



CASE STUDY: ANTI-ZAINICHI KOREAN SPEECH IN JAPAN IN CYPER SPACE AND BEYOND

Rina Komiya
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About the author:

Rina Komiya is currently a Ph.D. candidate and conducting research on refugees in Tanzania, Japan, and the United States. She has worked internationally in Japan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Jordan, and Bangladesh for various organizations including international NGOs and UNHCR. While working on global issues, she has also been active in grassroots activities within Japan, starting a volunteer group after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and continuing to contribute to the local community through international and cross-cultural exchange activities. She holds a bachelor's degree in Law from Waseda University, a master's degree in Human Rights from the London School of Economics, and a master's degree (with Distinction) in International Human Rights Law from the University of Oxford.

About this report

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Anti-Zainichi Korean Speech in Japan in Cyber Space and Beyond

Rina Komiya

In this essay, using the Dangerous Speech Framework, I examine speech by the Japan Fist Party (JFP) and its leader Makoto Sakurai, who is a former leader of Zaitokukai (在日特権を許さない市民の会, meaning Association of Citizens against the Special Privileges of the Zainichi). In particular, this essay will analyze three messages in the JFP's political manifesto, which are directed at ethnic Koreans who are permanently resident in Japan, commonly referred to as Zainichi Koreans. In order to understand the social and historical context of the Zainichi Koreans, this essay will first explain historical the background and discrimination against Zainichi Koreans in Japan. After that, I will introduce the above-mentioned three messages by the JFP and argue that although these messages are at a glance moderate compared to the flagrant hate speech of Zaitokukai in the past, they still serve as a dog whistle and can be considered dangerous speech.

1. Social and Historical Context

In order to understand anti-Zainichi Korean speech in Japan, it is critical to understand its social and historical context, as anti-Zainichi Korean speech is closely related to the atrocities committed by colonial Japan on the Korean people before and during World War II.

1) Japanese colonial rule before 1945

Zainichi Koreans are the second-largest ethnic minority group in Japan¹ and trace their roots to when Korea was under Japanese colonial rule. In 1910, Japan annexed Korea and granted Japanese citizenship to Koreans. The following decade saw significant migration from the Korean peninsula to mainland Japan, with many migrating to perform physical labor.

Although it is often argued that Koreans were not *forced* to come to mainland Japan, there have been organized efforts by the Japanese state to encourage their migration. During World War II, labor shortages arising from the conscription of Japanese males for the military led to organized official recruitment of Koreans to work on the mainland. By 1942, the Japanese government extended the provisions of the National Mobilization Law to include the conscription of Korean workers for factories and mines, which included relocation of workers to mainland Japan. By the end of World War II, over 2 million Koreans had relocated to mainland Japan.²

Zainichi Koreans have faced discrimination and violence in mainland Japan since shortly after the annexation of Korea. Negative sentiment toward Zainichi Koreans in Japan emerged due to the unstable economic situation in Japan after World War I during which time Japanese people were afraid that Korean people were stealing jobs from the Japanese.³ One of the earliest and most significant demonstrations of their negative feeling toward Zainichi Korean could be seen from

¹ As of December 2019, Japanese Government Statistics, <https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?lid=000001250236&layout=datalist> (access on 03/12/2020)

² Lee, H.C (2018). *Shokuminchi ka no Chosenjin tachi* (Korean People under the Colony), p. 4

³ Yamada, S. (2011). *Kantō Daishinsaiji no Chosenjin Gyakusatsu to Sonogo – Gyakusatsu no Kokkasekinin to Minsyusekinin* (Massacare of Koreans in Times of Great Kantō Earthquake and after: State Responsibility and Responsibility of People toward the Massacare) Tokyo: Sōshisha

the mass killing after the Great Kantō Earthquake, a magnitude 7.9 earthquake that struck the Kantō area including Tokyo in September 1923. In the aftermath of the quake, false rumors about a “Korean revolt (朝鮮人騒ぎ)” were widespread, including claims that Koreans in Japan were taking advantage of the chaos to poison wells or were carrying bombs to kill Japanese people.⁴ Because of these rumors, approximately 6,000 Korean people in the disaster area were murdered by vigilante groups, police, and soldiers.⁵

2) Surrender of Japan and the status change of Zainichi Koreans

At the end of World War II, Japan relinquished its control of the Korean peninsula, and began reneging on its promises to the Korean workers who had moved to the mainland.⁶ After surrendering and de-colonializing the peninsula, the Japanese government reserved the right to decide whether Koreans could naturalize and remain in Japan – despite having previously granted them Japanese citizenship. While many returned to the peninsula, around 650,000 stayed in Japan due to their already established life and socio-economic tie in Japan, which became the origin of Zainichi Koreans today.⁷ However, the Japanese government was not supportive of those Koreans who decided to remain Japan, and began systematically ostracizing Zainichi Koreans from the rest of the population.

In December 1945, the government took away the right to vote from Zainichi Koreans. In 1947, it implemented the Foreigners Registration Order, which demanded that Zainichi Koreans register as foreigners despite having been granted Japanese citizenship. In August 1949, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida expressed his contempt for Zainichi Koreans in a letter to U.S. General Douglas MacArthur, writing that all Koreans in Japan should be deported because they were not contributing to rebuilding the country and seemed to have an inherent penchant for criminal activity.⁸ In this letter, the Prime Minister claimed that 1 million Koreans lived in Japan and half of them were illegal immigrants.⁹

Finally, in 1952, the Japanese government stripped citizenship from Zainichi Koreans, but the special law known as Law 126 (法 126) was enacted, which allowed Koreans to stay in Japan until their legal status and the period to stay were determined.). Then in 1991, the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, Inter Alia, Those Who Have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace was enacted and Zainichi Koreans received permanent residency in Japan.

⁴ Yamada, S. (2011) Kantodaishinsaiji no Chosenjingyakusatsu to sonogo (Massacre against Koreans at the Time of Great Kantō Earthquake and after) pp.57-62.

