

「Sonjuku Trip to Israel: May 4 to 9, 2017」

A dozen members of Shimada sonjuku and I visited Israel from May 4 to 9, 2017. It was a wonderful trip. We enjoyed the trip very much and learned a lot by seeing Israel and talking to Israel people during our visit.

Why Israel?

First, let me begin the report of this trip by telling why we chose Israel to visit. Israel is an unique country which is involved with, I would say, more than a half of the problems of the world during its long history encompassing both the ancient and the modern Israel of today. Its experience may be said to be the warp that weaves the cloth of world history. Also, Jerusalem, the current capitol of Israel, provides the space for Jewish, Islam, and Christian religions to coexist within a narrow area with each long historical courses. Given these features, Israel is a very important subject of study for Shimada sonjuku.

Another reason is that while sonjuku class 1 visited Israel, class 2 was unable to visit largely because Israel was involved in conflicts with surrounding areas such as Gaza during the period of class 2. Since Israel is important for sonjuku studies, we meant for sonjuku class 3 should visit Israel this year when Israel is not involved with violent conflict with surrounding areas as in the recent past.

Planning of the Trip

This trip was made possible largely by the earnest solicitation and kind arrangement by Mr. and Mrs. Elchannan Harel. Mr.Harel is an outstanding business leader and renowned intellectual leader who has been contributing immensely to promote mutual understanding and interactions between Israel and Japan, and because of his contribution he was granted a high medal from Japanese Emperor. He has a marvelous family. His son has studied in Japan more than a decade ago in Keio University in my seminar. Since then we have had close

relations with the Harel family.

The sonjuku class 3, which studies the two year course from Sept 2016 up to August 2018, started to prepare for this trip several months ago. The planning was largely done by Mr. Elchanan Harel working with Israel travel company, “Dirigo,” and a Japanese concierge company, “Ypsilon,” which is run by Mr. Yu Yamada, who is the member of Shimada sonjuku, class one. Mr. Yamada meant to join this trip, but unfortunately, because of mishandling of his ticket booking, he was unable to join this time, which was a pity for all of us.

We planned the date of the trip from May 4 to 9, largely because of the consideration of Mr. Harel that we can minimize the loss of working days for sonjuku participants by using as much as possible Japan’s May holiday season. The participants have been finalized to 14 including two non-sonjuku participants and myself.

The Itinerary of the Trip

We left Tokyo Narita AP in late evening of May 4, 2017. Arrived at Ben Gurion AP in early morning of May 5. The flight from Tokyo, Istanbul and to Telaviv was as long as 19 hours from door to door. The flight by Turkey Air was comfortable with good service and facility. Upon arrival, we were escorted by the special service which was prepared by the request of Mr. Harel to make the process of entering the country smooth, which was very helpful.

May 5 Friday

On May 5, immediately after arrival, we started the program of visiting important and interesting sites. We were welcomed by an Israel tour guide Mr. Nimrod Besor, who spoke good Japanese and has great knowledge. Our bus, a medium size black color Benz, drove up North to Haifa. On the way we passed by

the statute of Mr. Theodor Herzl , who advocated Zionism at the end of 19th century. On the way we visited a detainees camp at the shore, Camp Atlit, and also visited Bahai Hq in Israel and its beautiful garden. We then visited Caesaria national park and took lunch at a seaside restaurant, and went back to Telaviv. We took a brief rest at Mendeli Street Hotel, which is a nice cozy boutique hotel in the midst of residential area. Then from 19:30 we joined Mr. and Mrs. Elchanan Harel at a busy but cozy outdoor restaurant, Vicky Cristina, to enjoy reunion and conversation. This was a long day.

May 6, Saturday

On May 6, we left the hotel early at 7 O'clock. We drove to the south heading at Dead sea. We chose to visit this sightseeing area on this day because it was Saturday, namely the Jewish Sabbath day, when all business activities are ceased. On the way, we visited Qumran national park which was established to cherish the site where the oldest copy of the Bible was found, visited Masada fortress and Herods place to watch and learn of the sad history of the final days of ancient Israel, and had a late lunch at Hanokdim Village where we enjoyed watching and enjoyed dancing with a Bedwin belly dancer, and ride on Camels. In the evening we arrived at hotel Isrotel Dead Sea Resort and Spa, which was located at the shore of the Dead Sea. Our members enjoyed floating on the Dead sea, mud wrap treatment, and late dinner.

