

**Culture difference and social change:
Japanese and Israeli Youth in a comparative perspective**

Abstract:

The course will deal with the cultural characteristics and social changes in Japanese and Israeli societies through focusing on the younger generation. It will offer a perspective on several contemporary issues such as life-work balance, family and home, urban lifestyle, and entrepreneurship. It will also highlight several society-bound issues, such as the military service in Israel and job-hunting in Japan.

In the course of the semester, the students on both Japanese and Israeli sides will actively participate in a discussion, share their personal insights and experiences, and conduct personal/ group assignments related to the studied topics. For example, for a class dealing with urban life the students may be given an assignment to record their route to the campus and comment on their everyday routines.

Course format:

Weekly online meetings within the period of March 2022 - middle of June 2022;
duration - 90 min

Monday 10:30 – 12:00 (Israel) / 16:30 > 17:30 – 19:00 (Japan)

From March 7 to March 21, the classes will begin 8:30 am Israeli time and 16:30 Japan time; from March 28 onwards, the Japanese students will begin at 17:30 (due to shift to summer time in Israel)

During academic vacations (Passover vacation/ Golden Week) the students will be given assignments for individual/ group work

The meetings will be organized along the following lines:

30-40 min frontal lecture; 5-10 min break; division of the students into groups (~ 6 groups/ 10 students from KyushuU and HUJI) and performing a group assignment; concluding discussion

Each meeting will be dedicated to a particular subject and focus on either Japan or Israel; the group assignment will aim at integrating the two cases

Teaching: Kinoshita Hiroko, Kyushu University, Grinshpun Helena, Hebrew University, complemented by experts on particular subjects

Student enrollment: limit the enrollment to 30 students on each side (and to Asian studies dept. students at HUJI); open on request for graduate students wishing to enroll.

Tentative course outline:

1. Introduction:

March 7, 14

Case of Japan

Lecture: *Orientation and ice breaking session*

Instructors: Dr. Hiroko Kinoshita

This session will provide an orientation to the course and outline how the lectures will be conducted. This will be followed by an short lecture on “Yokai (妖怪)” as they appears in Japanese anime for ice-breaking.

Case of Israel

Lecture:

Instructor: Dr. Helena Grinshpun

Group assignment: Mapping cultural differences and similarities in two societies

2-3. Education and labor in Japan and Israel

March 21, 28

Relevant topics: Education system, the link between education and labor, work-life balance

Case of Japan

Lecture: *The internationalization of higher education in Japan: The past, present, and future*

Instructor: Dr. Chisato Nonaka

This session will give an overview of how Japan has internationalized its higher education sector in recent decades. By comparing against their own university experiences, students in Japan and Israel will be encouraged to think critically about the various internationalization efforts made by the government under the banner of *kokusaika* (internationalization) in Japan.

Case of Israel:

Lecture: *The role of education and the work-life balance – Israel and Japan in comparative perspective*

Instructor: Dr. Helena Grinshpun

Group assignment: New work culture emerging during/ after COVID-19 (remote labor, freelancing)

4-5. Social integration and stratification in Japan and Israel

April 4, 11

Relevant topics: Invisible poverty in Japan, ethnic/ religious groups and divides in Israel; homelessness in comparative perspective

Case of Japan

Lecture title: *Minority issues and movements in Japan*

Instructor: Dr. Natalie Konomi

Case of Israel:

Lecture: *Labor migrants and social discrimination in Israel*

Instructor: Dr. Deby Babis

Group assignment: Mechanisms of social integration and cohesion: military service in Israel, *bukatsu* in Japan

6-8. Family, body and technology in Japan and Israel

April 25, May 9, 16

Relevant topics: Childbirth rates, advanced maternal age and reproductive technologies in Japan and Israel; cultural attitudes to motherhood, pregnancy and birth

Comparative perspective (Japan+Israel):

Lecture: *Family structure and related values and social norms*

Instructor: Dr. Helena Grinshpun

Case of Japan:

Lecture: *Women in contemporary Japanese society: Konkatsu (looking for the one), marriage, childbirth and childcare.*

Instructor: Dr. Hiroko Kinoshita

Case of Israel:

Lecture: *Pregnancy and birth in Japan and Israel – socio-cultural perspective*

Instructor: Prof. Tsipy Ivri / Dr. Helena Grinshpun on behalf of Prof. Ivri

Group assignment: Culture- bound attitudes towards family and parenthood

9-10. Urban life and culture; home and domesticity

Relevant topics: urban living experiences, the structure and meanings of a home, urban vs. rural life

May 23, 30

Case of Japan:

Lecture title: *Urban-to-rural migration and rural revitalization in Japan*

Instructor: Dr. Natalie Konomi

Case of Israel:

Lecture: *Urban living and the changing perceptions of a "home" in Japanese and Israeli mind: privacy and sociality*

Instructors: Dr. Helena Grinshpun and Mr. Eitan Serber

Group assignment: Young people's living conditions and arrangements; sustainable development

11-12. Concluding meetings

June 6, 13