

〔Note〕

“Foreign Citizens” and Public Sphere in Japan

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本研究ノートは、2009年9月23日に台湾・新竹市の台湾交通大学において、開催された国際シンポジウム『東アジアにおける公共圏と市民社会』において、筆者が報告したものである。この国際シンポジウムには、台湾はもとより中国本土の諸大学・研究機関から多数の研究者が参加した。日本からは、本学から小澤と国際関係学部松下冽教授、そして文京洙教授が、韓国からは、中央大学から申光榮教授が参加した（なお、国際関係学部文教授は、ペーパー提出のみの参加）。東アジア圏の社会学者が集い、東アジア圏における市民社会構築をテーマとする学術研究会は、台湾においても、初めての試みであり、画期的な意味を持つと言える。

日本においては、新たな政権の登場によって、「東アジア共同体構想」が提起され、国際的な波紋を生んでいるが、今回の国際シンポジウムは、アカデミックな次元で、そうした動きを先取りするものとなった。台湾を含めた中国本土、そして、日本、韓国の研究者が、それぞれの歴史的・社会的事情を理解し合いながら、公共圏形成の実態と問題点を議論していくという試みは、従来のフレームのような2国間の研究交流以上のインパクトがあった。東アジア圏における複数国家に跨る研究交流のフレームの必要性和重要性を痛感することができた。東アジア圏における研究交流の活性化は、必ずや、学術的に大きな成果に結びついていくものと思われる。なかでも、台湾の研究者が、先住民問題や中国本土との関係形成の問題を抱え、そうした問題群に対して真摯に立ち向かうなかで、広く欧米の学術的な知見を摂取しながらアプローチしていることが印象的であった。今回の国際シンポジウムの開催意図も、いかに民主的な公共圏形成が東アジア圏において可能かという強い問題意識に支えられており、東アジア圏における学術的連携において、台湾の研究者との交流は、いわば、キー・ストーンともいべき重要な意味を持つと思われる。

さて、本研究ノートの主旨は、民主党新政権の登場に伴い、現実味が増している「外国人の政治参加」をめぐる動きを背景として、現時点での問題整理と状況把握を行ったものである。本稿の論点は、以下の3点にまとめられる。

- 1) 公共圏を議論するとき、そこから排除されている人びとに注目することが重要であるが、なかでも、文化資本・社会関係資本・経済資本において劣位にあり、いわれなき社会的差別によってアイデンティティ危機に見舞われている在日外国人の政治社会からの排除の問題はきわめて重要なテーマとなる。
- 2) 在日外国人に対する参政権付与の議論が、今後、展開していくであろうが、その際、在日外国人を一枚岩として議論することはできず、彼ら・彼女らが置かれた状況が、政治参加に対する意識やコストにおいて多様であるという点を確認することが大切である。したがって、永住外国人のみに政治参加の道を開いても、問題の抜本的な解決にはならない。
- 3) 現在、川崎市や京都市、神戸市など、日本の各地で、「外国人市民」とも称しうる、従来の運動形態とはまったく質を異にする在日外国人の市民活動が芽生えている事実に注目することは重要である（本論では、「FM わいわい」と「モアネット」に注目した）。さまざまな文化的な壁を乗り越えて、在日外国人当事者と多様な市民活動が少しずつではあるが連携し始めている。こうした日本国内の公共圏の有り様の萌芽的な変化に注目し、こうした変化を確かにしていくことこそ、今後、民主的で創造的な東アジア圏のあらた政治連携を考えていく際において必要不可欠な社会学的な課題と位置づけられるだろう。

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1. Introduction: the core problem of “Public Sphere”

When we are focusing on the socio-political idea, “Public Sphere”, how we think of the people excluded from the public sphere becomes very important. This idea of Habermas made us realize the importance of “process” and “place” through which people can share the information on their political issues with the communication network around them. With such process and place, the Public Mind can be generated, and the people can sustain the democratic system.

However, such an idealistic understanding of “Public Sphere” has been criticized from several points of view. The most important criticism is that the communication network postulates the ability of people to express their problem by their language and the ability to discuss this with others¹. In short, using a sociological word of Pierre Bourdieu, the public sphere presumes that the people have already achieved a certain level of “cultural capital”. As he found out, cultural capital is distributed unequally among people. Therefore, it becomes very difficult for them to communicate well with each other beyond the communication barrier. Whether the majority can realize the minority excluded from the society is a crucial point for making a democratic public sphere.

