

Nationality / Citizenship

Here I write my opinion about nationality/citizenship, especially an idea that the nationality/citizenship combine with ones identity.

From a child, sometime I think about my nationality/citizenship. It is because my parents taught me,” You must choose one nationality when you will become twenty years old”. However, later I know this was a miss understanding of my parents of the Japanese nationality law.

Before writing about this issue, here I have to clear the term nationality and citizenship. First I write the difference of nationality and citizenship and second write about the principles of nationality(but it is very complicated and I can't explain it in details).

The difference about two terms, nationality and citizenship, is in my understanding, nationality combines with nation-state but citizenship can use more widely, such as “global citizenship” (I think this is same as “human rights”), therefore it can said that nationality include in citizenship. For this understand from here I use the term dual/multiple “nationality” because the issue what I want to write is combine with the nation-state.

The way to be a citizen of a nation-state or get the nationalities inborn has two principles. One is known as “*jus soli*”; become a citizen by birth depend on territory where he or she was born, and next is known as “*jus sanguinis*”; become a citizen by birth depend on “blood” and for a long time, in many nations, citizenship could be given by father. Japan is the nation of the principle of *jus sanguinis* and before 1984, in marriage couple children follows only father's nationality.

However before 1984, there are two possibilities in Japanese of dual nationality. One is when mother is non-Japanese and her homelands allow to give a nationality to her child, then the child could be dual nationality. Or when the parent's nation use *jus sanguinis* principle and their child give a birth in *jus soli* principle nation, the child could be dual or multiple nationalities. In Japan officially there are no individuals who have dual nationality in law after 22 years old (*de jure*) but in fact there many individuals who held dual nationality after the age(*de facto*).

After 1985 in Japan's new nationality law, it is said the children who have two or more nationality, he or she

must chose one before they become 22 years old (I don't know clear but I here that there were 2 or 3 years of transition, the child who born in international-marriage and father is non-Japanese and born before 1985, and he/she was under 20 could have mother's nationality; Japanese nationality). For this reason, choosing nationality is an issue for some individuals who labeled *Haafu* and in this website; *Die Kreuzungsstelle*.

In my own opinion, for some individual, nationality combines with their identity. For example in such questions, "Where are you from?" "What are you?" involve "Which nationality do you have?" However with my own experiences, "nationality" cannot secure a person's identity, rather it confuse such a person like me.

From a child, I labeled *Haafu* or *Gaijin* and it means I am "non-Japanese". However, I have Japanese nationality and I can say "I'm Japanese". The fact "Japanese" in law and the use of the term "Japanese" in daily life is sometime combine with nationality but sometime it's separate. With this kind of thinking, I became a conclusion that identity can not combine with nationality.

Needless to say the law allows many things and brings many limitations. With such power, the law influence to person's self-definition. For a long time I insist "I'm Japanese" based on having Japanese nationality but it helps nothing.

However there is another type of persons like a mirror of my case. Such persons cannot be recognized as "other" in face but they haven't Japanese nationality. This kind of person is a Korean or Chinese who born and living in Japan.

In nationality I'm Japanese and such the persons are non-Japanese, but in face or hair color I'm non-Japanese and they are Japanese. With this thinking, I doubt or I can't understand such the opinion that makes by an individual who has dual nationality or the parents; "For save my identity, dual nationality must permit from Japanese government" or "For my children's identity the dual nationality must permitted".

Though I recognize dual nationality is useful and many individuals need it in this global age. But I think the request must do by need not by such opinion as "For protecting my identity". I think the chance to have dual nationality must widely open to every individual who move around the globe. Not only the individuals who have dual nationality in born.

Finally, in addition, I give some information about Japanese nationality law about the "choice" of nationality

in Japan.

Officially the Japanese national government or local government office said that the individuals who have two or more nationalities inborn must choose one nationality before the person become 22 years old. However it means not to surrender other nationalities.

In the Japanese nationality law, there is a description about choice and it writes the individual must do the “effort” of surrender. With my understanding, the “choice” means to oath which nationality the individuals want to have. If a person oath that the choosing of Japanese nationality, then the person needs only doing an “effort” to surrender other nationality permanently (of course it can only when the other nation allows dual nationality).

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※ Here I must say I am not the professional of law and please ask to lawyer before chose the nationality.