ILLEGAL DEMOCRATS: IMMIGRANT RIGHTS NGOS IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

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Although Japan has one of the most controlled borders in the industrialized world, the number of foreigners rose from 750,000 in 1975 to over 2 million in 2005. While many foreigners are old immigrants from Korea and China who were born in Japan (*zainichi*), over half are new immigrants from Asia and Latin America who work in small-medium manufacturing firms. Newcomers also include another approximately 240,000 foreigners who overstayed their visas or illegally entered the country and work in low-paying positions as construction workers, factory workers, waitresses, entertainers, and cooks. Their recent influx is making the government to critically reconsider its basic principles of social democracy, which requires among members of the political community some agreement on membership rules, their entitlements, and a minimum of shared values.[1] Their existence forces the government and society to seriously consider giving respect for differences in culture, belief, and identity between individuals and groups while guaranteeing equality of opportunity in the social and economic domain.

Whereas legally recognized foreigners enjoy extensive public institutional support and can create their own self-help groups to fight for the improvement of their livelihood in Japan, illegal foreigners can form no such groups, for fear of arrest and deportation. For illegal foreigners in Japan, assistance and advocacy have come largely from Japanese

[1] On basic principles of social democracy in relations to foreigners, see Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

activists. Since 1983, immigrant rights activists have established approximately 200 immigrant rights NGOs to assist illegal foreigners, fighting for protection of their basic rights and provision of welfare services. Foreigner support groups formed by Japanese citizens provide a range of medical and legal services and work to increase public awareness of the conditions faced by overstayed foreigners. In some cases these associations play an active role in forcing local governments to be more responsive to the exploitation of unskilled foreign workers and more flexible in their treatment of them.

As they deal with individual problems brought to these support groups, Japanese activists become privy to the difficulties, concerns, and life experiences of illegal foreigners, arguably coming to understand better and empathize more deeply with the circumstances of illegal foreigners than do their legal counterparts. At the same time, activists' work with foreigners leads them to become more critical about their own society and more engaged in civil and political life. Through specific problem-solving activities for illegal foreigners and critical reflection on their own society, their generalized dissatisfaction with the political *status quo* becomes clarified. They build networks with other socially minded activists and then advocate for public policies to protect foreign migrants' rights and welfare, including reforms in immigration law, labor laws that give foreign workers benefits equal to those of Japanese workers, and amnesty for overstayed migrants. They protest against sex tours, trafficking in women, and criminalization of prostitution.

Their associative activism on behalf of illegal workers marginalizes these activists in the eyes of many Japanese, who see them as accomplices in "illegal" activities. Established political actors, however, are unlikely to perceive the work of individual

groups as a significant threat to the status quo; for example, a small group of doctors providing informal medical services to illegal workers is likely, if noticed at all at the regional or national level, to be seen as a harmless humanitarian effort. Such efforts may be in tension with prevailing immigration requirements, but they do not pose a serious threat to existing laws or to the credibility of officials charged with their enforcement. This situation changes when a number of local, task-specific associations begin to exchange information and publicize their work, setting the stage for transformation of the social meanings associated with these groups and their activities. In so doing, they advance a grassroots democracy in Japan by creating civic groups to actively support illegal foreigners and push for incremental social and political change. In this sense, I consider these Japanese activists who are assisting illegal foreigners to be "illegal democrats": accomplices in a criminal act through their assistance to illegal foreigners, yet promoting democratic ideals and institutions. They make demands on powerful economic political institutions with public reasonableness. They evaluate and question the actions of those in authority. They foster public concern with the greater good by educating the public about the democratic principles of social justice and tolerance. Moreover, they cultivate unity in the face of increasing social diversity, as some of their activities build trust between Japanese citizens and foreign residents. Thus these illegal democrats are forces that advance social democracy.

TYPOLOGY OF SUPPORT GROUPS FOR OVERSTAYED FOREIGNERS

Foreigner support groups established by Japanese citizens include the following categories: Christian groups, community workers' unions, women's support groups,

lawyers' association NGOs, medical NGOs, and concerned citizens' groups.[2] Christians were the pioneers in establishing support groups to help foreign workers, as illustrated in Table 1. They began in 1983 to provide counseling and shelters, mainly to Filipina women. By 1987, there were three Christian groups, whose assistance had extended to various ethnic groups, with several concerned citizens' NGOs and a women's group evolving out of the Christian groups. At the end of the 1980s, as foreign men entered the construction industry and small manufacturing, some labor unions and lawyers' association NGOs began assisting foreign workers. After the 1990 revision of the Immigration Control law and the oral directive to exclude overstayed foreign workers from the NHI program, numerous medical and occupational safety centers formed foreign worker support groups. By the end of 1992, 57 support groups existed in Tokyo and Kanagawa alone; since 1998, only four new groups have been created.

Faith-based Organizations

Most faith-based organizations that support overstayed foreigners are Christian groups. Although Christians comprise only about one percent of the population in Japan, it was Christian organizations that first opened their doors to overstayed foreign migrants in distress during the early 1980s. On April 13, 1982, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan (CBCJ) received a desperate call for help from a bishop in the Philippines to assist Filipina entertainers who had been forced into prostitution in Japan.[3] One year later, the CBCJ established the Asian Women in Japan Support Group, which later expanded to

[2] 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. On such cases, I weigh the importance of the group's concentration of activities above other criteria.

[3] Interview with Sister Ishii Yoshiko of the Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan, August 27, 1998.

become the Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan, to provide various services to both female and male 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, nine other Christian NGOs have emerged to help overstayed foreigners in Tokyo and Kanagawa. As Table 2 illustrates, they include the Catholic Tokyo International Center (CTIC), the CTIC-Meguro, 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 Philippines Center, and the Pastoral Center for Migrants (PACEM and formerly the Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants or SOL). Many of their names summarily describe the goals or activities of these Christian groups. Typically, they help foreign workers with problems related to working conditions, such as unpaid salaries and occupational injuries, and also deal with family difficulties and marriage problems. The Yamazato Consulting Office and the Philippines Desk of PACEM provide prison visits to foreign inmates. Each of these organizations was created as a branch of a certain Christian church or diocese, and many provide church services. These Christian groups typically do not have a membership system, as their staff and volunteers are generally church people. Most are subgroups of a religious corporation (*shūkyō hōjin*). Accordingly, Christian groups receive most of their funding from their churches.

The Christian influence on foreign migrant workers and foreigners support groups is tremendous.[4] Christian organizations support foreign migrant workers for two reasons. First, the majority of foreign workers in Japan, especially from Brazil, the Philippines,

[4] Interview with Father Akimoto Haruo of the Nagano's Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan, June 27, 1998.

Peru, and Korea, are Christians, especially Catholics. In 2000, the CBCJ estimated that 91 percent of Catholics (or 407,000 people) in Japan were foreigners.[5] Another 300,000 or so Koreans in Japan are Protestants. Second, Christians help foreigners because they hold an ethical view that all people – natives and foreigners – are equal as children of God.[6] According to the CBCJ, "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."[7]

Faith-based support groups also include Buddhist groups, which are far fewer in number and emerged much later. Āyus (Network of Buddhist Volunteers on International Cooperation) was formed in 1993, but did not begin to assist illegal foreigners in Japan until 1998. Āyus, which acquired NPO status in 1999, offers HIV/AIDS consultation and referral services to foreign women in addition to providing financial support to numerous immigrant rights NGOs. As a result of Japanese mistrust engendered by the historical link between Buddhism and authoritarian power, Buddhists in Japan have hesitated to reach out beyond the typical social activities of religious organizations. In the early 1980s, however, after witnessing the outpouring of relief support by numerous Christian groups during the Cambodian refugee crisis, their embarrassment led them to begin supporting social welfare activities abroad, mostly in South and Southeast Asia. Buddhists help foreigners because they believe that all living things – humans, animals, and plants – are interconnected. For them, a single living thing, even an illegal foreigner, contains immeasurable karma and must not be neglected but should be supported and

[5] Catholic Bishop's Conference of Japan, http://www.cbcj.catholic.jp/jpn/data/00data.htm (October 25, 2005).

[6] On the Christian concept of equality and a history of Christian activism, see Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), particularly p. 147.

[7] Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, "Seeking the Kingdom of God Which Transcends Differences in Nationality," (Tokyo: Mimeograph, 1993), p. 5.

nurtured.[8]

Community Workers' Unions

The second and most confrontational type of foreign workers' support group is the community workers' union (see Table 3). Of these unions, about one third, particularly the Fureai Koto Union, the Foreign Workers' Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ), the Foreign Laborers' Union (FLU), and the Kanagawa City Union, were particularly active during the 1990s in assisting overstayed foreign workers, as many unions subsequently made agreements with others nearby to divide up activities according to their respective strengths. On June 28, 1997, 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 (*Kanagawa Yunion Kyōgikai*). According to the Conference agreement, each union is to direct new members to the union that specializes in a specific field of labor disputes. For example, 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.[9] The Fureai Koto Union, the Sumida Union, and the Edogawa Union established a similar pact, creating the Shitamachi Union on September 15, 1998.[10] The Fureai Koto Union, 90 percent of whose members were foreign workers in 1998, concentrated on labor disputes involving foreign workers.[11] Membership in these groups ranges from 33 to 6,000 workers, and the membership fees

[8] Interview with Mika Edaki of Āyus, October 20, 2005.

[9] Interview with Yoshida Yukio of the Yokohama Workers' Union, September 30, 1998.

[10] The official name of the Shitamachi Union is the Tokyo Eastern Region Union Conference (*Tōkyō Tōbu Chiiki Yunion Kyōgikai*).

[11] Interviews with: Kase Junji of the Fureai Koto Union, May 18, 1998; Okamoto Testufumi of the Sumida Union, May 18, 1998; Udagawa Masahiro of the Edogawa Union, May 23, 1998; also see *Asahi Shimbun*, September 15, 1998.

provide all their operating funds.

