

Research on Korean Popular Songs Written by Korean Residents in Japan

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Abstract

This article aims to examine the history and era experienced by Korean residents in Japan through popular songs written in Korean which is their mother tongue but not their first language. In particular, the article focuses on how Korean residents in Japan who are members of the General Association of Korea Residents in Japan (*Chongryon*) and who were born in South Korea but who chose the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as their homeland and lives in Japan built their identities through national education through researching popular songs. Korean residents in Japan are an embodiment of the contradictions emanating from colonialism, cold war, and division. They have pursued their identity despite systematic discrimination in Japanese society as well as a sense of discrimination deeply engraved in the mindset of Japanese people through numerous challenges of possible divisions. This is why even today, Korean residents' resistance towards the Japanese government's oppression and suppression exists persistently as their history and culture. Pop songs made by Korean residents in Japan who were affiliated with *Chongryon* clearly reflects political circumstances that defined their sense of existence and livelihood. In the stage of the struggle for the right to education, and in the process of forming the definition of homeland and recognizing their hometown, and in a special education space called *Chosŏnhakkyo* (schools operated by the *Chongryon*), the struggle for postcolonialism and the struggle to overcome national division by singing such songs is a process that made Korean residents in Japan a member of Korean people.

Key Words: Korean residents in Japan, Federation of Chosŏn Writers and Artists in Japan, oppression of national education, *Chosŏnhakkyo*, postcolonialism

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1. Introduction

In discussing the history or culture of Korean residents in Japan, different names refer to the Korea residents in Japan due to their socio-political complexities. *Chaeilchosōnin*, *Chaeilhan'guk/chosōnin*, *Chaeilk'orian*, and *Zainichi* are such examples.

Korean residents in Japan refer to Koreans and their descendant who have lived in Japan as a result of Japan's colonial rule. There were approximately 2.3 million Koreans living in Japan at the time of liberation in 1945 due to forced mobilization which began in 1939 as well as free crossing that started even before the forced mobilization. Many Koreans left Japan for home after the liberation, but about 600,000 Koreans remained in Japan due to subsequent restrictions imposed by the General Headquarters (GHQ) and the Japanese government, coupled with the dire economic situation in South Korea. Even after returning home, some Koreans had to secretly themselves into Japan due to poor living conditions. Colonization and division of the nation caused by the Cold War led Koreans to suffer large-scale separation. The liberation of Korean people who continued to live in the land of its former colonial ruler even after August 15, 1945 and their true emancipation as human beings still remain as a task until today. Therefore, the problem of many Korean residents in Japan that exist today cannot be considered only in the category of Japan's "responsibility of war" but should be handled in the category of "responsibility of colonial rule." In addition, the discrimination and alienation that Korean residents in Japan have experienced in Japanese society is a problem of Japanese society, but it can be said that it is one of the problems of Korean people as a whole.

First of all, the name of the literature of Korean residents in Japan differs from one researcher to another, such as *chaeilgyop'omunhak* or *chaeiltongp'omunhak*, *chaeilhan'guginmunhak*, *chaeilhaninmunhak*, *chaeilk'oriōnmunhak*, and *chaeilhanminjongmunhak*. A few of the names are derieved from colonialism and division that is yet to be settled. In addition, the issue of setting the category is also related to the problem of limiting the category to literature written in Japanese by Korean residents in Japan or including literature written in Korean language

as well.

Up until now, research on literature of Korean residents in Japan has been carried out primarily by researchers of Japanese literature, which was an overview of the literature by generations and periods, and research on writers, researches on works, and researches on themes have been actively conducted.

On the other hand, the study on the creative activities in the Korean language by the Korean residents in Japan has not yet been fully studied. It is because the works of Korean language literature are written by writers who are affiliated with the Federation of Chosŏn Writers and Artists in Japan (hereinafter referred to as *Munyedong*) which is a sub-group of General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (hereinafter referred to as *Chongryon*). In *Munyedong*, the writers refer to their own literature as “Korean literature in Japan” and they are engaged in creative activities with a belief that they are part of the Korean literature of their homeland. At present, research on the “Korean literature in Japan” is being carried out by Korean researchers in Japan themselves.