May 7, Sunday

On May 7, we left the hotel early at 7 O'clock. We drove to Jerusalem. We visited Yad Va 'Shem holocaust Museum, visited the new city and Manor Haknesset near the building of National Assembly, took lunch at "Azura" restaurant, which is popular as a local commoners' dining in the market place. Tried to travel to Olivet Mountain in order to enjoy a bird's eye view of the old city. But the street was closed by the

police temporarily perhaps because it was the time when German president was visiting Jerusalem. We went up to the hill top nearby to take an alternative overview of the old city. Toward the evening we went to visit the Western Wall, and on to walk through the Western Wall Tunnels. We drove to Tel Aviv, and went to Kitchen Market restaurant where Mr. Elchanan Harel was kindly waiting for us to enjoy a nice dinner and enjoy conversation. We arrived at Mendeli Street Hotel nearly mid-night. This was a long day too.

May 8, Monday

On May 8, we left the hotel shortly before 8 O'clock. We visited in the morning WEDEA Center for Innovation, the College of Management Academic Studies(COMAS) where Mr. Harel served as a board member. We enjoyed a good and rich program organized by professor Jacoby Volk, Carmella and Mr. Moti Shatner. They gave us presentations on interesting topics such as "the Online Credit Revolution" by Mr. Shatner, "the Future of Bitcoin and Blockchain" by Mr. Ruschin, Gad, "Robo-Advisors and and Mirror Trading" by Mr. Eyal, Gil, and presentations by student groups who are studying in the Wedea's Entrepreneurship Program and the Start-up Nation Eco System. After having light lunch, we went to visit Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot. This is the glorious and very active science and technology innovation center of Israel named after the honor of the first president of the Israel Republic, Dr. Chaim Weizmann. Mr.Elchanan Harel kindly guided us of the tour of the Institute. Incidentally, father of Mr. Harel designed a large part of the institute architecture. After the tour we spent sometime in the business center of Tel Aviv to enjoy brief town walk and shopping. We left Ben Gurion AP at 21:45 for Japan through Istanbul AP. We arrived at Tokyo Narita International AP at 19:30 on May 9.

On this short but dense trip, we encountered many interesting scenes and

impressed by and learned many things. Let me make some notes in what follows on some of such experiences and observations.

Israel Population and their Diversity

Israel is a country of rather narrow land as wide as Shikoku island of Japan which is inhabited by some 8 million population of highly heterogeneous people in terms of racial and religious backgrounds as well as regional backgrounds as they or their ancestors come from. The population consists of 77% of Jews, 20% of Moslem, and 3% of Christians. The country developed since the declaration of its independence in 1948 by incorporating Jewish and other people who came from various parts of the world as many as more than 100 countries.

Those who came from northern areas such as Russia, Poland and many European countries tend to look taller and white skin and those from the south such as northern Africa and Arabian countries look with brown skin and relatively short. With all these heterogeneous backgrounds and outlooks, as far as they recognize themselves Israel nationals certified by the country, they are Israelis.

Among them, there are some devout Jewish people, who is identified in outlook usually with wearing black suits and black hat and with long black beard and always put Kipa on their heads. These people now occupy some 15 % of the total population and is gradually increasing. Particularly in Jerusalem, their proportion is getting as high as 40% recently. They are faithful observants of Judaism precepts. They spend their life in rigorous learning of Judaism teachings. They rigorously preserve Kosher precepts of food. Since they do not earn their living because they devote all their daily life in learning Judaism teachings, the Israel government provides subsidies to support their life.

This spending must be a significant portion of the government expenditure. These people are firm believers of "Messiah" belief. They believe that some day

the Messiah will save Jewish. This belief means that the current Israel is not the eventual form of Israel because Jewish people still have to wait for the Messiah to save them. This must be a very important religious contradiction of the definition of Israel as a country.

