Japan's Underclass

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Japan's Underclass

Day Labourers and the Homeless

Hideo Aoki

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Distributors

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Kinokuniya Company Ltd.

Head office:
38-1 Sakuragaoka 5-chome, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo
156-8691, Japan
Telephone: +81 (0)3 3439 0161
Fax: +81 (0)3 3439 0839
Email: bkimp@kinokuniya.co.jp
Web: www.kinokuniya.co.jp

Asia-Pacific office:
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Telephone: +65 6276 5558
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Email: SSO@kinokuniya.co.jp

Australia and New Zealand
UNIREPS
University of New South Wales
Sydney, NSW 2052
Australia
Telephone: +61(0)2-9664-0999
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Introduction

> Friends! Yesterday, Fuyuki was cremated. We feel indescribable fury, regret and anger seething within us. Because this is not a problem that Fuyuki alone just happened to encounter; it is a problem forced daily onto friends who are compelled to sleep rough. Friends who are forced to sleep rough! Friends who live by gathering empty cans and cardboard! When we are useful to them, they mercilessly work us hard and then, when they no longer need us, they throw us out onto the streets! This is how the capitalist system has always been. Then, they follow this up with 'appeasement' and 'isolation'. Let's put a stop to it! Fuyuki did not die because he intervened in a quarrel between friends. He was killed by the government which threw him out onto the streets and which forced him to sleep rough in parks, on footpaths and in countless other places!

This is a passage from the memorial service address, found in a Kamagasaki Day Labor Union leaflet, for Fuyuki (aged forty-three at the time of his death) who died as a result of being beaten up one night, when he attempted to mediate a quarrel between homeless friends in a tent in a park (Nagai Park in Osaka) (*Kamagasaki Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai* (Kamagasaki Day Labor Union), 24 February 2000). Fuyuki, the youngest of eight children, was born in a farming family in Ehime Prefecture. After graduating from high school, a succession of jobs took him to San'ya in Tokyo in 1977. For the next twenty years he came and went between *yoseba*[1] and construction camps as a construction worker hired on a daily basis. Fuyuki was a 'young man' who, with his continued attachment to the ideals of childhood, had a strong sense of justice; who was active in the day laborers' movement; and who loved literature. In San'ya, he took the lead in mounting a counter-offensive against the violence by gangs of thugs. In his last years, with his health failing and unable to find work, he pitched a tent and spent his days as a homeless person.

The 26th of February. A memorial chapel. Right front – a microphone. By the incense holder on the right, a photograph, the mortuary

urn and a bouquet of flowers. Mourners take the microphone one by one to talk about Fuyuki's life. An elderly homeless man bows down his head. The funeral march trickles along. People offer incense sticks as a tribute to the deceased. Hands clasped together. Fuyuki's homeless friends murmur to each other. 'How very sad this death of a friend, who like us was homeless!' Posted up on a board at the very front are the words, 'We mourn countless Fuyukis'. A world in which life and death exist side by side. A daily scene being repeated this very moment. What does Fuyuki think? What do the gods think?

Setting out the Subject

Japanese cities are changing under the impact of economic globalization. The management functions of politics and economics are concentrated in the large cities. We can rank cities in order from the capital city (Tokyo), central cities (for example, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka); and then core regional cities (for example, Hiroshima). The structure of cities is changing: manufacturing industry is declining and service industries are expanding. Tokyo and Osaka too are increasingly becoming global cities. Cities have become nodes relaying the national and international distribution of capital, information and labor. In the heart of these central cities, the class structure is polarized into the business elites, responsible for business and management, and peripheral workers, who fulfill various unskilled tasks. The physical space of the city is undergoing change. Gentrification of the heart of the city advances: suburban areas expand and we see the appearance of extensive urban areas with several tens of millions in population.

Changes in the urban industrial structure accompany the march of this type of urban change. On the one hand, the relative importance of manufacturing industry wanes and traditional industries decline. Construction and the civil engineering industry (abridged hereafter to the construction industry) stagnate. Employment opportunities in these industries shrink. On the other hand, service industries expand. Service sector occupations increase. New occupations appear and so employment in these new areas increases. In the midst of these types of industrial structure and labor market changes, the structure of demand for day laborer work also changes. Day labor markets in the construction industry are cut back and workers are discharged. Some people are thrown out onto the streets and become homeless. Others are lucky and find work in service occupations.

Post war, Japan's economy has traveled the road from the period of high economic growth to that of low growth and from the economic bubble to its collapse. Now, we are in a long-term recession. Even the recession of 1999, which was regarded as a potential 'downturn', fell far short of the 'downturn' in the decline of employment which occurred in the labor market – particularly the labor market for day laborers. There were money supply problems, an increase in the incidence of bankruptcies and also an increase in the numbers of unemployed. Day laborer work declined and the numbers of homeless people increased. Henceforth, we cannot hope to see any increase in employment in this area. This is the predominant feeling amongst people.

What kind of people are the homeless? Where do these men (and women) come from? Where, also, are they going? How are the appearance of and the circumstances surrounding the homeless linked to the transformation of today's cities? What kind of people are day laborers? What kind of people are foreign workers? What types of spaces do these men (and women) inhabit?

The numbers of homeless people are increasing in Japan's cities. Also, problems connected with the homeless have appeared. Research into the homeless is also increasing. Surveys are being conducted and research is advancing into the population numbers, work, lifestyle, policies, social classes, groups and the world of meaning (the framework of people's values and perceptions) of the homeless. Our image of the homeless has gradually become clearer. There is increasing specialization in research subjects on the homeless, with various points of dispute arising and arguments continuing. The focus, however, is not solely confined to research on the homeless. It is not possible to talk about the problems of the homeless if we fail to consider the trends regarding day laborers and foreign workers. Research in this area is seeing a continuing expansion of its base. Where will the urban underclass go? How will research track these moves? As studies of the homeless continue to stir and broaden the imaginative power of researchers, we are entering an interesting phase for research.

Through this book I hope to open up new horizons in *sociological research into Japan's present day urban underclass*. I will attempt to do this by focusing on the subject of Japan's urban underclass – that is, *the day laborers and the homeless, both of whom are tied to yoseba, and foreign workers*; by exploring the main points in existing research; by analyzing the changes in the urban underclass; and by

identifying a research subject. The term, people 'tied' to *yoseba*, is used, firstly, to mean the day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers who live in and go in and out of *yoseba* and, secondly, those people who – although they do not go in and out of *yoseba* – have, to a greater or lesser degree, some connection with the *yoseba*. These are, for example, homeless people in railway stations and parks who have no experience of *yoseba*, and foreign workers in insecure employment who work in factories and restaurants. This book is organized as follows.

In Chapter 1, I present an analytical framework for considering economic globalization, the globalization of cities and changes in the urban underclass. This is the viewpoint and standard framework which I use to introduce the empirical analysis of the urban underclass in Section I.

In section I (Chapters 2 to 5) I consider issues such as the connections between the consequences of changes to the urban industrial structure and labor market and changes occurring in the present day urban underclass. I also ask which consequences of economic globalization and the globalization of cities have resulted in these changes? The next task is to respond to these questions via an empirical analysis of the urban underclass. When doing this, I will narrow down the basis of inquiry by focusing on the 'work' of the urban underclass. This book is an attempt to analyze and interpret the objective mode of existence (*kyakkantekina sonzai yōshiki*) of the urban underclass, through a focus on 'work' as a macro-sociology of the urban underclass.

The objective mode of existence of the urban underclass is made up of the process of working and the process of living. For the homeless, the street is both a workspace and living space. Working and living are interchangeable. Accordingly, the processes of work and living overlap with one another. It is by keeping this whole picture within our field of vision that we can understand the objective mode of existence of the urban underclass. With this in mind, the focus of this book is deliberately the process of work for the urban underclass. There are two reasons for this. The first is that by placing the focus on the work process, we can *connect with* the globalization of economics and the *macro-processes* of global urbanization and from this base, thereby, make clear the mode of existence of the urban underclass. Secondly, a detailed analysis of the process of living of the urban underclass is beyond the scope of this book. Analyses of the politics and social movements of the urban underclass, similarly, are confined to a bare minimum. In this sense, this book is limited to only one aspect of

research into the urban underclass. The analysis of the work process of the urban underclass will proceed in the following way. In Chapter 2, I analyze the work and social strata of day laborers and the homeless in the Osaka *yoseba* of Kamagasaki. In Chapter 3, I analyze the work and social strata of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers in the Yokohama *yoseba* of Kotobukichō. In Chapter 4, I roughly sketch out the overall image of the homeless in present day Japan; then – using the example of the homeless in Osaka – I analyze the work and social stratum to which this group belongs; and, finally, I consolidate the arguments surrounding the naming of the homeless. In Chapter 5, I analyze – using the example of Osaka – the work of, and social stratum occupied by, recently arrived foreign workers who overstay their visas and work without the proper work documents. I also go on to analyze the relations between recently arrived foreigners (particularly Koreans) and Koreans resident in Japan (*zainichi* Koreans)[2].

In Section II (Chapters 6 to 8) I consider what is happening to the structure of discrimination towards the homeless, day laborers and foreign workers in the midst of the transformation of the urban underclass? What kind of 'world of meaning' are the men (and women) who find themselves in these circumstances of discrimination constructing? What are the methodological and theoretical issues which arise with regard to analyses of this world of meaning? The next task of this book is to respond to these questions. This will be an attempt at 'a micro-sociology of the urban underclass': an analysis and interpretation of the actual conditions of the subjective mode of existence of the urban underclass, carried out by focusing attention on their world of meaning.

The analysis of the world of meaning of the urban underclass will be undertaken in the following way. In Chapter 6, I will adopt the life history method to analyze the world of meaning of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers. I will also discuss the theoretical and practical issues surrounding the life history method. In Chapter 7, I will begin with an analysis of the structure and changing nature of discrimination in *yoseba*. Then, I will present an analytical framework for the world of meaning of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers, all of whom are living in circumstances which attract discrimination. In the course of doing this, I will refer to various concepts of interpretative sociology. In Chapter 8, I will carry out an analysis of the Winter Struggle in Kamagasaki. By regarding the Winter Struggle as a ritual and by analyzing the space which it occupies and the process of its progress, we draw closer to the world

of meaning of day laborers and the homeless. In order to do this, I refer to the ritual analysis method of religious sociology.

I collected the data used in this book during the 1990s and the 2000s. I use both primary and secondary data. I obtained the primary data from participant observation of gatherings, meetings and support activities related to the urban underclass and also from remarks made by day laborers, the homeless, foreign workers, labor union activists, administrative staff and others. The secondary data is made up of documents, reports, pamphlets, leaflets and newspaper articles. With some of the secondary sources it may not be clear whether, in reality, the 'facts' in the sources portray the actual situation. With particular regard to data on the urban underclass – a constantly fluid, anonymous society on the urban periphery – there are numerous pieces of data for which the actual situation is not easy to substantiate. I also make use of some of this 'risky' data in the book. This is because I think that the preceding comments notwithstanding, the very act of using this data provides valuable facts. What we call 'facts' are the products of dual interpretation: that is, listeners and readers (researchers) interpret the interpretation of reality made, in the first instance, by speakers and writers (informants). (This is also true of primary data.) In this sense, there cannot be any completely objective facts. Therefore, the analysis of actual conditions in this book is nothing more than this author's analysis and interpretation of data, which is limited in scope to what I have been able to collect. The realities of the lives of the urban underclass are made up of a far more varied range of aspects. When thinking about the difficulties of this analysis, we must not fail to emphasize this factor. Material in parentheses within data being quoted is all additional comment by the author. I do not make detailed comments in these entries.

I make no claim that this book is an exhaustive investigation of the theoretical themes in research into the urban underclass. This book confines itself merely to presenting a single viewpoint (and only one) and an analytical framework for approaching these themes; analyzing a few of the aspects of the present day urban underclass; and attempting to interpret and explain these. Having said this, however, I would naturally be extremely pleased if this book were to play a leading role in sociological research into the urban underclass and become a point of reference for opening up new horizons for research. This is a time when Japanese urban underclass research can even aspire to international comparative research, from urban/capitalist/world system viewpoints. Research into the urban underclass has also

reached the globalization stage. We have, in addition, also reached a micro-level stage in urban underclass research: a stage in which we peep into the abyss of the world of meaning of the urban underclass, stand in its depths and 'gently' reconstruct the infinitely varied lives of this class. This book's journey begins at the destination point of urban underclass research.

About ten years have passed since I wrote my previous book (*The Lives and Deaths of Yoseba Laborers*). In the midst of the changes being experienced by the urban underclass, what can this book – with *yoseba* laborers and the homeless as its enduring objects of research – add to urban underclass research? How can research into foreign workers enrich urban underclass research? Also, how can the results of this research be fed back into urban and sociological theories? Bearing these questions in mind, we move on to the rest of the book.

1 A Framework for Urban Underclass Research

Part One: Japan's Urban Underclass

The transformation of the urban underclass

At the 1996 HABITAT II Conference, Japan – a wealthy industrial nation – saw the worldwide airing of its 'refugee' problem, created by the Kobe earthquake, and its 'homeless' problem simultaneously. A 'new' urban underclass problem has emerged in present day Japan. Cities are changing and Japan's urban underclass is now being reorganized.

In the midst of economic globalization[1] Japanese cities too are forging ahead with growing levels of global urbanization, each in a way determined by their own specific historical conditions[2]. On the one hand, we have structural changes in the economies and labor markets of industrialized countries. Sassen focused her attention on the international transfer of work and discussed structural changes in New York and Los Angeles (Sassen, 1998). On the other hand, there are also discussions going on about structural changes in developing countries. In addition, there are ongoing attempts to provide *a uniform explanation* for structural changes in (developed) industrial countries and developing countries. 'New' types of homeless people have appeared in various western countries and in Japan (albeit with some time lag in the case of the latter). 'New' homeless are also appearing in developing countries. In the present world system, structural changes in industrialized and developing countries have a common base. What is this common base and how exactly do they share it? This is where the basic theoretical interest of this book lies: in making clear the meaning of the global structural changes which are sweeping over the cities of the world and also in predicting the direction of these changes. In this book, I approach these issues via an analysis of Japan's urban underclass. There is a link between research into Japan's urban underclass and research into the urban underclass in the cities of

western and developing countries. On the basis of my interest in this issue I have in another work analyzed the actual conditions of global urbanization in Manila, focusing the analysis on Manila's urban poor (Aoki, 2003).

The term urban underclass 'refers to those people who are found at the "very bottom" of cities and who are isolated both by social class and spatially'. In short, 'urban underclass refers both to those people "outside of society" who are simultaneously subjected to cruel conditions of exploitation and discrimination and also to the space where these people live together' (Aoki, 1999: 276). Depending on the context, the people and space making up the urban underclass can be referred to interchangeably. Members of the urban underclass are also politically oppressed people (Aoki, 1987). Nishizawa regards the urban underclass as 'an internalized exterior: a territory bound to an increasingly excluded labor market and one incorporated into the underclass segment of urban society' (Nishizawa, 1997: 81) and sees the requisite conditions of 'exclusiveness' and 'under layer' in the urban underclass. Accordingly, the urban underclass is not simply the poor. Neither is it simply people experiencing discrimination. Therefore, the urban underclass differs from various categories such as the 'miscellaneous urban laborer', the 'employee whose position is insecure', 'informal groups', 'the needy' or 'minorities'. Whatever the extent of class isolation and social discrimination experienced by these groups, all of them exist 'within society'. In contrast to this, the urban underclass endures thorough exploitation at the hands of capitalism and discrimination (exclusion) from civil society; this is a group which exists 'outside of society', lacking even the most basic of human rights[3].

The urban underclass is not a static group with clearly defined boundaries. What do we mean by exploitation and what do we mean by discrimination? For which functions in the reproduction and transformation of urban structures are people who are exploited and discriminated against responsible? The task of defining the urban underclass is bound up with providing answers to questions of this sort. It is also bound up with developing a theoretical viewpoint and framework which ought to make this definition clear.

To whom exactly does the term urban underclass apply? Cities are naturally in a state of constant flux and the various aspects of class and discrimination within them are also constantly changing. Therefore, the urban underclass needs to be continually redefined by determining the standards used to analyze exploitation and discrimination and also

the functions within the urban structure. Cities change over the course of time. Japanese cities, both in the present day and in the recent past, have undergone a process in which the 'traditional' poor have moved away from specific 'zones' to 'households' and even to 'individuals'; they have been subsumed in the flow of the whole society towards 'the middle class' and have become invisible (Nakagawa, 1985). This has also been a process of transition of spaces in which the poor live together – a move from '*hinminkutsu*' (original Japanese slums) to 'slums' and then to '*yoseba*'. This process was also an undercurrent in the movement of the urban poor post war. Mwanwhile, alongside changes in economic structure, there are new ways of separating out and segregating the poor and they are increasingly visible at the very bottom of cities. Examples of these are: day laborers, foreign workers, people receiving living assistance and extra relief, the homeless and 'refugees' from the Kobe earthquake. Processes of overlap and segregation amongst the various types of poor provide the basis for classifying this group of people together as today's urban underclass. This book refers to all of these people as 'the modern urban underclass'.

In this book I will not enter into the debates about class and social strata which surround the concept of 'underclass'. Generally, 'underclass' means lower classes but in this book the urban 'underclass' is made up of the very lowest stratum of people within the lower classes. 'Underclass', therefore, has a highly specific meaning in this book. By using this term in this way, I hope to distinguish the day laborers, homeless and foreign workers, who are all tied to *yoseba*, from groups such as those made up of people who are in insecure employment.

Of the various groups found in the present urban underclass, *I focus, in this book, on men who are living apart from their families[4] – the day laborers, homeless and foreign workers – as the object of study*, analyzing their work and the social stratum to which they belong, as well as changes in these areas. The urban nodal space in which these men meet up with each other is the *yoseba*.

