

論文

Japan is becoming a more multiracial and multiethnic society

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I. Introduction

“It (Japan) is a homogeneous society” remarked Nakasone Yasuhiro, then Prime Minister of Japan, on September 24th, 1986, two days after he had aroused controversy with his comment about African-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in the United States (Chira, 1986). He said they were lowering the average of the United States. An abashed Prime Minister tried to rephrase his racist remark with a diplomatic argot, comparing the United States’ multiracial and multicultural society to Japanese homogeneous society; but now he committed another mistake by justifying its colonization and ignoring the existence of other different ethnic groups like the Ainu in Japan.

Even the majority of Japanese people themselves believed that Japan was a “homogeneous” society at this time, because we live in an insular country. But this is just a myth. Rather than criticize them for being blind, it would be more accurate to criticize the Japanese government’s attempt to distort History in order to suit its needs. (Eto, 2014). Ainu people who are indigenous to what is known as Hokkaido¹ today, currently speak Japanese because the government forced them to learn it at Japanese compulsory schools even though they had their own distinctive language and culture. The truth is that Japan began to expand its territories into the land of the Ainu in the 15th century, coerced Ainu people into forced labor, and exploited their rich natural resources (Chikapp, 1991).

A few decades after the racist and xenophobic comment by our Prime Minister, the number of foreign residents, both foreign born and native, became greater. The children of multiracial or multiethnic background are also growing in number. Subsequently, Ariana Miyamoto who has an African-American father and a Japanese mother won first place in the Miss Universe Japan 2015. Needless to say, she was the

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first biracial person to be crowned in this beauty pageant. She was born and mostly raised in Japan. She even holds the rank, level Five of Japanese calligraphy²; however, she received criticism for not being fully Japanese by many publics (Wang, 2015).

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Doudou Diène of Senegal came to Japan on July 2005 and had submitted the report called, “Mission to Japan” in January 2006. According to his report, there are three discriminated groups in Japan: “the national minorities - the Buraku people, the Ainu and the people of Okinawa; people and descendants of former Japanese colonies - Koreans and Chinese; and foreigners and migrants from other Asian countries and from the rest of the world (Diène, 2006, p. 18).” The people are intermingling and the population of foreign residents is growing constantly in Japan. Yet, despite the report from the United Nations Special Rapporteur and the case of Miss Universe Japan’s biracial crown holder of 2015, racial discrimination and xenophobia do commonly exist in the society. In this paper; therefore, I will first analyze the number of foreign residents in Japan chronologically in order to expose how Japan is turning into a more multiracial or multiethnic nation. I will also discuss groups that are not reflected in the statistics of foreign residents: biracial or mixed children and naturalized foreign citizens. And then, I will raise the problem of Japanese policy which promotes the “globalization” on the surface; conversely, excludes foreign residents within Japanese society.

II. The grasp of racially or ethnic diverse society of Japan

In the “Mission to Japan,” Diène (2006) presents three discriminated groups: the national minorities, people and descendants of former Japanese colonies, and foreigners and migrants. These three discriminated groups have contributed greatly to the Japanese economy; nevertheless, they have been discriminated in Japanese society as outsiders. Within the national minorities, there are three groups: the Ainu, people of Okinawa, and the Buraku. The Ainu, the indigenous people of Japan, lost their land and were forced to assimilate into Japanese society as I mentioned in my introduction. The second group, the people of Okinawa have lived in what is currently known as Okinawa which is comprised of hundreds of islands and is the Japan’s southernmost prefecture.³ Japan invaded Okinawa and declared its annexation in 1879. Just like the Ainu, people in Okinawa have their own language and culture, but they had to buckle under Japanese policy. Unlike involuntary Japanese residents of the Ainu and people in Okinawa, the Buraku have been Japanese residents. However, they are groups which constitute the bottom of the hierarchy during the Japanese feudal era. Their social order has historically been stigmatized by their impure or tainted occupations such as executioners and butchers. These “national minorities” are Japanese residents; yet despite this fact, they face severe discrimination. This is manifested in their lack of access to education and employment as if they were

non-Japanese. Also, the languages and cultures of the Ainu and the people of Okinawa were disregarded and they were forced to assimilate under Japanese rule.