Food, Life-Style and Land-Scape

On our way of traveling, we happened to talk about the menu of breakfast of the hotel we stayed with our tour guide, Mr. Besor. We pointed to the fact that there were no meat on the meal shelf. Mr. Besor started a long story of explaining the habit of food taking which is much constraint by the teaching of the Bible. For example, it is not allowed to eat together parent and kid, say, chicken and egg for devout Judaism believers. For not much devout religious Israelis like himself, this teaching is not so much restraining. He in fact likes to eat a popular Japanese dish Oyako-don, a rice bowl topped with boiled chicken meat and egg. Since at an ordinary dining room or restaurant milk is served at breakfast. This is the reason why meat of a cattle is not provided there, while at dinners meat is supplied because milk is not supplied together.

Likewise, there are many rigorous rules to regulate the kinds of food you can eat. For instance, there are severe restrictions on the type of animal whose meat you can eat. For example, when you eat meat, you can eat meat of such animals who do ruminant, and also whose foot nail is separable. According to this rule, you can eat cow but cannot eat horse.

We talked about the practice of not working on the rest day, which is determined religiously on Saturday. To put it more precisely, they stop working after identifying three stars in the sky in the evening of Friday until they find three stars in the evening of Saturday. During this full one day rest in a week, most people stop working. Therefore, on the rest day most buses, trains and commuting airplanes are not available. Some hostile countries surrounding Israel attacked Israel taking advantage of this practice of the rest day at the time of the second

middle-east war.

Within a few days, we drove a round trip of much of the Israel land starting from Tel Aviv to up north to Haifa and also down to the south to the Dead Sea area and finally came back to Tel Aviv. This implies that we drove through much of north to south areas of Israel. We found that to the north of Jerusalem much of the surface of the land is covered by greens either of trees or of grass or vegetables. To the south of Jerusalem, to the contrary, land is extremely dry and mostly desert. Since Israel as a whole is a land where rainfall is extremely limited, it is amazing that a large northern part of Israel is covered by green trees, grass and vegetables.

This is made possible and supported by the splendid invention and development of the agricultural technology, "A drip irrigation." This technology can minimize the amount of water to be siphoned by the plant and yet maximizes the growth potential of the plant by its extremely efficient use of water. This technology has not only helped Israel dry soil covered by green plants but also help such dry countries to grow plants by being exported.

The land of Israel is quite hilly. The location of Jerusalem is some 800m above the sea level, while the Dead Sea is more than 400m lower than the sea level. Water of rain falls in Jerusalem area gradually runs to lower areas. This flow of water has helped such isolated fortress as Masada, which I will discuss more later, obtain and reserve the water to support the life of soldiers and their families on the top of dry rocky hill.

On the way from Tel Aviv to Dead Sea, we drove often by walls and fences which are spanned from the north down to the south of Israel land to divide the areas lived by the Jews and those for Palestines. Since modern Israel was created in the Palestine area where Palestines have been living for years. The establishment of modern Israel in this area almost automatically gave rise to creation of refugees living in camps, and accelerated bitter antagonism and confrontation between them and Israel. Since then there have been many attempts

of terrorism by Palestine radicals and their comrades.

The wall was built around the beginning of 21st century extending for a long distance from the north down to the south separating the area of Jewish living from where many Palestines are living for the purpose of protecting Israel population from such horror of terrorism. In the area where population density is his such as in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, the wall is as tall as 20m made of concrete, whereas the wall is often low fences in the area where population density is sparse such as desert. The scene of such walls remind us of painful and difficult issues Israelis and their neighbors are faced.

Start-up Nation and a COMAS Seminar

Israel is known in the world as “start-up nation” by which it is meant that Israel people, particularly of young and creative people, start us their businesses most actively and vigorously than any other major nations of the world. The expression “start-up nation” became widely known in the world by an eye-opening book entitled “Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel Economic Miracle” written by Dan Señor and Saul Singer published by Council of Foreign Relations in 2011.

To illustrate what the start-up nation means, let me quote some of the relevant date edited by Mr.Miyauchi, Makoto, who was the member of class 1 of sonjuku and visited Israel four years ago. He was so much impressed by Israel and kept learning about Israel while managing his own company “B-Lot”, in the real estate finance business. To help the sonjuku members of class 3 learn efficiently about start-up aspect of Israel, he kindly prepared the concise data set. Therefore let me quote some of his data to show briefly Israel’s outstanding features of start-up nation.

