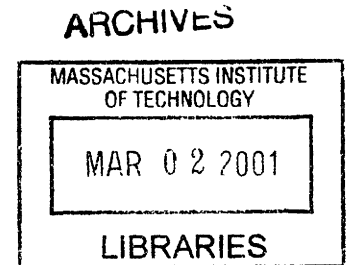


**ASSOCIATIVE ACTIVISM: ORGANIZING SUPPORT FOR FOREIGN
WORKERS IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN**

by

Apichai W. Shipper

A.B. Government, Asian Studies
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in Political Science

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Signature of Author

Department of Political Science
November 6, 2000

Certified by

Richard J. Samuels
Ford International Professor of Political Science
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by

Barry R. Posen
Professor of Political Science
Chairman, Graduate Program Committee

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ABSTRACT

Japan is a country known for its suspicion of foreigners, but Japanese citizens have established non-government organizations to support illegal foreign migrants. The problems and conditions of illegal foreign workers are rooted in Japanese government policies. The 1990 Immigration Control Law created a category of illegal foreign workers. Later, the Ministry of Health and Welfare excluded illegal foreigners from Japan's insurance system. Illegal foreign workers face challenges in dealing with employers, state officials, medical institutions, and family-life. These problems range from unpaid wages and enormous medical cost to marriage/divorce registration and the forced break up of the families due to deportation. To solve these problems, Japanese engage in associative activism and institutional experimentation, which has transformed local politics in Japan. Illegal Asian workers in Japan rarely seek assistance from existing government organizations or ethnic associations. Government organizations provide mainly information and interpretation services and government officials lack the know-how to help illegal foreign workers with serious labor and immigration problems. Ethnic associations in Japan do not support their illegal compatriots. Illegal foreigners turn instead to Japanese NGOs, which have extensive experience in helping the underprivileged in Japanese society. Japanese activists, who found these NGOs, came from other social movement organizations. Christians, community workers unions organizers, women activists, labor lawyers, health workers, and civil rights activists have created separate support groups to help solve problems for illegal foreigners. Japanese activists created these groups in order to: a) acquire and accumulate knowledge on how best to help illegal foreigners; b) strengthen their bargaining power with employers and state officials; and, c) gain financial support for their activities. By working on behalf of illegal foreigners, these Japanese activists build a new community of action. Local governments have invited these activists to share their expertise and are increasingly relying on these support groups to provide public services to illegal foreigners. In some localities, local government officials have joined these groups and experimented with new institutions of governance. As a result, local governments are now breaking with national policies regarding illegal foreign workers. Japan has done quite a bit over the last two decades to open its borders and accommodate immigration. Associative activism by Japanese citizens impresses upon other industrialized societies that Japan's efforts to accommodate immigration are surprisingly humanitarian for a historically xenophobic culture.

Thesis Supervisor: Richard J. Samuels

Title: Ford International Professor of Political Science

for
Aliko

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PREFACE

As capital, people, and ideas move more readily across national boundaries, globalization has become a buzzword during the past decade and poses as a challenge for many thinkers in the new century. It challenges us not only to understand how globalization positively or negatively affects societies but also to find imaginative rules and institutions to ensure that globalization also works for *people* – not just profits. I came across such innovative institutions in Japan, where Japanese people, acting against their cultural tradition, decided to establish support groups in order to help underprivileged foreign workers. Such institutions, I believe, can ensure that globalization works for people, particularly those 200 million people who live and work in a country different than the one they were born in.

I first encountered these institutions during the summer of 1996, when a summer grant from the Harvard-MIT MacArthur Transnational Security Fellowship allowed me to conduct preliminary research on immigrant communities in Japan. During that visit, I quickly noticed the existence of several foreigners support groups in many foreigner communities I visited. When I talked to prominent Japanese scholars on foreign workers in Japan, they advised that I pay a visit to so-and-so support groups. After I visited some of these groups, I was surprised to discover that Japanese people, and not co-ethnics, ran these organizations. Others have similarly expressed surprise by this fact. A Filipina woman who was assigned to the National Christian Council Hiroshima Peace and Human Rights Center, Liza Go, made the same observation in 1994 about support groups for Filipino workers in Japan. She noticed that “about 99% of the groups and organizations involved

with Filipino women (and other non-Japanese Asians in Japan) are Japanese.”¹ The surprise is not that native-established support groups do not exist in other countries, but the fact that they are disproportionately high in comparison to those groups established by co-ethnics. Since then, I have sought to explore why Japanese established support groups to help foreign workers and to understand what are their impact on foreign workers as well as Japanese society.

It took me over four years to piece together the puzzle. During this process, I have received substantial financial support from the United States, Japan, and the United Nations, enormous intellectual support from scholars in both Japan and the United States, and deep personal support from friends and extended family. In the summer of 1996, a pre-dissertation grant from the Harvard-MIT MacArthur Fellowship on Transnational Security funded exploratory research on immigrant communities in Japan. The Matsushita International Foundation and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies financed my fieldwork in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Ibaraki, and Gunma from February 1998 to February 1999. The Harvard-MIT MacArthur Fellowship on Transnational Economic Security and the MIT Industrial Performance Center provided financial support for my write-up. During my write-up, the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies, the Carroll Wilson Scholarship Fund, and the MIT Industrial Performance Center financed three follow-up trips to Japan during the 1999-2000 academic year. Two Kelly-Douglas Awards from the MIT Music Department partially funded one follow-up trip to Japan and my travel to present a paper on foreign workers and Japanese NGOs at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in San Diego. I gratefully appreciate

¹ Published interview with Liza Go in *Japan Christian Activity News* 711 (Winter, 1994): 4-7.

the financial support of these institutions.

I also benefited tremendously from the rich community of scholarship both in Japan and the United States. In Japan, I thank my supervisors Suehiro Akira at the University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science and Kajita Takamichi at the Hitotsubashi University Faculty of Sociology, who arranged my affiliation as a visiting research scholar at their institutions. These affiliations brought me into contact with Japanese researchers, who shared their writings, unpublished surveys, and fresh insights into foreign workers in Japan. For comments, suggestions, and inspiration on my research, I wish to thank: Hanami Tadashi of the Sophia University Department of Law; Higuchi Naoto of the Toshima University Faculty of Sociology; Kato Tsuyoshi of the University of Kyoto Center for Southeast Asian Studies; Tamada Yoshifumi of the University of Kyoto Center for Southeast Asian Studies; Tanno Kiyoto of the Hitotsubashi University Faculty of Sociology; and, Yoshimura Mako of the Hosei University Faculty of Sociology. For helping to set up some interviews, I thank: Kashiwabara Yutaka of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Inui Kaori of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and, Aburaki Kiyooki of the Keidanren. I thank my office-mate at the University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science, Peter Hill, who I shared many early mornings at the *yoseba* in San'ya and Kotobuki-cho and late evenings at entertainment establishments in Shin-Okubo and Kabuki-cho. I also wish to thank Kikuchi Hisako, who bravely accompanied me to Kabuki-cho and Shin-Okubo area of Tokyo. Her presence allowed me to interact with Thai entertainers in these entertainment districts while appearing less suspicious.

The person who helped guide my research while in Japan was Kajita Takamichi. Kajita selflessly shared information and surveys before they were published with me.

Always a gentle man and a highly productive scholar, Kajita graciously set up a two-hour one-on-one meeting with me every two weeks for a period of eight months to discuss the finding of my project. Kajita introduced me to social movements in Japan as well as trained me on sociological methods. He urged me to go beyond talking with different people, and observe the manner in which they spoke, the passion they held on the subject, the way they acted, the way they dressed, and so forth. When I encountered problems with my research, he often provided helpful suggestions – many of which have been incorporated in this study.

In addition to the institutional support of the University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science and the Hitotsubashi University Faculty of Sociology, I also benefited from the opportunity to take up residence at the United Nations University (UNU) Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS). The UNU/IAS provided financial support, in-house residence, and legal protection that transcended Japanese laws. The library at the United Nations University provided access to expensive Nikkei Shimbun CD ROMs and other valuable resources, which allowed me to research Japanese newspaper articles in the *Nikkei Shimbun*, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, and the *Sankei Shimbun*. The library at the University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science provided similar access to the Asahi Shimbun CD ROM. In addition, the Hitotsubashi University Faculty of Sociology generously supplied research materials and equipment for my project.

While my fieldwork in Japan was extraordinary exciting, my write-up and theorizing in Cambridge have not been a lonely process. Academic community in Cambridge provided valuable advice and criticism. I am in debt to many colleagues, who have been following my work from its inception to its final stages and have been given me

helpful comments. They are John Dower, Peter Evans, Doug Fuller, David Gartner, Jiyoung Kim, Brett Kubicek, Miriam Murase, Robert Pekkannen, Kim Reimann, and Drew Tagliabue. These people have attended my colloquia, read my chapters, and offered useful comments. I have also received helpful suggestions from intellectuals beyond the Cambridge area. Jonathan Marshall and Robert Weiner from University of California at Berkeley have followed my work and offered valuable comments. T.J. Pempel of the University of Washington, who first introduced me to Japanese politics at Cornell and suggested that I come to MIT for further training, read and commented on three chapters.

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to two friends and colleagues, Horiuchi Yusaku and Loren King, for their encouragement and special assistance. Yusaku helped me frame my question, build my hypotheses, and choose cases that were methodologically unbiased and efficient. Loren helped me organize the argument of this dissertation. Many abstract ideas come to me during the process of writing this dissertation. It was Loren who helped put them into a theoretical context. More than their intellectual assistance and inspiration, Yusaku, Loren, and their families provide selfless friendship to me and my family.

Without any doubt, the most important advice came from members of my thesis committee: Richard Samuels, Michael Piore, Benedict Anderson, and the late Myron Weiner. My Japanese colleagues often expressed envy at such a collection of extraordinary thinkers. I am truly fortunate to have studied under them. My project began with Myron Weiner, who supervised my preliminary research in Japan during the summer of 1996. Since then and until his death in June 1999, Weiner was a staunch supporter of my project and intellectual scholarship. Sadly, Weiner died before he saw the final product of this

project, the project that he helped to define and profoundly shape.

After the death of Myron Weiner, my long-time friend, tutor, advisor, and fellow-traveler, Benedict Anderson, graciously agreed to come out of semi-retirement to take up another graduate student under his wings. It was, in fact, “Ai Khruu Ben” who arranged my first long visit to Japan while I was an undergraduate at Cornell. He made various arrangements through his friends that I experienced working in a Japanese multinational corporation and studied Japanese language, history, politics, and culture from June 1989 to August 1990. After graduating from Cornell, he encouraged me to continue studying Japanese politics and helped me to obtain a two-year Monbusho scholarship in order to deepen my knowledge of Japan.

Michael Piore not only trained me in political economy but also taught me how to be a good social scientist. “As a good social scientist,” Piore says, “one should study all kinds of animals.” In essence, Piore encouraged me to talk to different types of people. Most importantly, Piore pushed me to explore beyond the academic paradigms and into the categories and concepts that the actors use themselves. As my readers will see, I adopted this approach in the dissertation.

Finally, my greatest debt is to Richard Samuels. No one has seen more unedited drafts of my work than Samuels. Before my first colloquium, Samuels tirelessly went through about a dozen drafts. Samuels always responded to my work with comments in an amazingly prompt manner. My drafts are returned with constructive comments within a day or two and, sometimes, within a few hours! From the beginning of this project to the very end, Samuels has encouraged me to examine *all* plausible explanations and see how each succeeds or fails by matching my empirical data with contending hypotheses. Many

of my colleagues from other graduate schools in the United States and Japan often asked me if I was a political scientist, a sociologist, or an anthropologist. They were amazed that I was encouraged to do this type of research in a political science department. Samuels reassured me that this is a sign of a good social scientist and has been a staunch supporter of my methodology and work.

In addition to these members of my formal committee, Suzanne Berger has left an important mark on this dissertation. Suzanne, who was my advisor during my first two years at MIT, deepened my understanding of comparative political economy and my appreciation for institutional analysis. I deeply appreciate her continued guidance and support throughout my years at MIT.

Academic communities are certainly essential for the development of this dissertation. My extended family has provided no less support for the research of this dissertation. Before I was awarded the UNU/IAS fellowship, my in-laws, Kuriyama Masako and Kuriyama Tomio, kindly provided my wife and I with warm hospitality in their Yokohama home for four months. They also lent me their car and mobile phone to conduct fieldwork. Similarly, my grandmother-in-law, Kajimura Yoshi, gave me unlimited access to her beautiful and quiet *bessou* (summer home) at Karuizawa, which I regularly used for my fieldwork in the Gunma prefecture. As the dissertation-writing intensified, which coincided with the birth of my daughter, my mother-in-law, Kuriyama Masako, came to Cambridge to help us for nine days. Two hours after she left, my sister-in-law Tomoko Kuriyama-Ederer flew in from Germany to offer the same service for another nine days. As a result, I was able to concentrate on my writing and finished a chapter while they were here. My parents also offered extra helping hands, particularly during the final push of the

dissertation.

After having written a dissertation on Japan and having produced a half-Japanese daughter, Japan has become part of my life. Both of these products would not have been possible without my wife, Akiko. Throughout my graduate school days, she was beside me both when the clouds darken my skies and when the sun shines warmly on my face. To be with me in Cambridge, she left Japan to become a “foreign worker” in the United States. As her career in the United States gained momentum, I interrupted it and dragged her back to Japan for one year. When my research funds ran dry, it was Akiko who carried the family through. When I must write, Akiko took time-off from work to look after our daughter. For all her sacrifices to allow me to indulge in what I love to do most in life, I dedicate this dissertation to Akiko, the co-author of my life experience.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Japan has one of the most tightly controlled borders in the industrialized world. Although the number of foreigners increased to more than 1.5 million by the end of 1998, the percentage of foreign population, 1.2 percent of the total population, is still small in comparison to other industrialized countries, where the percentage of foreigners is between 3 and 8 percent. The Japanese state is also known to have effectively imposed social control on its people so as to maintain order in human relationships and national prosperity. Yet, Japan's "law-abiding" citizens have established about 200 support groups (外国人労働者支援団体) or non-government organizations (NGOs) to assist the approximately 250,000 "illegal" foreign workers in Japan. These groups advocate for the rights and welfare of foreign workers from Korea, China, the Philippines, Thailand, Iran, India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Given the conventional understanding of Japanese civil society, these NGOs should not exist or be allowed to thrive in Japan. Instead, these Japanese NGOs, which include Christian groups, community workers unions, women's groups, medical NGOs, lawyers NGOs, and concerned citizens' groups, are making a significant impact on the mass media, the academic community, and local government in Japan. Members of these Japanese NGOs actively assist illegal foreigners despite the fact that some co-ethnics have established their own self-help groups and Japanese government agencies provide various service organizations for foreign residents. Unlike other industrialized countries where co-ethnics take the lead, *Japanese* people established most of these groups. Japanese people constitute the majority of the staff and the executive committees of these associations. In many instances, Japanese members also outnumber foreigners. This fact is surprising, because Japan is known to tout itself as a "homogeneous" society and to shun outsiders. This apparent puzzle raises a number of

questions. Why do formal institutions for foreigners in Japan consist of many Japanese-created NGOs actively supporting *illegal* foreign workers, when the Japanese state is known to exert tight social control? Given Japan's purported insecurity and skepticism toward foreigners, why have Japanese people established these associations to support illegal foreign migrants in their midst? How are these support groups helping illegal foreign workers? What impact are these groups having on the Japanese society? Finally, what does the existence of these groups mean to the ability of the Japanese state to control its society?

This dissertation attempts to answer these questions by exploring four plausible explanations for why Japanese people have established support groups to assist illegal foreign workers. The first explanation centers on government policies to promote the creation of such institutions. The second is a cultural explanation. It examines the norms and values of the Japanese people for forming support groups in order to maintain harmony in their society. The third explanation is ideological and class-based. It looks at the behavior of these groups of Japanese as vanguards, who try to establish horizontal solidarity with foreign workers in order to strengthen their struggle for socialistic ideals. The fourth explanation explores the dynamics of less hierarchical social movement organizations, which have looser control over their memberships. Under this explanation, Japanese activists, who are largely experienced organizers, saw that the recent influx of foreign workers into Japan would open up new "political opportunities" for the advancement of their movements if they were to support foreign workers.

While these four explanations provide plausible reasons for the establishment of foreigners support groups by Japanese people, the most compelling explanation looks at

actors as “problem solvers.” According to this problem-solution approach, Japanese activists solve problems for illegal foreign workers through associative activities that involved practical innovation and institutional experimentation. Illegal foreign workers who encountered serious problems in Japan sought assistance from Japanese activists with extensive experience in helping marginalized people in the Japanese society. Ethnic associations, preoccupied with ideological conflict within their own communities, their home country’s politics, and their own struggle to improve conditions for legal foreigners in Japan, turn away many newly arrived and “illegal” foreign workers. Support organizations of the central government provide mainly information and interpretation services to foreigners of Japanese descendant, Asian trainees, and foreign students. Local governments, on the other hand, have provided services to both legal and illegal foreign residents in their areas. However, these services are limited and local government officials lack the know-how to help their distressed foreign residents. Because the problems that illegal foreign workers face in Japan are structurally embedded within the Japanese political order, natives have greater leverage in resolving them. Operating against Japanese laws and despite relative inexperience with foreigners, these Japanese form support groups to share expertise, to raise necessary fund, and to legitimize their activities in order to help illegal foreign workers with their problems. Through their problem-solving activities and the effects that these activities have on mass media, intellectuals, and local governments, Japanese associative activists came to realize the potential for transformative politics in their activities. Hence, the recent influx of foreign workers, particularly illegal workers, into Japan led to institutional experimentalism by Japanese associative activists. Such institutional experimentalism, this dissertation argues, throws light upon the hidden

opportunities for “democratic” deliberation for marginalized people in Japan.

There are two theoretical advantages in employing the problem-solution approach. First, this approach offers both a bottom-up and a top-down view to the examination of civil society-state relationship. It requires an in-depth examination of how the people (agents) organize themselves as well as how government policies and actions structure the behavior of agents. Second, the problem-solution approach can improve our comparative understanding of institutions for foreigners in industrialized societies as well as explain institutional variations across nations.

This chapter contains six sections. The first section explores the central puzzle that animates this inquiry: why do Japanese people establish support groups to help illegal foreign workers. The second section reviews existing political economic and normative theories that can help guide our thinking about foreign workers and institutional possibilities to provide them support. The third section evaluates four plausible explanations to why we might expect Japanese natives to create such support groups for foreign workers. The fourth section introduces the contending hypothesis based on John Dewey’s idea of looking at actors as problem solvers. This section also provides an outline of the dissertation by constructing the theoretical argument advanced in this research. The fifth section discusses my methodology and the sixth section provides a brief conclusion.

I. THE PUZZLE

The formation of NGOs to support illegal foreign workers by the Japanese is puzzling for three reasons. First, we tend not to expect natives helping foreign workers because popular notion of foreign workers from both the conservative and progressive

camp directs us away from expecting to see *native* workers wanting to support their foreign counterparts as economic rivals. Second, existing empirical evidence from other advanced industrialized countries remind us that it is usually fellow foreigners or *co-ethnics*, not natives, that establish support groups for foreigners. Here Japan appears as an anomaly. Third, the question challenges our understanding of the Japanese people and their political culture. We understand the island people of Japan as being “homogeneous,” “isolated,” and therefore “suspicious of outsiders.” Furthermore, Japanese history reminds us of their ultra-nationalist potential. Yet, it is Japanese people who have created these institutions to support illegal foreign workers.

The dominant popular view on immigration in most advanced industrialized countries is that immigrants take jobs held by natives and thereby increase native unemployment. In its simplest form, advocates of this view argue that if the number of jobs is fixed and immigrants occupy some jobs, therefore there must be fewer available jobs for natives. At its most extreme, this argument suggests that immigrants displace native on a one-to-one basis: for every immigrant admitted, a native worker inevitably loses her/his job. This view is heard from people that come from all walks of life, from high-ranking, conservative government officials to progressive union leaders. Historically in the United States, conservatives view foreigners as a subversive force that undermines national unity, for they believe foreigners to be purveyors of anti-national ideas. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century many conservatives in the United States identified aliens as “radicals,” who must be suppressed.¹ In recent years, conservatives view

¹ See William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963)

immigrants as being in the forefront of socioeconomic agitation. Former Prime Minister of France, Jacques Chirac, blamed foreigners for some of his country's socioeconomic problems: "If there were fewer immigrants, there would be less unemployment, fewer tensions in certain towns and neighborhoods, a lower social cost." He then suggested that "we must not accept any new immigration and that we must severely curb illegal immigrants, [by] rigorously apply the laws of the Republic, [and] systematically expel those whose status is irregular."² Conservatives also blame immigrants for overloading many public institutions and social welfare programs.³ They note that the current level of immigration in some areas in the U.S., such as Los Angeles, have created very serious problems for some public schools and public health institutions.⁴

Until recently, many labor activists blamed foreign workers for worsening labor standards and working conditions of native workers, for depressing wages of native workers, for taking jobs away from natives, and for undermining working class solidarity. Labor unionists in the United States fear that the influx of immigrants will cause an increase in violations of the nation's labor laws. They have observed that unscrupulous employers have refused to provide workers' compensation or pay minimum wage or time-and-a-half overtime to immigrants, who may be required to work between 70 to 80 hours per week. Female illegal immigrants workers have complained of being sexually harassed by their bosses and must kept quiet, for fear that their bosses will report them to the

² Published interview with Jacques Chirac in the *Liberation*, 30 October 1984; quoted in Julian L. Simon, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 208.

³ See James Woodward, "Commentary: Liberalism and Migration," in B. Barry and R. Goodin, eds., *Free Movement: Ethical Issues in the Transnational Migration of People and of Money* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 59-84.

⁴ See Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, *Impact of Immigrants on County Services* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, 1992).

Immigration and Naturalization Service.⁵ Former AFL-CIO spokesperson, J.F. Otero, expresses similar concerns when he writes,

The AFL-CIO opposes any program that would permit importation of foreign labor to undercut U.S. wages and working conditions... abuses of our immigration laws and the lack of essential protections against displacement for American workers...⁶

In addition, organized labor, particularly in Europe, also fears that the presence of foreign workers will weaken both their political and economic bargaining power.⁷ During periods of economic recession when organized labor hope to exert their leverage against business, business often responds by scapegoating and repatriating foreign workers rather than making concessions to native workers. In addition, organized labor worries that foreign workers will create ethnic divisions which will weaken labor-backed political parties.⁸

Although the debate on the impact of immigrants on native workers remains unresolved, the popular view of foreign workers as economic rivals has become politicized and taken on a life of its own.⁹ Even environmental activists fear that "high levels of

⁵ Steven Greenhouse, "Foreign Workers at Highest Level in Seven Decades," *The New York Times*, 4 September 2000.

⁶ J.F. Otero, "A Labor View of U.S. Immigration Policy," *The Humanist* 41(6), pp. 39-46. It should also be noted that the AFL-CIO now supports amnesty for illegal foreigners. Giving them legal status, union officials now argue, would make it harder for employers to exploit them and hold down their wages. Labor unions now seek to unionize immigrant workers. See Steven Greenhouse, "Labor, in Switch, Urges Amnesty for All Illegal Immigrants," *The New York Times*, 17 February 2000.

⁷ Historically, foreign workers have also been used to undermine labor strikes and thereby working class solidarity.

⁸ See Mark J. Miller, *Foreign Workers in Western Europe. An Emerging Political Force* (New York: Praeger, 1981), pp. 2-5 (ff).

⁹ Existing statistical analysis and case studies show that at the national level, immigrants have negligible impact on the employment opportunities and the wages of natives as well as welfare institutions in host countries. Considerable economic impact from immigrants appears only at the local level. Examples include wages and employment opportunities of the janitor industry in Los Angeles, employment opportunities and the bargaining power of native farmers in the agriculture industry of the Southwest, employment opportunities of the high school dropouts, and welfare institutions of the city of Los Angeles. See John M. Abowd and Richard B. Freeman, eds., *Immigration, Trade, and the Labor Market* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), Joseph G. Altonji and David Card, "The Effect of Immigration on the Labor Market Outcomes of Less-skilled Natives," in John M. Abowd and Richard B. Freeman, eds., *op cit.*, pp. 201-234, George J. Borjas, "Economic Theory and International Migration," *International Migration Review* 23:3(1989): 457-485; idem., *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigration on the U S Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1990); idem., "Immigration and Self-Selection," in Abowd and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 29-76, idem., "The Economics of Immigration," *Journal of Economic Review* 32(1994): 1667-1717; George J. Borjas and Richard Freeman, eds., *Immigration and the Work Force: Economic Consequences for the United States and Source Areas* (Chicago: University

immigration will create unemployment rates that could seriously damage our [the U.S.] economy and standard of living.”¹⁰ Similarly, the Japanese Economic Planning Agency (EPA) conducted a survey in 1987 of Japanese adults and found that 41.2 percent feared that “employment opportunities will be taken away from Japanese citizens” as a result of the recent influx of foreign workers.¹¹ For these reasons, immigrants are often seen as a threat against native workers. As a threat, we do not expect to see natives assisting their foreign rivals.

Second, unlike immigrant support groups in most industrialized countries where co-ethnics take the lead in establishing such groups, *Japanese people* form these NGOs in Japan. Numerous studies have been conducted on “immigrant associations” or “ethnic associations,” in the U.S. and Western Europe.¹² A number of studies specifically report

of Chicago Press, 1992); George J. Borjas, Richard Freeman, and Lawrence F. Katz, “On the Labor Market Effects of Immigration and Trade,” in Borjas and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 213-244; Susan M. Collins, “Immigrants, Labor Market Pressures, and the Composition of the Aggregate Demand,” in Abowd and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 305-320; Gregory DeFreitas, “Hispanic Immigration and Labor Market Segmentation,” *Industrial Relations* 27(1988): 195-214; Richard Freeman and Lawrence F. Katz, “Industrial Wage and Employment Determination in an Open Economy,” in Abowd and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 235-260; Peter Kuhn and Ian Wooten, “Immigration, International Trade, and the Wages of Native Workers,” in Abowd and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 285-304; Rober J. LaLonde and Robert H. Topel, “Labor Market Adjustments to Increased Immigration,” in Abowd and Freeman, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 167-200; Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, *Impact of Immigrants on County Services*; Richard Mines and Jeffrey Avina, “Immigration and Labor Standards: The Case of California Janitors” in Jorge A. Bustamante et al., eds., *US-Mexico Relations: Labor Market Interdependence* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 429-448; Ellen Seghal, “Foreign Born in the US Labor Market: Results of a Special Survey,” *Monthly Labor Review* (July 1985): 18-24.

¹⁰ The Environment Fund, *The Data* (November 1983), p. 2.

¹¹ Economic Planning Agency, “Wagakuni ni okeru gaikokujin koyo to kokumin seikatsu ni kansuru enquete chosa kekka ni tsuite (gaiyo)” [On the Results of a Questionnaire Survey on the Employment of Foreign Workers and National Life in our Country] (Tokyo: EPA, Social Policy Bureau, March 1988). Quoted in Komai Hiroshi, *Migrant Workers in Japan* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1995), p. 219.

¹² For “ethnic associations” in New York, see Shirley Jenkins and Mignon Sauber, “Ethnic Associations in New York and Services to Immigrants” in Shirley Jenkins, ed., *Ethnic Associations and the Welfare State: Services to Immigrants in Five Countries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 21-106 (30-45ff). For Britain, see Juliet Cheetham, “Ethnic Associations in Britain” in Jenkins, ed., *op.cit.*, pp. 107-154 (120, 123, 142ff); Sasha Josephides, “Associations amongst the Greek Cypriot Population in Britain” in John Rex, Daniele Joly, Czarina Wilpert, eds., *Immigrant Associations in Europe* (Aldershot: Gower, 1987), pp. 42-61 (46ff); Daniele Joly, “Associations amongst the Pakistani Population in Britain,” in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 62-85. For France, see Marie-Antoinette Hily and Michel Poinard, “Portuguese Associations in France” in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 126-165 (151ff); Giovanna Campani, Maurizio Catani and Salvatore Palidda, “Italian Immigrant Associations in France,” in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 166-200 (166ff). For Germany, see Ali Gitmez and Czarina Wilpert, “A Micro-Society or an Ethnic Community? Social Organization and Ethnicity amongst Turkish Migrants in Berlin,” in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 86-125 (107, 110ff). For Sweden, see Magdalena Jaakkola, “Informal Networks and Formal Associations of Finnish Immigrants in

that co-ethnics established most of these associations and that group members usually consist of people from the same ethnic background. Verdonk et al., who study Spanish immigrant associations in the Netherlands and Switzerland, found that 80 percent of support groups were founded by immigrants while the remaining 20 percent were founded by Spanish institutions.¹³ Each ethnic or immigrant association usually focuses its energy on one ethnic group. This study also found that natives rarely participate in the associations' activities; those who do are colleagues from work, friends, or neighbors of members.¹⁴ These associations are mostly "self-help groups," whose main goal is to help preserve immigrant culture and identity. Moreover, Western European governments typically encourage immigrants to organize by granting sizable financial assistance to such organizations. In the United States, secondary sources overwhelmingly show that co-ethnics are the ones who organize illegal foreign workers.¹⁵ When California's legislators passed Proposition 187, which aimed to exclude public education at all levels and all health care except emergency room visits to undocumented immigrants, in November 1994, the Hispanic and Asian communities mobilized to boot those politicians who pushed for this

Sweden," in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 201-218. For the Netherlands (and Switzerland), see Hein de Graaf, Rinus Penninx, and Errol F. Stoove, "Minorities Policies, Social Services, and Ethnic Organizations in the Netherlands," in Jenkins, ed., *op.cit.*, pp. 203-238; A. Verdonk, et. al., "Spanish Immigrant Associations in the Netherlands and Switzerland and the Problem of Ethnic Identity," in Rex, Joly, Wilpert, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 219-238 (222-223ff). For an excellent comparative study of ethnic associations in Europe, see Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), particularly chapter 6.

¹³ Verdonk, et. al., "Spanish Immigrant Associations in the Netherlands and Switzerland," p. 225.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

¹⁵ On organizing undocumented Latinos in the U.S., see Hector L. Delgado, *New Immigrants and Old Unions: Organizing Undocumented Workers in Los Angeles* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Mario T. García, *Memories of Chicano History: The Life and Narrative of Bert Corona* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Marshall Ganz, "Strategic Capacity in the Unionization of California Agriculture, 1959-1966," *American Journal of Sociology* 105:4 (January 2000): 1003-1062. On organizing illegal Chinese in the U.S., see Peter Kwang, *Forbidden Workers: Illegal Chinese Immigrants and American Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1997), particularly chapters 8, 9. We should also remember that the labor movement in America originated with immigrant workers from Southern and Eastern Europe who found jobs in the factories and formed numerous labor unions soon after.

bill out of political office.¹⁶ My fieldwork with immigrant groups in the Boston metropolitan area also confirms that co-ethnics establish most support groups for illegal foreign workers. A Latino established the Immigrant Worker Resource Center to help Latinos; Chinese, the Chinese Progressive Association Workers Center to assist Chinese workers; Sino-Malaysian woman, the Asian Task Force to help battered Asian women; an Indian woman, the Indian Division of the Asian Task Force to support Indian Women.¹⁷

Immigrant “support groups” established by natives exist in most advanced industrialized societies in the form of religious, humanitarian, and civil rights organizations. The National Immigration Forum in the United States, the Race Equality Councils (REC) in Britain, the Federation of Associations of Solidarity with Immigrant Workers (FASTI), the Information and Support Group for Immigrant Workers (GISTI), and the Movement against Racism, Anti-Semitism and for Peace (MRAP) in France, the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and the Federal Joint Association of Independent Welfare Services in Germany, the Belgian League for the Defense of Human Rights and the Movement against Racism, Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia (MRAX) in Belgium, and the Dutch Center for Foreigners (NCB) in the Netherlands are examples of these groups.¹⁸ In Germany, for instance, Germans set up numerous foreign workers’ aid organizations.

¹⁶ Greenhouse, “Foreign Workers at Highest Level in Seven Decades.”

¹⁷ Interviews with: Ms. Emily Kemps of the Immigrant Worker Resource Center in Boston, 30 June 1997; Ms. Lydia Lowe of the Chinese Progressive Association Workers Center in Boston, 2 July 1997, Dr. Radha Jalan of the Asian Task Force in Woburn, 12 November 1999; Ms. Rita Raj of the Asian Task Force’s Indian Division in Belmont, 13 November 1999.

¹⁸ On FASTI, GISTI, and MRAP, see Miller, *Foreign Workers in Western Europe: An Emerging Political Force*, pp. 189-193. On the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and the Federal Joint Association of Independent Welfare Services, see Dave Edye, *Immigrant Labour and Government Policy: The Cases of the Federal Republic of Germany and France* (Aldershot: Gower 1987), pp. 105-106. On the NCB, see Graaf, Penninx, Stoove, “Minorities Policies, Social Services, and Ethnic Organizations in the Netherlands,” p. 232. For a comparison of native-established support groups for foreigners in Europe, see Eric-Jean Thomas, *Immigrant Workers in Europe: their Legal Status* (Paris: UNESCO Press, 1982).

German citizens established workers welfare associations to deal with the needs of Turks, Yugoslavs, Moroccans, and Tunisians. The Protestant Church, namely the Diakonisches Werk (Greek Orthodox), takes care of Greeks. Caritas (Catholic) looks after Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Croatian Catholics. These native-established support groups actively assist foreigners because the German government channels its social expenditures to immigrants mostly through these German organizations.¹⁹ Nevertheless, co-ethnic associations in Germany appear far more vibrant and numerous.²⁰ In France, J.P. Pilliard estimates that around 3,000 native-established solidarity associations existed in 1985.²¹ Legal restrictions on the formation of ethnic associations between 1939 and 1981 led to the creation of a large number of “solidarity associations” that were established by French nationals and opened to immigrants.²² Today, “ethnic associations” started by immigrants outnumber “solidarity associations” established by natives in France. In the Netherlands, most of the “welfare institutions” to support Mediterranean guest workers during the late 1950s were set up by Roman Catholic almoners and social workers.²³ In recent years, a network of about 18 immigrant workers’ aid associations, that were established by Dutch private citizens and financed by the Ministry of Culture and Social Welfare, exists in the

¹⁹ Elmar Honekopp and Hans Ullman, “The Status of Immigrant Workers in the Federal Republic of Germany,” in Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp 115-144 (138ff); David Jeffrey, “Citizenship, Exclusion, and Political Organizations: Political Responses to Immigrant Policy” (Ph.D. Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Political Science, 2000), p. 270

²⁰ Jeffrey, “Citizenship, Exclusion, and Political Organizations: Political Responses to Immigrant Policy,” p 271.

²¹ J.P. Pilliard, “Patterns and Forms of Immigrant Participation and Representation at the Local and National Levels in Western (Continental) Europe,” *International Migration* 24 (June 1986): 501-513 (511ff). These associations provide information, social help, and legal aid, and also advocate for the rights and legal status of immigrants

²² The legal restriction on the creation of foreign associations, which required that they obtain authorization from the Ministry of Interior, was issued in 1939 when xenophobia was rife in France. According to the regulation, foreign associations were defined as “groups displaying the characteristics of an association, whose headquarters are abroad or which, if their headquarters are in France, are, in fact, run by foreigners, or include foreigners among their office-holders, or have a membership of which at least one-quarter is composed of foreigners.” See Eric-Jean Thomas, “The Status of Immigrant Workers in France,” in Thomas, ed., *op.cit.*, pp. 41-82 (76ff).

²³ Jan Rath, “The Netherlands: A Dutch Treat for Anti-social Families and Immigrant Ethnic Minorities” in Gareth Dale

Netherlands.²⁴ In Sweden, foreign workers are organized “in special parties and unions *only* for foreigners; that are outside the regular organizations.”²⁵ For illegal foreigners in most industrialized societies, Christian churches support them in a non-organized manner. That is, they do not have a declared name, separate office with a direct phone line, or staff.

In the United States, native-established groups and foreigner-established groups have competed to organize foreign workers. The history of organizing immigrant farm workers in California best illustrates this point. Initially, Chinese in the 1880s, Japanese in the 1900s, Mexican in the 1920s, and Filipino in the 1930s all tried to organize themselves by forming ethnic labor associations. However, these associations failed to bring the desired protection. Thereafter, Anglo-American organizers made four major attempts to organize the multi-ethnic farm workers in California – the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) prior to World War I, the Cannery, Agriculture, and Industrial Workers (CAIWU) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s, and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the 1940s. All of these efforts failed. In 1959, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) of the AFL-CIO showed limited success in organizing immigrant farm workers. This success was dwarfed by the achievements of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). In 1962, co-ethnics, such as César Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and Gilbert Padilla, founded the NFWA, which now called the United Farm Workers (UFW). They collaborated with two Anglo-American

and Mike Cole, eds., *The European Union and Migrant Labor* (New York: Berg, 1999), pp. 147-170 (160-161ff).

²⁴ Chris Smolders, “The Status of Immigrant Workers in the Netherlands,” in Thomas, *op cit.*, pp. 83-113 (108-109ff) Smolders explains that these associations are linked to each other by the fact that they pursue their objectives in accordance laid down by the Dutch Center for Foreigners (NCB), which is a state-financed national association.

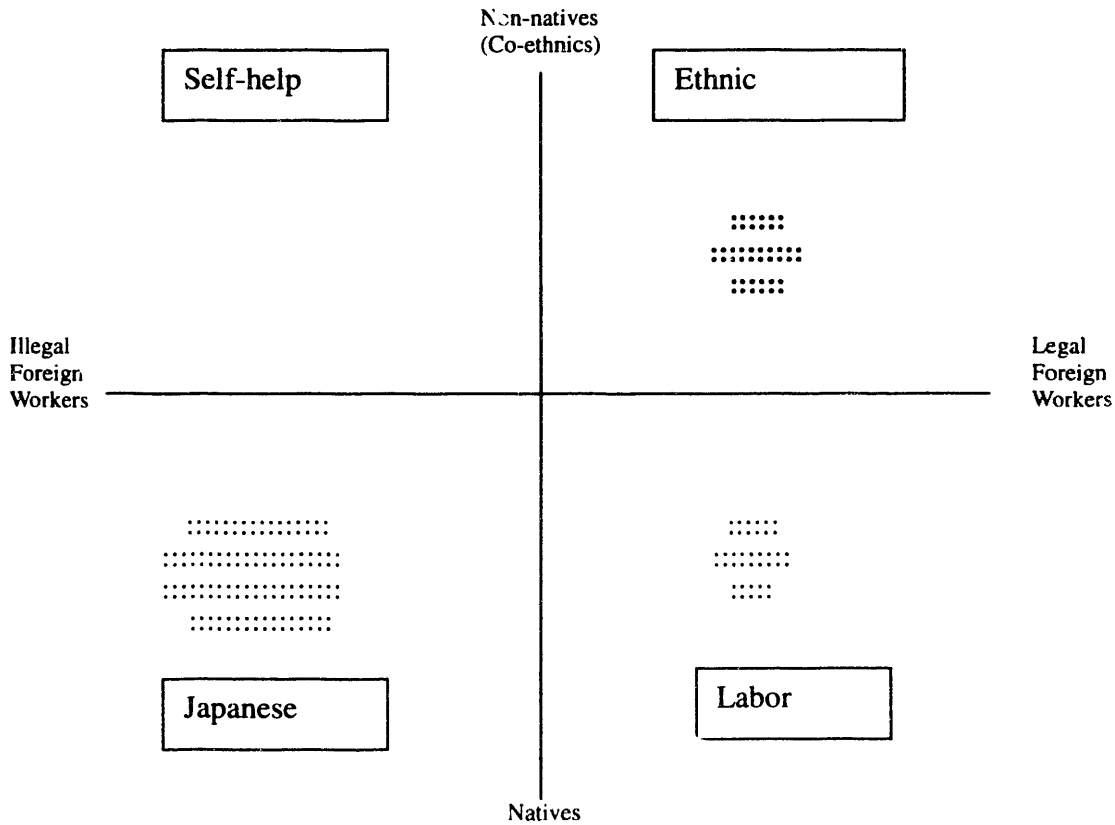
²⁵ Tomas Hammar, “Citizenship, Aliens’ Political Rights, and Politicians’ Concern for Migrants: The Case of Sweden,” in Rosemarie Rogers, ed., *Guests Come to Stay: The Effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving Countries* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 85-107 (89ff). Emphasis added.

clergymen affiliated with the California Migrant Ministry (CMM), Chris Hartmire and Jim Drake. By 1966, the union was having great success in organizing immigrant farm workers and winning contracts, which continued into the 1970s.²⁶

In short, support groups for illegal foreign workers established by natives do exist in other industrialized countries. However, in most industrialized countries it is co-ethnics, rather than natives, who formed most of the support groups to assist foreigners. In Japan, the proportion of native-established support groups for foreign workers is unusually higher than in other industrialized countries. Here, Japan stands as an anomaly. We can represent the pattern in Japan with a graph where native and non-native (or co-ethnics) founders are respectively situated on the lower and upper x-axis. In this graph, illegal and legal foreign workers occupy the left and right side of the y-axis, respectively. Graph 1 reveals that the concentration of support groups for foreign workers in Japan lies inside the lower left quadrant – native established NGOs supporting illegal foreign workers. Ethnic associations do exist in the upper right and labor unions in the lower right quadrant, but far fewer than those in the lower left one. Interestingly, agencies of local governments cross between the lower left and lower right quadrant. Why does Japan contain such a high concentration of support institutions for foreigners in the lower left quadrant? Or more generally, why does the pattern appear the way it does in Japan?

²⁶ Ganz, "Strategic Capacity in the Unionization of California Agriculture, 1959-1966."

Graph 1: Pattern of Foreigners Support Groups in Japan



Even more surprising, why would the *Japanese* want to help foreigners, given our understanding of the Japanese as being “isolated,” “homogeneous,” and therefore “insecure and suspicious of outsiders”? Japanese, who live in an isolated group of islands, consider themselves to be “homogeneous.”²⁷ Although a group of minorities exist in Japan, over 97.5 percent of the total population in Japan are Japanese.²⁸ The number of “non-Japanese”

²⁷ Non-Japanese such as Edwin O. Reischauer, an American diplomat and scholar, also observes that the Japanese people are “the most isolated” and “the most thoroughly unified and culturally homogeneous large bloc of people in the whole world.” Edwin O. Reischauer, *The Japanese* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 32-36.

²⁸ Michael Weiner calls the homogeneity of the Japanese people a “myth” or “illusion” due to the existence of 3 million minorities such as Ainu, Burakumin, Chinese, Koreans, Okinawans, and foreigners of Japanese descendant. See Michael Weiner, ed., *Japan’s Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (London: Routledge, 1997). Even if we were to include the 2 million Burakumin, who are actually Japanese, the percentage of Weiner’s minorities in Japan is merely 2.4 percent.

population is remarkably low in comparison with other industrialized countries.²⁹ Being “homogeneous” and “isolated,” the Japanese also developed a “suspicion against foreigners.” This suspicion appears to have deep roots in its culture. Anthropologist Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney asserts that “foreigners are symbolically equivalent to the Stranger Deity,” who “possesses dual natures and powers – the benevolent, pure energy of *nigitama* and the violent, destructive energy of *aratama*.”³⁰ Ohnuki-Tierney refers back to a god in ancient Japan, *marebito*, who often visited villagers to bring good luck. Villagers also view *marebito* as potentially dangerous, because this god comes from another world across the sea, where aging and death were unknown.³¹ Like *marebito*, Ohnuki-Tierney writes, Westerners “can turn into enemies, but they can also bring positive elements as long as they are brought into Japanese society only under controlled conditions.”³² To reinforce that the Japanese populace felt sufficiently isolated and suspicious of foreigners, Japanese rulers banned foreigners in their territory from 1640 to 1853 and severely enforced this ban.

Japanese suspicion towards foreigners is strongly revealed in comments made by

²⁹ Foreigner population alone (i.e. excluding ethnic minorities) account for 3.3 percent of the total population in the U.K., 4.6 percent in the Netherlands, 6.4 percent in France, 6.6 percent in Austria, 8.6 percent in the United States and Germany, 9.1 percent in Belgium, 9.5 percent in Sweden, 15.1 percent in Canada, 18 percent in Switzerland, and 23.4 percent in Austria. See Myron Weiner, “Opposing Visions: Migration and Citizenship Policies in Japan and the United States” in Myron Weiner and Tadashi Hanami, eds., *Temporary Workers or Future Citizens?* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), pp. 3-4.

³⁰ Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self. Japanese Identity through Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 101; also see John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), pp. 234-235.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

³² Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Illness and Culture in Contemporary Japan: An Anthropological View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 42. Japan’s ever-changing relations with the West during the past five centuries exemplify this dual attitude of Japanese toward Westerners. Japanese leaders welcomed Christians in the mid-16th century but, only one generation later, viewed them as threats to political unity and suppressed them ruthlessly. When Western traders in their armed, black ships edged their way into Japan again in the early 19th century, Japanese leaders reluctantly decided to give in to Western demands. Soon after, they began to send several scholars to Europe and the U.S. to study Western science and political institutions. Emulation of the West led directly to colonial aspiration and the surprised attack at Pearl Harbor. After the war, the Japanese “embraced defeat” and returned to their fascination with the West. See Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene, *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 84-130.

the Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro to the Ground Self-Defense Force on April 9th, 2000. In his address, Ishihara advised Japanese troops to target foreigners or “third-country persons” (「三国人」) in the event of a major earthquake because he believes that foreigners are likely to riot and commit crimes when there is a breakdown of order.³³ More interestingly, the *Asahi Shimbun* reported that 60 percent of calls to the Metropolitan government office a couple of days after the address expressed “support” for Ishihara’s comments.³⁴ Hence, Ishihara’s statement appears to be representative of the Japanese attitude towards foreigners. Similar comments have also emerged from average Japanese citizens. A weekly *Asahi Shimbun* magazine, *AERA*, reported that a bus conductor in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka announced in the loudspeaker of the bus after a 37 year-old Japanese-descendant, Brazilian woman came on board:

“Every one, please be careful of your bags. A foreigner is riding the bus.”³⁵

「みなさん、カバンに気をつけてください、外国人が乗ってます。」

Data from government agencies and various opinion polls indicate that Japanese people do view Asian foreign workers in Japan with suspicion and fear. Police and Immigrant officials often receive anonymous calls concerning “suspicious” foreigners. The Immigration Control Bureau in Tokyo receives approximately 20,000 letters and telephone calls per year denouncing foreigners. For example, the *Saitama Shimbun* reported that six Pakistanis were arrested after Japanese in their neighborhood telephoned the police stating that “Foreigners run after our kids. Please investigate!”³⁶ A survey conducted by the

³³ *Asahi Shimbun*, 10 April 2000.

³⁴ *Asahi Shimbun*, 12 April 2000; also see <http://cnn.co.jp/2000/JAPAN/04/12/asahic12019.asahi/index.html>.

³⁵ *Asahi Shimbun Weekly AERA*, October 10, 1998, pp. 25-27.

³⁶ *Saitama Shimbun*, 24 January 1990.

Economic Planning Agency (EPA) in 1987 found 40.7 percent (multiple answers were allowed) felt that “public safety will be worsened by the presence of foreign workers.”³⁷ An opinion poll of the Prime Minister’s Office in 1989 found that of those who opposed the admission of foreign workers into Japan, 60 percent listed “the corruption of morals and deterioration of public safety” as their reason.³⁸ A poll conducted by the *Mainichi Shimbun* in 1990 demonstrated similar findings. Forty-four percent of respondents opposed the admission of foreign workers into Japan and 37 percent of these believed that foreign workers will cause the “morals to get into disorder and public safety will deteriorate.”³⁹ In all opinion polls of Japanese attitude towards foreign workers that he examined, Komai Hiroshi found that “we can say...that all show a certain level of fear of crime and of the deterioration of public security and the social climate.”⁴⁰ To identify reasons for Japanese insecurity regarding foreigners, the National Police Agency conducted a poll in 1990 in eight neighborhoods with large foreigner populations. It found that 55.9 percent of respondents stated that they feel “a vague, but undeniable uneasiness” (漠然だが不安を観じている). The reason given for this uneasiness included: the emergence of crime (68.2 percent), women walking alone at night (56.1 percent), unspecified anxiety (37.2 percent), the deterioration of sanitary conditions (35.3 percent), quarrels and disputes among foreigners (32.5 percent), fear that an immigrant enclave could emerge (28 percent), fear of quarrels and disputes between Japanese and foreigners (20.5

³⁷ Economic Planning Agency, “Wagakuni ni okeru gaikokujin koyo to kokumin seikatsu ” Quoted in Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 219.

³⁸ Naikaku souri daijin kanbou kouhoushitsu, ed., *Yoron chousa nenkan. Zenkoku yoron chousa no genkyou* (Tokyo, Sourifu, 1989), p. 157. Quoted in Wolfgang Herbert, *Foreign Workers and Law Enforcement in Japan* (London: Kegan Paul International), pp. 223-224

³⁹ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 5 February 1990.

⁴⁰ Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 220.

percent), and fear of the outbreak of fires (17.8 percent).⁴¹ Therefore, given Japanese suspicion toward foreigners, the existence of Japanese NGOs supporting illegal foreign workers is puzzling. Which Japanese are actually helping these foreign workers? What are their motivations?

II. POLITICAL ECONOMIC AND NORMATIVE THEORIES ON NATIVES SUPPORTING FOREIGN WORKERS

Political economic and normative theories offer various ways to think about foreign workers and/or institutional possibilities to provide them support. Below, I review the evolution of theoretical understanding of foreign workers by focusing on political economic theories on foreign workers. Then I discuss normative theories on both the free movement of labor and the democratic institutional representation for foreigners.

1.2.1 Political Economic Theories on Foreign Workers

Existing literature indicates that those who care passionately for workers show less enthusiasm and empathy for “foreign” workers. Such literature begins with Frederick Engels and his discussion of “Irish Immigration” in *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (1845). In this book, Engels described the unsavory living conditions of Irish workers in England during the time. He then reasoned that “the wages of English working-man should be forced down further and further in every branch in which the Irish compete

⁴¹ National Police Agency, ed., *Keisatsu hakusho. Tokushuu – gaikokujin roudousha no kyuuzou to keisatsu no taiou* (Tokyo: Oukurasho Insatsukyoku, 1990), p. 31. Quoted in Herbert, *Foreign Workers and Law Enforcement in Japan*, pp. 223-224

with him.”⁴² Engels believed that Irish immigration had “degraded the English workers, removed them from civilisation, and aggravated the hardship of their lot.”⁴³ But he welcomed this development, for “it has thereby deepened the chasm between workers and bourgeoisie, and hastened the approaching crisis...[W]e can but rejoice over everything which accelerates the causes of the diseases.”⁴⁴ For Engels, the greater the deprivation of the workers the faster the socialist revolution would take place. Engels further believed that “the more facile, excitable, fiery Irish temperament” would provide the necessary spark that would push “the stable, reasoning, persevering English” into action.⁴⁵

In his encyclopedic study of the working class in England, Karl Marx said little about foreign workers except for a letter he sent to his comrades in New York in April of 1870. In this letter, Marx wrote that Irish immigrant workers in England were “forcing down the wages and material and moral position of the English working class.”⁴⁶ However, he did not think that Irish immigrants would hasten the imminent socialist revolution, a revolution that would improve humanity, as Engels had previously believed. In Marx own words,

All industrial and commercial centres in England now have a working class *divided* into two *hostile* camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who forces down the standard of life...He harbours religious, social and national prejudices against him [Irish worker]...The Irishman...sees in the English worker both the accomplice and the stupid tool of *English rule in Ireland*.

This antagonism is kept artificially alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the disposal of the ruling class. *This antagonism is the secret of the English working class's impotence*, despite its organisation. It is the

⁴² Frederick Engels, “The Condition of the Working-Class in England” in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4 (1844-1845) (New York: International Publishers, 1975), pp. 389-392 (392ff).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Letter of Karl Marx to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, 9 April 1870 in Marx and Engels, *op.cit.*, Vol. 43 (1844-1845), pp. 471-476 (474ff).

secret of the maintenance of power by the capitalist class. And the latter is fully aware of this. [emphasis in original]⁴⁷

For Marx, the antagonism between English and Irish workers during the nineteenth century was artificially constructed by capital and English imperialism. His solution was a call for English workers to support Irish independence:

The special task of the Central Council in London is to awaken the consciousness of the English working class that, *for them, the national emancipation of Ireland* is not a question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but *the first condition of their own social emancipation*. [emphasis in original]⁴⁸

In his study of Marx's view on immigrant workers, Chris Brown concluded that "Marx cannot argue about migration in terms of duties and rights, because these arguments were not available to him."⁴⁹ Marxists are in effect committed to an ethic of consequences according to which we ought to do whatever promotes the outcomes identified by Marxist science as best for humanity. Marxists, therefore, tend to favor or oppose foreign workers on tactical grounds. Engels, who believed that the Irish immigration would hasten the coming crisis in Britain, supported immigration while Marx, who viewed Irish workers as a dividing force in the English labor movement, did not.

Some labor economists today hold the position that immigrants depress wages too low for natives and thereby drive native workers out of their jobs. In his analysis of the economic consequences of the Bracero program (in which Mexicans were legally contracted to work temporarily in U.S. farms as harvest hands), Vernon Briggs argues that immigrants sharply "depressed domestic wage rates" and the "citizen workers who had

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 474-475.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 475.

⁴⁹ See Chris Brown, "Marxism and the Transnational Migration of People: Ethical Issues," in Brian Barry and Robert E. Goodin, eds., *Free Movement: Ethical Issues in the Transnational Migration of People and of Money* (University Park:

hitherto been the mainstay of the regional labor force began an exodus.”⁵⁰ Briggs also claims that immigrants have particularly adverse effect on low-skilled workers, who are typically women and minorities.⁵¹

Neo-classical economists make an argument in support of foreign workers based on the global allocation of resources that will increase the world economic output in the long-run. John Harris and Michael Todaro argue that given the high and institutionally rigid wages of industrialized areas, workers from low-income underdeveloped regions would be attracted in numbers much larger than the labor market demands, based on the chance that they would luck into a job.⁵² In other words, an economic man from poor countries finds it advantageous to migrate to rich countries even if employment is not assured. Consequently, migration would lead to a convergence of real wage rates between the home and recipient countries while the world economic output would increase on the whole. Neo-classical economists also argue that immigrant workers contribute to the creation of new jobs, thereby expanding the size of the economy.⁵³ First, immigrants expand the demand for goods and services through their own consumption. When immigrants come to a country, they shop for food in that country’s grocery stores; they move into apartments or homes, stimulating more demand for housing construction; they eat at native restaurants;

The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 127-144.

⁵⁰ Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., *Immigration Policy and the American Labor Force* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 139.

⁵¹ Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., “The Imperative of Immigration Reform: The Case for an Employment-based Immigration Policy,” in Vernon M. Briggs, Jr. and Stephen Moore, *Still an Open Door? U.S. Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Washington, D.C.: The American University Press, 1994), pp. 3-73 (51ff).

⁵² John R. Harris and Michael P. Todaro, “Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two Sector Analysis,” *American Economic Review* 60:1 (March 1970), pp. 126-142.

⁵³ See Simon, *The Economic Consequences of Immigration*; idem., “The Case for Greatly Increase Immigration,” *The Public Interest* 102 (1991): 89-103; Julian L. Simon, Stephen Moore, and Richard Sullivan, “The Effect of Immigration upon Unemployment: An Across City Estimation,” *Journal of Labor Research* (1991); Stephen Moore, “The Economic Case for More Immigrants,” in Briggs and Moore, *op.cit.*, pp. 77-155.

and so on. All of these activities lead to more jobs for native workers. Second, some immigrants are highly entrepreneurial and create jobs through the businesses they start. Third, immigrants may fill vital niches in the low- and high-skilled ends of the labor market, thus creating subsidiary jobs for native workers. Fourth, immigrants, particularly low-paid immigrants, may save declining industries or industries under intense competition from imports. Fifth, immigrants may contribute to economies of scale in production and the growth of new markets. For these reasons, we should expect to find support for foreign workers from business groups and, possibly, government officials (an increase industrial output also means an increase in tax revenue).⁵⁴

A labor economist at MIT, Michael Piore, presents a more sophisticated argument than that of neo-classical economics for why immigrants do not take jobs away from natives. Piore argues that immigrants have no impact on the labor market opportunities of natives, because foreign migrant workers are drawn into advanced industrial countries by the demand for jobs that natives do not want. In constructing his argument, Piore separates the structure of the labor market into two sectors: the primary sector and the secondary sector. The primary sector is composed of desirable jobs requiring skilled or educated workers while the secondary one is composed of the unskilled, undesirable jobs that are initially taken by most immigrants. Piore argues that immigrant workers tend to occupy the low-paying, unpleasant, secondary sector jobs that no native workers will take. He claims that in the early stages of migration, foreign workers are complements not competitors. It is the second-generation immigrants who are more concerned with job status and upward

⁵⁴ Simon calculates that "an immigrant family enriches natives by contributing an average of \$1,300 or more per year (in 1975 dollars) to the public coffers during its stay in the U.S." See Simon, "The Case for Greatly Increase Immigration."

mobility and therefore reject secondary jobs just like native workers. For Piore, issues of job competition do apply, but only to the second-generation immigrants.⁵⁵ With the dual labor market explanation, it becomes conceivable to imagine immigrant and native workers building solidarity with each other.

Although economists offer sound explanations for the impact of foreign workers on natives, most do not propose an institutional solution to accommodate foreign workers.

1.2.2 Normative Theories on Free Movement of Labor and Democratic Institutions for Foreigners

Certain philosophers, such as Michael Walzer, believe that free movement of people increases injustices, as it pulverizes a particular way of life. According to Walzer, “[t]o tear down the walls of the state is not...to create a world without walls, but rather to create a thousand petty fortresses.”⁵⁶ Walzer believes,

[t]he distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure and, without it, cannot be conceived as a stable feature of human life. If this distinctiveness is a value, as most people... seem to believe, then closure must be permitted somewhere. At some level of political organization, something like the sovereign state must take shape and claim the authority to make its own admission policy, to control and sometimes restrain the flow of immigrants.⁵⁷

In essence, distributive justice for Walzer begins with membership rights in terms of admission and exclusion. Walzer further argues that if a country wants to import foreign workers into its country, it must be prepared to enlarge its own membership and to extend the protection of citizenship to them. Without doing so, “the political community collapses

p 97.

⁵⁵ Michael Piore, *Birds of Passage: Migrant Labor and Industrial Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

⁵⁶ Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 39.

into a world of members and strangers, with no political boundaries between the two, where the strangers are subjects of the members.”⁵⁸

Rigorous normative justification for supporting free movement of labor and institutional recommendations for foreigners comes mostly from thinkers of the liberal egalitarian school, critical legal studies, and the multiculturalism school. Thomas Hobbes has argued that the poor and the strong who cannot earn a living in Europe “be transplanted into Countries not sufficiently inhabited...to court each little Plot [of land] with art and labour, to give them their sustenance in due season.”⁵⁹ Hobbes supported free movement of labor in order to prevent idleness of “strong bodies.” Although Hobbes’ argument was really to defend English colonialism, it offered the first liberal reasoning to defend the right to move freely across borders. In recent years, liberal egalitarians, such as Joseph Carens, espouse freedom of movement of people from one country to another in order to support people from the least well-off societies.⁶⁰ Building on John Rawls’ famous “difference principle” which states that inequality is allowed to exist if it were to maximize the position of the worst-off, Carens stresses the importance of a commitment to freedom of movement as both an important liberty in itself and as a prerequisite for other freedoms.⁶¹ While Rawls’ theory of justice, in its original form, is confined within a given society, Carens applies Rawls’ conception universally across societies. That is to say, justice requires that

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁵⁹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin, 1985[1651]), part II, ch. 30, p. 387

⁶⁰ He tolerates restrictions “only if they are likely to promote liberty and equality in the long run, or are necessary to preserve a distinct way of life.” See Joseph H. Carens, “Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders,” *The Review of Politics*, 49:2 (1987): 251-273; *idem.*, “Migration and Morality: A Liberal Egalitarian Perspective,” in Barry and Goodin, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 25-47 (25ff).

⁶¹ See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); *idem.*, “Justice as Fairness in the Liberal Polity” in Gershon Shafir, ed., *The Citizenship Debates* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp.

the well off take steps to improve the condition of worse-off groups in the world. Permitting extensive immigration from poor to affluent countries would be a way of accomplishing this end. Carens' argument is founded on the premise that there are gross economic inequalities between states. In the face of such inequality, freedom of movement would enable individuals to "avail" themselves of opportunities to improve their income and general well-being. In other words, Carens argues that "freedom of movement [of people] would [lead] to a reduction of political, social, and economic inequalities" as people from worse-off societies are allowed to migrate and to improve their lives in well-off societies.⁶² In essence, Carens views immigration as a strategy to reduce Third World poverty.

A critical legal scholar from Brazil, Roberto Mangabeira Unger, views the denial of the free movement of labor as "the single greatest reason for the present injustice and future instability" in the new world order where "capital and goods can roam the world while labor remains imprisoned in the nation-state."⁶³ Unger argues

[e]ach democracy must subordinate some possibilities of experience ...to others. In so doing, it creates a world better suited to some visions and temperaments than to others. That is why it matters so much for nations to remain different, with differences of culture rekindled by differences of practice and institution. That is also why it is vital that people be able to leave the country in which they see a better chance to define and develop their life projects.⁶⁴

Unger believes that "elective affinities,,of an individual with a nation not his or her

53-74.

⁶² Carens, "Migration and Morality: A Liberal Egalitarian Perspective," p. 26.

⁶³ Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *Democracy Realized: the Progressive Alternative* (London. Verso, 1998), pp. 175-182.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

own...will become ever more important as democracy deepens.”⁶⁵ Unger then calls for moving towards the free movement of labor in small, incremental steps in order for nations “to develop the powers and possibilities of humanity in different directions.”⁶⁶ Unger’s vision relies on the action of governments: setting quotas for legal immigration and temporary work permits, establishing sequences of rights that immigrant workers would win (i.e. first, health and education entitlements for migrants and their children; then, more comprehensive social claims; finally, the full participatory privileges of citizenship), and turning temporary work permits into permanent residency. The normative visions of Carens and Unger rely on the initiative of state actors in opening their borders or in reorganizing the legal system to accommodate foreigners. There appears to be little room for societal actors in driving this change, because foreigners will be legal and host governments will guarantee their rights and entitlements.

Other thinkers try to devise an institutional design that links state and societal actors in ways that best provide political deliberation for foreigners already in host countries. Iris Marion Young proposes one such design to represent group difference. Young claims that group difference exists in all modern complex societies and “wherever there is group difference, disadvantage or oppression always looms as a possibility.” Since she believes that group representation best promotes fairness and just outcomes under social oppression and domination, Young argues that “a society should always be committed to representation for oppressed or disadvantaged groups.”⁶⁷ In addition to

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p 181.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Iris Marion Young, “Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship” in Gershon Shafir, ed., *The Citizenship Debates: A Reader* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 263-290 (275ff).

promoting fairness, Young also believes that group representation maximizes public knowledge expressed in discussion, thereby promotes practical wisdom. Young explains, “different groups have different ways of understanding the meaning of social events, which can contribute to the others’ understanding if they are expressed and heard.”⁶⁸ Will Kymlicka agrees that the pluralist multiculturalism of immigrants groups can certainly promote the sort of civic engagement that helps develop important democratic virtues.⁶⁹ Both Young and Kymlicka believe that “group representation” or “ethnic association” is the best solution to cultural differences.

Melissa Williams advances another “group-based theory of fair representation” that stresses the importance of shared experience. Williams believes that it is necessary that “the representative shares his or her constituents’ experience, and consequently shares the cognitive agency that arises out of that experience.”⁷⁰ For her,

the experience the representative shares with the represented is an *essential* part of the agency that makes the representative an effective and trustworthy advocate....[A] representative who lacks an understanding of the experience of oppression will not be able to explain why some policies reinforce the constituency’s experience of subordination while others alleviate it. [emphasis added]⁷¹

Under this framework, it is possible to envision members of native-established NGOs be representatives for illegal foreigners. Although it may appear undemocratic in structure, such undertaking can provide fairness if that representative shares common experience with those s/he is representing. Here, the question why Japanese people create support groups to

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁶⁹ Will Kymlicka, “Ethnic Associations and Democratic Citizenship,” in Amy Gutmann, ed., *Freedom of Association* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 177-213.

⁷⁰ Melissa S. Williams, *Voice, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and the Failings of Liberal Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 241-242.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

help illegal foreigners can provide opportunities for further theoretical advancement in the studies of deliberative group representation.

III. FOUR HYPOTHESES

There are four plausible explanations of why Japanese people support foreign workers. In addition to differences in the unit of analysis, each hypothesis makes different assumptions and propositions about the functions and activities of support groups. More importantly, each identifies different variables to explain our central puzzle. The first hypothesis centers on government policies and control. The second hypothesis explores the culture of harmony in Japanese society. The third hypothesis focuses on the ideology of Japanese activists for establishing class-based solidarity with foreign workers in order to strengthen their struggle for socialist ideals. The fourth hypothesis concentrates on the creative action of Japanese actors and a new social movement in which Japanese activists build solidarity with foreign workers. Although each of these hypotheses contains different unit of analysis and makes different assumption and propositions, they are not mutually exclusive and could be combined. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics for each of these hypotheses, which will be discussed in greater detail below. The discussion for each of these explanations contains an argument, a critique, and an assessment. The critique and the assessment are typically determined by how the expectation and prediction made in each argument measures up to the preliminary, empirical data.

Table 1.1: Summary of the Four Hypotheses

	Government Policies	Harmony	Class-based Solidarity	Dynamics of SMOs
Unit of Analysis	State	Culture	Class	Organizations
Structure/Agency	Structure	Structure	Structure	Agency
Main Function of Support Groups	Controlling civic activities of foreigners	Creating harmony	Building a political base	Changing policies and popular attitudes
Assumption	State is united	Culture is static	Capitalists are the enemy	SMOs are dynamic
Central Role for Japanese Actors	Monitors	Mediators	Vanguards	Organizers
Expectation about Founders/Members	Are affiliated with the government	Are non-confrontational	Are affiliated with labor parties	Members have no conflictual goals
Expected Source of Funding	Government agencies	Community contribution	Parties contribution and membership	Membership
Expectation about Organization Activities	Do not challenge government (Passive)	Promote several cultural activities (Passive)	Promote Marxist ideals (Aggressive)	Challenge the establishments (Aggressive)

1.3.1 Government Policies and Control

A. *The Argument*

The first hypothesis resides on the conventional wisdom and posits that Japanese people established support groups as a result of government policies. Sheldon Garon, for example, argues that much of Japanese behavior and civic activities are a result of state efforts in “molding Japanese minds” through various government policies.⁷² Garon asserts

⁷² Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

that

[t]he past hundred years of governance in modern Japan constitute the century of the moral suasion campaign. These campaigns were central in the state's relationships with religious groups, women's organizations, social work leaders, and the poor.⁷³

In other words, the Japanese government directly transforms Japanese people into active participants in its various projects. Robert Pekkanen further argues that "the state" shapes civil society in Japan by selectively promoting certain civil society organizations and allowing them to expand while regulating others and making it difficult for them to survive or flourish. Pekkanen points to the existence of few large civil society organizations and numerous small ones. Pekkanen elegantly explains that the Japanese state provides preferential treatment to those civil society organizations that are useful to the state, such as the neighborhood associations, and promotes their growth before it eventually exerts influence over the organizations. In contrast, the Japanese government makes it difficult for those issue-oriented civil society organizations, such as environmental NGOs, to expand, because it fears that these organizations may undermine its power.⁷⁴

State promotion of associational life for foreign workers has historical precedents in Japan. After the economic recession in 1921, Pak Ch'un-kum, a prominent Korean resident in Japan, established the Mutual Friendship Society (相愛会) to help his fellow Koreans living in Japan by providing food and shelter. Realizing a need for such services for Koreans, Japanese officials began to provide financial support for Pak's projects, which had expanded into mediating labor disputes between Japanese employers and Korean workers. Subsequently, the Mutual Friendship Society began to build close ties with the

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 8.

Japanese police, passing on information related to allegedly subversive Korean activities.⁷⁵

Even though the declared objectives of the Mutual Friendship Society were to provide social services and to promote friendship between Koreans and Japanese, it began to function as a control organ over the Koreans in carrying out official Japanese policy.⁷⁶ After the military got control of the Japanese government in 1931, Japanese officials feared that private organizations might be easily diverted to anti-Japanese activities if they were not properly controlled. In 1934, the Mutual Friendship Society was superseded by the Concordia Society (共和会), which was operated and staffed by Japanese officials. It was established under the jurisdiction of four government agencies: the Ministries of Home Affairs, Welfare, and Colonial Affairs, and the Colonial Government of Korea. The publicly announced purposes of the Concordia Society were to promote understanding between Koreans and Japanese, to raise living standards through social services, and to cultivate the trust and loyalty of Koreans by Japanization. Locally, the Concordia provided employment and welfare services. It also offered classes on Japanese language, manners, customs, and sewing for adults. By 1943, Concordia Society had 47 groups with 1,124 branches.

This group undoubtedly functioned as a mechanism of government control. Membership in this organization was mandatory for all Korean laborers who came to Japan to work and every member was required to carry a membership card at all times. This card

⁷⁴ Robert Pekkanen, "Civil Society in Japan," (Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, Government Department, 2000).

⁷⁵ Although many Koreans were aware that the Mutual Friendship Society (*Sou-ai-kai*) maintained a close link with the Japanese police, they joined the organization regardless and pushed the membership to nearly 100,000 (or 25 percent of the Korean population in Japan). Korean laborers felt that they at least had some organization on which to represent them with an active spokesperson whom they could rely and ask for help.

⁷⁶ See Changsoo Lee and George de Vos, *Koreans in Japan: Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), pp. 48-49; Richard H. Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan* (Berkeley: University of

served as identification needed to process any government papers. Without the card, no Korean was allowed to travel anywhere.⁷⁷ As more and more Koreans were forced to serve in the Japanese industrial front to help the war effort during the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Japanese government became increasingly concerned about control over Koreans. The Concordia Society served as an official arm of the government to urge Korean workers to support the industrial requirements of a nation at war.⁷⁸ The historian Richard Mitchell writes that the main concern of the Concordia Society was

... to make the Korean laborers "soldiers of industry." The association supervised their training period and followed up by sending teams of inspectors to factories and mines throughout Japan. After consulting with the management to check working conditions, the inspectors held "friendly discussions," encouraging the Koreans to remain at the same job and talked individually with each man whose contract was due to expire.⁷⁹

Because the leaders of the Concordia Society had to work closely with the police stations and to handle classified information, the police bureau insisted that only Japanese be chosen for leadership in these organizations. By 1942, all the subgroups were headed by local police chiefs, and other officials in these organizations were members of the Special Higher Police.⁸⁰ This example from Japan's prewar history demonstrates that support groups for foreign workers can function as a mechanism of direct control by the central government over the foreigner community in Japan.

Government policies in our story would also include restrictive legislation to limit

California Press, 1967), pp. 37-38.

⁷⁷ Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, pp. 51-52

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁸⁰ This was the case despite the fact that the Welfare Ministry Regulation 145 (26 December 1942) stated that the leaders of the *Kyowakai* had to be Koreans. Home Ministry, *Kyowakai kankei kaigi shorui shougakukai kankei o fukumu* [Conferences Relating to the Korean-Japanese Harmony Society] (Tokyo: Naimushou, Police Bureau, Security Section, January 1943), p. 87,060. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 88.

“ethnic associations” and promotional legislation for creating voluntary associations. As mentioned earlier, legal restrictions on migrant organizing in France between 1939-1981 led many French nationals to establish thousands of “solidarity associations” where immigrants could join. Although legal restrictions do not exist on foreign migrant organizing in Japan, the lack of policy instruments and incentives to promote the collective organization of immigrants can lead to a dispersed organizational activity among foreign migrants.

Instead of promoting civic activities of foreign nationals, Japanese government could promote voluntary activities of their own nationals. By pushing for private initiatives, the government is spared from the task of providing extensive services and political rights to foreign workers. Several ministries and government organizations in Japan appear to support the development of NGOs, particularly those Japanese NGOs that provide international aids to developing countries.⁸¹ The Ministry of Postal and Telecommunication established the Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid System in January 1991. This group sought to provide the Japanese public with a simple and easily accessible method of direct participation in international cooperation and assistance. Under the system, depositors volunteer to donate 20 percent of the after-tax interest accruing on their Postal Savings Ordinary Deposits. The proceeds are channeled to NGOs involved in overseas assistance projects designed to improve the welfare of the people of developing countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the International Development Relations NGO Assistance Fund (国際開発協力関係民間公益団体補助金制度) and the

⁸¹ See Kim Reimann, “Japanese International Development NGOs and the State,” Paper Presented at the Association of Asian Studies Annual Meeting, San Diego, 2000

Grassroots Free Fund Cooperation (草の根無償資金協力). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry promotes NGO development with its NGO Agriculture and Forestry Cooperation Promotion Projects (NGO等農林業協力推進事業). The Ministry of Health and Welfare support NGO activities through its Training Projects for medical personnels as part of its International Emergency Medical Health Assistance Support Project (国際緊急保健医療援助支援事業). The Ministry of Construction creates an NGO International Construction Cooperation Support Project (NGO国際建設協力支援事業). The Department of Environment proposes a Project Development on Environment Partnership Plaza (環境パートナーシッププラザにおける事業展開) that seeks to help environmental NGOs in the Third World. The Ministry of Home Affairs supports regional NGOs that promote international exchanges through its Regional Internationalization Cooperation Associations (地域国際化協会). The Japan International Co-operation Association (JICA) also has its own programs to promote NGO activities for economic development in developing countries.⁸² Recently, the NPO Law, which was passed in the Upper House in early 1998, aims to stimulate civic activities in Japan through the promotion of non-profit voluntary organizations.⁸³

B. The Critique

The structural hypothesis that government policies drive human activities and motives is based on two false assumptions and makes two incorrect predictions. First, the

⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, '96 *NGO Shien Gaidobukku* [1996 Guidebook for Supporting NGO] (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs NGOs Assistance Division, 1996). Interview with Mr. Ogawa Kiyoyasu from the NGOs Assistance Division in Tokyo, 7 December 1998.

⁸³ On the passage of the NPO Law, see Robert Pekkanen, "Japan's New Politics: The Case of the NPO Law," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 26:1 (2000): 111-143.

hypothesis assumes that the Japanese government *wants* to promote civic activities. Instead, evidence suggests that the Japanese government has systematically tried to curtail civic activities in Japan. For example, the Peace Preservation Law of 1925 limited civic activities that challenged the government. It specifically stated that

[a]nyone who has organized a society with the object of altering the national constitution (*kokutai*) or of repudiating the private property system, or anyone who has joined such organization with full knowledge of its object shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor for a term not exceeding ten years.

The law was later amended on June 29, 1928 to include the death penalty. Although this Law no longer applies after World War II, Article 89 of the postwar constitution explicitly barred all governmental institutions from financially assisting “charitable, educational or benevolent enterprises not under the control of public authority.” Only with the passage of an amended law in 1959 could national and local governments subsidize private associations that assisted the authorities.⁸⁴ The 1998 NPO Law, for example, can also be viewed as a government effort to control and monitor NGO activities. Instead of promoting civic activities, many NGO leaders worry that the government is placing new guidelines on NGOs to which type of civic associations to be promoted and which to be rejected.⁸⁵ Moreover, many foreigner support groups do not intend to register their organizations under the promotional NPO law, because of suspicion about government involvement in their political activities.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, p. 161.

⁸⁵ See *inter alia* Taketomo Hideyuki, “Bunkenka to NPO” [Decentralization and NPO] in Okazawa Noriyuki and Miyamoto Tarou, eds., *Higaku fukushi kokkaron* [Theories on Comparative Welfare States] (Tokyo: Horitsu Bunkasha, 1997).

⁸⁶ Interviews with: Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Karabao-no-kai in Yokohama, 8 March 1998; Mr. Torii Ippei of the Zentoitsu Workers Union in Tokyo, 12 March 1998; Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki, 3 April 1998; Rev. Otsu Kenichi of the Nankiren in Tokyo, 10 April 1998; Ms. Watanabe Midori of the Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights in Tokyo, 27 April 1998; Ms. Harada Momoyo of the Furenzu in Isezaki-shi, Gunma, 9 June 1998.

Second, this hypothesis also assumes that the central government has a clear and united position on the issue of foreign workers. In reality, various ministries in Japan are divided on the issue of foreign workers as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2. The Ministry of Justice takes the hardest line against allowing new immigrants. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is much more moderate in accepting foreign workers in the face of international criticism. The Ministry of Labor is ambiguous, formally opposing the admittance of foreign labor, but now supporting the use of the “trainee” residence classification as a means to bring in more workers from abroad. The Ministries of Construction, Fisheries, and Transportation (industries that are currently hiring foreign workers) favor admitting foreign workers. MITI favors admitting migrant workers on a limited basis to work in specific industries where they are most needed.⁸⁷ The biggest clash is between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labor. The Ministry of Labor, following its universal labor protection policy, attempts to protect all workers, regardless of nationality and legal status. This policy conflicts with the efforts of the Immigration Office of the Ministry of Justice, which categorizes the types of working visa for foreigners and tries to minimize illegal stay of foreigners in Japan. While the Ministry of Labor recognizes the rights of illegal foreign workers, the Ministry of Justice views illegal foreign workers as violators of Japan’s immigration law who must be deported. The conflict between these two agencies worsened during the late 1980s, when Professor Koike Kazuo of the University of Kyoto proposed an open door policy for foreign workers under an

1998.

⁸⁷ See Simada Haruo, *Japan's "Guest Workers": Issues and Public Policies* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1989), Steve A. Spencer, “Illegal Migrant Laborers in Japan,” *International Migration Review* 26 3 (1992): 754-786

“employment permit system” similar to that which exists in Germany.⁸⁸ Under the Koike’s Proposal, firms that seek to employ foreign workers must apply for a permit beforehand, and firms that fail to do so face sanctions. The Koike’s Proposal was opposed by the Ministry of Justice, because such policy would give the Ministry of Labor greater control over foreign workers.⁸⁹

Furthermore, the continued existence of communist-supported Korean and Chinese ethnic associations undermine the explanatory power of this hypothesis. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, the North Korean-backed General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (在日本朝鮮人総連合会 or Souren) is as vibrant and active as the South Korean-backed Korean Residents Union in Japan (在日本大韓国民団 or Mindan). The same case can be made for Overseas Chinese Associations that are sponsored by the People Republic of China and those by Taiwan. A government control hypothesis predicts that the government would provide preferential treatment to more conservative groups and make them bigger and more vibrant than communist-backed groups. This has not been the case for these Korean and Chinese ethnic associations during the post-war period. The official position of the Japanese government towards the political division within the Korean and Chinese community is one of neutrality. It does not support one group over the other.⁹⁰

The state-centered hypothesis also predicts that these Japanese NGOs will support government’s positions regarding foreign workers in Japan. On the contrary, the activities

⁸⁸ Ministry of Labor, ed., *Kongo ni okeru gaikokujin roudousha ukeiru no houkou – gaikokujin roudousha mondai kenkyuu hokoku* [Future Directions for Accepting Foreign Workers – Report on Research on the Problem of Foreign Workers] (Tokyo: Labor Administration Research Institute, Employment Security Bureau, March 1988). Quoted in Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, pp. 208-209.

⁸⁹ Since the proposal would mean that newcomers were to receive the same status as the *zainichi* Koreans, rumors have it that members of the Ministry of Justice went so far as to leak out information to a few *zainichi* Korean associations in order to get them to organize against the Proposal.

of these NGOs often challenge the positions of the central government towards illegal foreign workers. Members of Japanese NGOs supporting illegal foreign workers incessantly voice their dissatisfaction with various government agencies, particularly with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. In fact, government officials from these agencies have expressed real fear of certain members of these Japanese NGOs. A group of lawyers in Yokohama, with the support of most of these Japanese NGOs, is taking the Ministry of Health and Welfare to court in two separate cases. Another Japanese NGO is pushing the Ministry of Justice to revise its immigration policy and to grant amnesty to foreign workers who have overstayed their visas.

C. The Assessment

This structural hypothesis examines the role of the state and its policies in promoting the establishment of Japanese NGOs supporting foreign workers. It makes the state and government policies the basic unit of analysis. It views the central function of Japanese NGOs as a controlling mechanism over foreigners. Hence, Japanese actors play the role of “monitors.” This hypothesis assumes that the state is united and wants to promote civic activities. Under this hypothesis, we expect to find central government agencies supplying people and resources to these organizations. In addition, the activities of these organizations would not be expected to challenge Japanese government policies.

This hypothesis makes false assumptions about the unity of the Japanese state and its desire to promote civic activities in Japan. The existence of communist-backed ethnic groups along side with their conservative counterparts poses a direct challenge to this

⁹⁰ Interview with Mr. Koide Kenzo of the Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau in Tokyo, 8 January 1998.

hypothesis. Contrary to the expectation of the hypothesis, we do not find the activities of these NGOs to be supportive of the government agenda toward foreign workers. We can now conclude that the hypothesis of government policies and control alone do not sufficiently explain the establishment of foreigner support groups in Japan.

Despite its short-comings, this hypothesis does force us to seriously consider the role of the government, particularly its influence in creating the conditions needed for social action by Japanese activists and in shaping the nature and range of activities of support groups. Without a close examination of the role of the government and its relationships with these support groups, as Pekkanen keenly suggests, we would not be able to fully comprehend the nature and range of activities of these support groups. As we shall later see, the relationship between different local governments and their foreigner support groups varies across different prefectures. A systematic examination of the role of different ministries and local governments is required to explain this variation. Hence, government policies do provide us with an important explanatory variable in our analysis of support groups' activities in Japan.

1.3.2 The Culture of Harmony (和)

A. The Argument

The second hypothesis argues that Japanese support organizations emerged as a deliberative mechanism to reduce social conflict between natives and foreign workers. Under this hypothesis, support groups for foreign workers can be seen as mediators between foreign workers and Japanese society. These groups assist the Japanese in the management of foreign workers, while ensuring that they are not disruptive to Japanese

society by resolving problems and conflicts that occur. Since harmony is one of the highest values in Japan, Japanese will do everything possible to prevent conflict.

Anthropologists and sociologists of Japan consistently argue that Japanese value communal life and harmony (和) over individualism and conflict.⁹¹ Thomas Rohlen describes 和 or “*wa*” as a word that expresses a quality of human relationships, referring to “the cooperation, trust, sharing, warmth, morale, and hard work of efficient, pleasant, and purposeful fellowship...[I]t is both a major means to social improvement and an end in itself.”⁹² Takie Sugiyama Lebra claims that Japanese attach “foremost importance to social cohesion as a necessary condition for goal attainment.” She goes on and says that “social co-operation and harmony are not only necessary but most readily available as resources: Japanese are willing to make an investment in cohesion as well as inclined to regard it as indispensable.”⁹³

Since Prince Shotoku (574-622) began his Seventeen Article Constitution with the phrase “harmony is to be valued...” 「和を持って尊し為す」, *wa* is said to have been the guiding behavior of Japanese people.⁹⁴ In fact, Takagiwa Hiroo argues that Japanese

⁹¹ See inter alia Nakane Chie, *Japanese Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Thomas P. Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Robert J. Smith, *Japanese Society: Tradition, Self and the Social Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁹² Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*, p. 47.

⁹³ Takie Sugiyama Lebra, “Compensative Justice and Moral Investment among Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans” in Takie Sugiyama Lebra and William P. Lebra, eds., *Japanese Culture and Behavior: Selected Readings* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986), pp. 43-61 (59ff). I should also add that in her comparison of Japanese behavior to those of Chinese and Koreans, Lebra finds that Japanese tend to seek “compensation for kindness in the inner state of mind or feeling.” She argues that “when a moral action is oriented toward other people, Japanese are even more introspective than when engaging in a more individual-centered action.” She writes, “the Japanese actor may be so sensitive to the inner feeling of another person, the receiver of kindness, that he, the giver of kindness, may be able to share, inwardly, the pleasure felt by the receiver.” I do not put this as an explanatory variable, because such explanation begs the question: Why not all “introspective” Japanese decide to help foreign workers?

⁹⁴ Prince Shotoku, who was a great patron of Buddhism, took the phrase directly from the Confucian Analects and used it for political relations as well as social relations. Takagiwa Hiroo, *Nihonjin ni totte wa to wa nani ka* [What is harmony for Japanese?] (Tokyo: Hakutou Shoubou, 1996), pp. 3-34. I thank Kuriyama Masako for bringing this book to my attention.

people take “*wa*” so seriously that they place it above “justice” (正義).⁹⁵ Moreover, the traditional Chinese characters for Japanese or “*wajin*” (和人) signify “people of harmony.” Japanese called themselves “*yamato no hito*” (大和の人) or Yamato people and use the prefix “*wa*” to refer to things Japanese, such as “*washoku*” (和食) or Japanese food, “*washi*” (和紙) or Japanese paper, “*wafu*” (和風) or Japanese style, “*washiki*” (和式) or Japanese traditional style, and so forth.

B. The Critique

This argument suffers a major flaw in its internal logic. The concept of *wa* groups, which stresses similarity among members within that group, contradicts any argument for incorporating dissimilar members for the sake of harmony. *Wa* groups are based on members that share similar traits as a way of minimizing conflict, because differences increase arguments and conflicts. Individuals with different traits pose as a challenge to such a group and are typically excluded.⁹⁶ Most importantly, a *wa*-driven Japanese society would most likely respond to foreign workers with indifference. A sociologist at the University of Tokyo, Fukutake Tadashi, remarks that “an individual, living for harmony and status, lacked autonomy, the capacity for independent action,” because the emphasis on harmony would lead to conformity in behavior: “To criticize and resist the majority, or to argue with a superior and seek to set him right, was only likely to invite resentment and exclusion as an enemy of the established order.”⁹⁷ Fukutake further argues that we find in

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-64.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

⁹⁷ Tadashi Fukutake, *The Japanese Social Structure: Its Evolution in the Modern Century* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1989).

the Japanese principle of conduct a culture of “avoiding initiatives” or “not rocking the boat.” In fact, this behavior holds true for the majority of the Japanese, who desire “not to rock the boat” and who maintain their indifference towards foreign workers. However, such behavior does not explain the confrontational action that most of the activists in this study engage in.

This hypothesis also makes three questionable propositions. First, according to this hypothesis, we should expect to see members of foreigner support groups wanting to promote harmony in their community. Although the majority members of these groups mediate between foreign workers and Japanese people, the mediation is not always harmonious. Members of these support groups, who come from marginalized groups, sometimes confront Japanese employers, state authorities, and the Japanese public on behalf of foreign workers. Second, under this hypothesis we expect to find members of these groups trying to promote relations between foreign workers and natives within their local communities. In reality, few members of foreigner support groups interact with the local communities. Many members come from outside the community. The existence of several women’s shelters is kept secret, even from locals. Moreover, the communities, in which many of these support groups are located, are surrounded by office buildings and have few residents. Third, this hypothesis is flawed in that it assumes that harmony cannot be achieved in an increasingly multicultural society without social activism. One can also argue, as Emile Durkheim did, that harmony and consensus can be achieved precisely because the individuals are different. Social differentiation or the division of labor in Durkheim’s conception allows each individual to contribute in her/his own peculiar way to

the survival of all.⁹⁸

C. The Assessment

This structural hypothesis takes culture as its unit of analysis. Support groups in this cultural explanation function as a mechanism for creating harmony. Therefore, Japanese activists are interpreted as “mediators.” It assumes that these “mediators” will be non-conflictual and act harmoniously on the behalf of the Japanese in the community. It also assumes that harmony will not be possible without social activism from the people within the community.

Moreover, the internal logic of this hypothesis is flawed, because *wa* groups are not expected to include members who are different. It wrongly assumes that Japanese activists will avoid conflict. In reality, Japanese activists also exhibit confrontational behavior and always act on the behalf of foreign workers – not Japanese harmony. It also makes questionable proposition that harmony between natives and foreigners requires social activism. Theoretically, we can argue harmony does not necessitate such social activism. Given the inconsistency of this cultural explanation, it is not the driving force for the establishment of support groups in Japan.

Interestingly, the puzzle of this project is set up based on one set of cultural understanding while this particular explanation is based on another cultural view, which predicts the opposite behavior from the Japanese. This contradiction demonstrates that cultural explanations are malleable. In other words, several inconsistent cultures can exist

⁹⁸ Durkheim called such consensus in societies with diverse individuals, “organic solidarity.” He contrasted it with consensus in societies that comprise of individuals who differ from one another as little as possible, which he termed

in a single society. Here, one cultural analysis explains the structure of “non-action,” which governs the *behavior of the majority* of the Japanese people – the people who decide to do nothing in order “not to rock the boat.” Another explains, albeit unsuccessfully, the *behavior of the minority* of the Japanese people – the people who act associatively to mediate between foreigners and Japanese. Therefore, we can gain more meaningful understanding about Japanese activists by separating these groups into distinct cultures, such as: Christian culture, community workers union culture, women activist culture, lawyer culture, progressive doctor culture, and concerned citizens culture. Each culture is driven by its own set of norms and goals.⁹⁹

1.3.3 Class-based Solidarity

A. *The Argument*

The third hypothesis contends that pro-labor Japanese established numerous support organizations to help foreign workers in order to establish a class-based solidarity among foreign and native workers and, thereby, to build a strong political base for challenging the business and political elite. According to this hypothesis, organized Japanese laborers do not view foreign workers as competitors. Instead, left-wing Japanese, particularly Japanese socialists and communists, believe that it is advantageous to incorporate foreign workers into their organizations in order to strengthen their political base and fight their common enemy – the capitalists. This hypothesis follows Engel’s reasoning as discussed earlier.

“mechanical solidarity.” Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: The Free Press, 1984).

⁹⁹ I thank John Dower for making this point to me.

Historical precedents exist to support this hypothesis. In addition to numerous incidents of cooperation between Japanese laborers and Korean workers in Japan during the 1920s, Japanese communists in the early 1930s began to see the importance of building alliance with foreign comrades as a force to strengthen the Japanese communist movement.¹⁰⁰ In 1930, Kazuma Joukichi, a Japanese communist leader who hoped to bring Koreans and Taiwanese into the communist movement, pushed the central committee of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) to establish a Nationalities Section (民族部) for the purpose of organizing the Koreans and Taiwanese in Japan. After this section was established in May 1931, the JCP actively sought new members from among the Koreans and Taiwanese working in Japan.¹⁰¹ The JCP newspapers *Red Flag* (赤旗) spread propaganda and urged the committee (particularly in Kansai where foreign workers were concentrated) to redouble its efforts to enlist Koreans, Taiwanese, and Chinese workers.¹⁰² As a result, thousands of Koreans joined either the JCP or its labor union, the National Conference of Japanese Trade Unions (日本労働組合全国協議会) or Zenkyou. By October 1931, about 4,100 out of 10,700 (38 percent) Zenkyou members were Koreans. These members dominated the Osaka and Tokyo headquarters of Zenkyou.¹⁰³ Hence, in the early 1930s, the JCP made deliberate efforts to incorporate foreign workers into its organizations in order to strengthen the Japanese communist movement.

¹⁰⁰ For examples of cooperation and friendship activities between left-wing Japanese and Korean labor organizations, see Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, pp. 34-35

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61 (fn)

¹⁰² Akahata, 30 August 1932

¹⁰³ Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 63 (fn)

B. The Critique

Solidarity with foreign workers is certainly a common goal that these groups hold, but it is not class-based. Although they all expressed concerns over labor issues, leaders and volunteers of these NGOs came from various classes and backgrounds. They show more concern for the treatment of illegal foreign workers as “foreigners” than as “workers.” Few NGOs supporting foreign workers today are affiliated with Japanese communist or socialist organizations. Under this hypothesis, we should expect to find Rengo - an affiliate of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Zenrouren - an affiliate of the JCP, and Zenroukyo actively trying to establish labor solidarity by supporting foreign workers. Of the 55 million active workers in the economy, 14 millions are organized in Japan. Of the 14 million, these three labor institutions together organized approximately 12 million workers while the remaining 2 million workers are organized under several, independent community workers unions. It is only recently that these unions are beginning to offer support to foreign workers in their local offices, but only to those foreign workers that belong to enterprise unions (i.e. legal foreign workers). Instead, only independent community workers unions have been absorbing foreign workers into their union membership in Japan. These unions are politically weak in comparison to Rengo and Zenrouren. These independent unions usually do not spread Marxist propaganda among their foreign members. Although some Japanese NGO members consistently vote for the JCP and the SDP in elections, most are not party members. In fact, Mr. Yoshinari Katsuo, the founder of the Asian Peoples Friendship Society, expresses strong dissatisfaction with the JCP and equates it with other political parties, for he believes that the JCP is mainly preoccupied

with obtaining votes rather than political change.¹⁰⁴ Foreign workers, on the other hand, typically leave the organization after their cases have been resolved. Therefore the value placed on class-based solidarity seems insignificant on both sides. More importantly, foreigners today do not have the rights to vote in national elections unlike in Japan during the 1930s. Therefore, the incentive to mobilize foreigners for their votes has disappeared.

C. The Assessment

This structural hypothesis stresses the importance of class politics. It reminds us that class, as a unit of analysis, can play a significant role in explaining the organizations of socio-political life in Japan. According to this hypothesis, support groups exist to unite foreign workers with native workers on class grounds. It views Japanese members as being the vanguards for building a left-wing political base in Japan. It assumes that the capitalist and political elite is the enemy. Under this hypothesis, we expect to see Japanese members of foreigner support groups be affiliated with the JCP or the SDP. We also expect to find these people promoting Marxist ideals among foreign workers.

The bond between foreign workers and native workers in Japan transcends class. Although the JCP and the opposition coalition (SDP, Democratic Party, and Komeito) are currently pushing for voting rights for foreign residents in Japan, the coalition between these workers does not yet aim to build a political base.¹⁰⁵ Japanese members of the support groups are not affiliated with the JCP or the SDP and they do not promote Marxist ideals onto foreign workers. Foreign workers, on the other hand, do not profess loyalty to

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Mr. Yoshinari Katsuo of the Asian People Friendship Society in Tokyo, 17 December 1998

¹⁰⁵ *The Japan Times*, 7 October 1998

the support groups, for they typically leave the organizations soon after their cases have been resolved. Nevertheless, the hypothesis pushes us to look seriously at the importance of class and various labor organizations. It forces us to ask what the Japanese working class and their organizations are doing in regard to foreign workers.

1.3.4 Dynamics of Social Movement Organizations

A. The Argument

The fourth hypothesis contends that those Japanese, who share a common goal of social change, saw “political opportunities” open up with the entry of foreign workers and therefore formed support groups for foreign workers in Japan. These Japanese believe that it is advantageous to incorporate foreign workers into their organizations in order to strengthen their own movements. They then mount a challenge to the political order through disruptive direct action against elites, authorities, other groups, and cultural codes. Consequently, they become “organic intellectuals,” who struggle for the rights and welfare of foreign workers and help them develop their own consciousness. In short, what we are observing in Japan with these support groups is the dynamics of social movement organizations.

Studies of social movements can shed light on our understanding of the origin as well as the nature of native-established support groups for foreign workers in Japan. For instance, Sidney Tarrow attributes the birth of social movements to the “political opportunity structure.” Tarrow asserts that “social movements form when ordinary citizens, sometimes encouraged by leaders, respond to changes in opportunities that lower the costs of collective action, reveal potential allies and show where elites and authorities are

vulnerable.”¹⁰⁶ Japanese activists see political opportunities open up with the migration of foreign workers into Japan. As Claus Offe would have expected, these Japanese activists came from the middle class.¹⁰⁷ Hanspeter Kriesi further helps us understand the organizational and dynamic aspect of social movements. He distinguishes four types of formal organizations among new social movements: 1) social movement organizations (SMOs), 2) supportive organizations, 3) movement associations, and 4) parties and interest groups. Native-established support groups for foreign workers in Japan resemble Kriesi’s “supportive organizations” or “service organizations...which contribute to the social organization of the constituency of a given movement without directly taking part in the mobilization for collective action.” Kriesi explains that “‘supportive organizations’ may work on behalf of the movement, their personnel may sympathize with the movement, but their participation in the movement’s mobilization for action is at best indirect or accidental.”¹⁰⁸ This, in fact, describes many Japanese who join support groups for foreign workers. Most importantly, Kriesi’s SMO is dynamic.

