

Introduction : Japan in Global Circulation : Transnational Migration and Multicultural Politics

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Special Issue

Introduction Japan in Global Circulation: Transnational Migration and Multicultural Politics

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序論

グローバルな循環のなかの日本：国際移動と多文化の政治学

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The collection of papers in this volume was prepared for a panel session at the 109th American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting held in New Orleans (USA), 2010. The starting point for that conference was the notion of “circulation” as a theoretical device for explaining the movement of people, commodities and cultural meanings in a globalized world. The idea of circulation embodies a complex interaction that entails both continuity and dislocation in relation to the traditional notions of “culture” and “identity.” This paradoxical dynamic has resulted in a worldwide scenario where connections and disjunctions simultaneously reinforce and undermine cultural and national boundaries. Taking Japan as an ethnographic focus, the papers reunited here consider this question through a twofold approach, focusing on transnational migration and multicultural politics. In this sense, this special issue sheds light on the main drivers of these two related topics, raising important questions about the use of cultural resources in transnational families, identity representation among the children born from international marriages, transnational migration in multi-exploitative circles, and economic crisis and migrant workers return in a transnational system of flexible production. In so doing, the authors explore how transnational migration

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and multicultural politics interplay, with the ultimate goal of reaching a better understanding of the transnational interactions, migration processes and multicultural dynamics that inscribe contemporary Japan in a global circulation context.

本特集では、2010年アメリカ合衆国ニューオーリンズで開催された第109回アメリカ人類学会年次大会での分科会で発表された論文を掲載している。年次大会のキーコンセプトは、人やモノの移動とグローバル化された世界における文化の意味を理解するうえでの理論的ツールとしての「循環(circulation)」であった。循環という概念は、「文化」や「アイデンティティ」との関わりにおいて、連続性と断絶性の双方を伴い、複雑な作用を産み出す。このパラドキシカルな力学はそれゆえ世界各地で文化と国民国家の境界を崩すとともに強化もするという結果をもたらしてきた。本特集に収められた諸論文は、日本を民族誌的な焦点として、国際移動と多文化の政治学という二重の視点からこの問題に接近している。すなわち、相互に関連するこの二つの動因に光を当てながら、越境家族における文化資源の活用、国際結婚によって生まれた子どもたちのアイデンティティ表象、越境に伴う多重搾取、フキシブルな生産システムにおける経済危機と移民労働者の帰還などについて検討している。こうして、本特集はグローバルな循環という文脈の中で現代日本における国際移動とそれに伴う文化の力学を理解することを目的とし、国際移動と多文化の政治学との関係について考察するものである。

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1 A Context of Global Circulation

The concept for this edited volume emerged from a panel session for the 109th American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting held in New Orleans (USA), 2010. The guiding theme of the conference was the idea of “circulation” in a globalized world (Heller 2009). The papers reunited here consider this topic in relation to Japan from a twofold approach focusing on transnational migration and multicultural politics.

In recent years, the concept of “circulation” has emerged to explain the movement of cultural meanings, objects, and people in a globalized world. This concept embodies both the idea of movement and interaction in relation to people, com-

modities, and discourses in a dynamic system of global flows. Perhaps the most challenging feature of this idea of movement is that it implies both continuity and dislocation in relation to the traditional notions of “culture” and “identity.” This paradoxical dynamic has resulted in complexity and contradictions in a world in motion where connections and disjunctions simultaneously reinforce and undermine cultural and national boundaries.

Cultural analysis has attempted to explain this process from a number of theoretical perspectives, such as the tension between the worldwide tendencies of homogenization and heterogeneization (Appadurai 1996; 2001), integration and differentiation (Featherstone 1990; Featherstone, Lash and Robertson 1995), connection and disconnection (Ferguson 1999; 2006), glocalization (Robertson 1992; 1995), cultural hybridization (García Canclini 1995) and global *mélange* (Nederveen Pieterse 1995; 2004), creolization and global *ecumene* (Hannerz 1992; 1996), global cultural supermarket (Mathews 2000), and transnationalism (Iwabuchi 2002), to name but a few.