⁵ Noh, J. (unknown). The Great Kantō Earthquake, the Korean Massacre and its Aftermath: The Responsibility of the Japanese Government and People BOOK REVIEWS, <https://www.harvard-yenching.org/research/the-great-kanto-earthquake/> (access on 03/12/2020)

⁶ Mun, K. (2009). <Zainichi>, “Kokumin” no Hazama wo Ikite [<Zainichi> , Living in the space between “Nationals”] Kokusai Gengo Bunka Kenkyujo Kiyō [The Journal of Ritsumeikan studies in language and culture] 20 (3), pp.145 - 150

⁷ Ryang, S. (2000). The North Korean homeland of Koreans in Japan, In *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin*, edited by Ryang, Sonia , London: Taylor & Francis, p.33.

⁸ Hayashi, Jiro (2021). Yoshida Sigeru= MacArthur Oufuku Shokan Shu 1945-1951 [Collected Correspondence between Shigeru Yoshida and MacArthur 1945-1951] Tokyo: Kōdansha

⁹ Hayashi, Jiro (2021). Yoshida Sigeru= MacArthur Oufuku Shokan Shu 1945-1951 [Collected Correspondence between Shigeru Yoshida and MacArthur 1945-1951] Tokyo: Kōdansha

3) Continuous discrimination by the government after 1945

Although Zainichi Koreans were given permanent residency and limited welfare support, the Japanese government continued discriminating against them in the area of social security on grounds of their lack of Japanese nationality. For instance, Zainichi Koreans who reached age 60 as of April 1, 1986 and those with disabilities who reached age 20 as of April 1, 1986, were excluded from national pension programs based on their frequently changed legal status between 1952 and 1991, and were never compensated for lost benefits, despite the fact that the National Pension Law does not have nationality clause.¹⁰

In addition, the Japanese government sometimes introduced discriminatory measures against Zainichi Koreans because of the anti-Korean sentiment of Japanese people triggered by political and economic instability in Japan. This is especially clear when relations between Japan and South Korea and/or North Korea worsen. For instance, the Japanese government excluded Korean schools (朝鮮学校、chōsen gakkō) from the high school tuition-waiver program introduced in 2013, while other ethnic schools and international schools were accepted.

4) Discrimination by Japanese people

Unsurprisingly, in addition to systematic government discrimination, Zainichi Koreans have also suffered from discrimination and an anti-Zainichi sentiment from ordinary Japanese people. For instance, in 1970, a Zainichi Korean man sued a famous Japanese company, Hitachi, for firing him on the ground that he used his Japanese common name (this common name is called 通名、Tsumei in Japanese) instead of his legal Korean name when he entered the company.¹¹

Female Zainichi Korean students have also been exposed to severe discrimination and violence after being identified by their wearing of hanbok (national clothes) as a school uniform. Between May and June 1994, there were at least 22 incidents where female students wearing hanbok were attacked with a knives by strangers in the trains or on the streets on their way to Korean school. These attacks happened during times when anti-Zainichi Korean sentiment, especially toward those from North Korea, was increased due to political incidents such as when it was suspected that a Japanese political party had received a donation from the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (one of the main organisations for Zainichi-Koreans, which has close ties to North Korea) and when North Korea launched missiles. Since these incidents, female Korean students do not wear their national clothes to schools.

¹⁰ Lawyers Association of Zainichi Koreans (LAZAK). (2014). Discrimination Against Koreans in Japan: Japan's Violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Shadow Report to the 7th-9th Periodic Reports of Japan, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/JPN/INT_CERD_NGO_JPN_17768_E.pdf (access on 03/12/2020)

¹¹ Among Zainichi Koreans, it is common to have two names: their original Korean name and a Japanese common name (a sort of alias). While this is a common practice among immigrants (to avoid pronunciation difficulties), it has a special historical context for Zainichi Koreans, as they were forced to use the Japanese names during the colonization; their use remains common because it helps people avoid discrimination in their daily lives. Despite this historical context, Hitachi, one of the biggest companies in Japan, fired a Zainichi Korean man without considering such context. After a four-year legal battle, a court ultimately ruled in favor of the Zainichi Korean man.

These are just two well-known examples of the challenges Zainichi Koreans have faced in Japan, and it is easy to find more personal stories of discrimination against Zainichi Koreans. For instance, Masayoshi Son, a Zainichi Korean man who is CEO of Softbank (Japan's second largest publicly traded company, wrote in his memoir that he at one point considered suicide as a result of discrimination he faced from fellow students – as early as kindergarten. He was not alone in this: the suicide rate of Zainichi Koreans is higher than Japan's national average and higher than other foreign national populations.¹² Son intentionally stopped using his Japanese common name when he established a company in Japan, as a show of support and solidarity for fellow Zainichi Koreans who suffer from discrimination.¹³

5) Overall sentiment by Japanese people against non-Japanese and the uniqueness of Zainichi Koreans

Zainichi Koreans are not the only targets of discrimination in Japan – a country that is not generally immigrant-friendly. The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) 2019 ranks Japan below average and significantly behind similarly developed countries, giving them the status of “integration denied” (one step below “equality on paper”).¹⁴ The authors found that “potential victims of ethnic, racial, religious or nationality discrimination have little chance to access justice in Japan,” and offers fewer discrimination protections than 49 of the 52 countries in the index (ranking above only Indonesia and India).¹⁵

In many countries, discrimination and exclusionism against foreigners is targeted at newly arrived immigrants with different backgrounds, often driven by economic concerns and/or a perceived threat to collective identity. However, Zainichi Koreans have been in Japan for over 75 years and are highly integrated into Japanese society. In general, they are no longer considered threatening to Japanese jobs, since they often own independent businesses due to discrimination in the job market¹⁶. In order to explain how discrimination occurs in such a context, a well-known scholar on social studies, Naoto Higuchi argues that that exclusionism in Japan is not rooted in negative stereotypes against foreigners per se, or job competition, but rather historical relations among neighboring countries.¹⁷ In fact, Higuchi argues that not many exclusionists in Zaitokukai (the Association of Citizens against the Special Privileges of the Zainichi) had exclusionist thoughts from the beginning, but many had doubts on whether the historical facts about the atrocities that

¹² Kim, T. (2017). Zainichi Korean to Seishin Shogai [Zainichi Koreans and Mental Disorders] Kyoto: Koyo Shobo. Although no statistics about the suicide rate of Zainichi Koreans is available, Kim presumes that it is because of the Zainichi Korean's high suicide rate that makes the suicide rate of all Koreans (including both Zainichi Koreans and Korean new comers) quite high compared to other nationalities.

