



# Cipango - French Journal of Japanese Studies

English Selection

7 | 2023

Coal and Mining Communities in Japan

---

## The Coal-mining Pariahs of Chikuhō. Assimilation or Over-Discrimination?

*Les parias des houillères du Chikuhō : assimilation ou surdiscrimination ?*

**Kaiko Miyazaki**

Translator: Karen Grimwade

---



### Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/cjs/1915>

ISSN: 2268-1744

### Publisher

INALCO

### Electronic reference

Kaiko Miyazaki, "The Coal-mining Pariahs of Chikuhō. Assimilation or Over-Discrimination?", *Cipango - French Journal of Japanese Studies* [Online], 7 | 2023, Online since 25 April 2023, connection on 13 September 2023. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/cjs/1915>

---

This text was automatically generated on 13 September 2023.



Creative Commons - Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International - CC BY-NC 4.0  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

---

# The Coal-mining Pariahs of Chikuhō. Assimilation or Over-Discrimination?

*Les parias des houillères du Chikuhō : assimilation ou surdiscrimination ?*

**Kaiko Miyazaki**

Translation : Karen Grimwade

---

Original release : Kaiko Miyazaki, « Les parias des houillères du Chikuhō : assimilation ou surdiscrimination ? », *Cipango*, 23, 2016, p. 63-124.

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/cipango/3496> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/cipango.3496>

- 1 The Chikuhō 筑豊 region<sup>1</sup> of northern Kyūshū was, until the 1950s, one of Japan's main coal-producing areas.<sup>2</sup> It was subsequently overtaken by Ishikari coalfield in Hokkaidō as production levels began to decline nationally. Although Chikuhō's last mine closed in 1976, the region remains strongly associated with coal-mining history, as evidenced by the frequent performances of *Tankōbushi* 炭坑節, the Chikuhō miners' song, at Buddhist Obon festivals as far away as Tokyo.
- 2 Much less well known is the link between coal mining and *burakumin* in the Chikuhō region, no doubt due to the powerful taboo that still surrounds these social outcasts in contemporary Japan.<sup>3</sup> As pointed out by Tokita Yoshihisa 戸木田嘉久 (1924-), an economist and author of several books on Kyūshū's mines, post-war historical research – particularly on Japan's working class – has been relatively silent on the issue.<sup>4</sup> And yet, Chikuhō has a particularly high concentration of *buraku* communities, often living in close proximity to disused mines. The few historians writing on the subject consider the presence of *burakumin* in the mines to be indisputable.<sup>5</sup>
- 3 Could this be a simple coincidence? Using the primary statistics available and the work of Japanese historians, this paper will attempt to show that there is a direct link

between the *buraku* presence in Chikuhō and the coal-mining industry, essentially resulting from historical and social factors.<sup>6</sup>

- 4 From there we will look at how the proletarianization of *buraku* communities came about in the late nineteenth century as the coal mines were industrialised. Did the *burakumin* blend seamlessly into the nascent working class? We will see how discrimination in fact persisted within the mining proletariat and what strategies were adopted by industrial groups to manage these populations. This examination will draw on the archives of *Suihei geppō* 水平月報,<sup>7</sup> a monthly bulletin published by the Suiheisha movement in Kyūshū.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, certain elements in this periodical indirectly provide a fairly clear picture of the *burakumin* condition in Chikuhō's mines during the 1920s, something relatively undocumented elsewhere.
- 5 In the interest of providing a comprehensive analysis, the final part of this paper will explore how Japanese labour movements responded to the *burakumin* presence in the mines. How did the mining unions and Japanese Communist Party (JCP) take this minority into account in their activities? How did they tackle the Suiheisha's strong influence in Chikuhō? An examination of *Suihei geppō*'s archives, the publication's fate and that of its editors will shed light on the evolving relations between *burakumin* defence groups and the mining unions, ranging from solidarity and alliance to subordination.

## Actual conditions and activities of the *burakumin* in Chikuhō's mines

### The birth of coal mining and the *eta* presence in Edo-period Chikuhō

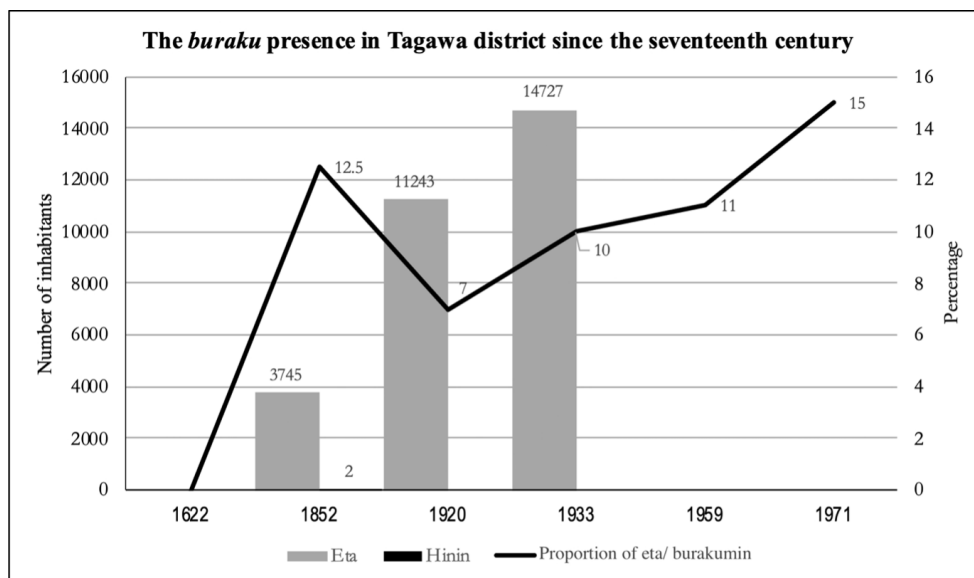
- 6 One of the first known mentions of coal extraction in Chikuhō dates back to the late seventeenth century (1686), when coal appears to have been used as a substitute for firewood by impoverished populations.<sup>9</sup> According to the Confucian scholar Kaibara Ekiken 貝原益軒 (1630–1714), who lived through the period, the communities responsible for extracting and selling coal were essentially “lowly people” – *senmin* 賤民 – belonging to the lowest stratum of society.<sup>10</sup> The term *senmin* had a broad range of interpretations at the time; however, historians Nagasue Toshio 永末十四雄 (1925–) and Mahara Tetsuo 馬原鉄男 (1930–1992)<sup>11</sup> suggest it may have referred to populations similar to *eta* 穢多 and *hinin* 非人.<sup>12</sup> Others, like Aso Tatsuo 安蘇龍生, believe that it simply denoted poor farmers.<sup>13</sup> Regardless, in mid-Edo Chikuhō the work of extracting and selling coal, as well as its use in the home, appears to have been restricted to the poorest classes of peasants. In other words, to populations similar in the hierarchy of values to *eta* and *hinin*.
- 7 Coal nonetheless became an increasingly lucrative resource during the eighteenth century, particularly in the realm of salt production (*enden* 塩田), which required huge quantities of wood that were advantageously replaced with coal wherever possible. This change in fortune saw the extraction and sale of coal pass into the hands of farmers under the control of village communities that employed *eta* as temporary labour. This was the case of farmers in the village of Nakahara in Kasuya district (粕屋郡), who controlled the coal trade there and in 1782–1783 employed *eta* for the unenviable task of bailing out water from the mines on New Year's Day.<sup>14</sup>

- 8 Other examples show that *eta*, excluded from the more lucrative business of extracting and selling, were mostly allocated menial tasks in difficult environments. These included transporting coal by waterway, particularly since many *eta* settlements were located near rivers. In the Chikuhō region, *eta* were employed as bargemen (*kako* 水主) transporting coal on the upper reaches of the River Onga's tributaries via flatboats, known as *takasebune* 高瀬舟 in the Tagawa area and *kawahirata* 川舩 in Chikuzen. The job of transporting coal on the lower reaches was assigned to *hyakushō* 百姓.<sup>15</sup> The *buraku* hamlet of Sendōmachi 船頭町 – or “boatmen's town” – in Tagawa (Kokura domain), for example, is attested to have carried out such activities on the Chūganji, a tributary of the Onga, in 1852. Other examples include the hamlets of Gakide, Toishi, Hichijikkoku and Miyatoko, all of which were involved in transporting coal by water. According to Mahara Tetsuo, who recorded testimony from *burakumin* still in possession of their ancestors' *kawahirata*, many would have worked as coal bargemen.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, Aso Tatsuo believes that the huge contribution of *burakumin* to this sector only began in the early Meiji period (1868–1912), following the loosening of restrictions on the transportation of coal by waterway in 1872. This situation, he posits, continued until the 1890s, after which *burakumin* were gradually replaced by the railways.<sup>17</sup>
- 9 The heightened focus on coal in the Chikuhō region during the eighteenth century was such that Fukuoka and Kokura domains decided to take control of the sector. Despite the lucrative nature of the trade, they prioritised agriculture and introduced measures designed to force the *hyakushō* to give up their coal-related activities and return to the paddies. In 1803, for example, Kokura domain forbid *hyakushō* from mining and officially authorised “outsiders” (*yosomono* 他所者) to work in the mines. As a result, the majority of coal workers in the region during the first half of the nineteenth century were *yosomono*. Documents from the period sometimes refer to these individuals as “exiled persons” (*aburemono* 溢者) or simply “travellers” (*tabibito* 旅人), underlining their nomadic existence on the margins of normal society. Other terms include the generic expression “day labourers” (*hiyatoi kasegi* 日雇持), the more specific “mine labourers” (*ishiyama kasegi* 石山稼) or even “coal-mining people” (*sekitan yama no mono* 石炭山の者), depending on the nature of their work. Most were not recorded in the civil registration system of the day and their origins are rarely known.<sup>18</sup> Endō Masao, an economist at Kyūshū University, stated in 1942 that these vagabond mine labourers would also have included *eta* and *hinin*.<sup>19</sup>
- 10 According to Aso Tatsuo, most of these miners were down-and-out *hyakushō* from other parts of Japan, although he sees significant similarities between the status of “coal-mining people” (*sekitan yama no mono*) and *eta*. Both were forbidden from entering *hyakushō* villages and were almost always blamed for any conflicts that arose between the two groups, whereas today they tend to be seen as victims.<sup>20</sup>
- 11 Conversely, it is quite likely that some of these itinerant miners were gradually absorbed into the *eta* class. Unlike in certain other parts of Japan, in Chikuhō these drifters mostly seem to have become *eta* rather than *hinin*.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the number of *hinin* was particularly low in Fukuoka and Kokura domains, no doubt because the *eta* class was better able to provide a stable agricultural workforce.<sup>22</sup>
- 12 This integration of migrant labourers into the *eta* class sometimes occurred after the deadly famines caused by failed harvests, in particular the Kyōhō famine of 1732. Such events wiped out huge sections of the peasant population: the 1732 famine alone was responsible for the death of 43,547 people in Kokura domain, while Fukuoka lost 26

percent of its population.<sup>23</sup> In addition, survivors tended to progressively abandon their lands, fleeing the increasingly punitive taxes. In Tagawa, the number of farmers (non-*eta*) contracted from 31,392 in 1768 to 26,124 in 1852.<sup>24</sup>

- 13 To resolve this labour shortage the two domains initially mobilised their own *eta* populations by sending them to work in the abandoned paddy fields as part of measures introduced in the latter half of the eighteenth century to “install new peasants” (*shinbyakushō shisue* 新百姓仕拵), designated as “new peasants of *eta* heritage” (*eta shinbyakushō* 穢多新百姓). In order to boost the size of this *eta* agricultural workforce, Kokura domain issued a decree in 1801 stipulating that peasants abandoning their land would henceforth automatically be designated as *eta*, thereby making it possible to force them to farm the land.<sup>25</sup> A significant increase in the proportion of *eta* in the domain can be observed during this period, rising from 0.02 percent of the total population in 1622 to 5.4 percent in 1868, while the percentage of *hinin* that same year was still only 0.07 percent.<sup>26</sup> If we look solely at Tagawa district, we can see that the growth of the *eta* population corresponds to a drop in the number of peasants: in concrete terms, the number of *eta* households rose from 484 to 755 between 1818 and 1852, while the number of peasant households shrank from 6,333 in 1818 to 6,124 in 1852.<sup>27</sup>

Figure 1. Evolution of the *eta*/*hinin*/*burakumin* populations in Tagawa district between 1622 and 1971.



The number of *burakumin* in the district for 1959 and 1971 is not available.<sup>28</sup>

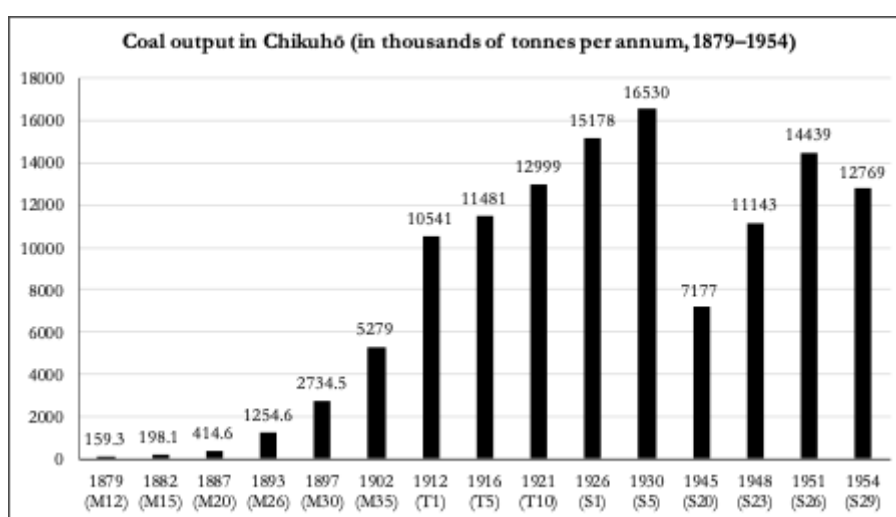
- 14 In Fukuoka domain, where a similar policy was introduced, the number of *eta* villages also rose significantly over an almost 250-year period, growing from 27 villages in 1604 to 133 in 1847.<sup>29</sup> These two domains came to provide a stark contrast to their neighbours due to their particularly high concentrations of *eta*. According to a government survey from 1868, the proportion of *eta* was 5.9 percent in Fukuoka domain and 5.4 percent in Kokura, compared to just 0.8 percent in Kurume, 0.7 percent in Yanagawa, 0 percent in Senzoku and 1 percent in Kumamoto, numbers that resemble the figures originally recorded in Fukuoka and Kokura.<sup>30</sup>

- 15 Although the increase in the *eta* populations in these two domains stemmed from a need to shore up agricultural revenues after the famines, it seems difficult to ignore the growing influence of coal-mining activities in the region. Authorising migrant populations to work in the mines and set up home in new villages certainly acted as a draw to the itinerant labourers of Kyūshū, and even elsewhere in Japan. These itinerant miners may subsequently have been incorporated into the category of *eta* farmers, particularly if they were often, as Aso Tatsuo has claimed, originally *hyakushō*. What is more, when not employed in the paddy fields tenant farmers also worked as day labourers in the mines. This hypothesis seems particularly plausible in the case of Tagawa, which lay in the heart of coal-producing country. The district saw a spectacular increase in its *eta* population between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, rising from 0 percent in 1622 to 12.5 percent in 1852, more than double the average for Kokura domain (see Fig. 1).
- 16 Additionally, there is evidence of high levels of immigration in Tagawa's *eta* villages. In Miyao, Kamiyugeta, Shimoyugeta and Kawarayugeta, for example, 16 percent of *eta* inhabitants in 1852 were originally from another district or another domain than Kokura.<sup>31</sup> This migration between domains strongly resembles the profile of *yosomono* and *tabibito* miners. It supports the idea that these miners were absorbed into the *eta* class and also confirms the correlation between mining activity and *eta* presence in the Chikuhō region. In any case, this immigration, boosted by the presence of tenant farmers installed on the land as “new peasants of *eta* heritage”, prepared the future candidates for the coal-mining proletariat of the Meiji period.

