

Meiji Gakuin Course No. 3505/3506

**Minority and Marginal
Groups of Contemporary
Japan**

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Lecture No. 15

**Insecure labor
and homelessness**

**不安定労働
ホームレス**

Day labor 日雇労働

**The opposite of lifetime
employment**

***One day's work,
one day's pay***

"As it was formerly commanded, people working as day-laborers must receive a license (fuda) from the day-laborers' chiefs (hiyatoi-gashira). Anyone employing persons without such a license will be fined. This is a criminal offense."

Tokugawa shogunate edict, 1653

"A worker is someone who enters society with his skills and who travels far and wide with them. Who could possibly credit with a spirit of advancement those workers who cling to a single place and put up with all sorts of abuse? ... Past and present, whatever occupation, a worker is someone who travels broadly, enters factories here and there, accumulates greater skills and, overcoming adversity, finally becomes a worker deserving of the name."

Anonymous machinist, 1898

The Oyakata 親方 lit. “father figure”

One technique used to maintain some kind of stability in the workforce was to employ indirectly, via an *oyakata*. He would be paid a lump sum, out of which he would pay his apprentices (who lived in his house or in a dormitory owned by him) an amount agreed between them without reference to the end employer.

Matsubara says that the oyakata of late-19th century Tokyo were influential men about the neighborhood, wielding authority and winning respect as becomes one who has some 40 or 50 men under his command.

(Matsubara 1988:156).

Iwagoro Matsubara, sharp social critic of late 19th century Tokyo.

- Leupp, Gary P., 1992. *Servants, Shophands and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan*. Princeton: University Press.**
- Gordon, Andrew, 1985. *The Evolution of Labor Relations in Japan: Heavy Industry, 1853-1955*. Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Press.**
- Matsubara Iwagoro, 1988 [1888]. *Sai-ankoku no Tokyo* [Darkest Tokyo]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten [Minyusha].**

In this economy of coercion, day laborers had an important role to play for the capitalists and political authorities, as what Marx called "a disposable industrial reserve army, ... for the changing needs of the self-expansion of capital, a mass of human material always ready for exploitation

The Communist Manifesto

- **Marx called day laborers part of "the 'dangerous class,' the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society... [whose] conditions of life... prepare it... for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue" (Marx and Engels 1977[1888]:92).**



Unemployment insurance for day labourers

Level	Wage	Stamp	Benefit
1	¥11,300 +	¥176	¥7,500
2	¥8,200 +	¥146	¥6,200
3	¥8,200 -	¥96	¥4,100

You have to average 13 days employment per month for 2 months. Your employer puts a stamp in your handbook for every day you work, and the next month you can get benefit for up to 13 days in the month.

The decline of day labouring (narrow definition)

Year	Registered labourers	day [with 1+ days work a month]	A/B
1970	256,000	229,000	89%
1980	129,000	114,000	70%
1990	68,000	23,000	34%
1995	45,000	9,000	20%
1998	42,000	6,000	14%

**Source: Ministry of Labor, Employment
Security Bureau.**

Broad definition day laborers

Year	1955	1960	1970	1980	1990	1998
Men	0.90	0.77	0.66	0.67	0.58	0.55
Women	0.49	0.45	0.52	0.63	0.68	0.70
Total	1.39	1.21	1.18	1.30	1.26	1.26

**Source: Management and Coordination
Agency 1960-99**

Irregular employment generally

Year	Total	Self-	Family	Casual	Day	Irreg %
	employed	workers	employees	laborers	of total	
1955	40.90	9.50	12.84	-	1.52	58.34+x
1960	44.36	9.48	10.61	1.30	1.21	45.35
1965	47.30	8.48	9.15	1.52	1.27	43.17
1970	50.94	8.10	8.05	1.65	1.18	37.26
1975	52.23	7.70	6.28	1.77	1.23	32.51
1980	55.36	7.65	6.03	2.56	1.30	31.68
1985	58.07	7.25	5.59	3.21	1.26	29.81
1990	62.49	6.85	5.17	3.93	1.26	27.54
1995	66.66	5.91	3.97	4.33	1.20	23.12
1998	67.93	5.72	3.67	4.93	1.26	22.93

ワンコールワーカー
日雇派遣

ONE CALL WORKER
HIYATOI HAKEN



Key terms

- ***Jiritsu[sei]*** 自立性 Self-reliance, autonomy, independence
- Related to ***jishu[sei]***自主性, ***shutaisei*** 主体性 [agency, 'subjectivity'], ***jiko sekinin*** 自己責任 [self-responsibility].