¹³ Nikkei Business (2019). Son Masayoshi Shi “Jizatsu Shiyouka to Omougurai Nayanda. Sabetsu wa Tsurai [Masayoshi Son “I Struggled So Much that I Thought About Killing Myself. Discrimination is Painful”], <https://business.nikkei.com/atcl/seminar/19/00059/052400004/> (access on 03/12/2020)

¹⁴ The Migrant Integration Policy Index (2020) Japan <https://www.mipex.eu/japan> (access on 03/12/2020)

¹⁵ The Migrant Integration Policy Index (2020) Japan <https://www.mipex.eu/japan> (access on 03/12/2020)

¹⁶ Higuchi, N. (2014). Nihongata Haigai Shugi – Zaitokukai, Gaikokujin Sanseiken, Higashi Ajia Chiseigaku [Japanese Style Xenophobia: Zaitokukai, Foreigners' Right to Participate in Politics, and East Asian Geopolitics] Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shupankai, p.58-59.

¹⁷ Higuchi, N. (2014). Nihongata Haigai Shugi – Zaitokukai, Gaikokujin Sanseiken, Higashi Ajia Chiseigaku [Japanese Style Xenophobia: Zaitokukai, Foreigners' Right to Participate in Politics, and East Asian Geopolitics] Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shupankai, p. 204

Japan committed that the learned at schools were accurate.¹⁸ The sentiment that Japan did not do anything so notorious during the War was further developed by particular events such as the 2002 FIFA World Cup organized by Japan and Korea and the news regarding the abduction of Japanese citizens and nuclear missiles by North Korea, which contributed to increase negative impressions against Korea and North Korea. For rightists, what Japan did before and during the war was not as bad as was reported and the stories were exaggerated. Consequently, they feel it is unfair that Japan has been paying “debts” to Zainichi Koreans until now, claiming that Korea and North Korea are both bad.

Zainichi Koreans are also targeted because of current affairs. The backlash against Zainichi Koreans becomes especially harsh when the Korean government and/or Korean people bring up the issues such as compensation for war victims and “comfort women”¹⁹ that remind Japanese people about its dark side in the past. As such, a tension between Japan and neighboring countries still exists due to the atrocities in the past, and those relations affect the anti-Zainichi sentiment in Japan.

6) Emergence of Zaitokukai (在特会)

Zaitokukai is the most prominent anti-Zainichi rightist group, which sees special treatments directed to Zainichi Korean as privileges and contests their status that has been granted. Although the founder of the group, Makoto Sakurai, has been quite active on the internet since 2002 as a person who opposed Koreans in general, the group was set up by him in 2005 when he came to know about the lawsuit regarding Zainichi Koreans who were omitted from the national pension scheme. His propaganda was widely shared on the internet using social media such as YouTube, Twitter, blogs, and Niconico Douga (a Japanese video-sharing service on the web). Four years after its establishment, Zaitokukai had more than 10,000 members. As the group was only active online in the beginning, people underestimated the offline impact that Zaitokukai would have.

However, Zaitokukai eventually started to organize aggressive street protests beyond cyber space. They started calling themselves, “Acting Conservative (行動する保守)” and criticized other conservative political organizations for not taking any action. For them, most rightist/conservative groups are groups of well-off intellectuals who make political statements, but are not fully engaged in political change.²⁰ They protested in Korean towns and in front of Korean schools in Japan, using targeted and provocative speech such as “There are no good Koreans. Kill all Koreans,” “Go back to the Peninsula,” “Cockroach Koreans, get out!”

The most prominent incident was a protest in front of a pro-Pyongyang Korean school in Kyoto in 2009. Some members of Zaitokukai were convicted for hate speech and other criminal offenses, and the school won a civil suit against Zaitokukai. Sakurai himself received a recommendation

¹⁸ Higuchi, N. (2014). *Nihongata Haigai Shugi – Zaitokukai, Gaikokujin Sanseiken, Higashi Ajia Chiseigaku* [Japanese Style Xenophobia: Zaitokukai, Foreigners' Right to Participate in Politics, and East Asian Geopolitics] Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shupankai, p. 115

¹⁹ Women and girls forced into sexual slavery mainly from occupied countries, including Korea, China, and the Philippines by the Imperial Japanese Army before and during World War II, or who participated in the earlier program of voluntary prostitution.

²⁰ Their sentiment toward other conservative rightist can be examined from the interviews with members in Yasuda's book.

from the Human Rights Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, not to spread hate speech in 2015, which was a response to his public speeches against Zainichi Korean in front of the Korea University between 2008 and 2011.²¹

After the criminal conviction against members of Zaitokukai, Sakurai left the group and set up a political party, the Japan First party (JFP). This is a unique movement of the Japanese internet rightists that the country has not seen before. Sakurai had succeeded already in founding the JFP in 2016, and even ran for the Tokyo gubernatorial elections in 2017 and in 2020. Looking at how many people voted for Sakurai in 2020, Sakurai's popularity in Japan seems to be the same even after Zaitokukai stopped aggressive protests directly targeting Zainichi Koreans.²² Sakurai's books on Zainichi Koreans are among the best sellers in Japan, providing a platform for potential further election. In addition, Sakurai created a YouTube channel that has 105,000 subscribers whose number of subscribers is more than the subscribers of the main political party of Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party. At the 2020 election of the Tokyo governor, he finished 5th out of 22 candidates with 178,000 votes, which are 60,000 more votes than he received during the previous election.