### From Meiji to Shōwa: a growing *burakumin* presence in the mines

- 17 The expansion of the coal-mining industry gathered pace during the Meiji period, particularly from the 1890s onwards. This growing output brought about a corresponding increase in the number of coal workers, rising from 30,345 individuals in 1893 to 88,330 in 1904 for the whole of Japan.<sup>32</sup>

Figure 2. Evolution of coal production in Chikuhō from 1879 to 1954.<sup>33</sup>



- 18 One might think that the Industrial Revolution and rise of capitalism would see *burakumin* allocated new coal-mining roles than those allowed under the old regime –

particularly since these *burakumin*, re-classified as “new commoners” (*shin heimin* 新平民) by the Emancipation Edict (*kaihōrei* 解放令) of 1871, now had the right to choose their occupation and place of residence.<sup>34</sup> In the case of Chikuhō, historians like Mahara Tetsuo and Nagasue Toshio<sup>35</sup> have argued that there is a clear link between *burakumin* and coal mining, hence the saying: “Where there are spoil-tips there are *buraku*. Where there are *buraku* there are spoil-tips” (*botayama no aru tokoro ni buraku ari, buraku no aru tokoro ni botayama ari* ホゝタ山のある所に部落あり、部落のある所にホゝタ山あり).<sup>36</sup> Given that many *buraku* hamlets had been located near coal deposits since the Edo period, mines were naturally opened close by. This was first and foremost for geological reasons: Nagasue Toshio states that “most of the large mines created in the twenties of the Meiji period [1888–1908] were located in and around *buraku*” because their topographical features (gorges, hillsides, riversides, etc.) made them suitable for mining.<sup>37</sup> However, there were also socio-economic factors at play: purchasing *buraku* land was cheaper and met with less resistance, making it easier to establish mines there than on land belonging to other farmers.<sup>38</sup> Historian Kawamukai Hidetake states that for the Chikuhō region, “out of the 500 or so spoil-tips currently in existence...around 300 are located near *buraku*”.<sup>39</sup>

- 19 Another element to take into account is the movement of *burakumin* migrating to Chikuhō to work in the region’s collieries, particularly as of the 1890s, according to some scholars. Aso, for example, argues that it was at this precise moment that the coal-mining industry in Chikuhō became a “*buraku* industry”.<sup>40</sup> Mahara Tetsuo, for his part, states that testimony from several “third- and fourth-generation” miners confirms that these populations migrated to Chikuhō en masse after the construction of industrial coal mines and came to constitute the archetype of the modern *buraku*.<sup>41</sup> Nagasue Toshio’s research on *buraku* oral transmission seems to indicate that this immigration came primarily from Chikuzen and Buzen – regions outside Chikuhō – as well as from Shikoku and Chūgoku.<sup>42</sup> As for Shindō Toyo’o 新藤東洋男 (1932–), he believes that “the number of *buraku* rose considerably and in proportion to the growth of the mines”.<sup>43</sup> Taki’i Yoshitaka 滝井義高 bases his views on the example of the inhabitants of a *buraku* in Ikeura, Munakata district (Fukuoka Prefecture), who in 1897 abandoned their ancestral farming lands en masse and moved to Kurate district in order to make a living in the mines.<sup>44</sup>
- 20 Nevertheless, the available statistics for the period provide a more nuanced picture of the proportion of *burakumin* among the populations arriving to work in the mines, at least prior to the 1920s. Although the number of *burakumin* tripled in Tagawa district between 1852 and 1920, rising from 3,745 to 11,243 individuals, their percentage within the total population of the district actually fell for the same period, from 12.5 percent to 7 percent (see Fig. 1 and corresponding note). As for the annual population growth rate of the district, it was 7.7 percent on average but only 4.4 percent among *burakumin*, which corresponds to the national average for the *buraku* population (4.3 percent annually at the time).<sup>45</sup> It is difficult, however, to determine when this rise may have been most pronounced: as far as I have been able to ascertain, no *burakumin* census exists for the period that is both accessible to the public<sup>46</sup> and provides a consistent geographic breakdown. The government survey of 1868, for example, is based on the former Edo domains (*han* 藩) rather than districts (*gun* 群).
- 21 The general trend nonetheless suggests that any immigration that took place concerned first and foremost, in terms of volume, non-*burakumin*, particularly since the

figures on the *buraku* population of the era are relatively reliable and exhaustive. In fact, for the most recent periods, individuals are counted as *burakumin* only if they live in a government-recognised *buraku*. This was the case, for example, in the government surveys carried out from 1970 to 1990. In contrast, in the surveys carried out in the first half of the twentieth century, the Home Ministry also counted those who did not live in *buraku*, using the “ancestors’ legal domicile” (*honseki* 本籍) recorded in the family register.<sup>47</sup>

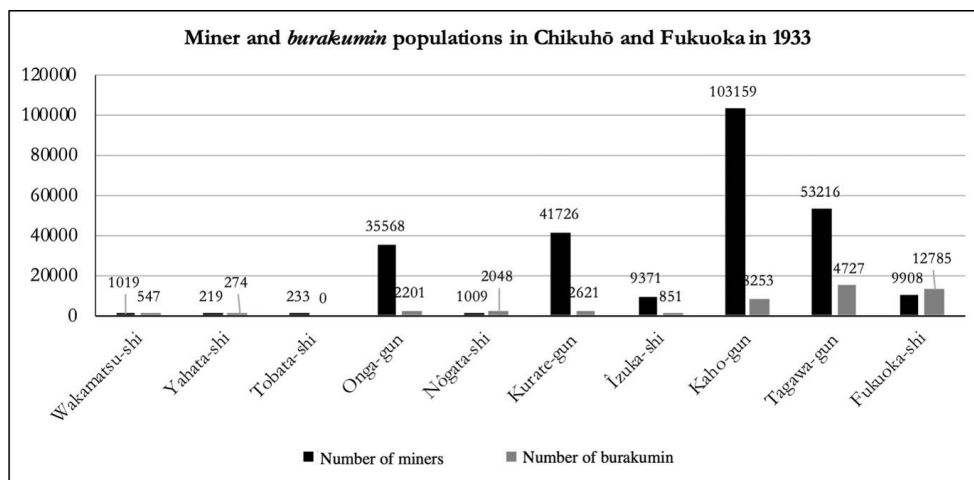
- 22 The situation seems to have evolved in the 1920s. In Tagawa district there was a rise in *burakumin* immigration to the coalfields, with the proportion of *burakumin* in the general population increasing from 7 percent in 1920 to 10 percent in 1933. In absolute terms, the number of *burakumin* rose from 11,243 in 1920 to 14,727 in 1933 (Fig. 1). This increase cannot be ascribed solely to births, since the *burakumin* annual growth rate is very high (average annual growth rate of 10.1 percent for Tagawa district, compared to 8.6 percent nationally for the same period).<sup>48</sup>
- 23 This evolution coincided with a contraction of the general population in the district, from 157,407 in 1920 to 146,766 in 1933.<sup>49</sup> This resulted from a series of economic downturns in the 1920s, from the aftermath of World War I to the stock market crash of 1929. The number of workers in Chikuhō’s mines is estimated to have dropped by over 30 percent between 1919 and 1926, then by 50 percent between 1926 and 1932.<sup>50</sup> Could it be that the growth in the *burakumin* population during this tumultuous period reflects a reliance on low-cost labour? The example of Korean immigrants to Japan, for whom statistics are more readily available, certainly suggests so, since the number of Koreans rose continually during the 1920s. It is estimated that the number of Koreans in Japan ballooned from 30,189 in 1920 to 171,275 in 1927 – an almost six-fold increase in just seven years.<sup>51</sup> Fukuoka prefecture counted some 14,595 Koreans in 1927 – the third-largest Korean population in Japan after Osaka (38,592) and Tokyo (15,030).<sup>52</sup> Nagasue Toshio believes that many Korean immigrants were employed instead of Japanese workers in order to reduce labour costs during the recession years. Some 30 of Chikuhō’s 97 mines employed a significant number of Koreans in 1928, in particular major mining conglomerates like Mitsubishi, Furukawa, Kajima, Asō and Kurauchi.<sup>53</sup> It is possible that the economic downturn of the 1920s also encouraged the recruitment of *burakumin* alongside Koreans in certain industries, including mining. This was the case, for example, in the mines owned by Asō Takichi 麻生太吉 (1857–1933).<sup>54</sup>
- 24 The majority of scholars agree that a certain number of *burakumin* worked in Chikuhō’s mines during the Meiji period. According to Kawamukai Hidetake, “many *burakumin* were coal miners” during both the Meiji and Taishō (1912–1926) eras.<sup>55</sup> Mahara Tetsuo goes as far as claiming that “*burakumin* represented almost 60 percent of the workforce at mines owned by large companies, and even 80 percent in small and medium-sized enterprises”.<sup>56</sup> Aso Tatsuo, for his part, writes that “beginning in the second half of the Meiji period, the link between *buraku* and coal was so strong that the mining industry can be considered a *buraku* industry (*buraku sangyō* 部落産業)”.<sup>57</sup> The term *buraku sangyō* is generally applied to the leather industry and denotes both a professional specialisation and an operating model: it implies that workers in the sector occupied the lowest level in the hierarchy of social values and that these communities ran or even monopolised the sector.
- 25 Given the lack of data for the Meiji period,<sup>58</sup> one might wonder if the number of *burakumin* in the coal industry has been exaggerated, in particular by historians



specialising in the *buraku* issue. Perceptions from the time do nonetheless suggest an omnipresence of this population in the mines. Sano Manabu 佐野学 (1892–1953), a leading figure and theoretician in the Japanese Communist Party,<sup>59</sup> wrote in 1923 that “in Fukuoka Prefecture there are almost seventy thousand people from the *eta* minority [*eta-zoku* エタ族], most of whom are miners”.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Matsumoto Kichinosuke 松本吉之助 (1902–?),<sup>61</sup> a former miner in Kaho district, wrote that “all the women in my *buraku* worked at the mine”.<sup>62</sup> Certain documents from the period reveal how recurrent the mining profession was among *buraku* populations, even around Fukuoka, where the coal-mining industry was less developed than in Chikuhō. Prince Tokugawa Iesato 徳川家達 (1863–1940), chairman of the philanthropic organisation Saiseikai 済生会,<sup>63</sup> described his 1917 visit to a *buraku* in Jigyōnishimachi 地行西町, in Fukuoka, stating that it mostly consisted of “miners, road workers and hawkers of vegetables, salt fish and other dried foodstuffs”.<sup>64</sup>

- 26 If *burakumin* are heavily associated with mining, the mining community is just as closely connected with the *buraku* in some people’s minds. Matsumoto Kichinosuke, writing about his experiences at the state-run (*kan’ei* 官営) mines of Chūō 中央 and Uruno 潤野 (Kaho district) in the 1920s, said that “there must have been a great many *burakumin* among the workers at Chikuhō’s mines” and claims to have seen many instances of *buraku* miners concealing their origins by calling other *burakumin* “*eta-gorō*” (エタ五郎).<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Shirato Zentarō 白土善太郎, a mining engineer for Meiji Tankō, noted in his recollections of the 1890s–1900s that “village farmers considered coal miners to be inhabitants of special hamlets [*tokushu buraku* 特殊部落]”, indicating the extent to which people conflated the two and perceived *burakumin* to be omnipresent in the mines.<sup>66</sup>
- 27 The statistics available for the period, however, suggest a more nuanced reality. Figure 3, based on the government survey of 1933, reveals that *burakumin* were far from being in the majority at Chikuhō mines.<sup>67</sup> Even in Tagawa district, with its particularly high proportion of *burakumin* among the local population (10 percent of inhabitants in 1933), the total number of *burakumin* was 14,727 – less than a third of the mining population in the area (53,216 miners).

Figure 3. *Burakumin* and miners in Chikuhō and Fukuoka in 1933.<sup>68</sup>

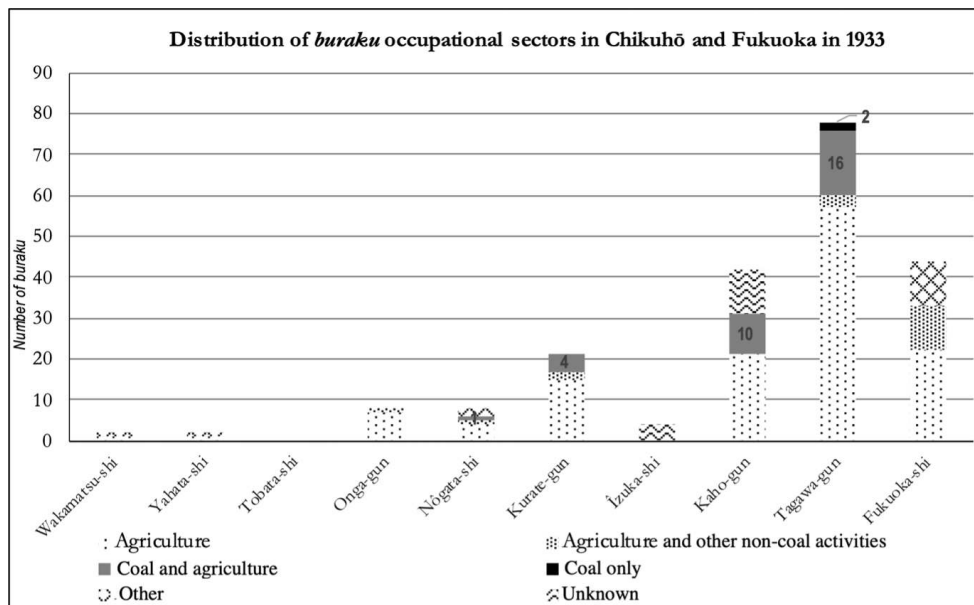


- 28 There is nonetheless a certain correlation between the presence of mines and that of *buraku*. In urban areas (*shi* 市, meaning towns and cities), the number of both *burakumin*

and miners was low: the town of Wakamatsu, for example, had just 547 *burakumin* and 1,019 miners in 1933. The same can be said of the rural areas (districts or *gun*) located down-river from the Onga, for example Onga district, which had 2,201 *burakumin* and 35,568 miners. In contrast, the need for workers to transport coal was greater upstream, on the upper reaches of the Onga and its tributaries, in the remote and mountainous areas where coal was extracted. Accordingly, these areas had a greater number of both miners and *burakumin*: 14,727 *burakumin* and 53,216 miners in Tagawa district; 8,253 *burakumin* and 103,159 miners in Kaho district. Wherever there were mines – and thus miners – so the size of the *buraku* communities was proportional to labour needs, at least in Chikuhō. Mining companies undoubtedly took advantage of the *burakumin* communities already living in the area, as well as those migrating from elsewhere.