Putting the voice of the minority into the political decision making process is an essential condition for Social Justice. If somebody in the society is excluded from such process, the social rules can not depend on public consensus². By this condition, the social rules will be guaranteed to be full of diversity, and consequently the security of society will be improved, getting rid of crimes and conflicts³.

In this report, we focus on the foreign residents and discuss the problem of the public sphere in Japan. Because many foreign residents have a lack of economic capital and social capital as well as cultural capital, and moreover they are suffering from identity crisis, the problem of the foreign residents is most important among minority problems.

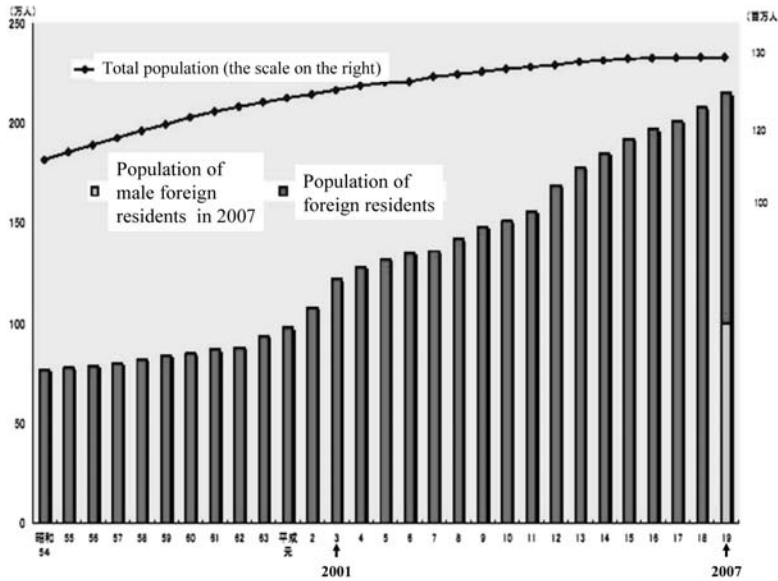
To analyze this problem, we will focus on the change of the voluntary sector in Japan from the 1990s. We will understand the possibility to build a new public sphere. Moreover, we will understand how to approach a new political alliance in Asia, just like in the EU, which will serve for worldwide peace.

2. The political situation of foreign residents in Japan

More than 2 millions foreign residents are now living in Japan. One in four of them are Korean residents who are referred to as “old comers”, and most of the others are referred to as “new comers”. Many new comers began to come to Japan from the end of the 1980s. Even though all of them pay consumption tax and income tax, they can not formally put their voice into the political decision making process in their community⁴.

Figure 1 shows us the rapid increase of population of foreign residents in Japan. On the other hand, the total population begins to decrease. Figure 2 shows us the rate of each group of foreign residents at the end of each year, focusing on where they come from. The first part

Figure 1 The number of foreign residents & total population in Japan



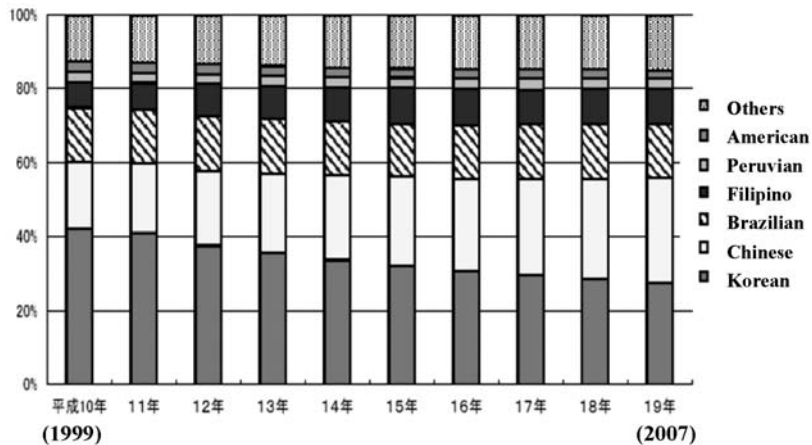
(Data of population of foreign residents in Japan, Immigration Bureau of Japan, 2008)

of each bar from the bottom means the rate of Korean residents in Japan, most of them are “old comers”. The second part is the rate of Chinese residents. It becomes the highest one from 2007 among the rates of ethnic groups in Japan.

