FEAR AND LOATHING

Discrimination in the Ancient Past

Research on the discriminated castes (*burakumin*) in Japan, particularly on medieval "non-humans" (*hinin*) and riverside dwellers (*kawaramono*), has made great strides in recent years. This research has not only uncovered a number of new documents, but, as in Niunoya Tetsuichi's Kebiishi (*The Imperial Police*), it has also concretely shown how the state and religious organizations (temples and shrines) controlled "non-humans" and riverside dwellers.[1] It has also become clear how the *miyagomori* of Gion Shrine in Kyoto and the "*sarugaku*" dancers should be included in the broader category of "discriminated people," in medieval Japan.[2] In addition, Kuroda Hideo, Kawada Mitsuo and Hotate Michihisa have used pictorial evidence to reveal the concrete conditions in which "non-humans" lived.[3] There has also been excellent research on the major cause of discrimination, the concept of "pollution" (*kegare*), by Miyata Noboru in the field of Ethnology and Yokoi Kiyoshi and

[1]Niunoya Tetsuichi, Kebiishi: chûsei no kegare to kenryoku, Heibonsha, 1986.

[2]*Sarugaku* is defined by the Cambridge History of Japan, volume 3, Medieval Japan, as a type of early medieval theater involving music dance and other kinds of entertainment. It was a precursor to Noh theater, which developed in the fourteenth century. It is not entirely clear who the *miyagomori* were, but as Amino discusses later in this chapter, they seem to have been a lower caste of shaman who performed *sarugaku* and did other tasks for shrines. From pp. 110 - 111 of the original: "According to Niunoya Tetsuichi, the lower caste shamans, known as "*miyagomori*" (residing within the shrine) who performed *sarugaku* dances and picked tea should probably also be included in the broad meaning of "non-humans." The *miyagomori* in particular later ran cheap tea houses, and after the Northern and Southern Courts period they fulfilled many of these same functions as teamsters and *inujinin*."

[3]Kuroda Hideo, Sugata to shigusa no chûseishi: ezu to emaki no fûkei kara, Heibonsha, 1986. Kawada Mitsuo, Shinran to hisabetsu minshû, Akashi shoten, 1994. Hotate Michihisa, Chûsei no ai to juzoku: emaki no naka no nikutai, Heibonsha, 1986.

Yamamoto Kôji in History.[4] Furthermore, there have been several studies lately on the efforts by the Ritsu, Zen, and Jishu sects to bring salvation to the non-humans and on the relations of specific religious figures with a variety of non-human groups.

Researchers are divided regarding the social position of non-humans in ancient and medieval times. The dominant interpretation of non-human status is that of Kuroda Toshio, who argues that non-humans occupied a "status outside the status system."[5] Kuroda believes that non-humans lived an existence that was originally completely alienated from society. Oyama Kyôhei, on the other hand, argues that they were essentially of the same status as villagers (*hyakushô*).[6] I believe, however, that non-humans were different from both common villagers and bonded servants, and that they possessed the same status as the shrine and temple purveyors discussed in the previous chapter . They also shared certain characteristics of skilled tradesmen. I should warn the reader, however, that my interpretation has not yet achieved full acceptance in the academic world.

In our approach to the question of discriminated castes in Japanese history, let us first consider a form of discrimination that is different from class discrimination: discrimination against the physically handicapped and those afflicted with terrible diseases. If we look all the way back to primitive society, we find no evidence of such discrimination in the Jômon period (10,000 - 300 B.C.). The average life expectancy at birth during the Jômon period is believed to have been 17 years—suggesting extremely harsh living conditions. Human remains that containing evidence such conditions as harelip, leg damage and so on, demonstrate

[4]Miyata Noboru, Kegare no minzokushi: sabetsu no bunkateki yôin, Jinbun shoin, 1996. Yokoi Kiyoshi, Mato to ena: chûseijin no sei to shi, Heibonsha, 1988. Yamamoto Kôji, Kegare to oharae, Heibonsha, 1992.

[5]Kuroda Toshio, Jisha seiryoku: mô hitotsu no chûsei shakai, Iwanami shoten, 1980.

[6]Oyama Kyôhei, Nihon chûsei nôsonshi no kenkyû, Iwanami shoten, 1978.

the existence of physically handicapped people during the Jômon period. According to some archaeologists, the Jômon era was a time when simple survival was extremely difficult. The evidence of physical handicaps in remains from the time suggests that human life itself was so highly valued that discrimination against those with physical difficulties may not have existed.

There is sufficient evidence, however, that in Japanese society from the Yayoi period on certain classes of crimes, called "*amatsutsumi*" (crimes against heaven) and "*kunitsutsumi*" (crimes against the realm)—such as mother-son incest, bestiality, and activities that obstructed agricultural production—were also considered forms of pollution (*kegare*). But by the late seventh century, it appears that, *in principle*, there was no thought of excluding the handicapped from the community, as later happened to those who suffered from Hansen's Disease (leprosy).[7] In fact, when the Ritsuryô State was founded, the imperial government quite earnestly attempted to implement the idea that everyone in the land should be listed in a household registry. Rather than provide for separate entries, the early household registries recorded the existence of those stricken with severe diseases or injuries, who were designated as "disabled" (*haishitsu*), and those with the most severe debilities, designated as "invalids" (*tokushitsu*), along with the entries for other members of the family. These people were not subjected to taxation and a caretaker was to be assigned to them.

In its zealous attempt to place every single person in the realm into a family registry, the early Ritsuryô State also doggedly pursued itinerants who had fled their homes. So from the standpoint of the government system, there was no tolerance for the existence of those who had fled their communities. For that reason,

[7]Amino admits, however, that it is not clear how the diseased and handicapped were treated in actual practice. His point here is that not only was there no clear principle for excluding these people, there were clear examples of them being included.

exclusionary discrimination was neither possible, at least as far as the system was concerned, nor demonstrable, as far as we can tell from surviving records.

However, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, the Ritsuryô State established *within its system* the statuses of the "five colors of baseness" for "debased people." A distinction was drawn between the "base" groups and the commoners and officials (known as "the good people," *ryômin*). Slaves in the service of the bureaucracy or the state were called "*kanko*" (official menials) and "*kunuhi*" (public slaves). Privately held slaves were called "*kenin*" (domestics) and "*shinuhi*" (private slaves). Of these four groups, "official menials" and "domestics" were allowed to form families (which would then receive a separate listing in the registries). In any case, these four groups of debased people were slaves, having lost their freedom due to criminal acts or unresolved debts. Even though they were not laboring slaves in the sense of those in ancient Greece or Rome, they were "unfree people," possessed by a particular master.

Moving from the ancient to the medieval era, we still find a caste of "unfree people" called "*genin*" (indentured servants and slaves). But most scholars acknowledge that medieval indentured servants and "non-humans" lived completely different lives. If that was the case, then the four groups of debased people in the Ritsuryô State may have been clearly distinguished from free subjects, but they were not necessarily stigmatized as the medieval non-humans were.[8]

Scholarly opinion is sharply divided on the fifth of the "five colors of

[8]In other words, if the "non-humans" did not derive from the four slave-like groups of the debased peoples, then the discrimination against non-humans did not derive from a relation to slavery, as is commonly held, but from something else. Amino's point, I believe, is that stigmatization of non-humans, which was the key form of discrimination in the early modern period was different from a caste-based discrimination such as one would find applied to slaves. Drawing this inference back in time, then, his argument here is that the fact of slavery itself did not generate discrimination, so we cannot infer that the "four debased groups" suffered stigmatization. The subtle difference in the modes of discrimination, between one that is status-based and one that is based on the magico-religious notion of pollution (*kegare*), is the crucial concept of this chapter.

baseness" of the Ritsuryô State— the "*ryôko*" whose mission it was to guard the imperial tombs.[9] It appears that they were considered the closest of the "five colors of baseness" to "the good people," in other words, officials. We do not really know, however, why they were included within the category of debased people, despite their proximity to officialdom. One of the prevailing theories is that their inclusion among the debased was related to the pollution that arises from death The argument goes that the tomb guardians were stigmatized as a group because of their connection to the polluted space of graves. In fact, there are some who believe that these tomb guardians were one ancestral source of today's stigmatized *burakumin*. But an examination of the condition of graves and tombs in those days shows rather that they were sacred sites and not polluted places that had to be avoided. As sacred places, they had to be strictly guarded.

I touched upon this in the previous chapter, but even in the Middle Ages, the guardians of the mausoleum of Fujiwara no Kamatari had tremendous authority and pride.[10] Indeed, they had attributed to them the special powers of the servants of the gods, that is, the shrine and temple purveyors. Tomb guardians, like the various purveyors, were also involved in commerce. Theirs was not the existence of outcastes, but of sanctified guardians of a holy site. But if that were so, then we are still left with the troubling question of why these people were attributed a "base" status.