This article aims to examine the history and era experienced by Korean residents in Japan through popular songs written in Korean which is their mother tongue rather than Japanese which is their first language. The music culture of Koreans in Japan was always with the history of oppression and alienation. The creation and dissemination of pop songs composed by Korean residents in Japan have long been carried out by the literary activities of *Munyedong*, a literary organization within *Chongryon*.

The “List of Korean Literature in Japan” was published in 2009 in the 50th anniversary edition of *Munhagyesul* (No. 110), the official journal of *Munyedong*. The list confirms that 185 collections of literature were published from 1953 to 2009.

In particular, the music department of *Munyedong* has been publishing popular songs for Koreans in Japan since the 1970s. Among them, the most comprehensive collection of songs is the *Three Hundred Popular Songs* (Hagusŏbang, 1989), which was published in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of *Munyedong*. Then, in the 1990s, a two-volume series entitled *Popular Songs Play the New Songs* (Federation of Chosŏn Writers and Artists in Japan Music Department) was

published in 1990 and 1993. Whenever there was an opportunity, popular song collections for the peoples of all walks of life were published in various forms.

In order to research Korean pop songs written by Korean residents in Japan, this paper first examines the political situation that has defined their sense of existence and the basis of their living. In particular, the article focuses on how Korean residents in Japan who are members of *Chongryon* and who were born in South Korea but who chose the DPRK as their homeland and lives in Japan built their identities through national education through researching popular songs. The article pays attention to the representative songs that have been sung in the stage of the struggle for the right to education, and in the process of forming the definition of homeland and recognizing their hometown, and in a special educational space called *Chosŏnhakkyo* (schools operated by the *Chongryon*).

2. Crisis of Division Suffered by Korean Residents in Japan

Korean residents in Japan have always been influenced by the ideology of division by experiencing the division and the cold war first hand. First of all, in this article, the crisis of division experienced by the Korean residents in Japan in the Japanese society will be studied historically. According to Kang Songun, there are three stages of division crisis experienced by Korean residents in Japan (2010, 161-171).

The first division was due to the time period between the liberation of Korea from Japan and the Treaty on Basic Relations between the Republic of Korea and Japan, which was signed in 1965. After the liberation, there were two Korean compatriot organizations, namely the Association of Koreans in Japan (*Choryŏn*) and Korean Residents Union in Japan (*Mindan*). In 1948, two separate regimes were established in South and North Korea, and two organizations solidified their respective relationships with each regime. *Choryŏn* was forcefully dissolved in September 1949, but soon after the Korean War, the *Minjŏn* (Democratic Front for the Unification of Korea in Japan) was formed as a national defense

organization. The *Minjŏn* made errors in terms of their line and policy shortly, but after the DPRK announced a change of line in December 1952, the *Chongryŏn* was established in May 1955. The *Chongryŏn* clearly stated that it consisted the citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea residing overseas and made the realization of national reunification the top priority, and consistently paid great attention to strengthening national unity with members of the *Mindan*. However, the division of two Koreas after the Korean War forced Korean residents in Japan to connect with only one homeland upon the division. What determined the division of Korean residents in Japan is the Treaty on Basic Relations between the Republic of Korea and Japan of 1965. According to the Treaty, South Korea was confirmed as the only legitimate government of the Korean peninsula thereby confirming the legal status of Korean residents in Japan with “South Korean” nationality. The treaty triggered the division of Korean society in Japan to affect the everyday lives of Koreans in Japan.