- 29 Some of the hamlets located close to mines did indeed depend on coal-related activities, with Tagawa and Kaho districts having the highest number of *buraku* wholly or partially reliant on the coal industry.

Figure 4. *Buraku* occupational sectors in Chikuhō and Fukuoka in 1933.<sup>69</sup>



- 30 In Tagawa, two *buraku* located right inside collieries subsisted entirely on their work at the mine: the *buraku* at Ōmine no. 2 mine (in Kawasaki village, run at the time by the mining firm Kurauchi Kōgyō 蔵内鉱業) and the *buraku* at Kigyōkomatsu 起行小松 mine (town of Gotōjimachi 後藤寺町, run by Kyūshū Kōgyō 九州鉱業 and managed by Asō). The first of these two *buraku* had 215 inhabitants, representing almost a third of the mine's 739 workers; the second was smaller, with just 90 inhabitants, representing 14 percent of the mine's 630 workers.<sup>70</sup>
- 31 One third of the *buraku* in Kaho district supplemented their farming revenues with mining work, illustrating the importance of coal to hamlets in this part of Japan. When agriculture failed to meet the needs of these populations, it was coal mining that provided extra revenue, not tanning or handicrafts, as was often the case in other regions. In the four Chikuhō districts of Tagawa, Onga, Kurate and Kaho, 30 *buraku*

made a living from agriculture and coal, compared to just 6 that supplemented their farming revenues with non-coal-related activities.

- 32 These *burakumin* farmers – whose high numbers reflect the presence of *eta* villages in the region during the Edo period – acted as a “pool of mining labour” due to their proximity to the mines and precarious status compared to other peasants. A national survey conducted in 1931 shows that the proportion of tenant farmers among *burakumin* was double the national average (52 percent compared to 27 percent<sup>71</sup>), while labour needs in the mines continued to grow until the end of the 1940s.<sup>72</sup> Although no precise figures exist for the Chikuhō region, the national percentage of *burakumin* farmers fell over a period of 27 years (from 51 percent in 1931 to 46 percent in 1958), no doubt due to a migration of labour towards the industrial sector.<sup>73</sup>
- 33 The percentage of miners in Chikuhō’s *buraku* seems to have been boosted in post-war Japan by the growing scarcity of Korean labour. Indeed, a 1950 survey carried out in Kurate district reveals that the proportion of mine labourers was higher in *buraku* than in other hamlets. In towns like Furutsuki miners could account for as much as 94 percent of the inhabitants of *buraku* neighbourhoods. In the Kasuga-West and Kasuga-East sectors of Furutsuki, miners accounted for 64 percent of the population on average, whereas in the two remaining sectors of the town, which had a significant number of miners but no *buraku*, the proportions were lower: 46 percent in Ideguchi neighbourhood and 30 percent in Kamikanzaki.<sup>74</sup>
- 34 This high proportion of *burakumin* miners is confirmed by a 1958 national survey, which showed that 2.4 percent of them worked in the mining industry. While this figure may seem low, it is double the percentage of miners among the general population, which stood at just 1.1 percent.<sup>75</sup> According to another government survey conducted in Tagawa district in 1973, 33 percent of the *buraku* population had at some time worked at a mine; of these, 63 percent had only worked at mines owned by small and medium-sized enterprises.<sup>76</sup> Given that these mines also employed many non-*buraku*, one may question whether industrialisation caused the *burakumin* to be absorbed into the undifferentiated mass of the working class, or whether on the contrary, the old segregation and discrimination of the feudal era continued in the mines.

## The *burakumin* condition in Chikuhō’s industrial mines

- 35 The promulgation of the Emancipation Edict was greeted by peasant riots, mainly in western Japan, in protest against *eta* and *hinin* becoming ordinary citizens. By far the largest riots took place in Fukuoka Prefecture, where 64,000 participants were arrested and sanctioned (representing 35 percent of all rioters, estimated to be 182,000 nationally). As for the number of *buraku* dwellings set on fire, the figures vary from 550 to 2,000 at the prefectural level, and between 1,050 and 2,500 homes nationally.<sup>77</sup> The uprising began with farmers in Chikuhō, particularly those in the districts of Tagawa and Kama (which was subsequently merged with Kaho), before spreading across the prefecture. The rioters demanded that “*eta* remain *eta* as before” and called for lower taxes. While the rioters’ motivations merit a more detailed investigation, these revolts demonstrate that the strong *burakumin* presence in these regions did nothing to reduce the animosity of the general population. It comes as no great surprise then to discover

an entire system of discrimination operating within the mines, as described by Shindō Toyō and Matsumoto Kichinosuke in numerous writings.<sup>78</sup>

## Discrimination in labour organisation

- 36 At industrial mines, the most obvious and routine aspect of segregation was the presence of special living quarters for *burakumin* (known as “*eta* barracks”, *eta-naya* エタ納屋) and separate bathing facilities (*eta-buro* エタ風呂). These appeared at the end of the nineteenth century as the mining industry grew. A report by the Council for the Improvement of Impoverished *Buraku* (*Saimin buraku kaizen kyōgikai* 細民部落改善協議会) noted in 1912 that “certain mines house an entire ethnic group [or tribe, *shuzoku* 種族] in a designated area”.<sup>79</sup> *Eta-naya* and *eta-buro* existed at Mitsubishi Namazuta 鯉田, at Asō Takichi-owned mines like Mameda 豆田 and Kamimio 上三緒, and even at state-owned mines like Uruno and Chūō, suggesting it was a widespread practice in Chikuhō regardless of ownership type.<sup>80</sup>
- 37 Compared to other workers’ housing, *eta-naya* were particularly dilapidated with extremely basic communal toilets located right at the end of the barracks and thus visible from the outside. Mahara Tetsuo has questioned whether this design may have been intended to signal openly that this was *burakumin* housing.<sup>81</sup> As for *eta-buro*, they were generally smaller and dirtier than the baths used by other miners, communal and mixed-sex. Yamamoto Sakubē 山本作兵衛 (1892–1984), whose drawings of Chikuhō miners are inscribed on Unesco’s Memory of the World Register, wrote that at the Asō Takichi-owned Kamimio mine, *buraku* bathing facilities were referred to as “special baths” (*tokushu-buro* 特殊風呂), echoing the pejorative term “special hamlets” (*tokushu buraku*). According to Yamamoto these baths were smaller (half the size of those reserved for other miners), leading him to conclude that “discrimination against *buraku* people even extended into the baths”. Matsumoto Tsuya (1898–?), a *burakumin* worker who entered the mines at the age of 14, described her experiences in the 1910s thus: “At the time, I didn’t know why there were *eta* baths. There were two big baths for ordinary people. Ours was the dirtiest and smallest.”
- 38 One of the worst descriptions of *eta-buro* concerns the so-called “horse baths” at Mitsubishi Namazuta mine. According to Matsumoto Kichinosuke, *burakumin* miners there “bathed with horses. Their dung floated in the corners of the bath. [Seeing this,] I felt with hatred in my bones what it was like to be discriminated against”. He went on: “Those kinds of things are not recorded in any archives. Until today, I didn’t even want to speak about them myself. It is only now, for the first time, that I’m talking about them”.<sup>82</sup> He claims that *eta-buro* existed at many of Chikuhō’s mines, although few written traces remain of this system of segregation.<sup>83</sup>
- 39 Unsurprisingly, far from being restricted to everyday life, segregation extended to the way labour was organised. Not only were the jobs assigned to *burakumin* more physically demanding, they were considered menial and unprofitable, and were the first to be replaced by machines between the late Meiji and early Taishō periods. One notable example is the bailing of water from the mine, an operation doubly indispensable in the late Edo period due to the increasing depths being excavated. At the beginning of Meiji, most *burakumin* specialised in wastewater disposal. Known as *mizukata* (水方), these workers were housed apart in “water-bailer barracks” (*mizu-naya* 水納屋).<sup>84</sup> Kaijima Tasuke 貝島太助 (1845–1916), who later founded one of the three

major regional *zaibatsu*, explains that back when he was just a “foreman” (*tōryō* 頭領), all the water bailers working for him were *burakumin*.<sup>85</sup> With the gradual introduction of steam-powered water pumps beginning in 1881, particularly at major mining outfits, such labourers were replaced by more qualified non-*burakumin* workers capable of using the new machinery.

- 40 The same fate befell the job of transporting coal by hand cart (*jinrikisha*) or river barge (*kawahirata*). Between late Edo and early Meiji, so many *burakumin* worked in this sector that a certain number of migrant settlements appeared around the mines. One such settlement was the large *buraku* in Nakama 中間 (Onga district), where previously there had been no *eta* village during the Edo period. The advances in rail transport beginning in 1891 meant that these *burakumin* too lost their livelihoods. This was particularly true at large companies, with *burakumin* relegated to working at smaller, less-mechanised mines.<sup>86</sup>
- 41 *Burakumin* employment was also characterised by its low pay, often due to the lower skill set of these populations. This was particularly visible at the large conglomerates, where *burakumin* tended to be given the lowest paid jobs. Generally speaking, they were more likely to be found working aboveground than in the pit. In the 1890s and 1900s Mitsubishi Nōgata 直方 mine was said to have forbidden *burakumin* from working underground.<sup>87</sup> This gave rise to a rumour in Chikuhō that these populations should not be allowed inside the mines because they would “pollute” them.<sup>88</sup> In reality, all the best paying jobs were located underground and they tended to be jealously protected by the mining community. According to a government survey from 1927, the average daily remuneration for pit work was 2,437 yen, including bonuses, compared to just 1,309 yen for work on the surface.<sup>89</sup> In fact, underground work, in particular extraction, was rarely allocated to *burakumin*, other than at exceptional times when there was a labour shortage, such as at the beginning of Meiji (*jiyū-bori* period 自由掘り) and during the Fifteen Years War (1931–1945).<sup>90</sup>
- 42 In contrast, the task of manually hauling coal wagons (*hako* or *tansha* 炭車) – a job known as *saodori* 棹取り – was frequently assigned to *burakumin*.<sup>91</sup> It was less well paid when it took place on the surface: according to a 1926 survey carried out by the Osaka Employment Office (*Ōsaka chihō shokugyō shōkai jimukyoku* 大阪地方職業紹介事務局), part of the Home Ministry, *saodori* work underground was paid at an average daily rate of 1,607 yen, compared to 1,438 yen aboveground.<sup>92</sup>
- 43 Another job frequently allocated to *burakumin* was coal sorting, a female-dominated activity where the pay was even lower. According to another Home Ministry survey, this time from 1924, the average daily earnings of such workers was estimated to be 1,121 yen for men and 892 yen for women – half that of miners extracting coal. Underground work at the time was paid at the rate of 2,051 yen for *sakiyama* 先山, who hewed the coal, and 2,009 yen for *atoyama* 後山, who processed the extracted coal and were often women.<sup>93</sup>
- 44 A statement of demands issued in 1918 by the Chikuhō Coal-Mining Industry Association (*Chikuhō sekitan kōgyō kumiai* 筑豊石炭鉱業組合) states that: “the majority of women sorting coal at Chikuhō mines are from special hamlets”.<sup>94</sup> Ueda Masayo, a former *burakumin* coal sorter, remembers that in 1925, at the age of 12, she earned just 0.25 yen for a 14-hour day at Mitsui Tagawa mine. This exceptionally low pay was due to her age and sex, but also certainly to her *buraku* status, which explains why she could neither read nor write and was less productive. As she explains: “My friends who

were coal sorters could read, but I counted the wagons by putting down stones one by one”.<sup>95</sup> Another former miner describes her memories of the 1920s in the following terms: “There were over 40 or 50 young girls employed to sort coal.... They were all different to us; they were *yottsu*.... There were also three or four normal girls sorting coal. They kept themselves to themselves”.<sup>96</sup> As well as providing a reminder of the pejorative term *yottsu*, this woman’s account underlines the fact that miners did not mix with *burakumin*, even when sharing the same work space.<sup>97</sup>

- 45 It is also worth noting that the mining song *Tankōbushi*, so popular around Japan today, is heavily based on the words sung by women as they sorted coal. Although the geographic origins of *Tankōbushi* are disputed by towns in Chikuhō keen to claim authorship for themselves, these songs were originally attributed to *burakumin*. Ueno Eishin 上野英信 (1923–1987), a non-*buraku* author of several texts on Chikuhō’s miners, reported being told by a former female mine labourer in 1947, when he himself was a miner in the region, that “Everyone called *Tankōbushi* ‘the *eta* song’. We got shouted at if we ever stooped to humming it while drunk.... The Japanese have their own Japanese songs; no need to sing that *eta* song”.<sup>98</sup> Harada Tomohiko believes that *Tankōbushi* was originally sung by female *burakumin* coal sorters in Tagawa, most likely at the Mitsui mine,<sup>99</sup> while Shindō Toyo’o suggests it comes from the Kaijima mine in Kurate.<sup>100</sup>

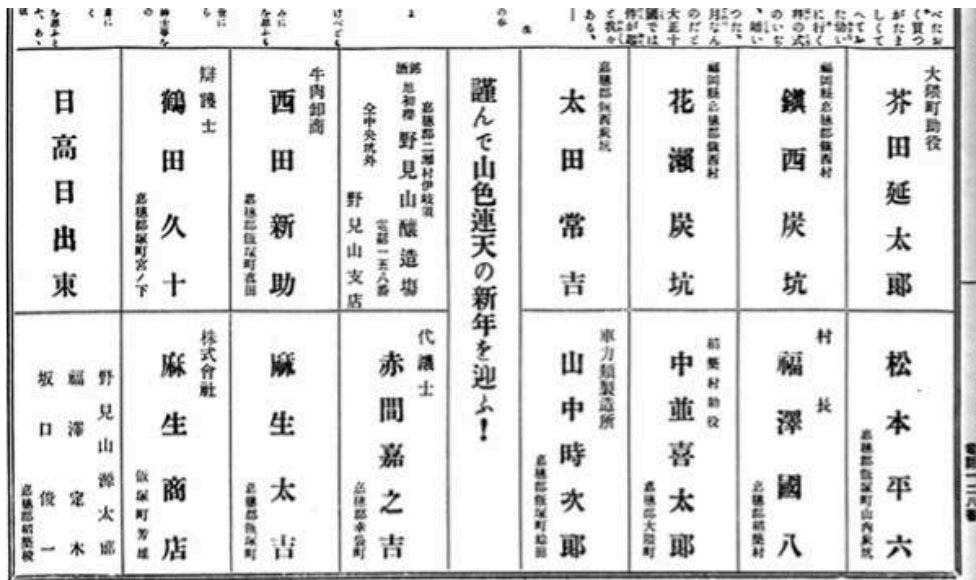
### The relegation of *burakumin* to small and medium-sized mines

- 46 Chikuhō’s mines entered the modern industrial age during the Meiji period, yet capitalism and proletarianization did nothing to efface the stigma attached to former *eta* and *hinin*, who continued to be reviled and segregated from other workers even into the 1920s. The archives of *Suihei geppō*, the official mouthpiece of the Zen Kyūshū Suiheisha (hereinafter ZKS), are a good indication of the discrimination seen in Kyūshū in the 1920s.<sup>101</sup> This monthly bulletin, which ran from June 1924 to June 1927, published apology letters from people accused by the Suiheisha of anti-*buraku* discrimination. For the writers of such letters, this was above all a means of avoiding legal action by the ZKS and the strong-arm tactics it sometimes employed. The signed and dated letters were highly formulaic, featuring typical expressions borrowed from Suiheisha texts, sometimes almost word for word. More importantly, these apologies carried the name of the accused, their address and the place where the discrimination took place (see Doc. 1). Over 60 such letters were published during the journal’s three-year lifespan, a third of which were apologies to Chikuhō miners, confirming that collieries also practised anti-*burakumin* segregation.

