

Quiet Buraku Discrimination

The Reproduction of Discrimination under Governance of Neo-liberalism

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Abstract

The shift from a welfare state to a neo-liberalism state dovetailed with the shift from the Toshin period of “A Report of Dowa Measure Deliberation Council to Cabinet” to the Iken-gushin period of “A Report for Basic Policy about Early Solution to Dowa Problem”. During this process, the consciousness and sentiment of the general public toward burakumin definitely changed. However, this change never verges on a positive relation. Many scholars insist that buraku discrimination has become a minor problem from a serious one. On the contrary, buraku discrimination has become more serious and more invisible. The “self-responsibility method” is the conventional view under neo-liberalism in Japan, which is the intermediary to personalize buraku discrimination. As a result, burakumin receive new types of stigma and hostility from the general public. In addition, some workers subjectify burakumin as a target for public security.

On the other hand, some burakumin accept the ideology of neo-liberalism and subjectify it. Some burakumin never disclose themselves as burakumin, meticulously keeping their identity quiet. This shows the reality of governance toward burakumin and the general public. It also shows a lack of understanding by the traditional power method.

These changes are bringing the conditions of a restructuring of buraku and the reproduction of buraku discrimination. The optimistic scholars who insist upon the “disappearing process method” are deaf to the sounds of the reconstruction process.

Keywords: addressing of buraku, social defense from buraku, governance

1 The Purpose of this Paper

This paper will deal with incidents of discrimination without analyzing them. The hypothesis of this paper is that the constant repetition of certain social-science narratives has produced a misunderstanding in buraku studies. Additionally, this paper will reveal these narratives to be mere phantasms, emerging from self-advocacy and the subjective estimates of scholars, to satisfy what the Buraku

Liberation Movement (BLM) expected as its fruits. Furthermore, these narratives, because they encourage the interior power apparatus of the general public against buraku, behave to disguise buraku discrimination. This paper will clarify contradictions inherent in these narratives, by examining how, and where, the general public practices addressing the buraku issue, and not addressing it, or, ‘unaddressing’ it. Lastly, this paper will explain how governance *contra* buraku becomes governance *contra* the general citizenry.

2 The Addressing of, and the Unaddressing of, the Buraku Issue

2.1 The Taboo and Restraint of Addressing the Buraku Issue

The buraku issue is taboo, it is repeated¹. The taboo has two dimensions, the first of which is commonly appreciated, and the second of which is not commonly appreciated: (1) not engaging with burakumin; (2) not engaging with the buraku issue. Exemplifying the former is the prohibition of marriage to burakumin, and the rejection of social and physical contact. Exemplifying the latter is more difficult because it is, by definition, the absence of an addressing of the issue. The question of whether the issue is addressed or left unaddressed is, however, of crucial importance; for how (or whether) an issue is addressed influences consideration of that issue; and consideration of an issue influences behavior. Therefore, this paper first examines the buraku taboo in terms of how Japanese society discourages any addressing of the buraku issue.

The tendency not to address the buraku issue developed after Japan's WWII defeat, and the subsequent imposition upon Japan of democratic values. Terms such as *eta*, *yotsu*, (or *yottsu*) and *buraku* became less frequently uttered. In 1950, in Sendacho, Fukuyama city, there occurred an incident of open discrimination with a street cry, 'Never allow our mikoshi to enter a district of *eta* and *chasen*.' In the fracas, a burakumin candy-vendor used his candy knife to injure a non-burakumin. The candy vendor was arrested and charged with inflicting bodily injury. The prosecutor, however, requested leniency from the judge, arguing that the whole incident was a regrettable phenomenon of the anti-democratic circumstance of Japanese society. (Hiroshima Buraku Liberation Institute, 1975:279-80.) In the famous Chikata Case, police arrested a young burakumin on a kidnapping charge. The man was eloping, consensually, with his non-buraku sweetheart. In 1960, after a passback from the Supreme Court, the High Court of Hiroshima absolved the young man of any wrongdoing. (Hiro-

shima Buraku Liberation Institute, 1975:287-9)

The following two episodes occurred in the 1960s. These episodes from Kobayakawa's field-work show that, among the general public, under democratic governance, there existed an agreement to refrain from addressing the buraku issue.

During a lunch break at a junior high school in the summer of 1963, a boy jeered a classmate with, '*Eta, eta!*' The circle of ten or so boys fell quiet. No boy repeated the jeer, or expressed any sympathy with it. This quiet had two causes. First, some of the boys understood the term *eta*, and felt ashamed. Second, those boys ignorant of the term were nonetheless able to read the mood of their informed peers. One of these ignorant boys later asked his parents the meaning of *eta*. Without explaining its meaning, his parents told him, grimly, that it was an unspeakable word. Within the school district in question, there existed no buraku.

In 1967, a young burakumin killed a construction worker attached to a local construction company, who lived in a *hanba* (laborers' camp) with his wife and hypophrenic son. Rumours of burakumin complicity did *not* spread.

Mr. A., a co-worker of the victim, lived in the same buraku as the killer. Mr. A. was loved by his peers, and described as 'gentle' and 'caring.' Within the company it was whispered, "Mr. A. is sorry. He may not be able to stay on with us." From investigation, no one discussed the case before Mr. A. The guilty party and Mr. A. were not kin, and probably not even acquainted. Yet, the whisper proved prophetic. Several days passed, and Mr. A. came to work no more. He had not been dismissed. His resignation had not been suggested, let alone promoted. The workers in his company avoided addressing the case. They avoided addressing each other.

This silence can be taken as protective of Mr. A. But it may also be taken as social exclusion, and an invitation to Mr. A. to volunteer his redundancy. Nothing was explicitly said to Mr. A. If he was prompted to retire, it came not through his company.

These examples do not show the more effective

prohibition of the discrimination of burakumin. Under the spreading discourse of the buraku taboo, from the centre of the nation state to its margins, the governance of hesitation towards the buraku issue persisted despite continuous avail. A self-regulatory power was seated within the people. The address of the buraku issue was under the private control of the established powers; but the method of its governance was apparent in public.

