

“Kanō Baseball and 'Triethnic' Identity in 1930s Taiwan”

**Paper prepared for the Conference:
“Soft Power: Enlargement of Civil Society and the Growth of a Pan-Asian Identity”
Institute of East Asian Studies, UC Berkeley, 5-6 October 2007**

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By 1930, after 35 years of colonial rule, Taiwan had been transformed into a relatively stable, peaceful, and prosperous Japanese colony. With a population that was still 95% rural, Taiwan had become a reliable “sugar bowl” and “rice basket” providing foodstuffs and light industrial products for Japan’s home islands. In the cities, thousands of college-educated Taiwanese, as one scholar described, had “entered the ranks of Japanese [intellectuals], becoming almost indistinguishable from them.”¹ And an official government publication had boasted the year before that “[t]oday one may travel alone and unarmed without the slightest danger of molestation at the hands of savages or bandits – except in certain small sections of the mountain fastnesses where the head-hunters have not as yet been entirely tamed.”²

Indeed, the government felt comfortable enough with its progress in civilizing and modernizing the island to schedule on the Tainan No. 1 High School grounds an “Islandwide High School Baseball Tournament to Commemorate 300 Years of Culture” (*Bunka sanbyaku*

¹ Scholar Ō Ikutoku (Ong Iok-tek 王育德), cited in E. Patricia Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 177.

² The Government-General of Taiwan, *Taiwan (Formosa): Its System of Communications and Transportation, Submitted by the Japanese Delegate for Taiwan to the Ninth Conference of the International Postal Union, Held at London, May, 1929* (Taihoku: The Government-General of Taiwan, 1929), p. 2.

kinen zentō chūtō gakkō yakyū taikai 文化三百年紀念全島中等學校野球大會).³ Lasting three days, from 26 to 28 October 1930, this tournament pitted nine of Taiwan's finest teams against each other in a clumsily-conceived effort to celebrate the longstanding institution of global – not just Japanese – colonialism. According to this chronology, “culture” would have arrived in Taiwan in 1630, eight years into the Dutch occupation of southwestern Taiwan,⁴ where the population was some 70,000 plains Aborigines and 1000 Chinese sojourners and traders, apparently cultureless to the last.⁵ The ahistorical point, clearly, was to credit and naturalize the global system by which Japan and their Western contemporaries had achieved such wealth and power.

This narrative of colonialist success was shattered, however, the very day after this self-congratulatory tournament was convened. The date of 27 October 1930 was also chosen for the annual interscholastic sports meet in Musha, a model village deep in the mountains of central Taiwan. As the national flag was raised and the national anthem played, some 300 Seediq Atayal Aborigine braves, seeking revenge for continued humiliations and violence at the hands of Japanese police, crashed onto the grounds and began stabbing and shooting the Japanese home

³ Nishiwaki Yoshiaki 西脇良朋, *Taiwan chūtō gakkō yakyū shi* 臺灣中等學校野球史 (History of high school baseball in Taiwan) (Kakogawa City, Hyogo Prefecture 兵庫縣加古川市: self-published, 1996), pp. 113-116.

⁴ In 1962, Taiwanese historian Shi Ming published (in Japanese) a comprehensive history titled *The Four Hundred Years of the Taiwanese People's History*, which implies a slightly different chronology as to when real “history” began in Taiwan – the arrival of larger numbers of Han mainland immigrants who began to “develop and build” Taiwan. Shi Ming 史明, *Taiwanren sibainian shi (Hanwen ban)* 台灣人四百年史 (漢文版) (San Jose, CA: *Pengdao wenhua gongsi* 蓬島文化公司 Paradise Culture Associates, 1980), p. iii.

⁵ John E. Wills, Jr., “The Seventeenth-Century Transformation: Taiwan Under the Dutch and the Cheng Regime,” in Murray A. Rubinstein, ed., *Taiwan: A New History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 87-88; Laurence M. Hauptman and Ronald G. Knapp, “Dutch-Aboriginal Interaction in New Netherland and Formosa: An Historical Geography of Empire,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 121.2 (April 1977), p. 175.

islanders in attendance. Some 134 Japanese were massacred in what came to be known as the Musha (Chinese: Wushe) Incident (霧社事件), before the military brutally quelled the rebellion with aerial attacks and poisonous gas.

Leo Ching has documented very skillfully how this violent uprising “deeply shook, [and] momentarily destabilized, Japanese rule” and how Japanese cultural producers reacted by creating stories and films in subsequent years that reordered the relationship between colonizer and “savage.” An example was the song and film “The Bell of Sayon,” about an Aboriginal maiden who dies helping her Japanese teacher (and local police officer) carry his luggage down a steep mountain pass. Like the British mythologization of Pocahontas, this discourse was meant to “[transform] the aborigines from an unruly population to patriotic subjects in the post-Musha era.”⁶ While Ching’s reading of these cultural productions is astute, the time lag between Musha and these works – for example, the film “Sayon” was released 13 years later, in 1943 – complicates notions of directly causal connection. The realm of baseball, by this time crucial to notions of modernity and nationalism in Japan, is another cultural space in which both colonizer and subject addressed much more immediately the implications of the bloodshed of October 1930.

⁶ Leo Ching, “Savage Construction and Civility Making: The Musha Incident and Aboriginal Representations in Colonial Taiwan,” *positions* 8.3 (Winter 2000), pp. 799, 810-811.

In an interesting ideological move – especially for a government usually concerned about expressing the depth of Japanese influence on Taiwanese culture – Taiwan’s central bank issued a NT\$20 coin in 2001 bearing the likeness of Mona Rudao, the leader of this massacre who committed suicide after the event. “Aboriginal hero honored on new coin,” *China Post*, 12 April 2001, <http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/20010412/20010412b2.html>, accessed 22 April 2005.

Enacting the Imperial Wish of Equality: Kanō Baseball in the Post-Musha Era

In August 1931, Japan's hallowed Kōshien (甲子園) National High School Baseball Tournament, held at Nishinomiya near Ōsaka, provided a gratifying sign of the resolution of the Musha disaster just ten months earlier. There, a team from southern Taiwan's Tainan District Kagi Agriculture and Forestry Institute (*Tainan shūritsu Kagi nōrin gakkō* 台南州立嘉義農林學校, abbreviated Kanō 嘉農) captured the imaginations of a Japanese public still recovering from the shock of that violent rejection of Japanese colonialism.