In a way, “people and descendants of former Japanese colonies” (Diène, 2006, p. 18) such as Taiwanese and Koreans had similar experiences to people of Ainu and Okinawa due to Japanese military incursions. Japan started to occupy Taiwan in 1895 and the Korea peninsula in 1910 until the end of the Second World War in 1945. Their languages were excluded just like the Ainu and the people of Okinawa. The great numbers of Koreans were either moved by force or immigrated voluntarily during the Japanese occupations.⁴ When Japan was defeated in World War II, Korea became liberated from Japanese rule. On the Alien Registration Ordinance of 1947, those Koreans in Japan were treated as foreign residents and were registered all under “Chosen,” Joseon in English, the old kingdom’s name of undivided Korea. After the southernmost part of the Korean peninsula became independent in 1948 as the Republic of Korea or “Daikan Minkoku” in Japanese, those Koreans in Japan were allowed to re-register their nationality as “Kankoku,” a shortened name of “**Daikan Minkoku**.” The northern part of the Korean peninsula became independent after the Republic of Korea. However, the government did not recognize the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea as a country. People of former Japanese colonies of the Korea peninsula who did not change their status as the Republic of Korea’s citizenships stayed as “Chosen.” Those “people and descendants of former Japanese colonies” were commonly called “zainichi” in Japanese by the public. The word “zainichi” literally means a foreign citizen staying in Japan. To distinguish their nationalities of these “zainichi,” people from Korean peninsula who re-registered as the Republic of Korea are called “Zainichi Kankokujin,” who did not re-register are “Zainichi Chosenjin,” Chinese residents are “Zainichi Cyugokujin,” and Taiwanese residents are “Zainichi Taiwanjin” in Japanese.

Table-1: The chronological number of foreign residents in Japan

Year	Total Pop.	South Korea						
		Joseon	Chinese	Brazilian	Filipino	American	Peruvian	Vietnamese
1947	639,368	598,507	32,889	...	240	2,249
1950	598,696	544,903	40,481	169	367	4,962	178	25
1955	641,482	577,682	43,865	361	435	8,566	53	48
1960	650,566	581,257	45,535	240	390	11,594	40	57
1965	665,989	583,537	49,418	366	539	15,915	88	169
1970	708,458	614,202	51,481	891	932	19,045	134	557
1975	751,842	647,156	48,728	1,418	3,035	21,976	308	1,041
1976	753,924	651,348	47,174	1,319	3,083	21,222	308	1,039
1977	762,050	656,233	47,862	1,279	3,600	21,390	308	1,425
1978	766,894	659,025	48,528	1,279	4,281	21,396	306	1,516
1979	774,505	662,561	50,353	1,393	4,757	21,651	331	2,126
1980	782,910	664,536	52,896	1,492	5,547	22,401	348	2,742
1981	792,946	667,325	55,616	1,652	6,729	23,266	376	2,842

