

# Grass-roots “Multiculturalism”: Korean-Burakumin Interrelations in One Community

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It is no longer a secret that the once vaunted idea of Japan as a homogeneous society, devoid of the kind of “minority problems” faced by many other industrialized states, is a carefully constructed fiction. At least in academic circles, both in Japan and elsewhere, the past two decades have yielded an increasing wealth of studies on groups such as the Ainu, Okinawans, Koreans, and Burakumin — the ethnically-Japanese descendants of Tokugawa-period outcast groups — from a wide variety of disciples. Yet while such work has done much to problematize, diversify, and ultimately enrich our understanding of Japan, on the whole research on minority groups to date has indulged in a certain degree of exclusivism of its own. Individual minority groups and their position vis-à-vis majority society are thoroughly examined, but usually in a manner that seems to suggest that the particular group in question is the only exception to an otherwise valid paradigm of Japanese social homogeneity. The question of inter-minority relations in Japan has received almost no attention until very recently, despite the fact that members of different minorities have often had close, if not always comfortable, contact with one another throughout Japan’s modern history. This “blind spot” is especially surprising in regard to the Korean and Buraku minorities, who have worked in many of the same jobs and industries, suffered similar problems of discrimination and exploitation, and in many cases even lived together in the same communities. This paper focuses on Korean-Buraku relations in one such community, and explores how government programs, minority organizations, and individuals influenced the way Burakumin and Koreans have interacted with one another, as well as the way Koreans have come to view themselves, their ethnicity, and their place in the Buraku community in which they live.

The Buraku community of Yasunaka lies a short distance to the east of Osaka-city. For much of the prewar period, it was still a largely rural area. Prior to the arrival of Koreans in the mid 1920’s, Yasunaka appears to have been a medium-sized Buraku, with five or six hundred residents at most.<sup>1)</sup> As with many Buraku communities, its economic activity centered on industries that had a popular association with filth or defilement. In Yasunaka, the main industry of this sort was the production of *nikawa*, a glue made from the carcasses of cows and horses. Another major industry in the area was refining pig hair for use in brushes. Both of these carried the stigma of being Buraku enterprises, yet they were also quite lucrative — at least for those who owned the means of production. This was highly concentrated wealth, however: only five families, who also served as the community’s landlords, political representatives, and welfare commissioners, controlled both industries in the area. Their influence over

this otherwise generally impoverished community was formidable, and they used it to their advantage. The prewar Buraku liberation movement, the Suiheisha, for example, failed to gain any foothold in Yasunaka, due to the resistance of these “Buraku bosses.”<sup>2)</sup>

The idea of Koreans living in the Buraku may seem strange. And yet, in most urban Buraku communities in the Kansai area, one can find Korean residents even today. In Yasunaka, roughly one out of every ten residents is of Korean ancestry.<sup>3)</sup> As with other urban Buraku, Koreans apparently first settled in Yasunaka during the late 1920's.<sup>4)</sup> They came in search of jobs, which the men sometimes managed to find as day laborers on nearby construction projects.<sup>5)</sup> Women and children probably took in some piecework in the local pig hair industry, as their Buraku neighbors did, or worked in dangerous and unhealthy match factories in the area.<sup>6)</sup> More than jobs, however, it was housing that provided Koreans with a reason to settle in the Buraku. Unlike the case in non-Buraku areas, where landlords usually refused to rent to Koreans, Buraku landlords were willing to rent to them, especially when the property concerned was so dilapidated that no other tenants could be found. Rents and food prices were comparatively cheap as well, adding a further incentive for Korean migrants to settle there. Such factors contributed to a pattern of “chain migration” into the community throughout the 1930's. By 1945, the Korean population in Yasunaka had burgeoned to perhaps as high as 3,000.<sup>7)</sup>

Not much is known about these early Korean arrivals or their relations with their Burakumin neighbors. They appear to have established their own “ethnic enclave” of sorts on the western side of the community, which came to be called “Korea town” by the locals. One of the earliest residents of this area recalls that his family was hardly welcomed by the Burakumin. If he and his sister went outside of the family's one-room shack during the day, local children hurled insults and rocks at them.<sup>8)</sup> Whatever animosity may have existed, however, Koreans continued to arrive in the community. Population pressure gradually forced many to seek housing in other areas of the community, outside of “Korean town.”

Japan's defeat burst the balloon of this Korean population swell. Like Koreans throughout Japan, those in Yasunaka were suddenly on the move, destined for Korea or for other parts of Japan.<sup>9)</sup> If very few Korean families stayed in Yasunaka after the summer of 1945, however, new Koreans began to migrate in,<sup>10)</sup> along with Japanese refugees from the ruins of Osaka-city.<sup>11)</sup> This influx, occurring amidst the turmoil of defeat, brought about a much greater degree of residential integration among Koreans and Burakumin. Koreans and Burakumin now found themselves to be neighbors; their households separated only by thin tenement walls. According to the accounts of many interviews, both Burakumin and Korean, the area of the community in which such residential integration was most noticed was in the “Takada Apartments” — a group of run-down tenements in the western section of Yasunaka.<sup>12)</sup> To be sure, this new situation brought with it occasions for discrimination and prejudice. Buraku children taunted Koreans by telling them to “go back to Korea!” or calling them “chonko”.<sup>13)</sup> Koreans were not defenseless, however, nor innocent of discrimination themselves. When arguments with their Buraku neighbors became heated, even those who spoke Japanese fluently reverted to their native tongue in order to berate their adversaries. Elderly Burakumin of the community still recall the impression this made

on them: “the way Burakumin speak Japanese can get pretty rough,” one told me, “but when they got angry the Koreans sounded even scarier.”<sup>14)</sup> In the course of these tirades, one Korean word which no doubt left their lips was “*paekjong*”; a derogatory label applied to a similar outcast group in Korean society. The term appears to have survived well into the postwar period among Koreans living in Buraku communities, precisely because they could use it without fear of directly offending their Buraku neighbors.<sup>15)</sup>

Despite such mutual discrimination, it appears that for the most part Koreans and Burakumin got along quite well during these early postwar years. They grew accustomed to hearing each other’s conversations and quarrels through the walls, and became quite familiar with their mutual differences in diet, clothing, and religious customs.<sup>16)</sup> In a few cases, they even intermarried. These were unions arranged within the community, exclusively between Korean men who had been living there for many years and impoverished Burakumin women who had lost their husbands in the war.<sup>17)</sup> Although these marriages arose out of economic necessity, within the confines of the community itself these “international couples” apparently saw no reason to try to conceal the Korean spouse’s ethnicity, and the community as a whole seems to have accepted these unions. In almost every case, however, these marriages were never made official; the partners realized that by reporting the fact to the local authorities, the woman and any children born to the couple would become Korean nationals. The fact that this was generally avoided may suggest that these Korean men had already resigned themselves to remaining in Japan.<sup>18)</sup> Also, despite the fact that the ethnicity of the male partner was generally recognized, these men went by their Japanese “pass names.” If they bothered to give their children Korean names at all, these were generally written in Chinese characters that could easily be read as perfectly “normal” Japanese names as well.<sup>19)</sup> This held true for Korean residents of Yasunaka in general. Even so, most in the community, Korean and Japanese alike, claim that a closely-knit web of social relations in Yasunaka left little room for doubt: everyone knew that the Matsuyamas, Ōyamas, Yamamotos, and Yasudas (to name just a few of the larger families) were actually Koreans.

Nor did the difference really seem to matter. As a Buraku community, Yasunaka was looked down upon by the surrounding society and all-but ignored by the local government in its public works projects. Living conditions in the community were substandard, to say the least, and life there for most was far from easy, but this seems to have brought Korean and Burakumin neighbors together in a day-to-day, mutual effort to get by. Incidents of bickering and name-calling occurred, but Korean and Burakumin residents of Yasunaka old enough to remember life in the community during the early postwar years on the whole recall relations as having been quite amiable. Koreans and Burakumin borrowed rice and salt from each other, shared their food and liquor, and even looked after one another’s children on occasion.<sup>20)</sup> Although Koreans did not assert their ethnic identity, within the confines of the community, at least, they saw no reason to conceal it either. Korean clothing such as *chima* and *chogori*, Korean cuisine, and *chesa* ceremonies were all common.