What made the Kanō team special at this historical moment was its tri-ethnic composition; in 1931 its starting nine was made up of four Taiwan Aborigines, two Han Taiwanese, and three Japanese players. This 1931 Kanō squad won the Taiwan championship, and became the first team ever to qualify for Kōshien with Taiwanese (Aborigine or Han) players on its roster. This Kanō team also became a powerful symbol of how Japanese colonialism was supposed to be working – producing colonial subjects who could work together in performing the cultural rituals of the Japanese state. Newspaper reporters fawned on these Taiwanese “barefoot spirits” and their “lion-like spirit of bravery and struggle” that marked them as the newly- (if just barely-) civilized product of a successful colonial model.⁷ And in the perfect ending to this moral fable of colonialism and the spread of civilization and the imperial gaze to Taiwan, Kanō made it to the championship game before finally losing to the powerful team from Chūkyō Business School, 4-0. The exploits of this “harmonious tri-ethnic” team (*san*

⁷ Zeng Wencheng 曾文誠, “Taiwan bangqiu shi” 台灣棒球史 (“History of Taiwanese Baseball”) (6 September 2003), http://www.tzengs.com/TWN_Baseball/History_Taiwanese_Baseball.htm (accessed 22 June 2005); Tobe Yoshinari 戶部良也, trans. by Li Shufang 李淑芳, *Bangqiu dongyouji* 棒球東遊記 (Baseball journey to the east) (Taipei: Zhonghua zhibang shiye gufen youxian gongsi 中華職棒事業股份有限公司, 1994), p. 123.

minzoku no kyōchō 三民族の協調) remain the source of much nostalgia and post-colonial ideology more than seven decades later; unpacking this narrative and its surrounding mythology offers much insight into the lasting impact of the Japanese rule of Taiwan.

The school known as Kanō was founded in 1919 as the intersection of two important colonial trends. One was the colonial regime's efforts to finally irrigate, develop and finally exploit more efficiently the fertile Jiayi-Tainan plains. After five years of careful land surveys, the school was founded in order to train a modern workforce for this important enterprise (and also for the eventual colonization of Southeast Asia).⁸ The composition of this student body – mostly Han Taiwanese, but also including several ethnic Japanese and a small number of Aborigine students – is also a reflection of the post-Wilsonian language of *dōka* assimilation. It is also important to understand how transformative this early exposure to colonial Japanese civilization was understood to be: in 1922, after 25 years of operating several “savage” elementary schools exclusively for Taiwan's Aborigine children, this special status was eliminated and the schools were folded under the broader heading of the public elementary school (*kōgakkō*).⁹ And in the official census of Taiwan, by 1925, the Japanese regime was counting Aborigines who had “ceased to be savages but were sufficiently ‘tamed’ to be designated as ‘Taiwanese.’”¹⁰

The game of baseball was another of these transformative and assimilative forces in

⁸ By the end of the 1920s, Kanō was one of three 5-year agriculture and forestry vocational schools, and of six vocational schools total, in Taiwan. Mosei Lin, “Public Education in Formosa Under the Japanese Administration: A Historical and Analytical Study of the Development and the Cultural Problems” (Ph. D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1929), p. 141.

⁹ Mosei Lin, “Public Education in Formosa Under the Japanese Administration,” Table 3, unnumbered back matter.

¹⁰ The Government-General of Taiwan, *Taiwan (Formosa)*, p. 13.

colonial Taiwan. After baseball flourished in southern Taiwan for a decade, an algebra teacher named Andō Shinya (安藤信哉) organized a Kanō school team in 1928, its starters numbering four Japanese, three Aborigines and two Han Taiwanese youth. Kanō's status as a less-than-elite vocational school is actually reflected in the fact that this team already exhibited the famed and unique "tri-ethnic" composition that would be fetishized in later years. High schools of any social prestige had few Taiwanese and no Aborigine students, as very few of them ever continued on past middle school; the Kanō story could only have occurred at a marginal school and city such as this. (For example, in 1929, of the 3000 students who applied for admission in Taiwan's six vocational schools, just six of them were Aborigines, and just two of these, and of 657 total, were admitted.¹¹)

This marginality was consistently evident to Kanō baseball players in other ways too; unlike Japanese-majority high schools, Kanō never had a baseball field of their own, and the team had to practice every day at the municipal field downtown.¹² This field was built in 1917, towards the top of a hill overlooking the city of Kagi, and significantly, right next to the city's Shintō Shrine.¹³ Both structures survive today, although in altered forms. The baseball stadium was replaced by a state-of-the-art park in 1997. While all other Shintō shrines in Taiwan were demolished by the Chinese Nationalist government in 1945, this Jiayi shrine was able to survive

¹¹ In all, there were 14,992 applicants to secondary schools in 1929, and just 21 of these were Aborigines, or "Savage," in Lin's words. Mosei Lin, "Public Education in Formosa Under the Japanese Administration," Table 35, unnumbered back matter.

¹² Zheng Sanlang 鄭三郎, ed., *Jianong koushu lishi* 嘉農口述歷史 (Oral Histories of the Jiayi Agriculture and Forestry Institute) (Jiayi: Guoli Jiayi nongye zhuanke xuexiao xiaoyouhui 國立嘉義農業專科學校校友會, 1993), pp. 135-136.

¹³ Cai Wuzhang 蔡武璋, Lin Huawei 林華章 and Lin Meijun 林玫君, *Diancang Taiwan bangqiushi: Jianong bangqiu, 1928-2005* 典藏台灣棒球史: 嘉農棒球 1928-2005 (The treasured history of Taiwan baseball: Kanō baseball, 1928-2005) (Taipei: Xingzhengyuan tiyu weiyuanhui 行政院體育委員會, 2005), p.167.

somehow as a Martyr's Shrine until being transformed in 1998 (by the pro-independence DPP mayor) into the city's Historical Materials Museum. But a walk on this beautiful hillside (where the all-Japanese Kagi High School was also built in 1924) can teach us much about geography and hierarchy, and again Kanō's marginality – under Japanese rule.

Kanō alumni often remember this marginality in other provocative ways. Liu Jinyao (劉金約), a native of Douliu in central Taiwan, studied at Kanō in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In 1993, Liu remembered that once after a Kanō baseball game – a victory over crosstown rival Kagi High – Japanese students from the losing side wanted to “start some trouble” with the majority-Taiwanese Kanō crowd. Liu proudly related how he and his mates, under the direction of their dormitory residential advisor, united that night to fight their foes for “justice.” Along the same masculinist lines, he was just as proud in describing how Kanō athletic meets were much more exciting (*renao* 熱鬧, literally “hot and noisy”) for all of the local girls who, while avoiding the (majority-Japanese) Kagi High meets like the plague, crowded the stands to cheer on their beaus from Kanō.¹⁴ In this way, it is possible to see the gendered mechanisms at Taiwanese students' disposal and used in hammering out a sense of unique identity from with colonial occupation. This memory of “resistance” through Kanō baseball was also recently recounted by Hong Taishan (洪太山), a former star player who is today 83 years old. During the early 1930s, Hong was a student at Baichuan Public School for Taiwanese children in Kagi, but he also remembered that even as a youngster he understood clearly the rivalry between Kanō and Kagi High as one between “Taiwanese” and “Japanese.”¹⁵ Again, then, the Kanō experience was one

¹⁴ Zheng Sanlang, ed., *Jianong koushu lishi*, pp. 100-101.

¹⁵ Xie Shiyuan 謝仕淵, “Kua shidai de chuancheng yu guangrong – Taiwan ‘Beibi Lusi’ Hong Taishan (er)” 跨世代的傳承與榮耀－台灣「貝比魯斯」洪太山(二) (Tradition and glory across the centuries –

understood as one of marginality – albeit often an attractive and authentic marginality.