The second division was attributed to the “multicultural coexistence society” theory of the late 1970s and Japan’s “nationalization” pressure. The prolonged division and rapid economic growth of Japan brought about a great change in the lives and ideology of Koreans living in Japan. The so-called “Japan-oriented” consciousness, that is, being able to live without the motherland and ethnic organization, increasingly came to be dominant. In this context, the Japanese government’s assimilation policy toward Korean residents has changed its course to convince domiciliation-oriented Koreans to naturalize by stabilizing their legal status and put forward the argument of inclusion that is “nationalization.” Above all, subjective conditions such as the generation change of Koreans and the diversification of values are changing, but the objective conditions surrounding Koreans in Japan have not improved greatly. Rather, the Japanese government took advantage of the Cold War situation in East Asia to avoid war and colonial responsibility and continued to expand its economy. Therefore, as an embodiment of the contradictions of emanating from colonialism, the Cold War and division, Korean residents in Japan continued to suffer due to the Japanese society’s systematic discrimination as well as a sense of discrimination deeply engraved in the mindset of Japanese people.

The third division crisis is said to be due to the negative propaganda against the DPRK that has intensified since the 1990s. With the expansion of conservatism and nationalism in Japan, the abduction issue of the Japanese and North Korean nuclear issue led to a massive negative propaganda and anti-DPRK atmosphere. The suppression of the Koreans and the *Chongryon* in Japan have intensified, and the Korean society in Japan has greatly shrunk. Korean residents in Japan who are affiliated with *Chongryon*, and have Chosŏn nationality have links to the DPRK, therefore, otherization toward them has intensified. Literally, the name Chosŏn has become an object to discriminate against. That is why most people consider South Korea and Chosŏn to be conflicting and regard the latter as inferior and different. Due to discrimination and hostility toward North Korea, which exists extensively in Japanese society, the tendency to escape from Chosŏn unconsciously is not uncommon among Korean residents in Japan.

However, from the beginning, Koreans residents in Japan were one of the Koreans who had been colonized by Japanese imperialism and lived in Japan for a reason different from other foreigners. This is the basis for the identity of Korean residents in Japan. So, even today, the resistance of the Korean residents in Japan who do not want to be oppressed and repressed by the Japanese government has become a history and a culture persistently.

3. Songs and Struggles Against the Suppression of National Education

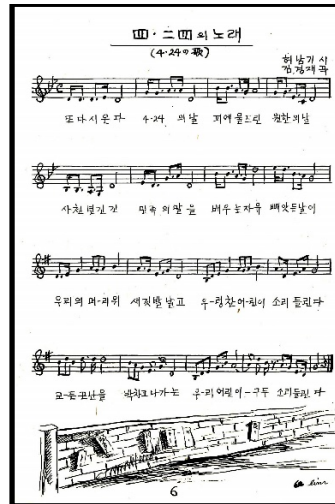
In the seventy-year history of Korean residents' struggle, the song sang during the "4.24 Educational Struggle" is probably the first struggle song to be recorded. The 1948 Hanshin Education Struggle, which is remembered as the largest event in the history of the struggles to defend the education of Korean residents in Japan, is known as the "4.24 Education Struggle" among Korean residents in Japan.

Here comes again, the day of grudge and blood, 4.24

The day our freedom to learn our 4,000-year old language was taken away
 But listen, but look, above our heads
 New flag waves, a dashing sound of children
 Go ahead and sweep aside all oppression
 We hear the sound of our children's footstep
 “The Song of 4.24” (Lyrics by Hō Namki, Music by Kim Kyōngchae)

This song was published in *Choryōnjungangshibo* in March 1949 in order to spread the unyielding fighting spirit of the “4.24 Education Struggle” after one year it took place. The score was introduced in *Choryōnjungangshibo* on April 11 and was widely spread through *Inmin'gayojip*, which was published in 1954.