In recent years, a big change has been occurring in this situation. A new word, “TABUNKA KYOSEI (多文化共生)” has become very popular in Japan, especially since the 1990s. This is a new idea to make much of cultural diversity in Japan⁵.

As you know, there is a new government organized by the Democratic Party of Japan

Figure 2 The rates of each ethnic group of foreign residents in Japan



(Data of population of foreign residents in Japan, Immigration Bureau of Japan, 2008)

(DPJ), and the DPJ is very eager to give the franchise to foreign residents who have obtained the right of permanent residence and have lived in Japan for more than 5 years since then. Sooner or later, the new electoral law will be established at the Diet in Japan⁶.

This leads to the question: will the problem of the absence of foreign residents' voice in the political public sphere in Japan be solved by such a reformation? The answer should be "No". Regarding this question properly, we must analyze the following two points:

1. First of all, we must deliberate the system for foreign residents to participate in the political decision making process in Japan, especially the result of "Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents".
2. Secondly, we will see a change of the volunteer sector in Japan from the 1990s, mainly the change in the Kansai area in Japan.

In the Public Office Election Law and the Law of Local Government, the franchise is limited to the residents who have Japanese nationality. Korean residents who have the right of permanent residence in Japan took a legal proceeding against such a political situation.

In 1995, the Supreme Court judgment dismissed their appeal for registering their names in the electoral roll. However, the Supreme Court judges also admitted, in its additional comment, the possibility to give the franchise to foreign residents in the local government, even within the limit of the Constitution. Since then, some local governments tried to introduce an assembly which was designed for foreign residents to participate in the political decision making process. Among them, "Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents" is most excellently designed⁷. It was established as an advisory committee for the mayor within limits of present laws.

3. The change of civil society in Japan: the emergence of "Foreign Citizens"!

3-1. On the system for foreign residents to participate in the political decision making process in Japan

"Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents" was introduced into Kawasaki city from 1996. This assembly was well designed for foreign residents to participate in the political decision making process in the local government, being within limits of the present law system.

Referring to the collaborative research on this Assembly by Professor Takashi Miyajima and others⁸, there are several strong points in Kawasaki City's system as follows:

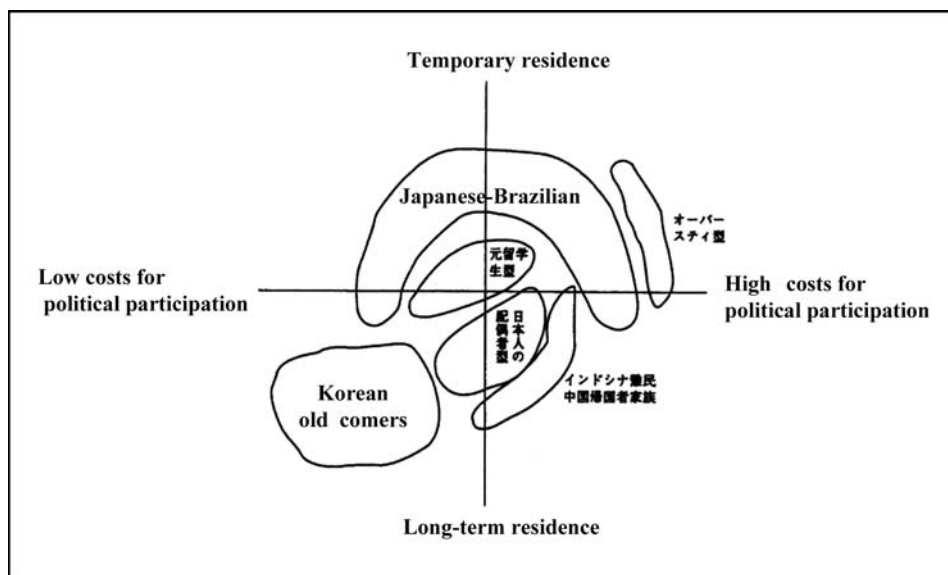
1. The opportunity to be a representative is equally provided to the foreign residents.
2. The independent management of this assembly is ensured by the ordinance.
3. The mayor must respect the proposal of this assembly. This is also ensured by the ordinance.

Figure 3 on the next page shows the diversity of foreign residents according to their costs for political participation and their intent to stay in Japan. The vertical axis means their

intent to stay in Japan. The horizontal axis means their costs for political participation. If they do not have enough money and time as well as education level, the cost for political participation will become higher.

