

## PROJECT INFORMATION



### JAPAN: WORK WITH DISCRIMINATED BURAKU

Your donation helps fighting discrimination in Japan.

**The Buraku is a Japanese minority which is constantly faced with social discrimination. Although they were granted equal rights by law in 1871, everyday life is a totally different story. The KYODAN Church stands up for their rights.**

„You are just pure scum,“ they said to Kazihuro Tanimoto when he was young. This is what he writes in his life review: „I grew up in a discriminated Buraku suburb. From an early age, I helped my father with his work as a cowherd. People said to me, ‚You’re just a dirty cowherd. Buraku are unclean. They speak a coarse language. They’re uneducated and frightened.‘ Even at school our rights to education were curtailed.“

What is the reason for the marginalisation of these Japanese women and men? Their ancestors held professions which were regarded as unclean by society. They were butchers, tanners or undertakers. Fathers handed down their professions to their sons, which is why professions remained in the family and so the population group could be identified at any time. The Buraku

were resettled in separate residential districts and their children were forbidden to attend normal school.

#### Wide gap between law and reality

It was a long fight for Kazihuro Tanimoto but today, he is pastor in the KYODAN Church (United Church of Christ), one of the largest churches in Japan. He is actively engaged in the fight for equality and helps other Buraku. Although the Buraku received equal rights by law in 1871 and their children attend the same schools as other Japanese schoolchildren, they still see themselves exposed to discrimination. At school their right to education is curtailed and they are also at a disadvantage when they look for a job on the labour market.

#### Buraku Liberation Centre

The church fights for the minority at the Buraku Liberation Centre. The centre issues publications, broaches the problems in theatre plays and sends out invitations to information events all over the country. The aim is to raise awareness in Japanese society about this injustice and stop discrimination. The centre collaborates with the international self-help organisations of the Dalits (the „Untouchables“) in India and with associations of the Sinti and Roma in Germany.

## DONATE

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