

## Editor's Note

This volume features both selected articles on the special topic of aging society and individual articles contributed to the volume in general. The special topic of this volume is both timely and meaningful. Japan is not simply an aging society but a super-aging society. Japanese society therefore stands at the forefront of human civilization as it demonstrates both new possibilities for longevity in human life and that super-aging society engenders unprecedented social, economic, and cultural issues. The three articles selected for this volume's special topic all convey particularly unique narratives. LEE Ho-sang's article highlights the issue of abandoned property. According to him, this new phenomena of vacant houses and owner-unknown land is not simply the result of changes to the social structure but the outcome of institutional malpractice. AHN Jina focuses on the issue of the increasing burden on the nuclear family in relation to super-aging, while OH Dok Lip sheds new light on the issue of lonely death, *kodokushi*. This article suggests that understating lonely death as an extension of community breakdown and disconnected human ties may have limited explanatory power.

The individual articles contributed to this volume are also powerfully innovative. CHOI Heesik picks up on the polarized nature of Korean domestic politics as a factor influencing the conflict between Korea and Japan. PARK Sohyun takes a renewed look at Murakami Takashi's art practice from the viewpoint of restructuring the art world in the age of economic recession. PARK Yi-jin re-reads Urasawa Naoki's *20th Century Boys* and points out that the vicious cycle of animosity within and across generations can yet be overcome. KIM Hyun Gyung addresses the question of public memory about the comfort women in Korean society by analyzing two films dealing with the subject. The final article, written by KIM Yeonok, tackles the issue of the Jiandao Expedition by the Japanese army. Digging out the hidden historical circumstances, including the killing of Koreans by the Japanese army, is the subject of the article.

All in all, the articles in this volume are refreshingly insightful as well as deeply penetrating. I hope these articles contribute substantially to a greater

understanding of some of the many diverse aspects of Japanese society. Scholars today often try to highlight hidden stories, unrevealed truths, and less attentive issues in their work, and the articles presented in this volume pursue exactly this kind of innovative quest.

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