There are various debates surrounding the word *yoseba*. *Yoseba* have their origins in the 'coolie *yoseba*' (*ninsoku yoseba*) of the Edo period, but the word *yoseba* was first used in the early 1970s. As the arrangements for recruiting laborers in San'ya and Kamagasaki declined and metamorphosed into the increasingly common sight of skid rows (*doyagai*: quarters with cheap lodgings for day laborers), the day laborer movement inside *yoseba* changed to using the term slum, with the word *yoseba* beginning to be used as a term which

retained some historical continuity with words such as coolie *yoseba* and prison cell (Katō et al, 1997: 6–8). The Japan Association for the Study of *Yoseba* (*Nihon Yoseba Gakkai*), which brings together *yoseba* researchers, was established in 1987. Some researchers use the term '*yoriba*' (meeting place), arguing that laborers are not 'gathered together' by capital but rather that they 'gather' of their own accord, thus stressing the identity of laborers. Also, there are practically no current *yoseba* laborers who would use the word *yoseba* to refer to San'ya and Kamagasaki (They call San'ya 'Yama' and Kamagasaki 'Kama' or 'Nishinari'). There are those who, for this reason, hesitate to make any scholarly use of the term *yoseba*. I think that, if we leave aside the intentions of the labor movement, it is possible to rebuild the term *yoseba* as a scientific concept in analyzing the structure found at the very bottom of cities. Terms such as underclass and squatter are the same in that they fall into this category of terms not used by the people concerned. Yet, this has not rendered them inappropriate as scientific concepts.

In this book, I make *yoseba* the starting point for my analysis and look at the people in the urban underclass who are tied to *yoseba*. I do this because I think that it is precisely these people who make up the nucleus of the modern urban underclass; and because I think that, through an analysis of the people at this bottom-most point, we can provide a picture of the meaning of urban change in Japan, in its most concentrated form, under the impact of economic globalization and global urbanization.

Part Two: A framework for urban underclass research

Global urbanization

I would now like to set out an overarching analytical framework for analyzing change at the very bottom of cities which are undergoing economic globalization and global urbanization. This analytical framework, which will be a guide to the introduction of the urban underclass research developed in Section I,[5] consists of hypotheses which I have constructed and developed in the course of my theoretical and empirical research. Firstly, let us look at Figure 1.1. This illustrates the process of transformation undergone by the urban underclass in Japan's cities (Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama – the research fields used in this book) and also the process of transformation occurring amongst the urban poor in corresponding major cities in developing countries.

In this book, I combine the urban underclass and the urban poor, and refer to them both as forming the bottom-most group in urban society (*toshi teihen*). In using the term bottom-most group in urban society, it is my intention that we understand that those who are found at the very bottom in cities – in both Japan and developing countries – are two products (the urban underclass and the urban poor) of the same economic process (economic globalization and global urbanization). In this book, I also use the word underclass to refer to Japan's urban underclass. The word underclass was first used with reference to people (mainly young Afro-Americans) who were in a destitute state and discriminated against in the ghettos which appeared in cities in the United States in the 1980s (Wilson, 1987). Subsequently, underclass has been redefined as a general concept for analyzing people (or the structural position of these people) in similar circumstances in different cities of the world. Naturally, Japan's urban underclass and the Afro-Americans in cities of the United States are people with markedly different histories and actual circumstances. I keep all of this firmly in mind when I use the term underclass to refer to Japan's urban underclass in this book.

The following is an elaboration of the main points in the transformation of the bottom-most group in urban society, as seen in Figure 1.1. The starting point is Japan's urban underclass. Firstly, owing to changes to the labor market and long-term recession, the pressures propelling members of the underclass as a whole to fall into the urban underclass have grown stronger. Secondly, the pressures

Figure 1.1: Global urbanization and class differentiation
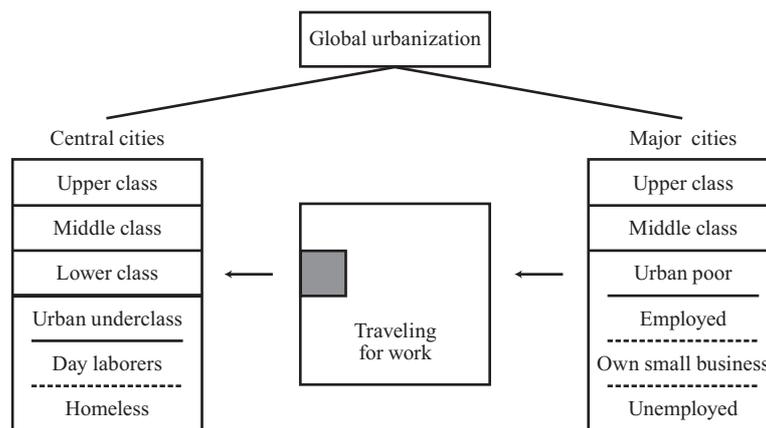
within the urban underclass propelling day laborers downwards into homelessness have become stronger. Thirdly, there is an increase in new, low paid occupations with inferior working conditions which are linked to the growing prominence of the service sector in the economy. The people employed in these new occupations emerge as a new labor group (hereafter: new labor) and flow into and become part of the urban underclass. Fourthly, new types of homeless people appear (hereafter: new homeless). They differ from the homeless in the past in a number of ways; they are the new poor. This group also flows into and becomes part of the urban underclass.

The next important point concerns the major cities of developing countries (in this book I look at Manila). Firstly, with the expansion of new occupations, which accompanies the growing prominence of the finance and service sectors of the economy, we see the appearance – on the one hand – of a new class of wealthy people (a new middle class). On the other hand, we have the appearance of 'a new labor class' which carries out the new, low-level occupations. Secondly, the urban poor are increasingly being divided into two poles. One group is moving up to become a class with stability and some economic leeway. In the case of the other group, we see the emergence of the 'new poor' who carry out the low-paid, new occupations, which condemn them to continued poverty. This latter group also flows into and merges with the urban poor.

Figure 1.1 also shows the movement of a labor force from major cities in other countries to Japan. In the first stage this labor flows out of developing countries, via their major cities (in the majority of cases), and overseas in search of work. Secondly, a portion of this labor flows into Japanese cities. Thirdly, this latter portion also merges with the urban underclass. All of these processes are a practical manifestation of the economic globalization and global urbanization seen in Japan and in developing countries.

I would now like to emphasize the significance of proposing these new concepts (new labor and new poor). Firstly, these are concepts found *simultaneously* in developed and developing nations, under the influence of economic globalization, and they are also concepts which focus on the *transformation* of underclass labor and poverty[6]. These concepts can be used to describe the essential nature of the transformation and *predict* the direction of future change. They mark a *shift* in the *viewpoint* of urban underclass research and in the *framework for interpreting* the actual state of the urban underclass and poverty. Secondly, two other new concepts – the 'new intermediate

class' (working class) and the 'new middle class' (a lifestyle class) – are useful for explaining the class changes in present day cities. New labor and new poor correspond respectively to these concepts. The new intermediate class would not be able to exist without the support of new labor. The new rich appeared at the same time as the new poor. Thirdly, new labor and the new poor came into being under economic globalization and they provide a framework for a simultaneous understanding of the transformation of underclass work and poverty in the developed and developing countries. Naturally, both the ways in which globalization has proceeded and its results vary from country to country. This boook is 'an attempt to discuss poverty in developed and developing countries *on this basis*, from the same horizon' (Ōta, 1997: 44). In short, it is possible to provide a *structural correlation* of the various new phenomena accompanying economic globalization and to interpret them. This does not mean comparing the differences between the phenomena, instead this means looking at what is happening in the world and locating, for example, Tokyo's or Manila's standing. In this way, new labor and the new poor open up the path to international research into underclass work and poverty. 'If we were to consider the fact that in both the case of the problem of "new poverty" in developed countries and the problem of serious "poverty" in underdeveloped countries the same environment and chief causes – namely, the ever-increasing globalization of the economy and markets – apply, we would be more aware of the importance of theories linking the two' (Ōta, 1997: 59)[7].

Let us now examine Figure 1.2. This shows the process by which the urban underclass is formed and the employment structure of this class. The following are the main points to note in Figure 1.2 with regard to the transformation of the bottom-most group in urban society. The first main point concerns the urban underclass. Firstly, in addition to the already existing pattern of people falling into the urban underclass from industrial sectors with low productivity, there is now an increase in the number of people falling into the urban underclass because of the restructuring of manufacturing industry, bankruptcies and lay-offs. Secondly, within the urban underclass there is a strengthening of the pressures propelling people downwards from the ranks of day laborers to the ranks of the homeless. Thirdly, in the area of employment, there is an increase in employment in low-level service occupations in the formal sector and away from employment in construction. Fourthly, the numbers of homeless are growing and they are increasingly taking up "miscellaneous work" (*zatsugyō*)[8] in the informal sector. The next

Figure 1.2: The process of segregating the people at the very bottom of urban society

Formal			Informal
Construction	Manufacturing	Service	Miscellaneous work

Day laborers ⟶ Homeless

Urban underclass

Areas of low productivity	Bankruptcy Unemployment

Informal	Formal
Small independent business	Manufacturing
Miscellaneous urban work	Service

Urban poor

Urban poor	Rural sector

—— Distinctive traditional process   ▬▬ Distinctive process in recent years

important point in connection with Figure 1.2 concerns the urban poor. Firstly, we are increasingly moving away from the old pattern in which the rural poor used to flow into the cities towards a pattern in which new poor are being generated from amongst the poor born in cities. Cities reproduce the urban poor. Secondly, the numbers of urban poor moving up to become wage laborers in manufacturing industry are increasing. Thirdly, the numbers of new poor employed in service occupations in the formal sector are increasing. All of these processes are manifestations of economic globalization and global urbanization, as seen in the urban underclass/urban poor[9].

The underclass labor market

The transformation of present day Japan's urban underclass invites a reconsideration of the concept of an urban underclass. In this section, I will present an explanatory framework for the entire process of this transformation. This will then provide the basic framework for reconsidering the concept of an urban underclass and also for analyzing the objective mode of existence of the lives of day laborers, the homeless and the foreign workers, which will be discussed in Section I.

The urban industrial structure has changed as a result of the global urbanization of Japan's central cities. In short, manufacturing

industry as a whole has shrunk and is moving increasingly towards a diversified, small-quantity production system which corresponds to consumption-oriented lifestyles. Service industries have swollen under the growing trend towards a service-based economy. Due to the increase in orders for construction materials engendered by this, the construction industry has continued to show some vigor even after the collapse of the bubble. The service industry has brought about the consolidation of the management and administrative functions of multinational companies, finance companies and domestic companies; the development of international and domestic information and communications networks; and along with all this, an expansion in the scale of business services and personal services[10].

However, there has been a long-term recession in the Japanese economy, stretching from the collapse of the economic bubble to the late 1990s, and this has led to a serious stagnation of all economic activity. There has been a long succession of company restructurings, bankruptcies and lay-offs. There is a continuing rationalization of management and, under employment adjustment (*koyō chōsei*), the basis of employment for laborers is moving away from regular employment towards irregular employment (temporary, dispatch (sent from one workplace to another by one's own company), transfers, day labor, part-time and casual)[11]. Also, the construction industry, which had continued to expand following the collapse of the economic bubble, then experienced a long succession of bankruptcies as a result of the decline in orders for work coming from the service industry and a drop in construction orders brought about by a curtailment of public investment. General contractors were not alone in experiencing these developments[12].

These sorts of transformations of the industrial structure and a general stagnation of economic activity have led to changes in the urban labor market. Next, I will highlight the main topics of this book and summarize the characteristics of the changes which we have seen in recent years, by focusing on the urban underclass labor market. I use underclass in this discussion to mean the labor market for day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers, with the *yoseba* as its nucleus. The first point to note is that a portion of those people who are in insecure employment keep pouring into the underclass labor market. There are three processes at work in this. The first is the flight of people dismissed and laid off into the underclass labor market as a result of restructuring and bankruptcies in manufacturing and financial industries. Initially, these people experienced a shift

from regular to irregular employment[13]. Then, dismissals and lay-offs exerted further pressure propelling them downward into the urban underclass. Normally, people who are dismissed manage by making use of their 'safety nets' – cutting living expenses, using savings, insurance or pensions, borrowing from relatives and friends and so on. People who are cut off from these types of resources and people who do not possess any resources at all are pushed into the underclass labor market. The second is that there is a stratum of young people flowing into the underclass labor market. They are there either because they are unable to gain fixed employment or because they dislike fixed employment but need to earn an income. The factors forming the background to this trend amongst young people are to be found in the narrowing of suitable employment opportunities as a result of management cutbacks, which have led to companies no longer providing new appointments employing young people; and also an increase in the number of young people with few qualifications because they have dropped out of high school or university. There has been an increase in the number of young people who, failing (being unable) to find regular work, feel comfortable doing part time jobs without any particular sense of commitment.

The next point to note is that day laborers in the construction industry are being thrown out onto the street. This means an inevitable fall into the urban underclass. Overall employment in the construction industry (construction labor) has declined. In the case of day laborers, the decline in employment had begun well before the time of the bursting of the economic bubble. It is, however, not only *yoseba* laborers who work for day wages in the construction industry. Migrating seasonal laborers, people from neighboring rural areas and farmers with jobs on the side, registered dispatch workers and young people looking for 'part time work without any commitments' also work in the construction industry for day wages. However, these men (and women) are generally day laborers on mid and long-term contracts; they are not day laborers in the same day-by-day sense (on daily day labor agreements) as *yoseba* laborers. Also, even if these men (women) fail to find work, they have safety nets. Therefore, even when the decline in work leads to downward pressures driving these men (women) into the urban underclass, they do not instantly skid into it. In contrast to this, any decline in employment has a direct impact on *yoseba* laborers. Lacking any safety nets, they instantly skid into homelessness.

Furthermore, the labor recruiting functions of the *yoseba* are being reduced. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the reduction

in demand for day labor in the construction industry has had a direct impact on the *yoseba*. The construction industry is (was) the major employer of *yoseba* laborers. The second cause is the decline of the number of recruiters of day laborers and labor arrangers found in the *yoseba*. This is itself also the result of a change in labor recruitment methods for day laborers, following the decline in work. The dominant practise now in *yoseba* is 'giving work to the people one knows' (*kaozuke*)', that is, the recruiters and arrangers of day labor pass on the scarce work in a self-interested manner to selected laborers. There are increasing numbers of labor recruiters and arrangers who recruit homeless people from outside *yoseba* – in railway stations, parks and along rivers. Labor arrangers now operate their own laborers' quarters into which they gather day laborers and the homeless in shacks. Labor recruiting via help-wanted magazines and newspapers is also widespread now.

Finally, the unskilled and low paid jobs created by the service industry have grown in number and day laborers and the homeless who fail to find construction work are flowing into these. Along with the growing prominence of the service sector in the economy, an increasing variety of service occupations have emerged in occupations at the lowest reaches of business services, personal services in specialist and skilled occupation levels and also as a function of the high-level consumer-ization of lifestyles. Day laborers and the homeless have assumed (a portion) of these occupations.

Transformations of the urban labor market in recent years, along these lines, have had the following consequences. Firstly, there has been a reduction in day laborer work in the construction industry and *yoseba* laborers have been thrown out onto the streets. There are also growing numbers of homeless people on the streets without any experience of either *yoseba* or the construction industry. Some people get off the streets by going into construction jobs or by taking on service occupations. Others find their own work doing miscellaneous work such as collecting recyclable materials. Today the homeless person could be someone who moves between day laborer work and homelessness; someone whose only existence is as a homeless person; someone working in self-managed miscellaneous work; someone who sets up a makeshift shack or a tent and 'lives in it'; or someone who changes his sleeping place on a daily basis. We are seeing the appearance of a whole array of homeless people.

Figure 1.3 provides a summary of these types of trends amongst the urban underclass (day laborers and the homeless). In Section I I

Figure 1.3: Movement within the urban underclass
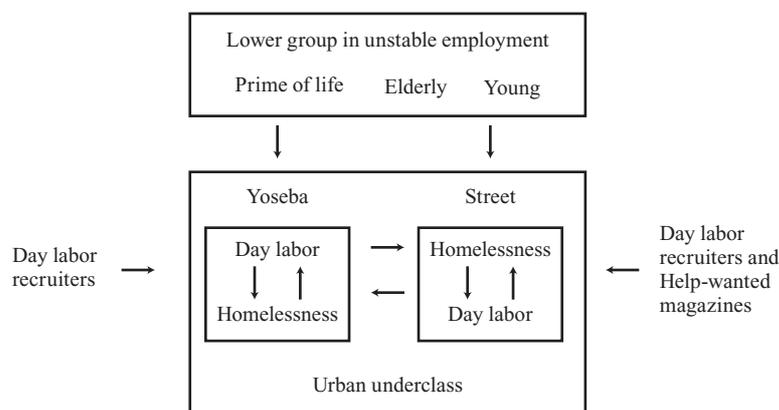
analyze the formation process and objective mode of existence of the lives of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers along the lines of the framework for the overall process set out in this figure. This provides the basis for giving a rough outline of the manifestations of global urbanization in the Japanese urban underclass.

A reconsideration of the urban underclass

The urban underclass is made up of 'people who are at "the very bottom" of cities and who are isolated in terms of class, space and society'. This book therefore places day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers tied to *yoseba* at the heart of its analysis. These people are currently undergoing a class transformation and this obliges us to reconsider the concept of the urban underclass.

The first point to note is that as a result of the absorption of day laborers into the ranks of the homeless, both of these groups have been rendered socially borderless. Day laborers, who would have been recruited in *yoseba*, have spilled out onto the streets and the space between day laborers and the homeless in *yoseba* and those on the streets has also become borderless[14]. One no longer finds a 'sociology of *yoseba*', which understands the urban underclass in the limited sense of *yoseba* (laborers). Furthermore, as a consequence of one segment of those in insecure employment in the general labor market flowing into *yoseba* and onto the streets, the borders have disappeared between the urban underclass and the group of laborers in insecure

employment. Given this type of situation, there is a need to redefine the urban underclass in the following ways. Firstly, people making up the urban underclass have been classified in a manner focusing on the lower reaches of this class. Consequently, day laborers have been reclassified and the numbers of homeless in their lower ranks have increased. Secondly, the urban underclass has been mobilized spatially. This means that day laborers have been thrown out onto the streets. Thirdly, this has led to an expansion of the space occupied by the urban underclass. *Yoseba* and the street now overlap and with the direct spilling out onto the street of the group in insecure employment, the space occupied by the urban underclass has become generalized. In effect, there has been the emergence of 'an "underclass", which has been made visible (the homeless) and "underclass labor", which has been rendered invisible, (in the form of laborers' quarters)' (Nasubi, 1999). We have now reached a point where we are compelled to restore both underclass laborers, who have until now been invisible (for example, laborers brought together in laborers' lodgings by labor recruiters) and the homeless on the streets, who have newly been made visible.