Although enterprise unions are prominent in postwar Japan, not every worker can belong to one of these unions.[12] There are strict rules about who can and cannot join, and many companies do not allow part-time workers to join their enterprise unions. Furthermore, small companies often do not have unions. Hence, part-time workers and workers at small business organizations turn to community workers' unions, that is, "a union where anyone, even a single individual, can join at any time" (*hitori demo itsu demo daremo haireru rōdō kumiai*). In other words, community workers' unions pick up those marginal workers who are not members of the enterprise unions. Because these organizations are open to anyone, foreign workers naturally benefit from this institutional arrangement. To mark their distinction from the mainstream workers' unions, most community workers' unions use the English word "union," which is written in katakana (*yunion*), in their names rather than the traditional "*rōdō kumiai*"

Community workers' unions provide labor consultation and dispute resolution. Foreign workers come to them to seek dispute settlement mainly over non-payment of wages, unjust dismissal, or compensation for work injuries. Once their disputes are resolved, they typically leave the workers' unions. In other words, foreign workers in Japan join these labor unions not for the purpose of strengthening worker solidarity and the labor movement; instead, they join because they are seeking resolution to specific labor disputes with the employers.

Women's Support Groups

[12] See *inter alia* Andrew Gordon, *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Ikuo Kume, *Disparaged Success: Labor Politics in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Oshima Chizuko and her associates at the Japan Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) were pioneers in assisting foreign women. The WCTU, which opposes extramarital sex and thus prostitution, founded Women's Shelter HELP with prestigious foundation status (*zaidan hōjin*) in April 1986 to commemorate its centennial anniversary in Tokyo and to reaffirm its commitment to the needs of all women. HELP's first undertaking was the rescue of two Filipina women who had been forced to work in a snack bar in Nagoya without pay. In addition to HELP, women's support groups include 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," the Women's Shelter "Saalaa," the Japan Network Against Trafficking in Persons (JNATIP), and Kalakasan (see Table 4). Many of these names are fabulously creative and entertaining. For example, *saalaa* is a Thai word for "resting place" while *kalakasan* is Tagalog for "strong." Mizula is taken from the English word, Ms., and adds the Japanese plural "la" to it. Akakabu means the "red turnip" in Japanese, which is red on the outside and white (symbolizing purity) on the inside.[13] These organizations offer temporary shelter and provide legal advice and women's advocacy, primarily to Filipina, Thai, and increasingly Chinese women. Saalaa is the only one that was established exclusively for foreign women. Because most of these groups provide welfare services to all women, local governments often turn to them for assistance, and two groups, Mizula and Saalaa, have acquired NPO status.

[13] The name is actually taken from a children's story by A. Tolstoi entitled *The Big Turnip*, which carries a message that in order to successfully pull up the big, sweet turnip from the ground, a group of people (even long-time foes) must cooperate and work together. Although the founder of the group, Sakai Kazuko, wanted to name her cooperative *Okīkabu* (Big Turnip), she discovered that someone had already registered that name. She then decided on "akakabu," which was soon after taken by the neighbor to mean "red" (i.e. communist). Posting a large portrait of Che Guevera in the window of its building has certainly strengthened that image.

Women's shelters provide assistance to women who have been abused and need temporary shelter.[14] While women are residing at the shelters, these groups arrange for the arrest of their abusive employers/partners, custody for their children, payment of medical compensation, and issuance of visas. For many abused, overstayed foreign women, turning to the government for assistance means little more than a ticket out of Japan, so these shelters offer a compassionate alternative, providing both help and confidentiality. Because the shelters have contact with the Thai and Philippine embassies, many Thai and Filipina women hear of them through their embassies. These shelters also have rescue teams to help foreign prostitutes and housewives escape from their captivity. Members of foreign women's support groups also accompany foreign women to the police station to make sure that male officers do not ask intrusive and embarrassing questions that are not connected to the case.

Japanese women assist foreign women for two reasons. First, many of these groups have Christian influence and thus hold Christian values on fidelity. They hope to sway other Japanese people's views on prostitution by pointing to various abuses that foreign women face due to their disadvantaged position. Second, they believe in gender equality and women's rights that transcend national boundaries. Through their service and activities, these groups aim to help exploited foreign women recover their self-esteem and empower them in order to launch a new start in life. Membership in these

[14] The usual period of stay is two weeks and usually limited to one month. These shelters charge small fees for lodging and meals. HELP fees are on the basis of individuals' ability to pay. Saalaa asks 1,000 yen per night for board and food, but allows exceptions. Mizula charges 1,500 yen per night. There is no age limit for women, but accompanying male children are accepted up to 10 years of age. Foreign victims of domestic violence are often advised by activists to bring their children along to the shelter, because there are legal advantages (i.e. in maintaining a legal residence status after a divorce) to foreign women when children are involved.

groups ranges from twelve to 2,500 people. They acquire needed funds from membership fees, lodging fees, church donations, and subsidies from local governments.

Medical NGOs

Medical service providers, including the Occupational Safety and Health Centers (OSHC), account for nineteen organizations, the most numerous among the six types of support groups. As Table 5 indicates, they are the AMDA International Information Center (AMDA), 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, 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 (KOSHC), Esperanza-no-kai, SABAY, and MIC Kanagawa. The Minatomachi Clinic, the Jujo-dori Clinic, the 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. Labor doctors, such as Dr. Yoshiomi Temmyo of MF-MASH and Dr. Hirano Toshio of the Kameido Himawari Clinic, both of whom are affiliated with their local OSHC, often treat patients who suffer from industrial illness and job injuries – many of whom are overstayed foreign workers who work in dangerous jobs and are not covered by the NHI. In the early 1990s, they

observed that overstayed foreign workers were increasingly seeking assistance with accident claims at their affiliated local OSHC and medical services at their clinics. They then mobilized their medical friends and members of these OSHC to support overstayed foreign workers.

Medical NGOs provide medical treatment and insurance schemes, offer medical translation, and make accident claims for all foreigners. Like women's support groups, medical NGOs offer medical welfare services, which attract the support of many local governments. Moreover, OSHC often coordinate activities with local labor offices, and four medical NGOs have thus acquired NPO status. Their membership ranges from 650 to 6,000 people. They operate, usually at a loss, with funds from membership fees and subsidies from local governments.

Medical doctors assist overstayed foreigners because they believe that medical care should be available to all, particularly to those at a higher risk of getting ill and with no means to pay for medical treatment. They have found that certain foreigners cannot receive appropriate medical treatment due to language barriers, while others are rejected by medical centers due to their illegal status. As discussed earlier, hospitals and clinics turn away overstayed foreigners for fear that these foreign patients will not be able to pay their medical fees, since they are not covered by the NHI. Meanwhile, the staff at OSHC feel it is their duty to protect "all" workers from industrial accidents and job injuries.

Lawyers' Association NGOs

The fifth type of support group is the lawyers' association NGO. The first legal institution to assist illegal foreigners was the Japan Civil Liberties Union (JCLU), when it

established the Foreigners' Rights Sub-committee in 1988.[15] JCLU began helping foreign newcomers when NGO activists seeking legal protection for foreign workers came to consult with one of its lawyers. Other lawyers' NGOs emerged in the early 1990s after several regional bar associations recognized the need to form sub-committees specializing in foreigner issues due to the increased number of foreigners visiting their members' offices. This was the case with 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 Yokohama Bar Association – Legal Consultation for Foreigners, and the Kanagawa Administrative Lawyer Association – Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group. Since all lawyers are required to be members of a local bar association in order to practice, most organizations providing legal services are subgroups of regional lawyers' associations (*bengoshikai*). The Lawyers' Association for Foreign Criminal Cases (LAFOCC), the Lawyers' Association for Foreign Laborers Rights (LAFLR), and the Immigration Review Task Force, which were found by Onitsuka Tadanori, are the only exceptions. For a small fee, these NGOs provide foreigners with legal consultation and dispute settlement on issues relating to labor, marriage/divorce, and immigration. Membership in these groups ranges from nineteen to 540 people.

The lawyers' associations help overstayed foreigners because they feel that this clientele is subject to injustices, particularly those caused by Japanese government policies. Overstayed foreign suspects typically do not receive legal counsel because they

[15] 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 "aims to protect human rights for all person regardless of belief, religion, or political opinion…[and] to issue advice, memoranda, and opinions on specific human rights cases relating to activities of the national and local government, the Diet, and the courts of Japan." See <http://village.infoweb.ne.jp/jclu/index.htm>.

lack the financial resources and personal connections to arrange for legal counsel. Public defenders reject cases involving overstayed foreign suspects because they are troublesome, involve difficulties of language (interpretation), and offer little financial reward. If foreigners are arrested, the institutional regulations of the Japanese legal system are often not explained to them comprehensively. Furthermore, the authorities are known to have verbally (and, at times, physically) abused foreign suspects even in cases of petty infringements. Lawyers from these foreigners support groups object to such practices as contradicting their beliefs about justice.

These lawyers also help overstayed foreigners due to their traditional opposition to the central government as members of a *zaiyahōsō* or an institution that exists apart from authority.[16] Hence, they challenge the authorities and act as an opposition group to the central government. Besides handling cases involving foreigners on labor disputes, illegal confinement, and violent acts, they also push for changes in the culture of authority, including better treatment 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. Some members of these groups have organized an ongoing campaign against incidents of physical abuse of illegal foreigners by Immigration Bureau officials and police. They urge foreign victims to come forward and contact lawyers in order to file damage suits against the government.

Concerned Citizens' Groups

[16] Interview with Oshii Tetsuo of the Japan Legal Aid Association, April 28, 1998.

