

Introducing Real Life in Japan, in Arabic

Megumi posts videos on her own YouTube channel.

Photo: Yaso Megumi

Yaso Megumi came to Japan from Egypt in 2016 after getting married. She runs a YouTube channel introducing Japanese life and culture in Arabic, and also currently has another channel that communicates Middle Eastern culture in Japanese. She is very active as a bridge-builder between Japan and the Middle East.

Murakami Kayo

An Egyptian born in Kuwait, she fled the country with her family when the Gulf War¹ broke out when she was two years old. She and her family made their way to Egypt via Iran and Iraq. In Egypt, they settled in Hurghada² on the Red Sea coast where she grew up. Her father was a judo coach, and she has been familiar with Japanese culture from childhood. Then, while working in Cairo, she met the Japanese man she would marry, coming to Japan in 2016. Apart from her Egyptian name, the name she registered on her family register in Japan is Megumi.

After coming to Japan, Megumi was feeling down because she couldn't

find a job. A friend suggested that she make a YouTube video.

“At that time, in Egypt you could get information on Japanese anime and tourist attractions, but there was almost no content that introduced actual daily life in Japan or Japanese people’s values. As a result, many Egyptians still had limited, old-fashioned images of Japan. Because of this, I wanted to make people more aware of Japan’s appeal, and decided to post videos that introduce the appealing aspects of life in Japan in the Arabic language.”

The YouTube channel Planet NIHON, which she launched in 2017, has videos showing how to make Japanese food, including ramen and



Yaso Megumi

Photo: Yaso Megumi



Taking videos that show real life in Japan

Photo: Yaso Megumi



She also uploads videos introducing child-raising in Japan.

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kyaraben,³ as well as videos introducing useful items that are not available in Egypt. In particular, a video of the birth of her daughter and a video introducing Egyptian restaurants in Japan have had many views. “I also got great responses to videos introducing child-raising in Japan and the differences in Japanese and Egyptian values,” says Megumi. Eight years have passed since she started posting videos, and she senses that changes in the circumstances have occurred.

“Recently, it feels like the number of Egyptian tourists coming to Japan has been increasing. It makes me very happy that many of them have got interested in Japan after watching my videos. There are Japanese events in Egypt organized by the Japanese Embassy and other local organizations, but often the people who attend them are people who are already interested in Japan, and the number of participants is limited. I feel that YouTube has a lot of potential because

it enables me to convey the charm of Japan to a large number of people. A lot of Egyptians are interested in foreign languages, so in the future I want to make videos that teach Japanese.”

In 2021, Megumi started a Japanese-language channel that introduces Egyptian culture, and it also introduces the charm of Japan as seen through the eyes of an Egyptian.

“Introducing the charm of Japan in Arabic got me thinking that, on the contrary, very few Japanese know what Egypt is really like today. Egypt is a country with diverse ethnic groups, and even has areas that get snow. I want to share the charms of Egypt that Japanese people don’t know about.”

While raising her daughter, Megumi also works as an Arabic interpreter and as a model. Although some things can be difficult to get accustomed to, due to cultural differences, she says, “Japanese people are always so kind and helpful.”

Megumi adds, “As more people

travel between Japan and Egypt, mutual understanding will deepen and mutual exchange will become even more active. I want to help make that happen.” From now on, she will continue to use her unique perspective to create videos that connect the two countries.



Megumi also works as a model.

Photo: Yaso Megumi

1. A war that was touched off by the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. A multinational force went to fight Iraq in January 1991. The Iraqi military withdrew from Kuwait at the end of February, ending the war.
2. A city in eastern Egypt. Along with Sharm El Sheikh, it is a well-known beach resort area facing the Red Sea.
3. A character bento (*kyaraben* for short) is a box lunch that uses polished rice and side dishes to represent cartoon characters, animals, etc.