Naturally, we cannot define, in advance and in a fixed manner, who is to be included in the urban underclass. Its composition will vary according to changes in the urban economy and in spatial and class structures. Japan's urban underclass has clearly been changing from the middle of the 1990s. The aspect of both *yoseba* and the streets has also been changing steadily. What are the realities of these changes? Section I set out an outline of the realities of the work (and lifestyles) of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers and also raises questions about the meaning of the changes we see in each of these areas.

Section I:
The mode of existence of the urban underclass

2 The Urban Underclass and Kamagasaki

Yoseba can be found scattered throughout all the industrial cities of Japan. San'ya in Tokyo, Kotobukichō in Yokohama, Sasajima in Nagoya and Kamagasaki in Osaka are known as the four big *yoseba*. *Yoseba* are changing in response to the increasingly important part being played by the service sector in the Japanese economy. There are decreasing numbers of jobs available in the construction and engineering industries (hereafter the construction industry) and while some day laborers manage to find employment in service occupations, others wait for work inside *yoseba* districts while others still spill out onto the streets.

In this and the following chapter I would like to outline the changes occurring in *yoseba* by analyzing the actual conditions in the late 1990s in *yoseba* work and the *yoseba* class. Both the form and scale of *yoseba* vary from city to city. However, all *yoseba* are changing and all are facing identical problems with regard to work, unemployment and poverty. Using Kamagasaki in Osaka as the example in this chapter and Kotobukichō in Yokohama in the next chapter, I retrace the post war history of *yoseba*, analyzing the present-day changes being experienced by day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers. Through this process I reconsider the meaning of these *yoseba* changes for urban underclass research. (I will give a detailed explanation of the situation of foreign workers in Kamagasaki in Chapter 5.) Firstly, I would like to describe *yoseba*, in terms of their current overall conditions.

Part One: The changing *yoseba*

Yoseba

Yoseba refers to a place where day laborers are assigned day work by labor recruiters (*tehaishi*) and labor arrangers (*ninpudashi*) and also a place from whence they are taken off to the work site[1].

What are the '*yoseba*' found in modern-day Japan? Employment relations in Japan today are regular employment relations (centered around lifetime employment): casual employment and day employment exist separately from these. We call the place where the day labor workforce is traded daily and intensively a *yoseba*. In other words, the '*yoseba*' is a free market for a day labor workforce and a market in workers who sleep rough (Ushigusa, 1993: 126).

The *yoseba* found throughout Japan can be classified on the basis of several criteria.

1a. *Yoseba* built around traditional slums. These types of *yoseba* make up one corner of a complex urban zone. They are found in the general underclass area, in communities which are discriminated against, in streets frequented by prostitutes (previously the red-light district) and in nightlife districts. These were once located along the roadsides of highways leading into cities but are now found practically in the very center of cities. San'ya and Kamagasaki are this type of *yoseba*.

1b. *Yoseba* newly built in the post war period. Most of these were built in the areas around railway stations and amidst the fire ruins left after Japan's defeat. Kotobukichō and Sasajima belong to this type of *yoseba*. Some of these *yoseba* were also part of the underclass area in the pre war period. Sasajima is one such case.

2a. *Yoseba* including a cheap lodgings area where the workers' places of employment and living spaces are one. These are the largest-scale *yoseba*. San'ya, Kamagasaki and Kotobukichō are this type of *yoseba*.

2b. *Yoseba* without a cheap lodgings area which stop being *yoseba* after workers have been hired for work in the morning. Workers lodge in single room occupancy (SRO) hotels and cheap hotels dotted throughout the city. Sasajima and most other local city *yoseba* are of this type (for example, Deyashiki in Amagasaki, Don in Hiroshima and Tikko in Fukuoka).

3a. *Yoseba* confined to one area as a result of urban administrative policy. Kotobukichō (Yokohama) and Kamagasaki (Osaka) are this type of *yoseba*.

3b. *Yoseba* intentionally spread throughout the city as a result of urban administrative policy. The *yoseba* found in Tokyo and Nagoya belong to this type. In addition to San'ya, Tokyo has other small *yoseba* of this type in places such as Takadanobaba and Ueno. Nagoya also has

other small *yoseba*, apart from Sasajima, in places such as Nagoya Railway Station and Okera Park.

The day employment being discussed here differs from the seasonal day employment engaged in by farmers from the outskirts of cities. It also differs from casual work, work outside a company, dispatch work, part-time casual work and other types of employment in which one works for day or casual wages. To be a (male) day laborer in a *yoseba* (a *yoseba* laborer) means to have, as the basic conditions of one's existence, work which is (seen as) low-'skilled'; be either separated, divorced or unmarried but in any event have a family-less 'singleness' and a 'drifting-ness' born of constantly changing one's place of abode (Aoki, 1989: 156–159); be employed to do heavy physical labor; live an impoverished life; and be discriminated against by society. Consequently, these men form a particular class, distinct from the stratum made up of people in insecure employment: they are the urban underclass[2]. There are many other *yoseba* aside from the four big *yoseba*; small-scale *yoseba* can be found dotted around the whole country (these include Tikko in Fukuoka, Deyashiki in Amagasaki, Harappa in Kawasaki and Don in Hiroshima). Day laborers constantly move from one *yoseba* to another on the basis of information about jobs and wages.

Labor recruiters and labor arrangers inform *yoseba* laborers of work opportunities. There are two forms of employment for day laborers: daily employment, in which they are hired in the morning and receive their pay in the evening, effectively on a 'cash' basis; and fixed term employment for a set period of time, effectively on a 'contract' basis. The former is the basic form of employment for *yoseba* laborers. Fixed term employment includes the further features of 'the direct run' – that is, commuting directly from one's own place of residence (for example, a cheap lodging house area or SRO hotel) – and 'traveling to work' while staying in a labor arranger's lodgings – a *hanba* (work camp) – at the construction site[3] or a hotel. The forms of employment available to *yoseba* laborers, including fixed term employment, are on a daily employment basis; that is, necessarily unorganized and leading inescapably to the lowly nature and insecurity of their lives.

Doya are day laborer lodgings for men living apart from their families. *Doya* styles have changed from the large rooms in which laborers used to sleep with their clothes on to the type known as 'silkworm shelves' in which beds were stacked into three or four

rows, arriving finally at the present 'compartments'. These are rooms measuring two-and-a-half to three *tatami* mats in size (one *tatami* mat is 95 by 191 centimeters) with a television and heating and cooling facilities. There are communal washing and bathing facilities and toilets, and small cooking stoves, available on a user-pays basis, so that laborers living in the rooms can prepare simple meals. Accommodation charges are one to two thousand yen per night in Kamagasaki. In recent years there has been a rise in long-term occupancy by older men receiving living assistance payments and these *doya* are developing improved welfare facilities such as weekly visits by a doctor who conducts free health checks.

The main employer of *yoseba* laborers is still overwhelmingly the construction industry. In this sense, the *yoseba* exists primarily as a construction labor market. The volume of work available in the construction industry varies tremendously in response to changing economic conditions. This situation is the result of the construction industry's heavy reliance on its stratified subcontracting structure and also the economic role of its employment adjustment function as it traditionally absorbed the unemployed laborers fired from other industries. Within the industry, there are considerable variations in the demand for day laborers: who make up the group at the very bottom of the stratified structure. These circumstances result in the unorganized nature of work for *yoseba* laborers and the insecurity of their lives.

> *Excessive* orders give rise to *unnecessary* stratification in labor force control. In periods of depression [the construction industry] creates management anxiety, low productivity and insecure work for the 3, 400, 000 in outdoor, independent medium and small enterprises and also creates insecure employment for the 1, 470, 000 laborers exclusively subcontracted by general contractors. Subcontracting companies and individual gaffers increase as a result of the 'rationalization' of business expenses, themselves adding in turn to increased levels of stratification. Alongside this, a construction labor economics mechanism operates producing a complex series of effects. The instability and opacity of stratified, indirect employment lead to the problems of poor welfare and working conditions; the hiring of young people; unemployment; aging; and a shortage of skilled workers. This, in turn, leads to a series of labor problems for the outdoor construction industry, such as a reliance on migrant labor, the inadequate skills of mid-career laborers, laborer accidents, inferior construction work and a profusion of bankruptcies. [Hippo's own emphasis] (Hippo, 1992: 37).

Yoseba Changes

The service sector is playing an increasingly prominent role in Japan's economy. Table 2.1, 'The percentage of employees by industry', charts this situation. The percentage of employees is falling in the manufacturing industry and climbing in the service industry[4]. The construction industry has not shown any marked fluctuations. The reason for this is that the increase in work orders from the service industry made up for the losses resulting from both the reduction in orders from the manufacturing industry and public works projects. However, the real numbers of employees are increasing each year in all types of industry. Next, Table 2.2, 'Percentage of employees by occupation', sets out the increasing prominence of the service industry in the economy. This shows a decline in the percentage of people in skilled work in the manufacturing and the construction industry and an increase in the percentage of people in specialist and skilled occupations in business and in sales. That is, there has been a reduction of employees in many occupational categories in manufacturing industries and an increase of employees in many occupational categories in service industries. Furthermore, we can also see this trend with regard to the percentage of day and casual laborers, on an industry-by-industry basis. Let us now look at Table 2.3 (based on a table compiled by Ogura (Ogura, 1999)). This table shows that the percentage of daily and casual employees is highest in the retail industry and then, in decreasing order, in the service, construction, transportation and manufacturing industries. This trend is accelerating.

Once we enter the 1990s, we see a stagnation of business activity, under the impact of a prolonged recession. Under the effects of this stagnation there has been a remarkable slump in the construction industry which had played the role of keeping business buoyant and regulating employment. The Tokyo City Employment Security Office, which introduced day labor work, also displays this trend in day work. Let us now look at Table 2.4, 'Day labor employment service (Tokyo)'. In the first half of the 1990s, the numbers of registered day laborers, people in employment and the total number of people working is falling (the situation was similar in the latter half of the 1990s). These 'day labor' figures include both people employed outside *yoseba* and outside the construction industry. However, there is no mistaking the fact that *yoseba* day labor work is decreasing.

There have been three causes of the decline in *yoseba* day laborer work in recent years. One is the change that has taken place in the

Table 2.1: Percentage of employees by industry (%)

Year	Construction	Manufacturing	Transportation	Financial	Service	Total
1965	9.3	34.5			16.2	28,760,000
1970	9.2	34.6	0.9	0.4	16.9	33,060,000
1975	10.3	31.2	0.9	0.4	18.1	36,460,000
1980	10.8	28.6	0.8	0.8	19.8	39,710,000
1985	9.6	28.6	0.8	0.8	21.8	43,130,000
1990	9.6	27	0.7	0.7	23.6	48,350,000
1995	10.3	24.9	0.7	0.7	25.2	52,630,000
1998	10.2	23.4	0.7	0.7	26.7	53,680,000

Source: An excerpt from *Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku*, 1998: 40.

Table 2.2: Percentage of employees by occupation (%)

Year	Skilled Professional	Management	Business	Sales	Transportation Communications	Manufacture	Labor	Security services
1970	7.4	4.0	21.9	10.4	6.6	34.0	6.0	8.1
1975	8.3	5.6	21.3	11.7	6.0	33.4	3.6	8.6
1980	9.2	5.5	21.9	12.5	5.8	31.7	3.7	8.6
1985	10.5	4.8	22.1	13.5	4.9	30.5	4.7	7.9
1990	12.3	4.8	22.5	14.1	4.5	27.8	5.1	7.9
1995	13.1	4.4	22.7	14.0	4.2	26.4	5.3	8.9
1998	13.7	4.0	23.0	13.8	4.0	25.3	5.6	9.4

Source: An excerpt from *Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku*, 1998: 42.

Table 2.3: Numbers of people in casual and day work by industry (1997)

	Employee total (1)	Regular employment	Casual (2)	Day employment (3)	[(2) + (3)] / (1)
Construction	5,630,000	5,090,000	240,000	300,000	9.6
Manufacturing	13,070,000	12,080,000	790,000	200,000	7.6
Retail	7,930,000	6,150,000	1,470,000	310,000	22.4
Transportation	3,900,000	3,580,000	270,000	50,000	8.2
Service	14,080,000	12,320,000	1,480,000	280,000	12.5
Industry total	53,910,000	47,910,000	4,750,000	1,250,000	11.1

Source: *Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku*, 1998. The industry total includes agriculture and forestry and a number of non-agriculture and non-forestry areas.

Table 2.4: Day labor employment service (Tokyo)

Year	Registrants	In employment	Total man-days
1992	134,371	65,819	419,391
1993	116,189	56,995	230,494
1994	105,532	54,531	206,683
1995	97,132	51,527	185,474
1996	88,165	51,300	163,950

Source: *Tōkyōto Tōkeikyōkai*, 1998: 336. 'Day labor' denotes day employment work transacted at the Employment Security Office, and in which the period of employment is set at less than a month.

industries in which *yoseba* laborers are finding day work. That is, the main place of employment first changed from the manufacturing to the construction industry. Now the employment opportunities are moving form the construction to the service industry, although this is only a slight trend. I will pursue this point in the following section in reference to the places of employment for Kamagasaki laborers.

Secondly, the construction industry, which up until now has been the place of employment for *yoseba* laborers, is experiencing unprecedented recession; upheavals stemming from reductions in orders for work; the problem of managing bad debts from the period of the bubble economy; bankruptcies; the reduced scale of business operations; and restructuring. Bankruptcies in construction companies reached 2, 474 cases merely in the period from April to September 1997, accounting for thirty-five per cent of total bankruptcies in all industries (Taira, 27 January 1998: 32). Moreover, there have been a number of major general contractors amongst the bankrupt companies[5]. In 1998 it was announced that Japan's expenditure on public works would be seven per cent lower than in the previous year. This, effectively, means a cut of twenty to thirty per cent in the number of new works started. If these reductions were to be put into effect as planned, it is estimated that this would mean unemployment for 300, 000 people currently employed in the construction industry (Taira, 1998: 33 and Yamaji, 1998: 42). We can see the unemployed, mainly concentrated amongst skilled workers and laborers, as accounting for sixty-seven per cent of the 6, 700, 000 construction workers. In view of the fact that the vast majority of *yoseba* laborers are construction workers, the reduction in demand for day laborers in the construction industry directly resulted in the dismantling of the *yoseba*'s labor supply function.

Thirdly, the methods for recruiting labor have changed in three main ways. To begin with, because *yoseba* day laborers, regardless of background, have been aging, they have lost their value as a labor force in the eyes of employers. The powers of control of labor arrangers and labor recruiters over day laborers have also increased. Labor recruiters have gained increased control over labor by keeping it locked up in their own work camps[6]. Labor recruiters select 'good quality' workers (those who are experienced, strong and docile) in *yoseba* through the practise of 'hiring people who are known to them'[7] (*kaozuke*: the preferential awarding of labor contracts to known-faces). The labor recruiters then keep these workers in work camps and convey them to work sites on the basis of company need. Labor recruiters and arrangers now recruit labor not from *yoseba* but from railway stations, from parks and alongside rivers. This means that they have expanded the space in which they recruit labor in order to ensure that they will obtain a good quality and low cost labor force. Finally, there has been an expansion of job seeking methods such as using help-wanted magazines and newspaper columns and also workers calling employers directly and signing contracts with them. With the rise of these methods, there is no longer any need for labor recruiters and labor arrangers to bother with going out into the *yoseba* and the streets to negotiate with workers. For laborers also this is an expedient method of finding employment as everything can be settled merely by making one phone call. Under these arrangements laborers can get jobs without labor recruiters and labor arrangers skimming off any of their wages.

Trends amongst the young

These developments have led to the decline of the labor recruitment function of *yoseba* since construction capital is now able to raise a labor force without relying on *yoseba*. There are two further factors behind this. The first is that in contrast to the decline in work in the construction industry, the availability of work in the service industry (including the wholesale and retail industries) is on the increase in the day labor market. The second is that increasing numbers of young people are flowing into the day labor market. The proportion of young people aged fifteen to twenty-four amongst service employees was 58.9 per cent (4,688,000) in 1975 and 69.5 per cent (5,699,000) in 1996 (*Rōdōshō Rōseikyoku* (Labor Administration Bureau, Ministry of Labor) 1998: 7–8). The percentage of young people employed in

the manufacturing industry fell while the percentage employed in the service industry rose. In the same period, there was a rise in the number of young people employed in the construction industry from 440,000 in 1985 to 760,000 in1996. Furthermore, the unemployment rate amongst young people was 5.7 per cent in 1985 but climbed to 7.6 per cent in 1996 (*Rōdōshō Rōseikyoku* 1998: 13). There are three background features to these trends amongst young people. One is the decline in demand for a young workforce in the manufacturing industry. The second is the absorption of a portion of those young people who failed to find work in the manufacturing industry into the service industry. The third is the change in young people's attitudes to work. This combination of factors has pushed up the unemployment rate for young people and has also thrust a portion of young people into the day labor market.

What do we actually mean when we talk about changes in young people's attitudes to work? Let us look at Table 2.5. This table depicts trends in employment choices and the reasons given by young people (aged fifteen to twenty-nine) in work for making these choices. Note that in this context we are not discussing young people who are working while studying. The percentage of people who 'have not promptly taken up regular employment' increases the younger the age of respondents. A large percentage gave as the reason for this 'there was a lack of positions'. This shows a decrease in regular paid employment opportunities for younger people. As the respondents' ages increased, a large number said, 'It did not meet my aspirations'. This shows an attitude of not persisting with work which does not meet one's expectations. We also see one in five people across all age groups saying, 'I did not feel like finding work'. In addition to this, the number of people giving no reason for why 'I did not find work promptly' reached thirty to forty per cent. There are likely to be a variety of personal circumstances behind these answers. We can say the following on the basis of the above facts. Briefly, a combination of objective conditions in which there are *few employment opportunities* and employment attitudes which place value on 'interest' and 'being carefree' are keeping young people away from employment as regular employees. As a consequence of this situation, we can see that there has been an increase in the number of young people who are hopping from one temporary job to another (*furītā*) and also that young people have become a conspicuous presence in the construction industry. When one asks young working people, between the ages of fifteen and

*Table 2.5: Young people's employment choices and the reasons for
    them (%)*

Age	I readily found employment as a regular employee	I did not find work quickly		There were no work vacancies	Work did not meet my aspirations	I did not feel like finding work
15–19	63.1	36.9	(100)	(27.8)	(13.4)	(20.0)
20–24	81.5	18.5	(100)	(20.9)	(21.8)	(20.5)
25–29	87.2	12.8	(100)	(14.2)	(22.6)	(20.3)

Source: *Kōsei Rōdōshō*, 1998: 95.

twenty-four, why they are doing casual work the responses one largely hears are 'I am doing it until I find work that I like', 'There are other things, apart from work, that I want to do' and 'In regular employment people are shackled to the company' (*Rōdōshō Rōseikyoku* 1998: 12). These statements reveal young people's attitudes to work.