Start-up companies have amounted to 4000 in a country of only 8.5million population. The start-ups relative the size of population implies that one company

starts up for 1844 population, which is the highest ratio among countries in the world. Tel Aviv is ranked 5th in the world in terms of start-up ecosystem following Silicon Valley, NY, LA and Boston. Israel is often called “the Second Silicon Valley” of the world.

Strength of Israel high-tech companies is found particularly in such areas as cyber security, water technology, new media and internet, health and life science and technology, financial technology and automotive industry. Some 300 global high-tech companies locate R&D centers in Israel such as Google, IBM, Microsoft, Intel, Philips, Siemens, GM, Apple etc. As we have driven along the main street heading at Haifa on May 5, we have seen from the window of the bus many offices of these companies located at the side of the street.

In planning our trip to Israel, Mr. Elchanan Harel kindly thought of an idea that we will have an opportunity to meet and discuss young people who are working aiming at starting up companies. Mr.Harel consulted with professor Carmella Jacoby Volk, vice president, innovation and interdisciplinary development, Coleman college and Weed Institute, COMAS academic studies. Incidentally, COMAS stands for college of Management and academic studies, which is a large business school located in Tel Aviv. She agreed with Mr.Harel and kindly proposed a one-day workshop for Shimada sonjuku.

The workshop begins in the morning by the opening lecture of professor Carmella Jacoby-Volk, which is followed by lecture of Mr. Moti Shatter, head of Wedea Finch Accelerator. After the lunch, Mr. Gil Eyal, president of Tradency gives a lecture on the recent experience of his company, Traddency, which is followed by the presentation of cases of venture start-up by students supervised by Mr. Moti Shatter.

It was a bright and shining morning of the final day of our visit to Israel, we arrived at the campus of COMAS in the morning. It was a cozy and nice campus. Prof. Camellia kindly welcomed us at the gate. Soon afterwards, she gave a well-

prepared lectures on Israel venture companies, particularly, the mindset of ventures, the back ground factors which fostered such venture businesses. Her explanation was systematic, comprehensive and persuasive.

She particularly emphasized as driving forces of Israel entrepreneurship the following four factors. (1) the role of military. During the military service, brilliant young officers learn knowledge and skills of handling high technologies which is useful for them to develop ideas of marketable business models. (2) technology education during the period of compulsory education, 3) Government support for incubators ranging from hard to soft technologies, and (4) as many as 300 global high tech companies locate their R&D center in Israel which encourage Israel young ventures to develop their business since they purchase successful business of such ventures.

Quoting the data of Mr. Miyauchi, Israel military is counted as an important background of the “eco-system” to foster start-up ventures, and even during the compulsory education period, students are given intensive education on English, programming and various fields of science such as robotics, astronomy, space and computer sciences etc. Such basic education of IT and science is highly useful to equip young people to build their capability in new business.

Since her institute develops an eco-system and an accelerator to foster start-up ventures. She explained the basic concepts of such arrangements. Again, quoting Mr. Miyauchi, the start up eco-system comprises such elements as accelerator, technology development center often run or supported by the government, military experience, global network of skilled human resources such as legal, tax, and financial advisors, venture capitals, university, stimulus given by global businesses located in the region, relevant research institutions which can help the venture. Also, the accelerator is provides selection of good candidates, assisting the venture in its early stage, helping to appropriate funds, assist to develop workable business models.

Her excellent and systematic lecture was followed by the lecture of Mr. Moti Shatter, on the topic of Fin-tech. He gave a broad picture encompassing various aspects and branches of Fin-tech, and more focussed discussion on critical technologies which help develop Fin-tech and application of Fin-tech. Stimulated by his discussion several members of son juku gave questions which developed interactive discussions actively and insightful.

This was followed by the lecture of Mr. Gil Eyal, the president of a company named Tradency. This company is a global leading company in the area of providing high tech services to facilitate trading using robotic advisory capability. He spent much effort in cultivating his business in Japan working with major companies which provide financial as well as trading services such as Rakuten. He explained in detail his experiences of how to cultivate relations with business partners. He emphasized the importance of finding a good and influential advisors in Japan who can develop business relations workable, which is quite interesting for us.

