

JAPANESE IMMIGRATION TO PALAU AFTER WORLD WAR II

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1. Purpose and Methods

It is said that about 30,000 Japanese lived in Palau from 1922 to 1945, when the colonial head office "Nanyocho" was set up at Koror, the capital in Palau. After the war almost all Japanese returned to their home country. However according to the Palau National Census, 218 Japanese live in Palau in 1995. This paper aims to make clear the process of this Japanese increase, settlement and the problems they faced. I sent a questionnaire to Japanese living in Palau in October 1995 to clarify these issues. A Japanese association is organized in Palau and the total membership was 95 in January 1995. I mainly distributed my questionnaires to these association members, but I tried to distribute them to non-member Japanese also as much as possible. I have been able to collect answers from the 64 respondents and will describe the results in three parts. (1) the process of their immigration, (2) their present life, (3) their perceptions at the future.

2. Results

(1) Immigration process

According to the results of questionnaire, the first immigrants came in the 1960s. But there weren't many immigrants in the 1960s. There were a few in the 1970s. The number increased little by little from the beginning of the 1980s and increased rapidly since the end of the 1980s (table 1). Respondents 25 to 29 were the most numerous (35.9%) particularly in 1990s than those 30 to 34 (17.2%). Old or middle age immigrants are found since the 1980s (table 2). More than half of the respondents came from Kanto district mainly Tokyo, about 11 % from Kyushu, all of them from Okinawa (table 3).

About 30% of the respondents came for diving work since the latter half of 1980s, about 13% for travel work and 11% for hotel work mainly in 1990s. By contrast, early immigrants came to work in a fishery company, or to do self-supporting work and living in easy circumstances (table 4). Most respondents rely on others of the same company already living in Palau especially in 1990s. However many early immigrants did not have any reliable persons, although some of them could rely on their families (table 5). Immigrants to Palau have increased since 1980s especially the latter half of 1980s. Many of them were in their 20s and came from Tokyo to work in tourist industries such as diving, travel and hotels, relying on their company organization. On the other hand some early immigrants from Okinawa came to work in a fishery company or to live in easy circumstances. Most of them rely on relatives or friends.

(2) Present life

Many Japanese live scattered through Koror, although about a third of them live concentrated in Malakal Island. Therefore, we can say that the tendency of segregation is not marked. More than 40% of spouses of respondents are non-Japanese. In the early stage many spouses were Palauan, and later some Filipinos (table 6). Although respondents are in various occupa-

tions, 64.1% are in tourism. Diving instructor is the most numerous and travel agent next (table 7). More than 60% of the respondents are not satisfied with their present life. This is particularly clear among more recent arrivals. On the contrary respondents who came in the early stage tend to be satisfied with their present life (table 8).

(3) A thought about the future

Forty percent of respondents have not decided yet whether to stay here or go back to Japan in the future. However, 31% hope to return home and 27% hope to stay. The former is numerous among arrivals in recent years and the latter among early settlers (table 9). The main reasons for staying were ease of life, strength of relations to Palau, etc. Reasons for returning home were uneasiness about work and life in Palau, except for respondents sent by companies. About 50% of respondents think negatively about the future of Palau. They point to difficulties of economic independence and reliable consciousness of the people. However, 40% of respondents think positively about the future of this country. They expect Palau to develop as the sightseeing country which utilized the ocean resources (table 10).

Table 1. Ages of Respondents in Migrated Time

Year	Male	Female	Total	Rate
1961~65	4		4	6.3
66~70	3	1	4	6.3
71~75	1		1	1.6
76~80	2	1	3	4.7
81~85	7	1	8	12.5
86~90	13	1	14	21.9
91~95	27	3	30	46.9
Total	57	7	64	100.0

Table 2. Ages of Respondents and Year of Migration

Age	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
15~19			1		1	1.6
20~24		2	2	3(1)	7(1)	10.9
25~29	3	3(1)	4(1)	13(2)	23(4)	35.9
30~34	3(1)	1	2	5	11(1)	17.2
35~39	1		1	3	5	7.8
40~44				1	1	1.6
45~49	1	2	1	1	5	7.8
50~54		2	1	2	5	7.8
55~59		1		1	2	3.1
60~64			1	1	2	3.1
65~69		1(1)	1		2(1)	3.1
Total	8(1)	12(2)	14(1)	30(3)	64(7)	100.0

Note: Figures in bracket indicate the number of females.

