

1: Ethnic issues in Japan - Wikipedia

Based on original research, Japan's Minorities provides a clear historical introduction to the formation of individual minorities, followed by an analysis of the contemporary situation.

The most recent estimate places the number lower at 1.2 million. Though in decline, it still holds that position in with an estimated 1.2 million. The commonly held view that the population of Japan is in line for a sharp decline is backed up by the numbers. Based on the projections by the United Nations visible in the graph below, the downturn will continue, and possibly accelerate. During the period, the population of Japan declined by thousand 0. It declined for the first time since the Population Census was begun in 1950. Japan Demographics Unlike many other countries around the world today, the population of Japan appears largely homogenous with the final population statistics comprised of a 99.8% Japanese. In addition, there is a very small proportion of foreign workers living here, largely made up of Koreans, Chinese, Peruvians and Brazilians. The largest native ethnic group in Japan is the Yamato people, although large minority groups include the indigenous Ryukyuan and Ainu peoples. The country has traditionally rejected the need to recognize ethnic differences in Japan, and former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso once described the country as one of "one nation, one civilization, one language, one culture and one race. The number of elderly people aged 65 or older accounts for 23.5% of the population. While 5 decades ago there were 12 workers for every retiree, there will be an equal 1:1 ratio by 2025. This is one of any demographics problems Japan must address. The difference between rising death rates and lower birth rates is also clearly a factor with low fertility rates among women shouldering part of the blame. Factors in suicides in the country include social pressure, depression and unemployment, and the National Police Agency found that suicides linked to job loss increased 15% in 2013. There was a suicide in Japan every 15 minutes, with close to 33,000 reported in 2013. Luckily, suicide rates have been on the decline for three consecutive years. This is just one of the many problems Japan will need to control to see its population and economy grow into the future. The Future of Japan Overall, Japan has the highest life expectancy in the world even though it is expected to fall slightly in the near future. However, with low birth rates, the population is rapidly aging but in 2013, the country announced its first significant birth rate increase in many years, so could the predictions be false? Incentives to have more children are also being announced, but as a whole, the country is just starting to feel the effects of a post-war baby boom, many of whom are now nearing the end of their years. Slowing population growth and an aging population are creating more than a headache for the island nation, as this problem is shrinking its pool of taxable citizens, causing the social welfare costs to skyrocket, and has led to Japan becoming the most indebted industrial nation with public debt that is double its economy. Japan Population History By the approximate time of the Meiji Restoration, Tokyo Japan had a population of just over a half of a million residents, which tripled in size in only 30 years to over 1.5 million individuals. The total estimated population of the time was already well over 33 million residents as well. The strong growth of this country is evident even from the start of national censuses, which were officially began in 1868 and every 5 years after. Components of Population Change One birth every 31 seconds One death every 23 seconds One net migrant every 11 minutes Net loss of one person every 2 minutes.

2: Still a way to go for Japanese minorities | East Asia Forum

They are now Japan's largest minority group, with million living in Okinawa and , living in other areas of Japan. [45] The Okinawan language, the most widely spoken Ryukyuan language, is related to Japanese, the two being in the Japonic languages.

Women actors were banned from kabuki theatre performances and, in turn, effeminate male performers took on the roles of women. Such actors maintained their dress both inside and outside of the theater. It was widely believed, at the time, that only men could really know what beauty in a woman looked like. Moreover, if a man acted like a woman, dressed like a woman and took on the social roles of a woman, he was simply socialized as one. The latter is a result of how Japan conceptualized gender and sexuality in terms of adopted social roles. As Japan becomes more westernized there is growing concern for the treatment of the sexual and gender minorities. Buddhism came to Japan from China by way of Korea during the Kofun period to Because Buddhist monks lived on steep mountains isolated within their own societies, they developed their own sexual customs. In fact, such behavior was so common in Japan that documentation of same sex relationships dates back over a thousand years. During the Edo period, for instance, male-female sexual relations were important to secure offspring and social status; however, male-male sexual relations, particularly amongst the Samurai , were viewed as an intricate part of male socialization. Such relationships established an unquestionable acceptance of same-sex practices and were not restricted to men. During the 16th century, medieval women gained new-found security as wives within virilocal systems, in contrast to the insecurity of Heian-period wives in uxorilocal and wifevisiting arrangements where women were easily abandoned by their spouses. This change was significant because it allowed women to establish more prominent positions within the household through which they were able to exert more influence. In turn, this allowed a kind of sexual liberation for many women. In the Meiji period, same-sex practices were considered personal preferences. Gay people were originally dropped during the first draft of the policy, but after facing pressure from the public, Non-Governmental Organizations NGOs and queer activist groups, the council eventually pledged to safeguard the human rights of gay people. Furthermore, awareness and education amongst Japanese people, specifically pertaining to LGBT issues has improved and information is now readily available. In the past, society often ignored queer lifestyles, thus interpreting their sexual and gender expressions as a disease. Now, with the influx of LGBT magazines, research, interviews, case studies, auto-biographies, journals and activism, more people have a relatively accepting and respectful attitude towards queers, their life-styles and choices. The availability of literature, information and formal representation of queer voices has helped many young Japanese to identify themselves with sexual minority groups. More importantly, awareness has opened a mode of communication between mainstream Japanese society and LGBT people in Japan. It would be incorrect to say that Japanese LGBT people do not face difficulties and that they only enjoy a life of comfort without any societal prejudice or discrimination. For instance, many men in contemporary Japanese society express their sexual attraction for other men; however they do so with a low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence. The extensive information on queer life-styles has helped to change this and now gays are more comfortable with their sexual orientation. In Japan became the first country in the world to elect an openly transgender man to a public office when Tomoya Hosoda was elected as a councillor for the city of Iruma. Many LGBT people do not feel comfortable discussing their problems with their families. While awareness amongst Japanese society has helped queer people to express their identities, societal restrictions prevent queer people from living freely and contently in regards to employment and public accommodations. Furthermore, the lack of clinical psychologists versed in understanding queer identities does not help the advancement for social acceptance. Issues such as old-age, same-sex partnership laws, marriage, adoption and welfare systems are all challenges that sexual-minority groups now face. Such challenges will need to be acknowledged by Japanese leaders before any positive societal changes can successfully occur. Homosexual practice is also found among the Samurai aristocracy in part because of the heavy influence that Buddhism had on their culture specifically during the early stages of the Edo period Cultural restraints[edit] The current