Document 1. Example apology letter published in *Suihei geppō*.<sup>102</sup>

- 47 In addition to being habitually assigned the lowest paid jobs, *burakumin* also tended to be relegated to small and medium-sized mines. This phenomenon became increasingly marked as industrialisation progressed. But was it really systematic and is it possible to assert that many more *burakumin* worked for smaller companies than for large conglomerates like the *zaibatsu*? This is the stance adopted by Nagasue Toshio and Mahara Tetsuo.<sup>103</sup> The idea does seem plausible, despite the lack of supporting evidence, as pointed out by economist Sakamoto Yūichi.<sup>104</sup>
- 48 An examination of *Suihei geppō*'s archives nonetheless provides some indication of the truth. To begin with, the previously mentioned letters of apology suggest that Suiheisha activists – and by extension *burakumin* – were no doubt present in the mines, because these letters were generally published at the request of such activists. The “business cards” published by *Suihei geppō* on behalf of its benefactors provide a second clue. These promotional inserts carried the name, title or affiliation, and address of the advertiser (Document 2), who paid a fee according to the size of the advert. The aim of publishing these inserts naturally varied, but they essentially allowed mine operators to express their desire for a harmonious relationship with the Suiheisha, whether to attract new recruits or curry favour with the *burakumin* already in their employment. The fact that management went to such trouble suggests that *burakumin* accounted for a significant proportion of the workforce. In this sense, the nature and quantity of these business cards can be considered fairly reliable indicators of the *buraku* presence at each mine.

Document 2. Example business cards published in *Suihei geppō*.

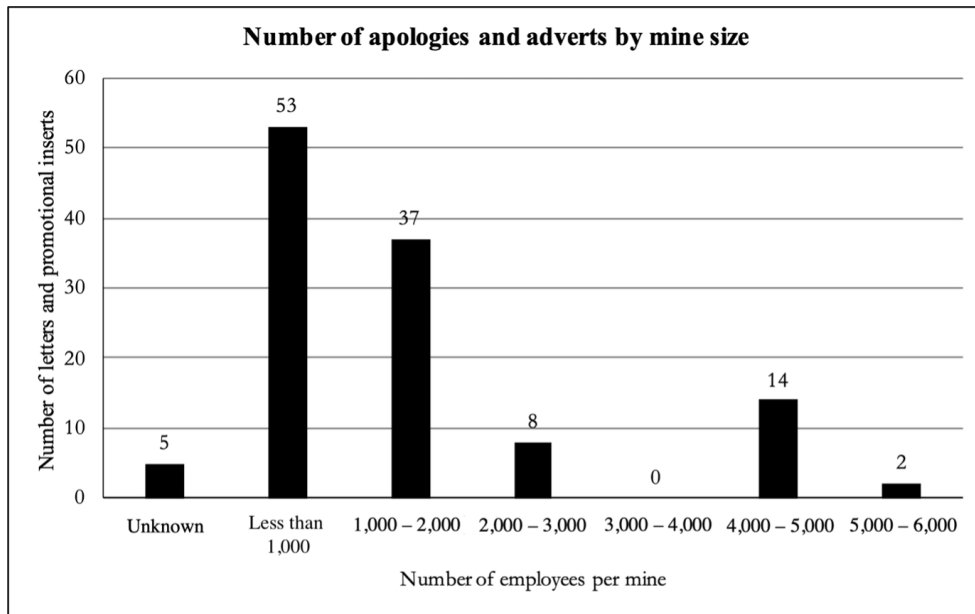


Note Asō Takichi's card (third insert from left, bottom row) and that of his company (second insert from left, bottom row).<sup>105</sup>

- 49 There are two limitations, however, to the use of these archives. One is temporal, as the period they provide insight on is restricted to the bulletin's publication dates: from June 1924 to June 1927. The second is geographic, since *Suihei geppō* was printed and distributed essentially in Kaho district.<sup>106</sup> This means that our two indicators – the apology letters and business cards – essentially concern mines in that area. Accordingly, the Kaijima mines, located mainly in Kurate district, are not mentioned in either the apology letters or business cards, despite the well-known presence of *burakumin* there.<sup>107</sup>
- 50 These methodological considerations aside, we can see a quantitative link between the size of the mine and the number of indicators showing a *burakumin* presence in the workforce. The smaller the mine, the greater the number of apology letters and business cards published: in concrete terms, there are 53 occurrences in three years for mines with under one thousand employees, compared to just 2 occurrences for mines with between five and six thousand workers (Fig. 5).

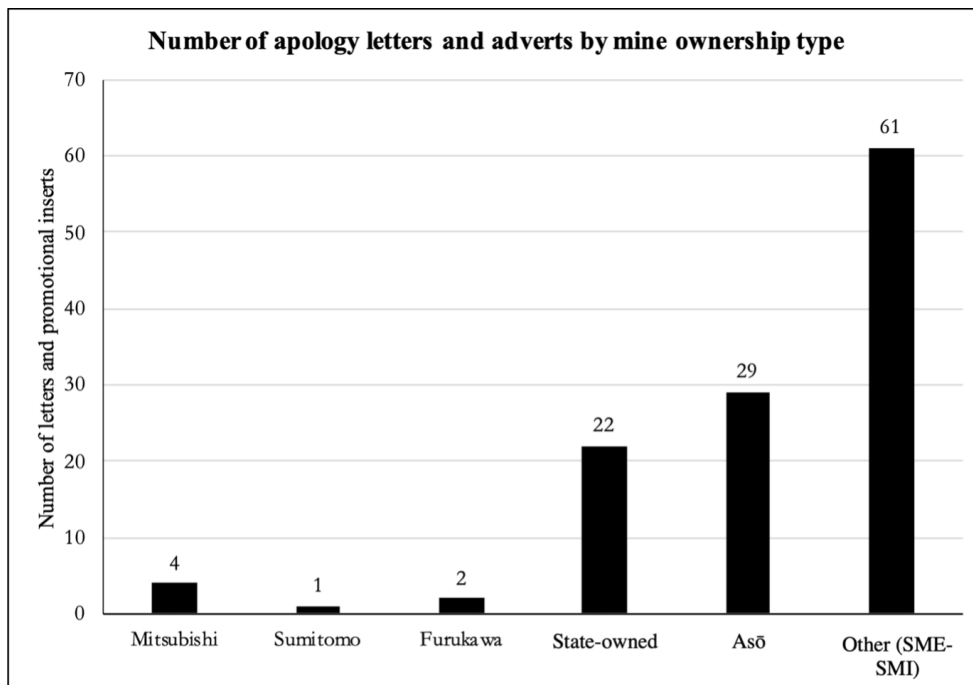


Figure 5. Number of apology letters and promotional inserts published in *Suihei geppō* by mine size.  
108



- 51 The only exception to this trend is one particular state-controlled mine, for which the indicators reveal a strong *burakumin* presence despite the workforce being comparable in size to that of the large conglomerates. The mine in question is Takao 高雄 (4,957 workers), which appears 11 times, compared to 2 for Mitsubishi Namazuta (4,548 workers) and only 1 for Sumitomo Tadakuma 忠隈 (4,173 workers). Overall, the number of apology letters and business cards relating to the Mitsubishi and Sumitomo mines is clearly lower (five in total), suggesting a small number of *burakumin* in the workforces there. The indicators reveal a difference in the strategy of state-owned mines compared to those run by large private enterprises: the mines owned by Sumitomo (Tadakuma), Mitsubishi (Namazuta) and Furukawa (Shimo-yamada 下山田) only appear in five apology letters, with no adverts at all. Could it be that large mining companies preferred to employ non-*burakumin* and relegated *buraku* workers to specific activities like coal sorting and transportation, as some scholars have suggested?<sup>109</sup>

Figure 6. Number of apology letters and promotional inserts published in *Suihei geppō* by mine ownership type.<sup>110</sup>



- 52 Following the rice riots of 1918 and the growth of the labour movement, Mitsui introduced a hiring policy that focused particularly on the family history and background of potential recruits, with a “black list” of known activists in the trade union movement that invariably featured Suiheisha members, closely linked at the time to the Japanese Communist Party.<sup>111</sup> Some large companies, afraid of rioting, chose to isolate their workers by not hiring *burakumin* at mines located close to their homes or only hiring them on the condition that they move away and no longer see their families.<sup>112</sup> This no doubt explains why Mitsui’s Yamano mine (Kaho district) is entirely absent from *Suihei geppō*, despite the many *burakumin* there.
- 53 It is worth noting that beginning in the 1930s, mines owned by large companies not only became increasingly mechanised but also placed a greater importance on qualifications. In 1931, for example, 75 percent of miners at Mitsui’s Tagawa no. 3 mine had graduated from primary school (*jinjō shōgakkō* 尋常小学校) and 31 percent had gone beyond middle school (*kōtō shōgakkō* 高等小学校).<sup>113</sup> With their lower levels of education, *burakumin* were thus disadvantaged and had less chance of being employed at these mines.<sup>114</sup>
- 54 As for the state-run mines affiliated to Yahata Steel Works (Yahata Seitetsusho 八幡製鐵所), they are relatively well represented in the pages of *Suihei geppō*, in particular Takao, Chūō and Urushio 漆生. They appear in apology letters and above all – in contrast to large private enterprises – in “promotional business cards”, some of them placed by relatively prominent figures. These include four *ōnaya* 大納屋<sup>115</sup> bosses at Takao mine, who addressed a New Year message to *Suihei geppō* and its readers via adverts placed in the journal.<sup>116</sup> These adverts suggest not only that the bosses in question had a certain number of *buraku* miners under their supervision, but also that it was in their interest to express their goodwill towards these miners in order to retain them and attract new workers, since recruitment was part of the *naya-gashira* 納屋頭 or

crew boss' job.<sup>117</sup> Another issue of *Suihei geppō* featured business cards from two town councillors in Kōbukuro 幸袋 with links to Takao mine, including one who paid for a particularly large advert.<sup>118</sup> The aim was to harness votes: by promoting his connection with Takao mine this councillor hoped to secure the vote of *buraku* workers, implying that the latter must have been sufficiently numerous to make the investment worthwhile.

- 55 In reality, while these state-run mines did to some extent adopt a policy of hiring *burakumin*, it was in the context of the national “reconciliation” (*yūwa* 融和) campaign launched after the rice riots of 1918, which had been attributed to *buraku* communities.<sup>119</sup> The idea was to provide aid in order to better assimilate these populations and thus dissuade them from joining opposition movements, in particular the communists.
- 56 At these mines, some *burakumin* were able to secure relatively “noble” jobs like coal extraction. At least two such individuals can be found at state-run mines in 1918 and 1921, whereas *burakumin* pit miners did not appear at large private collieries until the 1930s.<sup>120</sup> There are even instances of *burakumin* working as crew bosses (*naya-gashira*), such as certain members of the Wada family (three at Uruno mine from 1899 to 1929, one at Chūō mine in 1931).<sup>121</sup> These *naya-gashira*, who supervised other *burakumin* miners, belonged to wealthier *burakumin* families and in some cases even became local councillors. The adverts they placed in *Suihei geppō* enabled them to assert their status, strengthen their links with the *burakumin* mining community and in some cases, to electioneer.<sup>122</sup> As we can see, government mines, unlike their privately-owned counterparts, did not avoid the local *burakumin* populations. Instead, they took advantage of the stability offered by the local labour force, using prominent *buraku* members as *naya-gashira* to guarantee social harmony.
- 57 Asō Takichi had deep roots in northern Kyūshū, being as he was a powerful landowner with many *buraku* tenant farmers in Kaho district. With less capital at his disposal than the large *zaibatsu*, he was quick to explore the usefulness of these marginalised minorities for the mines owned by his group, Asō Shōten 麻生商店. In November 1888 he wrote the following recommendation to a manager at Namazuta mine: “We must hire miners from among the new commoners [i.e. *burakumin*], before other mines notice”.<sup>123</sup> This recruitment policy has led scholars like Shindō Toyō’o to describe Asō’s mines as “those where Chikuhō’s *burakumin* were most numerous”.<sup>124</sup>
- 58 The same strategy can be seen in the way Asō Shōten mines placed adverts in the pages of *Suihei geppō*. The number of apology letters and adverts indicating a *burakumin* presence makes Asō mines among the most highly represented in the bulletin: 29 instances (letters and adverts combined) over three years, without counting the business cards published in an individual capacity by Asō Takichi (see Doc. 2), who placed four particularly prominent adverts. In reality, Asō and his mines feature in almost every issue of *Suihei geppō*, ahead of government mines (24 instances) and just behind Chinzei 鎮西 colliery (30 instances). Although the latter occupies the top spot, it is distinctive for being a smaller mine (518 employees in 1928) run by Suiheisha members and supporters, and for having a majority of *burakumin* workers.<sup>125</sup>
- 59 As with Mitsubishi mines and those with some form of state ownership, the letters of apology presented by Asō mines suggest genuine tensions between *burakumin* and the other miners. And yet, at the same time, the Asō Shōten group strove to show its goodwill towards these populations. This is visible in the adverts it placed in *Suihei geppō*, not only from *naya-gashira* but from high-ranking executives within the group,

such as the managers of Kamimio and Sannai 山内 mines. In addition, there were adverts representing the entire company, not to mention those placed by members of the Asō family, local councillors and industrialists. In quantitative terms, the Asō family appears as frequently as the prominent *buraku* family the Wadas, certain members of which were crew bosses at state-owned mines or managed small mines like Chinzei and Hanase 花瀬.

- 60 Promoting itself to *burakumin* was especially vital for Asō Shōten, whose mines, according to former Asō miner Yamamoto Sakubē, were “known throughout Chikuhō for their low pay and long workdays”.<sup>126</sup> In fact, a report written in August 1932 by striking workers denounced Asō mines for having “salaries 20 percent lower than at other mines” and for being places where “the medical care given to miners after a workplace accident are halted on the foreman’s orders, without consulting a doctor”.<sup>127</sup> The authors of the report were mostly Korean miners, with whom Chikuhō’s *burakumin* had often showed solidarity. Indeed, large numbers of Koreans worked at Asō group mines – 1,100 at the beginning of the Shōwa era (1926–1989).<sup>128</sup> Their presence, added to that of the *burakumin*, reveals a preference for hiring discriminated groups in order to secure a lower cost workforce.