However, there is an aspect of the responses from these young people which cannot be taken at face value. They may simply 'be convinced' that their employment choices are 'a result of their likes', notwithstanding the fact that the employment opportunities for young people are decreasing. We must interpret young people's attitudes to employment by, first of all, examining the actual trends in employment opportunities. Comments such as 'There is plenty of work out there, as long as one is not fussy' and 'Not settling into fixed employment is simply a matter of procrastination' are nothing more than popularly-held misconceptions. In March 2000, unemployment rates of 12.5 per cent for males between 15 and 24 and 5.8 per cent for males between 25 and 34 were well over the 4.9 per cent unemployment rate for the total work force. The main reason for this is 'unemployment resulting from reasons of personal choice such as looking for work with good conditions' (*Asahi Shinbun* 29 March 2000). However, the actual employment conditions of young people, such as 'job-hopping part timers', are not clear. In what kind of work are young people employed, particularly those with scant education and incomes – for example, young people who have dropped out of middle school and high school and those who have joined motorcycle gangs? The trend towards the emergence of young people mingling in with the urban underclass, which is made up of day laborers and the homeless, draws our gaze. Are they an urban underclass reserve army?

Part Two: The basic day labor market

The concentration of labor supply capital

Let us move on to an analysis of the Kamagasaki labor market. Kamagasaki (as the *yoseba* area is popularly known) is an area 0.62 km[2] in one corner of Nishinari ward in the city of Osaka. This is Japan's largest *yoseba* with roughly 30,000 inhabitants, mostly day laborers. According to the Kamagasaki police, in December 1996, there were 17,000 people staying in cheap lodging houses (*doya*); 5,000 in work camps (*hanba*); 2,900 in the hospital and other *yoseba* facilities; 300 who were regularly homeless; and a further 8,000 using Kamagasaki as a point from which to go out and work: a total of 33,200 day laborers in work and former day laborers who live in and around Kamagasaki, moving in and out of the district (*Nishinari Keisatsusho* (Nishinari Police Station), 1998: 8)[8]. Figure 2.1 is a rough sketch of Kamagasaki. Historically, Kamagasaki can be described as a territory created as a result of the compulsory removal of cheap lodging houses to their present location because it was anticipated that Tennōji and Shinsekai in Nishinari ward would be the site of the Fifth National Industrial Exhibition in 1903[9]. Following this transfer, Kamagasaki remained, both pre war and post war, a slum quarter made up of poor families employed in traditional small, underclass occupations. In the post war period, however, once Japan entered the 1960s period of rapid economic growth, large numbers day laborer single men flowed into Kamagasaki from all over Japan, and, in particular, from the whole of western Japan, which has the Kansai (Kyoto–Osaka–Kobe) area at its heart. Kamagasaki changed into a *yoseba* in which labor arrangers find work for day laborers and simultaneously a place accommodating these people in cheap lodging houses. It turned into a *doya* town. In this manner, Kamagasaki changed aspect completely[10].

Kamagasaki is (was) above all else a basic day labor market. The meaning of basic, as used here, is that it placed day labor at the center of the labor market. To begin with, labor supply capital for day labor is (was) concentrated within the day labor market. Each morning, labor recruiters and labor arrangers congregate (congregated) in the Airin Labor Welfare Center in Kamagasaki, and in the surrounding streets, to recruit day laborers. This method of finding work is called the face-to-face (*aitai*) method for contracting employment in Kamagasaki. The face-to-face method of contracting employment

Figure 2.1: A rough map of Kamagasaki and its environs

Shinimamiya Station
Nankai Line

General Services
Center

Shinimamiya Station
JR Loop Line

Hanazono Park

Welfare Information Bureau

N

Tennūji Ward

Nishinari Police Station

Osaka–Kobe Expressway

Haginochayaminami Park

Nishinari Civic Center   Haginochayanaka Park
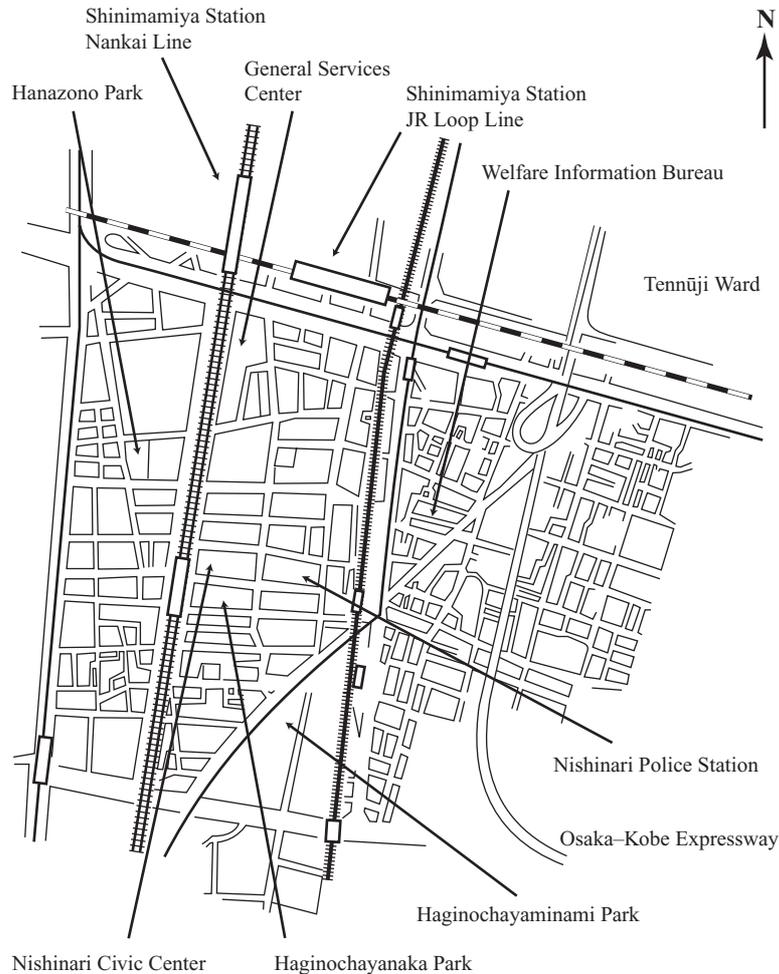
describes a method in which the Airin Labor Welfare Center[11] requires the registration of middlemen (labor arrangers and labor recruiters) who use Kamagasaki to look for workers; these middlemen can then attach a sheet of paper listing the conditions under which they are seeking workers to the fronts of their vehicles; and stand in front of these as they negotiate and conclude employment contracts with workers (*Rengō Ōsaka – Airinchiku Mondai Kenkyūkai* (Osaka Branch of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation, *Report of the Study Group on Problems in the Airin District*) 1998: 11). The

Employment Security Office, which serves as a public vehicle for disseminating information about work, does not find work for people in Kamagasaki: labor recruiters and labor arrangers, the company agents, negotiate directly with day laborers and conclude employment contracts[12]. Day laborers also have unemployment insurance – day labor employment insurance[13]. Furthermore, Kamagasaki has a Day Labor Union. This union throws itself into the Spring Struggle each year, sending off written demands to company agents who recruit labor in Kamagasaki, seeking responses to these, conducting collective bargaining, and constructing a unified unit wage system which decides minimum amounts for the year's day labor wages (cash). In this way, Kamagasaki has developed a day labor market system. The local government authorities have also put in place a number of policies regarding Kamagasaki. Two of the policy mainstays are the labor policies of the Labor Department of Osaka Prefecture and the welfare policies of the People's Livelihood Bureau of Osaka City. Both of these policies are fundamentally concerned with providing aid for day laborers in work. The continuing decline in the number of day laborers in work and the rapid increase in the numbers of homeless people are wrecking some of these policies, such as day labor employment insurance.

The base group and the peripheral group

Yoseba laborers are called 'a fluid surplus population' (Marx, 1867) because of their position and function in the labor market. The day laborers in Kamagasaki are made up of two groups. The first is the group of workers who are regularly employed in day labor. I call this the base group. This group forms the core of the stratum of day laborers in work in Kamagasaki. These are also the people who receive day labor employment insurance benefits. This is because unless they work they cannot get a stamp from their employer in their White Book (an employment insurance booklet given this name because of its white cover). The second group is one made up of people without work or who, having lost (been made to lose) even the will to work, largely do not (cannot) work. I call this group the peripheral group. Peripheral means people who are on the fringes of the *yoseba* labor market. These people make up the core of the homeless group in the Kamagasaki district. These men do not enjoy the benefits of any of the various labor policies of the local authorities (for example, day labor employment insurance).

Originally, the position of the base group and the peripheral group in Kamagasaki was not fixed and both were in mutually fluid relations. When laborers from the base group – that is, the group in work – failed to find work, they became part of the peripheral group – that is, the homeless group. Then, when they once again found work they would return to the base group. In this manner, the day laborers of Kamagasaki took on the role of being a control valve for the supply and demand of an underclass labor force in response to changing economic conditions. These men were cyclical and periodic day laborers who shuttled between employment and unemployment. Kamagasaki (in the past) was this type of surplus labor force pool.

Trends in day labor

Economic globalization has brought tremendous change to *yoseba* labor markets which developed to specialize in providing labor for the construction industry. The amount of work to be found in *yoseba* has dwindled and their labor provision role has receded. Labor arrangers and labor recruiters have gone off to railway stations, parks and the banks of rivers in pursuit of the homeless who have spread out from the *yoseba* and into city centers. Finding day labor work through employment magazines and newspapers has also become widespread practise leaving the *yoseba* to become the main source of homeless people. In order to use the *yoseba* as a medium for seeing the links between economic globalization and the increase in the number of homeless, we have to look back over the changes which have occurred in the *yoseba*. I will now review the changes which Kamagasaki has undergone. *Yoseba* are day labor markets. Trends within *yoseba* are prescribed by the volume and contents of capital's demand for day labor. If we outline the changes in Kamagasaki by dividing the day labor trends which occurred there following the period of rapid economic growth when Kamagasaki changed from a slum quarter into *yoseba*, the picture is as follows. Let us look at Table 2.6[14].

The first period (from 1960 until the early 1970s) was one of rapid economic growth in which huge, heavy industries, such as steel, shipbuilding and heavy chemical industries, drove economic growth. Day laborers were mobilized as subcontract and casual workers in these factories. In 1970 the industries employing day labor (for cash payment) recruited from Kamagasaki were construction 48.3 per cent, manufacturing 40.2 per cent and transport businesses 11.5 per cent (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* (National Conference of Day Labor

Table 2.6: Percentage of people sought for day employment (cash) by industry

Year	Port Transportation	Overland Transportation	Construction	Manufacturing
1967	33.2	6.1	33.8	26.9
1977	-	7.9	81.8	10.3
1987	-	2.7	93.9	3.4
1997	-	3.2	94.4	2.4

Source: An excerpt from *Nishinari Rōdōfukushi Sentā* (Shima, 1999: 59).

Unions), 1999). In this way, the places of employment for day laborers, whilst still primarily in the construction industry, also spread out into manufacturing and transport in this period. The demand for day labor increased and Kamagasaki expanded. Rapid economic growth ended with the first oil shock (1973–1975).

The second period (the late 1970s until the 1980s) was one in which the second oil shock (1980–1982) inaugurated a period of low economic growth, one which led into the period of the bubble economy (1986–1993), which drew business towards capital speculation in land. This period had already been one in which ninety percent of day laborers recruited from Kamagasaki had gone to work in the construction industry. This had been the case because whilst the beginning of the period of low economic growth heralded depressions in industries such as shipbuilding and a contraction in the scale of production in huge, heavy industries, there was an increase in capital speculation in land and an increase in the demand for day labor as a result of an increase in orders received within the construction industry. From this period on, Kamagasaki day laborers came to be specially recruited for work in the construction industry. The construction industry is an industry which experiences considerable fluctuations in its labor force demands, as dictated by the business climate. *Yoseba*, through their specialization in a labor market for the construction industry, heightened the insecurity of employment for day laborers.

The third period (the early 1990s) was one in which the bubble economy collapsed (1992), Japan experienced a recession and public investment aimed at effecting an upturn in business conditions increased. The construction industry took on the role of employment adjustment and absorbed the unemployed from many other industries. This is also the period in which the service industry started generating demand in the construction industry. Estimated construction expenses

in the service industry were 812.3 billion yen in 1975, 5,110.2 billion yen in 1994 and 3,4925 billion yen in 1995 (*Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku* (Statistics Bureau of the Management and Coordination Agency), 1998: 140). When we break down the number of orders being placed for construction work in 1996 on the basis of who placed them, we see that private orders made up 60.0 per cent of total orders and that orders from non-manufacturing industries accounted for 82.5 per cent of these private orders (*Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku*, 1999: 328). The majority of these non-manufacturing industries can be classified as service industries. Whilst there were fluctuations in expenditure on works projects in line with changes in the business climate, the overwhelming majority of construction works were generated by the service industry. In this period also the employment opportunities for Kamagasaki laborers were mainly in the construction industry. The industries employing day laborers in 1995 were: construction 96.0 per cent, transportation 2.8 per cent and manufacturing 1.2 percent (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1999).

The fourth period (the second half of the 1990s) was one in which the availability of day labor work declined as prolonged recession and reductions in public projects caused companies in the construction industry to reduce business operations and drove many into bankruptcy. In 1997, the government announced a reform of the financial structure and set out policies to reduce public spending. As a result of these steps, the construction industry lost its employment adjustment role and its role in curbing unemployment. In 2001, 6,154 construction companies, nationally, went into bankruptcy leaving in excess of ten million yen in debts, accounting for as much as 32.1 per cent of total company bankruptcies for that year (*Tokyo Shōkō Risāchi* (Tokyo Commerce and Industry Research), 2002). The total number of orders received for construction works by Japan's fifty construction companies were worth: 26.0 trillion yen in 1991; 20.4 trillion yen in 1996; and 14.3 trillion yen in 2001 (*Indekkusu* (Index), 2002: 892). The decline in the construction industry's need for people resulted in a parallel decline in recruitment for work in Kamagasaki. The average number of people finding help-wanted positions, paying cash, through the offices of the Airin Labor Welfare Center each day were 3,740 for the 1995 fiscal year but fell to 3,225 for 1996 and 2,351 for 1997 (*Airin Rōdō Fukushi Sentā* (Airin Labor Welfare Center), 1998: 4). This reduction in cash help-wanted positions has continued beyond these years, falling to an all-time average low of 1,601 people in May1998 and down to1,864 for the 1998 fiscal year (*Kamagasaki Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai* (Kamagasaki

Day Labor Union), 1 January 1999)[15]. This sharp decline in day labor work has come about primarily as a result of the recession in the construction industry and Kamagasaki is now experiencing a crisis linked to the fate of the construction industry's labor market[16].

Japan experienced the first and second oil shocks, the bubble economy and its collapse, cuts in the manufacturing industry, the expansion of the service industry and the failure of the employment adjustment function of the construction industry. There then followed a decline in the numbers of people employed in the manufacturing industry, an increase in the number of people employed by the service industry and, ultimately, a decline in the numbers being employed in the construction industry. There was also a decline in regular employment and an increase in fixed term (contract) employment. Ultimately, there followed a decline in fixed term employment, particularly, day labor in the construction industry. The numbers of unemployed people increased. This series of economic trends appeared in concentrated form in the *yoseba*. The day labor market in Kamagasaki first grew between the time of the period of rapid economic growth and the 1990s and after this, the bubble economy, public investment and work orders from the service industry all stimulated the creation of day labor work in the construction industry. Up until the beginning of the 1990s, whilst being sandwiched between repeated recessions such as those brought about by the oil crises, Kamagasaki's system of labor arranging was operating successfully and day laborers moved between the base group and the peripheral group. Economic globalization has been driving changes in the *yoseba* since the second period (the late 1970s until the 1980s). It was in this context, that the irreversible process of turning *yoseba* laborers into homeless people began. The decline of *yoseba* that we see today is a continuation of this process.

Part Three: The peripheral day labor market

Changes in day labor employment

In the latter half of the 1990s there was a cut in public investment and a rapid decline in construction works. The total number of works projects declined from 504,330 in 1990 to 404,003 in 1995 (*Sōmuchō Tōkeikyoku*, 1998: 145)[17]. Beginning in this period, bankruptcies amongst construction companies spread to general contractors. Even without the experience of bankruptcy, when general contractors face a decline in orders for construction work they tend to cut the unit price

offered to subcontractors. Alternatively, faced with these conditions, general contractors do not offer work to subcontractors: in an increasing number of cases master contractors have been completing work by relying entirely on their own employees. This is leading to continuing retrenchments and bankruptcies amongst subcontracting and sub-subcontracting companies. The following figures reflect the impact of this state of affairs on the numbers of people employed in the construction industry. The number of people employed in the construction industry was 4,730,000 in 1975 and 6,850,000 in 1997. However, these numbers fell in the latter half of the 1990s. The numbers of day laborers also fell from 550,000 to 300,000 between 1995 and 1997 (Fukuhara, 1998). Because of the overall increase in the number of people employed in the construction industry and the decline in day labor, the proportion of day employment, naturally, also fell. This was a fall from 14.8 per cent in 1975 to 5.3 per cent in 1997 (*Rōdōshō* (Ministry of Labor) 1998). The decline in construction work became particularly apparent in the latter part of the 1990s with a sharp fall in demand for day labor. The contraction of day labor opportunities began as a decrease in work for unskilled labor, such as navies, clearers, miscellaneous workers and others doing various types of light work. This has now spread to skilled jobs such as carpenters, steeplejacks, reinforcing bar placers and mould makers (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1998). Meanwhile, in line with the expansion of the service industry, there has been an increase in the volume of day labor work in service jobs – such as those for building supervisors, guards, cleaners, car park attendants and advertisers. In the Kantō area we are even seeing temporary help agents who specialize in identifying capable dispatch workers and recruiting day laborers in *yoseba* and on the streets (From comments made by B, a labor activist in San'ya. 25 October 1998). However, we do not know the real situation with regard to the number of day labor jobs in the service industry or just how widespread the regional expansion of recruiting has become.

