ABSTRACT

This article seeks to clarify the circumstances in the process of formation of the first new Chinatown in Japan situated in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, comparing it with the Three Big Chinatowns of Yokohama, Kobe and Nagasaki known as old Chinatowns. For this purpose, the increase in the number of Chinese newcomers in Japan is examined first. This is followed by an analysis of the development of ethnic businesses run by the Chinese newcomers and their relationship with the local Japanese community i.e. the host society. Ikebukuro Chinatown serves as a test case for problems relating to the presence of foreign residents in Japan and the extent to which they can be overcome.