

In the name of Allah , the Merciful and compassionate

A New converted Muslim

With the aspiration of manifestation ideal Islamic Unity

A conversation with Grossman Jorgen

by

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Jorgen Grossman is a German citizen who converted to the religion of Islam in the earlier years of his youth. He has especial affection to Imam Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution, and as said, after acquaintance with Imam Khomeini he became a Shiite Muslim. He has striving for many years with members of his family for establishment of the "Quds society of Berlin," He invites German citizens to participate in the rallies of International Quds Day. In this interview, Grossman has explained about his activities.

How do you evaluate the current situation of Shia Muslims in Germany?

In general, it must be said that one cannot throw light the issue Shias Muslims of Germany from all angles in a short interview. We should have a scientific and realistic view about this issue because

advertising and stereotype look does not help us. Answering the multiple questions about Shia in Germany required a comprehensive research. That is because whatever I would describe it will be just a part of reality as a result of my personal experiences. After establishing a center, with the name of "Quds society of Berlin," for seven years, we have been trying to draw the attention of German Muslims as well as the Muslims in all over the European countries towards the one target and that is resistance against occupying Zionist and the freedom of Sacred Quds.

On the first step, our activities in this center will focus on the organization of annual march on Quds Day in Berlin. For this purpose, my friends, family and I will mobilize voluntarily and we utilize all our personal and political resources so that we may attract cooperation of the Muslims particularly the young, in lawful form.

In this regard, we are cooperating with the Jews who are anti-Zionism, and they have also an annual rally. For this task what we need is, to more support the youth. These people are large in number among religious activists and those who come to the mosques.

For example, large populations of Muslim community in Berlin are active and we are trying to attract these people. We are endeavoring to draw the attention of German citizens towards the issue of Palestine. Not only Muslims but also all the citizens, even those who are communists can participate in our event.

Since, it has been published contradictive data about the number of Shiites in Germany. You have very close relation with the German Shiites, in your view , what is total number of Shiites in Germany and from which countries they belong to?

As far as I know, at present, 4.0 million Muslims are living in Germany and about 1 percent of them that are 400 thousands are Shiite. Most of Shias have come from Iran, Turkey and Pakistan to Germany. As compare to the Sunnis, the Shiites are very small in numbers.

How is the life of Shiites in Germany, especially how they hold and celebrate their religious ceremonies and programs in Germany?

I have been familiar with Shia-Population for 30 years, there is no problem regarding holding ceremonies and religious programs. In fact, it should be said that the main problem is Shias themselves. As Imam Khomeini (ra) said: “the duty of the Muslims to deliver the message of Islam to all the nations of the world”. But unfortunately, this message unnoticed and ignored. If the Muslims want to introduce the real Islam to the world, they must be united. The division and discord is a major obstacle amongst Muslims, in this way. Therefore, Imam Khomeini emphasized the need for unity amongst the Muslims and he talked about the pure Islam.

We don't speak only about Shia and Sunni but our issue of present time is Islamic discourse. It is not the time of talking about the issue, who is right and who is wrong.

What is the most important; it is our duty that Islam specified of us. We are all Muslims, regardless of Shia or Sunni. We should fall prey in the trap in which Salafis and Wahhabis have been fallen into that trap. These kinds of acts are like poison for the Islamic world. Status of Muslims in Germany is still the same . We have a great responsibility . We should

be vigilant and other we should keep aware the Muslims especially Shiites. We should strive to strengthen the unity and brotherhood between Muslims and should avoid from unilateral recession.

This was the very purpose that Imam Khomeini (ra) used to pursue it. He never said that Iran is a Shia republic but he said that Iran is the Islamic republic.

Imam Khomeini (ra) knew exactly what he says, neither had he said a word less, nor did he say a word more.

Today, you see that all countries except Saudi Arabia recognize Iran, as an Islamic country, it is not because they are enemy of Iran, but they are the enemy of Islam. If you have a problem with our Sunni brothers, this has become a documented pretext in hands of enemies for undermining the Islamic Ummah.

At present, some countries show the picture of Islam that is far from the actual and pure Islam. That is why our duty, as Shiites become heavier. Today, the Wahhabis and Salafi display the false picture of Islam with a vast propagation. They are a serious danger for the Islamic Ummah. The real Islam should be introduced to the public. The terrorist movements in Syria with the name of Islam have any relation with Islam. Our duty is enlightening about this matter.