1982	802,477	669,854	59,122	1,643	6,563	24,825	399	3,132
1983	817,129	674,581	63,164	1,796	7,516	26,434	432	3,472
1984	841,831	680,706	69,608	1,986	11,183	29,037	466	3,993
1985	850,612	683,313	74,924	1,955	12,261	29,044	480	4,126
1986	867,237	677,959	84,397	2,135	18,897	30,695	553	4,388
1987	884,025	673,787	95,477	2,250	25,017	30,836	615	4,381
1988	941,005	677,140	129,269	4,159	32,185	32,766	864	4,763
1989	984,455	681,838	137,499	14,528	38,925	34,900	4,121	6,316
1990	1,075,317	687,940	150,339	56,429	49,092	38,364	10,279	6,233
1991	1,218,891	693,050	171,071	119,333	61,837	42,498	26,281	6,410
1992	1,281,644	688,144	195,334	147,803	62,218	42,482	31,051	6,883
1993	1,320,748	682,276	210,138	154,650	73,057	42,639	33,169	7,609
1994	1,354,011	676,793	218,585	159,619	85,968	43,320	35,382	8,229
1995	1,362,371	666,376	222,991	176,440	74,297	43,198	36,269	9,099
1996	1,415,136	657,159	234,264	201,795	84,509	44,168	37,099	10,228
1997	1,482,707	645,373	252,164	233,254	93,265	43,690	40,394	11,897
1998	1,512,116	638,828	272,230	222,217	105,308	42,774	41,317	13,505
1999	1,556,113	636,548	294,201	224,299	115,685	42,802	42,773	14,898
2000	1,686,444	635,269	335,575	254,394	144,871	44,856	46,171	16,908
2001	1,778,462	632,405	381,225	265,962	156,667	46,244	50,052	19,140
2002	1,851,758	625,422	424,282	268,332	169,359	47,970	51,772	21,050
2003	1,915,030	613,791	462,396	274,700	185,237	47,836	53,649	23,853
2004	1,973,747	607,419	487,570	286,557	199,394	48,844	55,750	26,018
2005	2,011,555	598,687	519,561	302,080	187,261	49,390	57,728	28,932
2006	2,084,919	598,219	560,741	312,979	193,488	51,321	58,721	32,485
2007	2,152,973	593,489	606,889	316,967	202,592	51,851	59,696	36,860
2008	2,217,426	589,239	655,377	312,582	210,617	52,683	59,723	41,136
2009	2,186,121	578,495	680,518	267,456	211,716	52,149	57,464	41,000
2010	2,134,151	565,989	687,156	230,552	210,781	50,667	54,636	41,781
2011	2,078,508	545,401	674,879	210,032	209,376	49,815	52,843	44,690
2012	2,033,656	530,048	652,595	190,609	202,985	48,361	49,255	52,367
2013	2,066,445	519,740	649,078	181,317	209,183	49,981	48,598	72,256
2014	2,121,831	501,230	654,777	175,410	217,585	51,256	47,978	99,865
2015	2,232,189	491,711	665,847	173,437	229,595	52,271	47,721	146,956
2016	2,307,388	490,190	677,571	176,284	237,103	53,050	47,670	175,744
Year	Total Pop.	South Korea Joseon	Chinese	Brazilian	Filipino	American	Peruvian	Vietnamese

Note.

Data of cited year from 1947 to 1949 is adapted from *Japan Statistical Yearbook, 1950* (pp. 32-33) by Statistics Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office, 1950, Japan: Nihon Statistical Association; Data of cited year from 1950 to 1960 is adapted from *Japan Statistical Yearbook, 1961* (p. 43) by Statistics Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office, 1961, Japan: Nihon Statistical Association; Data of cited year from 1950 to 2011 is adapted from *人口の動向、日本と世界* (p. 165) by National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, 2016, Japan: Health, Labor and Welfare Statistics Association, and it is also adapted from *Historical statistics of Japan, New edition 1* (pp. 136-137) by Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan: Japan Statistical Association; Data of cited year from 2012 to 2016 is adapted from *Number of Registered Foreign Residents* by Ministry of Justice, retrieved from www.moj.go.jp.⁵