However, during the Kanō baseball team’s early years (and supposedly to the dismay of the local beauties), they played very poorly. At the important Islandwide High School Baseball Tournament in 1928, Kanō lost 13-0 to Taichū Commercial School as the team gathered just three hits but committed seven errors. As face-conscious principals in Taiwan had done for a decade and a half, Principal Toiguchi Kō (樋口孝) looked to the ranks of Waseda University graduates and located a more accomplished coach: Kondō Hyōtarō (近藤兵太郎), who had toured the United States with his high school team and who happened to be working as an accountant at nearby Kagi Commercial School.¹⁶

Kondō recruited athletes from the school’s tennis and track and field teams in order to bring the baseball team up to high local standards. “*Tenisu*” was another important modern cultural form useful in assimilating Taiwanese youth. In 1924, the same city of Kagi had hosted an islandwide tennis tourney, in which more than 200 players competed for the right to represent Taiwan at the nationals in the home islands of Japan.¹⁷ Two years later, in an important sign of assimilation and imperial grace, the brother of one of these champions was among six men,

Taiwan’s ‘Babe Ruth,’ Hong Taishan, Part 2), *Taiwan bangqiu weijiguan* 台灣棒球維基館 ([Taiwan] Wiki Baseball), 17 January 2007, <http://twbsball.dils.tku.edu.tw/wiki/index.php>, accessed 14 September 2007.

¹⁶ Lin Dingguo 林丁國, “Rizhi shiqi Taiwan zhongdeng xuexiao Bangqiu yundong de fazhan: yi ‘Jaiyi Nonglin’ wei zhongxin de tantao (1928-1942)” 日治時期台灣中等學校棒球運動的發展：以「嘉義農林」為中心的探討(1928~1942) (The development of Japanese-era Taiwanese middle school baseball: A study centered on the Jiayi Agriculture and Forestry Institute, 1928-1942), paper presented at The 5th Cross-Straits Historical Conference, Nanjing University, 8 September 2004, pp. 4-6; Su Zhengsheng 蘇正生, “Tianxia zhi Jianong” 天下之嘉農 (Kanō, champions of all under heaven), *Jianongren* 嘉農人 (People of the Jiayi Agriculture and Forestry Institute) 1 (November 1997), p. 12; Zheng Sanlang, ed., *Jianong koushu lishi*, pp. 78, 88-89, 223.

¹⁷ Lin Dingguo 林丁國, “Zhimin tongzhi xia de yundong fazhan: yi Taiwan Tiyu Xiehui wei zhongxin de tantao” 殖民統治下的運動發展：以台灣體育協會為中心的探討 (The development of sports under colonial rule: A study focusing on the Taiwan Sports Association), *Taiwan lishi xuehui huixun* 台灣歷史學會會訊 (*Newsletter of the Taiwan Historical Association*) 18 (2004), p. 56.

along with four women, selected to play in a Meiji Shrine Tennis Invitational held at the sacred grounds in Tokyo.¹⁸ However, the elite and bounded game of tennis never developed into a powerful ideology for empire and assimilation like the “wild,” more public team sport of baseball.

For several decades, an extensive mythology has surrounded Coach Kondō – particularly his “Spartan” attitude toward training and his proto-Branch Rickey blindness to ethnic difference in the name of baseball excellence. (An official biography by Taiwan’s National Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has praised recently his philosophy of “non-discrimination by nationality or ethnicity” [*bu fen guoji, bu fen zuqun* 不分國籍、不分族群], surely terms and categories that never would have occurred to Japanese in colonial Taiwan.)¹⁹ If this interpretation of Aborigine participation in Kanō baseball seems forced, it is not to say that there were not real implications for the lives of these players, who again constituted most of Taiwan’s Aborigine population exposed to this level of education.

Tuo Hongshan (拓弘山) was the oldest of 10 children in an Ami Aborigine living in the far mountains of Taitō Prefecture, when he was able to attend Kanō and join its first baseball team in 1928. In a 2001 interview, Tuo remembered that first Kanō team as consisting of nine Aborigines, three Japanese and two Taiwanese players. Historical records indicate that there

¹⁸ Takemura Toyotoshi 竹村豐俊, *Taiwan taiiku shi* 台灣體育史 (The history of sports in Taiwan) (Taihoku 台北: Taiwan taiiku kyōkai 台灣體育協會, 1933), p. 14.

¹⁹ “Taiwan bangqiu shi – fazhan qiji yu gushi” 台灣棒球史－發展奇蹟與故事 (The history of Taiwan baseball – miracles and stories of its development), from Xingzhengyuan tiyu weiyuanhui 行政院體育委員會 (National Council on Physical Fitness and Sports), “Shuwei bowuguan: bangqiu” 數位博物館：棒球 (Digital Museum: Baseball), 10 March 2001, <http://www.ncpfs.gov.tw/museum/museum-1-1.aspx?No=66>, accessed 1 May 2007.

were actually only three Aborigine players (out of twelve young men on that team)²⁰ – but the distortion in his memory says much about how accepted and important these Aborigine players felt at the school. It was at Kanō that Tuo took a Japanese name, Mayama Uichi (真山卯一), and then received the opportunity to study in Japan after graduation. He turned this down, but went home to serve as principal of a local elementary school, before retiring to become a Christian missionary in his middle age. This type of mobility, needless to say, was impossible to imagine for almost every single member of Taiwan’s mountain Aborigine tribes, and thus must become an important part of understanding the legacy of Kanō baseball.²¹ Again, if celebrations of the team’s unique “tri-ethnic” composition have more than a whiff about them of the politically-motivated “multiculturalism” discourse employed by ethnic Taiwanese since the 1990s (and critiqued by Allen Chun²²), it is true that baseball allowed Taiwanese youth to excel on a rarely equal “playing field” under the gaze of the emperor.

Another part of the Coach Kondō mythology, as many former players have testified in oral histories and memoirs – again in terms that tell us much about postcolonial Taiwan, and to which we still must return – is Kondō’s “Japanese” integrity, fairness, and spirit of sacrifice. His teams practiced every day, except when it rained, when they would retreat to classrooms to review rules and strategy. Players were not allowed to degrade their strength and eyesight by watching movies, and were taught to treat baseball as a battle and not a game. Kondō employed only the “highest principles of leadership” and held himself to high standards as well; once when

²⁰ Cai, Lin and Lin, *Diancang Taiwan bangqiushi*, p. 4.

²¹ Chen Shouyong 陳守庸, “Zoufang 94 gaoling de Jianong yuanlao Tuo Hongshan” 走訪 94 高齡的嘉農元老拓弘山 (A visit with the 94-year-old Kanō elder Tuo Hongshan), *Guomin tiyu jikan* 國民體育季刊 131 (December 2001), pp. 103-104, 108.