social restraints on personal expression and employment opportunities related to being queer in Japan present a modern challenge. As a represented minority in a country where mainstream conformity is promoted and preferred, queers in Japan are ostracized and stereotyped by society; however they are commonly portrayed by media components. The media presents queers with same-sex desire as people who are transgender or transsexual. However, as representations of homosexuality are concerned, only those that are noticeable, i. These forces press for a common expression of self that likely would not exist if social systems allowed for their personal expression. Along with this suppression, the lack of private space restricts the expression of feelings and self identity during times of growth, which in turn restrains attempts at finding love in the queer community. Further national government influence unofficially restricts employment opportunities to those who remain in the closet. Consequently it should not be sanctioned in modern society. Furthermore, many Japanese organizations are incorrectly informed on queer issues which restrain and influence performance reports and promotional possibilities.

3: Japanese minorities? | Yahoo Answers

One of the most salient issues facing minorities and indigenous peoples in Japan is hate speech and hate crime. Persistent xenophobic sentiment is widely embedded in societal attitudes, and reflected, for instance, in 'Japanese only' signs still posted by some hotels and restaurants.

Here we can examine the contradictions and consequences of this discourse. Examining contemporary Japan from this perspective offers many insights about identity, ideology, race, ethnicity and the narrative of homogeneity. *The Illusion of Homogeneity*, edited by Michael Weiner. Routledge, 1st edition, pp. She traces the evolution of the Chinese migrant community, but focuses on how recent migrants have leveraged their background and skills to embrace transnational life strategies. They are not just inert targets for Japanese discrimination bemoaning their plight. Between 1950 and 1958, Chinese became Japanese citizens while as of there were 1.5 million Chinese permanent residents, most gaining this status since 1958. Permanent residency is preferred to citizenship because it offers the advantages of both countries. Instead, they turn their Chinese background into an asset, creating and exploiting profitable niches in the transnational economy. In recent months, nikkeijin, mostly Brazilians of Japanese ancestry, have been swelling the ranks of unemployed. This is the tragic end of a story for many that began with optimism, but has descended into disappointment and recriminations. Takeyuki Tsuda explains that nearly 1 million Brazilian-Japanese came to Japan because the government made it easy for them to do so since by creating special visas without work restrictions for ancestral returnees. Officials created this side-door because of acute labor shortages, especially for unskilled workers, and acted on the assumption that Japanese blood would trump Brazilian culture. Nikkeijin held similarly unrealistic expectations that confronted the reality of discrimination and marginalization in Japan. Proud of their ethnic background and ancestral homeland, many have been disappointed to discover dingy factories, shabby towns and miserable living conditions. Nikkeijin suffer from fragmented identities. At home they are an elite ethnic group while in Japan they are stigmatized for being more Brazilian than Japanese. Ironically, here they serve as ambassadors of a Brazilian culture they looked down on back in Brazil. Tsuda observes that many are first time samba dancers in festivals staged here and few know the proper dance steps or how to make the proper costumes. Even if their performances would be ridiculed back home, in Japan samba enables an assertion of a Brazilian identity that has flowered only after migrating here. Japanese told Tsuda they feel more comfortable with the nikkeijin than ethnic Koreans, but still harbor prejudices. They are also criticized for lacking a strong work ethic and company loyalty. Their children are assimilating, but he thinks they will need to mask their identity if they hope to enjoy social mobility.

4: Is Japan really racist? - Japan Today

Based on original research, Japan's Minorities provides a clear historical introduction to the formation of individual minorities, followed by an analysis of the contemporary situation. This second edition identifies and explores the six principal minority groups in Japan: the Ainu, the Burakumin, the Chinese, the Koreans, the Nikkeijin and the Okinawans.

