

Europe, for example, are not brought into comparison. In addition, this discussion would have been more effective early in the book, for example in or immediately after the introduction. That would have further sharpened the authors' theoretical reflections on all issues raised.

The ninth chapter gives us a chronology various initiatives taken by the government and EC since 1989 for increasing electoral participation, such as reducing the voting age to 18 years, educating voters with customised programmes, and efforts of outreach to the youth, women, and areas where electoral turnout has been lower. The EC has also proposed the government extend the provisions of postal ballot to the aged and people with disabilities. Another issue is preparing the electoral rolls, whose painstaking compilation since the early 1950s has contributed to democratic consolidation in India. They are regularly updated and a former EC has expressed desire to take the challenge of preparing a flawless electoral roll.

There remain areas in which the book needed further sophistication – for example, the references section in general, and in-text references in particular, are inconsistent at times: in some cases, the author, as standard practice, mentions the surname of the cited author; yet in some other places, she mentions both the surnames as well as the initials. Also, given the exhaustive and thickly informative nature of the book, a separate conclusion for each chapter would have enabled the author to streamline the discussion further. Still, the merits of the work are manifold. Social science scholars and advanced students interested on sociology, development studies, law, administrative sciences and above all, Indian politics will find the book useful. Particularly for Comparative Politics, this book provides a detailed case of country study. As its content is both information-rich and immensely broad, the book shall also appeal to people engaged in various professions, like the aspiring and established civil servants and journalists, as well as the general readers interested on India's recent political history – since it covers one of the most exciting transition periods of Indian democracy.

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Uzbek Migration and Japanese Society (ウズベク移民と日本社会)

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This book is a compilation of multiple research projects related to people who migrated to Japan to work or study from Uzbekistan, a Central Asian country that gained independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991. In Uzbekistan, a multi-ethnic country, there are not only Uzbeks who are Muslims and whose mother tongue is Uzbek (a Turkic language) but also Tajiks who speak Tajik (a Persian language). Furthermore, the population of the Tatars and Russians has rapidly increased since the era of Imperial Russia, and Koreans (Koryo people) are descendants of people who were forced to immigrate from the Maritime Provinces by Stalin. This book mainly focuses on students from the former two groups studying Japanese in the Kanto area of Japan. It also includes official statistics and opinion poll results and covers the influx of Japanese language school students coming to Japan from Uzbekistan since 2016. The study analyses their motivations for migrating to Japan, the

mechanisms behind migrating to Japan, and the actual conditions of their lives after arriving in Japan. First, let us provide an overview of this book.

Chapter 1, “From Uzbekistan to the World,” describes the changes in the number of immigrants from Uzbekistan, the analytical framework of the book, and the data and research methods used. Data from 2022 show that approximately 10% of the approximately 35 million people in Uzbekistan are working overseas. As of 2020, the percentage of people living abroad was 5.9% of Uzbekistan’s total population, which is higher than the 5.6% of the Philippines, which sent out immigrants as part of its national policy. The most prominent destinations for these people from Uzbekistan are Russia (approximately 1.1 million people in 2020), Kazakhstan (approximately 296,000 people), and Ukraine (approximately 223,000 people), which have had strong social and linguistic ties since the Soviet era. However, according to the book, the attitude seen in the former Soviet era of valuing Russia much higher than China or the United States “no longer exist[s]” (p. 9) in recent years, with younger age groups valuing the United States more highly. The number of young Uzbekistan youths moving to Japan to find work or study abroad (referred to as “education–labour immigration” in this book) is increasing; in particular, the number of privately financed students attending Japanese language schools has increased rapidly since 2016.

Chapter 2, “Choosing a Japanese Language School – Motivation and Routes for Entering Japan,” examines the reasons behind the rapid increase in students from Uzbekistan since the mid-2010s. According to a report, people who lived in Japan began to actively work as brokers, and the number of students from Uzbekistan attending Japanese language schools in Japan increased.

Chapter 3, “From Education to Labor: The Reality of Education–Labor Immigration,” focuses on how much privately financed students, who have rapidly increased since the above period, invested in coming to Japan and how much time they spent in work to recoup their costs. Based on this research, details such as whether students were working, their household financial situation, and the amount they remitted to their home countries are described. Most of them are students who want to work beyond the legal working hours allowed by a student visa. Private companies in Japan are also accepting these people as *de facto* labour immigrants due to labour shortages caused by Japan’s declining birthrate and ageing population. As a result, the number of cases in which they are found as illegal workers has increased. Therefore, starting in 2020, Uzbekistan has been included in 80 countries subject to stricter screening when applying for a student visa.

