

The 55th International Research Symposium
The Scars of Post-war Japan 2022.2.11 (Fri)

The *Kikigaki* of the Discriminated Buraku Communities
: Focusing on Michiko Shibata's activities in the 1970s.

Hiroshima University Graduate School of Education
Izumi Gotouda

Contents

- ① Purpose (and Significance)
- ② Cultural Activities in the Buraku Liberation Movement in the 1970s
- ③ Michiko Shibata's Activities
- ④ “Kikigaki” as a way of give the Voices of the Voiceless

① Purpose and Significance

In the 1960s, the literacy movement became active.

In 1974, the Buraku Liberation Literature Award was established.

➔ The importance and potential of “writing” is advocated.

➔ Kenzi, Nakagami

“There's something in the words that professional writers seem to have forgotten” .

⋮

Michiko Shibata, “*Tradition and Life in the Buraku Communities*” (1972), emphasizes “listening” .

➔ Her activities have received insufficient attention.

The purpose of this presentation is to clarify the possibilities of Michiko Shibata's work and to position it in the history of cultural activities in the Buraku issue.

② Cultural activities in the Buraku Liberation Movement in the 1970s

In the 1960s, the literacy movement became active.

➡ Mainly composed of people over the age of 50 who were unable to go to school due to poverty and were unable to learn to read.

➡ In the beginning, it was for the betterment of life, but gradually it became an act of expression, such as poetry and the recording of one's life.

➡ The importance of "writing" is advocated.

▷ The writer, a Buraku woman, finds value in the community that forms in literacy classes.

1977: The literary magazine "*Kaku*" was first published.

➡ The first issue of the magazine was published to foster the development of Buraku writers and includes expressions by Buraku women who attend literacy classes.

Establishment of the Buraku Liberation Literature Award in 1974

The literacy class activities spread not only in Fukuoka, the birthplace of the program, but also in Kochi, Osaka, Hiroshima, Nara, Hyogo and Kyoto. I was very impressed by these activities, which I visited to cover them, and they spreaded like wildfire.

(partially omitted)

In the midst of this embryonic movement of literacy and cultural activities, what can the Institute for Buraku Liberation do to encourage and contribute to it? When I was working at the Osaka Literature School, I came up with the idea of the "Buraku Liberation Literature Prize" based on the idea of the Osaka Literature School Prize.

③ Michiko Shibata's activities

1934.3.30~1975.8.14 Writer of children's literature

1957 Graduated from Kyoritsu Women's University

1959 Published "*From the Bottom of the Valley*" on the theme of the evacuation of school children that she experienced.

1960 Recommended by the Sankei Children's Publishing Culture Award.

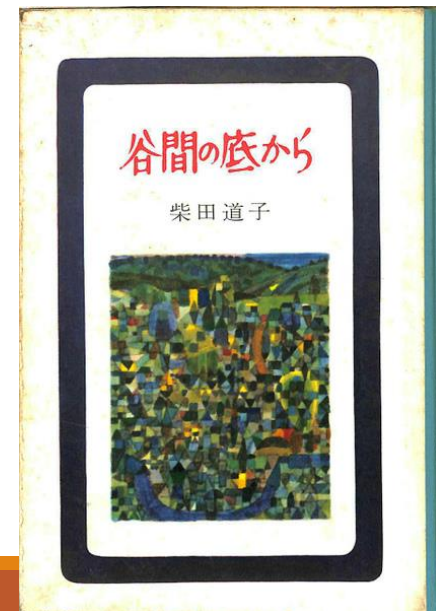
1963 Moved to Nagano Prefecture with her husband's job transfer.

1964 Participated in the Buraku Liberation Movement in earnest
Develop friendships with local high school students from the tribe

1968 Started interviewing senior citizens in Nagano Prefecture.

1972 Published "*Tradition and Life of the Discriminated Buraku Communities*".

1973 Participated in the Sayama Trial Struggle



“Tradition and Life of the Discriminated Buraku Communities” ①

For two years starting in 1968, she visited about 100 senior citizens in 55 villages in Nagano Prefecture.