By the late 1950’s, however, Japan’s economic “take-off” was coming to bear on the community. As Osaka industries boomed, surrounding municipalities experience

unprecedented population inflows from rural areas as far away as Kyushu. Many of the poorest of these migrants ended up in Buraku communities in and around Osaka City. In Yasunaka, this influx, containing many new Koreans as well, swelled the population.<sup>21)</sup> An explosion of small-scale businesses — producing everything from fake pearls to toothbrushes — also set up shop in and around the area to take advantage of this cheap labor supply.<sup>22)</sup> Furthermore, the spread of synthetic fibers and adhesives at around this time dealt a fatal blow to the local *nikawa* and pig hair industries, which went into rapid decline.<sup>23)</sup> The response of the influential families was to buy up even more land in the area, build cheap tenements on it to accommodate the flood of new arrivals, and attempt to live off the rent.<sup>24)</sup> Many moved away from the area soon after this, and although their position as landlords remained formidable, on the whole the influx of outsiders and the decline of traditional industries greatly weakened their hold on the community. Their slow decline and departure left the community even poorer than it had been, however. By the early 1960's, Yasunaka was a chaotic, densely packed jumble of tenement houses, outdoor latrines, polluting workshops, and Korean-owned pigsties. Public sanitation facilities were practically non-existent, and the area as a whole became a health hazard for those who lived there.

The deterioration of the community environment and decline of its elite families, however, cleared the way for the postwar successor to the Suiheisha, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL), which finally managed to gain a foot hold in Yasunaka, in 1965. Since as early as 1952, the BLL had been organizing in Buraku communities under the banner of what it called “administrative struggle” (*gyōsei tōsō*). Compared to many other Buraku communities, Yasunaka in the early 1960's was by no means remarkable in the degree of its social and environmental problems — if anything, the community still enjoyed better conditions than those prevalent in the large inner-city Buraku of Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe.<sup>25)</sup> What all of these areas had in common, however, was that postwar reconstruction and improvement projects had left them largely untouched. This was a fact that the BLL capitalized on in launching “administrative struggle” campaigns in individual Buraku communities. Anti-Buraku discrimination was not merely the result of mistaken conceptions or bigoted views. Rather, the BLL pointed out, such discrimination was nothing more than a reflection of the actual circumstances of the Buraku: to the extent that Buraku communities *were* unsanitary, polluted, and impoverished, it was understandable that society would stigmatize those who lived there. The problem was not so much general ideas about the Buraku as it was the actual situation in these communities that supported and propagated such prejudice. Local governments which had ignored the situation in Buraku communities under their jurisdiction, and left it to grow worse, were thus guilty of what the BLL termed “administrative discrimination” (*gyōsei sabetsu*). The BLL's “administrative struggle” tactics called for the organization of branches in individual Buraku communities, which would then press the issue upon local authorities, urging them to admit their responsibility, and rectify the situation by building public housing, social welfare facilities, and implementing other necessary improvement programs for the community and its residents.<sup>26)</sup>

This was generally the tactic adopted in Yasunaka, but Toshikura Hajime, the BLL's

organizer in Yasunaka, decided to take a somewhat round-about route and start by organizing “petitioners’ unions” (*yōkyūsha kumiai*), centered on specific demands such as public housing, in order to attract support from within the community.<sup>27)</sup> His reason for doing this is unclear, but perhaps he and others in the BLL’s Osaka Federation understood that the remnants of the “Buraku boss” families in Yasunaka would mount stiff resistance to any suggestion of BLL organization on their “turf.” Toshikura held meetings in the community, and gradually the membership of the individual unions grew.

Kim Ch’un-Ja, who went by her Japanese pass-name of “Murata Haruko” at this time, was one of the first to join the petitioner’s union for public housing. She attended the first meeting after seeing a flyer which promised a five-room apartment at the low rent of only 900 yen to anyone who joined the new group.<sup>28)</sup> Other Korean women — perhaps as many as twenty in all<sup>29)</sup> — eventually joined for the same reason she did; their families were growing, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to find housing in the community which was both suitable and affordable. Although Kim had no doubts about the sincerity of the organizers of this group and the BLL branch which was soon established in Yasunaka to support it and the other petitioners’ unions, her overall experience of discrimination in Japanese society made her weary of the city’s response. Even if the projects were actually realized, would city officials really let Koreans move in? Kim put this question to Ueda Takumi, then a member of the BLL Osaka Federation central committee, at a rally in Yasunaka. Briefly but firmly, Ueda assured her that all who participated in the movement would get housing, regardless of nationality.<sup>30)</sup>

With this assurance, Kim and the others threw themselves into the housing petitioners’ union activities, although none of them actually joined the new Yasunaka chapter of the BLL itself. As Kim recalls it, even though she trusted the BLL, she did not see it as an organization that required her membership — she was a Korean, after all, who just happened to be living in the Buraku.<sup>31)</sup> Nor does it appear that the Yasunaka chapter approached Koreans about joining.<sup>32)</sup> In any case, for the purpose of gaining access to housing, it was the housing petitioner’s union which remained the main focus of activity and involvement — in theory at least, the BLL chapter in Yasunaka was to act simply as a supporter of its demands.<sup>33)</sup>

Negotiations with the mayor’s office broke off within the first few days. What ensued was a 45-day sit-in demonstration at city hall during August and September of 1965, in which members of the various petitioner’s unions and the local BLL chapter occupied the mayor’s office during the day, and camped out in front of his home at night. In the midst of this struggle, the Prime Minister’s “Dōwa Policy Deliberation Committee” (*dōwa taisaku shingikai*) submitted its final report on the Buraku problem, which it declared “a matter involving basic human rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Japan.” Furthermore, the solution to this problem was “both the responsibility of the state, and at the same time a matter of importance for the nation as a whole.”<sup>34)</sup> This watershed report in the history of the Buraku problem provided a powerful ideological weapon for the Yasunaka demonstrators. Moral support came from other sectors, as the BLL, in an effort to insure that the government took positive action on the report, launched a national movement through which it sought the support

and cooperation of a wide spectrum of labor unions, citizens' groups, and political parties. Faced with the determination of the demonstrators, rising sympathy for their demands in the city council, the Deliberation Committee report, and BLL efforts to win support for it at both the national and local level, the mayor finally capitulated to all of the demands — including constructing public housing projects — on September 29.<sup>35)</sup>

The first housing project in Yasunaka was completed in December of 1966. In the weeks that followed, Kim waited to receive word on her apartment, as she watched many of her Japanese neighbors make preparations to move in. She then realized that the project was fully occupied; she and the other Koreans had been left out.<sup>36)</sup> Kim took the matter up with the officers of the BLL local chapter, which had negotiated with the city concerning who would be granted occupancy in the building. She was told that the League of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryun) had contacted the Yasunaka branch office and demanded that it not support Korean demands for housing.<sup>37)</sup> Obtaining housing would only dampen their desire to return to the fatherland and promote their further assimilation to Japanese society. Kim and her friends were outraged. None of them belonged to Chongryun, and most were in fact South Korean nationals; they felt Chongryun had no right to interfere in their business, nor did the BLL have any reason to heed its demands. For Kim and other Korean women in the housing movement, this incident opened a wound in relations with the BLL Yasunaka chapter that would take years to heal.

Interestingly, no one in the BLL Yasunaka chapter today seems to have any recollection of such contact from Chongryun.<sup>38)</sup> Instead, they mention the existence of a “nationality clause” in the Public Housing Law (*Kōei jutaku-hō*) of 1951, which ruled out Korean occupancy. A thorough discussion of the law, its interpretations, and impact on the question of Korean residency in public housing projects is beyond the scope of this paper. Reduced to its bare essentials, however, the fact of the matter is that there has never been a clause in the law itself that bars foreign nationals from residing in public housing projects. The Construction Ministry, however, had issued interpretations of the law that empowered local governments to deny applications for public housing from foreigners as *they saw fit to do so*.<sup>39)</sup> To add to the mystery, it appears that, in any case, city officials would have had very little to go on if they were determined to weed out Korean applicants: housing petitioners' union members made their applications through the local BLL office, which in many respects acted as their guarantor. As such, they were not required to submit any official documents that would reveal non-Japanese citizenship.<sup>40)</sup> Since Koreans like Kim would have applied under their Japanese pass-names, the question arises as to how city officials could have detected Koreans among the applicants in the first place.

