

“KOREAN” SCHOOLS AND ZAINICHI IDENTITY IN JAPAN

Cody Purchase



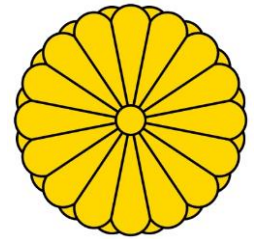
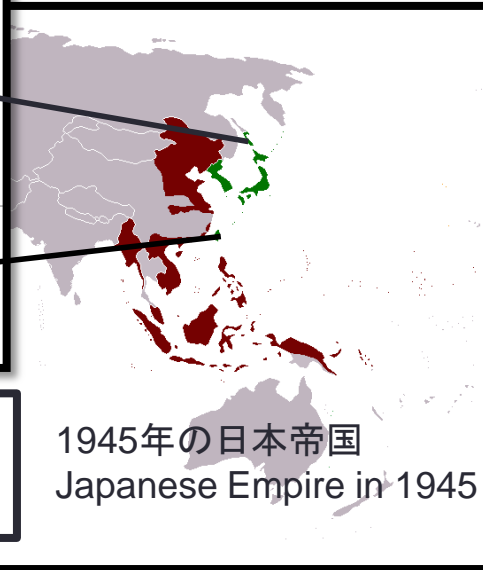
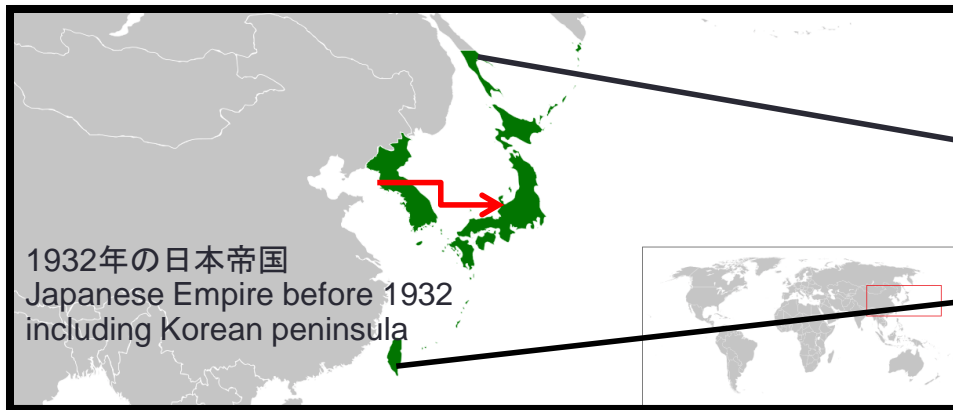
Thesis:

Recent cuts to funding are unconstitutional; action to formalize, equalize, and sustain educational funding is necessary.



Conclusion:

Issue is representative of larger struggle for acceptance of ethnic identities and narratives; recognition of variety within Zainichi identities is essential.



History of “zainichi”

- 2 million Koreans came/were forced to Japan
- Today about 466,000 permanent residents
 - Number shrinks due to “naturalization” and emigration
- Diachronical identity
 - Generational differences
- Loss of any citizenship following WWII
- Zainichi organizations founded “Korean” schools

“ZAINICHI” identity

- Comprised of generations of ethnic Koreans
 - Can be characterized by generational differences
- Associated language unique to demographic
- Hugely varied
 - accept and embrace along spectrum
 - political activism, festivals, pop culture icons
 - denial of, ignorance of
 - “naturalization,” adaptation of/to Japanese names
- Well known in Japan as referring to all ethnic Koreans

朝鮮学校 (chousen gakko)

“Korean School”

- Recent complete funding cuts from national gov't
- Self-determined curriculum and textbooks
 - History, geography, language
 - Unique uniforms
- Classification as vocational school (clause 83)
 - Previously, unofficially supplied with financial assistance from national gov't
- <80 schools established since end of WWII
 - Zainichi child enrollment: public > chousen gakko
 - Numbers decreasing

Exclusion from cost-free education

- Chousen gakko ONLY
- Prevalent reasoning includes
 - Fiscal issue
 - Anti-Japanese curriculum
 - Association with N.Korea
 - “vocational school”
 - Inability to verify curriculum

Why exclusion is unjust

- Subjective assessment of “anti-Japanese” curriculum
- Opinions inform interpretation of law
- Only chousen gakko excluded = clear discrimination
- Three fundamental rules of constitution
 - Democracy
 - Respect of fundamental human rights
 - Pacifism (defense only)
- Support for education does not equal support for N.Korea
- Availability of curriculum through subsidy applications/education licensing
- Status of funding for “international schools” etc.

What chousen gakko can do

- Funding from Zainichi organizations and local governments
- Navigation of historical lessons free of national control
 - Curriculum and textbook freedom of choice
 - Education that includes historical narratives/events
- Foster awareness of identity
 - One's own (zainichi)
 - Of identity diversity within Japan
 - Of issues associated with identity acceptance
- “Same or higher academic ability” [upon graduation from high school, compared with Japanese public graduates]

What if chousen gakko did not exist?

- Possibility of reinforcing discrimination
- Loss of vessel for cultural/historical narrative
- Loss of voice against unjust practices



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Images

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