2.2 Addressing and Unaddressing the Buraku Issue, and Governance

By the democratization of society, and by the honoring of human rights, at least superficially, the Japanese government gained space to obtain international absolution for its WWII war crimes. Concerning the buraku issue, however, the government intended not to address it. However, the Buraku Liberation Movement (BLM) was already gaining influence. In 1960, four BLL members were serving in the Diet. *The Report of the Cabinet Dowa Policy Council* (Council Report) and *Dowa Measure* were coming.

Organs of administration, generally, held to the discourse of buraku non-existence, and reproduced the federal discourse of unaddressing the buraku issue. Natsumi Ogushi has shown that Tokyo Prefecture redeployed its buraku prior to the war, and, after the war, it was being insisted that Tokyo had no buraku. These were two excuses for hiding buraku discrimination. (Ogushi, 1980: 138) The general discussion, after WWII, held as follows. Because buraku had disappeared after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, any addressing of the buraku issue was moot and unnecessary. This practice of unaddressing the buraku issue was the preferred method of denying and hiding buraku existence. The silence equated to erasure.

2.3 Scientific Discipline and Examining Buraku

This avoidance of the buraku issue continued from the postwar years of recovery (the mid-1950s) to the period of rapid economic growth (the early 1970s). The times demanded that burakumin throw themselves into the labor market. The consumer

market, too, needed them. (Council Report: 26, 53-5). To realize these economic demands, the government gathered scholars, bureaucrats, and the burakumin intelligentsia, for an extensive, coordinated study. The government, thereby, must recognize buraku and buraku discrimination. The issue was even addressed in the national budget. Tax recovery was offered, so that burakumin might volunteer for vocational training, and be better absorbed into the labor and the consumer force. These policies were imperial in character. A minimum of gestures to social welfare was deemed sufficient to allow agreement with the social democrats. Without national discipline, the government could not construct a strategy for the buraku issue.

The government redefined burakumin as Japanese racially, ethnically, culturally, and biologically. Moreover, the Council Report dismissed ethnological buraku studies as superstition. Any competing theories about the genesis of buraku received criticism from official political theory. The Council Report explained difficulties in buraku educational, work, and economic environments as ‘barbarities in primitive society or miseries in a civilized society.’ (Council Report, 1965:24)

In other words, the Council Report intended to regulate any addressing of the buraku within the context of ‘the civilizing of an uncivilized community,’ as practiced by administrative organs on the basis of the Dowa Measure. The Report insisted that buraku communities were suffering from poverty, poor hygiene, a lack of education, and a bad labor environment. These conditions, according to the Report, were remnants of primitive, uncivilized times. They stood in contrast, if not opposition, to modern Japanese society. In addition, the Report described severe discrimination, against buraku, from the general public. Therefore, the Report insisted that the government establish measures to improve buraku conditions. Soon, no study of the buraku apart from the angle of poverty and misery, was able to exist and be accepted as a science.

The official approach did not satisfy official platitudes. ‘Buraku discrimination stems from ignorance and silence.’ But neither the Report nor

the movements under its influence invited an open discussion. "Let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend," was invoked in word, but not in deed.

To the contrary, the Council Report insisted that the administration should undertake emergency measures for the enlightenment of buraku and non-buraku. Local governments were spurred to organize study meetings, to be held in the neighborhood associations and schools. At these meetings, administrators taught the public what behavior and speech came under buraku discrimination. The public was to be disciplined into a new way of thinking. And so, the citizens learned how to avoid the branding of "a person of discrimination."

In the buraku, the Council Report asked burakumin to examine their uncivilized behavior, and to study human rights. Self-study and self-enlightenment were to lead to of buraku liberation. Individuals were, according to official lip service, free to think their own thoughts about the subject. The Report did not prohibit free discussion about the buraku. It merely ruled that the national discussion must be concluded in such-and-such a way. If the people would accept this, they would recognize the correct way of thinking about and addressing buraku.

The Council Report, with the Dowa Measure politics, as ligamentous bands, bound burakumin together in labor and consumption. Buraku studies supported the Council Report policies. Such studies, however, tended only to focus praise on the rhetorical Preamble to the Council Report. Critical analysis would have required an examination of the Task Reports, and their political undercurrents. Criticism of the Report would not have disturbed the demands of the burakumin to achieve better circumstances. The denial of critique is unscientific.

At the same time, through the so-called *Iikae-shuu* (Collection of Taboo Words), the media created a manual for self-regulation in addressing buraku. Discriminatory words were listed, and words that people might find unpleasant. Alternative words were suggested. The word *buraku* originally meant a small farming or fishing community.

Its use in this context was henceforth prohibited. *Katateochi* denoted, simply, unfair treatment. But the word should be discarded, as it bore the unpleasant image of a missing hand. From the mid 1970s onward, the media, and scholars, criticized the unconscious usage of "discriminatory" words that could injure minorities and violate human rights. (Isomura, Fukuoka 1984:2) There were, however, backlashes against these word lists, citing freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and an opposition to the creation of new taboos. (The Committee of Symposium for Words and Discrimination, 1975:18) *Iikae-shuu* became academic and literary fodder for political and ideological discussion. This phenomenon, from the 1950s through to the 1970s, despite the phantasm of postwar democracy, represented the real governance of, or control of, buraku. The BLL was complicit with the Council Report in trivializing buraku liberation to mere gestures of affirmative action. In the period from the 1920s to the 1940s, the buraku had produced, so to say, high-quality anarchists and Marxists of great political efficiency. The Rice Riots of 1918 had already been blamed on buraku poverty. These riots still inspired nightmares for Japanese capitalists. After the war, it became a pressing issue to enclose burakumin, voluntarily, into a capitalist framework. Burakumin agreement could be bought with affirmative actions. At the same time, most people could be persuaded not to address the buraku issue, or else risk penalty. Thus, the people generally first accepted, and then reproduced, the unaddressing of buraku.