The shrine menials (*shinsen*) at Kashima Shrine appear in just one document of the archaic period. It is clear that these people were in direct attendance on the gods, but since they had greater military skills than commoners they were mobilized by the Ritsuryô State to fight against the peoples of northeast Honshû, then known

[9]See his related discussion of this group in "Commerce, Finance and Currency."

[10]Fujiwara no Kamatari (614-669) was the founder of the powerful Fujiwara Clan that dominated court politics through most of the Nara and Heian periods.

as “Ezo.” This may count, then, as one further distinction from the “outcastes” who appeared from the 17th century on. These people as a whole—the tomb attendants and shrine menials—were distinguished from the common people by the fact that they were in direct service to sacred things. The fact that they were accorded “base” status was due to the Ritsuryô State’s imitation of the Tang Chinese system, not a reflection of their actual position in society.

Tomb guardians were in a position similar to the shrine, temple and imperial purveyors. That is, in their service to the native deities and buddhas, they may have been characterized as menials or slaves, but in fact they had special rights. Therefore, when we consider the problem of discrimination in ancient times as a matter of status, we should recognize that there were two kinds of distinctions. One was found in the the distinction between slaves and “good people.” The other was the distinction accorded those people who were in service to sacred beings whose power exceeded that of normal human beings.

Buddhist Hospices for the Sick and Orphaned

However, the Ritsuryô system, in which everyone was supposed to be recorded in a register, began to fall apart in the eighth century. The government’s regulatory power weakened and the number of vagrants and absconders began to rise. Among these, people with serious diseases, people with no near relatives (such as orphans) and other people in misfortune became a major political problem. Responding to a growing need for relief, the government established hospices (known as *hiden’in* and *seyakuin*).[11] No only were these facilities constructed in the capital, but there are also archaeological traces of hospices established near the

[11]The effort of the Ritsuryô State to provide relief at these hospices was in part related to Empress Kômyô’s embracing of Buddhism.

government outposts in each region. When the Ritsuryô state established the official regional temple system (*kokubunji*), it also paired relief facilities to the official temple in each provincial capital.[12]

Put this way, it looks like the Ritsuryô state did nothing but good works. But the attempt to include everyone in a registration system was more for the purpose of levying heavy tax burdens than it was for providing for their relief. And it was because of the state's attempt to increase the tax burden that incidences of vagrancy and absconding rose. Therefore, we should keep in mind the intent to control the population when evaluating the Ritsuryô state's actions. In any case, when the abondoned children and orphans who had been raised in the hospices grew up, they were attached to the family registers of a normal person's household. Thus, at least for the Nara period, it would appear that these people were not subjected to discrimination simply because they had been in a hospice.

When the capital moved to Heian (Kyôto), hospices were built at the far eastern and western ends of Ninth Avenue. We have evidence that they retained their function through the ninth century. During this period, we know that those people raised in the hospices were added to the household registers of the capital, given the new surname of Muraji and granted one house per family registry. When those without relatives gave birth to their own children, they established an official household, and were thereafter treated the same as other commoners. However, if all were given new names, then it would be possible to know, at a glance, that they came from a hospice. This may have become a source of later discrimination.

By the end of the ninth century, the government faced a fiscal crisis as the Ritsuryô system weakened. As a result, the government could no longer support

[12]The system was established in 741 by order of Emperor Shômu and provided that an official Buddhist temple be built in every province and subjected to the overall control of the headquarters temple, Todaiji, in Nara.

the hospices. All government agencies faced this crisis, so all of the artisans attached to these agencies were forced to fend for themselves in their own independent groups. Or to put it another way, the artisanal classes distanced themselves from government regulation and began to freely form their own groups. The same was probably true for courtesans (*asobime*).[13] The singers and performers in the Office of Female Dancers and Musicians of the Bureau of Music, one of the agencies in the Ritsuryô government, and the lower grade maids serving in the Women's Quarters of the Imperial Palace probably formed their own female entertainers' associations. Hand craftsmen and shamans (*miko*) were attached to the regional government outposts as well, and it is possible to confirm the traces of an organization of courtesans (*ukareme*) in the city of Dazaifu in northern Kyûshû during the Nara period. So it is likely that there were professional associations that included courtesans in every region. These craft and entertainment associations appear most clearly in the tenth and eleventh centuries. As the ninth century fiscal crisis pushed tradesmen out of the bureaucracy and into their own associations, the people of the hospices (except for those with the most debilitating diseases) found themselves forced to resort to similar means to support themselves.

In the latter half of the ninth century there was a great famine that led to so many dead and sickened from starvation that the banks of the Kamo river in Kyôto were strewn with bones and corpses. This kind of famine occured from time to time from ancient times up through the sixteenth century. Documentation shows that in

[13]The same two characters for courtesan are variably glossed in the original with three pronunciations: *asobime*, *ukareme* and *yûjo*. There may well have been differences in detail and historical circumstance of each pronunciation, but for the sake of translation I am rendering all of them as courtesan. It is important to note that courtesan does not strictly imply prostitution. While sexual work may have been a part of the function of courtesans, it was not necessarily true of all of them, nor was it necessarily the primary task of most of them. The term courtesan (and the more awkward female entertainer) gives a wider range of possible activities and a clearer sense of the professional skills involved than does our modern-day notion of prostitution.

order to deal with the disaster the government ordered the people of the hospices to remove the dead from the riverbanks. It was from the time of this late ninth century famine, then, that the government first granted them a stipend and put them to work disposing of the dead. However, since commoners in the capital and low level officials in the Headquarters of the Middle Palace Guards (*hyôefu*) and the Headquarters of the Inner Palace Guards (*emonfu*) were also made to do portions of this work, we can see that it was a task that was not yet exclusive to the people of the hospices. The origins of the gradual separation of the people of the hospices from the communities of commoners to work with the disposal of the dead and at funerals may be found during this period. Nevertheless, since people from hospices were included in the family registers of commoners, it is not possible to directly link the early Heian hospices and the communities of discriminated groups which appeared later.

The Problem of Pollution

From the tenth to the eleventh centuries, it became completely impossible for the government and its regional outposts to support the sick and orphaned. Moveover, by this time Kyôto had outgrown the classic Chinese model of a capital—that is, one containing only the aristocracy, bureaucratic officialdom and a small number of merchants necessary to support a market. Kyôto had become a full-scale city in which all kinds of people lived. With this development, the problem of pollution (*kegare*) became a serious problem for the city and particularly for its leading citizens: the aristocracy.

Determining the precise nature of pollution during this time is itself a problem. I agree with Yamamoto Kôji's notion that "pollution" was connected to

the fear and uncertainty that arose in human society when the state of balance between human beings and nature was disrupted or lost. While that is a viable definition of "pollution" in general, the people of ancient society distinguished among a wide variety of specific forms of pollution. For example, death was considered a loss that caused "death pollution" (*shie*). Meanwhile at the opposite end of a human life, birth was also held to be a disruption of an existing state of balance and was known as "birth pollution" (*san'e*). Pollution could also arise from animals whose existence was closely tied to that of human beings, such as dogs, horses and cows.

Pollution was not limited to purely biological conditions. Conflagrations, the grand expression of the power in fire that can escape the control of human beings, gave rise to a form of pollution known as "destruction-by-fire pollution" (*shôbôe*). There was also a kind of pollution specific to the commission of a crime (*tsumie*). Of course murder was connected to "death pollution," but even theft was considered a form of pollution. It was believed at the time that objects themselves were closely tied to human beings, so the intentional removal of a thing from its owner in the act of theft was believed to cause a particular kind of pollution. As I will discuss further below, any major changes made in nature through human means, such as cutting down a large tree or moving a large stone, was seen as causing yet another kind of pollution.

People who entered a site that had beeen transformed by any of the above forms of pollution would become polluted and have to seclude themselves for a certain period while the pollution was removed. Since the deities (*kami*) and the emperor were seen as beings whose existence was bound up with the basic functions of nature, a serious crisis would ensue if the deities or the emperor became

polluted.[14] To be specific, if the emperor was polluted, vital religious and state ceremonies could not be conducted and all political activity would come to a standstill. A state of "imperial pollution" actually occurred on occasion from the end of the Heian period. While this kind of fear of pollution probably goes back to the very earliest society of the Japanese archipelago, this nervous avoidance of pollution grew to enormous proportions and became systematized in Kyôto with its large, densely concentratedpopulation.