In line with these theoretical devices, circulation has gradually been taking shape as a new field of study focused on the cultural analysis of global interconnections. As Tsing (2000: 336) reminds us “many things are said to circulate, ranging from people to money; cultures to information; and television programs, to international protocols, to the process called globalization itself.” Circulation is thus applied when discussing the breaking down of ethnic, cultural, language and national boundaries in a global setting that goes from the diasporic movement of people to the information restrictions by authoritarian regimes, and the democratic activism through social media. Having said that, however, we must be aware that circulation will be a useful analytic construct if it shows not only the movement of people, things, ideas, or institutions but also if it enables us to understand how “this movement depends on defining tracks and grounds or scales and units of agency” (Tsing 2000: 337) that are implicated in the circulation process itself. In this sense, Lee and LiPuma (2002) have developed the idea of “cultures of circulation” in an heuristic attempt to rethink circulation “as more than simply the movement of people, ideas, and commodities from one culture to another,” defining it as a cultural process “with its own forms of abstraction, evaluation, and constraint, which are created by the interactions between specific types of circulating forms and the interpretative communities built around them.” (Lee and LiPuma 2002: 192).

In a recent work on media creation of social imaginaries, Valaskivi and Sumiala (2014) have risen to the challenge of developing circulation as a theoretical and methodological tool for analyzing current social dynamics, positing three particularly relevant perspectives to consider: non-linearity, action, and materiality. Firstly, they acknowledge circulation as a non-static, non-linear process which is best explored through tracing and tracking different social actions and encounters, some of which lead to new paths of circulation, while others may wither away. In this

sense, their analytical interest lies not so much in the origins or authenticity of the type of sociality that circulation creates, but rather in the social life that is made visible through the traces it leaves across different mediated and physical times and spaces. Secondly, circulation is related to practical action, as an open-ended movement—shaped by tensions, contradictions and ambiguities—that brings ideas, items and people together in the same process. And, finally, Valaskivi and Sumiala emphasize the material dimension of circulation as a movement of objects and actors deeply involved with ideas, beliefs, ideologies, fantasies and fears, in a theoretical approach that underscores the role of media institutions as material realms that channel and shape circulation. In their conceptualization, circulation always takes place in material conditions where physical objects, bodies, technologies, and networks play an active role. Thus, it is necessary to know how the material features of all these elements, together with the physical and virtual spaces that they travel through, affect the circulation process.

However, as Valaskivi and Sumiala themselves point out, the epistemological interest in circulation for social and cultural theory does not emerge from a vacuum. It was grasped by Malinowski in his study of the *kula* exchange network, along with the essential function of exchange for the maintenance of social relations noted by Mauss in his analysis on the gift, and, of course, the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss and the central role given to exchange as a form of communication, constitutive of social and kinship systems through the linguistic analogy. Thereby, anthropology has moved from following the symbolic and physical circulation of goods, women, and services in the creation of sociability and, thus, culture itself, to considering what circulates as “sites of translocal and transcultural negotiating, contestation, and performance” (Carse 2014: 391). In the course of this discussion, the original formulation of circulation as a *cultural practice* has made way to its formulation as a *cultural process*.

Consequently, the cultural interactions designated with the notion of “circulation”—though exponentially intensified in an era of expanding networks—are by no means new, at least, not for anthropologists. As Lévi-Strauss himself (1952: 41) pointed out in *Race and History* more than sixty years ago, cultures rather than be isolated have historically interacted, voluntarily or involuntarily, by a wide variety of means (migration, borrowing, trade, warfare, etc.), and “we should not, therefore, be tempted to a piecemeal study of the diversity of human cultures, for that diversity depends less on the isolation of the various groups than on the relations between them.” (Lévi-Strauss 1952: 10).