Without gaining access to whatever records may exist of the Yasunaka BLL's negotiations with officials at city hall, it is impossible to know what factors led to the rejection of Koreans from the projects. With the evidence at hand, two possible scenarios come to mind. In the first, local BLL negotiators were simply, yet woefully ignorant of the contents of the Public Housing Law and how it applied to foreign nationals. If told by city officials that Koreans would not be allowed to live in the projects, BLL negotiators would have lacked the kind of understanding required to argue the point. It is also very likely that BLL negotiators had never really considered

the fact that their Korean neighbors differed not only in terms of ethnicity, but also in the legalistic terms of nationality, since many of the same community relationships and ties of mutual aid were carried over into the petitioner's union movement. Finally, since Korean applicants all used Japanese pass-names in their day-to-day interactions in the community, it is even possible that BLL negotiators were not entirely aware of the extent to which Koreans had participated in the movement.<sup>41)</sup> The second scenario is much more cynical. Here, the BLL negotiators went into the meeting with a set agenda: to increase the political influence of the BLL in Yasunaka, and strengthen the fledgling chapter there as well. Space in the projects was limited, and Koreans had not bothered to join the BLL anyway. Furthermore, Japanese nationals who received apartments could be counted on to vote for BLL-backed, Socialist Party candidates in local and national elections, unlike their disenfranchised Korean neighbors. Finally, "sacrificing" Koreans in this manner would remove one potential obstacle in negotiations with city hall, and might make negotiations progress more smoothly on other points of greater concern to the BLL.

Whatever the motives of the BLL negotiators in Yasunaka, however, what is clear is that the BLL as a whole was not prepared to face the issues posed by Koreans living in Buraku communities as a part of the greater Buraku problem itself. The BLL's involvement in Korean issues at this time was limited to its joint struggle with Chongryun in opposition to the normalization of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. In contrast, the BLL never called on Chongryun to join in its national movement following the Deliberation Committee report, despite the fact that it sought support from almost every sector of *Japanese* society. For the BLL at this time, the problem of the Korean minority belonged to the realm of international politics: Koreans in Japan were considered to be first and foremost expatriate nationals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who would return to their fatherland once reunification of the peninsula under the proper government was achieved. While such a view was in keeping with the general position of the Japanese Left, it ignored the existence of Koreans in the Buraku, or at best regarded this as a merely temporary feature of such communities.

Despite their rejection from the projects, however, most Koreans remained in the community. In fact, the Korean population of Yasunaka grew in the late 1960's, as construction projects for the 1970 Osaka World's Fair created a huge demand for manual labor, attracting Koreans from prefectures further west in particular.<sup>42)</sup> Even without access to the projects, the Buraku was still an easier place for Koreans to find housing. Also, the Yasunaka branch of the BLL had managed to secure some benefits for Koreans in the community through its on-going negotiations with city hall. One such benefit was the granting of "liberation scholarships" — designed to help Buraku children continue their education beyond junior high school — to Korean as well as Burakumin youths from the area.<sup>43)</sup>

Recipients of this scholarship were required to attend an after-school study group known as the "Buraku Liberation High School Friends' Group" (*Buraku kaihō kōkōsei tomo no kai*), commonly referred to as the "tomo no kai." Under the guidance of BLL organizers, students in this group learned about the history of anti-Buraku discrimination and the liberation struggle. More than study, however, the leaders of

the group — not long out of college themselves at this point — placed emphasis on the students' direct involvement in petition drives and protests against instances of discrimination.<sup>44)</sup> This focus on activism contributed to an open and participatory atmosphere, in which the students felt comfortable discussing the Buraku problem in light of their own experiences. Participation in this group made a particularly deep impression on the Koreans involved. Suh Jung-Woo, a second-generation Korean whose family settled in Yasunaka during the late 1960's, looked upon the BLL as his "personal savior" after receiving a scholarship to attend high school part time. For him, participation in the "tomo no kai" provided many revolutionary insights. Suh recalls that, before attending the group, he had fatalistically believed it was his destiny to be poor and despised, simply because he had been born Korean. Through the readings and discussions in the group, he came to realize that discrimination was not a natural phenomenon: since human society produced it, human effort could combat it.<sup>45)</sup>

Suh was not the only Korean student in the group during its early years, and participation in the group had a similar impact on others as well. Gradually, however, Suh and some of the others began to question why, if there were Koreans as well as Burakumin students in the group, the leaders never had them read about Korean history, or discuss problems facing Koreans in Japan. When Suh approached them about this, the BLL group leaders seemed puzzled at first: after all, weren't the problems of discrimination faced by both minorities essentially the same?<sup>46)</sup> In the end, however, Suh was told that the "tomo no kai" was specifically dedicated to studying the Buraku problem, in order to help the participants combat anti-Buraku discrimination. While the leaders applauded Suh's concern for anti-Korean discrimination, the BLL could not fight Koreans' battles for them: if Koreans like Suh wanted to explore Korean issues and combat anti-Korean discrimination, they should do so through an organization representing Korean interests. Although there is no way of telling how Suh and some of the other Koreans in the group might have reacted to such a reply, in retrospect, Suh does not see it as a brush-off. On the contrary, he came to have great respect for this thorough-going spirit of "self-liberation through self-reliance."<sup>47)</sup>

Eventually, Suh and six other Koreans in the "tomo no kai" formed their own "Korean Problems Study Group" to supplement their readings and discussions in the "tomo no kai." Suh also began to search for a Korean organization to participate in. Through the introduction of one of the BLL organizers in Yasunaka, he started to attend meetings at a nearby chapter of Chongryun, but soon became disillusioned with the organization. Suh's problem with Chongryun at the time was that it had almost no concern for problems of anti-Korean discrimination or human rights for Koreans in Japan. At the meetings, everyone expressed a great deal of pride in the fatherland and in being Korean, but once outside, the same people reverted to using their Japanese pass-names and identities. Not long after Suh left Chongryun, however, he seems to have become preoccupied with the same contradiction in himself. Although all of his classmates in the "tomo no kai" knew he was Korean and were comfortable with the fact, Suh and the other six Korean students were still going by their pass-names. After another year of studying about the history of Korea and Koreans in Japan, and discussion with his Burakumin and Korean friends in the "tomo no kai," Suh arrived at

the conviction that he had to live in Japanese society as a Korean, which for him meant going by his Korean name in whatever social situation he was in, and facing whatever discriminatory treatment he might receive as a result.<sup>48)</sup>

If Suh had decided to go by his real, Korean name, however, he was still quite alone among Koreans in Yasunaka. First and second generation Koreans there went by, and referred to each other by their Japanese names. Suh came to see that the BLL's campaign to raise community consciousness about anti-Buraku discrimination had left the issue of anti-Korean discrimination untouched. Korean children were attending the after school "Buraku Liberation Children's Club" (*Buraku kaihō kodomo-kai*) along with their Burakumin classmates, under the pretense that they too were Burakumin. As Suh and some of his Korean friends from the "tomo no kai" saw it, Koreans in Yasunaka, especially the children, still felt pressured to conceal their ethnic identity. Only the direction of this pressure had changed: whereas before Korean children tried to pass as Japanese, now they attempted to do so as Burakumin.<sup>49)</sup> For Suh, there was ample evidence to suggest that this new direction was little better for these children than the first. Around this time, a gang of students from the local junior high school began shoplifting and extorting money from their classmates. Although the teachers of the school and the local PTA were quick to put this behavior down to the adverse effects of anti-Buraku discrimination, Suh knew that the ringleaders of this gang were in fact Korean.<sup>50)</sup> The time had come for a group addressing the specific needs of Korean children in the community.