This anxiety stemmed from the belief that pollution could be communicable in certain circumstances, even to the deities. For example, when a case of birth or death pollution occurred in a closed space, such as one surrounded by a fence and gate, the entire space became polluted. This state could be called "primary pollution." If someone entered that space not knowing that it was polluted, and then returned to his or her home, that home would also become polluted. This would be a state of secondary pollution. If someone unknowingly came in contact with secondary pollution and then returned home, that third dwelling entered a state of tertiary pollution. There was no fourth degree of pollution, but the first through third were all considered pollution in gradually diminishing levels. All levels required purifying rituals and a system for recognizing and dealing with "communicable" pollution was developed by the government. Yet, interestingly enough, pollution was not considered communicable in open spaces such as

[14] Western readers may be prone to think of emperors in strictly political terms and deities as not subject to human conditions, which would make this passage difficult to understand. In ancient Japan, however, the emperor was understood principally as an "*arahitogami*" (a deity personified) and the deities (*kami*) were understood to be spirits apart from humans, but by no means omnipotent. The deities resided principally in "the other world," a kind of parallel universe, but they also had an important impact in the temporal world. The deities were particularly associated with natural processes, such as the growth of plants and the flow of wind and water. The emperor, as an embodied deity was the primary intermediary between the world of the humans and the world of the deities. Therefore, his (or her) primary function was understood to be conducting the ceremonies necessary to maintaining the balance in the universe between the temporal world and the world of the deities. As the people of the time saw it, becoming polluted would prevent the emperor or the

riverbanks and roads. For example, one would not become polluted if one came across a dead body lying by the road or on the riverbank. It may well be that the riverbanks became a funerary site for that very reason.

The Emergence of Non-humans and Their Labor

Groups labelled "non-human" first appear in historical documents at about the same time as this fear of communicable pollution began to spread among the aristocracy of Kyôto. The title "chief of the non-humans" appears in a document from the latter half of the eleventh century, so we can surmise that at the time there were already groups that had their own independent organizations. The severely diseased and orphaned who had formerly resided at the Buddhist hospices—but who now had to fend for themselves—were surely among these groups. As I noted before, these independent organizations were groups of people whose vocation —I choose to call it a "vocation"—was purifying polluted spaces. Over time, they came to be called "non-human" (*hinin*).

Limiting our discussion to those who appear in historical documents, these "non-human" groups were particularly conspicuous in Kyôto and Nara. As provincial government headquarters, especially in Western Japan, began to take on the appearance of towns around the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, "non-human" groups also began to show up in the regions. Since there were many kinds of people who took part in purification work, it is impossible for us to treat them as a homogeneous group. I will therefore discuss them one at a time.

The most conspicuous of these professional purifying groups (documented in the greatest detail) were those people called, simply, "non-humans." We have a fairly clear understanding of the actual life conditions of these "non-humans" from

deities from performing their crucial functions and thus result in natural disaster. The close

around the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. One of their main bases in Kyôto was on the hill leading up to Kiyomizu Temple, on the southeast side of the city, which came to be known as the "quarters" (*shuku*). The same Chinese character served for "post towns" in general, making it difficult to distinguish between the two in writing. However, from the Warring States period, a new Chinese character that was pronounced the same way, was used to orthographically distinguish the bases of "non-humans" from other post towns. The "quarters" below Kiyomizu Temple became known as "the headquarters" (*honshuku*), where "the chief of the non-humans," who controlled not just the "non-humans" of Kyôto, but all those living throughout the Kinai region in communities known as "outposts," resided.[15] Another group of "non-humans" that appears to have been opposed to the Kiyomizu group, was "headquartered" on the Nara hill in Yamato Province. This latter group, known as the Kitayama Quarters, was a powerful association of "non-humans," associated with Kôfuku-ji Temple and Kasuga Shrine.[16] It also controlled a series of "non-human outposts" scattered throughout the Kinai region.

Each outpost also had its own leader. The term used for these leaders, "*Chori*," later became a generalized term of discrimination, just as the term used to differentiate "non-human" *shuku* from post towns later became a derogatory term. However, at the time the same term was generally used to designate the head of any group of people, such as the head of a temple. Courtesans, to take another example, were also characterized by a hierarchy based on seniority. The same kind of organization existed in Buddhist monk associations and trade guilds. So again we find "non-humans" working within a general, not distinct, model.

contact of the nobles with the emperor explains why Amino discusses this as a particular problem for the aristocracy.

[15]Kinai refers specifically to the five provinces around the ancient capitals in the Yamato plain. Today, the Kinai region corresponds to parts of Osaka, Kyôto, Nara, Hyôgô and Wakayama Prefectures.

While the Kitayama group of "non-humans" was closely linked to Kôfukuji Temple, the "non-humans" of Kiyomizu Hill were closely tied to Enryakuji Temple and Gion Shrine. Among the latter were people who sold strings for archers' bows. In later eras, these people were called "string-sellers" (*tsurumeso*), but at that time they appear in documents as "*Inujinin*." Their name is a result of the word "dog" (*inu*) added as a prefix to the term for shrine purveyor (*jinin*). The group was composed of shrine purveyors at Gion Shrine and temple purveyors at the Shakyamuni Hall of Enryakuji Temple. But *inujinin* were not restricted simply to these two sites. These two *inujinin* groups were simply the most famous. A close look at historical records show *inujinin* groups at other shrines in other regions. I will be coming back to this point again later, but it is clear that there were *inujinin* at Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine in Kamakura, a rare case for eastern Japan.

As far as we know, the work of these *inujinin* and "non-humans" was primarily concerned with funerals. Documents from the Muromachi period show that the "non-humans" of Kiyomizu Hill were in charge of the funerary biers upon which corpses were carried to the funeral grounds in Kyôto. As a reward for their work, *inujinin* and "non-humans" had the right to goods offered to the deceased at funerals. If we recall the activities of people of the hospices during the early Heian period, we may surmise that "non-humans" fulfilled the function of purifying death pollution going back to the Heian period.

In addition, these people also had the task of purifying other forms of pollution, such as pollution arising from crimes and punishments. For example, capital punishment was carried out by released prisoners (discussed in greater detail below). Buildings that had been polluted by the commission of a crime within its walls or by the commission of a crime by its owner were commonly torn down at that time, and this task was done by *inujinin* (for cases in Kyôto, the destruction was

carried out by the Kiyomizu group). For example, a picture scroll called Pictorial Gleanings of Ancient Virtues (*Shûi kotoku den'e*) depicts *inujinin* destroying gravesite of a holyman named Hônen during the government's suppression of Hônen's Pure Land sect.[17]

Documents from the Muromachi period also show that "riverside dwellers" (*kawaramono*) and "non-humans" were employed to deal with afterbirth.[18] Young people these days know very little about afterbirth. Since most people are now born in a maternity clinic, we do not have to worry about where to dispose of the afterbirth. But in an era when people were born at home, the disposal of afterbirth was a significant problem. In Kyôto and most of western Japan, people were extremely concerned about "birth" pollution. For example, during the Muromachi period, "non-humans" took the afterbirth of the shogun's family to be buried in distant mountains.[19] These examples serve to demonstrate that the "skilled labor" of these groups was the purification of various kinds of pollution.

Fear of Special Powers

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[16]A Buddhist temple and a Shinto shrine in Nara and both related to the aristocratic Fujiwara clan.

[17]Hônen (1133-1212) was defrocked and banished from Kyôto by the government for heresy (he advocated the exclusive practice of "nembutsu," or calling on Amida Buddha for salvation at the exclusion of all other Buddhist prayers and practices). One of his disciples, Shinran (1173-1262), was also banished and several others were executed. This marked the beginning of an extended government suppression of the Pure Land sects led by Hônen and Shinran. The campaign to suppress Pure Land doctrines and practitioners was propelled by many of the major Buddhist institutions, particularly the Tendai monastery on Mt. Hiei. The scene Amino refers to in this picture scroll depicts an episode in that suppression campaign that took place after Hônen's death (thus the destruction of a small building at his grave).

[18]Because these documents date from the Muromachi period, Amino cautiously notes that we do not know how far back this custom dates.

[19]Ethnologists note a general difference between customs related to afterbirth in western and eastern Japan. In western Japan, including Kyôto where the Muromachi shoguns resided, the afterbirth was carried far away and buried in the mountains where no one would

While these "non-human" groups were quite diverse, they shared the characteristic of being unable to live as, and among, commoners. As I stated before, we know that the category of "non-humans" came to include orphans, handicapped, lepers and other people who were unable to live normal lives. But it also appears that not all lepers had to enter these groups. In the latter part of the Kamakura period, it appears that one leader of a "non-human" organization forced lepers out of their homes and into his group. A priest of the Ritsu sect who had worked for the relief of "non-humans" stopped this practice and forced the leader to vow to leave the decision to enter the group up to the individual leper him or herself.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the gravely sick or handicapped—in other words, those who were unable to move about freely—were frequently included among the "non-humans." We know from such picture scrolls as The Picture Scroll of the Holy Man Ippen (Ippen Hijiri-e), that these people begged for a living. Yet, according to Buddhist thought in this era begging was considered a method of spiritual training for those who had been dispossessed. It was widely held article of faith that donations to beggars were equivalent to virtuous acts toward Buddha. "Non-humans" took to begging in this sense of a religious practice. But since begging was also a kind of income, it had to take place in a clearly marked area, just as commerce had to take place in the particular space of the marketplace. It seems likely that the leader of the "non-humans" mentioned above tried to force lepers into his group in order to increase the number of beggars, and therefore to increase the organization's income.