While Sakurai did not win the Tokyo gubernatorial elections, the shift of Zaitokukai to the political arena needs special attention. In fact, one of the Party members, Yoko Harada, was successfully elected for a member of the City Council of Naka City in 2019.

2. DS Framework

Below, I analyze three messages by the Japan First Party (JFP) using the Dangerous Speech (DS) Framework.

Fist Message

Japanese original text: 入管特例法を廃止し、一部の外国人に対する優遇処置を撤廃します。²³

English translation: "We will abolish the Special Act on the Immigration Control, and all the privileges accorded to a particular group of foreigners."

Second Message

Japanese original text: 多くの在日韓国・朝鮮人が、合法的に日本人に成りすますための「偽名」として、通名を悪用していることは看過できません。²⁴ (中略) 一部メディア

²¹ The Huffington Post (2015). "Heito Supiichi Chushi wo" Houmushou ga Hatsukankoku, Zaitokukai Zendaihyou Sakurai Makoto shi ni [The Ministry of Justice's First Recommendation to Makoto Sakurai, Former Head of the Zaitokukai, to Stop Hate Speech] https://www.huffingtonpost.jp/2015/12/22/no-hate-zaitokukai_n_8860116.html (accessed on 16/01/2021). This was the first time that the Ministry of Justice issued a recommendation on hate speech, although this recommendation does not have any legal binding.

²² Sakurai received 178,000 votes which was 1.5 times more than the election in 2017 and marked 5th among the candidates.

²³ The Japan First Party (2020). Seisaku [Policy] <https://japan-first.net/policy/> (accessed on 10/06/2020)

²⁴ Sakurai, M. (2017). Nihon Daiichitou Sengen [The Japan First Party Manifesto] Tokyo: Seirindou Bijyuaru, p. 1061

は、在日韓国・朝鮮人による犯罪だけは国籍と本名を隠して通名で報道して、社会的制裁を特別に免除させているのです。²⁵

English translation: “It cannot be overlooked that many Zainichi Koreans living in Japan are abusing their Tsumei as “pseudonyms” to legally impersonate Japanese people. (.....) Some media only report crimes committed by Koreans living in Japan under Tsumei, hiding their nationality and real names, and giving Zanichi Koreans and Zainichi North Koreans a special exemption from the social sanctions.”

Third Message

Japanese original text: 朝鮮人が帰国も帰化もせずに、その後 60 年以上日本に居座って生活保護を食い物にし続けるなんてことは、さすがに想定できなくて当然立ったのかもしれない。²⁶ (中略) 「生活保護を停止されたら生きていけない」と訴える外国人もいるかも知れませんが、生活保護を受給できず餓死や自殺をしている日本人が実際に出ているのです。²⁷

English translation: “It may be natural to assume that the government of Japan could not predict that Koreans would not be able to return to their home country or naturalize and stay in Japan for more than 60 years and continue to prey on the welfare system. (.....) There may be some foreigners who complain that they cannot live if their welfare is suspended, but there are actually Japanese who have starved to death or committed suicide because they cannot receive welfare.”

Compared to the flagrant hate speech of Zaitokukai on the street in the past such as “Kill all Koreans including both good ones and bad ones”, these campaign promises and statements of the JFP are moderate. Sakurai’s point has always been that the Japanese government should prioritize Japanese people, which by itself seems to make sense, as foreign nationals cannot always fully enjoy rights in the same ways as citizens of that state.

However, the statements need careful examination. In the first message, although it is not explicitly stated that the “particular group of foreigners” is Zainichi Koreans, it is implied, as Zaitokukai often refers to the “privileges” received by Zainichi Koreans. In addition, those who know the historical context can easily understand that the “Special Act on the Immigration Control” that the statement mentions is actually the “Act on Those Who Have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan” that dealt with Zainichi Koreans. As such, this statement is carefully worded to avoid the risk of being accused as racists while still signaling to their supporters that it is about Zainichi Koreans. Thus, JFP’s statements have a certain effect of “dog whistle.”²⁸

The choice of the word “privilege” implies that these special treatments are an advantage (that Japanese people do not have) that lifts up the status of Zainichi Koreans. However, as explained

²⁵ Sakurai, M. (2017). Nihon Daiichitō Sengen [The Japan First Party Manifesto] Tokyo: Seirindou Bijyuaru, p.1096

²⁶ Sakurai, M. (2017). Nihon Daiichitō Sengen [The Japan First Party Manifesto] Tokyo: Seirindou Bijyuaru, p. 979

²⁷ Sakurai, M. (2017). Nihon Daiichitō Sengen [The Japan First Party Manifesto] Tokyo: Seirindou Bijyuaru, p. 979

²⁸ This refers to a coded language in messaging to obtain support from a particular group without provoking opposition.

above, the special considerations that are unique to Zainichi Koreans are not given to provide privilege, but are based on the colonial context that they were once Japanese citizens and the Japanese government itself asked or forced them to come to the mainland Japan as a labor force. The Party further states in their manifesto that Zainichi Koreans are prioritized in receiving social welfare while many Japanese are starving and committing suicide as seen from the third message. However, while it is true that there are Zainichi Koreans who receive social welfare, it merely reflects the fact that the community has historically suffered systematic discrimination in Japan, which has increased vulnerabilities and poverty levels. In fact, the statistics from 1951 show that, 61% of Zainichi Koreans were unemployed, and those who had jobs were day laborers or selling items illegally, such as self-produced Korean alcohol.²⁹ The official statement of the Japanese government also confirms that that social welfare is not provided as a way to prioritize particular nationalities. However, this word “privilege” is tactically used to provoke a feeling of unfairness among Japanese people.