In 1974, Suh and a few other Korean youths formed an after school group for Korean children in the area, with the help of a number of teachers from a local junior high. The Yasunaka BLL also offered support by providing meeting space for the group in its own facilities and granting it "semi-official" affiliation with the BLL. The group took its name, the "Tokkabi kodomo-kai," from the Japanese mispronunciation of the Korean *tokkebi*: a mischievous but good-natured spirit in Korean folk tales who sides with the common people and mocks those in power.<sup>51)</sup> At first, the group met only once a week, and concentrated on getting Korean junior high students to review their lessons in school and improve their grades. Soon activities for elementary school students were added, and the group began to meet more frequently. Review of school lessons and help with homework remained one of Tokkabi's central activities, but the organizers increasingly sought to teach the children something about Korean history, language, and culture, as well as the history of the minority in Japan.<sup>52)</sup> In order to take pride in being Korean, one first had to know something about what that meant. In regard to teaching the Korean language, however, Suh and the other Korean organizers may have felt themselves at somewhat of a disadvantage. Perhaps for this reason, the organizers ended up inviting a teacher from a Chongryun-affiliated elementary school to teach children the language.<sup>53)</sup>

A greater problem than the question of what to teach and how to teach it, however, was the initial reluctance of second-generation Korean parents to agree to have their children attend the group. Their reservations were in no small way connected to what might be called the "North or South" question. Most Korean families in Yasunaka, regardless of whether the nationality section on their alien registration cards read "Chōsen" (i.e., DPRK) or "Kankoku" (ROK) were not active members of either

Chongryun or its political rival Mindan, nor did they want to be. Second-generation parents in Yasunaka at this time exhibited a strong but unstated aversion to political causes and organizations connected to either government on the Korean peninsula. At the same time, however, a Korean organization like Tokkabi, which espoused a Korean identity free of political ties to the Korean peninsula, was practically beyond comprehension for them.<sup>54)</sup> Korean parents saw nothing about their ethnicity worthy of taking pride in: for most, being Korean meant being poor. “We’re never going back to there anyway,” some would tell the Tokkabi organizer who visited their homes, “so what’s the point of teaching the kids about Korea?” “Instead of wasting time teaching them Korean,” others suggested, “why don’t you get them to learn a bit of English. Then maybe they can get into college and become doctors or pharmacists.”<sup>55)</sup>

The Tokkabi organizers eventually formulated an argument that seems to have convinced most of the Korean parents in the community. “Even if one flees discrimination,” the argument read, “one will not be liberated from it or from the poverty that accompanies it by doing so. To fight and tear down the wall of discrimination is the only path left for us, both as Koreans and as human beings. We must therefore teach our children to take pride in their people (*minzoku*), even while living in this foreign country of Japan. We must also work to open paths which will allow our children a better life and future in this society.”<sup>56)</sup>

In order to achieve these objectives, the group established a three-point platform of action. The first two points concerned education. Improving the scholastic ability of Korean students was of course necessary to insure that they would be able to take advantage of whatever opportunities might come their way. Education about Korean history, language, and culture, as well as about the experiences of their parents’ and grandparents’ generations was vital to fostering a sense of pride in being Korean, and an understanding of the injustice of ethnic discrimination. Since most of the children in the group at this time also attended the Buraku Kaihō kodomo-kai, the concept of discrimination in itself was not new to them, and the Tokkabi organizers made use of many of the same approaches to teach children about the effects of anti-Korean discrimination.<sup>57)</sup> Ideally, this sort of nurturing of pride in one’s ethnicity and awareness of discrimination would culminate in each child’s decision to live as a Korean, using his or her real, ethnic name in all social interactions. This generally took the form of what were called “*honmyō sengen*,” or declarations of one’s real name. Tokkabi children stood before an assembly of their Japanese peers, stated their Korean name, and asked everyone to call them by it from that day on. Here too, the Buraku Kaihō kodomo-kai was a obvious and convenient venue for these declarations.<sup>58)</sup>

The third point of action, that of “open(ing) paths which will allow our children a better life and future in this society,” was necessary to make the first two worth pursuing at all. The Tokkabi organizers understood the position of some parents, who questioned what good it was to go by one’s Korean name in Japanese society if access to better jobs would be denied because of this. The solution for this impasse was a program of “administrative struggle” which borrowed many of the same strategies observed in the Buraku liberation movement of ten years before. Aside from the organizers of the Tokkabi-kai, and often the children themselves, the prime participants in these struggles were members of the Association of Fellow Koreans in

Yasunaka (*Yasunaka dōhō shinboku-kai*), a group made up mostly of parents whose children attended Tokkabi. The leaders of the Yasunaka BLL also provided pivotal support in these struggles, especially when actual negotiation got underway, and it could use the BLL's political clout in the city and prefecture to great advantage. In part, the interest of the Yasunaka BLL in the Korean situation at this time no doubt reflects a transformation in the BLL Osaka Federation's approach to Koreans and other minorities, culminating in the Osaka BLL's 1972 platform of joint struggle against all forms of discrimination. However, this did not mean that the BLL, or its Yasunaka chapter in this case, was attempting to take a leading role in struggles for Korean rights. As one of the leaders told Suh during the fledgling Korean group's run-in with the police, "We can't fight your battles for you, but as fellow victims of discrimination living in the same community, we have a moral obligation to give you whatever support we can."<sup>59)</sup>

With the backing of the Yasunaka BLL and several citizens' groups and labor unions in the surrounding area, the Tokkabi/Shinboku-kai program of "administrative struggle" gradually gained momentum and won some impressive victories. Most fittingly, the first of these was the opening of the Yasunaka housing projects to Koreans in 1975, eight years after their initial rejection, but a full five years before the Ministry of Construction ordered local governments throughout Japan to do so.<sup>60)</sup> In 1979, the same kind of joint action with Yasunaka Koreans at the helm succeeded in doing away with nationality clauses for employment in the local city government, thereby opening such jobs to Korean applicants. In 1984, with national support from the BLL, Mintōren,<sup>61)</sup> and the Union of Postal Workers, the group pressed the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to remove a nationality clause from employment requirements for postal delivery workers. This cleared the way for two Korean youths from Yasunaka, both Tokkabi "graduates," to be employed as national public employees.<sup>62)</sup>

In both their own administrative struggle, and in the educational practice of the Tokkabi-kai as well, Koreans in Yasunaka not only had the support of the BLL, but also applied lessons they had learned by observing the Buraku liberation movement from the mid 1960's on. In much the same way as the Buraku liberation movement, which in the late 60's and early 70's sought to incorporate the Buraku community more completely into mainstream Japanese society, yet in a manner that would not compromise the autonomy of the movement itself, the movement launched by Koreans in Yasunaka was in no small part a battle for incorporation. While asserting their Korean-ness, the participants sought rights that would allow them to participate in Japanese society on an equal footing with Japanese. This "different but equal" ideology emerged at an opportune time to find ready allies. As the Japanese government faced the question of whether to ratify the International Covenant on Human Rights, a wide spectrum of citizens' groups focused renewed attention on human rights issues within Japan, and particularly those concerning minority groups. The BLL's own shift from a "Buraku first" principle of action to a more comprehensive, "inter-minority" approach to problems of discrimination in itself reflected such political concerns, coupled with a reawakened appreciation of the proximity of the Korean minority, rising from the grassroots in Buraku communities

like Yasunaka.

The question remains of how “multicultural” Yasunaka is, or rather, what kind of “multiculturalism” the community presents us with. If anything, what one finds today in Yasunaka is not the spontaneous or “organic” kind of cultural coexistence and exchange which the community exhibited in the early postwar years. For one thing, the gradual loss of first-generation Koreans has deprived the community of its main source of what might be termed “raw” Korean cultural practice. There are few in Yasunaka today who can still speak Korean with any degree of fluency; traditional clothing such as *chima* and *chogori* now appear only at special events; and while many maintain a fondness for *kimch'i* and certain organ meats, the diet of most Korean families is otherwise thoroughly Japanese. Aside from the loss of the first generation, from 1965 on local and central government programs aimed at improving the environment of Buraku communities and raising the standard of living among its Japanese residents irrevocably altered the way members of these two minorities dealt with one another, and rapidly eroded their alliance in the mutual, day-to-day struggle to get by.

What eventually emerged in its place was what one might call the culture of the movement. From the late 1960's through the end of the 1970's, the Buraku liberation movement in Osaka experienced a golden age of intense organization, activism, and concern for human rights issues. In Yasunaka, the BLL mobilized the entire community, Burakumin and Koreans alike, on many occasions to protest a variety of issues.<sup>63)</sup> Koreans learned from these struggles, and from participation in other BLL activities like the “*tomo no kai*,” and adopted the culture of the movement for their own purposes. The product of this adoption was a version of Korean identity that is “cultivated” rather than “raw.” The Tokkabi-kai taught children about Korean history, culture and language as a means of giving them a sense of pride in being Korean in Japan. The history of the Korean minority of course contains a wide variety of examples of how to be a Korean in Japan, but while acknowledging these pasts, what the Tokkabi organizers were ultimately after was a new vision of Korean minority identity. Through the activities of their group, they sought to teach children to be responsible, and hopefully successful participants in Japanese society, who would at the same time have the strength of character to stand up to discrimination and positively assert their own Korean identity. Opening opportunities for advancement in Japanese society to such Koreans was of course the point of the group's program of administrative struggle. In all of this, the influence of the Buraku liberation movement is evident.