Concerned citizens were quick to follow Christian NGOs in establishing support groups to help foreign workers during the late 1980s. As Table 7 illustrates, these groups include the Solidarity Network with Migrants in Japan (SMJ), the Ōta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness (OC-Net), the INOKEN, the CALL Network, the Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS), the Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers' Problems, the Kalabaw-no-kai, and the Sagamihara Solidarity with Foreign Workers. Concerned citizens' groups provide lifestyle and labor consultations, as well as dispute settlement services, primarily to South Asians and Iranians. Like women's support groups, some of these groups have close connection with Christian groups. For example, the Kalabaw-no-kai is represented by Rev. Watanabe Hidetoshi. The SMJ, which functions as the central network organization for all NGOs that support foreign migrants, was given office space in a church. Many of these groups were formed by former labor unionists or radical activists. OC-Net, for example, was founded by Kawamata Koshin, who was kicked out of the Japan's Communist Party (JCP) in the 1960s due to his "radical" views on China, founded the OC-Net.[17] Similarly, Yoshinari Katsuo - who thinks all political parties, including the JCP, cannot bring "real" changes to Japanese society - helped found the APFS.[18] These groups have 40 to 1,700 members, on whom they rely for membership fees. Some of them also receive additional funds from local governments.

Concerned citizens' groups assist overstayed foreigners due to their belief in racial equality and civil rights. Many groups help not only foreign workers, but also the

[17] Interview with Kawamata Koshin of the OC-Net, April 7, 1998.
[18] Interview with Yoshinari Katsuo of the APFS, December 17, 1998.

Burakumin, the elderly, the handicapped, and homeless people. Hence, these groups are civil rights activist organizations that are seeking legal rights and protection for marginalized people. As a product of the civil rights movement, concerned citizens' groups assist foreign workers because of their humanitarianism and their progressive belief in racial justice that ensures civil rights protection to all.

Many NGO members look to the Kalabaw-no-kai and the APFS as the fathers of support groups for overstayed foreigners because both were formed in 1987 when few such NGOs existed. The Kalabaw-no-kai was set up "to help and establish solidarity with foreigners working in Japan." Members of the 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 problems.[19] The APFS provides similar services and activities in Tokyo's Oyama Higashi-machi area. After the successes of these two groups, other groups such as the OC-Net have emerged to provide services to foreign residents in their areas.

IMPROVISATION IN ACTIVISM: ACTIVIST STRATEGIES AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The activities and institutional development of Japan's foreigner support groups might well be characterized by the sociological concept of pragmatism.[20] Activists in these groups engage in problem-solving activities that lack a formalized theory or prescribed way of doing things and often require an original and creative approach outside the formal and accepted channels of political and social institutions.

[19] Interview with Imaizumi Megumi of the Kalabaw-no-kai, March 8, 1998.

[20] On pragmatism and creativity of action, see Hans Joas, *Pragmatism and Social Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); idem., *The Creativity of Action* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

Improvisation takes place not only in action, but also in the way the institutions develop, with group decisions, involving collective intelligence and participation from members, continually taking place.

The activists who form these groups are problem solvers with experience in helping underprivileged Japanese. Christian activists are accustomed to helping the poor. Community workers' unions have a history of representing workers that Japanese enterprise unions have abandoned. Women's groups have struggled to improve the social and legal position of Japanese women. Activist doctors have extensive experience in serving the poor, the homeless, and others prone to sickness or injury. Lawyers, progressive or not, have traditionally assisted victims of injustice. And a small group of concerned citizens have historically sought civil rights of marginalized Japanese. Having little or no experience in helping illegal foreigners, these activists often improvise their actions by applying their experience to the problems of illegal foreigners.

Only when they have grave problems – problems that they or their friends cannot resolve themselves due to language barriers, ignorance of Japanese law, or weak bargaining/financial positions – do foreign workers seek assistance from the Japanese NGOs. And when they do, they often seek out particular activists or institutions, due to their reputations for helping the underprivileged. For example, many Filipinos are Catholics who often go to church and are familiar with church activities. They turn to the church for assistance in the forms of legal, medical, financial, shelter, psychological counseling, networking, and other emergency relief and support. Overstayed Filipinos who wish to surrender to immigration authorities and return to the Philippines, as well as

women who have escaped from the mama-san or yakuza, seek shelter in the church facilities.

In terms of ethnic background, Filipinos, Koreans, and nikkeijin generally go to Christian NGOs. South Asians and Iranians, who usually suffer from labor-related problems, turn to community workers' unions and concerned citizens' groups. Filipino and Thai women generally seek help and shelter from women's support groups. Desperate overstayed foreigners of all backgrounds use the services of medical and lawyers' NGOs. Consequently, some of these support groups have developed a specialization in helping certain ethnic groups. For instance, the FLU, the Koto Fureai Union, the Santama Joint Labor Union, and the Hachioji Union serve mostly Bangladeshis and Iranians. The Zentoitsu Workers' Union concentrates on Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indian workers. The Kanagawa City Union specializes in Korean and nikkei Peruvian workers who have overstayed their visas. Concerned citizens' groups such as the Kalabaw-no-kai, the APFS, and the OC-Net help Bangladeshis (and Pakistanis). Before its dissolution, Inoken specifically concentrated on Iranians. Volunteers at women's shelter Saalaa became experts on Thai women. The Yokohama Bar Association – Sub-committee on Human Rights for Foreigners has developed a specialized understanding of illegal Chinese.

In many cases, immigrant rights groups came into existence in response to individual encounters with foreigners seeking assistance. One example is the concerned citizens' group Kalabaw-no-kai. During the cold weeks of December and January, known as *ettō tōsō* ("struggle to pass the winter"), when jobs are scarce and laborers find it difficult to survive, local volunteers set up temporary tents in Kotobuki Park to feed and

house those in need of help. These volunteers were initially surprised when a Filipino man came to their tents, but the encounter led them to recognize the plight of foreign workers. Soon after, they established the Kalabaw-no-kai. Similarly, the women's group Mizula began in 1990 when a group of concerned Japanese women came across a few desperate Thai women and tried to trace the snack bars where they had been forced to work as prostitutes and obtain the help of the police in retrieving their Thai passports and other documents. Since that beginning, Mizula has substantially expanded its support activities for foreign women, responding to requests for assistance that have included finding an inexpensive apartment in Tokyo for a Thai woman and her Japanese boyfriend, helping a Filipino woman escape from her violent yakuza husband, and sending a dying AIDS patient back to Thailand to reunite with her family. By 1997, Mizula was handling almost 400 such cases per year.[21]

The shifting focus and activities of many immigrant rights groups reflect their flexibility and creativity in responding to the problems illegal foreigners bring to their institutions. The concerned citizens' group APFS, for example, originally grew out of Yoshinari's friendship with his public bath buddies from Bangladesh. At first, the APFS concentrated its activities on resolving its foreign members' problems with Japanese language schools and introducing guarantors to foreign members. As foreign workers increasingly encountered labor problems, its activities expanded to more practical issues, such as providing consultations to foreign migrant workers on problems related to their jobs and daily lives. It then began to make appeals to the government and Japanese companies to protect foreign workers' fundamental human rights. It started to hold a May

[21] Interviews with: Yoshida Kyoko of Mizula, March 24, 1998; Abe Hiroko of Mizula, May 28, 1998. Also see Yokohama-shi Women's Association, *Yokohama-shi josei sōdan nīzu chōsa hōgokusho I* [Report I of Women's Consultation Needs in the Yokohama City] (Yokohama: Mimeograph, 1996), pp. 91-183.

Day meeting in Tokyo every year and to submit requests to the government to expand more legal rights and social benefits to foreign workers.

In recent years, as foreign workers began to settle in Japan, the APFS launched an ambitious campaign to get the government to grant "special residence permission" to certain overstayed foreigners. In September 1999, the APFS organized 21 overstayed foreigners to make a collective request for "special residence permission" at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, a permission that traditionally was granted only to those with Japanese spouses. The group sought the assistance of Professor Komai Hiroshi, who then formed a committee to mobilize academic circles (inside and outside of Japan) through e-mail to sign a petition in support of the APFS Campaign. The committee obtained 593 signatures of Japanese and foreign scholars and submitted the list to the Ministry of Justice in November 1999. These academicians contended that since the overstayed foreigners had lived in Japan for about 10 years and their children were born and raised in Japan, they had sufficiently demonstrated that they had established their living bases in Japan and should be granted "special permission" to live permanently in Japan. Komai informed the Immigration Bureau that a refusal to grant "special permission" would draw extended criticism from both domestic and international academic circles. He also threatened to file an administrative suit against the Ministry. As a result, the Ministry eventually granted special permission to these 21 overstayed foreigners.[22] By doing so, the Ministry recognized the efforts of the APFS and its academic allies in redefining Japan's membership rules. The APFS hopes to push Japan's

[22] Interview with Yoshinari Katsuo of the APFS, May 16, 2001.

membership rules further and is presently working on cases involving overstayed foreigners without any children.[23]

In a similar way, the faith-based group CTIC has adapted its focus and activities in response to newly-identified problems of illegal foreigners. CTIC originally provided counseling to help Catholic migrants with family difficulty and marriage problems. When illegal foreigners started bringing problems related to working conditions like unpaid salaries and job accidents to CTIC, Father Ohara, the group's representative at the time, recruited a 54 year-old, non-Christian Watanabe Tetsuro, who had more than 20 years experience at the now defunct General Council of Trade Unions of Japan (Sohyo), out of his early retirement.[24] CTIC's ability to adapt to the changing problems faced by illegal foreigners enabled the group to expand its offices to other parts of Tokyo.[25] The Zentoitsu union and SHARE medical group also experienced similar institutional transformations in adapting to new problems. After helping illegal foreign workers at the union, Zentoitsu increasingly realized that many of these foreigners did not have regular medical check-ups. Zentoitsu then teamed with SHARE to provide free medical check-ups to foreign workers at its office. SHARE, in turn, realizing that many overstayed foreigners without proper medical check-ups lived in the countryside, started to work with local NGOs in nearby prefectures to mobilize foreign workers for medical check-ups at a Christian church. In sum, the response of activists to new problems brought to them by illegal foreigners has been characterized by on-going institutional improvisation and creative adaptation.

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[23] Interview with Yoshinari Katsuo of the APFS, July 7, 2004.
[24] Interviews with: Arikawa Kenji and Watanabe Tetsuro of CTIC, May 7, 1998.
[25] Interview with Watanabe Tetsuro of CTIC, summer 2003?.