Another point to examine in speech of the JFP is how different kinds of racism are complementing to each other. While in many countries nowadays, modern racism can be seen more in the realm of discrimination than traditional racism,³⁰ speeches against Zainichi Koreans by the JFP contain both modern racism and traditional racism. In the context of Zainichi Koreans, speeches about privileges can be considered as modern racism and speeches about Zainichi Korean’s inferiority such as high crime rate and laziness, is seen as traditional racism. In the speeches of the JFP, they not only have both components, but those components also complement to each other. For instance, speeches about Tsumeï, thought to be one of the privileges,³¹ and Zainichi Koreans’ crime rate are complementing to each other since they claim that the use of Tsumeï is to cover up the crimes. While traditional racism nowadays seems to be ridiculous without any scientific proof, by combining traditional racism with modern racism as such, their claim based on traditional racism is strengthened and it may become easier for people to believe their speeches.

1) Speaker

While the above-mentioned statements are coming from the JFP, the reality is that it is that the JFP is a one-man party created by Sakurai. Different from other extremists, Sakurai is seen as an intellectual, as he has published several books – one of his best-selling books received more than 680 reviews in Amazon, which shows how popular his writing is. In addition, establishing a political party, which has not committed any violent protest so far, may add more validity to his speech than how he conveyed messages through Zaitokukai before. Considering that he received

²⁹ Shinozaki, H. (1955). *Zainichi Chosenjin Undo* [Zainichi Koreans Movement] Tokyo: Reibunsha, cited in Kim, T. (2017). *Zainichi Korean to Seishin Shogai* [Zainichi Koreans and Mental Disorders] Kyoto: Kōyō Shobō, p. 103

³⁰ Traditional racism is based on the prejudice that a particular race is inferior in terms of moral and skills. Such racism against black people is refereed and studied as Old-fashioned Racism, Redneck Racism, and Jim Crow Racism. After mid-20th century, such racism has no longer accepted in society because the society came to know what the Nazi government did was based on such racism and equality among races was claimed via the 1960s civil rights movement. (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay, 1986) Instead of traditional racism, modern racism, or symbolic racism appeared in the society which is based on ideas that 1) prejudice and discrimination against black people no longer exist, 2) the gap between black people and white people is based on the laziness of black people, 3) black people are protesting discrimination and over-demanding despite such fact and 4) black people are receiving more privileges than they ought to receive.

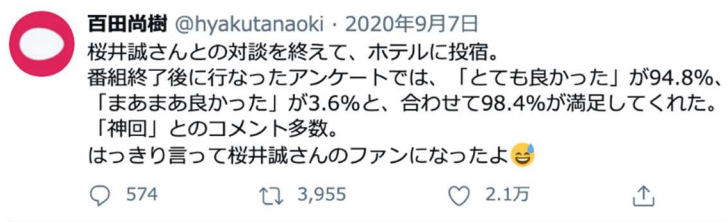
³¹ Tsumeï is not unique to Zainichi Koreans but anti-Zainichi Koreans speech considers that the use of Japanese names as Tsumeï is allowed to Zainichi Koreans only, which is considered as a privilege by anti-Zainichi supporters.

178,000 votes which was 1.5 times more than the election in 2017 and finished 5th among 22 candidates, his influence among the wider public cannot be underestimated.

2) Second Speaker

When Sakurai was active as a leader of Zaitokukai, initially some rightist groups showed interest in him and invited him to be on the popular right-wing internet TV such as Channel Sakura. However, most of them began to distance themselves from him after Zaitokukai staged violent protests. Rather, even a strong rightist politician such as Toru Hashimoto, then-Mayor of Osaka City, scolded Sakurai during a live TV interview in 2014 demanding that he stop discriminating against people with different backgrounds. Zaitokukai's channel on Niconico Douga was closed by an administrator in 2015. As such, there was no particular supporter to what Sakurai at Zaitokukai was claiming.

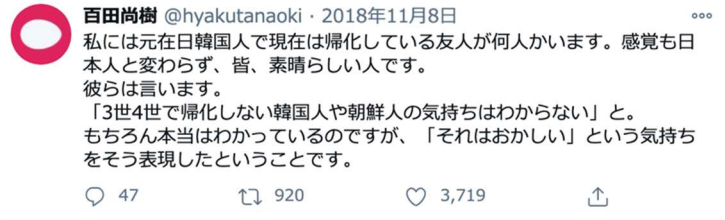
However, in 2020, Japanese best-selling novelist Naoki Hyakuta, who has 450,000 followers on Twitter, approached Sakurai and had a face-to-face interview via his online channel in September and December 2020 to discuss mainly COVID-19 and the US presidential election. He tweeted on 7th September that he became a fan of Sakurai. The tweet received 21,000 likes and 3,955 retweets.



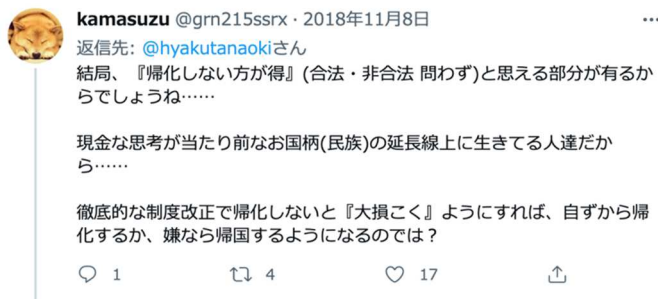
(English translation: Arriving at the hotel after having an interview with Ms. Makoto Sakurai. According to the survey after the program, “very good” is 94.8%, “good” was 3.6%, making a total of 98.4% satisfied. Many comments say “incredible episode.” To say it clearly, I became a fan of Mr. Makoto Sakurai.)

Hyakuta is known as a strong right-wing conservative who is a regular guest on popular right-wing online channels such as Toranomon TV. He is also known as a big supporter of Shinzo Abe, the former prime minister of Japan, and Hyakuta and Abe co-published a book about Japan in 2013.