Other notable minorities in Japan include Brazilians and Filipinos. The first large influx of such foreigners occurred in the 1950s, when the Japanese government adopted a policy to give scholarships to large numbers of foreign students to study at Japanese universities. In addition, as the Japanese economy grew quickly in the 1960s, a sizable number of Westerners began coming to Japan. Many found jobs as English conversation teachers, but others were employed in various professional fields such as finance and business. Although some have become permanent residents or even naturalized citizens, they are generally perceived as short-term visitors and treated as outsiders of Japanese society. Although this policy has been decelerated in recent years, many of these individuals continue to live in Japan, some in ethnic enclaves near their workplaces. Many people from Southeast Asia particularly Vietnam and the Philippines and Southwest Asia and Iran also entered Japan during this time, making foreigners as a group a more visible minority in Japan. The TBS television series *Smile* is about Bito Hayakawa who was born to a Japanese mother and Filipino father, and struggled to overcome the difficulties faced as a mixed race child. The main concerns of the latter groups are often related to their legal status, a public perception of criminal activity, and general discrimination associated with being non-Japanese. Like the Karafuto Koreans but unlike the Ainu, they were thus not included in the evacuation of Japanese nationals after the Soviet invasion in 1945. Some Nivkhs and Uilta who served in the Imperial Japanese Army were held in Soviet work camps; after court cases in the late 1950s and 1960s, they were recognised as Japanese nationals and thus permitted to migrate to Japan. There are a few Creole people in the Bonin Islands. Without this protection and status, these Kurds who have fled from Turkey due to persecution are generally living in destitution, with no education and having no legal residency status. This was exemplified in an editorial titled *Datsu-A Ron*, which advocated that Japan treat other Asians as other western empires treat them. A vicious pogrom resulted in the deaths of at least 3 Koreans, and the imprisonment of 26. Attacks against Western foreigners and their Japanese friends by nationalist citizens, rose in the 1930s under the influence of Japanese military-political doctrines in the Showa period, after a long build-up starting in the Meiji period when only a few samurai die-hards did not accept foreigners in Japan. This applied particularly to Americans and British; in Manchukuo at the same period xenophobic attacks were carried out against Chinese and other non-Japanese. Because of the low importance placed on assimilating minorities in Japan, laws regarding ethnic matters receive low priority in the legislative process. However, Japan does not have civil rights legislation which prohibits or penalizes discriminatory activities committed by citizens, businesses, or non-governmental organizations. Attempts have been made in the Diet to enact human rights legislation. In 1994, a draft was submitted to the House of Representatives, but did not reach a vote. Another issue which has been publicly debated but has not received much legislative attention is whether to allow permanent residents to vote in local legislatures. Currently, the Japanese government does not issue work permits unless it can be demonstrated that the person has certain skills which cannot be provided by locals. Access to housing and other services[edit] A handful of apartments, motels, night clubs, brothels, sex parlours and public baths in Japan have put up signs stating that foreigners are not allowed, or that they must be accompanied by a Japanese person to enter. For example, in 1994, a Korean woman who attempted to rent a room was refused because she was not a Japanese citizen. She filed a discrimination lawsuit, and she won in Japanese court. Organizers of the service said they hope to eradicate the racism that prevents foreigners, particularly Non-Westerners, from renting apartments since there are currently no laws in Japan that ban discrimination. Geller of University of Tokyo reported, in 1994, that it was extremely rare for them to be given tenure. Crime in Japan As in other countries, foreigners sometimes do work that is not allowed by their visas, or overstay the terms of their visas. Their employment tends to be concentrated in fields where most Japanese are not able to or no longer wish to work. The total number of crimes committed in the same year by Japanese was 1,000 cases.

The percentage of foreign nationals in all arrestees charged in penal code crimes was about 2. While the percentage of foreign nationals among all arrestees charged in cases involving robbery or burglary was around 5. Is Public Safety Really Deteriorating? He suggested, for example, that including visa violations in crime statistics is misleading. He also said that the crime rate in Tokyo is based on reported rather than actual crimes.

5: Ethnicity in Japan

Like other Diet members, all he had heard of was the sole Ainu Diet member in Japanese history, the late Shigeru Kayano. Kayano's son, Shiro Kayano, is among the most prominent Ainu fighting to change the attitude of Tokyo's leadership.

