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**Negotiating Belonging in One's Own Home:
Japanese Muslim Youth Born to Japanese Mothers and Pakistani Fathers**

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This paper explores the ways in which young Japanese Muslims who are born to Japanese mothers and Pakistani fathers negotiate their belonging in their homeland. This type of mixed marriages increased during the 1990s, following the influx of Pakistani labor migrants to Japan in the late 1980s. While the majority of the children of these bi-national unions were born in Japan, they were raised in Japan, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, and other countries. Preliminary findings from in-depth interviews I conducted in Japan and abroad suggest that while they do hold citizenship in Japan, they often feel alienated and “other-ized” not only abroad but in their own homeland as well. As they reach adulthood, the ways in which they respond to the experiences of exclusion and marginalization change. More importantly, some of them attempt to empower themselves and negotiate their positions within Japan by sharing their experiences and feelings with others who have grown up in similar circumstances. This paper highlights the case of a young Muslim male, Sohail, whose life reflects the ways in which nationality, religion, generation, and other factors intersect. By doing so, I present the complex ways border-crossing youth negotiate their belonging and create their own social worlds.

Biographical Note

Masako Kudo is a sociocultural anthropologist and professor at Kyoto Women's University. She has conducted longitudinal research among Japanese-Pakistani couples since 1998, focusing mainly on the processes of formation of transnationally split families and the ways in which Japanese women married to Pakistani men forge their Muslim identities. Her current project concerns the socio-economic status of the children of such marriages and the trajectories of their identity-formation in transnational spaces. She has also interviewed British Muslims of Pakistani backgrounds in the UK. Her recent publications in English include “Mothers on the Move: Transnational Child-Rearing by Japanese Women Married to Pakistani Migrants” (in David W. Haines et al. eds., *Wind over Water: Migration in an East Asian Context*, Berghahn Books, 2012); “Crafting Religious Selves in a Transnational Space: Japanese Women Who Converted to Islam upon Marrying Pakistani Migrants” (in Noriko Ijichi et

al. eds. *Rethinking Representations of Asian Women: Changes, Continuity, and Everyday Life*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and “The Evolution of Transnational Families: Bi-national Marriages between Japanese Women and Pakistani Men,” *Critical Asian Studies*, 49 (1) (2017).