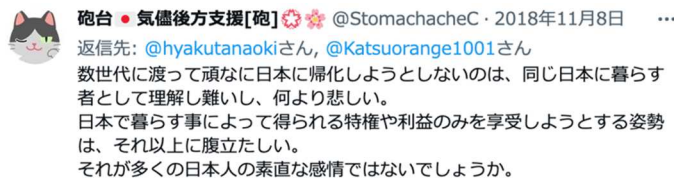
Hyakuta's anti-Zainichi sentiment can be seen from one tweet in 2018 when he said that “I have several ex-Zainichi Korean friends who are now naturalized. Their sense is not different from that of the Japanese and all of them are wonderful. They say ‘I don't understand the feeling of South Koreans and North Koreans who don't naturalize themselves even though they are third or fourth generation.’ Of course, they know but they expressed the feeling of 《that's wrong》 in such a way.”



While this tweet is high contextualized and difficult to understand what it suggests, some of the replies to this tweet like below suggest that the reason why third and fourth generation Zainichi Koreans do not naturalize themselves is because of the “privileges” they have.



‘In the end, I think it's because there is a part of them that think it's more beneficial to not naturalize (whether legal or illegal). Because they live in the extension of the country (nation) where mercenary is the normIf we could introduce stricter law reform and make it 《great loss》 in case they do not naturalize, they would naturalize or go back home if they don't like it’



‘As a person who lives in Japan, I find it hard to understand and most of all, I find it sad that several generations have stubbornly refused to naturalize in Japan. Moreover, I feel angry that they want to enjoy only the privileges and benefits that come with living in Japan. I think this is the honest feeling of many Japanese people.’

As such, Hyakuta’s tweet contains anti-Zainichi sentiment by suggesting that holding their status as Zainichi Koreans have some unjustifiable benefits. In this sense, there are some similarities between Hyakuta’s tweet and Sakurai’s point of view (although Sakurai may disagree that Zainichi Koreans should be naturalized).

By featuring Sakurai on his channel and tweeting that he is a fan of Sakurai, Hyakuta has the potential to play a role of a second speaker to Sakurai’s speeches against Zainichi Koreans, even though he himself has not made any strong anti-Zainichi Korean comments apart from the tweet

above. In fact, one review posted on Amazon for Sakurai's book on Korea called "Era of Hate for Korea (大嫌韓時代)," which criticizes Korea as well as Zainichi Koreans, states that this book was highly spoken of by Hyakuta. How Hyakuta, who is much more famous in Japan than Sakurai, is going to play a role as a second speaker needs close examination.

3) Audience

While Sakurai's speeches are mainly public as his campaigns are done via YouTube and other websites, there seem to be two types of people who echo Sakurai's speeches; a) those who do not trust the media and/or history they learned in schools and b) those who do not support the main political parties.

a) Audience who does not trust the media and/ or history

According to Taka, who has analyzed anti-Zainichi Korean tweets, words that are related to media, traditional racism and issues on historical perspectives between Japan and Korea have an affinity to each other.³² He analyses that those tweets claim that the truth about Korean crimes and inferiority (both are traditional racism) as well as the truth of historical issues are hidden by the media. He states that there is also a discourse that because Japanese people are too generous regarding the privileges of Zainichi Koreans, the media is now controlled by Zainichi Koreans.³³ According to Yasuda who interviewed Zaitokukai members, many of them had a feeling that newspapers, magazines, and TV are hiding the truth from them and are controlled by leftists.³⁴ As an alternative to main media, those people tend to trust online channels such as 2 channel (an anonymous Japanese textboard which was used as a platform for ultra-rightist).

Sakurai, who primarily spreads his anti-Zainichi Korean messages online is appealing to audiences who do not trust mainstream media. In fact, many supporters of Sakurai consider that the reason why the media is not broadcasting Sakurai's speeches is because the media is hiding the truth, while the true reason for that is probably because Sakurai's speeches contain hate and misinformation. For them, Sakurai can be seen as a savior who spreads the truth about Zainichi Koreans. Sakurai himself often attacks media at his press conferences, almost like a show or a performance, stating that media is not fulfilling their duties to tell the truth to the public. In addition, Sakurai often condemns journalists, politicians, and human rights activists, who stand against his speeches, as extreme leftists or questions their nationality. For him, anybody who is against those who express anti-Zainichi Korean sentiment is betraying Japan, and he assumes that they are extreme leftist or Zainichi Koreans. Such an idea echoes with the analysis of Taka that people believe that media is controlled by Zainichi Koreans. Such performance is well received by not only those who already have an anti-Zainichi Korean sentiment but also those who do not believe in media for whatever reasons.

In addition, historical revisionism can be easily connected to the strong historical sense of victimhood among Japanese people. Even though Japan committed atrocities and colonized other Asian countries before and during World War II, the use of atomic bombs in Hiroshima and

³² Taka, F. (2015). *Reishizumu wo Kaibousuru: Zainichi Korean eno Henken to Intaanetto* [Dissecting Racism: Prejudice against Zainichi Koreans and the Internet] Tokyo: Keisoshobō, p. 45

³³ Taka, F. (2015). *Reishizumu wo Kaibousuru: Zainichi Korean eno Henken to Intaanetto* [Dissecting Racism: Prejudice against Zainichi Koreans and the Internet] Tokyo: Keisoshobō, p. 45

³⁴ Yasuda, K. (2015). *Netto to Aikoku* [The Internet and Patriotism] Tokyo: Kōdansha, p. 869, 933, 1181

Nagasaki has overshadowed those acts in the public memory. Since the end of World War II, Japan has been holding commemorations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki every year and politicians across the political spectrum repeatedly point out that Japan is ‘the only nation ever to have been atomic-bombed.’³⁵ This narrative is strengthened by school trips to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in minutes of silence on August 6 and 9 every year, and in television dramas and movies about the suffering of victims. Through these commemorations, Japanese people’s feelings about ‘Hiroshima’ were redefined and reinforced, and victim consciences of an atomic bomb have become the central component of Japanese pacifist national identity.³⁶ Even those who recognized the atrocities committed by the Japanese government often rate atomic bombings as the “worst sin committed in the twentieth century” and thus assert the ascendancy of the bombings over other atrocities committed by the Japanese government, in an imagined hierarchy of state-sponsored evils, marking Japan as the ultimate victim.³⁷ This victimhood identity is reinforced by commemorations over generations and as a consequence, the victimhood became a way of forgetting Nanjing, Bataan, the Burma-Siam railway, Manila, and the countless Japanese atrocities there and other places.³⁸ For that kind of victimhood, there are certain people who consider that the atrocities by Japanese people which they learned in schools are exaggerated and that the Japanese government should not treat Zainichi Koreans in a special way as they do now. Such people easily echo what Sakurai says about how the Japanese government is giving special treatments to Zainichi Koreans.

