

## Judaism and Japanism

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Is Judaism a basis of Western culture?

I have a book titled "Why the Jews founded a state" written by D. Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel built in 1948 based on the UN plan of two states solution in Palestine. I soon stopped reading the book because it was so ethno-centric. He boasts the Jews is a great nation that gave the world the most important book; the Bible. He also totally neglects Jewish terrorisms against British Empire and the Palestinians living in Palestine.

Historically Christianity and Islam inherit the Old and New Testament as a sacred document. They have become dominant religions in the Western, Middle-Eastern and some Asian countries. If they were true religions, most Asian nations and particularly Japan farthest from the west must be the most unlucky people ignorant of "the good news from the God". As a Japanese I am proud of our culture with tens of thousands of years of primitive ages and almost 20 centuries of written history. We had been totally ignorant of the Old Testament but I am certain we had been much happier and richer in culture.

Judaism is not a basis of western culture

Judaism is a tribal religion for Jewish people. How could it ever be the basis of western culture?

In my opinion the true basis of western culture is that of ancient Greek and Rome. The feature of Greek and Roman culture is human-centric world view hence Democracy as a political system and Polytheism in religion.

Christianity and Judaism in Western culture

Christianity was introduced into the West together with Judaism. That is why the two religions are confused to be related. In fact they are totally different as I have proved in my memorandum; Christianity as a Natural religion;

<http://www5e.biglobe.ne.jp/~kaorin57/Christianity%20and%20Natural%20religion.pdf>

Is Christianity a true world religion?

Christianity was indeed a true world religion; a good news to save **all** human beings at its origin and while inhibited and persecuted by the Roman Empire. But Christianity changed its character as it was permitted and then adopted as the state religion of the Roman Empire. Since then Christianity prospered as state religions of Roman and the subsequent empires. In short Christianity changed from a truly world religion to state religions serving for secular powers. Furthermore Christianity

became itself a strong political power; one of the feudalistic lords. Preaching love, the church ruled the people with heavy loads and dogmas of scientific nonsense. Just think of the horrible Inquisition. Galileo surrendered to the Inquisition, but he murmured; yet the earth moves. So it does.

### Japanism

To us Japanese it is quite hard to understand why so many and such cruel religious wars were fought in the western world. In Japan there were religious arguments among different religions or schools but no such barbaric religious wars throughout our history.

Japan is separated from Asian continent by the ocean, hence our history has been more or less isolated from the external world. Japanese culture is unique. For example our ancestors invented potteries before anywhere else in the world. The “Jomon” potteries in our primitive ages since 20,000 years ago are the most unique and beautiful.

The feature of Japanese culture is not only uniqueness but also the capability to learn anything coming from outside. Japanese language is unique, unrelated with even the nearest neighbor; Korea, and totally foreign to Chinese. Despite of the differences in the languages, our ancestors learned the writing methods from China and Korea together with all realms of culture; agriculture, domestic animals, metallurgy, textiles, religions (Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, etc ), and so on.

In my opinion Japan is unique in religion, too. The natural religion from the primitive ages still is the basis of our belief. You will find almost all homes have small altars called “Butsudan” to worship our ancestors. Every morning I pray before my Butsudan to my parents, relatives, teachers and friends who are now in the other world for their happiness and our peace and prosperity in this world.

Japan was unified around the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Yamato dynasty. The unified state needs a state religion to justify the rule of the people by the dynasty. Nihon-Shoki, or Japan Chronicle was completed in year 720. It collected legends, records from all over Japan to form a mythology/history that justified the rule of the state by the dynasty. It depicts how the universe was at its origin, how the lands were created, how the gods cultivated the land, how the powerful groups were formed and unified under Yamato dynasty. In parallel to formation of Nihon-shoki, numerous shrines from ancient times all over Japan were taken over, their legends were modified to support descriptions of Nihon-Shoki.

The state religion was later called Shintoism (ways of gods).

The deities from abroad; Korea, China, India, Persia, Orient, etc. in various forms of religions or legends were mixed with those in Shintoism or natural religion from primitive ages. The amalgamation was so natural that most of us Japanese do not even notice the differences of their

origins.

Thus adaptability and capability to learn things from abroad is the feature of Japanese culture.

In political systems Japan is quite unique, too. The ancient dynasty was formally the rule by “Tenno” (Heavenly King) but in fact coalition of powerful lords. Taiho-Ritsuryo (the great law, year 701) state system, which truly unified the whole of Japan, corresponds to that of Roman Empire in the western world. The whole lands were announced to belong to the state. All the people are given a field of a fixed area when they reached adulthood to owe the duty to cultivate the land and pay the taxes in forms of rice, textiles and labor or military service. The loads were too heavy and the system was too totalitarian. Like Soviet Union, the Ritsuryo system gradually decayed. Then the dynasty changed the policy to allow private ownership of the land if newly developed. Then the new land-lords in the remote parts of Japan needed to defend their new properties. Thus came the Bushi (warrior) classes; land-lords with military capability. The new Bushi classes still subjugated to the dynasty. They had to carry the taxes to and serve the dynasty as military guards. They were called “Samurai” (server) as they had duty to serve the dynasty in order to maintain their ownership of the lands.