The fluidity and widening reach of labor arranging

These trends in the day labor market have had considerable impact on the laborers in Kamagasaki. As a consequence of the reduction in the number of works projects in the construction industry, Kamagasaki's labor supply function is beginning to look hollow. The number of labor arrangers and labor recruiters who are looking for workers in Kamagasaki has declined. The number of these agents registered

with the Airin Labor Welfare Center was 2,764 in March 1991 but by March 1997 this number had fallen to 1,860 (*Kamagasaki Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai*, 1 July 1998). The number of company agents arranging labor in the Kamagasaki neighborhood without being registered with the center (black market employment) has also fallen. These days, early morning at the Airin Labor Welfare Center sees considerably fewer minibuses accompanying the labor arrangers and labor recruiters who used to be found milling about and the daily scene has become instead one of groups of laborers who have failed to find work standing around. The decrease in the call for day labor in Kamagasaki has not, however, been solely due to the decline in available work. There are also other reasons for this. One is that workers who come into Kamagasaki from the outside take the work available through Kamagasaki's Airin Labor Welfare Center[18]. These workers come from a relatively young group of people in insecure employment, who live in the work camps, rented rooms and apartments of Nishinari Ward, Taishō Ward, Suminoe Ward and Minato Ward. Matsushige locates these men as 'the base workers who sit just above the workers of Kamagasaki' (Matsushige 1997: 120).

A second reason for the falling demand for day laborers in Kamagasaki is the change in labor arranging methods used by labor arrangers and labor recruiters. Labor supply capital has become more fluid. It has become general practise not to hire laborers every morning from Kamagasaki but instead to enclose workers in labor arrangers' work camps[19]. We are also seeing the appearance of certain companies within the ranks of general contractors which gather together laborers from all over Japan directly into their own boarding houses and keep them enclosed within them. However, an increase in the number of work camps does not mean an increase in job offers in the work camps of Kamagasaki. Job offers in the Kamagasaki work camps fell 22.5 per cent in the year from November 1995 to November 1996 (*Kamagasaki Ettō Tōsō Jikkō Iinkai* (Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Executive Committee), 1996). According to the Airin Labor Welfare Center, the registration rate of laborers in the work camps fell from 63.8 to 56.2 per cent in the period from 1997 until 1998 (Study Group on the Problems of the Airin District, Osaka Branch of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation 1998: 13). That is, saying that job offers in work camps increased is simply saying that the work camp system is now becoming the dominant new labor arranging system instead of cash work, which is in sharp decline. There has also been an increase in the number of labor arrangers limiting their selections to day laborers

younger than fifty or fifty-five in order to secure young and healthy workers for the meager work that does exist (*Rengō Ōsaka – Airinchiku Mondai Kenkyūkai*, 1998: 14). In Osaka, labor arrangers' work camps are concentrated in Nishinari Ward, which includes Kamagasaki, and Taishō Ward [20]. Work camps have also grown larger. Work camps with a capacity for housing several hundred laborers have appeared in areas such as Taishō Ward. There has also been an increase in the practise of recruiting labor from distant places. Labor recruiting agents from Tokyo are moving into the areas around Kamagasaki and those from Kansai are moving into Tokyo (A's comments 25 October, 1998). The labor recruiting agents, operating on the basis of a national network, now enclose laborers in their work camps for long periods and transport them to work sites[21]. 'Cash', the basic employment practise in Kamagasaki, is now a minority practise.

Another change is that the spaces in which labor is arranged have become more dispersed. Apart from arranging labor in Kamagasaki, labor arrangers have also increasingly relied on the method of arranging labor through help-wanted columns in help-wanted magazines and newspapers, at railway stations (Japan Rail's Osaka Station and Tennōji Station) and parks (for example, Tennōji Park, Nagai Park, Osaka Castle Park and Ōgimachi Park). Labor arrangers and labor recruiters, from their overwhelmingly dominant position as buyers, now make labor arrangements for day laborers under low pay and inferior working conditions, without going into Kamagasaki. There has also been an increase in the numbers of workers, in service occupations, such as transportation, crating, bookbinding and guard work, who 'live out', traveling directly to work from lodging houses and apartments – where laborers live together under the same roof – and also from friends' dwellings[22].

Inferior working conditions

The number of day laborers being hired in Kamagasaki has declined sharply and the labor arranging function of Kamagasaki has receded. As a consequence of this, the face-to-face contract system operated by labor arrangers, labor recruiters and day laborers has, in effect, collapsed. Amidst the present sharp decline in job offers for day work, labor recruiters and labor arrangers no longer attach a sheet of paper to the fronts of their cars clearly setting out their working conditions; the dominant practise is now a virtual black market, with hiring now occurring on the basis of the recruiter's preference. Registered

company agents also have an obligation to report their pay and working conditions to the Airin Labor Welfare Center every morning but this too has become a hollow requirement[23]. The Kamagasaki Day Labor Union traditionally decided the minimum level for cash work in the Spring Struggle each March but this unified wage system has now also effectively collapsed. The shortage of work has brought about a labor force buyers' market for labor arrangers and labor recruiters. Labor contracts operate to the labor arrangers' and labor recruiters' advantage. This leads to a rise in 'extremely bad' (*ketaochi*) work – for low pay and under inferior working conditions – and also an increase in 'semi-sweatshop' (*hantako*) work camps[24]. Labor unions talk over work matters with workers and occasionally engage in strikes and collective bargaining in order to protect the interests of workers. In recent years practically all of the matters brought to the union for consultation have been concerned with the problem of non-payment of wages (From the comments of A who was quoted earlier. 25 October 1998). Now, union consultations with the high-paid craftsmen stratum such as plasterers, reinforcing bar placers and paving workers, and consultations with the low-paid homeless stratum are spreading beyond, the sphere of the *yoseba*. Meanwhile, due to the fall in the unit cost of job orders (particularly in the case of low works unit cost bids for public works), we see the emergence of employers who cannot pay employee wages and even of employers who, from the outset, have no intention of paying employee wages. Nevertheless, we continue to see laborers who conclude (cannot help but conclude) employment contracts, fully aware of the inferior working conditions in them. In any case, by going into a work camp one can secure a bed for the time being and a meal. One can escape from having to sleep rough. The flip side of this is that even if one goes out to work from a work camp and earns money, because there are living expenses, such as rent and meals, to be paid one can find oneself with practically no money on leaving the work camp. However, day laborers and the homeless are aware of this. The sharp decline in the availability of work is driving them to accept even these conditions.

> The last time I went into a work camp, there were two rows of beds lined up in a 6 mat room, so as to be able to sleep eight people, and the monthly board was 30,000 to 40,000 yen per person. There was no such thing as any private space anywhere. There were always quarrels breaking out and on rainy days and at night there was nothing to do to pass the time except drink and gamble. It was practically a revival of the *ōbeya*

('large' room) of the past. Although I worked for a month, when I left I had a mere 50,000yen. I was supposed to earn 6,000yen a day under my first contract (D of Kamagasaki, 16 July 1999).

The peripheral group

The decline in construction industry day labor and the increasing fluidity and branching out over a wide area of labor arrangers and labor recruiters reduced Kamagasaki's labor arranging function to mere form. Then the class composition of the day laborers in Kamagasaki changed; the expulsion of unskilled laborers from the day labor market was the first of these changes. The base group of laborers in Kamagasaki today has simply come to mean a, by now, small group of artisans. Laborers coming in from outside Kamagasaki in search of work have subsequently swelled the ranks of this base group. This group of more recent arrivals includes young people who are hopping from one temporary job to another (*furītā*) and foreign workers. These men are young and full of vitality and, compared to the Kamagasaki laborers, whose average age is in the mid fifties, they have the edge when it comes to finding employment. Nevertheless, young people and foreign workers are still not present in sufficiently large numbers to alter the composition of workers in Kamagasaki. Meanwhile, the older laborers and homeless people who have been thrown out of the labor market have come to make up Kamagasaki's peripheral group. In the past, the base group of day laborers and the peripheral group, made up of former day laborers, were mutually interchangeable. Today the central component of both the base group and the peripheral group has changed and the position of these respective groups has become fixed. The number of laborers in the base group has declined while the peripheral group has grown. A further development has been the growing invisibility of the base group and growing visibility of the peripheral group. Members of the peripheral group have progressively lost the employment opportunities that used to exist in their 'principal occupation' – that is, construction day labor – and their presence as part of the homeless group, has become their normal state. There was a progressive downward move, in class terms, from the base group to the peripheral group but only an insubstantial incidence of people climbing from the peripheral group to the base group. The peripheral group then spread out from Kamagasaki to the adjoining areas of Nihonbashi and Tennōji Park, and further on into the areas to the south, and became a 'stagnant surplus population' (Marx, 1867) stopping

here and there. These men occasionally also hear about construction work from labor arrangers and labor recruiters. However, as a rule, they have come to scrape together a daily existence by working in a variety of service occupations. There is no change with regard to the fact that these men continue to work in both construction and service occupations in order to make a living. However, with regard to such things as the security of work, pay and laborers' sense of self worth, the move from construction work to service occupations, clearly signifies a drop in social class for laborers and the homeless[25].

The homeless

I give a detailed account of the homeless in present-day Japan in Chapter 4. What I would like to do here is take a look at the actual conditions facing the homeless specifically in the area of their relationship to the changes occurring in Kamagasaki. The laborers of Kamagasaki have no work. These laborers are aging and cannot take on heavy physical work. They are excluded by the labor recruiters' practise of hiring on the basis of preference and they cannot get into work camps either. The numbers of these types of laborers have increased in Kamagasaki. This fact has two consequences. First, these men (most of them) cannot qualify for day labor insurance payments. In 1996 the number of workers over fifty-five and below sixty who received insurance payments was 34.3 per cent and those over sixty in receipt of these payments were 26.5 per cent (*Shakai Kōzō Kenkyūkai* (Social Structure Study Group), 1997: 28). Fifty-five is roughly the average age of Kamagasaki laborers (the average age of Kamagasaki day laborers was 53.5 in 1998 (*Kamagasaki Shiryō Sentā* (Kamagasaki Resource Center), 1999). As they age, fewer people are entitled to benefits[26]. Secondly, *doya* capital in Kamagasaki has been rebuilding with an eye to turning the *doya* into multi-story and higher-grade establishments. Because of this *doya* rents have risen markedly[27]. As a result it has become increasingly difficult for laborers to find *doya* lodgings. According to the Nishinari Police Station, which conducts *doya* surveys on the fourteenth of every month, *doya* occupancy rates were 78.2 per cent in May 1995; 77.8 per cent in May 1996; 72.4 per cent in May1997; and 62.1 per cent in May 1998 (*Nishinari Keisatsusho*, 1998). There is a clear fall in occupancy rates[28].

For the reasons set out above, there has been an increase in the number of homeless people. According to the responses of 541 homeless people, queuing for dry biscuits at the Airin Labor Welfare

Center on 29 June 1998, to questions from the Kamagasaki Day Labor Union, 80.4 per cent of the total had been unemployed for less than half a year and of these 10.9 per cent had been unemployed for less than one month (*Nojukusha to Kamagasaki Rōdōsha no Jinken o Mamoru Kai* (Society for the Protection of the Human Rights of the Homeless and Kamagasaki Laborers), and between June and July 1997 the number of homeless people in Kamagasaki exceeded 1,000 people (Shima 1999: 34)[29]. On 9 May 1998, the number of homeless people in Kamagasaki and its surrounds exceeded 3,422 (*Nojukusha to Kamagasaki Rōdōsha no Jinken o Mamoru Kai*, 1998: 2). Furthermore, the number of homeless people dispersed throughout the city center, who were either day laborers in work or former day laborers from Kamagasaki, reached 5,000 (Shima, 1999: 34)[30]. The laborers who were the mainstay of the construction industry following the period of rapid economic growth have now become 'discarded people'. Company restructurings and bankruptcies have further added to these numbers; homeless people (of middle and advanced years) from the underclass in general who having been driven away from their homes, facilities and regions, drift into Kamagasaki. The numbers are not reliable but as new members of the homeless these men stay at the bottom in Kamagasaki (district). They do not possess the experience or the resourcefulness to survive homelessness. Moreover, their emotional scars from having so very recently skidded out of normal society are deep. They are, for this reason, the people facing the greatest danger of falling ill on the street[31].

There are numerous volunteer organizations working to support the homeless in Kamagasaki. 'No deaths!' is their motto. In the winter struggle period from the end of 1998 to the beginning of 1999, these groups provided more than 1,000 meals per day as part of the soup run in Sankaku Park (*Kamagasaki Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai*, 14 January 1999). The number of meals exceeded 2,600 per day in December 1998 (*Kachitorukai* 14 February 2000: 5)[32]. These groups also carry out midnight patrols of Kamagasaki and its environs. They also provide medical consultation facilities. They provide advice on work and lifestyle in the offices of the Kamagasaki Day Labor Union. However, this does not mean that this array of support activities for the homeless is capable of providing for the needs of all members of the rapidly increasing homeless population. The Osaka Relief Counseling Center, a branch office of the Osaka Civil Administration Bureau, (known as *Shikōsō* and located in the Kamagasaki district) provides assistance which includes advice on the daily lives of the homeless,

applying for welfare benefits, admitting people to hospital and other medical facilities and providing extra relief. Even this assistance, however, is inadequate. The Relief Counseling Center makes welfare benefit payments only by admitting those who come to it for advice to hospitals and other medical facilities. This approach lacks the type of protection afforded by one's dwelling in Sna'ya and Kotobukichō where a *doya* is treated as one's residence[33]. Welfare benefits cover lifestyle, medical and funeral support but not housing assistance. Consequently, because there is no independent emergency support system for the homeless – that is, in a form enabling one to start one's life anew – there is a gap between the aims and the realities of the Daily Life Security Law[34].

Day laborers are getting older, the class border between them and the homeless is disappearing and the demand for work amongst these groups is growing. As a result, the city of Osaka, in conjunction with Osaka prefecture, began running elderly people's cleaning work projects from November 1994[35]. Registered elderly people (over fifty-five) carry out the cleaning projects, on a rotation basis, in the Kamagasaki area and receive 6,000 yen in wages for six hours of work a day. The number of people who gained work through this scheme in 1997 was 1,119 (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1999). Also, in September 1999, Kamagasaki's Action Group, Kamagasaki Anti-Unemployment Liaison Conference (Anti-Unemployment Conference), set up the 'Kamagasaki Support Organization' NPO – a not for-profit organization – which began a welfare job scheme commissioned by the city of Osaka under the National Emergency Special Subsidy for Regional Employment. Sixty people a day, from amongst the approximately 2,000 workers registered with the Kamagasaki Support Organization, are employed doing cleaning work and repairs, for example, to Kindergarten facilities (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 14 March 2000). The number of workers employed in all the cleaning work is 150 people per day but this means that each registered person gets a turn to work only three times a month. This is a long way from satisfying the needs of all the elderly homeless people who would like to work. The main people who have taken on the task of providing assistance to the homeless people of Kamagasaki are volunteers from labor unions, religious organizations, city residents and students. The soup runs, counseling service and medical advice provided by these men and women are precious life resources for the homeless. For people who lack the confidence and the physical strength to endure homelessness outside of Kamagasaki and who have no choice but to

stay in Kamagasaki there is nothing to do but depend on assistance. Homeless people without any personal experience of day labor also come flowing into Kamagaskai because it has a system for assisting the homeless people at the very bottom in urban society[36].

3 The Urban Underclass and Kotobukichō

Part One: The evolution of Kotobukichō

Yokohama, a global city

Yokohama is an industrial city with a population exceeding 3,000,000. As with Tokyo and Osaka, Yokohama has also experienced the growing dominance of the service sector in its economy. The number of people employed in tertiary industries was 67.7 percent in 1981, 69.9 per cent in 1986 and 72.0 per cent in 1991 (*Yokohamashi Keizaikyoku* (YK) (Yokohama City Industrial Bureau), 1996: 219). Following the period of rapid economic growth primary industries declined, secondary industries stagnated (the construction industry leveled off) and tertiary industries (service industries) expanded. Yokohama was becoming a world city. From 1992 to 1993 there were 138 companies engaged in international trade (YK, 1994: 58). The figures for foreign affiliated companies setting up their headquarters in Yokohama are 72 in 1986, 126 in 1993 (YK, 1994: 60) and 133 in 1996 (YK, 1996: 123). There was a rapid increase in the number of foreign affiliated companies in the second half of the 1980s. Yokohama's advantageous economic location – for example, its proximity to the huge market of Tokyo, well-equipped infrastructure, the manufacturing industries of the Tokyo–Yokohama coastal area and its international harbor – promoted its transformation into a global city.

The number of registered foreigners in the city of Yokohama was 47,985 in 1996 (*Yokohamashi Kikakukyoku* (YKK)(Yokohama City Planning Bureau), 1996a) representing an increase of 73.3 per cent over the figures for 1988. Most of this increase consisted of foreigners who arrived in Japan during this period. This was in contrast to the trend towards a decline in the proportion of Koreans and Chinese residing in Japan as a whole at this time. Another feature of the foreign population at this time was the increase in the number of foreigners overstaying

their visas in Yokohama and a number of them have merged with Yokohama's urban underclass.

The city of Yokohama's daytime population was 88.7 per cent of its nighttime population in 1990 (YK, 1996: 97). In this same year, 39.4 per cent of the working population worked outside the city and of these 25.9 per cent worked in Tokyo. Large numbers of people are increasingly working in Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture. As the concentration of businesses in Tokyo continues to grow, Yokohama is increasingly acting as a consumer and dormer city for Tokyo. This is also the result of Yokohama's increasingly global nature as a city.