The diversity of interests of foreign residents is so large according to their costs for political participation and their intent to stay in Japan. The foreign residents, who have high costs for political participation, are faced with much trouble in their daily lives. They do not usually have both the support system and the mutual aid system.

Figure 3 Category of foreign residents concerning the attitudes toward political participation



(Cited from T. Miyajima ed., *Foreign Citizens and Political Participation*, Yuushindo Press, 2000, p.34)

It is very important that NGOs or volunteer groups help and empower the distressed foreign residents for their daily lives⁹. The voluntary sector has the important mission to convey the minorities’ voice to the public sphere. We can confirm the important role of the voluntary associations in helping the foreign minority to express themselves to the public sphere.

Recently, Korean old comers have become key people in this action. We can say that it is really the emergence of “Foreign Citizens”.

Table 1 is a chronological table to show the new movements towards Tabunka-Kyosei in Kansai & Kyoto area of Japan. From this table I would like to pick two examples underlined, namely FMYY and MORE-NET, to explain the change that can be seen in the voluntary sector in Japan.

3-2. On the change of the volunteer sector in Japan from 1990’s

At first, I would like to explain about the Community FM Radio: FMYY. This community

Table 1 New movements to Tabunka-Kyosei in Kansai or Kyoto area of Japan

- Kyoto international community house (1989~)
- YWCA's project: Asian People Together (1991~)
- Kyoto City Internationalization Promotion Office (1995~)
- NGO: Center for Multicultural Information & Assistance (1995~)
- Radio FMYY: Multi-lingual broadcasting (1995~)
- The First Scheme of Kyoto City for Internationalization Promotion (1997~)
- ELFA: Day Care Centre for the aged Koreans (2001~)
- Interpretation project for medical service (2003~)
- MORE-NET: network to support the foreign aged & disabled persons (2006~)
- NGO network to provide support for foreign residents (2006~)
- The Second Scheme of Kyoto City for Internationalization Promotion (2008~)

(W. Ozawa ed., *The Report on More-Net Part 2*, MORE-NET, 2009)

radio began in 1995, with the assistance of Korean residents, to cheer up the foreign victims of the great earthquake in Hanshin area¹⁰. In 1996, this radio was officially established to convey the voice of the minority in their language for building the multicultural community.

I believe the great earthquake that occurred in 1995 in Hanshin area made a big change in the voluntary sector in Japan. During this disaster, FMYY distributed portable radio sets to victims, receiving donations from Korean residents. By such efforts of FMYY, multi-linguistic information was conveyed to the victims and the voice of foreign victims was also conveyed to the public sphere.

After the disaster, FMYY began to work as the core station for building a multi-cultural community. For example, they worked hard to make multi-linguistic public notice boards for their community, collaborating with civic associations. For example, some of the multi-linguistic public notice boards were set to explain how to take out the garbage. They also promoted a lot of the multi-cultural events to cheer up the foreign residents.

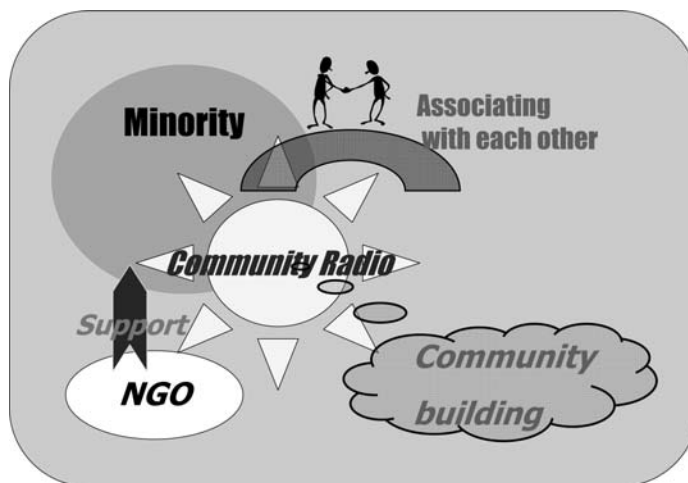
Figure 4 explains the function of FMYY in its community. When the NGO endeavors to support the minority, Community Radio facilitates such a challenge with their broadcasting. It also activates the association between the minority and other residents with their broadcasting. It works just as a medium for community building! We can say this organization works as "Cultural Apparatus" to build a multi-cultural community and to generate the Public Mind. Through such actions, people obtain the abilities to sustain the democratic system.