Discussion never prohibited addressing the issue, but showed the paradigm of the Council Report and Dowa Measure that made addressing the issue practicable. The taboo terms, *eta*, and *hinin*, would be allowed in certain cases. For anyone addressing the buraku issue, the viewpoint of buraku liberation became a strict discipline. In 1969, because the Meiji-era *Jinshinn-koseki* recorded older social positions' names, it was sealed off by the government. This is the oldest household registration system, and an invaluable resource for sociology and history. However, even for the purposes

of buraku study, the text is off limits. Whilst it urged study of the buraku issue, the government decided the vocabulary. The modern political term *tokushiburaku* was prohibited. *Hisabetsuburaku* was valid, if used scientifically. *Dowachiku* was promoted to the official lexicon. In 1992, leading academic publisher Iwanami-shoten abruptly changed the title of Sadao Takahashi's 1922 work, '1000-Year History of Tokushuburaku' to '1000-Year History of Hisabetsuburaku.' Justification was made by popular scholar Kazuteru Okiura. In 2008, Kawade-shobou-shinnsha, another major publisher, changed the 1919 classic by Dr. Teikichi Kida, 'Special Issue of the Tokushuburaku' to 'What Is Hisabetsuburaku?' These are examples of authorities designating rationalized language, and rejecting 'unscientific' language.

In the past, taboos were decided at people's discretion, rather than by governance. As governance increased, so did discussion, review, and study. Justified methods of addressing the buraku issue became widely diffused. In 1969, a non-burakumin student, who often joined in buraku settlement actions, said the following in confidence to his friend.

Food in the buraku is very oily. The soup shines with grease. It swims in it. It's impossible to eat with them. But I do. I force myself to eat. If I didn't, I'd be nailed for discriminating against the residents. It's intolerable. You should come with me. Then you will see what I mean. But don't repeat any of this. I'd get in trouble.

This student knew the boundaries of correct thought and speech. Outside of strictest confidence to a friend, his unacceptable ideas must be unspoken, i.e., unaddressed. This student belonged to the communist party, and volunteered at buraku. As such, he was supposed to have license to speak freely. Communism and socialism were, then, synonymous with science. He had the banner of scientific socialism. If anyone had freedom of speech, it were someone of this student's profile. Yet he knew, and obeyed, the limits. 'Laborers do not

discriminate against each other,' was the operating belief.

2.4 Addressing of Buraku and Creation of Buraku Images

From the late 1970s, there was a concerted so-called scientific investigation into various perspectives of burakumin: their lives, sentiments, thoughts, desires, etc. Research institutes and administrative organs mobilized many sociologists. Ironically, these "scientists" only managed to uncover traditional or semi-feudal figures of buraku and burakumin². This came from the Koza-ha Marxism established before the Second World War. 'In Koza-ha and postwar modernism, culture and community stood for backwardness, fetters on reason.' (Barshay, 2004:85) Dowa education stressed modern education for students from buraku, rather than re-education for the general public. Teachers and scholars, demanding buraku independence, insisted that students address buraku history in terms of suffering. Teachers received what they expected. Tales of suffering fulfilled both teachers' wishes, and official needs for justice. Teachers led students to subjectify their address of the buraku issue³. Supply of confessions rose to meet demand.

Scholars and teachers furthermore reinterpreted, politically and ideologically, students' confessions. This focus on suffering created the sanctification of suffering by a synergy with the Suiheisha Declaration. Yeal Tamar, Israeli political scientist, insisted, 'The mandatory visit, for every official visitor to Israel, to Yad Va Shen (museum of the Holocaust) also demonstrates the way that past atrocities are employed to achieve present political gains. If suffering qualifies a nation for national rights, then these rituals are inescapable. The sanctification of suffering fosters hatred and mistrust, and - worse still - a backward-looking politics that perpetuates conflict.' (Tamar, 1993:x) Likewise, as an unintended consequence, the sanctification of suffering by the deliberate addressing of suffering in buraku history, has exacerbated negative images of burakumin.

Most buraku are small. Relationships between

buraku are based on the adjacency of limited buraku communities; not on any principle of identity. One day, teachers of dowa education convened high school students from several different buraku, who did not know one another. The students were told they were brothers and sisters. Demanding that these siblings make burakumin declarations, their teachers and BLM leaders grouped them into Buraku Issue Institutes or Buraku Liberation Institutes in their respective schools. Students were taught that they were perfectly Japanese. The identity into which they were pushed was *not* perfectly Japanese, but perfectly burakumin. Teachers and scholars also imagined and created buraku culture. Burakumin belonging to such a culture must occupy a separate category from simple Japanese⁴. Burakumin were ushered, as children, into cultural essentialism.

This address of the buraku issue spread the context of miserable discrimination, historical poverty, and liberation from the feudal system. In the name of buraku liberation, experiences of buraku discrimination were sought, found, and put into brochures, books, and videotapes. Dowa education teachers and BLL leaders addressed the issue by one approach: that prescribed by government. Teachers and BLL leaders criticized anyone who addressed the buraku issue otherwise.

3 New Stigma, and Governance of Buraku

3.1 Advancing Expression about Buraku

The 1980s ushered in the neoliberal relaxation of economic and social regulations. During the 1990s, this tendency spilled over into the addressing of buraku. At various points in society, people left the regulations of the Council Report, and made their own ways to the buraku issue, positively and freely.

Styles of referring to buraku became diverse. People created physical gestures and expressions, or symbols, to signify *eta* and *hinin*. For example, the initial B stood for, 'buraku.' 'Black' could also stand for 'buraku.' Some Rotarians used the

word 'black' to mark a burakumin candidate for rejection. The homonyms 同和 (dowa) and 童話 (dowa: fair tale) were exploited, to refer to burakumin. Talking about someone with chin in hand, four fingers showing, denoted burakumin. (The number four being an evil omen.) Regionally, the word 'brick' was also used. Bricks are constructed of quadrangles, and are sold in bundles of four.

