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Ishikawa Y. (Ed.). *International Migrants in Japan: Contributions in an Era of Population Decline*. Kyoto, Japan: Kyoto University Press, 2015.

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Beginning in 2007, Japan witnessed its first of successive population declines (Kamiya 256). The fundamental question for the future of the country has become how to reverse this unfavorable trend. With an ageing population and a negative birthrate, Japan has sought various government-directed measures to encourage select individuals to migrate to the country in order to help initiate a reversal in the birth rate as well as to bolster the decreasing work force. The undertaking has not been without difficulties. In a country that is more than 98% ethnically homogeneous, outsiders have often found difficulty achieving “social integration” and acceptance. In order to better understand the government directives and community projects dedicated to assisting migrants in Japan, editor Yoshitaka Ishikawa has compiled twelve articles by researchers who have gathered extensive field data over the course of the past 15 years. The research in *International Migrants in Japan* has been conducted by scholars who statistically examine the condition of the migrant in Japan. What is revealed in this collection is an intricate and professional evaluation of the success—and failures—of the Japanese government’s efforts to slow the inevitable in a country that has historically been very independent and, in turn, conspicuously unaccommodating to the idea of immigrants becoming permanent residents of the country.

Immediately transparent in the research is the surprisingly sparse statistical data concerning the integration of migrants into the Japanese society. This dearth of data is partly attributable to the relatively recent induction of government data collection on foreigners in Japan. For instance, the Vital Statistics of Japan data began documenting births by a mother’s nationality in 1987, yet only in four categories: Korean, Chinese, American and Other; a further hindrance, the data did not begin including the mother’s age until 2009 (Yamaguchi 27). It is therefore not surprising that of the twelve research articles published here, nearly every scholar has performed some form of field research in either a specific city, prefecture, and in some cases, multiple prefectures across Japan.

Funded by the Japan Society of the Promotion of Science, several of the articles included in this work were originally written in Japanese and then translated for an English reading audience. In this regard, the data presented is of value for non-Japanese researchers concerned with population fluctuation and who do not have access to the numerous studies on Japan’s population written in Japanese. Ishikawa’s effort for this project should not be taken lightly considering the importance of understanding the impact migrants are having on Japan. As a member of the Population Association of Japan, Ishikawa has been involved with multiple comparative studies examining Japan’s population, such as *Region and Population in Japan* (2011, in Japanese). In order to extrapolate the limited government data, Ishikawa has gathered together articles by competent and experienced field researchers to provide data analysis on the following three general topic areas: 1) Nationwide Empirical Studies; 2) Ethnicity- and Region-specific Empirical Studies; and, 3) Policy Studies. Ample graphs and charts provide easy reference points, aiding the visualization of the statistics presented.

The first section on empirical studies covers immigrants’ ability to attain jobs (Korekawa), fertility rates of foreign women in Japan (Yamauchi), fertility rates based on demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds (Hanaoka and Takeshita), and an analysis of naturalization statistics across Japan (Du). Noting Japan’s failure to secure a higher number of skilled workers, Korekawa’s data demonstrates that job attainment and promotion is strongly linked with education levels rather than duration of stay. Japanese companies highly regard education, thus immigrants who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds tend to face more difficulties in achieving a standard of living comparable with their Japanese counterparts. Examining the falling birthrate in Japan, Yamauchi’s study reveals some

surprising data on foreign women's impact on the birthrate: "the effect of foreign women on Japan's overall [total fertility rate] is very small, and we found that they are contributing to a decrease rather than an increase" (42). The author notes that a serious handicap for this study arises from the inaccuracies found between the Population Census of Japan and the Statistics on Foreigners Registered in Japan. Taking another slant on fertility rates, Hanaoka and Takeshita provide an in-depth look at three couple types, both gender nationalities in Japanese-foreign marriages and foreign-foreign marriages. Dwelling types as well as the husband's employment status were significant factors in birth rates. Also of interest, rural areas tended to promote higher birth rates. In the final article of this section, Du, while hampered by "scant statistical data" (78), provides an overview of changes in the nationalization process and reveals that only the major city centers (Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto) have seen a significant increase in naturalized citizens while rural areas have not benefitted from the changes made by the Japanese government.