Table 3. Respondent's Previous Residence

Places	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
Tohoku		2	1		3	4.7
Kanto	2	7	6	19	34	53.1
Chubu	1			1	2	3.1
Kinki		2		2	4	6.3
Chugoku	1		1		2	3.1
Kyushu	3		1	3	7	10.9
Japan			4	3	7	10.9
Others	1	1	1	2	5	7.8
Total	8	12	14	30	64	100.0

Table 4. Purposes of Immigration to Palau

Purpose	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
Diving work		1	7	11	19	30.2
Work in travel agency		1	1	6	8	12.7
Hotel work		1	2	4	7	11.1
Live in easy circumstances	1	4	1		6	9.5
Do self-employment	2	1		1	4	1.3
Work in trading company	1			3	4	6.3
Work in fishery company	3				3	4.8
Work in restaurant		1	1	1	3	4.8
Look after family	1		1	1	3	4.8
Work of fishery development				3	3	4.8
Work in gas company		1			1	1.6
Missionary work		1			1	1.6
Teach Japanese			1		1	1.6
Subtotal		11	14	30	63	107.0
Unknown		1			1	
Total	8	12	14	30	64	

Table 5. The Persons on Whom Respondents Relied

Relied Person	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate (%)
Company fellow		1	4	19	24	38.1
Family or relative	1	3	2		6	9.5
Japanese friends	1	2		3	6	9.5
Palauan friends	1		1	1	3	4.8
Palauan partner in business	1	1			2	3.2
Persons of organizations		1	1		2	3.2
None	4	3	6	7	20	31.7
Subtotal	8	11	14	30	63	100.0
Unknown		1			1	
Total	8	12	14	30	64	100.0

Table 6. Origin of Spouses

Origin	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate (%)
Japan	2	5	6	16	29	56.9
Palau	6	5	2	1	14	27.5
Philippines		1	3	3	7	13.7
Tanzania				1	1	2.0
Subtotal	8	11	11	21	51	100.0
Single		1	1	7	9	
Unknown			2	2	4	
Total	8	12	14	30	64	

Table 7. Present Occupation

Occupation	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate (%)
Diving instructor			6	9	15	23.4
Travel agency		1	1	8	10	15.6
Manage restaurant	1	3	2		6	9.4
Hotel manager		1	1	3	5	7.8
Cook				3	3	4.7
Manage a gift shop		2			2	3.1
Repair automobile	1	2	1		4	6.3
Trading company				3	3	4.7
Fishery cooperation				3	3	4.7
Manage food shop	2				2	3.1
Fishery	2				2	3.1
Engineer	1				1	1.6
Manage apartment	1				1	1.6
Selling fruits		1			1	1.6
Photographing		1			1	1.6
Missionary		1			1	1.6
Teacher of Japanese			1		1	1.6
Housewife			1		1	1.6
No occupation			1	1	2	3.1
Total	8	12	14	30	64	100.0

Table 8. Degree of Satisfaction with Everyday Life

Degree	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
Being satisfied	5	3	1	6	15	24.6
Moderate	2	2	1	2	7	11.5
Dissatisfied		6	11	22	39	63.9
Subtotal	7	11	13	30	61	100.0
Unknown	1	1	1		3	
Total	8	12	14	30	64	

Table 9. Respondent's Expectations for Their Future

Plan	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
Live on here	6	5	3	3	17	27.4
Return to Japan	1	1	2	15	19	30.6
Not decided yet	1	6	8	10	25	40.3
Other (Live Philippines)				1	1	1.6
Subtotal	8	12	13	29	62	100.0
Unknown			1	1	2	
Total	8	12	14	30	64	

Table 10. Respondent's Opinion on Palau's Future

Opinion	64~70	71~85	86~90	91~95	Total	Rate(%)
Negative Opinion						
Difficulty of economic independence	1		2	4	7	
People's consciousness of reliance	1		3	1	5	
No expectance of development		2		2	4	
Should abolish chiefly system		1		2	3	
Ruled by foreign capital				2	2	
Existence of big anxiety		1			1	
Need long time for development				1	1	
Not good place for long life				1	1	
Subtotal	2	4	5	13	24	49.0
Positive Opinion						
Will develop as tourist country	1	2	3	7	13	
Will develop according to policy		1	1	3	5	
Will change by next generation		1		1	2	
Subtotal	1	4	1	11	20	40.8
Respondent's Hope						
Independence	1	1	1		3	
Develop tourism without big capital				2	2	
Subtotal	1	1	1	2	5	10.2
Total	4	9	10	26	49	100.0
Unknown	4	3	4	4	15	
The Sum Total	8	12	14	30	64	

3. Summary

From the results above we can divide Japanese immigration to Palau into two kinds. The one is individually motivated with various purposes until the first half of 1980s. The other is larger scale migration to work in the tourist industries especially as diving instructors since the end of 1980s. The former integrate themselves into Palauan society but the latter keep themselves outside this society. Consequently we may point out the dual structure of Japanese society in Palau. However, we cannot separate both parts clearly, as the Japanese association includes both under the former's leadership. We may be able to recognize both extinction and continuation in Palauan Japanese society.

4. Reference

TIA BELAU IV-15, 1995 July 15-30.