In the afternoon, Mr. Shatter introduced two student groups who he teaches and assists. They are developing business models of new venture businesses, one is focusing on providing services to reduce risks for landlords by using information network system which enlist many tenants of rooms. Another is developing a business model to help travelers to get cash more easily in various countries which they visit using a handy device "Change It." It is educational for us to see how these young students learn to develop their new business model to make them useful in the real world with relevant advices and assistance of experts such as Mr. Shatter in the university accelerate.

Atlit Detainees Camp

Atlit detainees camp is located at the shore facing the Mediterranean sea near the city of Haifa. This is the camp was managed by British authority toward the

end of the era of delegated ruling of this area by the British government. In the wake of the WWI, UK, France and Russia together agreed to govern the land of defeated Ottoman empire with the so-called Sykes-Picot Agreement. Following this agreement, which was subsequently over-ridden by other agreements to govern the area, UK was delegated the responsibility to govern this area.

Toward the end of WWII, many Jewish refugees dared to come to this area seeking survival from the suppression by the Nazis and the destruction of warfare no matter how hard to reach here. With the intensification of Nazi suppression as symbolized by holocaust massacre, the number of refugees has increased. British military government tried to limit the number of refugees within the level agreed with Arab countries around this area. Consequently, many of disparate Jewish refugees who barely reached the sea close to Atlit have been chased away and consequently many of them lost their lives.

Those refugees who were luckily accepted by the British authority to the camp were separated into men and women sections and then disinfected by DDT and sent to shower room to clean their bodies. To some this process reminded themselves of the nightmare of deadly treatment of Nazis mass killing facilities. But to the contrary, they were treated as human beings and eventually families were allowed to get together. This camp presumably received about 40000 refugees. Many of them left the camp after a certain period to join the Jewish inhabitants who arrived the area earlier and worked together to build the new country of Israel after the declaration of independence in May 1948.

Some of the basic facility is being kept to show the historical experience to visitors like us. Shabby camp buildings and fences to contain the refugees in a lonesome campus make us imagine the hardship of Jewish refugees who strived to arrive here hoping for survival. There remain a wrecked ship on the shore which conveys the hardship of the time. On the other hand, a renewed ship of the time is displayed to show us bitter experiences of the refugees by movies and exhibitions inside. Recently a renewed cargo plane is set to be displayed which

carried a hundred of so refugees from devastated areas at the time. This whole exhibition tells us bitter and cruel experiences of Jewish people shortly before the establishment of modern Israel.

Masada Fortress

The remains of Masada fortress is located on the top of the sharp rocky hill facing the Dead Sea. This is the fortress where a few hundred soldiers and their families defended the country against attacks of overwhelming size of Roman soldiers who surrounded the fortress for a few years.

It was AD 68 when Roman troops attacked the capitol city of ancient Israel, namely, Jerusalem. Under the fierce attacks by the Romans, all the buildings of the city including the huge and magnificent Heroes Shrine were destroyed and the entire city was burnt down to ashes.

Some 800 soldiers and their families remained in the Masada fortress and defended hard against repeated attacks by Roman soldiers who amounted to 10000. The roman troops built several camps around the Masada fortress. They constructed huge facilities to throw rocks toward the fortress, to shoot fires, and also forced Jewish prisoners of war to pile up rocks and mud to build a big slope to reach the top of the Masada hill so that the big troop can run up to the fortress.

While the Jewish solders and families fought hard to defend the fortress, which is the only Israel site remaining after the massive attacks by the Romans who virtually destroyed the entire ancient Israel, the commander of the Jewish soldiers on the fortress judged one day that it would be hopeless to survive the overwhelming attacks by the Romans. He ordered soldiers in the night to kill their families and ordered the selected sub-leaders to kill the soldiers. Then gave them pieces of broken potteries with names of them which tell them to kill with each other orderly.

Early next morning, when the Roman commander arrived at the fortress climbing the slope they forced the Jewish prisoners to build, he was astonished to find all the Jewish resistance troops and families already dead in the fortress. This story was later told by a few women who miraculously survived by accidental neglect, and was written as a critical memoir of the event. Since the suicide is prohibited in Judaism because of the religious rule that life and death can only be determined by the will of the god, this episode has not been played up for a long time. However, this story is now viewed as a respectful deed of the brave soldiers and their families not to survive as slaves of the conquerors. They view this action a kind of victory rather than the defeat.