Establishing the Subject

How has Kotobukichō – the *yoseba* – changed in the course of Yokohama becoming a global city? Kotobukichō provides a clear picture of both Yokohama's structure and dynamics, from its very base. In this chapter I will look back over the pre war and post war

Figure 3.1: A rough map of Kotobukichō and its environs
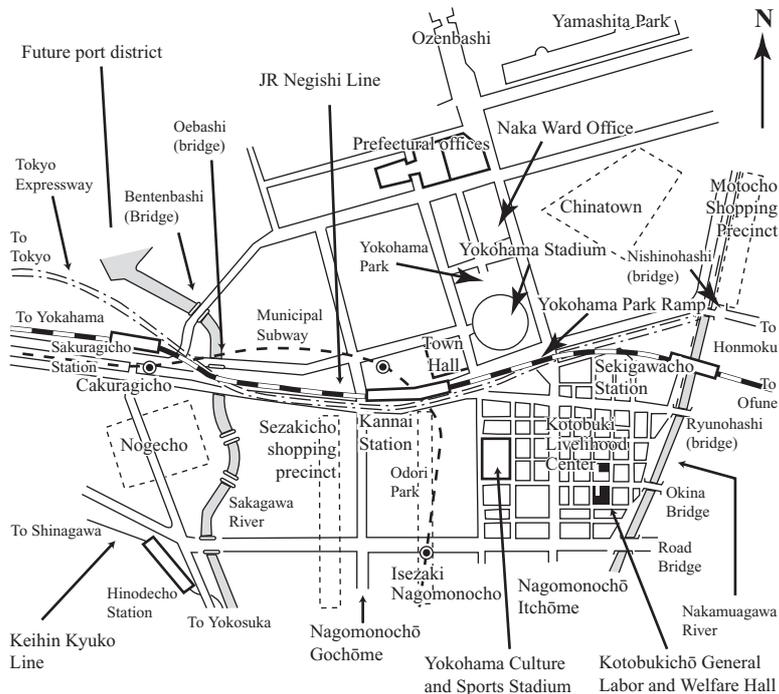
history of Kotobukichō and examine its formation and the changes that is has undergone. Then, I will look at the class structure of Kotobukichō today: that is, the actual conditions of employment for day laborers, the poor (the group of people on welfare benefits and the homeless) and foreign workers. Finally, I will outline the present conditions of class and physical space in Kotobukichō, and attempt to look into its future.

The area popularly known as Kotobukichō refers to a narrow district of 250 square meters crowded with lodging houses which straddles the Yokohama city wards of Ōgimachi, Matsukagechō, Kotobukichō (in the narrow definition) and Miyoshimachi. Let us look now at Figure 3.1. Kotobukichō came into being as a *yoseba* in the post war period. We can divide the transformations undergone by the area known as Kotobukichō into three periods, from the pre war through to the post war era. The first period is the pre-*yoseba* history of the area – this is, the pre war period when Kotobukichō was a commercial district. The second period is the expansion period of the *yoseba*, which lasted from the time when the United States army of occupation requisitioned the territory until the period of rapid economic growth. The third period is that of the contracting *yoseba*, stretching from the period of rapid economic growth through the low growth stage to the present day.

The former history of the *yoseba*

Towards the end of the Tokugawa period there was a tremendous increase in coastal reclamation activity in response to the rapid increase in foreign trade, brought about by the opening of the port of Yokohama. This work ended in 1873 with the creation of seven towns on the reclaimed land (Matsukagechō, Kotobukichō, Ōgimachi, Okinamachi, Furōchō, Mandaichō and Yoshihamachō in present day Naka Ward) (*Yokohamashi* (City of Yokohama), 1968: 337). Foreign firms, trading companies, wholesalers and domestic industries flocked to this area in large numbers and were responsible for the economic vigor of modern Yokohama. Large numbers of harbor cargo handling workers poured into the area. Even the widespread damage caused by the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 did not significantly dull this lively trend. According to 'The Survey of Land-Based Cargo Handlers' by the Yokohama Central Employment Agency, the numbers of workers, in 1925, were 5,000 construction workers, 3,200 cargo handlers on the sea, 300 cargo handlers on land, 500 workers doing a variety of factory jobs, 500 unloading workers and 1,500 other workers – giving

a total of 11,000 workers (there were few Korean workers in this period) (Serizawa, 1976: 12). In terms of the types of laborers in these figures, there was an A-group of 2,146 regular employees (possessing a licence) and a B-group of 900 day laborers (unlicensed) – giving a total of 3,046.

The A-type laborers who made up the main force of laborers, signed employment contracts with agents working for shipping and cargo businesses and lived together in one room under the powerful command of an agent (the room system: *heya seido*). Paternalistic status relations prevailed between the gaffer and this group of laborers as his followers. There were, however, many people in the skilled artisans group who, abhorring the idea of being in regular employment and fettered to a specific group, became casual workers available for day work. Consequently, in the pre war period, there were not large numbers of independent unskilled workers who were hired for work on day contracts by labor arrangers. For this reason, no *yoseba* came into being. These conditions stayed fundamentally the same in the wartime Shōwa period, when the needs of government policy and the mobilization of workers controlled the supply of labor.

The *yoseba* expansion period

In 1945 the seven towns, which had been built on reclaimed land, were in ruins following wartime air raids. At the time of defeat, the United States army of occupation requisitioned this area as a base for stationing its troops (the central region) and as a supply base for aid materials (the harbor facilities). The extent of the requisitioned land area was 3.9 per cent of Yokohama city and corresponded to 62.3 per cent of all requisitioned land throughout Japan, excluding Okinawa (Serizawa, 1976: 39). Ninety per cent of harbor facilities were also requisitioned. The troop stationing and supply functions of these bases generated a need for an enormous labor force. Approximately one thousand casual day laborers per day were employed as occupation army laborers and mobilized to handle military freight and to do simple work such as cleaning and tidying. The port of Yokohama, as the food supply base in this period of food shortages, served simultaneously as the unloading point for eighty per cent of the aid and imported grains for the whole country.

The laborers needed for these cargo handling activities were employed through referrals from the Labor Agency and face-to-face employment in front of the office gates (black market employment

by labor arrangers). These laborers were unemployed demobilized soldiers – returnees from Asian countries formerly under Japanese control – and the victims of war damage, who came pouring into the area both from within the city and from its outlying areas. Cargo handling work in the port of Yokohama continued to increase from the time of post war food shortages; special procurements activity for the Korean War; the Economic Boom from 1955 to 1957; the Economic Boom from 1959 to 1961; and the Olympics Boom. This vitality continued even after the end of land and facilities requisitioning: the process of bringing requisitioning to an end began at the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952 and ended in 1958.

During this period, there were important changes in both the employment of laborers by the occupation army and the nature of harbor work (Serizawa, 1976: 22–24). Firstly, the simplification of work and the spread of the container system advanced as a result of the introduction of a large volume of machinery and vehicles. On the other hand, there was a dismantling of the wartime contracting business system of one port one company and the appearance of a flood of cargo handling companies. This resulted in the dissolution of the laborers' room and group systems. Then, labor arranging shifted to the black market arranging done by labor arrangers and labor recruiters on company commissions: the practise found in today's *yoseba*. This period simultaneously saw laborers forming themselves into gangs (*rōnin gumi*)[1] and also the appearance of the practise of laborers concluding direct employment contracts with cargo handling companies. The payment of wages shifted from the package contract work method to the job class system (regular, registered day labor and unregistered day labor).

Employment contracts for harbor work were modernized and a system of free contracts became the norm in the day labor market. One portion of the day labor group gained employment via referrals through the registration system for day laborers, part of the Dock Labor Promotion Law of 1965, and through the Employment Security Office, which was based on this system, and became regular employees – a move which entitled them to the Harbor Day Laborers' Insurance Booklet (known as the Blue Book because of its blue cover), to retirement allowances and also to becoming permanent residents living in apartments as a family unit. Unregistered day laborers, by contrast, became increasingly dependent on labor arrangers and labor recruiters and became the day laborers living in the *yoseba* lodging houses.

Kotobukichō changed following the end of land requisitioning. Firstly, as part of the 1957 City Planning for Post War Reconstruction, places (slums) such as Sakuragichō and Kasutori Alley and Kujira Alley in Noge were cleared from the city center and the Employment Security Office, which used to be in the cleared area, moved to Kotobukichō. At this time, housing facilities in Noge had reached an accommodation capacity of up to 4,000 people. Following the relocation of the Employment Security Office, the day laborers' '*yoriba,*' the original name for *yoseba*, eventually moved to Kotobukichō[2]. After the war, scrapped ships in the Ōoka River near Kotobukichō were also converted into floating hotels for harbor laborers, but then in 1951 there were fatalities when one of these ships capsized. This led to the raising of questions about health and safety as social issues and to hotels being relocated on dry land once again, as the floating hotels were left to their fate as scrapped ships[3].

These were the circumstances in which the numbers of day laborers in Kotobukichō began to increase and in which the cheap lodging houses, which they would come to patronize, were built. Few cheap lodging houses had existed in 1957 but their numbers had risen to sixty-four in 1959 (*Nakakusei 50 Shūnenkinen Jigyōjikkō Iinkai* (hereafter Nakaku) (Naka Ward 50th Anniversary Commemoration Project Executive Committee), 1985: 444–445). The land released from requisitioning initially became an extensive wasteland and was known by names such as '*Seibu no machi*' (Western Town). Japanese landlords, who had already built up a base for their economic activities in other areas to which they had moved following the occupation army's order to vacate this land in 1945 had, even before they moved, offered this land for sale cheaply. *Zainichi* Koreans, who had lived in the waterfront slum of Nakamura River from the pre war period, bought this land[4]. It was with the increasing numbers of day laborers in mind that they built lodging houses on their newly acquired land. During the boom of the 1950s, the numbers of day laborers flowing into Kotobukichō increased. Meanwhile, in 1961, as part of city environmental maintenance by the City of Yokohama, the Yokohama Cheap Lodging House Businesses Cooperative Association submitted a written report to the city saying that it would exercise self-regulation regarding the spread of cheap lodging houses to other areas. This is how Kotobukichō came to be a *yoseba* for day laborers and a cheap lodgings district, and also how Kotobukichō came to be the way it is today. The physical layout of Kotobukichō has hardly changed at all since then.

The *yoseba* contraction period

With the burgeoning vitality of the construction and manufacturing industries in the 1960s period of rapid economic growth, the demand for a labor force in these industries grew rapidly. Following the enactment of the Dock Labor Promotion Law, registered workers became regular workers and spread out to live in individual residences and accommodation facilities for people living away from their families, which were in commuting range of the whole Yokohama area. In contrast to this, Kotobukichō, whilst embracing ever-larger numbers of day laborers engaged in harbor work, simultaneously, saw an increase in day laborers working in industries such as construction and manufacturing. Large numbers of day laborers, both living apart from their families and also with families, flowed into Kotobukichō. As a consequence of this, the population reached 7,500 in 1968 (including 1,000 children) (*Yokohamashi*, 1968: 450) and exceeded 10,000 in 1970. The number of cheap lodging houses also increased from eighty in 1963 to eighty-seven in 1973 (*Nakaku*, 1985: 445).

At the time of the First Oil Shock in 1973 Japan entered a period of low economic growth. There followed a steady decline in the demand for day laborers in the construction and manufacturing industries. The mechanization and rationalization of harbor work progressed all the more rapidly with the introduction of container ships and ships with lighters on board. As a consequence of these circumstances, the number of day laborers being recruited in Kotobukichō decreased and along with this the population of Kotobukichō also gradually decreased. The population of Kotobukichō fell to 6,000 after the 1980s and has continued to show repeated slight fluctuations up and down ever since. Meanwhile, there was a slight rise in the number of cheap lodging houses after the 1980s, increasing to 97 in 1997 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* (Kotobuki Supporters' Exchange Conference), 1998: 101).

In the first half of the 1990s there was a prolonged and chronic shortage of work and there were substantive changes in Kotobukichō's labor market. On the one hand, the laborers, who had flowed into Kotobukichō during the 1960s expansion period of the *yoseba*, had reached their prime or become elderly. On the other hand, the structure of industry itself had changed with progressive mechanization and rationalization of the skills process in the construction and manufacturing industries. Then the work process became differentiated into specialist work and simple work, with the demand for a

labor force in the latter area falling off. The growing prominence of the service sector in the economy continued and service occupations in tertiary industries began to multiply.

Laborers who were experiencing difficulty working because of their increasing age found themselves excluded from the day labor market. Laborers who were unable to adapt to the qualitative changes in work, which accompanied changes in the industrial structure also found themselves excluded. These changes occurred in the labor supply arranging process during the period of rapid economic growth. As a result of this, some people stayed in the cheap lodging houses of Kotobukichō, as recipients of welfare payments. Others were admitted to hospitals and other facilities. Others still became homeless people, collecting recycled resources, 'gathering food' (*esa hiroi*), and getting through each day with the help of the soup run. At about the time that this process was taking hold – the second half of the 1980s – and under the internationalization of the labor market, foreign workers willing to take on heavy work stepped in to meet the needs of this undersupplied segment of the day labor market.

In this way the numbers of welfare recipients, members of the poor class, such as the homeless, and foreign workers increased in Kotobukichō. While still retaining *yoseba*-like functions, Kotobukichō today is a place in which the socially weak stay. Also, as a *yoseba* day labor market, Kotobukichō is a collective living place for foreign workers. This was the situation in Kotobukichō in the 1990s.

Factors behind the formation of Kotobukichō

The pre war origins of San'ya, Kamagasaki and Sasajima were in the creation of *yoseba* from streets of sleazy hotels and slums. In contrast to this, Kotobukichō emerged as a new *yoseba* in the post war period. But why was it possible for a *yoseba* to appear on the reclaimed land of the port of Yokohama? Firstly, from pre war times there had been a harbor labor market requiring a large quantity of day laborers. The port of Yokohama had provided the base for the industrial structure of Yokohama. Secondly, there was the requisitioning of land by the United States occupation army. This was significant for three reasons. One, under the land requisitioning, which lasted close to ten years, landlords from this area dispersed to other areas in search of new bases for their economic activity and in which to live. This left them without any particular inclination to reuse their land once land requisitioning had ended. Two, the occupation army employed large

numbers of day laborers and this became the basis for the formation of a day labor market after the end of land requisitioning. Three, *zainichi* Koreans were ready to buy the land put up for sale after requisitioning. They gradually amassed capital in the post war period and invested it in buying land and building cheap lodging houses. The fact that the land was for sale cheaply, that it was uninhabited and that the Japanese landlords were not present, along with the fact that *zainichi* Koreans had strong networks with relatives and people from the same hometowns, enabled them to concentrate capital investment in the building of cheap lodging houses.

Part Two: Day laborers

The population of Kotobukichō

The population of Kotobukichō was 6,476 in 1992 (*Kotobuki Fukushi Sentā* (KFS), 1996). Around 2,000 people commute to Kotobukichō from surrounding areas for work or business and a daytime population of more than 8,000 people inundates the 250 square meter area of Kotobukichō with the result that it has an extraordinarily high population density. The population showed a minute decrease in the first half of the 1990s and then a slight increase in population in the second half of the 1990s. The figures were 6,340 at the end of 1995 (KFS, 1996) and 6,401 at the end of 1997 (KFS, 1998: 101). As is usually the case with *yoseba*, Kotobukichō is overwhelmingly a society of men living apart from their families. The population of 6,205 in 1993 (KFS, 1994) was 5,711 men, 449 women and 45 children. Also, there were 5,433 households made up of men living apart from their families and 237 households made up of married couples. The average age of the population was fifty-two (B, aged forty-seven, an employee of the Yokohama City Administrative Bureau. 30 June 1994)[5]. The population of elderly people, those over sixty, was 1,056 in 1992, representing 17.0 per cent of the total population (*Yokohamashi Kotobuki Seikatsukan* (Yokohama City Kotobuki Life House), 1993: 17). This jumped to 34.7 per cent in 1997 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* (Kotobuki Supporters' Exchange Conference), 1998: 101). The flow of elderly people into Kotobukichō is not simply the result of the aging of day laborers – there are also new arrivals as the restructuring and bankruptcies brought about by recession lead to unemployment and the break up of families and regions. The numbers of elderly people are increasing steadily: 628 in 1986, 1,056 in 1992, 1,650 in 1994 and 2,042 in 1996. Note that being

over sixty corresponds to advanced age for (former) day laborers and homeless people who have overtaxed their bodies with heavy work.

Day laborers

Kotobukichō, which became an area with a pooled labor supply for the reconstruction of war damaged areas after the return of requisitioned land in the post war period, remained a place where day laborers in harbor work and the construction industry could hear about job opportunities. This situation continued from the vigorous period of rapid economic growth, through the two Oil Shocks of 1973 and 1981, the economic bubble and its collapse. Kotobukichō is today changing once again.

We can classify day laborers into those in the base group and those on the periphery (See Chapter Two). In Kotobukichō the estimate for the number in the base group is around 1,500 and for those on the periphery around 800 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1995a: 14). The periphery refers to people who are constantly being driven into homelessness. According to the Yokohama Port Branch of the Yokohama Public Employment Office (hereafter the Public Employment Office), the actual number of people for whom jobs were found in Kotobukichō was 3,915 in 1995, a decline to 76 per cent of the figures for 1985 (*Kanagawaken Rōdōbu* (Kanagawa Prefecture Labor Division), 1995). The number of cases of people looking for day work at the 'Kotobuki Welfare Center's Free Employment Agency' (hereafter Kotobuki Labor Center)[6], another vehicle for learning about employment opportunities, reached its highest point of a monthly average of 5,274 people in 1990 and then also showed a marked decline to 1,840 people in 1993 (*Kotobuki Rōdō Sentā* (Kotobuki Labor Center), 1994: 11). There were 790 labor arranging and labor recruiting agents registered with the Kotobuki Labor Center at the end of 1988 but by 1996 the number had fallen to 25.9 per cent of this figure (*Kotobuki Rōdō Sentā*, 1997)[7]. In this same period, the number of work referrals also fell sharply from 4,654 to 1,835. In addition to this, the figures for labor arranging done on the streets of Kotobukichō are estimated to be three to four times greater than those occurring though the offices of the Kotobuki Labor Center but these figures too have declined (D, aged 46. 16 June 1996). These figures paint a clear picture of the decline in day labor 'help wanted' in Kotobukichō as a result of recession.

Incidentally, Kotobukichō laborers registered for day employment in the Yokohama Port Work Branch, which deals with harbor work,

numbered 3,415 by the end of December 1992, accounting for 62.7 per cent of all registrants (*Yokohamakō Rōdō Kōkyō Shokugyō Anteijo* (Port of Yokohama Public Employment Security Office), 1993: 14). This shows that the relative importance of Kotobukichō laborers in harbor day labor work is still considerable[8].

The base group is made up of laborers who possess a White Book (Insured Person's Book of Day Laborer Employment Insurance) and receive insurance payments. The highest number of cases of White Books being issued to this group was 6,236 people at the end of March 1993 but even this was a drop of 43.5 per cent from 1989 (*Yokohamashi Kuyakusho* (City of Yokohama Ward Office), 1995: 13)[9]. The actual number of people receiving insurance payments was 25,582 in 1993 but this was a decline of 33.8 per cent in the figures from 1988. We can appreciate from these figures that the number of people seeking day labor work is decreasing.