An SMO can become more like a party or an interest group; it can take on characteristics of a supportive service organization; it can develop in the direction of a self-help group, a voluntary association or a club; or it can radicalize, that is, become an ever more exclusive organization for the mobilization of collective action.¹⁰⁹

Kriesi characterizes these four paths as 1) institutionalization, 2) commercialization, 3)

¹⁰⁶ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement. Social Movements, Collective Action, and Mass Politics in the Modern State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 18; idem., “States and Opportunities. The Political Structuring of Social Movements,” in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 41-61

¹⁰⁷ On the rise of “middle class radicalism” in new social movements, see Claus Offe, “New Social Movements Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics,” *Social Research* 52 (1985), pp. 817-868

¹⁰⁸ Hanspeter Kriesi, “The Organizational Structure of New Social Movements in a Political Context,” in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, eds., *op.cit.*, pp. 152-184 (152ff)

involution, and 4) radicalization, respectively. Kriesi's categorization helps explain how an SMO from the labor movement, for example, can develop into a supportive service organization. "Along this path," Kriesi writes, "an SMO puts an increasing emphasis on the provision of paid services to the members of its constituency."¹¹⁰

The social movement organizations differ in quality and structure from the class-based solidarity movement organizations that were prevalent during the pre-war years. Today's movement organizations exhibit no strong political party connection. The leadership of these organizations consists of experienced organizers and the organizational control over the memberships is loose. During the pre-war years, by contrast, movement organizations were closely linked to political parties and labor unions. The leaderships of the organizations were professional vanguards selected within the hierarchical frameworks of particular organizations and the memberships were tightly controlled.

B. The Critique

Why do "political opportunities" for Japanese activists open up with the growth of illegal foreign workers? Why Korean and Chinese permanent residents and other legal foreign workers do not join these support groups? In other words, why Japanese activists do not incorporate legal foreign workers into their social movement organizations? These questions remain puzzling under this hypothesis. It is important to realize that this puzzle contains two agents: illegal foreign workers and Japanese activists. This hypothesis successfully explains the motivation behind the Japanese activists. However, it says

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p 156.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*

nothing about foreign workers and does not explain why some foreign workers seek assistance from support groups and others do not. Like the previous hypothesis, it also cannot explain why foreign workers leave the groups after their cases are resolved and do not join the Japanese with the struggle for their cause.

C. The Assessment

Unlike the previous three explanations, this hypothesis offers an explanation that focuses on the agency of Japanese activists. It makes organizations its unit of analysis. These organizations, according to the logic of this hypothesis, function as a mechanism for Japanese activists to change government policies and popular attitudes toward the underprivileged in Japan. Hence, leaders of these NGOs are seen as “organizers” or “organic intellectuals.” Members of these organizations are expected to hold non-conflictual goals, because those who do not agree with the goals are expected to leave the organization. And the activities of these organizations are expected to be aggressive in their challenges against the political establishment.

This hypothesis offers a compelling explanation for the origin of these support groups and the nature of their activities as well as a working and dynamic typology for them. It can also shed light on why certain Japanese form support groups to help foreign workers in Japan and why others have joined these groups. Moreover, it can make predictions on the direction that each of these support groups will take in the future. However, this agency-based hypothesis does not explain why only illegal foreign workers turn to these groups for assistance, for it concentrates only on the agency of the Japanese activists. To successfully answer the puzzle, we must not ignore structural forces that set

different conditions for the activities of different foreign workers. Certainly, the creative activities of state actors and their policy-outcomes can play an important role in setting such conditions.

IV. A PROBLEM-SOLUTION APPROACH: JAPANESE ASSOCIATIVE ACTIVISTS AS PROBLEM SOLVERS

The contending hypothesis of this dissertation combines the government policies hypothesis with the dynamics of SMOs hypothesis by employing a problem-solution approach into the analysis. This approach builds on a pragmatist theory of action, where “the actors confront problems whether they want to or not; the solution to these problems, however, is not clearly prescribed beforehand by reality, but calls for creativity and brings something objectively new into the world.”¹¹¹ According to this hypothesis, Japanese associative activists are seen as “problem solvers.” Therefore we need to divide the explanation into two sections, one that deals with the “problem” and the other with the “solution.” The problem in this case is rooted in a political construction of the Japanese state and its policies. The solution involves institutional experimentation by Japanese activists and unintended transformative effects of this experimentation at the local level. Diagram 1 provides a schematic outline of the contending hypothesis, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

¹¹¹ Hans Joas, *Pragmatism and Social Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 4; also see idem., *The Creativity of Action* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). On pragmatism, see *inter alia* John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948); idem., *The Public and its Problem* (Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 1954); Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 1995); Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Russell B. Goodman, ed., *Pragmatism: A Contemporary Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

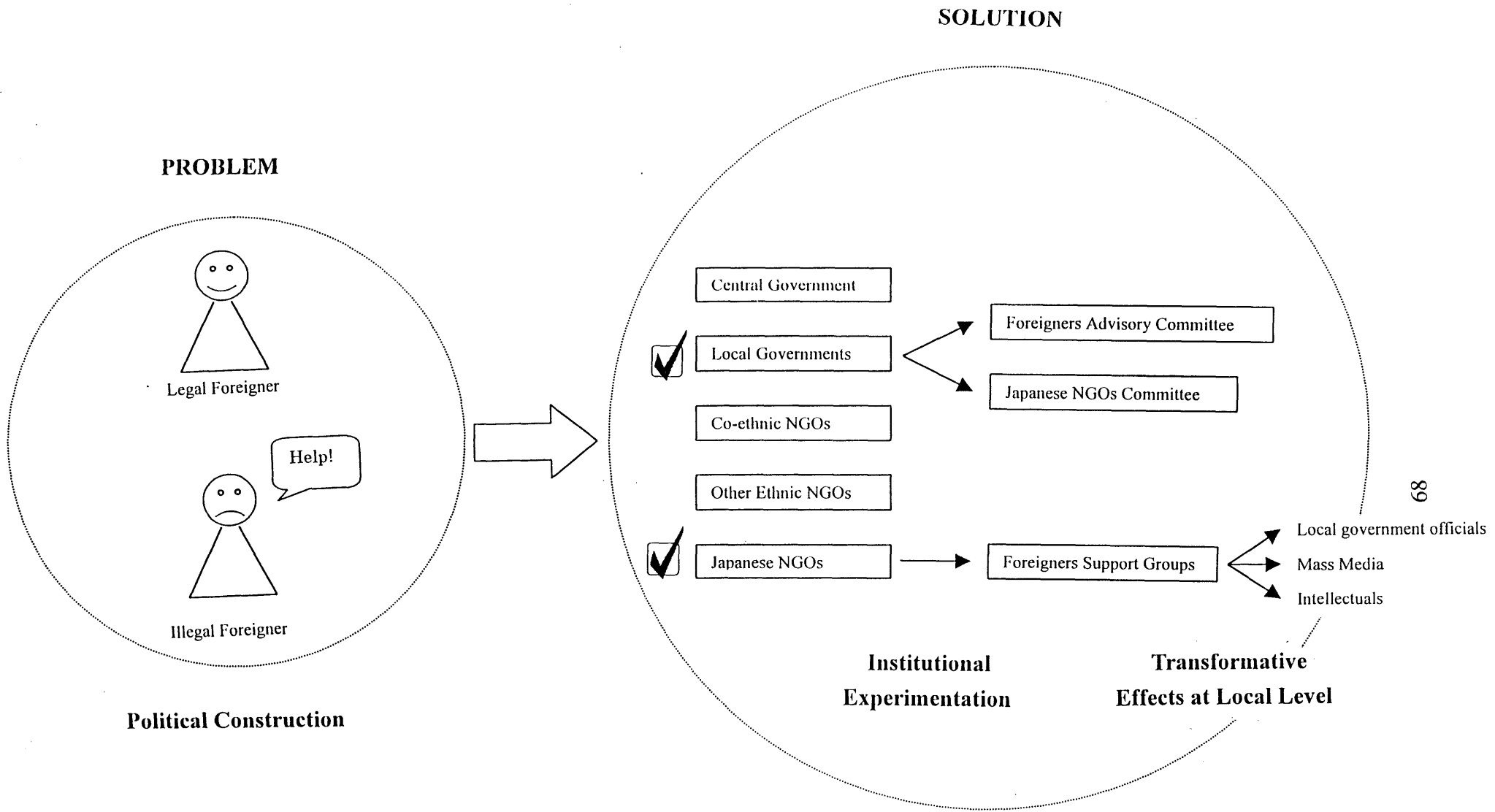


Diagram 1: The Problem-Solution Approach

1.4.2 Problem

Japanese actors unexpectedly confront problems that *illegal* foreign workers bring with them to their organizations, such as unpaid wages, unlawful dismissal, uncompensated accident insurance, inability to pay medical fees, forced prostitution, and physical abuse. These problems as well as the legal distinction between different types of foreigners in Japan, I argue in Chapter 2, are the political construction of the Japanese government. Businesses and Japanese brokers take advantage of foreign workers due to their “illegal” status. As illegal foreigners, public welfare services are mostly closed to them. They cannot form a “legitimate” self-help group themselves; because in doing so, they risk arrests and deportation. They exist in Japan by constantly hiding. The Japanese police, by feeding unsubstantiated information on criminal activities of some illegal foreigners to the mass media support a popular image of these people as unsavory and dangerous. Deprive of many means for self-help, these people seek professional assistance.

In contrast, legal foreign workers, such as *zainichi gaikokujin* (Japan-born foreigners), *Nikkeijin* (foreigners of Japanese descendants), and legal Asian workers, usually do not come to these groups for help, because they can obtain professional assistance from various service institutions, including their own “legitimate” self-help groups. The Japanese government also provides legal protection and has created various institutional means for them to express their views to the government. More importantly, these legally recognized foreigners can also create their own self-help groups to fight for their rights and for the improvement of their livelihood in Japan. In short, only “illegal” foreign workers, who often encounter serious labor problems and are excluded from public welfare services, seek help from these support groups.

1.4.2 Solution

A. Institutional Experimentation

Illegal foreign workers seek assistance from these particular Japanese-led organizations because of their reputation for helping the underprivileged in Japanese society. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, other forms of organization, such as government service organizations and co-ethnic associations, do not adequately support illegal foreign workers. Government service organizations provide basic information and interpretation services. Some local government agencies offer labor mediation service to illegal foreign workers, but they maintain a neutral stance in resolving problems and do not always side with the illegal foreign workers. Co-ethnic associations for Koreans and Chinese are highly political and concentrate their activities on helping the home country. Smaller co-ethnic associations for newly arrived foreigners function as social clubs that are primarily concerned with cultural and social activities. Large labor unions which organize workers through enterprise unions do not assist them because illegal foreign workers usually work in companies that are too small to have their own enterprise unions.

Japanese NGOs, on the other hand, can assist illegal foreign workers, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 4, because members of these groups have extensive experience in helping the underprivileged in the Japanese society. Despite their expertise in assisting the underprivileged, they still lack experience in working with foreigners. In order to provide requested services to illegal foreign workers, these Japanese must think creatively in the face of limited resources and restrictive governmental regulations against illegal foreign workers. They form separate institutions to extend services to specifically serve foreign

workers in order to share their expertise and raise necessary funds. Since they are acting against government legislation by helping illegal foreign workers, institutional experimentation and networking with other associations can help protect these activists from direct governmental reprisals. By volunteering to help illegal foreign workers, their fellow Japanese view these activists to be “on the margins” of the Japanese society.¹¹² With “associative activism,” they find meaning in their activities, for they can become part of a socially conscious community of activists, rather than remaining as isolated and marginalized individuals. Thus, they strive to increase memberships not only as a form of enlarging their operational fund and strengthening their bargaining power but also as a form of legitimizing their activities.

These organizations solve problems for illegal foreign workers. Once their problems are resolved, illegal foreign workers generally leave the organization. Activists in these organizations continue to strive to build a society where all such problems are resolved and there will be no need for their institutions. As they take on new cases, they discover that many of the problems illegal foreign workers face are structurally rooted and require a challenge to the political establishment in order to resolve them. To do this, they unite together as organized activists to pressure the government for change.

B. Transformative Effects at the Local Level

Problem-solving through action can provide “meaningful” and “educational” experience. Helping illegal foreign workers to resolve their problems and being part of the

¹¹² Carolyn S. Stevens, *On the Margins of Japanese Society: Volunteers and the Welfare of the Urban Underclass* (New York: Routledge, 1997). Stevens argues that regardless of their social backgrounds, Japanese considered all (social

support groups, Japanese activists realize that they share a common ideology of social justice and equality for all residents of Japan, including illegal foreign workers. Japanese activists, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, not only find meaning in their activities but also learn about the transformative effects that these activities can have on the mass media, intellectuals, and local governments. Moreover, institutional experimentation by these activists can produce an unintended consequence of achieving “democratic” deliberation. Their decision to separate themselves from the original organization and to institutionalize their activities into a different organization is an example of institutional experimentation that supports “democratic” deliberation to both marginalized Japanese activists and foreign residents of Japan at the local level. The importance of these Japanese NGOs propelled local governments to experiment with new representative institutions for foreigners. These institutions invite representatives from both legal foreign residents and NGO members who support illegal (as well as legal) residents. In this sense, associative action to help illegal foreign workers in Japan both provides immediate improvement of social conditions for illegal foreign workers and a forum to bring real changes in Japan’s political arena. “Associative activism” throws lights upon the hidden opportunities for democratic transformation in Japan and reorganizes the way in which Japan provides social welfare services to its residents. Under this reorganization, the central government provides rights and services to its legal residents while NGOs, with assistance from local governments, deliver similar rights and services to illegal ones.

In sum, the problem-solution approach explains how the Japanese state creates social problems that are left to its people to resolve, instead of the other way around. As a result,

welfare) volunteers that help the underclass, “marginal ”

Japan has made considerable achievements in the past two decades to accommodate immigration. Moreover, it has done so mostly through the assistance of societal actors in a way, which is surprisingly humanitarian for a culture that expresses insecurity and skepticism over foreigners.

1.4.3 Concepts and Definitions

The problem-solution approach analyzes the situation in Japan from two different levels: the problem and its origin at one level and the solution and its impact at the other. While liberals focus their attention on the preferences of the actors and Marxian scholars on the consequence of social action, this approach tries to present an overview of the whole situation through a problem-solution analysis. By doing so, we can determine what are the roots of the problem and the choices that the actors face. This type of analysis allows us to look closely at both foreign workers and Japanese activists as agents. Moreover, we can also use it to probe into the potential political consequences of social action.

The problem-solution approach makes several assumptions about the role of the actors and their associative activities. First, there are three types of actors in this dissertation: (a) Japanese employers, *yakuza*, state officials, and Japanese husbands; (b) illegal foreigners; and, (c) Japanese activists. Elective affinity results when one relation between two of these actors have been deliberately chosen in preference to another. The elective affinity of $(a + b)$ usually involves opportunity, hope, and promises between Japanese employers (*yakuza* and Japanese men) and illegal foreigners. The (bad) elements that separate the elective affinity $(a + b)$ are greed and physical abuse by a . The elective affinity of $(b + c)$ forms when b approaches c to seek assistance in solving b 's problems.

is the outcome of association and intercourse.”¹¹³ Institutional experimentation can result in the creation of secondary associations or “the wide range of nonfamilial organizations intermediate between individuals or firms and the institutions of the state and formal electoral system.”¹¹⁴ These secondary associations, which specifically include foreigners and NGO advisory councils that are established by local governments, can potentially yield a new form of democratic deliberation and extend participation in the political process to marginalized people in Japan.

V. METHODOLOGY

The task of identifying the true explanatory variable, whether structural or agent based, is subjected to the researcher’s bias in the choice of methodology. Certain social scientists concentrate on political variables such as laws and regulations to explain people’s social, economic, and political life.¹¹⁵ Understandably, such social scientists would employ a top-down approach to their studies by analyzing, for example, the influence of government policies onto the subject of their studies. As a result, human activities and social organizations are explained in terms of structural forces – namely the impact of government policies. Other social scientists prefer to examine human and organizational behavior at the individual and societal level. They often use a bottom-up approach by examining and interacting closely with the people in their studies. As a result, the agency emerges as the central explanatory variable for their analysis. While the top-down

¹¹³ Dewey, *The Public and its Problem*, p. 25

¹¹⁴ Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, “Secondary Associations and Democratic Governance” in Erik Olin Wright, ed., *Associations and Democracy* (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 7-98 (7ff).

¹¹⁵ For an excellent example, see Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1944)

approach gives little attention to the human potential for creative action, the bottom-up approach risks bias towards the subjects of the study. Therefore, it is a difficult challenge in balancing the structural explanatory variable with the agency explanatory variable. My research takes on this difficult methodological task by employing both approaches with careful academic neutrality. Specifically, I examine closely the influence of government policies on foreign workers and Japanese NGOs and also interact extensively with foreign workers, NGO activists, Japanese living in foreigner communities, and local government officials. By doing so, I hoped to develop a balanced view of both the structural and agency influence on the formation of support groups by Japanese. Thus, I hope to contribute to scientific progress with this dissertation by introducing new conceptual frames of reference to a study of social research and by accumulating new knowledge on foreign workers, NGOs, and associative activism in Japan.

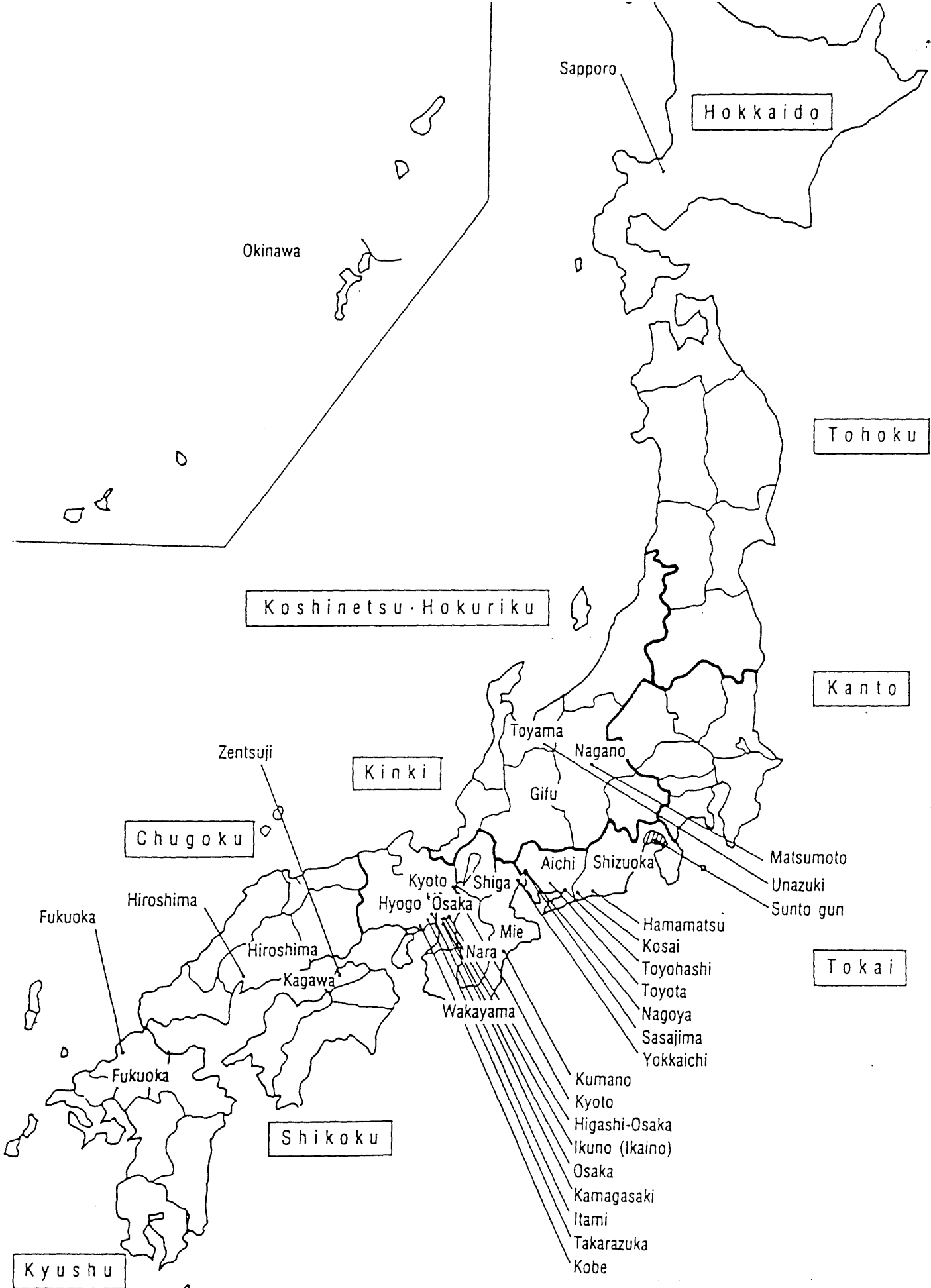
The empirical research is based on my preliminary fieldwork in the summer of 1996, my fieldwork during the entire year of 1998, and three follow-ups in May and June of 1999, November and December of 1999, and May of 2000. I chose to conduct my fieldwork in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Ibaraki because these areas each have a high density of foreign population while providing me with unbiased and most efficient samples to conduct an effective and manageable field research. Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Ibaraki have a relatively high density of both legal and illegal foreign workers (see Table 1.2). In particular, Kabuki-cho/Shin-Okubo in Tokyo, Kawasaki-shi and Kotobuki-cho in the Kanagawa prefecture, Oizumi-machi, Isesaki-shi, and Ohta-shi in the Gunma prefecture, and Tsuchiura-shi and Shimodate-shi in the Ibaraki prefecture have a relatively

Table 1.2: Number of Foreigners in Selected Areas in 1998

	Total Registered	Not Registered	Registered in Kanagawa	Registered in Tokyo	Registered in Gunma	Registered in Ibaraki
Korean	645,373	51,000	32,201	93,046	3,066	5,517
Chinese	252,164	47,000	20,920	73,955	2,608	4,695
Brazilian	233,254	N/A	15,434	5,301	13,933	9,216
Peruvian	40,394	10,000	6,682	2,058	3,280	1,542
Filipino	93,265	43,000	8,118	17,892	3,165	2,634
Thai	20,669	38,000	2,553	3,607	541	2,883
Indian	7,478	N/A	714	2,382	139	369
Bangladeshi	6,095	6,000	440	2,112	323	247
Pakistani	5,593	4,000	662	1,472	402	196
Iranian	7,946	8,500	980	1,934	520	645
Total	1,312,231	207,500	88,704	203,759	27,977	27,944

Source: Ministry of Justice

high percentage of foreign residents. For example, Japanese-descendant Brazilian and Peruvian men work in small-medium sized manufacturing sub-subcontracting firms in Gunma, Ibaraki, and Kanagawa. Thai and Filipina women work in snack bars while their male counterparts work illegally in small factories in politically conservative Ibaraki. In the town of Shimodate-shi in the Ibaraki prefecture, a conflict erupted when three Thai women murdered their boss and a support group was formed thereafter to assist these Thai women. Female entertainers from Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines dominate the “water trade” (prostitution) in Shin-Okubo and Kabuki-cho of Tokyo. Male construction and factory workers from Korea, the Philippines, and Bangladesh seek jobs at the Hiring Center in Kotobuki-cho in Kanagawa, one of Japan’s most progressive prefectures (see Map 1.1 and Map 1.2). These four areas also provide unbiased and most efficient samples for fieldwork. These localities are urban and rural; they are areas with foreign workers of diverse ethnicity and gender. There is also diversity in the industries in which foreign



Map 1.1: Area of Concentrated Foreign Workers in Japan

Tomo District

Ota

Oizumi

Isezaki

Warabi

Kawaguchi

Tama District

Musashino

Koganei

Akishima

Kokubunji

Kunitachi

Tachikawa

Gunma

Tochigi

Saitama

Ibaraki

Shimodate

Iwai

Tsuchiura

Arakawaok

Tokyo

Chiba

Kanagawa

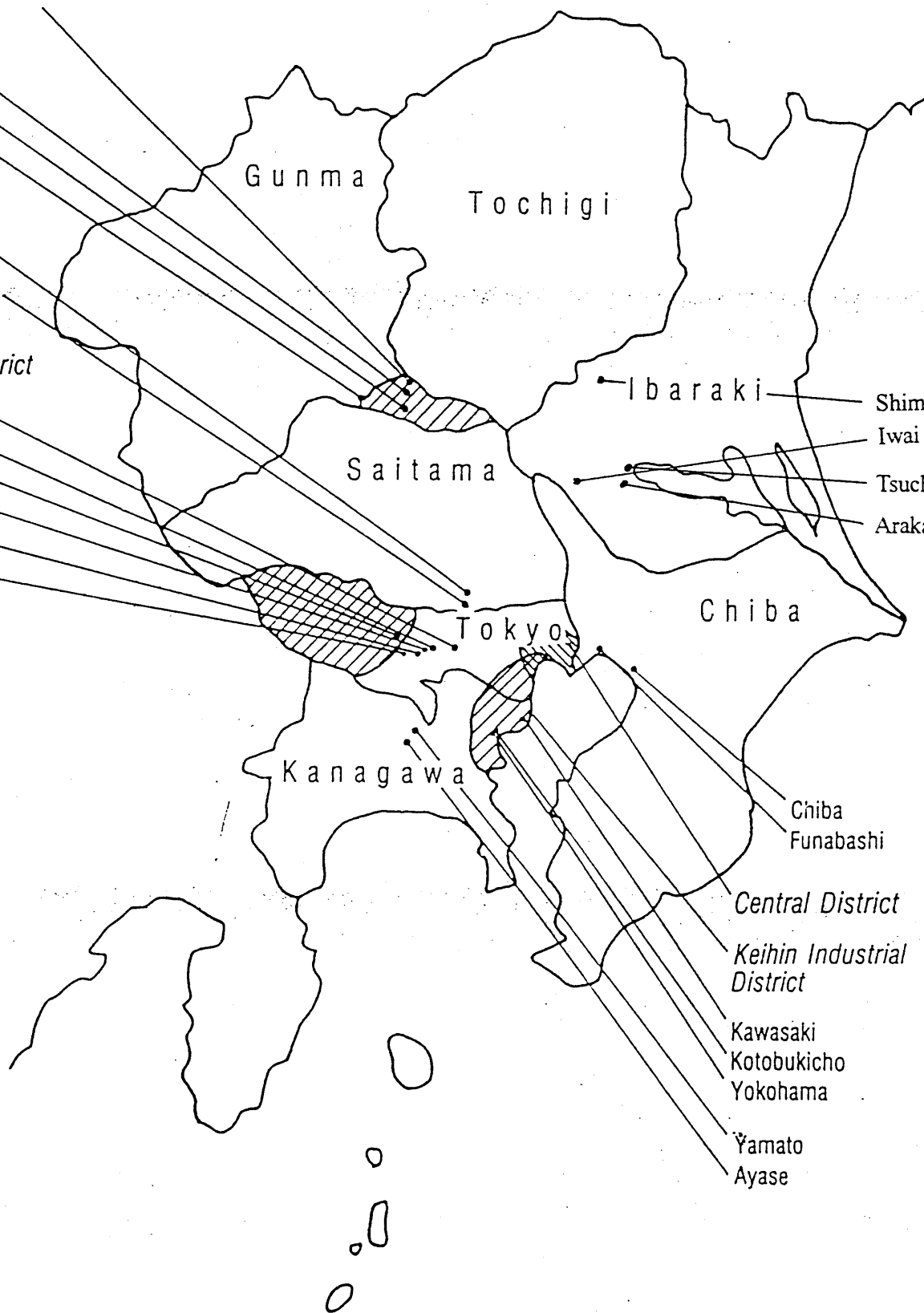
Chiba
Funabashi

Central District

Keihin Industrial District

Kawasaki
Kotobukicho
Yokohama

Yamato
Ayase



Map 2: Kanto

workers are engaged, the size of foreign communities, and the political orientations of each locality. Through a combination of various “matched pairs,” we can determine the value and nature of secondary associations in each of these areas.

For my analysis, I conducted 262 intensive and in-depth interviews.¹¹⁶ I interviewed 107 Japanese NGO leaders and volunteers, 19 co-ethnic volunteers, 62 foreign migrants (49 of which are illegal foreign workers), 36 officials from various local governments, 11 officials from the central government (the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare), 18 Japanese residents living in foreign communities inside Japan, 2 Thai brokers in Bangkok, 3 Japanese representatives of business associations (include the Keidanren), and an official at the International Labor Office (ILO) in Tokyo. The interview instrument for the support groups was a four-page questionnaire, which incorporated both structured and open-ended questions. My interviews were organized into eight main parts: basic information on the association, its membership and member activities, the historical development of the association, its organizational structure and rules, organizational resources, communications, its relations to the government and political activities, and relations to other groups within the community. Separate questionnaires exist for government officials, NGO people, foreign workers, and local residents. I did not set up appointments with illegal foreign workers before my interviews. Instead, I met them randomly in their communities and at the offices of the support groups. There, I engaged in a casual but systematic discussion with them. The discussion appeared casual, because I did not write

¹¹⁶ This number excludes about 120 telephone interviews with members of support groups in the rest of Japan. It also does not include casual conversations with foreign workers, Japanese activists, officials, and residents I encountered

down their answers at the time of the interview. I memorized their answers and recorded them immediately afterwards. It is systematic, because I asked all these illegal foreign workers similar questions. Those foreigners who I casually met for only a few moment and did not have a chance to ask them systematic questions, I did not include as part of my data. I conducted all the interviews - using Japanese with Japanese activists, government officials, and local residents; Thai with Thai workers; English with Filipinos, Indians, Bangladeshis, and Pakistanis; Spanish with Nikkei Peruvians and some Brazilians. The results of these interviews are recorded in separate data banks.

In addition to the interviews, I also employed various forms of participant observations: participating in a few union offensive activities, attending various organizational meetings and social gatherings of various groups (i.e. general meetings, executive committee meetings), attending National NGO Conferences (i.e. the National NGO Conference for Foreign Workers' Advocates in Atami in 1998, the National Forum of NGOs on Foreign Workers in Tokyo in 1999), sharing beer and *ofuro* (open bath) with several members of foreigners support groups, and working (illegally) in a Thai restaurant in Tokyo for one month (during my earlier stay in Japan). When I wandered around foreigners communities, I often ate ethnic foods in local restaurants with foreign workers, got my hair cuts in local barber shops, and talked to various types of people in the community (including gang members). For academic neutrality, I did not join or become a member of any group and I did not give suggestions, information, or advice to any of them. These forms of participant observation allowed me to observe the internal dynamics as well as the strategic planning of these support groups more closely. I also collected primary sources such as internal documents from these support groups and local governments and

secondary sources including newspapers clipping on foreign workers (covering the past 12 years), newsletters from all support groups, and published materials written by or about these group leaders.

Finally, I employed an institutional analysis in my study, because such an analysis is methodologically sound while providing me with an easy way to identify the causal variables. Moreover, it made my field research in Japan manageable and never, ever boring! Japanese support groups specifically include: labor unions for foreign workers; Christian human and foreign rights organizations; progressive law organization fighting for workers and human rights for foreigners; shelter homes for foreign women; organizations that provide medical treatments for injured or sick foreign workers; and, concerned citizens or neighborhood groups. Since no legal requirement exists in Japan that migrant associations should register with the government, I gathered the names and addresses of such associations from a variety of sources: *Manual for Migrant Workers*, *NGO Dairekutorii '98* [NGO Directory '98], *Directory of NGOs for Migrants in Asia*, *Human Rights, Refugees, Migrants & Development: Directory of NGOs in OECD Countries*.¹¹⁷ Some Japanese books on foreign workers in Japan also list several support groups in their appendixes.¹¹⁸ I also relied on the *meibo* (list of institutions) from the NGO group

¹¹⁷ Catholic Diocese of Yokohama Solidarity Center for Migrants (SOL), *Manual for Migrants* (Kawasaki: SOL, 1997), Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), *NGO dairekutorii '98* [NGO Directory '98] (Tokyo: JANIC, 1998); Scalabrini Migration Center, *Directory of NGOs for Migrants in Asia* (Quezon City: Scalabrini Migration Center, 1994, 1997); OECD, *Human Rights, Refugees, Migrants & Development. Directory of NGOs in OECD Countries* (Paris: Development Center of the OECD, 1993)

¹¹⁸ Some useful books include Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainichi gaikokujin jinken hakusho* [White Paper on the Human Rights for Foreigners of Japan] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997); Temmyo Yoshiomi, ed., *Gaikokujin roudousha to roudousaigai* [Foreign Workers and Industrial Accidents] (Tokyo: Kaifuu Shobou, 1991), Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, ed., *Ajiajin dekasegi roudousha teshou* [The Asian Worker's Handbook] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1990), idem., ed., *Okasareru jinken - gaikokujin roudousha* [Violated Human Rights - Foreign Workers] (Tokyo: Daisan Shokan, 1992); Karabao-no-kai, ed., *Nakama jya nai ka, gaikokujin roudousha* [Foreign Workers, Aren't they our Comrades?] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995); National Network of Community Union, ed., *Yuunyon-Ningen-Nettowaaku* [Union-People-Network] (Tokyo: Dai-ichi Shounin, 1993); CALL Network, ed., *Anata no machi no gaikokujin*

Kalabaw-no-kai, which maintains a reasonably comprehensive list and receives newsletters from most active support groups in the Kanto region (Metropolitan Tokyo). The *meibo* from the publications of previous National Forums of NGOs on Foreign Workers, which provide a list of all support groups that attend each Forum, also proves to be useful.¹¹⁹ I also obtained the register of associations through methodological fieldwork, obtaining names and addresses by word of mouth and then checking them personally through a telephone survey of all immigrant support groups in Japan with preliminary screening questions on their activities and founding members. A list of foreigners support groups in Japan is provided in the Appendix. This is certainly not a complete list of foreigners support groups in Japan, but it is the most comprehensive that exists today.¹²⁰ In order to make my research manageable, support groups in my study do not include Japanese language volunteer groups (Tokyo alone has more than 400 of these groups). In addition to these Japanese NGOs, I also visit other institutions, such as ethnic associations, regional international exchange associations, and various government agencies, to find out about their activities towards illegal foreign workers.

[Foreigners of your Town] (Tokyo, Dai-ichi Shounin, 1991), Nakagiri Shingo and Takayama Toshio, eds., *Subete no gaikokujin ni tryou hoken wo* [Health Insurance to All Foreigners] (Tokyo: Kaifuu, 1992)

¹¹⁹ Specifically, the summary publications from the following forums: *Dai-ichikai Kantou gaikokujin roudousha mondai foramu* [First Kanto Forum on Problems of Foreign Workers] Saitama, 1991, *Dai-nikai Kantou koushinetsu gaikokujin roudousha mondai foramu* [Second Kanto-Koushin'etsu Forum on Problems of Foreign Workers] Gunma, 1992, *Gaikokujin roudousha mondai zenkoku kouryuu shuukai houkokushuu* ['95 Forum for Foreign Workers' Rights] Osaka, 1995, *Dai-ichikai ijuu (gaikokujin) roudousha mondai zenkoku foramu houkokushuu* [First National Forum on Problems of (Foreign) Migrant Workers] Fukuoka, 1996, *Dai-nikai ijuu roudousha mondai zenkoku foramu houkokushuu* [Second National Forum on Problems of Migrant Workers] Aichi, 1997, *Dai-sankai ijuu roudousha to rentai suru zenkoku foramu* [Third National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers] Tokyo, 1999

¹²⁰ My list is complicated by the fact that a main organization often forms sub-associations, so that they appear to be several organizations, whereas in reality they ought to be treated as one single organization. It also may be the case that an organization launched by a "mother" association takes on a life of its own

VI. CONCLUSION

A pragmatist approach can help us understand why Japanese people established support groups to help illegal foreign migrants in their midst. Such approach, which examines both structural and agency forces, looks at Japanese activists as problem solvers. They try to resolve serious problems that illegal foreign workers encounter. This begs the question: why illegal foreign workers in Japan face serious problems? I believe that the roots of the problems faced by illegal foreign workers in Japan lie in the political construction of the Japanese state and its policies.

CHAPTER 2

THE POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN JAPAN

The conditions for foreign workers in Japan vary considerably according to their legal status. The illegal foreign workers, who overstayed their visas or have entered Japan illegally, encounter serious labor problems. They usually are the ones that ultimately seek help from Japanese-established support groups. As illegal foreign workers, Japanese businesses and brokers take advantage of their underprivileged positions. Moreover, these illegal aliens cannot form their own self-help groups, because such groups will signal their presence to the authorities and thereby stand the risk for arrests and deportation. In contrast, most legal foreign workers do not seek services from the Japanese-established NGOs, because the Japanese government provides legal protection and has created various institutions to assist them. In addition, legal foreigners can form their own self-help groups to support their own people. Such institutions and public services are absent for the illegal foreign workers. Thus, their illegality directly effects the conditions under which they must live in Japan.

Karl Polanyi argues that present social and economic conditions are embedded in state actions through various government policies. Similarly, the social conditions for foreign workers in Japan are a political construction of the Japanese state. The Japanese state creates a two-tiered labor market for unskilled foreign workers: legal and illegal foreign workers. It is the latter that suffers gravely and ultimately seeks assistance from Japanese NGOs. The causes of such sufferings are rooted in the actions of the Japanese government and its policies. Hence the “problem” is the various conditions that illegal foreign workers must face in Japan. And the roots of this problem lie on the Japanese state.

The argument in this chapter is organized into five sections. The first section provides a sociological and legal typology of foreign workers in Japan. The second section

discusses the impact of various government policies on different types of foreign workers. The third section examines the social consequences of being illegal foreign workers in Japan. The fourth section explores how agencies of the Japanese state have “molded” the minds of Japanese people on their views about illegal foreign workers. The fifth section summarizes the argument of this chapter. In addition to the argument that the Japanese government creates the “problem” that Japanese activists hope to resolve, this chapter also provides historical background to the existence of foreign workers in Japan and Japanese reaction to them.

I. TYPOLOGY OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN JAPAN

More than 1.5 million foreigners in Japan registered with their local wards in 1997. Although a small percentage of skilled Caucasian workers exist in Japan, foreigners from Korea, China, Brazil, the Philippines, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iran comprised of 87 percent of all registered foreigners in Japan. The Immigration Bureau estimated that another 276,810 foreigners overstayed their visa.¹ About half of the foreigners in Japan are recent immigrants, who come to Japan to work in jobs that natives do not want. Japanese called these jobs “*san-kei*” (3Ks): *kitanai* (dirty), *kisui* (difficult), and *kiken* (dangerous).²

Foreign workers in Japan, excluding the skilled Caucasian workers, can be divided into legal and illegal ones. Legal foreign workers consist of *zainichi gaikokujin* (Koreans and Chinese that are born in Japan), *Nikkeijin* (Japanese that are born abroad, particularly in

¹ Japan Immigration Association, *1997 Statistics on Immigration Control* (Tokyo: Nyukan Kyokai, 1998).

² Komai Hiroshi, *Gaikokujin roudousha wo miru me* [Looking at Foreign Workers] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1990).

Latin America), and trainees from Asia.³ Illegal foreign workers include East Asian men and women, South Asian men, and Iranian men. Table 2.1 summarizes the categories of foreign workers according to their sociological traits as well as their legal status. The details of their characteristics are discussed below.

2.1.1 Legal Foreign Workers

A. *Zainichi Gaikokujin*

The first group of foreigners consists of about 680,000 Koreans and 215,000 Chinese who have lived in Japan for over three or four generations and chose not to become naturalized Japanese citizens to protect their own ethnic identity and to maintain their distinct cultures. Since Japan grants citizenship according to the principle of *jus sanguinis* ('law of blood' or parental nationality) rather than on the basis of *jus soli* ('law of soil' or nationality based on place of birth), Koreans and Chinese who were born in Japan constitute foreigners by the Japanese law.⁴ Kajita Takamichi, a sociologist at Hitotsubashi University, calls this group "sociological Japanese;" that is, they are "born in Japan," but do not have "Japanese blood."⁵

For these people, the government grants them "permanent resident" status. Under this status, they are free to live and work in Japan, but are not allowed to vote in the

³ T.J. Pempel reminds me that Caucasians, who are working mostly in the service sector in urban areas and teaching English under the JET Program in rural areas of Japan, can also be categorized under legal foreign workers. I do not include them here because of their relatively "privileged" position in the Japanese society. Caucasians, who enjoy semi-extraterritorial rights in comparison to other foreign workers, can call upon the protection of their home states if they ever need it. Moreover, they rarely face the kinds of problems that other foreigners encounter.

⁴ On *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*, see Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 1-34; 75-84.

⁵ Kajita Takamichi, "The Challenge of Incorporating Foreigners in Japan: 'Ethnic Japanese' and 'Sociological Japanese'" in Myron Weiner and Tadashi Hanami, eds., *Temporary Workers or Future Citizens? Japanese and U.S. Migration Policies* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), pp. 120-147.

Table 2.1: Typology of Foreign Workers in Japan by Legal Status and Sociological Traits

Type of Foreigner	Sociological Type	Sociological Traits and Sources of Prejudice	Occupation	Type of Legal Documentation	Individual Discrimination	Institutional Support
A. Legal Foreign Workers						
1. <i>Zainichi gaikokujin</i> (Korean, Chinese)	"Sociological Japanese"	Blood (born in Japan; different blood)	Restaurants; pachinko parlors; self-employed	"permanent resident"	Certain employment; housing	Self-help groups; local governments
2. <i>Nikkeijin</i> (Brazilians, Peruvians)	"Ethnic Japanese"	Culture (same blood; born & raised abroad)	Manufacturing with >20 employees	"spouse or child of a Japanese national"; "long-term resident"	Housing (but most stay in company dorms); pools	Government agencies (MoL, JICA, local governments)
3. Asian Workers (Chinese, Filipino, Thai Indonesian)	Non-Japanese	Similar racial descent and culture	Manufacturing; entertainment	"trainee visa" "entertainer visa"		JITCO; local governments
B. Illegal Foreign Workers						
1. East Asians (Korean, Filipino, Chinese, Thai)	Non-Japanese	Similar racial descent and culture	Entertainment (female); construction (male); manufacturing (male) with < 20 employees	"temporary visitor" "entertainer visa" "pre-collge student" "college student"	Housing; constant suspicion; public baths; love hotels (women)	Japanese NGO Christian NGO; women groups; lawyers NGO; medical NGO
2. South Asian Men (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi)		Similar racial descent but dissimilar culture (religion) and skin color	Construction; manufacturing (with < 20 employees)	"temporary visitor" no visa requirement for Bangla & Pakis until 1989	Constant suspicion	workers unions; concerned citizens groups; lawyers NGO; medical NGO
3. Iranian Men		Different racial descent and culture (religion)	Construction; manufacturing (with < 20 employees)	no visa requirement until 1993	Constant suspicion	workers unions; concerned citizens groups; lawyers NGO; medical NGO

national election (and some local elections) and to work in the national civil service (except as teaching staff of national or public universities). *Zainichi* Koreans run *yakiniku* (barbecue beef) shops, *yakitori* (barbecue chicken) stalls, and many *pachinko* (pinball) parlors while *zainichi* Chinese operate many Chinese restaurants in Japan. Some *zainichi gaikokujin* also join the Japanese corporate world. Japanese management treats them relatively the same as Japanese workers by guaranteeing them life-time employment and paying them bonuses like other Japanese employees. If discrimination occurs, it is usually during the hiring and promotion process. Such discrimination also occurs among many Japanese women, Burakumin, and ethnic minorities, who are working in Japanese companies. To avoid such discrimination, some *zainichi gaikokujin* have left Japanese corporate establishments and started a business of their own.⁶ Most *zainichi* Koreans live around Osaka and Kobe, in Kawasaki in the Kanagawa prefecture, Adachi and Kita wards in Tokyo, and Kitakyushu. *Zainichi* Chinese mostly lives in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kobe. Japan's most famous China town is located in Yokohama. Plans to build a Korean town in Osaka and Kawasaki are in the making.

The *zainichi* Koreans and Chinese are split into two groups within their own communities in accordance to their political alignment. The division of Korea into South and North Korea splits the Korean community in Japan, and prompts alignment of ethnic Korean self-help groups with either South Korea or North Korea.⁷ *Zainichi* Koreans who sympathize with South Korea belong to the Korean Union in Japan (在日本大韓民国国民団

⁶ For an example of a success story of a *zainichi gaikokujin* in Japan, see Sheryl Wudunn, "An Entrepreneurial Exception Rides the Internet in Japan," *The New York Times* (July 26, 1999), p. C10.

⁷ See Hai Kyung Jun, "The Role of the Home Country in Shaping Assimilation and Attachment: The Case of Koreans in Japan" (MS Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Political Science, 1996).

or *Mindan* for short), while those who sympathize with North Korea join the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (在日本朝鮮人総連合会 or *Souren* for short). Similarly, *zainichi* Chinese align themselves either with Taiwan or the People Republic of China. But unlike the *zainichi* Koreans, the bipolar Overseas Chinese Associations for *zainichi* Chinese in Japan do not have a central headquarters. Because each type of these political-oriented self-help groups also sponsors its own ethnic school, most *zainichi* Koreans and Chinese inevitably become involved in one of these groups when they decide where to send their children to school.

Ethnic self-help groups without political alignment also exist in *zainichi gaikokujin* communities. For example, the Council for Combating Discrimination against Ethnic People in Japan (民族差別と戦う連絡協議会 or *Mintouren*) serves the *zainichi* Koreans around the country since 1974. For the *zainichi* Chinese, many continue to use their “native place associations” (*huiguan*) as social clubs and benevolent societies, which provide hospitals, Chambers of Commerce, and schools. The Fujian association, for example, offers general advice on problems in education, marriage, and employment. It established a youth group and a marriage agency, made efforts to maintain ties with relatives in China, and organized regular trips to the mainland.

Zainichi Koreans and Chinese complain of continued discrimination in housing and of humiliation for having to carry an alien passbook bearing photo, fingerprints, and personal data. From 1952 to 1992, many *zainichi gaikokujin* felt humiliated for being required to carry their alien registration card bearing their pictures and fingerprints, for fingerprinting is only done to criminals. However, this group of foreigners receives comprehensive social and welfare benefits from the government. According to a 1998

survey conducted by the *Mindan* in the Hyogo prefecture, 128 out of 322 (40 percent) respondents of surveyed Korean households have experienced housing discrimination.⁸ Of these 128, 113 said they were discriminated against because they were “foreigners.” According to the survey, some Koreans stated that they have been refused housing on the grounds that the place would smell of garlic. But housing discrimination against *zainichi gaikokujin* is far less than other groups of foreigners. Moreover, there is no noticeable discrimination against them in terms of the availability of public-subsidized apartments.

B. *Nikkeijin*⁹

The second group of legal foreign workers includes approximately 282,000 *Nikkeijin*, about 234,000 from Brazil, 40,000 from Peru, 3,300 from Argentina, 3,300 from Bolivia, and 1,500 from Paraguay.¹⁰ *Nikkeijin* in Japan consist of a relatively equal number of male and female, mostly between 20 and 35 years old. Japanese consider them both “ethnic Japanese” and “foreign workers.” *Nikkeijin* are typically second and third generation “Japanese” who are born and raised in South America. They are not ethnic immigrants returning to their home country, but migrants who come to work in Japan. In his 1998 survey of 2,054 *Nikkeijin* in Hamamatsu-shi (Shizuoka) and Toyoda-shi (Aichi), Kajita found that 79.9 percent of the *Nikkeijin* returned to Japan to find work while only 6.7

⁸ *The Japan Times*, December 28, 1998, p. 2.

⁹ For information on *Nikkeijin* in Japan, I thank Professor Kajita Takamichi and his collaborators Higuchi Naoto and Tanno Kiyoto at the Hitotsubashi University, who graciously shares information and survey before its publication with me. Most of the information on this section comes from Kajita Takamichi, ed., *Toransunasyonaru na kankyou sita deno aratana ijuu purosesu – dekasegi 10 nen wo heta Nikkeijin no shakaigakuteki chosa hougoku* [New Migration Process under a Transnational Environment: a Sociological Survey Study of *Nikkeijin* after 10 Years] (Tokyo: Hitotsubashi University, Sociology Department, 1999).

¹⁰ Ministry of Justice, *Toudou fukan bestu-kokuseki betsu gaikokujin tourokujin-in* (Tokyo: Ministry of Justice, 1997).

percent to visit family or relatives in Japan.¹¹ In addition, Japanese look unto *Nikkeijin* with prejudice like other foreigners.¹² Takeyuki Tsuda explains, “although the bloodline of most of the *Nikkeijin* descendants remains pure Japanese and has been ‘untainted’ by foreign blood, they have become polluted on the cultural level by foreign influences because of their...[foreign] birth and upbringing.”¹³ Although they look Japanese, many *Nikkeijin* cannot speak Japanese well. Kajita finds that only 11.7 percent of the *Nikkeijin* have a good command of the Japanese language.¹⁴

Most *Nikkeijin* work for sub-subcontractors in Toyoda-shi in the Aichi prefecture, Hamamatsu-shi in the Shizuoka prefecture, Ohta-shi, Isezaki-shi, and Oizumi-machi in the Gunma prefecture, and various places in the Kanagawa prefecture.¹⁵ In Oizumi-machi in Gunma, *Nikkeijin* constitute 11.25 percent of the total population.¹⁶ *Nikkeijin* tend to be employed in the manufacturing or services sectors with more than 20 employees. They are generally in high demand and receive good salaries, sometimes earning higher hourly wages than Japanese full-time workers. According to one survey, *Nikkei* men and women earned an average of 336,600 yen and 204,400 yen per month, respectively.¹⁷ Although they receive good wages, *Nikkeijin* rarely receive bonuses like their Japanese and *zainichi*

¹¹ Kajita Takamichi, “Dekasegi 10 nengo no nikkei burajirujin: 1998 nen no nikkeijin roudousha ankeeto shosa ni kizuka saikensho” [Japanese Brazilians after 10 Years’ Stay in Japan: Reexamination of their Reality of Life according to a Questionnaire to the Brazillian Workers in 1998] *Kokusai Kankeigaku Kenkyu* [Studies of International Relations] No. 25(March 1999).

¹² Yoko Selleck, “Nikkeijin: The Phenomenon of Return Migration,” in Michael Weiner, ed., *op.cit.*, pp. 178-210.

¹³ Tsuda Takeyuki, “The Stigma of Ethnic Difference: The Structure of Prejudices and “Discrimination” toward Japan’s New Immigrant Minority” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24:2 (summer 1998), pp. 317- 359 (342ff).

¹⁴ Kajita, “Dekasegi 10 nengo,” pp. 5-6.

¹⁵ Sellek, “Nikkeijin: The Phenomenon of Return Migration,” p. 194.

¹⁶ Gunma Prefectural Government, *Gaikokujin touroku shi-cho-sonbestu jin'in chosahyou* [Statistics on Foreigners Registration by City, Town, Village for 1997] (Maebashi, Gunma: Gunma Prefectural Government International Section, 1998).

¹⁷ Kokusai Kyouryoku Jigyoudan, *Nikkeijin honpou shuurou jittai chousa houkokusho* (Tokyo: Kokusai Kyouryoku Jigyoudan, 1992); also see Japan Institute of Labor, *Nikkeijin roudousha no jukyuu shisutemu to shuurou keiken* (Tokyo:

counterparts. Since they are mostly temporary workers, *Nikkeijin* are not guaranteed lifetime employment. Nor can they rely on regular pay increases or promotion in accordance with the length of their employment. Kajita finds that about two third of the *Nikkeijin* live in company housing.¹⁸

These people enter Japan with a “spouse or child of a Japanese national” visa. After three years, the Japanese government can grant them the “long-term resident” status. Under these legal statuses, they can work legally in Japan, but cannot vote or work in the civil service. *Nikkeijin* enjoy full access to medical care and public health services. Local governments have also been institutionally receptive to the *Nikkeijin*, allowing them to fully participate and benefit from local government services such as Japanese language classes, health insurance programs, and public-subsidized apartments.¹⁹ Overall, Kajita finds, two third of the *Nikkeijin* express satisfaction with their conditions in Japan.²⁰

C. Legal Asian Workers

Legal workers from Asia comprise about 50,000 trainees and 200,000 spouses of Japanese nationals. These trainees mostly come from industrializing countries where Japanese multinational corporations have established strong presence such as China (PRC), Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.²¹ According to the Ministry of Justice, a “trainee” is only allowed to engage in “activities to learn and acquire the technology, skills or

Japan Institute of Labor, 1995).

¹⁸ Kajita, “Dekasegi 10 nengo,” pp. 5-6.

¹⁹ Tsuda, “The Stigma of Ethnic Difference,” p. 349.

²⁰ Kajita, “Dekasegi 10 nengo,” pp. 5-6.

²¹ For a fascinating theoretical exploration of how multinational corporations can turn workers in host countries into migrants in their home country, see Saskia Sassen, *The Mobility of Labor and Capital: A Study in International Investment and Labor Flow* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1994).

knowledge at public or private organizations in Japan.” The visa is issued for either 3 months or 6 months or one year. Most trainees, who are mostly in their 20s, undergo training in small firms of the manufacturing sector (particularly in the textile and machine tools industry) in the Tokyo metropolitan area, Tokai (Aichi, Shizuoka, and Gifu), Kansai (Osaka and Hyogo) and Northern Kanto (Ibaraki, Tochigi, and Gunma). Many Asian workers who have entered Japan under a “trainee program” are not necessarily better off than their “illegal” compatriots. Since the authorized activities of a trainee are confined to acquiring skills and other knowledge, Japanese immigration law forbids a trainee to work and to receive remuneration for their training (compensation is limited to commuting and living expenses). Hence, they receive low wages. According to 1998 data of 26,075 foreign trainees supported by the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO), 83.9 percent of the trainees received a monthly compensation of less than 110,000 yen (less than 1,000 U.S. dollars).²² As foreign “trainees” and not “workers,” they are not protected under the Japanese labor laws. Workers’ Accident Compensation Insurance, for example, does not cover accidents that trainees may encounter in the course of training. Since most trainees sign a contract with their host companies before they come to Japan, cases of trainees being detained against their will are not uncommon. Usually, such contracts include clauses that the trainees must obey the host’s instructions (within reason) and that they may not abandon the training before the full period is over. These clauses give the employer enormous power over the trainees. Komai comments that “for the trainees, abandoning the program means not only being deported and having to repay debts to the host company, but also carries the possibility of being sued for damages, making

²² Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO) at <http://www.jitco.or.jp> (9 June 2000)

it...impossible for them to quit.”²³ If they have grave complaints about their conditions, they must bear them patiently. But cases of where foreign trainees abandon the trainee program do occur, particularly among Chinese trainees. Inadequate training and low allowance have caused many foreign trainees to abandon the trainee program and find work themselves as illegal foreign workers, where wages usually doubled those of their trainee allowance. One Indonesian man, who abandoned his training program along with 15 other countrymen, explains,

[t]he contents of the training were inadequate, for the training was only one month long...I was dissatisfied with the training system, because we trainees received only 80,000 yen monthly...This system pretends to be a training system, though it is in reality a labor system. If I had received enough training, I would have been satisfied with the allowance of 80,000 yen, and would not have complained.²⁴

Most Asian women who are married to Japanese men come from South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand. Some came to Japan as mail-ordered brides to Japanese men in the countryside, where there is a dearth of available women. Japanese farmers, who often were already in their late 30s or early 40s, and their elderly parents, who considered their sons' marriage as a hopeless case, typically viewed new foreign brides as a source of joy. For new foreign brides, things begin to look differently as soon as they arrived into Japan. Unfamiliarity with Japan's language, culture, religion, and climate was to be expected, but harsh conditions of the farm life and social disciplines by Japanese mother-in-laws could be overwhelming. Other foreign women came to work in the entertainment industry and overstayed their visas before marrying Japanese men. In other words, many of those who are now legal residents due to their marriage with a Japanese national were at one time

²³ Komai Hiroshi, *Migrant Workers in Japan* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1995), p. 51.

“illegal.” Although the Ministry of Justice has granted a regular visa status (a special permit to stay in Japan) to those overstayed foreigners who married Japanese nationals, being married to a Japanese does not necessarily eliminate all the legal concerns for non-Japanese spouses. In fact, it may create new legal problems, particularly those concerned with foreign spouses not being allowed to be listed in the family register of a Japanese national. Various social and legal consequences arise when the intercultural couple must present their family register, that does not list the name of the foreign spouse, in order to buy a condominium, apply for public loans, and find schools for their children.

2.1.2 Illegal Foreign Workers

Illegal foreign workers, who overstayed their visas or entered Japan with forged passports or by illegal methods, mostly come from Asian countries. More than half of overstayed foreign workers entered Japan under the status of “temporary visitor.”²⁵ Other visas such as “pre-college student,” “entertainer,” and “college student” follow respectively.²⁶ The Immigration Bureau calculated that about 475,000 newly arrived Asian foreigners (those without long-term status or 非永住者) registered at the end of 1997 while

²⁴ *Kalabaw* 34 (June 1998): 4-6.

²⁵ According to the Ministry of Justice, a “temporary visitor” is allowed to engage only in activities such as, “sightseeing, recreation, sports, visiting relatives, going on inspection tours, participating in lectures or meetings, business contact or other similar activities during a short period of stay in Japan.” The visa is issued for 15 days or 60 days.

²⁶ According to the Ministry of Justice, a “pre-college student” is allowed to engage in “activities to receive education at high schools, high schools courses of schools for the blind or of handicapped children’s schools, higher of general courses of advanced vocational schools (“Senshugakko”), or vocational schools (“Kakushugakko”),...or the other educational institute which are equivalent to vocational schools in facilities and curriculum.” The visa is issued for either 3 months or 6 months or one year. An “entertainer” is allowed to engage in such activities as: “theatrical performances, musical performances, sports, any other show business.” The visa is issued either for 6 months or one year. A “college student” is allowed to engage in “activities to receive education at college or equivalent educational institutions, specialized courses of study at advanced vocational schools (“Senshugakko”), educational institutions designated for preparing persons who have completed 12 years of education at school in foreign countries to enter college, of ‘Koto Senmongakko.’” The visa is issued for either 6 months or one year.

another 276,000 or so were overstaying their visa.²⁷ In other words, of every five newly arrived Asian we meet in Japan, about two are most likely to be overstaying their visa.²⁸ In the case of the Thais in Japan, two out of three Thais overstay their visa. If we were to include the number that are smuggled into Japan undetected by the Immigration Bureau, particularly the Chinese, the ratio of “illegal” Asians to legal ones would be even higher. In fact, the “official” number of illegal foreign workers peaked in 1993 with 298,646 people, but declined in 1998 due to repeated raids conducted by the Immigration Bureau and several police departments. In 1997, the Japanese government apprehended 49,566 foreigners for violating the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. Illegal foreign workers accounted for 41,604 cases, or 83.9 percent, of the total violations.²⁹ There were 25,781 men and 15,823 women. The latter were mostly from Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand.³⁰

About two-thirds of illegal foreign workers worked in the Kanto region (Tokyo metropolitan area). Male workers work as construction workers, factory workers, and

²⁷ Ministry of Justice, *Heisei 9 nenmatsu genzai ni okeru gaikokujin tourokusha tokei ni tsuite* [Statistics of Foreigner Registration at the End of 1997] (Tokyo: Circular of the Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau, June 1998); *idem.*, *Heisei 9 nen ni okeru nyuukanhou ihan jiken ni tsuite* [Cases on the Violation of the Immigration Control Law in 1997] (Tokyo: Circular of the Ministry of Justice Immigration Bureau, June 1998).

²⁸ On a life of an illegal Filipino worker in Japan, see Ray Ventura, *Underground in Japan* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992).

²⁹ According to the Immigration Control Act, the following constitutes illegal working.

In case a foreign national having the status of residence which permits him to work, has engaged without obtaining permission for an activity of running an income-generating business or an activity for receiving remuneration, which is outside the scope of activities permitted by his status of residence.

In case he has, having the status of residence which does not permit him to work and not obtaining the permission of engaging in extra-status-of-residence activities, engaged in an activity of running an income-generating business or an activity for receiving remuneration.

In case he has stayed and worked beyond the designated period of day.

See Ministry of Labor, “For Foreign Nationals Wishing to Work in Japan,” (Tokyo: Public Employment Security Office, pamphlet), p. 2.

Table 2.2: Characteristics of Overstayed Asian Workers

Type of Foreigner	n	Occupation	Monthly Salary	Education	Gender	Age	In Japan Since
Korean	1	DL	\240,000	HS	Male	20s	1998
Chinese (Taiwan)	3	R/S	N/A	N/A	Female	30s, 40s	1988
Filipino	5	C/E	\327,000	BA,BS	Both	25-42	1987
Thai	20	E/S	\283,000	Below HS	Both	25-48	1986
Indian	1	R	\600,000	HS	Male	38	1988
Bangladeshi	3	FW/S	\292,000	HS, BA	Male	30s	1988
Pakistani	3	S	\260,000	HS, BA	Male	30-50s	1987
Burmese	4	R/FW	\221,000	DO, BS	Male	27-31	1992
Iranian	2	FW	\300,000	HS, DO	Male	36-37	1990

Note: C = construction worker; DL = day laborer; R = restaurant worker; S = service worker; FW = factory worker; E = entertainer; HS = high school; BA = bachelor of arts; BS = bachelor of science; DO = college drop-out.

cooks. Female workers mostly worked in bars, but some also work as waitresses and factory workers. Typically, illegal Asian workers tend to work in small companies. According to one survey of those firms that hire foreign workers, firms with less than 10 employees have at least six Asian workers and those with less than 20 employees have at least 13 Asian workers.³¹ In terms of wages, about half earn between 7,000 and 10,000 yen per day while a third less than 7,000 yen.³² According to my interview of 42 overstayed Asians, the average monthly salary ranges from 221,000 yen for Burmese to 600,000 yen for an Indian cook in the trendy Asakusa district of Tokyo (see Table 2.2). Although their wages appear high, their jobs are not guaranteed and none provides benefits, such as bonuses, paid holidays, company insurance, and so forth. In terms of educational

³⁰ Japan Immigration Association, *1997 Statistics on Immigration Control*, pp. 51-103.

³¹ The same study also finds that no Nikkei Brazilian works in a firm with less than 10 employees. See Inagami Tsuyoshi, Kawahara Yasuo, and the People's Finance Corporation Research Institute, *Gaikokujin roudousha wo senryokuka suru chusyo kigyo* [The Actual State of Foreign Workers' Employment in Small Firms] (Tokyo: Chusyo Kigyo Research Center, 1992), p. 204.

³² Japan Immigration Association, *1997 Statistics on Immigration Control*.

background, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Burmese, and Iranians have completed high school while some have college degrees. The Thais show the lowest level of educational achievement with less than a high school education. In terms of age, most are in the most productive years of their lives, 20s and 30s with a few in their 40s. Most have been in Japan since 1987 or 1988. Iranians came later around 1991 and Burmese in 1992. A survey of 251 Asian workers in Tokyo conducted by Okuda Michihiro and Tajima Junko reveals that approximately 60 percent of Asian workers are either a “student” or worked in specialized and office jobs in their home countries before they migrate to Japan.³³

Illegal foreign workers can be divided further into three sub-groups according to the region of their origin: East and Southeast Asians, South Asians, and Iranians. East and Southeast Asian illegal migrants consist of both female and male workers from Korea, China, Thailand, and the Philippines. With the Japanese government allowing 40,000 foreign entertainers per year into Japan, women from the Philippines (and soon after from Thailand) first came to Japan as “entertainers” in the early and mid 1980s.³⁴ Their male counterparts followed in the late 1980s and found employment in construction sites and small factories around the Tokyo metropolitan area.³⁵ Today, female entertainers work in Kabuki-cho and Shin-Okubo of Tokyo, Tsurumi of Kawasaki, and various small towns in Ibaraki. They are closely connected to and monitored by various *yakuza* (gangster) organizations. Among the 683 apprehended illegal workers, who were employed by gang related people, 461 (67.5 percent) were female illegal workers. Of these, 236 (51.2 percent)

³³ Okuda Michihiro and Tajima Junko, *Ikebukuro no ajitakeri gaitokujin* [Asian Foreigners of Ikebukuro] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995), p. 67. For an overview of a Thai community in Tokyo, see Iwamoto Noa and Satou Shouko, *Shinjuku Itoiu bankoku* [Little Bangkok in Shinjuku] (Tokyo: Rojun, 1996).

³⁴ Asian Women’s Association, *Women from across the Seas: Migrant Workers in Japan* (Tokyo: Asian Women’s Association, 1988).

involved Thai women.³⁶ I place 100,000 or so male and female “newcomers” from Korea and China (PRC), who overstayed their visas, also in this category.³⁷ Newly arrived Koreans entered Japan mostly with “temporary visitor” visa while Chinese (PRC) with “pre-college student,” “college student,” and “trainee” visas. Many Chinese (3,045 out of 7,810 illegal Chinese workers apprehended in 1997) also entered Japan illegally.³⁸ These “newcomers” from Korea and China are completely different from the *zainichi gaikokujin* in their ability to speak Japanese and in the labor markets in which they participate. South Asian and Iranian workers are mostly men, who work in factories and constructions sites around the Tokyo metropolitan area. They entered Japan as “temporary visitors” and overstayed their visas. There were no visa requirements for Bangladeshis and Pakistanis until 1989 and for Iranians before 1993. Therefore, most of the remaining South Asians and Iranians entered Japan before that time.

Illegal Asian workers are born and raised abroad. They possess non-Japanese blood. Due to their similarity in racial descent, culture, and appearance, Filipinos and Thais (as well as Chinese and Koreans) look and act less foreign than Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Iranians. Moreover, many South Asians have darker skin, which make them more “obvious” foreigners. Given their visa status as “pre-college student,” “college student,” “entertainer,” “trainee,” and “temporary visitor,” these foreigners do not have the rights to work in Japan as “unskilled workers.” Unless they have stayed in Japan for more than one year and properly registered with the government, they are not entitled to receive

³⁵ Shimada Haruo, *Japan's "Guest Workers" Issues and Public Policies* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994).

³⁶ Japan Immigration Association, *1997 Statistics on Immigration Control*

³⁷ The National Police Agency estimated about 63,000 of such Koreans and 35,000 Chinese were living in Japan in 1999. National Police Agency, ed., *Keisatsu hakusho* (Tokyo: Ookurasho Insatsukyoku, 1999).

national health insurance, unemployment benefits, livelihood protection, and pension insurance. And if they do not carry an Alien Registration Card, many hospitals are known to have refused services to them. Landlords often refuse housing to these foreigners, because they fear miscommunication will cause problems during emergencies.

II. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON FOREIGN WORKERS AND THEIR IMPACT

In Japan, government policies contributed greatly to the social conditions and problems that foreign workers face. Government policies directly created certain migrant groups. For example, the National Manpower Mobilization of 1939 and the Korean Conscription Act of 1944 brought Koreans and Chinese into Japanese islands as “imperial subjects.” The Amended Election Law of 1945 and the Alien Registration Law of 1947 effectively turned them into foreigners and stripped them of their political rights. Similarly, the 1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act directly contributed to the increase of *Nikkeijin* into the country during the 1990s. During the same year, the government revised the trainee system and made it easier for Japanese companies to use Asian workers in Japan. Some hardships that illegal foreign workers in Japan faced typically include unpaid wages, unfair dismissal, uncompensated accident insurance, inability to pay medical fees, forced prostitution, and physical abuse by their employers or brokers. These hardships are direct consequences of the 1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, the Ministry of Health and Welfare’s Oral Directive in 1990, and the 1992 National Health Insurance Program. The 1997 revised Immigration Control

³⁸ Japan Immigration Association, *1997 Statistics on Immigration Control*

Table 2.3: Government Policies and their Impact on Foreign Workers in Japan

Type of Foreign Worker	Policies Responsible for their Origin	Policies Responsible for their Livelihood	Impact on Foreign Workers	Resulted Abuses
<p>A. Legal Foreign Workers</p> <p>1. <i>Zainichi gaikokujin</i> (Korean, Chinese)</p> <p>2. <i>Nikkeijin</i> (Brazilians, Peruvians)</p> <p>3. Asian Workers (Chinese, Filipino, Thai, Indonesian)</p>	<p>1939 Labor Mobilization Act 1944 Korean Conscription Act</p> <p>1924-1941 "Emigration Policy" of the MHA (Social Affairs Bureau) 1953-1973 "Emigration Policy" of the MOFA (Emigration Affairs) 1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act</p> <p>1982 Trainee System Program 1990 Revised Trainee System Program</p>	<p>1945 Constitution, Article 14 1945 Amended Election law 1947 Alien Registration Law 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty 1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act 2000 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act</p> <p>1990 Revised Trainee System Program 1993 Technical Internship Program 1997 Revised Technical Internship Program</p>	<p>No protection of rights Loose rights to vote Became "foreigners" beginning in 1952 Can legally work as "unskilled laborers" Visa and Re-entry Permit are extended to 3 years</p> <p>"Trainees" and not "workers" Trainees can work up to 2 years after training The period is extended to 3 years</p>	<p>Economic discrimination Political discrimination State control and monitoring</p> <p>No labor protection; no remuneration</p>
<p>B. Illegal Foreign Workers (Korean, Chinese, Filipino, Thai, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Iranian)</p>		<p>1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Act</p> <p>1990 Ministry of Health & Welfare Oral Direction 1992 Notice of Ministry of Health & Welfare to local governments on National Health Insurance (NHI) 1997 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Act 2000 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Act</p>	<p>Cannot be employed as "unskilled laborers"; fine firms that hire them</p> <p>No Medical Assistance for them No NHI coverage for foreign residents of less than one year Crack down on Chinese illegal entry Illegal entry becomes a "crime"</p>	<p>Non-payment of wages; no accident compensation</p> <p>Inability to pay medical fees; hospitals do not accept them</p> <p>More arrests on Chinese</p> <p>Illegal entered foreigners are treated as criminals</p>

Act attempted to crack Act attempted to crack down on illegal entry and human trafficking from China. The 2000 revised Immigration Control Act made illegal entry a “criminal” act. Table 2.3 summarizes the role of government policies in creating certain foreign migrant groups and in shaping negative socio-political conditions for illegal Asian workers. Let us now look more closely at these policies and their impact on certain type of foreign workers in Japan from a historical perspective.

2.2.1 Legal Foreign Workers

A. *Zainichi Gaikokujin*

The existence of Japan-born Koreans and Chinese is rooted in Japan’s colonial policies after Japan annexed Formosa in 1895 and Korea in 1910.³⁹ In 1913, there were only 3,635 Koreans in Japan. The annexation of Korea allowed Japanese firms to bring Korean laborers to Japan on the eve of World War I, when Japan experienced an economic boom and labor shortage. In 1911, a textile mill in Osaka pioneered the idea of importing Korean laborers to Japan. Other industries began to follow its example and dispatched recruiters to depressed agrarian regions of southern Korea, particularly Kyongsan-Nando, Kyongsan-Bukdo, and Cholla-Namdo. They brought young Korean men to Osaka and Kobe areas to do simple manual labor, as they lacked skills and could not speak Japanese. Many Korean men also journeyed to urban centers of Japan to look for work. These Korean men became casual laborers (自由労働者) and daily workers (日雇い妊婦); the

³⁹ Although a community of Korean potters has been reported to exist in Satsuma, Nabeshima, Yatsushiro, and Imani during the Tokugawa period, the number was quite small. See Changsoo Lee and George de Vos, *Koreans in Japan: Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981), pp. 15-16. After Japan opened its ports to the West, a small group of Chinese has accompanied their Western employers to Japan as servants, stevedores, and overseers. See Andrea Vasishth, “A Model Minority: The Chinese Community in Japan” in Michael Weiner, ed., *Japan’s*

former hold the same job for several weeks or months while the latter held a different job each day.⁴⁰ Several thousand Chinese laborers were also recruited from Wenzhou, in the Zhejiang province.⁴¹ Most immigrants worked in mining, railroad construction, and stevedoring industries. During the 1920's, Japan's central government, and later the provincial and city governments, promoted a plan for subsidized public works to help unskilled labor. As a result of the public works program, a seasonal migration developed with Koreans coming to Japan each year to register for work in the large cities.⁴² By 1930, there were about 400,000 Koreans in Japan and 50 percent were employed as coolies and miners. In 1936, the number of Koreans in Japan had increased to 690,503 people.

Then on August 1939, soon after Japan expanded into Mainland China, the government passed the Labor Mobilization Act. Under this Act, Korean laborers and military draftees were brought to Japan to fill the manpower vacuum created by the expansion of the military forces and the war economy.⁴³ Most worked in coal and metal mines.⁴⁴ Although the use of conscripted Chinese laborers was never the same scale as that of Korean, Manchurian Chinese were also subject to labor conscription after 1942. Between 1943 and 1945, Japanese transported approximately 42,000 Chinese from the mainland and forced them to work in mines, civilian and military-related constructions, and

Minorities: the Illusion of Homogeneity (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 108-139 (118).

⁴⁰ Many Koreans planned to work in Japan only long enough to save some money; other came just for the winter relief projects, and many returned to Korea each New Year's day. Richard H. Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California, 1967), pp. 28-31 (31ff).

⁴¹ Vasishth, "A Model Minority: The Chinese Community in Japan," p. 128.

⁴² Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 45.

⁴³ During the first few years, the government asked for volunteers, who were taken whenever available. But the law also provided for conscription if not enough volunteers were obtained. Both volunteers and conscripts typically had two-year tour of duty in Japan. New laborers were generally given three months' training before being assigned to a job. The Japanese government had promised political equality, better working conditions, more pay, and other advantages to all Koreans. It was not until 1942 that the Koreans in Japan became subject to conscription.

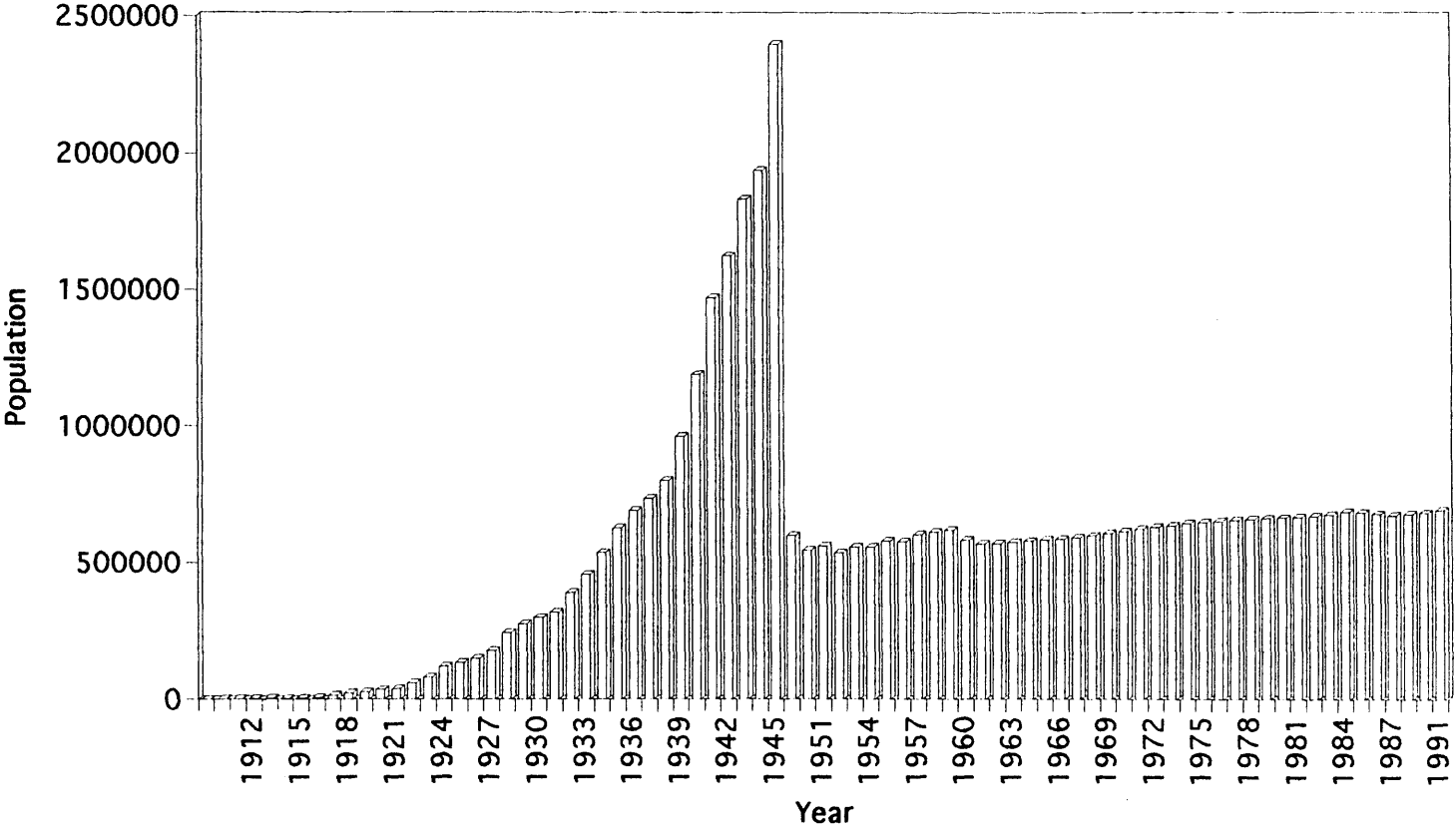
⁴⁴ By the end of March 1943, 22 percent of the miners in Hokkaido were Korean. "A War of Coal," *The Oriental*

factories in Japan. They were to complement the 150,000 Taiwanese men that were already recruited to do military labor service in Japan. In 1944, the Japanese Imperial Diet passed the Korean Labor Conscription Act under which all Korean men were subject to mobilization by fiat. By the end of World War II, over two million Koreans were residing in Japan, of which 680,000 were requisitioned persons (see Graph 2.1).

After Japan's defeat in World War II, many Koreans and Chinese repatriated to their homelands. Only 620,000 Koreans and 40,000 Chinese still remained in Japan by 1950. Those Koreans and Chinese who decided to stay in Japan lost their rights to vote and protection from discrimination. In addition, they were transformed from "imperial subjects" to "foreigners." Before the war, people from the former colonies (Korea and Formosa) were deemed to be "imperial subjects." Those "imperial subjects" who lived in Japan were entitled to vote, to be elected, and to assume public office. In fact, several Koreans were actively involved in politics as candidates for public office during the early 1930's. On 17 December 1945, the House of Representatives amended the Election Law and suspended suffrage for the nationals of Japan's former colonies. Its appendix suspended suffrage of those to whom the Japanese Census Registration Law does not apply, and the populations of the former colonies were under either the Korean Census Registration Law or Taiwanese Census Registration Law. This "census registration clause" likewise came to be included in the election law of the House of Councilors, the Local Autonomy Law, and the Public Offices Election Law, resulting in the suspension of

Economist, April 1944, pp. 167-168.

Graph 2.1: Korean Population in Japan: 1910-1991



Graph created based on data from: O, Kyu-sang, Zainichi Chosenjin Kigyo Katsudo Keiseishi (Tokyo: Yuzankaku Shuppan, 1992) 26, 68, 98, 118, 143, 174; Japan Information Center, 1995.

suffrage for the nationals of former colonies in every phase of the electoral process.⁴⁵ Henceforth. Koreans and Chinese, who decided to remain in Japan after the war, are not entitled to vote or to be elected.

With the passage of the new constitution in 1946, Koreans and Chinese in Japan also lost discriminatory protection. Sato Tatsuo convinced the Americans at the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) into revising the articles in the draft constitution that would provide equal rights to resident aliens.⁴⁶ The Americans had planned to guarantee equal rights to foreign residents in Japan even before the war ended. In fact, “the protection of the foreigners from violence or social and economic discrimination by the Japanese” was the first objective the U.S. Office of Strategic Services listed under its “Courses of Action” in a 29 June 1945 confidential document.⁴⁷ During the drafting session of the new constitution, General MacArthur and his staff at the GHQ intended to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race and national origin. Thereby, they proposed Article 13 and Article 16 to be written as follow:

Article 13: All natural persons are equal before the law. Political or social discrimination on basis of race, creed, gender, social status, caste, or national origin shall not be permitted.
第十三条 すべての自然人は法の前に平等である。人種、信条、性別、社会的身分、カーストまたは出身国により、政治的関係または社会的関係において差別されることを、授權しましたは容認してはならない。

Article 16: All foreigners are to receive equal protection by law.
第十六条 外国人は、法の平等な保護を受ける。

Sato argued that the draft charter guaranteed protections of resident aliens elsewhere within

⁴⁵ The Public Offices Election Law (Articles 9 and 10) and the Local Autonomy Law (Articles 11,18, and 19) explicitly state that those who have suffrage are “Japanese nationals.”

⁴⁶ See Tanaka Hiroshi, “Nihon ni okeru gaikokujin no jinken hoshou to sono keifu” [Human Rights for Foreigners in Japan and its History] in Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainuchi gaikokujin jinken hakusho* [White Paper on Human Rights of Newcoming Foreigners in Japan] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997), pp. 13-37; Robert Ricketts, “GHQ no zainichi chosenjin seisaku” [GHQ and Korean in Japan] *Ajia Kenkyuu* Vol. 9 (1994): 4-36.

⁴⁷ See U.S. Office of Strategic Services, “Aliens in Japan” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Strategic Services,

the document where the word “people” 「国民」 was used. He then merged the two Articles into Article 14 and revised the texts as the following.

Article 14: All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economical or social relations because of race, creed, gender, social status or family origin.
第十四案 すべて国民は、法の下に平等であつて、人種、信条、性別、社会的身分又は門地により、政治的、経済的又は社会的関係において、差別されない。

Originally, Sato chose the word 「国民」 to cast constitutional references to the “people” in a more democratic and nationalistic context. Eventually, Japanese conservatives have come to interpret the word 「国民」 in the new constitution to limit the rights against discrimination guaranteed by the state to Japanese national alone. Historian John Dower explains,

[w]here the Americans had intended to affirm that “all persons” are equal before the law, and included language in the GHQ draft that explicitly forbade discrimination on the basis of race or national origin, Sato and his colleagues erased these guarantees through linguistic subterfuge. By interpreting *kokumin* as referring to “all nationals,” which was indeed a logical construction of the term, the government succeeded in denying equal civil rights to the hundreds of thousands of resident ex-colonial subjects, including Taiwanese and especially Koreans. The blatantly racist nature of this revision was subsequently reinforced by “terminological” revisions during the Diet deliberations, and this provided the basis for discriminatory legislation governing nationality passed in 1950.⁴⁸

In short, the basic human rights provisions in the new Constitution are not granted to those who were from former colonies – Korea and Taiwan. As a result, foreign residents in Japan did not enjoy equal rights and discriminatory protection under the law until Japan signed the United Nations Treaty on the Abolition of Racial Discrimination in 1995.⁴⁹

Research and Analysis Branch, 29 June 1945), p. 29

⁴⁸ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: Norton, 1999), pp. 393-394

⁴⁹ In 1965, the United Nations adopted the Treaty on the Abolition of Racial Discrimination, which forbids all discrimination on the basis of race or skin color. Signatories are bound to follow its guidelines, which 1) forbid all racial discrimination, 2) demand that they take “concrete measures” towards abolishing it. Japan became the 146th country to

The final blow came in May 1947 when the Japanese government enacted the Alien Registration Law. Since Japan lost sovereign control over Korea and Formosa after the war, both Koreans and Chinese, hitherto classified as “imperial subjects” like other Japanese, were to be reclassified as “foreigners” under the Alien Registration Law. The Law stated that “until further notice the inhabitants of the former Japanese colonies will be considered foreigners.” However, they would retain Japanese nationality until the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in April 1952.⁵⁰ This Law, which was issued and put into effect the day before the enactment of the new Constitution, functioned as public security measures to protect Japan’s social order by establishing a system to control resident Koreans and Chinese.⁵¹ These measures were known to include strict surveillance accompanied by minor regard for human rights and coercive assimilation policies. Komai believes that “in this way a harsh structure of discrimination toward foreigners in general has emerged, and it has functioned most strictly against resident Koreans.”⁵²

Although Koreans and Chinese were still classified by law as Japanese nationals between 1947 and 1952, Japanese people, however, already considered them as “third-country people” (「第三国人」). That is, they were understood to be “third-tier” people - below the Japanese, and below the second-tier Caucasians, who they termed *gaijin* 「外人」. Because many Koreans were involved in black market activities during the Occupation period, the derogative 「第三国人」 became associated with criminal activities by Koreans in Japan at the time. These unsavory images of Koreans emerged.

ratify it 30 years after its introduction

⁵⁰ See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, pp. 578-579.

⁵¹ Oonuma Yasuaki, *Tan'itsu minzoku shakai no shinwa wo koete* [Overcoming the myth of a monoracial society] (Tokyo: Toshindo, 1986), Part 1, Chapter 3. Quoted in Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 234.

⁵² Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 234.

despite the fact that as many, if not more, Japanese were also involved in the black market activities.⁵³

On April 28, 1952, all the nationals of the former colonies lost their Japanese nationality and, in effect, became “foreigners.” As foreigners, they now fall under the new Alien Registration Law and were obliged to register as resident aliens. The Alien Registration Law required fingerprinting (Article 14) and the possession at all times of an alien passbook (Article 13) bearing print, photo, and personal data. Violators will “be punished with penal servitude or imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or be fined an amount not exceeding 200,000 yen.” Mr. Lee In Ha, a Christian minister and leader of the Korean community in Kawasaki-shi recalled, “when my son was fourteen, we forgot to renew his registration. He was charged and fined, a child of fourteen, and was given a criminal record.”⁵⁴ The Law clearly reflected the objective of the Japanese government to control foreigners in Japan. After intense protest particularly from the *zainichi* Korean community, the Ministry of Justice revised the Alien Registration Law in 1987 and switched to a computerized fingerprint card. The Ministry eventually suspended fingerprinting for Koreans and other permanent residents in 1992 and for all foreigners in 2000.

Since 1952, roughly 300,000 Koreans have naturalized. Those who naturalized must give up their original names and take Japanese ones as a requirement of naturalized citizens in order to assimilate into Japanese society without resistance. Those Koreans and Chinese, who wish to maintain their distinct cultures, can also stay in Japan as foreigners. By

⁵³ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*.

⁵⁴ David Suzuki and Keibo Oiwa, *The Other Japan: Voices beyond the Mainstream* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing,

remaining a foreigner in Japan, they do not have voting rights and are excluded from taking government jobs. According to a 1953 document from the first secretary of the Ministry of Justice's Legal Systems Bureau, "it is a natural legal principle for civil servants that, as they exercise state power and participate in the formation of the state will, that they be required to hold Japanese nationality."⁵⁵ In addition to the absence of voting rights and eligibility for office, resident Koreans and permanent residents do not have the right to membership in district welfare commissions, boards of education, or human rights commissions. Therefore, they have no direct way to express their rights as residents. This has been to the great disadvantage of these permanent residents.⁵⁶ Situations for *zainichi* Koreans improved in 1965 after Japan and South Korea signed a treaty that outlined an Agreement on the Legal Status and Treatment of Nationals of the Republic of Korea Residing in Japan, which gave Koreans in Japan with South Korean citizenship a special "treaty-based permanent residency." Koreans in Japan with North Korean citizenship received similar treatment in 1981. This new status provided *zainichi* Koreans with stronger position vis-à-vis the Japanese government in terms of deportation.

B. Nikkeijin

Government policies are also responsible for the existence and living conditions of *Nikkeijin* in Japan. The pushes for Japanese emigration to South America in 1924-1941 and 1953-1973 and the acceptance of the South American-born "ethnic Japanese" back to

1996), p. 166; also interview with Mr. Lee In Ha, 19 January 1999.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 238.

⁵⁶ Mintouren, *Zainichi kankoku/chosenjin no hoshō jinkenho* [A Law for Compensating and Respecting the Rights of *Zainichi* Koreans] (Tokyo: Shinkansha, 1989), Part 3, 4.

Japan during the 1990s are entirely a result of Japanese government policies. Japanese first emigrated in mass to South America in 1899 to work under harsh conditions in Peru's sugar-cane plantations. In 1908, Japanese emigration expanded to Brazil as European governments were banning their citizens to emigrate there due to deferred payment of salaries in the Brazilian coffee industry. In 1921, the Japanese government disbursed a subsidy of 100,000 yen to the Overseas Development Company (*Kaigai Kogyo Kaisha*), which was created in 1918 through the amalgamation of some existing emigration companies, and had it handle the encouragement, propaganda, and recruitment of emigrants. By 1923, 33,000 Japanese, mostly from Kagoshima and Okinawa, have emigrated to Brazil.

In 1924, the Japanese government actively supported and promoted Japanese emigration to Brazil as a state policy to resolve its problem of ever-rising population and providing relief to victims of the Great Kanto earthquake during the previous year.⁵⁷ The Social Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs initiated a series of measures to encourage and to protect emigrants. Beginning in October 1924, the Bureau subsidized travel expenses (200 yen per person) and commissions (35 yen), which helped to alleviate some of the major burdens for emigrants. It even brought stylish travel clothing for the emigrants to help improve their image. In 1921, the government started to subsidize prefectural emigrant associations and private emigrant organizations and through them propagated the idea of "great ventures abroad." As a result, 158,000 Japanese ventured to

⁵⁷ Tsuchida Motoko, "A History of Japanese Emigration from the 1860s to the 1990s," in Weiner and Hanami, eds., *op cit.*, pp. 77-119 (100ff).

Brazil between 1923 and 1941.⁵⁸ World War II temporarily interrupted Japanese emigration to South America.

Between 1945 and 1950, Japan experienced another population problem as approximately 6,250,000 million people returned to Japan after the war and another 6,400,000 babies were born. In addition, the economic situation in Japan showed a high level of confusion. In 1949, the Diet proposed a Resolution concerning the Population Problem (人口問題に関する決議) by promoting Japanese emigration. In 1953 when Japan re-entered the international community as an independent and sovereign state, the Japanese government, under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Consular and Migration Policy Division, reinstated its emigration policy to South America. In 1954, MOFA established the Japan Overseas Cooperation Union Committee (日本海外協会連合会) – a predecessor to Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA). In 1955, the Japanese government held a cabinet deliberation on emigration promotion policy and established an Emigration Division as well as an Overseas Migration *Shingikai* within the MOFA.⁵⁹ It helped set up the Japan Overseas Migration Promotion Corporation Limited (日本海外移住振興) to provide loans to Japanese emigrants. In addition to its Kobe Migration Mediation Office (外務省神戸移住斡旋所), MOFA opened another office in Yokohama (外務省横浜移住斡旋所) in 1956. The Japanese government signed bilateral Migration Agreement Contracts (移住協定の締結) with Bolivia in 1956, Paraguay in 1959, Brazil in 1960, and Argentina in 1961. Japanese emigration programs to

⁵⁸ The number of Japanese emigration to Brazil slowed down after 1934 when the Brazil's nationalist government enacted an anti-immigration policy

⁵⁹ A *shingikai* - whose members typically include bureaucrats, business representatives, and scholars - is a deliberative council or discussion group within a ministry

South America continued up to 1973, when Japanese economic prosperity quickly eliminated the economic advantage of emigration.⁶⁰ Between 1953 to 1973, almost 60,000 Japanese emigrated to Brazil alone.⁶¹ Interestingly, the Consular and Migration Policy Division of MOFA continues to exist to this day, because the Japanese government feels responsible for the existence and livelihood of such Japanese abroad.

The influx of *Nikkeijin* from South America back to Japan in the 1990s was triggered by the revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990. As a response to an influx of “illegal” foreign workers and a need to clarify the status of residents for its foreign inhabitants, the Japanese Ministry of Justice revised the categories in the status of residents for foreigners and eased working visa requirement for *Nikkeijin*.⁶² Prior to 1985, the visa status of the “spouse or child of a Japanese national” was only issued when both the parents and the grandparents of the person applying for the visa were Japanese. Under the Revised Immigration Control Law, visas of this type are now relatively easy to obtain if a relative in Japan within the sixth degree of consanguinity guarantees the applicant’s status. The Japanese government provides *Nikkeijin* with full access to medical care and public health services. The Ministry of Labor established the Nikkeis Employment Service Center (日系人雇用サービスセンター) within the Industrial Employment Stabilization Center of Japan (産業雇用安定センター) in 1991 to offer job placements for *Nikkeijin*.⁶³ It has three main offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and São

⁶⁰ Interview with Mr. Ohmura Toshio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Consular and Migration Policy Division in Tokyo, 19 May 2000

⁶¹ Keiko Yamanaka, “‘I will go home, but when’: labor migration and circular diaspora formation by Japanese Brazilians in Japan” in Mike Douglass and Glenda Roberts, eds., *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 129.

⁶² Interview with Mr. Koide Kenzo of the Immigration Bureau in the Ministry of Justice in Tokyo, 8 January 1999.

⁶³ Interview with Mr. Tejima Kazunari of the Nikkeis Employment Service Center in Tokyo, 7 August 1998

Paolo, where most *Nikkeijin* in Brazil live. In addition, the Ministry of Labor implemented an Employment Management and Improvement Program for *Nikkei* foreigners. It established a Foreign Worker Employment Management Advisor to provide counseling and assistance related to employment management and working lifestyles. It also held Foreign Workers Employment Management Seminar to provide necessary information and collective guidance to improve employment management for foreign workers, particularly *Nikkeijin*.

Some local governments, where subcontractors and/or sub-subcontractors of big manufacturing firms are concentrated, actively try to attract *Nikkeijin* and have been institutionally receptive to them.⁶⁴ *Nikkeijin* help stabilize the local labor market in those areas where companies regularly experience labor shortages. As financial conditions of local manufacturing and their subcontracting companies improve, tax revenues for local governments also increase. Some of these revenues go back to fund more facilities and services, thereby attracting even more *Nikkeijin* to the area. In places with a high concentration of *Nikkeijin*, local governments employ Portuguese and Spanish translators at their offices and subsidize Japanese language classes. For example, in Oizumi-machi, where *Nikkei* Brazilians constitute 9.8 percent of the total population, the town government employs a Portuguese translator who works there four days a week.⁶⁵ In its neighbor, Ohta-shi, local government officials helped launch the “Ayumi-no-kai,” which provides subsidized Japanese language lessons.⁶⁶ Not surprisingly, more than 80 percent of the

⁶⁴ Selleck, “Nikkeijin: The Phenomenon of Return Migration,” p. 197

⁶⁵ Interviews with Mr. Itoi Massanobu and Mr. Ookoshi Kunio, Coordinators of the International Affairs Section of the Oizumi-machi Town Improvement Division in Oizumi-machi, Gunma, 8 June 1998.

⁶⁶ Interview with Mr. Imai Takao, the Section Chief of the Ota City International Affairs Section, 8 June 1998; interview with Mr. Nabeshima of the Ayumi-no-kai in Ota City, Gunma, 9 June 1998. I also attended one of the sessions on 10 June

students are *Nikkeijin*.⁶⁷

In sum, government emigration policies triggered mass emigration of Japanese farmers to Latin America during the 1920s and the 1930s - and smaller numbers during the 1950s and 1960s. With the revised Immigration Control Law in 1990 and campaigns by government agencies and local governments to attract *Nikkeijin*, the number of *Nikkeijin* entering Japan have risen from 20,000 in 1990 to 282,000 in 1997.

C. Legal Asian Workers

In addition to opening its doors to the *Nikkeijin*, the Japanese government also decided to accept a larger number of Asian trainees in 1990. In 1982, the Japanese government first introduced the trainee system, where trainees must be at least 18 years old and the percentage of accepting trainees among regular employees must not exceed 5 percent in the firms. Trainees were limited to full-time employees of foreign joint venture companies, local affiliates or business counterparts of accepting companies, or expected local employees in a planned joint venture.⁶⁸ In other words, companies with no capital or trade relations with foreign counterparts and with fewer than 20 full-time employees were not entitled to benefit from this system. In 1990, the Ministry of Justice reformed the trainee system in order to pave the way for private enterprises to invite trainees through private-based channels in response to their increasing demand for trainees.⁶⁹ The 1990

1998.