The phrases 'those people,' and 'a part,' also came into use. The first phrase is obvious. '*Those people* occupy this district.' To exemplify the second phrase, here is a talk from a barbershop on June 2, 2010. Two men were discussing community integration instigated by the government.

Q: Does this town have to integrate?

A: No, it doesn't. But I hear that this town is getting behind on its huge debt.

Q: Eh? What do you mean, it's getting behind?

A: Officials have been spending too much money on a *part*, and that has soured the finances. This is from an insider.

Q: *A part*?

A: Yes, you know. *A part* of the town.

The abstract and indirect 'a part' was an effective and rigorous phrasing, coming off stronger than traditional discriminating words, and able to capture the burakumin heterogeneity.

Similar occurred in academia. Take this passage from *The Established and the Outsiders*:

In the case of very great power differentials, and correspondingly great oppression, outsider groups are often held to be filthy and hardly human. Take, as an example, a description of an old outsider group in Japan, the *Burakumin* (their old stigmatic name *Eta*, meaning literally, "full of filth," is now only secretly used.) (1965/1994: Elias Norbert Introduction: 27)

In its Japanese translation, the translator, Ohira,

replaced the word “*Burakumin*,” (needing no translation) with “discriminated people,” and also cut the word *eta*. Elias explained *eta* as “filthy and hardly human.” Ohira used a metaphor of Elias. Not only burakumin are discriminated against, in Japan. Ohira, however, managed to circumvent usage of the terms *eta* and *burakumin*, whilst retaining Elias’ meaning. Whatever his intentions, Ohira gave to social science a new method of expression concerning buraku and burakumin⁵. In Japanese, this indirect style of expression seems more creative and richer than use of the usual terms.

Stretching definitions, Michihiko Noguchi attempted to define burakumin as a diaspora. Noguchi understood that the distinction between buraku and non-buraku was fuzzy, and he described it as a “transethnicity.” (Noguchi, 2009: 186-203) A concrete border between countries, and a colonial policy, are requisites of a diaspora. Burakumin are settled domestically. No one imagines ejecting them from Japan. Nor do burakumin wish to leave. Burakumin, therefore, are no diaspora. Noguchi’s ‘diffusion of burakumin’ as a diaspora converging (or being converged) with the community of diaspora (sic). Leaving aside that a diffusion and a convergence would seem to be contradictory items, it should be noted that when the academy, under cover of science, examines the buraku issue, burakumin are rewarded with yet another cloaked term by which they may be indirectly denoted: *diaspora*.

A premise of such academic discussion is the recognition that the boundary between buraku and non-buraku is becoming fuzzy. The general public, consequently, is in confusion as to who exactly burakumin are. Marriages between burakumin and non-burakumin are becoming mainstream. (Noguchi, 2009:192-196)

Koichiro Miura denied the ontic arguments of the buraku issue, supplying instead a kind of theory of relationism. ‘Burakumin’ existence is in those who become (who have become) such in the eyes of others. No inherent attribute, however, belongs to them. Therefore any given man, in a certain social context, depending on his circumstances, may be or not be ‘burakumin.’ (Miura, 2004:226) If this

is so, then simply moving places, and putting on a non-burakumin show, would be enough to remove burakumin status. Conversely, passively receiving suspicious looks would be enough to give burakumin status.

The buraku population is somewhat fluid. This is clear from investigation. Increases and decreases in populations are due to social causes. But a core burakumin always remains. There are districts that have endured discrimination for generations. The ontological relation between burakumin and non-burakumin also continues. In urban buraku, historical mobilizations of people, both in and out, has led to reconstruction. Many persons do not know where their parents came from. Some were not originally burakumin; but, upon taking up residence in buraku, the succeeding generations became so. After the Meiji Restoration, the construction of modern buraku has shown that the buraku issue pertains to the social construction of Japan, and not to relationism.

Small buraku (the majority of buraku) have a definite, inherent character. (Kobayakawa, 2010:89) In one district of Fukuyama City, a doctor established a hospital under his surname. It was also a common surname among residents of the local buraku. Burakumin worried, kindly, that residents and potential patients might wrongly believe the doctor to be of them. This concern proved unfounded. The public, keenly, discriminated between buraku and non-buraku, despite the shared surname.

In some local buraku, in this author’s field of study, the rate of intermarriage with non-buraku is from 0% to 10%. Most burakumin have not had the opportunity to marry with the general public. Marriage discrimination is therefore a rather new problem. An industry has evolved around buraku intermarriage. Firms (illegally) investigate household registration documents, to acquire the required information to prevent burakumin from marrying into clients’ families.

In Osaka, scholars report intermarriage rates of about 37.7% (elder generations), and as high as 67.4% (25-29 years old). In a milieu of general

poverty, buraku borders count for less. Those living within buraku will mix with those beside the buraku, leading to intermarriage and urban buraku population growth. According to the government investigation, "Tactics of Houses and Estates in Heisei 20," Osaka was the Japanese city with the most poverty,⁶ and also a considerable amount of stratum transfer. Increasing buraku intermarriage rates do not mean that the general public is looking upon burakumin with kinder eyes. It should be interpreted as a phenomenon of realignment.

Uncomfortable insisting upon references to a burakumin 'diaspora' by Noguchi and Miura is mere signalling of scientific terminology. Attachment to the theory of relationism is likewise. These approaches, however, deny the severity of buraku discrimination, and muddy the problems. The buraku issue is personalized, and sets up a conclusion of neo-liberalism. Consequently Noguchi and Miura, in their addressing of the buraku issue, produce a rationalized technique for hiding buraku discrimination. Besides this, according to post-colonial methods, burakumin are nationals under a colonial master. The 'diaspora' method should be reconsidered from this point of view.

3.2 New Stigma

The agenda, now, is to change citizens' beliefs about burakumin. Onomichi City conducted a survey in 2003, entitled, 'The Consciousness of Onomichi Citizens Concerning Human Rights Issues.' Of particular interest are the comments in the free-entry column. This was a closed, anonymous document. Takers of the survey were 2,036 citizens, 20 and older, selected randomly. The response rate was 51.3%. Twenty percent of respondents (223) used the free-entry column. These respondents could be split into three categories.