Examples of creative, pragmatic activism also abound in the strategies employed by community support group activists in dealing with specific problems. For example, because members of community workers' unions come from various occupations and national backgrounds, these unions' most powerful tactic is not strikes, but all-day offensives called *ichinichi kōdō*. The *ichinichi kōdō* use shame to persuade employers to comply with the unions' demands. Typically, union organizers first try to settle labor disputes through collective bargaining with the employer. If they can reach an agreement in this fashion, then the dispute is resolved. If complications arise that require extra legal assistance, the union organizers 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), the unions mobilize their current members to stage a demonstration outside the employer's central office. The Kanagawa City Union, for example, organizes daylong demonstrations four times a month.[26] In each of these *ichinichi kōdō*, the members visit between four and six companies, with each visit usually lasting about one hour. Murayama Satoshi, who organizes these *ichinichi kōdō*, mandates that union members must participate in at least one of these events before he begins to work on their cases. This contributes to a high turnout of about 50 foreign workers attending these demonstrations.

A typical Kanagawa City Union *ichinichi kōdō* begins at 7:30 a.m. at Kawasaki Station and ends around 8:00 p.m. after dinner. The event is highly organized. The coordinators smoothly direct people from one place to another through subways and train stations and along sidewalks – not unlike Japanese tour groups overseas. Participants are

[26] Such tactics are emulated by other community workers' unions, albeit less frequently.

given union armbands so that they can be recognized by the union organizers (and others). The organizers buy and distribute train tickets, decide on a place for lunch and pay for the meal, and skillfully move people through crowded trains and stations, even during rush hours. On the sidewalk, a union organizer stands on each corner where participants need to turn, in order to point them in the right direction. Once the group has assembled in front of a company building, Murayama screams into a megaphone, denouncing the company's foul play. His messages are not only directed at the accused company, but are also meant to be heard by other companies in the area as well as by passersby. While Murayama is condemning the illegal practices of the targeted employer, other union members are distributing to pedestrians leaflets that explain the injustice caused by the employer. Occasionally, at Murayama's signal, the participants throw their fists high in the air to demonstrate their solidarity and intention to fight the management to the end. At times, Murayama has the wronged employees come to the megaphone and explain the situation firsthand, which is certainly difficult when they are foreigners.

The goal of these activities is to shame employers as a means of pressing for workers' demands. The orderly disruption of the *ichinichi kōdō* is an important tool of critical communication for members of community workers unions, aimed at calling attention to the unreasonableness of company managements – their exploitation of the status of illegal foreigners, their domination over the terms of negotiation, their use of their economic power to cut off negotiation, and their employment of intimidation and/or violence in negotiation. Through these disruptive, annoying, or distracting demonstrations, the community workers' unions effectively engage citizens, including passersby, in communication with one another on issues concerning foreign workers.

Another example of creative activism can be seen in the efforts of medical NGOs to deliver medical services to illegal foreigners at a more affordable rate. Because access to the Japanese Social Insurance and NHI system is closed to most migrant workers who have overstayed their visas, 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, for example, founders of the MF-MASH established an alternative mutual aid scheme to provide medical treatment to illegal foreigners. Members who pay a monthly fee of 2,000 yen are entitled to receive medical treatment at any of five participating clinics for only 30 percent of the total cost (the same reduction that is given to people who are members of the Japanese NHI Program). More than 12,000 overstayed foreigners from dozens of countries are insured under the MF-MASH system. Some doctors have found other creative ways to accommodate illegal foreigners with affordable medical services. Dr. Hirano of the Kameido Himawari Clinic, for instance, provides medical care to foreign workers at half the normal cost.[27] At the Kobayashi International Clinic, Dr. Kobayashi charges normal medical fees to foreigners, but less for medication. He reduces the cost of medications by using older medicines, which he claims to be safe and equally effective.[28]

A final example of creative activism comes from women's groups, who devised safe ways to rescue Southeast Asian women forced to work as prostitutes at snack bars, particularly during the late 1980s. Upon receiving an SOS call, women's groups send out a rescue team that typically includes respectable and trustworthy male members, such as a college professor or Christian priest, to visit the snack bar or other place where the

[27] Interview with Hirano Toshio of the Kameido Himawari Clinic, April 30, 1998.
[28] Interview with Kobayashi Yoneyuki of the Kobayashi International Clinic, May 15, 1998.

foreign woman is working. Pretending to be normal customers, these men request service from the distressed Southeast Asian woman and quietly inform her that they are part of the rescue team. They stay until the place of business closes and leave with the woman as if they were planning to spend the night together. Instead, they discreetly take her to a women's shelter, a secret place sufficiently far away that her former boss cannot easily find her.[29]

Responding to the problems brought to them, activists have generally formed foreigner support groups as extensions of, but separate organizations from, their original institutions. Thus, faith-based NGOs evolved out of Catholic dioceses, NCC/J, or Buddhist sects. Specific support groups for women emerged from a larger movement, and also out of Christian churches. Regional bar associations established most of the lawyers' associations groups. Community workers' unions and medical NGOs are exceptions, for they have served foreigners since they were established. Nevertheless, some community workers' unions, such as the Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu (FWBZ) and the Foreign Laborers' Union (FLU) of the National General Workers Union, have created foreigner sections within their unions. AMDA, SHARE, and Āyus extended their international voluntary relief activities to include foreigners in Japan.

There are three clear benefits of establishing a separate organizational entity to help foreigners. First, it allows the group to accumulate knowledge about how best to improve its assistance to illegal foreigners. Although they have extensive experience in helping the poor and the distressed, these Japanese activists initially lack experience and know-how in helping newly arrived Asian foreigners. Forming support groups allows

[29] Interview with a member of the rescue team in the Ibaraki prefecture, June 5, 1998.

them to acquire and share information specific to the problems of foreign workers. For instance, after six years of solving problems for illegal foreign workers, the Kalabaw-no-kai found that "there has been an accumulation of knowledge and experience in negotiating with employers" and as a result, "there has been an increase in our ability to solve problems [for foreign workers]."[30]

Second, creating a dedicated support group strengthens activists' bargaining power. In the words of staff people at the concerned citizens' group Inoken, "in order to resolve [problems for illegal foreigners], we need a lot of people."[31] This is particularly true for community workers' unions that support illegal foreign workers. As Abe Fumiko of the Kanagawa City Union was taking attendance at the beginning of an *ichinichi kōdō* she remarked, "number is everything in order to have an effective bargaining."[32] For this reason, Murayama makes it mandatory for all foreigners seeking assistance to take part in at least one of its *ichinichi kōdō* before he takes on their cases. Undoubtedly, bringing twenty-one overstayed foreigners to the Immigration Office in Tokyo to petition for their amnesty, together with five APFS lawyers, provides more leverage than would a sole petitioner. Having a separate group with a focused goal guarantees effective mobilization and legal representation of foreign workers during the bargaining process.

Third, by creating a separate entity, Japanese activists can raise needed funds for their activities. Institutionalization requires members, which then begets membership fees. In certain groups, such as the Kalabaw-no-kai, it is the policy to "refrain from asking for expenses or any other financial payment" from their foreign clients, instead relying on

[30] Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of *Kalabaw-no-kai*: Evaluation and Future Prospects," 3.
[31] Inoken internal document.
[32] Interview with Abe Fumiko of the Kanagawa City Union, April 7, 1998.

various fund-raising activities for financial support.[33] Even Christian groups, which do not rely on memberships, must institutionalize in order to receive funding from their headquarters - either in Tokyo, Geneva, or Rome. Of course NGOs may stand a better chance of receiving funding from local governments if they are well-established and stable institutions with relatively long histories, and many of the groups considered here are not especially durable in this sense. But the *issues* addressed by these institutions do tend to be relatively durable, so activists may reap some benefits with respect to local government support simply by organizing toward clearly defined and longstanding goals.

While foreigner support groups like APFS and CTIC, which have adapted to the changing problems foreigners encounter, continue to exist and thrive for a long time, it is important to point out that many of these groups are relatively impermanent. In some cases, the associated organization dissolves once specific problems are resolved. This occurred, for instance, with the "Support Group of Three Thai Women" after the Shimodate Incident, which dissolved in 1996 upon the termination of the court case of the three women in question. Similarly, "Inoken" dissolved in 1998 after Iranians no longer gathered at the Yoyogi Park. Some groups, such as LAFLR and SOL, have dissolved due to financial difficulties and others like FLU as a result of internal struggle within their organizations.[34] Obviously, there are potential gains from permanence for an institution, but there are also clear benefits to being a short-lived and narrowly focused organization in contemporary Japanese society: no entrenched bureaucracy has time to develop, and thus few interests become vested in the organization itself, as opposed to its specific task. Also, in a political culture characterized by strong deference of the

[33] Kalabaw-no-kai, "Six Years of *Kalabaw-no-kai*: Evaluation and Future Prospects," 9.

[34] Interviews: with Yamagishi Motoko of SOL and Kalakasan, August 4, 2004; Yano Manami of the SMJ, July 18, 2003; Watanabe Midori of LAFOCC, June 16, 2003.

institutional status, a short-lived organization avoids easy capture by existing political interests working through established institutions.[35]

REALIZING MOTIVATIONS THROUGH ACTIVISM: PROBLEM-SOLVING IN DELIBERATIVE NETWORKS

Members of immigrant rights NGOs 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, and the organization generally dissolves. But for these Japanese activists, the resolution of a problem and dissolution of a specific organization are not the end of the matter: rather, their associative activities help them focus their more abstract and inchoate political ideas. People who join these support groups generally accept the belief of the group as stated in their charters, and members soon find themselves united by a common ideology of social equality in one form or the other. This abstract commitment to equality generally includes 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. In addition to these general moral commitments, activists typically have engaged in opposition politics prior to their associative activism; but the latter activities help them to clarify and refine their political concerns and complaints with others who share their abstract moral commitments.

[35] We would expect some attempt at cooptation by the Japanese state: outright suppression, incorporation of these groups into the government's policymaking process, preferential treatment in terms of financial and logistical support to those groups whose agendas and activities are consonant with government interests, or redirecting some activities of certain groups toward national causes. Indeed, institutional capture can have benefits in terms of improved access to powerful actors, a point I do not deny. But it is an open question whether the promise of improved access would be worth the cost of diminished independence in the case of Japanese activists seeking to transform public attitudes about, and official treatment of, illegal foreign workers. Such trade-off would likely be unattractive to the activists discussed here.