⁶⁷ Ota City Government. *Kyousei no machi tsukuri wo mokushi shite* [Toward Building a Town of Togetherness] (Ota City, Gunma: Ota City Government Committee of Regional Japanese Language Promotion, 1998), pp. 26-29.

⁶⁸ Imano Kouchirou and Satoh Hiroki, eds., *Gaikokujin kenshusei* [Foreigners Trainees] (Tokyo: Touyou Shinhousha, 1991), pp. 57-84.

⁶⁹ Mori Hiromi, *Immigration Policy and Foreign Workers in Japan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 114-133(ff).

reform opened new channels for the introduction of trainees through mediating organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Association of Small Enterprises. Hence, smaller companies with no international operation were able to invite trainees through mediating organizations. The 1992 reform further recognized the Corporate Vocational Training Organization and the Agricultural Cooperative Association as authorized mediating organizations. In 1993, the government introduced the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP), which admits trainees who had finished the intended training program to undertake additional training under the new programs for up to two years (including the original training). The Ministry of Justice extended the limited period of this program to 3 years in 1997.⁷⁰ The trainee system helps alleviate expenses that accepting companies need to bear. As a result, the number of trainees, mostly from Asia, increased almost three-fold from 17,081 in 1987 to 49,594 in 1997. Trainees from China in particular increased from 2,688 to 21,340 during the same period (see Table 2.4).

There are government-based programs and private-based programs for admitting unskilled foreign workers into Japan. Government-based programs accept trainees upon request from foreign governments or international organizations. These programs operate under either government agencies or foundations affiliated with certain ministries. The former, which include Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA) and the Japan Socio-Economic Productivity Center (JPC), is funded completely by the government's budget, usually labeled as "official development assistance" (ODA). Foundations such as the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS and under MITI jurisdiction).

⁷⁰ Interview with Mr. Ishioka Kuniaki of the Ministry of Justice's Immigration Policy Division in Tokyo, 23 May 2000

Table 2.4: Changes in Foreign Trainee Inflow

Year	P.R. China	Indonesia	Thailand	Philippines	S. Korea	Malaysia	Others	Total
1987	2,688	1,310	2,428	1,207	2,800	757	5,891	17,081
1988	3,840	1,378	4,708	2,464	3,343	1,329	6,370	23,432
1989	3,496	1,748	4,502	3,974	4,125	2,175	9,469	29,489
1990	7,624	2,891	5,075	3,460	4,485	3,564	10,467	37,566
1991	10,668	3,883	6,290	4,476	4,439	4,307	9,586	43,649
1992	15,054	3,687	5,385	3,931	3,717	2,959	8,894	43,627
1993	15,688	3,433	4,075	2,942	3,224	2,174	8,259	39,795
1994	14,750	2,984	3,718					36,612
1995	16,009	3,965	3,661					40,591
1996	17,904	5,098	3,298	4,446	2,701			45,536
1997	21,340	6,701	3,534	4,380	1,596	1,575	10,468	49,594
1998	22,383	5,972	4,625	3,658		1,645		49,797
1999	22,041	5,926	2,998	3,694	696	1,358	11,272	47,985

■ missing data

Source: JITCO, Trend of Foreigners Trainee Inflow (Tokyo: JITCO, various years).

the Association for International Cooperation (under MOFA and MITI jurisdiction), the ILO Association of Japan (under MOL jurisdiction), the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA) International Development Body (under MOFA jurisdiction), and the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation (under MAFF jurisdiction) receive large subsidies from the Japanese government. In addition to these pre-existing institutions, new foundations were also set up specifically to receive trainees from abroad after 1990. In 1990, the Ministry of Labor created the International Youth Vocational Training, which was to be operated by the Japan Vocational Ability Development Association (JAVADA) and to form part of Japan's ODA. Similarly, the Ministry of Construction established the Construction Industry Education Center in 1991. Some local governments have also created their own training centers and brought trainees

from countries where they have established sister city or region relationships - the Saitama Prefectural Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1990 and the Kanagawa Prefectural Government in 1992.⁷¹ Private-based programs that are set up and executed independently by private companies or organizations do not receive financial support from the government. They must bear all cost.

In 1991, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Construction set up the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO) to provide “support and services to companies and organizations...that accept foreign trainees.” JITCO builds overseas networks with foreign government organizations through its Information Exchange Organization in various developing countries, particularly in Asia. JITCO regularly sends missions to these Information Exchange Organizations overseas in order to promote the training program in Japan. One year later, JITCO itself started accepting trainees and set a goal of bringing in 100,000 trainees from foreign countries annually. In April 1993, JITCO instituted the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) to transform “trainees” into “interns.” Those foreign trainees who want to become interns through the TITP go through three evaluations by JITCO officials: a) an evaluation of the trainee’s achievement through technical skill examinations, b) an evaluation of the trainee’s behavior during the period of residence in Japan, and c) an evaluation of the technical intern training plan. Trainees who pass these evaluations are given “designated activities” status stipulated under the Immigration Control Law and they are permitted to work legally.

⁷¹ These sister cities or region training centers are different than those that already exist for technical trainees.

Table 2.5: Foreign Trainees in Japan by Type of Organization in 1998

Type of Organization	No. of People	Percentage
Government Organization	14,136	28.4%
JICA	8,304	
AOTS	5,110	
JAVADA	525	
ILO	197	
JITCO Support	26,075	52.4%
Type 1	11,208	
Type 2	14,867	
Other Private Host	9,586	19.3%
Total	49,797	100.0%

Note: JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), AOTS (The Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship), JAVADA (Japan Vocational Ability Development Association), ILO (The ILO Association of Japan).

Type 1: Type implemented by a company itself

Type 2: Type implemented through the medium of an accepting organization such as public-service corporations, chambers of commerce and industry and the like cooperating together as a group

Source: JITCO

The maximum combined period of residence for regular training and technical internship is three years.⁷² The transformation from trainees to legal foreign workers means that they will be covered under Japan's Labor Laws and they are entitled to receive National Health Insurance and Workers Compensation Insurance. According to a 1990 survey conducted by Komai Hiroshi, "two-thirds of the trainees came through either the local subsidiary or business partner route, and were mainly dispatched by Japanese corporations that have developed foreign activities."⁷³ By 1998, over 80 percent of the foreign trainees go through government or quasi-government organizations (see Table 2.5). Clearly,

⁷² Originally, it was two years but it became three years in 1995.

⁷³ Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 45.

government policies are responsible for bringing legal Asian workers into Japan first as trainees and later turn them into legal foreign workers.

The existence of legal foreign women, who were brought to Japan's countryside in the 1980s as foreign brides, also has its roots in government actions, particularly those of local governments. In the late 1980s, 1,808 out of 3,253 (56 percent) municipalities in Japan reported a shortage in the number of Japanese women, who will marry Japanese farmers in their area. Japanese women drifted into the cities hoping to escape the harsh farm life and often ended up marrying urban salarymen. As a result, many male farmers remained single into their late 30s and 40s and faced a prospect of having no successor to their farms. Municipal governments in affected areas responded by taking budgetary measures to deal with this situation, hiring marriage counselors and match-makers, arranging group meetings with prospective brides, and sponsoring informal gatherings with women. They even reserved funds to be given to successful couple as marriage rewards. At first, local governments experimented with arranged meetings (見合い) with Japanese women, which resulted in almost complete failure because Japanese women prefer not to take up harsh burdens and obligations of being a farmer's wife. Then several towns began inviting women who have never been to Japan and cannot speak Japanese to such meetings. The meetings with foreign women turned out to be highly successful. In Matsuda in the Akita prefecture and Higashi-Iyayama in the Tokushima prefecture, these meetings with foreign women were organized respectively through the International Companion Association and the International Friendship Association, whose presidents were the mayor

of the town.⁷⁴

Yamazaki Hiromi, who studies international marriages between Japanese farmers in the Yamagata prefecture and Filipina women, reports that, in 1981, a farmer from the Asahi-machi in Yamagata prefecture traveled independently to Taiwan to seek a Taiwanese wife and brought a letter from the mayor of Asahi-machi to attest to his good character. After this success, the mayor later mediated another marriage between a farmer and a Korean woman. Finally in 1985, the town began arranging a series of group tours of local farmers to the Philippines. Specifically, Japanese farmers took one week *miai* (見合い) tour and interviewed different Filipina women, who had applied for such interviews. For this tour, a Japanese farmer paid approximately two million yen (\$US 18,000) to the “mediators,” who the town called “volunteers.” When a bride was discovered, the Japanese farmer waited for one month before getting married. The couple would often take their honeymoons in the Philippines before returning to the groom’s farm in Japan (under the watchful eyes of his mother). After only three of such tours, nine marriages resulted. Government officials in the Asahi-machi particularly like Filipina women because “Filipina women are obedient and have the spirit of ‘Yamato Nadeshiko’ (the ideal Japanese woman obedient and devoted to her husband) that Japanese women have lost...Filipinas have the capacity to adjust themselves to conquerors because their country has been colonized.”⁷⁵

Yamazaki writes,

in both the cases of Asahi-machi and Okura-mura, marriage is rationalized

⁷⁴ Yamazaki Hiromi, “Japan Imports Brides from the Philippines: Can Isolated Farmers Buy Consolation?” in *The Migrant Women Worker’s Research and Action Committee, ed., NGOs’ Report on the Situation of Foreign Migrant Women in Japan and Strategies for Improvement* (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1995), pp. 33-35.

⁷⁵ Yamazaki Hiromi, “Some Thoughts on Arranged Group Interviews between Southeast Asian Women and Japanese Farmers,” in *Asian Women’s Association, ed., Women from across the Seas: Migrant Workers in Japan* (Tokyo: Asian Women’s Association, 1988), pp. 52-58 (56-57ff).

as an international exchange, and using this logic, the mayor and/or deputy mayor of the companion municipality in the Philippines is invited to a special reception. The township of Okura-mura has also assisted its companion town in the Philippines by presenting it with a used fire engine. Asahimachi invited the mayor of its companion-village to Japan.⁷⁶

Yamazaki finds that the “municipalities refer to these marriages as special events that will help the survival of the towns.”⁷⁷

Interestingly, the Japanese government still does nothing to improve the living conditions for foreign spouses of Japanese nationals. Japan has the “family registry” (戸籍謄本) and the “residency registry” (住民票), which establish and clarify the status and domicile of individual Japanese. When two Japanese marry, they alter their family registry. When they move, they must register at their new address and get a residency registry locally. Because the *Juuminhyou Kihon Daichouhou Dai 39 Jou* (住民票基本台帳法第39条) excludes non-Japanese from being listed in the residency register of a Japanese national, numerous problems arise for intercultural couples.⁷⁸ For example, neighborhood heads (町内会長) can equate a non-listing with not having the right to live in the neighborhood, thereby ask non-Japanese women with Japanese spouses to leave their neighborhood. More importantly, non-listing gives a mistaken impression that the intercultural couple is not legally married. This often causes grave problems for the couple when they want to buy a condominium, apply for public loans, or find schools for their children, because the couple must present their residency register, which does not list the name of the foreign spouse. Without the listing of the foreign spouse in the residency registry, the Japanese spouse publicly remains unmarried and their children are bastards,

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-58 (55ff).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁷⁸ Lucinda Otsuka. “Foreign Residents and the Family Register,” *The UFJ* Vol. 3.1 (April/May 1998), pp. 1-3.

thereby jeopardizes their chances for a successful application. In 1967, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a notice granting non-Japanese household heads a right to be listed in the remarks column (備考欄) of her or his spouse family registry. Despite the notice, which illustrates how the Japanese government treats intercultural marriages as a “footnote” in the Japanese family record, several local governments still have not allowed foreigners to be listed in the family registry. A distressed Japanese man who married a foreign women for two and a half years complains, “...[i]n my *juuminhyou* I am single...[W]e are trying to...list my wife’s name in the *bikouran* of my *juuminhyou*, as a spouse...I don’t understand why only a small thing like a comment is...[so difficult to do].”⁷⁹

2.2.2 Illegal Foreign Workers

Despite the existence of foreigners in its country, Japan neither has a system of immigration nor a clear and comprehensive policy regarding unskilled foreign workers. Instead, Japan has a system for “entry control,” which regulates the movement of foreigners temporarily permitted to enter the country.⁸⁰ Similarly, Japan lacks a policy for accepting unskilled foreign workers from Asia. The official government position on employing unskilled foreign workers is given in the Eighth Basic Plan for Employment Measure on 19 December 1995 Cabinet Decision, which states the following.

We will accept foreign workers in professional and technical fields as much as possible, but deal cautiously with the question of accepting so-called unskilled [foreign] workers, because such acceptance might have a far-reaching impact on our country’s economic and social conditions..

⁷⁹ Isozaki Ken, “Japanese Husbands and Citizens,” *The UFJ* Vol. 3.1 (April/May 1998), pp. 6-7.

⁸⁰ Katherine Tegmeyer Pak, “Outsiders Moving In: Identity and Institutions in Japanese Responses to International Migration” (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago Department of Political Science, 1998), pp. 119-126ff.

専門的、技術的分野の労働者は可能な限り受け入れることとするが、
いわゆる単純労働者の受入れについては、我が国経済社会に広範な
影響が懸念されることから十分慎重に対応する。⁸¹

Such a position appears vague, as it does not set any guideline on how Japanese government officials should treat unskilled foreign workers that already existed within Japanese borders. The absence of a clear, comprehensive policy on illegal foreign workers results in a confused position for several ministries of the Japanese government. That is to say, no comprehensive policy regarding unskilled Asian workers in Japan that clearly defines or restricts their rights and privileges exists at the moment. As a result, four separate ministries are responsible at various stages for unskilled, illegal foreign workers in Japan. Since the Ministry of Justice set categories of visa status, foreigners who overstay their visas fall under their jurisdiction. But it is the Japanese embassies overseas, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs controls, that actually issue visas to foreign applicants who may or may not overstay their visas and work illegally (i.e. perform work not permitted given their visa status) in unskilled jobs. When these unskilled foreign workers encounter labor rights violation by their employers, the jurisdiction to solve labor-related problems becomes the responsibility of the Ministry of Labor, particularly the Labor Standards Inspection Office. For those overstayed foreign workers who have fallen ill and require medical treatment, their problems now fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and Welfare. A bureaucrat from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, using the English terminology, called such a government position “fuzzy.”⁸²

⁸¹ Cabinet Decision, *Dai-8ji kouyou taisaku kihon keikaku* [The 8th Basic Plan for Employment Measure], 19 December 1995.

⁸² Interview with Mr. Yashima Koji of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Foreign Nationals' Affairs Division in Tokyo. 19 May 2000.

Recently, Japanese government officials expressed concerns that Japan's population is growing older while its labor market faces a serious shortage. A study by the United Nations Population Division reported that Japan would need to accept 600,000 foreign workers a year for the next 50 years in order for the country to prevent declines in the working-age population and, thereby, to maintain the same level of industrial output as in 1995.⁸³ Japanese economist, Koshiro Kazutoshi, expects labor shortages to develop further in Japan during the early twenty-first century, *especially* for unskilled foreign workers.⁸⁴ To deal with the labor shortages and the aging population in Japan, the Ministry of Labor organized a nine-members *shingikai* on Foreigners Employment Measures (外国人雇用対策部会) consisting of three professors, three business representatives (one Keidanren officer, one company's CEO, and one representative of the Small-Medium Enterprise Association), and three labor representatives (one from Rengo, one from the Construction Workers Union, and one from the Shipbuilding Union).⁸⁵ Japanese policy-makers resolve to an idea of bringing retired Japanese workers back into the labor market and actively promoting the employment of Japanese women. Japanese government officials only consider further importation of foreign workers as nurses into Japan for the purpose of taking care of the increasing population of elderly Japanese in nursing homes.⁸⁶ Such a policy exemplifies how the Japanese government intend to "proceed with caution," particularly on further acceptance of foreign workers.

⁸³ United Nations, *Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Aging Population?* (New York: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2000).

⁸⁴ Koshiro Kazutoshi, "Does Japan Need Immigrants?" in Weiner and Hanami, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 151-176.

⁸⁵ Interview with Mr. Isobe Tetsuro of the Ministry of Labor's Foreign Workers Affairs Division in Tokyo, 10 August 1998.

⁸⁶ Ministry of Labor, *Koyou taisaku kihon keikaku* [Basic Plan for Employment] (Tokyo: Ministry of Labor, 1999), pp. 65-67.

Although government policies do not directly effect the creation and influx of illegal Asian foreign workers into Japan like they did on *zainichi gaikokujin*, *Nikkeijin*, and legal Asian workers, they made profound impact on the miserable livelihood for overstayed Asians in Japan. Government policies toward illegal foreign workers remain contradictory and readily manipulated for abuses by business people (and public officials). The government agency that tries to protect foreign workers is the Ministry of Labor. The Ministry of Labor maintains that Japan's labor laws protect all workers in Japan, regardless of their nationalities, including overstaying foreign workers.⁸⁷ Article 3 of the Labor Standards Law specifically states: "An employer shall not engage in discriminatory treatment with respect to wages, working hours or other working conditions by reason of nationality, creed, or social status of any worker." According to the Labor Ministry Memorandum (January 26, 1988), labor laws such as Employment Security Law, Workers Dispatching Law, and Labor Standards Law apply to all occupations and workers, whether they are Japanese or not. Foreign workers are also entitled to fundamental labor rights such as the right to organize a trade union and hold collective bargaining negotiations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) follows an internationalist policy, which, at times, appears contradictory. On the one hand, MOFA wants to prevent people from entering Japan to obtain illegal employment by instructing its embassies abroad to conduct rigid examinations before issuing visas. On the other hand, MOFA aims to promote international exchanges with different countries by simplifying and accelerating its visa-issuing procedures. The 1999 Diplomatic Bluebook succinctly captures such contradiction.

⁸⁷ Interview with Mr. Isobe Tetsuro of the Foreigners Employment Stability Policy Section of the Ministry of Labor in Tokyo, 10 August 1998.

Many foreigners staying in Japan illegally tend to become involved in crime. The situation not only creates prejudice against foreigners in Japan, but also seriously undermines the image of Japan in the countries from which the foreigners come, which impedes sound international exchanges.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs seeks as far as possible to prevent people from entering the country for the purpose of illegal work [by conducting rigid examinations before issuing visas]. At the same time, [in order to promote] interchanges with people from different countries,...the Japanese Government is promoting simplification and acceleration of visa-issuing procedures.⁸⁸

MOFA also feels responsible for looking after foreigners in Japan in order to maintain sound relations and exchanges with its neighboring countries. In May 1989, MOFA established the Foreign Nationals' Affairs Division to oversee the problem of human rights violations against foreigners in Japan. The Division asks concerned ministries to protect human rights of all foreigners in Japan. However, officials of this Division feel that their influence on other ministries are relatively weak due to an absence of a comprehensive policy towards illegal foreign workers and the fact that MOFA does not have jurisdiction over overstayed foreigners in Japan.⁸⁹ As one MOFA official puts it:

Foreign workers being employed in unskilled jobs are in the domain of the Ministry of Labor and overstaying foreigners in Japan are in the domain of the Ministry of Justice...We are responsible for maintaining good relations with foreign governments. All the domestic problems are in the domain of other ministries.⁹⁰

In contrast, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health and Welfare maintain a hard-line position against illegal foreigners. The Ministry of Justice's 1990 revision of the Immigration Control Law effectively denies overstayed foreigners, mainly Asians, the rights to exist as "unskilled foreign workers" in Japan. In effect, the 1990 revised

⁸⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *1999 Diplomatic Bluebook* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999); also available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1999/V.html> (17 June 2000).

⁸⁹ Interview with Mr. Yashima Koji and Mr. Moteki Futaba of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Foreign Nationals' Affairs Division in Tokyo, 19 May 2000

Immigration Control Law ascribes racial preference of the *Nikkeijin* over Asians on racial descent rather than on other qualities such as workers' ability or their commitment to hard-work. With the 1990 revised Immigration Control Law, the status of those Asians who have overstayed their visas as "illegal" beings completely overshadows their other worthy qualities such as "diligent" workers or "filial" daughters. Kajita explains that Japanese consider racial descent and blood ties as the primary basis for feelings of ethnic commonality.⁹¹ Therefore, the Japanese government decision to allow people with Japanese blood to work legally and to forbid those without this blood to do the same job clearly reflects this belief. But this belief is problematic for it exemplifies state-sponsored racism based on a xenophobic idea of mono-ethnicism. Consequently, law-abiding Japanese people often impute various unsavory attributes to illegal foreign workers as we will see later in this chapter.

The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law further targets illegal foreign workers by placing harsh sentences on employers who hire illegal foreign workers. According to Article 73-2 of the 1990 revised Law, employers who hire undocumented foreign workers may be sentenced to up to three years' imprisonment or fined as much as 2 million yen. This includes both "a person who has had an alien engage in illegal work in relation to business activities" and "a person who has placed an alien under his control for the purpose of having the alien engage in illegal work." Because they fear disclosures of illegal employment, employers sometimes insert Japanese names for illegal foreign workers.⁹²

⁹⁰ Interview with a bureaucrat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, 27 December 1998.

⁹¹ Kajita Takamichi, *Gaikokujin roudousha to Nihon* [Foreign Workers and Japan] (Tokyo: NHK Books, 1994).

⁹² For such cases, see *Kanagawa Shimbun* (9 November 1991, 10 November 1991), *Toukyou Shimbun* (26 January 1995, 27 June 1997), *Asahi Shimbun* (7 February 1992).

This practice leads to serious problems when illegal foreign workers suffer from industrial accidents but cannot claim accident insurance because their names do not match those in the employment contracts. The Kanagawa City Union reports that in almost all of its cases that involved industrial accidents, the employers fabricate Japanese names into the contracts with foreign workers.⁹³ In other cases, they are simply uncooperative in claiming insurance for illegal foreign worker. According to the 1992 study by the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center (全国労働安定衛生センター連絡会議), only 25 out of 129 cases (or 19 percent) show employers directly compensating injured foreign workers.⁹⁴ Clearly, the introduction of stiff penalties has discouraged employers from helping injured overstaying foreign workers.

Not only does this Article causes increased problems for illegal foreign workers, it does nothing to deter small businesses from hiring illegal foreign workers. Small businesses continue to hire illegal foreign workers while the authorities continue to turn their eyes away from these employers. If immigration officers really wanted to arrest illegal foreign workers and/or punish employers who hire illegal foreign workers, they can easily do this. In fact, a local government officer in Tsuchiura-shi, Mr. Aoyama Kazuo, showed me on the map the location of several business establishments that are operated by illegal Thai workers in his locality. He even knows the existence of a Thai barbershop in the area, despite the fact that the sign of this shop is written only in Thai.⁹⁵ An overstayed Thai man told me that the Japanese police have stopped his car four times since he has been

⁹³ Interview with Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki-shi, Kanagawa, 3 April 1998.

⁹⁴ Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, ed., *Gaikokujin roudosha no rousai hakusho* [White Papers on Industrial Accidents among Foreign Workers] (Tokyo: Kaifuu Shobou, 1992)

⁹⁵ Interview with Mr. Aoyama Kazuo in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 5 June 1998

in Japan. Each time, he frankly told the policemen in his broken Japanese that he was overstaying his visa and did not have a driver license. And the police let him go every time. And instead of paying the water and gas bills every month, he paid them off once every four or five months. Yet, the city officials do not mind. In fact, he added, the police and city officials always speak very kindly to him in comparison to the people at the Thai embassy and the Thai government. Ibaraki government officials even gave him a 'thank you' present at the end of the year!⁹⁶ In effect, Article 73-2 exists only to impede employers from helping injured illegal foreign workers and not to deter them from hiring illegal foreign workers.

The 1990 revision of the Immigration Control Law also makes it possible for employers to take advantage of illegal foreign workers by not paying due wages and unfair dismissal. Employers can stop paying due wages to illegal Asian workers thinking that these workers will be too afraid to report irregular labor practices to authorities due to their illegal residence status. In fact, the CALL Network reports that there has been a rise in such occurrences since the enactment of the new Immigration Control Law, which employers have used as a weapon against their illegal foreign employees.⁹⁷ Since the revised Immigration Control Act, non-payment of wages (賃金未払い) has consistently been a top topic of consultations (about half) for foreign workers at foreigners-supporting community labor unions.⁹⁸ Employers also dismiss illegal Asian workers for arbitrary reasons. A Burmese man, who came to Japan with his family in 1992, was unjustly dismissed from his job at an *izakaya* (drinking establishment) in Tokyo without any reason.

⁹⁶ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998.

⁹⁷ CALL Network, *Anata no machi no gaikokujin* [Foreigners in your Town] (Tokyo: Dai-ichi Shorin, 1991), pp. 13-14.

Moreover, his boss sent him off with this threat:

“You are an overstayer, I am going to report you to the Immigration Office!”⁹⁹

「お前はオーバーステイなんだから入管に知らせるぞ」

Of course, the employer will also be punished under the Immigration Control Law if he decided to follow through with the threat, but illegal foreign workers are more concerned about their own livelihood and continued existence in Japan. Fear of being exposed to the Immigration Office, many “illegal” Asian workers are forced to quietly accept such abuses. Hence, employers can conveniently controlled illegal Asian workers, who are marginalized and kept easily disposable, as a result of the 1990 revised Immigration Law.

The 1990 revised Immigration Law, which makes unskilled Asian workers illegal in Japan, also makes it easier for brokers to take advantage of the workers’ illegal status by taking dispatching fees from them without securing them any job. I met a Thai broker who smuggles Thai workers into Japan. She is 39 years old from the southern part of Thailand and only completed 5 years of primary education. She now runs a Thai restaurant in the Ibaraki prefecture. For her, being a broker is just another business, not much different from frying noodles in her restaurant. After a few minutes of getting acquainted with each other, she began to educate me on the differences between a “good broker” and a “bad broker.” According to her, a good broker is someone who brings the Thais into Japan and lives up to his/her words in finding a job for them while a bad broker is someone who brings the Thais into Japan, but lies about finding a job for them. The latter, which she claims to exist in

⁹⁸ Interview with Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki-shi, Kanagawa, 3 April 1998.

⁹⁹ Interview with an overstayed Burmese worker in Tokyo, 18 October 1998.

great number, simply pockets the money and does nothing to help these Thais find a job.¹⁰⁰

The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law makes it possible for Japanese police, immigration officers, and judges to discriminate against illegal foreigners. From this law, any “suspicious” foreigner can be asked to show her/his immigration document and be placed under custody if s/he fails to produce proper documentation. On 21 January 1997 in Hiroshima, for example, the police patrol car happened to pass by an overstayed Pakistani man who was waiting for his employer on the street. The police stopped to interrogate him and discovered that he had been overstaying his visa for 8 years. He was later detained and indicted 10 days later.¹⁰¹ The Japanese police have also arrested illegal foreign workers in order to investigate other presumptive offenses. When illegal foreign workers are arrested as criminal “suspects,” they rarely receive contact with their fellow friends and compatriots, because the use of their mother tongue is often prohibited in prison. Article 61-7(5) of the Immigration Control Law states that

[a] Director of the Immigration Center or Regional Immigration Bureau may, when he considers it necessary for the security of the Immigration Center or detention house, inspect communications the detainee dispatches and receives, and may prohibit or restrict such dispatch and receipt.

Moreover, their friends, who often are also illegal foreign workers, fear they will be caught and expelled. As a result, most foreign suspects, who overstayed their visas, feel totally isolated in Japanese detention centers.¹⁰² Being isolated, they can be tortured or their rights may have been violated in the detention centers and no one would have known about them. On 24 December 1994, a former official at a detention house in Tokyo’s Kita Ward, Mr.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with a former Thai broker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Ms. Watanabe Midori of the Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases in Tokyo, 27 April 1998.

¹⁰² Interview with Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamazato’s Foreign Detainees Visiting Group in Tokyo, 3 December 1998

Akiyama Takeshi, held a press conference, where he reported that tortures has been used routinely against illegal foreign detainees who do not follow instructions, particularly Iranians, Chinese, and Koreans. According to Mr. Akiyama, officials at detention centers are taught that Article 36 of the Japanese Criminal Law stipulates that an unavoidable act of violence, done to protect oneself or another person against imminent and unjust infringement, is not punishable. Hence, certain officials take advantages of this law to torture illegal foreigners. Furthermore, Japanese judges have given overstayed foreign workers heavier punishment for their crime due to their overstayed visa status. In sentencing an overstayed Thai woman, who critically injured a Filipina in a Nagoya snack bar, to three years in jail, the judge remarked, “we must consider that she was in Japan illegally at the time of the crime, and her punishment should therefore be heavy.”¹⁰³

The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law, which turned unskilled Asian workers into illegal foreign workers, causes social disruption with the family life of certain migrant workers. The revised law places many foreign workers into a position of confusion in such matters that concern marriage and divorce. Now that they have no rights to exist in Japan, how can they register their marriage or divorce with their partner? More importantly, deportation by an overstayed foreign partner who is involved in an interracial marriage, say with a Japanese person, signifies the break-up of her/his family unit. And children from these types of couples, who are born and raised in Japan, face disruption during their developmental stage, if they also must leave Japan. Even in cases where they are not deported, the revised Immigration Control Law still makes profound, negative, psychological impact on the children of illegal foreign workers who are born in Japan.

¹⁰³ *Migrant*, 20 October 1989. Quoted in Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan*, p. 155.

Because they interact with Japanese children everyday, their friends often remind them that they are illegal beings (or criminals!). Yet, they have done nothing wrong, but to be born into a family who has no rights to exist in Japan. Such children became noticeable in 1997, when one in eight children born in Tokyo that year have parents who are both illegal aliens.¹⁰⁴ Such “no status” children will certainly increase in the future and they have to live in an environment that condemns their parents as criminals.

Similarly, the Ministry of Health and Welfare makes it difficult for illegal foreign workers to maintain a safe and healthy life in Japan. The 1990 oral directive and the 1992 Notice of the Ministry of Health and Welfare to local governments’ welfare offices effectively eliminated the ability for illegal foreign workers to receive public-subsidized medical services. With the oral directive by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1990, illegal foreign workers were no longer eligible to receive Medical Assistance (医療扶助) from the Japanese government. Japan has a social aid system under the Livelihood Protection Law (生活保護法), which provides Medical Assistance to those Japanese citizens living under poverty or those who have accumulated large amount of unpaid medical expenses. Since its enactment in 1953, the system also has been applied, though not as their rights, to foreigners with or without formal resident status. However, faced with the rapid increase of cases involving foreigners, the Ministry of Health and Welfare instructed concerned parties that the system should be applied to Japanese and permanent residents beginning October 1990.

In addition, the Notice of the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1992 made it impossible for illegal foreign workers to join the National Health Insurance program

¹⁰⁴ *Asahi Shimbun*, 8 October 1999.

(国民健康保健). It supposes to be mandatory for firms with more than five employees to insure their regular employees with the Health Insurance (健康保健), where workers and employers share equal expenses. Under this system, the insured are exempted from 90 percent of the expenses incurred by medical care while their dependents 70 percent. Because many illegal foreign workers tend to work in small firms with less than five employees, employers are not obligated to provide Health Insurance.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, employers are often reluctant to insure foreign workers under this plan because they also must contribute financially into the Health Insurance. Hence, they prefer that foreign workers be covered by the National Health Insurance, which incurs no cost to them. The National Health Insurance program is a medical insurance system to cover local residents or self-employed persons who are not subscribers to any type of employee insurance such as regular Health Insurance. It is run by local governments and financed by insurants' premiums and National Treasury disbursements. Under this program, the insured pay 30 percent of the medical expenses. The medical institution then receives the remainder of the fee out of the funds of the insurance system. On March 31, 1992, the Ministry of Health and Welfare issued a notice on applying the National Health Insurance to Foreigners to all the heads of Public Welfare in all local governments. This Notice instructs that the application for the National Health Insurance is limited only to those foreigners who "have had registered themselves, and who will be in the country for over one year from the time of arrival."¹⁰⁶ As a result of the Notice, foreigners who are not permanent residents or who

¹⁰⁵ Brokers and dispatched companies tend not to insure foreigners with Health Insurance either.

¹⁰⁶ Notice from the Ministry of Health and Welfare to the Heads of Public Welfare in all Local Governments, *Gaikokujin ni taisuru kokumin kenkou hoken no tekiyou nitute (tuuchi)* [Notice on Applying National Health Insurance to Foreigners], March 31, 1992, particularly page 2 of the Notice.

have overstayed their visas or who do not have the correct resident status – in other words, all illegal foreign workers - cannot be insured. And no public medical insurance scheme exists for them to join.

In short, the Japanese government does not allow foreign workers without specified residence qualifications to join any of the public health insurance systems. Nor are they allowed to receive medical benefits under the Livelihood Protection Law – the lowest form of public assistance for people who are in need and cannot pay medical expenses. As a result, foreigners, who are unable to join medical insurance plans and unable to claim the Medical Assistance, must bear all hospital costs themselves. A Thai man, who was working at a snack bar in Kabuki-cho, had to pay 2,000,000 yen (\$US 18,000) for his medical treatment after having suffered a stab wound into his stomach.¹⁰⁷ He was lucky, because he had money to pay for the medical bill. Pregnant women must pay 400,000 yen (\$US 3,600) for delivery. If complication such as pre-mature birth arises (or the infant weights less than 2,000 grams), the fees can jump to 2,000,000 (\$US 18,000). And since pregnant foreign women cannot receive necessary pre-natal maternity care, various problems during delivery are not uncommon among illegal foreign women.¹⁰⁸ Infant mortality rate is unusually high among foreign mothers. According to a 1997 survey conducted by Setsuko Lee of the Tokyo Women's Medical College, the ratio of stillborn babies by Thai mothers was 2.1 times higher than that of Japanese mothers. The ratios of babies who died before their first birthday were 3.8 times higher for Philippine mothers and 2.5 times higher for Thai mothers than that for Japanese mothers. Medical experts believe

¹⁰⁷ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in the Kabuki-cho, Tokyo, 13 December 1999.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Dr. Sawada Takashi of SHARE in Tokyo, 26 May 1998

that many overstayed foreigners do not receive proper medical services for their babies.¹⁰⁹

The high medical expenses are reported to have caused many overstayed foreign workers to treat themselves with some disastrous results. Some foreigners have died from using the wrong medicines, because the directions for such medicines usually are written entirely in Japanese. This was the case for a Malaysian women who died when she was trying to treat her acute abdominal pains herself by over-the-counter medicine because she did not have health insurance due to her tourist visa status and thought that it would be too expensive to see a doctor.¹¹⁰ In numerous cases, foreigners without the National Health Insurance often wait until the illness turns badly before going to the hospital, because they cannot afford to pay medical bills.¹¹¹ High medical fees have kept an overstayed Thai hostess, who was diagnosed with symptoms of an ovary cancer, from going to the hospital for treatment until it was too late. One month after the initial diagnosis, she arrived in an ambulance with her bottom-half covered with blood. The doctor asked,

“Why haven’t you come until now?”

She then replied, “I don’t have money and I couldn’t afford to take days off from work.”¹¹²

The money she referred to was 2,000,000 yen. If she was covered by the National Health Insurance, she would only need to pay 60,000 yen, an amount that most likely would not have deterred her from attending to her illness as soon as possible.

To make the matter even worse, many hospitals reject non-registered overstayed

¹⁰⁹ Reported in the *Asahi Shimbun*, 8 October 1999. I thank Kim Reimann for bringing this information to my attention.

¹¹⁰ Takayama Toshio, “Gaikokujin wo shimesasu iryou – fukushi,” [Shutting out Foreigners of Medical Treatment and Welfare] in Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, ed., *Okasareru jinken gaikokujin roudosha* [No Rights for Foreign Workers], (Tokyo: Dai-san Shokan, 1992), pp. 127-145 (133-135ff)

¹¹¹ *Nikkei Shimbun*, 11 May 1991

foreign workers on the belief that these foreigners cannot pay their medical bills, as they are not insured by the public health insurance.¹¹³ For instance, a Southeast Asian woman in her 20s, who fell about 30 feet from the fifth floor of a central Yokohama hotel to an iron scaffolding, was rejected entry by four hospitals, because she was a foreigner and had no fixed address. Although she suffered from a broken spine and right arm and was unable to move, hospital officials refused to accept her, saying that they would not treat foreigners of no permanent residence. She was finally admitted to a hospital after Yokohama police and firefighters spent five hours trying to find a hospital for her.¹¹⁴

At the same time, Japanese small businesses prefer to hire illegal foreign workers for the reason that they are not obligated to pay insurance premiums to illegal foreign workers. I interviewed a representative of a Japanese business organization, which is comprised of CEOs from small companies that are hiring illegal foreign workers. Since the leader of this group had built a factory in Thailand, the largest number of illegal foreign workers employed by these member companies is Thai. They bring Thai workers into Japan through Nissei Trading (Thailand) Co., Ltd. – the company that established this group. They also use their networks with Thai communities in Japan to hire illegal foreign workers. A managing director of this group informed me that members of this group prefer to hire illegal foreign workers because they can avoid paying health insurance premiums for these workers – a great source of company's savings. When I asked my informer whether

¹¹² *Sankei Shimbun*, 21 December 1993

¹¹³ Since 1990, all hospitals around Japan have reported an increase in unpaid medical bills, particularly by illegal foreigners. The Tokyo Municipal No. 17 Hospital alone estimated its unpaid medical bills by foreigners at 25,150,000 yen (\$US 220,000) for only the first six months of 1992. See *Mainichi Shimbun*, 28 June 1993. According to a survey conducted by the AMDA International Medical Information Center in 1991, 33 out of 49 places reported that they have encountered problems with 26,980 foreign patients, more than half of whom were not eligible for any health insurance. These problems mostly involved unpaid medical bill or prescription. See *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 22 March 1992.

he thought that the group's activities are illegal and risky, he told me,

“Sure they are illegal, but everybody knows about our group – even the police officers near our office know about us. Sometime these police officers even ask us to help provide Thai translators at the police station. The country knows about us because NHK and TBS have come and interviewed our group before.”

The group ran into trouble in November 1998 when six Thai workers got drunk and were involved in trashing a *karaoke* machine in an entertainment center. This incident required police officers to investigate the CEO that was hiring these illegal aliens. The CEO, and co-founder of this group, was forced to fire all of his illegal foreign workers. The group was also in jeopardy and faced possible dissolution. When I asked my informer what the group planned to do if it was forced to dissolve, he said, “most likely we will form another group and use a different name.”¹¹⁵

To summarize, government policies toward unskilled Asian workers are fuzzy and often appear contradictory. The government must deal with both how to control its borders and how to deal with illegal foreigners humanely as expected from the international community. The Ministry of Justice (together with the National Police and the Ministry of Labor) sponsors an annual, nation-wide, one-month Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreign Workers while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs circulates requests to concerned ministries to protect the human rights of *all* foreigners in Japan. Similarly, the Ministry of Labor makes no distinction between overstayed and legal foreign workers in

¹¹⁴ *Asahi Shunbun*, 11 September 1992

¹¹⁵ Interview with Mr. Wada Nobuhiro of Kaigiken in Yokohama, 28 November 1998

providing labor protection while the Ministry of Health and Welfare makes a clear distinction for those who can enroll in the National Health Insurance.

Most important for many unskilled Asian workers in Japan, the 1990 revised Immigration Control Law makes them illegal persons. The revision makes it easy for employers to take advantage of illegal foreign workers by withholding past wages, dismissing them unfairly, and refusing to compensate them for work-related accidents. The 2000 revision turned illegally entered Asian workers into “criminals.” The actions by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1990 and 1992 to limit medical assistance and National Health Insurance coverage only to those registered foreign residents who have been in Japan for more than one year severely worsen the livelihood for illegal foreign workers. Consequently, illegal foreign workers face difficulty in paying all medical fees themselves, which prompt some hospitals to reject them for fear that they will not be able to pay for the treatment.

III. SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF BEING ILLEGAL FOREIGN WORKERS IN JAPAN

Japanese government policies, particularly the 1990 revised Immigration Control Law, effectively created a two-tiered labor market for foreign workers: legal and illegal foreign workers. It is the latter who encounter serious problems. In addition to the labor and health related issues discussed above such as unpaid wages, unfair dismissal, uncompensated accident insurance, and inability to pay medical fees, unskilled Asian workers are also placed under vulnerable positions due to their illegal status. This illegal status forces unskilled Asian workers into isolation and drives them into alcoholism and

gambling. Moreover, turning these people into illegal beings further promote underground activities of co-ethnic and Japanese brokers as well as *yakuza*. The details of such social consequences of being illegal foreign workers in Japan are discussed below.

2.3.1 Isolation and Loneliness

The official status of being “illegal” keeps Asian foreign workers isolated and often on the run. Illegal foreigners are afraid to go far from their apartments, because they fear being caught by the police or immigration officials. They cannot form a permanent community because they are constantly on the run. Filipinos called this activity “*tago-ng-tago*” (always hiding) or TNT.¹¹⁶ Once a close-knit community of several thousands Thais was formed in Tsuchiura-shi several years back, which became known as “Little Bangkok,” the Immigration Office conducted several raids which effectively dissolved the Thai community there. Thereafter, the Thais were afraid to come together in large number, fearing that it would again be an easy target for more raids from the Immigration Office. Isolation and loneliness appear to foster alcoholism and gambling among many illegal foreigners. Overstayed Thais live a lonely and stoic life. Many drained their loneliness with alcohol and their hard-earned money to *pachinko* (pinball) machines. In the Kabukicho district of Tokyo, female Thai entertainers, who usually drink with their Japanese clients at work, often stop over after work at a drinking establishment where Thai men are ready to entertain them. Such an establishment offers alcohol beverages with Thai snacks and usually one central *karaoke* box. Thai women bring their Thai friends and,

¹¹⁶ On the life of an illegal Filipino who was *tago-ng-tago*, see Ray Ventura, *Underground in Japan* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992).

sometimes, their Japanese clients with them to this place. Thai hosts smoothly moved from one table to another and entertained these Thai women with small talks and alcohol. In all my visits to these establishments, every Thai woman drank alcohol. In a small Ibaraki town of Iwai-shi, female Thai entertainers usually wake up around noon and headed directly to a Thai restaurant for *kaopad* (fried rice) or *pad krapao* (basil rice). By 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I observed in one restaurant, a couple of Thai entertainers were already drunk. Any Thai in these communities in Japan would agree that deaths from alcoholism among the Thais, particularly women, are on the rise.

In addition, I was told that most Thai workers at Iwai-shi and Tsuchiura-shi in the Ibaraki prefecture are addicted to *pachinko* machines.¹¹⁷ Customers complain that a Thai hairdresser in Tsuchiura-shi spends most of his quality time in *pachinko* parlors. They often have to fetch him there in order to have their hair cut. One entertainer told me that she loses somewhere between 250,000 to 400,000 yen per month to these money-sucking machines.¹¹⁸ I asked her,

“Don’t you feel bad losing so much money when you can send them home to your family?”

“I used to send that amount of money home every month. But I am bored and have nothing to do here,” she explained.

“If you are bored, why don’t you go back to Thailand?” I rudely persisted.

“I live a comfortable life [*sabai*] here, much better than in Thailand. I will continue to work until the *nyuukan* [Immigration Office] catches me. Then I will go back,” she

¹¹⁷ Interview with overstayed Thai worker in Iwai-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998.

¹¹⁸ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998.

calmly answered.

This phenomenon also appears in other foreigner communities. In the Kotobuki-cho district of Yokohama where Korean and Filipino day laborers try their luck on landing a job in the early mornings, many foreign workers escape isolation and boredom inside the *pachinko* parlors. A Japanese couple who runs a small barber shop in this district for 34 years advised me to go inside the *pachinko* parlor across the street if I wanted to meet many foreigners.

2.3.2 Promotion of Underground Activities

An unintended consequence of setting illegality to the work done by unskilled Asian workers in Japan is the expansion of underground activities, which further cause more problems for illegal foreign workers. These activities, which usually involve the *yakuza*, include illegal brokering business, human trafficking, and violent means of settling disputes.

Illegal Asian workers in Japan are obliged to rely on informal channels, finding jobs through recruiting agents or friends. As temporary workers, illegal Asian workers (and *Nikkeijin*) rely on Japanese dispatching companies or brokers to help them find jobs, usually in labor-short subcontracting companies.¹¹⁹ Brokers for illegal Asian workers involve deception, coercion, illegal captivity, and sometime physical violence. According to a 1995 NGO record of its 132 Thai women seeking refuge in its shelter, 108 of them (or 82 percent) were deceived and forced into prostitution. Almost half thought that they were

¹¹⁹ Komai, *Migrant Workers in Japan Nikkeijin* and other legal foreign workers can also use job placement services at Public Employment Security Offices.

going to be working in restaurants or factories in Japan.¹²⁰ In reality, traffickers brought foreign women through these “production” companies and forced them to work at clubs and snack bars.¹²¹ Similarly, a 1997 survey of 100 Filipina sex workers by the International Organization of Migration (IOM) reveals that over 70 percent were forced into prostitution. Over 60 percent of the Filipinas were not allowed to refuse the demands of their customers.¹²² Their Japanese employers often beat them when they do not comply. In other cases, the clubs and snack bars establish a *dohan* (pairing, dating) system, where foreign women are forced to date their clients after business hours - otherwise they will be fined.¹²³

Many Thai and Filipina women claimed they did not expect to be sold into a bar or night club and thereby incurred a large financial debt to the club owners.¹²⁴ For Thai women, the broker and *mama-san* in Japan usually pay local brokers in Thailand between 1,500,000 to 1,800,000 yen per each foreign woman for transportation fee and falsified travel documents. After these women arrived in Japan, they are sold to a broker or a *mama-san*, who runs snack bars, for around 2,000,000 yen. At this moment, they are then told, to their surprise, that they had incurred financial debt of between 3,500,000 to 3,800,000 yen in which they must pay back by performing sexual services to Japanese clients at snack

¹²⁰ Josei-no-ie Saalaa, *Shuerutaa riyuu jokyuu hougo* [Report of Shelter Activities] (Japanese version, January 1995); *Jodmaikao "saalaa"* [Newsletter Saalaa] (Thai version, January 1995). Also see newspapers reports in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 22 April 1988, 18 August 1988; *Asahi Shimbun*, 21 May 1991, May 24, 1991. *Mainichi Shimbun* (Nagano edition), 4 September 1997

¹²¹ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 22 April 1988

¹²² Cited in Batis Center (Philippines) for Women Newsletter (Vol. 8, No. 3) and HELP Newsletter (No. 32, May 1998), also see newspaper reports in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 29 November 1988

¹²³ The *dohan* system also causes considerable health impact on foreign hostesses. Hostesses typically work between 5 p.m. and 4 a.m. When they are forced to go out with clients, it is usually during the daytime when they supposed to be resting

¹²⁴ I should add that these data are biased by the samples, which only include those women who had encountered problems in Japan. Given the large publicity in Thailand and the Philippines about prostitution in Japan – not to mention

bars in order to reclaim their freedom.¹²⁵ These women received between 25,000 to 35,000 yen per customer for their sexual services. If she were lucky, she would be able to repay her debt and to regain her freedom.¹²⁶ If she were *really* lucky, a Japanese man might buy back freedom for her and would take her to live with him (of course, with her consent). I came across two cases in which Thai women are able to buy back their freedom *and* are able to start a night club or a bar of their own in Japan (with the help from a Japanese “friend”).

Japanese brokers and *mama-san* closely monitor these foreign women. According to a 1997 IOM survey, 94 percent lived in places assigned by employers so they could be monitored all the time. Some of the women were not allowed to go out for shopping or other errands without an escort. Almost half reported that they did not have adequate food and heating. The brokers and *mama-san* often threatened them if they entertained the idea of escaping.¹²⁷ In order to intimidate and to discipline these women, the brokers and *mama-san* (themselves or through hired thugs) often beat these women. In the case of Filipina entertainers, over half said their employers had mob connections. I know a Thai man, who was brought to Japan illegally during the “bubble economy” of the late 1980s and whose job was to keep the Thai women in good company. He was cornered down in his apartment by a *yakuza* and had one of his arms sliced with a samurai sword. The reason he gave for such a brutal act was that he was thought to be involved with a Thai woman

wide-spread prostitution in their own countries, one would guess that most knew what they were expected to do in Japan
125 Support Group for Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, *Sono hi, nihon de* [That Day in Japan] (Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki: Support Group for Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, 1994), pp. 26-28

126 Some are able to repay their debt as early as within one year. Interviews with Thai entertainers in Iwai-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998

127 Support Group for Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, ed., *Sono hi, nihon de*, pp. 30-37.

who was contemplating escaping.¹²⁸

To make the matter worse, these women must pay rent to their brokers or *mama-san* in Japan, since they could not get an apartment on their own. They are also burdened by medical and other miscellaneous expenses. Moreover, Japanese brokers can resell them off again to other brokers elsewhere as a way to make additional profits. The more successful ones typically headed for large cities, such as Tokyo and Osaka while the not-so-popular ones for the remote countryside. Hence, opportunist brokers can place Thai women in a situation of perpetual debt. If a Thai does not pay all the money and decides to run-away, then these people would hire the *yakuza* to track the person down.¹²⁹

Another Thai informer told me that snack bars pay 20,000 to 30,000 yen per month to the *yakuza*. If they did not pay, then “the organization” would send someone to have a few drinks there. Then he would pretend to be drunk and began breaking a table or two – all at the owner’s expense, of course. Now, if the owner paid, then “the organization” would provide protection services 24 hour per day. For example, if a customer got out of hand (i.e. overly drunk and began to break windows and things), then a snack bar worker could call the *yakuza* up at any time. And they would be there within a few minutes! Why? Because they can make even more money by threatening the drunken trouble-maker! As a result, these Thais are actually in very good terms with the *yakuza* and even see them as their protector. My informer claims that the *yakuza* would not harm people

¹²⁸ Interview with a formerly overstayed Thai worker who had returned to Thailand in Bangkok, 7 June 1994

¹²⁹ Interview with a Thai broker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998; also see Woman’s Rights Kamarado, ed., *Tai kara no tayori: sunakku “mama” satsukai jiken no sono ato* [Letters from Thailand: After the Killing Incident of a Snack Mama] (Tokyo: Gendai Shokan, 1998); Support Group of the Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, ed., *Baishun shakai nihon e, taijin josei kara no tegami* [To Prostitution Society Japan, Letters from Thai Women] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995); Saalaa, *Shierutaa riyou jokyoku*.

physically unless that person has done something “really, really” nasty to them.¹³⁰

The status of foreign workers as illegal beings also puts them into a situation where they must settle co-ethnic conflicts among themselves. A Japanese policeman at the Kotobuki-cho in Yokohama informed me that much of the crimes committed by Korean workers in that area usually involved other Koreans. The Thais in Ibaraki reported a similar pattern. Some Thais hire the *yakuza* to beat up another Thai enemy who possesses physical advantages.¹³¹ They hire *yakuza* in order to stay away from direct criminal activities, because arrest would most certainly mean deportation.

IV. GOVERNMENT’S EFFORTS IN MANUFACTURING NEGATIVE IMAGES OF ILLEGAL FOREIGN WORKERS

In addition to effecting the flow of legal foreign workers into Japan and to defining the conditions under which both legal and illegal foreign workers must live, the Japanese state plays a key role in constructing negative images of illegal foreign workers on the Japanese public. The National Police Agency publishes its annual *White Paper* where it often reports the increased number of crimes committed by foreigners with great alarm. Local police offices also feed Japanese newspapers with unsubstantiated crime reports involving foreigners. These state agencies find it to their interests, in terms of increased funding for their activities, to portray illegal foreign workers as “deviant” and potentially “dangerous” to the Japanese people. This section discusses how these state agencies do that by first examining past accounts of state’s construction of unsavory images of foreigners. It then shows how such practices have continued in Japan to the present day.

¹³⁰ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998.

2.4.1 State Construction of the Evil Foreigners in Historical Perspective

In Japan, state's construction of negative images of foreigners has historical precedents. Historically, Japanese leaders and influential ideologues have shaped negative images of foreigners on their people. They held a belief, which was rooted in the traditional social division between the samurai and the commoners, that Japanese commoners were "stupid" and could easily be "transformed" to foreign ways and thereby turn against the Japanese state. Therefore, Japanese leaders often created unsavory images of foreigners on their own people in order to instill fear against foreigners and strengthen their control over the Japanese people.

The suspicion of the Japanese governing elite on foreigners had its roots in the sixteenth century when Portuguese missionaries and traders found their way into Japan. At first, feudal lords in western Japan cultivated relations with such foreigners in order to obtain firearms from the West and maintain profitable trade. Worried at the rapid spread of Christianity in Japan, which approached half a million converts, the Japanese rulers began to suspect foreign missionaries of political ambitions. This suspicion was influenced by Protestant Dutch traders who warned the newly established Tokugawa regime at the turn of the seventeenth century that the Spanish conquest of the Philippines expressed the true intention of the Catholic powers.¹³² Increasingly, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) and the early Tokugawa shoguns came to view Christianity and foreign intruders as threats to political unity. They feared that foreigners, particularly Christian Westerners, may

¹³¹ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998

¹³² See Peter Daus, *The Rise of Modern Japan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), p. 21 (ff)

transform Japanese commoners into Christians and therefore turned against them. The Shimabara rebellion of 1637 in western Kyushu further strengthened this suspicion and fear. Supporters of this uprising, which began as a peasant disorder, were purported to include the local feudal lord, who was a Christian, and Europeans. The Tokugawa regime suppressed the rebellion and massacred thousands of Japanese Christians thereafter. Finally in 1640, Tokugawa officials beheaded forty-eight Portuguese and sent their comrades away with these words. "So long as the sun warms the earth, any Christian bold enough to come to Japan...even if he be the god of the Christians, shall pay for it with his head."¹³³ This xenophobia was extended to traders and all foreigners before the Tokugawa government embarked on its isolated (鎖国) foreign policy for the next two and a half centuries. Arthur Walworth remarks,

[b]y having any dealings with foreigners, even by receiving letters from them, Japanese became liable to severe punishment and exposed their whole family circle to penalties. Moreover, the anti-foreign laws were made effective by high rewards for the detection of offenders.¹³⁴

During this period, the Tokugawa regime forbade its Japanese subjects to come into contact with foreigners except the Dutch and Chinese, who were confined to the remote island of Dejima near the port of Nagasaki. The *bakufu* (Tokugawa's government) forced those Japanese who conducted business with foreigners on the island to "trample upon the cross two or three times a year as an expression of their hatred of the religion of the foreigners."¹³⁵ The Tokugawa regime also forbade Japanese from traveling abroad, because they feared that Japanese sojourners would succumb to dangerous ideas from foreigners

¹³³ Captain Frank Brinkley, *A History of the Japanese People from the Earliest Times to the End of the Meiji Era* (New York, 1915), p. 656. Quoted in Arthur Walworth, *Black Ships Off Japan: The Story of Commodore Perry's Expedition* (New York, Knopf, 1946), p. 5.

¹³⁴ Walworth, *Black Ships Off Japan*, p. 5.

while abroad.

Japanese rulers were satisfied with confining their relations with outsiders to the Dutch and Chinese at Nagasaki until the early nineteenth century when Western ships came back *en masse* knocking on their doors. A scholar of Dutch Studies (蘭学者), Takahashi Kageyasu, proposed a policy of armed expulsion of foreigners (攘夷) to the *bakufu* in 1824, because he reasoned that Japanese commoners “by nature” readily feel affection for foreigners. He believed that foreigners “do not have to entice [our commoners with novel and exotic gadgets] at all; they naturally feel affection for them...[W]e may not permit them to feel this way toward the foreigners [whose presence in Japan] is prohibited.”¹³⁶ Takahashi believed that only by physically separating aliens and commoners could *bakufu* leaders prevent their subjects’ transformation to foreign or barbarian ways. Following Takahashi’s recommendation, the *bakufu* passed the Expulsion Edict in March 1825. It stated:

All Southern Barbarians and Westerners... worship Christianity, that wicked cult prohibited in our land. Henceforth, whenever a foreign ship is sighted approaching any point on our coast, all persons on hand should fire on and drive it off.¹³⁷

According to this Edict, the Tokugawa leaders implanted onto Japanese commoners that foreigners were dangerous because they worshipped “that wicked cult” called Christianity. A written justification to why Christianity may be dangerous to the *bakufu* leadership arrived one month later in the literary form of the famous *New Theses* 「新論」 by a

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6

¹³⁶ Uehara Hisashi, *Takahashi Kageyasu no kenkyuu* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1977), pp. 289-293. Quoted in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 105.

¹³⁷ Quoted in Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan*, p. 60

Confucian scholar from the Mito School, Aizawa Seishisai (1781-1863). Aizawa feared that Westerners would convert Japanese people into Christians and “stupid [Japanese] commoners” would no longer support their domain leaders. Instead, “our people would consider it an honor and a privilege to die for this foreign god.”¹³⁸ Hence, the policy to expel the foreigners (攘夷) was conceived of as sweeping away or eradicating what was culturally barbarian and an attempt to build barriers between Japanese commoners and foreigners.¹³⁹ From 1825 to 1842, the *bakufu* leaders adopted 「攘夷」 (the expulsion of Western barbarians by force) as the guiding principle of Japanese foreign policy.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Japan first encountered a situation where a large number of Asians, mostly Koreans, was working in its factories, mines, and construction sites. Japanese state officials continued to sully the images of these Asian workers. The events that followed the Great Kanto Earthquake on 1 September 1923 exemplified this point. Rumors began to circulate soon after the earthquake that the Koreans were setting fires, looting, and poisoning wells in a planned attempt to attack the Japanese. The Tokyo police made matters worse by authorizing a radio broadcast that warned Japanese against Koreans, who “were burning houses, killing people, and stealing money and property.” On 3 September 1923, the Home Ministry sent a telegram to all subordinate government units in Japan stating that the Koreans had started fires and carried bombs as part of a Korean plot against the Japanese during the confusion following the earthquake. The Home Ministry instructed the local authorities to take strong measures to prevent any Korean

¹³⁸ See Aizawa Seishisai, *Shinron* (New Theses), in Imai Usaburo, et.al., eds., *Nihon shiso taikai 53 Mitogaku*. Quoted in Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 54

subversion in their areas.¹⁴⁰ It organized vigilante corps, which comprised of both army reservists and civilian volunteers, to search the streets for Koreans and authorized their brutal conduct against those Koreans found. Approximately 2,000 Koreans died at the hands of the members from these vigilante corps.¹⁴¹ It turned out that the rumors, which started this morbid ordeal for innocent Koreans, were false and the government, particularly the Home Ministry, knew about this.¹⁴²

Since the earthquake, the Japanese government did nothing to improve relations and images of Koreans in Japan. An official report of the Japanese government in the *Japan Yearbook* lent credence to the rumors and helped perpetuate them. According to the report,

[t]he Korean scare in the downtown quarter of Tokyo at Honjo and other places originated from the isolated malpractices perpetrated in the hour of confusion following the shock and the fire by a number of disorderly Koreans. About fifty criminal acts by Koreans were reported in Tokyo... One case that occurred early in the morning of the third day near the only remaining water tap in the Kikugawa-cho, Honjo, is significant. A suspicious-looking Korean... was noticed loitering near by [sic]. He was seized and examined... when a paper wrapper containing about an ounce of a whitish powder was discovered about his person. The man insisted it was common salt. He was forced to swallow it and soon died in agony. The powder was arsenic.¹⁴³

The Japanese press repeatedly printed unsubstantiated rumors about the Koreans, which further prolonged the panic after the earthquake.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, many Japanese people

¹⁴⁰ Matsuo Takayoshi, "Kantou daishinsai moto no chousenjin gyakusatsu jiken," *Shisou* (Thought), Part I, No. 471 (September 1963), p. 36. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 39 (fn)

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 54. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 38 (fn)

¹⁴² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Taishou juuyonen-chuu ni okeru zairyuu chousenjin no joukyou* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1926), p. 173. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 39 (fn)

¹⁴³ Takenobu, Y., ed., "The Earthquake and the Public Order," *The Japan Yearbook, 1924-25* (Tokyo: 1925), p. 241

¹⁴⁴ Harry Emerson Wildes, *Social Currents in Japan, with Special Reference to the Press* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 293. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 40

continued to believe, several decades later, that Koreans poisoned wells and attempted to kill the people of the islands during the Great Kanto Earthquake.¹⁴⁵

The Japanese government continued to construct myths and negative images of Koreans throughout the 1920s and 1930s. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote the following about Koreans in 1926.

In custom, Koreans are basically different from Japanese; and their general life is very unclean and unplanned. *Thus, it is natural that the Japanese do not like them.* They are very strange and get very jealous and misunderstand things. There is a tendency for Japanese to look at them with contempt. [emphasis added]¹⁴⁶

Such statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided an official justification for Japanese prejudice against Koreans. Furthermore, the 1933 report of the Home Ministry referred to Koreans as “lazy” and “they used their extra money for gambling and *sake*.”¹⁴⁷ It attributed the increase in crime rate to the “bad habits and vices” of the Koreans. According to the report, “[a]most all of...[Koreans] are very wild and deeply emotional; and as a result, they like to argue and fight.”¹⁴⁸ As John Dower eloquently shows, state-sponsored racism in Japan reached its apex during the war years when Japanese government officials painted unsavory images of all their enemies.¹⁴⁹

During the early days of the Occupation, Japanese politicians and bureaucrats resumed their racist attitudes toward the Koreans and accused them of creating Japan’s black market, of increasing the crime rate, and of having secured a financial stranglehold on

¹⁴⁵ Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 41

¹⁴⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Taishou juuyonen-chuu ni okeru zairyuu chousenjin no joukyou* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1926), p. 173. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 33.

¹⁴⁷ Ministry of Home Affairs, *Showa hachinen-chuu ni okeru shakai undou no joukyou* [Conditions of Social Movement in 1933] (Tokyo: Ministry of Home Affairs, 1933), p. 1397. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 31

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1401. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, pp. 91-92

Japan.¹⁵⁰ After the *Tokyo Mainichi* newspaper attacked the Koreans for their black-market operations in July 1946, the general secretary of the Liberal Party, Ono Tomemutsu, publicly denounced non-Japanese for destroying the social order. The Finance Minister, Ishibashi Tanzan, then announced that “third-country nationals” (第三国人) controlled twenty of the fifty billion yen in circulation. By mid-August, the politician, Shiikuma Saburo, brought the issue to the Diet and publicly accused Koreans of being the nucleus of the black market and asserted that they controlled one-third of the new yen in circulation.¹⁵¹ In a war-shattered economy, many Koreans, indeed, engaged in black-market activities, as did nearly everyone in Japan. Then, in early November 1946, the police posted hundreds of posters warning people to beware of robbers on walls throughout Ueno in Tokyo. The poster depicted a robber, who was armed with a knife, threatened a trembling woman. A Korean emblem was deliberately used as background.¹⁵²

2.3.2 Recent State Construction of Illegal Foreigners as “Criminals”

History has a powerful influence on how Japanese leaders today think and talk about foreigners in Japan. As mentioned earlier, the Tokyo governor Ishihara Shintaro exemplifies this point when he told Japanese troops to target foreigners in order to prevent looting and rioting in the event of a major earthquake. In his address to Ground Self-Defense Force troops, Ishihara claimed that foreigners, which he called “*sangokujin*”

¹⁴⁹ See John Dower, *War without Mercy* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

¹⁵⁰ SCAP was also responsible for the anti-Korean hysteria that swept Japan during the summer and fall of 1946. It issued a press release expressing fear that Koreans, who entered Japan illegally, were spreading cholera and typhus. Two months later, SCAP had to withdraw this charge and admitted that only one case of cholera had developed.

¹⁵¹ Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 110.

¹⁵² David Conde, “The Korean Minority in Japan,” *Far Eastern Survey*, XVI (February 1947), pp. 41-45. Quoted in Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, pp. 110-111.

(「三国人」), were likely to riot and commit crimes due to the breakdown of order.¹⁵³

Ishihara later explained,

In the confusion after the war, we created an open market... The press at the time referred to foreigners who committed illegal acts and caused actual harm as "*sangokujin*"...I used it because it expressed foreigners who cause problems for Japanese, extremely troublesome foreigners. Are they not many of them in Tokyo? *People who have entered illegally and who do not have clear identities will certainly cause riots*, therefore I said let's be prepared. Crimes in Tokyo are getting more violent. If you ask who is committing them, they are all *sangokujin*. In other words, foreigners...who have entered illegally and remain in Japan are the criminals, is that not so? Are the Snake Heads not like that too? [emphasis added]¹⁵⁴

Ishihara's reasoning is certainly influenced by historical events in Japan during the aftermath of World War II (and probably his acceptance of rumors about Koreans looting, rioting, and killing Japanese during the aftermath of the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923). In his address, he referred to foreigners as 「三国人」, which is derived from 「第三国人」. As mentioned above, the term 「第三国人」 was commonly used to describe Koreans during the Occupation period. Most interestingly, Ishihara invoked the infamous and brutal Chinese gang, the Snake Heads, to further construct a fearful image of illegal foreigners.¹⁵⁵ Snake Heads, who operate human trafficking of Fuzhounese workers to Japan, the United States, and Western Europe, are as representative of overstayed foreign workers in Japan as drug traffickers to undocumented Mexican workers in the United States. Yet, Ishihara tried to find justification for his original racist remarks by making such a bizarre and ungrounded association of overstayed foreigners with ruthless foreign gangsters, who the Japanese police themselves fear and cannot control. By doing so, he

¹⁵³ *Asahi Shimbun*, 9 April 2000

¹⁵⁴ *Asahi Shimbun*, 11 April 2000.

¹⁵⁵ On the Snake Heads and their illegal trafficking of Fuzhounese workers to the U.S., see Peter Kwong, *Forbidden*

instilled greater fear of “illegal” foreigners as “violent” and “brutal” onto the Japanese people.

When the police apprehended two Japanese men who had kidnapped a young boy in Yokohama, they discovered the potential harm that the pre-paid cellular phones may carry, because the Japanese criminals used them and the police were not able to trace the calls made on such phones. One day after the arrest of these Japanese criminals, the Chairman of the National Police Safety Commission and the Minister of Home Affairs testified before the House of Councilors that such phones present a threat to public safety, because “[t]hey can be used easily by foreigners staying here illegally and it is a situation in which they are used for selling illegal drugs and for other crimes.”¹⁵⁶ A high ranking government official made such statement despite the fact that no foreigner was even involved in this incident! Moreover, the Japanese government loosely makes official statement equating illegal foreigners to criminal activities. For example, in the section on “Foreigners in Japan” of the *1999 Diplomatic Bluebook*, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that “[m]any foreigners staying in Japan illegally tend to become involved in crime” without providing any statistical proof or an explanation on how it reaches such a conclusion.¹⁵⁷

In recent years, the Japanese government continues to construct unsavory images

Workers: Illegal Chinese Immigrants and American Labor (New York: The New Press, 1997), particularly pp. 26-39

¹⁵⁶ See newspaper clipping around 1 May 2000

¹⁵⁷ Since 1995 when a section on “Foreigners in Japan” was added, the language used by MOFA in the *Diplomatic Bluebook* has changed over the years regarding illegal foreign workers. Initially, MOFA showed sympathetic attitude and wrote “illegal workers tend to work under poor labor conditions and with little protection under Japan’s social security system, some cases result in human rights issues.” By 1996, MOFA began to equate illegal workers with criminal activities when it stated that “[t]hese illegal workers tend to get involved in crime.” In 1997, MOFA added that such “situation creates prejudice among some parts of the population against foreigners in Japan.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *1999 Diplomatic Bluebook* (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999). Also see <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/> (17 June 2000)

of foreigners, particularly illegal foreign workers. The existence of illegal foreign workers in Japan alarms the governing elite that they are losing control over the residents of their islands. Since they cannot control those who are residing illegally in Japan, they can influence the Japanese public on how they should look and think about illegal foreigners. Police offices constantly supply the mass media with unsubstantiated information on criminal activities committed by foreigners. The mass media then report them in their newspapers usually verbatim with such headlines as: "Foreign Criminals at its Worst," "Violent Crimes by Foreigners Increase 5 Times in 5 Years," "Foreign Organized Thefts Rise Fivefold," and "Police Say Thefts by Foreigners Up."¹⁵⁸ The major dailies assign approximately ten reporters to the headquarters of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department and additional staff at the eight district police offices.¹⁵⁹ The police use the press to pass on information about criminal activities by illegal foreigners to their advantage for expanding their jurisdiction and thereby their funding. David Bayley comments that "even though foreign residents in Japan committed less than one-tenth of one percent of crime in 1986, the National Police Agency and the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department set up special units to deal with the problem because the trend was upward over the preceding decade."¹⁶⁰

The police construct a fearful picture of illegal foreigners on Japanese citizens by associating illegal foreigners with criminality. After one incident in 1991 on money exchange, which presumably involved foreigners, the Yotsuya Police Office posted a

¹⁵⁸ See respectively *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 7 November 1991; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 18 April 1993; *Daily Yomiuri*, 4 September 1998; *Japan Times*, 4 September 1998.

¹⁵⁹ David H. Bayley, *Forces of Order: Policing Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California, 1991), p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

warning in various supermarkets and stores. At the end of this warning announcement, the Yotsuya Police Office made the following request.

Please immediately call 110 or report to the Yotsuya Police Office when a foreigner asks for money exchange even if no damage has been done.

外国人がマネーチェンジを申し出た場合は被害にあわなくても、直ちに110番が四谷署に通報して下さい。

According to this warning, any foreigner who asked to exchange money should be suspected as a criminal and be reported to the police immediately. Here, the police further promoted the association of foreigners as criminals and instilled fear of foreigners among the Japanese public. Officials at the Yotsuya Police Office explained that they posted such warning in order to prevent the recurrence of similar incident.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, the webpage of the National Police Agency in 2000 on foreign crime has Japan surrounded from all sides by an invasion of bad and fearful foreigners.¹⁶² A local periodical newsletter issued by a local police box in the Kanagawa prefecture announced the following.

The number of illegal foreigners committing crimes is getting worse, and is increasing. Organized groups' illegal immigrant cases and cases between Japanese yakuza and illegally staying foreign workers or employers who hire illegally staying foreign workers under severe working conditions is also increasing... Please inform the police office when you see or hear of any *suspicious foreigners*. [emphasis added]¹⁶³

Here, the police equate illegal foreign workers with “crimes” and being “suspicious.” More interestingly, the police call to the Japanese public to report *only* “suspicious foreigners” but not suspicious Japanese *yakuza* or suspicious business people employing illegal foreign

¹⁶¹ See Hakoishi Mami and Hatade Akira, “Rainichi gaikokujin no hanzai” [Foreigners Crimes] in Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainichi gaikokujin jinken hakusho* [White Papers on the Human Rights of Foreigners] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997), pp. 320-339 (328-329ff).

¹⁶² See http://www.npa.go.jp/koho2/mado_3.htm (9 May 2000).

¹⁶³ Quoted and translated in James Bond (007), “Illegal Foreign Workers, Suspicious Foreigners,” *The U/FJ* Vol. 3.2 (June 1998), p. 7.

workers, who the police actually cite as being criminal partners with illegal foreigners.

Police officials have given out exaggerated information to me on crimes committed by foreigners. When I visited Shimodate in the Ibaraki prefecture, I stopped at the police station and asked a senior policeman about the “Shimodate Jiken.” The Shimodate Jiken was one of the most famous criminal cases involving Thai women in Japan, where three Thai women murdered their Thai boss, claiming that the latter had forced them into prostitution, threatened them, and physically abused them. After my question, the policeman asked me back,

“Which one?”

“The one that involved foreigners,” I answered.

“Which one?” he asked again.

“The one with Thai women,” I explained.

“Which one?” he asked me again...and with a straight face!

Then he went on to explain to me that Shimodate has an unusually high criminal rate, particularly those involving foreigners. But when I asked him about what is the percentage of the crimes committed by foreigners compared to those by Japanese. He reluctantly answered,

“Very small,...[pause]...perhaps one percent.”

And he was quick to add that foreign residents in Shimodate were quite small, percentage-wise. Perhaps this was true with *legal* foreign residents.

Similarly in Kotobuki-cho in Yokohama, I stopped at a police box (交番) and asked an officer about the crimes in that area. He told me that there has been an increase in crimes in the past several years, particularly those involving foreigners. Given the fact that

two *yakuza* offices, one from the infamous Yamaguchi-gumi and the other from the Soaikai-gumi, are located within Kotobuki-cho, crimes committed by Japanese violent groups (暴力団) are much higher and more violent than those by foreign workers. Moreover, organized gambling halls prosper on the streets of Kotobuki-cho without any sign of subsiding. Yet, the police and government officials turn their eyes away from such illegal activities organized by the *yakuza*. More importantly, who dares to report those crimes committed by the *yakuza* to the police?

The police use the press and mass media to influence popular imagination of illegal foreign workers in Japan. Crime reports involving illegal foreign workers in the press almost always have the police as their source of information. Although the foreign “suspect” still has not been proven or judged guilty for the crime, the press often reports the suspect’s illegal status as visa overstayer. Hence, these foreign “suspects” automatically become “criminals” due to the fact that they have already violated Japanese laws by overstaying their visas. For this reason, Wolfgang Herbert believes that the Japanese mass media portray illegal foreign workers as people who are not law-abiding (deviant) and potentially dangerous.¹⁶⁴ The *Yomiuri Shimbun* illustrates this point when it writes,

[a]lthough almost all [“illegals”] are serious laborers seeking high wages and therefore often times changing jobs, they do, on the other hand, thereby get into financial troubles. Cases of criminal involvement, and crimes committed by illegal workers, happen as often as every month.¹⁶⁵

Of course, the extra blurb at the end is unnecessary and insignificant if the readers were to consider that crimes committed by Japanese happen as often as everyday! Because most “illegal” foreign workers cannot read Japanese, many are unaware of such reports. And to

¹⁶⁴ See Wolfgang Herbert, *Foreign Workers and Law Enforcement in Japan* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1996)

challenge such reports would require much more time and energy for them.

Specifically, Japanese newspapers tend to associate Chinese to crimes, Thai and Filipina women to prostitution, South Asians to crimes, and Iranians to selling illegal telephone cards and drugs dealing. This is not to say that these characterizations are wrong, but simply they are dishonestly out of proportion. For example, between 1 January 1988 and 27 January 1999, out of 15,617 articles about “Chinese” in Japan’s four major national newspapers, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Nikkei Shimbun*, and the *Sankei Shimbun*, 2,579 were on crimes and 841 were on murders. And out of 2,247 articles about “Thai people,” 317 of them were about prostitution. And of the 1,997 articles that were about “Iranian,” 300 associated them with drugs. From articles in Japanese newspapers, the Chinese appear to be the number one violator of major crimes such as rape, violent acts, and murders. For example, of the 64 articles on rapes committed by foreigners, 26 (41%) were on the Chinese, 160 of 417 (38%) on violent acts, and 841 out of 1,794 (47%) on murders. On prostitution, 317 out of 439 (72%) articles were on the Thais. For drugs, 300 of 708 (42%) articles were about Iranians (see Table 2.6).

More liberal and progressive newspapers show similar pattern. The *Asahi Shimbun* printed 621 articles on Thai prostitution between February 1990 and July 1996. A substantive number of them expresses concern over AIDS. The *Kanagawa Shimbun* reports how Iranians were selling drugs to high school students(!) at the Yokohama station.¹⁶⁶ Such a report will certainly leave a negative impression of Iranians among parents who read the article.

¹⁶⁵ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 26 May 1988

¹⁶⁶ *Kanagawa Shimbun*, 13 June 1996

Table 2.6: Number of Newspaper Articles by Nationality and Keywords

	Rape 婦女暴行	Violence 暴行	Crimes 犯罪	Murders 殺人	Incidents 事件	Prostitute 売春	Drugs 麻薬	All Articles
Koreans	8	72	560	64	377	10	32	7,546
Chinese	26	160	2,579	841	4,320	63	133	15,617
Brazilian	0	55	74	74	221	3	13	1,317
Peruvian	2	1	15	45	425	3	28	1,010
Filipino	6	52	387	416	793	55	50	2,976
Thai	5	58	330	327	554	317	105	2,247
Indian	3	1	64	44	118	1	8	1,138
Pakistani	4	7	116	78	211	3	30	696
Bangladeshi	2	17	40	25	92	1	0	287
Iranian	6	44	353	206	592	15	300	1,997
All Foreigners	64	417	4,668	1,794	7,422	439	708	

Note: The number of articles includes all articles in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, the *Nikkei Shimbun*, and the *Sankei Shimbun* from 1 January 1987 to 27 January 1999. They are taken from a computer search of the *Nikkei Shimbun CD Rom*. The methodology of the computer search is as follow:

All Articles = Nationality

Number of Articles = Nationality + Keyword (e.g. rape, violence, crimes, murders, etc...)

All Foreigner = Foreigners + Keyword

Let us now look at the actual data on crimes committed by foreigners, which are provided in Table 2.7 and Table 2.8. Based on the 1998 crime statistics committed by foreigners, the number one offenders are the Chinese. However, 3,980 out of 5,894 criminal cases (66%) were violations of immigrant control. Chinese committed more larceny than any other foreign groups. However, serious crimes such as rape, assault, violent act are more common among Koreans. Similarly, Korean cases on stimulants alone outnumber all drug-related crimes committed by Iranians.¹⁶⁷ While foreign men committed

¹⁶⁷ With the passage of the 1992 Law Concerning Prevention of Unjust Acts by *Boryokudan* Members, there appears to be an emerging pattern of *yakuza* organizations willing to allow and accept criminal operations in their territories for a fee, and to accept and increasingly rely on foreigners as street-level drug retailers. Moreover, Iranians are more visible than Japanese or Koreans and operate primarily in public places such as parks and train stations. See H. Richard Friman, "Gaijinhanzai: Immigrants and Drugs in Contemporary Japan," *Asian Survey* 36:10 (October 1996): 964-977.

Table 2.7: Number of Offenders in Suspected Cases in 1997

Crime	Non-Japanese Suspects			Visiting Foreign Suspects		
	Number	Percent	Change from 1996 (%)	Number	Percent	Change from 1996 (%)
Total	21,272	100.0	13.7	16,106	100	20.4
Crime Code Offenses	7,805	36.7	2.4	4,050	25.1	3.7
Obstruction of Official Duties	62	0.3	12.7	22	0.1	-15.4
Document Forgery	234	1.1	10.4	168	1.0	15.9
Rape, Indecent Assault	86	0.4	6.2	53	0.3	26.2
Gambling	206	1.0	28.0	82	0.5	39.0
Homicide	122	0.6	10.9	95	0.6	15.9
Assault	1,000	4.7	2.9	351	2.2	7.0
Larceny	3,794	17.8	12.2	2,213	13.7	16.4
Robbery	189	0.9	-4.5	127	0.8	-3.8
Fraud	305	1.4	-10.0	123	0.8	11.8
Extortion	224	1.1	3.7	45	0.3	60.7
Embezzlement/ Breach of Trust	535	2.5	5.3	116	0.7	30.3
Theft-related	72	0.3	111.8	53	0.3	178.9
Violent Acts	73	0.3	0.0	19	0.1	26.7
Others	903	4.2	-29.7	583	3.6	-37.3
Special Law Offenses	13,467	63.3	21.5	12,056	74.9	27.3
Public Morals	139	0.7	-12.6	68	0.4	-1.4
Firearms & Swords	165	0.8	-14.9	91	0.6	-5.2
Anti-Prostitution	217	1.0	-5.9	170	1.1	15.6
Cannabis	220	1.0	10.0	181	1.1	18.3
Narcotics	143	0.7	2.9	128	0.8	1.6
Stimulants	1,440	6.8	-3.7	885	5.5	4.6
Customs/Tax	133	0.6	37.1	122	0.8	37.1
Foreign Currency	2	0.0	-33.3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Immigration Control	9,853	46.3	31.1	9,710	60.3	32.3
Alien Registration	234	1.1	-4.5	214	1.3	-6.6
Others	921	4.3	11.1	487	3.0	55.6

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Justice, *Annual Report of Statistics on Prosecution for 1997* (Tokyo: Ministry of Justice, 1998), p. x.

Table 2.8: Number of Indictments Issued/Dismissed for Penal Code and Special Law Offenses to Non-Japanese Persons in Japan, 1997

Crime	Korea		China		Brazil		Peru		Phil.		Thailand		India		Pakistan		Banglad.		Iran		Others		Total		Total
	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	Ind	Psp	
Crime Code Offenses	1,371	666	1,150	516	90	45	122	49	92	52	47	31	5	4	30	10	12	3	75	16	607	353	3,601	1,745	5,346
Trespassing/entry	28	27	69	37	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	30	19	137	92	229
Indecent Materials	25	3	29	8	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	10	7	72	19	91
Indecent Assault	8	2	3	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	22	3	25
Rape	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	15	1	16
Gambling	103	46	18	10	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	18	131	75	206
Homicide	22	1	13	0	3	0	0	0	12	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	11	2	72	3	75
Assault	368	148	78	24	13	2	11	6	14	4	8	2	0	2	6	4	2	1	7	5	73	41	580	239	819
Injury (Negligence)	6	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	13	7	20
Larceny	393	209	635	353	52	31	85	35	28	38	13	9	0	2	6	4	0	0	35	7	354	233	1,601	921	2,522
Robbery	14	0	12	0	9	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	6	0	51	1	52
Injury from Robbery	13	2	24	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	17	1	64	3	67
Fraud	110	49	39	9	2	1	3	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	24	10	185	70	255
Extortion	50	18	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	59	19	78
Embezzlement	11	38	2	26	3	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	17	81	98
Theft-related	10	5	12	6	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	2	0	9	6	43	17	60
Violent Acts	37	15	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	45	19	64
Others	166	98	201	37	2	4	7	6	24	6	11	15	3	0	6	2	2	1	19	3	53	3	494	175	669
Special Law Offenses	1,668	471	2,643	1,585	66	25	210	79	812	421	637	396	51	23	227	144	217	101	1,100	157	1,066	510	8,697	3,912	12,609
Public Morals	70	36	12	6	0	0	0	0	4	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	93	48	141
Firearms & Swords	45	25	13	11	3	1	1	0	3	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	1	14	16	84	61	145
Anti-Prostitution	26	14	48	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	23	131	75	206
Cannabis	22	11	1	2	6	3	2	0	2	5	6	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	38	9	46	21	127	52	179
Narcotics	4	2	0	1	2	0	2	0	1	2	5	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	29	1	51	8	96	17	113
Stimulants	485	33	15	2	36	1	2	1	301	31	5	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	245	13	77	9	1,168	92	1,260
Opium	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	66	5	6	1	75	7	82
Customs/Tax	20	2	1	0	3	0	1	0	17	1	6	3	0	0	2	0	3	0	4	0	55	4	112	10	122
Immigration Control	607	225	2,438	1,492	5	7	194	71	451	347	545	322	48	22	206	134	212	93	679	118	738	385	6,133	3,216	9,349
Alien Registration	21	24	50	29	0	2	1	6	26	20	15	8	0	0	6	5	1	7	1	8	5	4	126	113	239
Others	367	99	55	33	11	11	7	1	7	9	15	24	3	1	5	4	0	1	33	2	49	36	552	221	773
Total	3,039	1,137	3,793	2,101	156	70	332	128	904	473	684	427	56	27	257	154	229	104	1,175	173	1,673	863	12,298	5,657	17,955
Number of Men	2,570	821	3,282	1,687	149	67	299	103	541	242	364	149	56	27	257	153	229	104	1,162	171	1,426	655	10,335	4,179	14,514
Number of Women	469	316	511	414	7	3	33	25	363	231	320	278	0	0	0	1	0	0	13	2	247	208	1,963	1,478	3,441

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Justice, *Annual Report of Statistics on Prosecution for 1997* (Tokyo: Ministry of Justice, 1998).

crime four time more than foreign women, the gender ratio for Thai and Filipino criminals is relatively equal at one-to-one. Interestingly, crimes committed by South Asian and Iranian women appear to be almost non-existent.

Most interesting about all the hype of the increase in crimes committed by foreigners in Japan is the hidden fact that more than half of these crimes, or precisely 9,349 out of 17,955 or approximately 52 percent, are violations of the immigration control and alien registration. Given these figures, however, every illegal foreign worker in Japan is considered a “criminal” by the fact of her/his existence in Japan. If these numbers were to be excluded in the calculation of crimes committed by foreigners, than the percentage of crimes committed by foreigners given their population are less than those that are committed by Japanese themselves. It is possible that the police, knowing that foreign suspects will be deported, charge illegal foreigners with only a violation of the immigration control and alien registration instead of heavier offences. To press other and more serious charges would require extra energy and effort from the police.

It is well known that the propensity to commit offenses varies considerably for different demographic groups. For example, young people between 18 and 40 commit offences more frequently than older people. Foreign workers in Japan, who are mostly in their 20s and 30s, are then concentrated in the demographic group which has a higher crime rate. Thus, immigrants’ general rate of criminality is artificially high. If one wants to make a fair comparison on immigrants’ rate of criminality, one should compare it to the same demographic group of natives – those who are in their 20s and 30s. But such a comparison will only show that young Japanese are far more deviant and dangerous than foreigners.

Moreover, the number of arrests may have increased, but a large proportion of

these involves the same people. For example, the Japanese police reported that arrests of foreigners in 1999 increased eight percent to 34,398 whereas the number of foreigners actually arrested for crimes was 13,436, suggesting the same people were arrested several times.¹⁶⁸ Therefore, crimes committed by foreigners, in fact, have not increased despite the increased population of foreigners in Japan. It then appears that the Japanese National Police Agency use unsubstantiated and general figures, which are taken out of their social and demographic context, to spread xenophobic propaganda. They contribute little to the understanding of the actual situation. Japanese journalists simply report such unsubstantiated information in their newspapers. In almost all reports of crimes committed by illegal Asians, the newspapers do not fail to report that these “suspects” are visa overstayers or foreigners without proper documentation. Hence these “suspects” have already become “criminals” in the minds of the readers even before trials.¹⁶⁹

The stereotype of criminals appears to be associated with only illegal foreigners and not the legal ones. *Zainichi gaikokujin* come out looking normal in the mass media, because they know the Japanese language well, so they can directly construct and/or reconstruct the popular imagination about their ethnic groups in the Japanese mass media themselves. Several successful *zainichi* Korean movie directors have made popular films about *zainichi* Koreans in Japan, thereby making a considerable impact on Japanese popular imagination of *zainichi* Koreans. Some of these directors include Oh Duk Soo (*Zainichi*, 1998) and Sai Youichi (*Tsuki wa dottira ni dette iru no*). In fact, all of Sai Youichi’s films,

¹⁶⁸ See “Japan police report spotlights crime by foreigners” in <http://www.abcnews.com/> (1 May 2000)

¹⁶⁹ Daniel H. Foote finds that despite the existence of a presumption of innocence under Japanese law, upon arrest, a suspect is widely regarded by the media and the public as guilty. Fewer than 5 percent of the adult suspects considered by police to have committed Penal Code offenses are sentenced to prison. See Daniel H. Foote, “The Benevolent Paternalism of Japanese Criminal Justice,” *California Law Review*, Vol. 80 (1992)

many of which have won prestigious awards in Japan, are about *zainichi* Koreans. *Nikkeijin*, perhaps due to their Japanese blood, receive moderate sympathy from the mass media. Local newspapers sometimes associate them to crimes and petty thefts. In areas where *Nikkeijin* are highly concentrated like Shizuoka, the *Shizuoka Shimbun* contains 25 out of 170 articles (only 15 percent) on *Nikkeijin* between 1994 and 1998 about the crimes that *Nikkeijin* committed. Clearly, it is the illegal Asians workers, however, that come out looking bad in the mass media.

In sum, agents of the government, specifically the Japanese police force, help construct such unsavory images of illegal Asian workers by selectively leaking information on criminal activities of these foreign “suspects,” who have *already* violated Japanese laws by overstaying their visas. Opportunistic Japanese may interpret such a construction by agents of the Japanese government as a legitimization for their maltreatment and exploitation of overstayed foreigners. Hence, instead of curtailing discrimination, the Japanese government appears to promote further discrimination by constructing images of overstayed foreigners as “deviant” and “dangerous” through the mass media. Mr. Watanabe Hidetoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai keenly observes, “the police and the government are taking the lead in racial discrimination and the media follow that line.”¹⁷⁰

V. CONCLUSION

The political construction of foreign workers into legal and illegal ones directly effects the livelihood of many Asian unskilled workers in Japan. Government policies directly created certain migrant groups, particularly the *zainichi gaikokujin*, the *Nikkeijin*,

and the legal Asian workers. The National Manpower Mobilization Act of 1939 and the Korean Conscription Act of 1944 brought many Korean and Chinese to Japan as forced laborers. After Japan's defeat, the Amended Election Law of 1945 and the Alien Registration Law of 1947 turned these Korean and Chinese, who were considered "imperial subjects," into "aliens" and stripped them of their political rights. The revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act of 1990 triggered an influx of *Nikkeijin* and some Asian trainees into Japan thereafter. Because previous and present government policies are largely responsible for the existence of these legal aliens in Japan, the Japanese government provides legal protection and has created various institutional means for them to express their views to the government. Moreover, these legally recognized foreigners can also create their own self-help groups to fight for the improvement of their livelihood in Japan.

The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law also makes unskilled Asian workers illegal in Japan. In effect, it created a two-tier labor market for foreign workers: legal and illegal ones. The illegal Asians remain intentionally unrecognized by the Japanese government and must live in Japan in constant hiding. As illegal beings, they often encounter irregular Japanese business practices, which include unpaid wages, unlawful dismissal, uncompensated accident insurance, inability to pay medical fees, forced prostitution, and sometime physical abuse. These hardships are direct consequences of the 1990 Revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, the Ministry of Health and Welfare's Oral Directive in 1990, the 1992 National Health Insurance Program. The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law also punishes employers who hire overstayed foreign workers, thereby reducing incentives for employers to help injured "illegal" Asian

¹⁷⁰ Published interview with Mr. Watanabe Hideyoshi in <http://www.abcnews.com/> (1 May 2000)

workers. The decisions of the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1990 to limit the Livelihood Protection Law to Japanese citizens and permanent residents and in 1992 to limit the National Health Insurance Plan to registered foreigners who have been in Japan for over one year significantly moved back the guarantee of medical care for foreign nationals. As most public welfare services are closed to them, illegal Asian workers live in Japan without health insurance or full legal protection for compensation of industrial accidents and must pay all medical costs themselves.

The state, by using the mass media, also creates unsavory images of illegal Asians, thereby negatively influencing public imagination of these people. Specifically, the mass media often portrays Chinese as criminals, Filipina and Thai women as prostitutes, Iranians as drug dealers and master minds of illegal telephone cards in the Japanese black market. These illegal Asians cannot challenge businesses, mass media, and authorities or form a “legitimate” self-help group themselves, for fear of arrest and deportation. Deprived of such means, these people turn to Japanese support groups for professional assistance. Interestingly, they do not seek help from typical institutions such as support organizations of the central government, support organizations of the local governments, their own ethnic associations, or other ethnic associations, because these institutions do not support illegal foreign workers. Why these institutions turn their attention away from the desperate illegal foreign workers is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

GOVERNMENT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND CO-ETHNIC ASSOCIATIONS

Illegal foreigners receive inadequate assistance from organizations where we might expect to help them. Specifically, foreigners can try to seek assistance from service organizations of the central government, service organizations of local governments, their own co-ethnic associations, and other ethnic associations. These institutions, which indeed exist in Japan, provide little assistance to illegal foreigners. In the case of ethnic associations, none supports illegal foreigners. What type of services then do government organizations provide to foreigners? Why do illegal foreigners find these services unsatisfactory? Why do ethnic associations not support their illegal compatriots? This chapter hopes to answer these questions by exploring the organizations of various government service institutions and ethnic associations in Japan.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section examines support organizations of the central government and argues that these organizations limit their activities for foreigners to merely providing consultation, information, and translation services. The second section reviews foreigners' support organizations of local governments, particularly in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Ibaraki. In addition to consultation, information, and translation services, some local governments also offer mediating services on labor disputes between Japanese employers and foreign workers, including illegal ones. However, as officials of the government, these local government officials take a neutral stance in settling labor disputes that foreign workers bring with them to the labor centers of local governments. Moreover, consultants of local governments still lack the know-how on helping foreigners. The third section focuses on various ethnic associations. It starts with Korean ethnic associations, which maintain the largest foreigner membership. It then examines the Chinese ethnic associations, which boast the longest

history of ethnic associations in Japan. These Korean and Chinese ethnic associations hold strong ideological views and have preoccupied themselves with political activities in their “home” countries, namely North Korea, South Korea, the People Republic of China, and Taiwan. This section also discusses some of those co-ethnic associations that Filipino, Thai, and Pakistani have established to help themselves. These newly established co-ethnic associations, which remain few, tend to function as social elite clubs, where legal Asians gather for cultural and social activities, build social networks, and work to improve the conditions for *legal* foreigners. The fourth and final section summarizes the findings of the chapter.

I. SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT


Because government policies and state actions determine the existence of legal foreign workers and define the social conditions for illegal ones in Japan as explained in the previous chapter, we should not expect to find any support organization of the central government offering services to illegal foreign workers. We might find the Japanese central government providing extensive services to legal foreign workers. However, the absence of a clear and comprehensive policy guideline governing unskilled foreign workers in Japan complicates the situation for many government actors, particularly in the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Home Affairs. The position of these ministries thereby appears fuzzy and the action of government officials contradictory. On the one hand, government officials need to consider on how to treat all foreigners inside Japan humanely as expected by the international community and to protect any violation of human rights against these people. On the other

hand, they must control Japan's borders. In particular, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Labor proceed simultaneously with these conflicting or contradictory objectives, which inevitably caused enormous suspicion among illegal foreign workers about the government's motive. Specifically, illegal foreign workers are suspicious of government organizations that provide services to foreigners, because each of the ministries that provide such services is actively involved in an effort to curtail illegal foreign workers. Interestingly, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, which comes under harsh attack by several Japanese NGOs that are helping illegal foreign workers, escapes such suspicion. This is because it clearly announces that the application of the National Health Insurance and other welfare benefits are strictly limited to those foreigners who have been in Japan for more than one year and registered with their ward offices. The Ministry of Home Affairs is the most complicated of all, for it helps formulate and execute Japan's national policy while it oversees the operation of local governments in Japan – many of whom pursue their own administrative policies that often contradict directly with the national policy over foreign residents. Table 3.1 summarizes the activities of these ministries and their support organizations, which will be discussed in detail below.

This section discusses support organizations of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Labor for legal foreigners and their activities. It also reviews the activities of the Ministry of Home Affairs in incorporating consultation services for foreigners to its regional International Exchange Associations. The activities and services of local governments for their foreign residents will be discussed separately in the next section, because such activities and services do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Then, I will examine the conflicting role of

Table 3.1: Ministerial Positions on Foreign Workers, Government Support Organizations, and their Activities

Name of the Ministry	Domain of Jurisdiction over Foreigners	Ministerial Actions for or against Foreigners in Japan	Institutions under Jurisdiction within the Ministry	Activities of Institutions for Foreigners in Japan
Ministry of Justice	Sets categories of visa status	Set no category for unskilled foreign workers	Immigration Information Center (JIA)	Consultation (on immigration issues)
	Oversees overstayed foreigners	Campaign against employment of illegal foreign workers	Detention Centers	Examination, detention, and deportation
	Promotes the Trainee Program	Accept Asian workers into Japan as trainees	JITCO	Facilitate the transition of trainees to workers (up to two years)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Maintains relations with foreign countries	Notify certain Ministries to protect human rights of foreigners in Japan	Foreigners Section (within the Ministry)	None
	Issues visas	Conduct rigid examination before issuing visas	Embassies and Consulates (outside of Japan)	None
	Oversees livelihood of Nikkeijin	Look after Nikkeijin workers	JICA's Nikkeijin Consultation Center	Consultation (to Nikkeijin)
Ministry of Labor	Provides labor protection	Make no distinction between overstayed and legal foreign workers on labor protection	Labor Standards Inspection Offices	File reports of labor rights violation
	Oversees employment of illegal foreign workers	Join MoJ on a campaign to prevent the employment of illegal foreign workers	Labor Standards Inspection Offices	Collect data on illegal foreign workers (and their employers)
	Promotes employment of Nikkeijin and foreign students		Employment Service Centers; Public Employment Security Offices	Job Placement Consultation (on labor issues in foreign languages)
Ministry of Home Affairs	Promotes Internationalization Policy at local governments level	Incorporate consultation services for foreign residents	Regional International Exchange Associations	Consultation and interpretation services
Ministry of Health and Welfare	Regulates National Health Insurance (NHI) Program	Set conditions to receive NHI (exclude foreigners with less than one year residence)	Social Welfare Office	Provide NHI to "qualified" foreigners

 signifies government institutions that provide supportive services to foreign workers

the Ministry of Labor's Labor Standards Inspection Offices in protecting the labor rights of illegal foreign workers and the Ministry of Justice's Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners. Due to such contradictory activities and objectives of various agencies of the Japanese government, illegal foreign workers are suspicious of government support organizations and express reluctance to approach them for assistance.