## The *buraku* issue and the labour movement in Chikuhō’s mines: alliance or subordination?

- 61 Chikuhō’s political and trade union movements could not sidestep the *buraku* issue, particularly after the creation of the Zen Kyūshū Suiheisha in May 1923. The size and tight-knit nature of the *burakumin* community meant that this organisation would play a pivotal role in structuring the labour movement as it navigated between individual interests and the universal interest represented by Marxism and the fight against all forms of oppression – at the risk of sometimes sidelining the discrimination suffered by *burakumin*.
- 62 Just like their counterparts in Fukuoka, Chikuhō’s *burakumin* were instrumental in the founding of the ZKS. Shindō Toyo’o even states that “the matrix of the Zen Kyūshū Suiheisha was born in Chikuhō”.<sup>129</sup> Haraguchi Eiyū, an expert on the ZKS, places the origins of this organisation in Kaho district.<sup>130</sup> This is backed up by Matsumoto Kichinosuke, employed at Uruno at the time, who claims that half of the individuals behind the initiative were miners.<sup>131</sup> With Zenkyūsui’s headquarters located in Fukuoka city, in the home of association chairman Matsumoto Ji’ichirō 松本治一郎 (1887–1966), the Chikuhō region and its *burakumin* miners were often associated with ZKS activities. In fact, Sano Manabu primarily had Chikuhō miners in mind whenever he mentioned the *burakumin* of Fukuoka and Kyūshū.<sup>132</sup> Similarly, Kondō Hikaru 近藤光, one of the driving forces behind the creation of the National Suiheisha, mistakenly believed that the headquarters of the ZKS were located in Kaho district, in the home of Hanayama Kiyoshi 花山清 (1896–1982),<sup>133</sup> whose *buraku* was mainly populated at the time by workers from Chūō mine.<sup>134</sup> It is true, however, that Hanayama’s village was one of the centres of the ZKS and the place where *Suihei geppō* was headquartered, written and printed.<sup>135</sup>
- 63 The ZKS was extremely influential among the *buraku* miners of Chikuhō, with membership rates particularly high in Fukuoka Prefecture at the time (27 percent, or

five times the national average, which was 6 percent at most).<sup>136</sup> Just like the National Suiheisha, the ZKS sought to defend *burakumin* by demanding public apologies from individuals and institutions guilty of discrimination. It also took concrete steps to improve living conditions for *burakumin* miners, such as campaigning for the abolition of *eta-naya* and *eta-buro* – something it obtained in the 1920s.<sup>137</sup>

## Social movement unity and the grand coalition

- 64 Torn between the class struggle and defending *burakumin* interests, the ZKS, like the Suiheisha nationally, faced the dilemma of what stance it should adopt towards non-*buraku* miners. It generally opted for class solidarity, leading it to clash with certain members of the central executive committee at the Third National Congress of the Zenkoku Suiheisha (1924), where it criticised the movement's exclusivism and suggested it make more efforts to secure the understanding of non-*burakumin*.<sup>138</sup> On the ground, the ZKS fought for the common cause of the proletariat. That same year, in 1924, it was actively involved not only in the labour dispute at Mitsui's Miike 三池mine,<sup>139</sup> but also the strikes by textile workers at Harada Seimenjo 原田製綿所 in 1925<sup>140</sup> and the Chikuhō tenant farmer movements (*kosaku sōgi* 小作争議) supported by the Japan Farmers' Union (*Nihon nōmin kumiai* 日本農民組合), from 1923 to 1924.<sup>141</sup>
- 65 Certain hamlets where the ZKS was powerful even housed the offices of unionised non-*burakumin* strikers in order to protect them from the strong-arm tactics of their employers and crew bosses (*naya-gashira*), who sometimes enlisted the local mafia. One example is the *buraku* hamlet of Futase 二瀬 (Kaho district), home to the offices of the Western Miners' Union (*Seibu tankōfu kumiai* 西部炭坑夫組合) from Chūō mine, founded in 1922. These trade unionists were the victims of genuine violence: between 1924 and 1925 four strikers were seriously injured and one was stabbed to death. His remains were placed in the tomb of a *burakumin*.<sup>142</sup> Later, in 1932, when strikers from the Japan Coal Miners' Union (*Nihon sekitan kōfu kumiai* 日本石炭坑夫組合<sup>143</sup>) were fighting for better working conditions at Asō collieries, the ZKS rallied *burakumin* in Kaho district to provide food for the striking workers, despite having little themselves.<sup>144</sup>
- 66 Inversely, some non-*burakumin* also showed solidarity towards their persecuted colleagues. In 1923, for example, miners at Kajima Ōnoura 大之浦 and local farmers supported a Suiheisha campaign against the mayor of Nakamura village (Kurate district), accused of anti-*buraku* discrimination. Their combined efforts resulted in the publication of a letter of apology by the mayor.<sup>145</sup>
- 67 Zenkyūsui activists were nevertheless aware that anti-*buraku* hostility emanated not only from the capitalist camp but from within the working class itself. In fact, they noted that “most acts of anti-*buraku* discrimination are currently committed by the proletariat [*musan kaikyū* 無産階級]”.<sup>146</sup> This observation led the ZKS to try to foster an awareness among non-*burakumin* workers of belonging to one single class – the proletariat – and to convince them that segregation was illogical. In April 1926, *buraku* women launched the following appeal in the pages of *Suihei geppō*: “Non-*burakumin* sisters, do not discriminate against us, do not humiliate us – we who are victims of the class system. You would only be hurting your own sisters in the same situation as you, and ultimately hurting yourselves”.<sup>147</sup>

68 The message the Zenkyūsui tried to bring home was the necessity of forming a “grand coalition” (*daidō danketsu* 大同団結) against the capitalist enemy.<sup>148</sup> In this struggle, anti-*buraku* racism<sup>149</sup> only divided *burakumin* from other exploited workers and “considerably hindered the growth of the proletarian movement”.<sup>150</sup> ZKS activists saw the class struggle and the fight against racism as two fundamental and inseparable aspects of their work, one being unachievable without the other.

### Subordination to the class struggle

69 The need to present a united front was stressed by left-wing groups too, but in a more specific sense: they believed the struggle for *burakumin* emancipation should take second place to the universal cause of the proletariat. In *Seibu sensen* 西部戦線 (The Western Front), a Chikuhō magazine with close ties to the Japanese Communist Party, Yamakawa Hitoshi 山川均 (1880–1958), one of the founders of the JCP, declared in 1924 that the Suiheisha’s ideal “could only be achieved through cooperation between the three proletarian liberation movements – the labour union, the farmers’ union and the Suiheisha”. He stressed that “labourers, tenant farmers and *burakumin* belong to one and the same class – that of the oppressed”. In the same issue of the magazine, the leader of the Western Miners’ Union, Koyama Morito 小山盛人, stated that “*buraku* emancipation means economic emancipation, which can only be achieved by liberating the entire working class from capitalist exploitation”.<sup>151</sup> The aim was to underline that *burakumin* struggles were simply variants of the proletariat’s and that both should join forces under the umbrella of the JCP. Nevertheless, placing *burakumin* alongside the traditional categories of farmers and workers in this way shows that, in the local context, the Suiheisha movement was difficult to ignore.

70 In reality, it seems that the Kyūshū chapter of the Suiheisha sought above all to exploit the power struggles dividing the socialist-leaning factions of the labour movement and groups closer to the JCP. When the latter’s influence was on the wane, *burakumin* demands rose to the fore. This was the case with the short-lived Farmer-Labour Party (*Nōminrōdōtō* 農民労働党 henceforth NRT), founded in December 1925 through a coalition between the Suiheisha and various trade unions.<sup>152</sup> In addition to mining-related demands, the party’s manifesto (*kōryō* 綱領) focused heavily on *burakumin* conditions in the mines, demanding “equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex, age or race [*jīnshu* 人種]”.<sup>153</sup> Although the word “race” could potentially refer to Korean workers, the same text refers to the latter as “people of the colonies” (*shokuminchi minzoku* 植民地民族), suggesting that “race” here denotes the *burakumin*. The Suiheisha itself defined *burakumin* as a minority “people” and was the only political organisation representing a minority at the time of the NRT’s creation.<sup>154</sup> Presumably the Suiheisha was able to impose its agenda thanks to infighting within the labour movement, which saw the communist left-wing sidelined during the creation of the NRT in favour of social democratic trade unions. This hypothesis seems particularly likely since the Suiheisha had not yet decided to put the general class struggle ahead of its fight against racism.

71 The government, suspecting the NRT of having links to the JCP, immediately ordered its dissolution. It was reformed just a few months later, in March 1926, as the Labour-Farmer Party (*Rōdōnōmintō* 労働農民党, henceforth RNT), but with a party platform that no longer included *buraku* rights.<sup>155</sup> The communist wing took advantage of this

reshuffle to take control, shifting the balance of power so that the cause of discriminated minorities took a back seat to the class struggle, despite the presence of Suiheisha leaders like Sakamoto Sei'ichirō 阪本清一郎 (1892–1987) in the RNT's central committee. The JCP's influence within the *burakumin* movements also reached a peak, relegating the fight against anti-*buraku* discrimination behind the class struggle.

### ***Taishū jihō*, from the social democratic alliance to the return of the communists**

- 72 In 1926 the Zenkyūsui stepped up its anti-militarist activities, collectively referred to as the Fukuoka Regiment Discrimination Struggles (*Fukuoka rentai sabetsu kyūdan tōsō* 福岡連隊差別糾弾闘争) and carried out by the organisation's communist wing. As part of these efforts the ZKS repeatedly boycotted and occupied the Fukuoka regiment's training grounds in protest against its discrimination of *buraku*, as well as denouncing militarism with the help of communist-leaning political parties and trade unions like the RNT and the Labour Union Council of Japan (*Nihon rōdō kumiai hyōgikai* 日本労働組合評議会).<sup>156</sup> The anti-militarist campaign in Fukuoka culminated in the arrest of several ZKS leaders in November 1926,<sup>157</sup> including Matsumoto Ji'ichirō and Fujioka Shōuemon 藤岡正右衛門 (1892–1930), as well as members of the Bolshevik wing like Wada Tōsuke 和田藤助<sup>158</sup> (ZKS) and Kimura Kyōtarō 木村京太郎 (1902–1988).<sup>159</sup> These crackdowns weakened the Zenkyūsui and caused *Suihei geppō* to cease publication in June 1927. The journal nonetheless reappeared a year later, in May 1928, retitled *Taishū jihō* 大衆時報<sup>160</sup> (The People's Gazette). It was now the mouthpiece of a coalition linking the Zenkyūsui and the Kyūshū Miners' Union (*Kyūshū tankōfu kumiai* 九州炭坑夫組合, henceforth KTK). This socialist-leaning trade union was affiliated to the Japan Labour-Farmer Party (*Nihon rōnōtō* 日本労農党, henceforth "Nichirōtō"<sup>161</sup>) and, when that was dissolved, to the Social Democratic Party (*Shakai minshūtō* 社会民衆党).
- 73 Aligning itself with a mining union was a natural step for the Zenkyūsui, since the miners' cause was already fundamental to *Suihei geppō*, edited as it was in the mining heartland of Kaho district. Conversely, an alliance with a socialist (or even social democratic) union is surprising given that Zenkyūsui's leaders also supported the RNT, which was closely linked to the JCP. In fact, Matsumoto Ji'ichirō (head of the Zenkyūsui) and Saikō Mankichi 西光万吉 (one of the founders of the National Suiheisha) stood in the February 1928 national elections with the backing of the RNT, respectively in Fukuoka and Nara.
- 74 The arrests of 1926 caused a mass exodus of communists from the Zenkyūsui. Hanayama Kiyoshi and Tanaka Shōgetsu 田中松月 (1900–1993), *Suihei geppō*'s editors-in-chief who survived the arrests, had close ties to the socialists, particularly since the short-lived NRT had included the issue of discriminated populations in its platform. In fact, *Taishū jihō* was created at a time when the communist movements were in a generally weakened state. This was due in large part to the 15 March 1928 Incident, which saw the arrest of several Zenkyūsui communist miners, including Wada Hatsutarō 和田初太郎, Sōmon Kotarō 惣門小太郎 and Matsumoto Kichinosuke.<sup>162</sup>
- 75 Numerically speaking, the balance of power within the editorial board of *Taishū jihō* was evenly split, with five members from the Kaho district Suiheisha (ZKS), including *Suihei geppō* founders Hanayama Kiyoshi and Tanaka Shōgetsu, and five from the socialist-leaning KTK mining union.<sup>163</sup> However, from the very first issues of the journal this

balance of power began to shift away from the *buraku* cause.<sup>164</sup> Even the periodical's title reveals a certain marginalisation of the Suiheisha's agenda in favour of the socialist cause: *Taishū jihō* (The People's Gazette) suggests a general focus on the exploited masses rather than discriminated minorities. In fact, the first issue, dated 1 May 1928, was devoted to International Workers' Day and did not really feature any articles on the *buraku* or the Suiheisha.

- 76 The omnipresence of the *Nichirōtō* is also striking, with not a single Suiheisha advert in the early issues of *Taishū jihō* compared to several for the *Nichirōtō*, including one for the Kaho district section of the party, one for the Kaho and Tagawa offices of the *Nichirōtō News* and one for the party's official candidate in the local elections.<sup>165</sup> Any mention of the Suiheisha appears in smaller characters than the *Nichirōtō*. Even the mining union KTK, whose members made up half of the editorial board, takes up less space than the *Nichirōtō*. Miners are occasionally mentioned, but often in columns presented in smaller characters. Similarly, in the case of electoral candidates who were also miners, the name of the mine employing them is less visible than that of the *Nichirōtō*.<sup>166</sup> This can no doubt be explained by the KTK's need for political support, having been weakened by the division of the Japanese Federation of Labour (*Nihon rōdō sōdōmei* 日本労働総同盟<sup>167</sup>), to which it formerly belonged, into the Labour Union Council of Japan (founded in May 1925) and the Japan Labour Unions League (*Nihon rōdō kumiai dōmei* 日本労働組合同盟), founded in December the following year.
- 77 The balance of power shifted once again in the December 1928 issue of *Taishū jihō*, with a first page devoted entirely to the Suiheisha cause. Alongside the legal proceedings of the Fukuoka Regiment Incident, then underway, the rest of the front page focused on the methods known as “combat by public denunciation” (*kyūdan tōsō* 糾弾闘争), a customary tactic for tackling anti-*buraku* discrimination. In this particular instance *Taishū jihō* denounced the use of the word *eta* by a yakuza member in Nagasaki who was close to the local mayor, Fujita Matao 藤田又雄. The individual in question was accused of being a “reactionary thug” for having said, “What's wrong with calling an *eta* an *eta*?”<sup>168</sup> In contrast to earlier issues, the hitherto omnipresent *Nichirōtō* is virtually absent from the December 1928 publication. In fact, the party was being disbanded to form a coalition with other leftist groups as the Japan Masses Party (*Nihon taishūtō* 日本大衆党), formed 20 days after the publication of this issue of *Taishū jihō*. Perhaps Zenkyūsui members took advantage of the reigning uncertainty to push their *buraku* agenda, as *Suihei geppō* did before them, particularly since the main editors of *Taishū jihō* ultimately aligned themselves with a more centrist party rather than with the new coalition. This new alignment saw Hanayama Kiyoshi stand in the prefectural elections of January 1929 with the support of the KTK, as usual, but also with the backing of the Social Democratic Party. In fact, the 10 January 1929 issue of *Taishū jihō* featured a message of support from Miyachika Kōji 宮近綱次, an elected official of that party.
- 78 After these events, the publication frequency of *Taishū jihō* slowed to barely one issue per year. It only returned to a more regular schedule in 1933, when ties were established with a new Kyūshū mining union, the Western Mines Labour Union (*Seibu kōzan rōdō kumiai* 西部鉱山労働組合, henceforth SKRK).<sup>169</sup> The SKRK was closely linked to the communist-controlled National Council of Japanese Labour Unions (*Nihon rōdō kumiai zenkoku kyōgikai* 日本労働組合同全国協議会, henceforth Zenkyō 全協) – a rival of the social democratic union to which *Taishū jihō* had previously allied itself. In January 1934, *Taishū jihō* even became the official organ of the SKRK. However, the alliance with



this JCP-affiliated union dates back further, to at least 1931, when Hanayama Kiyoshi ran in the Fukuoka prefectural elections with the official backing of the SKRK and the National Labour-Farmer Masses Party (*Zenkoku rōnō taishūtō* 全国労農大衆党). The year 1931 was also marked by the Chikuhō Coalfield Strikes (*Chikuhō tanden sōgi* 筑豊炭田争議), where the strikers were supported by the SKRK, the Zenkyō, and of course the Zenkyūsui.<sup>170</sup>