These activists were mature adults mostly in their 30s, 40s, and 50s (the median age for the 107 activists I interviewed in 1998 was 41 years old). As Table 8 demonstrates, half the activists interviewed started their associative activities for illegal foreign workers between the ages of 31 and 51. The youngest starting activist was a 19-year-old woman and the oldest a 75-year-old woman. The number of starting activists in paid and non-paid positions was relatively equal. Men (*n*=60), particularly those with professional careers such as doctors, lawyers, and labor unionists, out-numbered women (*n*=47), who mostly belonged to faith-based organizations, concerned citizens' NGOs, and women's support groups.

As one might expect, these activists included Christians, radical unionists, citizens' rights activists, progressive lawyers, and activist doctors. Most were highly educated: 85% had college degrees, and thirteen held master's degrees (excluding staff of community workers' unions). Medical doctors graduated from top medical schools, and lawyers tended to come out of prestigious universities before passing the highly difficult bar exam. Kawamoto Hiroyuki of KOSHC graduated from the economics department of the University of Kyoto and one volunteer at the Kalabaw-no-kai had a master's degree in engineering from the University of Tokyo. Most women activists also received university education from elite schools. The late Matsui Yayori of the Asian-Japanese Women's Resource Center was a Berkeley graduate, while Yoshida Kyoko of Mizula was working on her Ph.D. at Sophia University. Clearly, this elitist educational background is highly useful in leveling the playing field, not only during negotiation with more powerful organizations but also during the deliberative process with local government officials, as will be discussed in the next chapter. In addition to being able to

speak fluent Japanese, these activists understand Japanese expectations about norms of articulateness, which, as in other societies, tend to privilege the modes of expression more typical of highly educated people.[36] In most negotiations and deliberations, participants usually value expression that proceeds from premises to conclusion in an orderly and logical fashion. For these advocates, this entails formulating general ethical/normative principles and applying them to particular cases involving illegal foreigners they are helping.

Unlike those elites who find employment in the government and subsequently are molded to accept and espouse nationalist views, most of these activists hold internationalist views. They are dissatisfied with the social environment in which they live and share an alternative vision for its improvement. For example, Miki Emiko, a lawyer at the Yokohama Law Office and a representative of Saalaa, was raised by a single mother who ran a *ryokan* (Japanese inn) frequented by American GIs and their Japanese girlfriends. Dissatisfied with Japan's political environment, she was active in radical left-wing activities at the University of Tokyo's prestigious Law Department. Rather than joining the bureaucracy after graduation like most of her classmates, she spent two years in communist China, where she eventually became disillusioned with communism as well. She then decided to become a lawyer in order to confront the establishment and bring about change through legal means. Oshima Chizuko of HELP grew up in a family that helped Japanese prostitutes escape from their captivity and had been active in the Anti-Prostitution Movement since the 1950s before she became HELP's first representative. Onitsuka Tadanori, a founder of LAFLR, LAFOCC, and the

[36] On norms of articulateness in deliberation, see Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 37-40.

Immigration Review Task Force, became interested in fighting discrimination against minorities while studying at the Waseda University. Onitsuka took his first case involving a foreigner in 1985 when a zainichi Korean refused to be fingerprinted. Although he lost that case, he went on to take more cases involving foreigners, including illegals, beginning in 1988. Rev. Hidetoshi Watanabe, who regretted his father's role during World War II as a member of the security police in Korea, started helping Koreans in Japan before 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, he was recruited to join the Kalabaw-no-kai.[37] Similarly, Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH, who deplored governmental neglect and societal prejudice against Japan's marginalized workers from impoverished Tohoku and Hokkaido, had extensive experience in helping these workers prior to supporting foreign workers. It is Dr. Yoshiomi's conviction that "doctors must not refuse to examine sick people,"[38] and he observes that it is the impoverished and neglected who are prone to get sick.[39] Like Dr. Temmyo, Dr. Hirano Toshio of Kameido Himawari Clinic has progressive views and works closely with the local OSHC. Before starting his own clinic, Dr. Hirano founded a medical labor union in one of the community hospitals in Tokyo. In terms of their political views, 103 out of 107 Japanese staff members and volunteers interviewed had never voted for the politically conservative Liberal Democratic Party, and the few exceptions had done so only on unusual electoral occasions.

Unlike legal foreigners, who show little empathy for their illegal compatriots, Japanese activists express sincere respect and compassion for illegal foreign workers and

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[37] Interview with Rev. Watanabe Hidetoshi of Kalabaw-no-kai, June 27, 1998, June 5, 1999; also see *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 18, 1988.
[38] *Mainichi Shimbun*, June 28, 1993.
[39] Interview with Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH, April 3, 1998.

do not consider their illegal visa status to lessen their humanity. Instead, these activists accept the presence, albeit illegal, of these foreigners as legitimate because Japanese society needs them. Dr. Temmyo Yoshiomi of MF-MASH, for example, remarks,

> I have always been against using the word "illegal"…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.[40]

Rev. Watanabe Hideyoshi of the Kalabaw-no-kai similarly argues that illegal foreign workers help the Japanese society, because they pay taxes and shop at Japanese stores to maintain their livelihood.[41] He warns that due to Japan's labor shortage, companies could well go bankrupt without foreign workers. Many activists see the government's classification of these people as illegal as jeopardizing their basic human rights, since employers take advantage of their illegal status.[42] They insist that the services and benefits provided to Japanese residents should be provided equally to foreign residents regardless of their visa status. These activists admire illegal foreigners, who encounter numerous problems while living in Japan, for having the "guts" to stand and face their troubles with courage.[43]

Japanese activists commonly express deep compassion for illegal foreigners during their problem-solving activities. A mutually warm and caring relationship is clearly displayed in the following international phone conversation between Kawamoto

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[40] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 3, 1995.

[41] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 27, 1991.

[42] Interview with Furuya Sugio of JOSHRC, July 1, 1998; also see http://www.jca.apc.org/joshrc/index_e.html (access October 15, 2005); APFS, "Annual Report of APFS Activity for 1996" (Tokyo: Internal document, 1997), p. 25.

[43] Published interview by Keiko Yano, "Karera ni wa Ikiru Gattsu ga Aru no yo! [They Have the Guts to Live!] in Shonan Horitsuka Kyōkai, ed., *Bengoshi ni Naritai Anata e II* [To You Who Want to Become a Lawyer II] (Tokyo: Shonansha, 1997) pp. 7-27.

Hiroyuki of KOSHC and Iqbal, a former overstayed Pakistani whose right arm was amputated as a result of a work injury in a Kawasaki factory.

Kawamoto: Is that Isbal-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.[44]

A similar expression of warmth and compassion can be seen in another conversation at the Tokyo Municipal Prison in Kosuge between Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamasato Consulting Office and a Chinese inmate sentenced to death for the murder of a fellow countryman. Noticing the Chinese inmate's red face, Father Nakaya was concerned whether he had been beaten up in prison. "Are you alright?" he asked. "Yes, why?" the Chinese man answered in puzzlement. "Your face is red," explained the concerned priest. "Ah, I just came out of the shower," he answered. It appeared that Japanese prisons have running hot water and this Chinese man, who was wearing an

[44] *MF-MASH News* 6 (October 1993), English in original.

oxford shirt underneath his flashy Nike jacket, seemed satisfied with the prison conditions. Before leaving, Father Nakaya asked, "Do you need anything?" The Chinese inmate answered with little concern for his death sentence, "Maybe a long overcoat. An old, used one is fine. Oh! And an apple."

Perhaps even more than conversations, spontaneous and silent tears offer a powerful display of compassion and empathy for illegal foreigners. During a visit to Saalaa, I encountered a Thai woman who was excited to see a fellow countryman and to hear the Thai language after eight miserable years in Japan. She asked countless questions and addressed me with the honorific *phi*, or big brother, despite my younger age. She then took me inside the shelter, forgetting that the place was off-limit to outsiders, to say nothing of men. When I was preparing to leave, we chatted for a while about her situation in Japan. Apparently, she had married a Japanese man, who often beat her even when she was pregnant. No longer able to bear with her husband's violence, she fled to Saalaa with her children. As she told her sad story, she kept breaking into tears, and at the end, she pleaded with streams of tears flowing down her cheeks: "Why are these terrible things happening to me? I have never done anything [bad] to anyone. *Phi*, help me a little, *phi*…" A Thai-speaking staff member was listening to our conversation and crying quietly. When I asked her if she had not gotten used to hearing such stories, she replied that she had listened to dozens of them, but each one still moved her to tears. In fact, she had stayed up late the night before listening to this Thai woman's story and crying with her.

In addition to expressing their respect and compassion, certain activists have made extraordinary sacrifices to assist illegal foreign workers. In retaliation for his

tenacious efforts to help a Korean worker, a group of *yakuza* was hired to ambush and beat up Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union near his residence.[45] Similarly, during a negotiation by Zentoitsu Workers' Union on behalf of a foreign worker, someone from management threw gasoline on Torii Ippei and lit a match. The incident left a permanent scar on one side of his body.[46] Despite their injuries, these union organizers went on to win their cases for their foreign clients. Murayama and Torii's physical sacrifices earned them enormous respect among several foreign workers as well as fellow activists. Activists at women's support groups often receive threatening phone calls at their offices, which they respond to courageously. When Father Nakaya Isao of the Yamasato Consulting Office was personally threatened by a yakuza for helping a run-away foreign woman, he politely pointed to his forehead and told the yakuza, "if you want to hit me, go right ahead." Fortunately, the yakuza turned away without further incident.[47]

In affirming the legitimacy of illegal foreigners' presence in Japan and offering them respect and compassion, these activists advance Japan's multicultural democracy. Such empathy from Japanese activists allows them to have an open mind and to absorb detailed information about the conditions of illegal foreigners. As a result, many understand the situation of these illegal foreigners more than their legal compatriots. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this tolerance and empathy for illegal foreigners can expand the concept of democratic citizenship and further enrich democratic deliberation,

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[45] Interview with Murayama Satoshi of the Kanagawa City Union, April 3, 1998.