A constellation of terms playing around individual's control over his own actions.

The Self-reliance Debate

Words like “jiritsusei” are often heard in debate on various social issues – young people, old people, women, people with disabilities. Can be spun liberal (respect the self-reliance of the individual) or conservative (withdraw welfare and let people take care of themselves)

The heart of the DPJ 民主党

This issue is a key battleground within the governing DPJ: A liberal political party torn between progressive welfare liberalism (Naoto Kan) and conservative small government liberalism (Ichiro Ozawa). Prime minister Noda seems closer to the latter.

**(Note that this powerful trope
appears to run counter to some
strains of Nihonjinron writing
that stress mutual dependence
within the group... *amae* etc.)**

The phenomenon of homeless men in Japan results from a gendered conception of self-reliance that finds expression in two ways:

- 1. In a deeply sexist welfare ideology that penalizes men for failing to maintain economic self-reliance, while keeping women and children off the streets as they are not expected to be self-reliant in the first place**
- 2. In a concern with self-reliance on the part of homeless men themselves that is grounded in conceptions of manliness (*otokorashisa*).**

2002 Self-reliance Support Law

‘Special Law on Temporary Measures to Support the Self-reliance of Homeless People’ (*Homuresu no Jiritsu no Shien Nado ni Kan-suru Tokubetsu Sochi-ho*). Drafted by DPJ members when still in opposition.

Key word:

自立支援

Jiritsu Shien

Self-reliance Support

(cf 2006 Shougaisha Jiritsu

Shien-ho 障害者自立支援法)

A new type of citizen?

Before: Independent people (who have their own source of income to live on) + Dependent people (who get livelihood protection)

After: Third category: People who just need a little *support* to become *independent*

Perhaps they do not need livelihood protection... lowering the bar on social welfare?

Key Provisions

- **Govt recognizes that many people homeless through no fault of their own and that this is ‘causing friction with local society’ (Art. 1)**
- **Objective: providing housing & stable employment to homeless and at-risk people to enable them to maintain personal self-reliance (Arts. 3, 5)**
- **Pledges matching funding (Art. 10).**

- **People in charge of parks and other public spaces are empowered to remove homeless people's dwellings where 'appropriate use of the facilities is being obstructed' (Art. 11).**
- **The government pledges to carry out a unified national census of the homeless population (Art. 14).**
- **All the provisions are temporary and will lapse after ten years:**

... in August 2012.

Pro-SRL Case

- 1. Official recognition of problem**
- 2. Doesn't blame homeless people**
- 3. First ever law designed specifically to help homeless people**
- 4. Guarantees money for projects (50-50 national/city funding for projects)**

Anti-SRL Case

- 1. Lowers bar on welfare: puts people in shelters instead of giving them livelihood protection.**
- 2. Specifying 'homeless through no fault of their own' creates possibility of 'good' and 'bad' homeless.**
- 3. Budget very small, esp for employment measures... tokenistic?**
- 4. Risk of mass expulsions under Art. 11.**

2 sets of institutions

**1. Self-reliance Support Centres
(SSCs) *Jiritsu Shien Sentaa***

**自立支援センター (25 open in 10
cities, 2,216 beds @ June 2010)**

**2. Emergency Temporary Shelters
(ETSs) *Kasetzu Ichiji Hinanjo* (15
open @ August 2010)**

仮設一時避難所

Government figures for street homeless in Japan

1998	1999	2001	2003	2007	2010
<i>16,247</i>	<i>20,451</i>	<i>24,090</i>	<i>25,296</i>	<i>18,564</i>	<i>13,124</i>

Job nearly done?

**Reasons to temper joy
at falling numbers**

CITY	Jan 2003	Jan 2007	Jan 2010
Tokyo	5,927	4,213	2,786
Osaka	6,603	4,069	2,860
Kawasaki	829	848	666
Fukuoka	607	784	393
Nagoya	1,788	741	502
Yokohama	470	661	710
Kyoto	624	387	277

1. City figures: grounds for doubt?

“We are almost proud that Kawasaki’s figure went up in 2007. It shows that we are one of the few groups who take the count seriously. We really know where the homeless guys are.” (Member of Kawasaki Wednesday Patrol).