Inujinin and "non-humans" were also involved in the performing arts. For example, *inujinin* pulled and led the floats in the Gion Festival.[20] Today, the Gion

come into contact with it. In eastern Japan, however, the afterbirth was customarily buried in the entryway of the family home in the belief that the treading of many feet across the doorway would toughen the spirit of the children whose placenta were buried there.

[20]The Gion Festival is perhaps Kyoto's most famous city festival. It takes place in

Festival features a number of very tall floats called "*yamaboko*" (mountain floats). But in ancient times, the procession of the Gion Festival probably consisted of a series of tall poles upon which, it was believed, the gods would descend from the heavens. We have very early images of released prisoners carrying strange long poles with vines attached to them that are probably the origins of the Gion floats. During the Muromachi period, the *inujinin* were known to approach the emperor and give performances as part of a realm-purifying ceremony and a ritual prayer for the long life of the imperial clan. This custom continued until the Edo period. These examples point to the fact that "non-humans" had important roles to play in the purification of the realm and prayers for long life, which they fulfilled through performing arts.

It has commonly been believed that the use of the Chinese character for "dog" (pronounced "*inu*" in Japanese) in *inujinin*, or the use of the prefix "non" (*hi*) for "non-humans" (*hinin*) reveals that these people were excluded and ostracized from the communities of commoners. From this it has been supposed that "non-humans" and *inujinin* constituted a society outside of society, or a status outside of the status system: in other words, outcastes. But considering the actual conditions we just briefly covered, it was not likely to have been that simple. A somewhat different approach must be taken, beginning with the recognition that the core of these "non-human" organizations was constituted by commercial artisans and performers. Temple and shrine purveyors were clearly given a status within society in the same way as the tradesmen I discussed in the previous chapter.

"Non-humans" became temple and shrine purveyors because of the social fear of pollution and because "non-humans" were seen as having the special ability to purify people, places and things. People's fear of pollution at the time derived in part from a utilitarian problem: once a person came into contact with communicable

July and involves a parade of huge floats around the downtown section of the city. The festival

pollution, he or she would have to remain confined at home for a long period of time. Beyond that, fear of pollution was probably tied to a fear of the power of nature, one that far exceed the power of human beings.

In short, people at the time did not just avoid and despise pollution, they feared it. They held similar feelings about those who had the power to purify polluted sites, in other words, "non-humans." Because they performed a special function that was beyond the powers of a normal person, "non-humans" were accorded the special status of temple or shrine workers and recognized as direct servants of the native and Buddhist deities. This fear and respect for those linked to higher powers extended to beggars as well, for beggars were seen as incarnations of Buddhist deities. As a result, disrespect towards beggars was believed to result in divine punishment. This idea was first propagated to support the spread of Buddhism, but it also contributed to the idea that beggars had special abilities to purify scenes and states of pollution. In time, these special powers became linked to a fear of their very persons. Finally, returning to the question of social status, we should keep firmly in mind the fact that "non-humans" were seen, like other tradesmen, as temple and shrine purveyors. In other words, they were people with skills.

"Non-Humans" in the Service of the Gods

The term "non-human" itself, their propensity to present themselves as "slaves of the gods" and their association with pollution, beggars and the sick, have led many to view "non-humans" through a contemporary lens as stigmatized. But "non-humans" had pride in their special skills. For example, in a petition written in the thirteenth century, members of the Kitayama organization described themselves

is associated with Gion Shrine, one of the shrines which Amino repeatedly mentions as

as “the non-humans who have performed the weighty task of purifying the temples and the homes of the people.” This petition portrayed their “weighty task” not as a painful or burdensome job, but as an extremely important job, one they forcefully insisted they had fulfilled from ancient times as an important and sacred calling.

When a shrine purveyor was murdered for whatever reason, the site where the body was found became that person’s grave, and the site would revert to the control of the shrine to which he or she had been attached. Kasamatsu Hiroshi has called this “the legal principle of graves.”[21] The principle conformed to the logic of sacred possession: by the fact that the dead shrine purveyor had been in service to a sacred entity, the place where he died would itself become sacred, and the site would come under the jurisdiction of the gods. The same principle held true for *inujinin*. Moreover, in a petition that presented this argument, a group of *inujinin* claimed that, like their shrine purveryor adversaries in the particular lawsuit, they were important functionaries of the monastery on Mt. Hiei. This is probably the same kind of claim as that made by the “non-humans” mentioned above. The gist of the suit was that since they performed essential services, they should be entitled to the same rights as the shrine purveyors.

Of course, the problem remains as to why the *inujinin* had the character for “dog” as a prefix to their status name. This term probably did not suggest a lower, or bestial, order of humanity, as it might today. Rather, it indicated a certain distinction from other sacred workers. That difference notwithstanding, it is significant for our understanding of the history of discrimination in Japan that “non-humans” and *inujinin* considered themselves the same as other sacred workers and pressed this claim in lawsuits. It thus appears that *inujinin* and “non-humans” were incorporated *within* the system of shrine, temple and imperial purveyors that

containing a famous organization of shrine purveyors.

[21]Kasamatsu Hiroshi, Hô to kotoba no chûseishi, Heibonsha, 1984.

functioned from the Heian through the Kamakura period.

In addition to being attached to specific temples or shrines, "non-humans" and *inujinin* were also associated with a section of the bureaucracy directly related to the emperor, the Imperial Police (*kebiishi*). For example, the streets of Kyôto had to be cleaned whenever the emperor left his palace, or in the event of festivals, since the emperor and the native deities were extremely averse to pollution. At times, the residents of Kyôto would be mobilized for these tasks, but usually the "non-humans" under the control of the Imperial Police would do the cleaning. The Imperial Police Agency was, like the Emperor's Private Office (*kurododokoro*), a part of the bureaucracy in direct service to the emperor, and functioned as a police force within the capital city alone. During the Muromachi period, the courtesans of Kyôto came under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Police, but as Niunoya Tetsuichi has clearly shown, "non-humans" had been placed under the supervision and control of the Imperial Police from an even earlier date.

Taking all of this into consideration, we can see that it is a big mistake to view "non-humans" up until the fourteenth century as having been subjected to the the same kind of discrimination as the outcastes of the Edo period. "Non-humans" were, like shrine and temple purveyors, clearly distinct from the general classes of commoners. They were also quite different from indentured and enslaved classes in the quotidian world. They were *sanctified* as "slaves" of the buddhist and native deities, and thus were understood as existing within the realm of the sacred, for which they were feared and respected. It is true that it was their association with the particular problem of pollution that distinguished "non-humans" from other sacred purveyors. But their ability to purify scenes and sites of pollution can be understood as the socially necessary skill that situated them as a class, within the social system, among the broad category of tradesmen.

People of the Riverside

Historical records also reveal a group of people who may be classified as "non-humans" in the broad sense, although they differed from the "non-humans" I have discussed so far. This group was known as "riverside dwellers" (*kawaramono*). "Non-humans" in the narrow sense, such as *inujinin*, wore a special white face wrap and persimmon colored robes, which made them look like monks. In fact, sometimes "non-humans" have been named in historical documents as mendicant priests. However, the people who appear in historical documents as "riverside dwellers" had the same kind of personal names as commoners, unlike the monk-like "non-humans."

We do not understand yet when and under what circumstances riverside dwellers came to be known as such, nor do we understand what tasks they performed. We know comparatively far more about the "non-humans." However, a late Heian period text does record that "riverside dwellers" extracted a valuable medicine from the intestines of cattle, so we may surmise that they were involved with the disposal of domesticated animals. One likely origin of this group was the people employed by the falcon handlers of the Imperial Falcons Office to gather food for the birds. Overall, there are few references to "riverside dwellers" in historical documents. However, we have been able to confirm the existence of a group of "riverside artisans," in the early years of the Northern and Southern Courts period, organized under a leader attached to Gion Shrine. These people are reported to have made a kind of footwear called "*uranashi*" (heel-less sandals). Since the people who provided "*uranashi*" at Daigoji temple and Kitano shrine were also called "*kiyome*" (purifiers), it may be that "riverside dwellers" were also known as

"purifiers" and had formed their own groups independent of the "non-humans." If they were involved with the disposal of cattle and other animals, then it is likely that they dissected the bodies and worked the hides of sacred horses and cattle[22] on the river banks. To put it in the terms of the "non-humans" we have discussed so far, one of this group's skills was undoubtedly the purification of pollution arising from the death of horses and cattle.

But the work of the "riverside dwellers" did not end there. We know that from the Northern and Southern Courts period they also took part in such construction projects as well-digging and the movement of large boulders and trees. These tasks also fall within the purview of the problem of pollution. Since the people of the time viewed any major changes to nature as a momentous act, such changes aroused a certain kind of fear. Thus, for example, it appears that there were magical ceremonies requiring a diviner that had to be performed when a well was dug. The same was true whenever a large tree or boulder was moved. "Riverside dwellers" probably took part in such work from early on. It is well known that they constructed gardens during the Muromachi period, producingsuch exceptional artisans as the noted garden designer Zen'ami.[23] In addition, "riverside dwellers" were called in to repair or dig new wells. While we are only able to confirm their participation in such projects dating from the Northern and Southern Courts period, it seems likely that this goes back before the Kamakura period.