[46] Interview with Torii Ippei of Zentoitsu, March 12, 1998.

[47] Interview with Nakaya Isao of the Yamasato Consulting Office, December 3, 1998. Incidents involving the yakuza have not always been confrontational, for they are known to have come to these foreigner support groups asking for help. Staff at LAFLR have received phone calls from yakuza seeking legal consultations for their foreign "girlfriends." A yakuza in the Ibaraki prefecture brought a drug overdosed foreign woman to the office of a Christian group.

which attempts to incorporate as many voices as possible from affected residents, with Japanese activists representing the voices of illegal foreigners.

TRANSFORMATIVE FORCE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Because the staff and volunteers of immigrant rights NGOs tend to be individuals who are dissatisfied with the status quo, express deep compassion for all foreigners, and are willing to make personal sacrifices to bring about change, these groups play an important role in advancing Japan's social democracy. They restore rights that have been denied to illegal foreigners. They monitor government actions and abuses. In so doing, they advance democracy by encouraging civic engagement of Japanese nationals, creating other civic groups, and promoting multicultural understanding. They educate the public and force Japanese society to reflect critically about its national identity. Most significantly, they hold internationalist views and push for structural change in Japan.

When activists help illegal foreigners with medical and legal problems, they work to restore rights that have been denied. And in dealing with specific issues, they lay the groundwork for realizing a society which guarantees those rights.[48] On July 8, 1998, for example, the APFS protested against a private hospital in Tokyo to demand the removal of a sign, posted above the emergency room reception desk that read in English: "This hospital is obligated to report to the Immigration Office." In Chinese characters, this sign referred to a "Japan Immigration Control Office," although no such office existed. The sign had been put up a decade earlier to scare away "illegal" foreign patients because there had been many cases of overstayed foreigners who had refused to pay after

[48] *Kalabaw-no-kai*, "Six Years of *Kalabaw-no-kai*: Evaluation and Future Prospects," 8-9.

receiving emergency room treatment. APFS criticized hospital officials for putting up such a sign to turn away foreigners who might well need medical treatment for life-threatening problems.[49] Yoshinari was successful in obtaining the hospital's admission that it was not "obligated" to report illegal foreigners to the authorities and that the "Japan Immigration Control Office" was actually a bogus name, and the sign was removed as a result of the APFS protest.

Assisting illegal foreigners also help activists realize the need for Japan to extend certain rights that have been denied even to Japanese nationals, such as the protection of women from domestic violence. The women's shelter Mizula played an important role in the passage of the Domestic Violence Prevention Law in 2001. Specifically, Mizula participated in a *shingikai* (consultative committee) of the Prime Minister's Office in February 2000 and called for an increase in the number of shelters for victims of domestic violence and a bill to prevent domestic violence.[50] In April, a Study Group of the Upper House invited Abe Yoko of Mizula to a hearing on domestic violence counseling. Mizula and its representative, Fukuhara Keiko, participated in an important way during the drafting of the law, as they supplied the Diet with numerous survey reports on violence against spouses or partners.[51]

Similarly, in assisting illegal foreigners, activists monitor abuses of government power, with lawyers' groups in particular pushing for changes in the culture and abuse of authority. These changes include better treatment of suspects held in detention centers, prisons, and immigration offices, and the professionalization of translators in legal cases

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[49] *The Japan Times*, July 9, 1998.

[50] The idea, however, originated after the UN Declaration on the Protection of Women Rights in 1993. Kanagawa-Women's Space "Mizula", ed., *Shierutā - Onnatachi no kigi* [Women's Crisis – Shelter] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2002), p. 239.

[51] Interview with Kikutani Hideko of Mizula, July 16, 2004.

involving foreigners who speak Japanese poorly. In 1996, for example, the JCLU assisted an overstayed Bangladeshi who was allegedly assaulted by Japanese policemen during a labor dispute. Members of the JCLU, who regarded the police actions as unjustly coercive and violating the Bangladeshi's civil rights, sent letters to the chief of the police station to request an explanation and demand that appropriate measures be taken to prevent recurrences of such events. This ability to question authority or to evaluate the performance of those with authority is an important element for the development of social democracy.

Immigrant rights NGOs advance grassroots democracy by promoting civic engagement between Japanese and foreigners. Community workers' unions, in particular, have helped to revitalize Japan's declining labor movement by actively organizing part-time and foreign workers, whose numbers have increased steadily over the past two decades.[52] On March 8, 1993, a group of community workers' unions organized a "Day for Foreign Workers' Rights," the first organized action by Japanese labor unions on this issue. On that day, the group negotiated directly with the Ministry of Labor and with companies employing foreign workers, submitted petitions to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and District Court, and held a rally for migrant workers, the largest that had been held in Japan up to that time. These organizers, who viewed "migrant workers' rights as an integral task for Japanese labor unions," held a symposium on foreign workers' rights in December 1993 and have organized a "Day for Foreign Workers' Rights" every March since then. They explain: "We think that labor unions should be at the front of the struggle to strengthening the rights of migrant workers and only labor

[52] Rengo interview, 2004.

unions have the ability of doing so. We also believe that by doing so, Japanese labor unions will start to mark a new era."[53]

Community workers' unions began assisting foreign workers during the early 1990s and were most active during the late 1990s, when the number of illegal foreigners peaked. Clearly, foreign workers contributed significantly to their added strength. For example, during the Zenrōkyo Union's 1998 *Shunto* (Spring Offensive) staff of its foreign workers' branch FLU brought about 60 foreign workers to demonstrate in front of various companies where Japanese clients of the Zenrōkyo Union were having disputes with management. The involvement of foreign workers clearly helped increase the number of participants and thereby exert more effective pressure against management. The Shunto ended at the Diet's Conference Room, where about 5,000 members gathered to listen to 1997-1998 activity reports given by ten division leaders, one of them a foreign worker who represented FLU.

Immigrant rights groups also enhance civic activities and promote multicultural understanding in their neighborhoods. The Kalabaw-no-kai maintains excellent relations with all of the volunteer associations and people in the Kotobuki-chō area. It nurtures good relations with officials of the Yokohama Welfare Center, which is located in the community center, and avoids direct conflict with the yakuza, who control the streets of Kotobuki-chō. It helps organize the annual Kotobuki Summer Festival at the Labor and Welfare Center with various volunteer groups from the area. During this three-day event, staff members of the Kalabaw-no-kai contribute both food and labor to the "Mokuyō Patorōru" (Thursday Patrol), who distributes food stamps to the *ot'chan* and *oba-chan*

[53] Gaikokujin Rōdōsha Kenri Hakusho Henshū Iinkai, *Gaikokujin rōdōsha kenri hakusho* [White Paper on Foreign Workers' Rights] (Tokyo: Executive Committee to Edit the White Paper on Foreign Workers Rights, 1995), p. 4.

(uncles and aunts) who live in the area. In this way, the Kalabaw-no-kai is an important institution that helps to enhance not only social justice for foreigners, but also peaceful co-existence and inter-racial understanding in Kotobuki-chō. Similarly, staff and members of the Yamasato Counseling Office help the Yama-nichi-rō Labor Union organize the San'ya annual Summer Festival and engage in similar activities for local residents. CTIC organizes the annual International Day in April at the St. Mary's Cathedral in Tokyo, where it brings Japanese and different foreigners together for social gatherings. The Kobayashi International Clinic, which has its office inside an apartment complex, initially encountered resentment from Japanese building residents, even receiving two letters from residents expressing concerns that foreigners visiting the clinic might rape female residents. Relations improved after group members began to participate in activities with building residents and to promote multicultural understanding.[54] These activities by immigrant rights NGOs help foster trust between illegal foreigners and Japanese. As has been shown elsewhere, greater trust among residents allows the state to function more effectively as a democracy.[55]

Some immigrant rights NGOs have also created other civic groups. PACEM, for example, established the Filipino Desk and Latin Desk. The Kalabaw-no-kai, Mizula, and SOL helped found Saalaa. Āyus created the HIV/AIDS: Network on Supporting Migrant Labors and the Buddhist NGO Network, among others. This cross-institutional breeding allows these support groups to interact more easily within a network for problem-solving. In trying to solve problems for illegal foreigners, community workers' unions build networks with medical and lawyers' NGOs, Christian groups with women's and

[54] Interview with Kobayashi Yoneyuki.

[55] Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

concerned citizens' NGOs, and women's NGOs with all types of support groups with the exception of labor unions. The concerned citizens' NGOs use the most extensive network.

Japanese activists meet together regularly for staff meetings, seminars, study groups, and conventions. They also hold an annual nation-wide meeting of NGO activists, where they share information about their activities, raise pressing issues, and work together to resolve shared problems. During these meetings, activists eat, bathe, and play together, and they sleep in shared quarters. Such networking and regular interactions between Japanese activists from various groups create a warm atmosphere and a sense of shared purpose - specifically, a sense that there are others who share similar visions and act to fulfill those visions through their day-to-day activities. In this critical sense, they create shared meanings associated with their respective activities. This emergent solidarity is not bound up with the institutional structure of specific associations, which again tend to be relatively ephemeral, dissolving after their tasks are complete. Rather, it arises out of a shared commitment to egalitarian ideals that are in tension with existing Japanese law and policy.

Out of activists' shared experiences in helping illegal foreigners has emerged a critical reflection about Japan's national identity and ultimately a larger social and political movement for structural change in Japan, as well as in the capitalist world more generally. 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."[56] SMJ members explain that Japan's people are not only Japanese, but also Koreans, migrant workers, and ethnic minorities. Therefore, they "pledge to struggle

[56] Interview with Yamagishi Motoko of SOL, April 1, 1998.

