

# **Axial Age and China**

Sept. 27---Oct.1, 2018

## **Guiyang, China**

Axial Age and East Asia

**“Karl Jaspers, Axial Age in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,  
Civilizational Message from Japan”**

Kazuhiko Togo, September 29, 2018

Kyoto Sangyo University

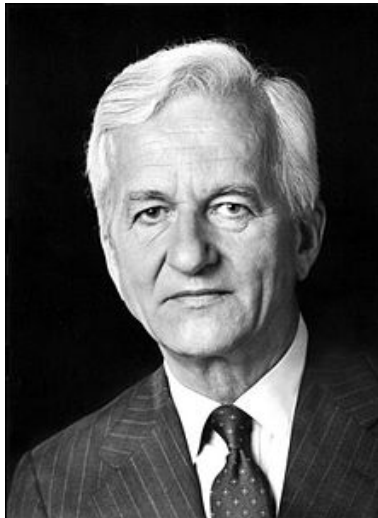
# From Togo's Note: Jaspers

## July 1969

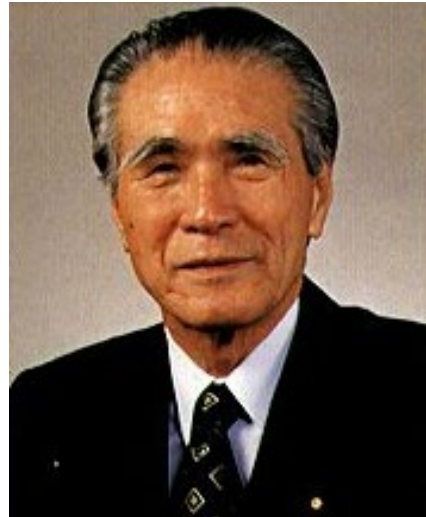
- “What can a human being be is ultimately hidden in his freedom. As long as he lives there must be something that he should be able to obtain through constant efforts that he makes. His dignity is that he represents something that cannot be defined.”
- “Ultimately what remains is the human being that does not lose love when thrown into destruction, and still maintains mysterious trust to the basis of things. Beyond all codes, thoughts reach to silence fulfilled by unlimited basis.”

# “Japan and Reconciliation in Post-War Asia” (Palgrave Pivot, 2012)

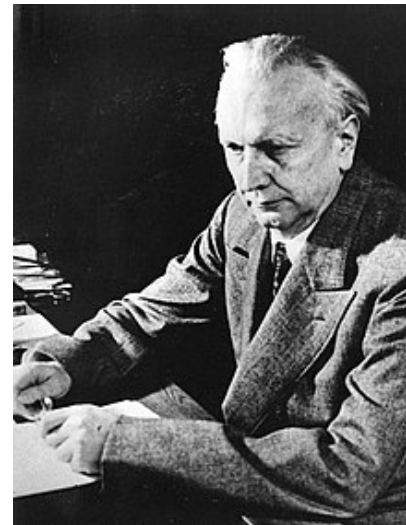
**Weitzecker**  
**Speech**  
**1985**



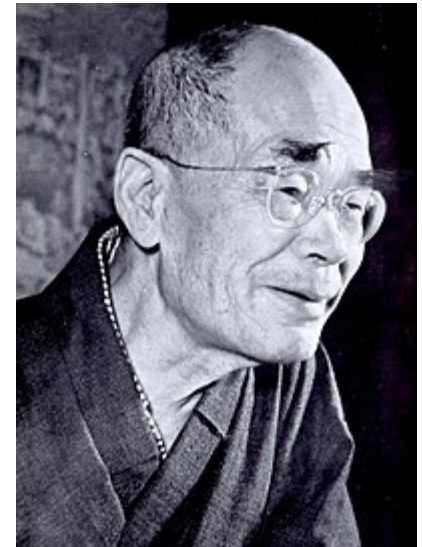
**Murayama**  
**Statement**  
**1995**



**Jaspers**  
**1945-46**  
The Question  
of German Guilt



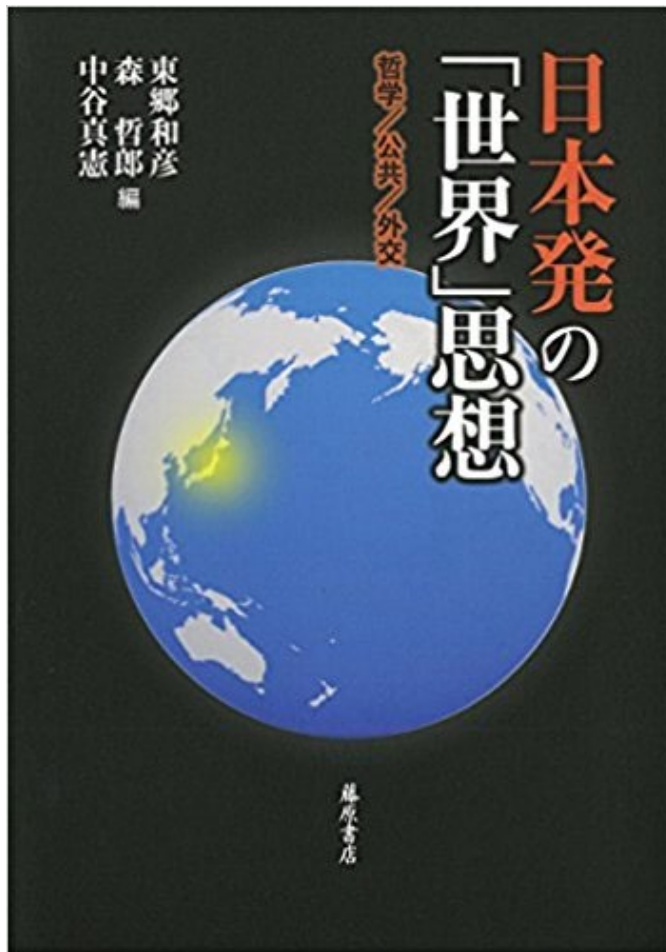
**Daisetsu**  
**1944-45**  
Construction of  
Spiritual Japan