3.1.1 Support Organizations for Legal Foreign Workers

The Japanese government has established several support organizations to assist foreign workers. However, most services provided by these organizations typically exclude illegal foreign workers. For example, the Ministry of Labor set up the Employment Service Center for Nikkeijin (日系人雇用サービスセンター) in 1991 and the Employment Service Center for Foreigners (外国人雇用サービスセンター) in 1993. The Employment Service Center for Nikkeijin is set up within a non-profit foundation, the Industrial Employment Stabilization Center (産業雇用安定センター), with offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and São Paulo (Brazil). The Employment Service Center for Nikkeijin offers vocational counseling in Portuguese and Spanish and job placements for *Nikkeijin*.¹ The Centers in Tokyo and Nagoya organize free seminars for *Nikkeijin* in selected cities on conversational Japanese language and basic education on Japanese labor laws. In a one-day seminar I attended in the Fujisawa City, Kanagawa, officers of the Tokyo Center handed out gifts, such as telephone cards and wooden foot massagers (with instructions in Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish) to those who attended the seminar.² The Center in São

¹ Interview with Mr. Tejima Kazunari of the Nikkeis Employment Service Center in Tokyo, 7 August 1998.

² Participant observation of a NIKKEIS seminar at Fujisawa-shi, Kanagawa, 29 November 1998.

Paolo provides information on job vacancies and tries to stop illegal brokerage activities in Brazil. For foreign students and foreigners with professional and technical qualifications, the Ministry of Labor established the Employment Service Center for Foreigners in Tokyo and Osaka to provide consultation services on employment in Japan.³

For other foreign workers with proper visas or permission from the Immigration Bureau to work in Japan, the Ministry of Labor provides employment services such as vocational counseling and job information to foreigners at its Public Employment Security (PES) Offices around the country. Foreigners register with the officials for a job application at these PES offices. The staff then consults with foreigners about the desired working conditions, type of work, wages, and working hours. Based on the information provided by a foreigner, the staff then selects job prospects. Because all PES offices in Japan are connected through a computer network, PES officials can look up the latest information on applicants and job offers at any of its computers. With the approval of the job-seeking foreigner, the staff will contact the enterprise that has an opening position and will try to arrange a job interview for the foreigner. These Offices, however, will not assist foreigners without proper visas or permission from the Immigration Bureau to work in Japan.⁴ Interpreters in English, Portuguese, and Spanish are available at the Employment Service Corner for Foreign Workers in some PES Offices. Most PES Offices in Tokyo also offer interpretation service in Chinese. These offices also distribute pamphlets explaining Japanese labor laws in various languages.⁵ In 1998, there were 66 Employment Service

³ Consultation in Chinese and English are available from Monday to Friday.

⁴ Interview with Mr. Isobe Tetsuro of the Ministry of Labor's Foreign Workers Affairs Division in Tokyo, 10 August 1998.

⁵ Ministry of Labor, *Gaikokujin roudousha no genjo to taisaku* [Conditions and Measures on Foreign Workers] (Tokyo:

Corners for Foreign Workers. Table 3.2 provides the details on the availability of foreign languages in certain PES offices around the country.

The Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Home Affairs have also established numerous support organizations for legal foreigners. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Ministry of Justice established the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization (JITCO), a non-profit foundation, to facilitate the transition of Asian “trainees” into “workers.” The organization also provides advice and assistance to JITCO-supporting foreign trainees and makes arrangements on private accident and health insurance programs for them. It conducts researches and publishes materials and manuals of training programs for foreign nationals. It also takes care of all the legal work on entry, change of residence term, and change of residence status for JITCO’s supporting members.⁶

Other support organizations of the Ministry of Justice for legal foreigners include Immigration Information Centers (外国人在留総合インフォメーションセンター) and Human Rights Counseling Centers (人権相談室). The Ministry of Justice set up Immigration Information Centers on July 1990 in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe, and Fukuoka. These Centers provide consulting and information services to foreigners on immigration procedures in English, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish. The Japan Immigration Association (JIA), a non-profit foundation affiliated with the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, runs these centers. The Ministry of Justice also set up Human Rights Counseling Centers that provide free consultation for foreigners facing

Circular, 1998).

⁶ See JITCO homepage at <http://www.jitco.or.jp/> (20 June 2000).

Table 3.2: Public Employment Security Offices Where Foreign Language Can Be Used

Name	Location	Languages served (Day)
1 Sapporo Public Employment Security Office	Hokkaido	Eng (Fri)
2 Shirakawa Public Employment Security Office	Fukushima	Eng (Wed, Fri)
3 Mito Public Employment Security Office	Ibaraki	Eng & Por (Tue, Thu)
4 Tsuchiura Public Employment Security Office	Ibaraki	Eng (Wed, Fri)
5 Utsunomiya Public Employment Security Office	Tochigi	Por & Spa (Wed)
6 Moka Public Employment Security Office	Tochigi	Por & Spa (Wed, Fri)
7 Maebashi Public Employment Security Office	Gunma	Por & Spa (Mon, Thu)
8 Ota Public Employment Security Office	Gunma	Por & Spa (Tue, Fri)
9 Isezaki Public Employment Security Office	Gunma	Por & Spa (Tue, Fri)
10 Omiya Public Employment Security Office	Saitama	Spa (Mon), Por & Eng (Fri)
11 Kawaguchi Public Employment Security Office	Saitama	Eng & Spa (Tue), Eng & Por (Thu)
12 Soka Public Employment Security Office	Saitama	Eng & Por (Wed), Spa (Fri)
13 Chiba Public Employment Security Office	Chiba	Por (Tue), Spa (Fri)
14 Matsudo Public Employment Security Office	Chiba	Por & Spa & Eng (Tue, Fri)
15 Funabashi Public Employment Security Office	Chiba	Spa & Eng (Tue, Thu)
16 Shibuya Public Employment Security Office	Tokyo	Eng (Tue), Chi (Thu)
17 Shinjuku Public Employment Security Office	Tokyo	Eng (Tue, Thu), Chi (Wed)
18 Ikebukuro Public Employment Security Office	Tokyo	Eng (Thu), Chi (Tue, Fri)
19 Kameido Public Employment Security Office	Tokyo	Chi (Wed, Fri)
20 Tachikawa Public Employment Security Office	Tokyo	Eng (Wed), Chi (Fri)
21 Yokohama Public Employment Security Office	Kanagawa	Por & Spa & Eng (Mon, Thu)
22 Kawasaki Public Employment Security Office	Kanagawa	Spa (Tue, Fri), Eng & Por (Fri)
23 Atsugi Public Employment Security Office	Kanagawa	Por & Spa & Eng (Wed, Fri)
24 Hiratsuka Public Employment Security Office	Kanagawa	Por & Spa (Tue, Thu)
25 Takaoka Public Employment Security Office	Toyama	Por (Wed)
26 Fukui Public Employment Security Office	Fukui	Por & Spa & Eng (Tue, Wed)
27 Kofu Public Employment Security Office	Yamanashi	Por & Spa (Mon, Thu)
28 Nagano Public Employment Security Office	Nagano	Por (Mon, Wed)
29 Ueda Public Employment Security Office	Nagano	Por (Mon, Fri)
30 Matsumoto Public Employment Security Office	Nagano	Por (Mon, Fri)
31 Gifu Public Employment Security Office	Gifu	Por (Tue, Thu)
32 Ogaki Public Employment Security Office	Gifu	Por (Tue, Fri)
33 Tajimi Public Employment Security Office	Gifu	Por & Eng (Tue, Thu)
34 Shizuoka Public Employment Security Office	Shizuoka	Por & Spa (Mon, Fri)
35 Hamamatsu Public Employment Security Office	Shizuoka	Por & Spa (Tue, Thu)
36 Iwata Public Employment Security Office	Shizuoka	Por & Spa (Tue, Wed)
37 Numazu Public Employment Security Office	Shizuoka	Por & Spa (Tue, Thu)
38 Shimizu Public Employment Security Office	Shizuoka	Por (Tue, Thu)
39 Nagoya Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Mon, Wed, Fri)
40 Toyoda Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Tue, Thu)
41 Okazaki Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Mon, Wed)
42 Kariya Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Tue, Wed, Thu)
43 Toyohashi Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Tue, Wed, Fri)
44 Inuyama Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Tue, Thu)
45 Ichinomiya Public Employment Security Office	Aichi	Por (Wed, Fri)
46 Yokkaichi Public Employment Security Office	Mie	Por (Tue, Fri)
47 Otsu Public Employment Security Office	Shiga	Por & Spa (Tue, Thu)
48 Nara Public Employment Security Office	Nara	Por & Spa (2nd, 3rd Tue)
49 Kyoto Nanajo Public Employment Security Office	Kyoto	Por & Eng (Tue, Thu, Fri)
50 Yodogawa Public Employment Security Office	Osaka	Eng (2nd, 4th Mon), Chi (1st, 3rd Thu), Por (2nd, 4th Wed; 1st, 3rd Thu), Spa (1st Fri, 3rd Tue)
51 Sakai Public Employment Security Office	Osaka	Por (Tue), Spa (2nd Thu; 4th Fri), Eng (1st, 3rd Mon), Chi (1st, 3rd Thu)
52 Kobe Public Employment Security Office	Hyogo	Por & Eng (Tue, Thu)
53 Kurashiki Public Employment Security Office	Okayama	Por (Wed)
54 Kurashiki Public Employment Security Office, Soja	Okayama	Por (Fri)
55 Hiroshima Public Employment Security Office	Hiroshima	Por & Spa (Mon, Thu)
56 Fukuyama Public Employment Security Office	Hiroshima	Por (Tue)
57 Takamatsu Public Employment Security Office	Kagawa	Spa (Tue, Thu)
58 Fukuoka Central Public Employment Security Office	Fukuoka	Por (Thu), Eng (Fri)

Source: Catholic Diocese of Yokohama Solidarity Center for Migrants, Manual for Migrants Living in Japan (Kawasaki: SOL, 1997), pp. 216–221.

difficulties or experiencing inconveniences due to their unfamiliarity with Japan, particularly those who have recently returned to Japan from abroad or naturalized to Japanese nationals. In the Tokyo Center, English and Chinese interpreters are provided from Monday to Friday, Korean interpreter on Wednesdays, and French and Spanish on Thursdays. The consultation is kept strictly confidential.⁷

Because MOFA looks after Japanese descendants (*Nikkeijin*) abroad and inside Japan, it set up on July 1991 the Nikkeijin Consulting Center (海外日系人相談センター) within the Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA), a non-profit foundation with affiliation to MOFA, to provide consultation services to *Nikkeijin* on both labor and lifestyle in Japan.⁸ The majority of the labor consultations involve unlawful dismissal and non-payment of wages.⁹ The Center has 11 staffs and 5 volunteers and publishes *Vida en Japon* and *Vida no Japão* (Life in Japan) for the *Nikkeijin* in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively. Members of this Center is considering ways to enhance political participation of *Nikkeijin* in Japanese politics and proposes to use the Overseas Japanese Association as an intermediate institution for the purpose of voicing the political concerns of *Nikkeijin*.¹⁰

Finally, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) also set up support organizations for foreign residents. During the 1980s when Japanese cities were increasingly being invited to participate in sister city relationships, MOHA authorized local governments to establish and fund International Affairs Divisions and quasi-government International

⁷ Interview with Mr. Koide Kenzo of the Ministry of Justice's Immigration Bureau in Tokyo, 8 January 1999.

⁸ Interview with Mr. Kaburaki Isao of the Nikkeijin Consulting Center of the Overseas Japanese Association in Tokyo, 17 September 1998.

⁹ Fusamada Kazu, "Fukyo jidai wo mukaete" [Entering the Depressed Era] *Nikkeijin News* No. 35 (1 July 1998), p. 5; idem., "Shokugyou no senbetsu jidai wa satta" [The Passing of the Era of Job Selection] *Nikkeijin News* No. 36 (1 September 1998), p. 3.

¹⁰ Kaigai Nikkeijin Kyoukai, *Dai 39 kaigai nikkeijin taikai youbousho* [Demand at the 39th Meeting of the Overseas

Exchange Associations to promote local internationalization projects.¹¹ In 1988, MOHA set up the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), a non-profit foundation, for the purpose of assisting and advancing internationalization at the local level.¹² In July 1990, the Japanese government created the Conference of Recognized Local International Exchange Association (国際交流協会) within the CLAIR to promote the development of a wide range of activities, such as: a) assistance for and exchange projects with local foreign residents, b) projects to increase the international awareness of local residents, c) development of international exchange volunteers, d) collection and dissemination of information relating to international exchange, e) international cooperation projects, and f) international exchange events encompassing all of the above.¹³ In the midst of increased local international exchange activities, local public entities also tried to promote international exchange projects and civic activities of their residents. For instance, recognized Local International Exchange Associations, such as the Ibaraki International Association, the Gunma International Association, the Tokyo International Foundation, the Kanagawa International Association, the Yokohama Association for International Communication and Exchanges, and the Kawasaki International Association, actively promote the development of regional associations in their areas.¹⁴ Under these recognized Local International Exchange Associations also exist numerous city, town, village, and

Japanese] (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 7 May 1998).

¹¹ See Katherine Tegtmeier Pak, "Foreigners are local citizens too: Local governments respond to international migration in Japan" in Mike Douglass and Glenda S. Roberts, eds., *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 244-274 (262ff).

¹² Interview with Mr. Kevin Newman of the CLAIR in Tokyo, 25 May 1998.

¹³ Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, *Japan Local Government Data Book 1997* (Tokyo: CLAIR, 1998), p. 282.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-287.

ward International Exchange Associations.¹⁵ Tables 3.3 to 3.6 provide the list, location, established dates, number of members, and activities of these city, town, village, and ward International Exchange Associations in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa.

The activities of these regional International Exchange Associations typically involve international cultural exchanges and informational services. These International Exchange Associations provide publications of foreign language materials and most associations in Tokyo also conduct surveys of their foreign residents. Some large International Exchange Associations also offer consultation services to foreigners. In particular, most International Exchange Associations in Tokyo offer consultation services while only three in the Ibaraki prefecture provide such services. These consultations typically concern family issues, immigration status, insurance and pension, and labor-related issues.¹⁶

The six recognized Local International Exchange Associations are located inside newly built and expensive buildings, but most of the city, town, village, and ward International Exchange Associations are located inside City Halls, Town Halls, or Ward Offices. The rest are located inside other public buildings. The operation fund for these associations, which mostly come from their local governments, varies tremendously from one place to another. In the Tokyo area, for example, the Shinagawa-ku International

¹⁵ Toukyou Kokusai Kouryuu Dantai Renraku Kaigi, *Toukyou kokusai kouryuu dantai renraku kaigi dairekutorii* [Directory of the Forum on Tokyo International Exchange Groups], (Tokyo: Toukyou Kokusai Kouryuu Dantai Renraku Kaigi, 1997); Kanagawa International Association, *Kokusai kouryuu-nettowaaku tesho* [Handbook on International Exchange and Network] (Yokohama: Kanagawa International Association, 1998); Ibaraki International Association, *Ibaraki-ken no kokusai kouryuu kankei dantai* [International Exchange-Related Groups in the Ibaraki Prefecture], (Mito: Ibaraki International Association, 1996); Gunma International Association, *Gunma-ken no kokusai kouryuu dantai* [International Exchange Groups in the Gunma Prefecture], (Maebashi: Gunma International Association, 1998).

¹⁶ For difficult cases concerning complicated legal problems, the Ibaraki International Association asked two volunteer lawyers from the Ibaraki Bar Association to advise its foreign residents about twice a month at its office. Interview with Ms. Maeda Junko of the Ibaraki International Association in Mito-shi, Ibaraki, 2 September 1998.

Table 3.3: International Exchange Associations in the Ibaraki Prefecture in 1996

No.	Name	Location	Year Est.	Mem (Staff)	Activities for Foreigners
1	(財) 茨城県国際交流協会 Ibaraki International Association	県民文化センター Inside public office	1990	(40)	Exchange; consultation;
2	(財) 水戸市国際交流協会 Mito City International Association	Inside public office	1995		Consultation; information
3	日立国際交流協議会 Hitachi International Exchange Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1982	35	Exchange (students); civic activities
4	土浦市国際交流協会 Tsuchiura-shi International Exchange Association	社会教育課内 Inside public office	1991	209	Exchange (students); research
5	結城市国際交流協会 Yuuki-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1988	187	Exchange (students, trainees)
6	竜ヶ崎市国際交流委員会 Ryuugasaki-shi International Exchange Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1991	14	Exchange (students); civic activities
7	高萩市国際交流協会 Takahagi-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1990	379	Exchange (students);
8	北茨城市国際交流協会 Kitaibaraki International Communications Society	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1994	323	Exchange; study group
9	笠間市国際交流協会 Kasama International Sharing Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1995	194	Cultural exchange; research
10	取手市国際交流推進会議 Toride-shi International Exchange Promotion Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1989	169	Cultural exchange; Japanese
11	ウイングス Wings (in Ushiku-shi)	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1993	56	Exchange
12	鹿嶋国際交流さるびあ Kashima International Exchange Sarubia	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1993	30	Translate maps; Japanese, party
13	那珂町国際交流協会 Naka-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1990	258	Exchange; information
14	大宮町国際交流協会 Omiya-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1994	157	Exchange (students); information, funds
15	山方町国際交流推進協議会 Yamagata-machi International Exchange Promotion	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1994	11	Exchange; information
16	神栖町国際交流協会 Kamisu-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1991	70	Exchange & consulta- tion (students)
17	北浦国際交流協会 Kitaura International Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1991	56	Cultural exchange
18	阿見町国際交流推進会議 Ami-machi International Exchange Promotion Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1995	30	Exchange
19	茎崎町国際交流協会 Kukizaki-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1996	234	Exchange; information
20	新利根町国際交流協会 Shintone-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1995	20	Exchange; information
21	出島村国際交流推進協議会 Dejima-mura International Exchange Promotion Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1993	24	Research
22	玉里村国際交流人材育成推進委員会 Tamari-mura International Exchange for the Promotion in Upbringing Able People Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1995	9	Exchange; information; research
23	八千代町国際交流推進委員会 Yachiyo-machi International Exchange Promotion	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1992	16	Exchange
24	総和町国際友好都市交流推進委員会 Sowa-machi International Friendship Exchange Promotion Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1995	16	Exchange
25	守谷町国際交流協会 Moriya-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1989	750	Cultural exchange
26	藤代町国際交流協会 Fujishiro-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1990	300	Exchange (students)
27	利根町国際交流推進協議会 Tone-machi International Exchange Promotion Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1992	20	Cultural exchange

Source: Ibaraki International Association, Ibaraki-ken no kokusai kouryuu kankei dantai [Ibaraki Prefecture's International Exchange-Related Groups] (Mito: Ibaraki International Association, 1996).

Table 3.4: List of International Exchange Associations in Gunma in 1998

No.	Name	Location	Established Date	Mem (Staff)	Activities for Foreigners
1	(財) 群馬県国際交流協会 Gunma International Association	安田火災群馬ビル Inside public office	30-Oct-90	30 (39)	Exchange; consultation; Japanese; translators
2	安中市国際交流協会 Annaka-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	26-Nov-97	55	Exchange; promote relations b/w gov-bus-for wkrs
3	伊香保町国際交流協会 Ikaho-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town hall	29-Mar-91	59	Cultural exchange
4	伊勢崎市国際交流協会 Isezaki International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	18-Mar-87	(3)	Consultation (Mon - Por, Spa, Eng, Tag)
5	大泉国際交流協会 Oizumi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	1-Jul-95	114	Exchange; Japanese; Por. Translator
6	太田市国際交流協会 Ohta International Exchange Association	市役所 Inside City Hall	1-Apr-92	67	Exchange; Japanese; Consultation
7	(財) 甘楽町国際交流振興協会 Kanra-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	12-Feb-88	151	Exchange (students)
8	桐生市国際交流協会 Kiryuu-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	30-Jan-89	334	Exchange (students)
9	草津町国際交流委員会 Kusatsu-machi International Exchange Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	3-Feb-97	29	Cultural exchange
10	群馬町国際交流協会 Gunma-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	20-Sep-91	109	Exchange; support civil associations
11	渋川市国際交流協会 Shibukawa-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	11-Jul-92	331	Exchange; consultation
12	榛東村国際交流溶解 Shintou-mura International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	21-Apr-96	165	Exchange; Japanese
13	新町国際交流協会 Shinmachi International Exchange Association	公民館内 Inside public office	28-Jul-86	115	Exchange (students)
14	高崎市国際交流協会 Takasaki-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1-Apr-90	537	Cultural exchange; consultation; Japanese
15	館林市国際交流協会 Tatebayashi-shi International Exchange Association	市役所 Inside City Hall	20-May-97	440	Consultation; Japanese; exchange; lifestyle
16	玉村町国際交流協会 Tamamura-machi International Exchange	役場内 Inside Town Hall	10-Feb-95		Exchange (students)
17	月夜野町国際交流協会 Tsukiyono-machi International Exchange	役場内 Inside Town Hall	12-Dec-96	113	Exchange (students)
18	利根沼田国際交流クラブ Tone-Numata International Exchange Club	社会教育課内 Inside public office	15-Jul-89	79	Exchange (students); Japanese
19	富岡市国際交流協会 Tomioka-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	19-May-96	591	Exchange; consultation
20	長野原町国際交流協会 Naganohara-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	8-Jul-93	127	Exchange (students); promote relations b/w groups, residents and
21	新治村国際交流委員会 Niiharu-mura International Exchange Committee	教育委員会内 Inside public office	26-Jan-91	20	Exchange (students)
22	榛名町国際交流委員会 Haruna-machi International Exchange Committee	役場内 Inside Town Hall	19-Mar-91	33	Exchange (students)
23	藤岡市国際交流協会 Fujioka-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	26-Jul-97	447	Cultural exchange; consultation
24	前橋市国際交流協会 Maebashi-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	26-Oct-89	1,163	Japanese; exchange; survey; consultation

Source: Gunma International Association, Gunma-ken no kokusaikouryuu dantai [International Exchange Groups in the Gunma Prefecture] (Maebashi: Gunma International Association, 1998).

Table 3.5: International Exchange Associations in Tokyo in 1997

No.	Name	Location	Established Date	No. Staff	Mem. (Vol.)	Activities for Foreigners
1	中央区文化・国際交流振興協会 Chuo Cultural and International Exchange Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	27-May-91	24	(246)	Cultural exchange
2	港区国際交流協会 Minato International Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-Jul-92		457	Cultural exchange
3	(財)新宿区国際交流協会 Shinjuku International Association	四谷区民センター Inside public office	1-Oct-93	30	305	Exchange, survey
4	文京区国際友好交流協会 Bunkyo-ku International Friendship Exchange Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	12-Oct-84		846	Cultural exchange
5	台東区国際交流委員会 Taito-ku International Communication Committee	区役所内 Inside ward office	12-Nov-86		314	Exchange, survey
6	(財)品川区国際友好協会 Shinagawa-ku International Friendship Association	新大崎勸業ビル Inside ward office	12-Mar-86	40	597	Cultural exchange
7	(財)目黒区国際交流協会 Meguro International Friendship Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-Dec-92	26	126	Cultural exchange, survey
8	(財)中野区国際交流協会 Association for Nakano International Communications	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-Feb-91	31	151	Cultural exchange, survey
9	(財)杉並区国際交流協会 Association for Suginami International Communications	みなみ阿佐ヶ谷ビル Inside ward office	1-Oct-93	34	157	Cultural exchange
10	荒川区国際交流協会 Association for Arakawa International Communications	区役所内 Inside ward office	21-Oct-93	14	149	Exchange, survey
11	(財)板橋区国際交流協会 Association for Itabashi International Communications	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-Dec-89	29	(214)	Cultural exchange, survey
12	練馬区国際交流協会 Nerima International Friendship Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	30-Sep-89	35	1 (526)	Cultural exchange, survey
13	(財)足立区国際親善協会 Adachi-ku International Friendship Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-Jul-89	25	(316)	Cultural exchange, survey
14	(財)葛飾区国際交流協会 Katsushika International Friendship Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	1-May-90	42	(181)	Cultural exchange, survey
15	武蔵野市国際交流協会 Musashino International Association	スイング Inside ward office	13-Oct-89	17	482	Cultural exchange, Japanese
16	(財)三鷹国際交流協会 Mitaka International Society for Hospitality	コミュニティ・プラザ Inside public office	1-Nov-96	30	475	Exchange
17	調布市国際交流協会 Chofu International Friendship Association	文化会館内 Inside public office	30-Nov-94	15	101	Cultural exchange, survey
18	狛江市国際交流協会 Komae International Friendship Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	4-Dec-95	17	107	Cultural exchange, survey
19	多摩市国際交流センター Tama City International Center	市役所内 Inside City Hall	27-Mar-93	13	344	Exchange, survey, consultation
20	小平市国際交流協会 Kodaira International Friendship Association	地域センター Inside public office	26-Feb-90	32	274	Cultural exchange
21	日野市国際交流協会 Hino City International Association	日野図書館 Public library	31-Oct-93	22	109	Exchange, survey
22	東村山市国際友好協会 Higashimurayama International Friendship Association	区役所内 Inside ward office	10-Dec-77	69	900	Cultural exchange
23	国分寺市国際協会 Kokubunji International Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	22-Nov-91	21	710	Cultural exchange
24	青梅市国際交流推進連絡協議会 Oume City International Exchange Promotion	市役所内 Inside City Hall	1-Apr-91	30		Exchange
25	羽村市国際交流協会 Hamura International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	29-May-93	27		Exchange
26	東京国際交流財団 Tokyo International Foundation	東京国際フォーラム Inside public office	1-Sep-94	35		Promote exchange

Source: Tokyo International Foundation, Toukyou kokusai kouryuu dantai renraku kaigi dairekutorii [Directory for the Contact Committee on Tokyo International Exchange Groups] (Tokyo: Tokyo International Foundation, 1997).

Table 3.6: International Exchange Associations in the Kanagawa Prefecture in 1998

No.	Name	Location	Established Date	Mem (Staff)	Activities for Foreigners
1	(財)神奈川県国際交流協会 Kanagawa International Association	市民かながわプラザ Inside public office	Feb-77	(47)	Exchange; consultation; funds (NGOs)
2	厚木市友好交流委員会 Atsuki-shi International Friendship Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Mar-92	50	Japanese
3	伊勢崎市姉妹都市委員会 Isesaki-shi International Friendship Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Jul-82	179	Exchange (students); civic activities
4	大磯町姉妹都市協会 Oiso-machi International Friendship Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	Jul-78	273	Exchange (students)
5	小田原海がいの市民交流会 Odawara International Friendship Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Nov-81	233	Exchange (students); Japanese
6	(財)川崎市国際交流協会 Kawasaki International Exchange Association	Inside public office 市役所内	Aug-89		Cultural exchange; research, consultation
7	相模原市国際化推進委員会 Sagamihara-shi Interanationalization Promotion Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Nov-80	212	Exchange; consultation
8	座間市国際交流協会 Zama-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Apr-92	129	Exchange, information, translation, Japanese
9	さむかわ国際交流協会 Samukawa International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	Nov-94	105	Exchange (students)
10	茅ヶ崎市国際交流協会 International Association of Chigasaki-shi	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Jul-84	445	Cultural exchange; Japanese
11	箱根町国際交流協会 Hokona-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	Oct-86	326	Exchange (students); translation
12	葉山町国際交流協会 Hayama-machi International Exchange Association	役場内 Inside Town Hall	Jul-92	29	Exchange
13	秦野国際交流懇談会 Hadano International Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Apr-85	182	Cultural exchange
14	平塚市国際交流協会 Hiratsuka-shi International Exchange Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Apr-94	205	Cultural exchange; translation; Japanese
15	藤沢市都市親善委員会 Fujisawa-shi City Friendship Committee	市役所内 Inside City Hall			
16	三浦市国際交流協会 Miura-shi International Friendship Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Oct-82	205	Cultural exchange; translation
17	南足柄市姉妹都市交流協会 Minami Ashigara-shi International Friendship	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Apr-89	691	Exchange; translation
18	(財)大和市国際化協会 Yamato-shi Intenationalization Association	市役所内 Inside City Hall	Jul-94	950	Exchange; translation
19	ゆがわら国際交流協会 Yugawara International Exchange Association	商工会内 Cham. of Commerce	Jun-88		Exchange (students, trainees)
20	横須賀国際交流協会 Yokosuka International Association	ヴェルクよこすか Inside public office	Feb-97	406	Exchange; information
21	(財)横浜市海外交流協会 Yokohama Overseas	産業貿易センター Inside trade center	Jul-81		Consultation; funds (students, NGOs)

Source: Kanagawa International Association, Kokusai kouryuu - kyouryoku nettowaaku tesho [Notebook on International Exchange - Cooperation Network] (Yokohama: Kanagawa International Association, 1998).

Friendship Association spent 162,718,000 yen (\$US 1.5 million) on its activities while the Komae-shi International Friendship Association spent only 856,000 yen (\$US 8,000) during 1997.¹⁷

Generally, these support organizations of the central government mostly offer general *information* and *interpretation* services to legal foreigners through their consulting staffs. More interestingly, these institutions that run these support organizations of the central government - such as JIA, JITCO, JICA, the Overseas Japanese Association, the Industrial Employment Stabilization Center, CLAIR, and recognized International Exchange Associations - are non-profit “civic group legal entities” (財団法人). The Japanese government subcontracts these non-profit foundations to perform many of its activities for foreigners. As a result, these foundations receive funding from their affiliated ministries and must submit annual reports to the government. In addition, retired government officials from affiliated ministries typically *amakudari* (descend from heaven) into executive posts and board members of these foundations.¹⁸ For example, the head of JITCO is a former vice-minister of the Ministry of Justice; several staffs of the Overseas Japanese Associations descended from the MOFA; many staffs of the Nikkeijin Employment Service Center are retired officials of the Ministry of Labor; and, usually at least two local government officials are staffed at regional International Exchange Associations. In other words, these non-profit foundations are not based on individual and corporate donors and they are not independent of the government despite their claims for

¹⁷ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Toukyouto ku-shi-chou-son no kokusai seisaku no joukyou* [Conditions of International Policies of the Tokyo City's Ward-City-Town-Village] (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs, 1998), pp. 312-314.

¹⁸ On *amakudari* of government officials, see Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1987), pp. 63-82.

being civil groups (民間団体). These organizations, which are usually located inside government buildings, can be understood as subcontracted (下請け) organizations of the Japanese government.

3.1.2 Support Organizations for Illegal Foreign Workers

Most support organizations of the central government only serve legal foreigners, except for the Labor Standards Inspection Offices. The Labor Standards Inspection Offices oversee working conditions, equal treatment and wage between men and women, rights to organize, rights to strike, and rights to mass bargaining of workers. Proper working conditions in Japan specifically include the provision of labor accident compensation benefits, medical treatment compensation benefit, benefit for disaster on the way to/from work, benefit for leave of work, compensation pension for injury and disease, pension benefit for casualty compensation, survivor benefit, and funeral benefit. The Office gives guidance and supervises employers to ensure that they do not violate the labor laws. As discussed in the previous chapter, “all people working in Japan, regardless of their nationality or visa status” are protected under Japanese labor laws. In the event that the employer infringes part of the Labor Standards Law, the Labor Standards Inspection Offices may penalize the employer or force the employer to accept a recommendation to put a legal end to the issue.

The Labor Standards Inspection Offices, to be sure, are investigative and enforcing agencies of the Ministry of Labor. Investigating labor violations is part of the job for officials at these offices and not a special service exclusive for illegal foreign workers. Officials at these offices do not necessarily negotiate on the behalf of foreign workers. In

fact, the Labor Standards Inspection Offices can only provide limited redress to those illegal foreign workers whose labor rights have been violated, given the absence of a specific law governing unskilled foreign workers in Japan. Rather than *to protect* labor rights of foreign workers, the Labor Standards Inspection Offices aim *to prevent* further deterioration of labor standards in the midst of the influx of foreign workers into Japan.¹⁹ Moreover, the Labor Standards Inspection Offices also collect data on illegal foreign workers and supply them to the central office in Tokyo, where policy-makers use them to formulate public policies on illegal foreign workers.

Since November 1989, the Ministry of Labor has set up a “Consultation Corner for Foreign Workers” (外国人労働者相談コーナー) in the inspection sections of the 47 prefectural Labor Standards Bureau. Officers of these Consultation Corners advise foreign workers and their Japanese employers about the Labor Standards Laws and inform employers about proper working conditions for non-Japanese workers in various languages.²⁰ Labor consultants give advice based on Labor Standards Law, Minimum Wages Law, and Workmen’s Accident Compensation Insurance Law that have relevance to foreign workers.²¹

During the 1980s, the Labor Standards Bureau directed its staff to report illegal foreign workers to immigration authorities.²² Reporting such cases to the immigration

¹⁹ Interview with Mr. Isobe Tetsuro of the Ministry of Labor’s Foreign Workers Affairs Division in Tokyo, 10 August 1998.

²⁰ In Tokyo, consultation in English is provided on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. It is on Tuesday and Thursday in the Kanagawa prefecture and on Monday and Wednesday in the Gunma prefecture. In the Ibaraki prefecture, consultation in English, Spanish, and Portuguese are available on Tuesday and Friday.

²¹ Interview with Mr. Isobe Tetsuro of the Ministry of Labor’s Foreign Workers Affairs Division in Tokyo, 10 August 1998.

²² The Director-General of the Labor Standards Bureau and the Employment Security Bureau issued an official circular on “Responses to the Illegal Employment of Foreigners” on 26 January 1988. The notice instructs staff to deal strictly with violations of the labor standards laws even in the case of illegal foreign workers. At the same time, it directed staff to

authorities discourages illegal foreign workers from asking the labor officers for advice and reporting abuses. The response of the labor standards inspection agencies to foreign workers thus appears to contradict their primary purpose, which is to protect workers' rights. On 1 July 1990, after a controversial session at the Diet, the Labor Standards Bureau's Director of Inspection Division issued a circular, titled "A Temporary Response to the Problem of Foreign Workers," to subordinate agencies. It stated that, as a rule, the labor standards offices should not inform immigration officials of illegal foreign workers who come to the offices for advice. However, the staffs of the Labor Standards Inspection Office were instructed to report to immigration authorities: a) in cases of serious violations of the protective labor laws, b) when prosecution to prohibit employment of illegal foreign workers is initiated against the employer, or c) the case involved many illegal foreign workers and the likelihood of further violations of the labor standards laws will ensure. We see a huge increase in the number of reported industrial accidents by illegal foreign workers in 1990 after the Labor Standards Bureau's Director of Inspection Division instructed the labor standards offices not to report illegal foreign workers to immigration authorities. The number of reports more than doubled from 89 cases in 1989 to 221 cases in 1990 (see Table 3.7).

Despite the dramatic increase in the number of reports by illegal foreign workers after 1990, illegal foreign workers show reluctance in reporting industrial accidents. Although the Labor Standards Law provides all workers, including overstaying foreign workers, with accident compensation insurance, injured illegal foreign workers hesitate to

report illegal foreign workers to immigration authorities.

Table 3.7: Industrial Accidents of Illegal Foreign Workers by Nationality

Nationality	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total
Brazil	0	0	0	2	4	3	12	6	9	10	46
Peru	0	0	0	2	5	8	12	24	19	13	83
Philippines	8	6	3	10	13	21	25	14	26	18	144
Thailand	0	1	1	4	15	20	18	26	22	9	116
Korea	2	6	7	20	32	43	38	23	14	11	196
China (PRC)	3	5	20	21	16	31	9	10	11	15	141
Pakistan	13	16	19	51	58	46	34	33	20	35	325
Bangladesh	8	27	22	63	33	42	28	31	24	25	303
India	0	1	0	6	2	6	9	11	9	16	60
Sri Lanka	0	0	1	10	13	14	23	19	22	15	117
Iran	0	2	0	15	100	122	101	89	72	66	567
Asia	4	2	8	13	18	19	23	17	14	21	139
Africa	1	3	2	2	10	9	14	8	6	12	66
Latin America	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	3	3	0	13
Industrialized West	1	1	0	1	2	3	4	2	1	3	18
Unknown	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	12
Total	40	71	89	221	322	393	351	320	276	273	2,356

Note: Asia = Malaysia, Burma, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Singapore, Laos, Nepal, Papua New Guinea.
 Africa = Ghana, Uganda, Tunisia, Lesotho, Sudan, Nigeria, Guinea, Burkina Faso, S. Africa, Mali, Tanzania, Egypt.
 Latin America = Bolivia, Argentina, Colombia, Honduras, Surinam, Bahamas, Mexico, and Cuba.
 Industrialized West = U.S.A., Sweden, Australia, Ireland, England, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, France.

Source: Adapted from Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, *Anzen Sentaa Johou* No. 244 (July 1988), p. 24.

apply for accident insurance for fear of being exposed as illegal residents and the Labor Standards Inspection Offices will report them to immigration authorities.²³ They also hesitate because other illegal workers at their work place might be affected.²⁴ As a result, many illegal Asian workers do not receive the Workers' Accident Compensation Insurance. For instance, approximately 2 percent (820,000 out of 40 million) of the work force are victims of industrial accidents each year. Since foreign workers occupy many dangerous

²³ Many are also unfamiliar with the Japanese labor accident compensation system.

²⁴ Interview with an overstayed Bangladeshi worker in Tokyo, 30 May 1999.

jobs in production process and at construction sites, we can expect that more foreign workers expose to accidents at work than Japanese workers.²⁵ Illegal Asian workers are particularly prone to accidents, because they tend to take unskilled jobs in small firms where production equipment is frequently obsolete and where appropriate safety measures are lacking. Even if we assume accidents for the 200,000-300,000 illegal foreign workers occur at the same rate as for Japanese, we should expect at least 4,000 cases involving illegal foreign workers being reported each year. In reality, we see only 40 to 393 cases (or less than 0.2 of one percent) between 1987 and 1996.²⁶ Iranians top the list while South Asian workers, particularly from Pakistan and Bangladesh, follow (see Table 3.7).

3.1.3 Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners

Given the Japanese immigration policy, unskilled Asian workers are not *supposed* to exist in Japan. The *fact* that they *indeed* exist and in large number undermines the administrative competency of the Japanese government. To rectify its short-comings, the Ministry of Justice, with the cooperation from the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Labor, conducts an annual one-month Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners (不法就労外国人対策キャンペーン月間). Seen together with the activities of the Labor Standards Inspection Offices, the Japanese government appears to pursue conflicting goals with its activities to protect labor rights of *all* foreign workers and its

²⁵ In Western Europe, the occupational accident rate for foreign workers is much higher than that of native workers. In Germany, foreign workers were found to have accident rate of 25 percent higher than German workers. In France, foreign workers comprise of less than 10 percent of the total work force but account for 22.5 percent of work-related accident. Mark J. Miller and Philip L. Martin, *Administering Foreign-Worker Programs: Lessons from Europe* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1982), pp. 70-71; Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, *Immigrant Workers and Class Structure in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 340; Carlene Kennedy-Brenner, *Foreign Workers and Immigration Policy: The Case of France* (Paris: OECD, 1979), p. 70.

Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners. One government agency protects illegal foreign workers while another punishes them.

The Campaign began in 1989 with an objective of publicizing the government's efforts to prevent the employment of illegal foreigners both domestically and internationally. Domestically, the Ministry specifically requests cooperation from employer groups, organizations that accept foreign trainees, Japanese language establishments, concerned government organizations, local government offices, and various embassies in Japan. The Ministry also operates Immigration Patrol Cars to monitor and control the employment of illegal foreigners. Internationally, it cooperates with Japanese embassies overseas, airlines, and other Japanese information centers abroad to spread its message by using both pamphlets (written in both Japanese and English) and the internet.²⁷ Since 1994, the Ministry of Justice coordinated its activities with the Discussion Board of the Cabinet Secretariat on the Domestic Administration, which until then had its own "Education Month on the Problem of Foreign Workers" (外国人労働者問題啓発月間). In March 1998, the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Labor joined the Ministry of Justice to crack down on foreigners working illegally in Japan. The three government organizations jointly established the Liaison Council of Government Agencies on the Affairs of Illegal Foreign Workers to gather information on illegal foreign workers and to prevent illegal working. The three agencies linked their prefectural offices and employers' group into a regional cooperative body to provide information to employers about proper

²⁶ Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, *Anzen Sentaa Johou* [Safety Center Information] No. 244 (July 1998), p. 24.

²⁷ Interview with Mr. Koide Kenzo of the Ministry of Justice's Immigration Bureau in Tokyo, 8 January 1999. Ministry of Justice, "Fuhou shuurou gaikokujin taisaku kyanpeen gekkan' no jissi ni tsuite" [About the Enforcement of 'The One-Month Long Campaign against Illegal Employment of Foreigners'] (Tokyo: Circular, June 1998).

hiring of foreigners. It was the bureau chief of the Ministry of Justice's Immigration Bureau, Mr. Takenaka Shigeo, who called for joint action against foreigners working without proper visas and pointed to an increase in the number of such workers' involvement in crimes. Police and officials from Immigration and Labor Standards Inspection Offices joined forces nation-wide to crackdown illegal foreign workers, labor brokers, and underground groups that smuggle foreigners into Japan. They also targeted the raids on underworld banks that help foreigners launder money or illegally remit it abroad.²⁸

Since the campaign started in 1989, the number of raids on establishments that are employing illegal foreign workers and the deportation of foreigners in Japan had increased considerably. For instance, the Immigration officials and the police conducted several raids at Tsuchiura-shi, a town known as "Little Bangkok" in the Ibaraki prefecture. Several thousands Thai workers used to live there before 1995. By 2000, only a couple of hundred remained.²⁹ From May 25 to June 20 of 1998, the Immigration Bureau mobilized 430 immigration officers to crackdown illegal immigrants around the Kanto area. The 26-day campaign in only the Kanto area resulted in the arrests of 1,311 suspected illegal immigrants – 253 Thais, 242 Filipinos, 167 Chinese, and 107 South Koreans.³⁰ During this campaign in June 1998, the Ministry appointed a popular TV star, Ms. Nakamura Tamao, to be the chief of the Immigration Bureau of both the Tokyo and the Osaka office for one day

²⁸ *The Japan Times*, 13 March 1998.

²⁹ Interview with Mr. Aoyama Kazuo of the Tsuchiura-shi's International Exchange Section in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 5 June 1998.

³⁰ See newspapers clipping around 28-29 June 1998.

in order to gain public awareness and/or support to this issue.³¹ The number of illegal foreigners being deported has also increased noticeably after 1989. In 1988, the Immigration Bureau deported 17,157 foreigners. From 1989 to 1997, the Bureau had deported 446,051 foreigners – an average of 49,561 people (or about 20 percent of the “official” total population of illegal foreigners) per year.³²

To summarize, the Japanese central government works at cross-purposes. Its service organizations assist legal foreign workers and it protects illegal foreign workers against abuses from Japanese employers. Yet, several government agencies cooperate on a Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners. Clearly, illegal foreign workers have reasons to view these service organizations of the central government with suspicion. Overstayed foreign workers understand that they have violated the Japanese Immigration Law, therefore they tend to stay away from government organizations in order to continue working in Japan. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* reports that despite the government’s creation of various consultation corners for foreign workers, hardly any body visit them.³³ I volunteered to help with Thai interpretation at the Q&A Corner of the Aoba-Ku International Exchange Lounge during its Lounge Festival on 25 October 1998. Despite its huge publicity, not one Thai came for consultation that day.³⁴ As an overstayed foreign worker succinctly puts it, “who in their right mind would go to these [government] offices asking for help? They will simply round you up and put you on the next plane heading

³¹ Interview with Mr. Koide Kenzo of the Ministry of Justice’s Immigration Bureau in Tokyo, 8 January 1999.

³² Ministry of Justice, *Immigration Control Guidebook* (Tokyo: Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau, 1998), p. 10.

³³ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 27 September 1991.

³⁴ Participant observation at a Q&A Corner of the Yokohama City Aoba-ku International Exchange Lounge in Yokohama.

home.”³⁵

II. SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Different types of support organizations have been created by local government officials. The Local Government Law requires that local government bodies provide public organizations to care for the safety, health, and welfare of all residents, including foreigners, in their areas of jurisdiction. Such public organizations protect foreign workers as both residents and workers. They offer information and consultation to foreigners in various languages regarding social security, education, family protection, housing, and cultural exchanges. These organizations differ to those from the previous section in that these public organizations are created at the initiative of local government officials. Although the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) governs local government bodies, local policy initiatives have long come from local officials at the prefecture, city, town, village, and ward level.³⁶

Examples of local government initiatives on issues regarding foreign workers are plentiful. In 1985, the Kawasaki City Government split with the central government on its stance on fingerprinting of permanent foreign residents for their alien registration. Local government officials from the Kawasaki City also led the movement to obtain voting rights for foreigners in local elections.³⁷ By 1994, more than a hundred local bodies, including nine prefectural assemblies has adopted resolutions urging voting rights for non-Japanese

25 October 1998

³⁵ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 7 June 1998.

³⁶ See Richard J. Samuels, *The Politics of Regional Policy in Japan: Localities Incorporated?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), particularly Chapter 3.

residents in local elections. By 1998, about 40 percent of all local governments have adopted such resolutions. This occurred despite the fact that, on February 28, 1995, the Third Petty Bench of the Supreme Court denied constitutional support of the suffrage to resident foreigners, even at local levels.³⁸ Local government officials from Kawasaki also played an active role in the movement to delete the requirement for Japanese nationality from eligibility for civil service. Many other local governments follow and have employed foreigners in positions that do not concern “the exercise of public power or decision-making on national matters” (i.e. regular clinical work, work in fire station, tax officer).

Certain local governments have split with the Ministry of Health and Welfare and decided to extend medical services to all foreigners, regardless of their visa or residential status. Local governments in Tokyo-tou, Osaka-fu, Utsunomiya-shi, Kawasaki-shi, Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa-ken, and Saitama-ken do this by reenacting the 1899 Sick or Dead Travelers Treatment Law (行旅病人及行旅死亡人取扱法), which originally aimed at providing care services to those foreign travelers who were taken ill while traveling in Japan and have no caretaker. At present, this Law benefits especially illegal foreign workers, for it applies to someone who travels away from his/her own sphere of life and therefore should not be registered as a foreigner in Japan. Such stipulation characterized many illegal foreign workers who do not register with their local authorities because of their illegal status.³⁹ Other local governments have introduced an “Emergency Medical Fee

³⁷ Interview with Mr. Yamada Takao of the Kawasaki City Government's Citizens Bureau in Kawasaki, 25 December 1998

³⁸ Hanami Tadashi, “Japanese Policies on the Rights and Benefits Granted to Foreign Workers, Residents, Refugees and Illegals,” in Myron Weiner and Hanami Tadashi, eds., *Temporary Workers or Future Citizens?* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), p. 234

³⁹ For an example of how a local government applied the law to pay the medical bill for an overstayed foreigner, see *Mainichi Shimbun*, 10 July 1996.

Subsidiary System” (外国人未払医療費制度) to make up unpaid medical expenses involved in emergency medical care. According to this system, the prefectural government covers 70 percent of the unpaid medical bill while the city, town, and village 20 percent and the employer 10 percent. The sum are paid to the hospitals. The Kanagawa Prefectural Government and the Gunma Prefecture Government introduced this system in 1993, which was quickly followed by the Saitama Prefecture Government and the Chiba Prefecture Government in 1994.⁴⁰ Since then, the Yamanashi Prefectural Government had also instituted similar system. In 1997, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government spent 15,000,000 yen on 192 foreigners, mostly Filipinos, Koreans, and Iranians.⁴¹ In the Ibaraki prefecture, a local government in Tsukuba initiated a free AIDS consultation service at the Tsukuba Health Center (つくば保健所) in 1993. The Center provides free consultation in English on the first and third Mondays and in Thai on the second and fourth Mondays. In 1995, it had 56 cases.⁴² It also published informational pamphlet about AIDS in Thai and English.

Therefore, it should not be a surprise that local governments in Japan would set up support organizations to provide needed services, including labor dispute mediation, for all foreign workers. This section explores various support organizations that local governments in Kanagawa, Tokyo, Gunma, and Ibaraki provide to their foreign residents. These organizations include Labor Consultation Offices, Foreign Residents’ Advisory Centers, and Foreigners Advisory Councils. Illegal foreign workers show reluctance to

⁴⁰ National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers, *Ijuuroudousha to sono kazoku ni okeru shakai hoshō-shakai fukushi seido no genjō* [The Condition of Social Security – Social Welfare Laws for Migrant Workers and their Families] (Tokyo Mimeograph, 1999).

⁴¹ Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Shin-kanagawa kokusai setsaku suishin puran shinchoku daichō* [Proposed Plan of the New Kanagawa on International Policy Progress Registry] (Yokohama. Kanagawa Prefecture Government, Foreign Affairs Division, 1998), p. 46.

⁴² Ibaraki Prefectural Government, *Kokusai jitsumu handobukku* [International Practical Business Handbook] (Mito:

seek assistance from these groups, because they still view these institutions as agents of the Japanese government.

3.2.1 Labor Consultation Offices

Local governments in Tokyo and Kanagawa have set up a labor consultation system, where they and their foreign interpreters offer free advisory services to foreign workers on working conditions and other general labor problems as part of their administrative services.⁴³ In Tokyo, the Chuo Labor Administrative Office, the Shinagawa Labor Administrative Office, the Shibuya Labor Administrative Office, the Shinjuku Labor Administrative Office, the Tachikawa Labor Administrative Office, and the Labor Administration Division of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office give advice on Japanese labor laws and on domestic employment practices. In the Kanagawa prefecture, the Yokohama Labor Affairs Center, the Kawasaki Labor Affairs Center, and the Ken-o Regional Administration Center provide similar services since 1992. English and, in some places, Chinese language interpreters are provided at the Tokyo offices. Dispatched interpreters for Thai, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Persian can be arranged at a Tokyo labor administrative office. In the Kanagawa offices, English are provided at all offices. The Yokohama Labor Affairs Center also provides Chinese interpreters on Fridays and Spanish interpreters on Wednesdays. The Kawasaki Labor Affairs Center offers Korean interpreters on the second and fourth Fridays. The Ken-o Regional Administration Center provides Portuguese interpreters on Mondays. Table 3.8 gives the detail of these offices

Ibaraki Prefectural Government, International Affairs Division, 1997), p. 29.

⁴³ Interview with Mr. Suzuki Makoto of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Economic and Labor Division in Tokyo.

Table 3.8: Local Governments' Labor Consulting Offices where Foreign Languages are Provided

	Name	Location	Languages served (day)
1	Labor Administration Department, Tokyo Government	Tokyo	Eng (Mon-Fri)
2	Chuo Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Mon-Fri), Chi (Tue; 2nd, 4th Thu)
3	Shinagawa Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Mon, Thu)
4	Shibuya Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Wed, Fri)
5	Shinjuku Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Mon, Thu), Chi (Fri)
6	Tachikawa Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Thu)
7	Oji Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Eng (Tue), Chi (Wed)
8	Kameido Labor Administration Office	Tokyo	Chi (Mon, Thu)
9	Yokohama Labor Affairs Center	Kanagawa	Eng (Thu), Chi (Fri), Spa (Wed)
10	Kawasaki Labor Affairs Center	Kanagawa	Eng (1st, 3rd Mon), Kor (2nd, 4th Fri)
11	Ken-o Regional Administration Center, Kanagawa	Kanagawa	Eng (2nd, 4th Tue), Por (Mon)

and their interpreter services.

These offices specialize on labor dispute settlement in: labor contract and labor conditions, paid holidays and working hours, dismissal and nonpayment of wages, compensation for injury at workplace and medical expenses, and labor union law. Officials at these offices act as third party conciliators at the consent of both the foreign worker and the employer and assist them in reaching an acceptable solution to the problem or matter in question.⁴⁴ “The consultants [officials at Labor Consultation Offices] do not represent either party, but they try to bring the parties to a reasonable conclusion, taking both parties’ views into consideration.”⁴⁵ For instance, a part-time Chinese worker at a restaurant in Tokyo sought advice at the Tokyo Labor Administrative Office after the employer refused to pay him 15-days worth of owed wages. The Chinese worker explained that he had quit working at the restaurant, because the manager complained he took time off without giving any notice. The advisor approached the manager and discovered that the manager tried to

12 May 1998.

⁴⁴ Interview with Mr. Sakamoto Takao of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Kameido Labor Administration Office in Tokyo, 9 October 1998.

⁴⁵ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *The Foreign Workers’ Handbook* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Labor

tell the Chinese worker that he did not want to pay the wages unless in the presence of the person who had introduced the employee to him. But in the presence of the advisor, he would pay the wages and deduct 30 percent as a fine for the loss the employee incurred to the restaurant due to his unexpected absence. The advisor then explained to the manager that Japanese Labor Laws stipulate that sanctions must be explicitly stated as a part of the rules of employment and fines cannot exceed half of the wages for one day's work or 10 percent of the total wages over one payment period. When the Chinese worker met the employer, he apologized for taking absence without notice and the manager made payment of 15 days' wages and transportation expenses.⁴⁶ In cases where a conciliation effort fails, it will be discontinued. The foreign employee may then want to seek further consultation with a lawyer and bring the matters to court.

Labor offices in the Tokyo Metropolitan area appear to be most progressive. Labor unions even ask them for assistance with their specific cases.⁴⁷ The five centers conducted 2,875 consultations with foreign workers in 1997. In terms of nationality, Chinese and Korean constituted 781 (27.2%) and 128 (4.5%) cases, respectively. Overstayed foreign workers from the Philippines, Iran, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Pakistan made up 256 cases (9%). In terms of content, non-payment of wages topped the list at 719 cases (24.6%), followed by unlawful dismissal at 502 cases (17.2%) and labor contract infringement at 276 cases (9.4%). In terms of the industry involved, consultation involving foreign workers from the restaurant business made up 480 cases (16.7%), manufacturing firms 422 cases

Administrative Division, 1996), p 132

⁴⁶ Interview with Mr Suzuki Makoto of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Economic and Labor Division in Tokyo, 12 May 1998.

⁴⁷ Interview with Mr Ogawa Kouichi of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Labor Administration Division in Tokyo, 21 December 1998

(14.7%), and construction firm at 286 cases (9.9%).⁴⁸ In the Kanagawa area, the three centers provided 597 consultations to foreign workers in 1997.⁴⁹ There were 224 cases (37.5%) involving Peruvians, 110 cases (18.4%) involving Brazilians, and 75 cases (12.6%) involving Chinese workers. Non-payment of wages topped the list at 181 cases (27%), followed by unlawful dismissal at 130 cases (19.4%), and accident compensation at 114 cases (17%).⁵⁰

In sum, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Kanagawa Prefecture Government established Labor Consultation Offices, which provide foreign workers with consultation, translation, and information in different foreign languages like those support organizations of the central government. Most importantly, these Offices also mediate labor disputes between foreign workers and their Japanese employers. As neutral mediators, government officials at these offices try to listen to both sides and do not make demands on any concerned party. If the dispute concerns non-payment of wage, the mediator simply asks the employer why s/he did not pay. This differs from the foreign workers supporting NGOs (particularly labor unions), who *always* take the position of the foreign worker. In short, these institutions, in their efforts to resolve labor disputes between foreign workers and their employers, tend to hold a neutral stand and do not always side with the foreign workers. When the case appears complicated, advisors at these labor offices in Kanagawa usually refer the foreign workers to a Japanese NGO that support

⁴⁸ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Roudou soudan oyobi assen no gaiyou (Heisei 9 nendo)* [1997 Outline of Labor Consultation and Mediation] (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Labor and Economic Bureau, 1998), pp. 27-33

⁴⁹ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 9 June 1998

⁵⁰ Kanagawa Labor Affairs Division, *Heisei 9 nendo gaikokujin roudou soudan no joukyou oyobi heisei 10 nendo soudan madoguchi ni tsuite* [About 1997 Situation of Foreign Workers Consultations and 1998 Consultation Centers] (Yokohama: Kanagawa Labor Affairs Division, Labor Policy Section, 1998). Also see *Sankei Shimbun*, 22 May 1998.

foreign workers.⁵¹

Although labor offices in Tokyo handled 2,875 cases in 1997, only about 400 of them involved illegal foreign workers. The Zentoitsu Workers Union alone worked on approximately 1,500 cases involving illegal foreign workers during the same year. And this number did not include labor consultations.⁵² The difference is more drastic in the Kanagawa prefecture. Only 43 foreign workers went to the Kawasaki Labor Affairs Center in 1997. This number is quite small if we were to compare it with the 230 foreign workers who went to a foreign workers support group, the Kawasaki City Union, for assistance during the same year.

3.2.2 Advisory Centers for Foreigners

Local governments in Tokyo and Kanagawa have established special advisory centers for foreigners (外国人相談センター) to answer inquiries on lifestyle in Japan such as: family life, schools, housing, emergency contacts, social welfare system, insurance procedures, traffic accidents compensation, and Japanese customs. The Tokyo Centers offer these services in English, French, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish free of charge and keep all consultations confidential.⁵³ The Tokyo Metropolitan Government also teams up with an NGO, AMDA International Information Center, to offer medical information service to foreigners in English, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Spanish. This service includes information on the medical facilities and Japanese medical system. They also provide

⁵¹ The advisor gives a list of all Japanese NGOs to foreign workers and does not support any particular NGO. Interview with Ms. Yamamoto Keiko of the Kanagawa Foreign Workers Consulting Office in Yokohama, 27 August 1998.

⁵² Interview with Mr. Torii Ippei of the Zentoitsu Workers Union in Tokyo, 12 March 1998.

⁵³ In Tokyo, services in English are available from Monday to Friday, in French on Thursdays, in Chinese on Tuesdays

interpretation service - specialized for medical institutions - for emergency patients who have language difficulties in receiving medical treatment.⁵⁴ In 1996, the Advisory Center for Foreign Residents in Tokyo handled 7,491 cases - about a quarter of these cases involved immigration issues.⁵⁵ The Kanagawa prefecture offers similar services in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Korean at its centers in Yokohama and Atsuki since 1988.⁵⁶ In 1996, the Yokohama Center handled 1,156 cases and the Atsuki Center 589 cases.⁵⁷ In addition, foreigners in the Kanagawa prefecture can also receive advisory service on human rights issues at the newly established Human Rights Consultation Window (人権相談窓口), which the Kanagawa Prefecture Government set up in 1997.⁵⁸ Some city halls, town halls, and ward offices in Tokyo and Kanagawa also offer their own consultation services to foreigners. These services are typically in English, Chinese, and Korean in Tokyo.⁵⁹ Portuguese and Spanish are added in Kanagawa.⁶⁰ In the Gunma and Kanagawa prefecture, local governments provide special services to *Nikkeijin*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, they subsidize Japanese language classes and employ Portuguese and Spanish translators at their offices.

and Fridays, in Korean on Wednesdays, and in Spanish on Thursdays. Interview with Mr. Ishiura Tadayoshi of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Foreign Residents' Advisory Center in Tokyo, 12 May 1998.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ms. Ota Toshiko of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs in Tokyo, 12 May 1998.

⁵⁵ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Kokusai ni kan suru kakukyoku no torikumi joukyou* [Situation of Each Bureau Concerning Internationalization] (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs, 1998), p. 68.

⁵⁶ Services in English are available at the Yokohama Center on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays and at the Atsuki Center on Mondays, in Spanish at the Yokohama Center on Wednesdays and at the Atsuki Center on Tuesdays, in Portuguese at the Yokohama Center on Thursdays, and in Korean at the Yokohama Center on Mondays. See Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Gaikokuseki kenmin shien jissen no tame ni* [For the Practice of Assisting Foreign Residents in the Prefecture] (Yokohama: Kanagawa Prefectural Government, Foreign Affairs Division, 1994), p. 53.

⁵⁷ Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Shinkanagawa kokusai setsaku suishin puran shunchoku daichou*, p. 43

⁵⁸ Interview with Mr. Kanai Nobutake of the Kanagawa Prefecture Government's Foreign Affairs Division in Yokohama, 1 December 1998

⁵⁹ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Guidance to Labor Administrative Offices & Foreign Residents' Information Service* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Labor Administration Office, 1997), pp. 52-57.

From an examination of the languages offered by the Advisory Center for Foreign Residents in Tokyo, these translation services in Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and English clearly benefit legal foreign residents such as *zainichi gaikokujin* and *Nikkeijin*. When the Center teams up with an NGO, then we see other languages such as Thai included in its service. Although the medical information service appears to be extremely useful for foreigners, the consultation service in French(!) at the Tokyo Center on Thursdays remains puzzling. Japanese activists also complain that local government consultants take too long to respond to the needs of foreigners. Government officials rarely leave their offices to meet problem-seeking foreigners. Furthermore, these support organizations of local governments are usually located inside government buildings, which intimidate many illegal foreign workers from making a visit. Consequently, illegal foreigners do not trust local government officials.

3.2.3 Foreigners Advisory Councils

Local governments in regions where many *zainichi* Korean live, particularly the Kawasaki City, have played an active role in the movement to improve the political lives of foreign residents. In 1994, local government officials in the Kawasaki City set up Japan's first foreigners advisory council, the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents (川崎市外国人市民代表者会議), which brings representatives of foreign residents together to discuss issues concerning their livelihood.⁶¹ The Citizens' Bureau of the Kawasaki City Government formed a six-person team to develop an institutional design

⁶⁰ Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Gaikokuseki kenmin shien jissen no tame ni*, pp. 53-55

⁶¹ While foreigner committees in Osaka, Kyoto, and the Hyogo prefecture appear to have been established earlier than the

for political participation of foreign residents in that area.⁶² Professor (Emeritus) Shimohara Hajime, who used to teach European politics at the University of Tokyo's prestigious Law Department, headed the investigation research committee. He thought that something must be done for foreigners to lessen discrimination. Because he believed that Japan was not ready to grant foreigners voting rights, he concluded that an institution where foreign residents can express their opinion would be most appropriate.⁶³ After another scholar-member, Professor Nakai Takeshi, visited and studied several institutional designs for political participation of foreign residents in various European cities, the team decided to borrow the German institutional design from the Frankfurt's Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents.⁶⁴ The name of the Kawasaki's Assembly is a direct translation of Frankfurt's *kommunale Ausländer-Vertretung*.

The Representative Assembly meets four times a year (two days for each session) to discuss problems that foreign residents face. During these meetings, "representative" members, who must be at least 18 years of age and have been resident in Kawasaki for at least a year, discuss pressing matters for foreign residents such as education, community life, and urban improvement. This discussion, which is conducted only in Japanese, includes debates among members on the proper course of action that they wish to recommend to their mayor. By the end of their term or fiscal year, they present the recommendation to the mayor who then decides on how to implement such course of

one in Kawasaki-shi, these committees were mostly "Discussion Groups" (懇談会) that also include Japanese members

⁶² The team included Professor Shinohara Hajime, Professor Nakai Takeshi, Professor Miyajima Takashi, Professor Tanaka Hiroshi, Mr. Pei Jundo, and Ms. Toda Ingeborg.

⁶³ Interview with Professor Shimohara Hajime of the University of Tokyo in Kawasaki, 20 January 1999.

⁶⁴ Investigative Research Committee of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, *Kashou: Kawasaki-shi gaikokujin shimin daihyousha kaigi chousa kenkyuu houkokusho* [Tentative Name: Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents – Investigative Report] (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City Government, Citizens

action.

The First Representative Assembly (1997-1998) consisted of 26 members - ethnic groups recommended 5 members while government officials selected 21 from a pool of 258 applications.⁶⁵ The number selected or elected from each ethnic group reflected the actual ratio of the ethnic population that registered in the Kawasaki City. Specifically, there were 4 nationals from South Korea, 3 each from North Korea and the People's Republic of China, 2 each from the Philippines and Brazil, and one each from Peru, Thailand, Britain, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Vietnam, Kenya, Poland, France, Argentina, and Canada. The gender composition consisted of 15 men and 11 women. Each "representative" can only hold two terms of office. Mr. Lee Inha of South Korea and Ms. Malgorzata Hosono of Poland were selected respectively as chairperson and vice-chairperson of the First Assembly. Three committees were formed: a) education, b) community life, and c) urban improvement.⁶⁶ Understandably, representatives from South Korea, North Korea, and the PRC, or *zainichi gaikokujin*, have no language difficulties and, thereby, tend to dominate the discussion at the Assembly.

At the end of the term of the First Assembly, Mr. Lee Inha and Ms. Malgorzata Hosono delivered the Assembly's annual report to the mayor with the following four proposals. First, the Assembly proposed that the city administrators "improve methods of support for international students, including re-examination of the scholarship system for

Bureau, 1996).

⁶⁵ The ratio became 3 and 23 during the Second Assembly (1998-1999).

⁶⁶ Interview with Mr. Yamada Takao of the Kawasaki City Government's Citizens Bureau in Kawasaki, 25 December 1998; also see Yamada Takao, "Kawasaki-shi gaikokujin shimin daihyousha kaigi no seiritsu to genjou" [The Establishment and Conditions of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents] in Miyajima Takashi, ed., *Gaikokujin shumin to seiji sanko* [Foreign Residents and Political Participation] (Tokyo: Yushindo, 2000), pp. 39-57; Higuchi Naoto, "Taikou to kyouryoku" [Confrontation and Cooperation] in Miyajima, ed., *op.cit.*, pp. 20-38.

international students to better reflect reality.” Second, the Assembly urged the mayor to pressure the Minister of Justice to reform the Immigration Control Administration. Assembly members reasoned that foreign residents needed stable residential status if they were to participate in and contribute to the local community as citizens. Third, the Committee on Community Life proposed creating a housing ordinance that includes a clause prohibiting discrimination in the private rental market against foreign residents, the disabled, the elderly, single mothers, and families with children. Assembly members believe that the city administrators must consider the most effective methods of abolishing discrimination by educating landowners and residential building managers, or making public the names of those who discriminate in housing. They also ask the city administrators to consider establishing a public guarantor system made up of local governments, real estate agents, universities, vocational schools, and citizens’ groups. Fourth, the Assembly encouraged foreign residents to take part in event planning in order to promote international exchange projects in the Kawasaki City.⁶⁷ On establishing a housing ordinance, the Kawasaki City responded in May 1999 by revising its “Fundamental Plan of Kawasaki Residences” and is working to create a fundamental ordinance on housing.⁶⁸

Similarly, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government established the Tokyo Foreign Advisory Council in November 1997 to “be an organization where foreigners who live in metropolitan Tokyo can express their opinions, suggestions, and desires concerning matters that affect them so that their concerns are reflected in the public policies and administration

⁶⁷ Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, *Kawasaki-shu gaikokujin shimin daihyousha kaigi nenyū houkoku 1997 nendo* [1997 Annual Report of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents] (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City Government, Citizens Bureau, 1998); also see Kawasaki City Government, *Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter*, No. 1 (31 March 1997), pp. 5-6.

⁶⁸ *Asahi Evening News*, 24 October 1999. I thank Kim Reimann for bringing this article to my attention.

of the Metropolitan Government.” The Council consisted of 25 members – 13 were selected through the application process while 12 were appointed.⁶⁹ During its first year, members of the Council discussed the importance of teaching children foreign language and international understanding at an early age. Some urged the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to compose guidelines on how to deal with students of different cultures.⁷⁰ They also discussed voting rights for permanent foreign residents at the local level. On this issue, the *zainichi* Korean community clashes emotionally. One member from North Korea argued against voting rights and went into tears in a defense of protecting her ethnic identity at the meeting in May 1998.⁷¹ In its first annual report submitted to the Tokyo governor in March 1999, the Tokyo Foreigners Advisory Council discussed broad and diverse topics such as: ways to distribute information to foreigners, human rights, voting in local elections, health, welfare, education, labor, housing, environment, and security. In essence, there were no concrete proposals like the ones from the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents. However, the Council stressed the need for better dissemination of those information provided by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to foreign residents. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government responded by adding an English language section in its homepage.⁷²

Foreigners advisory councils emerge throughout Japan. In 1998, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government also established the Kanagawa Foreign Residents’ Council. Like other foreigners advisory councils, the Kanagawa Foreign Residents’ Council is open to

⁶⁹ Interview with Ms. Ota Toshiko of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Bureau of Citizens and Cultural Affairs in Tokyo, 12 May 1998.

⁷⁰ *The Japan Times*, 10 September 1998.

⁷¹ Participant observation at the Tokyo Foreign Advisory Council meeting in Tokyo, 12 May 1998.

foreign residents who are at least 18 years old and have lived, worked, or studied in the Kanagawa prefecture for more than one year. The 20 members are chosen from applications by an independent committee of scholars and experts to reflect the ethnic ratio of foreigners in the prefecture.⁷³ By the end of 1999, twelve other local governments have established similar foreigner advisory councils in their towns (see Table 3.9).

Foreigners advisory councils provide a deliberative mechanism for reflecting the voices of resident foreigners in policy-making processes and have compiled policy proposals for their local governments. However, many suggestions the board presented are beyond the limit of city administration. An official of Kawasaki's Citizens Affairs Bureau, Ms. Niimura Tokiko, explains, "when they [foreign representatives] talk about their problems, they eventually come up against the wall of national law and visa status. Those problems are difficult for the city alone to solve."⁷⁴ On the reform of immigration controls, for example, city officials claim that all the mayor of Kawasaki can do is to submit a proposal to the relevant ministry. If the proposal is rejected, then officials are "obliged to explain to the council what can and cannot be reflected in policies."⁷⁵

Moreover, these foreigners advisory councils are private panels that have no legal basis. As private bodies, they can be changed easily by council members themselves, for they require no procedures involving the government assembly. However, private bodies are not places where members make policy but places where members *express* their

⁷² *Asahi Evening News*, 24 October 1999

⁷³ Kanagawa International Policy Promotion Discussion Group, *Gaikokujin kenmin kanagawa kaigi oyobi NGO kanagawa kokusai kyouryoku kaigi* [Kanagawa Foreign Residents' Council and NGO Kanagawa International Cooperation Council] (Yokohama: Kanagawa Prefectural Government, Foreign Affairs Division, 1998).

⁷⁴ *Ibid*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Table 3.9: Foreigners Advisory Councils of Local Governments in Japan

Location	Name	Year Established	No. of Mem	No. of For'g	Method of Selection	Mtgs/year
Kawasaki-shi	川崎市外国人市民代表者会議 Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents	1-Dec-96	26	26	21 applicants; 5 selected from ethnic groups	4
Tokyo-to	東京都外国人都民会議 Tokyo Foreign Advisory Council	26-Nov-97	25	25	13 applicants; 12 appointed	4
Hiroshima-shi	外国人市民との懇談会 Discussion Group with Foreign Residents	Dec-97	12	9		3
Shizuoka-shi	在住外国人意見交換会 Foreign Residents' Opinion Exchange Group 民間国際子流団体意見交換会 Citizen International Children Exchange Groups Opinion Exchange Group 県・市等関係機関連絡会議 Prefecture-City Level Government Council	Jul-97	18 15 15	5 5		2
Kanagawa-ken	外国籍県民かながわ会議 Kanagawa Foreign Residents' Council	21-Nov-98	20	20	all applicants	4
	NGOかながわ会議 NGO Kanagawa Council	21-Nov-98	10	0	all applicants	4
Osaka-fu	大阪府在日外国人問題有識者会議 Osaka Prefecture Council of Experts on Problems of Foreigners in Japan	Oct-92	10	4		3
Osaka-shi	大阪市外国人問題有識者会議 Osaka City Council of Experts on Foreigners' Problems	Nov-94	14	7		12
Hyogo-ken	兵庫県地域国際化懇話会 Hyogo Area Internationalization Discussion Group	Nov-94	6	6	selected from ethnic groups *	1
Kyoto-shi	京都市外国籍市民施策懇話会 Kyoto City Foreign Residents Policy Discussion Group	7-Oct-94	12	7	7 applicants	
Fukuoka-ken	福岡県外国籍集民会議 Fukuoka Prefecture's Foreign Citizens' Board	Mar-98	13	10		3 or 4
Saku-shi	佐久市外国人市民会議 Saku City's Foreign Residents' Conference	1998 (?)	80	20	open meeting	1
Minoo-shi	箕面市外国人市民施策会議 Minoo City Foreign Residents Policy Council	Spring-99 to Fall-99	12	10	10 applicants	

Note The English names are author's translation. They are not official names of the organizations

* These groups are 華僑総会、民団、総連、関西国際委員会、インド商業会議所、外国人学校協議会

opinions. For example, the Kanagawa Governor Okazaki Hiroshi can only promise to “respect as much as possible” the council’s view, although like other local government heads, he is not obliged to implement the recommendations of the private panel. In cases where opinions of members are divided over certain sensitive issues, opinions of all sides are included in the council’s recommendation. In the third session of the Tokyo Foreign Advisory Council in May 1998, for example, an apparent majority of the council members supported including a recommendation to allow foreign residents the right to vote in local elections and work in local governments. But some North Korean members strongly opposed the idea. The Tokyo Metropolitan government officials then decided against voting, for they feared that any decision by a majority could split the panel over politically sensitive issues, such as those dividing many North and South Korean residents in Japan.⁷⁶

Foreigners advisory councils do not fare well among illegal foreign workers. Although the number of each ethnic “representative” reflects the actual ratio of *legal* foreign population in the area, these members cannot be viewed as “representative” members of their own ethnic groups and no one claims to be so. Government officials *select* most of these “representatives” and no members of their own ethnic groups *elect* them.⁷⁷ Therefore, each member of the Council only represents her or his own individual opinion and not necessary those of their ethnic community, perhaps with the exception of the *zainichi* Koreans. The representability is further biased by the language competency of each foreigner representative. *Zainichi* Koreans dominate most discussion, because they

⁷⁶ *The Japan Times*, 14 August 1998.

⁷⁷ This is different from those foreigners advisory councils in Western Europe that Japanese officials hope to emulate. On foreigners advisory councils in Western Europe, see Mark J. Miller, *Foreign Workers in Western Europe: An Emerging Political Force* (New York: Praeger, 1981), particularly Chapter 5.

are native speakers of Japanese. A representative of Peru of the Kawasaki board complained, “I felt that I only came here to warm my seat. Koreans are not the only foreigners.”⁷⁸ Moreover, the issues raised at these Councils, which are usually influenced or controlled by the city government, are broad and aim to benefit the general foreign residents. They seldom cover issues of immediate concerns for illegal foreign workers, unless there is an intervention from a Japanese NGO (which I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter 5). A Thai representative at the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents informed me that she had tried to encourage other Thai people to attend the meeting, but no one showed any interests in participating.⁷⁹ Besides, many overstayed foreign workers do not have the time to attend, for they must work six days a week and prefer to use their only day off for rest.

In sum, illegal foreign workers still hold skeptical feeling towards these institutions, because they view these institutions as agents of the Japanese government. Staffs, who still lack the know-how on assisting foreigners, from these service organizations of local governments do not help foreign workers resolve specific labor-related or immigration-related problems. For serious problems, they usually send them to Japanese NGOs, which will be discussed later in Chapter 5. Hence, service organizations of local governments offer limited help to illegal foreign workers who typically seek assistance for serious labor and immigration problems. Furthermore, those institutions that try to resolve labor disputes between foreign workers and their employers tend to hold a neutral stand and do not

⁷⁸ *Asahi Evening News*, 24 October 1999.

⁷⁹ Interview with Ms. Somsee Mochida of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents in

necessary side with foreign workers. In political-oriented organizations such as Foreigners Advisory Councils, representative members of these institutions are not really “representative” members of the ethnic group they belong, for they are *selected* by Japanese government officials and not *elected* by members of their own ethnic community.

III. CO-ETHNIC ASSOCIATIONS

We might expect the large Korean and Chinese ethnic association, many of which have been in existence for long time in Japan, to assist newly arrived foreign workers. *Zainichi* Koreans established Japan’s largest ethnic associations - the Korean Residents Union in Japan (在日本大韓民国民団 or Mindan) with 509,000 members and the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (在日本朝鮮人総連合会 or Souren) with 247,000 members. These Korean ethnic associations are largely preoccupied with their political activities against their ideological counterparts and the promotion of ethnic attachment to their home countries. They pressure the Japanese government only to improve conditions for permanent residents while mostly overlook the plight of the newly arrived foreign workers in Japan. Chinese set up the first Overseas Chinese Association in Yokohama in 1867. Chinese ethnic associations also expressed ideological concerns, but their associative activities mainly involved business and political networking in Japan and organizing trips to their homelands. To avoid being seen with suspicion by the Japanese police, they do not help recent illegal Chinese workers in Japan with their problems.

A few small Filipino and Thai associations, such as Filipina Wives Clubs and the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan, have also emerged in recent years despite their

relatively small ethnic population. However, these associations also do not assist their illegal compatriots. I offer two explanations. First, the legal residential status for members of these co-ethnic associations – as spouses of Japanese nationals or foreign students or professionals with the legal rights to work in Japan – creates a social distance between them and their illegal compatriots. Legal Asian workers, particularly from the Philippines and Thailand, prefer to maintain their privileged status by not assisting their illegal compatriots. Instead, members of these co-ethnic associations aim to improve the living conditions for only legal foreigners or, basically, themselves. Second, members of these co-ethnic associations, like those in the Korean ethnic associations, are preoccupied with their own home country's politics.

This section discusses ethnic associations that co-ethnics created and why these institutions do not support illegal compatriots in Japan. It is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on Korean ethnic associations, Souren and Mindan. The second part reviews Chinese ethnic associations in Tokyo and Yokohama. The third part surveys other smaller ethnic associations such as those established by Filipinos and Thais.

3.3.1 Korean Ethnic Associations

The *zainichi* Koreans are divided within their own ethnic groups according to their ideological or political alignment. The division of Korea into North and South Korea split the Korean community in Japan, and prompted alignment of ethnic Korean self-help groups with either North Korea or South Korea. *Zainichi* Koreans who sympathize with North Korea join the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Souren), while those who sympathize with South Korea belong to the Korean Residents Union in Japan

(Mindan). The former presently represents approximately 247,000 *zainichi* Koreans while the latter about 509,000 *zainichi* Koreans.

The organizational structure of Souren is highly centralized with power concentrated around the central headquarters in Tokyo, which comprised of a central committee, an inspection committee, a central standing committee, and seven chairmen. Under this superstructure is the central secretariat, with seven main sections: secretariat, education, external affairs, social, economic, financial, and cultural and propaganda. The central headquarters directs the activities of 4 regional councils and 48 prefectural headquarters.⁸⁰ Lower down the scale are 440 regional branches and 1,551 district branches. Souren has one president, Mr. Han Deok Soo, and ten vice presidents. It has about 1,000 administrators in addition to its 371 staffs at the headquarters. Souren sponsors 218 Korean schools with about 17,000 students. It also has 18 smaller organizations and 23 businesses. Approximately 217,000 (88 percent) pro-North Korea, *zainichi* Koreans are members of Souren-affiliated credit unions, whose capital in 1993 totaled 2,398 billion yen. Its annual budget is approximately 20 billion yen.⁸¹ The goals of Souren include a) the peaceful unification of Korea, b) the protection of Korean racial rights, c) the promotion of racial education, and d) the normalization of relations between North Korea and Japan.⁸²

Like Souren, the organizational structure of Mindan is also centralized. Mindan has a central headquarters in Tokyo, 49 regional headquarters, 357 regional branches, 369 district branches, and 3,848 smaller branches. One president (Mr. Shin Yang-Sang), five

⁸⁰ Its Tokyo Headquarters is located, ironically, near the Yasukuni Shrine.

⁸¹ Souren, *Chosen Souren* [Korean Souren] (Tokyo: Souren, 1991).

⁸² Interview with Mr. So Chung-on of Souren in Tokyo, 8 December 1999.

vice presidents, one director, and two vice directors oversee the operation of Mindan.⁸³ Mindan's leadership comes from a relatively prosperous and conservative middle-class group. The number of its administrators totals approximately 600 in addition to 500 staffs at the central headquarters. Mindan sponsors 4 Korean schools. With only 1,739 students at these four schools, this means that less than one percent of the children of *zainichi* Koreans attends Mindan-sponsored schools.⁸⁴ It controls 6 smaller organizations and owns one business. About 212,000 (42 percent) pro-South Korea, *zainichi* Koreans belong to Mindan-affiliated Korean credit unions, whose capital in 1993 totaled 2,766 billion yen. Although Mindan has more members and branches than Souren, its annual budget is around 10 billion yen or about half of Souren. The goals of Mindan are: a) strict defense of the national (South Korean) policy; b) the protection of rights and interests; c) economic development; d) cultural advancement; and, e) world peace and international friendship.⁸⁵

The preoccupation of Souren and Mindan with the ideology of their home countries forces these two organizations to concentrate their activities against each other and to ignore the plight of the newly arrived Asian workers, many of whom come from South Korea. In order to understand the sources of political activities for their home countries and the lack thereof for the newly arrived Asians, it may be useful to examine the political development of these Korean ethnic organizations in a historical perspective.

Since the origin of their organizations, the North Korea and South Korea faction pursued separate politically and ideologically goals. Both Souren and Mindan emerged out

⁸³ This number includes affiliated groups.

⁸⁴ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi* [The 50 Year Path of Mindan] (Tokyo: Gosatsu Shobou, 1997), pp. 76-83.

⁸⁵ Interview with Mr. Chung Mong-Joo of Mindan in Tokyo, 8 December 1999.

of the League of Koreans in Japan (在日朝鮮人連盟 or Chouren), which Korean nationalists and activists established on 15 October 1945. Chouren represented all Koreans in Japan with its central headquarters in Tokyo and branches in every prefecture and city where Korean lived. Initially, Chouren concentrated its activities on repatriating Koreans in Japan back to Korea, teaching the Korean language and history to 62,000 young *zainichi* Koreans in its 578 schools, advising *zainichi* Koreans on everyday lives in Japan, and negotiating with Japanese employers on labor issues (usually unpaid wages) for *zainichi* Korean. Because Chouren initially ran the repatriation program, it steadily grew more powerful and functioned as a quasi-governmental organization.⁸⁶ The historian Richard Mitchell comments,

[i]n dealing with the Japanese and SCAP, Choren often acted as though it held sovereign power over all the Koreans in Japan as well as those repatriated. It carried on a large welfare program, using supplies received from the Japanese Welfare Ministry; it dispensed justice to Korean criminals turned over by the Japanese police; and it promoted educational programs. To gain office space, Choren moved into large buildings in Tokyo and Osaka that formerly had been connected with the government-general of Korea.⁸⁷

The operation fund of Chouren came from bank and postal savings books of repatriates, the Japanese government, and Japanese firms that had previously employed Koreans. Chouren was also involved in black-market operations.

Soon after its establishment, Chouren fell under the control of Korean communists who re-established ties with the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) after the veteran communist leader Kim Ch'on-hae (Kin Ten-kai) was released from prison in October 1945.

⁸⁶ Initially, Chouren representatives worked with Japanese officials in scheduling special trains to transport Koreans to ports of embarkation. When SCAP officially assumed control of the repatriation program in November 1945, Chouren continued to select the people to fill the daily quotas for repatriation. This privilege gave Chouren great strength. Finally

Kim became the “real” leader of Chouren, despite the fact that a Christian minister and political moderate, Yun Keun, was named the chairman. As a member of the Politburo of the JCP, Kim shared his racial commitment for Koreans in Japan with his ideological commitment to the communist movement. Up until the dissolution of Chouren in 1949, he often acted as an unofficial ambassador of the communist regime in North Korea. Such turn toward the radical left ignited a split within Chouren. On 3 October 1946, a conservative group, including former Chouren members and new members, established the Community of Korean Residents in Japan (在日本朝鮮居留民団 or Mindan) with Pak Yol as its first leader.⁸⁸ This organization, which quickly became the arch-rival of Chouren, followed the ideological position of South Korea.⁸⁹

During the Occupation Period (1945-1952), SCAP also expressed concerns on the direction that Chouren was heading. Fearing that Chouren posed as a potentially dangerous communist organization, SCAP declared on 24 January 1948 that Korean ethnic schools must follow regulations of the Japanese Ministry of Education, teach in Japanese, and use Japanese textbooks.⁹⁰ In late April 1948, the Japanese government ordered ethnic Korean schools in the Osaka-fu and the Hyogo prefecture to close down with the claim that they did not meet the Ministry’s requirements. Chouren promptly responded with protests and violence, which continued for over a year. The Japanese government finally thought that

on May 1946, SCAP decided to end such privilege.

⁸⁷ Richard H. Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 104-105.

⁸⁸ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi*.

⁸⁹ It is important to note that Mindan and the South Korean government did not get along wonderfully before the fall of the Syngman Rhee government in April 1960. Mindan was not pleased with the South Korea government during the 1950s when the latter showed reluctance to normalize Japanese-Korean relations and to negotiate an agreement with the Japanese government to improve the situations for Korean in Japan.

⁹⁰ On SCAP’s red scarce, see John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: Norton, 1999); Kazuo Kawai, *Japan’s American Interlude* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

Chouren went too far when 131 members of Chouren and its sister institution Minsei were arrested for attacking the Mindan office in late August 1949. On 8 September 1949, Japanese officials decided to restrict associative rights with the Association Control Law (団体等規正令), which effectively forced Chouren to dissolve.⁹¹

The pro-North Korean faction did not have a representative association until the time the Korean War broke out in 1950. Former members of Chouren, particularly those who were active in the communist movement, decided to form the Democratic Road for Unification of Koreans in Japan (在日朝鮮統一民主戦線 or Minsen) on 15 August 1950 to protest the Korean War and to push for a democratic unification of Korea. Because it supported the North Korean effort to unify Korea, Minsen helped spread the propaganda of North Korea and sent money and letters of encouragement to North Korean troops. Mindan responded by launching its own propaganda condemning the aggression and “Red Imperialism” of North Korea.

Most of Minsen activities, however, involved assisting the JCP’s attempt to foment internal revolution in Japan. It assisted the JCP with several “riots” in Tokyo and other industrial areas of Japan. Consequently, the Japanese government decided in 1953 to increase its security control over the Koreans in Japan. By 1954, the North Korean regime began to feel that Minsen’s preoccupation with revolution in Japan was a mistake and suggested to Minsen members to loosen their ties with the JCP and to concentrate on Korean problems. On 26 May 1955, Minsen was dissolved. One day later, Souren was

⁹¹ Interestingly, the Japanese government passed this Law one day before the First Anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea)

established under the direct control of North Korea.⁹² From 1955 onward, Souren and Mindan had been the two most important ethnic associations for the *zainichi* Koreans in Japan.

Because North Korea does not have diplomatic relations with Japan, Souren functions as the “unofficial embassy” of the North Korean government in Japan. For example, Kim Il Sung negotiated with the Japanese government through Souren on repatriation of Koreans to North Korea (北送事業) during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Approximately 50,000 *zainichi* Koreans repatriated to North Korea in 1959 and 1960. Many thought they were returning to a more prosperous and better North Korea, because the North Korean government had regularly sent enormous sum of money to Souren. Moreover, the economy of North Korea, with financial assistance from the communist block, grew faster than that of South Korea after the Korean War. From 1959 to 1984, 93,340 Koreans and their families repatriated to North Korea.

From the start, Mindan opposed the program on repatriation of Koreans to North Korea. It set up an opposition committee to the repatriation to the North program (北送反対闘争委員会) and organized demonstrations. Finally, it started a similar program of its own for *zainichi* Koreans to visit South Korea, which they called “Visitation Group to the Motherland Program” (母国訪問団事業) in order to build ethnic ties of *zainichi* Koreans to South Korea. The Mindan’s program did not enjoy the same level of success, for only 45,277 people (or about half those who participated in the Souren’s program) took advantage of the program.⁹³

⁹² Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, pp. 120-121

⁹³ Mindan, *Kankoku mindan no 50 nen no ayumi*, pp. 34-46.

Such ideological and political obsession against each other group or supporting government characterized the activities of both Souren and Mindan during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. One bitter incident involved the assassination of South Korea's first lady by a Souren member on 15 August 1974. The South Korean government claimed special agents of Souren and North Korea trained the assassin, Mr. Moon Se Kwang. Some went so far as to claim that Moon, who is a second generation *zainichi* Korean, tried to assassinate the South Korean president because he considered Park's totalitarian regime as the main impediment for the reunification of North and South Korea.

At present, Souren engages in an intense argument with Mindan on voting rights at local elections for permanent residents in Japan. Members of Mindan want suffrage at local electoral level, based on the fact that they actually live in Japan.⁹⁴ In contrast, members of Souren refuse suffrage and insist that their members, who are North Korean citizens residing in Japan, stay out of Japan's internal affairs.⁹⁵ They fear that the acquisition of the franchise may promote the assimilation of their citizens into Japanese society and loosen the political ties of *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea.⁹⁶

Souren and Mindan promote ethnic attachment to North Korea and South Korea, respectively, through: a) political participation of elite associative members in the home country's politics; b) official exchanges of gifts, letters, and financial assistance; and, c) their respective Korean Schools.⁹⁷ First, certain prominent members of Souren and Mindan

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-144.

⁹⁵ Koreans in Japan Human Rights Protection Committee (Souren), ed., *Zainichi chousenjin junken hakusho* [White Paper on Human Rights of *Zainichi* Koreans] (Tokyo: Chousen Seinensha, 1996), particularly pp. 191-198

⁹⁶ In the meanwhile, the government of North Korea tries to push Souren to pursue a Chousenization policy, a policy to promote ethnic attachment of the *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea.

⁹⁷ On the promotion of ethnic attachment between Koreans in Japan with North and South Korea, see Hai Kyung Jun, "The Role of the Home Country in Sharing Assimilation and Attachment: The Case of Koreans in Japan," (MS Thesis.

possess high-level political influence in the government of North Korea and South Korea, respectively. Seven of Souren's high ranking administrators, the president and three vice presidents of Souren, the rector of Chosen University, the president of Dong-Hai Association, and the director of Women's Association, are members of the People's Congress of North Korea. Similarly, two members of Mindan were elected as Congressmen in the 13th South Korean National Congress.

Second, Korean ethnic associations promote ethnic attachment with their home governments through official exchanges of gifts, letters, and financial assistance. For example, The South Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) claimed that Souren regularly send about 40 billion yen to North Korea every year for the celebration of North Korean leader's birthday. For Kim Il Sung's 60th birthday (1972), Souren built and donated a glass manufacturing and a textile factory to North Korea. For his 65th birthday (1977), it built and donated an instant noodles manufacturing company. For his 70th birthday (1982), Souren sent 400 delegates (who each paid 200 million yen) and 350 *zainichi* Koreans (who each paid 250,000 yen plus 30,000 to 50,000 yen for Kim Il Sung's birthday present). The birthday's monetary gift from Souren totaled more than 321 million US dollars (calculated at 1981 exchange rate). For his 80th birthday (1992), Souren donated 4 billion yen to the construction of a one-ton ship, *Man-Kyung-Ho 92*, and sent 650 *zainichi* Koreans with over 627 million US dollars. Souren had sent automobiles, medical instruments, electronic devices, and other manufacturing products to North Korea. Souren-related Trade Association manufactured food sets, containing 10 kg of rice, 1.4 kg of sesame oil, 1 kg of

sugar, and 500 g of spices and sent to North Korea at Souren expenses.⁹⁸ Similarly, Mindan had sent monetary gifts to South Korea, although at a far less sum than Souren to North Korea. Between 1963 and 1995, it sent over 62.5 billion *won* (\$US 52 million) to South Korea. About 54 billion *won* (\$US 45 million) went for support of the 1988 Seoul Olympic. Over 3 billion *won* (\$US 2.5 million) went to various construction projects such as the Independence Memorial Hall, the Peace Dam, and the Foreign Students Abroad Hall. The rest were sent as relief for national disasters in South Korea. Mindan also sent over 500 million *won* (\$US 420,000) to support the National Defense of South Korea between 1972 and 1983.⁹⁹

In response, Kim Il Sung often sent personal letters to Souren during every anniversary of the organization and festivities. The North Korean government had sent 1.2 billion yen to support Korean education in Japan between 1945 and 1960 while the South Korean government sent 100 million yen. In 1977, the Park administration paid for the construction of a new Mindan headquarters in Tokyo, which now shares the same building as some offices of the Embassy of South Korea in Japan.¹⁰⁰ The financial support from the South Korean government to Mindan mostly go to the maintenance and administration of Mindan headquarters and branches.¹⁰¹ To help Korean victims of the Hanshin Earthquake in 1995, the South Korean government sent 11 billion yen (\$US 100 million) to Mindan.¹⁰²

Third, to promote ethnic attachment of the *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea and South Korea, Souren and Mindan build several Korean schools and urge the members to

⁹⁸ Cited in Jun, "The Role of the Home Country in Sharing Assimilation and Attachment "

⁹⁹ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan no 50 nen no ayumi*, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ In fact, Mindan-affiliated *zainichi* Koreans can request South Korean passports at the offices of Mindan.

¹⁰¹ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi*.

send their children to these schools. For instance, the Souren's Central Education Institute works closely with the North Korean government to oversee the direction of Korean education in Japan. Souren sponsors 68 kindergartens, 81 elementary schools, 56 middle schools, 12 high schools, and 1 university.¹⁰³ The North Korea government encourages Souren members to study the Korean language and history at Korean schools in Japan, where it supplies these schools with textbooks from North Korea designed for Korean children living in Japan. Students at these schools wear uniforms that distinguish them from Japanese and Mindan-sponsored Korean students. For example, female students wear traditional Korean clothing. Students at Souren schools typically befriend with their Korean schoolmates and isolate themselves from the larger Japanese society. At the pre-university level, children of *zainichi* Koreans who attend Souren-sponsored schools experience little discrimination due to their deliberate isolation from the Japanese society. The North Korean government promotes this isolation, because the more isolated the *zainichi* Koreans, the more active and loyal to their home country (North Korea) they will be. As a result, they have strong Korean roots and ethnic identity.¹⁰⁴ Because graduates of Souren-sponsored high schools cannot take entrance examination for Japanese national universities, many pro-North Korea, *zainichi* Koreans opt to attend Japanese high schools. In fact, about 86 percent of the *zainichi* Korean children attends Japanese schools and only 13 percent attend Souren-sponsored schools. For those Koreans who graduated from Korean high schools, Souren established the Chosen Daigaku (Korean University) in Tokyo

¹⁰² Interview with Mr. Chung Mong-Joo of Mindan in Tokyo, 8 December 1999.

¹⁰³ Souren, *Chosen Souren*, pp. 78-81. For a list of these schools, the date of their establishment, and their contact addresses, see pp. 181-183.