1. 40.3% showed antagonistic views and/or questions, and were hostile to the city's human rights and affirmative action policies. Hostile, too, to the BLM.
2. 30.0% understood and accepted the policies, at least passively.

3. The remainder used this column to address tangential issues.

Here follow examples of the first, hostile, category. Responses in the free-entry column are identified by FEC and 3 digits.

Burakumin are always going on about 'dowa' this, and 'buraku' that. But from what I can see, they're just spoiled. (FEC125)

Burakumin problems don't have anything to do with human rights. It all has to do with themselves. (FEC580)

These human rights people are just milking the dowa thing. Nobody can live without government protection, these days. These sissies have to grow up and understand that it's a hard world. Human rights have nothing to do with dowa, and I'm sick of our taxes going to dowa. City hall, stop talking about dowa and buraku. Wake up, please! (FEC780)

There is a strong public opinion that the government treats burakumin too preferentially with tax policies, finances, and employment. Heretofore, buraku studies have considered such opinions to be jealousy. Jealousy, however, implies, beyond a resentment of the recipient of priority, a desire for the same priority. Jealous persons would be satisfied if they received the same priority; and then their resentment would end, and discrimination be resolved. Respondents did not ask for this. It is stigma, not jealousy, in their address.

Respondents did not want dowa-like protections for themselves. They insist, rather, that buraku problems are due to buraku attitudes and buraku laziness. Burakumin should acknowledge their defects, and fix their own problems. Respondents resent that burakumin receive government benefits in spite of obvious sloth and an utter lack of self-help.

There has always been a simple perception of buraku laziness. (Onomichi City, 1970:239-40) The

perception now is a little more complicated: ‘Burakumin do not need to help themselves, for they receive government protections on account of being burakumin.’ Burakumin are a privileged class now, under government sanctuary.

The new stigma evokes Michel Foucault’s words: “From the classical age, and for the first time, madness was seen through an ethical condemnation of idleness in the social immanence now grounded on a community of work. That community work had an ethical power to exclude, which allowed it to expel, as though to another world, all forms of social uselessness.” (Foucault, 1972:72) The neo-liberal ideology constructed by arguments of self-independence and self-responsibility individualized social contradictions. It reproduced an image: an indolent people reaping unfair rewards under the authority of human rights, enabled by the dowa policy, and unresisted because of cowardice. That image became a new stigma: a mental illness defined by a total inability for work.

4 Appearance of Aggressive Aggression

4.1 Changes of Consciousness against Buraku from *Iken-gushin*

Strategy shifted from the governmental dowa policy from the Council Report line to a new line based on *Iken-gushin*, by the Council on the Policy of Regional Improvement (CPRI). This change of strategy had several dimensions. The turning point was 1996, and the most notable matter was the unemployment problem. *Iken-gushin* was concerned with “stabilization of occupation.” (1996, CPRI: 8) The jobless problem was not to be solved, however, as no mention was made of unemployment policies. According to Foucault, neo-liberalists do not, anyway, target full employment, and jobless persons do not exist in their recognition. “Jobless workers,” refers to the transfer of workers from worksites to other, more profitable, worksites. For neo-liberalists, “Whatever rate of the unemployment, in a situation of unemployment you absolute-

ly must not intervene directly or in the first place on the unemployment.” (Foucault, 2004-2008: 139) The Dowa Council line reconstructed burakumin as a limber, loose-jointed labor force. On this same basis, the CPRI urged the movement of burakumin from less profitable to more profitable employments, i.e., stabilized occupations.

Additionally, *Iken-gushin* demanded for young burakumin, ‘training for admission for students in buraku, by the cultivation of a spirit of independence.’ Also demanded was independence of local administrations from the pressures of the BLM organization. Dowa relatives (burakumin) were likewise urged to wean themselves off of affirmative action. (1996, CPRI: 8) The CPRI understood ‘self-sustainability’ to be a condition in which one does not depend on welfare. Thus, ‘self-sustainability’ involves the unification of burakumin into the national power system, which for neo-liberalism, is ultimately a mechanism of the market. Neo-liberalism differs here from Fordism. In the latter, the nation state would discipline burakumin by way of public education and welfare policies. Under a neo-liberalism regime, government tasks are decreased. Without the protection of the dowa policy, burakumin would have to come to educate themselves, and train themselves. Therefore, *Iken-gushin* demanded burakumin to identify, essentially, as individual business entities. By the principles of market mechanics, burakumin are subjected to governance. Thus, neo-liberalism seeks to govern burakumin through, for example, the withdrawal of education and employment opportunities. Scholars evaluated this to be the ‘positive side’ of the *Iken-gushin*, (Takano, 1992:36) having misunderstood its real meaning. Social science likewise erred by evaluating positively the Council Report, and by permitting the sectional meeting reports of the Council Report.

Neo-liberalism, on the other hand, abolishes excessive social regulations. The *Iken-gushin* line of strategy included ‘free discussions,’ (CPRI, 1996: 10) replacing the governance of the Council Report that was the basis for addressing the buraku issue. As a result, the new stigma of government-

sanctioned laziness, as seen in the FEC responses, flourished. From taboos and a preferred non-addressing of the buraku issue, citizens moved into definite hostility. This aggression appeared during the BLL's abolition of the dowa measures and dowa education. The following is another response from the FEC:

Marriage trouble tore up my family. To-day we get along with our relatives on the surface. But my family was badly hurt. Deep down, the hurt can never be fixed. Some of it was inevitable. I accept that. But was it necessary to trample our hearts, too? We parents, too? I am consumed with annoyance and regret.

Maybe they acted from what they thought was justice. I think marriage should be a matter for parents and children, and that's all. Third parties calling and threatening, not knowing everything, and not wanting to discuss it. They decided everything and worked out the marriage without us.