If a multicultural community is characterized not only by a plurality of cultures, but also an essence of mutual respect between those of different ethnic backgrounds, then the situation found in Yasunaka presents us with complications that require the term to be modified by quotation marks. To be sure, the Tokkabi kodomo-kai and the Shinboku-kai have always been welcome and popular participants in the community's rallies, festivals, and other functions — all of which are in one form or another connected to the local BLL chapter. At such events, Tokkabi and the Shinboku-kai perform Korean drumming and dances, and serve up a variety of Korean foods, all as a way of introducing Korean culture to the rest of the community and reminding it of a

Korean presence within. Outside of such organized activities, however, relations are not always marked by such an attitude of mutual respect and exchange. In spite of an increase in the number of Korean residents who prefer to be called by their Korean names, many of their Burakumin neighbors, particularly of the older generation, continue to refer to them by their Japanese pass-names.<sup>64)</sup> Far from simply not seeing the importance of acknowledging Korean identity as such, many of the rank and file members of the Yasunaka BLL branch have on occasion even acted in a way that suggests a startling lack of sympathy for the situation faced by their Korean neighbors. From the mid 1970's to the early 1980's, for example, when the Yasunaka BLL organizers committed themselves to backing Korean demands for access to public housing and government jobs, they were bombarded with questions from upset rank and file members, who demanded to know why the BLL was wasting time supporting the Koreans, when it should be working to win more benefits for Burakumin. There have even been occasions in which such members have openly stated that they felt the Koreans were over-reacting to instances of discriminatory name-calling among children; something they would never say if the target of the insults was a Burakumin child.<sup>65)</sup>

For their part, some Koreans in the community, especially those of the first and older members of the second generations, regard their Burakumin neighbors as lazy, spendthrift, and prone to seeking government hand-outs, rather than working to improve their own situation. Such an attitude mirrors popular prejudices against Burakumin found among majority Japanese, and ultimately places the blame for anti-Buraku discrimination on its victims. Burakumin residents of roughly the same age group seem more willing to express a certain degree of admiration for Korean industriousness, and claim that many of their Korean peers have actually been "quite successful" in their businesses. Just under the surface of such praise, however, one can discern an attitude that suggests such success, or perhaps even the Korean ability to succeed in itself, is sufficient reason to disregard any Korean complaints about discrimination or claims being a part of the Buraku community.

Perhaps the area in which the coexistence of these two minority groups and their respective movements for human rights have had the greatest, most positive influence, is on the identity of third-generation Koreans who grew up in the community during the Yasunaka BLL's 'golden age' in the late 1960's and 1970's, and attended the Tokkabi-kai for most of their childhood. Unlike those of the first generation, for whom the struggle to make enough to feed one's family was of infinitely greater concern than the evils of discrimination, they have been raised with a consciousness of discrimination as a social problem to be combated. They also differ from their second-generation parents, and some of the Tokkabi organizers of that generation, many of whom only settled in Yasunaka after a long migration around Japan, harassed by persistent ethnic discrimination along the way. These second-generation parents and "big brothers and sisters" consider themselves to be "zainichi" Koreans, who just happen to call the Buraku their home. Many in the third generation, however, regard themselves as "Koreans born and raised in the Buraku" (*Buraku umare sodachi Chōsenjin*), and feel that this experience has had a great impact not only on the way they view themselves, but how they perceive problems of discrimination and social

injustice in general. It is those of this generation who have recently taken charge of Tokkabi, as well as becoming active participants in new movements to win greater rights for Koreans in Japanese society.

#### Notes

- 1) Morita Yasuo, Tsujimura Teruhiko. *Kawachi no hisabetsu Buraku — Yao-za no rekishi*. Osaka: Kaihō shuppansha, 1989. pp. 70, 105.
- 2) Unfortunately, there is little in the way of concrete historical evidence to reveal what kinds of conflict there may have been between this influential stratum and Suiheisha activists. Morita and Tsujimura (ibid. pp. 109-110) point out that a certain Shibata Sanjiro from Yasunaka invited leading members of the Suiheisha to speak at his home, most likely with the intent of launching a branch in Yasunaka. In the end, however, nothing came of this, according to Morita and Tsujimura because the wealthy and powerful of Yasunaka had serious reservations about the Suiheisha, and preferred the political views and policies of pro-government/pro-establishment *yūwa* (“conciliatory”) groups. While the propertied strata of the community probably did favor the *yūwa* approach to that of the often radical Suiheisha, it is interesting to note that Shibata *Sanjiro* was most likely a member of the same Shibata family that owned many of the *nikawa* and pig hair enterprises in Yasunaka.
- 3) “<Chōsa hōkoku> Osaka no Buraku ni sumu Chōsenjin no seikatsu,” *Buraku kaihō* no. 52, March 1974, table #2, p. 20. This 1974 survey by the Buraku Liberation League’s Osaka Federation and Buraku Liberation Research Institute found 397 Koreans among a total population of 4,338 in Yasunaka (9.2%). In all likelihood, the Korean percentage of the population has probably increased since then, since the number of Korean residents in the community has remained fairly constant, while the trend of the last 20 years has been for younger Burakumin to leave the area in search of jobs and an escape from the social stigma attached to living in such a community. The issue of negative social stigma attached to the Buraku does not seem to matter as much for Koreans, who are “immune” to it by reason of foreign nationality. Although they are discriminated against for being Korean, in Japanese society this foreign identity serves to keep them from being viewed as Burakumin, even though they reside in the Buraku.
- 4) Accounts of first-generation Koreans in Yasunaka which touch on the question of early Korean settlement can be found in *Buraku kaihō dōmei Osaka-fu rengōkai/ Kaihō shinbunsha Osaka shikyoku, Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, 1982. pp. 4-10. A recent and detailed study of Korean entrance into Buraku communities in the city of Kyoto can be found in Ha Myong-Seng. *Kanjin Nihon imin shakai keizai-shi — senzen-hen*. Tokyo: Akashi shoten, 1997. pp. 65-124.
- 5) *Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 5. It is far from clear exactly what kinds of work Korean men found in Yasunaka. One elderly Korean resident of the community recalls that there were “four or five oil refineries” nearby which employed him and other Koreans from the area to do dirty and dangerous jobs at low wages. (Ibid., p. 6.) It is also possible that Korean men from the area were hired to work on construction projects for sewage treatment and waterworks during the prewar period. These are areas which they came to dominate in the postwar. Finally, in all probability Koreans in Yasunaka began the illegal brewing of *doburoku* liquor sometime in the prewar period. This too became a Korean-dominated industry after the war.
- 6) My interviewees in Yasunaka offer conflicting accounts about the degree to which Korean women took in such piecework. In general, Korean interviewees claim that Korean women (and in one case a Korean man) did such work. Buraku and non-Buraku Japanese interviewees, however, claim that Korean women did not take in this kind of piecework, and assume that Korean families somehow got by on the husband’s earnings alone.
- 7) *Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 7.
- 8) Ibid., p. 5.
- 9) One elderly Burakumin resident of Yasunaka, who lived near the largest area of Korean settlement during and immediately after the war recalled that the whole area suddenly seemed to be “on the move,” and claimed that the population plummeted in the course of a few weeks following Japan’s defeat. From interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents, conducted at the Yasunaka rōjin sentā,

August 27, 1999.

