

# Analysis of support strategies and motives of the ROC for Overseas Chinese schools in South Korea in the context of the Cold War (1949-1987)



Photo of the 2nd Junior High School Graduates of Incheon Jungsan Overseas Chinese School

## Introduction

In Sino-Korean relations, the significance of overseas Chinese has been changing with the times. The overseas Chinese school (huaqiao xuexiao, 华侨学校) as the main educational pathway for the children of overseas Chinese in South Korea, plays an important role in the national identity of the overseas Chinese.

The main purpose of this study is to explore how the ROC (Taiwan) authorities conducted national education (minzu jiaoyu, 民族教育) through Overseas Chinese Schools in terms of policy and financial support, the selection of teaching and learning materials, and the content of related political activities.

## Background

- **World Bipolarity under the Cold War:** After the Korean War the ROC (Taiwan) was seen by the United States as an **important location for preventing the expansion of communism**. Education policies of the ROC for overseas Chinese was thus **heavily influenced by the US**. In 1954 the U.S. Aid to Overseas Chinese Students Programme was launched.
- **Domestic Affairs of the ROC:** Continuation of the great emphasis placed on the affairs of overseas Chinese since Sun Yat-sen 孙中山. The basic national policy of "**opposing the Communist Party and restoring the country**" (fangong fuguo, 反共复国) since 1949. After ROC's expulsion from the United Nations in 1971, Chinese diaspora education also became a tool to make up for the lack of formal diplomacy.
- **Domestic Affairs of the ROK:** Economically, the **trade policy shifted** from trade with China to trade with Japan. The enactment of policies such as the Korea-Japan Commercial Agreement and the Foreigners' Land Ownership Act made it difficult for overseas Chinese to operate their own businesses. Politically, from the 1960s onwards, government policy gradually shifted towards **exclusive nationalism and, ethnic Chinese were deprived of their political rights**. Educationally, overseas Chinese schools were **legally excluded** from the education system. There were no regulations on the teaching content in Chinese schools, except that schools are required to offer three hours of Korean language classes per week.

## Methods/ Theory

- **Literature Analysis:** Various types of sources such as minutes of the ROC government, textbooks of overseas Chinese schools, and relevant research papers.
- **Case Study:** Incheon Jungsan Overseas Chinese Primary and Secondary Schools
- **Political Socialisation Theory of Ideology**(Randolph B Persaud):

Role of politocal forces

Education deepens mainstream values

- Evaluation and perception of history
- Advocacy for the distribution of power
- Future options for lifestyles

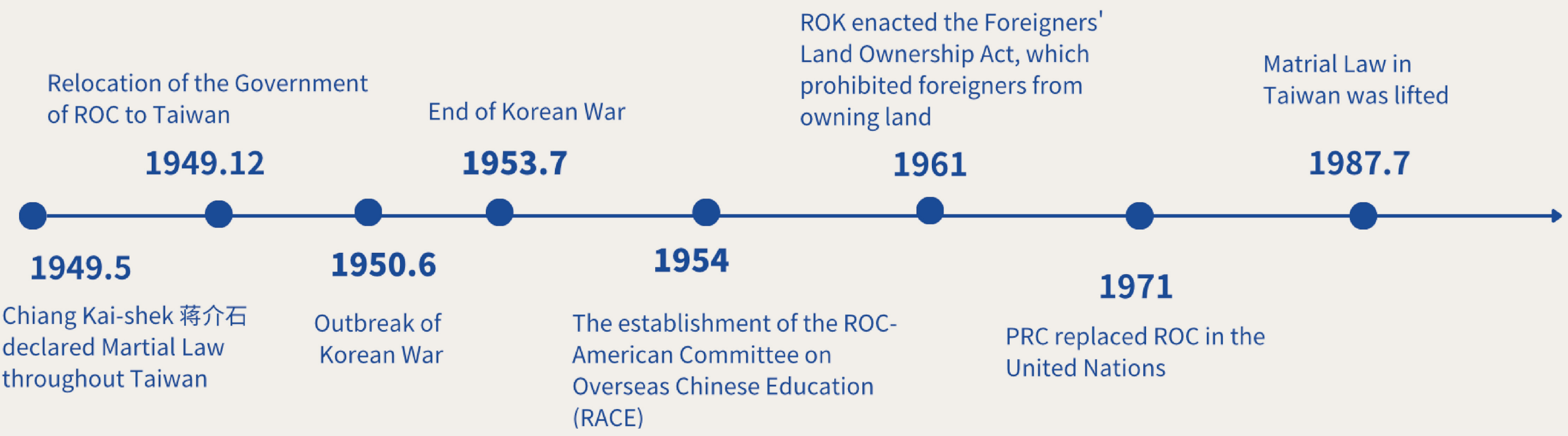
## Measures

- **Teacher Support and Training:** The ROC government actively supports overseas Chinese students who have completed their university education in the ROC (Taiwan) to return to their home countries to work as teachers, and also establishes special overseas teacher education programs in Taiwan's normal colleges and universities and conducts training in the form of summer and winter workshops.
- **Selection of teaching materials:** In the case study of **Incheon Jungsan Overseas Chinese School**, it can be noted that the school has been using teaching materials that are consistent with those used in the ROC. On this basis, the national language (guoyu, 国语) and history textbooks since the 1950s were selected for specific analyses in this study. The preface refers to the fact that the textbook is **based on the ideology** of the Founding Fathers, the words of President Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石, and basic national policies, and that the curriculum also focuses on **praising the ROC government and leaders**.
- **Political activities:** Students were required to participate in a **flag-raising ceremony** every day. Overseas Chinese groups such as the Korean Chinese Youth Anti-Communist Salvation Association (Hanhua Qingnian Fangongjiuguo Zonghui, 韩华青年反共救国总会) regularly organized **anti-Communist political rallies** in overseas Chinese schools in Korea. Students participate in the **"Motherland" visit program** called "National Salvation Corps"(Qingnian Jiuguotuan, 青年救国团) during their holidays. Activities were carried out mainly in Kinmen 金门 and Matsu 马祖, which are **military contact zones neighboring mainland China**, to enhance the sense of "patriotism" .

## Conclusion

After the ROC Government moved to Taiwan in 1949, it developed education for overseas Chinese under the guise of "preserving and spreading orthodox Chinese culture" (baochi chuancheng Zhonghua zhengtong wenhua, 保持传承中华正统文化). However, it can be seen from the specific development measures and the situation of the overseas Chinese schools in Korea that the ROC government, ostensibly based on its concern for the overseas Chinese, actually used the export of teachers and teaching materials, along with political activities, to disseminate ideology to the overseas Chinese in Korea in the form of education in order to respond to the dual anti-Communist demands in the context of the Cold War and the rivalry between the PRC and the ROC.

## Timeline for Major Events



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