Just because they feel hurt, that doesn't mean that they have to take it out on us. That's no way to resolve a problem. (FEC670)

The writer was angry toward her young relative and that relative's spouse. The couple eloped, ignoring the family's wishes. The respondent insisted that marriage requires consent of the entire family; and the family in question was intolerant of marriage to burakumin. This might be a reasonable response. However, the respondent continued, 'Since we were hurt, we have a right to take revenge.' In the view of the two principals, the marriage was a happy one. Yet the respondent could not approve. She also insisted on the sinister meddling of the BLM.

I used to try so hard for dowa education. But my efforts were never rewarded, and the whole thing is nonsense. I want to yell at them, 'Do it yourself!' This is not discrimination, now. It's my revenge. (FEC456)

Only the dowa problem ever stood out, among human rights. Only the dowa got special benefits, and was connected together with the ideology of a political party. Nowadays, 'human rights' means the dowa problem only. That's why we react so sharply against human rights. We ought to finish up our efforts for the dowa problem, and begin thinking about other kinds of human rights. 'Too much spoils; too little is nothing.' (FEC118)

The first respondent was a schoolteacher. Writing in the official column was this teacher's means of addressing the buraku issue. Moreover, it was an act of passive-aggressive revenge. Both respondents felt that the dowa policy (education and special measures) was constructed with an idea to nationalize burakumin according to the strategy of the Council Report. As a result, the Council Report became the background for the reproduction of exclusion and hostility.

4.2 Disappearance of Discipline for Addressing of Buraku, and Appearance of Hostility in Citizens' Movements.

The shift of governance may be observed in the addressing of the buraku issue at certain special social events and functions.

According to surveys concerning public consciousness, most people know of buraku and burakumin⁷. Knowledge comes from teachers, families, the mass media, co-workers, etc. Louis Pierre Althusser referred to the 'quarrying of information' as the ideology apparatus of the state. The above respondents knew well their neighboring buraku. They also knew the traditional occupations and industries in those buraku. When addressing the buraku issue, however, they would hardly imagine the presence of burakumin within earshot. Buraku anti-discrimination was designed for local communities. It was deemed enough to know and recognize the burakumin in each community, and to refrain from insults. Outside of one's community, however, there are no known burakumin, and there-

fore no thought of burakumin presence. Outside of one's own community, then, the addressing of the buraku issue becomes more aggressive⁸. Sometimes the topic appears spontaneously, as if from nowhere.

There is another reason that people do not imagine the burakumin among them: the quietness of burakumin. Most burakumin, when the issue comes up, forbear in silence. Even among card-carrying BLL members, 41.4% do not protest discriminatory behavior, nor resort to any organization. Among the same BLL members, only 9.6% reported offences to the BLL. Persons who brought discrimination complaints to city hall were only 2.1%. And 27.2% of BLL members reported intending, but failing, to register complaints. (Fukuyama City, 2005: 36) This is from an investigation of BLL members. If an investigation of the entire buraku population were to be held, these rates would fall severely. Incidentally, when the general public is questioned, only 12% who have met human-rights violations chose to endure in silence. (Onomichi City, 2003: 6)

Popular conceptions such as, 'Dowa is a nosy ass,' and 'Dowa is dreadful,' are baseless fantasies. In fact, the great majority of burakumin suffer in silence. People, however, have these discourses repeatedly imprinted into their consciousness and subconsciousness - and proceed to reproduce them. Essentially, the discourse includes a power that is decided in the consciousness of the people. As Marx wrote, language is of an age with consciousness. (Marx, 1845. 2002:57) Language forms discourse, and consciousness is the integration of memories using language. Therefore, even if non-Japanese, never having contact with burakumin, should frequently have demonstrated to them these discriminative opinions concerning burakumin, those non-Japanese would be liable to receive the discourse from the Japanese.

In today's background, constraints for the addressing of the buraku issue have moderated. The issue is more creative, and more arbitrary. As orthodoxy migrated from the Council Report to the *Iken-gushin*, more opulent hostility toward the buraku has appeared. This is true even among the

citizens' movements under the guidance of social democracy. Even in a public conference of citizen activists, the address of the buraku is more arbitrary. Here follows an example.

In 2006, in Fukuyama City, a downtown redevelopment threatened buried cultural properties with destruction. Activists gathered 110,000 signatures (out of 430,000 citizens) to protest the plans. The city ignored the petition, and refused suggestions to reconsider from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, and from the Tourism and Cultural Affairs Agency. Frustrated conservationists complained that the Dowa, i.e. the Fukuyama branch of the BLL, was controlling city hall, and persuading the city to destroy the buried heritage. The BLL, however, never uttered an official opinion on this topic. In their private capacities, several BLL activists were working together with the conservationists. Some well-known BLL activists had even published conservationist appeals in the newspaper.

Attending a citizens' movement conference were a former deputy mayor, a few city council members, and a university professor - all of whom knew the rights and wrongs of buraku address. During his career, the former deputy mayor declared his commitment to a resolution of the buraku problem. However, none of these authorities objected to such statements as, 'The villain destroying our cultural heritage is the dowa.' If anyone had dared object, he could hardly have been heard above the chorus of agreement. He might even feared exclusion from the meeting. The outright hatred was remarkable. The silence of these community leaders served to justify the 'dowa-curse' theory, and passively encouraged more hostility.

A leader of the citizens' movement has, from the municipal library, permanently borrowed several books written by a BLL personality. As the biblioclast said, 'We must not let the people read these books.' The impulse to exclude burakumin begins deep down in society. It interrupts free thought and expression. The citizens' organization in question included many members sharing many interests, such as environmental pollution, with the BLL.

4.3 Aggression and Sense of Loss

Why is this hostility reproduced?

Members' occupations were: manager of a real estate agency; manager of a metals-recovery company; electrical contractor; architect; engineering contractor; medical doctor; city councilman; prefectural assemblyman; retired schoolteachers; administrative scrivener; local historian; home builder; and several retailers. They were educated, successful professionals. One Mr. Murata, an NGO representative, testified concerning that citizens' movement and the BLM. (11.25.2010) Although he used to be connected with both organizations, he now avoids both.