2 A Cultural-historical Approach

Over the past two centuries, this process of cultural interaction has been intertwined with a political and ideological dimension closely tied to the construction of

the modern nation-state. In the case of Japan, Morris-Suzuki (1998) has analyzed in depth the relationship between time and space in the modern definition of the boundaries of the Japanese nation, artificially constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century through the advance towards what were recognized as the spatial and temporal contours of its natural entity—the Ryūkyū archipelago to the south, and the Hokkaidō, southern Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands to the north. Coincidentally, John Lie (2001) has argued that the fundamental forces that shaped modern Japan—state-making, colonialism and capitalism—made it into a multiethnic entity. The key mechanism for this was the territorial expansion into Hokkaidō and Ryūkyū in the 1870s, Taiwan (1895), the Korean peninsula (1910), the southern Pacific Islands (Nan'yō) (1919), Manchuria (1931) and northern China (1937). Simultaneous to this imperial expansion, capitalist industrialization implied a massive influx of colonial labor—especially highlighted by wartime labor shortages—turning Japan into a profoundly multiethnic society. Contrary to the emphasis on cultural homogeneity of the postwar discourse of Japaneseness, Lie demonstrates the centrality of multi-ethnicity in modern Japan and its essential role in the historical construction of the Japanese state.

In a similar way, Eiji Oguma (1995; 2006) has widely documented the image of a monoethnic and peaceful Japan emerging in opposition to the pre-war multiethnic and militarist state. Rather than applying a clear colonial pattern, the expansion of the Japanese empire to the neighboring regions was an extension of the unification policies implemented in the making of the Japanese nation-state. Those policies focused on cultural assimilation, expanding the idea of “Japanese” to the annexed territories, and represented the empire as a multicultural mix of Asian nations. After the war, the collapse of the empire brought about the breakdown of the multiethnic ideology, in Lie’s (2001: 134) words, condemning not just imperialism but its inevitable correlate, ethnic heterogeneity, too. The mono-ethnicity of Japanese society then became an hegemonic ideology that made ethnic minorities invisible and neglected cultural differences.

In recent decades, scholarly criticism of the ideology of homogeneity has led to a depiction of contemporary Japan as a multiethnic and stratified society where class, culture, and ethnic differences play a significant role (Aoki 1990; Befu 1993; 2001; Funabiki 2003; 2006; Goodman 2005; Mouer and Sugimoto 1986; Yoshino 1992). The displacing of the homogeneity paradigm to a diversity framework has thus given rise to the questioning of the monolithic and essentialist definition of Japanese identity forged in the ideological narrative of the *Nihonjinron* (“discourse on Japaneseness”) literature (Guarné and Hansen 2012). In this endeavor, as Roger Goodman (2005: 69) pointed out, the deconstruction of *Nihonjinron* discourse has reflected a process which can probably be seen across all nation states—“the use of history to construct and legitimate a sense of a commonly shared culture.” This process has led to the problematization of the very category of “Japanese,” as a

political definition neither constant nor stable but contextually shifting, shaped by particular engagements within the societies of the region (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 10, 184), through a long history of cultural intermingling that evidences the fluid borders of identity in Japan (Amino 2000).

Since the mid-1980s, this type of critical approach has been taking place in a social context where the notion of “internationalization” (*kokusaika*) and the political dilemmas associated with it made the issue of cultural identity a contested topic of reflection, one that found a new paradigm for understanding cultural diversity in a globalizing world within the notion of “multiculturalism.”