The ruins of the fortress are kept amazingly well. This fortress was originally built as a separate palace of Herod the Great. He constructed a three-tier building on the top of the steep rocky hill. The facility contains living rooms, guest rooms and floors, warehouses to store food and valuables. Amazing is that the facility contains huge baths of Saunas, hot and cool water baths, and has a dozen of water reservoirs. Curious is how they secured such a huge volume of water on the top of steep rocky hill where almost no rain falls usually. The gimmick is that they skillfully siphon the rain water which flows from higher areas such as Jerusalem down to this area and skillfully direct it to the drain carved against the rocky wall of the hill up to the reservoirs. How great the wisdom and skill of ancient Jews.

It was a hot day when we visited the Masada fortress. We used a cable car to climb up the slope. Walked around the facility to take a look and walked down the slope constructed by the Jewish war prisoners in ancient days. We learned that it is a required practice of young Israel military service officers and soldiers to walk up the hill regularly to pay respect to the bravery of their ancestors.

The Dead Sea

The Dead Sea was shining reflecting the west inclining sun shine later in the afternoon when we arrived at its shore. On the other side of the sea is the shore and hills of Jordan. The Dead Sea is located at an incredibly low place of the earth, indeed, some 430m below the sea level.

Since the inland sea is isolated surrounded by dry hills and mountains, this unique situation was kept for a long time. However, as time passes the amount of water kept in the sea has been decreasing due partly to the strong sunshine and heat which evaporates water and partly by tapping water for industrial use of extracting minerals contained in the salty water. The salt containment ratio is said to be more than ten times of the ordinary sea water.

This extra-ordinary high salt density provides a gimmick that a person can lay on the water and read a newspaper. The young members of Shimada son juku who experience this miraculous magic for the first time got excited. They enjoyed this and took many pictures. They had to be careful, though, that not to drink the dangerously salty water, not expose wounds, and protect foot heals because the bottom of the water is often covered by sharp crystalized salt blocks which hurt foot heals easily. Playing with this unique salty water provided a joyful and unforgettable memory of Israel for them.

Yad Va 'Shem holocaust Museum

Yad Va 'Shem holocaust Museum was standing still on the hill of Jerusalem which is surrounded by woods. This is the place which exits a sad and painful experiences of Jewish people who were victimized in Europe during the period prior and during the WWII. This is my third visit. For most of the sonjuku visitors, this was the first time. I planned this visit to the museum because I thought it is very important to know the facts of incredible suppression which Jewish people suffered during this time, and also learn how the war can drive people, the Germans led by the Nazi in this case, to conduct such incredible actions to kill

millions of nonresistant victims. The war certainly can and will drive people crazy and unbelievably cruel. I wish we all learn firmly by watching this sad historical fact that we should never resort to war by any means.

The museum was renewed some years ago. The current new museum puts more emphasis to show us Jewish people and families in their ordinary life before the crazy and cruel Nazi suppression starts in Europe. The Jewish life in various places and occasions are happy and joyful: wedding, family and friends get together, sports, residential areas and town scenes.

Such peaceful world was distracted by targeted harassment and violent suppression by Nazis. Adolf Hitler took the overwhelming power to rule Germany ironically by democratic means of repeated elections in the early 1930s. Within a few years he gained an absolute supreme power to conduct whatever policy actions after having been empowered by the enactment of All Rights Delegation Law to him. He has had an awful prejudice against the Jews before hand, and after this stage started to order all kinds of racial harassment against Jews in many European countries.

He ordered that all righteous Jews in any European country put yellow ribbons or medals to show that they are living there lawfully and properly. Amazing or incredible is the fact the his order was transmitted to every European country except a few countries such as Belgium and executed by the local police or relevant authority and not by the Nazi directly. They did it probably because they afraid or fear the subsequent retaliation or suppression from the Nazi Germany. This fact makes us imagine how fearful the power of Nazi Germany was in Europe at the time.

The Nazis then ordered that the Jews be pulled to and confined within the Ghetto circumscribed by walls in each city and each country. While many ghettos were built in Germany, the largest ghetto created in Europe was the one in Warsaw. The order given for the Jews to put yellow ribbon or medals was in fact the means

to find and identify the Jews more easily.