There has been a clear decline in the day labor 'help wanted' and situations wanted in Kotobukichō. The fall in day labor 'help wanted' is due to the following. One, the fall in 'help wanted' in the construction industry as a result of recession and a drop in public sector business. Two, changes in the methods of labor arranging used by companies. Employment via *yoseba* has fallen while finding labor in front of railway stations and in 'help wanted' magazines and newspapers has increased. Three, the demand for day labor has fallen as a consequence of the rationalization and mechanization of operations. Rationalization and mechanization have been striking also in the labor intensive construction industry (Hippo, 1992: 61–71). There has also been a decline in the demand for day labor in harbor work as a result of the containerization of cargo handling. The total numbers for day labor employment in the port of Yokohama were 62,684 in 1990 but this had fallen by 46 per cent by 1994 (*Yokohamashi Kōwankyoku* (Yokohama City Ports Bureau), 1994: 401). Four, as general contractors carried out work at their own expense when there was a fall in work orders received, it became more difficult for subcontractors to get work. Under these conditions we have also seen the emergence of day laborers moving into dangerous jobs such as work in nuclear power stations (*Kotobuki Hiyatoi Rōdōsha Kumiai* (Kotobuki Day Labor Union), 1997).

The fall in day labor situations wanted is due to the following factors. First, there was a fall in the number of day laborers in work as a result of the aging of day laborers. There were no young people to compensate for this inadequacy. Second, because of the shortage of work there was an increase in the number of laborers who shifted

from cash work, in which they would commute daily to work requiring them to travel (fixed term employment for which they would enter a work camp) and receive, at least, food and lodging and also direct run work (direct contracts with the employer). There was also an increase in the number of laborers moving to areas with work, on the basis of word of mouth communication. Third, in 1989 the Employment Security Office made having a White Book a condition for being told about employment opportunities and made it obligatory to present a resident's card (proof of residence was sufficient in Kotobukichō) in order for a White Book to be issued. Because of this, declining numbers of laborers registered with the Employment Security Office. One does not hear, however, of laborers having flocked to the Kotobuki Labor Center, where the possession of a White Book was not a condition.

The decline in day labor ''help wanted'' and 'situations wanted' in Kotobukichō meant a corresponding decline in the *yoseba* function of Kotobukichō. The growing prominence of the service sector in the economy and its influence on the day labor market as well as the business cycle accounted for this fall in ''help wanted'' positions. A look at the contents of the ''help wanted'' work that did exist illustrates this point. In 1996, there was a total monthly average of 5,178 'help wanted' positions at the Kotobuki Labor Center. Broken down by industry these positions were: construction 87.0 per cent, transport 11.4 per cent, service 1.4 per cent and manufacturing 0.2 per cent (*Kotobuki Rōdō Sentā*, 1997). The breakdown, by industry, of 585 establishments which also registered with the Kotobuki Labor Center this same year is: construction 93.7 per cent, transportation 4.1 per cent, service 1.0 per cent and manufacturing 1.2 per cent. In both cases, the relative importance of the construction industry is overwhelming. The transportation industry, in this context, refers to laborers in jobs such as drivers and cargo handlers. The service industry refers to work such as cleaning buildings and tanks.

The following are the results if we look at day labor 'help wanted' by occupational category. In 1994 at the Kotobuki Labor Center there were, in total, 24,106 'help wanted' positions for cash work and 33,242 for fixed term work (*Kotobuki Hiyatoi Rōdōsha Kumiai*, 1995). The breakdown of these by occupational category for cash work was: 'laborers' 47.3 per cent, 'general laborers' 21.6 per cent, 'cargo handlers' 18.2 per cent and 'others' 12.9 per cent. For fixed term work (limited employment) the figures were: 'laborers' 76.8 per cent, 'drivers' 15.2 per cent and 'others' 8.0 per cent. Because most fixed term work is work for which one is kept in a work camp, it includes a high proportion

of 'laborers'. In cash work, however, 'laborers' makes up less than half of the 'help wanted' and there is a differentiation of occupational categories. Occupational categories related to the service industry are included under 'general laborers', 'cargo handlers' and 'others'. This type of occupational divergence is a new *yoseba* phenomenon as in the past the construction industry (and manufacturing industry) accounted for practically all day labor. Also, in terms of the numbers of people by industry, the construction industry remained stable compared to the declining trend in the manufacturing industry. This resulted from the spread of the continuing office construction related boom to the Yokohama construction industry, brought about by the concentration of business operations in Tokyo (*Yokohamashi Keizaikyoku* (Yokohama City Economic Agency), 1994: 38). Thus, a considerable number of 'laborers' and 'general laborers' also exist because of the influence of the expanding service industry.

Now for a brief look at the location of the establishments which provide work in Kotobukichō. Of the 790 establishments registered with the Kotobuki Welfare Center in 1993, 29.4 per cent were in the city of Yokohama and 60.8 per cent were in other regions in the prefecture (*Kotobuki Rōdō Sentā*, 1994: 7). Within the prefecture, many are located, in particular, along railway lines in rural cities. A mere 9.9 per cent of establishments are outside the prefecture. Of these, 7.6 per cent are in Tokyo. More than ninety per cent of the work sites for the work offered by these establishments are also within the prefecture (D, mentioned previously. 7 January 1997). Work sites outside the prefecture extend from the areas around Chiba, to the east, as far as the environs of Kamakura, in the west, and include the entire Tokyo region between these two. When work occasionally becomes available on distant work sites, such as Toyama, Nagano or Takasaki, many laborers do not stay in work camps but are put up for short-term stays in inns. The area of the national capital, including Yokohama, operates as an independent labor market[10] with regard to the demand for day labor.

Part Three: The homeless

Impoverishment

The day laborers of Kotobukichō have been aging. The average age in 1993 was 51.6 and has been going up each year (*Yokohamashi Nakakuyakusho* Naka Ward Office, City of Yokohama), 1995: 11). The

average life span of day laborers in Kotobukichō, as in other *yoseba*, is around sixty. This aging of the population is also a result of the fact that few young people come into Kotobukichō. Young men find Kotobukichō unappealing because there are few women, no leisure facilities and only 'unfashionable' '3K' work (*Kitsui, Kitanai, Kiken*) (demanding, dirty, dangerous). Because of young people's preference for working in casual jobs and moving from job to job, on the basis of employment information in magazines and newspapers, they arrange employment directly with the construction and service industries.

Increasing age makes retirement from the day labor market inevitable. In the case of *yoseba* day laborers, because they abuse their bodies in doing hard physical work their retirement from the labor market comes, essentially, while they should still be in their prime. Retirement from day labor results in their loss of livelihood and they immediately fall into the poverty class. At this point they face three choices. The first is the path of employment in light general work such as collecting recyclables and carrying advertising placards. The second is the path of becoming a welfare recipient or entering hospital or other facilities. The third is the path of becoming a homeless person. There are also instances of people relying on administrative extra relief, such as bread tickets, while homeless. People move between these various paths. Everyone chooses a path to independent living on the basis of individual will, abilities and resources.

The number of homeless people in Yokohama is currently increasing[11]. The homeless are mainly concentrated in Kotobukichō, Kannai Station and the neighborhood around Yokohama Station. There are also many former homeless people in the welfare class. The number of homeless people fluctuates widely in response to the economic climate and the season. Even so, there are estimated to be around 150 to 200 homeless people in Kotobukichō and its environs and around 400 to 600 within the Yokohama city area (B. 30 June 1994)[12]. In Kotobukichō and its surrounding areas 184 people died on the streets from illness in 1994 (E, aged 41, a labor activist in Kotobukichō. 25 March 1994). There are three reasons for the increase in the number of homeless people in recent years. Firstly, day laborers have become unable to work because they have grown older and impoverished. Secondly, the number of unemployed has increased as a consequence of factors such as company bankruptcies, dismissals and restructuring. The people in this group – with no one to help them, who have repeatedly switched jobs, and who lack any other way of providing for their livelihood security – have ended up on the street (Shōji et al., 1997: 120). Thirdly,

the growth of the service industry has brought additional means for survival such as miscellaneous work and increased amounts of food thrown out by restaurants and convenience stores. The homeless find work in various types of jobs in order to get by on a daily basis. Some do day labor work. Others work in miscellaneous work such as collecting recyclable materials, handing out leaflets, carrying around advertisements, and queuing for tickets. Some people search for food and some queue at soup kitchens. By means of this range of 'work' they acquire the resources which they need to live.

Living Assistance

The role of administrative support in Kotobukichō has increased as a consequence of the impoverishment of laborers. In 1994 the Kotobuki Life Center dealt with 22,862 consultations (*Yokohamashi Kotobuki Seikatsukan* (City of Yokohama Kotobuki Life Center), 1995: 2). Not only is the number of cases with which it deals each year increasing, so too is the age of those seeking advice. In 1994, people over fifty seeking advice made up 71.0 per cent of total consultations (*Yokohamashi Kotobuki Seikatsukan*, 1995: 6). The average age of people coming to the Welfare Department of the Naka Ward Office for advice on livelihood and health matters, between November 1993 and November 1994, was 50.9 (*Yokohamashi Nakakuyakusho*, 1995: 23). Those in their early fifties without work find it difficult to be considered for welfare relief; this is the age group in the most disadvantageous position. Welfare offices will not apply welfare benefits to people who are not elderly and who are deemed to be able to work. The determination of whether a person is able to work or not is a perpetual problem in this area (F, a union activist aged 48. 12 January 1996). Sixty per cent of those seeking advice do not possess a White Book and ninety per cent are not signed up for social insurance. The main reason for this is 'the lack of a resident's card'. The condition requiring the presentation of a resident's card at the time of applying for a White Book, or signing up for social insurance, has become a barrier. Quite a number of people also do not bother applying for a White Book because they do not think that it would be of any use.

The number of people receiving welfare benefits is increasing (E, mentioned above. 12 January 1996)[13]. The number of welfare recipients in Kotobukichō has risen yearly and so too has the rate of increase: 2,291 people in 1991, 3,188 in 1993, 4,672 in 1995 and 4,950 in 1997 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* 1998: 101). The welfare rate

increased to as much as 77.3 per cent of the population of Kotobukichō in 1997 (F, a welfare facilities employee aged 50. 29 June 1994). In Kotobukichō, the lodging house in which one is staying is treated as the current address, and people staying in lodging houses can get life assistance payments. Because of this, there is not the same situation as in Kamagasaki where people are admitted to hospitals and other facilities at the time when they apply for welfare benefits. However, with the exception of cases in which it is clear that one is elderly or cannot work, it is not possible to apply for welfare benefits by citing livelihood distress as the sole reason[14].

The amount of welfare payment varies from person to person. If we take the example of a man aged sixty in 1994, he would be given monthly payments of 75,000 yen in living assistance and 44,000 yen in rent assistance, making a total of 119,000 yen[15]. Those over seventy receive an additional 7,000 in age allowance. One needs money for everything in Kotobukichō. There are many people living in Kotobukichō who find life harsh on this amount. Welfare recipients barely manage to scrape together a living and have very frugal lifestyles.

The number of welfare benefit recipients keeps increasing[16]. The rate of increase in the number of families on welfare is also accelerating. This can be attributed to two causes. One is the increase in the group on the periphery of the day labor market whose members have lost the ability to work because of age. The shortage of work has accentuated this trend. The second reason is that as this group on the periphery has grown and as livelihood and medical problems have become more serious, the administration has been recognizing increasing numbers of people as being 'in need of welfare'. Support organizations, such as the Kotobuki Day Labor Union, also now repeatedly negotiate with the administration in order to have welfare benefits applied to homeless people in need of urgent assistance, even when they lack a resident's card or other proof of address.

The city of Yokohama conducts interviews to assess need and gives out extra assistance in the form of food coupons to day laborers who cannot find work (These food coupons were popularly known as bread tickets and in 1993 one of these was valid for two meals valued at 600 yen. Accommodation coupons were popularly known as lodging house tickets and in 1993 one was worth 1,400 yen) (*Mokuyō Patorōrukai* (Thursday Patrol Group), 1993: 5). Both of these coupons could be used at the Naka Welfare Office and at designated lodging houses (twenty-six) and shops (in exchange for foodstuffs other than tobacco

and alcohol). However, the chronic lack of vacant rooms in lodging houses has rendered the accommodation coupons practically useless. (The following figures for food coupons and accommodation coupons refer to the numbers issued only in the month of November each year.) In November 1994 the daily average was 354.5 people interviewed, 548.3 bread tickets handed out and 167.0 accommodation coupons handed out (*Kotobukichō Hiyatoi Rōdōsha Kumiai*, 1994). Increasing numbers of bread tickets are being issued: 5,949 in 1992; 16,540 in 1995; and 26,676 in 1998 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1998: 102). The issuing of accommodation coupons has also increased: 3,180 in 1992; 7,080 in 1995; and 14,442 in 1998 (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1998: 102). This is a manifestation of the fact that there has been an increase in the number of homeless people who have no other recourse but to rely on extra assistance. According to assistance consultations held by the city of Yokohama between 9 December 1996 and 3 January 1997, 1,545 people sought advice. Of these, 776 people found places in lodging houses, relief facilities and temporary accommodation (*Dai 24 Kotobukichō Ettō Tōsō Jikkō Inkai* (24th Executive Committee for the Winter Struggle in Kotobukichō), 1997)[17]. In this same period support organizations, conducting winter survival patrols in Kotobukichō and the areas around Kannai Railway Station and Yokohama Railway Station, counted an average of 135 homeless people per day. Throughout this period support organizations ran soup kitchens three times a day, producing an average of 416 meals each time (*Kotobuki Hiyatoi Rōdōsha Kumiai*, 1997). These figures give us an idea of the approximate numbers of homeless people in Kotobukichō and the central parts of the city of Yokohama at this time.

Part Four: Foreign workers

Foreign workers

There are increasing numbers of recently arrived foreigners in Yokohama. Registered foreigners by nationality, in decreasing order of representation, are Koreans (both z*ainichi* and recently arrived), Chinese (both of *zainichi* and recently arrived), Brazilians, Filipinos, people from the United States and Peruvians (*Yokohamashi Kikakukyoku* (Yokohama City Planning Bureau), 1996a). Their numbers, as a whole, rose to 47,985 people in 1996. In recent years, there has been an increase in the registration of people coming from Asia and the various countries of South America. Added to these are

the foreigners who overstay their visas and who are working without the proper work documents. It is precisely this latter group who make up the increase in the number of recently arrived foreigners. It is widely assumed that Koreans, Chinese and Filipinos are the most numerous in this group of foreigners but it is not possible to give specific numbers.

Because of the lack of work as a consequence of the recession at the beginning of the 1990s, recently arrived foreigners have tended to be differentiated into two groups: those who stay behind in Japan to settle permanently and those who move on to another country or who return to their own country (G, a facilities employee, aged 38. 9 January 1996). However, the actual numbers of foreign workers in Japan continue to rise. According to a 1993 city of Yokohama survey of 230 recently arrived foreigners, aged over twenty and in employment, the occupational categories for foreigners, as a whole, fall into the skilled and the unskilled (*Yokohamashi Kikakukyoku*, 1996b: 5). Most occupations for the unskilled are in the construction industry, followed by press operators, welders' assistants, dishwashers, the restaurant industry and building cleaners. The main occupations for skilled foreign workers are office employees, specialist skilled occupations and language teachers. However, the former group forms an overwhelming proportion of the total population of foreign workers. Foreigners are largely employed in occupations in small-scale service companies which provide services catering for individuals.

In 1997 there were 424 recently arrived foreigners living in Kotobukichō (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1998: 101). The population is declining along with the recession-induced decrease in jobs: 1997 shows a 63.0 per cent decrease when compared with the peak year of 1991, when Kotobukichō recorded its highest ever number of recently arrived foreigners (*Yokohamashi Nakakuyakusho*, 1995: 8). During the prolonged recession, large numbers of foreigners either left Kotobukichō in search of work or returned to their own countries.

Most foreigners in Kotobukichō live in cheap lodging houses, have arrived recently and have overstayed their visas or are working without the proper work documents. Up to eighty per cent of these foreign men and women are *zainichi* Koreans or recently arrived Koreans. The next largest national groups are foreigners from the Philippines and Thailand. The majority of Koreans come from Cheju Island[18]. These men and women originally came to Kotobukichō through their networks with other Koreans already residing in Japan. Then, they

built up networks with other recently arrived Koreans: with people from the same hometowns and with work colleagues.

One in four foreigners in Kotobukichō are women. The number of foreigners with families is increasing. The number of children is also increasing. We have also seen the appearance of foreigners who leave their small lodging houses and go out of Kotobukichō to live when they marry. In both cases, there is a striking tendency for recently arrived foreigners to settle. As they settle, problems such as children's nationality, education and medical treatment are becoming more serious issues (H, a day laborer, aged forty-six. 5 January 1997).

We do not have any statistical sources about the occupations in which unregistered foreign workers in Kotobukichō work, however, we can probably say the following. The overwhelming majority of men work in occupations related to the construction industry (as is the case with their Japanese counterparts). Women work largely in occupations related to the food and drink industry in the areas around Kotobukichō and Isezakichō, the biggest downtown area in Yokohama City (about a fifteen minute walk from Kotobukichō). In both cases these are unskilled occupations. Some of the types of employment for foreign workers who are in work, in the Yokohama city survey quoted earlier, were given as: part time 34.8 per cent, casual 15.7 per cent, day labor 14.3 per cent and regular employees 30.9 per cent (*Yokohamashi Kikakukyoku*, 1996b: 6). In short, close to seventy per cent of foreign workers were in insecure employment. In reality, a considerable amount of trouble surrounds the work done by foreign workers. Two thirds of the labor problems on which the Kotobuki Day Labor Union is called to give advice come from foreign workers (I, a labor movement activist, aged forty-eight. 12 January 1997)[19]. Mostly advice is sought on matters such as the non-payment and skimming off of wages and the hushing up of work accidents (Hanada, 1997: 94). We have also seen, however, the emergence of a group of foreigners who manage to 'rise' to the position of being the boss' man on the job (manager); let acquaintances know about work opportunities; and start up their own businesses (for example, bars and ethnic restaurants)[20].