3 Multicultural Politics

In the light of this context it may be useful to examine the concept of *tabunka kyōsei* or “multicultural coexistence” as Japan’s version of multiculturalism¹⁾. The origin of the term *tabunka kyōsei* is attributed to Kawasaki City, Kanagawa Prefecture, which in 1993 drew up the “Kawasaki City New Era: 2010 Plan” (*Kawasaki Shinjidai: 2010 Puran*) and set up the idea of city planning through multicultural coexistence (Kato 2008: 23). As Kawasaki is home to many Zainichi Korean residents, it was in this context that the term came about. The term spread following the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995 through the volunteer and aid activities assisting foreign residents (Takezawa 2009: 90). The Foreign Resident Earthquake Information Center (Gaikokujin Jishin Jōhō Sentā) which was established to provide foreign residents with the information on the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake later became the Center for Multicultural Information and Assistance (Tabunka Kyōsei Sentā) and branches were established in five cities across the country (Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Tokyo), and from 2004 each of these became independent associations²⁾.

Within these developments, in June 2005 the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) established a Research Group for the Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence, and in March 2006 published the *Report of the Research Group for the Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence: Implementing Regional Multicultural Coexistence*³⁾. The term “multicultural coexistence” hence became public terminology and diffused throughout the country. Importantly, the MIC research report defined multicultural coexistence as follows: “People of different nationalities and ethnicities, recognizing each other’s cultural differences, cultivating a relationship of equality, while living together as members of a local community.” This definition has circulated through public administration through the MIC, and been used as a reference for local governments throughout Japan in addressing the issue of multicultural coexistence.

For example, a pamphlet produced by Tokyo metropolitan government titled, *Human Rights of Foreign Residents: The Importance of Knowing Each Other*,

states: “In Tokyo there are many foreign residents of various nationalities. One should not hold bias or prejudice against foreign residents living close by simply because of differences in skin color, language and culture, or lifestyles ... Each of us should do our part to create an appropriate international society by accepting the cultural diversity of foreign residents, deepening exchanges in the community, and respecting each other’s human rights” (Tōkyō-to Sōmukyoku Jinken-bu Jinken Sesaku Suishin-ka Panfuretto, *Gaikokujin no Jinken*).

At first glance there is nothing objectionable in these statements. However, on closer inspection a number of problems can be seen. First, in the definition provided in the MIC research report that states, “cultivating a relationship of equality, while living together as members of a local community,” an emphasis is placed on the local community as site for practicing multicultural coexistence. Behind this statement is the fact that Constitutional basic human rights (*kihonteki jinken*) are provided only to Japanese nationals, excluding foreign residents in the wording, while according to Local Government Law, the local government is responsible for residents’ safety and the provision of health and welfare, thus making the municipality the base for the daily lives of residents, including those of foreign nationality. Therefore, local governments have a compelling reason to advocate multicultural coexistence (Komai 1997: 16–17). Areas with high concentration of foreign residents (e.g. Kawasaki City in Kanagawa, Toyota City in Aichi, and Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo), therefore, have led the way in their responses. Conversely, this conceals the issue of multicultural coexistence as a state affair. While the MIC may be praised for addressing the issue, there is no explicit attempt to frame it as living together as members of the nation-state. Disavowing responsibility for this problem, the state leaves these difficult problems in the hands of local communities.

Second, as can be seen in the Tokyo multicultural coexistence promotion pamphlet, “foreign residents” (without specifying nationality or ethnicity) are framed in opposition to Japanese. By framing Japanese as a majority, a potential for another form discrimination takes shape, as it is “the cultures of foreign residents” that are emphasized as the differences to keep at a respectful distance. There is no attempt to envision a case in which a foreign resident becomes a Japanese national.

Third, the culture implied in this cultural recognition is defined essentially. The usage of culture, as in “Japanese culture” or “Korean culture,” implies that there is an entity with different and essential qualities. The cultural acceptance entailed here is oftentimes limited to that of the three F’s frame (fashion, festivals and food)⁴. This is a superficial kind of multiculturalism that the Australian historian Tessa Morris-Suzuki (2002: 154) has called “cosmetic multiculturalism.”