If our religious leaders had been living in our times, certainly they would not have said that Shiites belonged to us and Sunnis are not from us. Certainly they would have said that all the Muslims are from us. This is our strategic approach, an approach that is helpful in the whole world. The world must know that there is only one image of Islam. We should clear this fact to our Sunni brothers. We should not center our sect and sectarian differences. Those who do this practice surely they are unaware of interest of Islam.

Is it possible for you to share your personal experience that how you became a Shia Muslim?

Actually I became acquaintance with Shia school of thought by Imam Khomeini. When he was in Paris, a group of students who were performing their activities for formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and those activities were based on Imam Khomeini's ideas. They were Iranian, and I was friend of a few of them and had a look on their activities and I began to read and research about that issue. The Messages that Imam Khomeini used to deliver to their followers in Paris , I used to study it carefully . At the time, I was of thirty years old and I was full of zip in my work and busied in some activities. However, I maintained contacts with students. In those years, which coincided with the rapid revolutionary developments in Iran, and a new movement was started among Shiites Germany.

The things drew my attention. I had been converted to Islam about ۱۰ years before these events during a trip to Egypt. Though I was spending my life being a Muslim yet I had not actual knowledge and acquaintance about Islam. I was able to recognize the true Islam via Imam Khomeini (RA). The way of thinking and teachings of Imam Khomeini (RA) showed me the real path that is why I am in debt to him for this guidance. I consider myself as a follower of Imam Khomeini (RA). Unfortunately the thoughts and intentions of Imam Khomeini (RA) in have not been known in a general sense. He was the character who appeared in the Muslim world after centuries and attracted the attention of all towards the real Islam even the Iranians became successful about the exact acquaintance of Islam by the teachings of Imam Khomeini (RA).

After the success of Islamic Revolution I traveled to Iran and visited the city of Khomein . I went there to meet a clerk; he asked me whether I am

Shia or Sunni? I replied him that I wanted to be Shia. I replied that there is a verse in the Quran that says that believer should choose the best option and for me to be Shia is the best option and way.

I have been familiar with my Sunni brothers for over forty years. My issue is not whether to be a Shiite or a Sunni. Our beliefs should not be a cause of dispute between us . For example, what is happening in Syria caused such controversy.

Today, Salafis in Syria are of the view that those who do not act upon their beliefs, they are not Muslim. This kind of thinking is wrong. Have our religious leaders delivered this message. Is this message of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). His resistance was guidance for Islamic nation and Imam Khomeini (ra) took the step on the same way.

Why did you take step for the establishment of center of Quds in Berlin?

I think one of the main axes of the Union of Muslims nation is issue of Palestine. The issue of Palestine is not limited to one day. We always work and strive for ceremonies of that day , our promotional activities are in progress throughout the year. We performed some activities like holding conferences, distributing brochures and other activities and we try to organize and hold the ceremonies of Al-Quds Day rallies more graceful than previous years.

We contact with all groups in Germany and outside Germany including Jews who are anti-Zionism. They oppose the existence of a country with name of Israel and they are agreed to get back homeland for the Palestinians.

Contacting with German politicians is one of the other with other programs of our center. We try our best to draw their attention towards the condition of the Muslims and occupied territory of try and occupy Palestine. We have a group of young people who are actively seeking the attention of youths in the area. In this regard, we invite all Shiite or Sunni Islamist groups for cooperation. Our goal is one thing and that is to unite the Muslim of the world against the Zionist. We also attend conferences and seminars to explain Islamic values.

As a last question, with regard to your experience of activities in Germany, in your view what kind of objection and criticisms are valid on Shiite community in this country?

One of the problems of Shiite centers in Germany is their little activities with snail walk. One of the other reasons is the lack of a motivating and familiar preacher with the environment. We have rarely good and effective preacher here in Germany. While we a good potential for activity. Islamic centers of Hamburg and Berlin have good capacities for attraction for the youth and to activating them, but capacities are deprived of worthy attention. Learning language is one of needs of religious preachers in Germany; unfortunately this issue could not be able to draw a sufficient attraction consideration. We should talk with youth by medium of their language for powerful impact.

The religious ceremony of Shiites, including memorial ceremonies of Ashura is one of the other suitable opportunities through which Islam can be introduced to German citizens.

The splendor religious traditional ceremony hold by Shiites unfortunately has not progress in Germany. Shiite mosques and groups prefer to perform commemorative ceremonies on their own place

instead of launching *mourning groups* on other places. This is the fact that these ceremonies have the best capacity to introduce true Islam and we should get the advantage of these occasions.