At the earthquake in Niigata, 2006, FMYY supported the Radio stations by translation and conveyed the translated voice file to them via the internet. FMYY distributed 900 radio sets to foreign victims. FMYY have started to make a network around the world, and recently they have begun to help the Indonesian community radio.

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The next example is a case of MORE-NET in Kyoto. This is a new project: counseling and support to foreign aged and disabled persons in Kyoto, which began in 2006¹¹. It depends on the collaboration of two of the Korean residents' organizations: Souren and Mindan as well

Figure 4 Medium for community building: the functions of FMYY



(This figure was personally provided by Ms. Chiaki Kim in FMYY.)

as specialists and scholars¹². It is partially supported financially by Kyoto city and Kyoto prefecture. MORE-NET is beginning to support other ethnic groups, especially Returnees from China, who are Japanese orphans left behind in China during World War II¹³.

As you know, the relationship between these two organizations is not good because of the difference of their political stance. It could be referred to as the “north-south problem”. How is such a conflict overcome in the collaboration of MORE-NET?

I think it is very important that they had the “successful experience” to collaborate during the legal proceedings against the pension problem. The pension is not paid to aged foreign residents over 83 years old, because of lack of transitional measures for the policy change¹⁴. Their appeal was not admitted at the court. However, the local government realized their appeal and began to pay a certain amount of money to the aged foreign residents on behalf of the national government. The Korean residents have begun to understand their merit of collaboration towards the struggle to obtain full human rights in Japan.

Secondly, I think it is very important that they are focusing on the problem of the least fortunate, the aged and disabled foreign individuals. Through voluntary activities, they can confirm the importance of their collaboration everyday.

This network is supported by several Korean associations. ELFA, a Day Care Centre for the aged Koreans, is one of the Key organizations. Dropping in this Day Care Centre, the elderly are playing and learning cheerfully. They say unanimously that it is the happiest time for their lives. ELFA is also challenging to have Multi-cultural events, to convey the information of the minority to the public sphere. Getting the support from such a vital organization, MORE-NET is able to begin its mission step by step.

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By analyzing these examples, we can understand that there are some notable points on

the change of the voluntary sector in Japan.

At first, even though there are big differences of political interests between ethnic groups, they have begun to collaborate in community activities, from when they could understand the efficacy of their collaboration through the successful experience in overcoming their common unhappiness. The peoples who participate in FMYU had experienced the great disaster, on the other hand the people of MORE-NET had common difficulties during a legal proceeding against the pension problem.

Secondly, foreign residents are beginning to make networks with other civic groups for their community activities. The idea: "Tabunka-Kyosei" has become their motto to build a multicultural society.

My third point is that foreign residents are focusing on the least fortunate residents, the foreign aged and disabled, their daily collaboration can become fruitful beyond their difference of political stance. The ideological differences between the two groups of Korean residents can be overcome by their daily collaboration.

My fourth point is that the Korean residents groups, which had been focusing on their own interests, have become aware of the problems of other foreign residents and support them by volunteer activities. A Korean activist said as follows: "After setting out to support the Returnees from China who are Japanese orphans left behind in China during World War II. I became able to realize our own problems more than before as well as other people's problems".

Lastly, the local government has begun to support such a new movement in the voluntary sector and is eager to make a keen network with them. For example, "*The second scheme of internationalization promotion in Kyoto (2008)*" is produced with the assistance of the representatives from NGOs at this time¹⁵.

We should be surprised to find out that the foreign residents begin to act as "Citizens". Moreover, Korean old comers have become aware of the problem of new comers and have started to help them through voluntary activities. These volunteers can be referred to as "Foreign Citizens" in Japan.

4. Conclusion: Importance of inclusiveness of cultural minorities in the public sphere

It is worth while to notice the emergence of "Foreign Citizens" in civil society in Japan. Of course, such a change is not mainstream in Civil Society in Japan. Many Japanese don't know such a change is occurring. However, I think it is an essential change on the level of quality in Civil Society in Japan.

Such a new movement in the voluntary sector will surely improve the openness of the public sphere in Japan in the near future. Inclusiveness of cultural minorities in the public sphere is necessary to build a peaceful world full of diversity. Recently, a new political alliance in Asia, just like the EU, has started to be discussed. Diversifying the public sphere in each country will be a vital step to realize such a goal.

