

SYMPOSIUM: MULTICULTURALISM AND MINORITY RIGHTS

Takashi Narushima

Professor of Law
Designated Principal Manager for CSDP

The Niigata Faculty of Law, under joint auspices with the Law and Political Science Association, held on September 4, 1998 an international symposium entitled "Multiculturalism and Minority Rights". This symposium is a part of our Japan-Canada academic exchange project which is run in cooperation with our three sister-faculties in Canada (those of the University of Alberta, the Queen's University and the University of British Columbia) and by grace of a financial aid by the Government of Canada under the CSDP (Canadian Studies Program Development Grants). The CSDP project has started in 1996 as a four consecutive year project for 1996-1999. Each year's project is carried out under a specific subject-matter and is composed of an intensive lecture series and an international symposium. The subject-matter for the project 1998 was: "Multiculturalism and Minority Rights". This theme was aimed at considering one of the Canadian basic policies (multiculturalism) in relation to minority rights issues. The issue seems to be of great importance for both Canadian and Japanese societies considering that the international community is now becoming more borderless and interdependent. A better way of co-existence might be found through rethinking of multiculturalism from various perspectives. This time, two Canadian guests were invited to participate in the project. After they delivered lectures on each sub-topic under the subject-matter, the above-mentioned symposium was held. In the symposium, another four scholars (two Japanese and two French) participated

as speakers. The participation of the French scholars was realized by grace of a friendly cooperation of the French Constitutional Law Studies Group which holds every year "Seminaire Franco-Japonais" either in France or Japan. Each speaker introduced issues relating to the subject-matter in each country (as shown below). Through a fruitful discussion after the presentations, we could recognize that multiculturalism, even though the notion itself is controversial and its aspects vary from country to country, still remains a key-concept for the three countries represented.

《Presentations》

- (1) "Le Problème des Minorités au Japon"
Ken Hasegawa, Associate Professor, Kogakuin University,
Japan
- (2) "Suffrage for Resident Aliens in Japan"
Tomomi Takasa, Lecturer, Dokkyo University, Japan
- (3) "Multiculturalism and Minority Rights as Mechanisms for
Political Integration in Canada"
Philip Bryden, Associate Professor, University of British
Columbia, Canada
- (4) "The Justiciability of Multiculturalism and Minority Rights
in Canada"
Beverley Baines, Associate Professor, Queen's University,
Canada
- (5) "Le Droit Local en Alsace"
Pierre Eckly, Associate Professor, Robert Schumann Uni-
versity, France
- (6) "La Polynésie Française et la Nouvelle-Calédonie: Autono-
mie ou Indépendence?"
Christophe Chabrot, Researcher, Montpellier I University,
France