²² Allen Chun, “The Coming Crisis of Multiculturalism in ‘Transnational’ Taiwan,” *Social Analysis* 46.2 (Summer 2002), pp. 103-104.

sick with malaria over vacation he insisted on attending practice on a stretcher. And so on. Decades later, Sasada Toshio (佐佐田利雄), a Japanese native of Taiwan who played under Kondō, remembered a poem that the coach wrote and would often have the players recite:

The ball is the soul,
If the ball is not correct then the soul is not proper,
If the soul is proper the ball will be correct.²³

Su Zhengsheng, former starting center fielder for Kanō, by the 1990s was recognized in Taiwan as a “brilliant and battle-tested elder of our country’s baseball.” In 1997, Su described the Kanō baseball atmosphere as one of “equal treatment under one [imperial] view” (*isshi dōjin* 一視同仁) – of course the official Shōwa-era description of their treatment of colonized populations. Interestingly, Su cites as proof of this attitude an incident when an Aborigine player, in a game vs. Taihoku No. 1 High, missed a take sign and instead hit a triple, only to be excoriated so thoroughly by Coach Kondō that he quit the team.²⁴ Another quite ambivalent endorsement of Kondō comes from former star slugger Hong Taishan. Hong was interviewed (in Japanese) in 1995 by Nishiwaki Yoshiaki (西脇良朋), a policeman from Hyogo Prefecture (near Kobe) who has published two giant volumes on his obsession, baseball in Japanese-ruled Taiwan. Describing Coach Kondō’s “Spartan style ... [that would] knock today’s players down in one day,” Hong characterized Kondō as an “*oni kantoku*” (鬼監督), or “devil/wizard-

²³ Nishiwaki, *Taiwan chūtō gakkō yakyū shi*, p. 528.

²⁴ “Taiwan bangqiu shi – fazhan qiji yu gushi”; Su Zhengsheng, “Tianxia zhi Jianong,” p. 15; Zeng Wencheng 曾文誠, “Cong 1931 nian Jianong bangqiu dui kan Riju shidai Taiwan bangqiu fazhan (si)” 從 1931 年嘉農棒球隊看日據時代台灣棒球發展(四) (The development of Japanese-occupied Taiwanese baseball seen from the perspective of the Kanō baseball team, post-1931, Part 4), 21 May 2003, <http://sports.yam.com/show.php?id=0000010420>, accessed 23 May 2007.

manager.”²⁵ In another interview, in 2003, Hong elaborated on his coach’s “Spartan” methods. He described to scholar Xie Shiyuan the system of age hierarchy (*xuezhangzhi* 學長制) that governed the team. On a player’s first day with the team, he would be beaten and boxed on the ears. After that, there would be all sorts of chores and beatings for the younger players, although Hong proudly pointed out that it this violence “was not about Japanese or Taiwanese,” but just of age hierarchy. Also, in the same interview, Hong stretches our ability to share his admiration for his coach, who would scream at Taiwanese or Aborigine players who made mistakes on the field, (respectively) “Go back to China! (*Shina* 支那)” and “Go back to the mountains!”²⁶

After two years of such treatment under Coach Kondō, the team from Kagi Agriculture and Forestry Institute somehow reached a pinnacle of excellence in 1931, with a starting nine made up of four Taiwan Aborigines, three ethnic Japanese, and two Han Taiwanese players. (It is important to note that the three Japanese were the seventh through ninth hitters in the lineup, and also that four of the five backup players were Japanese,²⁷ in much the same way that NBA benchwarmers until quite recently were overwhelmingly white.) In July of that year, they captured the Ninth Islandwide High School Baseball Tournament championship despite, as Kanō center fielder Su Zhengsheng remembered in 1997, the Japanese umpires’ every effort to throw the game to the all-Japanese squad from Taihoku Commercial School. Su also revealed much in telling how, after winning the game after eleven trying innings, the entire team broke down sobbing loudly:

Our Kanō team traditions were actually just like those of the Japanese teams. If

²⁵ This formulation is often used to describe sports coaches with unusually intense but ultimately successful methods. Nishiwaki, *Taiwan chūtō gakkō yakyū shi*, p. 529.

²⁶ Xie Shiyuan, “Kua shidai de chuancheng yu guangrong,” Part 3.

²⁷ Su Zhengsheng, “Tianxia zhi Jianong,” pp. 16-17, 26.

you have ever seen Kōshien [championship] games on television, you will see that after every game the losing team will cry, some even sobbing loudly with their noses running. But we Kanō players would never cry after losing; we would only cry after winning.²⁸

Just like the Japanese, but different. In a citation of Scruggs and Bhabha above, I described this ideological formulation as an act of the colonizing agent, meant both to elucidate and fog the twisted logic of colonialist assimilation. Here, however, as with Jian Yongchang's project above of creating an identity from within the constraints of "not Japanese, and not Chinese either," we see that this strategy also was an important element of the Taiwanese experience of colonialism.

By 1931, high school baseball in Taiwan had become every bit the popular obsession it was in the home islands. The Asahi-published *Baseball Bulletin* (*Yakyū sokuhō* 野球速報) was sold at 22 bookstores and newsstands in the capital at Taihoku, and 50 more in nine different cities all over Taiwan.²⁹ And before this 1931 contest, the Islandwide High School Baseball Tournament, the biggest baseball event in Taiwan, had been dominated by ethnic Japanese. According to Officer Nishiwaki's painfully-gathered records, in eight previous tournaments dating back to 1923, of 46 teams participating, 38 (including all the champions) consisted of only Japanese players. Of 536 total players, just 28 (5.2%) had been Taiwanese. (Fourteen of these had been on an all-Taiwanese squad from Taichū No. 1 High in 1930, and ten had been on three previous Kanō squads. Four teams from Tainan No. 1 High, Taihoku Commercial and Taihoku Vocational had started one Taiwanese player each.)³⁰ Some 15,000 fans were in attendance when Kanō won their fourth straight game, prevailing over the biases of the Japanese umpires,

²⁸ Su Zhengsheng, "Tianxia zhi Jianong," p. 18.

²⁹ Nishiwaki, *Taiwan chūtō gakkō yakyū shi*, pp. 211-212.

³⁰ Nishiwaki, *Taiwan chūtō gakkō yakyū shi*.

captured the Taiwan championship and fulfilled every Japanese boy's dream of qualifying for the Kōshien national tournament.

The next day, Kagi Mayor Matsuoka Kazue (松岡一衛), the city's public servants, Kanō Principal Shimauchi Tsuneaki (島内庸明) and the student body, and thousands of baseball fans greeted the champions at the train station and accompanied them to a victory celebration at the Kagi city center. Despite all the rivalries implicated in these contests, this pride was not simply southern or ethnically Taiwanese. Before leaving for Japan proper, the Kanō team was hosted over several days in the capital by Taihoku No. 1 High School. Several other all-Japanese school teams also sent their star players to take part in three "sendoff contests" (*sōbetsu shiai* 送別試合) to help prepare Kanō for the stiff competition they would soon be facing at Kōshien. The thousands of fans who bought tickets – at 20 *sen* each, or 10 *sen* for students – to these games would also be satisfied knowing that the proceeds would pay for Kanō's trip to Japan.³¹

Again, a historical perspective reminds us that at this moment in 1931 there was much at stake – literally the entire logic for empire and colonial rule – for Japanese residents of Taiwan to see, experience, purchase and cheer for this commonality with Taiwanese subjects (both Han and Aborigine), even if things were actually more complicated than this. These episodes and details above, reported in the *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, still allow us to see a sort of "Taiwanese" unity that – despite certain postwar memories to the contrary – very much included ethnic Japanese residents of the colony. While this obviously is not simply to judge as successful the colonial policies of *dōka* assimilation, it is important to see how Japan's "national game" of baseball was an important way for all imperial subjects to unite in amity as well as in