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."[57] Christian groups, particularly the National Christian Council in Japan (NCC/J), locate the foundation of Japanese ideas of racial superiority and discrimination in the imperial system and call for its abolition in order to create a society that is based on racial equality. Assisting foreigners also strengthens the NCC/J's longstanding campaign against the popular deification of the Japanese emperor, which provided the foundation for Japanese racial superiority.[58] Thus, the NCC/J pursues this struggle through its Foreign Workers Issues Committee, challenging the traditional concept of racial superiority of the Japanese people and introducing the idea that all humans are equal (as children of God).[59]

The devoted Christian and woman activist, Matsui Yayori, and her Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center set up the Migrant Women Worker's Research and Action Committee to prepare for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Its report states: "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."[60] Generally, women's groups try to educate the Japanese public on the idea that prostitution is a severe form of human rights violation against women. Many Japanese men do not consider buying a woman to be an immoral or shameful transaction.[61] Information on buying prostitutes, such as advertisements for massage parlors or

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[57] National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers,

[58] National Christian Council in Japan, "The Salt of the Earth," (Internal Document of the NCC/J, 1993).

[59] Interview with Rev. Otsu Kenichi of the NCC/J, April 10, 1998.

[60] Migrant Women Worker's Research and Action Committee, ed., "NGO's Report on the Situation of Foreign Migrant Women in Japan and Strategies for Improvement," (Tokyo: The Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers, 1995).

[61] Group to Think with Men About Prostitute, *Baishun ni tai suru dansei ishiki chosa* [Survey Study of Men Attitudes Toward Prostitution] (Tokyo: Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, 1998).

"soaplands," often appear in Japanese weekly magazines and evening newspapers, which are widely read by businessmen on commuter trains.[62] To challenge this dominant male attitude, the Friends of Thai Women Association took legal action against the Japanese publishing company Data House for its 1994 publication of the *Thai Prostitution Handbook* [*Tai Baishun Dokuhon*] written by four male freelance writers. The title, "Thailand Nightzone" in English, markets the publication as a handbook on buying women in Thailand. It provides names and locations of local massage parlors and brothels in Bangkok and Chiangmai – accompanied by pictures of women on almost every page. It also gives instructions on how to take a taxi or bicycle rickshaw to these places. It sold more than 10,000 copies during the first year following its publication. Viewing the publication of such a book as not only promoting buying prostitutes in Thailand, but also violating and humiliating all women, the group launched a protest against the publisher and the four authors. After Data House published a revised edition in 1995 that contained degrading remarks about the group and women's rights in general, they took the publisher to court and won. For the Saalaa women's shelter, its ultimate goal is "to build a society that no one needs shelter."[63] These activists realize that solving problems for illegal foreign workers involves working to change and to improve Japanese society.

Some foreigner support groups possess more global and ambitious goals. Members at the Kalabaw-no-kai, for example, have 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

[62] Yoko Yoshida, "Why Do Men Buy Women?" *Women Asia* 21:3 (October 1997), pp. 26-28.
[63] Interview with Fukushima Yuriko of Saalaa, March 17, 1998.

> structural exploitation of our world by capital. Though not intended, those endeavors have made up the special character of our organization.[64]

The women's shelter HELP also expresses a more general commitment to "strive against the problems associated with the internationalization of prostitution and to eliminate the underlying structure of violence."[65] Similarly, JNATIP views human trafficking as "a transnational organized crime that knows no boundaries…Underlying the issue of trafficking is problems such as the economic disparities between sending and receiving countries, migrant labor and globalization." [66] The group believes that the human trafficking business is built and thrives on the exploitation of the aspirations of people who seek a better life in a different land. Most women's groups acknowledge that these global problems may have been exacerbated by Japan, a major destination country for prostitution and the trafficking of persons. In 2004, the JNATIP appealed to Diet members the need for efforts to address the human trafficking problem and aggressively lobbied Diet members for an action plan on counter-trafficking measures. Soon after, special committees on human trafficking were created within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the Democratic Party (DPJ), the Komeito, the Japan Communist Party (JCP), and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). JNATIP members were invited to study groups of these parties, where they provided data on victims of trafficking in persons particularly from Thailand and Colombia and exchanged ideas. In December 2004, the government of Japan adopted an action plan to combat human trafficking and implemented legal changes such as amending the Penal Code to make human trafficking

[64] Ibid., p. 2.
[65] Interview with Oshima Chizuko of HELP, December 2, 1998.
[66] See http://www.jnatip.org/aboutthejnatip.html.

a crime. In October 2005, it then agreed to set up a joint task force to combat human trafficking with the government of Thailand. Here, the JNATIP holds a worldly and ambitious goal of eradicating human trafficking and aiding such victims from all over the world.

CONCLUSION

Illegal democrats engage in pragmatic or problem-solving activities, which entail creativity and improvisation in action. They tend to be highly educated, holding internationalist views and generalized ideologies of social justice and equality. They often come into these groups with prior experience of oppositional politics. In the process of assisting illegal foreigners, these activists come to know well and emphasize with the problems and life experiences of illegals and discover the ways in which these problems intersect with and illuminate broader societal issues. Through promotion of greater civic engagement between Japanese and foreigners and advocacy for social change, illegal democrats advance grassroots democracy in Japan. At the same time, associative activism leads activists to clarify and refine their political concerns with others who share their abstract moral commitments. Out of their shared experiences in helping illegal foreigners has emerged a critical reflection about Japan's national identity and ultimately a larger social and political movement for structural change in Japan, as well as in the capitalist world more generally.

The existence of immigrant rights NGOs who advocate for the protection of illegal foreigners poses a paradox for democratic theory. On the one hand, activists of these institutions are Japanese who represent the interest of a particular foreigner or non-

Japanese group. Moreover, they represent a group of foreigners whose existence in Japan is illegal under Japanese law. As such, these NGOs appear undemocratic in terms of both democratic representation and the upholding of membership rules. On the other hand, they better represent the interests of illegal foreigners and advance public concerns about greater good than do immigrant ethnic associations, as these Japanese activists also participate in greater politics. In this sense, these groups are critical forces for advancing social democracy in Japan.

Table 1: Foreign Workers Supporting Christian NGOs in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Group Name	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Member	Ethnic Groups Served
1	Catholic Tokyo International Center - CTIC	Tokyo	1990	Religious Corp.	300	Filipino, Nikkei Peruvian
2	CTIC - Meguro	Tokyo	2000	Religious Corp.		Filipino, Nikkei Peruvian
3	Society in Solidarity with Foreigners in Japan	Tokyo	1983	Religious Corp.	26	Filipino
4	Christian Coalitions on Refugees and Foreign Migrant Workers - Nankiren	Tokyo	1989	Religious Corp.	37	Filipino, North Korean
5	Yamasato Consulting Office	Tokyo	1988	Religious Corp.	N/A	Chinese, Iranian
6	Society to Struggle Together with Asian Workers in Japan	Tokyo	1989	Religious Corp.	1	Filipino, Korean
7	Kapatiran - Nihon Sei-Ko-Kai	Tokyo	1987	Religious Corp.	40	Filipino
8	Makoto Kaibigan	Tokyo	1990	Religious Corp.		Filipino
9	The Philippines Center	Tokyo	1992	Religious Corp.	N/A	Filipino
10	Pastoral Center for Migrants - PACEM	Kanagawa	2002	Religious Corp.	N/A	Filipino, Korean, Nikkei Peruvian
	Yokohama Diocese: Solidarity Center for Migrants	Kanagawa	1992 -2002	Religious Corp.	N/A	
11	Korean Desk	Kanagawa	1992 -2002	Religious Corp.	N/A	Filipino
12	Philippines Desk	Kanagawa	1994 -2002	Religious Corp.	N/A	Korean
13	Latin Desk	Kanagawa	1994 -2002	Religious Corp.	N/A	Nikkei Peruvian
14	Yokosuka Citizens Group to Think about the Philippines and Japan	Kanagawa	1983	Religious Corp.	N/A	Filipino

Table 2: Community Workers Unions for Foreign Workers in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Group	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Member	Ethnic Groups Served
1	Edogawa Workers' Union	Tokyo	1988 *1984*	Labor Union	**130** *10*	Iranian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi
2	Keihin Union	Tokyo	1992	Labor Union	**80** ***10***	Bangladeshi, Iranian
3	Sumida Union	Tokyo	1991	Labor Union	**70** ***10***	Filipino
4	National Union of General Workers-Tokyo South	Tokyo	1974 *1960*	Labor Union	2,700 *400*	Chinese, (American, European)
5	Foreign Workers Branch of Zentoitsu	Tokyo	1992 *1960*	Labor Union	3,000 *2,000*	Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian
6	Foreign Laborers' Union - FLU	Tokyo	1992 -2001	Labor Union	3,642 *50*	Bangladeshi, Nikkei, Iranian, Pakistani
7	Tokyo Union	Tokyo	1989 *1979*	Labor Union	500 *10*	
8	Japanese Language School Teachers Union	Tokyo		Labor Union	**90** *1*	
9	(Nerima Part-time Workers' Union)	Tokyo	1992	Labor Union		
10	(Toshima Union)	Tokyo	1992	Labor Union	**80**	
11	Fureai Koto Workers' Union	Tokyo	1988	Labor Union	**200** *180*	Bangladeshi, Iranian, Pakistani
12	Hachioji Union	Tokyo	1988 *1984*	Labor Union	**67** *1*	Iranian
13	Santama Joint Labor Union	Tokyo	1991 *1977*	Labor Union	**120** *7*	
14	Hokubu Part-time Workers' Union Former: Kita-ku Community Union	Tokyo	1998 1990	Labor Union	33 *4*	
15	Labor Union of Migrants	Tokyo		Labor Union		
16	BRIGHT International Cooperative Society	Tokyo	1993	Labor Union	6,000	Iranian, Chinese, Pakistani, Filipino
17	Kanagawa City Union	Kanagawa	1990	Labor Union	**586** *230*	Nikkei Peruvian, Korean
18	Yokohama City Union	Kanagawa	1997	Labor Union	133 *10*	Indian, Korean, Bangladeshi
19	Yokohama Workers' Union	Kanagawa	1991 *1986*	Labor Union	**100** *2*	Korean, Chinese