The construction of race in Japan conflates race, ethnicity, language, culture, class, and citizenship. Minorities in Japan lack some or all of the aforementioned traits: After reviewing scholarship that analyzes the meaning of race in Japan, I briefly describe the major minority groups: Introduction When thinking about nations that claim racial homogeneity, Japan may be one of the first countries that come to mind. Since the s, when the myth of Japanese homogeneity and uniqueness reached its peak Yoshino , the hegemonic image of Japanese society outside and arguably inside of Japan, has been of an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically homogeneous place. While Japan may be more homogeneous relative to places such as the United States, this does not mean that Japan lacks racial or cultural diversity. Rather, minority populations have existed in Japan for centuries and continue to be studied by scholars from a variety of disciplines around the world. Minorities in Japan continue to struggle for social inclusion and political and economic equality. How these struggles play out, however, differs greatly depending on how they have been constructed as minorities, what rights they have been denied, and how they have been marginalized. The majority of academic work in English critically analyzing the construction of racial homogeneity and minorities in Japan has been published since the s. Continued publications in the form of edited volumes demonstrate interest in research and teaching in this area; for those new to the study of Japan, these resources provide samplings of work on minorities in Japan Weiner , ; race, ethnicity, and migration in Japan Douglass and Roberts ; Weiner , and Japanese culture and society, including discussions of minorities and diversity in Japan Bestor et al. This academic position, that Japan is not homogeneous, has become a major discourse in the study of Japan and can also contribute to the global and comparative study of race and ethnicity. This article will present an overview of the literature in English on racial and other minorities in Japan. In Japan, the concept of Japaneseness includes ideas of race but also conflates them with other characteristics, such as culture, citizenship, and language. The particular history of Japan has led to racial meanings that are in some ways similar to places such as the United States, but in other ways are significantly different. Race in Japan The introduction of the western concept of race and its inclusion in mainstream Japanese thinking is usually traced back to the late 19th century when Yukichi Fukuzawa published *Account of the Countries of the World Sekai Kunizukushi* in . Subsequent conceptions of race in Japan paralleled western notions of the subcategorizability of the human race, also including Social Darwinist ideas about different races representing different stages of civilization Morris-Suzuki , 85-86. The construction of Japanese as a race developed within larger contexts of imperialism and nation-building in the late 19th century. As Japan was modernizing in the late s and early s, it was looking to western nations as models that were more highly industrialized and had more powerful militaries. Europeans and Americans, in particular, had developed nation-states that had become empires. In doing so, they also asserted their superiority over groups such as the indigenous Ainu and Okinawans Siddle , as well as other Asians as a way to position themselves higher in the developmental racial hierarchy. Perceiving the human population to be comprised of subgroups of biologically different races helped to legitimize imperial conquests and global inequalities that ensued. While Japanese leaders wanted to compete in the modern world along with western nations that were taking colonies where they could, there was also a fear that if Japan did not become a colonizer itself, it could possibly become one of the colonized. Japanese continue to locate themselves racially in two ways: In this configuration, Japanese are grouped together with other people in the geographic area known as Asia. Domestically within Japanese society, the construction of Japanese as its own race is more common, as the focus is on the majority Japanese juxtaposed against people who are indigenous such as Ainu , or migrants such as resident Koreans, Chinese, or more recent foreign workers. In this perspective, Japanese are distinct from other Asians; other Asians are seen as different races the Japanese race versus the Chinese race, the Korean race, etc. Japanese national identity has been constructed as both multiracial and monoracial,

fluctuating over time. Most notably, during the period of the Japanese Empire from the late 19th to the mid-20th centuries, the Japanese government adopted assimilationist policies as a strategy for integrating the various nations it colonized. It was after the dissolution of the Japanese Empire, especially since the 1980s that the myth of Japanese homogeneity has become more dominant in shaping Japanese national identity see Yoshino. Japanese is both a racial and an ethnic category in Japan. In contrast to the US continent where it is predominantly an ethnic category that the group itself uses to assert an identity different from others, in Japan this designation is acknowledged and utilized by mainstream society and has normative connotations. That is, as the majority group in Japan, Japanese is an unmarked category. Foreigners are the marked, minority group. In other words, the meaning shifts according to the context; sometimes it refers to ideas of culture and ancestry, while other times it implies the hierarchical ordering of groups of people. The term *jinshu* is more commonly translated as race, and tends to refer to the non-Japanese races, or to the idea of race that has been imported to Japan by sociologists and scientists see Minamikawa. The difference between the English concepts of race and ethnicity are that ethnicity implies claims to shared ancestry, shared culture, and shared history Cornell and Hartmann not necessarily implying hierarchical relations, while race acknowledges a system of inequality based on racial categories assumed to be reflective of biological differences Omi and Winant. *Minzoku* and *jinshu* do not easily translate or correlate to the English-based concepts of ethnicity and race. The Japanese government does not collect demographic information on race and ethnicity. The government does keep track of people by citizenship, so data on foreign residents are readily available see Table 1. However, as discussed below, there are a number of different kinds of minorities in Japan, many of whom are Japanese citizens. Identifying minority groups in Japan and understanding on what characteristics their minority status is predicated upon illuminates the structure of Japanese society. Registered foreigners by nationality Total 2., China, Korea, Brazil, Philippines, Peru 57, U. Japanese-ness and foreignness in Japan: Sugimoto has pointed to various characteristics that define Japanese-ness: Japanese-ness also conflates race and ethnicity with notions of the state and nation in contemporary Japan Lie; Sidle. In other words, Japanese citizenship is racialized in Japan. Legal citizenship in Japan is based on the principle of *jus sanguinis* Kashiwazaki. That is, it is passed on through parents and is not a birthright. So even if one is born and raised in Japan, that does not make one a Japanese citizen. To become a Japanese citizen, one must have at least one parent who is a Japanese national, or must naturalize her or himself. While the indigenous populations of Ainu in northern Japan and Okinawans in southern Japan are all considered Japanese citizens, they are seen as culturally and linguistically distinct from Japanese. Tessa Morris-Suzuki explains how as Japan developed as a modern nation state, Chinese and European influences shaped its changing relationships with Ainu and Okinawans. From the late 19th century, contact with Europeans gave Japanese a different view of international relations. Instead of multiple degrees of foreignness, from this period of exposure to European imperialism, Japanese developed a view of a single, linear frontier distinguishing one nation from another Morris-Suzuki. Within the boundary of Japan, Ainu and Okinawans became enveloped. These views certainly shaped the sometimes contradictory views of race in Japan that became more explicit from the late 19th century. Japanese-ness includes notions of culture and behavior, as well as language ability. To be considered mainstream Japanese, a fluent command of the Japanese language is also necessary. There are different accents and dialects depending on the region of the country. Rather, they are simply perceived to be a subset of, and differentiated from mainstream Japanese. As discussed below, Japanese Brazilians have become a minority population in Japan, due to their large numbers, their linguistic and cultural differences, and their class position as primarily unskilled workers in Japan. In what follows, I review work on the major minority groups in Japan. I begin with the two indigenous populations of Ainu and Okinawans, then move on to Burakumin, a minority group originally constructed based on class differences. Next I look at Zainichi Koreans, the largest foreign resident population, then at foreign workers more generally, and Japanese Brazilians, a group of foreign workers that are distinguished by the ethnic background that they share with majority Japanese in Japan. I end by looking at mixed race Japanese, a growing segment of Japanese society, then conclude with final thoughts. Ainu The Ainu are an indigenous population that historically inhabited the northernmost part of the area now known as Japan. Ainu language and culture are distinct from Japanese language and culture, though most Ainu are now assimilated

