

# ***A Translator of Rushdie's Novel Is Slain at a Japanese University***

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TOKYO, July 12 — The Japanese translator of "The Satanic Verses," by Salman Rushdie, was found slain today at a university northeast of Tokyo.

The translator, Hitoshi Igarashi, 44 years old, was an assistant professor of comparative culture who reportedly studied in Iran in the 1970's. The police said he was stabbed several times on Thursday night and left in the hallway outside his office at Tsukuba University.

It is the second time this month that someone involved with the production of the novel by Mr. Rushdie, the Indian-born author condemned to death by the Iranian authorities two years ago, has been assaulted. On July 3, Ettore Capriolo, 61, the Italian translator of "The Satanic Verses," was stabbed in his apartment in Milan. He survived the attack with what were described as superficial wounds.

## **Rushdie Urges Death Order's End**

The Milan police have made no arrests and offered no theory on the attacker. But the authorities said without elaboration that the assailant told Mr. Capriolo that he had a "connection" to the Iranian Embassy in Rome. A man reached at the embassy late today said no officials were available for comment.

The police reported that a janitor had found the body of Mr. Igarashi near an elevator on the seventh floor of the building with slash wounds on his

neck, face and hands. They said an autopsy showed that he died between 10 P.M. on Thursday and 2 A.M. today.

In addition to translating "The Satanic Verses," Mr. Igarashi wrote books on Islam, including "The Islamic Renaissance" and "Medicine and Wisdom of the East."

Mr. Rushdie went into hiding in 1989 after his novel's publication in Britain.

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# Japanese Translator of Rushdie Book Found Slain

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brought a call by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran for Muslims to kill the author. Ayatollah Khomeini, who said the book was blasphemous and anti-Islamic, died in June 1989, but the assassination order has been reaffirmed by the Iranian authorities.

In the last year, Mr. Rushdie, a British citizen and Muslim who was born in Bombay, has started to give interviews, make some public appearances and issue statements construed as an apology for his book, saying he never intended to defame Islam.

But the Iranian Government refused to withdraw its assassination order, although it appeared until these recent incidents that the immediate threat to Mr. Rushdie might have subsided with the passage of time.

Reuters reported from London that Mr. Rushdie said in a written statement today, "I am extremely distressed by the news of the murder of Mr. Hitoshi Igarashi and I offer my condolences and deepest sympathy to his family." He appealed to the British, Italian and Japanese Governments and other world leaders "to make urgent representations to the Government of Iran" to have the death order set aside.

## Outcry Against the Novel

No person or group in Japan asserted responsibility for the killing of Mr. Igarashi, which came to light late this afternoon, and the police said they had no specific evidence that it was carried out because of the novel.

But news organizations reported that the publisher of the novel had received death threats from Islamic militants and that Mr. Igarashi had for a time been given bodyguards. Family members of Mr. Igarashi said on television tonight that he had not received any death threats that they knew of.

It did not appear that Mr. Igarashi



Reuters  
Hitoshi Igarashi, the Japanese translator of "The Satanic Verses," who was found slain yesterday near Tokyo.

## A second attack in a month on someone linked to a novel.

had any security guards at the time of his death. The police said he seemed to have been killed after some students left him about 7 P.M. on Thursday, and that perhaps the incident occurred as he was heading out the door of his office at Tsukuba University, about 40 miles northeast of Tokyo.

In 1989, the Islamic Center in Japan requested publishers, newspapers, magazines and broadcast stations not

to translate or reproduce the novel, which it called an "anti-Islamic" work that "contains filthy remarks and ridicules fundamental beliefs of Islam."

## 'We Cannot Forgive the Novel'

There are few native Japanese Muslims, but there is a large community of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and others who worship at the Islamic Center in the Akasaka district of Tokyo. News reports said the center had about 30,000 members.

Last year as well, a leader of a Japanese association of Pakistanis joined the condemnations of Mr. Rushdie, saying he deserved to die because of the book.

"We cannot forgive the novel because it is insulting our prophet indecently and making God's words Devil's words," the spokesman said at the time.

Nevertheless, the publisher, Shinseisha, a medium-sized house, went ahead, drawing demonstrators outside its offices in 1990. At a news conference in early 1990, a Pakistani was arrested after disrupting the scene and trying to assault a promoter of the book.

## A Success but Not a Best Seller

Japanese news organizations reported that "The Satanic Verses" had sold about 60,000 or 70,000 copies in Japan, making it a success but not a best seller by Japanese standards.

Despite the threats to the publishers, the Japan Book Publishing Association said in 1990 that it supported the publishers and promoters of the book, saying, "We will make as much cooperation as possible with those organizations on this issue as we obey the basic legal rules."

But some bookstores were more cautious, hesitating to sell the novel or at least to display it. A spokesman for Maruzen books, a leading bookstore chain, told The Japan Times in 1990 that "it is difficult for us to put the book on counters because of possible confusions."