The lyrics of “The Song of 4.24” published in *Choryōnjungangshibo* on March 21, 1948



The score of “The Song of 4.24” published in *Inmin'gayojip* (Association of Korean Musicians in Japan, July 1954)

Korean residents in Japan were subject to kominka policy and assimilation policy under Japanese rule, and for them, recovering ethnicity was an immediate challenge. Educating children was their wish of a lifetime as well. That is why Korean residents in Japan began a massive campaign for national education under to slogan of “Let the Rich Pay, Let the Strong Lend Strength, and Let the Wise Share Wisdom to Build Our Own Schools!” despite the complicated political situation in Japan and extreme living conditions. The first step toward recovering ethnicity was Korean language. National education initiated with the operation of Korean language class and expanded rapidly with the implementation of secondary education in October 1946. With a lot of enthusiasm of the Korean residents, about 50,000 children of Korean residents were studying in five hundred *Chosŏnhakkyo* by the end of 1947. However, the Japanese authorities did not approve of this. Upon the request of GHQ, the Japanese authorities did not acknowledge the establishment of Korean schools and issued the Ministry of Education directives forcing already approved schools to use the Japanese language and Japanese textbooks. Such actions were taken based on the perception that ethnicity breeds

rebellion and is connected to communism.

In resistance to the suppression by the Japanese authorities, Korean residents have set up a committee for the education of Koreans under *Choryŏn* and asked for a condition in which they can educate the children of Korean residents using the Korean language, compile their own textbooks and operate schools independently. US-Japan reactionists responded to this request by ordering school shutdown even mobilizing the military, police, heavy weapons and fire trucks to forcefully shutdown *Chosŏnhakkyo*. This led to a massive protest by Korean residents all over Japan against the forced shutdown of *Chosŏnhakkyo*.

Why are you crying, my teacher
 Japanese police closed our school
 The teacher is crying with anger
 Don't cry teacher don't cry
 We will not go to Japanese schools
 We will not go to Japanese schools
 "Teacher Don't Cry" (Lyrics, music anonymous)

Many teachers and parents who fought against the police at the time were apprehended and imprisoned while students were forced to transfer to Japanese schools. The song describes the sadness students felt when watching teachers shedding tears worrying about their future. In the song, the students declare that they will not attend Japanese schools, which depicts that Japanese schools were a very confrontational space with *Chosŏnhakkyo*.

The struggle in Osaka and Hyogo was the most intense struggle nationwide. US-Japanese reactionists declared a strict "emergency situation" in Hyogo district and raided prefecture headquarters of *Choryŏn* and randomly arrested workers and Korean residents. On the 26th, the Japanese police carried out a crackdown of 40,000 Koreans who gathered in front of Osaka Prefectural Government building, and a 16-year old Kim T'aeil was shot dead during the crackdown.

Korean residents have engaged in intense struggles in many different areas crying "Let's Avenge for Our Compatriots Who Bled and Perished!", "Kim T'aeil's

Death Must Not be In Vain!'. Japan was appalled by the momentum of Korean residents and had no choice but to sign a memorandum on May 5, which stipulated that "education for Koreans shall be carried out independently."

Won with blood 4.24 Day of resentment 4.24

Red blood of comrade Taeil, red blood of our chief teacher

We saved our school with a five-pointed star in the sky

We saved our education despite the oppression from the beast

"The Song of 4.24 Education Struggle" (Lyrics, music anonymous)

This song was also created during the ongoing struggle to continue the spirit of 4.24. The phrase "with a five-pointed star in the sky" is an evidence proving that this song was written after the DPRK was founded. The "chief teacher" in the song was the leader of *Choryŏn* in Hyogo Prefecture who led the Kobe struggle and imprisoned at the Ookubo prison. He was released on parole as the authorities worried that he might die in the prison but died within hours of his release on November 28, 1949.

In 1948, politically volatile events such as the Jeju 4.3 Uprising occurred as a result of the excesses of the U.S. military occupation and the national division. At the same time, the "4.24 Educational Struggle" took place, and these two events are not unrelated events. The everyday violence and extreme forms of dominance under the Cold War structure have been relentlessly applied not only to the home country but also to the Korean residents in Japan.