- 79 The first issue of *Taishū jihō* as mouthpiece of the SKRK, in January 1934, presented the union as representing Chikuhō miners engaged in the class struggle.<sup>171</sup> A large-print insert on the first page reads:

Yet another explosion at Akaike mine.... The owners and capitalists should be sentenced to death. In avidly seeking profit they have massacred many miners and caused their families a life of unending hatred!! A lifetime's compensation for the families of the dead!!<sup>172</sup>

- 80 Most of the articles in this issue were addressed to Chikuhō miners. They mention “the common enemy of Chikuhō’s one hundred thousand miners” (page 2) and encourage readers to express their difficulties and expectations in a column entitled “The Miners’ Arm” (page 4). Reading suggestions were also given with a view to educating the masses: “Read!!! Books are our daily bread”, advises one column recommending three authors, among them Karl Marx and Yamakawa Hitoshi. Conversely, these articles make no mention of the condition of *buraku* miners. Nor is there any mention of *buraku* discrimination by Hanayama Kiyoshi, editor-in-chief of *Taishū jihō*, in the two articles he penned for the inaugural issue. There is just one text from the Suiheisha, written by chairman Matsumoto Ji’ichirō. It appears in the bottom corner of one page and is a simple New Year’s message with newsbites from the Suiheisha in small characters.

- 81 The *burakumin* condition was not tackled until a special issue of *Taishū jihō* in April 1934. Entitled “Suiheisha”, it differs markedly from earlier issues of *Taishū jihō* and *Suihei geppō*. It includes neither public denunciations nor apology letters, nor messages of direct support for the ZKS. Instead, there are didactic accounts of discrimination, particularly in schools. The stated aim was to raise awareness of the difficulties encountered by *burakumin* and explain the reasons behind some of the Suiheisha’s actions:

From an ordinary person’s point of view, Suiheisha activities like the public denunciations of discrimination may seem incomprehensible.... Simply explaining how a single word can wound us irreversibly will not help you understand. Instead, we propose to tell you a personal story.<sup>173</sup>

- 82 At the end of the article the author stresses his desire to raise awareness:

No doubt you think that in these days of the Shōwa era such discrimination surely no longer exists.... However, it is precisely because such discrimination still exists that the Suiheisha is obliged to continue its practice of public accusation.<sup>174</sup>

- 83 Educating readers about the Suiheisha’s public denunciations was particularly important because the authors of such acts were often fellow miners. It has not been possible to ascertain whether this special issue was a concession won by the Zenkyūsui’s members or whether the SKRK – in other words the communists – felt the need in 1934, either nationally or locally, to close ranks and enlist the support of the Suiheisha and the *burakumin* community at large.<sup>175</sup>

- 84 In fact, this special “Suiheisha” issue of *Taishū jihō* makes no mention of miners or labourers in general, as if the condition of discriminated minorities and that of the working class were now two distinct realities. This is a considerable change from the

assimilationist discourse of the JCP and Sano Manabu, who 10 years earlier had described Chikuhō and its mines as the ideal place for achieving solidarity between *buraku* and non-*buraku* workers.<sup>176</sup>

## Conclusion

- 85 The connection between *eta* and coal, and later *buraku* and the mines, is long-standing in the Chikuhō region. It results from historical and social factors linked to the local strategies adopted by the Edo-period feudal domains, in addition to pedological factors relating to the location of coal deposits.
- 86 Industrialisation and the appearance of a mining proletariat automatically eroded this connection, particularly during the expansion of the mining industry in the late nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1920s, however, and then in the post-war years, the *buraku* presence in the mines grew once again. This may explain why certain historians specialising in the issue came to link coal so closely to the *buraku*, and in doing so, to extrapolate the situation in Chikuhō. What can be said with more certainty is that coal appears to have remained a decisive element for Chikuhō's *buraku* in terms of employment, revenue and even collective memory.
- 87 Indeed, the industrial working class, into which the *burakumin* were quickly absorbed, did not abandon the centuries-old discrimination that had existed prior to Meiji. This included segregated housing, relegation to less qualified and lower paid jobs, and the perpetuation of taboos such as the ban on *burakumin* working in the pit.
- 88 The large mining conglomerates like Mitsui, Mitsubishi and Sumitomo adopted various strategies with regards these communities, ranging from avoidance to dissimulation. However, companies like Asō Takichi's, which knew the Chikuhō region and its hamlets well, seem to have developed a fairly clear strategy of taking maximum advantage of this cheap, available and captive pool of labour. The Asō group adopted this same approach in the 1930s when it preferentially hired colonial workers, often for considerably less wages than *burakumin* and for jobs with difficult working environments.
- 89 Within the labour movements and the JCP in particular – the Suiheisha's closest ally – organisations adopted various approaches to the treatment of discriminated minorities according to their theoretical analysis of the class struggle: either incorporating them into their strategies or considering them a secondary preoccupation. The shifting balance of power between the JCP and the Suiheisha was decisive and had repercussions in Chikuhō's mines via the presence of the Zenkyūsui and JCP-affiliated trade unions: when times were hard, a need for support on either side variously led members of the ZKS to place less emphasis on *buraku* rights, or JCP leaders to attempt to convince their activists of the need to fight against anti-*buraku* segregation.
- 90 Although the post-war period saw the gradual closure of Chikuhō's mines, paradoxically, the percentage of *burakumin* miners seems to have increased. This phenomenon no doubt reflects the lower skill sets of these populations, making it more difficult for them to retrain for other industries than non-*burakumin* workers.
- 91 Given the current recognition of Chikuhō's mining heritage, either in the form of museums, exhibitions or commemorative monuments, one might expect a memory of the *buraku* presence to have arisen. In reality, many former mine shafts are located

close to *buraku* and still inhabited by *burakumin*.<sup>177</sup> Since the location and identification of these hamlets remains a decisive element in the defence of *buraku* by associations in Kyūshū and the rest of Japan, groups affiliated to the ZKS are opposed to any mention on the ground or in publications that might enable the location of Chikuhō's *buraku* to be precisely pinpointed.

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ASO Tatsuo 安蘇龍生, 1979, "Bakuhan jidai no tagawa ni okeru sekitan saikutsu to hisabetsu buraku" 幕藩時代の田川における石炭採掘と被差別部落 [Coal Mining and Buraku Discrimination in Feudal Tagawa] in *Buraku kaihōshi: Fukuoka 部落解放史・ふくおか* [The History of Buraku Emancipation: Fukuoka], no. 15, p. 56–85.
- BURAKU KAIHŌ JINKEN KENKYŪJO 部落解放人権研究所 (ed.), 1981, *Buraku mondai. Jinken jiten 部落問題・人権事典* [Encyclopaedia of Buraku and Human Rights], 解放出版社 [Kaihō Shuppansha], 大阪 [Osaka].
- BURAKU KAIHŌ KENKYŪJO 部落解放研究所 (ed.), 1981, *Buraku mondai 部落問題* [Buraku Issues], 解放出版社 [Kaihō Shuppansha], 大阪 [Osaka].
- CHIKUHŌ SEKITAN KŌGYŌSHI NENPYŌ HENSAN IINKAI 筑豊石炭産業史年表編纂委員会編 (ed.), 1973, *Chikuhō sekitan kōgyōshi nenpyō 筑豊石炭産業史年表* [A Chronological History of Coal Mining in Chikuhō], 田川郷土研究会 [Tagawa Kyōdo Kenkyūkai], 田川 [Tagawa].
- CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI 中央融和事業協会, 1970 [1926–1941], *Yūwa jigyō nenkan 融和事業年鑑* [Annual Report of Yūwa Initiatives, 1926–1941], 部落解放研究所 [Buraku Kaihō Kenkyūjo], 大阪 [Osaka].
- CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI 中央融和事業協会, 1974, *Yūwa jigyō kenkyū 融和事業研究* [Research on Yūwa Initiatives], reprint of 80 issues, 世界文庫 [Sekai Bunko], 東京 [Tokyo].
- ENDŌ Masao 遠藤正男, 1942, *Kyūshū keizaishi kenkyū 九州経済史研究* [Studies in the Economic History of Kyūshū], 日本評論社 [Nihon Hyōronsha], 東京 [Tokyo].
- FUKUOKA BURAKUSHI KENKYŪKAI 福岡部落史研究会 (ed.), 1979, *Fukuoka-ken hisabetsu burakushi no shosō 福岡県被差別部落史の諸相* [Aspects of the History of Buraku Discrimination in Fukuoka], 福岡部落史研究会 [Fukuoka Burakushi Kenkyūkai], 福岡 [Fukuoka].
- FUKUOKA BURAKUSHI KENKYŪKAI 福岡部落史研究会 (ed.), 1989, *Fukuoka no buraku kaihōshi 福岡の部落解放史* [The History of Buraku Emancipation in Fukuoka], vol. 2, 海鳥社 [Kaichōsha], 福岡 [Fukuoka].
- HARADA Tomohiko 原田伴彦, 1975 [1973], *Hisabetsu buraku no rekishi 被差別部落の歴史* [The History of Buraku Discrimination], 朝日新聞社 [Asahi Shinbunsha], 東京 [Tokyo].
- HARAGUCHI Eiyū 原口穎雄, 1988, "Kikanshi 'Suihei geppō' ni miru Zenkyūshū Suiheisha no undo" 機関紙『水平月報』にみる全九州水平社の運動 [Zenkyūshū Suiheisha's Campaigns as Seen Through its Official Organ, Suihei geppō], in SEINAN CHIKISHI KENKYŪKAI 西南地域史研究会 (ed.), *Seinan chi'iki no shiteki tenkai: kindai-hen 西南地域の史的展開—近代篇* [The Historical

Development of Japan's South-western Regions During Modernisation], 思文閣出版 [Shibunkaku Shuppan], 京都 [Kyoto].

HARAGUCHI Eiyū 原口穎雄, 1989, "Suiheisha no shisō to undo" 水平社の思想と運動 [The Suiheisha: Ideologies and Campaigns] in FUKUOKA BURAKUSHI KENKYŪKAI 福岡部落史研究会 (ed.), *Fukuoka no buraku kaihōshi* 福岡の部落解放史 [The History of Buraku Emancipation in Fukuoka], 海鳥社 [Kaichōsha], 福岡 [Fukuoka].

HARAGUCHI Eiyū 原口穎雄, 2001, in BURAKU KAIHŌ JINKEN KENKYŪJO 部落解放人権研究所 (ed.), *Buraku mondai. Jinken jiten* 部落問題・人権 事典 [Encyclopaedia of Buraku and Human Rights], 解放出版社 [Kaihō Shuppansha], 大阪 [Osaka].

HOSOSAKO Kanemitsu 細迫兼光, 1926, *Rōdōnōmintō no kōryō to seisaku* 労働農民党の綱領と政策 [Party Platform and Policies Proposed by the Rōdōnōmintō], 労働農民党調査部 [Rōdōnōmintō Chōsabu], 東京 [Tokyo].

ISHIKIDA Miki Y., 2005, *Living Together: Minority People and Disadvantaged Groups in Japan*, iUniverse, Bloomington (Indiana).

KANEKO Uzeki 金子雨石, 1975, "Mitsui Tagawa tankō ni okeru rōdōsha no boshū to kaiko, 1" 三井田川炭鉱における労働者の募集と解雇, 1 [The Hiring and Firing of Workers at Mitsui Tagawa Mine, 1] in ENERUGI SHI KENKYŪKAI エネルギ 史研究会 (ed.), *Enerugi-shi kenkyū nōto* エネルギ 史研究ノート [Research Notes on the History of Energy], no. 5.

KAWAMUKAI Hidetake 川向秀武, 1989, "Buraku kaizen to seikatsu kadai" 部落改善と生活課題 [Buraku Improvements and Everyday Issues] in FUKUOKA BURAKUSHI KENKYŪKAI 福岡部落史研究会 (ed.), *Fukuoka no buraku kaihōshi* 福岡の部落解放史 [The History of Buraku Emancipation in Fukuoka], 海鳥社 [Kaichōsha], 福岡 [Fukuoka].

*Kindai burakushi shiryō shūsei* 近代部落史資料集成 [Compilation of Historical Documents on the Buraku During Modernisation], 1984-1987, 三一書房 [Sanichi Shobō], 東京 [Tokyo].

KYŪSHŪ DAIGAKU SEKITAN KENKYŪ SHIRYŌ SENTĀ 九州大学石炭研究資料センター (ed.), 1993, *Sekitan kenkyū shiryō sōsho* 石炭研究資料叢書 [Collection of Historical Documents for Coal Research], vol. 14, 九州大学石炭研究資料センター [Kyūshū Daigaku Sekitan Kenkyū Shiryō Sentā], 福岡 [Fukuoka].

KYŪSHŪ DAIGAKU SEKITAN KENKYŪ SHIRYŌ SENTĀ 九州大学石炭研究資料センター (ed.), 2000, *Sekitan kenkyū shiryō sōsho* 石炭研究資料叢書 [Collection of Historical Documents for Coal Research], vol. 21, 九州大学石炭研究資料センター [Kyūshū Daigaku Sekitan Kenkyū Shiryō Sentā], 福岡 [Fukuoka].

MAHARA Tetsuo 馬原鉄男, 1973, *Nihon shihon shugi to buraku mondai* 日本資本主義と部落問題 [Japanese Capitalism and the Buraku Issue], 部落問題研究所 [Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo], 京都 [Kyoto].

MATSUMOTO Kichinosuke 松本吉之助, 1977, *Chikuhō ni ikiru* 筑豊に生きる [Life in Chikuhō], 部落問題研究所 [Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo], 京都 [Kyoto].

MATSUZAKI Taketoshi 松崎武俊, 1979, "Edoki ni okeru fukuoka chihō no buraku to nōgyō, sono 5" 江戸期における福岡地方の部落と農業, その五 [Buraku and Agriculture in the Fukuoka Region During the Edo Period, vol. 5] in *Fukuoka-ken hisabetsu burakushi no shosō* 福岡県被差別部落史の諸相 [Aspects of the History of Buraku Discrimination in Fukuoka], 福岡部落史研究会 [Fukuoka Burakushi Kenkyūkai], 福岡 [Fukuoka], p. 85-120.