b) Audience who has political resentment against the main political parties

Similar to other far-right political groups in other countries, the JFP describes themselves as outsiders to the current party system, and adopts populism as a political method. They criticize the main political parties as well as the Prime Minister publicly, as we can see from the letter, which he sent to the former Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe.³⁹ They try to differentiate themselves from other political parties by emphasizing the leadership of Sakurai. They claim that they are distanced from the current political parties, and thus they can pursue what is really important to the citizens without collusions. These messages may attract those who are not satisfied with what the current government is doing, and the number of such people may have been increased due to COVID-19. Indeed, a big change of the JFP from Zaitokukai is that unlike Zaitokukai, which only focuses on the abolishment of Zainichi Korean’s privileges, the JFP’s statements include various topics such as criticism toward the current government about how they handle Covid-19, fertility decline, child poverty, and so on. By having more topics on the plate, their anti-Zainichi stance seems to be diluted to some extent and instead attracts voters who are dissatisfied with the main political party for different issues that are not related to Zainichi Koreans. This category of people may include

³⁵ Orr, J.J. (2001). *The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’s Press.

³⁶ Orr, J.J. (2001). *The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’s Press; Saito, H. (2006) “Reiterated Commemoration: Hiroshima as National Trauma”, *Sociological Theory* 24 (4), pp. 353-376.

³⁷ Haverson, M. (2010). "Memory and Memorial: How the Hiroshima Bombing and Its Korean Victims Have Shaped and Challenged Postwar Japanese Identity." *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 10 (2), pp. 69-80.

³⁸ Dover, J.W. (1996). *The Bombed: Hiroshimas and Nagasakis in Japanese Memory* in *Hiroshima in History and Memory* edited by Hogan, M.J. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, pp. 116-142.

³⁹ The Japan First Party (2021). Abe Shinzo Zensouri tonon Taidan Moushiire nit suite [Regarding the request for dialogue with former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe] <https://japan-first.net/topics/%e6%a1%9c%e4%ba%95%e8%aa%a0-2020-12-01/> (accessed on 11/01/2021).

fans of Hyakuta as Hyakuta himself is now criticizing the main party and becoming more closer to Sakurai.

For those two groups of people, Sakurai can be seen as a savior who is fighting for correct historical views and for Japanese people. Because of this fact, Sakurai's speech can be considered as more dangerous.

4) Medium

Sakurai has been using the internet as the main tool to spread his message since he started writing anti-Korea statements on his website. While Sakurai is banned from Twitter due to his discriminatory tweets, which violate Twitter's terms of service, the JPF continues using Twitter and it has 44,000 followers. It is understood widely that ultra-rightists' speeches spread quickly and widely especially in the realm of Twitter due to the bot function, which allows one tweet to spread multiple times.⁴⁰ This point may also be applied to the JPF.

For the election in 2020, Sakurai made a clear decision not to conduct a political campaign outside of the internet. In fact, the only time he appeared on a mainstream TV channel was when he was on NHK (Japan National Broadcasting Corporation), when all the candidates appeared to make brief speeches regarding their campaign promises. He did not even make any speeches on street corners due to COVID-19. While this may have limited his exposure to a wider audience, this decision may have reinforced the authenticity of his speech regarding mass media thus he may have gained more support from people who are against mass media.

5) Counteractions

As seen before, there is a tendency that anti-Zainichi sentiment and the probability of the occurrence of physical violence are increased when the society is unstable and/or when the relation between neighboring countries worsens. During the COVID-19 pandemic, society became more and more unstable. In fact, the recent statistics show that the suicide rate in Japan increased by 16% between July and October 2020 during the second wave of COVID-19.⁴¹ The relation between South Korea and Japan is currently not good because the Seoul Central District Court decided in January 2021 to put off the ruling on the lawsuit filed by "comfort women," demanding compensation from the Japanese government.⁴² While some of the barriers to violence against Zainichi Korean have been lowered as such, because of the counteractions against Sakurai below, it is still difficult to conclude that probability of actual physical violence against Zainichi-Korean is high at the moment.

1) Lawsuit against Sakurai at the Supreme Court

⁴⁰ Schäfer, F. et al. (2019). *Nettuyoku to Seiji 2014 nen Sousenkyo de Konpyuutaa Shikake no Puropaganda* [The Internet Right Wing and Politics: Computer-generated Propaganda in the 2002 General Election], In *Netto uyoku towa nanika* [What is the Internet Right Wing], edited by Higuchi, N. et al., Tokyo: Seikyusya, pp. 133-163

⁴¹YAHOO! Japan News (2021) *Korona 2ha de Jisatsu 16% Zou Kokunai, 1pa dewa 14% Gensho* [Suicide Up 16% in the 2nd Corona Waves, Domestic, Down 14% in the First Wave] <https://news.yahoo.co.jp/articles/2162990da3c386c0e2de5e58b57c562f17375980> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

⁴² The Japan Times (2021). In a first, South Korean court orders Japan to compensate former 'comfort women' <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/01/08/national/first-south-korean-court-comfort-women/> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

In 2014, Zainichi Korean freelance writer Lee Sin Hae filed a lawsuit against Zaitokukai and Sakurai, demanding 5.5 million yen (about \$48,000 USD) as compensation for their hate speech campaigns against her. Lee claimed that after she published an article criticizing hate speech to an online news site, Sakurai started calling her "an old Korean hag" and targeted her on Twitter using discriminatory words. The case went up to the Supreme Court and in 2017, the Court dismissed the appeal made by Zaitokukai and Sakurai, concluding that the damage was worth 770,000 yen.⁴³ Before the case went to the Supreme Court, the Osaka District court acknowledged that some of the words Sakurai had said and tweeted invaded her personal rights and concluded that such speech was against the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In addition, the Court acknowledged the intersectionality of the case since Lee was targeted by Zaitokukai and Sakurai not only because she was Zainichi Korean but also because she was a woman. It is quite rare for the Japanese courts to cite international law and this is the first case where the Court recognized intersectional discrimination.