¹⁰⁴ Jun, "The Role of the Home Country in Sharing Assimilation and Attachment."

on 10 April 1956 in order to give Koreans an opportunity to receive a communist education at the university level and administrative training at Souren offices. Graduates of the Chosen University often find employment at the headquarters, branches, and local offices of Souren.¹⁰⁵ The budget for running these schools come from contributions from pro-North Korean businesses (45%), tuition (30%), school income (10-15%), assistance from Japanese local governments (4-5%), and educational fund from the government of North Korea (3-7%).¹⁰⁶

Mindan operates only four Korean schools in Japan: the Tokyo Korean School, the Kyoto Korean School, the Osaka Keum Kang Institute, and the Osaka Keon Kook School. When it noticed the propaganda that the North Korean regime was disseminating through Souren, the South Korean government began to send money over to Mindan in 1957 to fund educational programs at Mindan-sponsored Korean schools. After Park Chung Hee took over in 1963, he was increasingly concerned with the ethnic education of pro-South Koreans in Japan. To counter the “communist” Chosen University, the Park administration initiated the Mo-Kook-Soo-Hak program, an educational program for overseas Koreans who were interested in studying in South Korea. The Tokyo Korean School is the largest of the four schools with 868 students in 1996. However, many students of this school are children of Korean diplomats and businessmen who are temporarily living in Japan. Only 13.2 percent of the students are children of *zainichi* Koreans.¹⁰⁷ Hence, the Tokyo Korean School uses the same textbooks as those used in South Korea. Most children of pro-South Koreans attend Japanese schools and thereby have many Japanese friends. As a result,

¹⁰⁵ Mitchell, *The Korean Minority in Japan*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁶ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi*, p. 73.

many pro-South Koreans integrate into the Japanese society. This also means that they cannot speak fluent Korean. Similar to Souren, the fund for running these four schools come from contributions from pro-South Korean businesses, tuition, school income, assistance from Japanese local governments, and educational fund from the government of South Korea.¹⁰⁸

Perhaps, the few areas where both Souren and Mindan do not clash with each other are their demands on the Japanese government to improve social conditions for *zainichi gaikokujin*. On this political movement for *zainichi gaikokujin* in Japan, they are joined by the Council for Combating Discrimination against Ethnic People in Japan (民族差別と戦う連絡協議会 or *Mintouren*), a non-ideological alignment organization that was established in 1974 to fight against ethnic discrimination in Japan. This group emerged after a group of Koreans organized themselves to combat discriminatory practice by the Hitachi Corporation in 1970, when Hitachi offered a position to a *zainichi* Korean, Mr. Park Chong Seok, and later withdrew the offer after Mr. Park could not produce a copy of his family register. Because only Japanese are allowed to possess family registries in Japan, Park took Hitachi to court and accused the corporation of racial discrimination on employment practices. The court decided in 1974 in his favor. Since then, situations for *zainichi* Koreans improved considerably as they increasingly found work in work-site operations and low-rank office work in private companies.¹⁰⁹

In 1977, Mindan initiated its “Movement to Abolish Governmental Discrimination”

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Mintouren, Zainichi kankoku-chousenjin no hoshou-jinkenhou* [Zainichi Koreans' Compensation-Human Rights Law] (Tokyo: Shinkansha, 1990), pp. 136-138

(行政差別撤廃運動). This Movement started when *zainichi* Koreans in the Kawasaki City pressed the city officials to abolish discrimination on public housing. The Movement spread to Osaka, where *zainichi* Korean further demanded on non-discriminatory treatment towards their children at schools and on the application of national pension be extended to them. Eventually, the Movement expanded nation-wide by 1978. These demands plus non-discriminatory treatment on home loans and on the employment of foreigners at public offices became the policy-objective of the central Mindan in 1978. However, “many of the changes toward Koreans made in the early 1980s are attributable to newly ratified international covenants.”¹¹⁰ Japan abolished state discrimination on public housing and extended its home loans to foreigners in 1980 after it signed the UN Treaty on Human Rights (人權規約). To prohibit discrimination on public housing and home loans, the government established the Public Fund for Home Loan (住宅金融公庫) and passed the Public Housing Law (公営住宅法), the Urban Housing Maintenance Law (住宅都市整備公団法), and the Rural Housing Supply Law (地方住宅供給公社法). After Japan ratified the UN Refugee Treaty (難民条約) in 1982, it improved treatment towards foreign children and extended the national pension to permanent foreign residents with the National Pension Law (国民年金法), the Children Assistance Support Law (児童扶養手当法), Special Children Assistance Support Law (特別児童手当法), and the Children Support Law (児童手当法). Mindan, in fact, acknowledges the impact of Japan’s ratification of international covenants on its anti-discrimination campaigns.¹¹¹

It is important to acknowledge that the success of certain elements of the Mindan’s

¹¹⁰ See Amy Gurowitz, “Mobilizing International Norms. Domestic Actors, Immigrants, and the Japanese State” in *World Politics* 51 (April 1999): 413-445 (412ff).

Movement to Abolish Governmental Discrimination, such as the provision of the national pension to permanent residents, was also due to Souren's political pressure on the Japanese government.¹¹² Souren also launched its own movement to improve conditions for permanent foreign residents with its campaign for the Freedom of Ethnic Education (民族教育の自由性) ever since the Japanese government began to regulate the Korean schools in 1948. The Movement gained momentum in 1968, three years after the establishment of the Chosen University. By 1994, the organization has successfully fought for the school children at Souren-sponsored high schools to be able to take the entrance examination in about 40 percent of Japan's private universities. During the same year, the Japan Railway (JR) began granting the same train discount for Korean schools' students as it does for Japanese schools' students.¹¹³

On fingerprinting of foreigners for alien registration purposes, several major Korean (and Chinese) ethnic associations cooperated to organize protests against such practices by the Japanese government. In 1983, Mindan helped organized demonstrations at the National Diet and various political party headquarters. This movement gained success in 1985 when the Kawasaki City Government decided not to fingerprint its permanent foreign residents. By 1991, the central government officially exempted permanent residents from being fingerprinted.¹¹⁴

Clearly, when come to political activities against the Japanese government, Korean ethnic associations mainly display social and political concerns for the improvement of

¹¹¹ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi*, pp. 56-61.

¹¹² On the specific of Souren's demands, see Koreans in Japan Human Rights Protection Committee, ed., *Zanichi chousenjin jinken hakusho*, particularly pp. 147-169

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-99.

Korean permanent residents in Japan. Such attitude was most revealing when Mindan submitted a request to the Japanese government in 1990 that the revision of the Immigration Control Law would not cause any disadvantage to permanent Korean residents in Japan.¹¹⁵

The recent influx of Korean newcomers into Japan is rocking the Korean ethnic associations, because both Souren and Mindan set conditions and exclusion for their membership.¹¹⁶ Korean newcomers are not *zainichi* (usually characterized as Japan-born as discussed in the previous Chapter) but *rainichi* (which literally means “coming to Japan”). Therefore, they do not meet the criteria of membership for these groups. Moreover, recent Korean newcomers all come from South Korea, therefore Souren does not support them. A Mindan official, on the other hand, claims that

new-coming Korean workers usually go to the South Korean Embassy for assistance. Mindan has little experience in helping Korean workers, since most *zainichi*, until recently, did not work in Japanese corporations. Instead, they have been working in their own businesses, particularly running *yakiniku* restaurants and *yakitori* stalls.¹¹⁷

3.3.2 Chinese Ethnic Associations

Like the Korean community, the Chinese community and their associations also split along Taiwan and the People Republic of China lines.¹¹⁸ After the founding of the People

¹¹⁴ Mindan, ed., *Kankoku mindan 50 nen no ayumi*, pp. 56-61; 134-144. By 2000, the Japanese government completely abolished the practice of fingerprinting for registration purposes of all foreigners.

¹¹⁵ Kajita Takamichi, “The Challenge of Incorporating Foreigners in Japan: ‘Ethnic Japanese’ and ‘Sociological Japanese’” in Myron Weiner and Takashi Hanami, eds., *Temporary Workers or Future Citizens? Japanese and US Migration Policies* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), pp. 120-147 (140ff).

¹¹⁶ Kou Hyonmi, “Yureru zainichi korian shakai” [Rocking *zainichi* Korean Society] *AWC Tsuushin* No. 9(June 1999): 10.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Mr. Chung Mong-Joo of Mindan in Tokyo, 8 December 1999.

¹¹⁸ Interviews with: Mr. Seki Hiroyoshi of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association (Taiwan), 28 May 1999; Mr. On of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association (Mainland), 31 May 1999.

Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, most overseas Chinese organizations such as Overseas Chinese Associations and Chinese schools separated into two different political factions. One faction supports the PRC while the other supports Taiwan. Despite the division, both Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese members called their association “Overseas Chinese Association” (華僑總會). Therefore, there are two Tokyo Overseas Chinese Associations (東京華僑總會) and two Yokohama Overseas Chinese Associations (横浜華僑總會). The political division between the PRC and Taiwan is also reflected in the five Chinese schools in Japan. Two Chinese schools, one each in Yokohama and Kobe, are affiliated with the PRC faction while three others, one each in Tokyo, Yokohama, and Osaka, are affiliated with Taiwan. Unlike the *zainichi* Koreans, however, the bipolar Overseas Chinese Associations for *zainichi* Chinese in Japan are not centralized and do not have a central headquarters. Two separate Overseas Chinese Associations also exist in Kobe, Osaka, and Fukuoka. In fact, these Overseas Chinese Associations do not coordinate their activities with each other, even among their own political affiliated groups. The Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association (PRC), for instance, does not work with the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association (PRC).

Chinese merchants set up Overseas Chinese organizations as early as 1867 when the Chinese population in Japan consisted of approximately 1,000 people. The Chinese community in each of the Japanese cities originally came from different regions in China and typically formed “native place associations” (*huiguan*) to assist each other. These organizations “provided support to members, exploited trading links with their home province and developed a monopoly within the Chinese community on particular goods or

services.”¹¹⁹ After China established diplomatic ties with Japan in the late 19th century, these Chinese organizations assumed the role of intermediaries between the Chinese consul and their individual members. They also continued to take responsibility for the economic and social well-being of their community. In 1891, Overseas Chinese established the *Zhonghua huiguan* (“Chinese Guild”) in Yokohama with 863 members as an overarching organization, which “provided general services such as the organization of religious and social events, burials and the shipment of remains to China for permanent burial.”¹²⁰ As the Chinese community continued to grow, merchant associations extended their activities to sponsoring constructions of new schools, temples, Chambers of Commerce, and hospitals. Today, the Kanagawa prefecture alone is home to about 25,000 *zainichi* Chinese, many of whose ancestors came from Canton (15%) and Taiwan (11%). The original Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association was established in 1911. These Overseas Chinese Associations were established as self-help groups to assist in resolving various lifestyle problems that overseas Chinese in Japan faced. Their activities typically included consultations on marriage and lifestyle in Japan. After Chairman Mao Zedong declared the founding of the People Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, these Overseas Chinese Associations split into the communist PRC faction and the conservative Taiwanese faction – Tokyo in 1950 and Yokohama in 1952.

The PRC faction of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association currently has about 3,000 members while its Taiwanese counterpart has about 2,000 members. Members of the pro-PRC group pay 300 yen per month while the pro-Taiwan group does not charge

¹¹⁹ Andrea Vasishth, “A Model Minority. The Chinese Community in Japan” in Michael Weiner, ed., *Japan's Minorities: the Illusion of Homogeneity* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 108-139 (120ff).

membership fees. There are approximately 350 executive members in the pro-PRC Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association with Mr. Wen Yao Quan as the current representative. Executive members include presidents, vice presidents, directors, vice directors, and staffs of ten Chinese groups that are affiliated with the PRC faction of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association. These affiliated institutions include a Chinese school, a parent-teacher association, an alumni association, a youth club, a women club, two provincial associations, a chamber of commerce, an economic association, and a meeting hall. By contrast, only 40 executive members and 3 staffs oversee the operation of the Taiwan faction of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association and about half are really active members. Mr. Seki Hiroyoshi is the present representative of the group.

The goals of the pro-PRC Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association are: a) to protect overseas Chinese just interests; b) to promote Chinese patriotism; c) to expand Chinese culture overseas; d) to enhance socio-economic situation for overseas Chinese; and, e) to continue promoting Japan-China friendship. The activities of the Association include organizing social gatherings, trips, and festivals.¹²¹ The goal of the pro-Taiwan Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association is simply “to help promote Chinese educational and cultural activities in Japan.”¹²² It runs one Chinese school in Yokohama and offers religious services at its Community Hall. Money received from renting out the Community Hall for religious services and social functions provides an important source of income for the pro-Taiwan Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association. Both of these associations in Yokohama

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p 122

¹²¹ Interview with Mr. Wen Yao Quan of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association (PRC) in Yokohama, 31 May 1999.

¹²² Interview with Mr. Seki Hiroyoshi of the Yokohama Overseas Chinese Association (Taiwan) in Yokohama, 27 May 1999

do not assist Chinese newcomers on labor or immigration problems, because many owners of the 200 Chinese restaurants in the Yokohama's Chinatown, who are association members, employ Chinese newcomers in their restaurants.

Tokyo Overseas Chinese Associations exhibit similar patterns. Their goals and activities mirror those in Yokohama. The pro-Taiwan Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association boasts a membership of 120,000 people (although only half are active or paying members) while its pro-PRC counterpart has 20,000 members. The pro-Taiwan group enjoys such a large membership despite the fact that it limits its members to those overseas Chinese who have lived in Japan for at least eight years. Members of the pro-Taiwan group pay a membership fee of 3,000 per year while those of the pro-PRC group pay 5,000 yen per year. A large proportion of their operation funds also come from the Taiwanese government and the PRC government, respectively. Each of these groups operates its own Chinese school. Mr. In Chu Yuu is the present representative of the pro-PRC group while MR. Sen Tokukun is one for the pro-Taiwan group.

Before Japan normalized relations with the PRC in 1972, the pro-PRC Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association functioned as the "unofficial embassy" for the PRC. As a result, it reports to have received countless threats and demonstrations by Japan's right-wing, anti-Communist groups.¹²³ Presently, the pro-PRC group mainly functions as a business networking organization for *zainichi* Chinese. The four Chinese companies that occupy four floors of the eight-story Tokyo Overseas Chinese Hall exemplify the importance that the pro-PRC group holds for business networking. Similarly, the pro-Taiwan group concentrates its activities on business and political networking. The

representative of the pro-Taiwan group, Mr. Sen Tokukun, who is also the president of Fuji Coin Company, boasts extensive business and political ties with both Taiwanese and Japanese companies and high-level government officials.¹²⁴ His Fuji Coin office in Kanda, Tokyo displays several pictures of him with former and present Presidents of Taiwan.

To stay away from the suspicion of the Japanese police in the midst of numerous illegal entries of Chinese workers, these groups deliberately distant themselves from illegal foreign workers and offer no services to Chinese newcomers. The pro-Taiwan Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association, for example, decided to stay out completely of providing employment-related services.¹²⁵ Like the Korean ethnic associations, Chinese ethnic associations had little experience in assisting Chinese workers, for most *zainichi* Chinese worked in their own restaurants and other service-related businesses. On the newly arrived Chinese workers from the PRC, Andrea Vasishth keenly observed

[i]n marked contrast to earlier patterns of migration and settlement, where new arrivals were assisted by a network of pre-existing mutual support organizations, there has been little interaction between the established Chinese community and the most recent arrivals from the PRC. Instead, Japanese local authorities and voluntary organizations have taken the lead in providing a range of legal and advisory services to Chinese immigrants.¹²⁶

3.3.3 Other Ethnic Associations

Although the influx of Asians into Japan is recent and the population remains relatively small, a few co-ethnic Asian associations have emerged. Filipinos often come together for church services on Sundays. Some church-goers formalized their gatherings

¹²³ Interview with Mr. In Chu Yuu of the Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association (PRC) in Tokyo, 9 December 1999

¹²⁴ Interview with Mr. Sen Tokukun of the Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association (Taiwan) in Tokyo, 24 May 2000

¹²⁵ Interview with Mr. Sen Tokukun of the Tokyo Overseas Chinese Association (Taiwan) in Tokyo, 24 May 2000.

within their church organizations.¹²⁷ Moreover, several Filipino women who are married to Japanese men have created numerous Filipina Wives Clubs throughout Japan to promote cultural exchange and to introduce Philippine's culture and tradition to Japanese people.¹²⁸ Thais in Japan have also established two ethnic associations of their own – the Thai Students Association in Japan and the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan - to form social clubs of Thai students and professionals in Japan.¹²⁹ A Pakistani, Mr. I.A. Chaudhry, who runs a private computer consulting company in Japan and married a Japanese woman, established the United Front Japan on August 1996. The association hopes “to bring together [foreigners with Japanese spouses], spouses, and families of international members in order to exchange support, information, and professional and personal cooperation for mutual benefit.”¹³⁰ The United Front Japan offers “free” legal counseling and on-line help to its 80 or so members, who are either permanent residents or Japanese spouses that have paid their 3,000 yen membership fee for the year. The relatively small number of co-ethnic associations in Japan is largely due to illegal foreign workers not wanting to focus attention on themselves by establishing an association and become an easy target for the Japanese police and immigration authorities. This does not mean that no co-ethnics help their illegal compatriots.

Co-ethnics tend to help their compatriots at an individual basis or at religious gathering places. In fact, the majority of illegal foreign workers I interviewed prefer to

¹²⁶ Vasishth, “A Model Minority: The Chinese Community in Japan,” p. 135

¹²⁷ See Ibarra Crisostomo Mateo, “Collapsible Community: A Catholic Church and its Multiple Role in the Lives of Ethnic Filipino Catholic Migrants in Central Tokyo” (Tokyo: MA Thesis, Sophia University, 1996).

¹²⁸ Kanagawa International Association, *Kokusai kouryuu - kyouryoku nettowaaku tesho*, p. 167.

¹²⁹ Interview with Dr. Vuthichai Ampornaramveth of the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan in Tokyo, 19 May 2000

¹³⁰ Interview with Mr. I.A. Chaudhry of the United Front Japan in Noda City, Chiba, 5 September 1998

seek assistance from their co-ethnic friends or friends-of-friends. These associations function more as social clubs for foreign elite in Japan rather than support groups and tend to be preoccupied with their home country's politics and to help only legal foreigners. None of these groups helps their illegal compatriots. The Philippine Women's League of Japan goes so far as to condemn illegal foreign workers in Japan. Filipino women with Japanese spouses organized the Philippine Women's League of Japan in 1986 to "counter-attack the media blitz on the plight of Filipino women working in Japan as bar hostesses that was wrecking havoc on Philippine image in Japan."¹³¹ The League has a national chapter and six provincial chapters. The executive members include a chairperson, two counselors, an auditor, and a Kanto area leader. The activities of the organization include searching for lost relatives, counseling on marriage problems and immigration procedure (on preparation before departing Japan), and providing shelters for battered Filipino wives. Members of this group, who are mostly women with Japanese spouses and thus "legal" aliens, feel that illegal Filipino workers sully the reputation of all Filipinos.

A. Co-ethnic Associations as Elite Social Clubs

Many co-ethnic associations in Japan appear more as elite clubs, rather than as support organizations. Thai students, many of whom were from elite families in Thailand, established the Thai Students Association in Japan with "patronage" from the Thai royal family as an exclusive social club. Members are invited to attend the annual New Year Party at the Thai Embassy in Tokyo. The composition of this association usually includes

¹³¹ See the homepage of the Philippine Women's League of Japan at <http://japan.co.jp/~ystakei/pwll.html> (23 October 1998).

students who have received scholarships from the Japanese Ministry of Education (Monbusho) or the Thai government. A small number also include rich students who come to study in Japan with their own family financial support. Even among the Monbusho scholarship students, most come from affluent families in Bangkok.¹³²

The Association of Thai Professionals in Japan is a social club for former Thai students who have completed their studies in Japan and decided to work in Japan for a few years after graduation. Members of this group are mostly former members of the Thai Students Association in Japan.¹³³ In its Third Annual Conference in Tokyo during fall 1998, all of the speakers were socially distinguished individuals, such as: the Thai Ambassador in Japan, prominent Thai bureaucrats (from the Ministry of Science Technology and Environment, the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, and the Reverse Brain Drain Project), and famous Japanese professors. The audience consisted of mostly Thai students or Thai professionals working legally in white-collar positions in Japanese corporations.¹³⁴ Since both associations keep and regularly update the directory of their current and former members, members in both of these Thai associations maintain their networks for business or professional purposes even after they have returned to Thailand.

These groups do not help illegal Thai workers in Japan. On the contrary, they look

¹³² As one of the 58 recipients of this scholarship in 1992, one of the first things I observed these privileged students did after they arrived to their Foreign Students Dormitories in Japan was to decorate their rooms with televisions, VCRs, stereos, and expensive cameras. They purchased these luxury items even before they received their first paycheck from the Monbusho! Clearly, these students had money before they came to Japan. Many had their own cars, some even had chauffeurs

¹³³ Interview with Dr. Vuthichai Ampornaramveth of the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan in Tokyo, 19 May 2000.

¹³⁴ Participant observation of the Third Annual Conference of the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan in Tokyo, 12 December 1998.

down on those people who enter Japan illegally to do dirty and socially degrading work in Japan. This attitude is most obvious during the annual Songkran (Thai New Year) Festival every April 13th when Thai students, professionals, and illegal workers come together. The Thai Students Association in Japan typically organizes this celebration in a Buddhist temple in Tokyo and several thousand Thai workers attend this festival, where Thai food can be purchased and various Thai performing arts are displayed. Students and professionals usually gather to watch performing arts such as performances of Thai traditional court instruments while workers gather to see *muay thai* (Thai kick boxing). These two social groups rarely mingle with each other.¹³⁵

Elitist attitudes exist even within the Thai student community. Thai students, particularly scholarship students, pride themselves not only on their intellectual gift but also on their social background in Thailand. Even when they were living in the same foreign student dormitory, I observed that Thai university students tended to distance themselves from vocational school students. Some university students viewed vocational students as people who came from a socially inferior class, whose intelligence and/or parents' influence could not get them into a university. Vocational school students usually supplement their income by working *arubaito* (part-time) job at restaurants. In the Bangkok elite community, this job is considered socially distasteful. It was from these vocational Thai students in Tokyo who introduced me to the Japanese owner of a Thai restaurant that was willing to employ me during the time I entered Japan with a tourist visa and lacked the financial means to sustain myself in Japan. Another vocational student from Laos shared his four-and-half matted room with me for over a month.

¹³⁵ Participant observations of the 1992, 1993, and 1994 Songkran Festival in Tokyo

Like the Thai community, elite Filipinos disdain their illegal compatriots. A Filipino missionary in Japan complains that

[s]ometimes I can't bear going to mass for the Filipino community in Japan because you can clearly see the structures of discrimination replicated in the church. At the front pews you will see the "legitimate" Filipino community – the embassy people, the students on Monbusho [Education Ministry] scholarships, the spouses of Japanese nationals, then the male migrant workers, who are engaged in "decent back-breaking labor." Crowded by the door are the women who work in the sex industry, the last to arrive and the first to leave. Readers and leaders are almost always the students. Although coffee or tea or cookies are served after mass, for fellowship, only the "legitimate" members of the community remain.¹³⁶

Filipino women who established the Philippine Women's League of Japan also take an elitist position and aggressively try to exclude illegal compatriots. They feel that illegal Filipino workers sully the reputation of all Filipinos in Japan. In their own words, "we are fed up of being identified as domestic helpers,...mail-order brides, and worst, as prostitutes." For them,

[t]o tolerate, grant recognition and support to illegal Filipino migrant workers, most of whom do not even have proper identities and passports, is like saying that there is nothing wrong with Filipinos stealing in foreign lands as long as they remit their loots to the Philippines. We cannot allow ourselves to be part of such racket and a farce!¹³⁷

They explained

[a]lthough many of us were at one point contract workers ourselves, we are opposed to the deployment of Filipino workers overseas, particularly women being sent to Japan as bar hostesses. We have reasons to believe that the deployment of Filipino workers abroad has caused more social problems and economic woes...¹³⁸

Ms. Yuko Takei, the chairperson of the group, insists that "contrary to claims by supporters of illegal foreign migrant workers in Japan, majority of the illegal Filipino migrants are not

¹³⁶ Published interview with Lisa Go in *Japan Christian Activity News* No. 711 (winter 1994), pp. 4-7 (5ff).

¹³⁷ Yuko Takei, "The Filipino Migrants in Japan," in the homepage of the Philippine Women's League of Japan at <http://japan.co.jp/~ytakei/pw11.html> (23 October 1998).

innocent but willing victims of exploitation by both Filipino and Japanese recruiters.”¹³⁹ Therefore, they do not accept illegal migrant workers as members. Most interestingly, two executive members of this group have close ties with the Japanese police. The chairperson, Ms. Yoko Takei, works as interpreter/translator for the police, court, and prosecutor’s office in the Kanto area. The auditor, Ms. Ester Iinaga, is married to a former policeman from Kyoto.

B. Preoccupation with Helping their Home Countries and Legal Foreigners in Japan

Members of co-ethnic associations concentrate their activities on their home countries and on helping legal foreigners in Japan. The Association of Thai Professionals in Japan focuses on acquiring technological knowledge and professional experience in Japan and brings them back to Thailand when they eventually return.¹⁴⁰ The Thai Students Association in Japan helps out impoverished people in Thailand by collecting used clothing from Thai people in Japan and sending them to various slums in Bangkok and impoverished rural areas of Thailand. Between 1992 and 1994, when I was in charge of this project, the Association sent about two truck-loads of used clothing back to Thailand. Donors, interestingly, were mostly Thai women, probably entertainers, who resided in the Japan’s country-side.

As chair of the “Social Service Committee” of the Thai Students Association in

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* Benedict Anderson informs me that in many places, Filipinos have exceptionally high crime rates. He believes they are “terrible effect of Marcos years which encouraged everyone to lie, cheat, forge, and so on, sometimes to be ‘patriotic.’”

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Dr. Vuthichai Ampornaramveth of the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan in Tokyo, 19 May 2000.

Japan between 1992 and 1994, a Japanese man approached me and asked for help with translations for detained Thai women in Japanese prisons. People in the Association had informed me about a case involving a Thai student who had volunteered for such services. According to the story, members of the underworld (*yakuza*) did not like the involvement of this young student and decided to teach him a lesson by sending illegal drugs from Thailand (through their gang connections in Thailand) to his apartment. Consequently, he was arrested and charged for drug trafficking. Not waiting to check on the facts behind the story, I (cowardly) declined the request and did not get the Association to be involved in such projects. Till this day, both Thai ethnic associations do nothing to help their illegal compatriots in Japan and concentrate their activities on helping people in Thailand.¹⁴¹

The Philippine Women's League of Japan also appears to be involved in the Philippines politics. Their publications regularly blast at both the Philippines government and Filipino radicals.

For their failure to address properly the unemployment problem, politicians back home have resolved to flattering the egos of Filipino workers stranded abroad with such accolades as "unsung heroes," "saints," etc. even when...many of them are ending up in foreign jails for committing...heinous crimes.¹⁴²

They call for Philippine government officials not to "burden other countries like Japan to provide jobs for Filipino workers. The government should now endeavor to create jobs and call fathers and mothers to come home and take direct supervision and care of their children."¹⁴³ On Filipino radicals, they believe that

¹⁴¹ I should add that some Thai students and professionals volunteer to help illegal Thai workers in Japan, but all do it on an individual basis or through the Japanese NGOs. This was the case of Mr. Romdej through SHARE, Ms. Busaya through HELP, and Ms. Purapaporn through AMDA.

¹⁴² Takei, "The Filipino Migrants in Japan."

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

...Filipino dissidents...based in Hong Kong...transferred most of their operations to Japan when they discovered that they could subsidize their guerrilla activities in the Philippines with donations from gullible Japanese, who did not know what to do with their rising yen.

Filipino dissidents operated as lay missionaries under the protection of a council of Christian churches, which had adopted a new order of social justice. Because of the religious freedom guaranteed by the Japanese constitution, Japanese authorities were unable to take action against them and deport them from Japan even when they were engaging in subversive activities. The only exception was a Filipino introducing himself as a priest, who was barred from entering Japan when police confirmed his connections with the New People's Army (NPA) and ultra-leftist Japanese groups.¹⁴⁴

Another preoccupation of these co-ethnic associations, as clearly depicted by the United Front Japan, is their focus on helping only legal foreigners in Japan. The United Front Japan started a campaign against Japanese local governments to list non-Japanese spouses in the remarks column (備考欄) of the Japanese spouse's family register. Because the 1967 notice of the Ministry of Home Affairs granting non-Japanese household heads a right to be listed in the remarks column of the Japanese family register, members of the organization reasoned that such a demand requires no law to be changed. Instead, the decision is left to the head of each city, town, or village to enact this change when the city, town, or village sees a necessity to do so. They also struggle to eliminate the requirement of a re-entry permit for spouses of Japanese nationals and permanent residents.¹⁴⁵

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, illegal Asian workers seldom seek assistance from existing government organizations and ethnic associations. In general, support organizations of the central government provide mainly information and interpretation services to *Nikkeijin*,

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*

Asian trainees, and foreign students. Although the Labor Standards Inspection Offices offer labor protection to all workers, illegal foreign workers still express reluctance to approach them. They are suspicious of the Japanese government, given its annual Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners. Without a doubt, local governments in Japan are receptive towards foreign workers. In addition to providing information and interpretation services to foreigners, local government officials also try to help foreign workers, including illegal ones, resolving their labor problems. However, officials in such institutions hold a neutral stand and do not necessarily side with foreign workers. They have set up support organizations to assist foreign workers in labor-related and lifestyle-related issues while trying to empower them with new and innovative institutional design for political participation. Staffs at these organizations still lack the know-how on assisting foreigners with serious problems. Moreover, illegal foreign workers hold skeptical feeling towards these institutions, because they view them as agents of the Japanese government.

Existing ethnic associations also do not help illegal foreign workers. Preoccupied with ideological conflict within their own community, their home country's politics, and their own struggle to improve conditions for legal foreigners, Korean and Chinese associations close their doors on newly arrived foreign workers – many of whom come from Mainland China and South Korea. Groups established by co-ethnics, such as the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan and the United Front Japan, struggle to improve conditions only for legal foreigners. Illegal foreign workers indeed seek help from their legal compatriots, but at a personal level. Many also turn to religious gatherings for

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Mr. I.A. Chaudhry of the United Front Japan in Noda City, Chiba, 5 September 1998.

assistance, but these religious centers still have yet to formally institutionalize themselves. Most interestingly, the Philippines' Women League of Japan, which was established by Filipinos themselves, is an out-spoken group against illegal Filipinos in Japan. Members of this group, who are mostly women with Japanese spouses and thus legal aliens, feel that illegal Filipino workers sully the reputation of all Filipinos. In short, the legal position inadvertently places them above their illegal compatriots, despite of their education, social background, and occupation. Legal Asians fear of jeopardizing their existence in Japan if they were to institutionalize and to assist their illegal compatriots. And those that have institutionalized tend to turn *away from* or *against* their illegal compatriots. Therefore, illegal foreign workers do not go to these institutions for assistance. Instead, they find sincere support from Japanese NGOs, which we now turn our discussion to in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

JAPANESE NGOS THAT SUPPORT ILLEGAL FOREIGN WORKERS

The night has effectively tamed the summer heat and hidden the unsavory streets of Kotobuki-cho in Yokohama. The sweet smell of marijuana has diluted that of urine and garbage. The Free Summer Concert at the Labor and Welfare Center is coming to a close. From the home-made stage of metal pipes and wooden planks, the lead singer of the band bids her audience adieu with this song from Okinawa.

川は流れて		どどこ行くの	
Rivers, they flow		To where are they going	
人も流れて		どどこ行くの	
People, too, they flow		To where are they going	
そんな流れが		つくころには	
These streams		When they reach the place	
花として	花として	咲かせてあげたい	
Like flowers	Like flowers	Lets them bloom.	
泣きなさい		笑いなさい	
Go ahead and cry!		Go ahead and laugh!	
いつの日か		いつの日か	花を咲かそうよ
One of these days	One of these days	Lets make our flowers bloom.	

涙ながれて		どどこ行くの	
Tears flow		To where are they going	
愛もながれて		どどこ行くの	
Love, too, they flow		To where are they going	
そんな流れを		このうちに	
[If] such streams		[were to come] our way	
花として	花として	むかえてあげたい	
Like flowers	Like flowers	Lets welcome them.	
泣きなさい		笑いなさい	
Go ahead and cry!		Go ahead and laugh!	
いつの日か		いつの日か	花を咲かそうよ
One of these days	One of these days	Lets make our flowers bloom.	

花は花として		わらいもできる	
Flowers, as flowers,		are able to laugh	
人は人として		涙もながず	
People, as people,		can shed tears.	
それが自然の		うたなのさ	
These . . . are		songs of nature.	
心の中に	心の中に	花を咲かそうよ	
Inside our heart	Inside our heart	Lets have the flowers bloom	
泣きなさい		笑いなさい	
Go ahead and cry!		Go ahead and laugh!	
いついつまでも		いついつまでも	花をつかもうよ
Forever	and ever	Lets reach for our flowers	

As I was listening to this moving Shokichi Kina's ballad, *Subete no Hito no Kokoro ni Hana wo* ("Flowers to All People's Hearts"), I recognized a young Korean man standing to

my left. The Asian economic crisis interrupted his third year of law studies in a university in Seoul and brought him to Kotobuki-cho in search for work. My eyes wandered past him toward the crowd in front of the stage and spotted a group of Bangladeshis. Next to this group of foreign workers stood a few staff and volunteers from the Kalabaw-no-kai, a support group for foreign workers in Kotobuki-cho. Their eyes shine with compassion and hope, but their bodies showed signs of fatigue. They have been helping to organize this annual event with various volunteer groups from the area and operated a *yatai* (stall) selling barbecue meat all afternoon. One Kalabaw staff also helped another volunteer group handing out food to homeless residents during the festival (earlier in the week, homeless residents were given a coupon to receive free food during the festival). These foreign workers and members of the foreigners support group were immersed in the beautiful music. After all, this Okinawan song was a huge hit throughout Asia, after local folk bands have translated Shokichi Kina's lyrics into their native languages. *Hana*, the commonly referred title, is a song about flows of "rivers," "people," "tears," and "love." It is also about compassion and hope. In many ways, it is about...them.

To help foreign workers, particularly "illegal" foreign workers, to overcome their problems, Japanese people have established about 200 support groups. They can be divided into six categories according to their function and background. They are Christian groups, community workers unions, women's support groups, medical NGOs, lawyers association NGOs, and concerned citizens groups. Certain groups fall into two or more categories. For example, HELP can be categorized as either a Christian group or a women's support group. Similarly, SABAY is both a medical and women's support group.

TELL, which is a Christian group, provides mental health services. On such cases, I weigh the importance of the group's concentration of activities above other criteria. In Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Ibaraki, 81 support groups exist to help foreign workers: 16 Christian NGOs, 18 community labor unions, 8 women's support groups, 19 medical NGOs (including occupational health and safety centers), 11 lawyers' support groups, and 9 concerned citizens NGOs. Labor unions and concerned citizens groups offer consultation and help settle labor disputes particularly for South Asians and Iranians. Christian NGOs also provide services in consultation and labor dispute settlement, but mostly to Filipinos, Koreans, and *Nikkeijin*. Women's support groups give legal advice to foreign women and advocate for their rights. Some also provide temporary shelter to foreign women who are escaping from their abusive employers (and husbands). Mostly Filipina and Thai women seek help from women support groups. Medical NGOs provide medical treatment and assist with industrial accident claims for foreign workers. Lawyers associations' NGOs provide legal consultation and help foreign workers settle their disputes. Both medical and legal NGOs serve all illegal foreign workers. Although they hold a similar progressive worldview and share a common objective of improving the conditions for foreign workers in Japan, these six types of support groups come out of different institutional traditions or cultures. Women's groups evolved out of the women's movement; community workers unions, from the labor movement; concerned citizens groups, from the civil rights movement; medical groups, from the health and welfare movement; Christian groups, from a Christian tradition for volunteer activities; and, lawyers groups, from a legal tradition to improve social justice. Hence, they organize differently and achieve mixed results, but in accordance to their individual movement or tradition. Moreover, these institutions were

created not to build “meaning” among members from various ethnic groups like those in the West but to serve “useful” (役に立つ) purposes, first, in solving serious problems for illegal foreign workers and, then, in advancing the political struggles of Japanese activists.

In this chapter, I discuss Japanese-established support groups for “illegal” foreign workers in more detail. First, I will introduce each type of support group and will provide their main characteristics and activities. I will focus on some of the founders, staffs, and volunteers of these groups. I then use these characteristics, activities, and stories to understand why Japanese activists formed these institutions. I argue that these institutions were created as a medium for Japanese activists to effectively solve specific problems that illegal foreign workers brought to them for assistance. In the final section, I will summarize key points of the chapter.

I. CHRISTIAN NGOS

Although Christians comprise less than one percent of the population in Japan, it appears that Christian organizations were the first to open their doors to “illegal” foreign migrants in distress during the early 1980s. On 13 April 1982, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan received a desperate call for help from a Bishop in the Philippines to assist Filipina entertainers who were forced into prostitution in Japan.¹ Exactly one year later, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan established the “Asian Women in Japan Support Group” (滞日アジア人女性を支える会), which became the “Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan” (滞日外国人と連帯する会), to provide various

services to foreigners. During the same year, the “Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan” was established to help suffering Filipina women in Japan. Since then, fifteen other Christian NGOs emerged to help “illegal” Asian workers in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa. These Christian NGOs include the Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers, the Akatsuki-no-mura, the Catholic Tokyo International Center (CTIC), the Christian Coalitions on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers (Nankiren), the Yamazato Consulting Office, the Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan, the Kapatiran, the Makoto Kaibigan, the Centro Claver, the Philippines Center, the Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants (SOL), the Philippines Desk, the Korean Desk, and the Latin Desk (see Table 4.1). Many of these names summarily describe the goals or activities of these Christian groups. Typically, they help foreign workers with problems related to working conditions like unpaid salaries and occupational injuries. They also deal with family difficulties and marriage problems. The Yamazato Consulting Office and the Philippines Desk provide prison visits to foreign inmates. The Akatsuki-no-mura provides shelter to Vietnamese refugees and troubled foreigners. All of these organizations were created as a branch of a certain Christian church or diocese and many provide church services, as part of their support to illegal workers.

The Christian influence on foreign migrant workers and foreigners support groups is tremendous.² Christian organizations seem to support foreign migrant workers for two reasons. First, the majority of foreign workers in Japan are Christians, especially from

¹ Interview with Sister Ishii Yoshiko of the Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan in Tokyo, 27 August 1998

² I thank Father Akimoto Haruo of the Nagano’s Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan for bringing up this information during our long discussion in a *rotenburo* (open bath) at Atami, 27 June 1998

Table 4.1 Foreign Workers Supporting Christian NGOs in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

No.	Name	Location	Year Began	Mem	Ethnic groups served	Services offered
1	つくばアジア出稼ぎ労働者と連席する会 (Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers)	Ibaraki	1985 -1996	200	Filipino, Thai	Labor consultation; rescue team
2	あかつきの村 (Akatsuki-no-Mura)	Gunma	1990 (1979)	N/A	Filipino, Vietnamese	Shelter
3	CTIC 亀戸相談センター (Catholic Tokyo International Center - CTIC)	Tokyo	1990	300	Filipino, Nikkei Peruvian	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation
4	滞日外国人と連帯する会 (Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan)	Tokyo	1983	26	Filipino	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation
5	難民・外国人労働者問題キリスト者連絡会 (Christian Coalitions on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers - Nankiren)	Tokyo	1989	37	Filipino, North Korean	Consultation and negotiation
6	聖フランシスコ・山里相談室 (Yamazato Consulting Office)	Tokyo	1988	N/A	Chinese, Iranian	Shelter and prison's visit
7	在日アジア人労働者と共に戦う会 (Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan)	Tokyo	1989	N/A	Filipino, Korean	Labor consultation and negotiation
8	Kapatiran・日本聖公会 (Kapatiran - Nihon Sei-Ko-Kai)	Tokyo	1987	40	Filipino	Labor and lifestyle consultation
9	Makoto Kaibigan (Makoto Kaibigan)	Tokyo	1990		Filipino	Labor and lifestyle consultation
10	セントロクラベール (Centro Claver)	Tokyo	1992	N/A	Nikkei Peruvian	Labor and lifestyle consultation
11	フィリピンセンター (The Philippines Center)	Tokyo	1992	N/A	Filipino	Labor and lifestyle consultation
12	横浜教区・滞日外国人と連帯する会 (Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants)	Kanagawa	1992	N/A	Filipino, Korean, Nikkei Peruvian	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation
13	フィリピンデスク (Philippines Desk)	Kanagawa	1992	N/A	Filipinos	Same as above plus prison's visit
14	韓国デスク (Korean Desk)	Kanagawa	1994	N/A	Koreans	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation
15	ラテンデスク (Latin Desk)	Kanagawa	1994	N/A	Nikkei Peruvian	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation
16	フィリピンと日本を考える横須賀市民の会 (Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan)	Kanagawa	1983	N/A	Filipinos	Labor and lifestyle con- sultation and negotiation

Brazil, Peru, Korea, and the Philippines. In 1996, the Catholic Central Conference estimated that 387,000 foreigners in Japan are Catholic believers, or 47 percent of the total believers in Japan.³ Another 300,000 or so Koreans in Japan are Protestants. Second, the Christian doctrine of charity implores the faithful to feel compassionate toward those in need and in distress, and try to alleviate their sufferings. The Catholic Bishops' Conference in Japan exemplifies such virtue in the following statement about foreign migrants.

[W]e are in constant search for effective means of mutual understanding and cooperation with people of various nationalities through suffering with them, learning with them and through various forms of contact with them...The Church warmly welcomes people who move into its midst from other places, recognizing that it is the Church's mission to be of service to them....For the Church, these immigrants are brothers and sisters in Christ. This means that we do not merely welcome them, but strive to build up a community that respects differences, thereby witnessing to society at large the universality of the Church.⁴

Christians are also taught a message of equality - that all people, wherever they come from, are God's children. This belief comes into direct conflict with the Emperor System (天皇制) in Japan, where the emperor is traditionally revered for his divine ancestor - the Goddess Amaterasu. A central topic of discussion in the 1993 General Assembly of the National Christian Council in Japan (NCC/J), the central Protestant organization in Japan, concerned with this confrontation from the Emperor System.

[T]he major task of the Christian Church in Japan over the last three years has been to re-evaluate the "Tenno" (emperor) system, ...[which] has become the apparent dominating force in Japanese society...A resolution was passed at the General Assembly that says NCC/J will continue to confront problems with the "Tenno" system in cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church, non-member churches and Christians organizations related to the NCC/J.

³ Catholic Central Conference, "Kyokubetsu Gaikokuseki Shitozui" in *Shakai mondai kenkyuukai* [Social Problem Research Group] (31 October 1996).

⁴ Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, *Seeking the Kingdom of God which Transcends Differences in Nationality* (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1993), pp. 2-5; idem., *Kyousei suru kyokai ni mukete* [Towards a Church for Living Together] (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1998).

...[S]pecific directions for church renewal must be spelled out in the light of the living Gospel and for *the liberation of the Japanese people from the blind enslavement to the whims and degradations of the 'Tenno' system* [emphasis added].⁵

By supporting foreign workers in the name of racial equality as children of God, it allows Christians to attack and to challenge Japan's Emperor System, the System that historically provides the foundation for Japanese racial superiority. Thus, the NCC/J pursues this struggle through its Foreign Workers Issues Committee by undermining the traditional concept of racial superiority of the Japanese people and introducing the idea that all humans are equal as children of God.⁶

Christian churches and NGOs hold enormous importance for certain ethnic groups, particularly the Filipinos. While walking in Tokyo with a Filipino colleague, we encountered two Filipino construction workers. After having given them our short introduction, the first question that was directed to my Filipino friend was, "Where do you go to church?" Since many Filipinos are Catholics and often go to church, churches provide the greatest source of psychological support, as well as a place to exchange information on employment. Ibarra Mateo, who studies the role of the "Franciscan Philippines Center" in the Filipino community of Tokyo, explains that Christian NGOs and churches are places where many Filipinos not only can gather for religious purposes but also can air their job-related problems and seek redress or justice.⁷ There, they can complain about illegal contracts of employment and renegotiate reasonable terms of

⁵ National Christian Council in Japan, "The Salt of the Earth," (Internal Document of the NCC/J). I thank Reverend Otsu Kenichi, the present Secretary General of the NCC/J for making this document available to me.

⁶ Interview with Reverend Otsu Kenichi of the NCC/J in Tokyo, 10 April 1998.

⁷ Ibarra Crisostomo Mateo, "Collapsible Community: A Catholic Church and Its Multiple Role in the lives of Ethnic Filipino Catholic Migrants in Central Tokyo" (MA Thesis, Sophia University, Department of Comparative Culture, 1996).

employment through the help of Christian social workers. These places can provide sanctuary or a refuge where Filipino migrants can find solace, comfort, or escape. Overstayed Filipinos, who would like to surrender to immigration authorities and to return to the Philippines, and women, who escaped from the *mama-san* or *yakuza*, also seek shelter in the facilities of the churches. Mateo summarizes,

The church, for most ethnic Filipino Catholic migrants, is a place where...they could expect assistance in times of need, a place where non-kin instantly became imaginary kin members, where Filipino parishioners are willing to seek help without hesitation and without losing their face and are willing to lend support. Just like one big extended family back home.⁸

In short, churches provide the physical and social welfare needs of Christian migrants. They include assistance in the forms of legal, medical, financial, shelter, psychological counseling, networking, and other similar emergency relief and support.

Due to the enormous importance of the Catholic church to the Filipinos, several Christian groups first began to establish support groups for mainly Filipinos. Some serve exclusively Filipinos while others offer their services to a broader array of foreigners. Five Christian groups - the Franciscan Philippines Center, the Philippines Desk, the Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan, the Kapatiran, and the Makoto Kaibigan - exclusively assist Filipinos. Nine other Christian groups started out by helping Filipinos, then expanded their services to other foreigners. Of these, five Catholic foreigners support groups were set up in the Tokyo-Kanagawa area as a result of that 1982 desperate request from the Bishop of the Philippines, but their assistance expanded into other ethnic foreigners. The Society to Struggle with Asian Workers in Japan started out by

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 81

supporting a Filipino who was charged with arson for a fire at an apartment building.⁹ The Yamazato Consulting Office began its visits to a detention center in Tokyo when Filipinos were most numerous among foreign criminals.¹⁰ Similarly, the Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers started by helping “illegal” Filipino workers.¹¹ Of the 16 Christian groups, only three groups did not start out helping Filipinos. The Akatsuki-no-Mura in Gunma had its beginning with Vietnamese refugees, the Nankiren with Chinese refugees, and the Centro Claver with Nikkei Peruvians.¹²

Let us now look at the activities of these groups in greater details. After having received the letter from a Bishop from the Philippines, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan urged its sixteen dioceses in Japan to respond to the needs of foreign migrants by providing staff available for counseling, masses in different foreign languages, temporary shelters, and so forth. The Tokyo diocese and the Yokohama diocese, which are among the most active Christian groups in the country in assisting foreign workers, responded by setting up the Catholic Tokyo International Center (CTIC) and the Solidarity Center for Migrants (SOL), respectively. Counselors at CTIC helped foreign workers with problems related to working conditions like unpaid salaries, working accidents, and so forth. To handle labor issues, Father Ohara, CTIC’s representative, recruited the 54 year-old Watanabe Tetsuo out of his early retirement. Mr. Watanabe had more than 20 years

⁹ See Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan. *Aja no machi e. sa-a-kyou nyuusu* [To Asian Towns: Sa-a-kyou News] (25 January 1990), pp 2-3

¹⁰ Interview with Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamazato Consulting Office in Tokyo, 3 December 1998

¹¹ Interview with Professor Chimoto Hideki of the Tsukuba Association in Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers in Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki, 5 June 1998

¹² Interview with Father Ishikawa Yoshiya of the Akatsuki-no-Mura in Nishi-omuro-machi, Gunma, 14 September 1998. On Nankiren, see Yuri Yajima, “The Christian Coalition on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers (Nankiren),” *Japan Christian Activity News* (Winter 1994), p. 3.

experience working at Sohyo.¹³ In addition, CTIC, which has its own independent office from the Tokyo diocese, is staffed with nuns from the Philippines and Spain to handle “family difficulties” and “marriage problems.”¹⁴ CTIC also organizes the annual International Day in April at the St. Mary’s Cathedral in Tokyo, where it hopes to bring foreigners together for social gatherings.¹⁵ SOL offers similar services to “illegal” foreign workers in Kanagawa. Like CTIC, it also has a separate office in Kawasaki-shi, where it concentrates solely on assisting foreign migrants. It also set up the Philippines Desk, the Korean Desk, and the Latin Desk with foreign staffs to serve newly arrived foreign migrants from the Philippines, Korea, and Latin America. Both the Philippines Desk and the Latin Desk are located inside the SOL headquarter, a run-down apartment building near the Kashimada train station. Each occupies one room and has its own phone number. Because the building has a kitchen, volunteers normally rotate in cooking lunch for everybody. The Korean Desk holds office at the Kanagawa City Union. Each of these Desks is staffed with co-ethnics. In addition, SOL published the *Manual for Migrants: Information for Living in Japan* in Japanese, English, and Spanish, which has become the “bible” for helping foreign migrants in Japan.¹⁶ The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan created the Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan to act as a central networking organization for the sixteen dioceses. This group gathers information from its dioceses. After it finished analyzing information on foreign workers in Japan, it petitioned the Japanese government in the name of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan. These

¹³ Interview with Mr. Watanabe Tetsuo of CTIC in Tokyo, 7 May 1998.

¹⁴ Interview with Sister Teresita Valdes of CTIC in Tokyo, 7 May 1998.

¹⁵ Interview with Mr. Arikawa Kenji of CTIC in Tokyo, 7 May 1998

¹⁶ Interview with Ms. Yamagishi Motoko of SOL in Kawasaki, 1 April 1998.

petitions include a letter to the Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro requesting the Japanese government to ratify the UN's International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and a letter to the Justice Minister Shimoinaba Koukichi demanding an improved treatment of foreigners in Immigration Offices, detention centers, and prisons.¹⁷

As mentioned above, the Franciscan Philippines Center, Kapatiran, Makoto Kaibigan, Philippines Desk, and the Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan specifically serve the Filipino community. All of these offices are located inside the church compound. Most of the staffs and volunteers of these groups are Filipinos. With the exception of the Philippines Desk, these groups typically provide spiritual and emotional support to distressed Filipinos while they refer serious cases to other support groups. The Franciscan Philippines Center aims "to integrate the ethnic Filipino Catholic migrants into the mainstream parish life" and provides house blessing at a residence of Filipinos.¹⁸ Kapatiran, a member of the Anglican Church, organizes monthly meetings with Filipino social workers from various groups, and thereby act as a network organization for Filipino support groups in the Tokyo Metropolitan area.

Unlike the services offered by most foreigners support groups, the Yamasato Consulting Office, which is based in San'ya, Tokyo, consoles foreign inmates, particularly on a death row, in a Tokyo prison. Christians and others who oppose the death sentence form the core members of this group. Members of this group regularly come into contact with people who are engaging in underground activities during their visits. About half of

¹⁷ Letter to Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, 1 December 1997; Letter to Justice Minister Shimoinaba Koukichi from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, 12 November 1997.

the visitors at the prison are young, good-looking *yakuza* dressed in their fancy suits, overcoats, and dark sunglasses – trying, ironically, to imitate those *yakuza* characters in the movies. They are not low-ranking *yakuza* that can be seen in the *doya* of San’ya and Kotobuki-cho. Some of the foreign inmates they visit are members of foreign gangs, such as the “Snake Heads” gang. “Snake Heads” have made a name for themselves from a lucrative business in trafficking Chinese workers from Fuzhou to the United States and Japan.¹⁹

Although the group started out helping detained Filipinos in the 1980s, its services now expanded to non-Christians, as the number of Chinese and Iranian accused has increased in recent years. Father Nakaya Isao and members of the Yamasato Consulting Office visit foreign prisoners at the Tokyo Municipal Prison in Kosuge every Thursdays, despite the full knowledge that the people they are visiting are guilty and they have no reason to believe otherwise. Blame for foreigners’ criminal activities does not lie with the foreign migrants themselves but with public policies.

Because they have no visa, they must always be on guard...
[T]hey live in crowded rooms with others who are here illegally (for example there may be 5-6 others in one room). In this situation, quarrels and fights easily happen...It is not natural to live that way.²⁰

They also believe that some of the cases were unjustly sentenced due to mistranslation

¹⁸ Interview with Mr. Ruben of the Franciscan Philippines Center in Tokyo, 25 May 1998.

¹⁹ On the illegal trafficking of Fuzhounese workers by Snake Heads, see Peter Kwong, *Forbidden Workers: Illegal Chinese Immigrants and American Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1997), particularly pp. 26-39. According to Kwong, Snake Heads charge Fuzhounese up to \$35,000 per person in the early 1990s for the smuggling fee to the U.S. They ask for a deposit of \$1000-\$5000 before the journey is taken. Then a gang member acquires the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the Fuzhounese workers’ relatives in Fuzhou and abroad, for the rest of the sum owed to the smugglers is to be paid by them within seven days of the person’s arrival. Typically, the newly arrived illegal immigrant pays off the relatives within three years. Recently, there have been many that relatives can no longer help. Recent Fuzhounese immigrants have to borrow from snakehead-controlled underground loan associations, at 30 percent interest. These debts must be paid, or the Snake Heads will hire “enforcers” to beat it out of the debtors.

during the trials.

Father Nakaya Isao took me on one of his prison's visits in December. While waiting for other members of the group to arrive, he explained to me about Japan's oppressive public policies toward illegal foreigners and the isolation that foreign inmates are placed in Japanese prisons. After three other members arrived, each visited one foreign inmate. I followed Father Nakaya and visited a Chinese man on a death row. The Chinese man, who was wearing an oxford shirt underneath his flashy Nike jacket, had killed another Chinese man in Japan.²¹ He reported that he had just received these new clothes from his "father" in China. This "father," who he claimed to run a shop in the Fujian province, is most likely a comrade from the infamous Fuzhounese "Snake Heads" gang. Noticing the face of the Chinese man was red, Father Nakaya was concerned whether he had been beaten up in prison and asked,

"Are you alright?"

"Yes, why?" the Chinese man answered in puzzlement.

"Your face is red," explained the concerned priest.

"Oh, I just came out of the shower," he answered. This remark informed me that Japanese prisons have running hot water. This Chinese inmate seemed satisfied with the prison's conditions.²² Despite the death sentence he received, he did not appear to be

²⁰ *View from San'ya 2* (April 1998), English in original.

²¹ This led me to believe that he might have been one of those "enforcers" hired to beat up a debtor.

²² As a former inmate in Thailand, I remember that I had to roll up my long pants, so that prison guards could see that I was not hiding anything in my shoes or underneath my pants. I had to sleep with the lights on, so the guards could see what was going on inside the cells at all time. And the most precious thing that I craved for was a drink of clean water because drinking water and toilet water were the same inside this Thai prison. I was arrested for having participated in a "democratic movement" to overthrow a military dictator in May 1992. I was pardoned along with about 2,000 other inmates a few days after my arrest and the dictator stepped down three days later. The account of my activities and prison life is reported in "Banteuk Lad Yao: Dan 8 Hong 2" [Memoir of the Lad Yao Prison: Division 8 Room 2], *Siamrat*

scared whatsoever.

“I do not think that the Japanese official would execute a foreigner,” he explained.

“Say what?” interrupted the prison official inside the visitor booth.

Before we leave, Father Nakaya kindly asked him,

“Do you need anything?”

“Maybe a long overcoat - an old, used one is fine. O! And an apple,” he answered.²³

After the visit to the detention center, Father Nakaya brought me to his office in San’ya, where a group of women and nuns were busily making *onigiri* (rice balls wrapped in seaweed). We helped until the job was finished, which was around 2:30. Later that evening, a different group of male volunteers came to pick up these *onigiri* and distributed them to homeless Japanese in San’ya.²⁴

In addition to being pioneers in establishing support groups for “illegal” foreign workers, Christians also take part in local citizens’ groups and movements, often as initiators and leaders. A few non-Christian groups have asked several prominent, respected Christians to serve as their representatives. For example, Reverend Watanabe Hidetoshi, who is a pastor at the Naka Church (a member of the *Kyodan* or the United Church of Christ in Japan) and a lecturer at the Tokyo Woman’s Christian University, was invited to become a representative of the Kalabaw-no-kai. Similarly, Ms. Otsu Keiko, who is the wife of Reverend Otsu Kenichi - the Secretary General of the NCC/J, was asked to head a

Sapdaviarn 39:7 (19-25 July 1992), pp. 22-24.

²³ Participant observation of a detention visitation by the Yamasato Consulting Group with a Chinese prisoner on death role at the Tokyo Municipal Prison in Kosuge, 3 December 1998.

²⁴ Participant observation at the Tokyo Municipal Prison in Kosuge and the Yamasato Consulting Office in San’ya, 3

couple of foreign women support groups, such as Hand-in-Hand Chiba and the Friends of Thai Women Association (タイ女性の友の会). Christian churches have also provided facilities free of charge for a few foreigners support groups. Women support groups HELP and Saalaa have their shelters within a church compound. The national network NGO for foreign workers in Japan, the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers, is located inside the headquarters of the NCC/J in Tokyo (all of these support groups and people will be discussed later in this chapter).²⁵

These Christian NGOs are funded internally through private donations from church members. Some activities receive direct funding from the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Switzerland. The Akatsuki-no-mura in Gunma receives money from the Japanese government and international organizations for its activities to help Vietnamese refugees in Japan. It also raises funds through its own recycling business. With the exception of this group, Christian groups do not receive financial support from the Japanese government. Instead, Christian groups view the Japanese government with suspicion. They believe that the Japanese government is trying to gain stricter control over religious organizations with the 1995 Revised Religious Corporations Law in the aftermath of the March 1995 sarin gas attacks by Aum Shinrikyo in Tokyo. Reverend Otsu Kenichi of the NCC/J explains,

[O]ne of the requirements in the new law is financial transparency

December 1998.

²⁵ In some cases, activities began by Christian groups expanded into citizens' movements. For example, 16 Kyodan churches in Hokushin sub-district of Tokai District joined with churches of other dominations and with Christian schools and hospitals to form the Hokushin Christian Association. The NGO Hokushin International Health Network developed from that organization to provide Asian foreign workers in the area with access to medical service. Akira Shimazu, one of the association's founders and pastor of Nagano Hongo church, reports that network membership has expanded beyond the framework of Christian groups, and the movement is steadily widening its circle of involvement in the Hokushin area. See Hazel Terhune, "The Response of the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan) to Migrant Workers," *Japan Christian Activity News* 711 (Winter 1994), pp. 8-10.

which requires the access of financial documents of religious organizations to their members...Then, there is the clause concerning the governments right to question religious corporations...NCC-J's general concern resulting from the revision of the religious corporation law is increased state intervention into the religious domain.²⁶

Of the nine leaders, staffs, and volunteers of Christian NGOs I met, most have bachelor degrees and two even have masters from abroad (U.S. and Italy). Almost half are women. Five are over 50 years old while the other four are in their 20s and 30s. All have extensive experience living or traveling abroad. Reverend Otsu Kenichi of Nankiren spent 8 years in Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand. Father Nakaya Isao of Yamazato Consulting Group spent one year in the Philippines' countryside. Unlike the members of the community workers unions, few participated in political movement during the 1960s and 1970s. Only Reverend Otsu was involved in one, the AMPO Movement. Nevertheless, all show their distaste for the LDP, for only one person has voted for the LDP and he only did it once. Others cast their vote for the Socialist Party and other non-LDP parties.

II. COMMUNITY WORKERS UNIONS

The second and most confrontational type of foreign workers support groups is community workers unions. Eighteen community workers unions in Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Gunma support foreign workers, particularly illegal Asian workers. No labor union in Ibaraki supports "illegal" foreign workers. The community workers unions that assist foreign workers in this study consist of Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ but

²⁶ Published interview with Reverend Otsu Kenichi of NCC/J in *Japan Christian Activity News* No. 715 (Winter 1996), pp. 15-16 (16ff).

Zentoistu hereafter), Foreign Laborers' Union (FLU), Fureai Koto Workers' Union, Edogawa Workers' Union, Sumida Union, Keihin Union, National Union of General Workers – Tokyo South (Nanbu), Hachioji Union, Santama Joint Labor Union, Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union, Tokyo Union, Nerima Part-time Workers' Union, Toshima Union, Japanese Language School Teachers Union, Kanagawa City Union, Yokohama Workers Union, Women Union – Kanagawa, and Gunma Union (see Table 4.2). Of these, about one third, particularly Fureai Koto Union, Zentoitsu, FLU, and Kanagawa City Union, is really active on assisting illegal foreign workers in labor consultation and negotiation. And three of these eighteen workers unions are parts of the Tokyo Union. One of the reasons that these unions appear more active than others on their activities toward illegal foreign workers is because many of these unions have formed a network with other nearby unions in order for each union to focus on its respective strength. For example, the Yokohama Workers' Union, the Kanagawa City Union, and the Women Union-Kanagawa established a regional network called the Conference of Kanagawa Unions (神奈川県ユニオン協議会) on 28 June 1997. According to the agreement of the Conference, each union is suppose to direct new members to the union that specializes in a specific field of labor disputes. In particular, foreign workers are directed to the Kanagawa City Union, women workers to the Women Union-Kanagawa, and Japanese part-time workers to the Yokohama Workers' Union. The system aims to further improve specialization for union organizers.²⁷ The Fureai Koto Union, the Sumida Union, and the Edogawa Union also established a similar pact and created the Shitamachi Union on 15

²⁷ Interview with Mr. Yoshida Yukio of the Conference of Kanagawa Unions and the Yokohama Workers' Union in Yokohama, 30 September 1998.

Table 4.2 Community Workers Unions for Foreign Workers in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name	Location	Year Began	Mem (For)	Ethnic Groups Served	Services offered
1	ぐんまユニオン (Gunma Union)	Gunma	1989	40	Bangladeshi, Iranian, Pakistani	Labor consultation and negotiation
2	江戸川ユニオン (Edogawa Workers' Union)	Tokyo	1988 (1984)	130 (10)	Iranian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Labor consultation and negotiation
3	京浜ユニオン (Keihin Union)	Tokyo	1992	80 (10)	Bangladeshi, Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation
4	すみだユニオン (Sumida Union)	Tokyo	1991	70 (10)	Filipino	Labor consultation and negotiation
5	全国一般労働組合東京南部 (National Union of General Workers-Tokyo South)	Tokyo	1974 (1960)	2700 (400)	American, European, Chinese	Labor consultation and negotiation
6	全統一労働組合外国人労働者分会 (Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu)	Tokyo	1992 (1960)	2500 (1500)	Bangladeshi, Pakis- tani, Indian, Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation
7	全労協全国一般東京労組FLU分会 (Foreign Laborers' Union - FLU)	Tokyo	1992 (1989)	3642 (50)	Bangladeshi, Nikkei, Iranian, Pakistani	Labor consultation and negotiation
8	東京ユニオン (Tokyo Union)	Tokyo	1989 (1979)	500 (10)	Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation
9	日本語学校教職員ユニオン (Japanese Language School Teachers Union)	Tokyo	1989	90 (1)	Chinese, Cambodian	Labor consultation and negotiation
10	ねりまパートユニオン (Nerima Part-time Workers' Union)	Tokyo				Labor consultation and negotiation
11	としまユニオン (Toshima Union)	Tokyo	1989	80	Chinese, Korean	Labor consultation and negotiation
12	ふれあい江東ユニオン (Fureai Koto Workers' Union)	Tokyo	1988	200 (180)	Bangladeshi, Iranian, Pakistani	Labor consultation and negotiation
13	八王子ユニオン (Hachioji Union)	Tokyo	1988 (1984)	67 (1)	Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation
14	三多摩合同労働組合 (Santama Joint Labor Union)	Tokyo	1991 (1977)	120 (7)	Bangladeshi, Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation
15	北部パートユニオン (Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union)	Tokyo	1998	33 (4)	Bangladeshi	Labor consultation and negotiation
	旧: 北区地域ユニオン (Former: Kita-ku Community Union)	Tokyo	1990			Labor consultation and negotiation
16	神奈川シティユニオン (Kanagawa City Union)	Kanagawa	1990	586 (230)	Korean, Nikkei Peruvian	Labor consultation and negotiation
17	かながわ・横浜勤労者ユニオン (Yokohama Workers' Union)	Kanagawa	1991 (1986)	100 (2)	Korean, Chinese	Labor consultation and negotiation
18	女ユニオン・かながわ (Women Union - Kanagawa)	Kanagawa	1990	80	(Korean)	Labor consultation and negotiation

September 1998.²⁸ The Fureai Koto Union, whose 90 percent of its members are foreign workers, concentrates on labor disputes involving foreign workers.²⁹

In order to understand why Japanese workers want to help unskilled foreign workers, it is essential to understand the division within the Japanese labor movement. Conventional wisdom suggests that a coalition between business and foreign workers against native workers. But this interpretation is based on an assumption that the labor movement in Japan is united. Labor unions that support foreign workers are independent unions and look nothing like post-war enterprise unions of Japan.³⁰ A historian of Japanese labor at Harvard University, Andrew Gordon, convincingly demonstrates that the Japanese view the factory as

the natural unit of action and a primary source of identity and community. A decision to organize labor unions in workplace units rather than by trade or locality...was a defining characteristic of early postwar organizing...Lacking traditions of craft or regional organizing comparable to those in Europe, Japanese union organizers before and after World War II felt it so natural to create factory unions comprised of workshop locals that they rarely considered other organizing principles.³¹

Although enterprise unions are prominent in Japan, not everyone belong to such unions, because there are strict rules on who can join and who cannot. In many firms, part-time workers cannot join their enterprise unions. Furthermore, several small firms do not have unions. Hence, part-time workers and workers at small business organizations turn to “a

²⁸ The official name of the Shitamachi Union is the Tokyo Eastern Region Unions Conference (東京東部地域ユニオン協議).

²⁹ Interview with Mr. Kase Junji of Fureai Koto Union in Tokyo, 18 May 1998; interview with Mr. Okamoto Tetsuhumi of Sumida Union in Tokyo, 18 May 1998; interview with Mr. Udagawa Masahiro of Edogawa Union in Tokyo, 23 May 1998; also see *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo edition), 15 September 1998.

³⁰ On the roots of enterprise unions in Japan, see Andrew Gordon, *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

community workers union which anyone, even a single individual, can join at any time”

「一人でも、いつでも、誰でも入れる労働組合」。 In other words, community workers unions pick up those marginal workers who are not members of the enterprise unions, such as part-time workers and workers in small firms. Because they are open to anybody (誰でも), foreign workers naturally benefit from this institutional arrangement. This is a reason why all but four community workers unions in this study use the English word “*yunion*” (union), which is written in *takakana* as 「ユニオン」, for their name rather than the traditional “*roudoukumiai*” (労働組合) to mark their distinctive quality from the mainstream workers unions in Japan.

Nanbu began helping foreign workers in 1974, but their clients were mostly English teachers from the West. Assistance to Asian workers really began in 1988, when the Fureai Koto Workers’ Union, the Edogawa Workers Union, and the Hachioji Union extended their services to foreigners. Table 4.2 shows that most of these unions expanded their services to foreign workers, particularly illegal Asian workers from South Asia and Iran, between 1988 and 1993. None of these unions were formed exclusively for foreign workers.³² All *extended* their services to foreign workers in addition to their Japanese clients. Although more than 90 percent of the Fureai Koto Union are foreign workers, it was originally created as a community workers union for Japanese workers around the Koto area.³³ Some, such as FLU of the National Union of General Workers (NUGW) and Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ) of the Zentoitsu Workers Union (ZWU),

³² BRIGHT, which actually registers as a labor union, is the only exception. But BRIGHT concentrates its activities on providing an insurance scheme for foreigners rather than labor activism, as will be discussed below. Interview with Ms. Sugaya Aiko of BRIGHT in Tokyo, 17 May 1998, also see *Yomuri Shimbun* (evening edition), 12 March 1993.

³³ Interview with Mr. Kase Junji of the Fureai Koto Union in Tokyo, 18 May 1998.

created a special unit within their unions for foreign workers.

The activities of these independent community workers unions involve labor consultation and disputes resolution. Foreign workers come to these community workers unions to seek dispute settlements mainly over non-payment of wages, unjustly dismissal, and compensation for work injuries. Data of accumulated cases involving foreign workers up to July 1994 from the Kanagawa City Union, the Zentoistu Workers Union, and the FLU show that 40 percent (148 out of 372) of the cases involved non-payment of wages, 32 percent (118 out of 372) unjustly job dismissal, and 25 percent (94 out of 372) compensation of work injuries.³⁴ For the Kanagawa City Union, more than 50 percent of the cases since 1995 have involved the non-payment of wages.³⁵ The Kanagawa City Union enjoys the highest successful rate of dispute settlement for foreign working men at approximately 50 percent. The Women Union – Kanagawa boasts a success rate of above 80 percent!

These independent community workers unions concentrate their activities on certain types of foreign workers. In particular, Zentoitsu concentrates its work on Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Indian workers; Kanagawa City Union on Koreans and Nikkei Peruvians; FLU on Bangladeshis and Iranians; and Fureai Koto Union on Bangladeshis, Burmese, and Pakistanis. The Hachioji Union, the Keihin Union, the Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union, and the Santama Joint Labor Union typically receive visits from either or both Iranians and Bangladeshis. No Thais belong to any of these workers unions.

³⁴ Calculated from Gaikokujin Roudousha Kenri Hakusho Henshuu Inkaei. *Gaikokujin roudousha kenri hakusho* [White Paper on Foreign Workers Rights] (Tokyo: Executive Committee to Edit the White Paper on Foreign Workers Rights, 1995), p. 60.

³⁵ It was 55 percent in 1995, 50 percent in 1996, 53 percent as of December 1997. Internal document of the Kanagawa

Specialization helps union organizers to be more culturally sensitive to the needs of their foreign workers. During the National Conference for Foreign Workers Advocate in Atami, Mr. Torii Ippei of Zentoitsu, who understood that his Muslim members could not eat many traditional Japanese foods, sent someone to a convenient store nearby to buy food for them. Similarly in a meeting of foreign workers of the Zentoitsu for the preparation of the Third National Forum of Foreigners Support NGOs, Ms. Ozawa Kuniko, a staff at Zentoitsu, went out of her way to be clear, understanding, and kind to her foreign clients. Again, a major concern in the discussion for these Muslim workers was what to do for dinner during the meeting.³⁶ In a self-introduction session during the dinner, Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union sang a Korean song, which is well-known in Korea for its fighting and solidarity spirit. What is peculiar about foreign members of these unions is that most join a union because they were seeking legal advice or help over labor disputes with their employers rather than to strengthen workers solidarity and the labor movement. These disputes entail illegal dismissal, compensation for industrial accidents, non-payment of wages, and sexual harassment in the workplace (for women). Once their disputes are resolved, they typically leave the workers' unions. The Women Union – Kanagawa, for example, does not have a single foreign member despite the fact that 5 percent of the cases it handles involved foreign women. Ms. Abe Yuko explained that foreign women come there for help and usually leave after their cases are resolved. No one becomes a member and tries to build the union.³⁷ This ignites some Japanese organizers of these unions to complain about the behavior of their foreign comrades.

City Union

³⁶ Participant observation at the Zentoitsu headquarters in Tokyo, 30 May 1999

Community workers unions are the most confrontational against the Japanese management in comparison to both other foreign workers support groups and other Japanese labor unions. Dispute resolution may involve either negotiation or one-day offensive or both. Unlike neutral negotiations in the dispute resolution that local governments undertake, the negotiations done by these independent community unions are naturally lop-sided in the favor of foreign workers. Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union remarks,

In our eyes, the workers are always right and the management always wrong. This is the driving principle on which we operate. Local government offices also offer labor consultation, but they operate on a neutral stand and do not necessary take the workers' position.³⁸

As these unions consist of mixed members from various occupations and national backgrounds, their most powerful union tactics against the employers is not the use of strikes but the use of the all-day offensive called "*ichinichi koudou*" 「一日行動」. The *ichinichi koudou* is a common tactic for small community workers' unions in using "shame" to persuade the employers to comply with unions' demands. Union organizers first try to settle labor disputes through collective bargaining with the employer. If they can reach an agreement on such discussion, then the dispute is resolved. If complications arise which involve extra legal assistance, then union organizers will call on labor lawyers for help and further negotiations. If the dispute remains unresolved and union organizers feel that the employer is in the wrong (employers are "always" wrong in the eyes of union organizers), then they will mobilize their current members to a demonstration outside the

³⁷ Interview with Ms. Abe Yuko of the Women Union – Kanagawa in Yokohama, 28 May 1998

³⁸ Interview with Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki, 3 April 1998

employer's central office.³⁹ The Kanagawa City Union organizes day-long demonstrations four times a month. In each of this *ichinichi koudou*, they visit between four to six companies. As many as 50 foreign workers attend this *ichinichi koudou*. Mr. Murayama Satoshi, the managing director and organizer of such *ichinichi koudou*, mandates that members of his union must participate in at least one of these events before he begins to work on their cases. This contributes to its amazing turn out.

I participated in one of the Kanagawa City Union's *ichinichi koudou*, which began at 7:30 a.m. at the Kawasaki Station and ended around 8:00 p.m. after dinner. On that day, we visited 6 companies. It was highly organized. Organizers smoothly directed people from one place to the other through subways, train stations, side-walks – not unlike Japanese tour groups overseas. All train tickets were brought and distributed efficiently. The place for lunch was decided and paid for by the organizers. They moved people through crowded trains in Tokyo during rush hour! On each corner where we needed to turn, an union organizer was standing to direct us to the right direction. When we reached another corner, another union organizer was waiting to show us the way. We were given the union arm-bands, so that we could be recognized by union organizers (and others). While in front of a company building, Mr. Murayama screamed into the megaphone denouncing the company's foul play. The messages were not only directed at the accused company, but were meant to be heard by its neighboring companies and pedestrians that were walking by. While Mr. Murayama denounces illegal practices of the targeted employer on the megaphone, other union members distribute leaflets to pedestrians,

³⁹ Interview with Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki and Tokyo, 3 April 1998 and 18 October 1998

explaining the injustice caused by the employer. Occasionally, they throw their fists high in the air at Mr. Murayama's signal to demonstrate their solidarity and intention to fight the management to the end. At times, Mr. Murayama had victimized employees come to the megaphone and explained the situation in person. Certainly, this was difficult when the victims were foreigners. The demonstration typically lasts about one hour per company.⁴⁰

Such disruptive activities of the *ichinichi koudou* of workers unions are completely legal under the Japanese law, unlike those disruptive tactics of right-wing groups and *yakuza* gangs.⁴¹ In the first demonstration of the Kanagawa City Union in front of a company in Ochanomizu in Tokyo at 9:00, I noticed a group of policemen, who came in two police cars and a van, was watching the event. Curious, I approached one of them and asked,

“Why are there so many policemen here?”

“The union filed a document to the local police department to conduct their offensive here this morning,” answered the policeman.

“Then you are here to protect the workers?” I naively asked.

“No, we are here to make sure that the traffic runs smoothly, since the offensive is going on during a busy hour and might cause traffic jam.” As he finished, I saw that four to five policemen were indeed directing the traffic.

Certainly, the central aim of these activities is to place sufficient “shame” on employers as a means of pressuring for workers demands. It appeared to have some direct effects on company behavior, for this particular company eventually decided to close the

⁴⁰ Participant observation of the *ichinichi koudou* of the Kanagawa City Union in Tokyo and Kanagawa, 7 April 1998

⁴¹ This is a reason why right-wing groups have to operate from a moving truck. *Yakuza*, similarly, have to conduct their

front gate and had its employees enter the office through the side gate. However, some people within the government express concern over Mr. Murayama being too confrontational.⁴² But such tactics are emulated by other community workers unions, albeit at less frequency.

These community workers unions also have *Shunto* (Spring Offensive) like big enterprise unions. However, they designate a day for their own *Shunto*. For example, FLU had its *Shunto* on March 19th. It began at 11:00 a.m. where staff rounded up foreign workers and took them to various companies, where its (Japanese) members were having a dispute with management. They lined up in front of these offices and screamed into their megaphones. During a FLU *Shunto*, the union used foreign workers to help pressure management, because such activities rely on their number for effectiveness. The participation of foreign workers helped increase the number of participants. Around 2:30 p.m., we marched to the Upper House Diet Office, where we were greeted by an old MP from the *Shin-shakaito* (New Socialist Party). He gave a formulaic speech about protecting worker rights and raising labor standards. Then several chartered buses arrived to take us to the Diet's Conference Room where 5000 workers (all from one union but various divisions) gathered. Ten division leaders gave reports on the 1997-1998 activities. One of them was a foreign worker, who represents the foreign worker section. His speech, in poor Japanese, was dwarfed by other more charismatic union leaders. It was very difficult to grasp the gist of his remarks.⁴³

A group of community workers unions began organizing a separate "Day for

disruptive activities directly inside the companies or in board meetings.

⁴² Interview with Mr. Takayama Hiromitsu of the All Ministry of Labor Workers Union in Yokohama, 19 May 1998.

Foreign Workers' Rights" on 8 March 1993. On this date, the group negotiated directly with companies employing foreign workers and also the Ministry of Labor and made petitions to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the 27th Civil Affairs Section of the Tokyo District Court. They also organized a big rally of migrant workers with a record-breaking attendance. This action was the first organized action by Japanese labor unions on this issue. Since then, the organizers felt that "the migrant workers' rights is an integral task for the Japanese labor union."⁴⁴ They held a symposium in December 1993 on foreign workers rights and organized a "Day for Foreign Workers' Rights" on every March of subsequent years. They explain,

...we think that labor unions should be at the front of the struggle for strengthening the rights of migrant workers and only labor unions have the ability of doing so. We also believe that by doing so, the Japanese labor unions will start to mark a new era.⁴⁵

These community workers unions are funded entirely by membership fees and donations (usually between 10 and 20 percent of the winnings) from members after the case is successfully resolved. In addition, all unions hold an annual General Meeting (総会) once a year, where the host union presents its annual report. During this meeting, representatives from other community workers unions are invited to attend the Meeting and the party afterwards. There, they are expected to donate certain amount of money to the host union.⁴⁶ In addition to attending these annual General Meetings of various unions, each union also circulates its newsletter to others. They often participate in each other's *ichinichi koudou*. Japanese found all of these unions. Recently, there is an effort among

⁴³ Participant Observation of the FLU Shunto in Tokyo, 19 March 1998.

⁴⁴ Gaikokujin Roudousha Kenri Hakusho Henshuu Iinkai, *Gaikokujin Roudousha Kenri Hakusho*, p. 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

the Filipino community, lead by Mr. Manny Rosales, to form a foreigners workers union, LABOR.⁴⁷ The preparation committee for this organization also includes Mr. Murayama Satoshi from the Kanagawa City Union.

Of the 19 union leaders and staffs I interviewed, 8 have received a bachelor degree and 1 a master degree. The rest either never went or completed college. Mr. Murayama was actually kicked out of college. They are mostly men in their 30s, 40s and early 50s, who have traveled abroad. The knowledgeable 72 years old, Mr. Yoshida Yukio, who visited the Soviet Union and the People Republic of China during the late 1960s and early 1970s, is known as the “father of community unions” in Kanagawa. Most have participated in some kind of social movement such as the Student Movement, the AMPO Demonstration, the Anti-war Movement, and the Narita Demonstration. No one has ever voted for the Liberal Democratic Party. Most vote for the Socialist Party (Japan Socialist Party, now Social Democratic Party) while a few for the Communist Party of Japan (JCP). On average, they have more than six years of experience in helping foreign workers in their respective workers unions. Two individuals, Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union and Mr. Torii Ippei of FWBZ, show extraordinary courage in helping foreign workers. While working on a Korean worker case, a group of *yakuza* beat up Mr. Murayama near his apartment. Similarly, during an union activity on behalf of a foreign worker, someone from management threw gasoline on Mr. Torii and lit a match. The incident left a permanent scar on one side of his body. Today, these two men boast of their fierce reputation among the *yakuza*, the management, and the police.

⁴⁶ Participant observation of the General Meeting of the Fureai Koto Union in Tokyo, 18 October 1998.

⁴⁷ Interview with Mr. Manny Rosales in Yokohama and Tokyo, 1 April 1998 and 16 October 1998.

III. WOMEN SUPPORT GROUPS

Women support groups and women shelters make up the third type of support groups for foreign workers. Eight organizations provide assistance to foreign women in Ibaraki, Tokyo, and Kanagawa. They are the Support Group for 3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, the Women's Shelter HELP, the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, the Friends of Thai Women Association, the Group Akakabu, the International Movement against All Forms of Discriminations and Racism (IMADR), the Kanagawa Women's Space "Mizula," and the Women's Shelter "Saalaa." Many of these names are fabulously creative and fun. For example, *Saalaa* is a Thai word for "resting place." Mizula is taken from the English word, Ms., and adds the Japanese plural "la" to it. HELP actually stands for the "House in Emergency of Love and Peace" and carries a clear message that "help" is provided at this organization. Akakabu means the "red turnip" in Japanese, which was taken from a children story *The Big Turnip* (「大きいなかぶ」).⁴⁸ In order to successfully dig up the big, sweet turnip from the ground, a group of people (specifically marginalized people in the Japanese society) must work together (hence, the cooperative). Although the founder, Ms. Sakai Kazuko, of the group wanted to name her cooperative "Okikabu" (Big Turnip), she discovered that someone has already registered that name. She then decided on "Akakabu" (Red Turnip), which is later taken by the people in the area as being "red" (i.e. communistic). Posting a large portrait of Che Guevara on the window of its building

⁴⁸ "The Big Turnip" actually comes from an old Russian tale "The Turnip" retold by A. Tolstoi. It recounts a story of an old man who planted a turnip in his garden, which turned out to be too big for him to pull out by himself. With the help from his family and animal friends, they cooperated and successfully pulled the large turnip from the ground. I thank Ms. Kajimura Keiko of the Kodomo-no-ie for this information.

has certainly strengthened that image. Ms. Sakai explains, “the so-called red turnip is only red on the outside but, inside, it is white [i.e. pure]...”⁴⁹ These women’s support groups provide consultation, legal settlement, and temporary shelters to foreign women, mostly Thai and Filipina women. Some also fight against the international trafficking of women and the promotion of Japanese sex tours abroad (see Table 4.3).

Japanese women assist foreign women for two reasons. First, many of these groups have Christian influence and therefore hold Christian values on fidelity. They hope to influence Japanese about their view on prostitution by pointing to various abuses that foreign women face due to their disadvantaged positions. Second, they are part of the women movement in Japan that seeks sexual equality and the protection of women rights.

Although the visionary and progressive Ms. Matsui Yayori established the Women of Asia Association (now the Asia-Japan Women’s Resource Center) in 1977 to promote women rights and to build networks with other women groups in Asia, her activities to help foreign women in Japan did not begin until much later.⁵⁰ Instead, Ms. Oshima Chizuko and her Women Shelter HELP are really the pioneers in assisting foreign women in Japan. The Japan Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which opposes extramarital sex and thus prostitution, founded HELP in April 1986 to commemorate its centennial anniversary in Tokyo and to reaffirm its commitment to the needs of all women. Ms. Oshima Chizuko, who has extensive experiences in helping Japanese prostitutes, served as the first representative for HELP. Ms. Oshima grew up in a family that helped Japanese prostitutes

⁴⁹ Published interview with Ms. Sakai Kazuko in *Kurisutokyo kyōiku kinyūu* [Studies on Christian Education] No. 15 (1997): 43-68 (54-55ff).

⁵⁰ Interview with Ms. Matsui Yayoi in Tokyo, 4 September 1998.

Table 4.3: Foreign Women Support Groups in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

No	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Mem	Ethnic Groups Served	Services offered
1	下館事件タイ3女性を支える会 (3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident Support Group)	Ibaraki	1991 -1996	200	Thai, Filipina	Rescue team; prison's visit; translation; consultation
2	女性の家 HELP (Women's Shelter HELP)	Tokyo	1986	2500	Thai, Filipina	Consultation; shelter; legal settlement
3	アジアの女性資料センター (Asia - Japan Women's Resource Center) 旧: アジアの女たちの会 (Former: Women of Asia Association)	Tokyo Tokyo	1995 1977	900	Asian Women	Information; consultation Information; consultation
4	タイ女性の友の会 (Friends of Thai Women Association) 旧: タイ女性支援基金 (Former: Thai Women's Supporting Group)	Tokyo Tokyo	1991 1989	150	Thai	Consultation; legal settlement Information; consultation
5	ぐるーぷ赤かぶ (Group Akakabu)	Tokyo	1983 (1992)	20	Thai, Filipina	Consultation; shelter; temporary work
6	反差別国際運動 (International Movement Against All Forms of Discriminations and Racism - IMADR)	Tokyo	1988 (1990)	204	Asian Women	Information
7	かながわ・おんなのスペース"みずら" (Kanagawa Women's Space "Mizula")	Kanagawa	1990	607	Thai, Filipina	Consultation; shelter; legal settlement
8	女性の家"サーラー" (Women's Shelter "Saalaa")	Kanagawa	1992	700	Thai, Filipina	Consultation; shelter; legal settlement

escape from their captivity.⁵¹ She has been active in the Anti-Prostitution Movement since the 1950s. I met this 81 years old woman on two occasions. I spent a couple of hours with her in a coffee shop at the Tokyo Station during our first meeting and an afternoon in the Yoshiwara red-light district during our second meeting.⁵² During our second meeting, Ms. Oshima gave me a personal tour of Yoshiwara where I was embarrassingly unable to keep up with her. While she was perfectly happy to continue exploring, I had to ask her for rest in a coffee shop a couple of times. At Yoshiwara, we stopped in a photo shop, where the women of Yoshiwara come to take their portrait shots for advertisements. She calmly asked the female shopkeeper, who appeared to be in her 30s, about the women who worked in that area or those that came to take their portraits. Her questions included: Why do women come to this shop? Does the shop offer personalized services for men who want to go out with these women? Are there foreign women working in this neighborhood? Are there foreign men, who come and visit these establishments? And why not? The questions were blunt and delivered with a calm and curious face.⁵³

In its first case, HELP rescued two Filipina women who were forced to work in a snack bar in Nagoya without pay.⁵⁴ From 1986 to 1996, HELP provided shelters to 1443 (54 percent) Thai women and 355 Filipinas (13 percent).⁵⁵ In recent years, as the number of foreign women seeking refuge from violent husbands are increasing, the number of Filipinas (and their children) coming to HELP is steadily increasing. In 1998 alone, 21

⁵¹ Interview with Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP in Tokyo, 2 December 1998.

⁵² On Yoshiwara, see Stephen and Ethel Longstreet, *Yoshiwara: The Pleasure Quarters of Old Tokyo* (Tokyo: Yen, 1970).

⁵³ Participant observation of Yoshiwara in Tokyo with Ms. Oshima Chizuko, 14 January 1999.

⁵⁴ Josei no ie HELP, *Ajia no josei ni yotte nihon no mondai ga miete kita: josei no ie HELP 10 nen no ayumi* [10 Years at the Women's Shelter HELP: Japanese Problems from the Eyes of Asian Women] (Tokyo: HELP, 1995), pp. 141-145.

⁵⁵ Josei no ie HELP, *Nettowaku nyuusu* No. 36 (5 May 1997), p. 4.

Filipinas and 29 of their children stayed at the shelter, compare to 29 Thai women and 10 of their children.⁵⁶ Since its creation, HELP has gained international recognition and has received private visits from the Thai Minister of Social Welfare, the wife of the Dutch Prime Minister, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, and recently Britain's Princess Anne.

In addition to HELP, there are two more women shelters, Saalaa and Mizula. Saalaa, which is the only organization that was established exclusively for foreign women, was found in September 1992 after four support groups for foreign migrant workers (Kalabaw-no-kai, Mizula, Women of Asia Association, and SOL) came to the rescue of a Thai woman who was trying to escape from a snack bar in the Ibaraki prefecture where she was confined and forced into prostitution.⁵⁷ It manages "a shelter for foreign women who are not guaranteed full basic human rights in Japanese society, and assist[s] each woman to prepare for a new start in life." The group tries "to find solutions for structural problems in Japanese society and to review public consciousness" and aims "to build a society that no one needs a shelter." I regularly visited Saalaa. During one of these visits, I saw a woman, who appeared to be from Southeast Asia, washing a car in front of the shelter.⁵⁸ Since I knew that most foreign women who are seeking refuge at this place were mostly from Thailand, I asked her in Thai, "Are you from Thailand?" She was so excited to hear Thai and to see a fellow countryman that she took me inside the shelter, forgetting that the place is off-limit to outsiders – not to mention men. I knew that it was off-limits and tried to wait

⁵⁶ Josei no ie HELP, *Nettowaku nyuusu* No. 42 (1 May 1999), p. 7.

⁵⁷ Interview with Ms. Fukushima Yuriko of Saalaa in Yokohama, 30 July 1996; also see Josei no ie Saalaa, *Saalaa Q & A: shierutaa 3 nenkan no katsudou kara mietamono* [Saalaa Q&A: Observations on the Three Years of Activities at the Shelter] (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1996).

at the door, but the woman persisted in dragging me inside. She asked me countless questions and addressed me with the honorific *phi*, or big brother, regardless of my age in relation to her. She was overjoyed to find out that I come from Singburi, a province where her sister teaches in a grade school. I went to the shelter, because I had scheduled interviews with several Japanese staff. During my interviews, the same Thai woman came in and served coffee to all of us. It was obvious that she was excited to see a fellow Thai after eight miserable years in Japan. She was beaten badly by her Japanese husband and escaped to the shelter. When I was preparing to leave, we chat for awhile about her conditions in Japan. Apparently, she had three children with this Japanese man, who beat her even when she was pregnant. As a result, she lost one child at birth and the other two were born mentally retarded. As she told her story, she kept breaking into tears after every other word. At the end, she then plead with tears all over her cheeks,

“Why are these terrible things happening to me? I have never done anything [bad] to anyone. *Phi*, help me alittle, *phi*...”

An NGO staff, who speaks Thai, listened and cried quietly.

Mizula began helping Thai women from the start in 1990 when it tried to trace the snack bars where Thai women had been forced to work as prostitutes and reported this information to the police, asking them to retrieve the passports and other documents. In addition, it tries to educate the public on the fact that prostitution is a severe form of human rights violation against women.⁵⁹ “Through its services and activities, Mizula supports

⁵⁸ Participant observation at Saalaa in Yokohama, 23 March 1998.

⁵⁹ Interviews with Ms. Yoshida Kyoko of Mizula in Yokohama, 24 March 1998 and with Ms. Abe Hiroko of Mizula in Yokohama, 28 May 1998; also see Yokohama-shi Women’s Association, *Yokohama-shi josei soudan niizu chousa hougokusho I* [Report I of Women’s Consultation Needs in the Yokohama City] (Yokohama: Mimeograph, 1996), pp. 91-

women in order to recover their self-esteem, empower them, and to be able to decide their own life.” Mizula handled 150 cases on foreign women in 1995, 248 cases in 1996, and 394 cases in 1997. About 67 percent of the foreign women that sought help at Mizula are from Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand. Approximately 34 percent of the cases in 1997 involved interracial marriage or divorce. The range of assistance requested from Mizula includes finding a cheap place in Tokyo for a Thai woman and her Japanese boyfriend to rent, helping a Filipina woman escaped from her violent *yakuza* husband, and sending a dying AIDS patient back to Thailand to reunite with her family before she died.⁶⁰

Both HELP and Saalaa, whose shelters are kept secret, are located inside Christian churches. Mizula has its shelter in an apartment complex. To keep the secrecy of their locations from abusive employers and husbands, volunteers at HELP and Saalaa tell the women, who first contact them by telephone, to meet them at a certain train station nearby their shelters. In addition, these shelters also have rescue teams, affiliate NGOs in the rural areas such as the Support Group for 3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, to help foreign women escape from their captivities. After receiving SOS calls from other women support groups or shelters, respectable and trust-worthy male members of this group, such as Professor Chimoto Hideki of the Tsukuba University and Reverend Miyazaki, would visit the snack bar where the Southeast Asian woman is working and seeking help. Pretending to be normal customers, they request the service of the distressed Southeast Asian woman and quietly inform her that they are part of the rescue team. They stay until

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⁶⁰ Mizula, “Tokei: tainichi gaikokujin josei no seikatsu soudan, kinkyuu hogo, kikoku enjo 1996.11~1997.10” [Statistics: Lifestyle Consultation, Urgent Protection, and Repatriation Aid for Foreign Women in Japan from November 1996 to October 1997] (Yokohama: Internal document, 1997).

the bar closes and leave with the distressed Southeast Asian woman as if they plan to spend the night together. Instead, they secretly take her to a woman shelter either in Tokyo or Yokohama – a place far away from the snack bar so that the owner or the *mama-san* cannot find her easily again.⁶¹ Increasingly, these women shelters help rescue battered foreign women from their violent husbands. These women shelters report that there are many calls from non-Japanese wives and girlfriends of Japanese men who want a divorce or to end the relationship because of the man's violence. In fact, about 20 percent of the work at Mizula in 1997 involved such cases.⁶² As a result, there is no longer a need for a rescue team and the Support Group for 3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident dissolved in 1996.⁶³

In short, women shelters provide assistance to women who have been abused and need temporary shelter. Foreign women support groups provide temporary shelter and legal advice, and advocate for women rights. Women, who come to these women support groups, are mostly from Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines. Because these shelters have contacts with the embassies from Thailand and the Philippines, many Thai and Filipina women heard of them through their embassies.⁶⁴ HELP fees for lodging and meals are on the basis of individuals' ability to pay. The usual period of stay is two weeks. There is no age limit for women, accompanying male children are accepted up to 10 years of age. Saalaa asks 1,000 yen per night for board and food, but allows exceptions. The period of stay varies from a few days to about a month. Mizula charges 1,500 yen per night with a one month limit. All three of these groups provide legal support to help foreign women

⁶¹ Interview with Professor Chimoto Hideki of the Support Group for 3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident in Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki, 5 June 1998.

⁶² Mizula, "Tokei: tainichi gaikokujin josei no seikatsu soudan, kinkyuu hogo, kikoku enjo 1996.11~1997.10."

⁶³ The main reason for the group's dissolution was the termination of the court case against the three Thai women.

with their cases against abusive employers or male partners. For instance, these groups arrange for the arrest of abusive employers/partners, the custody for their children, the payment of medical compensation, the issuance of visa, and so forth. HELP has legal associates from the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association while Mizula from the Yokohama Bar Association. The representative of Saalaa, Ms. Miki Emiko, is an active lawyer at the Yokohama Law Office, a member of the Yokohama Bar Association (she will be discussed in greater detail in the section on lawyers association NGOs). HELP also cooperates with the Tokyo local government to publish Handbooks for Thai migrants on life and labor in Japan.

The Japanese government also provides shelters for women, but most foreign women prefer to come to these NGOs for fear of being reported (of their illegal status) to the Immigration Office. For many abused foreign women, turning to the government for assistance means little more than a ticket out of Japan, so these shelters have acted as a compassionate alternative, providing both help and confidentiality. Moreover, government-run shelters lack expertise in helping foreign women in comparison to these NGOs.

Certain groups fight against the trafficking of women and the promotion of sex tours in Asia. IMADR, which was found by the board members of the Burakumin Liberation League (BLL) and has a United Nations Consultative Status since 1993, works on a project against the trafficking of women in Asia.⁶⁵ The Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center

⁶⁴ Interviews with Thai and Filipina women at Saalaa in Yokohama, 23 May 1998.

⁶⁵ Interview with Mr. Ikeuchi Hisao of IMADR in Tokyo, 16 September 1998. Burakumin (literally "people of the hamlet") are considered "outcastes" in traditional Japanese society, because their occupation dealt with things derived from dead animals such as tanners and leather workers. Such occupations involving death were viewed as unclean. Today, Burakumin descendants still have a hard time getting jobs in mainstream companies or marrying outside of their caste. On Burakumin, see George de Vos and Hiroshi Wagatsuma, *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcastes: The*

works on similar projects in addition to providing informational resources on the disadvantaged situation of Asian women. Friends of Thai Women Association took legal action against a publishing company, *Deeta Housu* (Data House) for the 1994 publication of the 「タイ売春読本」 (“Thai Prostitution Handbook”), which has an official English title of “Thailand Nightzone.” The title markets the publication as a simple “handbook” on buying women in Thailand. As a result, it sold more than 10,000 copies during the first year. In the book, four Japanese male free-lance writers provide names and locations of local massage parlors and brothels in Bangkok and Chiangmai - accompanying with pictures of women in almost every page. It also gives instructions on how to take a taxi or bicycle rickshaw to these places. The group felt that such publications not only promote buying prostitutes in Thailand but also violate and humiliate women’s rights and protested against the publisher and the four authors. After Data House published a revised edition in 1995 that contains degrading remarks against the group, the group then decided to take them to court. From the start, the group faced two structural problems. First, studies have revealed that many Japanese men do not consider buying women as wrong or a shameful transaction.⁶⁶ Information on buying prostitutes, such as advertisements for massage parlors or soap lands, often appear in Japanese weekly magazines and evening newspapers, which are widely read by businessmen in commuting trains.⁶⁷ Second, there are no identifiable victims harmed by publication of the book. They reside on broad and general

Underside of Modern Japan (New York: Pantheon, 1982), pp. 139-171. On the Burakumin Liberation League (BLL), see Frank K. Upham, *Law and Social Change in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), Chapter 3; Ian Neary, “Burakumin in Contemporary Japan,” in Michael Weiner, ed., *Japan’s Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 50-78.