into Japanese society linguistically and culturally. Due to the way in which Ainu lands were colonized and continue to be enveloped by the Japanese state, Ainu are all Japanese citizens. From the late 19th and early 20th centuries, deeply influenced by radical social movements in Japan and abroad, there has been a resurgence of Ainu activism. Similar to other indigenous rights and cultural nationalist movements, this political activism has been tied to a reclaiming of cultural heritage. Despite previously denying the existence of minorities in Japan, in 2008, just before the G8 summit was held in Hokkaido and put Japan in the global political spotlight, the Japanese government officially recognized Ainu as an indigenous population. Historically, Ainu were ethnically and phenotypically different from mainstream Japanese—described as hairier and taller—but more than a century of assimilation policies and intermarriage with Japanese have made Ainu less physically distinct. As a continued effect of their geographic and economic displacement, Ainu overall have a lower standard of living and lower average level of education than the Japanese population as a whole.

Howell Okinawans Okinawans are another indigenous and colonized population, historically inhabiting the southernmost part of what is now Japan. They are the second largest minority group with a population of approximately 1.5 million. Their situation is different from Ainu, however, because rather than being dispersed and forced to resettle, they have been colonized in the form of a prefecture; Okinawan people and culture are relegated to the level of prefectural or regional difference, similar to other Japanese prefectures with dialects and local foods and customs. This ignores their indigenous differences in language, food, and culture and masks their previous status as a different ethnic group and independent nation. Historically speaking, Okinawans are an indigenous population that has been colonized by Japan. Lie What we now know as Okinawa prefecture, previously known as the Ryukyu Kingdom, has a long and tumultuous history. Kerr Okinawans call themselves Uchinanchuu people in the Okinawan language, and differentiate themselves from the Naichi or Yamatanchuu majority mainland Japanese. With Japanese rule, the area known as Ryukyu was renamed Okinawa. Similar to the Ainu, in recent decades, Okinawans have struggled to have their ethnic and cultural difference acknowledged by mainland Japanese. Before Japanese colonization, Okinawans were clearly a distinct ethnic and national group that had their own language and culture (see Taira, Japanese colonization and assimilation has meant the imposition of Japanese language, education, military, and agricultural practices). Allen, Mainstream constructions of Okinawans as similar to Japanese have posed a challenge to those claiming a differentiated Okinawan identity. While Okinawa is officially part of Japan, it occupies a marginal place. Moreover, the Okinawan islands were the only part of the Japanese archipelago to experience land battles in World War II. Many scholars believe the extent of the devastation of the war in Okinawa was exacerbated by the Japanese perception of Okinawa as expendable (Ikeda). Finally, as a result of US Occupation of Okinawa from 1945 to 1972 (see Allen; Taira), Okinawa continues to carry the burden of hosting a disproportionate amount of the US military forces stationed in Japan.

