

# Essay on the impact of judaism in the 21st century

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## **The Impact of Judaism in the 21st century**

In the 21st century, there has been a continuous evolution of cultures, religions, innovations and traditions. In all these exchanges taking place in the new millennium, the Jewish communities have not been left out (McKay 236). They are acquiring a new 21st identity. Over the centuries, the definition of the identity of the Jewish communities has changed because of their encounters with different historical, intellectual, cultural and sociological changes and trends. Judaism and Jewish communities have been susceptible to the different changes that occur in the world. The 21st century has transformed the definition of Judaism and Jewish communities now have a new identity. When the current Jewish culture is compared and related to the past models, a comparative perspective on the impact the 21st century has had on Judaism is identified. The 21st century information culture has transformed Judaism the similar way the religion was transformed by the industrial revolution.

Several aspects in the modern world have contributed towards this change in the Jewish culture. These include the remodeling of the Israel- Diaspora relationship, introduction of new technologies, the effect to the Jewish institutional life, changes in marriage patterns and demographic trends, survival of Judaism in the age of hybrid identities and choice, movements in the general populations and similarly the impacts from scholarly constructions of identity, ethnicity and social cohesion (McKay 237).

Initially, the significance of community in Judaism has evolved from the advent of the 21st century. Community is one of the most fundamental and significant values in the Jewish culture. However, this has eroded with the

advent of internet and cyberspace where Jewish communities are embracing the virtual communities that are taking over the world (237).

The specific set of values and belief systems of Judaism have similarly been affected. These values of the Jewish people based on Decalogue and are expanded by the rabbinic wisdom have been maintained within their communities for over 3000 years. The 21st century has however greatly affected these Jewish value systems. Judaism has been impacted by the expansion and extension of the human consciousness of the spirit and mind. The global cultural homogenization process has diluted these values. Most of the Jews of the 21st century rarely use the Tablets of Torah that was at the center of their religion and culture before. The globalization of culture has similarly affected their attempts to maintain their rich cultural diversity. Although the Jewish people have attempted to maintain continuity and to fight and strive to maintain their culture for the past 200 years from eroding, the impact of globalization has been a counter current effect to their efforts (McKay 238).

There has also been the evolution of Judaism into Secular Judaism for a fraction of the Jews. It is also known as secular or cultural Judaism though it is not a formal Jewish denomination. These groups of Jews are perhaps the largest Jewish communities. They are a group of Jews who do not conform to any of the Jewish sects, they also attend synagogue less often and observe few of the Jewish customs (McKay 238). The 21st century culture has played a significant role in defining the culture of these Jews. Majority of them believe in God but there are those that are atheists but address themselves as cultural and ethnic Jews. It is therefore evident that the Judaism culture

has not remained fixed with the advent of the 21st century. Particularly, Judaism essentially presents a culture that is going through a gradual transformation and development.

### **Work Cited**

McKay, John P. A History of World Societies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.  
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