From the Table-1, you will discern the vast majority of foreign residents after World War II, is “people and descendants of former Japanese colonies” (Diène) or “zainichi,” especially those from Korea peninsula. In 1947, Korean residents took up approximately 94% of foreign residents and the number of its population was around six hundred thousand. Although the number of Korean residents fluctuates, due to government policy, their number increased to almost seven hundred thousand in 1991. Yet, since then, they are “decreasing” in number and their current population is estimated at about four hundred ninety thousand people. On the other hand, Chinese were estimated only thirty-three thousand after the War, but they doubled in number to eighty-four thousand in 1986. Furthermore, five years later, the population doubled to one hundred seventy-one thousand people in 1991. They even surpassed the majority Korean residents in 2007. There are reasons for the “decreasing” the number of Korean residents. Firstly, born and raised in Japan, descendants of the “Zainichi Kankokujin” or “Zainichi Chosenjin” tend to naturalize as Japanese. Statistics from Korean Residents Union in Japan (2016) indicates 355,274 people or approximately 0.9% of people from Korean Peninsula living in Japan from 1952 to 2014 adopted Japanese citizenship. Secondly, the first generation starts to aging, but there are not many births. According to Table 9 from the same source (Korean Residents Union in Japan [Mindan], 2016), there were only 1,222 births but 4,894 deaths. It resulted in a 3,672 natural decrease. In addition, Table 4 (Mindan) reveals that more than 80% of Korean residents since 1990 had married other than Korean descendants, especially with Japanese. And within those marriages, 58% of Korean women married Japanese men. Since Japan’s nationality is the law used to determine one’s citizenship by paternalism in nationality, I believe that their children are still acquiring Japanese citizenship. Finally, in addition to this tendency, the economic bubble in Japan that started in late 1980s required a large labor force. Subsequently, in 1990, the Japanese government authorized legal entries of a great number of Brazilian and Peruvians who had Japanese ancestry to fulfill this labor shortage. It favored immigrants with Japanese blood compared to Asian illegal labors (Hatano, 2006). Although the U.S. residents⁶, the third largest group after Koreans and Chinese, increased its number, the Brazilians exceeded their number in 1990, and then so did Peruvians in 2000. Since Brazil was experiencing high inflation, even the price bubble collapsed in early 1990s, Japanese Brazilian and Japanese Peruvians continued to immigrate to Japan as a cheap labor force to the detriment of the native Japanese. “Favoritism” could be seen toward the Filipinos who of the 80% of migrants were women and worked under the “entertainer” category. Suzuki (2010, p. 89) states that the Japanese government was accepting workers actively from the “professional and technical” area. The “entertainer” was considered as a part of this “professional and technical” works. As a result, they exceeded the American population in 1989 which was earlier than Brazilian and Peruvian. The total number of foreign residents has continued to grow dramatically even after the bubble burst.

In 2009, the number of foreign residents in Japan declined for the first time since 1970, probably due to the largest bankruptcy filing in U.S. history by Lehman Brother in September, 2008. This economic crisis affected the Japanese economy, and Japanese government passed the policy to reduce the enlarged number of unemployed foreign residents especially those who had Japanese ancestry. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), the government had paid a stipend of \$3,000 for airfare and \$2,000 for each dependent. The number of beneficiaries, who applied for this “support program to those unemployed of Japanese descent wishing to return home country” that started from April 1, 2009 and ended on March 31, 2010, were 21,675 people⁷. 92.5% of those beneficiaries were Brazilians, 4.2% was Peruvians, and 3.3% was the other ethnic (MHLW, 2013). The subsequent occurrence of the 2011 earthquake off the Pacific coast of Tōhoku after the economic crisis of 2008, also seemed likely to cause the diminishing number of foreign residents in Japan. The earthquake and tsunami caused the severe damage to the Nuclear Power Plant in Fukushima and resulted in releasing great amount of radioactivity. Since one’s health and environmental issues were of great concern, approximately 56,000 foreign citizens left within 2011, and the total of 100,000 people, almost all foreign residents of each ethnic group, reduced its numbers in 2012 except Vietnamese. Since 2012, the population of Vietnamese in Japan was dramatically increasing. As of 2012, there were only 52,367 Vietnamese were registered and they were at the fifth largest group after Brazilian of 190,609. But the population almost doubled to 99,865 in two years, and it got almost equaled to Brazilian residents in June 2016. The Vietnamese residents may pass the Brazilian at the end of December, 2016.