2) Recognition of hate speech by the Legal Affairs Bureau

In August 2020, the Legal Affairs Bureau in Fukuoka prefecture reached the conclusion that Sakurai's public speech conducted in March 2019 near the Korean School in Fukuoka was hate speech.⁴⁴ This is the first time that the speech of Sakurai as a leader of the JFP was publicly judged as a hate speech (although his speech as a leader of Zaitokukai was recognized as hate speech before).

These two cases show that even when there is anti-Zainichi Korean sentiment in society due to instability of society and diplomatic relation between neighboring countries, the Courts are still able to claim that hate speech should not be tolerated. This public condemnation is one reason why messages such as the ones analyzed in this case study have not led to intergroup violence. This kind of clear statement by the Court was not available when Zainichi Koreans were physically attacked during the 90s. Ironically, it is the Zaitokukai's violent acts that created an atmosphere in Japan that the stricter scrutinization is necessary to control those who spread hate speech. Although Japan's Hate Speech Elimination Law, which was enacted in 2016, is considered not as effective due to lack of sanctions, these judgments by the Courts may send a message to the society about what statements are tolerated and which ones are not.

3) Popularity of Korean culture in Japan

Lastly, although it is not directly related to Sakurai or the JFP, I would like to mention the power of Korean culture, which may contribute to increasing a positive impression toward South Korea by Japanese people, especially by that of young generation.

As noted above, anti-Zainichi Korean sentiment often stems from the negative image of Korea. In this regard, the soft power of Korean culture may play a role in positively influencing the impression of Korea. In fact, when Sakurai criticized one K-pop group on his Twitter in 2016,

⁴³ Asahi Shinbun DIGITAL (2017). Heito Supiichi de Zaitokukai no Haiso Kakutei Saikousai, Jyoukoku Shirizokeru [Supreme Court Rejects Zaitokukai's appeal in Hate Speech Case] <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASKCZ5GN1KCZUTIL03T.html> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

⁴⁴ The Mainichi (2020). Japan First' leader's remarks against Korean school children recognized as hate speech <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20200827/p2a/00m/0dm/010000c> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

various fans conducted counter-arguments against Sakurai on the internet, which was taken up by some major media outlets.⁴⁵ As such, the soft power of K drama has the potential to overcome discriminatory discourse in Japan.

Korean culture is visible in many industries in Japan such as drama, music, cosmetics, and food. In fact, the recent Netflix series “Crash Landing on You” was a huge hit in Japan, and it became the most popular drama on Netflix in Japan in 2020.⁴⁶ It went so far as the exhibition on the drama was organized in Japan despite COVID-19.⁴⁷ It is yet to be seen whether a positive image toward Korea would contribute to creating pro-Zainichi Korean sentiment, but soft power of Korean culture seems to be at least an embankment for hate speech against Koreans.

3. Conclusion

While the campaign promises and statements of the JFP are moderate, considering the Party’s grassroots background, its philosophical foundations, and its previous convictions, this speech can still be considered as dangerous. Although the Zaitokukai is no longer active, and the JPF’s anti-Zainichi speech has lessened in severity, now that the JPF gained an influential second speaker, there is the potential that their messages can be spread even to those who are not interested in Zainichi Koreans. Especially with COVID-19, society is becoming more unstable, and the current diplomatic relations between South Korea and Japan are strained. Considering these aspects, as happened several times after the natural disasters in the past, if the COVID-19 situation continues, and the economic situation becomes worse, there may be the situation that incites violence against Zainichi Koreans. However, taking into consideration that the Courts have been sending a clear message to the public that hate speech is not tolerated and that the image of Korea improving due to the spread of Korean culture, the situation surrounding the Zainichi Koreans is different from how it used to be when violence occurred in the past. Since there will be an election for legislative in 2021, it would be a barometer to show how much support the JPF has from society during the pandemic. Thus, a continuous close watch against the JPF speeches, especially during the election time, is required.

⁴⁵ Sankei News (2017) Sakurai Makoto shi no “Kankokujin wa Kankoku de Ganbattekuddasai” to Tsuiito ni Hanrhu Fan ga Gekido Ippomohikanu Sakuraishi ni, Kouyama Rika shi mo Sansen shi... [Fans of Korea boom furious over Makoto Sakurai’s tweet, “Koreans should do their best in Korea,” Rika Kayama joins the fray...]<https://www.sankei.com/entertainments/news/170101/ent1701010037-n1.html> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

⁴⁶ IT media NEWS (2020) Netflix、Nihon no 2020 nen Ninki Sakuhin Toppu 10 wo Kohyo 1i ha? [Netflix, Japan’s Top 10 Most Popular Movies of 2020 Revealed What’s No. 1?]
<https://www.itmedia.co.jp/news/articles/2012/14/news061.html> (accessed on 16/01/2021)

⁴⁷ Newsweek Japan (2020) Daininki Dorama no Sekai wo Saigenshita “Ai no Fujichaku Ten” ni Ittemita! [I visited the “Crash Landing of Love” exhibition, which recreates the world of a very popular TV drama!]
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¹ Newsweek Japan (2020) Daininki Dorama no Sekai wo Saigenshita “Ai no Fujichaku Ten” ni Ittemita! [I visited the "Crash Landing of Love" exhibition, which recreates the world of a very popular TV drama!] <https://www.newsweekjapan.jp/stories/world/2021/01/post-95348.php> (accessed on 16/01/2021)