³¹ Lin Dingguo, "Rizhi shiqi Taiwan," p. 8.

competition. After the Musha massacre, this long-advertised camaraderie and equality under the watchful imperial gaze now simply had to be made real.³²

Tri-Racial Harmony, Second-Place Finish, One Unified Empire

The Kanō team arrived for the 1931 Kōshien tournament as one of 22 district representatives, including Kyōjō (Seoul) Commercial High and Dairen Commercial High from Japan's other colonial holdings in Korea and Manchuria. The ideological sensitivity of these two teams' presence at the tournament was minimized by the fact that these were all-Japanese teams, safe reminders of the colonial presence in otherwise tumultuous parts of the empire. The Kanō team, however, came starting four walking reminders – an Aborigine left fielder, shortstop, catcher and third baseman – of the bloody Musha rebellion and its bloodier suppression. Some 631 teams throughout the empire had competed to reach Kōshien, but of the 22 who made it, the presence of Kanō was the most significant. That same year, Taiwan Governor-General Ōta Masahiro (太田政弘) had written in his *Outline of Policies for Savage Governance* (*Rihan seisaku taikō* 理蕃政策大綱) that: “Although there have been some changes in the savage governing policy, its ultimate goal has always been to enact the imperial wish of equality and to honor them with imperialization [Japanization]. This has always been the consistent and

³² This collective anxiety is also borne out by the fact that it was during this same year of 1931 that Principal Miura Shizu (三屋静) of Kagi High School – in the same town as Kanō – wrote his script for “The Story of Go Hō” (*Go Hō den* 吳鳳伝). The next year, this tale of one Qing Dynasty official's taming of atavistic Aboriginal violence – a timely topic, if one marked by wishful thinking – was made into the film “The Righteous Go Hō” (*Gijin Go Hō* 義人吳鳳). Go's mythical accomplishment – not quite as easy as teaching Aborigines how to play baseball, since it required his own dramatic self-sacrifice to shame the headhunters – was an important marker of how the colonial regime to imagine civilization's crucial triumph over savagery in this post-Musha era. Ye Longyan 葉龍彦, *Rizhi shiqi Taiwan dianying shi* 日治時期台灣電影史 (*The History of Taiwanese Movies during the Japanese Colonization*) (Taipei: Yushan she 玉山社, 1998), pp. 233-236. Leo Ching also describes the colonial uses of the Go Hō myth, but in a very ahistorical way. Ching, “Savage Construction and Civility Making,” pp.804-807.

fundamental spirit.”³³ Soon after the Musha violence, Ōta, viewed as an expert in dealing with uncooperative colonial populations, came to Taiwan directly from the post of Director of the Kwantung Leased Territory in China’s northeast. If he protested too much in the declaration above, we can at least see how high the stakes were in the colonial project in Taiwan.

It is difficult to relate to a Western audience the Japanese enthusiasm for the yearly Kōshien high school baseball tournament, perhaps best described as a cross between the Super Bowl, NCAA “March Madness,” and *American Idol* in its centrality to Japanese popular culture. On average, more than 100 baseball fans applied for each of the stadium’s 70,000 seats for the tournament.³⁴ At the opening ceremonies, this general excitement intersected with Kanō’s special status when their team was the last to enter the field, and received the loudest ovation of all.³⁵ Exoticizing plugs by the *Asahi Shimbun* for Kanō’s “fierce offensive” attack and their ability to “fly [around the bases] like swift horses” had aroused a burning curiosity in the team as well.³⁶

In the games themselves, Kanō continued to thrill the Japanese public – “shocking the entire Japanese nation,”³⁷ as a Japanese historian put it two years later – by sweeping their first three games by the combined score of 32-9. This qualified Kanō to play Chūkyō Business School in the championship game, which was hyped not only on the front page of the *Taiwan*

³³ Ching, “Savage Construction and Civility Making,” p. 803; Kiyasu, *Riben tongzhi Taiwan mishi*, p. 241.

³⁴ “Athletic Sports: Amazing Development and World Recognition,” *Present-Day Nippon, 1934: Annual English Supplement of the Asahi, Osaka and Tokyo* (Tokyo, 1934), p. 46.

³⁵ Su Zhengsheng, “Tianxia zhi Jianong,” p. 19.

³⁶ Suzuki Akira 鈴木明, *Takasago zoku ni sasageru* 高砂族に捧げる (Dedicated to the Takasago people) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha 中央公論社, 1976), p. 174.

³⁷ Takemura, *Taiwan taiiku shi*, p. 156.

Nichinichi Shimpō, but of the *Tōkyō Asahi Shimbun* as well,³⁸ who on page three also featured articles referring gratuitously both to “[Kanō’s] terrifying ferocity” (*osoru beki Kagi no mōki* 恐るべき嘉義の猛氣) and to them as the “Fiercely vigorous and brave Kagi Agriculture and Forestry” (*mōyū Kagi Norin* 猛雄嘉義農林).³⁹ Back home, crowds gathered in and outside of stores selling radios to listen to the broadcasts.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the Kanō starting pitcher Wu Mingjie (吳明捷, ethnically Han Taiwanese), exhausted from starting his fourth game in just seven days, lacked his usually brilliant control and walked eight batters. Kanō batters also were overmatched by the Chūkyō pitcher known as “The Big Wheel” (*daisharin* 大車輪). Yoshida Masao (吉田正男) shut them out 4-0, winning what would be his first of three consecutive national championship games from 1931 to 1933.⁴¹

This second-place Kanō finish was perhaps the perfect ending for Japan’s baseball world. Historian Suzuki Akira has described how, in rooting for these exotic and exciting new subjects of the Emperor, Japanese fans found a convenient way to exhibit solidarity with the subjects of their farflung empire.⁴² The flowering ideology of a Japanese-led “harmony among the races” throughout Asia made the successful cooperation and integration of this Aborigine-Han-Japanese

³⁸ Two articles were on *Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpō*, 21 August 1931, p. 1, and three articles were on *Tōkyō Asahi Shimbun*, 21 August 1931, p. 1.

³⁹ Tobita Suishū 飛田穂州, “Osoru beki Kagi no mōki” 恐るべき嘉義の猛氣 (The terrifying ferocity of Kagi), and “Mōyū Kagi Norin, Chūkyō to sōha, kefu (niji) kesshōsen” 猛雄嘉義農林, 中京と争覇, けふ(二時)決勝戦 (Fiercely vigorous and brave Kagi Agriculture and Forestry, battling with Chūkyō for the championship at 2:00), both in *Tōkyō Asahi Shimbun*, 21 August 1931, p.3.

⁴⁰ Zeng Wencheng 曾文誠, “Taiwan bangqiu shi (qi)” 台灣棒球史(七) (History of Taiwan baseball, Part 7), 8 September 2003 (accessed 23 May 2007), <http://sports.yam.com/show.php?id=0000015732>.