2. The meaning of words

Concept	US	UK	Japan
Sleeping in the street	Street homeless	Rough sleepers	Nojukusha, homuresu, aokan 野宿者 アオカン
Have roof but no fixed abode	Sheltered homeless	Homeless	No common term
Could become homeless	At risk	Vulnerable	Yobigun 予備軍

International comparison is hard

Concept	US pop	UK pop	Japan pop
Sleeping in the street	“350,000”	“503”	“13,124”
No fixed abode	“400,000”	“380,000”	?
Could become homeless	“c. 5 million?”	“c. 1 million?”	?

Since Japan now has several thousand beds in emergency and transitional facilities, a US-style analysis would see the recent decline in numbers as evidence of a switch from street homeless to sheltered homeless.

3. Role of “Poverty Business” NPOs (1998 NPO Law)

- **SSS (Social Security Service): buys up empty company dormitories around Tokyo**
- **Houses homeless people in them**
- **Helps residents apply for livelihood protection, usually successfully**
- **Pockets c. 90% of welfare payments for food + lodging...**
- **Run by ex-yakuza, busted for tax evasion**

***Now houses 3-4,000 people in
the greater Tokyo area...***

***... more than all the public
shelters in Japan put
together.***

Similar large-scale NPOs operate in the Yokohama area (*Sagami*) and the Osaka area (*Daito Network*). The latter were busted for tax evasion in May 2007, accused of concealing income of 130 million yen over 3 years.

**Love them or hate them, these
NPOs get many people off the
street and into livelihood
protection.**

(Compared to the welfare population, the homeless population is like a flea on an elephant's bum.)

4. Livelihood protection (*seikatsu hogo* 生活保護) recipients

1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011
1.43	1.01	0.88	1.07	1.48	1.83	2.06

Unit: Millions of people,

2011 figure for October, others January

Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Roughly speaking...

***While officially reported
homeless people have
declined by a few thousand,
people living off welfare
have risen by several
hundred thousand...***

Numbers of homeless, and the rise and fall in their numbers, are small enough to possibly be accounted for simply in terms of livelihood protection policy... embarrassment over homelessness & pressure from activists & NPOs starting to shame the government into meeting its constitutional obligations.

Micro-level case studies

Tokyo's Ōta-ryō shelter gives each man a packet of twenty *Mild Seven* cigarettes a day. Staff explained to me that most of the men using the shelter were smokers, and if they were not given cigarettes, they would have to go around the streets looking for dog-ends, which would damage their self-respect [*jisonshin*].

The Hamakaze shelter in Yokohama gives each man ten *Wakaba* cigarettes a day. This is a much rougher brand than *Mild Seven*, costing 190 yen a pack and smoked by those who cannot afford better. The need to supply the men's smoking habit is still recognized, but they are not to be spoiled by being given a whole pack of mainstream cigarettes such as people in regular employment smoke.

The Nishinari Self-Reliance Support Center in Osaka gives its residents no cigarettes; instead residents must work for 15 minutes every day, cleaning the premises. Their 'wage' for this 'labor' is 300 yen – which they can feed into the cigarette vending machine in the lobby to buy a pack of 20 of their preferred brand. This time the threat to self-respect is seen as coming from getting something for nothing, not from having to smoke dog-ends.

Case Study 1

OGAWA, CAN COLLECTOR

缶集め

Ogawa san

60 years old, compulsive gambler.

Waiting for debts to loan sharks to expire before applying for welfare.

Wife in Kobe, had a cushy job for many years.

- **Of the many ways homeless people make a bit of cash, by far and away the most popular one these days is can-collecting. A vast increase in demand for aluminum, mainly from China's booming economy, nearly doubled the street price of aluminum from 2003 to 2007... from about 80-100 yen per kilo to 150-180 yen. After the Lehman Brothers shock, it collapsed to 50 – 60 yen, and is now around 70 to 80 yen.**

While I was staying at the Aiseiryō shelter in Kawasaki, I was lucky enough to spend several mornings collecting cans with Ogawa san. His principles:

- 1. Only aluminum – steel and tin prices are too low to be worth collecting. Nor are there any deposits to be had for recycling glass and plastic. Ogawa san only collects aluminum cans and the occasional aluminum saucepan. You can tell by the slightly duller sheen. Beer cans are good, coffee cans no good.**

Cruising for cans...



- 2. He never bothers to look in street rubbish bins, even the ones next to vending machines. Not enough return to justify the hassle of going through them and separating steel from aluminum.**
- 3. Instead, he focuses on household waste disposal points – looking for the big fish. A whole big bag of beer cans from some drunken party, or a month's worth of Coca-Cola cans. (So our collecting doesn't help the environment much: it's nearly stuff that would have been recycled anyway by the local government.)**

Heading for the recycle plant



Nakajima Kinzoku



185 yen a kilo for aluminum!