After four years of continuous reduction of foreign residents since 2009, the foreign residents began to rise in 2013. Finally, it had reached the highest-ever level in 2015, and the number is expected to rise. As of June 2016, the most recent statistics of the Number of Registered Foreign Residents, the total foreign residents in Japan are 2,307,388. When we compare the number of foreign residents with the Japanese population, the fraction is 1.8%. The fraction had been 0.7% for 37 years from 1948 until 1985, before the economic bubble starts. From 1985 to 2016, the fraction escalated fiercely from 0.7% to 1.8% in 31 years. Besides the enlargement of the fraction, foreign residents come from 188 different countries in 2016 (the Ministry of Justice, 2016). As stated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2016), currently 196 countries are recognized as countries in the world by the Japanese government⁸. That is to say, foreign residents in Japan are come from almost all countries in the world, and Japan is becoming a more multiracial or multiethnic society.

However, “these registered foreign residents are only showing a part of racially and/or ethnic diverse Japanese society, and not a full picture.” says Lilian Terumi Hatano (2006, p. 195). Because more immigrants entering Japan, a more marriage between Japanese and other than Japanese nationality or a marriage between

Japanese and Japanese citizen with other ethnic origin like the case of Koreans as showed the statistics from Korean Residents Union in Japan is considerably higher. Their biracial or mixed children are probably registered as Japanese. As a result, their number won't reflect on Alien Registration or Registered Foreign Residents. The investigation done by Statistics and Information Department of MHLW (2014, pp. 546-549) shows that Japanese who got married other than Japanese was only 4,156 people in 1965. That means only 0.4% of total marriage were bicultural. Since then, the number of bicultural marries have been increasing, especially after the economic babbble started and the large number of immigrants entered Japan. There were a total of 12,181 bicultural marriages or 1.7% of total marriages in Japan were bicultural marriages in 1985, just before the economic babbble started. The percentage notably went up during the economic babbble to 3.5% in 1990 and 4.5% in 2000. It finally broke through 5% in 2004. The year 2006 shows the highest ever, and it was 6.1% of total marriages.

Japanese men are more likely to have a foreign bride than Japanese women to have a foreign groom after 1975. In 2006, when bicultural marriages peaked in number, there were 35,993 Japanese men who married with a non-Japanese. It is four times larger if one compared to 8,708 Japanese women who married with a non-Japanese in the same year. The majority of foreign brides were from Asian countries: Philippines, China, Korea or Joseon (hereinafter referred to as Koreans), and Thailand. They make up of 89% of total foreign brides in 2006: Philippine women were with 33.8%; Chinese who used to be the first since 1997 were second with 33.7%; Koreans who used to be the first before 1997 were third with 16.8%; and Thai were forth with 4.7%. Interestingly, about 80% of Philippine residents in Japan are women having the "entertainer" visa, which permits individuals to work in Japan as actors, singers, dancers, and including professional athletes. In addition, roughly 60% of the female population is in the age of 20 to 39 years old, which could be potential marriage partners (Hatano, 2006). On the other hand, Japanese women tend to have a foreign groom not limited to Asian countries like their male counterparts but from varied countries. In 2006, Korean men became second with 26.8%; Americans were third with 16.9%; Chinese and British were forth with 12.5%; Other make up 31.9% and it made up the largest group of the bicultural marriages. I would assume that the high percentage of Koreans, Chinese, and Philippines as marriage partners is due in part to the large number and the long term of residency in Japan. In addition, if you take a close look at Table 9.21 Percent distribution of marriages by nationality of bride and groom: Japan, each prefecture and 21 major cities, 2014 (Statistics and Information Department of MHLW, 2014), the Chubu region or the central part of Japan's main land such as Gifu and Aichi where there are concentrations of manufacturing industries and great number of foreign labors, have high a bicultural marriage rate although large prefectures such as Tokyo, Kanagawa and Osaka come at the top five in total number of bicultural marriages.