Again, the paucity of materials makes it unclear, but it seems that "riverside dwellers" were organized under a leader, attached to certain temples and shrines, and given the same kind of status as other trade groups. In other words, they were

[22]These would be horses and cattle owned by shrines and temples and used in religious ceremonies.

[23]Zen'ami (1393-?) was a famous garden designer of the Muromachi period, known for designing such gardens as the Inryôken garden at Sôkokuji in Kyôto.

also in direct service to the buddhas and deities. In fact, in the middle of the Kamakura period, the "riverside dwellers" group at Kitano Shrine referred to itself as "*inujinin*."

One of our pieces of documentary evidence concerning "riverside dwellers" is a petition dated 1307 at Kitano shrine submitted by a "riverside dweller" named "Rokurodan." What is of note in this petition (which was probably submitted to Kitano shrine) is that this man, who would later be called a "riverside dweller" and a "mendicant," referred to himself as an "honorable purifier." The use of the honorific in this document is in deference toward Kitano shrine, but it also recalls the dignity the "non-humans" demanded in the lawsuit discussed above.

This reinforces my contention that "non-humans" (in the broad sense) viewed their functions as extremely important. It is also clear that "non-humans," "riverside dwellers" and "purifiers" were able to act as plaintiffs in litigation at judicial facilities within temples and shrines. Since they were willing to press their claims in formal procedures at socially recognized institutions, I do not believe that we can view them as constituting a society outside of society, or a status outside of the status system. Rather, we should see them as tradesmen with a particular skill and a professional esprit.

Released Prisoners

The "*hômen*"constituted yet another group different from "non-humans" and "riverside dwellers" but that might still be included in the broad category of "non-humans." "*Hômen*" refers to people who had been released from prison. Their penal origin is also recognizable from their alternative name, "*chakuda,*" which refers to the leg irons they had worn. In other words, they were people who had

committed some crime and who, after release from prison, were assigned to work under the direction of the Imperial Police.

We have solid evidence concerning this group's existence as such from the eleventhth century. It is also clear from the tales collected in Konjaku monogatari[24] that they participated in the capture, punishment, execution and cremation of criminals. However, these people had official titles assigned by the office of the Imperial Police, such as "Prison Guard of the Left" or "Prison Guard of the Right." By the late Kamakura period, they had organized themselves into something like a guild—known as the "Servants of the Four Posts" in reference to the four guard offices under the Imperial Police—with their own system of leadership. Since the Imperial Police was an agency directly answerable to the emperor, we can situate released prisoners as yet another group in direct service to a sacred being.

The actual appearance of this group is portrayed most clearly in the Picture Scroll of Holyman Hônen. In the scene in which the monk Anraku was beheaded on the banks of the Kamo river near Sixth Avenue in Kyoto, they are the heavily bearded men holding long halberds and standing behind the police officers. We cannot tell what kind of hair style they had, but I believe their hair was probably not bound up in a topknot. In this scene, they are not wearing folded *eboshi* hats, but completely cover their hair in standing *eboshi* hats, and are quite lavishly dressed. They were undoubtedly the men who actually beheaded the prisoners.

Released prisoners also carried out other punishments, such as the destruction of houses (as did the *inujinin*) as well as the capture of criminals. In other words, their work was probably comparable to that of detectives during the

[24] Konjaku monogatari shu is a collection of approximately one thousand short tales, many of which depict the spread of Buddhism in Japan. Its exact date of compilation is unknown, although Marian Ury, the translator of sixty-two of the tales into English, sets the early twelfth century as a likely date. Tales of Times Now Past, Marian Ury trans., University of California Press, 1979.

Edo period. Moreover, they participated in the procession of the Kamo festival, carrying their halberds and wearing their gaudy clothing. Their clothing got so outlandish at this festival that it eventually became an issue that had to be adressed in the laws for aristocratic households (which employed them). In any case, by fulfilling all of these functions, their tasks closely resembled those of the *inujinin*.

Interestingly enough, during the Northern and Southern Courts period, the "*hômen*" were given allottments of indigo taxes for their salary (this practice probably goes back to the Kamakura period). They received the materials for indigo dye from wholesalers. During the Edo period, indigo dyers were a stigmatized group.[25] This later discrimination appears to have been connected to the "*hômen*" in some way.

People with Children's Names

Although we do not know many individual non-humans' names, riverside dwellers and many comparable non-humans (that is, all non-humans excepting those who dressed like monks) generally had the suffix "maru" attached to their names. The same is true, without exception, for all the released prisoners whose names we have been able to identify. From the late Heian period, when released prisoners were still generically called "leg-ironed", we know, for example, of a "Kuroyu-maru." We also know of an important executive officer in the released prisoner organization of the Kamakura period named "Kunimatsu-maru." And we have records from the Northern and Southern Courts period of released prisoners named "Teimatsu-maru," "Yoshimitsu-maru" and "Hikosato-maru."

[25]Amino notes in the original: "It does not appear to have been that way in Eastern Japan, but it was generally true in Western Japan." Since this is an issue dealt with directly in the last section of this chapter I have removed it from here.

What makes this so striking is that "maru" was also a suffix used for children's names.[26] Most Japanese today know that "maru" was used in children's names, but released prisoners in ancient times had "maru" appended to their names even as adults. This suggests the need for a deeper level of social investigation. There are other examples of adults with children's name suffixes in the medieval period, but the resemblance to children did not stop with the names. Adults who bore children's names also took on the physical appearance of children, most notably in their hair styles.

The best known example of that is cow herders. According to a document from 1035, cow herders inevitably had children's names, such as "Kota-maru" and "Takiyu-maru," and were known collectively as "cow herding children" (*ushikai-warawa*). Whenever they appear in picture scrolls, they are shown with their hair grown long, bound in a pony-tail like children, rather than bound in a topknot. Their one distinction from children was their occasional facial hair.

In contrast, adult commoner males of the time bound their hair in the "*motodori*" (topknot) style and covered their heads with an "*orieboshi*" cap. To have one's topknot cut and have one's hair flow free was equivalent to being stripped of one's status as an adult commoner. In fact, cutting off a topknot was a form of punishment that was considered deeply humiliating. However, adult cow herders are portrayed without a top knot, their hair in a long, loose pony tail, in childish fashion. While it is not clear from the picture scrolls, released prisoners also did not seem to have their hair bound in a top knot.

A similar group of people living to the north of Kyôto, called "Yase-children" (*yase-dôji*), carried the palanquins and coffins of the aristocracy. The "Yase-children"

[26] People in the Japanese islands commonly had several names throughout the different stages of their lives. These could correspond to age, occupational title, family associations, artistic work and so on. Children's names would, therefore, be immediately identifiable.

were in the public eye again as recently as 1925, when there was a dispute between the army and the navy over which branch would bear the coffin of Emperor Taishô at his funeral. In the end, the descendents of the "Yase-children" were called from Kyôto to carry the imperial casket.[27] This group possesses an extremely long history, appearing in historical records from the latter half of the eleventh century. According to these documents, the "Yase-children" originally produced charcoal for Shôren temple. But, what concerns us here is that all the people who appear in this document have the "*maru*" suffix to their name. We do not know what they looked like, but since they were called "Yase-children" in the Northern and Southern Courts period, it seems likely that they, too, had the appearance of children. There is also a legend that they descended from demons, which adds further fuel to my contention that they should be included within the category of "non-humans" in medieval society.

The childish appearance of "Yase-children" can be explained along similar lines as released prisoners and riverside dwellers. That is, all three groups had contact with the sacred realm, or with pollution, particularly death pollution. But we are still left with the problem of why cow herders also had children's names. They were neither strictly confined to sacred service, nor were they apparently involved in purification. It seems to me that the answer lies in the way medieval society viewed these animals. In later eras, horses and cows were derogatorily called "beasts" and "four-legged" because their unenviable lot in life was to toil for humans. But there is evidence that the view of these creatures up to the medieval era was considerably different.

Depictions of cows in ancient picture scrolls all show animals with terrifying

[27]Despite the name, all of them were adults, and (as a sign that they had long since stopped playing this role) there were rumors of how they had been nervous about dropping the heavy coffin. They also participated in the funeral procession for Emperor Showa in 1988.

faces. They are painted with glaring eyes, often charging off, brandishing their horns and dragging their cow herders behind them. As far as the picture scrolls are concerned, cows do not appear to be gentle creatures. This suggests that the dominant social image of cows was that they were almost wild and not easily controlled by humans. While the same can be said for horses, horse drivers are not as well documented as cow herders. Horse drivers appear in Heian period documents, and are fairly well understood in the Muromachi period. There is a documentary gap, however, concerning horse drivers during the Kamakura period. Since we know that cart drivers were also cow herders, it seems certain that horse drivers were also affiliated with the stables of the imperial family or the Fujiwara regents. We also know that they were occasionally called "imperial stable purveyors" (*miumaya yoriudo*).