Fourth, multiculturalism in the West is thought to stem from the problem of social integration: how to integrate immigrants, indigenous groups, and other ethnic minorities into the framework of the nation-state (Hirota 1996: 24)⁵. Similarly, Hiroshi Komai (2006: 128) defines “multiculturalism as an attempt to create a

national culture that respects the cultural differences of diverse ethnic groups consisting of immigrants and indigenous peoples,” and emphasizes the nation-state as an important site for the actualization of multiculturalism. However, as mentioned above, multicultural coexistence has largely taken shape in superficial cultural exchanges in local communities and has cleverly avoided addressing issues (e.g. of immigration, civil rights, and problems of national identity) regarding social integration in the nation-state (Kajita 2005: 285). Moreover, the Ainu, Okinawans, and discriminated minority peoples such as Burakumin are not included in these discussions (Takezawa 2009: 92). As mentioned before, since the Japanese government does not even have an immigration policy, the influx of foreign residents is only addressed from the perspective of immigration control. In this regard, it is not possible to equate multicultural coexistence with Western ideas of multiculturalism⁶.

On this point, Takamichi Kajita persuasively makes the following scathing assessment. “The ‘government failure’ in regard to the immigration policy has been addressed by local municipalities. However, viewing immigration policy as an extension of ‘internationalization,’ the local governments’ responses have been inadequate and fail to resolve the problems. Moreover, the arguments surrounding ‘coexistence’ are actually no different than assimilationism and even fuel exclusionary discourses. Furthermore, the discussion on coexistence trivializes the problem into the social-cultural sphere, making it impossible to provide a path toward a solution” (Kajita 2005: 285).

As Tessa Morris-Suzuki has discussed, the presence of immigrants alone has not made Japanese society multicultural. Rather, the economic and social development of the late twentieth century—of which transnational migration is but one part—have led to a “multiculturalism within” (*uchinaru kokusaika*) (Morris-Suzuki 2002: 246–247). Therefore, whether one wants it or not, multiculturalism is an issue linked to the nation-state’s adaptation to today’s globalized world. But, as Japan begins to develop state policy toward multiculturalism, there should be confrontation and disagreement in regards to redrawing the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion (Morris-Suzuki 2002: 163). Furthermore, as Lisa Yoneyama points out, we should not only “advocate coexistence and multicultural understanding from a liberal standpoint, and include the others who have been excluded,” but also “reformulate the relationship between knowledge and power, and undertake a comprehensive review of whom and from what perspective knowledge is created, distributed, and normalized” (Yoneyama 2006: 311–312). Only at that time will we be able to evaluate the true value of multicultural coexistence on the shape of multiculturalism in Japan⁷.

4 Transnational Migration

In view of all these considerations, it is not surprising that the notion of “mul-

multiculturalism” has become increasingly ideological, contributing to deactivate the political debate around the legal status, citizens’ rights and working conditions of some of those migrants who have got stuck in a kind of social limbo. As a result, less than a decade after the generalization of its social use, there is no lack of evidence that multiculturalism has become a pervasive ideology (Graburn and Ertl 2008: 5), one that conceals a particularly strong type of nationalism by celebrating a reified idea of culture through the commoditization of difference. Something that, ultimately, reinforces the essentialist dichotomy between “Japanese” and “non-Japanese” and, indirectly, the predominance of what Harumi Befu (2001) insightfully called the “habitus of homogeneity”⁸).