But the marriages with other than Japanese are decreasing in number since

2006. The percentage of biracial marriage was only 4.3% in 2010, and the number kept decreasing. It is apparently only 3.27% in 2014. The percentage of number of births by these bicultural marriages is not as high as the marriage rate. While the ratio of total bicultural marriages is 3.53% in 1990, the ratio of total births by bicultural marriages is 1.12% in the same year. The year 2006 was the highest bicultural marriages rate of 6.08%. The highest number of births by bicultural marriage came a year later, and it was 2.19%. The delay happened probably because of the pregnancy period. And the same as the total marriage number, the number of births by bicultural marriages also decreased in number after the year 2007.

III. Forced assimilation policy under economic “globalization”

Currently we often hear the word “globalization.” According to the Japanese dictionary, Daijirin (Sanseido, 2006, p. 753), “globalization” means extending to all parts of the world; encompassing political, economic, cultural aspect cross the border and globally; the act of globalizing. The Japanese government and Japanese socioeconomic structure promote economic “globalization.” Now trade occurs on a global level and economic globalization leads the international labor migration. Especially the Japanese young people who no longer desire to work as blue-collar workers, claim these job as 3K: “Kitanai, Kiken, Kitsui” in Japanese, or 3Ds in English: “Dirty, Dangerous and Demeaning.” The labor shortage in Japan has provided a pool of migrant labors who undertake the 3D occupations that Japanese citizens avoid (Izawa, 2010). Since the wages in Japan are higher than in their native countries, they are willing to work at 3Ds especially when they are experiencing economic crisis in their countries. The great number of Japanese descendants from Brazil and Peru were permitted legally to undertake 3D occupations. Places like Toyota and Toyohashi in Aichi, Hamamatsu in Shizuoka, Oizumi in Gunma where there are manufacturing industries are well known to have Brazilian towns. These foreign laborers become “invisible” to Japanese public unless they live nearby (Kazita, Tanno, and Higuchi, 2005). They cluster in one place, because there are not many places that offer housings for foreign residents. The manufacture industries cannot run without them. The foreign laborers are members of our Japanese society. For all that, they are discriminated just like how Buraku people were treated. The Brazilian and Peruvian residents are “visible” as labors; though, they become “invisible” in our society.

Many children of Brazilian and Peruvian labors have a hard time assimilating into Japanese public schools. Despite the fact they are Japanese descendants, they have high dropout rate (Kazita, Tanno, and Higuchi, 2005). The second generation of Japanese Brazilian and Japanese Peruvian might able to speak some Japanese, but their children hardly speak Japanese. They do have a hard time mastering Japanese calligraphy which is far different from their alphabet scripts. Japanese compulsory education system practices social promotion by age regardless of whether they learned

the necessary materials or not. The Japanese government does not offer “Japanese as a second language.” Countries like the United States where there are many immigrants offer English for natives and English as a Second Language (ESL) for immigrants. If immigrant children enter third year of Japanese compulsory school, they are already missing 240 Kanji characters along with 46 Hiragana syllabaries, and 46 Katakana syllabaries of Japanese calligraphy. Children learn: 80 Kanji characters in the First grade; 160 more in the Second grade; 200 more in the Third grade; 200 more in the Fourth grade; 185 more in the Fifth grade; 181 more in the Sixth grade; which in total of 1,006 Kanji characters in the six years of primary school. Even Japanese children would have difficulty learning all Kanji, I imagine how hard it would be for immigrants especially if he or she already is missing the first few grades.