The struggle against the political powers of the United States and Japan which oppressed such right occurred on an unprecedented scale in order to protect the right to live as Koreans in Japan. In other words, the struggle is a form of resistance to protect ethnic autonomy. However, the Japanese authorities at the time regarded *Chosŏnhakkyo* issue as a public security issue and used this to spread the idea that Koreans are engaged in illegal activities. Even now, descendants of Koreans of *Chongryon* keep discovering the songs of struggle from that time period because the songs reflect the essential national and educational issues that are still relevant today.

4. Song for the Way Home

Most of the *Chosŏnhakkyo* students, whose families are originally from southern Korea but have the nationality of *Chosŏn*, are unable to formally visit South Korea. To those third- and the fourth-generation Korean residents in Japan, southern Korean peninsula is merely the hometown of their grandmothers and grandfathers but nothing more. At the school, however, the students are educated to see the entire Korean Peninsula as the place where they belong, regardless of whether it is the northern or the southern part of the peninsula. The third- and fourth-generation Korean residents in Japan learn about Korean songs only at the school, just like they do about the Korean language. They systemically learn about Korean songs, musical instruments, and dances through music textbook, not like the way the first generations used to hum.

So, the Korean language songs that the Korean residents in Japan sing are all transferred to the next generation through *Chosŏnhakkyo*'s music lessons. Among them are the songs about Korean residents' yearning for home, which have been sung by generations. Kim Hakkwŏn's songs are the most representative of such. Kim Hakkwŏn, a second-generation Korean resident in Japan, had long been in the educational field. Like many other songs, most of the Korean residents' songs were composed by school teachers, not by professional songwriters. "My Hometown" is one of those songs that has long been in the *Chosŏnhakkyo*'s music textbook.

Mountains and rivers change as time goes by
 But my hometown never changes in my mind
 Cherries in the mountains birds flying into the sky
 I close my eyes and everything comes back to me

Winds bring me the news
 With mountains and fields bare, my hometown is crying out
 Where did the trees go
 Birds without home cry sadly

Miss my hometown day and night
I sing this song that I can't forget
When the spring comes with fragrant flowers
I will go back to you with a smile

Mountains and rivers of my hometown lost in the dark
I will build a land full of flowers when I go back

“My Hometown” (Lyrics by Ko Kapsun, Music by Kim Hakkwŏn)

For the first-generation compatriots, their hometown in southern Korea was not just the place for longing, the hometown became the land “lost in the dark” by the violence of colonialism and division, which did not allow Korean residents in Japan to become a part of their community. The hometown imagined by the Koreans in Japan thus gradually became the utopian land. The door to the hometown would only be opened after the land becomes ideal ethically, with no nationalistic problem and no violence from the outside.

Korean compatriots’ homecoming is premised upon overcoming of the division of the Korean peninsula, which is the biggest political barrier, and achieving reunification. Thus, Korean residents believed that joining the national movement to break down those barriers would get them one step closer to their homeland. But many died on foreign soil, singing “My Hometown” and wishing to return home with smiles on their face.

As for the descendants of the first-generation Koreans, they seem to have their own unique sentiment when singing about a yearning for the homeland even though they actually have no direct experience. Under the circumstances where connections to the pre-liberation homeland and Japan are almost suspended due to political reasons, and where communications with families are disconnected, stories of memories of their parents are the only way to prevent them from being disconnected to the homeland. The language of homesickness by the first generation in the daily life is unconsciously conveyed to their offsprings, portraying the homeland ideally and subliming it into the feeling of yearning. The

second and the subsequent generations of Korean residents in Japan actually live Japanese language-based lives, so they are maybe Japanese by sentiment. But, for many second generations, how to understand experiences that they could not understand, how to portray and express memories of their parents, how to convey to others, were important political agendas for the composing of songs in the era of the divided peninsula.