Exploring ethnicity in regional areas, the second section examines the social integration of Filipino, Brazilian and Turkish immigrants. In the first study, Takahata explains that in the late 1980s the Japanese Government began promoting the idea of bringing in foreign brides for rural villages; a predominant nationality in this scheme were Filipina brides. After a few years, the program was squelched due to nationwide media and public furor and the issue shifted to how best help these newly transplanted brides adjust to Japanese life. To provide a glimpse into these particular migrants' experiences, Takahata incorporates personal interviews, statistics and overviews of companies that hire certain Filipina women as caregivers. The next three articles all examine immigrants in Hamamatsu City, each specifically looking at ethnic economy (Kataoka), quality of life (Nishihara), and education support (Miyazawa and Moriguchi). As an industrial city, Hamamatsu has attracted a large number of ethnic Brazilian and Chinese workers. In these chapters, the severity of the 2008 global recession becomes more apparent through the negative impact it had on the migrant workers in Japan. After 2008, social integration and work availability greatly altered. The extensive ethnic Brazilian community that existed before 2008 has since declined, thereby impacting all three areas examined in these studies. The final article looks specifically at the presence of Islam in Aichi, Japan, and how children of Muslim parents (many born to a Japanese mother and Turkish father) are being educated in accordance with Islamic education practices. Takeshita and Hanaoka are early frontrunners in the study of Islam in Japan, and their participant group is quite small. Examining both demand-based and supply-based Islamic communities, they provide background as to why a significant number of Turks moved to Aichi (to be employed in the construction industry) and how the communities are helping to support the educational needs.

The final section on policy studies examines labor policy issues (Chiba and Yamamoto), the labor market structure for Brazilians (Takenoshita), and how local municipalities aid marriage migrants (Kamiya). Chiba and Yamamoto provide a broad-ranging overview of labor migration in Japan, underscoring some of the flawed approaches the Japanese Government has attempted. They highlight the limiting immigration policies put in place, but also demonstrate how new measures have attempted to provide additional workers for the industries in need (farming, care workers, fisheries, convenient stores). There is an overview of the highly criticized "trainee" program meant to provide migrants skills to take back to their own country as well as the 300,000 International Students Plan, basically working "students" who enter the country on student visas. A key issue, Chiba and Yamamoto argue, is that immigrants are not socially integrating into Japan and are thereby not choosing or not allowed to remain in the country. The authors conclude with a paraphrase from Max Frisch: "the Japanese government and companies have called for labor from abroad to Japan, and it is human beings that have come to this country" (232). The Brazilian

immigrants, many of whom are second- and third-generation decedents of Japanese emigrants to Brazil (called *Nikkeijin*), were hit hardest from the economic downturn of 2008, and Takenoshita examines the welfare policies for Brazilians that have helped with their integration. Unemployment became a serious problem after the financial crisis and in order to aid the Brazillian community, the Japanese government provided funding for return tickets for some of the 100,000 Brazilians who chose to leave; for those who stayed, the government began daytime language courses and select vocational training. In the final article, Kamiya examines some of the different municipal programs put in place around Japan. Many prefectures have their own procedures and Kamiya specifically looks at seven different municipals, highlighting a selection of successful approaches.

A few drawbacks to *International Migrants in Japan* must be mentioned. To begin with, when read sequentially there are no explicit references to the research put forward in the other articles. It would seem highly beneficial for a collection studies dealing with similarly narrow research fields to demonstrate some cohesion by referring to their counterparts' research. As a result, contradictions appear between particular studies (perhaps to be expected, but not ignored) and there are numerous cases of repetitive information. Nevertheless, taken individually, each study contributes informative analyses concerning migrants in Japan. Another aspect that slightly detracts from the current-day relevance of these studies derives from the fact that some of the data sourced is rather old. There are certainly many factors that may have contributed to this drawback. While one or two articles appear to have been written in 2010-11 and then translated into English for this publication, several of the scholars note the lack of assessable and more current data from the Japanese government. All studies relied on the 2010 Population Census, but others, such as Hanaoka and Takeshita, had to look back to 2005 (before the drastic changes brought about by the 2008 recession) to find the needed microdata. Additionally, several of the interviews take place between 2001 and 2007, which is again before the 2008 recession. Even so, the limitations on the data sets along with the few years' gap between original composition dates and the 2015 publication do not exclude *International Migrants of Japan* from being a relevant addition to studies on migrants in Japan.

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