

**Colloquium Series on Language, Society, and Culture**  
**Lectures and discussion with Prof. John Myhill, University of Haifa**

**No. 2. Language, religion, and national identity**

17:50-19:00 July 7th (Thursday), 2022

In-person Venue: Akita University Education and Human Studies 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hall

Zoom: Zoom ID will be sent to you upon your request

Contact [miyake@ed.akita-u.ac.jp](mailto:miyake@ed.akita-u.ac.jp) to report zoom or in-person attendance by 11:59 pm July 6<sup>th</sup> (Wed)

7月7日(木曜日)・午後5:50~7:00

コロキウム No.2 Prof. John Myhill 言語、宗教、国民アイデンティティ

ズームまたは対面

対面: 秋田大学教育文化学部 60周年記念ホール

[ズーム参加か対面参加かを、miyake@ed.akita-u.ac.jp](mailto:miyake@ed.akita-u.ac.jp) まで7月7日 12:00 昼 までご連絡ください。ズームの場合、Zoom ID および Passcode をお送りします。

使用言語は英語です。どなたでも歓迎します。積極的な議論を期待します。

**Abstract:**

Which is more important to national identity, language or religion? Why is it that in some cases, different religious groups who live in the same country and speak the same language can live together peacefully, while in other cases, they fight with each other until it is necessary to separate them into two different countries? For example, why is it that in Yugoslavia, Catholics and Orthodox Christians who spoke the same language fought against each other so that the country had to be divided, but in Ukraine, Romania, and Belarus, the same two religious groups have not had any conflicts, and a common language identity has successfully tied together different religious groups? This paper, which is based on comparative research about all of the nationalities of Europe and the Middle East, suggests an answer to this question. The answer lies in how different nationalities understand their own identity, which comes as a result of their history. Some national identities were defined before modern times on the basis of a language and a **national religion**, a religion which only members of a single nationality can belong to, while other nationalities are associated with a language and a **universal religion**, a religion which members of any nationality can belong to, and this difference is the key to understanding when different groups can coexist and when they can't: Different national religious groups can

coexist, and different universal religious groups can coexist, but national and universal religious groups can't coexist peacefully with each other. This conclusion is supported by historical developments in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Romania, Belarus, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, and Syria. This theory can be used to predict whether coexistence will be possible in various countries in the future, particularly in the Middle East.

### **About Prof. John Myhill**

John Myhill got his PhD in linguistics from the University of Pennsylvania in 1984. He taught at SUNNY-Buffalo and the University of Michigan until 1994. He has been teaching in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Haifa since 1995. His research specialties include sociolinguistics, semantics, and language planning, focusing on the relationship between language and identity and the development of indigenous languages of East Africa. He is the author of *Language, religion, and national identity in Europe and Middle East: A historical study* (Discourse Approaches to Politics Society and Culture) John Benjamin's Publishing Company (2006), *Language in Jewish Society: Towards a New Understanding*. Multilingual Matters (2004), and *Typological Discourse Analysis*. Blackwell Publishers (1992).

◇お問い合わせ先◇

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