Burakumin Burakumin are a minority group unique to Japan. Burakumin have been racialized. Brown and experience racism if racism is defined as structural discrimination against a group perceived to be biologically different, i.e. The basis of the perceived biological difference, in this case, is impurity, in terms of the constructed notion of cleanliness. Burakumin are the largest minority group in Japan with an estimated population of between 1.5 million. It is difficult to confirm Burakumin numbers, however, since there are contradictory ways of estimating the population. Meanwhile, the Buraku Liberation League, the largest Buraku social movement organization, counts the population based on ancestry regardless of residence (Bondy). However, despite the reorganization of social classifications, former status as part of an outcast group was recorded in the koseki, or official family registry. Over time, the status labels were taken out of the registries, but as part of the standard information, permanent residence information persists. This information can associate a household with an historically Burakumin neighborhood, effectively institutionalizing this stigmatized status and making it nearly impossible to erase from official family history.

6: Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity - Google Books

This article focuses on Japanese definitions of gender and sexuality, Japanese reactions to queer life, the clash between traditional and contemporary ideas, and the cultural restraints of being queer in Japan.

Though there are changing demographics due to immigration and interracial marriages, minority groups in Japan are considered to be social fringe groups. With the changing population, however, Japan is bound to need to address the complexities and challenges that have been created from a homogenous society. Despite the international hub that Tokyo has become, Japan still retains some of the xenophobia that marked nineteenth century politics. Having had limited relations, mostly with Pacific Rim countries, Japan was relatively isolated until the appearance of Commodore Matthew Perry in the mids, after which some ports were opened for trade. Predating opening ports to foreigners, Japan was mostly secluded. Since then, Japan has continued to open up to and welcome foreigners, but the impacts of the long-standing xenophobic policies still exist. Unlike Western European nations and the United States, the little immigration to Japan has limited changes to Japanese demographics. Since then, Japan still has one of the most uniform ethnicities. The effects of having a homogeneous society implicate many half-Japanese and foreigners alike. Though becoming more discussed, half-Japanese children often grow up between cultures. If they can pass as Japanese, often their educational and social experiences are much more similar. Many biracial children, however, are still impacted in both cultures based on their different phenotype. The expectations for these half-Japanese, many of whom travel to Japan from another home country, are stringently harsh. Many people assume that they will be familiar with both the Japanese language and the Japanese culture despite the fact that many are raised abroad. Though everyday life in Japan is complex for biracial Japanese, the media has largely embraced them. Some of the most popular models and actors in Japan are half-Japanese. Due to a mix of curiosity and the unique phenotypic features, biracial people are becoming more prominent in the media. Talents like Becky and Rola have gained attention because of their ethnicity. Just as complex as the relationship between Japan and biracial Japanese is the relations between Japan and foreigners. There are still practices in Japan that continue to target foreigners. Stereotypes remain in the legislation that discriminate against foreigners. For example, stemming from an older belief that foreigners were more likely to engage in illicit behavior, foreigners are still banned from purchasing a cell phone without a cellular plan. It is not uncommon to hear stories of foreigners who were denied housing based on the fact that they are foreigners. In addition, foreigners are also referred to differently in the Japanese language. While the term *gaijin* has largely been reclaimed by foreigners, the term remains controversial among the Japanese. The intent behind *gaijin* is still debatable, but there is a distinction that the language reflects. With more trade and travel occurring, the number of non-ethnic Japanese is rising. In addition, it is estimated that there are over 20, half-Japanese children born around the world annually. More and more people in Japan, particularly in urban and suburban area, are encountering people of different ethnicities, and with this experience, the stereotypes are slowly being challenged. As Japan encourages foreigners to come, the demographics are expected to continue to change, even at a higher rate than ever before. Discover similar content through these related topics and regions.

7: Koreans - Minority Rights Group

Minorities are no more than 5% of the Japanese population. Minority groups because they are disadvantaged, may justly perceive mainstream Japanese society as being materialistic, always seeking to climb up the ladder.

Some expats have made entire careers writing “ or ranting “ about the problems of discrimination in Japan. So how racist is Japan, really? I grew up in a white, middle-class neighborhood. There were a handful of minorities at my schools, mostly Latino, but I lived my entire life as part of the majority ethnic group. Let me be clear. For the first time in my life, racial differences stopped being something I thought about abstractly and started being something I confronted daily. It got me thinking about the different forms racism takes and how they work in society. Many Japanese make three assumptions about me before even speaking to me. One, I am an American true. Two, I am an English teacher nope. None of these assumptions are particularly terrible, but are nonetheless racial stereotypes. While my experiences with racial profiling in Japan have been relatively benign, things are much more problematic for other groups. Some of the comments made in casual conversation or even in the media about Africans or anyone black, really , other Asians in particular SE Asians and Asians from former Japanese colonies , or minorities within Japan such as the Ainu of Hokkaido, the Ryukyu of Okinawa, ethnic Koreans and the Burakumin betray far more negative stereotypes. There are positive signs that attitudes about race are changing in Japan, though. There is growing recognition that Japan is in fact multi-ethnic. The government reversed its long-held policy of forced assimilation and recognized the Ainu as an indigenous people, and in , it joined the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In a similar case some years ago in Hamamatsu, a court ordered a jewelry shop that refused to serve a Brazilian resident to pay damages, citing the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as the legal standard in the absence of a domestic discrimination law. Most importantly, average Japanese, concerned about the direction their country is taking, are speaking out. General rallies were held in Tokyo and Osaka recently to protest racism and hate speech. Similarly, when an anti-Korean protest was held in Shin-Okubo, a neighborhood with many ethnic Koreans and immigrants, counter-protesters showed up to support their Korean neighbors. However, I think Japan could be doing a lot more to protect minorities and foster a more friendly environment for foreigners. There should be a law banning hate speech. There should be a law banning discrimination, particularly in employment and housing, on the basis of race or nationality. What will ultimately change attitudes in Japan is more discussion, though. Particularly in the media and in education, I would love to see more diversity and more recognition of the presence and contributions of foreigners and minorities in Japan. There are bigots here, just like in every society, but on the whole, people are friendly and open, just lacking in exposure to diversity. Read more stories from RocketNews