Their hostility was not jealousy because of affirmative action for burakumin. The government had had that policy for years. But the BLL and the local government never accomplished their purposes. Citizens, at the beginning of the BLM, supported the fixed-term dowa policy as a matter of necessity. As it went on and on, and got extended again and again, and no improvement being made, the people came to criticize it. I lost my father when I was a lad. Somehow I made it through university, and I got a job with (Fukuyama) city. That's where I got to understand the importance of NGO movements, and I left city hall in order to organize one. Recently I established an organization abroad.

I cannot understand how some people, with all of this government affirmative action, still fail to make anything of themselves. They have more than enough support. More than enough educational opportunities. I can't sympathize with their failure. No effort, no success. I'd like to know how many BLL members could act as worldwide organizers without public subsidy. Me, I was making relationships in East Germany during the Cold War! I found out human rights violations by the secret police in that country. Here, the BLL insists on human rights, but they do nothing at street level. They're only

on the official level. That's why they believe in the accomplishments of socialism. But do they take responsibility for its delinquencies? Now, for the members of this movement, these buried ruins connect directly to their positive self-consciousness and sense of identity. When someone (i.e. burakumin) negates that identity, these people will hammer back. It wouldn't matter who was doing it.

Mr. Murata favorably contrasts his own diligence and success with burakumin lack of success. So doing, he allows the stigma of government-sponsored laziness. On the other hand, he observes accurately that the conservationists were attempting to protect their own identity through the preservation of Japanese heritage. The conservationist movement is solidly and safely middle-class. Its leaders are high-middle class, or higher. Simple jealousy for affirmative action benefits can be ruled out as motivation for hostility. Murata exposes the real issue: identity.

From the worldwide financial crisis beginning 2008, the middle class suffered not only economic loss, but also ontological loss. Additionally, there were occurring, globally, mutual violations among different cultures. Globalism, culturally and politically, was changing the traditional Japanese system. The sense of loss was felt to be, and reported to be, spiritual. The proposed destruction of feudal-era heritage symbolized the feelings at the time. Traditional culture under attack. Local pride being removed. Identity being eroded. Even in their own advertisements, conservationists appealed to national identity. Nationalism was a reaction to globalism. By promoting competition among nations, without disestablishing nations, globalism intensifies conflict among nations.

From interviews, however, the leaders of the conservationist movement felt globalism to be a rational economic model. Their angst must have another source. They stumbled upon the BLM, which they took for a monster attacking their culture. The BLL was also complicit, for its awkwardly questioning identity. Conservationists were conserving

the buried ruins, yes; but they were also conserving the citizenry. ‘Liberty consists of doing anything which does not harm others,’ Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The BLM and BLL were monsters, and the conservationists were banding in social defense.

Today, the conservationists will not accept any apology from burakumin, nor allow any of their behavior. No peace, it seems, is possible. The conservationists’ sense of justice is too passionate, and they are too married to heritage and tradition. But as Hobsbawm has demonstrated, tradition is often “invented tradition.” (Hobsbawm, 1983:1) Japan, especially, has ‘some well-judged invention of tradition.’ (Hobsbawm, 1983:266). Such inventions, upon investigation, can be revealed to be phantasms - and wobbly phantasms at that. Consequently, social and economic structures based on *tradition* are always precarious. Additionally, for all the conservationists’ amplification of criticism against burakumin, their own ontological crisis must worsen, aggravated by externalities.

5 Social defense, subjectification of security, and power from the bottom.

5.1 Knowledge of the Buraku Issue Transformed into Power

The following interview occurred between the third and fifth of October, 2006. It also serves to demonstrate the refinement of social hostility against burakumin. The interviewee was a salesman for a security enterprise. The original aim of the interview was to determine that security firm’s position regarding yakuza. Banks, at that time, were preparing to exclude dealing with yakuza customers. The interviewee gave some unanticipated testimony.

Q: Now then, are there any particular industries with which your company will not enter into a contract?

A: We never check the type of business.

Q: Have you ever had any trouble?

A: Yes, I have.

Q: What kind of trouble?

A: Buraku.

Q: Buraku?

A: Yes, buraku.

Q: Receiving discrimination?

A: Yes.

Q: And what happened?

(omission)

A: It’s necessary to take special caution with peace and security problems.

Q: What do you mean?

A: Buraku areas are full of problems.

Q: Many complaints from buraku?

A: Yes, sometimes.

(omission)

Q: You said that, “It’s necessary to take special caution with peace and security problems.” Any other issues?

A: Sure. Those districts are dangerous.

Q: Gangs?

A: Yes. Like that.

Q: Information about buraku. It’s important in your business?

A: I think so.

Q: Why do you think so?

A: My company handles security.

Q: Does your company ever ask you to collect buraku information? Or does your company give you such information?

A: No, not at all. We workers, we just have our own ideas.

Employees of the security firm considered buraku to be an essential target of supervision, for peace and public safety to be maintained. For these employees, the buraku is a key point of social defense. These are noticeable matters. No power from above orders the monitoring of buraku. The company in question has never supplied nor gathered

information on buraku. Employees trade such information amongst themselves, on their own initiative. This interviewee reported that his knowledge of buraku came primarily from school, and more specifically, from dowa educational materials, from after-school activities, and from the social affairs study group. These programs were all designed to resolve the buraku issue. Their actual effect was the opposite. The information was disseminated for human emancipation. However, as knowledge transformed into power, this man used it for social security, i.e. social defense.

5.2 Commodification of Anxiety and Security, and Power from the Bottom

The modern-day security firm, representing the commodification of social anxiety and insecurity, began in 1962. At first, employees patrolled the premises of a few contracted businesses. In 1964, the Tokyo Olympic Games propelled security firms into mainstream awareness. *The Guard Man*, a television drama revolving around security guards, glamorized the exciting new profession. In the 1968 Nagayama case, the spree-killer was caught, not by police, but by brave security guards, with assistance from an automatic private security system. This cemented the place of security firms in everyday Japanese life.

