This book starts with an episode from the film by Tizuka Yamasaki, the first Japanese Brazilian woman to direct a motion picture. Her debut film was titled *Gaijin* (Foreigners), which revealed the ongoing gender inequality within the Japanese community in Brazil. Yamasaki was first ignored, then criticized and even attacked for shaming the Japanese in Brazil. However, Mieko Nishida, the author of the book under review, sympathizes with Yamasaki because the very idea of her book strongly resonates with that of *Gaijin*. Although one of the primary focuses of this volume is Japanese Brazilian identity vis-à-vis Japan, what interested me the most is the author’s strategy to research and write the history of the Japanese Brazilians in terms of multilayered experiences in accordance with not only gender but generation, age cohort, race, and class. The book implicitly aims to rewrite their history from the point of view of intersectionality, although the author never uses that notion. It seems very natural for her to focus on race because of her specialization in Brazilian racial history.

In her work, Nishida traces the experiences of six categories of Japanese Brazilians: (1) prewar child immigrant *issei* (first generation) and *nisei* (second generation) born before World War II; (2) second generation of the urban middle class; (3) postwar first-generation immigrants; (4) *nisei* and *sansei* (third generation) of the postwar generation; (5) young upper-middle-class *sansei* and *yonsei* (fourth generation) and; (6) *dekasugai* (migrant workers) in Japan. The biggest contribution of this volume is that the author convincingly clarifies the differential influence of intersectionality for each category, avoiding a simplistic description pointing toward assimilation or ad hoc explanations of plural identities.

For example, consider the author’s intersectional analysis on choice of marriage partners. It has often been said that the first generation hoped for their children ethnic and class endogamy, but the author further finds gendered expectations that more tightly encapsulate women in the immigrant community. As the norm weakened, the tendency was partly reversed; more women began to prefer intermarriage than men, and women with upward mobility were inclined to “whiten” (climb ladders of class and racial hierarchy) themselves by marrying non-Japanese Brazilians with the same socioeconomic status. Many women tended to remain single if they failed to find suitable marriage partners, which was also welcomed by their parents, who expected care from their daughters. In contrast, men married women regardless of their racial and socioeconomic background, suggesting that men are less likely to be influenced by racial and gender-based opportunities for upward mobility.

The author uses the term “whitening” to describe the process of attaining
a social class similar to that of the whites (by accessing professional jobs) and reaching comparable racial status (through intermarriage). But she also suggests that the process of whitening is not unidirectional. While some upper middle-class Japanese Brazilian youth of third or fourth generation identify themselves solely as Brazilians, others limit friendships to fellow Japanese of the same class to avoid racism from other Brazilians, valorizing their Japanese-ness collectively. Although whitening is the norm in Brazil, racial inferiority complex still exists and has resulted in bifurcated responses to the problem.

This is just a partial and cursory summary of Nishida’s findings. In fact, various narratives collected by the author brilliantly illustrate the complexity and dynamics of acculturation and identity of Japanese Brazilians. However, at least three points need to be emphasized in greater depth.

First, one can find strengths and weaknesses in the author’s methodology. On the one hand, Nishida’s analysis of the social history of Japanese Brazilian women sheds light on their oft-ignored experiences that find very limited mention in written documents. It also vividly describes the transformation of Japanese Brazilians across generations. On the other hand, the accounts of life stories in the book start from the narratives of first-generation immigrants who came to Brazil in their childhood and were alive to share their views with the author. This is why the initial circumstances, such as the context of emigration from Japan or the mode of incorporation into Brazil were assumed rather than reset by the author’s own perspective.

Second, the author depicts a more nuanced picture of the Japanese Brazilian community, which has been far from monolithic. The book, however, enhances rather than changes the common belief regarding the history of Japanese Brazilians. This generally accepted notion is as follows: when the prewar first-generation child immigrants grew up, they moved from rural to urban areas to look for better opportunities and succeeded as small business owners; their offspring also achieved upward mobility with white-collar jobs and experienced a process of acculturation through generations; then they suffered an economic downturn in Brazil that pushed them into Japan, but there too they encountered economic crises. The limitation comes from the research strategy in which the author weaved the history using typical narratives from each category.

Third, although Nishida attaches importance to the *dekasseg ui* phenomenon to understand the status quo of Japanese Brazilians, her analysis of this occurrence remains rather superficial. She points out that Japan’s mode to incorporate Brazilian *dekassegui* brought about a “wonderland” in which men and the young were more valued as factory workers, and education lost importance. However, it is far from adequate to describe the features of *dekassegui* in that way. The community of *dekassegui* in Japan embodies a compressed picture of a century-long history of acculturation that occurred
among Japanese communities in Brazil, thereby calling for more detailed analysis of the intersectional relations renewed in their ancestral land.

Having read this volume, I personally think it is a pity not to see books on the history of Koreans (or other migrant groups) in Japan from perspectives similar to Nishida’s. Such analysis could enrich our understanding of Japan as a migrant-receiving country. In this regard, she certainly breaks new ground for research on immigration history from the point of view of intersectionality. The shortcomings reviewed here are challenges for subsequent studies, which need to follow the author to delve deeper into the history of immigration in general and Japanese Brazilians in particular.

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This work purports to show how the South Korean government developed Korea’s middle class, how that class became bifurcated in the 1970s, and declined after the financial crisis of 1997. Since “middle class” is a particularly vague term, Yang focuses on the group of professionals and managers that moved to Seoul’s newly developed Gangnam district. Her book reveals how this group of Koreans fared as the “East Asian Miracle” unfolded.

The introduction notes the middle class’s role in social and political change, the “contested concept” of such a class, and the importance of cultural norms and individual strategies for defining the concept. Yang also examines efforts of the Park Chung-hee government, which took power through a coup in 1961, to establish a middle class where there was none after the Korean War. Park evidently expected the new class to provide stability and legitimacy for his regime.

Yang’s “imagined middle class” (chapter 1) actually emerged after it became a much discussed public topic in the early 1960s. Also, it became the cornerstone of a “spiritual revolution,” which made hard work and limited consumption patriotic. Housewives were exhorted to be frugal, and, as strict import restrictions kept out consumer durables, there was little else to do but save. This suited a government whose five-year plans emphasized the establishment of heavy industries. Such industries needed both savings for investment, and the managerial and technical expertise of middle class husbands, the “salary men” employed by favored firms that eventually became Korea’s giant conglomerates (or chaebol) like Hyundai and Samsung.

Chapter 2, “Gangnam Style,” explores how the Gangnam district,