8: OHCHR | Minorities

Since then, rising levels of immigration, cultural globalisation and the rise of minority rights movements at home and abroad have helped to change those perceptions and have resulted in some improvements for minority groups in Japan.

Mainly distributed in the major industrial and economic centres of the country, the largest number of Koreans live in Osaka, followed by Tokyo and Hyogo prefectures. Like their counterparts in North and South Korea, most Koreans in Japan speak Korean, although younger Koreans who are second or third generation increasingly speak only Japanese. However, the Government of Japan does not officially consider Koreans or any other group as minorities except for the Ainu people. They consider Koreans the largest group of foreign residents. The political division of Korea between a communist North Korea and now democratic South Korea is mirrored to some degree in the ideological divide between the two main Korean minority organizations in Japan: The distinction between these two minority organizations is more ideological than geographical, however, as Koreans associated with the pro-North or pro-South organization are not necessarily linked by birth to North or South Korea respectively. Both organizations operate private schools in Japan, though the pro-North Chongryon has been more active in this area and is perceived as the more aggressive in maintaining the Korean culture and language and resisting assimilation. Most Korean-language schools are operated by Chongryon rather than Mindan. The majority of Koreans are today thought to be affiliated or sympathize with Mindan although there are no official statistics on this, which is linked to the positive economic and political transformations in South Korea, and interest among younger Koreans in integrating into Japanese society more easily. The worst forms of intolerance and denigration against Koreans have lessened, with an accompanying increase in the number of Zainichi Koreans seeking and obtaining citizenship. Nevertheless, Zainichi Koreans still face a large number of obstacles in their exercise of civil and political rights because of their status in Japanese society as permanent residents rather than citizens. Historical context The presence of such a large number of Koreans in Japan is intrinsically linked to the close and uncomfortable relationship between Korea and Japan in the first half of the last century. Japan occupied Korea from 1910 to 1945, and initially made colonization attempts that led to large numbers of farmers losing their land and becoming a convenient pool of cheap labour. Many were brought to Japan in the 1930s and 1940s as Japan needed to replace its own nationals who were largely engaged in the war effort. While Koreans had been citizens during the occupation period, they would eventually lose Japanese citizenship after World War II. Though more than a million Koreans were to return to Korea, the difficult economic situation there and the looming confrontation between South and North Korea, among other factors, meant that around 1.5 million Koreans remained in Japan. The adoption of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952 brought the end of their right to Japanese citizenship, since they would have had to abandon Korean citizenship in order to be naturalized as Japanese citizens. Most Koreans were not willing to make the necessary break at the time. The situation of the Korean minority in Japan is thus unique: The second half of the 20th century would see Koreans at the receiving end of unfavourable or discriminatory treatment linked either to their position as non-citizens or because of long-standing prejudice. They were for most of this period not allowed to register their Korean family names which they might have lost previously through the Japanese government forcing the adoption of Japanese-sounding names during the colonial and war periods. Until the 1980s, those who wished to acquire Japanese citizenship had to surmount burdensome or even demeaning requirements, such as having to fingerprint all ten fingers. Because of the prevailing attitude of government authorities who view Japan as a monocultural and monolingual society, members of the Korean minority who wished to maintain their language and culture have for decades taken away their children from state schools and educated them in private schools using Korean as the medium of instruction. Not all of these schools have been recognized and they have received no funding from the Japanese government. In 1987, the Department of Education allowed graduates of Mindan-run Korean schools, but not of Chongryon schools, to sit the university entrance exams. Changing attitudes in Japan towards minorities which came with the 1960s civil rights movement, as well as the normalization of relations between South Korea and Japan, led to further developments which would be more favourable to the Korean minority. Legislation and

regulations were amended to reflect this new status, including allowing them to work in previously inaccessible employment categories, such as teaching in public schools although still only at the lowest levels. While private Korean schools were finally given a form of official recognition at this time, this was still limited and still did not entitle access to universities. From this period a number of trends have affected the size of the Korean minority and their status in Japan. In addition, the number of Koreans who were Special Permanent Residents diminished overall since the mids as many of them obtained Japanese citizenship.