In so far as they appear in picture scrolls, the styles of those who attended horses is fairly distinctive. For example, there are pictures of boys galloping on horses with their pony tails flapping in the wind. As I touched on above, their appearance and hair styles were different from those of the common people, since they fulfilled similar functions to those of *inujinin*. The association of animals and children receives further support from the fact that cormorant fishers also let their hair flow free and monkey trainers also had the appearance of children.

The thread that ties all of these examples together was the medieval view that held that wild animals, or those nearto, possessed powers exceeding those of humans. Those people who dealt with such animals were seen as having special powers unavailable to common people. This view likely extended to the activities of those riverside dwellers and purifiers who dealt with the carcasses of horses and cows. Quite unlike the view in later eras of animals as "four-legged beasts," people of the ancient and early medieval eras saw them as having an existence that

exceeded that of humans. Even if we cannot quite call them "sacred beasts," to slaughter these animals was to risk bringing down the punishment of Buddha. Thus, riverside dwellers who were able to deal with animal carcasses safely were understood to be able to do so because they were sanctified, because they existed on the edge of the sacred realm.

From Sanctification to Loathing

Let us return for the moment to the problem of children's names. The suffix "maru" was attached to the names of many things besides humans. Hawks and dogs were given names with the suffix "maru," as were suits of armor and helmets. Musical instruments such as flutes, reeds and flageolet, were given names with the "maru" suffix, as were boats. In short, there were all kinds of things called "something-maru." Why this was so is still a matter of debate. There are some who say that "maru" was used to name beloved things. Others argue that people whose name carried that suffix were slaves or servants. But these seem insufficient explanations to me.

Rather, I believe we need to take note of how all these things called "maru" existed on the border of the sacred and profane worlds. Hawks and dogs, because they were used in hunting, are two animals that were certainly seen as existing on the border. At the time, the world of sound was thought to be connected to the deities; sound called forth and pleased them. Musical instruments were clearly a way of mediating between the sacred world of the deities and the profane world of humanity. The same may be said for boats. People risked their lives when they went out onto the ocean, so it is understandable that they would want to give ships some kind of magical power. The same was true for the swords and armor to which

soldiers entrusted their lives on the battlefield.

The fact that these various items were given children's names is intimately related to that society's view of children themselves. In short, children were believed to exist on the border between the sacred and the profane. In fact, near the end of the Heian period, records indicate that the accusation of a child was sufficient cause for arrest by the Imperial Police.[28] The common saying that "until the age of seven a child is with the gods" gives us a clue as to the reason that children were presumed to be inherently truthful. That is, whatever children said was taken as an expression of the will of the deities. I believe that the custom of giving certain adults, objects and animals children's names is related to this belief in the borderline existences of various classes of beings and objects. Thus, anything with a child's name, up until the early part of the medieval era, was considered at least partially sacred.

The discriminatory word *eta* (greatly polluted) first appeared in a picture scroll from the later half of the 13th century, the Tengu soshi (A Picture Book of Goblins).[29] The "*eta*" in the scroll is also called a child and is drawn with free-flowing hair. The "*eta* child" is also shown killing a bird on a riverbank. The scroll's text states that the bird is a *tengu* (goblin) that had taken the form of a kite and that the "*eta* child" had captured and killed the bird with some bait. The text further describes esoteric Buddhist incantations and "*eta* disembowlers" as things that are terrifying to goblins. As I stated earlier, riverside dwellers were known for removing the entrails of cows, so this may have been a specific reference to them.

[28]An example of this may be found in the Tale of the Heike where it is reported that Taira no Kiyomori retained a troop of young boys employed as spies in Kyôto. What made them effective, according to Amino, was not simply their ability to slip into places unnoticed, but also the presumed truthfulness of their statements.

[29]"Eta" is the word used to describe "outcastes" that is probably most familiar to non-Japanese.

Thus, riverside dwellers, or *eta*, were presented as having the power to exorcise goblins. This power of "non-humans" in general deserves special attention.

I must reiterate that this is the earliest appearance in writing of a discriminatory word (*eta*: greatly polluted) in reference to these people. The scroll was produced some time in the 1290s, marking the early stages of a shift toward the use of a clearly discriminatory appellation for "non-humans" and riverside dwellers. A dictionary of ancient terms compiled in the latter half of the Kamakura period explains that "purifiers are called *eta*" because "*eta*" is a slurred pronunciation of "*etori*," the latter meaning procurers of food for animals. The entry ends by noting, "they are evil people whose bodies are polluted from killing and selling animals." This clearly reveals a trend within society toward stigmatizing "non-humans" and riverside dwellers.

There are many debates as to why this shift occured, but I believe it has to do with a change in views of pollution around this time. The fear of pollution that had held sway in earlier eras began to dissipate. In its place grew an aversion to pollution as simple filth. I believe this shift was due to changes within Japanese society in the relation between humans and nature. As people began to see nature more clearly, the fear of pollution diminished. Accordingly, those who dealt with pollution also lost their claims to special skills. The fear with which they had been regarded was superseded by loathing.

However, the transformation was quite complex. The end of the thirteenth century was an era of great intellectual tensions over the questions of how to view "evil" and pollution (and the "non-humans," women and others most closely related to pollution). While the movement to despise, debase and reject "the greatly polluted" people as "evil" represented one end of the spectrum, there was also a counter-movement to claim that those associated with pollution, such as "non-

humans" and women, could be saved by the power of the buddhas. The Buddhist priest Shinran claimed in his famous dictum, "if a good man may be saved, how much more so an evil one." That is, Shinran held that it was the very people associated with pollution who were the most representative of the human condition.

An intensely strained relationship between these two trends developed in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. We can get a good sense of that tension by examining the contrast between The Picture Book of Goblins, discussed briefly above, and the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen (*Ippen hijirie*), which was produced at about the same time.

Themes of the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen

The Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen is famous for its depiction of an unusually large number of "non-humans" and beggars, in contrast to other scrolls of its time. There is a later Pictorial Biography of the Holyman Ippen (*Ippen shônin ekotobaden*), from the Northern and Southern Courts period that also shows many beggars and "non-humans," but they are drawn in a stereotypical and un-animated fashion. In contrast, the beggars and "non-humans" in the Picture Scroll are each drawn individually, more true to life than any other scrolls extant, even including beggars who moved around in wheeled huts, and some who walked in wooden clogs on their hands.[30]

Until now, discussions of this scroll have focused on the beggars, "non-humans" and the *inujinin*, identifiable by the cloth covering their faces. But if you look at the scroll more closely, you will also find depicted a considerable number of people who appear to have been closely related to "non-humans" and beggars,

[30] In the original Japanese, Amino points out that the latter type of beggar was reportedly seen in Osaka until relatively recently.

including many people who look like children, without the familiar *eboshi* hat, hair flowing free or tied in a pony tail. When we broaden our examination of the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen to include these child-like figures, hitherto unnoticed details begin to reveal themselves.

Turning first to a portion near the end of the scroll, two scenes immediately before the final image of Ippen's memorial chapel are shown in Figures 1-B and 2. Figure 1-A shows the same scene, not from the most well-known copy of the scroll (from Kankikô-ji), but from an unusual sketch copy (in the collection of Miedô). The two are very similar, but differ in some important respects. Both show that after Ippen's death, some *inujinin* (again, the ones with their faces covered in a cloth wrap) attempted to follow Ippen into the after life by drowning themselves. In Figure 1-A, there are two monks from Ippen's sect, known as the Jishu sect, flanked on the left and on the right by two *inujinin* who are watching two other *inujinin* move off into the water. I think it is very significant that the final scene of this scroll shows "non-humans" (here *inujinin*) attempting to follow Ippen into the other world. This final scene offers the key as to why the scroll has shown so many beggars and "non-humans."

Let us shift to the scene of Ippen's dying hour, which takes place just before the scene we discussed above (see Figure 3). Ippen is lying on his deathbed to the left of the scene. We can clearly see three *inujinin* among the many people come to pay their respects. In the Miedô sketch version of this scene there are five *inujinin*, and one is crying. Note as well that next to the three *inujinin* is a man with a pony tail and beard. We have no idea what kind of man he is, but I believe he has some relation with the *inujinin*. The Kamakura-era dictionary I referred to earlier claims that the "greatly polluted" cannot go about among common people. But in this scene, those *inujinin* who were later to be labelled "greatly polluted" have come

amongst many commoners to see Ippen's passing.

Figure 4 also shows many people who have come to see Ippen's final hour. I believe that all of them are of a type of group like the "non-humans." The man with some kind of scroll attached to his umbrella is said to be an "*etoki*" (a buddhist layman who gave popular sermons using pictures). The man in the lead has a top knot, so he is probably not a "non-human. " But the others, such as the one carrying the basket, or the one wearing a head band, are probably from some kind of "non-human" group.