- NAGASUE Toshio 永末十四雄, 1973, *Chikuhō: sekitan no chi'ikishi* 筑豊－石炭の地域史 [Chikuhō: A Regional History of Coal], 日本放送出版協会 [Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai], 東京 [Tokyo].
- NAGASUE Toshio 永末十四雄, 1979, “Chikuhō o chūshin to shita shihon shugi no hattatsu to buraku mondai” 筑豊を中心とした資本主義の発達と部落問題 [The Growth of Capitalism and the Buraku Issue with a Focus on Chikuhō] in *Buraku kaihōshi: Fukuoka* 部落解放史・ふくおか [The History of Buraku Emancipation: Fukuoka], no. 15.
- NAGASUE Toshio 永末十四雄, 1989, “Sekitan kōgyō to buraku mondai” 石炭鉱業と部落問題 [The Coal Industry and the Buraku Issue] in FUKUOKA BURAKUSHI KENKYŪKAI (ed.), *Fukuoka no buraku kaihōshi* 福岡の部落解放史 [The History of Buraku Emancipation in Fukuoka], vol. 2, 海鳥社 [Kaichōsha], 福岡 [Fukuoka], p. 69–106.
- NAIMUSHŌ 内務省 [Home Ministry], 2000 [1924], *Kōgyō rōdō jijō chōsho* 鉱業労働事情調書 [Survey on Working Conditions in the Mines] in KYŪSHŪ DAIGAKU SEKITAN KENKYŪ SHIRYŌ SENTĀ 九州大学石炭研究資料センター (ed.), *Sekitan kenkyū shiryō sōsho* 石炭研究資料叢書 [Collection of Historical Documents for Coal Research], vol. 21, 九州大学石炭研究資料センター [Kyūshū Daigaku Sekitan Kenkyū Shiryō Sentā], 福岡 [Fukuoka].
- NAKAMURA Naofumi 中村尚史, 2008, “Chihō zaibatsu’ no tanjō” [The Emergence of the Regional Zaibatsu] in *ISS Discussion Paper Series*, 東京大学社会科学研究所 [Tōkyō Daigaku Shakaikagaku Kenkyūjo], 東京 [Tokyo].
- OGINO Yoshihiro 荻野喜弘, 1993, *Chikuhō tankō rōshi kankei-shi* 筑豊炭鉱労使関係史 [A History of Labour-Management Relations in Chikuhō’s Mines], 九州大学出版会 [Kyūshū Daigaku Shuppankai], 福岡 [Fukuoka].
- REBER Emily A. Su-Ian, 1999, “Buraku Mondai in Japan: Historical and Modern Perspectives and Directions for the Future” in *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, vol. 12, p. 297–360.
- SABOURET Jean-François, 1983, *L’Autre Japon: les burakumin* [The Other Japan: The Burakumin], Maspero, Paris.
- SAKAMOTO Yūichi 坂本悠一, 1997, “Chikuhō sekitan kōgyō to hisabetsu buraku” 筑豊石炭鉱業と被差別部落 [The Chikuhō Coal Industry and Buraku Discrimination] in *Buraku mondai kenkyū* 部落問題研究 [Research on the Buraku Issue], no. 140, p. 82–116.
- SANO Manabu 佐野学, 1923, *Suihei undō* 水平運動 [The Movement for Equality], author’s personal archives.
- SHINDŌ Toyō’o 新藤東洋男, 1978, *Chikuhō no jokōfutachi* 筑豊の女坑夫たち [Women Miners in Chikuhō], 部落問題研究所 [Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo], 京都 [Kyoto].
- SŌMUCHŌ 総務庁 [General Affairs Agency], 1995, *Dōwa mondai no genkyō, heisei nananenban* 同和問題の現況平成七年版 [The Current State of Dōwa (Assimilation) Issues, 1995], 中央法規出版 [Chūō Hōki Shuppan], 東京 [Tokyo].
- SUMIYA Mikio 隅谷三喜男, 2003 [1968], “Nihon sekitan sangyō bunseki” 日本石炭産業分析 [Analysis of the Mining Industry in Japan] in *Sumiya Mikio chosakushū* 隅谷三喜男著作集 [The Collected Works of Sumiya Mikio], vol. 4, 岩波書店 [Iwanami Shoten], 東京 [Tokyo].
- TACHIBANA Takashi 立花隆, 1983 [1978], *Nihon kyōsantō no kenkyū* 日本共産党の研究 [Research on the Japanese Communist Party], vol. 3, 講談社 [Kōdansha], 東京 [Tokyo].
- TAKANO Nobuharu 高野信治, 2007, “Kinsei daimyō no nōsei tenkai to shakai sabetsu” 近世大名の農政展開と社会差別 [Agricultural Policy and Social Discrimination Under the Kinsei (Early

Modern) Daimyō] in *Hikaku shakai bunka* 比較社会文化 [Social and Cultural Studies], vol. 13, p. 36–43.

TAKI'I Yoshitaka 滝井義高, 1985, “Assatsu sareta tankō” 圧殺された炭鉱 [Smothered Coal Mines] in Isomura Ei'ichi 磯村英一 (ed.), *Teihen shakai* 底辺社会 [The Underclass], 雄山閣出版 [Yūzankaku Shuppan], 東京 [Tokyo], p. 203–216.

TANAKA Masato 田中真人, 2001, “Rōdōnōmintō” 労働農民党, in BURAKU KAIHŌ JINKEN KENKYŪJO 部落解放人権研究所 (ed.), *Buraku mondai. Jinken jiten* 部落問題・人権事典 [Encyclopaedia of Buraku and Human Rights], 解放出版社 [Kaihō Shuppansha], 大阪 [Osaka].

TOKITA Yoshihisa 戸木田嘉久, 1976, *Hatarakumono to buraku mondai* 働くものと部落問題 [Workers and the Buraku Issue], 部落問題研究所出版部 [Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo Shuppanbu], 京都 [Kyoto].

TOKITA Yoshihisa 戸木田嘉久, 1989, *Kyūshū tankō rōdō chōsa shūsei* 九州炭鉱労働調査集成 [Compilation of Surveys on Mining Labour in Kyūshū], 法律文化社 [Hōritsu Bunkasha], 京都 [Kyoto].

Tokita Yoshihisa 戸木田嘉久, 1992, “Chikuhō no tankō to buraku no koto” 筑豊の炭鉱と部落のこと [The Mines and Buraku of Chikuhō] in *Ritsumeikan keizaigaku* 立命館経済学 [Ritsumeikan Economic Review], no. 5, vol. 41, p. 161–164.

TŌKYŌ CHIHŌ SHOKUGYŌ SHŌKAI JIMUKYOKU 東京地方職業紹介事務局 [Tokyo Regional Employment Placement Office], 2000 [1928], “Chikuhō o chūshin to shita shihon shugi no hattatsu to buraku mondai” 筑豊を中心とした資本主義の発達と部落問題 [The Growth of Capitalism and the Buraku Issue with a Focus on Chikuhō] in *Sekitan kenkyū shiryō sōsho* 石炭研究資料叢書 [Collection of Historical Documents for Coal Research], vol. 21, 九州大学石炭研究資料センター [Kyūshū Daigaku Sekitan Kenkyū Shiryō Sentā], 福岡 [Fukuoka].

TSUCHIANA Fumito 土穴文人, 1975, “Nōminrōdōtō' no seiritsu keika to rōdōkumiai” 「農民労働党」の成立経過と労働組合 [Labour Unions and the Establishment of the “Nōminrōdōtō”] in Hōsei Daigaku Shakaigakubu Gakkai 法政大学社会学部学会 (ed.), *Shakai rōdō kenkyū* 社会労働研究 [Social Labour Studies], no. 12, p. 195–271.

TSŪSHŌ SANGYŌSHŌ 通商産業省 [Ministry of International Trade and Industry], 1964, *Honpō kōgyō no sūsei gojūnen-shi, zokuhen* 本邦鉱業の趨勢50年史, 続篇 [A 50-Year History of Coal Mining in our Country], 通商産業調査会 [Tsūshō Sangyō Chōsakai], 東京 [Tokyo].

UEDA Masayo うえた まさよ, 1977, “Watashi no oitachi” わたしのおいたち [My Childhood], in Tōjō Takashi 東上高志 (ed.), *Watasha sore demo ikitekita* わたしやそれで も生きてきた [And Still, Left Went On], 部落問題研究所 [Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo], 京都 [Kyoto], p. 12–17.

YADA Toshifumi 矢田俊文, 2014, *Yada Toshifumi chosakushū* 矢田俊文著作集 [The Collected Works of Yada Toshifumi], vol. 1, 原書房 [Hara Shobō], 東京 [Tokyo].

YOSHIDA Fumiyoshi 吉田文茂, 2013, “Muson seitō kessei to zenkoku suiheisha” 無産政党結成と全国水平社 [The National Suiheisha and the Formation of the Proletarian Party], published on the website of the research institute Buraku Kaihō Jinken Kenkyūjo 部落解放人権研究所.

UENO Eishin 上野英信, 1960, *Owareyuku kōfutachi* 追われゆく坑夫たち [Miners Driven Away], 岩波書店 [Iwanami Shoten], 東京 [Tokyo].

ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA 全九州水平社, 1985, *Suihei geppō* 水平月報 [Monthly Bulletin of the Kyūshū Suiheisha], no. 1–28, 1924–1927; archives reprinted in *Suihei geppō fukkōkuban* 水平月報復刻版 [Reissue of Suihei geppō], 福岡部落史研究会 [Fukuoka Burakushi Kenkyūkai], 福岡 [Fukuoka], p. 1–109.

## NOTES

1. Since Chikuhō is not an officially delimited region, this paper adopts the approach of Japanese historians by referring to its four districts (*gun* 郡) of Kaho 嘉穂, Kurate 鞍手, Onga 遠賀 and Tagawa 田川, all located in Fukuoka Prefecture.
2. Chikuhō accounted for 54 percent of the national coal output in 1902, 50 percent in 1921 and 31 percent in 1951. YADA, 2014, p. 34–75.
3. Also known as *eta* (filth) and *hinin* (non-humans), these terms referred, during the Edo period (1603–1868), to entire populations of people excluded from the official caste system. Members of these groups were restricted to occupations considered impure and confined to living in segregated settlements with high rates of endogamy. This social and spatial segregation continued despite the Emancipation Edict of 1871, introduced as part of the modernising efforts of the Meiji period (1868–1912). The settlements inhabited by outcast communities gradually came to be known as *tokushu buraku* (special hamlets), and then simply *buraku*, while the inhabitants were called *burakumin* (hamlet people).
4. TOKITA, 1992, p. 162.
5. The pioneer in this field is undisputedly Mahara Tetsuo with “Chikuhō tankō to buraku no keisei” (1964), reprinted in MAHARA, 1973, p. 67–86, followed by Nagasue Toshio and, more recently, Sakamoto Yūichi (see further on in this paper). With many historians of the *buraku* question supporting the Buraku Liberation League (*Buraku kaihō dōmei* 部落解放同盟, founded in 1955), historical treatments of the subject tend to focus more on the history of the Suiheisha (see footnote 8) or the Edo period, and less on the sensitive issues that go hand in hand with more recent economic and social history.
6. The primary data in question essentially consists of studies by government agencies, from the Meiji Restoration (1868) to the post-war period.
7. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA 全九州水平社, *Suihei geppō* 水平月報 [Monthly Bulletin of the Kyūshū Suiheisha], no. 128, 1924–1927. Archives reprinted in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, p. 1109.
8. The Suiheisha – or National Levellers’ Association (full name Zenkoku Suiheisha 全国水平社, Zensui for short) – was founded in 1922 to defend the rights of *burakumin* and fight for equality with the rest of the Japanese population.
9. Certain sources mention the year 1587 but they are not considered reliable by Aso Tatsuo, director of the Tagawa City Coal Mining History Museum. ASO, 1979, p. 57.
10. Kaibara Ekiken 貝原益軒, *Yamato honzō* 大和本草 (1709), cited by SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 86.
11. MAHARA, 1973, p. 71; NAGASUE, 1979, no. 15, p. 94. My sincere thanks to Bernard Thomann for making this article available.
12. As mentioned elsewhere, the terms *eta* (filth) and *hinin* (non-human) referred, during the Edo period (1603–1868), to outcaste populations restricted to working in occupations often considered impure and to living in segregated settlements away from the general population. Use of the term *tokushu burakumin* 特殊部落民 (special hamlet people), and later simply *burakumin*, dates back to the early twentieth century. For more information on the subject see ISHIKIDA, 2005, p. 26–47.

13. ASO, 1979, p. 58.
14. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 97.
15. Although the definition of *hyakushō* has evolved over time, during the Edo period it referred to commoners living in rural areas (*mura* 村), most of them peasants, as opposed to *chōnin* 町人, who lived in towns (*machi* 町).
16. MAHARA, 1973, p. 74.
17. ASO, 1979, p. 77–79.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 59–84.
19. He wrote that “during the Edo period, △△ [sic] and *hinin* were treated as belonging to the class of ‘special lowly people’ and it is likely they were among the vagabonds working in the mines” (*Tokugawa jidai no tokushumin to shite toriatsukawareta kaikyū ni △△ [sic] oyobi hinin ga atta. Furōsha to shite tankō ni hairikonda mono no naka ni wa, korera no kaikyū mo attarō to omowareru* 徳川時代の特殊賤民として取扱はれた階級に△△及び“非人か”あった。浮浪者として炭坑に入り込んだ“ものの中には、是等の階級もあつたらうと思われる”). The symbol △△ replaces the word *eta*. ENDŌ, 1942, p. 156–157.
20. ASO, 1979, p. 62–63.
21. HARADA, 1975 [1973], p. 124–126.
22. In 1868 there was not a single *hinin* in Fukuoka domain compared to 21,485 *eta*, while Kokura domain had 82 *hinin* and 6,356 *eta*. CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974 [1939], p. 77–98.
23. MATSUZAKI, 1979, p. 100.
24. ASO, 1979, p. 82.
25. TAKANO, 2007.
26. CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974 [1939], p. 77–101 & no. 58, p. 101.
27. “Peasant households” actually refers to the number of non-*eta* households, which mainly consisted of peasants. ASO, 1979, p. 57 & 82.
28. MATSUZAKI, 1979, p. 89; SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 84; ASO, 1979, p. 57. This graph is based on figures compiled from different sources depending on the year: Kokura domain archives for 1622, private archives for 1852 and the newspaper *Fukuoka Nichinichi* 福岡日日 for 1920. Although they cannot be considered perfectly accurate, their relative size, their accordance with the overall trend and the calibre of scholars who have used them in their work nonetheless lend them a certain credibility.
29. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 72–75.
30. CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974 [1939], p. 77–101.
31. ASO, 1979, p. 63–76.
32. TSŪSHŌ SANGYŌSHŌ, 1964, p. 194–195.
33. YADA, 1974, p. 34–75.
34. Promulgated on 12 October 1871 (28 August of Meiji 4), the Emancipation Edict officially abolished the status distinctions of outcaste populations like *eta*, *hinin*, *shuku* and *tōnai*, etc.: “The titles of *eta* and *hinin* shall be abolished; and henceforth the people belonging to these classes shall be treated in the same manner both in occupation and social standing as the common people (*heimin*)” (*eta hinin tō no shō haiserare sōrōjō jikon*



*mibun shokugyō tomo heimin dōyō tarubeki koto* 機多非人等ノ称被廢候条自今身分職業共平民同様タルヘキ事). Translation from REBER, 1999, p. 304. Segregation nonetheless continued due to the lack of other concrete political measures to tackle discrimination. Moreover, *eta* and *hinin* lost their monopolies of certain occupations as well as their tax exemption status, ultimately proletarianizing and impoverishing some of them.