⁶⁶ Group to Think with Men about Prostitution, *Baishun ni taisuru dansei ishiki chousa* [Survey Study of Men Attitudes towards Prostitution] (Tokyo: AJWRC, 1998).

⁶⁷ Yoshida Yuko, “Why Men Buy Women?” in *Women Asia 21* No. 3 (October 1997): 26-28.

terms. Despite these legal challenges, the group won the case on December 1998.⁶⁸

Members of foreign women support groups also accompanied foreign women to the police station to make sure that male officers do not ask detailed and embarrassing questions that are not connected to the case. Many foreign women have complained that some of the questions were too intrusive and embarrassing. One cried and said she felt like throwing herself out the window. Foreign women support groups' volunteers requested that policemen do not ask questions that would be painful for a woman, and that they always allow NGO's staff to be present. Nowadays, NGOs volunteers accompany foreign women to police stations and some police officials now even take the initiative to invite them into the discussion.

Some of these foreign women support groups establish networks and try to pressure the Japanese government to change its policies. For example, the Migrant Women Worker's Research and Action Committee, which was set up to prepare for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, clearly states its purpose.

We are trying to change Japanese society, with the goal that someday women will be treated equally with men. This goal directly links our work with migrant women. We desperately need a society where migrant women can live with dignity.⁶⁹

Particularly, the famous and outspoken Ms. Matsui Yayori, who is the founder and present representative of the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, has made considerable impact internationally on the situation of foreign women in Japan. A Christian, a Berkeley graduate and a former journalist at the *Asahi Shimbun*, she has been attracting several

⁶⁸ See *Asahi Shimbun*, 8 December 1998.

⁶⁹ Migrant Women Worker's Research and Action Committee, ed., "NGOs' Report on the Situation of Foreign Migrant Women in Japan and Strategies for Improvement" (Tokyo: The Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, 1995), p. 54.

followers in Japan and educating the outside world about her activities in advocating foreign women rights in Japan. She has delivered a speech at the Beijing Conference, at UN Meetings on Women Rights in Geneva and Rome, and at the APEC Meeting on Women Issues in Vancouver. She has become a spoke-person on Asian women for Japan.⁷⁰

Foreign women support groups receive their funding from membership fees, business income, donation, and project grants from private foundations, local governments, and international organizations. Most get public funding from its local governments. Exceptions are the Tsukuba group, Friends of Thai Women Group, and the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center. The shelters, HELP and Saalaa, are provided free of charge from Christian churches. For the 1996 fiscal year, HELP received 8,248,000 yen from the Tokyo government.⁷¹ Mizula regularly holds a bazaar to raise money, in addition to grants it received from several public institutions in the Kanagawa prefecture and private organizations throughout the country. Almost half of Saalaa's income comes from public funding, particularly the Kanagawa International Association and YOKE.

Needless to say, most of the leaders, staff, and volunteers of these groups are women. Of the 24 people from these support groups I interviewed, only 2 were men. Most were in their 40s and 50s. In addition to the two college students, only four did not have a college degree. Four, however, had master degrees and one is pursuing her doctorate. Many were married and only four were divorced. Unlike the people of previous groups, members of this group rarely participated in past social movements. Instead, they prefer to be involved in either specific social work abroad, such as Batis in the Philippines, the Maekhong

⁷⁰ Interview with Ms. Matsui Yayori of the Asian-Japanese Women Resource Center in Tokyo, 7 August 1998.

⁷¹ HELP's internal document

Project, the Karen Project, and the Sakura Doren Project in Thailand, or current civil movement such as anti-nuclear plants, environment protection, anti-Tenno system, and women rights. Ms. Oshima Shizuko, who has retired from HELP, is an active member of the Women's Rights KAMARADO (女性の人権カマラード), which published a book about a Thai woman who served time in Japanese prison for killing the *mama-san* at a snack bar.⁷² Most had traveled extensively abroad, particularly in Asia. Over half had visited Thailand and two are fluent in the Thai language.

IV. MEDICAL SUPPORT GROUPS

The fourth and largest type of support groups for foreign workers is the medical support group. Twenty medical groups, including the occupational safety and health centers, exist to support foreign workers in Japan. They are the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) International Information Center, the Services for Health in Asian and African Regions (SHARE), the Kameido Himawari Clinic, the Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Center, the Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center (JOSHRC), BRIGHT International Cooperative Society, the Tokyo English Life Line (TELL), the Health Insurance to All Foreigners! Committee, the Minatomachi Foreign Migrant Workers' Mutual Aid Scheme for Health (MF-MASH), the Minatomachi Clinic, the Jujo-dori Clinic, the Yokosuka Chuo Clinic, the Isezaki Women's Clinic, the Imai International Clinic, the Kobayashi International Clinic, the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center, Esperanza-no-kai, and SABAY. The Minatomachi Clinic, the Jujo-dori Clinic, the

⁷² See Women's Rights KAMARADO, ed., *Tai kara no tayori* [News from Thailand] (Tokyo: Pandora, 1998).

Yokosuka Chuo Clinic, the Isezaki Women's Clinic, and the Imai International Clinic are part of the MF-MASH network. Similarly, the Kobayashi International Clinic is part of the AMDA network. Doctors added the word "international" into the name of their clinics to signify that they are open to foreigners. These medical NGOs offer medical treatment at reduced price, information on hospitals with translators, insurance scheme exclusive for illegal foreigners, and negotiation with employers on industrial accident compensation. Foreigners who use these groups include Filipinos, Iranians, Chinese, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indian, Korean, and Thais. Membership in these groups range from 51 at the Esperanza-no-kai to 6,000 people at BRIGHT and MF-MASH – the two groups that created their own insurance scheme for overstayed foreigners (see Table 4.4).

Medical doctors help illegal foreign workers, because they believe that medical care should be available to all. For Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki of AMDA, "[t]he internationalization of medical treatment means the institutional establishment of medical examination that treats foreigners and Japanese equally."⁷³ In fact, members of Japanese medical NGOs believe that "illegal" foreigners face more serious problems than other patients because of their illegal status, as eloquently explained in a JOSHRC's official statement.

The number of foreign migrant workers who overstay the time limit stipulated in their visas continues to rise, they are often called "illegal" workers. Illegal only means in terms of the immigration regulations, however, the word "illegal" stamped on them causes them problems, which often go so far as to jeopardize their basic human rights. Under these circumstances, a growing number of workers expect much of JOSHRC, and JOSHRC has decided not to disappoint them.⁷⁴

⁷³ *Nikkei Ryuutsuu Shimbun*, 8 June 1993

⁷⁴ This statement is taken from JOSHRC homepage at http://www.jca.ax.apc.org/joshrc/index_c.html (1 September 1998) I also interviewed Mr. Furuya Sugio, the Secretary General of JOSHRC, in Tokyo, 1 July 1998. He directed me to this homepage for JOSHRC's official stand on illegal foreign workers in Japan

Table 4.4: Foreign Workers Supporting Medical NGOs in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Mem	Ethnic Groups served	Services offered
1	AMDA国際医療情報センター (AMDA International Information Center)	Tokyo	1991	160	Thai, Chinese, Indian, Filipino	Information; doctors referral; translation
2	SHARE (国際保健協力市民の会) (SHARE)	Tokyo	1991 (1983)	650	Thai, Filipino, Peruvian	Free medical check-up; medical consultation
3	亀戸ひまわり診療所 (Kameido Himawari Clinic)	Tokyo	1990	1000	Bangladeshi, Filipino, Iranian	50% off on medical check-up
4	TELL Filipino Line (Tokyo English Life Line - TELL Filipino Line)	Tokyo	1991		Filipino	Medical information and consultation
5	三多摩労災職業病センター (Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Center)	Tokyo	1992 (1985)			Occupational accident negotiation & settlement
6	東京労働安全衛生センター (Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center) 旧: 東京東部労災職業病センター (Former: Tokyo East District Occupational Safety and Health Center)	Tokyo Tokyo	1998 1989 (1979)	224	Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Occupational accident negotiation & settlement Same as above
7	全国労働安全衛生センター連絡会議 (Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center)	Tokyo	1990	360	Pakistani, Iranian, Bangladeshi	Occupational accident negotiation & settlement
8	国際互助組合ブライト (BRIGHT International Cooperative Society)	Tokyo	1993	6000	Iranian, Chinese, Pakistani, Filipino	Insurance scheme, accident settlement
9	すべての外国人に医療保障を! 連絡会議 (Health Insurance to All Foreigners! Committee)	Tokyo & Kanagawa	1990		All "illegal" foreign workers	Networking group on medical issues
10	在留外国人の医病問題を考える市民の会 Esperanza-no-kai	Kanagawa	1993	51	Nikkei, Filipino, Indian	Medical check-up; medical consultation
11	みなとまち健康互助会 (MF-MASH)	Kanagawa	1991	6000	Filipino, Iranian, Korean, Ghana, Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Insurance scheme, medical check-up
12	港町診療所 (Minatomachi Clinic)	Kanagawa	1991			Insurance scheme, medical check-up
13	十条通り病院 (Jujo-dori Clinic)	Kanagawa	1991			Insurance scheme, medical check-up
14	横須賀中央診療所 (Yokosuka Chuo Clinic)	Kanagawa	1991			Insurance scheme, medical check-up
15	伊勢佐木クリニック (Isezaki Women's Clinic)	Kanagawa	1995			Insurance scheme, medical check-up
16	いまい国際クリニック (Imai International Clinic)	Kanagawa	1995 -1998			Insurance scheme, medical check-up
17	小林国際クリニック (Kobayashi International Clinic)	Kanagawa	1991	N/A	Peruvian, Thai, Filipino	Discount medicine, treatment, translation
18	SABAY (SABAY)	Kanagawa	1993	10	Filipina, Thai	Free medical check-up and consultation
19	神奈川労災職業病センター (Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center)	Kanagawa	1990 (1980)	600	Korean, Nikkei, Iranian	Occupational accident negotiation & settlement

Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH agrees that “no matter how much you say they are illegal, the reality is: they are foreigners; they do become ill; and, they come to the clinic. Doctors cannot reject medical examinations of the ill.”⁷⁵ Japanese medical doctors also help illegal foreign workers, because many treat patients who suffer from industrial accidents or illnesses – increasingly, many of whom are foreign workers. Several, such as Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH and Dr. Hirano Toshio of the Kameido Himawari Clinic, are affiliated with an Occupational Health and Safety Center. They then mobilize members of these Centers to support illegal foreign workers.

Members of Japanese medical NGOs often find in Japan that certain foreigners cannot receive appropriate medical treatment due to language barriers while some face rejection from medical centers due to their illegal status. As explained in Chapter 2, hospitals and clinics turn away illegal foreign workers for fear that these foreign patients will not be able to pay their medical fees, since they are not covered by the National Health Insurance. Citizens of Japan, through the payment of a monthly fee, enjoy membership of one of a number of public health insurance plans. The Ministry of Health and Welfare determines the amount of money to be paid for each type of medical treatment. According to the kind of insurance scheme they have joined, patients pay the medical institution from 10 to 30 percent of the expenses of the treatment they have received. The medical institution then receives the remainder of the fee out of the funds of the insurance system. Except for people with specified residence qualifications, the Japanese government does not allow illegal foreign workers to join any of the public health insurance systems. Nor

⁷⁵ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 28 June 1993. Dr. Temmyo makes similar comments in the *Sankei Shimbun*, 21 December 1993, where he said, “it does not matter [if] the patient is overstayed or not. Curing illness is the duty of doctors.”

are they allowed to receive medical benefits under the Daily Life Security Law – the lowest form of public assistance for people who are in need and cannot pay medical expenses. As a result, illegal foreign workers must pay all medical fees in full.

The first medical NGO for foreigners in Japan was the Tokyo English Life Line (TELL). TELL, which was created in 1973 by the churches of the Tokyo Ecumenical Council, provides confidential emotional support or crisis intervention on the telephone. Initially, TELL concentrated its activities on serving American soldiers who were stationed in Japan. In 1991, it established a TELL Filipino Line, which provides emotional support as well as practical information and referrals for the Filipino community on Tuesday evenings.⁷⁶ However, most medical NGOs for foreign workers emerged during the early 1990s when several doctors got together after numerous foreigners began coming to their clinics for medical treatment. Several regional Occupational Safety and Health Centers also received increased reports of industrial accidents by illegal foreign workers. Doctors either formed alternative medical schemes for illegal foreigners who were not part of Japan's National Health Insurance Program or treated them at a reduced fee. AMDA and SHARE simply extended their international medical volunteer activities to include domestic issues.

Because the path to join Japanese Social Insurance and National Health Insurance system is closed to most overstaying migrant workers, some private medical institutions and NGOs have been established to provide medical treatment to those who are not covered by the national insurance system. In 1991, Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi, Ms. Lennie Tolentino (Filipina), and Ms. Hirama Masako (Korean) established an alternative mutual aid scheme

to provide medical treatment to illegal foreign workers. Their aim is:

To establish a mutual aid scheme for people (e.g. overstayed foreign workers) who are unable to join a public health scheme. To plea for a public Health Insurance scheme that foreigners working in Japan can join.⁷⁷

Members of MF-MASH pay a monthly fee of 2,000 yen per month and thereafter entitle to receive medical treatment at only 30 percent of the total cost (the same reduction that is given to people who are members of the Japanese National Health Insurance Program). As of 1998, more than 6,000 overstaying foreign workers, mostly male, from over 70 countries are insured under the MF-MASH system. In addition to providing medical aid scheme, MF-MASH joined other political groups to lobby the Yokohama local government to create an Emergency Fund to help impoverished patients pay their medical fees.⁷⁸ BRIGHT International Cooperative Society, which is actually registered as a labor union, offers a similar program for its 6,000 foreign members.⁷⁹ Dr. Hirano Toshio provides medical care at his Himawari Medical Clinic to foreign workers at half the cost. Medicine, however, is sold at the normal price.⁸⁰ Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki of the Kobayashi International Clinic, on the other hand, charges normal medical fees to foreigners, but less for medication. Dr. Kobayashi reduces medication costs by using older medicine, which he claims to be safe and equally effective. Health conscious Japanese do not buy them because they are too close to the expiration date.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Telephone interviews with Ms Yoko Jogenji of TELL, 13 July 1998, Ms Patterson of TELL, 22 May 2000

⁷⁷ MF-MASH pamphlet

⁷⁸ Interview with Dr Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH in Yokohama, 3 April 1998

⁷⁹ Interview with Ms Sugiya Aiko of the BRIGHT International Cooperative Society in Tokyo, 17 May 1998

⁸⁰ Interview with Dr Hirano Toshio of the Kameido Himawari Clinic in Tokyo, 30 April 1998.

⁸¹ Interview with Dr Kobayashi Yoneyuki of the Kobayashi International Clinic and the AMDA International Information Center in Yamato-shi, Kanagawa, 15 May 1998

Two large medical organizations with opposing political views, AMDA and SHARE, help foreign workers in Japan in addition to their activities in developing countries. The politically conservative AMDA International Information Center, which does not network with other Japanese NGOs, aims “to provide foreign nationals with information on the Japanese medical system, enabling them to receive the same appropriate medical services as the Japanese.” AMDA provides telephone services in eight languages to explain the Japanese medical system and introduces doctors who can speak the patient’s language. It receives approximately 40 calls per day from foreigners. The politically progressive SHARE is a grassroots level movement to promote “Health for All.” It maintains a “...desire to reach an ideal world in which every person can enjoy a healthy life.” Its activities include medical patrols in impoverished areas - with local NGOs and, sometimes, local governments. SHARE is an unusual foreigners support group in the sense that its staff and volunteers actively enter foreigners communities. The patrols provide services not only in urban *yoseba* such as San’ya in Tokyo and Kotobuki-cho in Yokohama, but regularly provide outreach to foreigners in rural areas like Gunma as well. In addition, it places advertisements in ethnic magazines. For example, in August of 1998, it placed advertisements of its organization in four Thai magazines in Japan and saw an immediate increase in the number of medical inquiries from Thais in September and October.⁸² Unlike AMDA, whose members are mostly doctors, SHARE members include both doctors and nurses. In fact, over half of SHARE members are nurses and its staff are mostly female. SHARE successfully builds an extensive network with local NGOs and provides medical check-up around the Tokyo Metropolitan area in these local NGOs’ offices. For example,

⁸² Interview with Mr. Romdej, a Thai volunteer at SHARE, in Tokyo, 26 November 1998.

SHARE teams up with the Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ) and regularly provides free medical check-ups to foreign workers at the FWBZ office. It also works with local NGOs in the Gunma prefecture such as Friends to mobilize foreign workers in the area for medical check-ups at a Christian church.

Another medical group that actively supports the foreigner community's health needs is SABAY. SABAY, which is taken from the Tagalog word "*sabay*" (together) and the Thai word "*sabai*" (happy), was established in 1993 to educate foreign women living in the Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama on their own health, their babies' health, childcare, and other maternal issues. Volunteers of SABAY provide home visits, vaccination programs and assist children of foreign mothers enter day care. Its goal is "to create self-help, independent community among the foreigners living in the Kotobuki-cho area...to create network to enable foreign women's economic, medical, and social problems to solved within their own community rather than depending on Japanese institutions for support."⁸³ A Japanese doctor, four female volunteers of the Kotobuki medical team (医療班), and a Filipina nun started SABAY, because they thought that Kotobuki-cho needed a women's health group that was sensitive to cultural differences considering the fact that most of the young women in Kotobuki-cho were foreign women.⁸⁴

With the exception of Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki and his AMDA group, most members of the medical groups hold progressive views. As labor doctors, Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi and Dr. Hirano Toshio work closely with their local Occupational Safety and Health Centers. Dr. Temmyo is a sub-chairman of JOSHRHC and oversees the activities of the

⁸³ Carolyn S. Stevens, *On the Margins of Japanese Society: Volunteers and the Welfare of the Urban Underclass* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 99-101.

Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center while Dr. Hirano is the representative and founder of the Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center. In fact, Dr. Hirano provides the offices in the building of his medical clinic free of charge to both the Tokyo and Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Centers. Dr. Hirano, who graduated from the University of Tokyo's Medical School, also found a medical labor union in one of the community hospitals in Tokyo. He lives in Kameido and organizes regular study groups on foreign workers in Japan every other month with several local groups in the Kameido region, such as CTIC, the Fureai Koto Union, the Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, and SHARE. Dr. Temmyo has extensive experiences helping Japanese migrant workers from Tohoku and Hokkaido prior to his undertaking to support foreign workers. Dr. Temmyo strongly opposes the decision of the Japanese central government to restrict the National Health Insurance system from certain foreigners. He explained,

[i]n maintaining the National Health Insurance system, it is a fact that the government policy has omitted [the inclusion of illegal foreign workers]. The government says that it is difficult to apply the National Health Insurance system to foreigners because they do not pay tax. But foreigners do pay income tax.⁸⁵

In 1992, he and his MF-MASH unsuccessfully pressured the Ministry of Health and Welfare to set up a public insurance system for foreigners.⁸⁶ Both Dr. Hirano and Dr. Temmyo have become role models for younger, progressive doctors like Dr. Sawada

⁸⁴ Internal conflict within the 医療班 was another important factor for the origin of SABAY. For details see, *ibid.*

⁸⁵ Published interview with Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi in the *Nikkei Sangyou Shimbun*, 21 May 1992.

⁸⁶ *Tokyo Yomiuri Shimbun*, 8 June 1992.

Takashi of SHARE to learn and emulate.⁸⁷

In contrast, Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki, who helped establish the AMDA International Information Center and the Kobayashi International Clinic, exhibits conservative tendency. Dr. Kobayashi, who is married to a *zainichi* Korean, believes that most foreigner support groups work for their own political interests at the expense of helping the foreign workers. Consequently, Dr. Kobayashi prefers to leave political activities out of his voluntary activities and the activities of his support groups.⁸⁸ Dr. Kobayashi has publicly expressed his opposition to the creation of an emergency fund for illegal foreigners. He believes that such system amounts to a reverse discrimination against Japanese people and legal aliens. He prefers that Japan introduce some kind of regulation that will limit the amount of public expenses be used on medical treatment for illegal foreigners.⁸⁹

Various offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Resource Centers focus on a goal to protect “all” workers from industrial illness and job injuries. Four Occupational Safety and Health Centers in Tokyo and Kanagawa – the Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Center, the Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center, and the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center (JOSHRC) - actively assist foreign workers. These centers provide consultations on industrial labor accidents and coordinate activities with local labor offices. As mentioned above, they maintain close relations with progressive medical doctors such

⁸⁷ Dr. Sawada has, in fact, worked in both Dr. Temmyo’s and Dr. Hirano’s clinic. Interview with Dr. Sawada Takashi of SHARE and the Minatomachi Clinic in Tokyo, 3 April 1998.

⁸⁸ Interview with Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki of the Kobayashi International Clinic and the AMDA International Information Center in Yamato-shi, Kanagawa, 15 May 1998. It is important to point out that AMDA maintains close ties with the ruling LDP. Moreover, AMDA receives approximately 40 percent of its operation fund from the Japanese government.

⁸⁹ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 17 March 1993.

as Dr. Temmyo of the MF-MASH and Dr. Hirano of the Kameido Himawari Clinic. These centers push for reforms in labor policies regarding foreign workers.⁹⁰ For example, in 1991, the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center successfully negotiated with local governments in its area not to report overstayed foreign workers to the Immigration Office.⁹¹ In addition, Mr. Kawamoto Hiroyuki of the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center organizes a study group with lawyers and government officials on labor-related issues, including those concerning foreign workers. JOSHRC, which evolved from the Japan Occupational Safety Center (JOSC) that Sohyo (General Councils of Trade Unions of Japan) and Churitsu Roren established, serves as the nation-wide information center for these Occupational Safety and Health Centers. It collects information from various centers and conducts independent surveys. It then uses these surveys to push for labor reforms. It also has an unusual practice of decision-making; people clap to express consent.⁹²

Both AMDA and SHARE receive large financial support from the central government and the Tokyo local government. The NGO Activity Fund of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (外務省NGO事業援助金) and the Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid System of the Ministry of Postal and Telecommunication regularly fund AMDA and SHARE for their overseas operation. In 1998, for example, MOFA gave AMDA over 147,000,000 yen (about US\$ 1,350,000) – or more than one third of AMDA's operation fund. The Postal Savings for International Voluntary Aid System of the Ministry of Postal

⁹⁰ Interview with Mr. Iida Katsuyasu of the Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center in Tokyo, 8 May 1998.

⁹¹ Interview with Mr. Kawamoto Hiroyuki of the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center in Yamato-shi, Kanagawa, 28 April 1998.

and Telecommunication provides AMDA and SHARE each with approximately 12 to 17 million yen per year. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government also gives about 4,000,000 yen to AMDA for its domestic activities in helping foreigners in Japan. In effect, the Japanese government provides about 40 and 28 percent of AMDA's and SHARE's operation fund, respectively. The Kanagawa International Association has given SABAY 100,000 yen in 1993 and the Esperanza-no-kai 528,000 yen in 1995. In contrast to other medical groups, MF-MASH operates at a huge loss. The problem with the MF-MASH insurance scheme is that foreigners stopped paying the monthly fee after their illnesses have been treated.⁹³ In fact, less than one-third of foreigners pay their membership fees more than twice. Hence, by 1995, the MF-MASH's book showed 20,000,000 yen deficit.⁹⁴ Fortunately, MF-MASH and the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center successfully pressured Kanagawa local governments to establish a Medical Emergency Fund system to help those foreigners who are unable to pay their medical expenses. Otherwise, it would be out of business by now. Other medical clinics manage to generate sufficient income, particularly from their Japanese patients. The Occupational Safety and Health Centers are largely funded through membership fees and income generated through their activities.

Of the 12 medical activists I interviewed, nine are men, five of whom are medical doctors. The three single women are in their late 20s or early 30s and only one has a bachelor degree. Only two senior members from AMDA, which presents itself as non-political, consistently vote for the LDP while the rest express support for Socialist and

⁹² Interviewed with Mr. Furuya Sugio of JOSHRC in Tokyo, 1 July 1998.

⁹³ Worse, it is not possible for MF-MASH staffs to find them because these foreigners are constantly on the move.

⁹⁴ Interview with Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH in Yokohama, 3 April 1998; *Mainichi Shimbun*, 4 September 1995.

independent political parties. Most can speak fluent English and have traveled abroad extensively, particularly in Asia. Dr. Sawada of SHARE completed his master degree in Thailand's most prestigious medical school, Mahidol University. A staff at AMDA, who came out of retirement, worked in a Japanese company in Latin America for 22 years and boasts of having been to 55 countries. Unlike the people at community worker unions, medical activists were rarely involved in social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. However, Mr. Kawamoto, who studied economics at the University of Kyoto, had lived in the Yoshida Dormitory, which is historically known for its radicalism and student violence.⁹⁵ Two medical doctors also actively engage in social works in Southeast Asia.

V. LAWYERS ASSOCIATION NGOS

The fifth type of support groups is the lawyers association NGOs. There are 11 lawyers association NGOs for foreign workers in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa. They are the Partner, the Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases (LAFOCC), the Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights (LAFLR), the Immigration Review Task Force, the Center for Human Rights of Foreigners, the Japan Legal Aid Association, the International Rights Section of the Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association, the Human Rights Protection Committee of the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association, the Japan Civil Liberties Union's Foreigners Rights Sub-committee, the Yokohama Bar Association – Legal Consultation for Foreigners, and the Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association –

⁹⁵ The Yoshida Dormitory is a sister dormitory of Today's infamous left-wing Komaba Dormitory. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, residents of the Yoshida dormitory clashed violently with the university administrators and the police. Eventually, the university surrendered its rights to administer the dormitory to student residents. As a result, the building is run down but the rent is incredibly cheap at less than 2,000 yen per month. It has now turned into an artsy dormitory with several aspiring musicians practicing at the front courtyard.

Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group. These lawyers support groups typically serve all foreigners, although Chinese clients appear most numerous. They offer legal consultation and dispute settlement on issues concerning labor, marriage/divorce, and immigration (see Table 4.5).

These lawyers are motivated to help foreign workers by their belief in social justice and their traditional opposition to the central government. As members of a *zaiyahousou* 「在野法曹」 or an institution that exists apart from authority, they feel that foreigners in Japan are being treated unjustly, particularly by the Japanese authority.⁹⁶ Hence, they challenge the authority and act as an opposition party. These groups not only handle cases involving foreigners on labor disputes, illegal confinement, and violent acts, they also push for changes of the authority culture. These changes include better treatments of suspects being held in detention centers, prisons, and Immigration Offices and the professionalization of translators in legal cases involving foreigners, who speak Japanese poorly.

The first legal institution to assist illegal foreigners was the Japanese Civil Liberties Union (JCLU), when it established the Foreigners Rights Sub-committee in 1988. JCLU, which consists of mostly lawyers and academics, was established in 1947 during the Occupation Period as an affiliation of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). It “is an independent non-profit organization which aims to protect human rights for all persons regardless of beliefs, religion, or political opinion...to issue advice, memoranda, and opinions on specific human rights cases relating to activities of the national and local

⁹⁶ Interview with Mr. Oshii Tetsuo of the Japan Legal Aid Association in Tokyo, 28 April 1998.

Table 4.5: Lawyers Support Groups for Foreign Workers in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Mem	Ethnic Groups Served	Services offered
1	パートナー(群馬県外国人問題弁護団) (Partner)	Gunma	1992	19	Korean, Iranian, Filipino, Chinese	Legal consultation and settlement
2	外国人刑事弁護団 (LAFOCC) (Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases)	Tokyo	1992	140	Chinese, Iranian	Legal settlement; translation
3	外国人労働者弁護団 (LAFLR) (Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights)	Tokyo	1990	400+	Peruvian, Filipino	Legal consultation and settlement
4	入管問題調査会 (Immigration Review Task Force)	Tokyo	1994	140団	Chinese, Iranian, Bangladeshi, Thai, Korean	Legal consultation and settlement
5	東京弁護士会・外国人 인권 救済センター (Tokyo Bar Association - Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights)	Tokyo	1989	80	Chinese, Iranian, Filipino, Korean	Legal consultation and settlement
6	法律扶助協会 (Japan Legal Aid Association)	Tokyo	1995	95	Chinese, Iranian, Korean, Filipino	Legal consultation and settlement
7	東京第一弁護士会・国際人权 部会 (Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association-International Human Rights Section)	Tokyo	1989	50	Chinese, Filipino, Iranian, Korean	Legal consultation and settlement
8	東京第二弁護士会・人权 擁護委員会 (Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association-Human Rights Protection Committee)	Tokyo	1993 (1990)		Chinese, Iranian, Bangladeshi	Legal consultation and settlement
9	自由人权 協会・外国人の権利小委員会 (Japan Civil Liberties Union/Foreigners Rights Sub-committee)	Tokyo	1988		All foreigners	Legal consultation
10	横浜弁護士会・外国人人权 委員会 (Yokohama Bar Association: Sub-committee of Human Rights for Foreigners)	Kanagawa	1991	30	Chinese, Thai, Peruvian, Korean	Legal consultation and settlement
11	神奈川県行政書士会・渉外行政書士研究会 (Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association - Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group)	Kanagawa	1998	25	Chinese, Peruvian, Korean	Legal consultation and settlement

government, the Diet, and the courts of Japan.”⁹⁷ During the 1970s, JCLU lobbied boisterously for the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As a result of its effort (along with cooperation from other NGOs) and an intense pressure for Japan to internationalize, the Japanese government ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in 1978, and the Refugee Convention in 1982. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the ratification of these international laws dramatically improved the livelihood of all *zainichi gaikokujin*, particularly Koreans, in Japan, for such ratification required revisions in the Japanese laws concerning the treatment of *zainichi* Koreans and Chinese in Japan. For example, *zainichi* Koreans and Chinese became eligible for the national pension plan only after Japan ratified the Refugee Convention in 1982.⁹⁸ During the late 1980s, members of Japanese NGOs, who were struggling for the legal protection of foreign newcomers, sought advice from a lawyer, who happen to be member of JCLU. In order to publicize the actual conditions of foreign workers in Japan as experts, several members of JCLU began writing about them. The support for foreign workers rights did not become institutionalized until 1988, when JCLU established a Foreigners Rights Subcommittee. JCLU began helping foreign newcomers when Japanese NGO activists, who sought legal protection for foreign workers, came to consult with one of JCLU lawyers. In order to publicize the plight of foreign workers in Japan, several members of JCLU began publishing scholarly articles and books about them. Since then, JCLU has actively been

⁹⁷ See JCLU Homepage: <http://village.infoweb.ne.jp/jclu/index.htm>.

⁹⁸ On the impact of the ratification of international agreements to Koreans in Japan, see Amy Gurowitz, “Mobilizing International Norms: Domestic Actors, Immigrants, and the Japanese State,” *World Politics* 51 (April 1999): 413-445 (426- 433ff).

helping foreign newcomers.⁹⁹ In 1996, JCLU assisted an overstayed Bangladesh man, who was allegedly assaulted by Japanese policemen during a labor dispute. Members of JCLU thought that the policemen were unjustly coercive and violated the human rights of the Bangladesh man. Following the incident, they then sent letters to the chief of the police station to request explanations of their action and demanded that appropriate measures be taken to prevent similar recurrences.¹⁰⁰ In addition, JCLU struggles to protect foreigners' rights by writing counter-reports on the Japanese government's civil rights records concerning foreigners in Japan and submits them to the annual meetings of the United Nations Commission for Human Rights.¹⁰¹

Like the JCLU, most other lawyers support groups were established as sub-committees of regional bar associations or official peak legal organizations rather than an individual lawyer, because all lawyers in Japan are required to be a member of a local bar association in order to practice. For example, the Gunma Bar Association, the Yokohama Bar Association, the Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association, the Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association, the Dai-ni Bar Association, and the Tokyo Bar Association formed sub-committees - such as: Partners, the Legal Consultation for Foreigners Group, the Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group, the International Human Rights section, the Human Rights Protection Committee and the Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights, respectively - to provide legal consultation and settlement to foreigners.¹⁰² During

⁹⁹ Ebashi Takashi, "Gaikokujin no jinken to jiyuu jinken kyokai (JCLU) no katsudou" [Human Rights of Foreigners and the Activities of JCLU] in Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainichi gaikokujin jinken hakushou* [White Paper on Human Rights of Foreigners] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997), pp. 38-57.

¹⁰⁰ *Jinken Shimbun*, 25 November 1996.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Mr. Hatade Akira of JCLU in Tokyo, 9 October 1998.

¹⁰² This does not mean that individual lawyers did not take up cases involving illegal foreigners before these lawyers

the late 1980s and early 1990s, local bar associations in Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Gunma recognized the need to form a sub-committee that specializes in foreigner issues due to the increased number of foreigners, who were visiting the offices of their members.¹⁰³ In 1991, the Yokohama Bar Association formed a sub-committee that focuses solely on foreigners and started to provide legal consultation to foreigners on every Wednesdays afternoon from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Then in 1995, four local bar associations in Tokyo, the Tokyo Bar Association, the Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association, the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association, and the Japan Legal Aid Association cooperated to provide counseling services to foreigners regarding their visas, citizenship, international marriage and divorce, civil, criminal, labor and employment issues.¹⁰⁴ Their stated purpose was “to give necessary legal assistance to foreign people when their fundamental human rights are infringed or threatened in relation to various legal issues, including, but not limited to, matters of immigration, labor accidents, labor disputes including payment of salary, divorce, and traffic accidents.”¹⁰⁵ These lawyers associations rotate in providing such counseling services in Japanese, English, and Chinese from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. every weekday at the Lawyers Association Building (*Bengoshi Kaikan*) in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo. Typically, the Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association is responsible for Tuesdays, the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association for Wednesdays,

support groups were established. Ms. Oshima Yukiko, the daughter-in-law of Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP, was already assisting HELP with their legal problems in the late 1980s before the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association – Human Rights Protection Committee, her current institutional affiliation, was established in 1993. Mr. Onitsuka Tadanori had numerous foreign clients before he found LAFLR and the Immigration Review Task Force.

¹⁰³ Interviews with: Mr. Higuchi Kazuhiko of Partner in Maebashi, Gunma, 22 September 1998; Ms. Miki Emiko of the Yokohama Bar Association Sub-committee of Human Rights for Foreigners in Yokohama, 30 September 1998; Mr. Ishikawa Masashi of the Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association International Human Rights Protection Section; Mr. Onitsuka Tadanori of the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association Human Rights Protection Committee in Tokyo, 10 December 1999; Mr. Oshii Tetsuo of the Japan Legal Aid Association in Tokyo, 28 April 1998; Mr. Ishii Yoshimitsu of the Tokyo Bar Association Center for Protection of Foreigners’ Human Rights in Tokyo, 28 April 1998.

¹⁰⁴ See *Sankei Shimbun*, 18 August 1995.

¹⁰⁵ See <http://www.toben.or.jp/english.html> (18 December 1998).

and the Japan Legal Aid Association for Thursdays. They charge 5,000 yen for the first 30 minutes and 2,500 yen for each 15 minute thereafter. Free legal consultations are available on Thursdays for foreigners who cannot afford to pay the legal fees. Recently, the Kanagawa Gyoseishoshi Lawyer Association – Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group began its free legal consultation services to overstayed foreigners in the Kanagawa prefecture on visa, international marriage or divorce, rights of overstayed persons, and starting a business in Japan. The Gunma Bar Association, through its sub-committee called Partner, provides free legal counseling to foreigners twice a year at the office of the Gunma International Exchange Association in Maebashi. Since membership in a local bar association is compulsory for all lawyers, all members of each bar association must decide on what type of activities to perform. Hence, no specific individual is responsible for establishing a Committee to serve foreigners. However, lawyers, who participate in these service activities for foreigners, typically volunteer to do so.

Only Mr. Onitsuka Tadanori from the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association is an exception to the pattern of establishing lawyers support groups, for he is the founder of LAFLR in 1990 and the Immigration Review Task Force in 1994. Mr. Onitsuka graduated from the Waseda University where he became interested in fighting discrimination experienced by minorities. Mr. Onitsuka took his first case involving a foreigner in 1985 when a *zainichi* Korean refused to be fingerprinted. He lost that case. Since 1988, he has been working on cases involving illegal foreigners, particularly concerning non-payment of wages, industrial accidents, and visa issues, and has been having a fun time doing it.¹⁰⁶ In addition to his

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Mr. Onitsuka Tadanori of LAFLR and the Immigration Review Task Force in Tokyo, 10 December 1999.

work at the law office, he actively advocates for foreigner rights at LAFLR and the Immigration Review Task Force. As stated its pamphlet, LAFLR “is a working group formed by individual attorneys throughout Japan with a view to protect and promote the rights of foreign nationals living in Japan.” LAFLR conducts consultations and litigation action concerning labor problems of foreigners, problems with residence permits, medical or health inquiries, and criminal or civil law cases. It also organizes periodic meetings and conferences with national and local governments. The Immigration Review Task Force emerged out of the LAFLR in November 1994 after an Iranian man was arrested during the police sweep of Iranians at the Ueno Park in June 1994 and suspiciously died in police custody the next morning.¹⁰⁷ The Immigration Task Force collects testimonies and gathers information on those immigrants who were subjected of discriminatory treatment and other human rights violations during the deportation procedures in Japan. Such discriminatory treatment and human rights violations include: physical and sexual abuse of foreign migrants while in detention of Immigration Bureau, inadequate translation procedures, denial of counsel, failure to inform detainees of the rights to remain silent, and excessive periods of detention for violations of the immigration statutes.¹⁰⁸ In particular, members of this group have organized an ongoing campaign against incidents of physical abuse by Immigration Bureau officials and police. It urges victims to come forward and contact

¹⁰⁷ Mr. Arjang Mehrpooran (31) from Iran was arrested at 7:50 p.m. on 20 June 1994 along with about 35 Iranians at the Ueno Park on account on non-possession of passport. Thereafter, he was taken to the Ueno police station and then the Minami Senju police station. He died at the Shirohigebashi Hospital at 7.42 a.m. the next morning due to “pulmonary embolism.” His body showed numerous injuries and wounds, which had caused severe internal hemorrhaging. The police and immigration authorities maintain that Arjang’s injuries which led to his death was self-inflicted when his head banged against the seat or window glass during the time he was being transported to the police station in the armored vehicle. For details, see The Immigration Review Task Force, *Report: Summary of Human Rights Violations against Aliens in Japan during Deportation Procedures by Immigration Control Officers acting on behalf of the Government of Japan* (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1997), pp 3-4.

¹⁰⁸ The group collected 40 cases (not people) of human rights abuses against aliens by Immigration Control, police, and

lawyers in order to file a damages suit against the government. With connections to two Diet members, it succeeded in arranging two deliberative meetings with officials from the Immigration Bureau. More importantly, in 1997 the group submitted a report to the United Nations' Commission on Human Rights on human rights violations against aliens in Japan during deportation procedures by immigration control officers. In 1998, it helped draft a counter-report, which was submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, on human rights violation committed by the Japanese government.¹⁰⁹ Mr. Onitsuka Tadanori is also a founding member of LAFOCC, which offers not only legal consultation but also translations. Ms. Oshima Yukiko, the daughter-in-law of Ms. Oshima Shizuko from HELP, and a few of her colleagues at the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association began providing legal services in 1988 for the protection of the rights of Asian women who came to work in Japan.¹¹⁰ As a result, Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association officially became HELP's lawyer and these two institutions continue to cooperate on their activities on protecting the rights of foreign women.

Without any doubt, Ms. Miki Emiko, a lawyer at the Yokohama Law Office and a representative for the Women's Shelter Saalaa, is one of the most important and well-known supporters of "illegal" foreign workers in Japan. She is one of the most feared person for the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Believing that the National Health Insurance program should be available to all, including overstaying foreign workers, she and her colleagues took the Ministry of Health and Welfare to court in two separate cases in

Courts of Justice between 1982 and 1995. For the list, see *ibid.*, pp. 17-21.

¹⁰⁹ For details on the discussion between NGO activists and Japanese government representatives during the 1998 session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, see *Migrant Network News* 9 (November – December 1998).

Yokohama and Musashino. If she wins, the Ministry will be forced to reconsider existing policies towards overstayed foreign workers.¹¹¹ In this sense, she can potentially make the most influential impact on policy changes over illegal foreign workers at this moment. Therefore, it may be beneficial to discuss more about Ms. Miki Emiko.

Ms. Miki Emiko is an energetic and petite woman. She was born in 1958. Unlike most Japanese women, she has had a prestigious career, lives an extremely active life, speaks like a machine gun, and smokes like mad. Her friends have teased her, “are you talking or are you smoking, which one?”¹¹² She was raised by a single mother who ran a *ryokan* (Japanese inn) where American GIs and their Japanese lovers often visited. She graduated from the University of Tokyo’s prestigious Law Department, where she was active in left-wing radical activities. After graduation, she decided to spend some time in China where she became disillusioned with communism. She works hard to help Asian workers in Japan because she believes that “these people have guts...No matter what type of troubles they may encounter, they stand and face it with guts.”¹¹³ She receives about 5 to 6 foreign clients per week, almost twice more than her support group, the Yokohama Bar Association Sub-committee of Human Rights for Foreigners. She enjoys her active life in various volunteer groups because she thinks they are “fun” 「楽しい」. “It is fun to meet different, young, and active people. It is fun to learn something new. It is certainly more

¹¹⁰ See *Mainichi Shimbun*, 3 February 1988 and 29 April 1997

¹¹¹ Interview with Ms. Kawano Kyoko of the Ministry of Health and Welfare’s National Health Insurance Section in Tokyo, 7 January 1999.

¹¹² Published interview with Ms. Miki Emiko by Yano Keiko, “Karera ni wa ikiru gattsu ga aru no yo!” [They have the Guts to live!] in Shonen Horitsuka Kyokai, ed., *Bengoshi ni naritai anata e II* [To You who Want to Become a Lawyer II] (Tokyo: Shounensha, 1997), pp. 7-27.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

fun than hanging out with lawyers all the time.”¹¹⁴ During the Kanagawa Occupational Health and Safety Study Group meetings, which she helped organize at her office, she was by far the most active and talkative participant in the group. She showed no respect for the person’s gender, age, or social position. Her comments were highly thoughtful. Yet, when she was with foreigners, she kept quiet and listened patiently. When I ran into her at the women’s shelter Saalaa, I thought I was seeing a different person as she sat quietly and listened attentively to a Filipina woman. The entire hour that I was there, Ms. Miki only uttered a few sentences.

When I attended a talk, which was co-organized by a woman group in the area and the Kawasaki local government, where she was the main speaker, Ms. Miki was dressed like the pop-star Madonna in her black leather mini-skirt. It was clearly a statement to the 60 to 70 mostly women who attended that she is independent in mind and appearance. Moreover, she declared herself a progressive woman and ready to be a role model for other Japanese women. At this Forum, organizers invited three foreign women in distressed to participate. One woman from the Philippines complained of her Japanese husband’s infidelity and expressed a desire to leave him. However, she was concerned about losing custody over her child and her visa status privilege to remain in Japan if she were to leave him. Ms. Miki advised the Filipina woman to leave him and take her child with her to a women’s shelter. She explained that there are legal advantages to foreign women when children are involved.¹¹⁵ At the same time, Ms. Miki is modest and humble. When asked about her chances against the Ministry of Health and Welfare, she remarked, “of course, we

¹¹⁴ Interview with Ms. Miki Emiko of the Yokohama Bar Association and Women’s Shelter Saalaa in Yokohama, 30 September 1998.

will win. I am trying hard.” But doubt and fatigue clearly appeared on her face. As her job demands, she must show confidence that she can win despite knowing that she faces a hard struggle. This was very different from a member of the Ministry of Health and Welfare who reacted with hubris.

All of these groups are funded by membership fees of lawyers in various local bar associations. Because lawyers support groups provide specific professional services, lawyers of these groups charge a minimal fee for legal counseling and representation. When they take on and win a court case for their foreign client, they usually receive at least 15 percent of the award money. Although they may use public facilities as places to consult foreign workers, none receive financial support from the government. Although LAFLR was forced to move out of its expensive office in Shinjuku due to financial burdens, most of these lawyers support groups do not encounter financial difficulties. In fact, the Yokohama Bar Association funds other Japanese NGOs by awarding 1,000,000 yen to the recipient of its “Human Rights Award” (横浜弁護士会人権賞). In 1996, the Yokohama Bar Association began presenting two “Human Rights Awards” to individuals or groups in Yokohama each year for their struggle to promote and protect human rights. A Japanese NGO in Yokohama that supports illegal foreign workers typically wins one of these awards each year. The Kalabaw-no-kai won it in 1996 (although it declined the award), Mizula in 1997, and Saalaa in 1998.

I interviewed 10 lawyers and 5 staff and volunteers of lawyers groups that support foreign workers. Among lawyers, Ms. Miki was the only woman. There were 3 female and 2 male staff and volunteers of these groups. All lawyers were in their 40s and 50s and

¹¹⁵ Participant observation at the 1998 Forum of Kawasaki Women and Men in Kawasaki, 24 October 1998.

married while the volunteers were in their 20s and early 30s and still single. One staff was 48 years old and had been active in AMPO, Student, and Anti-Vietnam War Demonstrations. She and a fourth year student volunteer were the only people who did not have a bachelor degree. The rest, except for Mr. Onitsuka, did not participate in past demonstrations and a few were really active in current social issues. In fact, two people consistently voted for the LDP and one lawyer joined a club in college that fought against left-wing students. In addition to having traveled extensively like other activists, three people had lived in unusual places. As mentioned above, Ms. Miki spent time in China, one volunteer lived in Nicaragua for 2 years, and another volunteer studied in Hohhot in Inner Mongolia (China) for one year.

VI. CONCERNED CITIZENS GROUPS

The sixth and last type of foreigner support groups is the concerned citizens group. There are 9 of these groups in Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa and none in Ibaraki. These groups include the Gunma Migrant Workers' Support Committee (Friends), the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers, the Ohta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness (OC-Net), the Preparation Committee for Human Rights Beyond Borders (formerly Inoken), the CALL Network, the Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS), the Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems, the Association in Kotobuki for Solidarity with Foreign Migrant Workers (Kalabaw-no-kai), and the Sagami-hara Solidarity with Foreign Workers. Some of these groups not only help foreign workers, mostly Bangladeshis and Iranians, but also Burakumin, elderly, handicap, and homeless people. Hence, these groups are civil rights activist groups, who are seeking legal rights and

protection for marginalized people in Japan. Their main activities involve labor and lifestyle consultation and negotiation for foreign workers. The National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers is the central network organization for all Japanese NGOs that support foreign migrants while the Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems performs the same function specifically for those groups in the Kanagawa prefecture (see Table 4.6).

As a product of the civil rights movement in Japan, concerned citizens groups assist foreign workers because of their love of humanity and their progressive belief in racial justice that ensures the protection of civil rights to all people in Japan. As the Kalabaw-no-kai puts it, "our objective is to share in the aspirations and passion of fellow human beings."¹¹⁶ For them, "migrants' rights are human rights."¹¹⁷ In addition, Japanese activists from these groups believe that foreign workers are powerful forces for social change. In their own words,

these foreign workers...are a powerful force bringing about revolutionary changes in many countries...[O]ur movement shows solidarity with them, and together we wish to be the main agents caring out a better future for the human race.¹¹⁸

Many NGO members look to both the Kalabaw-no-kai and the APFS as fathers of concerned citizens groups for foreign workers, for both were formed in 1987 when few NGOs existed to support foreign workers at the time. The Kalabaw-no-kai was formed after a Filipino man came for help at one of the tents set up in Kotobuki-cho during the

¹¹⁶ Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai: Evaluation and Future Prospects" (Yokohama: Mimeograph, 1993).

¹¹⁷ Letter from Ms. Ogasawara Kimiko of the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers to Ms. Mary Robinson of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 19 January 1998.

¹¹⁸ Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai: Evaluation and Future Prospects."

Table 4.6: Foreign Workers Supporting Concerned Citizens NGOs in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Mem	Ethnic Groups Served	Services offered
1	フレンズ (群馬外国人労働者支援連絡会) (Friends)	Gunma	1991	30	Iran, Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Labor consultation and negotiation
2	外国人とともに生きる大田・市民ネットワーク (Ohta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness - OC Net)	Tokyo	1992	50	Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Labor consultation and negotiation
3	移住労働者連帯運動・高田馬場準備会 (Takadanomaba Preparation Committee for Migrant Workers) 旧:いのけん(渋谷・原宿生命と権利をかちとる会) (Former: Shibuya-Harajuku Group to Gain Life and Rights)	Tokyo Tokyo	1998 1993		Iranian Iranian	Labor consultation and negotiation Labor consultation and negotiation
4	CALL ネットワーク (Call Network)	Tokyo	1988 -1993		Iranian, Filipino, Bangladeshi	Labor consultation and negotiation
5	Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS) (Asian Peoples Friendship Society - APFS)	Tokyo	1987	1700	Bangladeshi, Myanmarese	Labor and lifestyle consultation and negotiation
6	移住労働者と連帯する全国ネットワーク (National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers) 旧:アジア人労働者問題懇談会 (Former: Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers)	Tokyo Tokyo	1997 1987	70	ALL ALL	Information, network group (national) Information, network group
7	外国人労働者と連帯する神奈川連絡会議 (Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems)	Kanagawa	1988		ALL	Information, network group (Kanagawa)
8	カラバオの会 (Kalabaw-no-Kai)	Kanagawa	1987	300	Bangladeshi, Pakistani	Labor and lifestyle consultation and negotiation
9	カラバオ・相模原 (Sagamihara Solidarity with Foreign Workers)	Kanagawa	1991		Filipino, Iranian, Thai, Pakistani	Labor and lifestyle consultation and negotiation

ettou tousou (越冬闘争) in 1986-1987. *Ettou tousou*, which literally means the “struggle to pass through the winter” but actually referred the period between the last few days of December and the first week of January, is a time in Kotobuki-cho when laborers find it particularly difficult to get through, as day jobs rarely come by. During this period, volunteers at Kotobuki-cho set up temporary tents at the Kotobuki Park to feed and to house those in need of such assistance.¹¹⁹ When a Filipino man came to their tents, these volunteers began to recognize the plight of foreign workers in Japan and, soon after, established the Kalabaw-no-kai. They chose the Tagalog word *kalabaw*, water buffaloes, because water buffaloes work hard, thereby help to ease the work of the farmers. Founders of the Kalabw-no-kai see them as not too dissimilar to foreign workers in taking up dirty, difficult, dangerous jobs that Japanese reject.¹²⁰ As stated in its pamphlet, the Kalabaw-no-kai was set up “to help and establish solidarity with foreigners working in Japan.” Members of this group “help foreign workers in trouble, protest when their human rights are infringed, and try to ensure that they are always treated fairly in [Japan].” They conduct free telephone and direct consultation on labor-related problems like unpaid wages, work-related accidents, and unfair dismissal. Recently, their consultation activities also include those problems connected with the general lifestyle, such as seeing special permission to reside in Japan, health care, divorce, rearing of children, and so forth. This development reflects the increasing “settlement” of migrants in Japan. They collect and publish newspaper clippings on foreign workers issues. They also help organize the annual

¹¹⁹ On the *ettou tousou*, see Stevens, *On the Margins of Japanese Society*, pp. 178-190.

¹²⁰ Interviews with: Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 10 July 1996; Mr. Harada Masaru of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 19 July 1996.

Kotobuki Summer Festival with various volunteer groups from the area.¹²¹ One Kalabaw staff also helped another volunteer group handing out food to homeless residents during the festival. In this way, the Kalabaw-no-kai is an important institution that helps to enhance not only social justice for the foreign workers but also peaceful co-existence and inter-racial understandings in Kotobuki-cho.

The APFS provides similar services and activities in the Tokyo's Oyama Higashimachi area. Mr. Yoshinari Katsuo, who hopes to bring "real" changes to Japanese society, established APFS in 1987. The APFS grew out of Mr. Yoshinari's friendship with his public bath (銭湯) buddies from Bangladesh. At first, APFS concentrated its activities on resolving problems of its foreign members with Japanese language schools and to introduce guarantor to foreign members. Eventually, its activities have expanded into more practical problems. It provides consultations to foreign migrant workers on problems concerning their jobs and daily lives. It also appeals to the Japanese government and companies to protect the fundamental human rights of foreign workers. The APFS holds a May Day meeting in Tokyo every year and submits requests to the government to extend more legal rights and social benefits to foreign workers.¹²² Specifically, members of the APFS believe that "the infringement of the human rights of the migrant workers happening nowadays is...mostly [due to] the reasons that they are kept in illegal situation, [therefore] they should be granted Amnesty and approved legally their status of residence in Japan."¹²³ They also demand that the National Health Insurance and the Livelihood Protection Act should be applied to overstayed foreigners. In addition, they demand that the services and benefits

¹²¹ Interview with Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 8 March 1998.

¹²² Interview with Ms. Yoshinari Katsuo of the APFS in Tokyo, 17 December 1998.

applied to Japanese residents be applied equally to foreign residents regardless of their visa status. More interestingly, they ask that local governments seek opinions from members of support groups or NGOs and provide financial support to their activities when requested. After the successes of the Kalabaw-no-kai and the APFS, others groups emerged to provide services to their foreign residents in their areas, such the OC-Net in 1992. In fact, the Kalabaw-no-kai helped launch other concerned citizens groups such as the Kalabaw-Sagamihara and the Friends group (in Gunma) in 1991 and the women's shelter Saalaa in 1992.

As mentioned above, some of these groups evolved from Christian groups or have close connection with a Christian organization, such as the Kalabaw-no-kai and the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers. Concerned citizens were quick to follow the Christian NGOs to establish support groups to help foreign workers during the late 1980s. The National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers, which has its office inside the NCC/J, was launched at the Second Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers in 1997 to replace the Forum of Asian Immigrant Workers as a national network organization for all Japanese NGOs around the country.¹²⁴ It aims "to protect the rights of migrant workers and (other) migrant foreigners, to support activities toward their independence, and to work toward creating a Japanese society wherein multi-cultural and multi-ethnic people co-exist."¹²⁵ It was created to network on a national scale with individuals and groups in each locality and field, to strengthen systems for information

¹²³ APFS, "Annual Report of APFS Activity for 1996" (Tokyo: Internal document, 1997), p. 25.

¹²⁴ Interview with Ms. Ogasawara Kimiko of the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers in Tokyo, 7 April 1998.

¹²⁵ As stated in the "Agreement on National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers;" also available in its

exchange and mutual assistance, and to coordinate joint action. The group is represented by six prominent Japanese NGO activists that support illegal foreign workers: Ms. Shoji Rutsuko of the women's shelter HELP, Ms. Matsui Yayori of the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union, Mr. Niwa Masao of the lawyers support group RINK (Osaka), Father Yui Shigeru of the Christian NGO Asian Laborers Solidarity (Nagoya), and Reverend Watanabe Hideyoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai.

As a network group, the National Network in Solidarity with Migrant Workers regularly organizes the annual the All National Migrant Network for Activists and the National Forum on Migrant Workers every two years. I attended the annual NGO conference on 27-28 June 1998 in Atami, where over 80 activists from 32 NGOs around Japan gathered.¹²⁶ During the first day, Mr. Niwa Masao, a lawyer and representative of the Network for Asian Workers in Kansai (RINK), reported on the "Immigration Law System" while another activist presented a counter-report.¹²⁷ The participants are then divided into 5 separate groups and discussed specific cases they encountered over the year. The general meeting resumed an hour and a half later, when panel leaders gave a summary report of each group. The meeting broke up at 6:30 p.m. for a group dinner. During the dinner, each participant introduced her/himself and was asked to sing (without a *karaoke* box) or to dance. After dinner, it was time to enjoy Atami's famous *rotenburo* (open-air hot bath) and informally interact with each other over a few beers. Although everyone was assigned a room where they suppose to sleep, most came together into one room for more chatting and

homepage at <http://jca.ax.apc.org/migrant-net/index-me.htm> (21 August 1998), p. 1.

¹²⁶ Participant observation of the conference for the All National Migrant Network for Activists, 27-28 June 1998.

¹²⁷ A practice borrowed from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, where the Japan's government presents its annual report and Japanese NGOs offer a counter-report.

drinking until 3 o'clock in the morning. At 8 o'clock the next day, participants slowly got up for breakfast. By 9 o'clock, all were wide awake and ready for another round of meeting, where they prepared a report of the current situation of foreign workers in their region. The meeting ended at noon with a section for appeal from any group that wants to request special assistance or additional mobilization. By sharing information among each other group in this annual NGO Conference, Japanese activists can readily recognize pressing issues and work together to bring changes.

The National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers also organized the Third National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers on 5-6 June 1999 in Tokyo, where over 800 activists, scholars, and journalists attended. Such Forum occurs once every two years in different part of Japan. The previous two Forums were held in Saitama and Fukuoka. Mr. Torii Ippei of the Zentoitsu Workers Union opened the Third National Forum with introductory remarks in Japanese, English, and Korean. It was followed by four panel discussions from four prominent activists for foreign workers rights: Ms. Shoji Rutsuko from the Women's Shelter HELP (Tokyo), Mr. Niwa Masao from RINK (Osaka), Rev. Yui Shigeru from Asian Laborers Solidarity (Nagoya), and Mr. Murayama Satoshi from the Kanagawa City Union (Kawasaki). Reverend Watanabe Hideyoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai was the commentator.¹²⁸ As mentioned above, these speakers and the commentator were representatives of the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers. Ms. Rutsuko spoke about "The Current Situation of Non-Japanese Women in Japan," Mr. Niwa about the possibility of realizing "A Society where Multiple Ethnic Groups and Culture Co-exist,"

¹²⁸ Ms. Matsui Yayori, the other representative of the National Network, was attending an International Women Conference in Korea at the time.

Rev. Yui about “The History of Foreign Workers in Japan during the Past 10 Years and the Future View,” and Mr. Murayama about “The Aim at Full Application of Labor Laws, Expanding the Rights of Foreign Workers and Getting them Organized.” After the panel discussion, there were 12 group sessions where each participant could choose on which one to participate.¹²⁹ These group sessions lasted for two and half hour before they broke for dinner. After dinner, participants were invited to attend one of three group sessions on: 1) The Situation of Migrant Workers and their Families in Japan, 2) Solidarity among Asian Migrant Workers, and 3) Sharing among Migrant Workers in their Mother Tongue (which included Bangali, English, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, French, Persian, Burmese, Japanese, Chinese, and Urdu). On the following day, the Forum began with a dramatic and exaggerated skit by a lawyer group on the treatment of inmates in Japanese prisons. The skit was followed by a speech by two Iranian children, who spoke in fluent Japanese on being victimized as children of “illegal” foreigners and their benevolent feelings toward Japan. The Japanese seemed too perfect and the messages were too mature for their ages. Japanese activists may have assisted these children to write part, if not all, of these speeches.¹³⁰

The National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers can also organize other NGOs to prepare for special international conference on migrant rights. In 1994, for example, its predecessor group, the Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, formed the

¹²⁹ These group sessions include: 1) Migrant Workers and Labor Problems, 2) Problems of the Training System, 3) Immigration Laws and Residential Qualification, 4) Treatment and Measures from Arrest to Trial, 5) Living Together in a Community, 6) Support for Migrants' Daily Living & Medical Treatment, 7) Human Rights for Foreign Women, 8) Permanent Residence and International Marriages and Divorce, 9) Human Rights for Undocumented Children, 10) Education of Children, 11) Migrant Workers' Social Education, and 12) Concerning the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

¹³⁰ Participant observation of the Third National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers, 5-6 June 1999.

Research and Action Group on Women Migrant Workers in Japan, which consisted of organizations that have been involved in counseling, relief, and rescue operations of female migrant workers in Japan. This Group presented reports on the situation of exploited migrant women in Japan at the Fourth World (UN) Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.¹³¹

Most of the concerned citizens groups are highly ideological and try to promote civil rights in Japan. As such, they are prone to push the legal boundaries. For example, on 1 September 1999, the APFS (with five lawyers) organized a group of 21 people (5 families and 2 single person) from Iran, Bangladesh, and Burma, who had overstayed their visas in Japan to visit the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau.¹³² Mr. Yoshinari Katsuo, the president of the APFS, commented that “although they wish to continue living in Japan, they are ‘illegal immigrants’ with no rights, and can no longer bear to continue living under the present circumstances.” That was why, after long deliberation and at the risk of deportation, they took the decision to appear at the Immigration Bureau to request special permission for residence. These 21 foreigners arrived at the Immigration Office carrying toiletries and a change of clothes - prepared of being arrested. Since Immigration officers had been warned of their move, they were waiting for them and made no arrest. Instead, they questioned the 21 overstayed foreigners without lawyers’ assistance, because no lawyer or APFS staff was allowed inside interrogation rooms.

One year earlier on 8 July 1998, the same group protested against a Tokyo private hospital demanding the removal of an English sign that read: “This medical hospital is

¹³¹ On these groups and their individual reports, see Migrant Women Workers’ Research and Action Committee, “NGOs’ Report on the Situation of Foreign Migrant Women in Japan and Strategies for Improvement.”

obligated to report to the Immigration Office.” In Chinese, this sign erroneously referred to a “Japan Immigration Control Office,” where no office of such name existed, to scare away “illegal” foreign patients. The sign was mounted above the emergency room reception desk. It was put up a decade earlier because there had been many cases of foreigners who had overstayed their visas and who had refused to pay after receiving emergency room treatment. The group criticized hospital officials for putting up such a sign that may turn away foreigners who need medical treatment for life-threatening problems.¹³³ Mr. Yoshinari was successful to make the hospital acknowledged that, in fact, it was not “obligated” to report illegal foreigners to authorities and that the “Japan Immigration Control Office” is actually a bogus name before it finally took the sign down soon after the protest.

All concerned citizens groups confront the Japanese political system. As the people at the CALL Netowaaku explained, “...we at the CALL Netowaaku have primarily focused on resolving individual problems brought to us for consultation... [N]ow,...the movement has entered a stage where it must raise dynamic policy solutions.”¹³⁴ Similarly, the Kalabaw-no-kai also organized a campaign against the Immigration Reform in 1989 arguing that the reform

would go even further in treating foreign workers as criminals, and clearly result in entrapping them in the detrimental condition of “illegality.”...[T]his reform would worsen an already bad situation by further trampling upon their human rights...Rather...we should quickly adopt policies which treat these workers who must come

¹³² *Asahi Shimbun*, 2 September 1999.

¹³³ *The Japan Times*, 9 July 1998.

¹³⁴ Hatade Akira, “‘Gaikokujin jinken jourei an’ to ‘gaikokujin jinken onbuzuman’” [Proposed Regulation for Foreigner Human Rights and Foreigner Human Rights’ Ombudsman], in CALL Network, *Anata no machi no gaikokujin* [Foreigners in your Town] (Tokyo: Dai-ichi Shorin, 1991), p. 161.

as human beings and workers whose rights are protected.¹³⁵

On 18 April 1999, the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers organized a rally to protest the revision of the Immigration Control Law, because members of this group believed that the proposed revision would strengthen discrimination against foreigners.¹³⁶

Members of the group declared,

[a]mong us are Japanese, Koreans, migrant workers and ethnic minorities with Japanese nationality. We pledge to struggle together to destroy the seeds of assimilation and xenophobia planted by Japanese society and the state, and to resist all forms of discrimination against non-Japanese residents.¹³⁷

Approximately 350 people, including numerous illegal foreign workers, turned up for the protest. In addition, the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers sent representatives to lobby important international organizations at international conferences against Japanese policies toward foreign migrants. For example, it sent delegates to lobby at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights during fall 1998. There, it helped draft a counter-report on the Government of Japan and Human Rights, where it accused the Japanese government of various violations of human rights in their treatment of foreign migrants, ethnic minorities, and prisoners.¹³⁸

The source of funding for these concerned citizens groups mostly comes from membership fees. Some of these groups also receive small funding from their local governments for specific projects. For example, the Kalabaw-no-kai received 1,000,000

¹³⁵ Letter of appeal from the Kalabaw-no-kai to subscribers of its newspaper clippings. Quoted in Katherine Tegtmeyer Pak, "Living in Harmony: Prospects for Cooperative Local Responses to Foreign Migrants," in Sheila Smith, ed., *Local Voices, National Issues* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies), p. 65.

¹³⁶ On details of their argument, see *Migrant Network News* 12 (March 1999).

¹³⁷ *Migrant Network News* 13 (April 1999), p. 3.

¹³⁸ For details of the activities conducted by a delegate from the National Network in Solidarity with Migrant Workers, see *Migrant Network News* 9 (November-December 1998).

yen from the Kanagawa International Association in 1996 for the promotion of its Bangladeshi Section. The OC-Net received 200,000 yen from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and another 70,000 yen (and necessary books) from the Ota-ku for its project on Japanese Language Program for foreigners. Similarly, the Itabashi International Communications subsidizes the lecture series of the APFS.

Of the 14 men and 8 women from this group that I interviewed, only 12 had a bachelor degree. Two had a master degree, one of which had a master in engineering at the University of Tokyo. Four of the men were in their 60s, six are between 44 and 54, and rest were in their 20s and 30s. For women, there was no age pattern. Eleven people had been with their groups for less than five years and only five people had been at their group for more than ten years. Most tended to vote for the Socialist or Independent Parties. Only one person consistently voted for the LDP. Two activists did not vote at all and claimed that electoral politics do not bring real changes to Japanese society. As will be discussed in the next chapter, three local government officials are involved in a few of these concerned citizen groups. Those activists who came out of the labor movement typically were involved in the Student, AMPO, and Narita demonstrations.¹³⁹ The majority, however, do not have prior experiences in social movements. Some exception includes Reverend Watanabe Hidetoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai and Mr. Kawamata Koshin of the OC-Net. Reverend Watanabe Hidetoshi's father was a security police in Korea during World War II, which he was not particularly proud of. He had experience of helping Koreans in Japan

¹³⁹ In 1960, socialists, communists, unions activists (particularly from Sohyo), and students (particularly members of the *Zengakuren* Association) protested violently against the ratification of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. See W.G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1973), pp. 299-301. The Narita demonstration began in 1967 when urban students and Sanrizuka farmers organized protests of the construction of the New Tokyo International Airport in Narita. These protests turned highly confrontational between 1971 and 1977. See David E. Apter and Nagayo Sawa, *Against the*

when he left for a two-year study trip in the U.S. and a year in the Philippines. Two months after his return to Japan from the Philippines, he was recruited to become the representative of the Kalabaw-no-kai.¹⁴⁰ Mr. Kawamata Koshin was kicked out of Japan's Communist Party in the 1960s when he spoke against violence in China.¹⁴¹ Although most activists had extensive foreign experiences, the rural activists traveled abroad far less. Most had been in other Asian countries. Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai was fluent in Thai and translated Japanese into Thai for other groups.

In sum, some common characteristics and patterns in these support groups emerge when we categorize them into six types: Christian groups, community workers unions, women's groups, medical NGOs, lawyers association NGOs, and concerned citizens groups. Table 4.7 provides a summary of some common characteristics of these six types of Japanese NGOs that were discussed separately above. In essence, sixteen Christian NGOs provide labor and lifestyle consultations as well as dispute settlement to mostly Filipinos, Koreans, and *Nikkeijin*. Most of these Christian groups do not have a membership system as staff and volunteers are mostly church people. Accordingly, Christian groups receive most of the funding for the church. They help foreigners, because they hold an ethical view that all people, natives and foreigners, are equal children of God. Assisting foreigners also strengthens their campaign against the Japanese emperor system. Eight-teen community workers unions provide labor consultation and disputes settlement to

State: Politic and Social Protest in Japan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Rev. Watanabe Hidetoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Atami, Izu, 27 June 1998 and in Tokyo, 5 June 1999. Also see *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 18 May 1988.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Mr. Kawamata Koshin of the OC-Net in Tokyo, 7 April 1998.

Table 4.7: Summary Characteristics of Foreigners Supporting Japanese NGOs in Ibaraki, Gunma, Tokyo, and Kanagawa

Support Groups	No.	Size of Mem.	Services Provided	Ideological Motives	Foreigners Served	Activities not pertained to foreigners	Network Partners	Sources of Funding
Christian NGOs (C)	16	N/A	Labor & Family Consultations, Disputes Settlement	Equality (as God's children)	Filipinos, Koreans, Nikkeijin	Anti-emperor System Movement	W, Z	Churches
Community Workers Unions (U)	18	33-6000	Labor Consultation Disputes Settlement	Solidarity among all marginal workers	South Asians, Iranians	Workers Movement for part-time workers and workers in small firms	M	Members
Women Support Groups (W)	8	12-2500	Temporary Shelter Legal Advices Women Advocacy	Sexual Equality, Women Rights	Thai & Filipina women	Women Rights in Japan	C, L	Fees; Local Governments
Medical NGOs (M) -include Occupational Health and Safety Centers	19	650-6000	Medical Treatments Insurance Scheme Accidents Claims	Medical Equality (Good Health to All)	All illegals	Campaign to bring medical assistance to all people	U	Members; Local Governments, Central Government (MPT)
Lawyers Association NGOs (L)	11	19-540	Legal Consultations Disputes Settlement	Equality (based on concept of justice)	All illegals (part. Chinese)	Opposition to the Central Government	(W, U)	Fees
Concerned Citizens Groups (Z)	9	40-1700	Consultations Disputes Settlement	Racial Equality; Civil Rights	South Asians, Iranians	Civil Rights Movement	W, C, M, L, U	Members; Local Government (Kanagawa only)

mainly South Asians and Iranians. Membership of this group ranges from 33 to 6,000 workers, who provide all the sources for their operational funds. Japanese activists at these community workers unions assist illegal foreign workers in order to strengthen solidarity among all marginal workers, including part-time workers and workers at small firms. Eight women support groups offer temporary shelters and provide legal advice and women advocacy to mostly Filipina and Thai women. They assist foreign women, because they believe in sexual equality and women rights, which transcend national boundaries. Members in these groups range from 12 to 2,500 people. They acquire needed funds from membership fees, church donation, and subsidies from local governments. Medical NGOs, including the Occupational Health and Safety Centers, account for nineteen organizations – most numerous among the six types of support groups. These organizations provide medical treatment and insurance scheme, and make accidents claims for all foreigners. Their membership ranges from 650 to 6,000 people. They assist foreigners, because they believe that medical services should be available to all, particularly to those who have higher risks of getting ill and no means to pay for medical treatment. Assisting foreigners also strengthens their campaign to bring medical help to all people. The eleven lawyers NGOs, whose membership ranges from 19 to 540 people, offer legal consultations and disputes settlement to all foreigners at a small fee. They help illegal foreigners, because they feel that illegal foreigners are prone to being victims of Japanese injustice, particularly those caused by Japanese government policies. Finally, nine concerned citizens groups provide lifestyle and labor consultations as well as dispute settlements to mostly South Asians and Iranians. They assist illegal foreigners due to their belief in racial equality and civil rights. They have 40 to 1,700 members, who they rely on for membership fees. Some

of these groups also receive additional funds from local governments.

VII. SOLVING PROBLEMS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES ON JAPANESE SUPPORT GROUPS

These six types of foreigners support groups share one common characteristic; that is, the people who form these groups have extensive experience in helping the underprivileged people in Japan. Christians are accustomed to helping the poor. Community workers unions have been representing those workers that Japanese enterprise unions have abandoned. Women struggle to improve the social and legal position of women in Japan. Social-conscious doctors have extensive experience in serving the poor, the homeless, and other people who are more prone to get sick. Lawyers, progressive or not, have traditionally been assisting victims of injustice. And concerned citizens have historically been seeking civil rights for marginalized people in Japan.

Due to this reputation for helping the underprivileged people in Japanese society, illegal foreign workers seek assistance from these particular Japanese activists with their specific problems. Such problems include: physical abuse from Japanese employers or husbands, industrial accidents, unpaid wages, unfair dismissal, maltreatment by Japanese officials, and inability to receive or pay for medical treatment. Only illegal foreign workers with grave problems seek assistance from these Japanese NGOs. Legal foreigners and those illegal foreigners without serious problems rarely come to these groups. In fact, most have not even heard of them. In terms of ethnic background, Filipinos, Koreans, and *Nikkeijin* go to Christian NGOs. South Asian and Iranians, who usually suffer from labor-related problems, turn to community workers unions and concerned citizens groups.

Mostly Filipina and Thai women seek help and shelter from women support groups. All types of desperate illegal foreigners use the services of medical NGOs and lawyers associations NGOs.

Most impressively, these Japanese activists quickly responded to help solve their problems, despite not having prior experience in assisting Asian foreigners. They did this by forming foreigner support groups as extension but separate institutions from their original establishments. Christian NGOs evolved out of Catholic dioceses or NCC/J as separate entities. Women groups came out of larger women movement organizations or Christian churches. Regional bar associations established most of the lawyers associations groups. Community workers unions and medical NGOs were exceptions, for they served foreigners since the beginning of their establishment. Nevertheless, some community workers unions had created foreigners section within their unions, such as the Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ) and the Foreign Laborers' Union (FLU) of the National General Workers Union. AMDA and SHARE extended their international medical voluntary activities to include foreigners in Japan.

An important point that needs to be stressed is the timing in which these support groups were created. Christians were the pioneers in establishing support groups to help foreign migrant workers.¹⁴² They began in 1983 to provide counseling and shelters to mainly Filipina women in Japan. These counseling focused on how to resolve serious

¹⁴² Although two support groups existed before the creation of the earliest Christian NGOs, they did not originally serve Asian workers in Japan. The Tokyo English Life Line (TELL) was founded in 1973 by American Christians to help American servicemen overcome psychological problems and the Tokyo South (Nambu) Union began its support for Western English teachers in 1974. Similarly, the Women of Asia Association (now the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center) has been in existence since 1977 to promote women rights and to build networks with other women groups in Asia. However, it did not begin helping foreign women in Japan until much later.

problems Filipina entertainers faced, particularly rescuing them from snack bars.¹⁴³ By 1987 there were six Christian groups and the assistance had extended to various ethnic groups. Thereafter, several concerned citizens NGOs evolved out of Christian groups. During the end of the 1980s as foreign men made their presence in the construction industry and small manufacturing, some labor unions and lawyers associations NGOs join the struggle. After the 1990 revision of the Immigration Control Law and the oral direction to exclude overstayed foreign workers from the National Health Insurance program, numerous medical and occupational safety centers began forming support groups to help foreign workers. By the end of 1992, there were 68 support groups in these four areas. Only 4 groups emerged after the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995, to which many people have credited the recent NGO boom (see Diagram 4.1). Clearly, the Japanese government policies toward foreign workers, particularly against illegal foreign workers, have profound impact on the creation of these Japanese NGOs. As more and more foreign workers suffered as a result of specific government policies or lack thereof, they increasingly sought assistance from Japanese activists. As the problem disappeared, the organization also ceased to exist. This was the case of the Support Group of Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, which dissolved in 1996 after the termination of the court case on the three Thai women.

There are three benefits of establishing a separate entity to help foreigners. First, it allowed the group to specialize on assisting foreign workers and to accumulate knowledge to improve on their assistance. Although they have extensive experience in helping the

¹⁴³ Interviews with: Sister Ishii Yoshiko on the Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan in Tokyo, 27 August 1998; Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP in Tokyo, 2 December 1998.

poor and the distressed, these Japanese activists lack experience in helping newly arrived Asian foreigners. Forming support groups allowed them to share and to accumulate new knowledge on how to help foreign workers solve their problems. After six years of solving problems for illegal foreign workers, the Kalabaw-no-kai acknowledged that “there has been an accumulation of knowledge and experience in negotiating with employers.” As a result, “there has been an increase in our ability to solve problems [for foreign workers].”¹⁴⁴ In fact, some of these support groups have developed a specialization on helping certain ethnic groups. For instance, Foreign Laborers` Union (FLU), Koto Fureai Union, Santama Joint Labor Union, Hachioji Union, Bright International Union, Keihin Union, Edogawa Union, and Gunma Union serve mostly Bangladeshis and Iranians. Zentoitsu Workers Union concentrates their work on Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Indian workers. The Kanagawa City Union specializes on overstayed Korean workers. Concerned citizens groups such as the Kalabaw-no-Kai, the APFS, the OC-Net, and the Friends help Bangladeshis (and Pakistanis). Inoken specifically concentrates on Iranians. Volunteers at women’s shelter “Saalaa” became experts on Thai women. The Yokohama Bar Association – Sub-committee on Human Rights for Foreigners expresses deep understanding of illegal Chinese.

Second, creating a support group strengthens their bargaining power. In the words of people at the concerned citizens group Inoken, “in order to resolve [problems for illegal foreigners], we need a lot of people.”¹⁴⁵ This is particularly true for community workers unions that support illegal foreign workers. As Ms. Abe Fumiko of the Kanagawa City

¹⁴⁴ Kalabaw-no-kai, “Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai: Evaluation and Future Prospects,” p. 3

¹⁴⁵ Inoken’s internal document.

Union was taking attendance at the beginning of an *ichinichi koudou*, she remarked, “number is everything in order to have an effective bargaining.”¹⁴⁶ This is a reason why Mr. Murayama makes it mandatory for all foreigners seeking assistance to take part in at least one of its *ichinichi koudou* before he takes on their cases. Undoubtedly, bringing 21 overstayed foreigners to the Immigration Office in Tokyo to petition for their amnesty with 5 APFS lawyers carried more leverage than simply doing it alone. However, the size of membership for these groups varies from group to group - 12 people in the Friends of Thai Women Association to 6000 in the MF-MASH medical NGO.

Third, Japanese activists need to create a separate entity in order to raise necessary funds for their activities. Institutionalization requires members, which then begets membership fees. In certain groups, such as the Kalabaw-no-kai, it is their policy to “refrain from asking for expenses or any other financial payment” from their foreign clients.¹⁴⁷ Even Christian groups, who do not rely on memberships, must institutionalize in order to receive funding from their headquarters – either in Tokyo, Geneva, or Rome. As will be discussed in the next chapter, NGOs stand a better chance of receiving funding from local governments if they are well-established and stable institutions that have considerable long history.

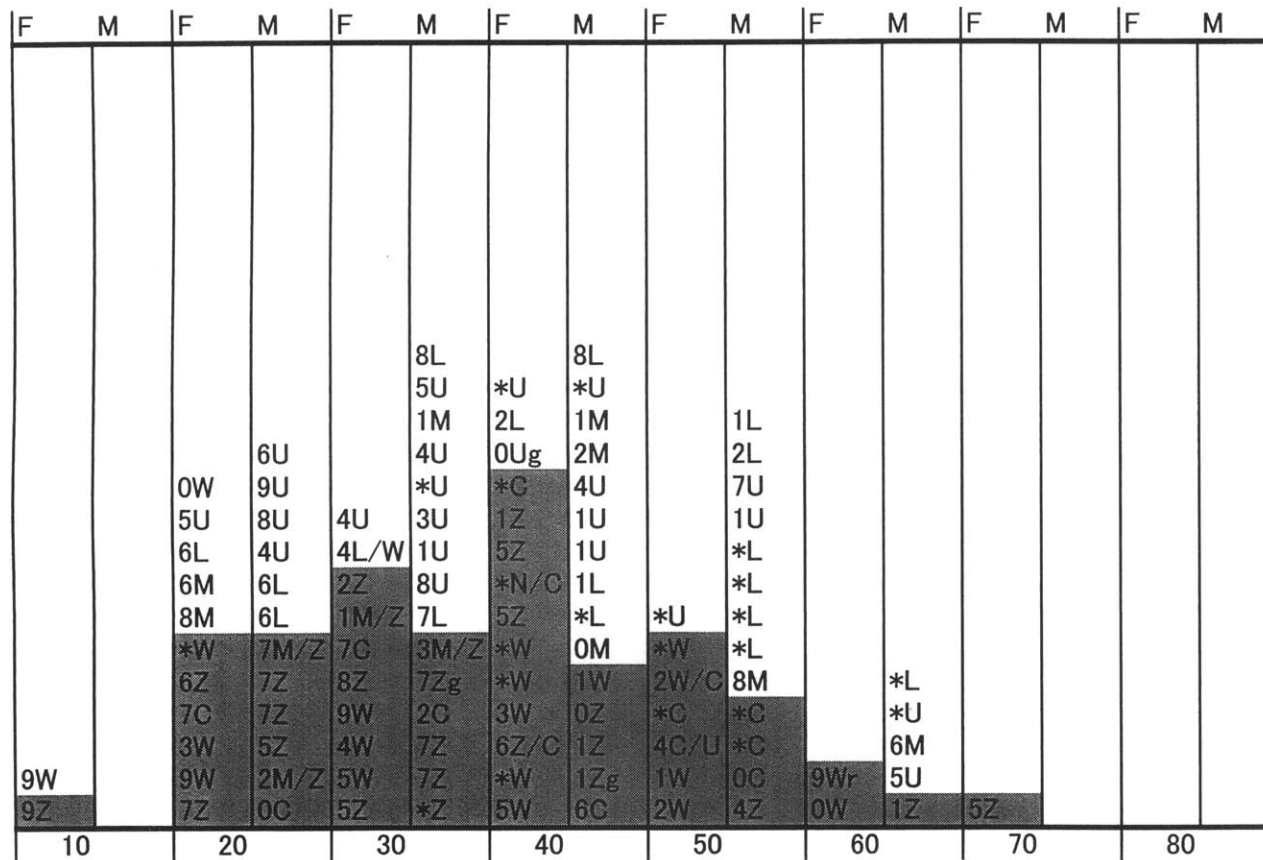
Members of these groups concentrate their activities on solving specific problems that illegal foreign workers bring with them to their institutions. Once their specific problems are resolved, foreigners usually leave these groups. For Japanese activists, however, they discover new meaning to their associative activities as they help to resolve

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Ms. Abe Fumiko of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki, 7 April 1998.

¹⁴⁷ Kalabaw-no-kai, “Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai: Evaluation and Future Prospects,” p. 9.

problems for illegal foreign workers. Because people who join these support groups must accept the belief of the group as stated in their charters, members soon find themselves united together by a common ideology of social equality in one form or the other. Such equality include civil equality, class equality, sexual equality, medical equality (good health to all), equality based on the concept of social justice, and equality based on the belief that all humans are children of God (see Table 4.7). As one might expect, members of these groups were Christians, radical unionists, citizens' rights activists, progressive lawyers, and activist doctors. Most of these people were dissatisfied with the social environment in which they were living in and shared an alternative vision for its improvement. In particular, 103 out of 107 Japanese staff and volunteers of these groups had never voted for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the few that had only did it on special electoral occasions. They were men and women mostly in their productive years - 30s, 40s, and 50s. According to the Stem and Leaf plot for the starting age of activists shown in Diagram 4.2, the median for the 107 activists interviewed was 41 years old. The lower quartile was 31 years old while the highest quartile was 51 years old. This means that half of the activists interviewed started their associative activities for illegal foreign workers between the age of 31 and 51. The youngest starting activist was a 19 years old woman and the oldest a 75 years old woman. The number of paid and non-paid staff was relatively equal for starting activists. Men (60), particularly those with professional careers such as doctors, lawyers, and labor unionists, out-numbered women (47), who mostly belonged to Christian NGOs, concerned citizens NGOs, and women support groups. Diagram 4.3 provides a Stem and Leaf plot for the 103 current activists interviewed. The median age was 45. The lower and upper quartile was 26 and 53, respectively. This Stem and Leaf plot also shows that

Diagram 4.2: Starting Age of Founders, Staffs, and Volunteers of Japanese NGOs Supporting Illegal Foreign Workers



Note: C = Christian NGO
 U = Labor Union
 W = Women Shelter/NGO
 L = Lawyers Association NGO
 M = Medical Support Groups
 Z = Concerned Citizens NGO

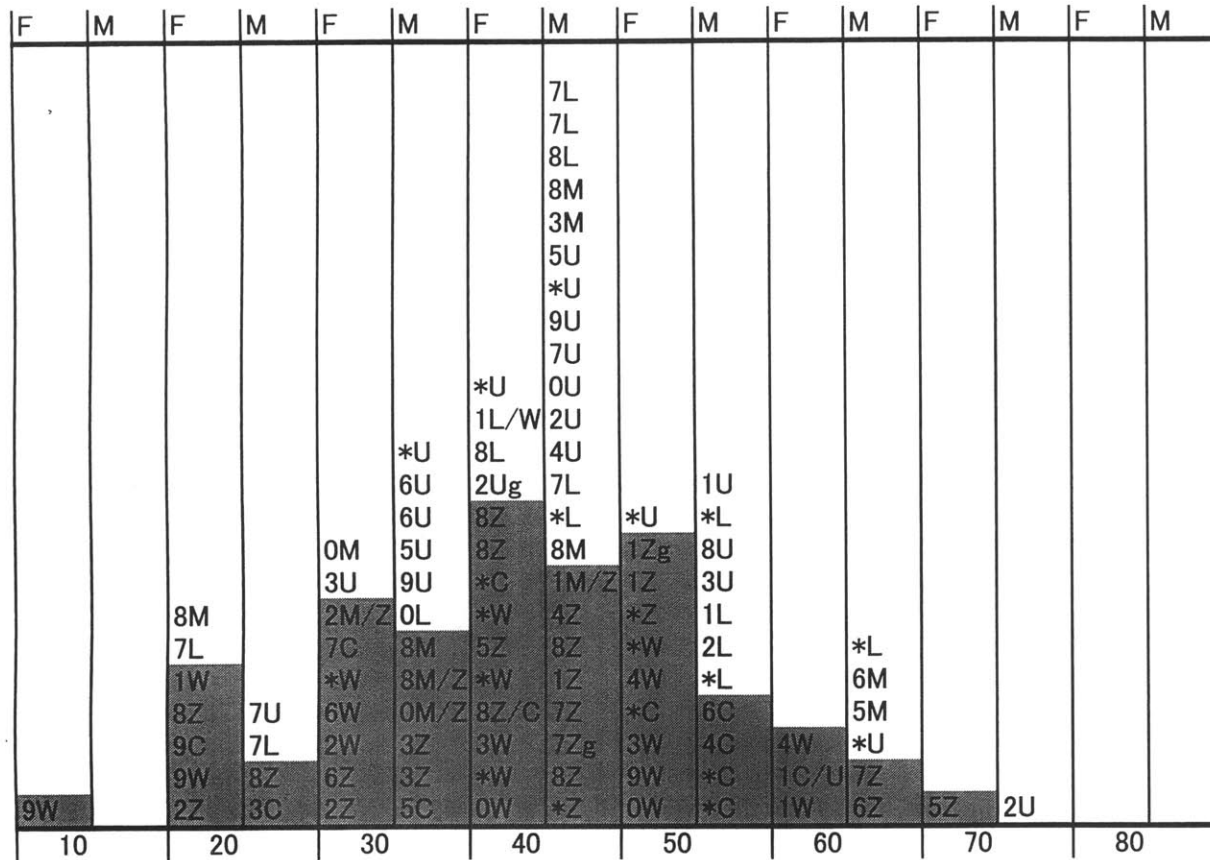
* = 10s, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, etc.
 g = local government officials
 r = retired

n = 107
 Median = 41(19, 31, 41, 51, 75)

■ = Non-paid staff (57 people)
 □ = Paid staff (50)

F = Female (47)
 M = Male (60)

Diagram 4.3: Current Age of Founders, Staffs, and Volunteers of Japanese NGOs Supporting Illegal Foreign Workers



Note:

C = Christian NGO
 U = Labor Union
 W = Women Shelter/NGO
 L = Lawyers Association NGO
 M = Medical Support Groups
 Z = Concerned Citizens NGO

* = 10s, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, etc.
 g = local government officials

$n = 103$
 Median = 45 (19, 26, 45, 53, 75)

■ = Non-paid Staff (58)
 □ = Paid Staff (44)

F = Female (45)
 M = Male (57)

Japanese activists for illegal foreign workers (37) were mostly in their 40s. The youngest activist was a 19 years old woman in a woman NGO while the oldest was a 75 years old man in a community workers union.

Moreover, these support groups are connected together by a web of cross-networking with other groups. In trying to solve problems for illegal foreigners, community workers unions build networks with medical and lawyers NGOs, Christian groups with women and concerned citizens NGOs, and women NGOs with all support groups but labor unions. The concerned citizens NGOs use the most extensive network (see Table 4.7). All these Japanese activists meet regularly at the annual meeting of NGO Activists, where they share information of their activities with each other, raise pressing issues, and work together to bring changes. During this meeting, Japanese activists eat together, play together, bathe together, and sleep together. Such cross-networking and regular interactions between Japanese activists from various groups create a warm atmosphere that they are not there alone - that there are people who share similar visions and act to fulfill those visions. In a sense, they created meaning to their associative activities.

Out of the newly discovered meaning from shared ideology and experience in helping illegal foreigners emerged a larger social and political movement for structural change in Japan as well as the capitalist world. For instance, Japanese activists at SOL feel that "Japanese society has put too much stress on homogeneity. This indicates...that we should take up the challenge of living with migrants."¹⁴⁸ Similarly, the ultimate goal at women's shelter Saalaa is "to build a society [in Japan] that no one needs shelter."¹⁴⁹ These activists

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Ms. Yamagishi Motoko of SOL in Kawasaki, 1 April 1998.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Ms. Fukushima Yuriko of the Women's Shelter Saalaa in Yokohama, 17 March 1998.

realize, as evident in a statement by the Kalabaw-no-kai, that solving problems for illegal foreign workers also mean they can work to change and to improve Japanese society.

One aspect of helping with labor problems is that it is an emerging measure to restore rights that have been deprived. Another is that while dealing with concrete cases it lays the groundwork for realizing a society which guarantees those rights.¹⁵⁰

Some groups possess more worldly and ambitious goals. The people at the Kalabaw-no-kai, for example, stated,

[a]long with taking up individual infringements of the human rights of foreign workers, we have also endeavored to appeal to society as a whole, and to promote movements which highlights related issues inherent in the structural exploitation of our world by capital. Though not intended, those endeavors have made up the special character of our organization¹⁵¹

The women's shelter HELP also expresses a world-view and "strive against the problems associated with the internationalization of prostitution and to eliminate the underlying structure of violence."¹⁵² At the same time, some of these groups claimed that they are careful not to use foreign workers for their own ideological purposes.

We are careful to avoid using [foreign] labor problems for any other purpose than helping the individuals who come to us. We could, on the occasion of their coming to us for advice, make it a condition that they join our organization... We have deliberately not used this method, and do not intend to do so. Our stance has and will continue to be: 'it is the foreign workers... themselves who have to confront the problem, we are only there to help them to do this.' Participation in our organization... must be left to the voluntary initiative of the individual.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai Evaluation and Future Prospects," pp 8-9

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵² Interview with Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP in Tokyo, 2 December 1998.

¹⁵³ Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of Kalabaw-no-kai: Evaluation and Future Prospects," p. 9.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In sum, these Japanese NGOs clearly go beyond the simple provision of basic information and translation for foreigners that government service organizations offer and show more concerns in helping illegal foreigners than the co-ethnic associations. Japanese activists at these institutions are problem-solvers. Illegal foreign workers seek them out, because they have extensive experience in helping the underprivileged in Japanese society. Despite that rich experience, these Japanese activists initially lacked expertise and know-how in helping foreigners, particularly illegal ones. To effectively solve problems for illegal foreigners, they created these support groups to acquire and to accumulate knowledge (on how best to help illegal foreigners), to increase their bargaining leverage (vis-à-vis the employers, Japanese husbands, and Japanese officials), and to explore various sources of funding for their activities. These groups can be categorized into six types: Christian groups, community workers unions, women's groups, medical NGOs, lawyers NGOs, and concerned citizens groups. Community worker unions and concerned citizens groups offer consultation and help settle labor disputes particularly to South Asians and Iranians. Christian NGOs also provide services in consultation and labor dispute settlement, but mostly to Filipinos, Koreans, and *Nikkeijin*. Women support groups give legal advice to foreign women and advocate for their rights. Some also provide temporary shelter for foreign women who are escaping from their abusive employers (and husbands). Mostly Filipina and Thai women seek help from women support groups. Medical NGOs provide medical treatments and deal with industrial accident claims for foreign workers. Some have established an insurance scheme for overstayed foreign workers. Lawyers associations NGOs provide legal consultation and help foreign workers settle their disputes.

Because of their professional services, medical and lawyers NGOs assist all illegal foreign workers.

These groups were created not to build ethnic identity among foreigners, because only foreigners who have serious problems go to these support groups for assistance. Once the problems are resolved, they leave the groups. However, “meaning” of such associative activities arised among Japanese activists themselves as they tried to solve problems for desperate foreigners. Japanese activists could associate themselves more as a member of a socially conscious community of activists, rather than an isolated and marginalized individual. Through associative activism, they discovered that others share similar ideology and common experiences. As they took on more and more cases for illegal foreigners, they realized that much of these people’s problems were structural and required them to challenge the establishment in order to resolve the problems. To do this, they must unite as organized activists to pressure the government for change. How are these support groups making an impact on the Japanese society is the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

IMPACT OF JAPANESE NGOS ON THE JAPANESE SOCIETY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

By solving problems for illegal foreign workers, Japanese activists have learned about the transformative effects that their activities have on the mass media, intellectuals, and local governments. Japanese activists, who gain expertise through their direct experiences with illegal foreign workers, become a rich source of alternative information on foreign workers for the mass media. Their activities have attracted intellectual attention and inspired collective action from the academic community inside and outside of Japan. More importantly, local government officials in particularly progressive areas, who often interact directly with foreign residents, have come to recognize and appreciate the work and expertise of the Japanese NGOs. Local government officials in the Kanagawa prefecture have initiated an NGO advisory council, where representatives of Japanese NGOs discuss and propose public policy on international issues to the governor. But these Japanese NGOs do not universally produce a positive impact on all communities in Japan. Certain Japanese and foreigner communities in Japan do not appreciate some of these Japanese NGOs. Japanese activists from other civil groups have expressed resentment on those foreigner support groups that do not interact with Japanese residents in their own communities. Meanwhile, many foreigners, particularly those who have not yet encountered serious problems and thereby a need for assistance, show distrust of the motive and sincerity of these Japanese NGOs.

This chapter examines the impact of these Japanese NGOs on Japanese society. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section looks at the contribution that these Japanese NGOs are making to the Japanese public discourse by offering an alternative and rich source of information about the struggles or problems that illegal foreigners in Japan encounter. The second section reviews the influence that these Japanese NGOs have

inside the academic circle. The third section focuses on the impact of Japanese NGOs on local government officials and institutions. The fourth section examines negative impact of Japanese NGOs on Japanese and foreigners communities. The fifth and last section summarizes the findings of the chapter.

I. THE CONTRIBUTION OF JAPANESE NGOS TO PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Japanese activists contribute to the public discourse by providing an alternative and expert source of information about the actual social conditions of illegal foreign workers in Japan. Through their direct interaction with various illegal foreign workers, Japanese activists have gained expert knowledge on those problems foreign workers face in Japan. Foreigner support groups publish and circulate newsletters to inform their members and Japanese activists from other groups about their activities as well as to share expertise with them. Moreover, many prominent members of these groups write informative books about foreign workers. These direct interactions with illegal foreign workers and their publications on the subject earn them recognition for being experts on illegal foreign workers. As a result, journalists from various Japanese newspapers turn to them for detailed and testimonial information about illegal foreign workers in Japan.