⁴¹ “Kōshien ‘meitōshu,’ ‘meisenshu’ hyakusen” 甲子園「名投手」「名選手」百選 (100 top Kōshien pitchers and players), 6 June 2006 (accessed 23 May 2007), <http://www.fanxfan.jp/bb/player/3.html>. Yoshida was elected to the Japanese Baseball Hall of Fame in 1992.

⁴² Suzuki, *Takasago zoku ni sasageru*, p. 174.

combination that much more exciting. This tri-racial team “proved,” in an extremely visible fashion, the colonial myth of “assimilation” – that both Han and Aborigine Taiwanese were willing and able to take part alongside Japanese in the cultural rituals of the Japanese state.

Sportswriter Tobita Suishū (飛田穂州) was known as the “father of school baseball” in Japan for his legendary leadership of the Waseda University team two decades earlier. He became the first of many commentators to rhapsodize on the almost-tragic Kanō story, the next day praising their “pugnacious spirit and ability to ignore the fact that the other teams were so much more experienced in battle.” Paying attention to and reifying the important “tri-racial” trope, Tobita wrote dreamily:

When the sun sets on the Kōshien diamond, and all the young warriors who took part in the tournament have gone home, pictures of the Kagi Agriculture and Forestry Institute players battling on the field – like [Aborigine outfielder] Hirano’s baserunning, [Han outfielder] Su’s strong arms and [Japanese second baseman] Kawahara’s solid defense – float one by one across the seas of my mind.

Tobita was a moralistic baseball writer in the mode of America’s Grantland Rice, known for his lengthy discourses on “the unselfish way (*bushidō* 無私道) of baseball” and “soulful baseball” (*tamashī no yakyū* 魂の野球).⁴³ Especially given his status in the history of the game in Japan, his spirited endorsement on the front page of the *Asahi Shimbun* made Kanō a vibrant and crucial element of post-Musha baseball and imperial ideology. Likewise, the great playwright and film magnate Kikuchi Kan (菊池寛) immediately declared himself utterly fascinated and emotionally captured by Kanō’s performance: “Seeing the homelander [Japanese], islanders [Taiwanese] and Taksago [Aborigines] – of different race, but working together in harmony as they battled

⁴³ Tobita Suishū 飛田穂州, *Tobita Suishū senshū, dai 3 kan: Yakyū kisha jidai* 飛田穂洲選集, 第3巻: 野球記者時代 (Anthology of Tobita Suishū’s works, volume 3: The baseball reporter era) (Tokyo: Besshoromagajin Sha, 1986), pp. 169-247, 319-359.

toward the same goal – was something that moved me to tears.”⁴⁴ Japanese media elites were quick in staking claim to what they defined as a moral victory for colonialism as well as for Kanō.

Colonial hierarchies were quickly reinforced when four of Kanō’s star players were approached by different schools and asked to stay on and play baseball in Japan. The Ami Aborigine third baseman Tuo Hongshan, as mentioned above, was the only one to turn down this offer.⁴⁵ But the Taiwanese star pitcher Wu Mingjie and center fielder Su Zhengsheng, and the Puyuma Aborigine shortstop Uematsu Koichi (上松耕一, originally named Akawats, and later known in Chinese as Chen Gengyuan 陳耕元), all took these offers. Su and Uematsu played and studied at the Yokohama College of Commerce before returning to Taiwan, while Wu played at the storied Waseda University before playing for several semipro teams and moving on to a business career in Japan, where he lived for half a century before dying in 1983. Once again, then, the mobility earned by these Taiwanese and Aborigine players has to be understood within the hegemonic colonial implications of baseball’s career in Taiwan.

A useful comparison to the Kanō mania of 1931 can be seen in the annual Intercity Baseball Tournament (*Doshi taikō yakyū taikai* 都市对抗野球大会), sponsored by the *Tōkyō Nichinichi Shimbun*, predecessor of the Mainichi Newspaper Company. The competition, established in 1927, was played at the Meiji Jingu Stadium, on the sacred grounds of the Shintō Shrine dedicated to the souls of the Meiji Emperor and his Empress. In 1931, just days before Kanō made their debut at the Kōshien championships, this Intercity Tournament featured fifteen

⁴⁴ Kikuchi Kan 菊池寛, “Namida gumashī... san minzoku no kyōchō” 涙ぐましい...三民族の協調 (So moving... the harmony of the three races), *Tōkyō Asahi Shimbun*, 22 August 1931, p.3.

⁴⁵ Chen Shouyong, “Zoufang 94 gaoling de Jianong yuanlao Tuo Hongshan,” p. 104.

teams from throughout the empire, including colonial outposts Dairen, Seoul and Taihoku. The Taiwanese capital was represented by a team from the Taihoku Transportation Department, who reached the semifinals before falling to the eventual champions from Tokyo.⁴⁶ This team, however, consisted solely of ethnic Japanese residents of Taihoku, a fact that made this team seemingly totally uninteresting to the Japanese public. This Intercity Tournament was (and remains today) a major event in Japan's baseball culture, but there is no evidence that the Tokyo public cared a whit about this all-home islander (and non-savage) team from Taiwan. Taihoku Transportation's dominant victories over Seoul's Ryūyama Railroad Team and the All-Osakans held no social or colonial significance for the public. These games had no resonance with larger issues or crises as did the Kanō triumphs. Where the latter performances fit perfectly within, even helped to write by themselves, a happy and fulfilling ending to the colonial crisis of the time; these Taihoku Transportation appearances were just baseball games.

In 1931, if the half-savage Kanō team had beat the poster boys from Aichi in central Japan, it may have been too much for even the most enthusiastic colonizer to accept. But a hard-fought loss in the championship game – one which allowed the Taiwanese to exhibit all the properly Japanese values of sacrifice and teamwork, to be (in Scruggs's words above) “virtual Japanese”⁴⁷ while not defeating the real Japanese – was the perfect ending for this first post-Musha national tournament. It is for this reason that this 1931 Kanō team is still a very popular

⁴⁶ Nihon yakyū renmei 日本野球連盟 and Mainichi Shimbunsha 毎日新聞社, eds., *Toshi taikō yakyū taikai rokujūnen shi* 都市对抗野球大會 60 年史 (Sixty years' history of the Intercity Baseball Tournament) (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha 毎日新聞社, 1990), pp. 22-24.

⁴⁷ Bert Scruggs, “Identity and Free Will in Colonial Taiwan Fiction: Wu Zhuoliu's ‘The Doctor's Mother’ and Wang Changxiong's ‘Torrent,’” *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 16.2 (2004), p. 168.

nostalgic symbol even today in Japan.⁴⁸ The Kanō legend lives on still because just months after the horrible massacre at Musha, this team of “assimilated” Han, Aboriginal, and Japanese players proved able to use the modern opportunities provided by the Japanese state to transform themselves into imperial subjects. Of course, the irony is that the six Taiwanese players on the starting roster probably also saw their victories as a statement of Taiwanese (Han or Aborigine, “not Chinese and not Japanese”) will and skill that could no longer be dismissed by the Japanese colonizing power. But the fact that this Kanō triumph could be understood in such very different ways is merely proof of the important and liminal position that baseball held in colonial Taiwan.