Interaction with Eiichi Nakayama, General Secretary of the Nagano Prefecture Federation of the Buraku Liberation League at the time

In the tradition, the will and hope of the narrator at the time are hidden in the folds of the story, allowing us to hear the inner voice of the people. In order to make active use of the significance of tradition, I have focused on what has been handed down rather than what has been written down. (p.5)

The Buraku people, who have lived through discrimination, have a wonderful life and culture. Through this excavation, let's give confidence to the "Buraku people" as people they can be proud of, and let's make use of it for the Buraku Liberation Movement. (p.339)

➡The discourse of "pride in being a Buraku people.

“Tradition and Life of the Discriminated Buraku Communities” ②

Until now, the people of Buraku have perceived their history as a negative one. They have been forced to do so. They have been made to believe that their existence is uncool or disgraceful, and so they have been reluctant to talk about their past. In this way, many of the positive and positive aspects of the life history of the Buraku people were buried together. Most of the parents were reluctant to let their children know about the humiliation and pain they had suffered, so they clammed up.

(partially omitted)

The history of life as told by senior citizens is colored with hatred, sorrow, and joy. This is the living history of the people who have been reduced to the lowest level of the status system, a village outside the village, and a person outside the people. (p4)

- ➔ The same issue was faced by the creation in the literacy movement.
- ➔ She tried to pick up the voices of the Buraku people not by writing but by listening.

“Tradition and Life of the Discriminated Buraku Communities ” ③

The words of Tsugi-san, born in 1894.

I didn't go to school for even a year, so I didn't know how to write. It was hard not to be able to write home while I was out working. My close friends would write for me. They would also read them for me. Everyone younger than me knew how to write, but I was the eldest, so I couldn't go to school because I had to help out at home.

I went to the closet of the factory, set up a candle, and tried to memorize the letters after everyone was asleep, but I could not. When I got older, I was too busy to continue, so I couldn't. I learned the Japanese syllabary by having a friend draw it for me. It was embarrassing, but I had no choice. I walked with people who knew how to write. Even though I attended women's meetings, I was troubled by the fact that my writing was passed around. I took them home and asked young people to teach me.

(partially omitted)

What is not known is not that troubling. It would have been better if I didn't have to know, but when you know a little, you realize what you don't know and it becomes a problem.

➡ The condition of Buraku women who could not learn to read.

➡ The state of Buraku women who were not able to be involved in the literacy movement.

“Tradition and Life of the Discriminated Buraku Communities ” ④

Words by Kunimatsu Takahashi of the Arabori tribe

“Hakai” was published in 1906, but people around here didn't know about it until much later. Because of the high prestige of this kind of pure literature, it is not a part of our daily lives. We don't often get to know letters and literature. It is said that Fujimura came to Arabori several times when he was writing “Hakai”, but after he wrote it, he never went back. They are like the students who come to investigate the Buraku. These people make me angry.

When I was a young man, I thought of Toson as an enemy after I read “Hakai”.

- ➔ Skepticism and Dissatisfaction with Shimazaki Toson’ s “Hakai” .
- ➔ In the 1950s, there had already been critical examinations of “Hakai” .
- ➔ However, in the actual place where it was modeled, “Hakai” was not a excellent literature.

④ “Kikigaki” as a way of picking up the voices of the voiceless

- The ways in which Buraku women differed from the Buraku women who acquired letters through the literacy movement.
 - ➔ Candid narratives about the pain of these women unable to learn even if they wanted to.
- Perceptions of “Hakai” that have been overlooked in the history of research
 - ➔ Narratives of the Buraku people spilled from what was left behind

Conclusion

Shibata's emphasis on "listening" in the midst of calls for the importance of "writing" This is an activity that has been overlooked in the rise of the literacy movement.

“Kikigaki” picks up the voices of the Buraku people, which "writing" could not pick up.

However, it is important to note that in her review of this book, Eiju Narusawa states the following.

She has uncritically taken the narratives of senior citizens and written them as they are.

It seems that the author lacks the attitude of critically taking in as much as he can.

- ➔ The relationship between Shibata, as a writer, and the local Buraku people.
- ➔ Tension between speaker and listener in “Kikigaki” .