5.1.1 Disseminating Information on Illegal Foreign Workers through Newsletters and Books

As Table 5.1 to Table 5.6 illustrate, most of these foreigner support groups have newsletters. These newsletters record individual cases, provide summary statistics of foreign workers the group has helped, and inform members about up-coming events or

Table 5.1: Newsletters and Other Publications from Christian NGOs on Foreign Workers

No.	Group Name	Newsletters	Books and other Publications on Foreign Workers
1	つくばアジア出稼ぎ労働者と連席する会 (Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers)	「ニュースレター。。」	
2	あかつきの村 (Akatsuki-no-Mura)	「あかつきの村」の便り	
3	CTIC 亀戸相談センター (Catholic Tokyo International Center - CTIC)	「CTICニュース」	
4	滞日外国人と連帯する会 (Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan)	「きずな」	
5	難民・外国人労働者問題キリスト者連絡会 (Christian Coalitions on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers - Nankiren)	「難キ連Newsletter」	「移住労働者の権利を宣言する！」 [Declare the Rights for Migrant Workers!], 1993.
6	聖フランシスコ・山里相談室 (Yamasato Consulting Office)	The FPC Reaching out Yamazato Dayori	
7	在日アジア人労働者と共に戦う会 (Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan)	「アジアのまちへ」	「アジアからの出稼ぎ労働者はわしら仕事を奪うか？」 [Do Migrant Workers from Asia take away our Jobs?], 1989
8	Kapatiran・日本聖公会 (Kapatiran - Nihon Sei-Ko-Kai)	TINIG (until 1996)	
9	Makoto Kaibigan (Makoto Kaibigan)		
10	セントロクラベール (Centro Claver)		
11	フィリピンセンター (The Philippines Center)	Reaching Out	
12	横浜教区・滞日外国人と連帯する会 (Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants)	「にゆうすれたー」	<i>Manual for Migrants. Information for Living in Japan</i> (in Japanese, English, Spanish), 1997
13	フィリピンデスク (Korean Desk)		
14	韓国デスク (Philippines Desk)		
15	ラテンデスク (Latin Desk)		
16	フィリピンと日本を考える横須賀市民の会 (Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan)	「よこすかフィリピン通信」	

Table 5.2: Newsletters and other Publications from Community Workers' Unions on Foreign Workers

No.	Name of Group	Newsletter	Books and other Publications on Foreign Workers
1	ぐんまユニオン (Gunma Union)	「ぐんまユニオン ニュース」	「ユニオン・人間・ネットワーク」 [Union, People, Network], Dai-ichi Shorin, 1993
2	江戸川ユニオン (Edogawa Workers' Union)	「江戸川ユニオン」	Same as (1)
3	京浜ユニオン (Keihin Union)	「京浜ユニオン ニュース」	Same as (1)
4	すみだユニオン (Sumida Union)	「すみだユニオン 通信」	Same as (1)
5	全国一般労働組合東京南部 (National Union of General Workers-Tokyo South)	Kaiko	「外国人労働者権利白書」 [White Papers on the Rights of Foreign Workers], 1995
6	全統一労働組合外国人労働者分会 (Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu)	FWBZ News	Same as (5)
7	全労協全国一般東京労組FLU分会 (Foreign Laborers' Union - FLU)	FLU News	Same as (5)
8	東京ユニオン (Tokyo Union)	GU	Same as (1)
9	日本語学校教職員ユニオン (Japanese Language School Teachers Union)	「日本語学校通信」	Same as (1)
10	ねりまパートユニオン (Nerima Part-time Workers' Union)		
11	としまユニオン (Toshima Union)	「ささにごり」	Same as (!)
12	ふれあい江東ユニオン (Fureai Koto Workers' Union)	「デルタウン」	Same as (1)
13	八王子ユニオン (Hachioji Union)	「八王子ユニオン」	Same as (1)
14	三多摩合同労働組合 (Santama Joint Labor Union)	「ユニオン」	Same as (1)
15	北部パートユニオン (Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union) 旧: 北区地域ユニオン (Former: Kita-ku Community Union)	「北区ユニオン ニュース」	Same as (1)
16	神奈川シティユニオン (Kanagawa City Union)	「ユニオンショック」 (Union Shock)	Same as (1) and (5)
17	かながわ・横浜勤労者ユニオン (Yokohama Workers' Union)	「かながわ・横浜 ユニオンニュース」	Same as (1)
18	女ユニオン・かながわ (Women Union - Kanagawa)	「とびだせ! 女 たち」	Same as (1)

Table 5.3: Newsletters and Other Publications from Women Support Groups on Foreign Workers

No	Name of Support Group	Newsletters	Books and other Publications on Foreign Workers
1	下館事件タイ3女性を支える会 (3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident Support Group)	「支える会ニュース せーりーパープ」	「その日、日本で」[That Day, in Japan], 1994; 「売春社会日本へ、タイ人女性から手紙」[To Prostitution Society Japan, Letters from Thai Women] Akashi Shoten, 1995.
2	アジアの女性資料センター (Asia - Japan Women's Resource Center) 旧: アジアの女たちの会 (Former: Women of Asia Association)	「女たちの21世紀」	「アジアから来た出稼ぎ労働者たち」[Foreign Migrants from Asia] Akashi Shoten; Women's Asia 21 Voice from Japan; <i>Women from across the Seas</i> , 1988.
3	タイ女性の友の会 (Friends of Thai Women Association) 旧: タイ女性支援基金 (Former: Thai Women's Supporting Group)	「サワデウィー通信」	
4	ぐるーぷ赤かぶ (Group Akakabu)	「赤かぶニュース」	Article by Sakai Wako in 「優される人権外国人労働者」 [Violated Human Rights: Foreign Workers], 1992
5	女性の家 HELP (Women's Shelter HELP)	「女性の家HELP ネットワークニュース」	「HELPから見た日本」[Japan through the Eyes of Women Migrants] Asahi Shimbunsha, 1988 (Eng 1989), 「アジアの女性によって日本が見えてきた」
6	反差別国際運動 (International Movement Against All Forms of Discriminations and Racism - IMADR)	「[IMADR-JC通信」	[Japan's Problems for Asian Women], 1996
7	かながわ・女のスペース"みずら" (Kanagawa Women's Space "Mizula")	「みずら通信」	「横浜市女性相談ニーズ調査報告書I」[Yokohama Women Consulting Needs Survey Report I], 1996. Articles by Ms Abe in [Japanese Problems Appear for Asian Women], 1996
8	女性の家"サーラー" (Women's Shelter "Saalaa")	「サーラー通信」	「サーラーQ&A」[SaalaaQ&A], 1996; Article by Ms Fukushima in 「来日外国人入国白書」[White Paper on Human Rights of Newcoming Foreigners], 1997

Table 5.4: Newsletters and Other Publications from Medical NGOs on Foreign Workers

No.	Name of Support Group	Newsletters	Books and Other Publications on Foreign Workers
1	AMDA国際医療情報センター (AMDA International Information Center)	AMDA Newsletter	「医者と患者双方の手助けになれば。」[To be Helpful for both Doctors and Patients]「日本の
2	SHARE (国際保健協力市民の会) (SHARE)	Bon Partage	医療・福祉制度ガイド」[Guide to Japan's Medical & Welfare System], Nakayama Shoten, 1993.
3	亀戸ひまわり診療所 (Kameido Himawari Clinic)	「ひまわり通信」	Article about Dr. Hirano in [Unions, People, Network], 1993.
4	TELL Filipino Line (Tokyo English Life Line - TELL Filipino Line)	TELL Connections	
5	三多摩労災職業病センター (Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Center)		
6	東京労働安全衛生センター (Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center) 旧: 東京東部労災職業病センター (Former: Tokyo East District Occupational Safety and Health Center)	「東部労災職業病」	「すべての外国人に医療保障を」[Medical Security to All Foreigners], Kaifu Shoubou, 1992.
7	全国労働安全衛生センター連絡会議 (Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center)	「安全センター情報」 JOSHRC Newsletter	「外国人労働者の労災白書」[White Paper on Foreign Workers' Industrial Accidents], Kaifu
8	国際互助組合ブライツ (BRIGHT International Cooperative Society)	None	Shoubou, 1992, 「いのしの差別 外国人労働者の労災・医療」[Discrimination on Life Foreign
9	すべての外国人に医療保障を！連絡会議 (Health Insurance to All Foreigners! Committee)	None	Workers' Industrial Accidents-Medical Expenses], Shakai Shinsho, 1993
10	在留外国人の医病問題を考える市民の会 Esperanza-no-kai	「エスペランサ」	
11	みなとまち健康互助会 (MF-MASH)	「みなとまち健康互助会ニュース」 MF-MASH News	「外国人労働者と労働災害」[Foreign Workers and Labor Disaster], Kaifu Shoten, 1991
12	港町診療所 (Minatomachi Clinic)		
13	十条通り病院 (Jujo-dori Clinic)	Same as above	
14	横須賀中央診療所 (Yokosuka Chuo Clinic)	Same as above	
15	伊勢佐木クリニック (Isezaki Women's Clinic)	Same as above	
16	いまい国際クリニック (Imai International Clinic)	Same as above	
17	小林国際クリニック (Kobayashi International Clinic)	None	「外国人患者診察ガイドブック」[Guidebook to Medical Treatment of Foreigners], Mikusu, 1993
18	SABAY (SABAY)	None	Carolyn Stevens writes about SABAY in <i>On the Margins of Japanese Society</i> , Routledge, 1997
19	神奈川県労災職業病センター (Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center)	「かながわ労災職業病」	

Table 5.5: Newsletters and other Publications of Lawyers Support Groups on Foreign Workers

No.	Name of Support Group	Newsletter	Books and Other Publications on Foreign Workers
1	パートナー(群馬県外国人問題弁護団) (Partner)	None	
2	外国人労働者弁護団 (LAFLR) (Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights)	LAFLR Newsletter	「外国人労働者と権利救済」[Foreign Workers and Rights Relief] Kaifu Shobo, 1993
3	入管問題調査会 (Immigration Review Task Force)	「入管問題調査会 News Letter」	<i>Testimonies of Foreigners who have been Deported from Japan '95-'97</i> , 1999.
4	東京弁護士会・外国人 인권救済センター (Tokyo Bar Association-Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights)	None	「悲しいパスポート」[Lonely Passport] Doujidaisha, 1991, 「外国人 인권救済の手引」 [Guideline to Human Rights Protection of Foreigners], 1995, 「外国人法律相談」[Legal Consultations for Foreigners] Akashi Shoten, 1996, 「Q&A 外国人のための法律ガイド」 [Q&A Legal Guide for Foreigners] Akashi Shoten, 1997, 「外国人 인권救済実例」 [Actual Cases on the Protection of Human Rights], Akashi Shoten, 1998
5	法律扶助協会 (Japan Legal Aid Association)	None	「外国人の法律相談Q&A」[Legal Consultations of Foreigners Q&A] Gyosei, 1998
6	外国人刑事弁護団 (LAFOCC) (Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases)	LAFOCC	「長い旅の重荷」[A Long Journey with a Burden] Kaifu Shoubou, 1993
7	東京第一弁護士会・国際人权部会 (Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association-International Human Rights Section)	None	「来日外国人 인권白書」[White Paper on Human Rights of Newcoming Foreigners], Akashi Shoten, 1997, 「日本で暮らす外国人の子どもたち」[Children of Foreigners Living in Japan] Akashi Shoten, 1997
8	東京第二弁護士会・人权擁護委員会 (Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association-Human Rights Protection Committee)	None	
9	自由人权協会・外国人の権利小委員会 (Japan Civil Liberties Union/Foreigners Rights Subcommittee)	Universal Principle	
10	社会権規約小委員会 (Social Rights Sub-committee)		
11	横浜弁護士会外国人法律相談窓口 (Yokohama Bar Association Legal Consultation for Foreigners)	None	「弁護士になりたいあなたへII」[You who want to become a Lawyer II], Shounensha, 1997, Article by Miki Emiko in Nichibenren, ed .
12	神奈川県行政書士会・渉外行政書士研究会 (Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association - Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group)	None	「定住化時代の外国人の人权」[Human Rights for Foreigners in the Era of Settlement] Akashi Shoten, 1997

Table 5.6: Newsletters and Other Publications from Concerned Citizens Groups on Foreign Workers

No.	Name of Support Group	Newsletters	Books
1	フレンズ (群馬外国人労働者支援連絡会) (Friends)	「フレンズ News」	
2	あゆみの会 (Ayumi-no-Kai)	None	
3	外国人とともに生きる大田・市民ネットワーク (Ohta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness - OC Net)	「OCNet通信」	
4	移住労働者連帯運動・高田馬場準備会 (Takadanomaba Preparation Committee for Migrant Workers) 旧:いのけん(渋谷・原宿生命と権利をかちとる会) (Former: Shibuya-Harajuku Group to Gain Life and Rights)	「のじれん」 「いのけん通信」	
5	CALL ネットワーク (Call Network)	「CALL」	「あなたの町の外国人」[Foreigners in your Town], Dai-ichi Shoin, 1991
6	Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS) (Asian Peoples Friendship Society - APFS)	「This land is ___」	「国際結婚の基礎知識」[Foundation of Knowledge on International Marriage], Akashi Shoten, 1995.
7	移住労働者と連帯する全国ネットワーク (National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers) 旧:アジア人労働者問題懇談会 (Former: Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers)	「Migrants' ネット」 Migrant Network News 「移住労働者通信」	<i>The Asian Worker's Handbook</i> , Akashi Shoten, 1988; 「優される人権外国人労働者」[Violated Human Rights: Foreign Workers], Dai-san Shokan, 1992, 「外国人と国際人権」[Foreigners and International Human Rights], Kaifu Shoubou, 1992.
8	外国人労働者と連帯する神奈川連絡会議 (Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems)		
9	カラバオの会 (Kalabaw-no-Kai)	「Kalabaw」	「仲間じゃないか、外国人労働者」 [Foreign Workers, Aren't they our Comrades?], Akashi Shoten, 1990
10	カラバオ・相模原 (Sagamihara Solidarity with Foreign Workers)	「Karabaw」	

activities. Some also disclose the group's financial situation. With the exception of community workers unions, many foreigners support groups publish their newsletters in both Japanese and English. The women's shelter Saalaa even has a Thai language version. These newsletters, which are distributed to their members and sometimes to the officers of their networking groups, bind members together and build networks of Japanese activists, who are assisting illegal foreign workers.

Japanese activists usually record testimonial accounts of illegal foreigners in their newsletters. For example, a HELP newsletter, *Network News*, offered the following account of a Thai woman who escaped from Shimodate in the Ibaraki prefecture.

She said that she had worked as an office worker in Bangkok, but the Thai economy was not very strong. She was encouraged to work as an "office lady" in Japan where the pay is better. So, she handed over all her savings, in addition to 400,000 yen she borrowed from her relatives.

However, when she arrived at Narita, the Japanese man who had brought her to Japan told her to sneak past the immigration inspectors... [Then, he] took her to a hotel. There she met another Japanese man and a Taiwanese mama-san. They made her count out 4,000,000 yen and then gave it to the man who had brought her to Japan. It was at this point that she first knew she had been sold.

She was taken to Shimodate and, along with a dozen or so other Thai women, forced into prostitution. She really hated it and her customers complained to her boss that they got bad service. As a warning to other women, the boss bound her feet with chains... and ...violently abused her. She always begged her customers to help her get back home, but they said they were too afraid.

Finally, after three months she was able to escape... [A] month later, the broker and restaurant owner, in addition to other people involved in this case, were arrested, and this woman's passport and identification papers were returned. However, when the police arrested them, they also found a poster with her picture offering a 500,000 yen reward to anyone who could find her.¹

Similarly, a lawyer NGO's newsletter, *LAF OCC*, tells a troubling story of an overstayed Pakistani man who faced deportation. His deportation would mean forced separation from

¹ *Network News* 32 (May 1998), English in original.

his *nikkei* Peruvian wife.

On January 27th, 1997, Mr. M was waiting for his employer on Route 2 in Hiroshima-shi when a patrol car happened to pass by. The police stopped to interrogate him and discovered that he had been overstaying his visa for 8 years. He was later detained and indicted on February 6th... When Mr. M was arrested, he had just begun living together with a *Nikkei* Peruvian woman... They married on March 14th in order to proceed with an application for a "special resident visa status" (在留特別許可) [for Mr. M]... The verdict [on the indictment] came on March 31st,... where the court ordered him to be under surveillance for 3 years... On September 12th..., the Immigration Bureau... notified Mr. M that his application [for a special resident visa status] had been rejected... [We fight] in order to overrule the judgement of the Minister of Justice, which aims to split up the family.²

Occasionally, the testimony on how foreigner rights have been violated comes directly from the voices of the illegal foreign workers themselves. A Zentoitsu Workers Union's newsletter, *FWBZ News*, carries the following remarks by a Bangladeshi.

...[M]y name is Md. Mizan [from]...Bangladesh...I was working in "Kinzok Press" when I [had] an accident and got my fingers cut. After the accident, my president (Shacho) opened [a] false bank account in [my] name...without my knowledge. Since then, I have been fighting over my case as [a] Zentoitsu Workers Union member. The decision for my case is still under consideration in the court.³

Although this particular group publishes only Japanese newsletters, the testimony from the Bangladeshi worker was written in English. This increases the creditability of the report as well as draws new (English-speaking) foreign workers into the union. Sometimes, a newsletter may carry a conversation between illegal foreign workers and Japanese activists, such as the following article in the *MF-MASH News* about an overstayed Pakistani worker.

In January 1991 Mohammad Iqbal from Pakistan, who was working at the Nissan Gurabia printing factory in Kawasaki City, had his right arm injured in an industrial accident. This resulted in amputation of the arm at a point half way between the shoulder and elbow. Worried

² *LAFOCC* 15 (25 November 1997), my translation

³ *FWBZ News* 8 (5 June 1999), English in original

..., Iqbal-san came seeking advice to the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center.

After he joined Kanagawa City Union, negotiations on compensation were held with his former employers. However they maintained that "he did it deliberately," and "he did it for the money," and the negotiations broke down. In March 1992 his case was taken to the Yokohama District Court.

Recently, I talked directly with Iqbal-san on an international call to Karachi.

Kawamoto: Is that Iqbal-san?

Iqbal: Is that Kawamoto-san? How are you?

Kawamoto: I am well. Are you receiving the money?

(Because of a discrepancy between the Labor Ministry and the bank, his pension did not arrive for the first six months).

Iqbal: It's alright. It's coming.

Kawamoto: Are you working now?

Iqbal: Yes. I am helping my cousin's business. There is no work here like in Japan.

Kawamoto: Are your wife and children well?

Iqbal: Yes, thank you.

Kawamoto: Your Japanese is still good. You can speak better than me!

Iqbal: It would be awful if I forgot it.

Kawamoto: It looks as if the court case will continue for another while.

Iqbal: It would be good if I could go to Japan once more.

Kawamoto-san, please come to Pakistan.

Kawamoto: Yea. It would be good if we could all go.

Iqbal: Are Miki-san, Hono-san, Orimoto-san all well? (The members of Iqbal-san's team of lawyers)

Kawamoto: Yes, they're doing their best.

Iqbal: And the people at Minatomachi and the Union?

Kawamoto: They are all busy working.⁴

The conversation between Mr. Kawamoto and Mr. Iqbal displays a warm and caring relationship between a Japanese activist and an illegal foreign worker. Interestingly, this article further demonstrates the tight network between four NGOs in Yokohama to help an overstayed foreign worker. Mr. Kawamoto Hiroyuki of the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center wrote this piece in the MF-MASH newsletter. In the article, Mr. Kawamoto mentioned the Kawasaki City Union, the Minatomachi Clinic, and members of the Yokohama Bar Association's Legal Consultation for Foreigners (Ms. Miki Emiko and

⁴ MF-MASH News 6 (October 1993), English in original

her colleagues). Such cross-references further helped to tighten the relationship among these four groups and promote the activities of each other work.

Warmth and compassion for illegal foreigners appear to be common in most newsletters of foreigner support groups. The newsletter of the Yamasato Consulting Office even expresses warmth and sympathy for foreign criminals in Japan. Instead of criticizing the foreigners for the crimes they have committed, Father Nakaya Isao focuses his criticism on the deplorable condition of Japanese prisons. This is evident in Father Nakaya's account in the *Yamazato Dayori* about his encounter with a Chinese inmate at the Tokyo Detention Center.

The first time I met Mr. S from China he said in Japanese...."I really don't understand, but thanks for coming." These were the... words of someone who...was surprised that a Japanese person whom he had never seen before would suddenly come to visit him.

Mr. S had killed someone in a fight and was imprisoned for four years before a decision was reached... The first two years were spent at the Tokyo Detention Center. He was really at the mercy of the cold-hearted detention center [officials]. Until we began visiting him, he had not one single visitor, no change of clothes or personal money, and he had not been able to even write home... [T]here are many unconvicted foreign prisoners like Mr. S who can not receive visits from friends and family who want to see them and can not receive clothes or other daily necessities.⁵

In the English version newsletter *View from Sanya*, Father Nakaya expressed concerns with the recent news media sensation about the rise in crimes committed by illegal foreigners and offered some compelling reasons for this apparent increase in the figure. One is his belief that the number of illegal foreign workers in Japan is much higher than the official figure. Therefore, the crime rate per capita for illegal foreigners should be much lower.⁶ Additionally, their illegal status forced them to "always be on guard" and to "live in

⁵ *Yamazato Dayori* 12 (December 1997). English in original.

crowded rooms” with 5 to 6 others. Father Nakaya believes that in this situation, quarrels and fights easily happen, because it is not natural to live that way.⁷

Women’s shelters, Saalaa and HELP, also publish original surveys of foreign women who stayed there in their newsletters, *Saalaa* and *Nettowaaku*, respectively. For example, Saalaa interviewed 160 foreign women who have used the shelter since its opening in September 1992 to December 1994. From these interviews with foreign women while they were staying at the shelter, they have learned how these women got to Japan and how they have been treated since the day they arrived in Japan. Of these 160 people, 132 were Thai women who were brought to Japan by a broker. In its January 1995 *Saalaa* newsletter (Thai language version), Saalaa provided detective-like information on the international trafficking of women from Thailand to Japan. It started with some characteristics of Thai prostitutes in Japan.

Most of these women were between 20-30 years of age (see Table 1). Of the 132 Thai women, 59 were single while the other 63 were married (and/or separated from their husbands). And 56 of these women had children. Some came to Japan to run away temporarily from their boyfriends or husbands in Thailand. Marital troubles had made their decision to enter into prostitution easier, particularly if they were to do so in a far distant land. And some enter the profession in order to support their children left behind at home (usually at the houses of their parents). Most of these women came from Bangkok and the central region of Thailand. In addition to Bangkok, the North and the Northeast provinces, such as, Chiangmai, Chiangrai, Nakorn Sawan, Udonthani, and Khon Kaen, supply a large number of Thai prostitutes in Japan.⁸

Disclosing information on the marital status and hometowns of Thai women demonstrates that the group has gained trust from these women and is relatively familiar with their country. The article then proceeded with an explanation on methods used to lure Thai

⁶ View from *Sanya* 2 (April 1998), English in original.

⁷ *Ibid*

women to come to Japan.

In most cases, close friends or neighbors were their main source of information on available methods of entering into Japan (see Table 2). Many were deceived and had thought that they were going to be working in restaurants or factories in Japan. But some knew exactly that they were expected to become female escorts and prostitutes in Japan (see Table 3). In any case, no one had expected that they would be sold into a bar or night club and thereby incurred a large financial debt to club owners. Most of these women came to Japan for financial reasons (see Table 4)...⁹

Most interestingly about the interviews with Thai women who stayed at the shelter are the underground information about the preparation of travel documents for Thai women to enter Japan and the role that Thai brokers play in the process. The newsletter also provides information on the route that these women took to get to Japan.

After a woman had decided that she would go to work in Japan, the first person she would encounter is the so-called "*nai jang*" (broker), who would arrange all the travel documents (passports, Japanese visa) for her. The brokers are usually Thai, but a few were foreigners as well as Japanese (see Table 5). Not surprisingly, many of the women carried falsified travel documents. For example, of the 132 Thai women, 68 of them carried real passports while 57 carried fake ones. And of these 57 women, 38 entered Japan via an intermediary country, particularly via Malaysia and Singapore (17).¹⁰

Finally, the newsletter provides statistical data on the wretched living and working conditions of Thai women after they have arrived in Japan.

After they had arrived in Japan, they were taken to different regions of the country to be sold to a boss or to a *mama-san*. Most of the bosses and *mama-san* were Japanese, but some were Thai and Taiwanese as well (see Table 6). The boss or *mama-san* in Japan paid the *nai jang* in Thailand between 1,500,000 to 1,800,000 yen per each person. After these women were sold, only then did they become aware that they had incurred financial debt to the *mama-san* or the boss in which they must repay in order to reclaim their freedom. The amount that these Thai women must repay to their bosses and *mama-san* in Japan was usually twice more than the amount the latter originally had paid.

⁸ *Saalaa Newsletter* (Thai language version) 1 (January 1995), my translation

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ *Ibid*

Hence, the debt of between 3,500,000 to 3,800,000 yen is considered normal... These women were forced into prostitution in order to pay back all their debt. Thai women received between 20,000 to 30,000 yen per customer for their sexual service. In the meantime, these women were closely watched by their bosses and mama-san. The bosses and mama-san often threatened them if they entertained the idea of escaping. In order to intimidate or to discipline these women, the bosses or mama-san often beat these women. To make the matter worse for these women, they often encountered a situation of perpetual debt, because they also must pay rent to their brokers or Mama-san in Japan. Medical and other miscellaneous expenses were additional financial burden to them. As a way to force them to prolong their prostitution service, it was not uncommon to see these women being resold and transferred to other brokers elsewhere.

Of the 132 Thai women, 32 resided in the Ibaraki prefecture. Others were from Chiba, Saitama, Gunma, and Nagano. Ibaraki is dubbed for being the Japanese "Bangkok," because it is home to many Thais and Thai night clubs.¹¹

Japanese activists at Saalaa then attached relevant tables to the end of this report in its newsletter.

Rather than being an isolated incident by one or two foreign women, these surveys demonstrate that hundreds of others share common experiences. The surveys show how foreign women got to Japan and what type of situation these women went through while they were in Japan. More importantly, the large number of samples further gives credence to their stories and expertise. As apparent in the above citation, Japanese activists backed their claims and stories with numerous tables and original statistical data. Newsletters from other support groups contain similar surveys on those foreigners they have helped.

Support groups from various Occupational Safety and Health Centers occasionally find unpublished but relevant surveys and materials from the Ministry of Labor to print in their newsletters.¹² For example, the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² For example, see Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, *Anzen Sentaa Joohou* 244 (July 1998).

Center (JOSHRC) collected data from the Ministry of Labor on occupational injuries of foreign workers by nationality and published them in its 「安全センター情報」. Newsletters from labor unions and concerned citizens groups usually contain information of their activities and specific cases handled during a given period.

In addition to their newsletters, many prominent members of these support groups also publish books about foreign workers in Japan. As Table 5.1 to 5.6 demonstrate, books from these support groups include guides on how Japanese activists can help illegal foreign workers, testimonies of illegal foreign workers, and surveys on or studies of illegal foreign workers. Guidebooks on how Japanese activists can assist illegal foreign workers include *The Asian Worker's Handbook* by the Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers and the *Manual for Migrants: Information for Migrants Living in Japan* by the Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants, which are published in Japanese, English, and Spanish. These guidebooks, which suppose to be useful for Japanese activists as well as foreigners, provide numerous sample questions and answers in both Japanese and English. In *The Asian Worker's Handbook*, for instance, the authors raise a sample question on the inability for an overstayed foreign worker to pay for medical treatment and then proceed to provide an answer.

Q20: I am sick, but I don't have any money. Furthermore, I have overstayed my visa... I am afraid to go to the hospital. What can I do?

A20: If your illness is not serious, contact the nearest support group. If you are very sick and need urgent treatment, ask a friend to call an ambulance (dial 119...). The ambulance will take you to a hospital. If you become seriously ill on the street, you may be treated free of charge as a charity case depending on the circumstances.

Be aware that in this case, if you are here illegally, the hospital will probably report you to the Immigration Bureau, and you are likely to be deported. If the authorities try to deport you before you get well, ask [them] to allow you [to] stay [in Japan] until you are back on you

feet again.¹³

Several lawyers support groups also publish legal guidebooks, but most aim to provide references for Japanese lawyers who are helping foreigners. For each sample situation, the authors of these books go into greater detail about the applicable law, its legal conditions, and loopholes.¹⁴

Testimonial books include *Letters from Thai Women to Prostitution Society Japan* 「売春社会日本へ、タイ人女性からの手紙」 by the Support Group of Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, *Lonely Passport* 「悲しいパスポート」 by the Tokyo Bar Association - Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights, *A Long Journey with a Burden* 「長い旅の重荷」 by a member of the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association – Human Rights Protection Committee, *Testimonies of Foreigners who have been Deported from Japan* by the Immigration Review Task Force, and *Foreign Workers, Aren't They our Comrades?* 「仲間じゃないか、外国人労働者」 by the Kalabaw-no-kai. These books contain detailed cases involving illegal foreign workers and how their rights have been violated. In *Letters from Thai Women to Prostitution Society Japan*, for example, the support group or authors use letters written by the three Thai women involved in the Shimodate Incident to reconstruct the morbid conditions that ignited these desperate women to murder their Thai boss. The letters, which were originally written in Thai to their families in Thailand, discuss the dreams and the aspirations that these Thai women hold as they journeyed to Japan. The authors unyieldingly believed that these women were forced into prostitution. They described how these three women were lured to come to

¹³ Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, ed., *The Asian Worker's Handbook* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1988), p. 33.

¹⁴ For the best example, see Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association – International Human Rights Section, ed., *Gaikokujin no*

Japan with a belief that they would be working at a restaurant or a factory. After they arrived in Japan, a Thai boss (Lek), informed them that they have incurred a debt of 3,500,000 yen, which they must pay back by performing sexual services to Japanese clients at a snack bar in Shimodate-shi of the Ibaraki prefecture. Lek took away their passports and personal identifications and placed them in a room with 36 other Thai women. The Japanese mama-san taught these women key catch phrases to be used with Japanese customers, such as:

“Sex, thirty thousand yen, taxi, one thousand yen, hotel, five thousand yen” and
「アオカン サンマン タクシー センエン ホテル ゴセンエン」
“[Lets] go on a date.”
「デート イクカ？」

As a result, their Japanese is limited to a few relics of Japanese songs from the *karaoke* and these catch phrases. The authors then reveal that these women received between 25,000 to 35,000 yen per customer. Five thousand yen went to the snack bar and the rest went to Lek to pay off the “debt.” Lek also took away all the tips that they received from their customers. Hence, the authors claim, not one sen went to these Thai women. Lek kept a close watch on these women and threatened to kill them if they tried to escape. The threat appeared real, for the husband of the Japanese mama-san of the snack bar was a *yakuza*. The book goes on to discuss in great detail the murder incident itself and the court case that followed.¹⁵

In *A Long Journey with a Burden* 「長い旅の重荷」, Mr. Higashizawa Yasushi of the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association – Human Rights Protection Committee provides

houritsu soudan Q&A [Legal Consultations for Foreigners Q&A] (Tokyo: Gyousei, 1998).

¹⁵ Support Group of Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident, ed., *Baishun shakai nihon he, taijin josei kara no tegami* [Letters from Thai Women to Prostitution Society Japan], (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1995).

several testimonies of various illegal foreign workers that he has worked on in the past.¹⁶ Similarly, the *Testimonies of Foreigners who have been Deported from Japan* from the Immigration Review Task Force offers 13 detailed testimonies of human rights violations committed by agents of the Japanese government against foreigners in Japan. One of these testimonies includes an incident involving two Korean men who suffered physical assault by immigration officers at the Osaka Immigration Control Bureau on 29 June 1994.¹⁷ It began when one Korean inmate (Mr. Y), who was annoyed by the cockroaches in the cell, slapped the wall with his slipper in order to kill the cockroaches. The slapping noise attracted three immigration officers, who then took him to a different room. Soon after, another Korean inmate (Mr. C) heard screams, (apparently) kicked the cell door, and asked an immigration officer whether if someone was being beaten. The immigration officer then took Mr. C to the same room where Mr. Y was being kept. Mr. C then saw Mr. Y, who had fallen to the floor from repeated beatings. Several officers forced Mr. C to sit down with his arms restrained behind his back, but he resisted and threw off the officers. He immediately received a series of violent blows, particularly in his face and under his arms. The next day, both of these Koreans were taken to a hospital, where the doctor reported that Mr. Y had painful wounds to his whole body while Mr. C suffered a rupture of his ear drum. Without receiving proper medical treatment, both were deported to Korea.¹⁸ The testimony was written in the first person form from the viewpoint of Mr. Y, despite the fact

¹⁶ Higashizawa Yasushi, *Nagai tabi no omoni* [A Journey with a Burden] (Tokyo: Kaifuu Shobou, 1993)

¹⁷ One Korean, Mr. Y who was 45 years old at the time, came to Japan in 1993 and was arrested on 28 June 1994. The other Korean, Mr. C who was in his 20s, came in 1989 and was arrested on 25 June 1994.

¹⁸ The Immigration Review Task Force, *Kyousei soukan sareta gaikokujin no shougen '95-'97* [Testimonies of Foreigners who have been Deported from Japan '95-'97] (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1999), pp. 43-48

that Mr. Y could not speak very much Japanese.¹⁹ Moreover, the Immigration Review Task Force supplemented the text with detailed maps of the Osaka Immigration Central Bureau to illustrate the purported places where the incident took place. The strategic use of writing technique and information supplementation added credibility of the testimony in the face of constant denial by immigration officers of any wrong-doing.

Support groups also publish surveys, such as the *White Paper on Foreign Workers' Industrial Accidents* 「外国人労働者の労災白書」 by the Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center and the *Foreign Workers and Labor Disasters* 「外国人労働者と労働災害」 by the MF-MASH. Some use the cases they worked on to present a better understanding of foreign workers in Japan. The Kalabaw-no-kai, for instance, publishes *Foreign Workers – Aren't they Our Comrades?* 「仲間じゃないか、外国人労働者」 with descriptions of representative cases involving foreign workers in its first three years of activity. It also includes an analysis of the problems of migrant workers from an international perspective, with a proposed concrete policy for dealing with these problems. Interestingly, lawyer support groups, which usually do not publish newsletters that specialize on foreign workers, produce numerous books on foreign workers in Japan. The Tokyo Bar Association – Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights alone published at least five books on foreign workers, particularly guidebooks (see Table 5.5 above).²⁰

¹⁹ The testimony eluded to this fact when it stated that Mr Y needed to have Mr C translated and explained to immigration officers that there were cockroaches in his cell. Moreover, Mr Y had only been in Japan for about one year at the time.

²⁰ These books include *Kanashu pasupooto* [Lonely Passport] (Tokyo: Doujidaisha, 1991), *Gaikokujin jinken kyusai no tebiki* [Guidelines to the Protection of Foreigner Human Rights] (Tokyo: Tokyo Bar Association, 1995), *Gaikokujin houritsu soudan* [Legal Consultations for Foreigners] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1996); *Q&A gaikokujin no tame no houritsu gaido* [Q&A Legal Guide for Foreigners] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997); *Gaikokujin jinken kyusai jitsurei* [Actual Cases

Many of these support groups publish their books with the Akashi Shoten publishing house. The Akashi Shoten is a liberal, non-mainstream publisher that devotes an entire section of its business to publishing books on foreign workers. Its interests in issues concerning foreign workers evolved out of its past publications on *zainichi* foreigners and the Burakumin Movement.²¹ In fact, the person in charge of the section on foreign workers in the Akashi Shoten, Mr. Osawa Yoshio, is a former activist in one of the foreigners support groups in the Tochigi prefecture. He participated in the 1998 NGO Conference at Atami as an activist. In major NGO conferences like the 1999 National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers and the 1999 APFS symposium on the Campaign for Special Permission for Residence (discussed below), he set up a table to sell publications by the Akashi Shoten on foreign workers. The Akashi Shoten publishes numerous works by prominent Japanese scholars on foreign workers in Japan, such as those written by Komai Hiroshi, Tanaka Hiroshi, Ebashi Takashi, Miyajima Takashi, and Tezuka Kazuaki. In particular, six of Komai's most important works on foreign workers are published by the Akashi Shoten.²² The Akashi Shoten also publishes translations of classic works on immigration by well-known international scholars like Tomas Hammar and Myron Weiner. By having their works published at the Akashi Shoten in company with serious Japanese and international scholars, members of these foreigner support groups further gain recognition as experts in the field.

on the Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights](Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1998).

²¹ Interview with Mr. Osawa Yoshio of the Akashi Shoten in Tokyo, 5 June 1999.

²² Specifically, they are: *Gaikokujin roudousha wo miru me* [From the Eyes of Foreign Workers], 1990; *Gaikokujin roudousha teijuu e no michi* [The Road to Settlement for Foreign Workers], 1993; *Kouza: gaikokujin teijuu mondai* [Course: Problems of Foreigners' Settlement], 1995-1996; *Gaikokujin teijuu mondai shiryō shūsei* [Data Collection on Problems of Foreigners' Settlement], 1995; *Shinrai: teijuu gaikokujin ga wakaru jiten* [Newcomers: Dictionary to Understand the Settlement of Foreigners], 1997; *Shinrai: teijuu gaikokujin shiryō shūsei* [Newcomers: Data Collection

In short, Japanese activists have developed expert knowledge of Japanese laws and pressing issues concerning illegal foreign workers through their direct interaction with illegal foreign workers. They demonstrate such expertise in their publications of newsletters and books. In these publications, they often use primary sources, such as their conversations or interviews with illegal foreign workers and letters written by them. They justify their arguments and associative activities with detailed testimonies from illegal foreign workers and surveys they have conducted on those foreign people they have assisted. The information recorded in these publications is rich and, at times, sensational, which attracts the mass media. We now turn to a discussion on the influence of Japanese NGOs on the mass media.

5.1.2 The Influence of Japanese NGOs on the Mass Media

The struggle of these Japanese NGOs to improve the livelihood of overstayed foreign workers in Japan has attracted much attention from the mass media. Moreover, the news media turn to them for alternative and expert information on overstayed foreign workers. Specifically, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, the *Nikkei Shimbun*, and the *Sankei Shimbun* carried 447 articles on these support groups and their activities for overstayed foreign workers between 1 January 1987 and 27 January 1999. As Table 5.7 demonstrates, women's NGOs and lawyer NGOs respectively had 149 and 122 articles written about them and their work with overstayed foreign workers. The Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center (formerly Women of Asia Association) alone was the subject of 64 articles - more than those about Christian NGOs and Community Workers Unions

on the Settlement of Foreigners], 1998.

Table 5.7: Articles about Japanese NGOs and their Activities to Help Illegal Foreign Workers in Selected Japanese Newspapers

Group Name	No.	Newspapers (No.)	Content of the Article
I Christian NGOs	13		
CTIC	5	Nikkei(2), Sankei(2), Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group
Yokosuka Citizens Group...	3	Mainichi(3)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers
Yamasato Consulting Group	1	Mainichi(1)	Activities of group; profile of Father Nakaya
Nankiren	1	Mainichi(1)	Humanitarian aids to North Korea
Akatsuki-no-mura	1	Mainichi(1)	Activities of group
Tsukuba Solidarity...	1	Mainichi(1)	Profile of activist (Rev. Miyazaki) in the group
Kapatiran	1	Yomiuri(1)	Party announcement
II Community Workers Unions	31		
Zentoitsu	9	Nikkei(3), Sankei(3), Mainichi(2), Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers (testimony), activities of group
Tokyo Union	6	Nikkei(3), Yomiuri(2), Mainichi(1)	Activities of group
Fureai Koto Union	5	Mainichi(5)	Activities of group; formation of Shitamachi Union
Edogawa Union	4	Mainichi(2), Yomiuri(2)	Activities of group, profile of Mr. Udagawa, symposium engagement
Kanagawa City Union	3	Nikkei(1), Yomiuri(1), Mainichi(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers (testimony)
Sumida Union	1	Mainichi(1)	Formation of Shitamachi Union
Yokohama Workers' Union	1	Nikkei(1)	Formation of Conference of Kanagawa Unions
Women Union - Kanagawa	1	Nikkei(1)	Formation of Conference of Kanagawa Unions
Gunma Union	1	Mainichi(1)	Announcement on a Philippine's movie
III Women's NGOs	149		
Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center (Women of Asia Ass)	64	Mainichi(48), Yomiuri(13), Sankei(2), Nikkei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony), activities of group, symposium engagements
Saalaa	40	Mainichi(40)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony), report of its survey, activities of group
HELP	30	Mainichi(17), Yomiuri(7), Sankei(4), Nikkei(2)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony), activities of group, profile of Ms Oshima
Mizula	11	Mainichi(10), Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony), activities of group, profile of Ms Abe, seminars
Group Akakabu	3	Mainichi(2), Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony), activities of group
Shimodate Support Group	1	Mainichi(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign women (testimony)

Table 5.7: Articles about Japanese NGOs and their Activities to Help Illegal Foreign Workers in Selected Japanese Newspapers (Continued)

Group Name	No.	Newspapers (No)	Content of the Article
<u>IV Medical NGOs</u>	78		
AMDA	26	Yomiuri(10), Nikkei(10), Mainichi(4), Sankei(2)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers; activities of group
Kobayashi International Clinic	26	Nikkei(12), Yomiuri(8), Mainichi(5), Sankei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers; most articles(19) on profile of Dr. Kobayashi
MF-MASH	15	Nikkei(6), Yomiuri(5), Mainichi(2), Sankei(2)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group; profile of Dr. Temmyo, seminars
SHARE	7	Mainichi(4), Yomiuri(1), Nikkei(1), Sankei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, symposium engagements
BRIGHT	2	Yomiuri(1), Sankei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers
Kameido Himawari Clinic	1	Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers
Medical Security to All	1	Mainichi(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers
<u>V Lawyers NGOs</u>	122		
LAFLR	44	Mainichi(24), Nikkei(8) Yomiuri(8), Sankei(4)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group, profile on Mr. Onitsuka (11), seminars
Yokohama Bar Association	34	Mainichi(15), Yomiuri(15), Sankei(4)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group; Human Rights Prize, profile on Ms. Miki (23), symposium engagements
Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association	14	Yomiuri(5), Nikkei(4), Mainichi(4), Sankei(1)	Activities of group
Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association	12	Mainichi(6), Sankei(3), Yomiuri(2), Nikkei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group
JCIJ	12	Mainichi(6), Yomiuri(5), Nikkei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, symposium engagements
Immigration Review Task Force Partner	3	Mainichi(3)	Symposium engagements
	2	Mainichi(1), Nikkei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group
LAFOCC	1	Mainichi(1)	Activities of group
<u>VI Concerned Citizens Groups</u>	55		
APFS	32	Yomiuri(17), Mainichi(10), Nikkei(3), Sankei(2)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers (especially misunderstood aspects), activities of group, symposium engagements, book announcement
Kalabaw-no-ka	14	Mainichi(11), Yomiuri(3)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers (testimony), activities of group, profile on Rev. Watanabe
National Network for Solidarity	5	Mainichi(3), Yomiuri(1), Nikkei(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group
OC-Net	3	Mainichi(1), Nikkei(1), Yomiuri(1)	Conditions of illegal foreign workers, activities of group, profile on Mr. Kawamata
Friends	1	Nikkei(1)	Activities of group

combined. This is due, in part, to the extensive network of Ms. Matsui Yayori, who is a former and well-known journalist at the *Asahi Shimbun*, with the Japanese news media. The contents of these articles mainly pertain to conditions of overstayed foreign workers and activities of these support groups. Occasionally, a profile of a certain Japanese activist or an announcement of a seminar or symposium engagement is included in these articles.

Most commonly, newspaper articles involving support groups explore current trends in the actual conditions of foreign workers in Japan. For example, the Zentoitsu Workers Union reported to the *Mainichi Shimbun* that

[t]he situation for foreign workers is getting worse and worse since the recession. Not only are they weak due to their illegal status, the control by the police and the Immigration Bureau are becoming stricter. Illegal foreign workers, who are under treatment for their work injuries, are being deported. There are also illegal foreign workers being splashed with gasoline and subsequently lidded on fire, when they went to their employers demanding unpaid wages.²³

In this article, the Zentoitsu Workers Union also mentioned how employers have used the names of legal foreigners or Japanese to falsify company's documents in order to hide the employment of illegal foreign workers. Some groups use the voices of illegal foreign workers to reveal violations that Japanese employers have commit, such as: "Although I work, I did not receive pay" and "I am sick, but I don't have money for medical treatment."²⁴ When these voices are reported in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, foreign workers appear real and the activities of these groups noble.

In several articles, members of these support groups supplied journalists not only with direct quotations from foreign workers but also detailed testimonies from a specific foreigner. This can easily be done, because Japanese activists have already recorded such

²³ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 14 March 1994

testimonies in their newsletters or books. For instance, the women's group Mizula informed the *Mainichi Shimbun* the following testimony of a Thai woman.

[In May 1991],...a Thai woman (23), who was forced to work as a prostitute in a snack bar in the Ibaraki prefecture and was rescued by an NGO, came to Mizula. When she lost her job in Bangkok, a friend enticed her that she could earn good money in Japan working as a waitress. But right after she was brought to Japan, she was threatened, "You have 3,500,000 yen debt" and was forced to work as a prostitute day after day. However, not a single sen of this money obviously goes to her family. The brokers took all of it for transaction fees. That is to say, this debt is the price of life for Thai women.²⁵

Similarly, LAFLR, a lawyer NGO, offered the following disturbing testimonies to the *Mainichi Shimbun* about a Chinese student in a Japanese police station and an Iranian man in a Detention Center.

A Chinese student (24), who was suspected of violating the Immigration Control Law, was arrested (the charge was later cleared). This March, he sought compensation from the police department for violence by a number of policemen against him when he was detained inside the police station. Also this June, an Iranian man (34), who was arrested, mysteriously died at the Detention Center during a joint investigation by the National Police and the Tokyo Immigration Bureau. The family is planning to sue for compensation.²⁶

In some instances, these support groups clarified common misunderstanding about the Japanese labor laws on overstayed foreign workers and offered a sympathetic view of overstayed foreign workers to the newspaper readers. The concerned citizens group APFS informed the *Nikkei Weekly* that

...[m]any workers who are injured at the workplace receive neither proper medical care nor their monthly salary or compensation from their employers. Illegal immigrants are usually in a very weak position where they work. Many complain of not receiving any salary for several months.

²⁴ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 11 August 1996.

²⁵ *Mainichi Shimbun* (Osaka evening version), 2 October 1996.

²⁶ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 12 October 1994.

Such workers, even if they are not legal immigrants, are entitled by law to receive those benefits...But Japanese employers often ignore workers' rights because they are here illegally. Many workers keep quiet because their employers threaten to report them to the immigration office.²⁷

The article went on to elucidate the conditions that overstayed foreign workers face in Japan before it touched on the purpose and goals of the organization. In fact, many articles showcase those extraordinary activities of these support groups and their progressive visions. An interview with Father Nakaya Isao in the *Mainichi Shimbun* about his Yamasato Consulting Office exemplifies this point.

There are many cases involving brokers taking away their passports and forced them [foreign women] into prostitution. There are known examples of Japanese "husbands" leaving them while pregnant and not yet have been legally married. The consulting room accepts these women into its dormitory, where it individually provides best consideration on visa application, loan problems, children's issues...

Almost all women...tell Mr. Nakaya, "Even with this situation, I want to be in Japan." Japanese money for poor Asian people is like a forbidden fruit. If you don't eat it, you would be able to believe that your homeland is paradise.²⁸

Furthermore, members of foreigners support groups use the press to make critical remarks about the Japanese society. The lawyers group LAFLR forcefully claims that "the government discriminates against foreigners, especially Asians. Immigration officials are rude. Employers only consider foreigners as merely labor power."²⁹ In the same spirit, the women's group Mizula offered harsh remarks about Japanese men in an interview with the *Mainichi Shimbun*.

Consultations concerning troubles with international marriage have continuously increased. There are many Japanese men who marry overstayed Thai and Filipino women. Why do you think that is so?

²⁷ *Nikkei Weekly*, 6 July 1998.

²⁸ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 11 September 1994.

²⁹ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 3 January 1991.

These women always kindly serve [their men]; they are not [being treated] as partner.³⁰

Here, Japanese activists turn the situation around and accuse certain Japanese people and government institutions for their action. To those Japanese readers who care to read these articles, one critical question arises: Who are the real criminals?

In fact, many of these Japanese activists want to tell Japanese newspaper readers that overstayed foreign workers in Japan have done nothing wrong. For them, overstayed foreign workers are not “criminals,” in contrast to the views of Japanese political leaders and the National Police Agency. For example, in an interview with the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH remarks:

I have always been against using the word “illegal” 「不法」 ... Certainly these working people violate the Immigration Control Law, but is it alright, in terms of medical consultations, to leave this remarkably harsh situation as it is? They take up the 3K jobs that Japanese dislike; they pay income and consumption taxes. *As far as illegal act, they have done nothing* (emphasis added).³¹

In a separate interview with the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Reverend Watanabe Hideyoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai takes the argument further and argues that illegal foreign workers actually help the Japanese society.

Recently, foreign workers have been increasing, but our government's loose response is creating greater confusion. As a result, human rights violations against foreign workers have been remarkable, such as wage gap to begin with, education, and housing... There are also foreigners who pay taxes from their income. They shop [at Japanese stores] to maintain their livelihood. Japanese people allot distasteful, unskilled work to them. When something bad happen to these people, Japanese people dismiss it by claiming that they are illegal people.³²

Reverend Watanabe asserts that “the company can go bankrupt if there were no foreigners,”

³⁰ *Mainichi Shimbun* (Osaka evening version), 2 October 1996.

³¹ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 3 October 1995.

due to the labor shortage in Japan.³³

These interviews with members of foreigners support groups clearly offer the mass media with different images of overstayed foreign workers in Japan than those created by Japanese political leaders as discussed in Chapter 2. Those Japanese who care to read these newspaper articles can begin to see illegal foreign workers as “human beings” or “victims” of Japanese capitalism and *not* simply as “dangerous criminals.” In some instances, foreigners support groups try to demonstrate that these foreign “criminals” have been forced by circumstances created by vicious Japanese people to commit the crime that they were charged with, such as prostitution and murder. For example, a women’s support group of the three Thai women in the Shimodate Incident reveals to the Japanese public that the three Thai women who murdered their Thai caretaker

...were fed at best one meal a day. All the tip money they received from their clients were taken away. Even during their menstrual period, they were forced to take up customers. When Lek [the Thai caretaker] felt like it, she would increase the overhead of the “loan,” so there was no end to the days of being “prostitutes.” Besides, they cannot escape. “Papa (snack manager) is a *yakuza*.”³⁴

This information echoed that presented in its publication of *Letters from Thai Women to Prostitution Society Japan* discussed above. Similarly, the women’s support group, Saalaa, utilizes its interviews of the Thai women who stayed at its shelter to supply the readers of the same article with original statistical data on the characteristics and conditions of Thai prostitutes in Japan.

Based on the result [of the survey on 106 Thai women], familiar

³² *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 27 September 1991.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 19 May 1994.

person would talk to the women and then a broker in Bangkok would arrange the trip to Japan. The Bangkok broker then pass the women to another broker in Japan, where they ended up in snack bars. Transaction fees add up to between 1,500,000 yen to 1,800,000 yen plus 2,000,000 yen for profit. The total amount [3,500,000 to 3,800,000 yen] is the “selling price.” This is the [reality of the] international trafficking [of women].³⁵

Hence, these revelations from foreigners support groups directly challenge the image that the National Police Agency has created of Thai women in Japan through its press releases as foreign women who have violated the prostitution law. Members of foreigners support groups present a sympathetic message to the Japanese public that some of these Thai prostitutes, who have broken both the Japanese immigration law and the anti-prostitution law, are not criminals but actually *victims* of international human trafficking, whose involvement also include the *Japanese* mafia. Such Japanese people placed these foreigners into a desperate situation. In order to escape from such situation, some foreigners resorted to violent act.

In these newspaper articles, members of foreign support groups supply journalists with detailed information on illegal foreigners in Japan, information that would not otherwise be available and from sources that would not otherwise be heard. In other words, they provide Japanese journalists with rich, alternative sources of information on illegal foreigners in Japan to that from the National Police Agency. Consequently, Japanese activists add a critical perspective to newspaper articles on illegal foreign workers for public discourse. Without a doubt, Japanese journalists see the importance of these support groups as dependable suppliers of alternative sources of information on illegal foreign workers. In 1996, the Mainichi Shimbun decided to award the Mainichi Prize for

³⁵ *Ibid.*

International Exchange (毎日国際交流賞) to the women's group Mizula.³⁶ When Japan celebrated the 50th anniversary of its constitution in 1997, the *Mainichi Shimbun* provided a list of symposiums that were being held in Tokyo on the Japanese constitution. One of these symposiums included one that was sponsored by the APFS, which focused on whether the Japanese constitution actually protects the human rights of migrant workers in Japan.³⁷

How these newspaper articles make an impact on those Japanese who read the articles can only be speculative, but they certainly have the potential to make the information on the actual conditions of illegal foreigners more comprehensible to the newspaper reading public who may be socially distant to such issues.³⁸ Nevertheless, these foreigner support groups certainly add alternative sources of information on illegal foreign workers to the public discourse within the Japanese society.³⁹ Consequently, Japanese activists attain greater visibility, gain access to wider publics and political institutions, and discover potential allies, who they can share information.

II. THE IMPACT OF JAPANESE NGOS ON ACADEMIC CIRCLES

In addition to the mass media, the activities of many of these foreigners support

³⁶ See *Mainichi Shimbun*, 2 October 1996.

³⁷ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 2 May 1997.

³⁸ On the importance of providing the public with an alternative source of information for activists, see Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 18.

³⁹ For those Japanese who do not read the newspapers, they can also learn about illegal foreign workers and their support groups through television coverage. Many television stations report on the activities of many of these support groups. During the trial of the three Thai women of the Shimodate Incident, there was at least six hours of coverage in various stations that included the Support Group of the Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident. Members of this group even took the television crew onto various sites in Shimodate that directly pertained to the case. They showed to the crew the desperate conditions in which these women were forced to live. Recent television coverage that focuses on some of these support groups include a TV Tokyo special on Ms. Sakai Kazuko and her Akakabu Group in 1997, NHK Special on the Mizula in 1998, and NHK Special on the APFS in 1999.

groups have also attracted intellectual attention and collective action from the academic community inside and outside of Japan. Not only do researchers study and write about these groups, many have supported and joined their activities, particularly those activities that are directed against the Japanese government. They join or support these NGOs either because they uphold universal standards of human rights or they appeal to progressive views about grassroots organizations and their potential for increased political deliberation and social justice. Professor Chimoto Hideki of the Tsukuba University, who was an executive committee member of both the Support Group of Three Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident and the Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers, is one such example. Professor Chimoto often participates in a rescue team to sneak distressed foreign entertainers out of snack bars in the Ibaraki prefecture.⁴⁰ He uses data from these groups to write socially critical articles about the foreign workers, prostitution, and the Emperor system.⁴¹ In many of his works, he explicitly positions himself with the progressive camp and passionately expresses his personal opinion rather than holding academic neutrality on the subject. His decision to publish an article about the Support Group of Three Thai Women of the Shomodate Incident in a journal of the Burakumin Liberation Movement, *Buraku Liberation* 「部落解放」, exemplifies such progressiveness.⁴² In many ways, his writings mirror those of Japanese activists.

There are Japanese scholars who have joined these groups or support their

⁴⁰ Interview with Professor Chimoto Hideki of the Tsukuba University in Tsukuba City, Ibaraki, 5 June 1998.

⁴¹ Chimoto Hideki, "Roudou toshite no baishun to kindai kazoku no yukue" [Prostitution as Labor and the Direction of the Modern Family] in Takazaki Hideki, ed., *Urushintai – kaushintai* [Buying Bodies, Selling Bodies] (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 1997), pp. 141-194; idem., "Taijin josei no kyousei baishun: ikyou de fumi ni jirareru jinken" [Forced Prostitution of Thai Women: Human Rights being Crushed in Foreign Land] in Onozawa Masayoshi, ed., *Ajia tokuhon: Tai* [Reader: Thailand] (Tokyo: Sanshoudou, 1996), pp. 296-306; idem., "Gaikokujin roudousha no kyousou to komyunikeeshiyon" [Rapid Increase of Foreign Workers and Communication] *Nihongogaku* 11 (December 1992): 4-14.

campaign because they have been studying foreign workers and came across these support groups in their studies. For example, Professor Ebashi Takashi of the Hosei University, who writes extensively on foreign workers, is a representative director of the Japan Civil Liberties Union (JCLU). Professor Tanaka Hiroshi of the Hitotsubashi University and Professor Komai Hiroshi of the Tsukuba University – both of whom are prolific researchers on foreigners in Japan – are board members of the JCLU.⁴³ Professor Komai, in fact, often uses materials from the foreigners support groups in his research.⁴⁴ These influential academics introduce their colleagues and students to support some of the activities of these support groups. Recently, foreign scholars who have encountered some of these support groups in their research, such as Glenda Roberts on women groups, Carolyn Stevens on SABAY, and Sharman Lark Babior on HELP, have supported certain activities of these groups.⁴⁵ When one writes or researches on these groups, it is difficult not to feel sympathetic for their noble causes and struggles.

Many of these support groups have also built a close relationship with the academic community – both inside and outside of Japan. Prominent Japanese scholars on foreign workers such as Komai Hiroshi, Kajita Takamichi, and Tanaka Hiroshi find time to

⁴² Chimoto Hideki, “Sabakareru beki wa dare ka” [Who are Supposed to be Judged?] *Buraku Kaihou* 377 (1994): 76-85.

⁴³ Other representative directors of the JCLU who are from the academic community include Professor Yamada Takao of the Nihon University and Professor Kinjo Kiyoko of the Tsuda Women’s College. But these scholars do not work on foreign workers in Japan.

⁴⁴ For an excellent example of the use of NGOs’ data in his work, see Komai Hiroshi, *Gaikokujin roudousha teijuu e no michi* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1993), which is available in English as *Migrant Workers in Japan* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995).

⁴⁵ In particular, see Glenda Roberts, “NGO Support for Migrant Labor in Japan” in Mike Douglas and Glenda Roberts, eds., *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 275-3XX; Carolyn Steven, *On the Margins of Japanese Society: Volunteers and the Welfare of the Urban Underclass* (London: Routledge, 1997). Sharman Lark Babior wrote her doctoral dissertation, *Women of a Tokyo Shelter: Domestic Violence and Sexual Exploitation in Japan*, in the department of anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles on the women’s group HELP. Interestingly, her dissertation is translated into Japanese by the same people who she wrote about – HELP staffs and volunteers. See her *Josei e no bouryoku* [Violence against Women] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1996).

attend major conferences sponsored by these support groups like the 1999 National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers in Tokyo. When I attended a Zentoitsu Workers' Union meeting on 12 March 1998, Glenda Roberts was also present. On 6 December 1997, the APFS invited Professor Komai Hiroshi to speak at a celebration for its Tenth Anniversary of the group establishment.⁴⁶ The Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center has invited me to present at its Study Group on 19 October 1998. Conversely, some researchers also invite leaders of these support groups to give talks at their universities. For instance, Mr. Higashizawa Yasushi of LAFLR and Mr. Udagawa Masahiro of the Edogawa Union were invited to speak at an academic conference on "The Wave of People in Asia" at the Nihon University in October 1992.⁴⁷ Rikkyo (St. Paul) University in Tokyo invited Ms. Sakai Kazuko of the Akakabu Group to give a lecture in July 1997.⁴⁸ When a Japanese activist cannot make it to the talk, scholars have discussed her/his activities on assisting illegal foreign workers at academic conferences. This was the case of Mr. Harada Mitsuyoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai, who became the topic of academic discussion in a conference "On Problems of Foreign Laborers" at the Wako University.⁴⁹

The concerned citizens group APFS, in particular, has earned support from Japanese and foreign researchers. When the APFS organized 21 overstayed foreigners to make a collective request at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau on 1 September 1991 as discussed in the previous chapter, the group sought assistance from Professor Komai

⁴⁶ *Mainichi Shimbun*, 2 December 1997.

⁴⁷ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 16 October 1992.

⁴⁸ See Kimiko Sakai, "Chiiki no saisei wo motomete" [In Quest of the Revitalization of Community], *Kurisutokyō kyoūiku kenkyū* [Studies on Christian Education] No. 15 (1997): 35-68.

⁴⁹ For a full text on the academic discussion of the work of Mr. Harada at the Conference, see Harada Mitsuyoshi, "Kotobuki-cho no gaikokujin roudousha mondai" [Problems of Foreign Laborers in Kotobuki-cho] *Studies in Asia* 7 (1991): 12-30.

Hiroshi and other Japanese academicians. Professor Komai then formed the Organizing Committee for the Urgent Appeal and Petition. The Committee mobilized the academic community via the electronic mail in signing a petition in support of the APFS Campaign to gain amnesty for the 21 overstayed foreigners. The 12-person steering committee included Professor Kajita Takamichi of the prestigious Hitotsubashi University, who had been a member of a *shingikai* on foreign workers of the Ministry of Labor. In spite of the short time constraint, the Organizing Committee obtained a total of 593 signatures, 112 of them from foreign researchers.⁵⁰ On 11 November 1999, the group then submitted the list of the signatories to the Ministry of Justice along with its statement and experts' view in supporting the demand. The group held a press conference immediately after the submission of these documents, which was promptly reported in the evening edition of the *Asahi Shimbun*.⁵¹

In order to raise public attention to the Campaign for the Special Permission for Residence of the 21 overstayed foreigners, the Committee and the APFS organized a symposium to explain "Why we demand the permission for residence?" on 11 December 1999 with college professors from various Japanese universities as discussants. The symposium, which was held at the Itabashi-kuritsu Sanbun Hall, drew approximately 400 attendants.⁵² In essence, the academic group reasoned that these 21 overstayed foreigners have lived in Japan for about ten years and their children were born and raised in Japan. Therefore, the group argues, these foreigners have sufficiently demonstrated having established their living bases in Japan. Accordingly, they should be granted "special

⁵⁰ I was one of those foreign researchers who received such an e-mail.

⁵¹ See *Asahi Shimbun*, 11 November 1999.

permission” to live permanently in Japan. Professor Komai informed the Immigration Bureau that the refusal to grant “special permission” would draw extended criticism from both domestic and international academic circles. In fact, he threatened to file an administrative suit against the Ministry of Justice if the minister refused to grant amnesty to these 21 overstayed foreigners.⁵³ As a result, the outcome of this Campaign turned out better than the people at the APFS had originally expected, as the Ministry of Justice granted special permission to 16 of the 21 overstayed foreigners.⁵⁴ The reasoning the Ministry of Justice gave for granting “special permission” to those 16 overstayed foreigners (all families with children who had spent most of their lives in Japan) echoed that presented by the academic group: “Because their children were born and are being raised in Japan, they would have difficulty living in their home country.” By this action, the Ministry of Justice for the first time granted a “special permit” to families consisting only of illegal foreign nationals on the ground that children in those families attended Japanese schools. In essence, even though these foreigners had overstayed their visas, the decision to legalize their status was made based on the overall evaluation of their situations and in view of humanitarian considerations and human rights. Such evaluation would not have been seriously considered by Japanese government officials if it were not for the explicit support of the academic community.

The success of the Campaign for Special Permission of Residence for 21 overstayed foreigners illustrates the cooperation between the APFS and the academic

⁵² Participant observation of the APFS symposium in Tokyo, 11 December 1999.

⁵³ *Japan Times*, 12 November 1999.

⁵⁴ The five who were rejected – two men who are receiving treatment for labor-related injuries and a family of three from Myanmar – are currently contesting the ruling in court.

community. Mr. Yasunari Kazuo of the APFS provided the energy and organizational know-how while the academic group strengthened the petition by providing a compelling intellectual reasoning. Without the interaction of the academic group, a Japanese activist of the Kalabaw-no-kai remarked, the petition would have appeared merely as another passionate activity of Japanese activists.⁵⁵ Instead of dissolving in February 2000 after the Ministry of Justice made its decision, the academic group expanded. The organizing committee now includes two foreign scholars – Professor Wayne Cornelius of the University of California, San Diego and Professor Glenda Roberts of the Waseda University. When the Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro remarked on overstayed foreigners as being dangerous, this group composed another joint statement on 24 April 2000 demanding the retraction of his remarks.

In sum, foreigners support groups have made important allies within the academic community. The potential for Japanese activists to make a difference in the Japanese political system increases substantially with such an alliance. Members of the academic community can offer convincing intellectual reasoning for some of the activities that these Japanese NGOs are engaging. Moreover, many Japanese scholars are involved in the policy-making process of the Japanese government. Not only are they invited to join various *shingikai*, Japanese scholars are often asked by officials of progressive local governments to introduce innovative institutional designs in their areas. As discussed in Chapter 3, Professor Shinohara Hajime of the Tokyo University played a key role in the establishment of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents. And as will be discussed below, Ebashi Takashi, a professor at the Hosei University and a

⁵⁵ Interview with Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Yokohama, 9 December 1999.

representative director of JCLU, tries to promote cooperation between foreign workers, NGOs, and local governments. As the chairman of the Kanagawa International Policy Promotion Discussion Group (神奈川国際政策推進懇話会), he helped introduce an institutional setting where both the foreigner advisory council and the NGO advisory council can interact and cooperate with each other before coming up with policy recommendation to the governor of the Kanagawa prefecture.

III. THE IMPACT OF JAPANESE NGOS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Perhaps, the most significant impact of Japanese NGOs is on local governments. Because local government officials must interact directly with foreign residents in their areas, they have come to recognize and appreciate the work and expertise that the Japanese NGOs can offer. In order to tap on their expertise, local government officials invite Japanese activists to give talks in their offices, affiliated institutions, and study groups. Some local government officials appreciate their work to the extent that they decide to join these groups themselves and participate in their activities. Local governments in progressive areas such as the Kanagawa Prefectural Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government have discovered the financial benefit of outsourcing their services and activities to Japanese NGOs. As a result, local governments contract certain services and activities to some of these NGOs. Such cooperation between local governments and Japanese NGOs promotes the creation of innovative institutional environment where legal foreigners, local government officials, and Japanese activists come together to discuss matters concerning the livelihood of foreign residents and make policy recommendations to the governor. The impact of Japanese NGOs on local

governments, however, is not uniformed across geographical region. Local governments in progressive areas exhibit greater cooperation with Japanese NGOs.

This section discusses the impact that Japanese NGOs are making on local governments. It is divided into five parts. The first part examines the respect that Japanese activists received from local government officials for their expertise on assisting distressed foreign workers in Japan. The second part focuses on specific local government officials who have joined these NGOs and actively participate in their activities. The third part reviews certain services and activities that local governments outsource to Japanese NGOs. The fourth part concentrates on the efforts of certain local governments to institutionalize formal cooperation with Japanese NGOs. The fifth part discusses the variation on the relations between local governments and Japanese NGOs in Kanagawa, Tokyo, Gunma, and Ibaraki.

5.3.1 Gaining Respect from Local Government Officials

Local government officials think highly of Japanese activists and their NGOs. Some praise their noble effort in helping distressed foreigners. A labor consultant at the Kanagawa Foreign Workers Consulting Office, for instance, spoke highly of Ms. Miki Emiko from the women's shelter Saalaa and the Yokohama Bar Association on her active involvement in helping foreign workers in Japan. The government consultant added, "there is hardly anybody in Yokohama who deals with foreign workers that does not know about Ms. Miki."⁵⁶ The Kanagawa Prefectural Government certainly recognizes the work of

⁵⁶ Interview with Ms. Yamamoto Keiko of the Kanagawa Foreign Workers Consulting Office in Yokohama, 27 August 1998.

these NGOs, for, in 1998, it awarded the women's group Mizula with its Eleventh Kanagawa Region Prize for Social Activities (第11回神奈川県社会事業賞). Most local government officials, however, appreciate the expert knowledge that these Japanese activists have demonstrated in solving problems for overstayed foreigners. When staffs at various International Exchange Associations (国際交流協会) in the Kanagawa prefecture encountered difficult cases concerning international marriage, divorce, or domestic violence, they typically refer the foreigners to Mizula, Saalaa, or SOL.⁵⁷ Similarly, an official at the Yokohama Welfare Center in Kotobuki-cho often sends foreigners, who have come to his Center asking for help, to the Kalabaw-no-kai. He explains,

NGOs provide more professional services to foreign workers than do government-run welfare centers. If these NGOs do not exist, local governments will have to do all the work, which means that many of the problems will not be resolved [for foreigners].⁵⁸

Mr. Kanai Nobutaka of the Kanagawa Prefectural Government believes that local government officials still lack the know-how to assist foreigners in their areas.⁵⁹ When I asked the official at the Yokohama Welfare Center in Kotobuki-cho whether the Kalabaw-no-kai or any other foreigners support group has ever sent foreigners to his office, he laughed and thought that my question was a joke.

In fact, advisors at International Exchange Associations and international offices in the Kanagawa prefecture admit that they lack the know-how on helping foreign residents. In 1996, some decided to form the Kanagawa Prefecture Foreigners Consultation Study Group (神奈川県外国人相談窓口研究会). This study group, which meets every last

⁵⁷ Interview with Ms. Narita Akiko of the Kanagawa International Association in Yokohama, 13 May 1998.

⁵⁸ Interview with Mr. Okawa Akihiro of the Yokohama Welfare Center in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 15 December 1998.

⁵⁹ Interview with Mr. Kanai Nobutaka of the Kanagawa Prefectural Government's Foreign Affairs Department in

Fridays of the month, regularly invites members of Japanese NGOs that support foreigners to give talks at their meetings in order to learn from their extensive experience.⁶⁰ Past speakers included Japanese activists from the medical group SHARE, the lawyer group Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association – Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group, and the women’s group Mizula. In educating staffs and volunteers of the Kanagawa’s international offices, these Japanese activists do not restrain themselves from criticizing Japanese traditional, discriminatory practices and local government officials’ slow response to the needs of distressed foreign residents. In a meeting on 27 November 1998, for example, the Study Group invited Ms. Abe Yuko of Mizula to give a talk. Staffs and volunteers at the Kanagawa international offices brought difficult cases involving foreign women that they have encountered at their offices with them to the meeting. They then asked Ms. Abe on how to go about in resolving them – one case at a time. Ms. Abe, who appeared soft and polite at a first glance, spoke fast and loud with great charisma. While advising these government officials, she often mocked Japanese men for their traditional beliefs and attitudes by speaking in a low voice with her lips artificially forced downward while slightly shaking her head like a samurai out of a *jidai gekki* (period) film. When someone raised a specific case involving a troubled, overstayed Filipina woman who was in hiding and showed reluctance to come to the international office for consultation, Ms. Abe quickly gave the following answer.

That’s easy. You...go and meet her. You can decide on a coffee shop or train station or whatever. It would mean that you will have to leave your office in order to meet with her. Go ahead and leave your office, the government can’t fire you for leaving your office. You are public officials; you

Yokohama, 1 December 1998.

⁶⁰ Interview with Ms. Narita Akiko of the Kanagawa International Association, who is one of the organizers of this study group, in Yokohama, 3 July 1998.

can't be fired!⁶¹

The participants were embarrassed, but I cannot help myself from laughing at this gutsy woman's mocking these public officials right at their faces.

Japanese activists give talks at local governments' sponsored forums, because they have learned that they can make real impact toward policy changes through local government officials. During her speech at a meeting of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents on 29 June 1996, Ms. Miki Emiko expressed her belief that "local public institutions (地方公共団体) respect the opinion of the Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents more than that of lawyers and NGOs." Similarly, "officials and the Ministry of Justice," in her opinion, "listen more to people from the local public institutions than to people from, say, the Japanese Bar Association."⁶² As a guest speaker, Ms. Miki took the opportunity to discuss pressing concerns regarding medical treatment and health insurance for overstayed foreigners, which attracted the attention of many members from the Committee on Community Life. As she had hoped for, the Committee on Community Life announced in the Assembly's newsletters on 31 March 1997 that "[a]ccess to medical care, including the problems faced by people overstaying their visas, will be a topic for future discussion."⁶³ As discussed in Chapter 3, these foreigner advisory councils typically do not touch on issues that concern overstayed foreigners. This has been the only exception thus far.

⁶¹ Talk by Ms. Abe Yuko at the Kanagawa Kenmin Center in Yokohama, 27 November 1998.

⁶² At the meeting, Ms. Miki discussed various problems that arise with each kind of visa status and provided concrete examples of such problems that foreigners encountered. For a full text of Ms. Miki Emiko's talk, see Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, *Kawasaki-shi gaikokujin shimin daihyousha kaigi nenji houkoku 1997 nendo* [1997 Annual Report of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents] (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City Government's Citizens Bureau, 1998), pp. 9-16.

⁶³ *Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter* 1 (31 March 1997), p. 6.

5.3.2 “After Five Activities” of Local Government Officials

Another way that Japanese NGOs are making an impact on local governments is its success in getting some local government officials to participate in their activities. A few officials even feel strongly about the purposes and activities of some of these groups that they have joined them. They engage in social activism after work. These individuals called their volunteer work “after five activities” (アフターファイブの活動) by using the English “after five” and adding the Japanese “activities” (活動) to form this wonderful phrase. One local government official explained that local government officials like him, who are active in volunteer activities after work, are actually “not important people” (偉いではない人たち). He claimed that if one becomes “important” (偉い) in the bureaucratic system, one lacks the freedom to do whatever one pleases. Because his job is secured as a local bureaucrat (that is, he cannot be fired unless he commits a serious crime), he is content not to become “important” within the bureaucratic system. Instead, he devotes his energy to his “after five activities,” where he gets to meet many interesting people and finds it to be fun (楽しい). His wife often complains, because he returns home around 10:30 every night due to NGO meetings or study groups meetings and spends his weekends on catching up with his sleep.⁶⁴

Three famous “after five” activists work at local governments in Tokyo and Yokohama. Mr. Hatade Akira is a member of JCLU and actually helped found the concerned citizens group CALL Network. Hatade Akira is a pen name for Mr. Sakamoto

⁶⁴ Interview with Mr. Ogawa Koichi of the Tokyo Labor Office (Shinjuku) in Tokyo, 21 December 1998 and 10 June 1999.

Takao, who works at the Tokyo Labor Office in Kameido.⁶⁵ Although the group officially dissolved in 1996, he continued to attend Dr. Hirano's Study Group in Kameido where they discussed issues concerning foreign workers. Similarly, Tanaka Kiyoshi is a pen name for Mr. Ogawa Koichi, who works at the Tokyo Labor Office in Shinjuku. Mr. Ogawa, who actively works on Japanese labor issues, came to CALL Network as a friend of Mr. Sakamoto and began working on foreign workers issues by accident. He took the name Tanaka Kiyoshi from a famous critic in Japan and thought that the new identity would not impede on his work at the Tokyo Labor Office, where he must interact with numerous people from Japanese labor unions.

In addition to their articles in the CALL Network Newsletter, *CALL*, these two men write extensively and express critical opinion of certain government policies. Hatade Akira has published over ten articles in various books on issues concerning foreign workers in Japan and regularly contributes articles to the *Migrants' Net*, a newsletter of the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers. His articles reveal the desperate situation and various labor problems that some illegal foreign workers face in Japan.⁶⁶ He helped to obtain government materials for a JOSHRC's publication on the actual number of industrial accidents being reported by foreign workers at the Labor Standards Inspection Offices

⁶⁵ Interview with Mr. Sakamoto Takao of the Tokyo (Kameido) Labor Office in Tokyo, 9 October 1998

⁶⁶ In particular, see Hatade Akira, "Gaikokujin roudousha wo meguru hataraki" [Turning the Work of Foreign Workers Around], in Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainichi gaikokujin jinken hakusho* [White Paper on Human Rights of Newcoming Foreigners] (Tokyo Akashi Shoten, 1997), pp. 75-110; CALL Network, ed., *Anata no machi no gaikokujin* [Foreigners in your Town] (Tokyo Dai-ichi Shorin, 1991), pp. 3-10, 161-172. In addition, he has written numerous pieces in the Iwanami Shoten's monthly *Sekai* [World] criticizing the trainee system, government actions against Iranians, and governmental retreat of social security for foreigners. See Hatade Akira, "Ginou jisshuu seido wa nani wo motarasu" [What does Learning Skills System Bring?] *Sekai*, April 1993; idem., "Jyunbi sareta iranjin tekihatsu geki" [Faking the Arrest of Iranian] *Sekai*, August 1993; idem., "Koutai suru gaikokujin no shakai hoshou" [Retracting Social Security for Foreigners] *Sekai*, June 1994.

(LSIO) throughout Japan.⁶⁷ He expresses critical views on Japan's trainee system, the Japanese state's construction of negative images of foreigners, and the lack of commitment of the Japanese government and society to protect international human rights.⁶⁸ Similarly, Tanaka Kiyoshi has also contributed articles on foreign workers in Japan, but less numerous than those by Hatade Akira. He wrote critically about the Japanese government's 1990 reform of the Immigration Control Law.⁶⁹ Like Mr. Hatade, he is also critical on Japan's trainee system.⁷⁰

The third person is Mr. Okawa Akihiro, who works in the Yokohama Welfare Center in Kotobuki-cho and is an executive committee member of the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers. Mr. Okawa participated in all three National Forums in Solidarity with Migrant Workers in Osaka (1995), Nagoya (1997), and Tokyo (1999) as a presenter at a panel on health and medical treatment for foreigners.⁷¹ During the Third National Forum in Solidarity with Migrant Workers on 5-6 June 1999 in Tokyo, he and Mr.

⁶⁷ See Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center, ed., *Gaikokujin roudousha no rousai hakusho* [White Paper on Foreign Workers' Industrial Accidents] (Tokyo: Kaifuu Shobou, 1992)

⁶⁸ On his critique of Japan's trainee system, see Hatade Akira, "Keshuusei seido no mondai joukyou" [Problematic Condition of the Trainee System], in Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, ed., *Okasareru jinken gaikokujin roudousha* [Violated Human Rights of Foreign Workers] (Tokyo: Dai-san Shokan, 1992), p. 295-314. On his critical view about the lack of commitment of the Japanese government and society to protect international human rights, see idem., *Gaikokujin to kokusai jinken* [Foreigners and International Human Rights] (Tokyo: Kaifuu Shobou, 1992), pp. 99-113. For his critical view of state construction of negative images for foreigners, see his co-authored article in Hakoishi Mami and Hatade Akira, "Rainichi gaikokujin no hanzai" [Foreigners Crimes], in Tanaka Hiroshi and Ebashi Takashi, eds., *Rainichi gaikokujin jinken hakusho* [White Paper on Human Rights of Newcoming Foreigners] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997), pp. 320-339.

⁶⁹ See Tanaka Kiyoshi, "'Kaisei' nyuukanhou wo kangaeu" [Thinking over the 'Reform of the Immigration Control Law'] *Rouhou Sentaa Nyuusu* 93 (April-May 1991): 1-12.

⁷⁰ See Tanaka Kiyoshi, "Gaikokujin kenshuusei no genjou to mondaiten" [Conditions and Problems of Foreigner Trainees] in Ebashi Takashi, ed., *Gaikokujin roudousha to jinken* [Foreign Workers and Human Rights] (Tokyo: Hosei University Press, 1989), pp. 95-119; idem., "Chitsujo aru gaikokujin roudouryoku no dounyuu e" [Introducing Order to Foreigners Labor Power] *Rouhou Sentaa Nyuusu* 112 (April 1993): 1-11

⁷¹ For a summary of his presentation at the First Forum (1995), see National Exchange Forum on the Problems of Foreign Workers, *Gaikokujin roudousha mondai zenkoku kouryuu shuukai houkokushuu* [Report on the National Exchange Forum on Problems of Foreign Workers] (Osaka: Mimeograph, 1995), pp. 42-49; the Second Forum (Nagoya), see Organizing Committee of the Second National Forum on Migrant Workers' Problems, *Dai-ni kai ijuu roudousha mondai zenkoku soorumu houkokushuu* [Report on the Second National Forum on Migrant Workers' Problems] (Nagoya: Mimeograph, 1998), pp. 47-51

Kawamoto Hiroyuki of the Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center led the discussion at the panel on “Support for Migrants’ Daily Living and Medical Treatment.” Mr. Okawa (and Mr. Ogawa) regularly attends the Kanagawa’s Occupational Accident Study Group that Mr. Kawamoto organizes at Ms. Miki Emiko’s law office. Mr. Okawa believes medical patrols around Kotobuki-cho by volunteer medical groups, such as SHARE and SABAY, to help foreigners are something that his local government should do. However, he strongly feels that local government officials lack the know-how and their presence would intimidate many overstayed foreigners.⁷²

In some instances, foreigners support groups invite concerned local government officials to their meetings. The Fureai Koto Union, for example, get two officials of the Tokyo Labor Office at Kameido to attend its annual General Meeting, where it gave a summary report on its activities for the 1998 year. It also invited its members, most of whom were overstayed foreign workers, and representatives from other community workers unions to attend the meeting. The General Meeting ended with an informal party, where attendants mingled with each other.⁷³

In sum, Japanese NGOs have made an impact directly on local government officials, for a few have joined their groups while others have participated in their activities. Although these local government officials claim that they are not “important” within the bureaucratic system, they are, after all, “policymakers.”

5.3.3 Outsourcing Activities and Services to Japanese NGOs

⁷² Interview with Mr. Okawa Akihiro in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 15 December 1998.

⁷³ Participant observation of the Fureai Koto Union in Tokyo, 18 October 1998. Two local officials were able to attend

Local governments in progressive areas, such as the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Kanagawa Prefectural Government, increasingly contract activities and services for their foreign residents to Japanese NGOs. Local governments, being legally constrained, cannot do things that NGOs can for overstayed foreigners, even if they are willing to challenge “fuzzy” immigration policies of the central government.⁷⁴ As a result, they outsource many of those life-saving services for overstayed foreign workers to some of Japanese NGOs, particularly medical and women shelter NGOs. In other instances, cash-stricken local governments outsource their activities and services to Japanese NGOs in order to save money. At the same time, this allows them to introduce new services for foreign residents (via Japanese NGOs) and thereby extends their jurisdiction and secures future government budget without having to expand the number of officials.

First, local governments increasingly outsource life-saving services such as medical assistance and women emergency shelter for illegal foreigners to Japanese NGOs. In Tokyo, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government prefers to support Japanese NGOs with a long history such as the medical group AMDA and the women’s shelter HELP.⁷⁵ The Tokyo Metropolitan Government contracted AMDA to provide medical consultation to foreigners in five languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Spanish. In 1996, it funded AMDA to start an AIDS Information Helpline in English and Thai.⁷⁶ It also provided money for AMDA to bring in AIDS specialist from Thailand. This service began after a study conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare during 1994 found that foreigners

this meeting, because it was held on a Sunday.

⁷⁴ On this point see Katherine Tegtmeier Pak, “Living in Harmony. Prospects for Cooperative Local Responses to Foreign Migrants” in Sheila Smith, ed., *Local Voices, National Issues* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan’s Center for Japanese Studies, 2000), pp. 51-74 (71ff).

⁷⁵ Interview with Mr. Ishiura Tadayoshi of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s Policy News Section, 12 May 1998

accounted for 80 percent of AIDS patients in Japan. In the Nagano prefecture alone, 617 out of 679 AIDS patients were foreigners – 613 of them were Thais.⁷⁷ Women's shelter HELP also received considerable financial support from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government for its activities in helping foreign women.⁷⁸ In addition, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government contracted HELP to publish Handbooks specifically for (overstayed) Thai migrants on family life and labor laws in Japan.⁷⁹

In the Kanagawa prefecture, the Kanagawa International Association initiated the Fund Assistance System (資金助成制度) in 1993 to support international NGOs inside its prefecture. This program provides funding up to three million yen for projects that involved overseas development, foreigners inside the prefecture, international cooperation, NGO promotion, and emergency support for disasters. From 1993 to 1997, the Kanagawa International Association handed out 35,691,835 yen to NGOs that were involved in such activities. Five Japanese NGOs that were supporting illegal foreign workers in the prefecture received 13,933,331 yen (almost 40 percent) of the total amount (see Table 5.8). In particular, women shelters, Mizula and Saalaa, together received over 25 percent of the assistance awarded between these five years. Interestingly, the Kanagawa International Association expressively supports those projects that would enhance the organization of co-ethnic self-help groups.⁸⁰ Hence, SOL was able to expand its activities, with the financial support from the Kanagawa International Association, to cater specific groups, such as

⁷⁶ *Nikkei Shimbun*, 24 October 1996.

⁷⁷ *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 29 September 1996.

⁷⁸ In 1996, for example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government gave HELP 8,248,000 yen or about 20 percent of HELP's total budget.

⁷⁹ These two books are *Kuu meu tai-yipun: kropkrua* [Thai-Japanese Handbook: Family] and *Kuu meu tai-yipun: raengnan* [Thai-Japanese Handbook: Labor]. Both are published in 1998 by the Women's shelter HELP. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government funded the publications of these two books through the Tokyo International Foundation.

Table 5.8: Projects Funded by the Kanagawa International Association

Year	Group	Projects Funded	Amount (yen)
1994	Mizula	Consultation, emergency protection, repatriation	2,624,710
1995	Mizula	Consultation, emergency protection, repatriation	1,500,000
	Saalaa	Consultation, shelter, information, education, staff training	255,621
	SOL	Education on self-help activities	1,000,000
	Esperanza-no-kai	Medical consultation, interpretation, specialization enhancement training	528,000
1996	Mizula	Emergency protection, repatriation	1,500,000
	Kalabaw-no-kai	Ethnic self-help programs	1,000,000
1997	Saalaa	Emergency protection, consultation, publicizing information	3,375,000
	SOL	Latin Desk self-help	2,150,000
Total			13,933,331

Source: Kanagawa International Association.

Korean, Filipino, and Latinos, and to hire co-ethnic staffs. The Kalabaw-no-kai similarly organized a Bangladeshi self-help group, most of whose members consist of overstayed foreign workers, with the funding from Kanagawa International Association.⁸¹

In some places, local governments began outsourcing their activities and services to Japanese NGOs in order to save money. Mr. Okawa Akihiro acknowledges, “the only thing that government institutions can beat these NGOs is money.” Local governments have money but lack know-how on how to assist foreigners. Since around 1995 when the Yokohama local government experienced a sharp decline in its budget, the Yokohama

⁸⁰ Interview with Ms. Narita Akiko of the Kanagawa International Association in Yokohama, 13 May 1998.

⁸¹ Interview with Ms. Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Yokohama, 8 March 1998.

Association for International Communication and Exchange (YOKE) began coordinating activities with Japanese NGOs in the Yokohama area. In 1997, for example, YOKE began contracting Japanese NGOs on the publication of multilingual manuals to provide information guide. It discovered that such support to Japanese NGOs was cheaper and resulted in greater success in terms of helping foreigners. Moreover, such coordination allows YOKE to collect far better information on the condition of foreigners in the area. YOKE then used such information to decide on what type of public services should be made further to foreigners.⁸² YOKE now tries to develop an internship program on international volunteer activities for Japanese residents in Yokohama. Three foreigners support groups – Kalabaw-no-kai, Saalaa, and SOL – participate in this program as accepting institutions. SOL agreed to accept five interns, Saalaa two, and Kalabaw-no-kai one. The training course lasts from September to January and introduces interns to the activities of these groups.

Let's systematically compare the expense the government spent on providing merely information consultation and translation services to foreign residents. The Kanagawa Prefecture Government spent approximately 15 millions yen per year between 1996 to 1998 for such services.⁸³ In contrast, the Kalabaw-no-kai spent between 6.5 million to 8 million per year between the same period.⁸⁴ Kalabaw-no-kai's figure includes rent and administrative staff whereas the Kanagawa Prefecture Government's figure does not. And as we have seen in the previous chapters, the range and intensity of the activities provided

⁸² Interview with Mr. Watanabe Kazuo of YOKE in Yokohama, 24 September 1998.

⁸³ Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Shin-kanagawa kokusai seisaku suishin puran shinchoku daichou* (Yokohama: Kanagawa Prefectural Government, Foreign Affairs Division, 1998), pp. 43-44 (ff).

⁸⁴ Figures from JANIC, *NGO dairekutorii '98* [NGO Directory '98] (Tokyo: JANIC, 1998); idem., *Kokusai kyouryoku NGO dairekutorii 2000* [International Cooperation NGO Directory 2000] (Tokyo: JANIC, 2000).

by the Kalabaw-no-kai far exceed those by any local governments in Japan.

Furthermore, by outsourcing their services and activities to NGOs, local governments can expand their services and/or jurisdiction without having to expand the number of officials.⁸⁵ In exchange for financial support, local governments can list these groups in their Japanese, English, and other foreign language brochures and pamphlets as places that provide services to foreigners who live in their areas. For example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government recommends the women's shelter HELP to foreign women and their children for emergency shelter above its own Tokyo Metropolitan Women's Consulting Center in its English guidebook on *Living in Tokyo*.⁸⁶ In fact, some pamphlets appear to look as if local governments are providing the service themselves. For example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government distributes 3 inches by 4 inches pamphlet at its offices throughout Tokyo offering medical services called the "Tokyo Medical Information Service 'Himawari.'" As appears in the small pamphlet, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government seems to be offering this service. However, when one looks at the telephone numbers given in the small pamphlet, they all go to AMDA.

In sum, local governments outsource activities and services to Japanese NGOs for three reasons. First, Japanese NGOs can do things that legally constrained local governments cannot. Second, local governments find it cheaper to outsource certain activities to Japanese NGOs rather than doing them themselves. Third, local governments can expand their activities and thus their jurisdiction without having to expand their bureaucracy. Mr. Okawa Akihiro, who is both a government official at the Yokohama

⁸⁵ In fact, the size of Japanese bureaucrats remains relatively low in comparison to those in other advanced industrial countries.

Welfare Center and an NGO activist at the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers, best summarizes the reasoning for why local governments decide to outsource many of their activities and services to NGOs.

NGO people are much better experts in the field. And it is much cheaper to support them financially and institutionally than for the government to do the same services. The government would have to establish a new department and then staff them. This will cost lots more money, which we don't have.⁸⁷

5.3.4 Institutionalizing Cooperation between Local Governments and NGOs

The cooperation between local governments and Japanese NGOs is increasingly becoming institutionalized. Since 1996, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has been sponsoring multi-parts seminar to enhance cooperation between local government officials and NGO activists for the promotion of leadership in internationalization of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (東京都国際化推進指導者セミナー). The official purpose of this Leadership Seminar is

for resident NGOs and local government officials, who are involved in international exchange and international cooperation or the support of foreigners, to exchange ideas, to learn from each other, and to establish a network that transcends each other field... This seminar is important not only for deepening the understanding between the local governments and NGOs but also for tackling the problems that Tokyo is facing in terms of internationalization.⁸⁸

In the 1997-1998 Seminar, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government brought Japanese NGO activists and government officials together between 13-14 February 1998 to discuss “International Exchange and Cooperation” for Tokyo, which included such topics as the

⁸⁶ See Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Living in Tokyo* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 1996), p. 18 (ff).

⁸⁷ Interview with Mr. Okawa Akihiro in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 15 December 1998.

⁸⁸ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Toukyou-to kokusaika suishin shidousha seminaa houkokusho* [Report on the Leadership Seminar on the Promotion of the Internalization of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government] (Tokyo: Tokyo

provision of medical and consultation services to foreigners as well as Japan's immigration system. Dr. Sawada Takashi of the medical group SHARE participated in a panel on "Health and Medical Treatments for Foreigners," Mr. Suzuki Akihiko of the OC Net on "Foreigner Consultations and Networking," and Ms. Tsunami Kimie of the APFS on the "Immigration Control System."⁸⁹ In these particular panels, local government officials and Japanese NGO activists addressed specific problems that illegal foreign residents face and tried to come up with plausible solutions together.

Most importantly, officials of the Kanagawa Prefecture Government recognize the importance of Japanese NGOs. They introduced an NGO advisory council, the NGO Kanagawa International Cooperation Council (NGOかながわ国際協力会議), when they were creating the Kanagawa Foreign Residents' Council in 1998. The idea of creating an NGO advisory council actually come from local government officials at the Kanagawa Prefectural Government's Foreign Affairs Division. Mr. Kanai Nobutake, the Kanagawa official in charge of the Council said that questions were raised on why the Kawasaki's Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents only included foreigners when members of Japanese NGOs are seen as their partners. Hence, Kanagawa officials saw the need to create an NGO advisory council along side with the Foreign Residents' Council.⁹⁰ The NGO advisory council consists of ten members from different NGOs, who are selected by a four-person Committee of Specialists (headed by Professor Ebashi Takashi of the Hosei University). The NGO advisory council is divided into four divisions: regional

Metropolitan Government's Citizens and Cultural Affairs Division, 1998), p. 3.

⁸⁹ For a full text of these panels, see *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Interview with Mr. Kanai Nobutake of the Kanagawa Prefectural Government's Foreign Affairs Section in Yokohama, 1 December 1998.

internationalization, international exchange, international cooperation, and peace. For the first NGO advisory council, the Committee of Specialists selected six women and four men – three each for the regional internationalization group, international exchange group, and international cooperation group and one for the peace group. One of these ten members included Ms. Ariizumi Keiko of the women’s group Mizula.

The Kanagawa Prefectural Government established the NGO advisory council in order to collect opinions from members of the NGOs and reflect on them in the making of international policy of the prefecture. The stated goals of the NGO Kanagawa International Cooperation Council are: a) to promote NGO participation in the policymaking process of the prefectural government on regional international policy; b) to strengthen cooperation between local governments and NGOs; and c) to strengthen cooperation among NGOs within the prefecture.⁹¹ The link between the 20 members Kanagawa Foreign Residents’ Council with the 10 members NGO Kanagawa International Cooperation Council marked the beginning of institutional experimentation by the Kanagawa local government that calls for representatives from both legal residents and NGO members who support legal as well as illegal foreign residents. Such institutional innovation may provide “democratic” deliberation to both marginalized Japanese activists and foreign residents of Japan at the local level.

NGO advisory council cannot provide deliberation to illegal foreigners, but it can improve fairness for them as it incorporates their voices into the council via a member of Mizula. Melissa Williams, who proposes a group-based theory of fair representation along

⁹¹ Kanagawa International Policy Promotion Discussion Group, *Gaikokujin kenmin kanagawa kaigi oyobi NGO kanagawa kokusai kyouryoku kaigi* [Kanagawa Foreign Residents’ Council and NGO Kanagawa International

a deliberative model, points out that

the task of institutional design aimed at fair group representation is to focus on institutional changes that would have the effect of moving representatives away from competition and toward deliberation, without the expectation that we can ever achieve a “pure” form of deliberative decision making.⁹²

Williams stresses the importance “that the representative shares his or her constituents’ experiences, and consequently shares the cognitive agency that arises out of that experience.”⁹³ The Kanagawa NGO Advisory Council, which invites a member of Mizula, may not structurally appear democratic on the surface. However, it can better provide fairness to foreign community than foreigner advisory councils, which have foreigners as representatives. As mentioned above, representatives at the foreigner advisory councils belong to legal immigrant groups and are not elected by members of their ethnic groups but selected by local government officials. As legal foreigners, they do not necessary share similar life experiences as those of their illegal compatriots. In contrast, Japanese activists, who are experienced problem-solvers for underprivileged people in Japan, may share more similar experiences with illegal foreigners. Hence, an NGO advisory council that exists together with a foreigner advisory council like that in the Kanagawa prefecture can improve fairness to the foreigner community.

Presently, the central government is considering the possibility of establishing further cooperation between agencies of the government with Japanese NGOs. On 1 April 1999, the Ministry of Health and Welfare released a circular on domestic violence, where it stressed the cooperation between government agencies and NGO shelters by expanding and

Cooperation Council] (Yokohama: Kanagawa Prefectural Government’s Foreign Affairs Division, 1998), pp. 8-12.

⁹² Melissa S. Williams, *Voices, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and the Failings of Liberal Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 222-223.

institutionalizing cooperation to the prefectural, city, district, and village levels. However, NGOs expressed concerns that they do not want to be “expected to take up the slack for lazy government agencies.”⁹⁴ Without a doubt, the trend to institutionalize cooperation between NGOs and agencies of the government in the policy-making process is on the rise in Japan.