This moment of self-conscious, and even desperate, public participation in the official colonial discourse of *dōka* (assimilation) also allows us to reconsider recent historiography on Japanese Taiwan. Leo Ching’s explication of this ideology – the mission to assimilate into Japanese subject-citizenship these formerly benighted Taiwanese – is the most elegant. He concludes that “the possibility of *dōka* lies precisely in its impossibility, in its continuous *deferment* of its materialization.” That is to say, while even liberals of the time remarked convincingly on the artificiality of trying to transplant some Japanese “essence” unto others, this goal of proving the unique Japanese ability of colonizing Taiwan (and indeed all of Asia) was too tempting to abandon. Therefore, as Ching describes, the ideology of *dōka* is best understood as a “problematic of the colonizer,” where every failure of assimilation was experienced as a failure of the Japanese regime.⁴⁹ The exploits of the 1931 Kanō team, performed within the important frame of the “national game” of baseball, allow us to see these Japanese fears about

⁴⁸ Su Jinzhang 蘇錦章, *Jiayi bangqiu shihua* 嘉義棒球史話 (Items From the History of Jiayi Baseball) (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi 聯經出版事業公司, 1996), p. 40.

⁴⁹ Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 113, 132.

their empire at a moment when the bloody Musha uprising had left the public feeling quite vulnerable.⁵⁰ Baseball made for a uniquely safe zone for the contemplation of competition, racial rivalries and the fate of Japan's empire. The recognition of the 2nd-place young men from far-off Kagi is as fine an illustration as there is of the pure relief that this time, assimilation had succeeded.

Between the years 1931-36, Kanō would send five teams to the Kōshien high school championships in Japan, but none had the cultural impact of the iconic 1931 team. The 1935 team, led by Ami Aborigine pitcher Higashi Kumon (東公文, later known in Chinese as Lan Deming 藍德明) came the closest to matching their success. Higashi's arrival at Kanō is usually explained in one of two ways. The simplest is that he was recruited to the school to follow in the footsteps of his older brother Higashi Kazuichi (東和一, or Lan Dehe 藍德和), who started at catcher on the 1931 Kanō team. The costly cross-island trip and tuition were funded by a scholarship from the Taitō Prefectural Government, once again proving the thoroughness of these eastern regions' commitment to making their name via the Japanese national game of baseball. More romantic and nostalgic writers, Japanese and Chinese alike, however, prefer to emphasize the more novelistic and colonial-idealized elements of his life: His preternatural "submarine" (literally *andāsurō* = "underthrow") pitching motion was honed as a child throwing rocks at birds trying to steal his fisherman father's catch. He was then picked up by the local sugar company team, only to have his unique abilities discovered by a local Japanese innkeeper,

⁵⁰ This is especially true when one considers that 1931 was the year when many radical and liberal Taiwanese political organizations, like the New Taiwan Cultural Association (*Shin Taiwan bunka kyōkai* 新台灣文化協會), Taiwan People's Party (*Taiwan minshūtō* 台灣民眾黨), Taiwan Workers' League (*Taiwan kōyū sōrenmei* 台灣工友總聯盟), Taiwan Communist Party (*Taiwan kyōsantō* 台灣共產黨), and Taiwan Farmers' Combine (*Taiwan nōmin kumiai* 台灣農民組合), were shut down by the colonial government.

who personally escorted him across the island to prosper at the baseball powerhouse that was Kanō.⁵¹

Higashi/Lan's story is also usually told in a tragic mode, for several reasons. He was the team's best player and starting pitcher – dubbed *Kaiwan* (怪腕, literally “fantastic wrist,” but more typically “remarkable ability”) by the Japanese media – when Kanō reached the Kōshien quarterfinals in 1935.⁵² But somehow this legendary player doomed his team by botching a steal of home in the 9th inning and then balking in the winning run in the 10th inning!⁵³ The next day, Higashi was immortalized in the *Asahi Shimbun* by famed writer Tobita, who lamented the pitcher's balk as a “tragic ending [at which] we the audience could only sigh.” He sought “to comfort the Kanō team” by reminding them that “the will of Heaven” was at work, and concluded that “only pitcher Higashi's spirit of struggle can be blamed, and the crowd who loved the entire team's mastery cried tears of sympathy [for them].”⁵⁴ And the notion of tragedy in Higashi's life is carried out further by pointing out that the Tokyo Giants, so impressed with his showing at Kōshien, in 1936 twice sent representatives to Taiwan to ask him to join their team. Perhaps since this was the first year of Japanese professional baseball, Higashi did not

⁵¹ Of these five appearances at Kōshien, four (1931, 1933, 1935, 1936) were at the fall tournament and one (1935) was at the less-storied spring version. Zeng Wencheng 曾文誠 and Yu Junwei 孟峻瑋, *Taiwan bangqiu wang 台灣棒球王 (Baseball King of Taiwan)* (Taipei 台北: Woshi chubanshe 我識出版社, 2004), p.58; Suzuki, *Takasago zoku ni sasageru*, p.180; Kang Tiancai 康添財, “Guaiwan jinlai ke hao?” 怪腕近來可好 (How is the Fantastic Wrist now?), *Changchun yuekan 常春月刊 (Evergreen monthly)* 6 (November 1983), p. 90.

⁵² In their first game, Kanō beat another team with important connections to Taiwan and its Aborigine population – Heian High School, the Kyōto school that had recruited so many Ami members of the “Savage Team Nōkō” in the 1920s. Their second game, coincidentally enough, was against the eventual 1935 national champions Matsuyama Commercial School (松山商業), where Kanō's “devil-manager” Kondō had once coached on the island of Shikoku.

⁵³ Zeng Wencheng, “Taiwan bangqiu shi”; “Guaiwan – Lan Deming” 怪腕 – 藍德明 (Fantastic wrist – Lan Deming), *Changchun yuekan 常春月刊 (Evergreen monthly)* 6 (November 1983), pp. 84-85.

⁵⁴ Suzuki, *Takasago zoku ni sasageru*, pp. 179-180.

understand the chance for fame and riches he was passing up; instead he went home to work for his home Taitō Prefectural government out of gratitude for their earlier support.⁵⁵

Forty years later, historian Suzuki Akira interviewed Higashi (now Lan Deming), for his ruminations on Aborigine history titled *Dedicated to the Takasago People*. The seventh of his twelve chapters was titled, “The glory of Kōshien, the present reality of pitcher Higashi.” Suzuki emphasized the tragic gap between Higashi’s nationwide fame as a young Aborigine pitcher under the Japanese, and Lan’s present reality in Chinese Nationalist-ruled Taiwan, working as a poor janitor at a Taipei elementary school for a monthly salary equivalent to ¥25,000 (US\$85). Lan’s new wife tells Suzuki that long before she married the former star, she always admired him: “Even though he was Ami [Aborigine], he was the most handsome man in Taiwan.” But still the story is a tragic one: after thirty degrading years in KMT-ruled Taiwan, Lan reflects pitifully (but perhaps satisfyingly for Suzuki’s purposes) on all he had as a colonial subject, “Shit, I used to be Japanese.”⁵⁶

The Taiwanese Postcolonial and Japanese “Soft Power”

It is in such ways that the history of Japanese Taiwan can be told in the clearly ahistorical mode of “tragedy.” Hans Gumbrecht, in his brilliant work *In 1926*, claims that a discourse of tragedy “express[es] nothing but an elementary unwillingness to discuss guilt or responsibility at all.”⁵⁷ This begs the question, then, of why both Taiwanese and Japanese authors over the last

⁵⁵ Gao Zhengyuan 高正源, *Dong sheng de xuri: Zhonghua bangqiu fazhan shi* 東昇的旭日：中華棒球發展史 (Rising sun in the east: The history of the development of Chinese baseball) (Taipei: Minshengbao she 民生報社, 1994), pp. 85-86; Zeng & Yu, p.58.