As a reaction to this, more dynamic approaches to the understanding of cultural and ethnic identities have emerged, going in depth into the anti-essentialist shift in the study of Japanese society that started in the closing two decades of the last century (Befu and Guichard-Auguis 2001; Eades, Gill and Befu 2000; Graburn, Ertl and Tierney 2008; Hendry 2000; Lie 2001; Morris-Suzuki 1998; Oguma 1995; Willis and Murphy-Shigematsu 2008). In this intellectual context, the theoretical notion of “transculturalism” has been formulated to overcome the biased application of the multiculturalism paradigm in its recognition of precise cultural entities that coexist side by side, as if they were the tesserae of a mosaic. Thus has arisen the need to understand identity formation as the result of complex and multifaceted cultural processes that are “historically fluid and always contested, as they are increasingly decentered, fractured, and multichanneled” (Willis and Murphy-Shigematsu 2008b: 309). Underlying this approach is the assumption that culture cannot just be conceived of as “something we have and are members of, but also as something we make and shape,” through flexible, imaginative, and dynamic ways that refer to multiple and situational relations rather than absolute and singular identifications (Willis and Murphy-Shigematsu 2008a: 9). Not coincidentally, Willis and Murphy-Shigematsu follow Bhabha and Benhabib when stating the need to acknowledge the “radical hybridity” and “polyvocality” that constitutes Japanese people and shapes Japanese society/societies. From this perspective, they tackle the study of today’s Japan from a multi-relational rather than a one-dimensional approach, pointing out the essential role played by transnational flows, cross-cultural synergies, and diasporic exchanges in its historical development.

As Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc (1995: 50) underscored in a pioneer work, transnational migration is an important means through which borders and boundaries—ethnic, cultural, national—are contested and transgressed in paradoxical ways that reflect both the intensification of global interconnections and the resurgence in the politics of difference. In this process, transnational migrants “forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc 1995: 48), (re)constructing their simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society and

in relation to more than one nation-state, through multiple and constant interconnections across national borders. Douglass and Roberts (2000) has widely analyzed this transnational dynamic in the case of Japan, underscoring the complexity of a social reality in which the establishment of long-term relationships—including marriage to and having children with Japanese nationals—spills over national boundaries and immigration categories, having an effect on future generations that must be explored by anthropological research. Similarly, Goodman et al. (2003) have examined immigration and emigration as an inter-related process in which movements to and out of Japan tend to mutually stimulate each other, becoming intricately connected in the context of growing circular and transnational migrations. From this perspective, by addressing migratory dynamics as a whole, they have investigated the experience of Japan's new migrant groups and overseas communities, considering their role in shaping the future of Japanese society and nationhood.

5 Japan in Global Circulation

In light of this, and taking Japan as an ethnographic focus, the papers in the present volume elucidate the main drivers of transnational migration and multicultural politics in a global setting of expanding interactions. With this aim, the contributing authors raise important questions about the use of cultural resources in transnational families, identity representation among the children born from international marriages, transnational migration in multi-exploitative circles, and economic crisis and migrant workers' return in a transnational system of flexible production.

The first paper, by Masako Kudo focuses on the case of cross-border marriages between Japanese women and Pakistani male migrants, by considering the challenges and dilemmas that those mixed couples face—especially in raising the next generation—and how they try to overcome them through the transnational mobilization of different cultural resources. Specifically, Kudo looks at the emergence of the transnational family in which the Japanese wives and their children move to Pakistan or a third country, while their Pakistani husbands remain in Japan to continue their businesses. For Kudo, this emerging pattern of the transnational family blurs the classical line between the “immigrant” and the “native,” as the family becomes intertwined in an increasingly complex web of relationships that cross geographic, cultural and political borders. This phenomenon exemplifies a form of transnational practice that places Japan in a global circulation context through extended religious and kinship networks used for education, business, or legal purposes. Of particular interest is her analysis of how cultural resources are not always employed to achieve aims common to both members of the couple, but can also be activated to fulfill their different and sometimes conflicting interests. Kudo illustrates this issue by describing the case of the Islamic knowledge circulating globally as a resource used by the wife to challenge their husband's religious authority,

established by asymmetrical gender relationships within private spheres. Thereby, Japanese-Pakistani mixed couples make use of their religio-cultural resources to respond to various evolving needs that arise during their lifecycle, with the aim of pursuing their goals and dreams in a transnational dynamic closely interwoven with their identity-building processes.