The weigh-in

13 kilograms!

... 2,400 yen for 3 hours work. Just above minimum wage [which is about 720 yen an hour in Kawasaki].

A good day's work



On the face of it, can-collecting should be welcomed: rather than begging, or passively waiting for welfare or charity, these men are getting on their bikes in search of gainful activity.

Yet can-collecting is viewed by the authorities as problematic. First, it is widely assumed that most of the money raised goes straight into alcohol or gambling, enabling homeless men with addictions to carry on fuelling them without feeling much pressure to reform their lifestyles.

Secondly, as an opportunistic, unscheduled economic activity, it resembles day labor as a kind of work that does not require a regular working week. For both these reasons, can-collecting is viewed by many welfare professionals as a barrier to getting out of homelessness and unemployment, rather than a possible first step on the ladder out.

... it's the *wrong kind* of
self-reliance.

Case Study 2

Yoshikawa san



Nishinari Park, Osaka

About 100 men live here



Scavengers, collectors...





(個人) 山本タクシー

祝





Yoshikawa san's abode

**Kaku san:
mourned;
remembered
in the
Solidarity
Hut
(Danketsu-
goya 団結小
屋)**



Case study 3: Hirayama san

Homeless since 2000, at age 50. Used to work in building maintenance. Work dried up, turned to day laboring. That dried up too. Used to be too proud to collect cans –not any more. Used to be too proud to take food from rubbish bins – not any more. Has 4 dogs and several cats in his stockade in Osaka Castle Park.