5.3.5 Variation on the Impact of Japanese NGOs on Local Governments

An important point that needs to be addressed about the impact of Japanese NGOs on local governments is its non-uniformed nature across geographical regions. That is to say, variations exist on how much impact Japanese NGOs make on specific local governments. To be sure, the number of Japanese NGOs in an area alone does not account for the impact of NGOs on local governments. For example, Tokyo has 55 NGOs while Kanagawa only 28, but Kanagawa exhibits tighter relations between local governments and NGOs. Instead, the political background of the area and its history in dealing with foreigners appear to be important factors for explaining the variation. In general, progressive local governments, such as the Kanagawa Prefectural Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, show more cooperative activities with Japanese NGOs and institutional innovation than conservative ones like the Ibaraki Prefectural Government and the Gunma Prefectural Government.

Because the Kanagawa prefecture has historically been a place of contact between Japanese and foreigners since the time Commodore Perry’s black ships arrived, the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ *Network News* 35 (May 1999).

Kanagawa Prefectural Government has extensive experiences in dealing with foreigners. Hence, its treatment of foreign residents appears innovative and visionary. Taking advantage of its local autonomy rights, it systematically takes the lead in challenging conservative national policies and experimenting with innovative institutional designs to improve the lives of its foreign residents. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government was the first local government in Japan to set up an Emergency Medical Fee Subsidiary System in 1993 for foreign residents who cannot pay their medical bills. Local government officials at the Kawasaki City, where many Korean live, have played an active role in the movement to improve the lives of their foreign residents. In 1985, Kawasaki City officials acted against the national government and sided with the Koreans when they decided not to accuse those Koreans who refused to be fingerprinted for their alien registration cards. In 1994, Kawasaki City officials set up the country's first foreigners advisory council, the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Residents. Local government officials from Kawasaki also played an active role in the movements to obtain voting rights for foreigners in local elections and to delete the requirement for Japanese nationality from eligibility for civil service. These innovative practices were later copied by other cities and prefectures. Some practices, such as fingerprinting, were eventually eliminated nation-wide.

The Kanagawa Prefectural Government historically exhibits progressive political tendencies. Because the prefecture is the manufacturing site for many large companies, the population of Kanagawa includes many workers. Until recently, these people have consistently voted for a socialist governor. Local taxes, understandably, are the highest in the country. Not surprisingly, the Kanagawa prefecture does not always follow policy

guidelines of the central government. In fact, many of its activities toward foreign workers contradict with several policies of the central government. Officials of the prefecture even compose a set of proposals or requests for changes in policies of several ministries toward foreigners. Some of these proposals on foreigner issues show extraordinary progressivism. For example, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government proposed in 1998 that the Ministry of Home Affairs examines ways for foreigners in Japan to be able to participate in local policy-making such as in the regional Committee for the Protection of Human Rights. It also requested that the central government refined its medical system in a way to financially assist foreigners who cannot pay medical bills and (re)applied the Livelihood Protection Law for foreigners.⁹⁵

As a consequence of its progressive political background and its long history in dealing with foreigners, the Kanagawa Prefectural Government displays innovative actions in improving the lives of its foreign residents and in cooperating with Japanese NGOs that are helping foreigners. It outsources many of its activities and services to foreigner support groups. It funds the medical group *Esperanza-no-kai*, women's shelter *Mizula* and *Saalaa*, and concerned citizen groups *SOL* and *Kalabaw-no-kai* on their programs to promote self-help groups for foreigners. Some members of various International Exchange Associations organize a monthly study group where they bring Japanese activists to their meetings as guest speakers. In a study group that is organized by Japanese activists, such as the Kanagawa Occupational Accident Study Group, certain local government officials regularly turn up at these meetings. More importantly, local governments in this prefecture have

⁹⁵ Kanagawa Prefectural Government, *Heisei 11 nendo kuni no shisaku-seido-yosan ni kansuru youbou* [Demands Concerning the Country's Measure-System-Budget for 1999] (Yokohama: Kanagawa Prefectural Government,

established two foreigner advisory councils and one NGO advisory council.

In contrast, the Ibaraki prefecture has historically displayed conservative tendencies. Ibaraki was home to the Mitogaku, where the last Tokugawa shogun received his educational training. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Mitogaku explicitly espoused the idea of “expelling the foreigners” (攘夷) during the early 19th century. As it was a staunch backer of the central government (*bakufu*) during the Tokugawa period, it shows similar loyalty to the central government today. During an interview with two officials from the Ibaraki Prefectural Government, I brought up a story about an overstayed Thai worker who thought that local government officials and policemen in Ibaraki treated him kindly despite knowing that he was an “illegal” foreign worker. One official tried to explain why the Ibaraki policeman decided to let the overstayed Thai, who was driving without a driver license, go as follows.

It's probably because the Thai person couldn't speak Japanese very well, is that right? [I nodded my head] and the policeman probably did not want to deal with him, for it would be too troublesome. If the policeman were to charge the Thai person, he would have to explain to him in Japanese all the offenses, which the Thai would not understand. It would be a lot of work and effort on the policeman side. So, he let the Thai off. But this, I assure you, is an extremely rare case. Everyone here [in Ibaraki] follows all the laws of the central government.⁹⁶

Regardless of whether he was telling the truth or not, his strong attitude and intention to follow *every* policies of the central government were firm and obvious, in contrast to those local government officials in Kanagawa (and Tokyo). Where policies of the central government are conflictual, such as policies on overstayed foreigners of the Ministry of

Department of Planning, 1998), particularly demand number 18.

⁹⁶ Interview with Mr. Terakado Mitsuhiro of the Ibaraki Prefectural Government's International Affairs Division in Mito, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998.

Labor versus policies of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, officials at the Ibaraki Prefectural Government simply evade them.⁹⁷ Needless to say, they do not write proposals demanding changes in policies of the central government (like in Kanagawa). All words from the central government are supreme, not too dissimilar to those during the Tokugawa and pre-war period.

As far as its activities with foreigners are concerned, people at the Ibaraki International Association provide most of the services for their foreign residents inside the prefecture themselves. These services include providing translators, consulting on medical and health issues, and organizing legal consultations for foreigners with members of the Ibaraki Bar Association. On labor-related issues for foreign workers, they act as mediators themselves and try to pressure companies to abide by Japan's labor laws in terms of applying for accident compensation for foreign workers, paying wages, and up-keeping dismissal laws. A consultant at the Ibaraki International Association claimed that officials at her office often took the side of foreign workers, unlike labor consultants at the Tokyo labor offices.⁹⁸ These services appear similar to those offered by foreigners support groups in Kanagawa and Tokyo. The Ibaraki International Association does not outsource these costly services to NGOs, because such NGOs no longer exist in the prefecture and officials prefer to perform these services themselves.⁹⁹ However, the Ibaraki Prefectural Government is trying to establish cooperation with voluntary associations and various International Exchange Associations inside its prefecture in the area of cultural exchange.

⁹⁷ Interview with Mr. Terakado Mitsuhiro and Mr. Noguchi Shinichi of the Ibaraki Prefectural Government's International Affairs Division in Mito, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998.

⁹⁸ Interview with Ms. Maeda Junko of the Ibaraki International Association in Mito, Ibaraki, 2 September 1998.

⁹⁹ The two foreigners support groups that used to exist there dissolved in 1996.

It established a Committee for Mutual Cooperation and Information Exchange and began funding the activities of some cultural exchange groups (8 in total with a maximum budget of 150,000 yen per group).¹⁰⁰

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Gunma Prefectural Government lie in the middle. Specifically, the former is closer toward progressive Kanagawa and the latter toward conservative Ibaraki. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Bureau of Labor and Economic Affairs (労働経済局) of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government aggressively offers mediation on labor disputes between foreign workers and their employers. Like the Kanagawa Prefectural Government, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government also out-sources services and activities to medical NGOs, AMDA and SHARE, and to women's shelter HELP. Local government officials regularly attend meetings of some of these Japanese NGOs. Moreover, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government sponsors an annual Leadership Seminar that brings together Japanese activists and local government officials to tackle problems that foreigners face. In the Gunma prefecture where subcontractors and sub-subcontractors of big manufacturing firms are concentrated, local governments actually try to attract *Nikkeijin*. They have provided various facilities and services such as translators at city or town offices and Japanese language classes. Officials of the Gunma International Association also ask members of the lawyer group Partner to provide legal advice at their office twice per year.¹⁰¹ Like the Ibaraki International Association, the Gunma International Association also organizes a committee for mutual cooperation and international exchange with other voluntary groups in the prefecture in the area for cultural

¹⁰⁰ This marked the first time that the Ibaraki Prefectural Government funded voluntary groups. Interview with Ms. Ogawa Naomi of the Ibaraki International Association in Mito, Ibaraki, 28 December 1998.

exchange.¹⁰² None of Japanese NGOs that are helping overstayed foreigners participates in this committee.

In short, the role of local government in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma, and Ibaraki varies considerably in their activities to help foreign workers and in their relations with Japanese NGOs. Although local governments in all four places provide extensive services to foreign workers in their areas, Ibaraki is relatively less supportive of its overstayed foreign workers while Kanagawa demonstrates progressive efforts to assist its overstayed foreign workers. For example, two foreigners advisory committees and one NGOs advisory committee exist in Kanagawa while only one foreigners advisory committee exists in Tokyo and none in Gunma or Ibaraki. Both Kanagawa and Tokyo outsource some of their services to medical and women NGOs while Gunma only to lawyers NGO and Ibaraki does not at all. Local governments in Kanagawa, Tokyo, and Gunma have a system to cover unpaid medical expenses for illegal foreign workers. In addition, Kanagawa, Tokyo, and Gunma make recommendations for policy changes on helping their foreign residents to various ministries, Ibaraki prefers to follow policies of the central government almost to the letter. Three local government officials from Tokyo are also active members in some of these foreigners support groups. Two regularly contribute anti-government articles to some of the support groups. In Kanagawa, members of the Kanagawa International Association coordinate a study group with several support groups in the prefecture once a month. Table 5.9 summarizes the variation that exists in these regions as discussed above.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Mr Hirata Noriaki of the Gunma International Association in Maebashi, Gunma, 8 September 1998.

¹⁰² Gunma International Association, '97 APR~'98 MAR *Jigyou nenpou* [FY1997 Annual Report] (Maebashi: Gunma

Table 5.9: Role of Local Governments in Selected Areas

	Kanagawa 神奈川県	Tokyo 東京都	Gunma 群馬県	Ibaraki 茨城県
Legal Foreigners (1997 figures)	108,680	256,465	30,858	31,924
Labor Consultation Offices	3 offices	6 offices	None	None
Foreigners Advisory Centers	yes	yes	Interpreters	None
Foreigners Representative Assembly	Kawasaki, Kanagawa	Tokyo	懇談会	None
Voting Rights (percentage of population)	100 percent	79.8 percent	52.5 percent	40.1 percent
Illegal Foreigners				
Sick/Dead Persons Law	Kanagawa, Kawasaki and Yokohama	Tokyo	None	None
Unpaid Medical Fund	Kanagawa (1993)	Tokyo (1995)	Gunma (1993)	
Support Groups				
Number [dissolved]	28 [1]	55 [1]	6 [2]	[2]
Type [dissolved]	All	All	U, C, Z, L	[C,W]
Local Government-NGO Relations				
Outsource Services to NGOs	M(Esperanza-nokai); W(Mizula, Saalaa); Z(SOL, Kalabaw)	M(AMDA, SHARE); W(HELP)	L(Partner)	None
Study Groups between NGO activists and Local Government Officials (initiated member)	県窓口 (local gov't); 労災 Study Group (NGO)	Hirano Study Group (NGO)	None	None
Institutionalized Cooperation	NGO Advisory Council (Mizula)	Annual Leadership Seminar	None	None
Local-Central Government Relations				
Proposal to Ministries on Foreigners Issues	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

We can summarize the conclusions to be drawn from the evidence thus far by accepting the fact that Japanese NGOs have made an impact on local governments. Local government officials, particularly in progressive areas, have come to recognize and appreciate the work and expertise of Japanese NGOs. They try to establish a dialogue with Japanese activists by inviting them to give talks, arranging discussion meetings and citizens' assemblies, and even setting up an NGO advisory council in order to improve public information-dissemination functions. Clearly, local governments in progressive areas try to incorporate the participation of Japanese activists into the process of setting

International Association, 1998), p. 8 (ff).

their policy priorities on foreign residents in their area. As a result of these myriad attempts to institutionalize participation, the attitudes and behavior of local government and politics are showing signs of reform in a variety of respects that are today undeniably and irreversibly part of the local political scene. Officials at certain local governments have begun to position themselves with Japanese activists that may contradict with national priorities. The Kanagawa Prefectural Government, for example, positioned itself with Japanese medical NGOs when it set up an “Emergency Medical Fee Subsidiary System” to cover for unpaid medical expenses which largely incurred by illegal foreigners. Its annual proposal to the central government often reflects similar demands made by Japanese NGOs, such as the reapplication of the Livelihood Protection Law to cover all foreigners. Both the Kanagawa Prefecture Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government fund some Japanese NGOs, particularly women shelters and medical NGOs, by outsourcing some of their service activities to them. Certain local government officials volunteer at some of these support groups and publish books and articles, many of which condemn policies of the central government on foreign workers. In this way, associative activism by Japanese activists has produced transformative effects at the local level.

IV. NEGATIVE IMPACT OF JAPANESE NGO ON JAPANESE AND FOREIGNERS COMMUNITIES

Japanese NGOs are not well-received in all communities in Japan. They appear to produce mixed impact on the Japanese community. Certain NGOs try to participate in the activities of their community while others do not. As a result, members of the Japanese community look onto those NGOs with little community involvement with negative

feeling. Interestingly, overstayed foreigners, who have not encountered serious problems, do not appreciate the work of these Japanese NGOs. Most do not even know of their existence. And when they are informed about their existence, overstayed foreigners are suspicious of them. This section explores the negative impact that these Japanese NGOs are making on Japanese and foreigners communities in Japan.

5.4.1 Impact of Japanese NGOs on Japanese Community

In most Japanese communities where foreigner support groups have their offices, Japanese residents are usually indifferent about these groups. Many of these groups are, in fact, located in the metropolitan area with a high concentration of office buildings. Hence, few people actually live in the area. Foreigners support groups that have their offices inside an apartment complex, such as Mizula and the Kobayashi International Clinic, usually encountered resentment from Japanese residents of the building during the early days of their operation. The Kobayashi International Clinic, for example, received two letters from residents, who were living in the same building as the clinic, expressing concerns that foreigners visiting the clinic might rape female residents.¹⁰³ Relations typically improve only after members of these groups began to participate in activities with residents of the building. However, foreigner support NGOs have made mixed impact on *yoseba* where men down on their luck gather in the very early mornings to get day jobs on construction sites, handed out by gang-affiliated brokers. Those NGOs that actively participate in the activities of their *yoseba* tend to build better relations and positive images among Japanese

¹⁰³ Interview with Dr. Kobayashi Yoneyuki of the Kobayashi International Clinic in Yamato-shi, Kanagawa, 15 May 1998.

members of that community. Those that do not participate in the activities of their *yoseba* encounter resentment from other Japanese. This has been the case of the Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan (hereafter Zai-a-kyou from its Japanese acronyms) and the Japanese community in San'ya.¹⁰⁴

To better understand why the Zai-a-kyou suffers resentment from its Japanese community in San'ya, it may be useful to compare and contrast Zai-a-kyou in San'ya with the success of the Kalabaw-no-kai in Kotobuki-cho. With exceptions that the two places are *yoseba*, Kotobuki-cho is very different to San'ya.¹⁰⁵ San'ya men are mostly Japanese while those in Kotobuki-cho are more mixed with many Koreans and some Filipinos and Bangladeshis. The streets of Kotobuki-cho are still flooded with *yakuza*. It is home to at least two *yakuza* groups, the Yamaguchi-gumi and the Soaikai.¹⁰⁶ The Soaikai group (a different group than the Korean ethnic group that existed before World War II as mentioned in Chapter 1) seems to be running the show in Kotobuki-cho. The Yamaguchi-gumi concentrates on a more lucrative business, selling black market tickets at the Yokohama stadium, which is only five-minute walk from its Kotobuki-cho's office. In contrast, the *yakuza* group in San'ya, the Kanamachi Ikka, has quiet down since the 1980s after direct confrontations with the Sogidan Labor Union, who was organizing San'ya day-laborers. As a result of the violent clash, the Sogidan leader was murdered (and so was the fate of a

¹⁰⁴ The Japanese name is 「在日アジア人労働者と共に戦う会」, which is shortened to 「在ア協」.

¹⁰⁵ On San'ya, see Edward Fowler, *San'ya Blues: Laboring Life in Contemporary Tokyo* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). On Kotobuki-cho, see Steven, *On the Margins of Japanese Society*.

¹⁰⁶ One can tell that *yakusa* have an office in these *yoseba* by the two cameras hanging on each side of the building pointing at each other toward the direction in front of the entrance. I thank Peter Hill, who actually spent many early mornings with me at San'ya and Kotobuki-cho, for this information. I also thank labor organizers at the Kotobuki-nichi-rou Labor Union for their information about these two *yakuza* groups.

movie director who was trying to film San'ya life and union activities).¹⁰⁷ After the two killings, all eyes, particularly the police's, turned to the Kanamachi Ikka.¹⁰⁸ Today, the Kanamachi Ikka is keeping a low-profile and has reduced its activities in San'ya.¹⁰⁹

Currently, an off-spring of the Sogidan, the Yama-nichi-rou (山日労) Labor Union, runs San'ya.¹¹⁰ Every Fridays between 6 and 8 o'clock in the morning, Mr. Gya (Japanese for "loud-mouth" – that is what all the people in San'ya called him) of the Yama-nichi-rou goes around the neighborhood shouting into the loudspeaker and trying to organize San'ya day-laborers. Mr. Gya strongly resents the Zai-a-kyou group. He claimed, "although its office is in San'ya, no one from this Christian group comes to San'ya or care about San'ya people; it is just an empty office with nobody there."¹¹¹ Mr. Gya seemed correct, because I spent over a year trying to get a hold of someone there. Mr. Gya contrasted the Zai-a-kyou group to the Yamasato Counseling Office, which distributes *onigiri* (rice balls wrapped in seaweed) to San'ya day-laborers every Thursday evenings in addition to their prison visits of foreign inmates at the Tokyo Municipal Prison in Kosuge (as described above). Mr. Gya believes that the cooperation and active involvement of labor unions and volunteer groups in San'ya are important in curtailing the exploitative activities of the *yakuza* inside that community. Members of the Yamasato Consulting Office helped the Yama-nichi-rou Labor Union organize the San'ya annual Summer Festival in 1998. Before the festival officially started, members of the Yama-nichi-rou Labor Union were handing out sweet ices to

¹⁰⁷ Fowler, *San'ya Blues*

¹⁰⁸ Interview with a police officer at the San'ya Koban in Tokyo, 1998.

¹⁰⁹ Another reason for the decline in its activities has to do with the decline of San'ya as young people from the countryside stopped coming there to search for day jobs at construction sites. CHECK NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

¹¹⁰ The full name of the Yama-nichi-rou (山日労) is the Tokyo-San'ya Day Workers Union (東京・山谷日雇労働組合).

¹¹¹ Interview with Mr. Gya of the Yama-Nichi-Rou Labor Union in San'ya, Tokyo, 3 July 1998.

San'ya men. The line went half way around the Tamahime Park. The festival included beer-drinking contest, *karaoke*-singing contest, and so forth. Those who were not involved sat quietly and watched. Since Mr. Gya was the announcer, he occasionally promotes some Marxist ideals on the stage between events.

In contrast, the Kalabaw-no-kai maintains excellent relations with all of the voluntary associations and people in the Kotobuki-cho area. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Reverend Watanabe Hideyoshi and Mr. Hanada Masaru were members of the Kotobuki-nichi-rou (寿日労) Labor Union when they found the Kalabaw-no-kai.¹¹² As discussed above, the Kalabaw-no-kai nurtures good relations with Mr. Okawa Akihiro of the Yokohama Welfare Center in Kotobuki-cho. In his “after five activities” with Japanese activists, Mr. Okawa asks them to send their correspondences with him to the Kalabaw-no-kai's office. Moreover, Japanese people who live in the area know about the Kalabaw-no-kai and speak kindly about its activities to help foreign workers.¹¹³ Volunteers at the Kalabaw-no-kai also try very hard to avoid direct conflict with the *yakuza*, who control the streets of Kotobuki-cho.

During the 1998 Summer Festival at Kotobuki-cho, different groups in the community, including the Kalabaw-no-kai, helped organize the three-day event. The first day of the festival was a free concert with bands mostly from Okinawa. People, many of whom were outsiders, were jumping up and down. There were plenty of *yatai* (or stalls) – selling cheap foods. A couple of the stalls were handing food out to the “*ot'yan*” and “*obachan*” (uncles and aunts) – that is what the people of Kotobuki-cho are referred to – who

¹¹² The Full name of the Kotobuki-nichi-rou is Kotobuki Day Workers Union (寿日雇労働者組合).

¹¹³ Interview with a Japanese couple (barbers) in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, 13 August 1998.

have food stamps that were distributed earlier by the “Mukou Patorou” (Thursday Patrol – another NGO in the community supporting the homeless). Kalabaw-no-kai also contributed both food and labor to the “Mukou Patorou.” In essence, the locals basically ate for free while urban outsiders (and, of course, more financially prosperous) were dishing out small chains from their pockets for foods and drinks. During the third day of the festival, which consisted mainly of *bon-odori* (dancing in circle to traditional music and the drumming of the *taiko*), almost all of the participants were Kotobuki-cho’s *ot’chan* and *obachan*.

Like the Japanese community in *yoseba*, Japanese NGOs received mixed reaction from the *yakuza* and right-wing (右翼) community. Because these Japanese activists challenge some of the activities of the *yakuza*, many *yakuza* are not pleased with them. In one instance, a group of *yakuza* ambushed Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in front of his house and gave him a good beating. Mr. Murayama explained that these *yakuza* were annoyed with him for his relentless union involvement with a Korean worker that was causing them trouble.¹¹⁴ Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamasato Consulting Office mentioned that he received a physical threat from a *yakuza*. He then politely pointed to his forehead and told the *yakuza*, “if you want to hit me, go right ahead.”¹¹⁵ Fortunately for him, the *yakuza* turned away and let him be. Staff at women’s shelters, HELP and Mizula, have received several threatened phone calls at their offices. Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP recalled one humorous incident when she told the *yakuza* at the other end of the line that “this organization is for women only; you cannot come

¹¹⁴ Interview with Mr. Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union in Kawasaki, Kanagawa, 3 April 1998.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamasato Consulting Office in Tokyo, 3 December 1998.

here.”¹¹⁶ Apparently, he listened, for he did not go to the shelter. In some instances, the *yakuza* actually have come to these foreigner support groups asking for help. Staff at the lawyer group LAFLR have received phone calls from *yakuza* seeking legal consultations for their foreign “girlfriends.” Once, a *yakuza* in the Ibaraki prefecture brought a drug overdosed foreign woman to the office of the Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers.¹¹⁷ The progressive activities of these groups can also caused conflict with members of the right-wing groups. One of such incidents occurred while I was visiting the Kalabaw-no-kai’s office in the summer of 1996. A member of a right-wing group stormed into the office, acted rudely, and cursed at the female staff. Although the staff acted calmly, I thought violence was coming for sure and was prepared to drop to the floor if shooting begin, which it never did. Fortunately, there was no violence that day and the staff assured me that this was the worst she had ever seen thus far.¹¹⁸ In short, although there have been numerous close calls, these Japanese activists have kept away from violent confrontation with the *yakuza*, unlike the Sogidan Labor Union and the Kanamachi Ikka in San’ya.

In sum, foreigners support groups have made mixed impact on the Japanese community. Since most of them are located in urban areas surrounded by office buildings, their presence usually go unnoticed by those few Japanese residents. In the *yoseba* of Tokyo and Yokohama, those NGOs that actively participate in the activities of the community build good relations with the Japanese residents in the community. The NGO in San’ya that do not participate in local community activities faces resentment from

¹¹⁶ Interview with Ms. Oshima Chizuko of HELP in Tokyo, 2 December 1998.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Mr. Chimoto Hideki of the Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers in Tsukuba, Ibaraki, 16 May 1998.

¹¹⁸ She claims that the man was a member of the “right-wing” group (右翼団体) and not a *yakuza* or a member of the violent group (暴力団).

resident Japanese. In the *yakuza* community, gang members have both threatened them as well as asked them for help.

5.4.2 Impact of Japanese NGOs on Foreign Community

Most surprisingly, Japanese NGOs have not yet made a positive impression on illegal foreigners. Most overstayed foreigners, who find no problem with their situation in Japan, do not even know about the existence of these NGOs. For example, none of the overstayed Thais in the Ibaraki prefecture or in the Shinjuku and Shin-Okubo area who I interviewed know any of these NGOs. Neither did the overstayed Filipino construction workers I ran across in downtown Tokyo. And after they were informed about the existence of these NGOs, they remained suspicious of these groups.

In 1998, I came across a recently organized Thai community in the Ibaraki prefecture, which looked like another industrial park in Thailand. There were several Thai shops, restaurants, groceries, and so forth. The older women and/or retired female entertainers ran the shops. The signs for these shops were all in Thai – with no Japanese characters (i.e. the Japanese did not go there!). After a hard day at work in the factories, the Thai men stopped at these shops to buy *kao gang* (ready meal) to bring back to their apartments, which they usually shared with one or two other persons. If they had problems, they helped each other. In particular, they would try to seek their friends who had proper visa to stay in Japan. Not one person in this community was aware of the existence of foreigners supporting NGOs. When I informed them about these Japanese NGOs, they immediately expressed their distrust against them. They were afraid that the NGO people would inform the Immigration Office. In my interview with a Thai entertainer in Ibaraki, I asked her what

she usually does when she becomes sick. She replied,

“I will do as all the Thais here do, treat myself.”

“Isn’t that alittle dangerous? Do you know that there are medical NGOs in Tokyo and Yokohama that will treat you?” I asked her expressing concern.

“Nonsense...If I go there, they will report me to the *nyukan* and send me back to Thailand,” she answered with a laugh and probably thought that I must be out of mind.¹¹⁹ Although I assured these Thais that Japanese NGOs would not do such things, they remained suspicious. They thought it was ridiculous that anyone would help them for free.¹²⁰ One Thai man asked me,

“If these NGOs are really sincere about helping us, why aren’t they here in the community and talk to us like you?”¹²¹

He actually raised an important point – that is, all these NGOs (except for a few) do not enter the foreigner communities in Japan but usually wait for foreigners to come to them with their problems. As a result, these Thais do not trust Japanese NGOs. As I have encountered with other overstayed foreign workers inside their communities, one could earn their trust simply by entering their communities and talked with them. Even after the first meeting, many have asked me to eat or drink or sleep with them. Common among these overstayed foreigners was their request to have my name card. Before I left them, some would ask,

¹¹⁹ Interview with an overstayed Thai woman in Iwai-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998. Interestingly, the Thais in Japan appeared to have adopted the Japanese word “*nyukan*” [Immigration Office] into their every-day vocabulary.

¹²⁰ This is the reason why some support groups began charging these foreigners, albeit at a minimal cost. They hope that this would lessen the foreigners’ suspicion. This is a major concern of lawyer NGOs. Comments by Ms. Miki Emiko of the women’s shelter Saalaa and the Yokohama Bar Association’s Legal Consultation for Foreigners at a Kanagawa Occupational Accident Study Group in Yokohama, Kanagawa, 3 July 1998.

¹²¹ Interview with an overstayed Thai worker in Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki, 17 June 1998.

“This is where I call when I need help, right?”

“I cannot help you, but you can call me,” was my usual reply. Despite this uncompassionate answer, they appeared satisfied. Clearly, these overstayed foreigners felt reassured when someone actually go into their communities and talk to them. Only then would the suspicion that fell upon the Japanese activists be reduced.

One particular Filipino group expressed similar suspicious about these Japanese NGOs. The leader of the Philippine Women’s League of Japan, Ms. Yuko Takei, believes that these Japanese-established NGOs use overstayed foreign workers to get “free publicity for their less popular causes like the abolition of the Emperor system.”¹²² Ms. Takei adds,

[I]amentably, the children are also being used by so-called “support groups” for their moneymaking campaigns. Illegal Filipino migrant workers are being given false hopes that their children would be their guaranty for permanent residency in Japan. It is for such reason that they do not go to the Philippine Embassy to have their children registered as Filipinos.

The Civil Code of the Philippines guarantees a child’s right to be a Filipino if the parents or even just one parent is a Philippine national, but overstaying Filipinos in Japan would rather have their children become stateless and illegal than go to the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo or the Philippine Consulate in Osaka to register them.

In 1996, an overstaying Filipino woman living in Osaka with her illegitimate children was granted a special permit to stay in Japan after suing the Japanese government with the support of a Kansai-based NGO. Appallingly, the court failed to recognize the fact that the Filipino woman was using her illicit affair and her children to legitimize her stay in Japan, and that the court decision has caused havoc on Filipino morality.¹²³

Hence, it appears that the foreigners who appreciate these Japanese NGOs are mostly those that have grave problems and seeking specific assistance from these NGOs. Those overstayed foreigners who do not encounter serious problems or face desperate situation, which account for the majority of illegal foreigners in Japan, largely remain disinterested or

¹²² See their homepage at <http://japan.co.jp/~ystakei/pw11.html> (23 October 1998).

¹²³ Yuko Takei, “The Filipino Migrants in Japan” at <http://japan.co.jp/~ystakei/pw1.html> (23 October 1998).

suspicious of these groups. When serious problems occur to them, illegal foreign workers then begin to gather information on various personal and institutional services available to them. Because most illegal foreign workers who use these support groups learn about their existence through word-of-mouth, this means that someone in the foreigner community must know about them. They simply do not pay much attention to these groups until serious problems occur to them.

V. CONCLUSION

To summarize, Japanese NGOs, although still young and powerless, are making a noticeable impact on the Japanese society at the local level. Japanese activists record their activities in their newsletters in order to share information with their members and publish books to inform the concerned audience about the situations of overstayed foreign workers in Japan. As a result, Japanese activists have captured the attention of the mass media and have become providers of an alternative source of information on illegal foreigners to the Japanese public. They also have reshaped the thinking for many Japanese intellectuals and have gained many of their intellectual support. Most importantly, they have acquired significant and powerful allies with local government officials, who decide not to interrupt the work of many of these NGOs and to support them with financial assistance. Local government officials try to build dialogue with these Japanese activists by inviting them to give talks, organizing discussion meetings, and soliciting their participation in citizens' assemblies and advisory councils. Some have even joined their groups and lead a joint-committee on specific political movements. In progressive local governments like those in Kanagawa and Tokyo, they even subcontract some of the government's own activities to

them. The Kanagawa Prefectural Government went so far as to create an innovative institutional forum where Japanese NGO representatives can discuss on pressing matters regarding illegal foreign workers. Whether such transformative effects at the local level open up new opportunities for further democratic transformation in Japan or fall into a traditional pattern for further government control is still inconclusive at this early stage. But it is suffice to state that institutional experimentation by Japanese activists to solve problems for illegal foreign workers in Japan have improved public discourse on foreigner issues, increased intellectual interests for foreigners, and promoted participation of Japanese activists in shaping local governments' priorities for foreign residents in their areas.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

This dissertation attempts to answer the question why do Japanese people establish support groups to assist illegal foreign workers. In searching for the answer, I have constructed a problem-solution approach, which allowed me to examine the issue deeply from both a top-down (structural) and a bottom-up (agency) perspective. Such an approach, I believe, is built on the concepts and categories that the actors themselves use to understand the world in which they operate. What I discovered is that these Japanese activists are solving *problems* for foreign workers. When I looked into these problems, I found that they were a political construction of government policies and action. I then observed the *solution* that Japanese activists undertook to solve the problems. It involved associative activism and institutional experimentation, which had produced various unintended transformative effects at the local level. I then conclude that these Japanese people, as experienced problem-solvers for the underprivileged people, help illegal foreigners because the latter come to them with serious problems. Such an approach can also be used to understand a variety of institutions for foreigners in other nations.

This final chapter first illustrates how the problem-solution approach might be used to explore institutional variations on foreign worker support groups across advanced industrialized societies. Then I return to the central question on why Japanese people established support groups to help illegal foreign workers and review how the problem-solution approach has tried to explain it. It also discussed how other hypotheses have fallen short in providing a compelling explanation. The dissertation concludes with some normative remarks on the contribution of associative activism for illegal foreign workers in Japan to the improvement of humanitarianism and democracy in that country.

I. THE PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH IN COMPARATIVE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Students of comparative politics can employ the problem-solution approach to understand the situation for foreign workers and their support groups in other countries as well as to formulate a cross-national analysis. To undertake such an approach would require a deep knowledge of the problem foreigners face and government policies that affect them. Using only secondary sources, I will demonstrate below how this approach can bring a fresh and rich understanding to foreign workers and their support groups in other nations. I then will show how this approach can generate general predictions to sort out patterns across nations on government policies and immigrant groups.

6.1.1 Native NGOs as Problem-Solving Institutions in Other Advanced Industrialized Countries

Native-established support groups have been viewed as “problem-solvers” in other advanced industrialized countries. In Germany, for example, Elmar Honekopp and Hans Ullman observed that German-established foreign workers’ aid organizations

have taken over a task which no one else (neither the German employers nor the administrative authorities) was willing to shoulder – the task of attending to the needs of individuals.... *These organizations attempt what might be called ‘ad hoc social engineering,’ that is to say, assisting individual foreigners who come up against difficulties and problems...* Interpreters or mediators provided by the aid organizations intercede with employers or tackle housing problems; they contact the competent administrative authorities on behalf of immigrant workers who have *problems* concerning applications, certificates or other documents; they give legal advice regarding the rights of foreigners and questions of social security; they supply special information on various aspects of labor law (young people, health, family status, etc..). [emphasis added]¹

¹ Elmar Honekopp and Hans Ullman, “The Status of Immigrant Workers in the Federal Republic of Germany,” in Eric-Jean Thomas, *Immigrant Workers in Europe: their Legal Status* (Paris: UNESCO Press, 1982), p. 138.

Similarly in the Netherlands, Chris Smolders reveals that the Dutch-established immigrant workers' aid associations "...deal...with the whole range of problems concerning immigrant workers, although they are more particularly concerned with helping those who come from the recruitment countries. They make no distinction in their work between legal and illicit immigrants."² Herman Debbaut and Johan Declerck also discussed how Belgian-established support groups have endeavored "to improve the lot of migrant workers." They have established "reception centers...[to help]... migrant workers with the *problem* of adjusting to their new surroundings in Belgium and in "bringing this *problem* to the notice of public opinion and politicians."³

The problems that foreign workers in other advanced industrialized countries face, however, differ considerably from those in Japan. In Japan, mainly illegal foreigners encounter serious problems and go to Japanese-established NGOs for assistance. In other advanced industrialized societies, by contrast, illegal aliens face far less hardships because these countries typically guarantee them rights and basic services regardless of their legal status. Soysal elegantly demonstrates that in Europe and the U.S., "universal personhood" supersedes national citizenship and legal status. There, "individual" transcends other qualities such as nation-bound citizen or legal-bound alien. Soysal writes,

the trend toward international standardization of the rights and status of noncitizens – not only does the array of rights improve over time, but also the categories of populations that they cover expand. Even illegal workers are granted the right to appeal deportation, to be treated humanely, and in the United States, to receive education and some social services.⁴

² Chris Smolders, "The Status of Immigrant Workers in the Netherlands," in Thomas, *op.cit.*, p. 109

³ Herman Debbaut and Johan Declerck, "The Status of Immigrant Workers in Belgium" in Thomas, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

⁴ Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1994), p. 131.

For legal foreign workers in Europe, their socioeconomic rights are close at par with those of indigenous workers after they have stayed in the host country for a specific number of years.⁵ Illegal foreign workers in Europe are also protected by either or a combination of national regulations, regional convention, bilateral treaty, and international treaty. In Germany, guest workers can claim public assistance even if their stay is illegal.⁶ In Belgium, even when a foreign worker “has been hired in an irregular way (for example, when no employment permit or work card has been obtained), the worker loses none of the rights accruing from the work that has in fact been done. In principle, all workers employed in Belgium are assured of the right to social security.”⁷ The European Council also has provisions dealing specifically with illegal aliens and their protection. Moreover, many host European countries signed the ILO’s Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) which required the ratified state to “provide equality of treatment with its own nationals to the nationals of any other State for which the Convention is also in force, as well as to refugee and stateless persons.”⁸ Social security provision in this Convention consists of invalidity benefits, old-age benefits, survivors’ benefits, death grants and/or employment injury pensions. Signatories of this Convention

⁵ In France, Switzerland, and Germany, Mark Miller finds that residing rights “hinge on completion of the first year’s contract. After the first year, foreign workers qualify for permits that confer progressively greater employment and residency rights. After five years of continuous work and residency, most foreign workers are considered to have ordinarily nonrevocable residency rights, and their socioeconomic rights are virtually the same as those of indigenous workers. After eight years in Germany and ten years in Switzerland and France, most foreign workers can qualify as permanent residents aliens.” See Mark J. Miller, *Foreign Workers in Western Europe: An Emerging Political Force* (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 16. For an excellent general comparison on the provision of socioeconomic rights accorded to migrants in France, Switzerland, and Germany, see Mark J. Miller and Philip L. Martin, *Administering Foreign-Worker Programs: Lessons from Europe* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1982), Appendix I, pp. 184-185

⁶ Horst Reimann and Helga Reimann, “Federal Republic of Germany” in Ronald E. Krane, ed., *International Labor Migration in Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1979), p. 79

⁷ Debbaut and Declerck, “The Status of Immigrant Workers in Belgium,” p. 19.

⁸ International Labor Office, *Social Security for Migrant Workers* (Geneva: ILO, Social Security Department, 1996), p. 11.

are required to guarantee these provisions to foreign workers and their dependents from other signatory countries *without any condition of residence*. Ratified nations include France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, Zaire, Suriname, Tunisia, Mauritania, Madagascar, Kenya, Jordan, Iraq, and others.⁹ Hence, the German government must grant Turks the same treatment as it grants to Germans in terms of social security provisions. The same is true for the Dutch government and Surinamese workers, the Swedish government and the Finns, the French government and the Tunisians, and so forth. In addition, many European host countries sign bilateral agreements with the sending countries on the guarantee of welfare provisions.¹⁰

In the United States, Peter Schuck finds that “many statutes and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels confer substantive rights upon undocumented aliens.”¹¹ In particular, illegal aliens are eligible for “social insurance” programs, social security programs, medicare (health insurance for the elderly, disabled, and certain others), workers’ compensation, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). For those illegal aliens who can claim PRUCOL status (basically a statement from the INS that their departure or deportation the INS does not contemplate enforcing in the near future), they are also eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program and Medicaid (a joint federal-state program that finances medical care for the poor). Most importantly, hospitals in the United States do not discriminate against illegal aliens. In Los Angeles public hospitals, for example, approximately 75 percent of the births are said to be children of

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰ For a list of examples of bilateral treaties between France and African nations, see Miller and Martin, *Administering Foreign-Worker Programs: Lessons from Europe*, particularly Appendix F and G, pp. 171-174

¹¹ Peter H. Schuck, “The Status and Rights of Undocumented Aliens in the United States,” *International Migration* 25 (1987): 125-139 (131ff).

illegal aliens.¹²

Moreover, illegal aliens do not remain illegal indefinitely in these countries like those in Japan. Most of these nations occasionally regularize the status of illegal aliens through official amnesties. Belgium regularized 12,000 illegals in 1974; the Netherlands, 15,000 in 1975; France, 140,000 in 1981 and 23,000 in 1998; Spain, 44,000 in 1986 and 110,000 in 1991 and 20,000 in 1996; Italy, 118,000 in 1988 and 235,000 in 1990 and 259,000 in 1996; and, the United States, 2.7 million in 1986.¹³ From 1964 to 1974 in France, a regularization procedure made it possible for most immigrants to enter as tourists, find work, and subsequently get official work and residence permits which legalized their position.¹⁴ Regularization procedure was so frequently practiced in France before 1980 that it became the prominent mode of entry for the majority of permanent residents. In 1975, 13,013 out of 15,769 foreigners entered France and became permanent immigrant workers through regularization procedure; 15,562 out of 17,253 in 1976; 8,219 out of 9,225 in 1979.¹⁵ Hence, periodic amnesties have come to be regarded as a right, which has resulted in several political campaigns and strikes since the 1970s.¹⁶

Because illegal aliens have basic rights and entitlements to critical welfare provisions in Europe and the U.S., they are not necessarily the ones who have most serious problems in their host societies (except for victims of human trafficking who are kept under captivity). Since they are not indefinitely illegal aliens, they are not subjected to the psychological deprivation or endless abuses from their employers. Most of the problems

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 133.

¹³ OECD (SOPEMI), *Trends in International Migration* (Paris: OECD, 1998), pp. 60-62.

¹⁴ Jonathan Power, *Migrant Workers in Western Europe and the United States* (New York: Pergamon, 1979), p. 30.

¹⁵ Eric-Jean Thomas, "The Status of Immigrant Workers in France," in Thomas, *op.cit.*, pp. 41-82 (47ff).

that foreign workers in Europe face are in the area of public housing and migrant education programs.¹⁷ These problems applied to all foreigners regardless of their legal status and tend to be less serious than those illegal foreigners in Japan face. As Tomas Hammar observed in Sweden, “foreign citizens tend to look for individual and private instead of collective and political solutions to their problems.”¹⁸

6.1.2 The Predictability of the Problem-Solution Approach and its Limits

The Japanese experience with foreign workers and native-established support groups informs us that problems arise for immigrants when a country practices an incoherent and/or “control” (restrictive) immigration policy. Then, we see increased associative activism by natives to help immigrants. Similar situations appeared in the Netherlands in the late 1950s. At that time, migrant workers from the Mediterranean began to seek jobs in the Netherlands and the Dutch government declined any responsibility for the guest workers. Instead, Catholics set up several welfare institutions to assist them.¹⁹ Frank Bovenkerk observed that during the early 1960s, “there was no coherent policy,” “no national policy on housing or individual social help.” “The central government did, however, subsidize various private undertakings in this field, such as those of the churches...[B]y assigning responsibility to private foundations, the government guarded

¹⁶ Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*, p. 132.

¹⁷ Miller and Martin, *Administering Foreign-Worker Programs: Lessons from Europe*, p. 77.

¹⁸ Tomas Hammar, “Citizenship, Aliens’ Political Rights, and Politicians’ Concern for Migrants: The Case of Sweden,” in Rosemarie Rogers, ed. *Guests Come to Stay: The Effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving Countries* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 85-107.

¹⁹ Jan Rath, “The Netherlands: A Dutch Treat for Anti-social Families and Immigrant Ethnic Minorities” in Gareth Dale and Mike Cole, eds., *The European Union and Migrant Labour* (New York: Berg, 1999), pp. 147-170 (160-161ff).

itself against any form of criticism.”²⁰ In 1974, when the Dutch government proposed a more restrictive immigration policy to control the entry of foreign workers and to promote the return of Mediterranean workers to their home countries. It suggested setting the maximum duration of stay at two years and giving those who comply a bonus of 5,000 Dutch guilders at departure. The Dutch public responded with massive resistance. Numerous Dutch-established support groups for foreign workers protested fiercely. Even the employers were prepared to offer individual Mediterranean workers a bonus of 6,000 guilders for staying, figuring that their costs for new recruitment every two years would be higher.²¹

The restriction on government welfare provision to foreigners also appeared to have given rise to native-established voluntary organizations. Gary Freeman explains that during the early stages of the immigration, the British government was concerned over reverse discrimination if it were to create special programs or facilities for immigrants or to provide advantages in the acquisition of existing services to immigrants. Moreover, British officials thought that the initial experience with “difficulty in adjusting to their new surroundings...would be resolved by the simple passage of time.” As a result, “[t]hose services of reception, information, and counseling that were necessary were provided primarily through [British] voluntary organizations.”²²

The converse of this argument, which is only provisional and not discussed in the dissertation, also appears true. That is, the more open is the country’s immigration policy

²⁰ Frank Bovenkerk, “The Netherlands,” in Kranc, *op. cit.*, pp. 118- 132 (127-128ff)

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

²² Gary P. Freeman, *Immigrant Labor and Racial Conflict in Industrial Societies: The French and British Experience 1945-1975* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 163-164.

and comprehensive welfare provisions, there appears to be a rise in ethnic associations. Let us now look at the pattern in European countries. Both Sweden after 1975 and the Netherlands after 1981 demonstrate that once the central government has a clear and coherent immigration policy, we see ethnic associations flourish. In Sweden, the government introduced a coherent immigration policy in 1975, which clearly stated its objectives on the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities. The objectives are based on Sweden's three principles of equality, freedom of choice, and solidarity.

The principle of equality implies that Swedish society must take a sustained effort to secure for immigrants the same social conditions and opportunities, together with the same rights and obligations, as the rest of the population. It also implies that all ethnic groups in Sweden should have an equal chance of cultivating the use of their mother tongue and enjoying cultural activities...In order to observe the principle of freedom of choice, it is necessary to ensure that immigrants have a real choice between the possibility of preserving and developing their own cultural identity and that of assuming a cultural identity of Swedish origin...The principle of solidarity...implies that co-operation should be established in all fields of activity between the various groups of immigrants and the majority of the Swedish population.²³

This new policy expressed a desire to restore their human rights to immigrants. Moreover, the central government encourages immigrant groups to organize by providing grants to national immigration organizations through the National Immigration Board (SIV). Government funds constitute 73 percent of the operating budget of the national-level immigrant organizations.²⁴ The majority of the Swedish government spending on immigrant measures, in fact, goes to the support of national-level immigrant organizations.

As a result,

²³ Jonas Widgren, "The Status of Immigrant Workers in Sweden," in Eric-Jean Thomas, *op.cit.*, pp. 166-167.

²⁴ David Jeffrey, "Citizenship, Exclusion, and Political Organizations: Political Responses to Immigrant Policy" (Ph.D. Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Political Science, 2000), p. 153.

every major immigrant group in Sweden has a national-level organization. Serbs, Assyrians, Chileans, Eritreans, Estonians, Greeks, Icelanders, Italians, Japanese, Croatians, Kurds, Latvians, Palestinians, Poles, Portuguese, Salvadorans, Spaniards, Finns, Syrians, Turks, and Hungarians all have national-level associations. In some cases, the immigrant group has more than one national association to represent their interests. Immigrant women have their own national organization also.²⁵

Immigrant associations are organized at the local level as well. For example, there is a National Federation of Turkish Association in Stockholm, but the local municipalities have their own, relatively autonomous Turkish associations. Eighteen local Turkish Associations exist in Sweden. Local immigrant associations receive partial financing from the country or municipal government. A typical local association receives about 46 percent of its operating budget from government sources (36 percent from municipalities and 10 percent from the central government).

The Dutch policy on immigration resembles Sweden's. In 1981, the Dutch government finally devised a comprehensive "ethnic minorities policy," which aims

to create the conditions necessary to enable minority groups to attain equal rights and participate in society, to reduce the social and economic disadvantages suffered by minority groups, [and] to prevent discrimination and to improve the legal position of minorities where necessary.²⁶

Like the Swedish policy, the Dutch policy encourages immigrants to organize their own ethnic associations. It introduced the Government Grant Scheme for the Welfare of Minorities that directly finances migrant organizations through the Directorate for the Coordination of Minorities Policy (DCM). Furthermore, Dutch policy encourages the participation and consultation of minority groups at both national and local levels.²⁷

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155. These associations have at least 1,000 members

²⁶ Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*, p. 48

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

In general, the more restrictive the immigration policy and the less welfare provisions the host country offers to foreigners the more likely we will see active and, often, political involvement of native-established support groups. This is simply because numerous problems will arise for foreigners under such policies. Major differences occur on the role the government plays in supporting these native-established support groups. In the United States and Britain, the government takes a *laissez-faire* approach while governments of Continental Europe actively support, finance, or incorporate the activities of their support groups for foreigners. Conversely, the more open and integrative the immigration policy and the more welfare provisions the host country offers to foreigners, the more likely we will see more creation and apolitical involvement of government support organizations and ethnic associations. This pattern was different in France before 1980 when native-established support groups for foreigners flourished under a highly open and liberal immigration policy. This was largely due to the French restrictive policies on alien associations.²⁸

II. JAPANESE ASSOCIATIVE ACTIVISTS AS PROBLEM-SOLVERS

To make sense of the highly energized and progressive activities of the Japanese, who established support groups for illegal foreign workers in Japan, I introduced a problem-solving approach where I divided my explanation into two parts - problem and solution. The problem in this particular case is politically constructed. The solution involves institutional experimentation that produces unintended transformative effects at

²⁸ See Miller, *Foreign Workers in Western Europe: An Emerging Political Force*, p. 19; J.P. Pilliard, "Patterns and Forms of Immigrant Participation and Representation at the Local and National Levels in Western (Continental) Europe," *International Migration* 24 (June 1986): 511

the local level. Let us now revisit how I have applied a problem-solution approach to the Japanese experience.

6.2.1 The Problem-Solution Approach to the Understanding of Foreigner Support Groups in Japan

The first claim that this problem-solution approach makes is that only those foreigners who face more serious problems seek assistance from Japanese activists. Chapter 2 showed that the conditions for foreign workers in Japan vary considerably according to their legal status. Illegal foreign workers encounter the most serious problems with employers, state officials, medical institutions, and family-life. Problems with their employers include unpaid wages, unfair dismissal, and uncompensated work-related injuries. Illegal foreigners run into problems with state officials in terms of random checks for their immigration documentation, physical torture in detention centers, isolation in prisons, and heavier punishment for their crime. Illegal foreigners also face serious problems from medical institutions, because of their inability to pay for their medical treatment. Illegal foreigners also encounter problems in their family-life, such as: forced break-up of their family unit, negative psychological impact on their children, and legal difficulties with marriage and/or divorce procedures.

These problems are a “political construction” of the Japanese state and its policies. The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law turned Asian, unskilled workers into illegal beings. As a result, employers have taken advantages of illegal foreign workers by withholding past wages or dismissing them unlawfully because they believe that illegals are too afraid to report to authorities about their unlawful activities. The same law also raises

fear among employers on disclosing information on their employment of illegal foreign workers. They then insert Japanese names instead of foreigners' real names in the employment contract, thereby making it impossible for illegals to claim accident insurance as their names do not match those in their contracts. In other cases, employers simply act uncooperatively in claiming accident insurance for illegal foreign workers, for they fear disclosing their employment of illegal foreign workers.

As the 1990 revised Immigration Control Law clearly demarcated the legal from illegal unskilled foreign workers, it allows state officials to discriminate on their treatment toward illegal foreigners. The police can randomly ask Asian foreigners to produce immigration documentation on the streets. Immigration officers can torture illegal foreigners in detention centers and no one will know about it (except, of course, other immigration officials). Illegal foreigners often feel isolated in prisons, because their friends, who often are also illegals, cannot come and visit them. Moreover, judges are known to have given heavier punishment for their crime, because they have already broken one Japanese law, the immigration law.

The 1990 revised Immigration Control Law has also caused serious problems in the family-life of Asian foreigners. The family unit that includes an illegal foreigner can face the possibility of a break-up if Japanese officials decide to deport the illegal foreign member. If both partners are illegals, their children, who usually are still in their early school years, may be forced to leave Japan. Children of parents who are illegal aliens can suffer negative psychological impact at school from their Japanese peers, who may look unto them as children of "criminals." The view that illegal foreigners are "criminals" or "deviant" or "dangerous" is another construction of the Japanese police and certain political

leaders who provide unsubstantiated information on increased criminal activities that illegal foreigners commit to the mass media. In addition, various legal complications arise for illegal foreigners in Japan in a situation of registering for a marriage or a divorce.

Furthermore, policies of the Ministry of Health and Welfare create problems for illegal foreigners regarding medical treatment. The 1990 oral directive discontinued public-subsidized medical services to illegal foreigners and exclude illegal foreigners from the protection of the Livelihood Protection Law. The 1992 circular of the Ministry and Health limited the eligibility to join the National Health Insurance to registered foreigners who have been in Japan for more than one year. These actions of the Ministry of Health and Welfare signify that illegal foreigners must bear all hospital costs themselves. As a result, many find themselves unable to pay for their medical treatment. They then try to treat themselves, which can cause further medical complications, or wait until it has become too late to visit the hospital. At the same time, some hospitals have rejected illegal foreigners fearing that they cannot pay their medical bills, as they are not insured by the public health insurance.

To find solutions for these serious problems, illegal foreign workers can choose to go to a variety of institutions: service organizations of the central government, service organizations of local governments, their own ethnic association (if in existence), other ethnic associations, or Japanese NGOs. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, illegal Asian workers in Japan do not seek assistance from existing government organizations and ethnic associations. Service organizations of the central government, such as Employment Service Centers, Public Employment Security Offices, JITCO, Immigration Information Centers, Nikkei Consulting Centers, and regional International Exchange Associations, provide

mainly information and interpretation services to *Nikkeijin*, Asian trainees, and foreign students. Only the Labor Standards Inspection Offices (LSIO) serve all foreigners, including illegal ones. However, these LSIO are not service organizations but investigative and enforcing agencies. Furthermore, illegal foreigners are suspicious of these organizations of the central government, given the Japanese government's annual Campaign against the Employment of Illegal Foreigners. Hence, illegal foreign workers prefer to stay away from organizations of the central government.

Service organizations of local governments, such as Labor Consultation Offices and Foreign Residents' Advisory Centers, provide needed services, including labor dispute mediation for all foreign workers. However, staffs at these organizations lack the know-how on assisting foreigners and thereby cannot help illegal foreign workers with serious labor and immigration problems. Moreover, officials at the Labor Consultation Offices, which try to resolve labor disputes between foreign workers and their employers, take a neutral stand on dispute settlement and do not necessarily side with foreign workers. In general, illegal foreign workers hold skeptical feelings towards these institutions, because they view them as agents of the Japanese government. Overstayed foreigners understand that they have violated the Japanese Immigration Law, therefore they tend to stay away from government organizations in order to continue working in Japan. In addition to these service organizations for foreign workers, some local governments have also set up foreigner advisory councils. These councils provide a forum where "legal" foreigners can express their opinions concerning matters that affect them. However, topics discussed at these councils do not necessarily reflect the needs of all foreigners, because representatives of these councils are selected by government officials and not elected by their immigrant

groups. More importantly, all representatives of these councils are legal foreigners, who encounter different life experiences than those of their illegal compatriots.

Ethnic associations in Japan rarely support their illegal compatriots. Korean and Chinese ethnic associations - such as, Souren, Mindan, Yokohama Overseas Chinese Associations, and Tokyo Overseas Chinese Associations - are divided along ideological lines. They preoccupy themselves with political activities in support of their home countries and in the promotion of ethnic attachment to their respective homelands. Those ethnic associations where Filipinos, Thais, and Pakistanis established to help themselves - such as the Association of Thai Professionals in Japan, the United Front Japan, and the Philippine's Women League of Japan - function as social clubs, where legal Asians gather for social or cultural activities and build social networks. Their role is to provide members with opportunities to maintain ties with their home countries and to meet their fellow-countrymen and friends. Their political struggle in Japan, if any, focuses on the further improvement of the conditions for legal foreigners. Illegal foreign workers do seek help from their legal compatriots, but at a personal level. Legal Asians fear jeopardizing their existence in Japan if they were to institutionalize and to assist their illegal compatriots. Ethnic associations that condemn their illegal compatriots also exist in Japan, such as the Philippine's Women League of Japan. Thus, illegal foreign workers do not go to these ethnic institutions for assistance.

Instead, illegal foreigners find sincere and professional support from Japanese NGOs, where activists at these institutions have extensive experience in helping the underprivileged people in the Japanese society. Members of these groups are Christians, radical unionists, citizens' rights activists, progressive lawyers, and activist doctors, who

are dissatisfied with their social and political environment and share some sort of vision for its improvement. These people are experienced problem-solvers. Despite their expertise in assisting the underprivileged, Japanese activists still lack experience in helping foreigners, particularly illegal ones. To effectively solve problems for illegal foreigners, Japanese activists created separate support groups for foreigners in order to: a) acquire and accumulate knowledge on how best to help illegal foreigners; b) strengthen their bargaining leverage vis-à-vis the employers, Japanese husbands, and Japanese officials; and, c) explore various sources of funding for their activities. They work diligently to solve problems that each illegal foreigner, who come to their organizations, encounters. Some activists go out of their way to assist them. After the problems are resolved, illegal foreigners usually leave these organizations.

I categorized these support groups into Christian groups, community workers unions, women's groups, medical NGOs, lawyers associations NGOs, and concerned citizens groups. Christians help illegal foreign workers because the majority of recent foreign workers in Japan are Christians from Brazil, Peru, Korea, and the Philippines. Moreover, the Christian virtue of charity dictates that the faithful feel compassionate toward those in need and in distress, and try to alleviate their sufferings. Small community worker unions attract marginal workers who are not members of the enterprise unions, such as part-time workers and workers in small firms. Because these community worker unions are open to anybody, regardless of nationality, creed, race, or gender, foreign workers naturally benefit from this institutional arrangement. Japanese women assist foreign women, because many leaders of women groups have Christian influence and therefore hold Christian values on fidelity. They hope to influence Japanese about their view on

prostitution by pointing to various abuses that foreign women face due to their disadvantaged positions. Furthermore, they are part of the women movement in Japan that seeks sexual equality and the protection of women rights. Medical doctors help illegal foreign workers, because they believe that medical care should be available to all. They find in Japan that certain foreigners cannot receive appropriate medical treatment due to language barriers while some face rejection from medical centers due to their illegal status. Labor lawyers help illegal foreign workers due to their belief in social justice and their traditional opposition to the central government. Civil rights activists seek legal rights for all marginalized people in Japan, including illegal foreigners.

These Japanese NGOs not only provide basic information and translation for foreigners that government service organizations offer but also show more concerns in helping illegal foreigners than ethnic associations. These groups provide to illegal foreigners labor and life-style consultations, legal advice, negotiations, disputes settlement, accident compensation claims, temporary shelters, medical treatments, and private insurance schemes. The creation of these groups reflects the problems that emerged as a result of Japanese government policies. Christians first established support groups to assist mainly Filipina women in the early 1980s, when Japan began importing female “entertainers” from the Philippines. During the end of the 1980s, when foreign men entered Japan to work in the construction industry and small manufacturing, some labor unions and lawyers association NGOs joined the struggle. After the 1990 revised Immigration Control Law and the oral direction to exclude overstayed foreign workers from the National Health Insurance program, several medical NGOs emerged to help illegal foreign workers.

As Japanese activists associatively pursue their problem-solving activities for illegal foreigners, they increasingly find themselves belonging to a socially conscious community of activists, rather than an isolated and marginalized individual. Each support group networks with other groups. The cross-networking is formalized in an annual meeting of Japanese NGO activists, sponsored by the National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers. There, they exchange information and (re)establish formal ties. Such cross-networking and regular interaction among Japanese activists from various groups create a sense of belonging to a community of people who share similar visions and are willing to act in pursuit of those visions. In this sense, associative activism - that is, establishing support groups, publishing newsletters, sharing information, networking with others - generates shared meaning among the activists as they discover that others share similar ideology and common experiences.

Institutional experimentation by Japanese activists to solve problems for illegal foreign workers in Japan have improved public discourse on foreigner issues, increased intellectual interests for foreigners, and promoted participation of Japanese activists in shaping local governments' priorities for foreign residents in their areas. Japanese activists, who gain expertise through their direct experiences with illegal foreign workers, become a rich source of alternative information on foreign workers for the mass media. Japanese journalists recognize them as experts on illegal foreign workers also because these Japanese activists publish newsletters and write articles and books. With their influence on the mass media, these Japanese activists make the information on the actual conditions of illegal foreign workers more critical and comprehensible to the newspaper-reading public. In this way, these foreigner support groups contribute to and shape public discourse within the

Japanese society.

In addition, their activities have attracted intellectual attention and collective action from the academic community inside and outside of Japan. Researchers study and write about these groups. Many support and join their activities, such as the 1999 APFS amnesty campaign for 21 overstayed foreigners. Because members of the academic community can offer convincing intellectual reasoning for some of the activities that these Japanese NGOs are engaging against certain policies of the central government, the chance for that activity to succeed increases substantially.

More importantly, local government officials, particularly in progressive areas, who often interact directly with foreign residents, have come to recognize and appreciate the work and expertise of Japanese NGOs. They try to build a dialogue with the Japanese activists through such mechanisms as “discussion meetings” and “citizens’ assemblies” for the purpose of expanding public hearing and public information functions, and to improve the performance of information-dissemination functions. In addition, they endeavor to institutionalize Japanese activists’ participation in the process of both long-term planning and operational planning in local government. The concrete forms of participation they instituted extend from subcontracting Japanese NGOs for certain service activities to creating an NGO advisory council. The Kanagawa Prefectural Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, in particular, outsource some of their service activities to Japanese NGOs that help illegal foreigners. Certain local government officials actively volunteer at some of these groups after work. Local government officials in the Kanagawa prefecture have initiated an NGO advisory council, where representatives of Japanese NGOs discuss and propose public policy on international issues to the governor.

In short, Japanese activists add alternative information on illegal foreigners, thereby improving the public discourse on illegal foreign workers. They have influenced the intellectuals, who often think but seldom act, to take collective action. Most importantly, they have moved some local governments to institutionalize their participation in discussion meetings, assemblies, and councils. Some local governments are now beginning to position themselves with Japanese activists, which, at times, mean breaking with national priorities. In this way, associative activism by Japanese activists on the behalf of illegal foreign workers has produced transformative effects at the local level.

6.2.2 Limits of Other Hypotheses

Empirical data from this research further reveal the limits of other hypotheses. Below, I show how my empirical data match up to the predictions and propositions advanced by three structure-based hypotheses - the government policies and control hypothesis, the culture of harmony hypothesis, the class-based solidarity hypothesis - and the agent-based hypothesis on the dynamic of social movement organizations. To evaluate these hypotheses, I return to a set of propositions that each hypothesis makes on: the role of Japanese actors, founders, and members; sources of funding; and, organizational activities, which were laid out in Table 1.1.

A. The Government Policies and Control Hypothesis

Unlike in France before 1980, no government policy directly promotes the creation of native-established associations for immigrants in Japan. Instead, it is the *lack of* a coherent and comprehensive immigration and migrant worker policy that causes problems for illegal

foreigners and, thereby, ignited the establishment of native-established support groups. Most of the support groups have been established before the Japanese government passed the NPO Law in 1998 to promote voluntary associations. Moreover, instead of promoting these support groups that assist *illegal* foreigners, we expect the Japanese government to crush or to punish them in the name of maintaining national security. The fact that these institutions are allowed to exist in Japan attests to substantial level of autonomy that the Japanese people enjoy. It is also possible that these foreigner support groups are still too small and powerless for the Japanese government to take notice.

Furthermore, we can interpret the local governments' institutional incorporation of Japanese activists into the process of setting policy priorities as the authority's attempt to control and weaken the radical edge of these Japanese activists. Frank Upham reminds us that "one consistent Japanese response to social conflict in any form is the creation of institutional mediation."²⁹ By doing so, it encourages dependence on the government as a central player in the struggle for social change. Upham explains, "once the bureaucracy has intervened in a given field..., the bureaucracy becomes the locus of the policymaking process and official policy the object of political debate."³⁰ This view reaffirms a traditional Japanese idea of "incorporate the people under political authority but don't let them participate in politics" (「依らしむべし、知らしむべからず」).

However, the situation for Japanese activists who support illegal foreign workers remains inconclusive, as the institutional incorporation process introduced by local governments is still recent. At the moment, evidence points to a different direction. Ms.

²⁹ Frank K. Upham, *Law and Social Change in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

Miki Emiko, who was invited to speak at the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, successfully steered the discussion and policy priorities of the Assembly to issues concerning medical treatment of illegal foreign workers as a result of her talk there. Of the 81 support groups in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Ibaraki, and Gunma, only 2 received funding from the central government. And these two support groups are health-related organizations – a reflection of the importance of this issue for the central government as Japan is facing an aging population. It is local governments, which have been providing financial assistance to many of these NGOs. While certain Japanese NGOs receive financial support from their local governments for certain projects, they also pursue other and more radical projects on the side. The Kanagawa International Association, for example, funds both the Kalabaw-no-kai and SOL for their projects to promote the creation of ethnic self-help groups within their organizations. Both maintain their progressive visions and continue helping illegal foreign workers with the same vigor as they did before. Most importantly, members of these groups can decide not to participate in government-sponsored forums or not to get involved in government-related projects.

A variation of the government policy hypothesis argues that those groups that decide to opt out of government's support will simply loose out and become insignificant. For foreigner support groups in Japan, the opposite appears true. AMDA, for example, receives by far the largest financial support from the Japanese government. It is AMDA that becomes insignificant in this particular community of Japanese activists. AMDA does not network with any other NGO in the community (except for the Kobayashi International Clinic as Dr. Kobayashi was a founder of the AMDA International Information Center). It does not send its members to the National Network Conference or the annual NGO

Meeting. When a member of AMDA attended the meeting, she did it individually and not as a representative of AMDA. Pekkanen keenly argues that when a voluntary group becomes deeply dependent on the government, that particular group will tend to lose its activist mission and be shut out by other similar groups. In such way, government policies and action can shape the direction of a voluntary association.

B. The Culture of Harmony Hypothesis

None of these groups practices violence and only few exhibit confrontational behavior, such as the *ichinichi koudou* conducted by Mr. Murayama of the Kanagawa City Union. Some groups appeared to get on well with neighborhoods and local government officials. They have been lobbying for incremental change rather than launching a revolutionary one. But these facts are *descriptive* of their activities and their unintended *consequences*, they do not sufficiently explain the *motives* why Japanese citizens established support groups to help illegal foreigners. The promotion of harmony is not part of the Japanese NGOs' central or official goal, which usually centers on the concept of social equality for all.

According to this hypothesis, Japanese actors function as mediators. Mediators rarely take side, otherwise the other party will simply leave the mediation process. In the case of Japanese-established support groups, Japanese activists *always* take the side of illegal foreign workers, rather than Japanese employers, husbands, or state officials. The culture of harmony hypothesis actually makes a better explanation for the goals and activities of local officials of Labor Consulting Offices in Tokyo and Kanagawa, who often take a neutral stand in resolving conflicts between Japanese employers and foreign workers.

We also expect to find members of these groups promoting relations within their local

community. Empirical data show that certain NGOs participate in the activities of their local community while others do not. The Kalabaw-no-kai displays an impressive success in promoting harmony between its members and the Kotobuki-cho community while the Zai-a-kyo fails miserably in San'ya. In general, members of the Japanese community view those NGOs with little community involvement with resentment. Since most Japanese NGOs are located in urban areas surrounded by office buildings, their presence usually go unnoticed by those few Japanese residents. Most do not concentrate their activities on promoting cultural understanding. Local community rarely funds the activities of these groups. Moreover, illegal foreigners, who still have not encountered serious problems, view Japanese activists with considerable suspicion.

C. The Class-based Solidarity Hypothesis

Many of these groups have the word “solidarity” in their names. The central national network organization is named the “National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers.” Community workers unions have the word “solidarity” written on their armbands and their banners. But the explanatory value of a class-based solidarity is limited to community workers unions and certain concerned citizens groups. Many members of the Christian groups, women groups, and lawyer NGOs are not simply “potatoes in a sack” but people who are well-educated and often come from middle-class families. They assist the distressed not because they associate themselves with the working class, but because they hold high moral visions on humanity and/or their profession or faith required that of them. Most surprisingly, the Japanese working class is largely absent in these support groups.

Since foreigners still cannot vote, the central function of these support groups is not to

build a political base. With the exception of certain community workers unions whose leaders regularly vote for the socialist party, members and founders of these groups do not belong to one particular party, although they tend to vote for non-LDP parties. To be sure, no political party financially supports any of these groups. The assumption that capitalists are the enemies holds true for most of these groups, but non-labor activists typically do not refer to their foes as “capitalists.” Instead, they view their foes as “exploitative employers,” “abusive husbands,” and “oppressive officials.” Few Japanese actors see themselves as vanguards for foreign workers. Instead, the majority of activists view themselves as “problem-solvers,” who have the ability to help troubled foreign workers solve their problems.

D. The Dynamic of Social Movement Organizations Hypothesis

Empirical data seem to support most of the propositions that the dynamic of social movement organizations hypothesis make. Support groups are dynamic and actors are organizers. Members do not have conflictual goals, because they must agree to the objective of the group in order to join these groups; otherwise, there simply will be no reason for them to join. Funding usually come from membership fees.

The activities of these support groups certainly resemble those by social movement organizations. They organize protests and demonstrations, lobby the government, and network with others. However, they perform these activities in order to solve specific problems. For example, the Kanagawa City Union regularly organizes protests, or *ichinichi koudou*, as part of its method to get the company to yield to its demands on a specific labor dispute case involving foreign workers. People at the National Network for Solidarity with

Migrant Workers organized a demonstration to protest the 1999 revision of Immigration Law, because they believed that the revision would increase problems for illegal foreigners. As a result of concentrating their medical treatment on foreigners who are not covered under the National Health Insurance program, the MF-MASH found itself in deep financial trouble. Members of the MF-MASH then lobbied the Kanagawa Prefectural Government and the Yokohama City Government to set up a system to cover unpaid medical expenses. Interestingly, these NGOs tend to network with other NGOs that can be useful to them in solving problems for illegal foreigners. Women groups build networks with Christian NGOs, for some churches provide them office and/or shelter space free of charge. Community workers unions network with medical NGOs as they send victims of industrial accidents to their organizations and need to obtain the doctor's assessment on the extent of the injuries. Like the government control hypothesis, evidence remains inconclusive on the direction that these organizations will take, as these Japanese NGOs are still in their early stages of development. For now, however, these Japanese activists are simply solving problems.

III. CONCLUSION

Japan is a country historically known for its suspicion of foreigners. This suspicion appears to be a construction of state officials, who were not sure that the Japanese populace was as isolationist and anti-foreign as they would like them to be. As foreign workers in Japan steadily increased during the past two decades, Japan is now more open to foreigners than it has ever been since World War II. In response to this new influx of foreigners into Japan, the Japanese government tried to sort out immigration into Japan by redefining

categories of foreigners allowed to enter the country. From this process, approximately 250,000 unskilled foreign workers from Asia were redefined as “illegal” foreigners. In effect, these people were the residuals of Japanese immigration policy. However, these residuals were not natural or accidental, but deliberate action by the Japanese government in favoring foreigners of Japanese-descendants over other Asians. While the Japanese government promotes the immigration of foreigners of Japanese-descendants from Latin America, it strengthens its borders control against Asians and limits its welfare provisions to those registered foreigners who have been in Japan for over one year. In essence, the Japanese government makes deliberate efforts on expressing its racial preference through immigration policies to which type of foreigners it wishes to have and which type to exclude. To those that it decided to exclude, the Japanese government instilled fear onto its citizens of the potential danger and disruption that these undesirable foreigners may have on Japanese society.

Despite these deliberate and nasty efforts by the Japanese government, Japan’s attempts to accommodate immigration over the past several years appear surprisingly humanitarian and compare quite favorably to those of other industrialized countries. Japan differs from the United States and Western Europe in that these Western countries have clear, worked-out policies on immigration and foreign labor, which allow for self-organization among the immigrant workers. Governments in these Western countries further encourage and subsidize self-organization in their states. Japan, by contrast, has achieved such high level of humanitarianism in its accommodation of foreign workers due not to government efforts but to associative activities of certain Japanese citizens.

Japanese associative activism is a response *against* Japanese policies. Japanese

associative activists energetically fight for the protection of their rights and the provision of welfare services to illegal foreigners. They ensure that globalization also works for all *people* – not just profit. Associative activism for illegal foreign workers in Japan involves problem-solving, which often resulted in practical innovation and institutional experimentation. It unites marginalized people and builds a new community of meaning and action. Most importantly, associative activism enhances political activities from members of the civil society and experiments with new institutional designs of governance at the local level. Such institutional experimentation can result in the creation of secondary associations, such as foreigner advisory councils and NGO advisory council, which can potentially yield a new form of democratic governance. As a result, associative activism not only help to make Japan a humanitarian nation in accommodating its foreign workers but also to deepen its progress towards a more democratic country.

APPENDIX

在日外国人労働者のための民間支援団体
Support Groups for Illegal Foreign Workers in Japan

	Name	Area	Founding Date	Founder/s Nationality	Type of Organization
1	在日外国人の人権を守る会・北海道 (SPR) Society for the Protection of Rights of Foreigners - Hokkaido	Hokkaido	1990	Japanese	Women NGO (Concerned Citizens NGO)
2	サンパギータの会 Sampagita-no-Kai	Hokkaido		Japanese	
3	ハウスフレンドシップ House Friendship	Hokkaido			
4	北海道フィリピン協会 The Philippines Association of Hokkaido	Hokkaido	1980	Japanese	Christian NGO
5	札幌パートユニオン Sapporo Part-time Workers Union	Hokkaido	1985	Japanese	Communty Workers Union
6	聖ウルスラ修道院センター St. Urusura Convention Center	Aomori	1987	Both	Christian NGO
7	仙台イングリッシュマス Sendai English Mass	Miyagi	Dissolved		Christian Church
8	みやぎ外国人問題研究会 Miyagi Foreigners Problems Study Group	Miyagi	1990	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
9	最上地方国際交流会 Mogami Association for International Exchange	Yamagata	1988	Japanese	Christian NGO
10	JVC 山形 Japan's Volunteer Center - Yamagata	Yamagata	1991	Japanese	Women NGO
11	栃木インターナショナルライフライン (TILL) Tochigi International Life-line - TILL	Tochigi	1990	Japanese	Medical NGO
12	国際交流センター・オープンハウス International Exchange Center - Open House	Saitama (Tochigi)	1994	Japanese	Christian NGO
13	外国人119ネットワーク Foreigners' Network 119	Saitama	1989	Japanese	Christian NGO
14	埼玉YMCA国際奉仕センター Saitama YMCA International Service Center	Saitama	1989	Japanese	Christian NGO
15	外国人労働者と共に生きる狭山の会 Living Together with Foreign Workers: Sayama-no-Kai	Saitama	1991	Japanese	Christian NGO
16	上尾国際交流会人権部・土門様東 Kamio International Exchange Group	Saitama	1989	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
17	カトリック浦和教区正義と平和協議会 Catholic Diocese of Urawa: Justice and Peace Association	Saitama	1987	Japanese	Christian NGO
18	中村荘事件・外国人被害者をささえる会 Nakamura Dorm Incident - Foreigner Victims Support Group	Saitama	1991	Japanese	Lawyer NGO
19	日本キリスト教団埼玉地区社会委員会・フレンズ NCC Regional Social Committee - Friends	Saitama		Japanese	Christian NGO
20	フィリピン女性の部屋 M & F Filipinas' Room M&F	Saitama	Dissolved (1990-93)	Japanese	Women NGO
21	外国人労働者問題埼玉連絡会 Foreign Workers Problems of Saitama Contact Group	Saitama	Dissolved	Japanese	Christian NGO
22	埼玉弁護士会外国人人権センター Saitama Bar Association - Foreigners Rights Center	Saitama	1991	Japanese	Lawyers NGO

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	Name	Area	Founding Date	Founder/s Nationality	Type of Organization
23	Hand-in-Hand ちば Hand-in-Hand Chiba	Chiba	1990	Japanese	Christian NGO
24	コスモスの家 Cosmos House	Chiba	1990	Japanese	Women NGO (Shelter)
25	外国人と共に生きるちば人権ネットワーク Chiba Human Right Network in Solidarity with Foreigners	Chiba	Dissolved	Japanese	NGO
26	カトリック東京教区・千葉 Lay Missionary Commission of Catholic Chiba - Block	Chiba	1990	Japanese	Christian NGO
27	つくばアジア出稼ぎ労働者と連席する会 Tsukuba Solidarity with Asian Migrant Workers	Ibaraki	Dissolved (1985-96)	Japanese	Christian NGO
28	下館事件タイ3女性を支える会 3 Thai Women of the Shimodate Incident Support Group	Ibaraki	Dissolved (1991-96)	Japanese	Women NGO
29	あかつきの村 Akatsuki-no-Mura	Gunma	1979 ('90)	Japanese	Christian NGO
30	フレンズ (群馬外国人労働者支援連絡会) Friends	Gunma	1991	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
31	パートナー (群馬県外国人問題弁護団) Partner	Gunma	1992	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
32	ぐんまユニオン Gunma Union	Gunma	1989	Japanese	Community Workers Union
33	AMDA国際医療情報センター AMDA International Information Center	Tokyo	1991	Japanese	Medical NGO (UN NGO)
34	SHARE (国際保健協力市民の会) SHARE	Tokyo	1983 ('91)	Japanese	Medical NGO
35	亀戸ひまわり診療所 Kameido Himawari Clinic	Tokyo	1990	Japanese	Medical NGO
36	外国人刑事弁護団 (LAFOCC) Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases	Tokyo	1992	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
37	外国人労働者弁護団 (LAFLR) Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights	Tokyo	1990	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
38	入管問題調査会 Immigration Review Task Force	Tokyo	1994	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
39	東京弁護士会・外国人入権救済センター Tokyo Bar Association - Center for Human Rights of Foreigners	Tokyo	1946 ('89)	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
40	法律扶助協会 Japan Legal Aid Association	Tokyo	1952 ('95)	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
41	東京第一弁護士会・国際人権部会 Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association - International Human Rights Section	Tokyo	1989	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
42	東京第二弁護士会・人権擁護委員会 Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association - Human Rights Protection Committee	Tokyo	1990 ('94)	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
43	女性の家 HELP Women's Shelter HELP	Tokyo	1986	Japanese	Women NGO (Christian)

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44	アジアの女性資料センター Asia - Japan Women's Resource Center 旧: アジアの女たちの会 Former: Women of Asia Association	Tokyo	1995	Japanese	Women NGO
		Tokyo	1977	Japanese	Women NGO
45	タイ女性の友の会 Friends of Thai Women Association 旧: タイ女性支援基金 Former: Thai Women's Support Fund	Tokyo	1991	Japanese	Women NGO
		Tokyo	1989	Japanese	Women NGO
46	移住労働者と連帯する全国ネットワーク National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers 旧: アジア人労働者問題懇談会 Former: Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers	Tokyo	1997	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
		Tokyo	1987	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
47	CTIC 亀戸相談センター Catholic Tokyo International Center - CTIC	Tokyo	1990	Japanese	Christian NGO
48	滞日外国人と連帯する会 Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan	Tokyo	1983	Japanese	Christian NGO
49	NCC・在日外国人の人権委員会 NCC Committee on the Rights of Foreigners in Japan	Tokyo	1987	Japanese	Christian NGO
50	難民・外国人労働者問題キリスト者連絡会 Christian Coalitions on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers - Nankiren	Tokyo	1989	Japanese	Christian NGO
51	聖フランシスコ・山里相談室 Yamazato Consulting Office	Tokyo	1988	Japanese	Christian NGO
52	在日アジア人労働者と共に戦う会 Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan	Tokyo	1989	Japanese	Christian NGO
53	外国人とともに生きる大田・市民ネットワーク Ohta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness - OC Net	Tokyo	1992	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
54	ぐるーぶ赤かぶ Group Akakabu	Tokyo	1983 ('92)	Japanese	Women NGO
55	「国境を越える人権」準備会 Preparation Committee for Human Rights Beyond Borders 旧: いのけん(渋谷・原宿生命と権利をかちとる会) Former: Shibuya-Harajuku Group to Gain Life and Rights	Tokyo	1998	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
		Tokyo	1993	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
56	CALL ネットワーク Call Network	Tokyo	Dissolved (1988-93)	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
57	自由人権協会・外国人の権利小委員会 Japan Civil Liberties Union - Foreigners Rights Sub-committee	Tokyo	1988	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
58	反差別国際運動 International Movement against All Forms of Discriminations and Racism - IMADR	Tokyo	1988 ('90)	Japanese	Women NGO (Concerned Citizens NGO) (UN NGO)
59	Kapatiran・日本聖公会 Kapatiran - Nihon Sei-Ko-Kai	Tokyo	1987	Japanese	Christian Church
60	Makoto Kaibigan Makoto Kaibigan	Tokyo	1990	Japanese	Christian Church
61	TELL (東京英語いのちの電話) Tokyo English Life Line - TELL Filipino Line	Tokyo	1991 ('73)	American	Christian NGO

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	Name	Area	Founding Date	Founder/s Nationality	Type of Organization
62	セントロクラブール Centro Claver	Tokyo	1992	Spaniard	Christian NGO
63	フィリピンセンター The Philippines Center	Tokyo	1992	Filipino	Christian NGO
64	Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS) Asian Peoples Friendship Society - APFS	Tokyo	1987	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
65	三多摩労災職業病センター Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Center	Tokyo	1985 ('92)	Japanese	Medical NGO (OSHA)
66	東京労働安全衛生センター Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center 旧: 東京東部労災職業病センター Former: Tokyo East District Occupational Safety and Health Center	Tokyo Tokyo	1998 1979 ('89)	Japanese Japanese	Medical NGO (OSHA) Medical NGO (OSHA)
67	全国労働安全衛生センター連絡会議 Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center	Tokyo	1990	Japanese	Medical NGO (OSHA)
68	国際互助組合ブライト BRIGHT International Cooperative Society	Tokyo	1993	Japanese	Medical NGO (Community Worker Union)
69	京浜ユニオン Keihin Union	Tokyo	1992	Japanese	Community Workers Union
70	江戸川ユニオン Edogawa Workers' Union	Tokyo	1984 ('88)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
71	すみだユニオン Sumida Union	Tokyo	1991	Japanese	Community Workers Union
72	全国一般労働組合東京南部 National Union of General Workers - Tokyo South	Tokyo	1960 ('74)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
73	全統一労働組合・外国人労働者分会 Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu - FWBZ	Tokyo	1960 ('92)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
74	全労協全国一般東京労組FLU分会 Foreign Laborers' Union - FLU	Tokyo	1989 ('92)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
75	東京ユニオン Tokyo Union	Tokyo	1979 ('89)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
76	日本語学校教職員ユニオン Japanese Language School Teachers Union	Tokyo	1989	Japanese	Community Workers Union
77	ねりまパートユニオン Nerima Part-time Workers' Union	Tokyo		Japanese	Community Workers Union
78	としまユニオン Toshima Union	Tokyo	1992	Japanese	Community Workers Union
79	ふれあい江東ユニオン Fureai Koto Workers' Union	Tokyo	1988	Japanese	Community Workers Union
80	八王子ユニオン Hachioji Union	Tokyo	1984 ('88)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
81	三多摩合同労働組合 Santama Joint Labor Union	Tokyo	1977 ('91)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
82	北部パートユニオン Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union 旧: 北区地域ユニオン	Tokyo Tokyo	1998 1990	Japanese Japanese	Community Workers Union Community Workers Union

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	Name	Area	Founding Date	Founder/s Nationality	Type of Organization
	Former: Kita-ku Community Union				
83	すべての外国人に医療保障を！連絡会議 Health Insurance to All Foreigners! Committee	Tokyo & Kanagawa	1990	Japanese	Medical NGO
84	在留外国人の医病問題を考える市民の会 Esperanza-no-kai	Kanagawa	1993	Japanese	Medical NGO
85	外国人労働者と連帯する神奈川連絡会議 Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems	Kanagawa	1988	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
86	みなとまち健康互助会 MF-MASH	Kanagawa	1991	Both	Medical NGO
87	港町診療所 Minatomachi Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Medical NGO
88	十条通り病院 Jujo-dori Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Medical NGO
89	横須賀中央診療所 Yokosuka Chuo Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Medical NGO
90	伊勢佐木クリニック Isezaki Women's Clinic	Kanagawa	1995	Taiwanese	Medical NGO
91	いまい国際クリニック Imai International Clinic	Kanagawa	1995-98	Japanese	Medical NGO
92	小林国際クリニック Kobayashi International Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Medical Clinic
93	横浜弁護士会・外国人 인권委員会 Yokohama Bar Association: Sub-committee on Human Rights of Foreigners	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
94	神奈川県行政書士会・渉外行政書士研究会 Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association - Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group	Kanagawa	1998	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
95	かながわ・おんなのスペース"みずら" Kanagawa Women's Space "Mizula"	Kanagawa	1990	Japanese	Women NGO
96	女性の家"サーラー" Women's Shelter "Saalaa"	Kanagawa	1992	Japanese	Women NGO
97	SABAY SABAY	Kanagawa	1993	Both	Women NGO (Medical NGO)
98	カラバオの会 Kalabaw-no-Kai	Kanagawa	1987	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
99	バングラデシュ部会 Bangladesh Section	Kanagawa	1996	Bangladeshi	Concerned Citizens NGO
100	カラバオ・相模原 Sagamihara Solidarity with Foreign Workers	Kanagawa	1991	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
101	横浜教区・滞日外国人と連帯する会 Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants	Kanagawa	1992	Japanese	Christian NGO
102	韓国デスク Korean Desk	Kanagawa	1994	Korean	Christian NGO
103	フィリピンデスク Philippines Desk	Kanagawa	1992	Filipino	Christian NGO
104	ラテンデスク Latin Desk	Kanagawa	1994	Nikkeijin	Christian NGO

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105	ラテンアメリカ系労働者を支援する会 - CATLA Latin American Workers Support Group	Kanagawa	1990	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
106	フィリピンと日本を考える横須賀市民の会 Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan	Kanagawa	1983	Japanese	Christian NGO
107	神奈川労災職業病センター Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center	Kanagawa	1980 ('90)	Japanese	Medical NGO
108	神奈川シティユニオン Kanagawa City Union	Kanagawa	1990	Japanese	Community Workers Union
109	かながわ・横浜勤労者ユニオン Kanagawa: Yokohama Workers' Union	Kanagawa	1986 ('91)	Japanese	Community Workers Union
110	「LABOR」準備会 Preparation Committee for LABOR Workers Union	Kanagawa	1998	Filipino	Community Workers Union
111	女のユニオン・かながわ Womens' Union - Kanagawa	Kanagawa	1990	Japanese	Community Workers Union
112	オアシス (山梨県外国人 인권ネットワーク) OASIS - Yamanashi Human Rights Network for Foreigners	Yamanashi	1992	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
113	アジアの花嫁を考える会・ながの Asian Brides in Japan Support Group - Nagano	Nagano	1991	Japanese	Women NGO
114	外国人問題を考える会 Support Group on the Foreigner Problem	Nagano	1990	Japanese	NGO
115	佐久勤労者ユニオン Saku Workers' Union	Nagano	1994	Japanese	Community Workers Union
116	佐久地域国際連帯する市民の会 Saku Citizens' Association for International Solidarity	Nagano	Dissolved (19XX-98)	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
117	信州外国人 인권ネットワーク Foreigners Rights Network in Shinshuu	Nagano		Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
118	ハイ・ハイ・センター (北進外国人医病ネットワーク) Hi-Hi Center: Hokushin Medical Network for Foreigners	Nagano	1991	Japanese	Medical NGO
119	プアンの会 Puan-no-Kai	Nagano	1993	Japanese	NGO
120	滞日外国人と連帯する会・ながの Solidarity Center for Migrants - Nagano	Nagano		Japanese	Christian NGO
121	伊那谷アジアと連帯する会 Inatani Association in Solidarity with Asia	Nagano	Dissolved (1990-96)	Japanese	Christian NGO
122	伊那国際交流協会 Ina International Exchange Association	Nagano	1993	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
123	安曇野自由学校 Azumino Free School	Nagano	Dissolved (1991-96)	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
124	女のスペース・にいがた Women's Space Niigata	Niigata	1994	Japanese	Women NGO
125	新潟ラテンアメリカ協会 Niigata Latin America Association	Niigata		Japanese	
126	新潟県安全衛生センター	Niigata	1994 ('71)	Japanese	Medical NGO

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	Niigata Occupational Safety and Health Center				
127	新潟ヘルプの会 Niigata HELP-no-Kai	Niigata	1991	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
128	富山県勤労ユニオン Toyama Prefecture Workers' Union	Toyama		Japanese	Community Workers Union
129	アジアを考える静岡フォーラム Forum on Asia in Shizuoka - FAS	Shizuoka	1988	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
130	外国人労働者と共に生きる会・浜松（へるすの会） Hamamatsu Overseas Laborers Solidarity	Shizuoka	1990	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
131	カサ・デ・アミゴス東部 Casa de Amigos Toubu	Shizuoka	1990	Japanese	Christian NGO
132	志太榛原地区外国人の人権を考える会 Shida-haibara District's Society for Human Rights of Foreigners	Shizuoka	1993	Japanese	Community Workers Union
133	静岡ジェネラルユニオン Shizuoka General Union	Shizuoka	1979	Japanese	Community Workers Union
134	ユニオン浜松 Union Hamamatsu	Shizuoka		Japanese	Community Workers Union
135	静岡ふれあいユニオン Shizuoka Fureai Union	Shizuoka		Japanese	Community Workers Union
136	せいれい外国人相談室 Counseling Room for Foreigners of Seirei S.W.C.)	Shizuoka	1992	Japanese	Christian NGO
137	仏教者国際連席会議・日本会議 INEB - Japan	Aichi			Buddhist NGO
138	あるすの会 Asian Laborers Solidarity - ALS	Aichi	1987	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
139	外国人労働者と共に生きる会豊橋 Toyohashi Society for Living Together with Foreign Workers	Aichi	1991	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
140	小牧教会 Komaki Church	Aichi	1989		Christian Church
141	共の会 Tomo-no-Kai	Aichi	1989	Japanese	Christian NGO
142	外国人医療センター Foreigners Medical Center	Aichi	1998	Japanese	Medical NGO
143	外国人裁判を考える会 Society to Think over Foreigners' Court Cases	Aichi	1996	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
144	名古屋国際センター・外国人法律相談 Nogoya International Center - Legal Counseling for Foreigners	Aichi		Japanese	Lawyers NGO
145	東海ユニオン Toukai Union	Aichi	1992	Nikkeijin	Community Workers Union
146	京都YWCA・Asian People Together (APT) Asian People Together - APT	Kyoto	1991	Japanese	Christian NGO
147	京都アジア文化交流センター Kyoto Asian Culture Exchange Center	Kyoto	1988	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
148	「プリヤーンニさん」を守る会	Kyoto	1989	Japanese	NGO

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149	Puriyani's Support Group ブレンダさんの会 Ms. Brenda's Support Group	Kyoto	1992	Japanese	Medical NGO
150	京都滞日外国人と連帯する会 Kyoto Society in Solidarity with Foreigners	Kyoto	1985	Japanese	Christian NGO
151	草津教会 Kusatsu Church	Kyoto	1994	Japanese	Christian Church
152	京都ユニオン (京都地域合同労働組合) Kyoto Community Joint Labor Union	Kyoto	1988	Japanese	Labor Union
153	アジアフレンド Asian Friend	Osaka	1988	Japanese	Legal & Medical NGO
154	大阪教区国際協力委員会 Osaka Catholic International Cooperation Committee	Osaka	1992	Japanese	Christian NGO
155	Bahay ni Maria Bahay ni Maria	Osaka	1988	Japanese	Christian NGO
156	カトリック堺教会 Sakai Catholic Church	Osaka	1995	Japanese	Christian Church
157	関西労働者安全センター Kansai Workers' Safety and Health Center	Osaka	1977 ('92)	Japanese	Medical NGO
158	すべての外国人労働者とその家族の人権を守る関西ネットワーク (RINK) Network for Asian Workers in Kansai (RINK)	Osaka	1991	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
159	ナターシャさん母子を見守る会 Society to Look after Ms. Natasha and her Child	Osaka	Dissolved (1992-96)	Japanese	Lawyer NGO
160	バルゴ・マイラ母子を支える会 Society to Support Ms. Maila and her Child	Osaka	1994	Japanese	Lawyer NGO
161	多文化共生センター Center for Multicultural Information and Assistance	Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto	1995	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
162	外国人地震情報センター Foreigners Earthquake Information Center	Osaka	1995	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
163	大江橋法律事務所 Obashi Law Office	Osaka		Japanese	Law Office
164	佐日高麗労働者連盟 Zainichi-Korai Workers' League	Osaka	1983	Zainichi Korean	Community Workers Union
165	北大阪ユニオン Kita-Osaka Union	Osaka	1985	Japanese	Community Workers Union
166	せんしゅうユニオン Senshu Union	Osaka	1988	Japanese	Community Workers Union
167	北摂生活者トータルユニオン Hokusetsu Seikatsusha Total Union	Osaka	1988	Japanese	Community Workers Union
168	ユニオンとうなん Union Tounan	Osaka	1988	Japanese	Community Workers Union
169	ユニオンひごろ (総評東地域合同労働組合) Union Higoro	Osaka	1983	Japanese	Community Workers Union
170	NGO 外国人救援ネット NGO Foreigners Rescue Network	Hyogo	1995	Japanese	Christian NGO

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171	神戸定住外国人支援センター Kobe Long-term Resident Aliens Support Center	Hyogo	1995	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
	旧:兵庫県定住外国人生活復興センター Former: Hyogo Long-term Resident Aliens Support Center	Hyogo	1995	Japanese	Concerned Citizens NGO
172	外国人の生存権を実現する会 Society concerning Foreigners' Living Rights	Hyogo	Dissolved (1992-97)	Japanese	NGO
173	尼崎武庫川ユニオン Amagasaki Mukougawa Union	Hyogo	1988	Japanese	Community Workers Union
174	津山ユニオン Tsuyama Union	Okayama		Japanese	Community Workers Union
175	アジア人労働者と支える会 Support Group for Asian Workers - YMCA	Hiroshima		Japanese	Christian NGO
176	広島教区滞日外国人と連帯する会 Hiroshima Diocese: Solidarity with Foreigners/Memorial Cathedral for World Peace	Hiroshima	1986	Japanese	Christian NGO
177	manosウニダス・ひろしま Manos Unidas Hiroshima - Society in Link with Foreigners	Hiroshima	1992	Japanese	Christian NGO
178	ワールドシップ World Ship	Hiroshima	1994	Japanese	Christian NGO
	旧:アジア連席会 Asian Solidarity Association	Hiroshima	1991	Japanese	Christian NGO
179	広島連席ユニオン Hiroshima Solidarity Union	Hiroshima	1989	Japanese	Labor Union
180	外国人裁判を考える会 Society to Think over Foreigners' Court Cases	Ehime	Dissolved (1996-98)	Japanese	Lawyer NGO
181	カトリック中村教会 Catholic Nakamura Church	Kouchi		Japanese	Christian Church
182	アジア女性センター Asian Women Center	Fukuoka	1997	Japanese	Women NGO
183	アジアに生きる会・福岡 Living in Asia Association - Fukuoka	Fukuoka	1990	Japanese	Legal/Women NGO
184	美野島司牧センター Minoshima-Shiboku Center	Fukuoka		Japanese	Christian NGO
185	福岡移住労働者と共に生きるネットワーク Fukuoka Network for Living Together with Migrant Workers	Fukuoka		Japanese	NGO
186	青柳さんへの不当弾圧を許さない会 Group Against Unlawful Pressure on Aoyagi-san	Fukuoka	1993	Japanese	Lawyers NGO
187	「全国一般労働組合福岡」準備会 Preparation Committee for the Fukuoka General Union	Fukuoka	1998	Japanese	Community Workers Union
188	アミスタド・アソシアション Amistad Association	Fukuoka		Japanese	
189	外国人と供に歩む会・北九州 Kita-Kyushuu Association toward Togetherness with Foreigners	Fukuoka		Japanese	
190	大分ユニオン佐伯支部 Oita Union Saei Branch	Oita		Japanese	Community Workers Union

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191	コムスタカ・外国人と共に生きる会 Kumustaka - Society for Living Together with Foreigners	Kagoshima	1985	Japanese	Christian NGO
192	始良ユニオン Aira Union	Kagoshima		Japanese	Community Workers Union
193	カトリック国際協力委員会沖縄支部 Catholic International Cooperation Committee-Okinawa Branch	Okinawa	1988	Japanese	Christian NGO
194	ヒスパニック文化センター Centro Cultural Hispano	Okinawa	1994	Japanese	Christian NGO
195	沖縄国際ユニオン Okinawa International Union	Okinawa	Dissolved (1998-98)	American	Community Workers Union

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Nikkei Shimbun

Saitama Shimbun

Sankei Shimbun

Toukyou Shimbun

Yomiuri Shimbun

NGO Newsletters:

Various NGO Newsletters (see Table 5.1 to 5.6)