Also related to the issue of mobilizing intangible resources, Taichi Uchio discusses the micro-politics of identity among Japanese Filipino Children (JFC), the children of Japanese and Filipino parents, and their use of colonial heritage—especially language and an imagined legacy—as a cultural resource to symbolically overcome prejudice and discrimination in Japanese society. JFC seem to have learnt by experience the importance of developing specific mechanisms for addressing the stereotyped images underlying their derogatory depiction, as a way of neutralizing and subverting them. In light of this, Uchio ethnographically explores the self-representational mechanisms articulated by JFC in order to reverse and empower their individual and collective identity, by making use of their multiple inherited cultural backgrounds. In so doing, JFC build their identities against a transnational backdrop where their vindicated colonial heritages attain full meaning when they are registered in the racial and ethnic hierarchies prevalent in today's Japan, rather than in a historical colonial past. From this perspective, Uchio expounds that the complexity of the representational mechanisms implicated in the JFC's identity formation cannot be captured solely by considering the bilateral relation between Japan and the Philippines in the second half of the twentieth century. It is necessary to apply a more complicated approach that considers their multiple—real and imaginary—racial, cultural, and historical backgrounds, in a project that, ultimately, overcomes the limitations of a dualistic approach in understanding the JFC's identity experience.

Following this work, Haeng-Ja Chung focuses on the ethnographic analysis of a Korean night-club in Osaka where South Korean-born women work as hostesses, exposing the social and legal inconsistencies of the “entertainer visa” scheme under Japanese law. By comparing the work activity of hostesses and entertainers, Chung explores the contradiction between the demand for immigrant hostesses and the lack of an appropriate visa category, revealing the personal, social and economic costs of a multiple-exploitative circle that converts them into legally vulnerable persons, prey to exploitation and psychological suffering. The absence of labor recognition for hospitality services has forced the immigrant hostesses to work in highly stressful conditions where their economic obligations, job situation, and legal security are differently affected by their migration patterns and visa statuses. In this context, immigrant hostesses are exploited not only economically by transnational hiring agencies, but also legally and emotionally, moving between countries depending upon job opportunities and visa restrictions. They are buffeted by the contradictions of a visa system that is unable to acknowledge their vibrant role as hospitality

workers whose added-value services are in demand from the night entertainment industry regardless of a policy action that neglects the real interest of their social and economic activity.

Economy and social issues are also central to the following paper in which Koji Sasaki analyses the tremendous social and psychological impacts that the breakdown of the *dekassegui* migration system had on the large Brazilian community in Japan, after the economic crisis in late 2008. The global financial crisis led to a rupture in the circular migration of the Brazilian *dekassegui*, critically affecting its transnational growth in a country like Japan without an adequate political structure for receiving foreign workers, and where the efforts to construct a consistent immigration policy have been largely absent. By drawing on fieldwork accounts, statistics and community media reports collected in Japan and Brazil, Sasaki illustrates this economic context and provides an ethnographic vignette of its immediate social consequences among the Brazilian community in Japan. Ultimately, his analysis discloses the vulnerability of transnational labor in a global system of flexible production, revealing how the fragility involved in the development of the migrant presence may undermine the political vision of multiculturalism in Japan—often associated with a promise of permanent increase in migrant population—and, thus, its growth as a truly multicultural society.

Finally, Glenda S. Roberts, who insightfully discussed the papers in the panel session at the AAA Annual Meeting where they were presented, soberly summarizes these works and extends their arguments in her final commentary. Her reflections maintain the lively intensity and rhythm of her comment as discussant, in a piece that includes a postscript on Japan's immigration control policy and the need to continue research on this topic, looking carefully at how Japanese society evolves in a global circulating context.