Hirayama's stockade



The living room







Yorozu no Kai tent

よろず相談
火曜日 14時～17時
木曜日 15時～19時
Welcome

INTERCULTURAL
EXCHANGE
PROJECT

大坂城公園

Case study 4:Kizu River settlement

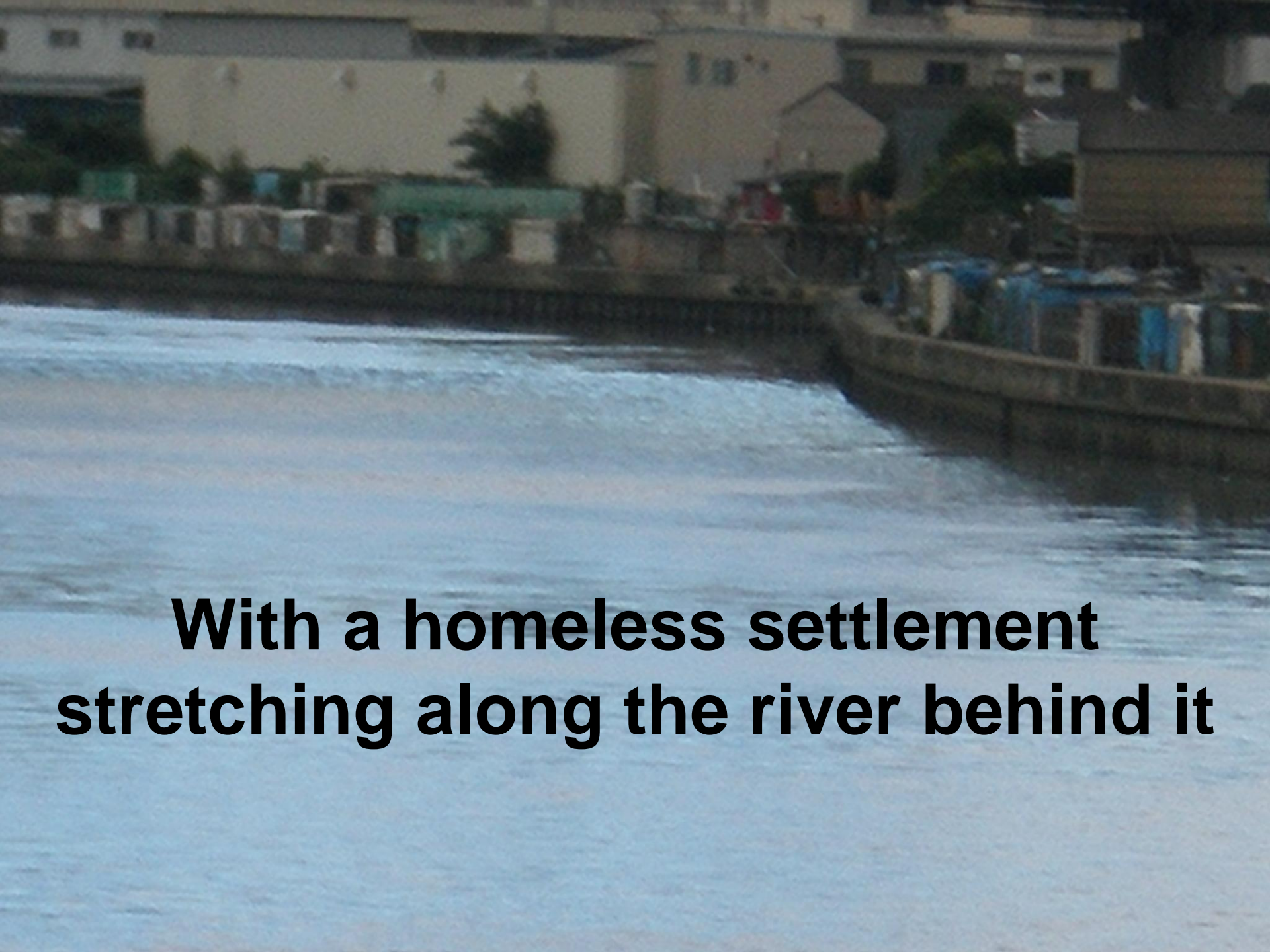
Kizu River Osaka

木津川





A run-down row of warehouses



With a homeless settlement stretching along the river behind it



Few Osaka natives; many from Kyushu and Okinawa; rural, working-class backgrounds

How do you join?

- **Men that I spoke to at the Kizu River settlement said that they had been invited to join.**
- **None of them had built their own shack; they had inherited them from previous occupants who had gone away or been granted welfare.**
- **About a third of the shacks were vacant.**
- **Men dislike rules, alcohol restrictions, limited term of stay at shelters.**

Non-intervention policy

- The Osaka city government has made no attempt to shut down the Kizu River settlement.**
- Outreach workers from the social welfare office make infrequent visits.**
- Where shacks have not been built, steel scaffolding is set up to prevent new building.**
- Typhoon warnings are made by megaphone and flyer.**



注意！！

たいふう ごう せつきん
台風4号が接近して
います。

おおあめ たかしおなど きけん
大雨・高潮等の危険
があります。

ただちに避難してくだ
さい。

平成19年7月13日
西成区役所

**Case study 5:
Sawayama on the
Shonai River**

庄内川 Shonai River, Nagoya



**Recycling leftovers, and dumping
by outsiders, litters the bank**





**Sawayama san
lives here, in one
of 5 shacks
under a bridge**



Sawayama san in his own words

- **60 years old; born in rural Yamagata.**
- **Orphaned; left school at 15; went to Osaka**
- **38 years day laboring in Kamagasaki (Osaka); 5 more in Sasashima (Nagoya).**
- **Lost ability to get jobs through age.**
- **6 months in a Nagoya Castle Park shelter, then here.**
- **Collects cans 4 times a week**
- **Hopes to get onto welfare once he turns 65.**
- **Likes cats.**

Many men, like him, are trying to get through the years until they are old enough to get approved for livelihood protection.

Neither abject victims nor counter-culture heroes, they are pragmatists trying to get by.

Different paradigm?

Park and riverside communities: a Japanese kind of homelessness?

Well-built cabins, propane gas, electric generators, bicycles, pets, legal postal addresses... community.

Hard to fit into UK/US paradigm of rough sleepers & sheltered homeless.

Case study 6

RESISTANCE:

HOTOKE

抵抗者：仏

Hotoke 仏 “Buddha”

- **Refuses to tell anyone his real name**
- **Claims his age is ‘zero years’**
- **One of the last 5 men evicted from Shirakawa Park in 2005**
- **Slept under a tree in the park for 6 months**
- **Arrested for flicking miso soup on local official’s tie**
- **2-year court battle**

Hotoke ...
last man
standing.



Wakamiya Park zoning







Hotoke's house



... it's on wheels, for a reason.



It's a Makiguchi mobile home.

Water supply

A photograph showing an outdoor water supply setup in a makeshift living space. A green hose is connected to a water tap on a brick floor. The area is cluttered with various items including a yellow crate, cleaning supplies, and buckets. The background features a green chain-link fence.