35. MAHARA, 1973, p. 67–86; NAGASUE, 1979, p. 98–107.

36. This expression appears in the work of most scholars researching the issue, for example NAGASUE, 1979, p. 104, and TAKI'I, 1985, p. 205.

37. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 83.

38. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 99 & 105.

39. KAWAMUKAI, 1989, p. 115.

40. ASO, 1979, p. 84.

41. MAHARA, 1973, p. 69.

42. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 99.

43. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 166.

44. TAKI'I, 1985, p. 206.

45. Rate calculated using the Home Ministry surveys of 1871 and 1921 (CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974 [1936] no. 40, p. 85). The high growth rate is partly due to the fact that the government *buraku* survey of 1933 was more exhaustive than that of 1920. It remains high even compared to the national rate of population growth.

46. More detailed sources exist but they are concealed in private archives.

47. This can be seen in duplicates of early-twentieth-century documents, like the 80 issues of *Yūwa jigyō kenkyū* (CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974) and *Yūwa jigyō nenkan* (CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970), in addition to around 10 or so volumes of *Kindai burakushi shiryō shūsei* (1984–1987).

48. Rate calculated using the surveys carried out by the Home Ministry in 1921 and 1935 (*Yūwa jigyō kenkyū*, no. 40, p. 85; CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970 [1935], p. 283–287).

49. CHIKUHŌ SEKITAN KŌGYŌSHI NENPYŌ HENSAN IINKAI, 1973; SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 84 & 107.

50. YADA, 2014., p. 67; NAGASUE, 1973, p. 133, & 1989, p. 92.

51. TŌKYŌ CHIHŌ SHOKUGYŌ SHŌKAI JIMUKYOKU 東京地方職業紹介事務局, 2000 [1928], p. 199.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

53. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 92.

54. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 119.

55. KAWAMUKAI, 1989, p. 114.

56. Mahara Tetsuo, quoted by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 38.

57. ASO, 1979, p. 84.

58. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 82.

59. Sano announced his “ideological conversion” (*tenkō* 転向) from prison in 1933.

60. SANO, 1923.

61. An early member of the Kyūshū Suiheisha, closely linked to the Japanese Communist Party.
62. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 12.
63. A semi-public social welfare organisation founded in 1911.
64. *Saiseikai kaihō* 済生会会報 (Saiseikai Bulletin), no. 4, 6 January 1918, reprinted in *Kindai burakushi shiryō shūsei*, 1984–1987, vol. 9, p. 330.
65. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 31.
66. Quoted by MAHARA, 1973, p. 81. Information on Shirato Zentarō based on NAKAMURA, 2008.
67. The number of workers employed in the mines in 1933 is roughly equivalent to the years preceding the prosperity brought about by World War I. Working class population figures quoted by YADA, 2014, p. 67.
68. Based on SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 84.
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ibid.*, p. 91; TOKITA, 1976, p. 75.
71. Survey published in CHŪO YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970 [1933], p. 556.
72. YADA, 2014, p. 67.
73. CHŪO YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970 [1933], p. 556; BURAKU KAIHŌ KENKYŪJO, 1981, p. 55.
74. Survey carried out by Tsuru Daijirō 都留大治郎, quoted by TOKITA, 1976, p. 72.
75. BURAKU KAIHŌ KENKYŪJO, 1981, p. 55.
76. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 106.
77. *Kindai burakushi shiryō shūsei*, 1984–1987, vol. 2, p. 3 & 584.
78. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 185; MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 31.
79. Report quoted by SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 103.
80. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 12 & 103; SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 91–102; SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 13 & 30–38.
81. MAHARA, 1973, p. 82.
82. Recollections of Yamamoto Sakubē, Matsumoto Tsuya and Matsumoto Kichinosuke quoted by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 31–32.
83. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 31.
84. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 100.
85. Along with Asō Takichi and Yasukawa Kei'ichirō, Kaijima is nicknamed one of the “Chikuhō Big Three” (*Chikuhō gosanke* 筑豊御三家).
86. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 80–86.
87. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 108.
88. MAHARA, 1973, p. 82; SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 185.
89. TŌKYŌ CHIHŌ SHOKUGYŌ SHŌKAI JIMUKYOKU, *Saitanfu rōdō jijō* 採炭夫労働事情, 1929, reproduced in KYŪSHŪ DAIGAKU SEKITAN KENKYŪ SHIRYŌ SENTĀ, 2000, p. 190.
90. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 98.
91. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 108; SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 101; MAHARA, 1973, p. 82.

92. ŌSAKA CHIHŌ SHOKUGYŌ SHŌKAI JIMUKYOKU, “Chikuhō tanzan rōdō jijō” 筑豊炭山労働事情 [Working Conditions in Chikuhō Mines], 1926 survey, reproduced in KYŪSHŪ DAIGAKU SEKITAN KENKYŪ SHIRYŌ SENTĀ, 1993, p. 81.
93. NAIMUSHŌ, 2000 [1924], p. 25.
94. Quoted by SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 101.
95. UEDA, 1977, p. 1014.
96. Recollections quoted by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 34.
97. The term *yottsū*, literally meaning “four”, was often used to describe *burakumin*, insinuating that they were not human but simply creatures with “four limbs”.
98. Quoted in MAHARA, 1973, p. 76.
99. HARADA, 1975 [1973], p. 231.
100. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 180.
101. Created in 1923, the Zen Kyūshū Suiheisha 全九州水平社, or Zenkyūsui for short, is a regional branch of the National Levellers’ Association – Zenkoku Suiheisha – founded the previous year to tackle *burakumin* discrimination.
102. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 12, 1 August 1925.
103. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 90–92; MAHARA, 1973, p. 82.
104. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 103.
105. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 7, 1 January 1925.
106. HARAGUCHI, 1988, p. 495.
107. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 96; SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 64.
108. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985. Information on the number of workers employed at each mine is based on MOJI TETSUDŌ UN’YUKA 門司鉄道局運輸課, *Ensen tankō yōran* 沿線炭鉱要覧, 1928, cited by SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 99.
109. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 108; MAHARA, 1973, p. 82.
110. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985.
111. KANEKO, 1975, p. 100.
112. NAGASUE, 1989, p. 90–91.
113. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 103.
114. CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970 [1936], vol. 11, p. 135–136.
115. Large dormitories for unmarried miners. NAGASUE, 1979, p. 106.
116. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 7, 1 January 1925.
117. Information on the organisation of the “*naya seido*” system is based on SUMIYA, 2003 [1968], p. 323–329; OGINO, 1993, p. 41–43 & 134.
118. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 9 [sic: no. 10], 1 May 1925.
119. The *yūwa* policy was the forerunner of the *dōwa* (assimilation) policy introduced by law in 1969.
120. According to Sakamoto Yūichi, one of the most documented researchers on the subject, 1997, p. 95–102.
121. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 12–37 & 113.

122. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, nos. 3, 8, 10, 15, etc.
123. Instruction by Asō Takichi, 6 November 1888, quoted by SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 100.
124. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 124 & 250.
125. SAKAMOTO, 1997, p. 100–103.
126. Yamamoto Sakubē, quoted by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 124.
127. Report by striking miners, *ibid.*, p. 126.
128. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
129. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
130. HARAGUCHI, 2001, p. 590.
131. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 39.
132. SANO, 1923.
133. Comments by Kondō, recorded by the police after his arrest in May 1923. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 209.
134. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
135. HARAGUCHI, 1988 p. 495.
136. In 1929 there were 18,899 Suiheisha members among the roughly 70,000 *burakumin* in Fukuoka Prefecture (69,345 individuals in 1920, 71,913 in 1935). At the national level the Suiheisha had 48,483 members that year out of almost one million *burakumin* present in Japan (829,674 according to the 1921 census, rising to 999,687 in 1935). Sources: CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1974, no. 40, p. 85; CHŪŌ YŪWA JIGYŌ KYŌKAI, 1970 [1935], p. 283–287; *Kindai burakushi shiryō shūsei*, 1984–1987, vol. 9, p. 19 & 29; HARAGUCHI, 1988, p. 502–503.
137. Account by Yamamoto Sakubē, quoted by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 32.
138. Comments made at the 1924 congress by Matsumoto Ji'ichirō and Hanayama Kiyoshi (personal archives).
139. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 230.
140. Admittedly, half of the striking workers were *buraku* women. HARAGUCHI, 1989, p. 159.
141. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 221.
142. Tomb belonging to the family of Hanayama Kiyoshi, one of the editors of *Suihei geppō*.
143. A social democratic union, which had many Koreans members among the striking miners of 1932.
144. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 111–126 & 225.
145. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985 [1924], articles published in issues 3, 4 and 6.
146. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 15, 10 November 1925.
147. *Ibid.*, no. 18, 1 April 1926.
148. *Ibid.*, no. 12, 1 August 1925.
149. Descriptions of *burakumin* as racially distinct from the Japanese appeared during the Edo period. However, it was above all the spread of Darwinism and eugenics in Japan in the late nineteenth century that brought about the birth of racialist and racist

discourse concerning *eta*. The term “race” (*jinsu* 人種) in relation to *burakumin* appeared in numerous texts in the first half of the twentieth century. I discussed these points in greater detail at seminars held on 22 January 2015 (“Japanese Populations”, CEJ-Inalco) and 24 March 2016 (CEJ-Toulouse).

150. ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 15, 10 November 1925.

151. Views expressed by Yamakawa Hitoshi and Koyama Morito in the inaugural issue of *Seibu sensen*, cited by SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 229.

152. The NRT scarcely lasted a day before being disbanded by the authorities.

153. Manifesto voted in 1925, cited by TSUCHIANA, 1960, p. 256.

154. The term “people” (*minzoku*) is used for example in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985 [1925], no. 15.

155. Such, in any case, is the conclusion of the majority of scholars at the Buraku Kaihō Jinken Kenkyūjo 部落解放人権研究所. YOSHIDA, 2013; TANAKA, 2001, p. 1098. However, a direct analysis of the party manifesto at the National Diet Library is necessary: HOSOSAKO, 1926.

156. SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 234.

157. Information on these arrests is based on ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 26, 1 March 1927.

158. HARAGUCHI, 1988, p. 518.

159. Kimura became a card-carrying member of the JCP in 1927. BURAKU KAIHŌ JINKEN KENKYŪJO, 2001, p. 218.

160. *Taishū jihō*, nos. 35–98, 1928–1933, reproduced in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, p. 111–120.

161. The socialist party Nihon Rōnōtō is distinct from the other three parties closely linked to the JCP and referred to as “Rōnōtō”, namely Rōdō Nōmintō (RNT, 1926–1928), Rōdōsha Nōmintō 労働者農民党 (1928–1928) and Rōnōtō 労農党 (1929–1931).

162. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 107; SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 237.

163. The composition of the editorial board is listed in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, issue published on 10 January 1929.

164. By “first issues” I mean those published between May and August 1928, numbered 35 to 38, since the numbering of the new journal carried on from *Suihei geppō*.

165. *Taishū jihō*, 1 May 1928 and 1 August 1928: *Taishū jihō*, nos. 35–98, 1928–1933, reproduced in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, p. 111–120.

166. *Ibid.*, 1 August 1928.

167. Distinct from the Zen-Nihon Rōdō Sōdōmei 全日本労働総同盟.

168. *Taishū jihō*, no. 42, 1 December 1928: *Taishū jihō*, nos. 35–98, 1928–1933, reproduced in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, p. 111–120.

169. *Taishū jihō* became the official organ of the SKRK in 1934 (nos. 99–107). These issues of the periodical are reprinted in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, p. 121–130.

170. MATSUMOTO, 1977, p. 104–115; SHINDŌ, 1978, p. 238.

171. *Taishū jihō*, ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 99, 1 January 1934.

172. *Ibid.*

173. *Taishū jihō*, ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 102, 10 April 1934.

174. *Ibid.*

175. In 1934 the communist movements had been weakened by government repression and successive ideological conversions.

176. SANO, 1923, and “Suihei shakai no kensetsu” 水平社会の建設, in ZEN KYŪSHŪ SUIHEISHA, 1985, no. 3, August 1924.

177. According to the most recent national census carried out in 1993, Fukuoka Prefecture has the second largest *burakumin* population in Japan, after Hyōgo Prefecture. SŌMUCHŌ, 1995, p. 72.

## ABSTRACTS

The Chikuhō region of northern Kyūshū remains strongly associated with coal-mining history. Much less well known, however, is the link between coal mining and the outcast *burakumin* communities, as post-war historical research has been relatively silent on the issue. And yet, Chikuhō has a particularly high concentration of *buraku* communities, often living in close vicinity to disused mines. This paper will show a direct link between the *buraku* presence in Chikuhō and the coal-mining industry, essentially resulting from historical and social factors. The industrialisation of the mines at the end of the nineteenth century could have led to the integration of *burakumin* into the nascent working class. Instead, discrimination persisted within the mining proletariat and was even leveraged by certain industrial groups as a means of managing working-class populations. The issue of *buraku* specificity was also addressed within the labour movement, by the unions and in the strategies of the Japanese Communist Party. Relations between *burakumin* defence groups and the other mining unions thus fluctuated according to the shifting balance of power, ranging from solidarity and alliance to subordination.

La région du Chikuhō (Kyūshū) reste fortement associée à l'histoire du charbon. Les liens entre communautés de parias (*burakumin*) et l'industrie de la houille y sont moins connus, l'historiographie d'après-guerre ayant peu abordé cette question. Les communautés *buraku* sont pourtant bien présentes dans le Chikuhō, le plus souvent à proximité des anciennes mines. Nous montrons ainsi qu'il existe un lien organique, entre la présence *buraku* dans le Chikuhō et l'industrie du charbon, procédant de facteurs historiques et sociaux. L'industrialisation des houillères à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle aurait pu conduire à l'intégration de ces *burakumin* au sein de la classe ouvrière émergente. Mais la discrimination a pourtant perduré au sein du prolétariat minier et fit même partie des stratégies de certains groupes industriels pour la gestion des populations ouvrières. Cette question de la spécificité *buraku* s'est aussi posée au mouvement ouvrier, au sein des syndicats et dans les stratégies du Parti communiste japonais. La nature et l'évolution du rapport des groupes de défense des *burakumin* aux autres syndicats de mineurs ont ainsi évolué, selon les impératifs du moment et les rapports de force, entre solidarité, alliance et subordination.

## INDEX

**Keywords:** coal, outcasts, buraku, Chikuhō, Japanese Communist Party, discrimination, working class

**Mots-clés:** charbon, parias, buraku, Chikuhō, Partie communiste, discrimination, populations ouvrières

## AUTHORS

**KAIKO MIYAZAKI**

Kyūshū University