Current issues The absence of comprehensive legislation prohibiting discrimination, especially by private parties, means that the Korean minority is still vulnerable in Japanese society. They have traditionally been victims of intolerance and prejudice in the land which for many has been the only home they know, and the history of abuse against them has led some Koreans to hide their identity. One of the continuing contentious issues for Koreans in Japan is education. The Japanese government in made graduates from most international schools and foreign schools “ as well as Japanese schools “ eligible for the university entrance examination. This has not been extended to most Korean schools with the exception of a small number of Mindan-run schools , meaning that Korean students from these schools remain seriously disadvantaged. There also exists other forms of continuing discrimination against Korean schools, with donations to foreign schools being tax-exempt, but not those to Korean schools. Since most Korean schools are thus still not recognized as regular schools, children attending these schools will also risk discrimination in employment. The government of Japan also excludes Korean schools from the high school tuition-waiver programme, which was introduced by the government in April , although the programme covered foreign schools authorized as miscellaneous schools. Many local governments have cancelled financial support for Korean schools as well. Although some municipal governments have in recent years provided some level of support and provided subsidies to Korean schools, this still remains low and sparse. Despite comments and criticisms from international bodies, there has been no movement from educational authorities in recent years to establish state schools teaching in Korean “ a prospect which remains unlikely in light of the pervasive view of Japan being ethnically homogenous. Some members of the Korean minority continue to face the difficulty of being unable to access the pension system and the health insurance scheme in Japan. As a result of legislative changes in and , some foreign residents “ and in particular Koreans “ are still unable to access the two schemes because at the time the Japanese government did not provide remedial measures for those falling between gaps in the law “ mainly elderly Korean residents of a certain age group or disabled residents who do not have Japanese citizenship. The government has not even conducted research on the number and the situation facing Zainichi Koreans living without pensions. Another persistent issue facing Koreans in Japan is hate speech, a phenomenon which critics have accused the Japanese government of failing to meaningfully combat. Racist groups have held numerous rallies and anti-Korean demonstrations, particularly in Tokyo and Osaka, where they have used loudspeakers to blast hate speech and sought to intimidate.

9: Japanese Ethnic Groups - The Translation Company

Japan is a multiethnic society largely in denial about its diversity. Here we can examine the contradictions and consequences of this discourse. This second edition published a dozen years after.

Shintoism and Buddhism, also Protestantism and Roman Catholicism Minority communities include Burakumin estimates range widely between million people , Chinese more than , and Koreans around 1 million in total, out of which , are foreign nationals holding permanent residency. One of the most salient issues facing minorities and indigenous peoples in Japan is hate speech and hate crime. In recent years right-wing nationalists have used Nazi imagery as well as various racist slurs during anti-Chinese and anti-Korean demonstrations in Tokyo. Multiple municipalities followed suit with similar proposals, although there were concerns that hate speech legislation would be difficult to pass due to free speech concerns. Even in Hokkaido, where the majority are based, most Ainu have lower economic status than non-Ainu Hokkaido residents. Nonetheless, while they may be largely symbolic, gestures towards protecting Ainu culture have occurred. The government has sought to establish a Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony in Shiraoi, Hokkaido, which is scheduled to be completed in when the Tokyo Olympic Games are held. July saw the repatriation of Ainu human remains to their village of origin from Hokkaido University. Their culture and traditional lands are threatened by the denial of their right to free and informed participation in policy-making, especially concerning the expansion of US military bases in Okinawa – an issue that continues to be perceived as a form of discrimination against the indigenous population. Ongoing construction of a new US base in Henoko, situated in a bay rich in biodiversity including the critically endangered Okinawan dugong, is a particularly contentious issue in Okinawan politics today. Japan has not created a specific government agency to deal with Burakumin issues. Although they are not subject to official discrimination, Burakumin still face deep-seated prejudice, especially in marriage and employment, with some companies referring to lists of family names and neighbourhoods to discriminate against Burakumin. There exist persistent socioeconomic gaps between the Burakumin and the rest of the population and also a lack of information and indicators to assess the impact of the measures implemented by Japan upon the termination of the Dowa Special Measures in , including measures to counter discrimination against the Burakumin. For the Ainu, it meant the formal incorporation of their land which was formally renamed Hokkaido, and the eradication of traditional Ainu ownership of land, which was offered to Japanese settlers who colonized the Ainu Mosir Land of the Ainu , marginalising the indigenous Ainu. The absence of comprehensive human rights legislation, including against discrimination by public and private parties in particular is a problem for many minorities and indigenous peoples, as such legislation is quite often one of the few effective ways to assert and protect their rights and interests. International criticism of this lacuna and increasing efforts and pressure from minority groups and civil society have contributed to a number of attempts after to have the Diet enact greater human rights legislation. Such efforts have received inadequate support among legislators, including within the Liberal Democratic Party which has been in power except for brief periods in and The position of more recent migrants in society is a contested issue in Japan as the country faces an ageing and even declining population, but legislation in areas such as the right to vote for permanent residents and the acquisition of citizenship remain restrictive. Japan continues to have no civil or criminal law against racial discrimination, a key issue for minorities. Such an absence has the effect of enabling discriminatory practices towards migrants as well, particularly migrant women in Japan who are more vulnerable to discrimination and violence.

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