“*Manghyangga* (Song of Longing for My Hometown)” (Kim Hakkwŏn) is a song about longing which was sung by Korean residents in Japan for a long time. The song begins with “I like mountains and fields, but I like the ocean much more.” Korean compatriots in Japan like the ocean because once they cross the East Sea, they can reach their hometown. No force could stop the ocean, that is why they love the ocean. The way back home was harsher than any force of nature for the Korean residents in Japan. As if the song was trying to soothe the pain and ordeal of compatriots on the way back home, the melody of the song is very soft. The song ends with “I can go back home in a day, but I will wait till the strong wind calms down,” which illustrates the will to endure the pain of national division and sacrifices to achieve unification of the Koreans in Japan.

In the process of sharing collective experience of suffering, making and singing beautiful and ideal songs based on their memory in order to find answers to the existential questions of where they are from and who they are, Korean residents in Japan could build their collective sense of identity.

5. National Education and Songs

Chosŏnhakkyo is still not recognized as an official education institution by the Japanese authorities. Therefore, with various support from the DPRK, Korean residents in Japan persistently carried out Korean language education, education on Korean history and geography to instill affection for the country and fellow Korean people. Through such national education, students come to have a strong sense of national identity as well as belonging to the Korean community.

The song “Let You Blossom into the Flower of Korea” (lyrics by Kang

Myōngsuk, music by Kim Chōngch'öl) was continuously sung at the graduation ceremony of a *Chosōnhakkyo*. Many *Chosōnhakkyo* had dormitories even for first graders because many families lived far away from *Chosōnhakkyo* so had no other option but to send off a six-year-old child to the school dormitory. The students barely spent six years with their parents before attending the school. That is why mothers of students who sent their children to schools for twelve years sung this song before the children during the graduation ceremony.

My little girl, when will you understand
 How I feel sending you away to the dormitory far away
 I won't be able to comb your hair every morning
 I won't be able to help you with your homework
 I will plant the spirit of our people in your little heart
 I will let you blossom into the flower of Korea

Because there are so many untold stories that were not written into songs, whenever Korean residents in Japan hear this song, they do not think of it as a song depicting one particular family but a song about national education. It takes a lot of determination and will as well as everyday filled with conflicts and sacrifices of parents to provide national education to their children. It is extremely difficult to live as a Korean in Japan. On the other hand, today's *Chosōnhakkyo* is a place where Japanese residents in Japan can recognize homogeneity with fellow Koreans and build the collective strength to resist the discrimination of Japanese society.

As a measure of assuming responsibility for colonial rule, the Japanese authorities should have guaranteed the national education of Koreans who had been forced to remain in Japan as a result of colonialization. However, the Japanese authorities oppressed the national education of Koreans.

Local governments have the discretion to approve schools, and the approval for *Chosōnhakkyo* began in 1975 and continued throughout the 1980s. A small amount of subsidy was provided, which would not have been possible without the struggle of Korean residents in Japan. Until then, during a period of four decades, it was

due to the support of the DPRK that the *Chosŏnhakkyo* reestablished itself and managed to complete its education system autonomously. Not only science and technology education at *Chosŏnhakkyo*, but also physical education and art education were provided to students based on the full-fledged support from the DPRK. In other words, even though generations have changed, the relationship with the DPRK, which they called “motherland,” is the basis for the children of the Korean residents in Japan to use and learn Korean language, writings, and songs. The “motherland” is in the important place of the cultural and emotional base of *Chosŏnhakkyo* children.

Shall I set my right foot first
 Or shall I set left foot first
 I look for my motherland
 I shed my tears before me
 On my motherland

This song was originally a poem written by Ch'oe Yŏngchi, a writer and member of *Munyedong*, written in 1982. The poem is called “Set Left Foot or Right Foot” and is about the joy Korean students from Japan felt when they first visited their homeland and the poem eventually became a song.

In today's world, the word “North Korea” is used daily to symbolize the evil and the need to deny the existence of *Chosŏnhakkyo* was discussed based on the relationship with the Republic.