The poor Jewish de facto prisoners were not given enough foods nor clothes. Many of them got weakened, got sick and many of them died in cold weather of Northern European countries. As the war developed in many European countries where the Nazi army promoted drastic attacks, the Nazi started horrible outrageous actions to kill the captured Jews in many places and many ways. In early stages, the German officers let the captured Jews dig holes by shovels and order them to stand at the edge and shoot them from behind so that they fell into the hole, which turned out to be their grave.

Later, the German military leaders, such as Adolf Otto Eichmann, reconsidered the means to kill the Jews. Killing them by guns meant too costly and not very efficient. They estimated that there were altogether 11 million Jews in Europe. They thought that they need to employ more efficient and massive way of killing Jews, which was to kill many of them at once by poison gas.

They urged the weakened and desperate and victimized Jews in Ghettos to leave the ghetto, and get on the freight cars to go somewhere else. Many Jews may well have thought that they can now get rid of terrible and desperate situation in the ghetto and followed the order of German officers and soldiers to get on the train. After a few days, they arrived at a plant looking facility, which was the gas room to kill all of them at once. After they were killed, many bodies of the victims were pushed and mounted by the bulldozer and bellied with mud on them. At the end of all this massacre, it is estimated that well over six million Jews were killed.

Finally, the German led by the Nazi was defeated in May 1945 by the allied forces of united nations. Victimized Jews were finally liberated. This must be a victory for them too, and can be celebrated. But many pictures of the Jews in various places at the time were mixed. Many of them were so depressed, weak and sick. Having lost parents, friends, all the fortunes they have built in their lives, and left alone, and helpless, perhaps they did not know what to do, what they can do.

Under such circumstances, some of them who had some means to travel tried seriously to reach Palestine area where they know that their ancestors had their home country. Our visit to Atlit detainees camp exhibits a part of their experiences.

Toward the end of the hall, there is a room where many name plates are placed against the wall and the ceiling. This is however only a very small proportion of the victims who could be identified. In the center of the floor, there is a pond looking hole way below, where people threw coins probably praying for the repose of the soul of the victims. This is no longer practiced. Outside the museum, there exist a smaller building which is totally dedicated to pray the repose of the soul of victimized children. The children who lost their young lives are said to be as many as a quarter of all the dead victims.

In the woods nearby these buildings, there were memorial stones or plates for those courageous people who worked hard to save the lives of the Jews at that difficult time. Among them was the memorial plate at the foot of the wood, named, Sugihara Senpo. the Japanese diplomat, councilor general stationed in Lithuania at the time. Mr.Sugihara courageously issued visas against the rule of Japanese government for some 6000 Jews, who would otherwise be captured by the Nazi and would most likely be killed, to flee from the area controlled by the Nazi to reach to Japan and later to other countries such as the US. His formal name is "Chiune" but is carved as "Senpo" perhaps because of alleged difficulty to read his name correctly.

Yad Va 'Shem holocaust Museum is the place all of us have to see and learn how the most dreadful actions in human history have been executed in Europe before and during the period of WWII. This sad fact should be remembered all the people to teach and warn them that we never should repeat such a terrible action of war which cannot be justified by any reasons. Jerusalem: Old City, Herods Place, the Wall, Tunnel Below the Wall

While driving in and around the city of Jerusalem, our tour guide told us

pointing to the building which is at the top of the hill of the old city, "That is the Supreme Court, and at somewhat lower place is build the National Assembly Hall."

The city of Jerusalem has been developed certainly on a much hilly area which is relatively high land of the territory of Israel. This was so even at the time ancient era. After the exodus from Egypt, ancient Israel had famous three kings: David the Great, Solomon the Great, and Herod the Great.

King Solomon built the first major shrine at the center of Jerusalem. Unfortunately, however, there remains no ruins of the shrine. In the subsequent years, Israelis were forced out of the country for a century to serve as a sort of slavery in the then powerful empire of Babylon. Having returned from Babylon, King Herod built the second major Shrine. This shrine was a huge construction to symbolize the glory of ancient Israel. This shrine was unfortunately totally destroyed by the Romans when the Romans attacked Israel and burnt down the entire city of Israel in AD 68. However, there remains now a portion of the wall facing the West of the base of the shrine.