# Axial Age, Jaspers and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Axial Age as defined by Jaspers: 500 B.C.: China, India, West (Iran, Palestine, Greece)
- Axial Age in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:
- America is the leading actor.
- China is the challenging actor.
- Is this a civilizational collision or coexistence?
- **Where are other actors?**
- Where is Japan?

# Civilizational message from Japan



- Kazuhiko Togo,  
Tetsuro Mori,  
Masanori Nakatani  
edited
- “Global Thoughts  
originating from Japan---  
Philosophy/Public  
Policy/Diplomacy”
- (Fujiwara/Tokyo/2017)
- Root/Stem/Branch

# The Height of Japan's philosophy

## Pre-war Kyoto School (1)

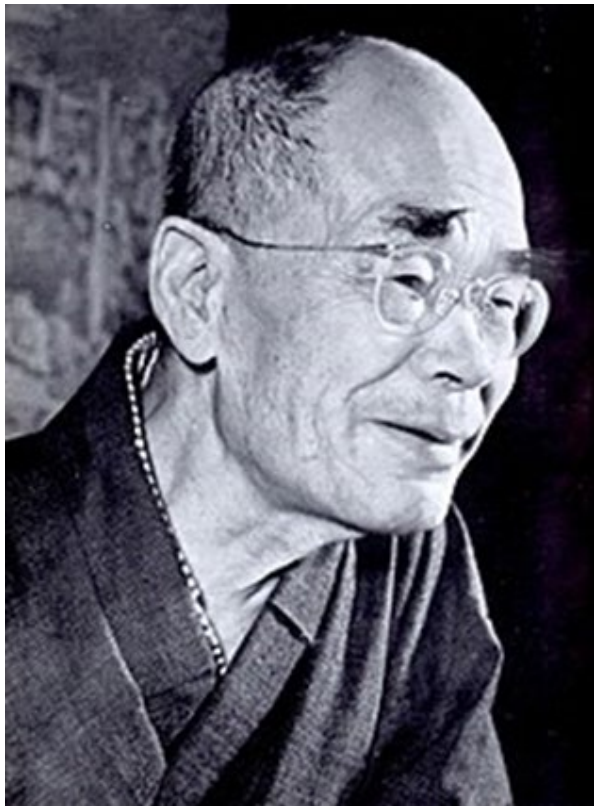


西田幾多郎 昭和16年2月

- Nishida Kitaro:  
philosophy: 絶対無  
Absolute Nothing (the world comprises everything, including you. You are inside and cannot see)
- Japan comprises the world and comprised by the world, (1940)

# The Height of Japan's philosophy

## Pre-war Kyoto School (2)



- Suzuki Daisetsu: religion: 靈性的自覚 Spiritual Self Recognition (see the real world; seen by the world)
- Construction of spiritual Japan; green grass the root deep under ground, stretching to the sky with complete freedom (1946)

# Nishida&Daisetsu practiced ZEN→ 13<sup>th</sup> Century Kamakura Buddhism

曹洞宗 Sodo School

道元 Dogen



臨濟宗 Rinzai School

栄西 Eisai





# 十牛圖 Ten Bulls



第一尋牛



第二見跡



第三見牛



第四得牛



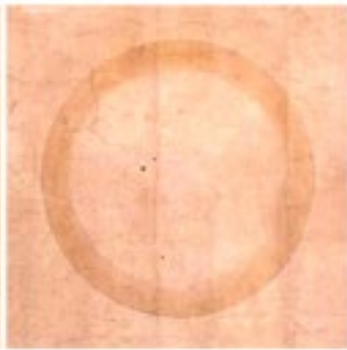
第五牧牛



第六騎牛歸家



第七忘牛存人



第八人牛俱忘



第九返本還源



第十入廬垂手

# Japan's Axial Age= Jomon Era



- ~400 BC = 縄文  
Jomon Era = Japan's Axial Age
- Period of Wood, trees grass, soil
- 400BC~300AD = 弥生  
Yayoi Era = Rice pad agriculture from China



# Introduction of Buddhism



- 538 Buddhism through China
- 神仏習合 Coexistence of Kami(Deity) and Buddha
- 本地垂迹説 Honji Suijaku Setsu
- 天台宗 Tendai School
- 最澄 Saicho 767~822
- 草木国土悉皆成仏 grass, trees, national soil all turning to Buda → 13<sup>th</sup> century

# Civilizational message from Japan

- Accept others as they are
- Inside Japan: give further rethinking to transform them to something unique and original
- Sharing them as something open, universal and global