- 10) Where these early postwar Korean arrivals came from is a matter of some uncertainty. According to the account of one elderly Korean resident of Yasunaka (*Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 8), Koreans from Ikuno Ward were employed soon after the war by one of the *nikawa* business owners to work in a sand paper factory which he had set up in the eastern part of the community. These new Koreans established their own community around the plant, which came to be called *higashi no Chōsen-machi* (“Eastern Korea Town”), in contrast to what remained of the older prewar community to the west. Most interviewees, Korean and Burakumin, recall that this was an exclusively Korean area, and that pig farming and scrap metal collecting were the main occupations of those who lived here. However, Son Ha-Soo (64), who moved to Yasunaka with his family in 1937 and lived in another Korean area near the center of the Buraku, recalls that the eastern Korea town existed even prior to the end of the war. Also, he claims that few if any Koreans in Yasunaka came there from Ikuno Ward. Korean communities in Ikuno were largely composed of Cheju Islanders, who faced severe discrimination from other Koreans. Thus, Son claims, if they left Ikuno for anywhere, it probably would have been the Korean community in Hagusa, a Buraku area on the eastern border of Ikuno Ward, in Higashi Osaka City. (Interview with Son Ha-Soo and family, conducted at their home in Yasunaka, September 4, 1999.)
- 11) A “reconstructed” map of the way Yasunaka looked on 1945 (obtained from the Yasunaka rōjin sentā: “Showa 20-nen koro no Yasunaka no yōsu,” compiled in October, 1985.) notes that refugees from the March 13, 1945 air raid on the Nishihama area of Osaka settled in an area on the southwestern side of the Buraku. This would seem to suggest that they moved into the Korean area, although the map makes no mention of this, nor does it note the existence of any Korean areas whatsoever. It is unclear whether the Japanese refugees who entered the community became long-term residents, or moved on soon after the war. In the case of refugees from Nishihama, it is quite possible that they came to Yasunaka because they had friends or relatives in the community; many may have originally come from Yasunaka themselves. For much of the prewar period, the huge Buraku community of Nishihama served as a kind of economic hub for a network of traditionally Buraku industries. For this reason, there was a fairly intense degree of migration from rural Buraku communities to Nishihama. (Fukuhara Hiroyuki, “Toshi Buraku jūmin no rōdō = seikatsu katei — Nishihama chiku wo chūshin ni,” Sugihara Kaoru and Tamai Kingo, eds. *Taisho, Osaka, suramu — mo hitotsu no Nihon kindaiishi* [expanded edition], Tokyo: Shinhyoron, 1996. pp. 97-159.)
- 12) From interviews with Saeki Chizuko (March 1, 1999), Elderly residents of Yasunaka (August 27, 1999), and Son Ha-Soo and family (September 4, 1999). The “Takada Apartments” were built in 1928, in an area that probably bordered on the area of the western Korea town, or perhaps overlapped with it. There was also a Korean school in the area, established by the Zainichi Chōsenjin renmei, the forerunner of the pro-DPRK Chongryun. The “Zai-Osaka Chōsenjin kakushu jigyo sha meiboroku (published in July 1947 by the Zainichi Chōsenjin renmei, Osaka honbu, kinro assen-sho), contains a listing for a “Yasunaka chū-shōto gakko” attached to its Naka kawachi higashi chapter. Son Ha-Soo also recalls some sort of Korean “office,” with a classroom attached, located in the home of a certain Korean family known as the “Ōyamas”. Ahn Sang-Duk (interviewed on August 3, 2000) recalls that a small classroom “with a picture of Kim Il-Sung” was still there during his youth, which would mean that it continued operating in some capacity until at least the early 1960’s. I have been unable to locate anyone who actually attended the school.
- 13) Interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents, conducted at the Yasunaka rōjin sentā, August 27, 1999.
- 14) Ibid.
- 15) Ha Myong-Seng’s study of first-generation Koreans living in Buraku communities in Kyoto found that this term is still very much alive in their vocabulary today, for exactly this reason. (*Kanjin Nihon imin shakai keizai-shi — senzen-hen*. pp. 65-124.) In Yasunaka as well, first-generation Koreans appear to have complained often that “those *paekjong* think they’re so smart.” (*Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 10.)
- 16) Interviews with elderly residents of Yasunaka, August 27, 1999.) In the realm of food, while both Burakumin and Koreans residing in Japan made use of organ meats such as cow and pig intestines in their diet, the manner of preparing these was entirely different. Burakumin generally steamed these

together with rice and vegetables, but never grilled them. Saeki Chizuko recalls her surprise at being served grilled *horumon* at the home of a Korean friend. “I thought it was really good. I wondered why Burakumin had never thought of cooking it that way.” (From an interview with Saeki Chizuko, August 27, 1999.)

- 17) There are of course no statistics available on intermarriage in Yasunaka, but elderly Japanese residents of the community (interviewed August 27, 1999), recall that such intermarriages did occur, especially in the late 1940's. Son Ch'un-Mi (interviewed September 5, 1999), who is the daughter of one such couple, believes that there were quite a few unions of this sort, at least among friends of her parents.
- 18) Interview with Son Ch'un-Mi, at her home in Yasunaka (September 5, 1999). Interestingly, Son's parents were one of the few — perhaps the only — couple of this sort who did report their marriage. By doing so, Son's mother lost her Japanese nationality by default. After her husband's death she had to petition the Ministry of Justice in order to *renaturalize*. Son believes that, at the time of her parents' marriage, in any case, her father still entertained hopes that the family would someday return to Korea together, although this eventually became little more than a dream of his.
- 19) Interview with Son Ha-Soo and family (September 4, 1999). Son is the uncle of Son Ch'un-Mi. He points out that his niece's given name (春美) can also be read as “Harumi,” a common Japanese woman's name. She was thus generally known as “Yamamoto (the Son family's pass-name) Harumi.” Son believes that his brother chose such a name intentionally for this purpose.
- 20) Interview with Son Ha-Soo and family (September 4, 1999), interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents (August 27, 1999). All interviewees recall this period with no small amount of nostalgia. For Son in particular, the postwar years up to the late 1960's were years marked by the greatest degree of mutual cooperation and fellowship between the two minorities. He claims, perhaps ironically, that the public housing projects built to alleviate the crowded, substandard housing conditions of the community have greatly curtailed opportunities for spontaneous interaction with one's neighbors by compartmentalizing the community. The projects and other community improvements also brought about a much higher degree of movement into and out of the community. For Son, these changes have all-but destroyed the community's former cohesiveness.
- 21) No population figures for Yasunaka alone are available for this period, but the population of Yao-city as a whole nearly tripled between 1950 and 1965. (Calculated from population figures in Yao-shi shi henshu iinkai, *Yao-shi shi (kindai) honbun-hen*, 1978, pp. 564-569.) Some of this increase, however, was the result of the incorporation of neighboring villages into the city.
- 22) None of these new businesses provided a stable source of jobs to the community, however. A study conducted in 1969 found that 50% of manufacturing firms in Yasunaka employed fewer than eleven workers and 17%, fewer than five workers. Quoted in Yao-shi dōwa taisaku shingikai, “Yao-shi dōwa taisaku shingikai toshin,” April 27, 1970. (*Yao-shi shi (kindai) honbun-hen*, p. 702.)
- 23) *Yasunaka kaihō kaikan 25-nen no ayumi*. p. 108. Interview with Saeki Chizuko, conducted at the Yasunaka kaiho kaikan, March 1, 1999.
- 24) Interviews with Nakamura Seiji (May 8, 1999) and Saeki Chizuko (May 10, 1999).
- 25) A 1958 survey found that conditions in Yasunaka compared favorably to those found in other Osaka Buraku communities. (Osaka-fu dōwa jigyō sokushin kyōgikai, ed. *Osaka no dōwa jigyō to kaihō undō: Osaka-fu dōwa jigyo sokushin kyogikai-shi*, Osaka: Buraku kaiho kenkyusho, 1977. p. 75.)
- 26) Much has been written on the history of and theory behind administrative struggle. As both a term and tactic of the liberation movement, it first appeared in the wake of the “All Romance” Incident of 1951, which involved the large Buraku community of Sūjin in Kyoto. For an overview of the incident and the administrative struggle that it spawned, see Morooka Sukeyuki, *Sengo Buraku kaihō ronso-shi*, vol. 1, chapter 7. For the recollections of Asada Zennosuke, then leader of the Kyoto Federation of the BLL, see his *Sabetsu to tatakaisuzukete*, chapter 12. Many researchers have focused on this incident and the impact it had on both the community of Sūjin and the liberation movement as a whole. Kim Jung-Mi's exploration (*Suihei undōshi kenkyū: minzoku sabetsu hihan*, pp. 543-569) is particularly noteworthy among these for its penetrating treatment of the “hidden” issue of anti-Korean discrimination in the incident, which the BLL Kyoto Federation concealed in its subsequent administrative struggle. More recently, Maekawa Osamu has reexamined the incident to reveal a

much more complex “behind the scenes” story of political influence at the local level, and the impact this had on its resolution. (“Mo hitotsu no ‘ōru romansu gyōsei tōsō,” in Osaka jinken hakubutsukan, ed. *Sengo Buraku mondai no gutaizō*, pp. 60-91.) My own treatment of the “All Romance” Incident and its historical importance for relations between Koreans and Burakumin in the areas of Sūjin and neighboring Higashi Kujō is forthcoming.