The area where King Herod wanted to build the shrine was quite hilly. Therefore, King Herod conducted a great ground work. He constructed a wide high flat base on which to build the shrine. The shape is rectangular quite close to the square. The longer side is about 448m. And the hight of the wall was 15 to 25m. The difference of the hight of the wall reflects the hilly shape of the ground. On this flat surface which is elevated quite high from the ground, he constructed the shrine, and also another rather big building at the other end of the flat, which was built to worship his soul after his death.

He constructed such a building because King Herod became the King of Israel after marriage, and he himself was not a genuine successor of Israelis blood.

Jerusalem has always been the focus of religious confrontation and conflicts. Currently, the inner old town of Jerusalem is resided side by side by four religious groups within a narrow space: the Jews, Moslems, Christians, and Armenians.

During the past centuries, the occupants and the ruler of this area have changed many times. In the modern era, up to 1967, this area, the central section of the old city of Jerusalem, was controlled by Jordan.

As a consequence of the third middle-east war, or more commonly called as “Six day war” by Israelis, this area belonging to Jordan was secured by Israel. The area Israel obtained after a long time in the history include the area of the wall facing the West. Since this wall is the only remain of the wrecked Second Shrine built by Herod the Great, many Jewish go there repeatedly and pray for fortunes for their life.

After capturing this area and put the whole area under the control of Israel as a consequence of the victory of six day war, Israel government decided to dig a tunnel underground along the line of the West wall. They aimed at realizing the original shape of the wall of more than 2000 years ago. Since the length of the West wall is said to be 448m, the tunnel below the wall is deep and long. Israel started the construction of the tunnel shortly after the end of the six day war in 1967. The construction is still going. Just about 50 years have passed since the launch of construction.

We got into the tunnel to see and learn about this long lasting project. The tunnel goes through quite deep in the ground, perhaps 10 to 20m depending on the surface of the current ground. There were many tourists walking along the tunnel and watching the inside wall and some exhibitions of explanations posted here and there. It was interesting experience in walking through such a tunnel. The tunnel starts nearby the tourist spot of the wall, and ends up at the other side. At the other side is a spiral stairs to get out to the surface of the ground, which is within the residential area of Moslems. It was impressive that Israel dared to dig a long tunnel in the wake of the victory of the six-day war even this was to dig underground of the Moslem inhabiting area. We are reminded again of the complexity of racial, religious and historical issue of the old and historical city of Jerusalem.

Security Consciousness

The advice or story which I was told when I visited Israel for the first time about a decade ago has remained persistently in my mind that Israel authority pays special attention to Japanese tourists who try to enter the country with a special suspicion that every Japanese man could be as dangerous as Okamoto Kozo, a radical extremist, who shut a machine-gun at Tel Aviv airport some 40 years ago and killed more than a dozen people. This horrible precedence is kept cautionary as an institutional memory by such authorities as police and entry examination office. At the time of my first entry, my influential friend has made special effort to prepare some documents to endorse the credential of myself.

In this trip, when we visited Manor Haknesset near the building of National Assembly, we saw many elementary school students who were also visiting there and National Assembly building. We realized then that each of the teachers leading those students wore a gun(pistol). This scene was somewhat shocking or beyond imagination from the view point of we, Japanese. This is because the gun and children, in our notion, should be mutually totally unrelated. Teachers may be wearing guns in case it was necessary to protect children from attacks of terrorists. In such cases, we wonder if teachers inexperienced in handling guns could protect children effectively with their guns. Nevertheless, protecting yourself by any means may be the strong norm of Israel. This seems to reflect the Israeli sense of security which is beyond Japanese imagination.

Another episode we were impressed was the rather severe examination imposed by security officers at the airport when we are in the process of departing the country. The examination often appears to be severer than the examination at the time of entry. This is queer and not seems logical. I asked on the officers why Israel authority examines departing people that closely, the practice I have never encountered in any other countries. The officer told me that they do this because

Israel was surrounded by enemies. His statement was not quite convincing. Then, someone advised that consider the case of terrorist attack of 9.11, or many other incidences when planes in the air were attacked by terrorists on board. Then, I understood the reason. All these episodes reminded us of the tough and dangerous situation which surrounds Israel, and it is only natural that Israel people, may they be private or government, must have a sharp awareness of the importance of security.