Table 3: Foreign Women Support Groups in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Member	Ethnic Groups Served
1	Asia - Japan Women's Resource Center Former: Women of Asia Association	Tokyo	1995 1977	None	900	Asian Women
2	Friends of Thai Women Association Former: Thai Women's Supporting Group	Tokyo	1991 1989	None	150	Thai
3	Group Akakabu	Tokyo	1992 *1983*	None	20	Thai, Filipina
4	Women's Shelter HELP	Tokyo	1986	Foundation	2,500	Thai, Filipina
5	International Movement Against All Forms of Discriminations and Racism - IMADR	Tokyo	1988	UN NGO	204	Asian Women
6	Kanagawa Women's Space "Mizula"	Kanagawa	1990	NPO *2001*	607	Thai, Filipina
7	Women's Shelter "Saalaa"	Kanagawa	1992	NPO *2003*	700	Thai, Filipina, Chinese, Peruvian
8	Kalakasan	Kanagawa	2002	None	120	Filipina

Table 4: Foreign Workers Supporting Medical NGOs in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Member	Ethnic Groups Served
1	AMDA International Information Center	Tokyo	1991	NPO(2001)	160	Thai, Chinese, Indian, Filipino
2	SHARE	Tokyo	1991 *1983*	NPO(2001)	650	Thai, Filipino, Peruvian
3	Kameido Himawari Clinic	Tokyo	1990	Medical Corporation	1,000	Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Filipino
4	Tokyo English Life Line - TELL Filipino Line	Tokyo		None		Filipino
5	Santama District Occupational Safety and Health Cente	Tokyo	1992 *1985*	None		
6	Tokyo Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center Former: Tokyo East District Occupational Safety and Health Center	Tokyo	1998 1989	NPO(2000)	224	Pakistani, Bangladeshi
7	Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center	Tokyo	1990	None	360	
8	Health Insurance to All Foreigners! Committee	Kanagawa	1990	None		All "illegal" foreigners
9	Esperanza-no-kai	Kanagawa	1993	None	51	Nikkei, Filipino, Indian
10	MF-MASH	Kanagawa	1991	Medical Corporation	6,000	Filipino, Iranian, Korean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi
11	Minatomachi Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Medical Corporation		
12	Jujo-dori Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Medical Corporation		
13	Yokosuka Chuo Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Medical Corporation		
14	Isezaki Women's Clinic	Kanagawa	1995	Medical Corporation		
15	Imai International Clinic	Kanagawa	1995 -1998	Medical Corporation		
16	Kobayashi International Clinic	Kanagawa	1991	Medical Corporation	N/A	Peruvian, Thai, Filipino
17	SABAY	Kanagawa	1993	None	10	Filipina, Thai
18	Kanagawa Occupational Safety and Health Center	Kanagawa	1990 *1980*	Social Corporation	600	Thai, Peruvian
19	MIC Kanagawa	Kanagawa	2002	NPO(2002)	80	All Foreigners

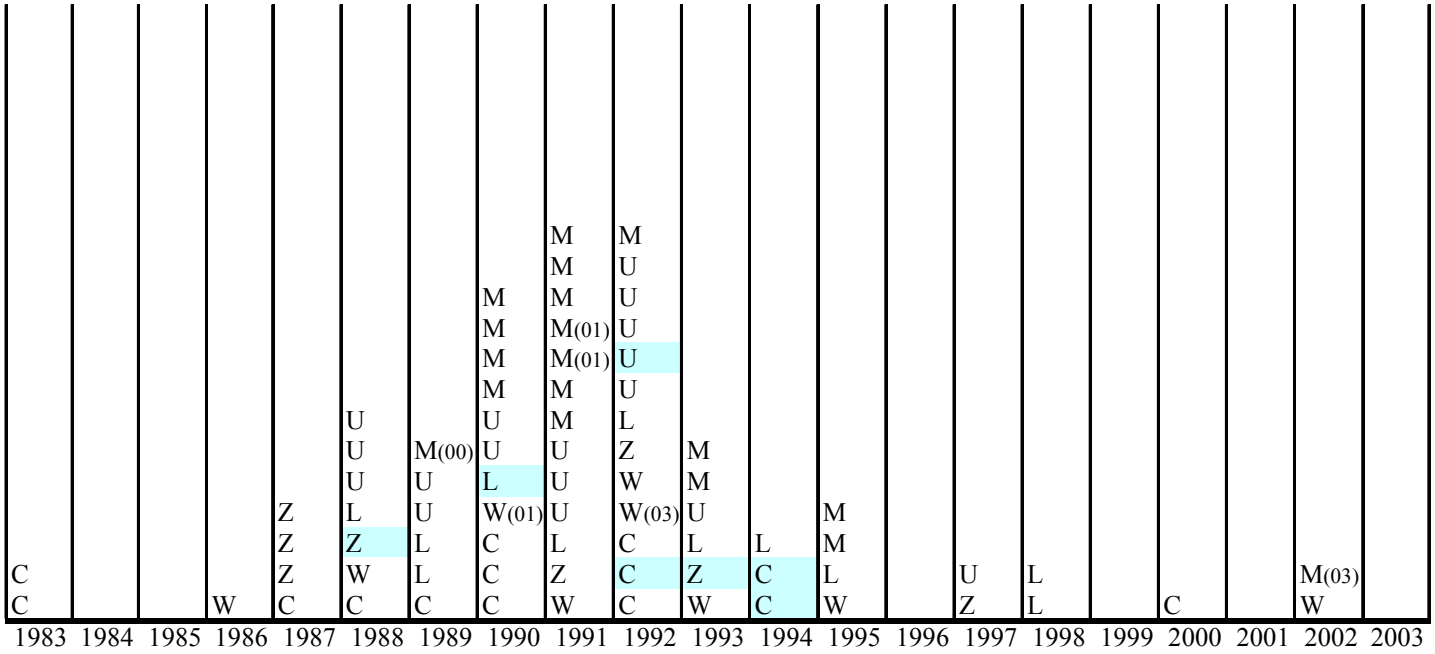
Table 5: Lawyers Support Groups for Foreign Workers in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Member	Ethnic Groups Served
1	Lawyers Association for Foreign Laborers Rights - LAFLR	Tokyo	1990 -2000	Lawyer Association	400 140	Filipino, Chinese, Iranian, Peruvian
2	Immigration Review Task Force	Tokyo	1994	None		Bangladeshi, Thai, Korean
3	Tokyo Bar Association-Center for Protection of Foreigners' Human Rights	Tokyo	1989 *1946*	Lawyer Associatio	80	Chinese
4	Japan Legal Aid Association	Tokyo	1995 *1952*	Lawyer Association	95	Chinese, Iranian, Korean, Filipino
5	Lawyers Association for Foreign Criminal Cases - LAFOCC	Tokyo	1992	None	140	Chinese, Iranian
6	Dai-ichi Tokyo Bar Association-International Human Rights Section	Tokyo	1989	Lawyer Associatio	50	Chinese, Filipino, Iranian, Korean
7	Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association-Human Rights Protection Committee	Tokyo	1993 *1990*	Lawyer Associatio		Chinese, Iranian, Bangladeshi
8	Japan Civil Liberties Union/Foreigners Rights Sub-committee	Tokyo	1988			All foreigners
9	Social Rights Sub-committee	Tokyo	1998			All foreigners
10	Yokohama Bar Association: Legal Consultation for Foreigners	Kanagawa	1991	Lawyer Associatio	30	Chinese, Thai, Peruvian, Korean
11	Foreign Negotiation Administrative Research Group	Kanagawa	1998	Lawyer Associatio	25	Chinese, Peruvian, Korean

Table 6: Foreign Workers Supporting Concerned Citizens Groups in Tokyo and Kanagawa

No.	Name of Support Group	Location	Year Began	Legal Status	Members	Ethnic Groups Served
1	Ohta Citizen's Network for Peoples' Togetherness - OC Net	Tokyo	1992	None	50	Pakistani, Bangladeshi
2	INOKEN Former: Shibuya-Harajuku Group to Gain Life and Rights	Tokyo	1993 -1998	None		Iranian
3	Call Network	Tokyo	1988 -1995	None		
4	Asian Peoples Friendship Society (APFS)	Tokyo	1987	None	1,700	Bangladeshi, Pakistani
5	National Network for Solidarity with Migrant Workers Former: Forum on Asian Immigrant Workers	Tokyo	1997 1987	None	120	All foreigners
6	Forum on Kanagawa's Foreign Workers Problems	Tokyo	1997	None		
7	Kalabaw-no-Kai	Kanagawa	1987	None	300	Bangladeshi, Pakistani
8	Sagamihara Solidarity with Foreign Workers	Kanagawa	1991	None		

Table 7: Year of Establishment for Foreigners Support Groups



Sample Size (n) = 78

Note: C = Christian NGO
U = Community Workers Union
W = Women Shelter/NGO
L = Lawyers Association NGO
M = Medical Support Groups
Z = Concerned Citizens NGO
( ) = year incorporated as NPO
NGO that no longer exists

Table 8: Starting Age of Staffs and Volunteers of Support Groups

F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
							9B								
							8L								
						*U	*U								
					5U	2L	1M		1L						
					1M	0Ug	2M		2L						
					4U	*C	4U		7U						
			6U	4U	*U	1Z	1U		1U						
			9U	4L/W	3U	5Z	1U		*L						
		5U	8U	2Z	1U	*N/C	1L		*L						
		6L	4U	1M/Z	8U	5Z	*L	*U	*L						
		*W	6L	7C	3M/Z	*W	0M	*W	*L		*L				
		6Z	6L	8Z	7Zg	*W	1W	2W/C	8M		*U				
		7C	7M/Z	9W	2C	3W	0Z	*C	*C		6M				
		3W	5Z	4W	7Z	6Z/C	1Z	4C/U	*C		5Z				
		9W	2M/Z	5W	7Z	*W	1Zg	1W	0C	9Wr	1Z				
9Z		7Z	0C	5Z	*Z	5W	6C	2W	*Z	0W	4Z	5Z			
10		20		30		40		50		60		70		80	

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