The website of the above security firm describes a 'social system industry for the security of the people.' Because 'society always needs new systems of social service,' this company constructs security systems. This advertising plays on, and feeds into, anxiety. (Tanaka, 2009:487) It also commodifies the reassurance of safety, real or perceived. The strategy pertains not so much to independent customers as it does to an abstract social human or humanity. This is similar to the strategies of nations, which consider people only as abstract populations.

Marketing theories now dictate that it is usual to fractionate markets. Management defines the outlines of each fragment by many variables. It then judges each fragment's purchasing power through credit-assessment, and thereby computes the different kinds of commodities, their costs, advertising,

etc. In the commodification of social anxiety and insecurity, communities are graded.

Judging by the number of stickers present on private homes, traffic spots, work zones, construction sites, event sites, parking sites, nuclear energy plants, etc., security companies are ubiquitous. They are like an occupying force, their observations and regulations creeping into every corner of private life. The public accepts these intrusions as the price of peace, safety, and smooth social relations. Unconsciously, a surveillance society has been realized. Moreover, the higher the position that one achieves, the higher the walls surrounding one; the thicker the hedge of security. Most people agree to being ranked, weighed, assessed, etc. as abstract social fragments, and subjected to the appropriate level of surveillance.

The security man judged buraku to require special caution. He shares such judgements with his peers. From this phenomenon it is evident that the power of evaluating buraku information as a commodity comes up, from the bottom of society. Discrimination is a bio-power, as may be witnessed when extreme discrimination leads to suicide⁹. At present, the addressing of the buraku issue is free from governance, but intensifies quietly and privately. Burakumin are put in a situation 'to foster or disallow it to the point of death.' (Foucault, 1976-1978: 138) Death has become 'the individual and private right to die at the border and in the interstices.' (Foucault, 1976-1978: 139) The security man featured above, and his practices, were born in the industry of capitalism. His objectification of buraku as a target for increased security was the objectification of "to foster or disallow it to the point of death." Additionally, the acts that he describes are essential components for the continuance of modern capitalism.

6 Conclusion

Burakumin have received some small courtesies from the Council Report policy. Under neo-

liberalism, they have also received new stigmas, and new hostilities. All of this comes from the governance of the address of the buraku issue. Under governance, the general public was influenced to invent new methods to express discrimination, from local gossip sessions to academe. Neo-liberal forces removed the controls for the addressing and unaddressing of the buraku issue. The sociologists, in their great optimism, declared, wrongly, that the borders between burakumin and non-burakumin were blurring; and that the problems of intermarriage were disappearing. Buraku discrimination itself (they thought) was on its way out. Scientific buraku studies, with the excuse of speaking the truth, opened a door to denialism - and gave new, scientifically plausible rationales for the social exclusion of burakumin. Originally, the buraku was a place of struggle between the people and authorities wielding power. Now, the buraku is a place where bio-power functions with the objectification of social security, which is a necessary commodity for the development of modern industry. Science serves to disguise this situation. This paper has endeavoured to unmask it and criticize it.

This paper, however, has only described the divergence between buraku studies and buraku reality. It could not discuss concretely the changing dimensions of buraku and burakumin. As the general public experiences a deepening ontological crisis, the buraku also has its own escalating crisis. The economic gaps and class contradictions in buraku are worsening. Moreover, as this paper has described, the acceptance of neo-liberalism is quietly spreading in the buraku. These things, therefore, shall be the next topics of study.

Notes

1. On the TV program, 'The Sunday Project Special Issue,' January 23rd, 2005, commentators made these remarks concerning the mislabelling of imported beef.

Tahara: The media didn't criticize Mr. Asada. He is a burakumin, so they were afraid of him. But they shouldn't be

afraid.

Takano: It's a taboo.

Tahara: Only Mr. Ohtani takes it up. He's not afraid of taboos.

Takano: Yes, well, we might his body floating in Osaka Bay, one of these days.

Ujiki: He's in trouble!

2. The Theory of Remnant Feudalism emphasizes the uncivilized economy and culture of the buraku, and produces stigma.
3. The BLL held the 2nd National Scholarship Students Meeting in Fukuyama City, in 1969. At this meeting, some students were pressed to testify about the hardships of life in the buraku. According to the memory of one participant, there was no interest in hearing about any other sort of unfortunate background.
4. It was generally claimed that buraku had their own particular folk arts, such as *harukoma* and *deko-ningyo*. However, the same arts exist outside of the buraku. Costumes in the buraku were never essentially different. Culture in the buraku basically fit the dominant culture. Seeming differences should be explained as belonging to a subculture, and certainly not a separate culture.
5. When asked about his intentions, Ohira failed to answer.
6. According to this investigation, 57% Nishimari-ku residents lived on less than 2 million yen annual income. In Taitou-ku, Tokyo, 27% of residents live on less than 2 million. Osaka's disparity is widening, and the city is getting poorer.
7. In an investigation in Osaki-kamijima cho, only 5 respondents in 396 answered, 'I do not know about the buraku issue.'
8. During a discussion about the governor of Osaka Prefecture, Mr. B brought up the buraku issue rather spontaneously.

Q: Public gambling is rationalized for industrial development. But casinos don't contribute to the cause. If the government allowed cash payouts to winners, the

pachinko industry couldn't comply.

A: Couldn't the government sue the pachinko places?

Q: Pachinko is a 30-trillion-yen business. If the government tried putting it out of business, pachinko would crash the whole economy. It would be a severe situation.

B: Speaking of severe situations, we had a pretty big surprise at the factory where I worked just before I retired.

Q: What, a pachinko problem?

B: No. The BLL.

Q: What do you mean?

B: The BLL mobbed the company. They said our astrological calendar was discriminatory.

9. From 1960 to 1980, Kobayakawa's data shows 12 burakumin suicides, of which 9 involved marriage discrimination. In Nagano Prefecture between 1949 and 1974, 12 suicides also occurred. These are the official numbers, but the reality is far from clear. In Japan, the police generally designate even obvious suicides as 'unnatural death.'

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