⁵⁶ Suzuki, *Takasago zoku ni sasageru*, pp. 182, 178, 192.

⁵⁷ Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *In 1926: Living At the Edge of Time* (Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 353.

several decades insist on this ideologically loaded type of voice. Revisionist work like that of right-wing cartoonist Kobayashi Yoshinori (小林善紀) – namely, his use of images of Taiwanese gratitude for the 50-year colonial era in order to posit nationalist critiques of a weak Japan today – is well-known.⁵⁸ This discourse becomes more problematic when we see contemporary Taiwanese publications celebrating a similar nostalgic discourse.

In 1997 the alumni magazine for National Chiayi University, Kanō's current incarnation, published its first issue, packed with articles about its proud baseball tradition. The head of the school's alumni association penned one piece, joyfully relating how Japanese newspapers and television programs today still hold up the Kanō teams as “an example for the younger generation of how to withstand bitterness and endure hard work.”⁵⁹ One such television broadcast was made in 1996 by both TV Tokyo and Mainichi Broadcasting System, who visited the secluded mountain home of Tuo Hongshan, the former Kanō star who left baseball and education to become a Christian missionary. A photograph from the broadcast shows the 88-year-old Tuo and his 84-year-old former teammate Su Zhengsheng hamming it up for the benefit of their visitors, posing in batting stances with umbrellas on a dirt path in front of Tuo's home.⁶⁰ In the end, these mutually constitutive Taiwanese and Japanese discourses – of “tragedy” in Japan's rule of Taiwan, and of pride in the former colonial masters' condescension toward the

⁵⁸ Kobayashi Yoshinori 小林善紀, translated by Lai Qingsong 賴青松 and Xiao Zhiqiang 蕭志強, *Taiwanlun: xin aogu jingshen* 台灣論：新傲骨精神 (On Taiwan: A new spirit of pride) (Shogakukan Inc. 2000; 台北: Qianwei chubanshe 前衛出版社, 2001); John Nathan, *Japan Unbound: A Volatile Nation's Quest for Pride and Purpose* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), pp. 119-137.

⁵⁹ Cai Wuzhang 蔡武璋, “Jianong bangqiu shi” 嘉農棒球史 (A history of Kanō baseball), *Jianongren* 嘉農人 1 (November 1997), pp. 34-35.

⁶⁰ Cai, Lin and Lin, *Diancang Taiwan bangqiushi*, p. 107. A number of visits to Kanō by Japanese television stations, corporations and admiring fans are described in Cai Qinghui 蔡清輝, “Nanwang de ‘Jiayi Nonglin’ qingjie” 難忘的‘嘉義農林’情結 (The unforgettable ‘Kagi Agriculture and Forestry’ complex), *Jianongren* 6 (November 2002), pp. 58-69.

island – eventually tell us as much about “nativist” or “anti-Chinese” politics in Taiwan today as they do about these standout Kanō baseball teams of seven decades past. Yet any reckoning of the Japanese era must account for these colonial ideologies that still inform so strongly the Taiwanese postcolonial.

In 2002, Taiwan’s National Council on Physical Fitness and Sports produced a documentary on Kanō and Japanese-era baseball in general. “Legend and Glory” opened with a vivid example of how this postcolonial can operate to redefine notions of both “Taiwanese” and “Japanese.” Su Zhengsheng, 89 years of age and looking fit in his spotless Kanō uniform, sang the official Kanō baseball team anthem for a school function in 2001. Arms swinging rhythmically as he once did seventy years earlier, Su sang with vigor about the pride and diligence learned at his alma mater. The last two lines saw him substitute Chinese pronunciations of two Japanese compound words. But if this hinted at some ethnic Chinese pride creeping into his memories of the colonial period, this notion was quickly erased when he skipped ahead to the coda. Where players once shouted “Kanō, Kanō, *pure pure pure* [play, play, play],” Su belted out “*Dahe, Dahe*, play, play, play.” And *Dahe*? Merely the Chinese pronunciation of the Japanese *Yamato* (大和) – the racialized term used in World War II to express the notion of a pure and militaristic Japanese race.⁶¹ It is hard to imagine a more powerfully conflicted performance of the Taiwanese experience under Japanese colonialism, or one that captures more poignantly the rich and complex nature of baseball’s role in this history.

⁶¹ *Chuanqi yu guangrong* 傳奇與榮耀 (Legend and glory), Disk #2 of 10-disk set *Taiwan shiji tiyu mingren zhuan* 臺灣世紀體育名人傳 (Biographies of famous Taiwanese athletes of the [20th] century) (Taipei: Xingzhengyuan tiyu weiyuanhui 行政院體育委員會, 2002); Cai, Lin and Lin, *Diancang Taiwan bangqiushi*, p. 160.

Finally, it is worth ending this paper with one more story of the bonds forged through the national game in Japanese Taiwan. In 2006, an 82-year-old Japanese man named Konno Tadao (今野忠雄) decided to act on his longtime love for the 1941-42 exploits of the Kanō baseball squad that we have examined here. He wrote to the Tokyo Broadcasting System, asking if they could help locate his old hero, the Taiwanese slugger Hong Taishan. Konno, who was born in Taiwan, attended Taihoku Industrial School, itself a baseball power, but had always admired the more storied (and ideologically significant) Kanō teams. Some 64 years after watching Hong's performances on the fields of Japanese Taiwan, Konno was able to meet his idol when TBS flew the 82-year-old Hong to Japan for what Taiwan's *Liberty Times* called a "tearful reunion."⁶² Now, Konno meeting his old idol was no more of a "reunion" that it would be for me to meet Henry Aaron or Rod Carew. But the hierarchies that this language betrays – as does the idea that an elderly baseball fan could have a childhood hero delivered to him almost on demand – remind us of the power that these sixty-plus-year-old bonds of Taiwanese baseball still retain today.

⁶² Cao Heng 曹姮, "Kuiwei 60 nian , Tai Ri qiuyou salei chongfeng" 睽違 60 年 台日球友灑淚重逢 (After 60 years' separation, Taiwanese and Japanese baseball pals' tearful reunion), *Ziyou dianzibao* 自由電子報 (LibertyTimes.com), 25 April 2006, <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2006/new/apr/25/today-life10.htm#> (accessed 27 July 2007).