Figure 5 shows the scene immediately before the one shown in Figure 4: the scene of Ippen's final sermon. Ippen is lecturing off to the left of the scene, while the people shown in the figure are drawn in the far right corner. The three *inujinin* shown on the bottom may be the same three that appear in the next scene. Considering the continuity of the tale form, this seems most likely.

The upper half of Figure 5 shows a number of characters, usually taken to be beggars and "non-humans," encamped immediately outside the grounds of a shrine. One among these has an extremely large nose, is holding a rounded fan, and has something strange hanging off his waist. There are also some people with pony tails or head bands, and on the far left are what appear to be beggars in small huts. While there are many things of note in this picture, we should observe in particular that the three *inujinin* are facing toward Ippen, listening to his sermon with looks of true concern. Yet these three are not standing among the rest of the people listening to the sermon.

Taking these five scenes into consideration, following them in the order of the scroll (from Figure 5 to 1), we can see that the painter of the scroll has depicted an emotional drama. The *inujinin* who have followed Ippen as he nears his death still show signs of restraint by staying outside the grounds during his final sermon. But

upon his death, they give up that restraint and enter the grounds to mix among the people and see Ippen off into paradise. In the end, one among them is so distraught at the loss that he attempts to follow Ippen into the other world by drowning himself. In other words, the painter of the scroll shows in a number of frames the emotional story of how the *inujinin* bound themselves to Ippen and followed him everywhere, including into the afterlife.

Viewing the Past in Picture Scrolls

Of course, this is not the only theme of the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen, but it can be considered one of the most important. I believe that one of the goals of the painter of this scroll was to convey Ippen's efforts to save the "non-humans." It is for that very reason that the painter so persistently painted "non-humans" in a variety of guises. When we go back through the scroll from this perspective, anticipating the final climax, we can catch a number of things that have rarely been noticed before.

Figure 6 is a detail from a scene in Ippen's final journey in which Ippen performs a memorial service at the Shrine to Sugawara no Michizane in the town of Shizuki on Awaji Island. It clearly shows Ippen preaching his doctrine to people who are undoubtedly "non-humans," suggesting that Ippen's sect intentionally prosletized among them.

Figure 7 is a detail from the same scene, showing the outside of the gate to the shrine. Immediately inside are two *inujinin* and a number of beggars in lean-tos. While it is difficult to determine the exact character of the person we see running toward the gate, it is clear that these "non-humans" kept themselves on the periphery of Ippen's group, in the position of observers.

When we take into consideration the cumulative effect of the direct prosletyzing to "non-humans" in Figure 6, the position of the "non-humans" in Figure 7 relative to Ippen (similar to that in the scene of Ippen's final sermon, that is outside the gate), and the scene at Ippen's final sermon, it would be impossible to argue that the "non-humans" depicted in the scroll had no connection to Ippen and his followers. It makes far more sense to view the "non-humans" and beggars as followers of Ippen.

Let us go back to an even earlier point in the scroll: to the scene at the Ichinomiya shrine of Mimasaki, shown in Figure 8. This scene depicts a visit to the shrine by Ippen and his followers. The text of the scroll notes that Ippen directed the "polluted ones" in attendance to build a structure outside the shrine grounds. It also records that "at this time, the non-humans remained outside the gate, while the holyman and his followers entered the shrine." The structure he ordered built was a shed for the performance of the Nembutsu dance, although it does not appear in the picture. The reference to "non-humans outside the gate" is to the non-humans and beggars who are setting up temporary shelter in the above right hand corner.

However, we should also take care to observe the two people sitting beside the gate, one with free-flowing hair and an umbrella, the other with a head band. Some feel the one on the right is a woman, because of the high-stilted wooden sandals, but I believe it is a man. These two appeared in an earlier scene, and they are probably either "non-humans" or else closely related to them. Since these people are outside the gate, the one with unbound hair and high geta is probably one of that general category of people who appeared in childish guise.

At first glance, the figure of Ippen and his followers inside the shrine appears unrelated to the "non-humans" outside the gate. But when we take into account the text, particularly its emphasis on "at this time," it seems likely that the "non-

humans" are waiting outside the gate at Ippen's request. The phrase "at this time" suggests that the procedures taken here were exceptional. Unlike their usual practice, in which "non-humans" traveled everywhere with Ippen and his followers, at Mimasaki, Ippen appears to have responded to some local conerns, departed from their usual custom and asked the "non-humans" wait outside.

Backing up further into the scroll, we come upon a scene in which Ippen and his followers give alms at the Jimokuji temple in Owari, shown in Figures 9, 10 and 11. Jimokuji is a famous temple that even now preserves an image of this event. According to the text of the scroll, Ippen began a service here that lasted seven days. In the course of this service, Ippen's monks "so exhausted themselves that each paled with the effort." In other words, they ran out of food, sapped their strength and found themselves unable to continue. At the time, there happened to be two wealthy people, called "worthy men" in the text, staying in a nearby inn. According to legend, the deity Bishamon appeared to them in a dream and commanded them to give offerings to Ippen. When the two went immediately to give alms, the text records that Bishamon's statue in the temple miraculously moved.

Again, Figures 9, 10 and 11 show portions of this scene, with Figure 10 being an enlarged close-up of a portion of Figure 11. The entire scene shows a hedge on the right side which surrounds the temple. Beside the hedge stands an *inujinin* holding a medium-length staff, standing at the head of a number of "non-humans." as if he is guarding the fence (Figure 9). To the left of this scene (which does not appear in the figure) are some people carrying a Chinese casket filled with food for alms, walking toward the entrance gate to the temple on the left. There are also depictions of women carrying boxes and buckets of food on their heads. The people in Figure 10 can be seen walking in the garden between the gate, the bell tower and the main hall. There are three people walking proudly, one with hair in a simple

pony tail, dressed as a child, with high geta and carrying a round fan. The two others are, in fact, women, one of whom is carrying a baby, leading a fourth man with unbound hair, who is carrying an umbrella and wearing some kind of backpack. These people are truly out of the ordinary. One of the women is carrying something indiscernable on her waist. The man in the back carrying the umbrella is probably a "non-human" in the broad sense. In any case, this strange-looking group is heading toward Ippen. In addition, in Figure 11 there is one more man with a pony tail in front of the man in high geta, kneeling with one hand on the veranda who seems to be informing Ippen and his followers of something.

As with the scenes we examined above, this scene reinforces my contention that these two childish figures and the "non-humans" by the hedge are all part of a group related to Ippen. So far, little thought has been given to what the painter might have been trying to convey through these two child-like figures. But I believe that these two are none other than the "worthy men" described in the text. As I see it, the man in high geta in front of the people carrying the food offerings is walking in a grandiose manner, thus making it reasonable to view him as one of the "worthy men". The man near the veranda is kneeling in a dignified manner, probably informing Ippen that the alms are being offered.

Some may doubt that these strange men in child-like garb could be the rich "worthy men" of the text, but consider the example of the so-called "children of the capital" (*kyôwarawa*), found in Kyôto up until the beginning of the medieval era. Some members of this group, which included cow herds and who had connections with "non-humans," were wealthy. For example, cow herds were also known to drive carts for hire, so it is not surprising that they could accumulate wealth as transportation tradesmen. There is evidence that these people may also have been involved in gambling, because the "children of the capital" and gamblers often

appear together in the literature of the time.

Of course, we cannot tell for sure what the "worthy men" in the picture were actually doing, or what function the people with them fulfilled. But to insist that it is impossible that for the pony-tailed men to be the "worthy men" is to fall into the trap of presuming that "non-humans" and child-like figures were strictly "lowly people."

Until now, most scholars have seen the beggars and the "non-humans" in the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen as unrelated to Ippen and his followers. The tendency has been to study the "non-human" figures simply as "non-humans" while Ippen and his followers have been studied separately. But as I read the scroll, the two child-like men are connected to Ippen through the mediation of the "non-humans." Through such scenes, the scroll depicts the gradual conversion of the child-like men and "non-humans" to Ippen's sect. The scroll is much easier to understand as a whole when we view both Ippen and the "non-humans" together.

To further reinforce my point, consider the written text of the scroll after this scene at Jimoku temple:

> As they passed through Mino and Owari, they found occasional signs erected by bandits saying, 'Those who wish to attend upon the Holyman may proceed to the practice hall without fear. Those without sympathy will meet with retribution.' and so on. For three years, they travelled over land and sea, and during that time they never feared high waves in day or night, nor met with trouble in the forests.

The "bandits"[31] in this passage were independent, local armed groups that the government treated as "mountain bands" or "pirates." It is important for our understanding of Ippen's movement that we recognize that the "bandits" not only protected Ippen but also aggressively supported his evangelical work. At the time,

[31] "Akutô, literally "evil parties". For more on these groups see "Bandits, Priates, Merchants and Financiers."

these “bandits” were closely related to the child-like people, “non-humans” and gamblers we have been investigating. Therefore, the text and images at this point in the scroll are naturally linked, the text underscoring the importance of the “non-humans” who might otherwise appear tangential.