The Fundamental Law of Education which enacted by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) on December 22, 2006, obligate Japanese citizen (parents) to educate their children. The obligation is the same as the old Fundamental Law of Education which was enacted in 1947. In this new law; however, Japanese government officially opened the education to foreign residents (MEXT, 2016, Chapter One, Article Four). Japanese public schools do not reject immigrant’s children now, but it doesn’t guarantee their learning environment. The “assimilation” is an implicit understanding. The children of foreign residents have to “adopt” Japanese way. If they can’t “adopt,” dropout would be their choice. They have no obligation to stay in Japanese compulsory school system since they do not have Japanese citizenship. As a result, they are tracked to be “fail” and obligated to stay at the bottom of the hierarchy. According to statistics of the Japan Immigration Association, there were a total of twenty three immigrant children under 15 years of age were exposed to unauthorized labors in 2004, and Hatano believes that this number is only the tip of the iceberg (Hatano, 2006, p. 204). I will question the Japanese convenient policy of pushing foreign residents into 3D occupations that Japanese do not want. On the other hand, the Japanese government restricts their entrance or deports them when they are no longer necessary ignoring their human rights. They were treated as “labor force” rather than “laborer” just exactly how European Americans treated African slaves as commodities instead of people. The odd “separate but equal” law which was applied to African slaves, was applied to foreign residents in Japan as “assimilate but not equal” by Japanese government under economic globalization.

I found an interesting recorded lecture of Nobuyuki Sato at Research-Action Institute for the Koreans in Japan. “South Korea is more oriented toward homogeneousness than Japan.” Sato continues, “I cannot deny it (homogeneousness) is especially due to Japanese rule and because Koreans were divided after the war (2010, p. 401).” However in South Korea, people who live in South Korea including foreign residents have had their human rights protected since 2001 by the “National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI)” whose founding was encouraged by the Office of the United

Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Through this NHRI, even foreign residents in South Korea are guaranteed to have voting rights as members of society. The NHRI was originally established in 1993, and currently over 100 countries are participants. Disgracefully, Japan has not found the institution yet. Needless to say, Japan effected the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 1996, but still has no law outlawing racial discrimination on the basis of race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin. It led Doudou Diène of the United Nations Special Rapporteur to visit Japan in 2005.

IV. Conclusion

We still seem to believe the myth that we are living in a homogeneous society because we are living in an insular country as stated by then Prime Minister of Japan, Nakasone Yasuhiro in 1986. We should have been told that Japan invaded the land of the Ainu and people of Okinawa who had their own language and culture, but they were disregarded and forced to assimilate by the Japanese government. The great number of people from the Korean peninsula and China were forced or immigrated voluntarily during the Japanese occupations. Although the Japanese government invaded or colonized for self-economic interest, Japanese citizens were given to believe that we are homogeneous; because it chose to distort our history with carefully selected language (Eto, 2014).

Because our history books do not reveal true history and because the Japanese policy of keeping foreign residents as invisible, we tend to believe that our society is homogeneous. Under these conditions, national minorities, those “zainchi” and foreign residents are never able to be part of Japanese society but stay as outsiders and bottom of the hierarchy. On the other hand, they receive pressure to give up their language and culture. We won't feel their agony because we are the mainstream. I become aware of that when I studied abroad at the United States for my higher education. I was raised by a very conservative father who believed women do not need Bachelor degrees or higher education. He believed that we, women, just need to obey men or husbands. I focused on American Area Studies while I was studying at a collage in Japan. There I became acquainted an American woman with a Feminist perspective and she helped me to open my eyes. The new perspective of Feminism made me want to study further in the United States. What I believed to be normal in Japan was not normal in the United States. I started to see myself or Japan from the perspective of a third person, and started questioning why do I or Japanese believe or act certain ways which are different from Americans or other people or vice versa. And found out it was because I was born and raised in a male dominated capitalistic Japanese society. While I was in the center of it, I did not notice the pressure of a superior: my father/men, Japanese government/people who control our socio-economic structure, or Japanese culture/Japanese tradition. Stepping out from behind these pressures, I realized that I was wearing eyeglasses just

like Dorothy in the land of OZ. She put on green-tinted eyeglasses before she entered the Emerald City, so that everything in the Emerald City looked emerald and glorious. Dorothy was explained the eyeglasses as protection for their eyes from the "brightness and glory" of the Emerald city, but this was one of "humbug" created by the Wizard to make him superior even though he was no different from the others. We criticize European-Americans as racist. Though we, Japanese, do not differ from the European-Americans. We ignore the human rights of foreign residents who are no different from us.