Since 2006, the Japanese government has imposed its own economic sanctions against the DPRK and has been blocking the movement of people, goods, and money between the DPRK and Japan until today. This sanction imposes unreasonable restrictions on the exchange and trade with the motherland, which is the fair right of Korean residents living in Japan. Above all, since the mid-2000s, the Japanese government has been continuing to take measures to infringe on the rights of Korean residents in Japan as a means of putting pressure on the North Korean government to realize its political and diplomatic objectives, such as the resolution of the abduction issue. A representative example of this is the

discriminatory treatment of *Chosŏnhakkyo*, such as the exclusion of *Chosŏnhakkyo* from free high school education scheme and cuts in subsidies. Literally, human rights violations targeting Koreans living in Japan, a member of a citizen living in the country imposing sanctions, have been publicly committed. The anger of Koreans in Japan is reaching its extreme, who should be originally protected by the Japanese government, not discriminated against.

Today, the children of *Chosŏnhakkyo* are going out to the streets all over Japan to raise their voices of protest against the exclusion of *Chosŏnhakkyo* from free high school education scheme and singing the songs of resistance once again. In addition, that struggle is even reaching out to the courthouse asking for national compensation to Japan.

How hard do I have to shout out
Voices were constantly being taken away
Can you hear? Are you listening?
Wrath becomes the voice right this moment
Voices come together, songs come to us
Voices come together, becomes songs
Comrades come together let's sing together
Let's sing together let our voices get together

(Written by a student at the Korea University of Japan as a theme song for the "Friday Action" rallies in front of the Ministry of Education)¹⁾

This educational struggle has been in its sixth year. Korean residents in Japan are singing the song, not in Korean which should have been their first language if it were not for the violence of colonialism, but they are singing in Japanese, which is their first language and the language of the colonial ruler of the past to the Japanese citizens. Many Korean residents in Japan are taking part in the struggle every week to sing the song. A new song for struggle was born in the long history of national education that made non-daily lives into daily lives.

1) The lyrics were translated from Japanese by the author.

6. Conclusion

Due to adverse conditions of *Chosŏnhakkyo*, more than 90% of school-age Korean children attend Japanese schools. Rather than having the opportunity to learn the Korean language and Korean culture, Korean children are exposed to ethnocentric history education that covers up the truth of colonial rule and aggression.

To learn the language, words, and history of the Korean people who have been deprived of the opportunity of learning for the last one century is a matter directly connected to the restoration of their dignity. Therefore, claiming dignity and right to live as a Korean and living one's life autonomously is in line with the struggle to protect national education.

In the process of raising the voice against the realities of oppression and alienation, Koreans residents in Japan have made themselves a member of the Korean people. Fighting to overcome postcolonialism as well as national division and singing the songs of struggle made us Koreans. That is why Korean residents in Japan are confident that they can share the historic and national experience of the division with those still living in the homeland and other ethnic Koreans living abroad.

A Korean resident poet in Japan called children of *Chosŏnhakkyo* "Garden Cosmos Near the Demarcation Line."

Nobody here notices your beauty
 Why did you bloom here
 Pure white garden cosmos moving gently near the bank of *Imjingang*
 The wind blowing back and forth the South and North
 Maybe you wanted to feel the excitement in the wind

Nobody here is delighted to welcome you
 Why are you so thrilled
 Powder pink cosmos moving gently near the bank of *Imjingang*
 One day our dream will come true
 Are you thrilled dreaming about that day
 "Garden Cosmos Near the Demarcation Line"

(Lyrics by Kang Myŏngsuk, Music by Cho Pangu)

Korean children living in Japan are the bridges connecting South and North Korea, and the Korean peninsula and Japan. They have the full potential to contribute to the unification of two Koreas, disruption of the relationship between the DPRK and Japan, and will eventually contribute to peace in East Asia. Just like the lyrics of this song, Korean residents in Japan still dream of their children, humble flowers, to grow up and bloom all over both sides of the 38th parallel. They are unwavering in the effort to find their identity despite the history of hardships and to remain as a member of unified Korea. This is why the destiny of Korean residents in Japan is connected to the destiny of the entire Korean people living on the peninsula as well as those abroad.

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