

Greetings

Thank you Dean Mizutani-sensei, and “*mina-sama konnichiwa*”!

It is a great honor for me to be here, although I am under very tight schedule, but I had promised Professor Ada Cohen to come today to Kyoto and I have made it.

Of course I would like to participate in this kind of event, honoring the very famous A. B. Yehoshua, and since we–Japan and Israel–are celebrating sixty years anniversary of diplomatic relationships, this is a special event for me.

The Embassy of Israel considers itself as a friend of Doshisha University, and I have been here already four times; I have a very personal remark, that probably many people do not know, Professor Ada Cohen and I studied at the same year at the Hebrew University and I am glad to meet her here in Japan, it makes it a very small world.

I consider this conference’ event, among many other celebrations’ events in Japan and in Israel commemorating our relationships, as a very important one and I promise to stay until the end of the day with you. I wish you a successful day!

H. E. Mr. Nissim Ben-Shitrit (Ambassador, Embassy of Israel in Japan)

Distinguished guests,

It is an honor for me to open session A of this conference following the visual prelude of yesterday evening.

I would like to thank CISMOR and Doshisha School of Theology for supporting and executing this venture in reference to the Japan-Israel 60th anniversary. I like to specially thank Ada-sensei for being such a Jewish Mama-Feeding our soul and hopefully inspire the next generation of translators from Hebrew to Japanese. This is extremely needed.

As a representative who researches innovative ways of building cultural exchanges between two edges of the great Asian continent, I try to better understand contemporary Japan, yet at the same moment, trying to encrypt the “Israeli culture” and what kind of dialogue it can offer to Japan.

One of these offerings might be, the continuous celebration of thinking, talking and writing in “colorful” Hebrew. I use the word “colorful” not only to express its richness and non-stop flexibility,

but also to express its being a “boiling stew” that runs the unexplainable multi-cultured constantly changing Israel; A culture that has ancient deep roots, yet trying to reveal what kind of roots are to be watered and what kind might better stay untouched. Which roots should be completely uprooted? Where one can replant those, having known that they will not survive without doing so.

I wish us all a fruitful exchange of views.

I would also like to remind you that the Israeli ministry of foreign affairs is offering scholarships to Japanese students, who would like to study in Israel. Please help us encourage Japanese students to apply to Israeli universities. Studying in Israel is unique and surprisingly enriching due to constant talkative loud and open discourse derived from the Jewish heritage. This is a definitely major way of creating new generation of translators. Thank you.

Mr. Nir Turk (Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Israel in Japan)