Throughout history, we have had people from a variety of nations and continued to have as you can observe from Table-1. Japanese current socio-economic structure and the world trend of economic "globalization" create global migrants. These foreign immigrants in Japan are required to work at 3D occupations that Japanese young people no longer willing to do. The Japanese government adopted a policy to address these labor shortages; yet, it restricted their entrance or deported them when foreign immigrants are no longer needed, ignoring their human rights. They were treated as "commodities or labor force" rather than "laborers" just like African slaves in the United States history. They are not regarded as "laborers (human beings)" because self-interest to make economic profit is more important than human rights which is no different from colonialism. The relentless law of "separate but equal" which was applied to African slaves to separate them from European-Americans was constitutional. Although we criticize it as inhuman, a similar doctrine of "assimilate but not equal" by the Japanese government was applied to the foreign residents in Japan. Needless to say, Japan effected the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 1996, but still, the Japanese government has no law making racial discrimination illegal. Doudou Diène (2006) of the United Nations Special Rapporteur visited Japan in 2005 and reported that three groups: the national minorities, people and descendants of former Japanese colonies, and foreigners and migrants that consist of Japanese society, are still discriminated against in Japan. The fact we need to depend on foreign residents' work force, Japan needs to treat them as members of the society, not as "outsiders," and provide them their human rights such as their educational right to study in their language.

In public, foreign residents seem to be welcome. The mainstream takes advantage of their labor and enjoys the best of their cultures such as food and folk handicrafts as long as they remain a minority or not "visible" enough. But when they outnumber the mainstreamers, how are mainstreamers going to react: co-existence or exclusion? The strong attitude based on race, color, descent, and national or ethnic origin are deeply rooted in Japanese history which is reflected in its social and economic institutions. It is not easy to change nor is change likely to come unless there is unity between the public and the Government.

Notes

1. The Meiji Government renamed the land of Ainu as Hokkaido in 1869. The Ainu people call their land “Ainu Moshiri” in their native language. It means “the land of people” and it applies to Hokkaido, Kuril Islands and Sakhalin.
2. Although there are many different Japanese calligraphy styles and each has different way of ranking levels. Normally speaking, the rank starts from level one and the highest level is ten.
3. The name “Okinawa” is placed by Japanese government when it was annexed to Japan. After the World War II, Okinawa was occupied by the United States until 1972.
4. According to “아버지聞かせてあの日のことを: 我々の歴史を取り戻す運動報告書 (Father, tell us about that day: The report to reclaim our history),” the published report done by a youth group of the Korean Residents Union in Japan (在日本大韓民国青年会, 1988, p. 27), the statistics acquaint reasons for Korean immigration to Japan during Japanese occupation are 39.6% for economics, 17.3% for marriage or family, 13.3% for conscription or forced labor, 9.5% for study abroad, 20.2% for other reasons and 0.2% for unknown. However, we can’t obliterate the possibility that those who were taken to Japan for conscription or forced labor may possibly have died under harsh conditions. Therefore, they couldn’t appear in the number.
5. Data are as of the end of the each year except the year 2016. The “Aliens Registration (外国人登録)” system which was enacted in 1947 for 14 years old and over, used to be handled at a municipal, was replaced with the “Foreign Residents' Registration (在留外国人登録)” system on July 9, 2012, which now handles at the Immigration Bureau, the national level. Since the registration system had changed, they are not completely counterpart to each others. For example, “China” included people from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao in the old system, but now Taiwan has a different category under the new system. In my table, I adopt the old system’s form since it was enacted for a longer period of time: kept people from Taiwan under “China” and also combined people of Korean peninsula without separate them; so that we can easily compare the number with other ethnic groups.
6. The U.S. military personnel under a Status of forces agreement and diplomatic personnel have been excluded from this requirement.
7. Those participants must agree not to reenter Japan pursuing employment in the future. However, the registration for permission to reenter Japan to work was passed in September 2013 (Japan’s Ministry of Justice, 2013).
8. 193 countries are counted as member nations of the United Nations in the same year.

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