In conclusion, this collection of papers ethnographically explores how transnational migration and multicultural politics interplay in a growing framework of interconnectedness, with the ultimate goal of reaching a better understanding of the transnational interactions, migration processes, and multicultural dynamics that inscribe contemporary Japan in a global circulation context.

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for *Resilient Communities in Multicultural Aging Societies*, SES 87, 2014). Blai Guarné wants to thank Prof. Yuji Seki (National Museum of Ethnology, Minpaku) for his support in the development of this work, and gratefully acknowledges the support of the Visiting Researcher Program of the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku), the Department of Translation and Interpreting at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and its research group Inter-Asia (MINECO I+D FFI2011-29090 “The Impact of East Asia in the Spanish Context: Cultural Production, Policy/Policies, and Society”; 2014 SGR 1402 GRC “InterAsia and the New International System: Society, Policy, and Culture”). Thanks are also due to the three anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments during the preparation of this special edition.

Notes

- 1) The rest of this section is from a previous work by Yamashita (2011: 8–11) translated into English by John Ertl and Maki Tanaka.
- 2) Multicultural Center Tokyo, site at <http://www.tabunka.jp/tokyo/>.
- 3) Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2006. *Tabunka Kyōsei no Suishin ni Kansuru Kenkyūkai Houkokusho: Chūki ni okeru Tabunka Kyōsei no Suishin ni Mukete* (Report on the Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence: Toward Promoting Multicultural Coexistence in Communities), site at <http://www.soumu.go.jp/>.
- 4) Discussing the transformation of multiculturalism in the age of neoliberalism, Yoshikazu Shiobara, who examined multiculturalism in Australia, points out that past research on multiculturalism overlooked the possible “unintended consequence” in which ethnic minorities are disempowered when neoliberal political forces appropriate cultural understanding based on academic anti-essentialism (Shiobara 2005: 38). It is probably the case, but more importantly, as Shiobara suggests in the last chapter of his book, we need to grasp essentialism/anti-essentialism as essentialism that reproduces hybridity, and to conceptualize multiculturalism as a principle of resistance (Shiobara 2005: 205–234). Nevertheless, “multicultural coexistence” in Japan seems not to have evolved yet to such a stage.
- 5) The West is by no means homogeneous, as situations in Canada, Australia, the USA, France, the UK, Germany, etc., are different. Similarly, multiculturalism is interpreted differently depending on the perspective taken. Lisa Yoneyama distinguishes either three types: 1. Liberal multiculturalism, 2. Corporate multiculturalism, and 3. Critical multiculturalism (Yoneyama 2003: 20), or two types (1 and 3) (Yoneyama 2006).
- 6) Similarity, difference, and possible intersection of multiculturalism and multicultural coexistence are examined by Yasuko Takezawa (2009: 90–93). The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Committee for Promoting Multicultural Coexistence seems to define multicultural coexistence in the lineage of liberal multiculturalism; nevertheless, at this moment, Japanese government has not finalized the official definition of multiculturalism from which we start to discuss. Koichi Iwabuchi (2010: 19) regards Japanese multicultural coexistence as “multicultural coexistence without multiculturalism.”
- 7) Harumi Befu (2006) portrays four future options for Japan in regard to multiculturalism: 1. Continue monoculturalism by excluding foreign residents. Send foreigners back to their countries and remove all foreign communities. This is, however, an unrealistic choice. 2. Maintain the status quo. Let foreigners stay, but proclaim monoculturalism. That is, foreign residents are allowed no more than as temporary sojourners or marginal existence in society. 3. Accept plurality as a principle. Give “citizenship” to pluralism and two contradictory principles of pluralism and monoculturalism will exist side by side in Japanese society. Conflicting principles will compete, and contribute to the formation of a dynamic society. 4. Renounce monoculturalism, and multiculturalism will constitute the mainstream value of Japanese society. Of the four scenarios, Befu predicts that Japanese society is likely to head for the third scenario.
- 8) These issues are also discussed in Guarné and Hansen (2012).

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