Negotiated with city by Makiguchi san,
Nagoya's 'homeless landlord'

**Resourceful... resistant...
resilient... build their own
houses, cook their own
meals...**

**... an alternative mode of
masculinity?**

Japanese Homeless Shelters

**OSAKA CASTLE
PARK EMERGENCY
SHELTER**

Accommodation block



Bedroom



Recreation room



Married quarters



Dog kennels



Can storage

(Controversial)





**Atsuta Self-reliance Support Center
(Nagoya)**

Million dollar question:

*Where do people exit to?
Do they indeed achieve
self-reliance, or not?*

Continuity problem

表24 住宅確保者の退所後の状況

年 月	住宅 確保者	2004年3月				2005年3月				2006年3月				2007年3月			
		継続	中断	失踪	その他	継続	中断	失踪	その他	継続	中断	失踪	その他	継続	中断	失踪	その他
合 計	199	32	17	16	3	67	36	26	4	94	54	43	0	122	77	54	7
2003年4月	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003年5月	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003年6月	9	1	6	2	0	0	6	3	0	0	6	3	0	0	6	3	0
2003年7月	8	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0	3	3	2	0
2003年8月	9	5	1	2	1	4	2	2	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	3	1
2003年9月	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1
2003年10月	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	2
2003年11月	6	2	1	3	0	2	1	3	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	3	1
2003年12月	11	6	2	2	1	4	2	4	1	3	3	4	1	2	4	4	1
2004年1月	9	6	0	3	0	5	1	3	0	5	1	3	0	5	1	3	0
2004年2月	4	2	2	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0
2004年3月	7	5	2	0	0	1	4	2	0	0	5	2	0	0	5	2	0
	68	32	17	16	3	22	22	21	3	18	22	22	6	17	23	22	6

*	2004/3				2005/3				2007/3			
	OK	Quit	Gone	Etc	OK	Quit	Gone	Etc	OK	Quit	Gone	Etc
68	32	17	16	3	22	22	21	3	17	23	22	6

* **Total men who left shelter in FY 2003 [April 03 to March 04] to get job and housing, i.e., the most successful graduates of the facility.**

OK: Still have housing and job

Quit: Still housed, but quit job.

Gone: Quit housing and job; whereabouts unknown

Etc.: Other (died, hospitalized etc.)

YOU CAN'T GO BACK

戻ってはいけない

Nishinari Park is one of the few parks left in Japan with more than 100 people living in them. Elsewhere, city governments have gradually reduced the population by

- (1) Setting up shelters in the park;**
- (2) Forcing those who enter the shelter to abandon their shacks or tents for removal;**
- (3) Setting barriers and guards to prevent newcomers and returnees from setting up new dwellings.**

(On occasion, too, city governments have resorted to forcible expulsion, using large numbers of riot police. These events, though widely publicized, have only been a minor factor in reducing the park population.)

Osaka Castle Park, Sept 2002



... 655 tents and huts counted

A photograph of a wooded area at night. The foreground is covered in fallen leaves. In the background, a structure is covered with a bright blue tarp. The scene is dimly lit, with some light visible through the trees.

Today: fewer than 50

A photograph showing a wooded area with several trees and a large blue tarp structure hidden behind them. In the foreground, there are several large, rounded green hedges. The ground is covered with brown leaves and grass. The text "... discreetly tucked away in the woods." is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

**... discreetly tucked
away in the woods.**

Nishinari Park today looks like a military camp.



