A Popular Urban Chronicle of Neighborhoods of Korean Residents: The Examples of Hakata-ku and Higashi-ku in Fukuoka City

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This paper examines and describes in a popular chronicle style the way of life in the neighborhoods of Korean residents in Fukuoka City, one of the key cities in western Japan. In the course of this description there is an analysis and presentation of various kinds of data like that from popular chronicles that concern the way of life in these neighborhoods. In general terms, the following has become clear.

During the chaotic period following Japan's defeat which saw the release of Korean residents in Japan, these Korean residents created, selected and followed various "methods of staying alive" and built their own way of life. However, with some exceptions, this way of life necessitated reorganization due to their eviction by government. In response to this, negotiations and resistance in various forms were implemented as essentially "methods of staying alive". Then, at the end of these negotiations and resistance they were ultimately evicted, and though they accepted relocation to substitute housing developments, this was not simply subordinate acceptance but was an acceptance obtained through a certain amount of initiative as a result of negotiations.

Then, when they resumed their lives following this reorganization they once again drew on robust "methods of staying alive" and built their own way of life. This was followed, in more recent years, by a plan for the reconstruction of a new housing development, for which too the Korean residents held various negotiations so that they could maximize the benefits for themselves. Although in the end they accepted a reconstruction plan initiated by government, after their acceptance they became enthusiastic about once again making full use of "methods of staying alive" to build their own way of life.

We learn from this process that the development of the way of life of these Korean residents was a process by which they sought as much as possible to build their own initiatives while drawing on their "methods of staying alive" while confronted with the environments they found themselves in and the authority of government. It is precisely these "methods of staying alive" that they drew on at such times that form the essence of the "folk customs" of Korean residents living in the areas where this research was conducted.