- 27) *Kawachi no hisabetsu Buraku — Yao-za no rekishi*. p. 130.
- 28) Interviews with Kim Ch’un-Ja, conducted at Lee Chang-Jae’s apartment in Yasunaka (February 28, 1999), and at the Tokkabi kodomo-kai in Yasunaka (September 1, 1999).
- 29) The actual extent of Korean participation in this organization is far from certain. The figure of “20 or more” (“sūjūnin”), used here, comes from the account in *Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 12. Kim Ch’un-Ja merely recalls that there were “quite a few” Korean women like herself involved. Ironically, Burakumin women who were involved in this organization do not recall any Korean participation, although they seem willing to entertain the possibility. (Interviews with elderly Yasunaka resident, conducted at the Yasunaka rōjin sentā, August 27, 1999.) This seems to contradict the general consensus among interviewees of both minorities that everyone in the community knew which families were actually Korean. One possible explanation for the discrepancy is that Korean women like Kim, who became active in the housing struggle early on, represented a more recent group of arrivals to Yasunaka. Kim herself settled in the area with her husband in 1961, just four years prior to Toshikura’s first attempts to organize the community. She recalls that when her family first arrived in Yasunaka, most of her neighbors thought she was from Tokyo — apparently because she did not speak Japanese with a Kansai accent.
- 30) *Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 12. Interview with Kim Ch’un-Ja, conducted at the Tokkabi kodomo-kai in Yasunaka (September 1, 1999). The charismatic Ueda came to personify the youthful and dynamic activism of the Osaka BLL in the late 1960’s. He eventually took a leading role in defining the Osaka Federation’s commitment to forming alliances with other minority right’s organizations in the 1970’s. He was later elected to the House of Representatives of the Diet as a candidate of the Japan Socialist Party, where he served for six consecutive terms.
- 31) Interview with Kim Ch’un-Ja (September 1, 1999).
- 32) None of my interviewees, Korean or Japanese, had any recollection of Koreans trying to join the local chapter of the League, or of organizers seeking their support.
- 33) Interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents (August 27, 1999). In contrast to the case with Korean participants, all Japanese in the petitioners’ union joined the BLL chapter as soon as it was launched. One of my interviewees who joined at this time was not actually of Buraku background herself, but had moved to Yasunaka after marrying a man from the community in 1960. This kind of community-based approach to membership served to set the Osaka Federation apart from BLL organizations in other prefectures, in particular Kyoto, which still limited membership to “bona fide” Burakumin at this time. Given such an approach, it seems odd that Koreans were never asked to join. In fact, there were cases of Koreans joining local BLL chapters elsewhere at around this same time, such as the Hagusa chapter in Higashi Osaka (*Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 39).
- 34) Dōwa taisaku shingikai, “Dōwa taisaku shingikai tōshin,” (zenbun) August 11, 1965. Sōrifu, *Dōwa taisaku no genjō*, March 1977. p. 223.
- 35) Buraku kaihō dōmei Yasunaka shibu kessei 15 shūnen kinen gyōji jikkō iinkai, *Yasunaka ni okeru Buraku kaihō undō 15 nen no ayumi*, 1981. p. 10. *Kawachi no hisabetsu Buraku — Yao-za no rekishi*. p. 132.
- 36) Personal correspondence with Kim Ch’un-Ja and Lee Chang-Jae, September 18, 2000. *Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin* merely states that “after the city promised to build the housing, it became apparent that Koreans would not be able to move in.” (pp. 12-13)
- 37) Interview with Kim Ch’un-Ja, September 1, 1999. In the September 18, 2000 correspondence, Kim named Yasunaka branch director Toshikura Hajime as one of those from whom she heard this explanation.
- 38) Saeki Chizuko, the present director of the Yasunaka BLL chapter, does not recall ever hearing of such a request from Chongryun, although she would have been only 13 years old at the time.
- 39) Shinozuka Terutsugu, et. al. *Jōrei kenkyū sōsho 5: kenchiku/toshi kaihatsu jōrei, kōei jūtaku jōrei*. Tokyo:

Gakuyo shobō, 1979. p. 48. The Ministry issued its interpretation of the Law to local authorities in different municipalities on two separate occasions during the 1950's. The gist of this interpretation was that the Public Housing Law was designed to help protect an individual's "right to live" (*seizonken*) as guaranteed in Article 25 of the Japanese Constitution, but since this article applied only to Japanese citizens (*kokumin*), foreigners therefore had no automatic right to demand access to public housing, and local administrative bodies were within their power to deny applications from foreigners if they so chose. This merely placed the burden of decision on local municipal governments, however, since it did not expressly forbid them from allowing foreigners access. In fact, within Osaka Prefecture itself there had been cases prior to Yasunaka in which Koreans who joined their local BLL chapter and took part in its struggle were granted apartments along with their Burakumin neighbors. The housing struggle in the Buraku community of Hagusa, in 1962, was one such case. (*Hisabetsu Buraku ni ikiru Chōsenjin*, p. 39)

- 40) Interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents, August 27, 1999. Specifically, none of the interviewees could recall being asked to submit a copy of their Certificate of Residential Registration (*jūminhyō*), which would prove they were long-term residents of the community. Even today, foreign nationals living in Japan do not possess this document, and are thus required to submit an Alien Registration Certificate (*gaikokujin tōroku hyō*) in its place when official proof of residence is required.
- 41) Although Saeki Chizuko was not old enough at the time of the struggle to have taken much of a part, she claims that chapter members probably had little if any awareness during the struggle that "nationality clauses" would be in force and create problems for Koreans in the movement. Part of the problem, she surmises, may have been a lack of understanding of the laws involved. More than this, however, she believes that Burakumin involved in the Yasunaka struggle probably had little if any consciousness of the fact that Koreans were of a different nationality. Especially during the struggle, the participants operated on what she calls a "village consciousness" (*mura ishiki*), in which Koreans were seen as different ethnically, but still members of the same community. (Interviews with Saeki Chizuko, March 1 and May 10, 1999.) On the other hand, elderly Japanese residents of Yasunaka (interviewed August 27, 1999) cannot recall any Korean participation in the movement.
- 42) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, at Osaka kokusai rikai kyōiku kenkyū sentā (KMJ), September 1, 1999. Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, and Yamaguchi Prefectures in particular seem to have experienced something of a Korean population hemorrhage from the mid 1950's on. All four saw their Korean population decline by over 15% during 1955 — 1960, and over 20% during 1960 — 1965. In Shimane Prefecture alone during the latter period, the Korean population dropped by over 50%. In contrast, the Korean population of Osaka Prefecture rose by roughly 20% in this first period, and slightly over 10% in the latter. (Figures taken from bar graphs in Morita Yoshio, *Sūji ga kataru zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin no rekishi*, pp. 141, 144.)
- 43) Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chin'gu hwa hamge — nakama to tomo ni: Tokkabi kodomo-kai 10 shūnen kinenshi*, 1984, p. 30.
- 44) Interview with Saeki Chizuko, August 2, 2000.
- 45) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, September 1, 1999.
- 46) Interview with Saeki Chizuko, March 1 1999.
- 47) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, September 1, 1999.
- 48) Ibid.
- 49) Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, pp. 41-42. However, even after Suh established the Korean children's group examined below, the Tokkabi kodomo-kai, many Korean children in the community continued to attend both groups after school. *Chingu hwa hamge* states that in the beginning the Korean group's young leadership did not find such a situation desirable. They worried that the Kaihō kodomo-kai would only act as a vehicle for further Korean assimilation. However, when they attempted to discourage such children for attending the BLL-sponsored activities, the result was that the children often stopped attending Tokkabi as well. (p. 42) The leaders apparently came around to the children's point of view on the issue: all of their non-Korean friends from the area attended the Kaihō kodomo-kai, so it was only natural that they would want to go there too. Furthermore, while some children may have attempted to run from anti-Korean discrimination by taking an active part in the Buraku group, one's ethnicity seems to have been a fairly open secret among the children in the