Notes

- 1 In Japan, such a criticism can be seen in Jun-ichi Saito’s work (*On Publicity*, Iwanami Press, 2000) and Yasushi Yamaguchi’s work (*On the Theory of Civil Society*, Yuuhikaku Press, 2004). Such a theoretical study is very important. However, I believe it is more important to think of a specific way to make the public sphere more democratic, creative and full of diversity in the realistic development of civil society in each country.
- 2 Looking back to the history of development of the Theory of Social Contract, two key ideas become very important. The *Generalization of membership* (in other word, universal suffrage) and the *Reciprocity between all members of social contract* are crucial conditions for Social Justice.
- 3 Of course, there are many objections to a society full of diversity. As Dr. Will Kymlicka said in his writings, diversifying society is inevitable to any society because of the dynamism of Globalization (please see his book: *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford University Press, 1995). To overcome the difficulties from cultural diversity, I think the reconstruction of the theory of social contact will be needed. We must reflect on the system of modern Nation State.
- 4 We must understand the situation of foreign residents in Japan from the historical study of policies toward them after World War II. The first congress after the war to make a new Constitution was famous for its election with universal suffrage. This fact is written in the school textbook as the symbol of new democratic society. However before the election, the people who came from Korea or Taiwan, who obtained citizenship in Japan, had been unlisted from the electoral roll. I believe this historical fact is of great important to understand the problem of the public sphere in Japan. Please refer to Hiroshi Tanaka’s work (*Foreign Residents in Japan*, Iwanami Press, 1995) to find out more.
- 5 The Japanese word, “Tabunka-Kyosei” has been translated into English, for example, as “Multicultural Symbiosis”, “Socio-cultural Symbiosis”, “Multicultural Coexistence”, “Multicultural Diversity”, “Living together in a multicultural society”. In this paper, I dare to use the Japanese word as it is, because I think the implication of this word is too difficult to be translated into English. Please refer to my short paper: “Towards the Multi-cultural Society”, Naoki Kato (ed.), *Welfare and Contemporary Japan*, Minerva Press, 2005.
- 6 This policy was listed in the grand platform of DJP in 1998. However it is not written at the campaign promise: Manifest 2009. There are, of course, objections to the electoral reformation to admit the foreign resident’s political participation. Reflecting on these reasons, most of them emphasize the family base of the state, the difference of Nationality and hostility to foreign residents because of declining the level of life.
- 7 Please refer to the internet site of Kawasaki City as below, <http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/25/25zinken/home/gaikoku/kaigi/index.htm>.
If the name of the assembly is translated literally, it can be called “Kawasaki Foreign Citizens Representative Assembly”. At the official explanation in English, the word “Foreign Citizens” is avoided.
- 8 Please refer to Takashi Miyajima ed., *Foreign Citizen and Political Participation*, Yuushindo

Press, 2000

- 9 The same opinion is seen in Hiroshi Komai's work: *The Japanese Type of Multi-cultural Society in the Era of Globalization*, Akashi Press, 2006.
- 10 Please refer to the internet site of FMYY: <http://www.tcc117.org/fmyy/>.
- 11 Please refer to the internet site of MORE-NET as below: http://blog.livedoor.jp/oseyo815/archives/cat_50018068.html and the internet site of ELFA: <http://lfa-kyoto.org/>. I am one of the advisers for MORE-NET.
- 12 The Soren (総連) and Mindan (民団) tried to reconcile each other in 2006, but their attempt failed because of the difference of political stance to the nuclear missile problem.
- 13 The problem of Returnees from China is very complicated. Returnees are supported by law, because most of them could again obtain the nationality in Japan. However most of their relations who come from China don't have such right. There is much difference between their interests. There is also much difference of interest between Korean residents and Returnees from China. These days, a collaboration has begun among them beyond such a difference.
- 14 In 1986, the Japanese government introduced new welfare laws which unlisted the nationality restriction. However it was decided that the pension should not be paid to the aged foreign residents over 60 years old at that time. Because of lack of transitional measures for the policy change, more than 5000 people were taken from the pension system.
- 15 After the planning of *The first scheme of internationalization promotion in Kyoto (1997)*", there was the protest from NGO that NGOs' opinion were neglected by the government. Please see *The Report on More-Net Part 2*, MORE-NET, 2009 edited by W. Ozawa.

* All of listed books & paper but Will Kymlicka's are written in Japanese.