Chapter 4, “Crossing Gender Borders: The Experiences of Female Migrants,” focuses on female migrants. Among Uzbekistan’s majority Muslim population, there are strong expectations for men and women to play different roles; in a patriarchal society, it is ideal for women to marry young and raise children while obeying their spouses and families. Some of the women profiled in this chapter migrated to escape these norms, while others seamlessly blended their lives in Japan with the gender role norms of their home countries. The candid accounts of survey participants featured in this chapter reveal the gender characteristics of Uzbekistan’s Muslim population.

Chapter 5, “International Migration as a Cultural Practice: The Dynamics of ‘Uzbekness’” is an interesting chapter that develops themes from the previous chapter and is woven from the narratives of the research subjects. Through the research, the authors found that many immigrants give meaning to their experiences in Japan by adopting cultural identities such as “Uzbekness,” and challenges to and overcoming Muslim norms. This is nothing more than pointing out the universal phenomenon that the movement of people across borders and the same cultural zones is not just about economic interests but also leads to a re-examination of identity and culture. Concurrently, this chapter describes various elements of “Uzbekness” and provides several specific examples of how Muslims interpret their experiences in other cultures, giving us an idea of the values of Uzbekistan’s Muslim population.

Chapter 6, “Japan and South Korea as Destinations of Migration,” compares the flow of people from Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, between Japan and South Korea. Since introducing the work permit system in 2004, South Korea has dramatically improved the treatment of foreign workers, making it more attractive for job seekers. In 2019, the number of people entering South Korea from Uzbekistan exceeded the number of people entering Japan by approximately 6.8 times (p. 117).

However, neither Japan nor South Korea has enough slots to meet Uzbekistan's demand, and studying abroad has become a cover for employment, resulting in a large number of education–labour immigrants. This chapter concludes that many immigrants do not necessarily wish to settle or integrate into Japanese or Korean society and that there may be a need for different immigration measures than conventional ones. Chapter 7, “Uzbek Immigration and the Future of Japan,” considers how Japan should deal with the future increase in the number of immigrants from Uzbekistan.

Having introduced the content of this book, I would like to consider its implications. This book focuses on education–labour immigrants from Uzbekistan, which the reviewer considers to be the second phase of the flow of people from that country. The first period spans from Uzbekistan's independence in 1991 until the mid-2010s. At that time, it was extremely difficult for Uzbekistan people to obtain visas to Japan, besides a small number of elite students, bureaucrats, and spouses of Japanese people. However, in the 2010s, Uzbekistan's people, who increased their economic power by migrating to Russia and other countries to work (Kikuta, 2018), came to Japan after paying their own travel expenses and fees for admission into Japanese language schools, and worked part-time to cover living expenses and remittances to their home countries. This is an original book that reveals this reality in detail. Chapters 4 and 5, in particular, highlight the characteristics of Muslim society in Uzbekistan from the voices of immigrants and will provide intellectual stimulation for regional studies in Uzbekistan.

On the contrary, the reality has changed since 2020, when the granting of student visas became stricter. I believe that we are now entering the third phase of labour immigration, when the number of labour immigrants coming to Japan as technical intern trainees increases. Therefore, in the comparison between Japan and South Korea in Chapter 6, it is said that the income and expenditure are almost the same. However, as far as the reviewer has looked at technical interns in Hokkaido since the 2020s, South Korea is far more popular because its acceptance system is state-led, stable, less prone to fraud, and offers good treatment and salaries. In fact, because of Japan's low salaries and weak currency, foreign technical interns who come to rural areas are attracted to jobs with higher hourly wages in the Tokyo metropolitan or Kansai areas, which they can find through social media posts by fellow countrymen. There is no end to the cases of people going missing from the companies that accept them, and according to the Ministry of Justice, this number exceeded 9,000 in 2022 alone. Will the Japanese government be able to address immigration policies head-on? How will Japanese society accept people from different cultures and religions (especially Muslims, who make up 80–90% of Uzbekistan's population)? What do they want Japan to do? This book provides valuable suggestions for researchers studying Uzbekistan and Central Asia and will also be useful for Japan, which is suffering from a labour shortage, in considering how to accept labour immigrants.

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