

‘Residentialization’ of the Second-Generation in Japan: Comparing *Zainichi* Korean and Newcomer Non-Citizen Political Engagement

Ken Silverman, City University of New York Graduate Center and University of Tokyo

Keywords: second-generation, immigrants, political engagement, Japan, *Zainichi* Koreans

By 2065, one in five residents of prime working age (20-44) in Japan will be of immigrant-origin, yet it is estimated that the majority will not have Japanese citizenship (Korekawa, 2018). Given how Japan’s institutionalized *jus sanguinis* citizenship policies have created a subclass of indefinite denizens (Komine, 2014), a growing share of the future young adult population will likely remain disenfranchised due to the hurdles of, and resistance to, naturalization. However, across countries without birthright citizenship, extra-electoral non-citizen political engagement is challenging conventional understandings of immigrant political incorporation (Chung and Abbas, 2018). This paper explores a nascent form of political engagement emerging among non-citizen young adults of Japan’s newcomer immigrant second-generation (henceforth, newcomers), the progeny of foreign-born parents who have arrived since the 1980s (Shimizu et al., eds., 2021). Despite the tendency in Japan for youth conservatism (Kikkawa and Hazama, 2019) and even political apathy (Hashimoto, 2011), preliminary data from qualitative interviews suggests that many newcomers are not only adopting left-wing ideologies but also actively expressing their Hirschmannian voice in the host society. In fact, the variation in newcomer identification with the host society appears to be tracing that of Japan’s oldcomer vanguard group of non-citizen second-generation immigrants: *Zainichi* Koreans. Building upon Yamawaki’s (2000) classification framework for identity construction among the *Zainichi* Korean second-generation, this paper argues that a political “residentialization” (*teijūka-keikō*) effect is also evident among newcomers. Residentialization refers to an emphasis on “in Japan” belonging among second-generation *Zainichi* Koreans who, rather than resist assimilation into Japanese society, fought to overcome their social exclusion from it (Kang 1987). I explore how the host society embeddedness of residentialization can be reflected politically via extra-electoral engagement as well, particularly as a strategy to circumvent the inaccessibility of full political membership. I then discuss the relevance of the *Zainichi* Korean second-generation experience of leveraging social capital for political claim-making for newcomers. An examination of the increasing convergence of characteristics—cultural competence and permanent settlement—among the two second-generation cohorts is followed by a comparison of the political opportunities that mobilized second-generation *Zainichi* Korean activists against forced fingerprinting in the 1980s (Strausz, 2006) with the potential and limits for national-level organizing among newcomers in the present day.

References:

- Chung, Erin Aeran and Rameez Abbas. 2018. “Non-Citizen Political Engagement.” *In Routledge Handbook of Asian Migrations*, edited by Gracia Liu-Farrer and Brenda S.A. Yeoh. Routledge.
- Hashimoto, Yoshiaki. 2011. *Media to Nihonjin: Kawariyuku Nichijō* [The Media and Japanese People: Changing Everyday Lives]. Iwanami Shōten.
- Kang, Je-on. 1987. “‘*Zainichi Chōsenjin*’ de aru koto no Imi” [What it Means to be a *Zainichi* Korean]. *Kikan Sanzenri* 50.
- Kikkawa, Tōru and Ryōtarō Hazama, ed. 2019. *Bundan Shakai to Wakamono no Ima* [The Divided Society and Current State of Young People]. Osaka Daigaku Shuppankai.
- Komine, Ayako. 2014. “When migrants became denizens: understanding Japan as a reactive immigration country.” *Contemporary Japan* 26, no. 2.
- Korekawa, Yū. 2018. “*Nihon ni okeru Kokusai Jinkō Idō Tenkan to sono Chūchōki-teki Tenbō: Nihon*

Tokushu-ron wo koete [Migration Transition in Japan and its Mid- to Long-term Consequences: Beyond Japanese Exceptionalism].” *Imin Seisaku Kenkyū* 10.

Shimizu, Mutsumi, Akira Kojima, Hiroki Tsunogae, Misako Nukaga, Akiko Miura, and Kōhei Tsubota, eds. 2021. *Nihon Shakai no Imin Dainisedai: Esunishitī-kan Hikaku de Toraeru 'Nyūkamā' no Kodomo-tachi no Ima*. [Second-Generation Immigrants in Japanese Society: The Current State of 'Newcomer' Children in Comparative Ethnic Perspective]. Akashi Shoten.

Strausz, Michael. 2006. “Minorities and Protest in Japan: The Politics of the Fingerprinting Refusal Movement.” *Pacific Affairs* 79, no. 4.

Yamawaki, Keizō. 2000. “Zainichi Korian no Aidentītī Bunruiwakugumi ni kansuru Shiron” [On the Typology of Zainichi Korean Identity]. *Meiji Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyūjo Kiyō* 38, no. 2.