- Kaihō kodomo-kai, and most of the Buraku children had no problem with the fact that some of their friends were Korean. Lee Chang-Jae, an early participant in the Tokkabi kodomo-kai who attended Kaihō kodomo-kai under his pass name “Murata Katsuo” for the first few years, recalls that all of his classmates in the Kaiho kodomō-kai knew he was Korean. (Interview with Lee Chang-Jae at his home in Yasunaka, May 9, 1999.)
- 50) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, September 1, 1999.
- 51) This was essentially Suh’s definition of the term. The group apparently took the name from the title of a certain children’s magazine. The Tokkabi tenth anniversary history mentions that this magazine also contained an explanation of the term, written by “the ethnologist Prof. Kim Yang-Ki.” (Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, pp. 38-39.) I have yet to locate this magazine.
- 52) Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, p. 32.
- 53) Ibid, p. 34. Kim Ch’un-Ja believes that a teacher from Chongryun was brought in because there were few if any in the community who were fluent enough in the Korean language to teach it. She also recalls that relying on a teacher from Chongryun created problems second-generation Koreans in Yasunaka who, like herself, generally felt a strong aversion to “home country” political and ideological platforms, North or South. When her children came home after the first day of these language classes shouting *mansei* to Kim Il-Sung, she was so upset that she slapped them and had them tear the North Korean leader’s picture out of the textbooks they had received. (Interview with Kim Ch’un-Ja, September 1, 1999.)
- 54) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, September 1, 1999. The “North or South” question had reverberations even in the way the group was to refer to the minority. Combinations such as “*zainichi Kankokujin-Chōsenjin*” (aside from just being a mouthful to say all the time) put those of one nationality before those of the other. “*Zainichi Korean*” held little charm for parents unfamiliar with the English word “Korean.” The term that organizers initially made use of was the Japanese “*dōhō*,” or “brethren,” usually a term charged with nationalistic sentiment, but convenient in this case precisely because it could be used to refer to Korean ethnicity without touching on the sensitive issue of nationality. (Interview with Lee Chiyonmi, at Tokkabi kodomo-kai, March 1, 1999.) Interestingly, the group now seems to use “*Chōsenjin*” and “*zainichi Chōsenjin*” as generic terms for the minority. This also seems to be the practice of many Koreans in the community, who refer to themselves as “*Chōsenjin*” in juxtaposition to the Japanese majority. Only when the conversation turns to legalistic issues of citizenship and alien registration do they refer to themselves as “*Kankokujin*.”
- 55) Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, p. 35.
- 56) Ibid., p. 36.
- 57) The Kaihō kodomo-kai sought to help Buraku children stand up to anti-Buraku discrimination by having them face the facts of their background and the discrimination they faced for living in a Buraku community, and teaching them the history of anti-Buraku discrimination as a means of making them realize its injustice. The Tokkabi approach in regard to Korean minority identity, and Korean history and culture was of course similar. However, in 1979 organizers apparently began to realize problems with this approach among students in the upper grades of elementary school. Rather than coming to appreciate anti-Korean discrimination within the wider context of discrimination in general, emphasis on taking pride in being Korean ran the risk of degenerating into what the leaders termed “a tendency toward cultural nationalism (*minzoku shugi*).” (Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, p. 97.)
- 58) Ibid., pp. 44, 96. The case of Lee Chang-Jae and Son Soo-Gil’s *honmyō sengen* was typical. First, each declared his real name before the members of the Kaihō kodomo-kai. At a later date, they repeated this declaration before their classmates at school. The issue of *honmyō sengen*, however, served to reveal the complicated relationship that second-generation parents had with Korean identity. For example, Son’s father, Son Ha-Soo, was convinced that the family would never return to Korea, and thus gave his children Japanese names rather than Korean names that could also be read as Japanese names. Soo-Gil was thus *actually* named “Hideyoshi” (an extremely ironic name for a Korean), because his father had intended for him to pass in Japanese society as “Yamamoto Hideyoshi.” He was thus entirely against his son’s planned *honmyō sengen*, primarily because he doubted that the name 秀吉 could even be read as a real Korean man’s name. Eventually, Suh Jung-Woo managed to convince

Ha-Soo that “Soo-Gil” was actually an authentic Korean name. (Interview with Son Ha-Soo, September 4, 1999.) Prior to this, however, Soo-Gil had already stood before his friends at the Kaihō kodomo-kai, and asked them to call him by his real name, “Son Hideyoshi.” (Son’s *honmyō sengen* experience and other aspects of his involvement in the Tokkabi kodomo-kai are related in Fukuoka Yasunori, *Gendai wakamono no sabetsu suru kanōsei*, pp. 108-119.)

- 59) Interview with Suh Jung-Woo, September 1, 1999.
- 60) The actual point at which all public housing in Yasunaka was opened to Koreans, and the degree to which joint action by the Yasunaka BLL and the Shinboku-kai were important in bringing this about are matters of some uncertainty. According to the chronology in *Chingu hwa hamge* (p. 114), the Shinboku-kai decided to demand access to public housing at its 10<sup>th</sup> General Meeting, held on October 12, 1975. However, some Koreans families may have already gained access to some of the Yasunaka projects by this point. Son Ha-Soo’s family (interviewed September 4, 1999) had been forced to move out of their dwelling to make way for construction of the municipal Yasunaka Higashi Day Care Center, part of Yao City’s area improvement program for the community, most likely sometime in the spring of 1975. Son recalls that the family was given the choice between accepting 500,000 yen in compensation and finding another place to live on their own, or moving into Municipal Building #13. They chose the latter option, and moved in sometime during 1975. (Unfortunately, neither Son nor anyone else in the family could recall the general timing of the move.) The apparent discrepancy in all likelihood has to do with the official status of the building involved. Yao City eventually constructed 15 public housing facilities in Yasunaka. Buildings #1 through #6 (constructed between 1966 and 1969) were all classified as “public housing projects” (*kōei jūtaku*), as were buildings #10 and #11 (completed in 1972). However, buildings #7 through #9 (all completed in 1970) and buildings #12 through #15 (completed between 1973 and 1985) were all “area improvement housing projects” (*kairyō jūtaku*). (*Yao-shi kikaku chōsei-bu jinken-shitsu, Yao-shi dōwa taisaku jigyō gaikyō (1997-nenban)*, pp. 39-40.) Although technically a sub-category of public housing, these latter buildings were built for the purpose of facilitating government residential area improvement projects, and as such were governed under a separate law, the Residential Area Improvement Law (*Jutaku chiku kairyō-hō*) of 1960, which obligated local governments to grant persons whose homes were in poor condition and slated for removal in the course of the improvement work the option of residency in such buildings, regardless of their nationality. The Son family apparently gained access in this manner, as did many other Korean families. Although they were less than 10 years old at the time, both Son Soo-Gil and Lee Chang-Jae recall that building #12 (completed in 1973), became entirely occupied by Korean families. (Interview with Lee Chang-Jae and Son Soo-Gil, February 28, 1999.)
- 61) The “Minzoku sabetsu to tatakau renraku kyōgikai,” founded in 1975. Mintōren represented a new type of Korean minority organization, focused on minority rights in Japan rather than support for “home country” governments. It arose as a loose federation of various Korean minority groups nationwide, which had all lent support to Pak Chong-Sok in his legal battle with Hitachi Seisakujo, beginning in 1970, after the company fired him for requesting to be addressed by his Korean name, rather than the pass-name he had been employed under. Pak won his suit in 1974, and Mintōren went on to champion other legal and human rights issues facing Koreans, such as the early 1980’s movement in opposition to the fingerprinting of members of the minority, required under the Alien Registration Act. The Tokkabi kodomo-kai became involved in Mintōren, under Suh Jung-Woo’s guidance, and served as a model for similar Korean minority children’s groups established elsewhere.
- 62) The two were Lee Chang-Jae and Son Soo-Gil.
- 63) In Yasunaka, as in other Buraku communities nationwide, the largest of these were the school boycotts in protest of the guilty verdict handed down against Ishikawa Kazuo in the Sayama Case. In general, Korean parents supported the boycott. Kim Ch’un-Ja says that she had no problem with her children participating in the boycott, since she herself believed that there was something discriminatory about the verdict and the way the case had been handled by the police from the start. (Interview with Kim Ch’un-Ja, September 1, 1999.)
- 64) In my interviews with elderly Yasunaka residents (conducted August 27, 1999), it was impossible to even get the interviewees to acknowledge the identity of members of certain Korean families from the

community without resorting to using their Japanese pass names. These interviewees had never heard of anyone named Kim Ch'un-Ja or Son Ha-Soo, but knew immediately who "Murata Haruko" and "Yamamoto Tsuruhide" were.

- 65) Interviews with Saeki Chizuko (May 10, 1999), and Suh Jung-Woo (September 1, 1999). The name-calling incident occurred in 1978, and involved a Burakumin child who was upset over losing in a game to a Korean classmate at the Kaihō kodomo-kai. The incident was treated as a case of discrimination by the Yasunaka BLL, which called a meeting of parents to explain new educational measures the BLL would implement in the children's group to prevent such occurrences in the future. The parents, however, claimed to see nothing discriminatory in the utterance. Some even charged Tokkabi with making Korean children overly sensitive to such utterances. (Tokkabi kodomo-kai, *Chingu hwa hamge*, p. 45.)