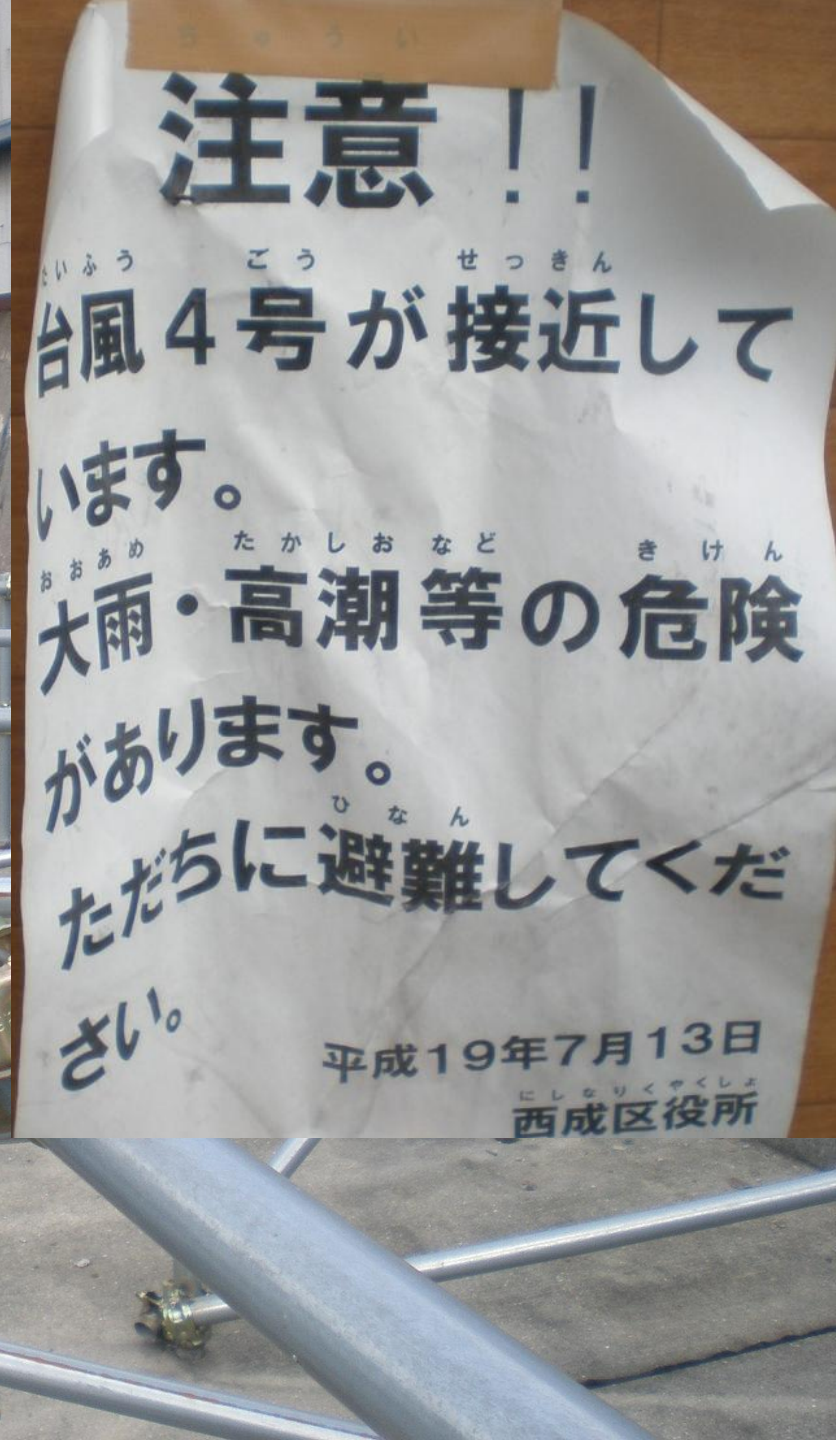








**Kizu River:
Minimal
intervention,
but barriers to
newcomers**



注意！！

たいふう ごう せっきん
台風4号が接近して

います。

おおあめ たかしおなど きけん
大雨・高潮等の危険

があります。

ひなん
ただちに避難してくだ
さい。

平成19年7月13日

にしなりくやくしょ
西成区役所

FIXED/MOBILE 固定型対移動型

All observers agree that the reduction in homeless numbers (13,000 in 2010, from 25,000 in 2003) has come in the fixed population (tents and shacks, especially in parks), while mobile homeless may actually have increased: former tent/shack dwellers lost their place in the park when they left the shelter unable to find work.

***They are now living in
cardboard boxes instead.***

Fixed type [kotei-gata]. Live in park or on riverbank. Have a shack, or tent: a place to keep your possessions. No need to throw away clothes when season changes. May acquire pets, battery, TV, cooking stove etc. Get mail delivered.

Q Are these guys totally homeless?

They don't fit in the street homeless / sheltered homeless paradigm.

Mobile type: Sleep in cardboard box; own almost nothing

**They are unambiguously homeless.
Hence radical critique of the shelters.
People come in from shacks, and most of them exit either to welfare dependency or to cardboard boxes.
Neither of those can be described as “support for self-reliance”... so the shelters are a failure.**

Some international comparisons

Self-presentation

Unlike my American and British informants, quite a few of the homeless men I met in Japan cheerfully or ruefully described themselves as lazy, as stupid, or as drunkards.