Let us take a look at one more example. Figure 12 illustrates a scene at the market in Tomono in Shino Province. It is not shown in the picture itself, but the accompanying text records that the good omen of a purple cloud appeared while Ippen and his group were at the Tomono market. We can see a group of monks, with Ippen at their head, sitting to the left and looking at the cloud. Immediately behind the monks is a group of beggars with an *inujinin* at its head.

Until now, these beggars and “non-humans” have been understood as receiving whatever was left over from the alms given to Ippen. However, in the scene at Jimokuji, the *inujinin* is sitting in an extremely conscientious posture, facing Ippen, while the rearmost monk appears to be calling toward the “non-humans.” The painter is portraying a direct bond between Ippen and the “non-humans.” I believe it was precisely because the painter had this perspective and these themes in mind that the “non-humans” appear in such great numbers and are so vividly portrayed from the very beginning. This suggests that, apart from its portrayal of Ippen’s career, one of the major themes of The Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen is undoubtedly the salvation of the “bandits” and “non-humans.”

The Evolution of Discrimination

However, as I stated above, the Picture Book of Goblins offers a sharp contrast to its near contemporary, the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen. While the Ippen scroll treats its subject with love and respect, the text of the Picture Book

of Goblins treats Ippen's activities as the deeds of a *tengu* (a goblin). The scroll heaps abuse on Ippen in both text and image, such as when it depicts a nun holding a bucket up to Ippen to receive his urine, or when it shows a goblin making flowers wilt. In an alms-giving scene comparable to the one we examined in the Ippen scroll, the Picture Book of Goblins shows a group of lazy monks gorging on the food they have received as alms, while to the side it shows a number of slovenly beggars and "non-humans" receiving the excess.

As I mentioned above, the text of the scroll also uses the clearly discriminatory term "filthy child" (*eta warawa*) for the first time. This fact is truly significant. In contrast to the Picture Scroll of the Holyman Ippen, which depicts Ippen saving and being supported by beggars, "non-humans" and bandits, the Picture Book of Goblins ridicules and dehumanizes these people as being "full of filth." This contrast clearly reveals the intense intellectual discord at the end of the thirteenth century concerning "pollution" and "evil." This discord resulted in a tremendous decline of the social position of "bandits," "child-like people" and "non-humans."

However, this decline was not confined to only these groups: the status of merchants, artisans and even courtesans suffered similarly. It was around this time that courtesans began to be stigmatized in the same way as "non-humans" were. For example, the Pictorial Biography of the Holyman Hônen equates the problem of courtesans to that of the "non-humans" in its portrayal of courtesans appealing to Hônen for salvation, and of Hônen answering their pleas.

Indeed, there was also an extremely sharp intellectual division at the time on the issue of sex. The new Buddhist sects that arose in the Kamakura period all dealt head-on with the problems of evil and pollution, particularly as they concerned "bandits," "non-humans" and women. As a result, these groups were subjected to a

thorough suppression by the military governments up through the seventeenth century.[32] As the new Kamakura sects were disenfranchised, discrimination against those people we now call "*burakumin*," prostitutes and "gangsters" (in other words, "non-humans," courtesans and gamblers) took root in Japanese society.

As I have suggested, I believe these changes are rooted in a major transformation in the relation of society to nature. The various changes that took place in this relation made possible a number of different responses, leading to a great deal of political turmoil. We have only taken up a small part of that problem. But the discrimination against "*eta*," or "non-humans," courtesans, and gamblers that hardened during the Edo period was not a problem confined to these people alone. Instead, it is a major problem that involves all of Japanese society, thought and culture.

The Differences Between Eastern and Western Japan

By the beginning of the fifteenth century the epithet *eta* was used more widely to refer to "non-humans" and riverside dwellers. Even the term "purifiers" came to denote a debased person. This trend continued until the discriminatory status of these people became firmly fixed with the religious suppression of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Still, there is little agreement as to why this occured. While there is no easy answer, surely one important source of this trend was the shift that took place during the fourteenth century concerning the concept of "pollution."

Before the fourteenth century, pollution produced a certain amount of fear, as

[32] The reason for this government suppression will be made clearer in "Bandits, Pirates, Merchants and Financiers" where Amino deals directly with the competing social ideologies of agrarianism and mercantilism.

I discussed above. But around the fourteenth century, the way humans related to nature began to change. In short, society became more "civilized." In the process, pollution came to be less feared and seen more as "contamination," something to be avoided. This is somewhat closer to our present day concept of pollution.

The same thing happened to the social view of animals. The idea that animals could not be easily controlled by humans was gradually replaced with a more denigrating perspective, revealed in such derogatory terms as "beasts" (*chikushô*) and "four-leggers" (*yotsuashi*).[33] This transformation was essentially complete by the Edo period and its effects extended to people who worked with animals. These conditions formed the background to the Tokugawa shogunate's legal prescription of outcaste status to the groups we have been discussing.

The final issue I would like to address in this chapter is about how the problem of discrimination manifested itself differently from region to region. The transformations I have been discussing so far were centered in Western Japan, including the western half of the island of Honshû, and all of Shikoku and Kyûshû.[34] Eastern Japan, excluding Hokkaidô, has far fewer surviving documents overall than does Western Japan, so the evidence is less complete. But extant materials from the east rarely contain the word "non-human." The eastern city of Kamakura was an exception to this rule, for we know there were beggars and "non-humans" in the city. We also know of a group of *inujinin* who were formally attached to the premier shrine of Kamakura: Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine. The only other example of "non-humans" we find in the east is the "non-human place" established in the *shôen* estate of Okuyama in Echigo. Even today, there are far fewer communities of

[33]A Japanese reader will recognize the stigma in these words for they are commonly used curse words in Japan today.

[34]When Amino refers to "Western Honshu," he is referring to everything from Lake Biwa west. Eastern Japan refers to everything east of Nagoya, all the way north to Hokkaido.

burakumin in Eastern Japan than in Western Japan.

In fact, according to data compiled in the early twentieth century, the number of discriminated communities, and their total population, in the East is far smaller than those in Western Japan. I was born in Yamanashi Prefecture, and my first experience with this kind of discrimination came from reading the novel The Broken Commandment by Shimazaki Tôson.[35] At first I did not understand what the novel was about. It was only when my grandmother explained it to me that I began to understand. A friend from Western Japan, where almost everyone has seen discrimination against *burakumin* from early childhood, had a very different experience growing up.

What caused this regional difference? The answer may relate to the different sensibilities towards animals and pollution in the two regions. For example, in the case of pollution, afterbirth was treated very differently in Western and Eastern Japan. While, we should not draw overly hard distinctions between Western and Eastern Japan, in the East the placenta was generally buried in a place were as many people as possible could walk over it, in a doorway or at a crossroads for instance. In Western Japan, however, the placenta was taken as far away as possible, either buried deep under the house, or better yet, taken deep into the mountains. In another example related to the issue of pollution, released prisoners or "non-humans" carried out capital punishments in Kyôto, but in Kamakura, samurai from the Kamakura shogunate would cut off the criminal's head themselves. This may be one of the reasons that "non-humans" were unable to form clear trade guilds in Eastern Japan.

The treatment of horses also differed between the two regions. Pasture land was highly developed in the East, so people came into contact with horses that were

[35]Shimazaki Tôson, The Broken Commandment, translated by Kenneth Strong, University of Tokyo Press, 1974.

nearly wild. This closely resembles the case of middle Kyûshû, which should remind us to be cautious about making too clear cut a distinction between East and West. In any case, the custom of eating horse meat still exists today in places that had pastureland. However, in places where horses were kept inside the house,[36] eating horse meat was probably unthinkable. In general, the treatment of animals varies according to region. And it may be that this difference in sensibility is also related somehow to the fact that "non-human" and riverside dweller groups did not clearly form organizations in the East.

Communities of stigmatized groups are also called by different names in different regions. In Hokuriku, these communities are called "*tonai*," while in Dewa they are called "*raku*." In some areas they are called "*chasen*" or "*hachiya*." Why these names should be so different is not yet entirely clear. It seems that there are no discriminated communities in Okinawa, as there are in the rest of Japan. However, we cannot say that Okinawa was without discrimination since there was a group of stigmatized performers called "*annya*," and artisanal people were also subject to some forms of discrimination. But for the moment, pending further research, it appears that there were no *segregated communities* of stigmatized people in Okinawa. There were no such hamlets in Ainu society either.

In conclusion, we must recognize that this problem has specifically regional dimensions and differences within the Japanese islands. Without recognition of this kind of regionality, one is likely to indiscriminately generalize from one's own experience, or even unintentionally hurt other people badly. For those of us who would like to overcome discrimination, this is something that we must always keep in mind.

[36]This would be in an earthen-floored section of the house, next to the kitchen, known as the *doma*. In a standard farmhouse, this would be a large storage area where not only the horse and other livestock could be kept, but also farm tools and other supplies.