The servers gradually grew and finally succeeded in establishing their own government “Bakuhu” in year 1192. The Bakufu is the government with the real power over all Japan but “Tenno” and the dynasty managed to exist and maintain a formal authority.

The situation is similar to the middle ages of Europe where the people were doubly ruled; by the powers of secular emperors or kings and by the authority of the pope of Catholic church.

Japanese history developed mostly on its own in relative isolation but she was forced to open herself to the world in 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was like a wake-up from a long dream to a reality. What a reality it was! The whole world had been divided by Occidental powers and the great China was in the state of half colonized. There was a real danger that Japan could be colonized by the Occidental powers.

In order to survive in the world of Imperialism, Japan determined to grow to an Empire herself. She revived the ancient Shintoism and deformed it to the level that the Emperor was a living god! The new state-controlled education system was very effective to plant Shintoism to the children and promote the militarism. The policy was a success. Japan grew strong, won the wars against China and Russia and lifted her position to a leader equivalent to the British Empire.

The state religion of Shintoism was not only a powerful means to promote militarism but also to oppress people’s demands for human rights and democracy.

Japanese militarism collided with that of USA. The collision brought out the war of the pacific oceans and Asia (1941-1945), destroying tens of millions of human lives culminating in the horrible atomic bombs that totally destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 1945, Japan surrendered to the allied forces for the first time in her history.

Japan was reestablished after the war based on democracy. The separation of state and religion is the basis of our democracy, on which it is supported by three pillars; sovereignty of the people, fundamental human rights and renunciation of wars

The democracy and pacifism of Japanese constitution is the basis of the remarkable development of our science & technology and prosperity **in peace** for the past 3/4 century.

### Judaism and Japanism

Japan and Israel are antipodal in many respects.

### Geography.

Palestine is located at the crossroads of the world while Japan is separated from Eurasia by the oceans.

### History

Palestine had been conquered by great empires in the ancient Orient hence could not develop their own independent state. The states in Palestine, e.g. ancient Israel were subjugated to the great empires of Egypt, Hittites, Persians, Macedonians and Romans.

Conquest of Israel by the Roman Empire made the Jewish people leave Palestine and migrate all over Europe. They were discriminated and persecuted wherever they migrated because of Judaism; "only Jewish tribes chosen by almighty God" ideology and the label "Christ killer".

The holocaust inflicted by NAZI Germany during WW2 on Jewish people was an enormous crime; 6 million children, women and men of Jewish descent were killed at the death camps. It is a crime far beyond any madness.

Being more or less isolated, Japan followed a natural historical development from primitive ages, unification by Yamato dynasty, development of feudalism, decays of the feudalism to modern ages before jumping into the imperialism world as described before.

### Religion

Palestine had been crossroads of the great empires of ancient Orient. I think the Jewish people coined their religion by the psychological compensation law. As they were weak, subjugated to the powerful empires, their God had to be the almighty; creator of the world. And they had to be chosen by the God as the sole tribe. This ethno-centric monotheism must have given the Jewish people a great comfort and unity among the people at times of the harsh reality.

Japanese religion is a typical polytheism. The Shintoism tells how Japan was unified by Yamato dynasty, hence the boundaries between the gods and human beings are blurred. In fact great persons are enshrined after death in shrines in their names. You will find many such shrines all over Japan.

That is similar to Lincoln Memorial in USA, which is, in my opinion, the shrine dedicated to Abraham Lincoln.

#### Future

Adolf Hitler and NAZI party gained power by democratic election. Their crazy attack on Jewish people was effective to gain the popularity. Judaism must have had a reason to be rejected by the German people. Their hatred to Jewish people was not merely a political campaign but so real that brought the horrible holocaust where 6 million Jewish people were massacred!

Based on the sympathy on the Jewish people, the UN helped the erection of the state of Israel in the land of Palestine in 1948. Alas! The greatest victim of Nazism was essentially the purest Nazism as proven by the following 76 years of history. The blockade of Gaza and expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank correspond to limitation of the Jewish people in Ghettos by Nazis Germany. The HAMAS massacre on 7, October, 2023 corresponds the desperate uprising of Warsaw Ghetto in 1945. The subsequent GAZA war for almost a year now is equivalent to the death camps, where already nearly forty thousand children, women and men were massacred.

Israel is surrounded by Arabic countries. It is the unilateral support of USA that helped Israel to survive. But the Gaza atrocities have revealed what Israel is, and the unilateral support of USA will not be guaranteed in the future. Israel must reform herself for her survival.

I hope Japan could give a good example.

Japan abolished Shintoism as the state religion and established separation of state and religion as the basis of our democracy. Japan is one of the rare countries which have had no wars for the past 76 years after the end of the second world war (1945).

To Israeli people, I advise the following.

- (1) Abolish Judaism as the state religion.
- (2) Establish separation of state and religion.
- (3) Establish the state based on science & technology.
- (4) Respect the Palestinian people as the rightful residents of Palestine.
- (5) Help Palestinians establish their state for the original two-states solution, or
- (6) United Israel and Palestine (UIP) might be a solution if it is acceptable to both Israeli and Palestinian people. See

<http://www5e.biglobe.ne.jp/~kaorin57/United%20Israel%20and%20Palestine.pdf>