Aiseiryō Shelter, Aug 6 2007

- Man, thin, tanned, grinning, looks about 40. Arm in plaster – injured “while drinking.” (gestures raising glass with arm). Self-described alcoholic. “Aruchu dayo.” アル中だよ
I ask why he ended up here?
“Namakemono dakara.” 怠け者だから
Big, cynical laugh.

ISOLATION

Varying degrees of ISOLATION and SEPARATION. US, UK homeless far more likely to retain some contact with family.

Ricky (Santa Barbara)

My dad said, "If you run away, at least ring once a week and say fuck you." To me he's more like a brother than a father. He's got a mean scowl on his face, though he's not a mean man. Maybe he superglued his forehead together when he was a kid or something.

BEGGING

Begging/non-begging. very little in Japan, some in UK. Lots in US. Rewritten as "panhandling" and treated as a skilled trade.

GENDER

Authorities very unwilling to see a woman become homeless in Japan; much more common in UK, US.

Old-fashioned sexism works for women in Japan.

CAUSES

Job-loss, marriage break-up pattern common in Japan; many more factors in US, UK. Drugs, mental health, veterans.

ETHNICITY/RACE

- **Ethnic factor much bigger in U.S.**
- **Mexican migrants who day labor -- white and black guys who beg and use shelters.**

Homeless categories

- **UK and US have countless NPOs trying to help different kinds of homeless person: mentally ill, addicted to drugs or alcohol, “dual diagnosed,” women with children, military veterans, etc.**
- **But it’s much harder to get help if you are just plain homeless.**
- **So the system encourages people to present themselves as ill, as dependent...**

Possible reasons for these differences

- 1. The populations are of very different sizes**
- 2. Differing mental health policies**
- 3. Differing drug availability**
- 4. Different experience of war, PTSD**

Outreach workers go searching for people who may not want assistance and try to make them accept assistance anyway, while refusing assistance to many people who *do* ask for it.

"Workers' most thankless task is that of rejecting people because they have the wrong kind of disability" (p. 60).

Michael Rowe, *Crossing the Border: Encounters Between Homeless People and Outreach Workers* UC Press, 1999

**Tom: You don't seem mentally ill yourself
Spike. You make perfect sense to me.**

**Spike: I don't like people knowing I'm
psychotic and bi-polar. I get depressed
easily. If I don't take my medication, I
get bad. I use drugs for self-medication
when I can't get meds. I was on Ritalin
as a kid – for ADHD, Attention deficit
and hyper-activity disorder.**

Dependent language

- **“Bipolar”**
- **“Dual diagnosis”**
- **“Attention Deficit Disorder”**
- **“Self Medication”**
- **NOT:**
“Drunkard” / “lazy” / “stupid”...

Vinny (Camden NJ)

I never made trouble for my family or friends – I financed my habit myself, for instance by stealing items from chemists in different parts of Philadelphia and then re-selling them for a fraction of their value to little shops in Camden.

Paul (Santa Barbara)

“I think the ‘no talent’ sign is a help. It’s a bit different from the usual – ‘spare change’, ‘any amount helps.’ People seem to like it. I thought of it after praying to God. He gave me that idea. I’m a Christian believer, though I don’t go to church any more.”

Homeless, but not destitute

Paul denies being destitute, drawing a line between self and most other homeless people, though his sole income is begging. He is unwilling to be dependent on state, but sees it as OK to depend on people who give him money in street.

He practices passive begging – just sits there with his sign and hat, reading a book. Looks up briefly and says “thanks” if someone drops a coin or a note in the hat.

Rationalizing dependency

- **OK to depend on strangers through begging, though not OK to depend on state welfare**
- **OK to claim welfare rights, though not OK to beg**
- **OK to beg or even steal, though not OK to depend on family members**
- **OK to beg from rich but not from poor**

Conclusion: UK

The UK has done very well in reducing rough sleeping to a very small number, but at the cost of creating a self-perpetuating homeless industry with semi-permanent clients.

How this system will respond to budget cuts and the “Big Society” is open to question.

Conclusion: US

The US has totally failed to deal with street homelessness, due to replacement of welfare by charity, lack of coordinated national system, scattershot patchwork.

(Cf David Wagner, *What's Love Got to Do With It?*)

Conclusion: Japan

Japan has a homeless problem that is small enough to be tackled, but present system is flawed by overly-narrow definition of “self-reliance” and prejudice against casual labour, informal economy.

(Cf Christopher Jencks, *The Homeless*, 1995, calling for the return of Skid Row / Doyagai)

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