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**Abstract**

Japanese education has been a focus of comparative studies for the past 20 years. Many scholars have attributed the economic success of this industrialized society to a highly literate and well-educated population. Recent studies, however, have tended to be more critical of, in particular, Japanese higher education (HE). Indeed, most universities in Japan are acutely aware of the need for change and a considerable effort at institutional reform is sweeping the nation. Unfortunately most of the constructive criticism of Japanese HE has not yet been published in English. One of the most vocal of the reformists, Professor Ikuo Amano, has published widely on various aspects of HE in Japan. The following paper is a translation of a chapter in his book Challenges to Japanese Universities. This translation is prefaced by both a synopsis of this book as well as a brief introduction to Amano and his work. (HRK / Abstract übernommen), Poole, Gregory S., E-Mail: [gregory.poole@anthropology.oxford.ac.uk](mailto:gregory.poole@anthropology.oxford.ac.uk)