A multiracial society

Kotobukichō is a multiracial society. The racial hierarchy is as follows. The Japanese are at the top. Japanese, most of them day laborers, form the largest group in Kotobukichō. They are the beneficiaries of work recommendations, welfare, extra assistance and the like. Increasing

numbers of people from this group, however, leave Kotobukichō and become homeless as they age. In second position are *zainichi* Koreans. Koreans are largely to be found as managers of lodging houses and shops (some are also day laborers). As in the case of Kamagasaki there are no Korean labor arrangers. There are also few owners of construction industry businesses; they number about one per cent of the total (J, an employee of the Kotobuki Labor Center, aged fifty-eight. 27 June 1994)[21]. It is said that many of these owners of enterprises hail from Kyongsang-bukto in South Korea (K, female manger of a lodging house. 14 August 1994)[22]. The position of manager has actually been passed down from the first generation through to the second and third generations. For these managers, recently arrived foreigners are precious customers. Third in the ranking are recently arrived foreign workers. In the context of the era of internationalization, from 1970 until the 1980s, the number of foreign workers living and working in Kotobukichō increased. Their numbers have, however, been tending to decline from the end of the 1980s because of the recession induced drop in work. The numbers of recently arrived foreigners were 1,059 (851 households) in December 1992 and 932 (735 households) in 1993 (KFS, 1994). As we saw previously, this number fell again by half in the second half of the 1990s. As at 1993, recently arrived foreigners made up fifteen per cent of the population of Kotobukichō. The breakdown of this number was 633 males, 264 females and 35 children. Although a large number, 471, were men on their own (99 women on their own), there were also 138 households made up of married couples and this number is growing. The number of recently arrived foreigners who have over stayed their visas is also, at least, in excess of 800 people. Recently arrived foreigners are continuing to over stay their visas and work without the proper work documents as they form families and settle permanently[23].

If we look at foreign workers by nationality, we see that in 1993 there were 724 Koreans, 155 Filipinos, 47 Thais, 2 Malaysians and 1 from each of Iran, Pakistan and China (KFS, 1994). The number of Koreans increased along with the liberalization of foreign travel by South Korea in 1988. The majority of these men and women were sponsored to come to Japan by relatives or people from the same hometown already resident in Japan. Meanwhile, we are also seeing the appearance of Koreans who came to Japan with the aim of setting up businesses for Korean workers (restaurants and grocery shops). These men and women bring foodstuffs and a variety of other items directly from South Korea and sell them[24].

Filipinos were the first foreign workers to come to Kotobukichō[25]. There were already thirty Filipinos at the start of the 1980s. In 1989 the number was 150 and thereafter remained relatively stable (M, a labor movement activist, aged thirty-six. 2 September 1989). The influx of Thais and other nationalities has been a far more recent development.

Stratification amongst foreigners

Many male foreign workers are day laborers in work. Many of the women work in Kotobukichō's eating establishments and bars and the service industry in the area around the amusement quarter, Isezakichō. Because virtually all of these men and women are working without the proper documents, they are excluded from Kotobukichō's various administrative measures such as job referrals, medical facilities and welfare[26]. Foreign workers, both as nationality groups, and individually, are ranked on the basis of: physical visibility; Japanese language competence; degree of work skill; length of stay in Japan; and the strength of their networks (see Chapter Five). Korean workers, generally, have the highest standing, followed by Filipinos, Thais and then others. We are also seeing the appearance amongst Koreans of people acting as managers and assistant bosses who mediate between foremen and workers. Foreign workers seek employment as a group. Within each national group information about work is held in common and the group gets work from known recruiters. They also stay together in predetermined lodging houses. The lodging houses are mutual aid spaces.

Recently arrived foreigners possess their own network of fellow nationals[27]. These men and women exchange information about work and places to live and preserve their national language via networks which extend into general society outside Kotobukichō[28]. Places such as lodging houses, bars, churches and group offices become relay points on these men's and women's information circuits. In this way Kotobukichō is a pluralistic mosaic of a society, marked off into multiple small worlds, even as the many national borders come into contact with one another[29]. The networks of *zainichi* Koreans and those of recently arrived Koreans operate independently of one another.

> Recently arrived Koreans and *zainichi* Koreans overlap to some extent in areas of work but the reality is that they largely feel a sense of distance from one another and do not mix very much (Kō, 1996: 35).

There are two facets to relations between Japanese and foreigners. On the one hand, Japanese and foreigners both work and live the same way; they work together and meet each other. Then there is also the lifestyle and world of feelings which both share as day laborers without families. But at the same time, these men and women live apart from one another. Foreign workers who have over stayed their visas or who are working without the proper work documents are unable to make use of the administrative facilities or the system related to work and welfare[30]. In this sense, the Japanese are a privileged group. Japanese workers' attitudes to foreigners are also frequently prejudiced. In the past, discriminatory graffiti has been written on the walls and pillars of the Kotobuki Labor Welfare Center[31]. There have also been incidents of discrimination.

Kotobukichō and foreigners

There are also foreign workers in San'ya. Most of them are, however, foreigners who commute to San'ya from the surrounding areas in search of work[32]. Kamagasaki has seen a growth in the number of foreign workers (See Chapter Two) but most of these are Koreans and Chinese who live in lodging houses and travel to work. This was the case in the late 1990s but previously, in the 1980s, it was only Kotobukichō that had *yoseba* in which foreign workers lived in lodging houses from where they went to work. These were early cases of segregation of foreign workers within the urban underclass in Yokohama. The following points sum up the social conditions under which foreign workers are segregated within Kotobukichō. First, Kotobukichō is a society of transient single people and an anonymous society. As far as foreign workers who have over stayed their visas or who are working without the proper work documents are concerned, Kotobukichō is a perfect place for avoiding the gaze of the Immigration Department. In fact, there are hardly ever any raids by the Immigration Department or the police in Kotobukichō. Self-government by the residents operates in Kotobukichō and the area is socially and politically stable[33]. This is what makes it possible for foreigners to live 'hidden' within Kotobukichō[34]. Second, Kotobukichō, with its accumulation of facilities necessary for living – for example, lodging houses, eating places, bars, coin laundries and coin-operated showers, is a convenient city for single people[35]. There is also the Day Labor Union and a Support

Organization (the *Karabaw* (Philippine word for cow) Association) which both provide support for foreigners.

Third, lodging houses suit the living styles of foreign workers as they offer apartment style living with private rooms. In the lodging house environment foreigners are also free of the discrimination against foreigners which this group often encounters in the general district. In Kotobukichō lodging houses were run not on the traditional inn-like hotel basis but as apartments and business hotels (*Kawase Seijikun Tsuitōbunshū Henshū Iinkai* (Editors Committee of Memorial Writings for Kawase Seiji), 1985: 210). The situation was that most of the customers were port laborers in relatively secure employment. The absence of closing times for lodging houses, resident control over room keys, being allowed to go directly up to one's room with shoes on, the fact that residents clean their own rooms, and other similar features, all confer a high level of independence to each room in a lodging house. There is no need or reason for the lodging house owners and managers to vet residents. Even detailed community rules, such as how and when to put out rubbish are more lenient than those found in the general district. These conditions make it easy for foreign workers to come to live in lodging houses[36]. Fourth, there has always been well-paid work for stevedores on land and on water in the international port of Yokohama. The seamen on board the foreign vessels docking in the port of Yokohama (Filipinos and Koreans) knew about the existence of Kotobukichō early on. Thus, Yokohama – located inside the national capital region – is (was) right at the heart of global urbanization; as is seen in the wholesale rapid increase in the number of recently arrived foreigners. A number of these foreign workers have drifted into Kotobukichō as unskilled workers.

Part Five Changing Kotobukichō

The position of Kotobukichō

In this chapter, I have looked at the changes undergone by urban underclass Kotobukichō and at the classes found there and also at the relations between national groups. Next, I will consider what the future looks like for Kotobukichō. The sources mentioned thus far are still not adequate for this task. What changes are in store for Kotobukichō? We have been able to glean some idea of this but the population size, work and lives of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers are

constantly changing. Bearing this in mind, the following is an attempt to give a rough sketch of Kotobukichō as a *yoseba.*

Kotobukichō is a *yoseba* for day laborers. The area has enjoyed the opportunities afforded by the wealthy cargo handling work of the port of Yokohama since pre war times. Kotobukichō has provided a mobile surplus population pool during a variety of historical circumstances such as air raids, land requisitioning, post war urban recovery and the period of rapid economic growth. It has been an effective labor recruiting area for the transportation and construction industries. Because Kotobukichō had developed from wasteland it was able to respond and provide the regional functions demanded by post war cities without having to overcome any historical obstacles to development. Yokohama's pre war and post war history had, however, provided the *zainichi* Koreans who bought the land in Kotobukichō and built lodging houses on it. This set of circumstances undoubtedly contributed specifically to the formation and development of Kotobukichō: however, this was also more generally the widespread process of the formation of underclass society throughout Japan's post war urban recovery. In the post war period, victims of war damage flowed into San'ya and Kamagasaki, transforming them into *yoseba* as they became segregated from other residents of the area as day laborers, even in these places which had always been slums. With the period of rapid economic growth, the population of San'ya and Kotobukichō swelled and then fell again. All *yoseba* and lodging house districts throughout Japan, to a large extent, underwent these types of changes, as a function of being underclass areas during the post war formation of cities. Kotobukichō, which emerged in the post war period from wasteland, is a clear example of this type of development.

Kotobukichō is a place where the socially poor live. Since the1970s Kotobukichō has become a poverty and welfare pool. The following social conditions have been at work in this. First, sharply rising numbers of day laborers from the period of rapid economic growth lost their jobs during the reduction in day labor work as the period of low economic growth began. Second, laborers became unable to take on physically taxing day labor work because of illness and advancing age. Third, they were, however, unable to adapt to the new work which appeared with the softening of the economic structure. Fourth, elderly and injured people, expelled by their disintegrating regions and families, drifted into Kotobukichō. Fifth, Kotobukichō, as a town of single workers, had an accumulation of regional welfare

facilities. These were the very conditions underpinning the changes to Japan's urban underclass following the period of rapid economic growth. The aging of day laborers, the pooling of the poverty class and, in particular, the increase in the number of homeless people was proceeding simultaneously in industrial cities throughout Japan. This process was particularly intense in *yoseba*. Relations between the poverty class and the *yoseba*, inside *yoseba*, were prescribed, on a city-by-city basis, by the circumstances behind the formation of a particular *yoseba*; the city's underclass area; and, moreover, by the industrial structure and labor market in a city's region. Kotobukichō is the Yokohama version of this process.

Kotobukichō is a community made up of many national groups. From the very beginning of the post war formation of the district, there were considerable opportunities for contact between *zainichi* Koreans and other nationalities in the international trading port of Yokohama. What is more, in the second half of the 1980s, Kotobukichō experienced an increase in the number of foreign workers. The social conditions behind this were as follows. First, foreign workers who had over stayed their visas or who were working without the proper work documents found the anonymity of Kotobukichō society very useful. Also, there was little risk of these foreign workers being detected as a result of disputes, incidents or violence because regional self-government by residents rendered Kotobukichō socially and politically stable and led to low levels of monitoring by the Immigration Department and the police. Second, Kotobukichō had lodging houses and facilities for everyday living making it a convenient living place for single people. There was also official assistance for foreign women expecting babies and for the children of foreign workers. Kotobukichō also had a foreign workers' support movement.

These features were of considerable benefit to foreign workers who had overstayed their visas. These are the conditions underpinning the process by which foreign workers were segregated within the urban underclass. One finds foreign workers in all *yoseba* in Japanese industrial cities. They work on the same work sites as Japanese people, as single day laborers. The *yoseba* is the relay point where day laborers gain information about the transfer of work sites. In Kotobukichō, in particular, foreign workers live in lodging houses, even marrying in them, and work together with Japanese laborers. The relations of rivalry and coexistence between the many nationalities in the urban underclass can be seen more readily and in a more dynamic form because of this.

Thus, the transformation and structure of Kotobukichō whilst reflecting the form of a specific *yoseba*, simultaneously serves as an example showing the transformation of the urban underclass and of cities themselves from the time of the post war recovery of Japanese cities up until the present day aging and multiracial transformation of the population of laborers. We can see in this the clearest manifestation of economic globalization and urban globalization.

The urban underclass

A wide variety of people make up the urban underclass. Who should we think of as belonging to the urban underclass? We must constantly specify what we actually mean by the urban underclass, with reference to a definition (See Chapter One). As times change so too will the composition of the urban underclass. At this point I would like to consider the composition of the urban underclass in *yoseba*, looking at the actual situation in Kotobukichō. The places and methods for arranging day labor have spread to railway stations, parks, the banks of rivers and, moreover, to the pages of newspapers and magazines. As a result of this, a view has emerged that we ought to expand our spatial understanding of the concept of a *yoseba* (Fujita, 1998). This suggests the need for a unified understanding of *yoseba,* linking together the original *yoseba* – San'ya, Kamagasaki and Kotobukichō – and the expanding spaces where day labor work is now arranged, as well as the functions of these spaces. The labor arranging functions of *yoseba* have certainly declined and their structure has also changed dramatically. Nevertheless, *yoseba* have retained their specific circumstances, structures and functions even though the labor recruiting function of *yoseba* has spread out into as expanding realm of spaces.

Figure 3.2 is a schematic representation of the changes undergone by the urban underclass and the lower classes within *yoseba*, based on the example of Kotobukichō.

'Pre' and 'post' change, as used in Figure 3.2, are simply devices for giving a general indication of before/after *yoseba* changes – with the first half of the 1990s as the dividing line. The subcategories used above also are simply classifications which correspond to the work and lives of the *yoseba* population. There were also significant numbers of homeless people and welfare recipients in *yoseba* in the past. Today, there has been an increase in work in construction and cargo-handling occupations linked with service industry occupations.

Figure 3.2: Changes undergone by the urban underclass and the lower classes within yoseba

		Present *Yoseba*
1. Day laborers	Construction industry occupations	Pre- / Post-change
	Harbor cargo handler occupations	Pre-change
	Service industry occupations	Post-change
2. Foreigners	*Zainichi* foreigners (Koreans)	Pre- / Post-change
	Recently arrived foreigners (mobile/settled groups)	Post-change
3. The poor	Welfare recipients	Post-change
	The homeless	Post-change

With these points in mind, I will, tentatively, call the people who were part of *yoseba* before the change (pre-1990s) the 'former' urban underclass and the people who became part of *yoseba* after the change (post-1990s) the 'present' underclass. When we do this, three characteristics of the 'present' urban underclass become clear. The first is that the urban underclass has again split in class terms and in a downward fashion. Second, the urban underclass has split ethnically. Third, mobility between the subcategories within the urban underclass has increased. Laborers in work (day laborers and foreign workers) and the poor, welfare recipients and the homeless – there are now no class borders between these groups.

With the exception of a small number of fortunate workers, there are no people in *yoseba*, apart from the very few who possess the capacity and resources, able to escape from the very bottom group to the 'top group'. As fewer people seek their services and as they age, day laborers are being exposed to the pressures of poverty. The poor, in turn, are being exposed to the crises of falling ill on the streets and death.

Kotobukichō's future

The growing prominence of an urban service economy leads to urban redevelopment in order to maintain the industrial base. Urban redevelopment begins from the inner city (the central business district) where service industries catering for businesses are concentrated. The inner city is polarized into two classes: the business class and the class of workers normally found on work sites.

In 1973 the city of Yokohama devised the 'Integrated Plan for the City of Yokohama' thus taking the first steps in the post war development of the city (*Yokohamashi Shiminkyoku* (Yokohama City Citizen's Bureau), 1996). Then, in 1981, it released the 'Yokohama in the 21st Century Plan', a new integrated plan with a view to the twenty first century city. On the basis of this plan, in 1994, the city of Yokohama issued '*Yumehama* (Dream Beach) Plan for 2010 – A New Opening up of the City', which focused on the end of the year 2010. Within this plan was the idea of redeveloping the heart of the city so as to strengthen the urban base. The central aspect of this is 'The Future Port – 21 Areas'. The concept to unify the two sections into which the city center is currently divided, Kannai and Isezakichō, and the areas around Yokohama Railway Station; integrating the city's business, commercial and cultural functions; and forming a city center marine business belt. Marine reclamation and construction works began in 1982 and was still continuing in 2000

Kotobukichō is located on the eastern edge of the 'business and commercial zones' in 'The Future Port – 21 Areas' plan (*Yokohamashi Nakakuyakusho*, 1993), extending westwards to Isezakichō, north-wards to Chinatown and, taking in Nakamura River to the east, it continues to the 'residential zone' – it is in a very convenient location for access to transport. Kotobukichō (the area popularly known by this name) is a *yoseba*/cheap lodging house district consisting of eighty-nine lodging houses in a 250 square meter area comprising Ōgimachi, Matsukagechō, Kotobukichō (the administrative town), Miyoshichō and part of Chojamachi. Yokohama's *yoseba*, with the exception of a small number in eastern Kanagawa and Sakuragichō, are practically all concentrated in Kotobukichō. Yokohama's lodging house district is also entirely in Kotobukichō. There are business hotels in the areas surrounding Kotobukichō but no lodging houses. Nor has Kotobukichō seen labor recruiters' work camps creeping into the area, as has been the case in San'ya and Kamagasaki. However, because Kotobukichō is close to the city center there are many small and large apartments in the areas around it. People frequently move between these and Kotobukichō. There have also been increasing numbers of cases in which recently arrived foreigners leave Kotobukichō to live in apartments when they marry, with husbands traveling to Kotobukichō to find work and wives going to Isezakichō to work in bars (N, a foreign worker. 16 June 1996).

Zainichi Koreans own most of the lodging houses. They also own most of the town's land titles (*Kanagawa Shinbun*, 10 October

1994). The limits of the territory of lodging house districts have not changed since 1961 when the Lodging House Businesses Cooperative Association decided to impose self-regulation over expansion into territory around lodging house districts. There are a total of 6,133 lodging house rooms. This number determines the size of the town's population. Also given the sudden jump in land values in the surrounding areas, there is no scope for lodging house districts to expand in the future.

Lodging houses in Kotobukichō are mainly four to six story buildings (*Yokohamashi Kotobuki Seikatsukan*, 1995: 24). Most of these have been rebuilt from wood and mortar in Ferro-concrete. Many of these buildings are in the process of being rebuilt once again as they have become derelict. Compared with San'ya and Kamagasaki, however, Kotobukichō has smaller amounts of lodging house capital and the pace of rebuilding is also slower leading to the noticeably run down nature of the lodging houses in the area. The lodging houses have no closing/curfew time and operate like apartments. The people staying in lodging houses occupy the position of boarders rather than customers. This type of lodging house differs from San'ya and Kamagasaki's inn-style accommodation, which have cheap lodging houses as their precursors. The construction of rooms is cheaper than in San'ya and Kamagasaki. In view of the fact that some lodging houses do not have any heating or cooling facilities (electric fans in summer), the accommodation fees are high.

Kotobukichō is a lodging house district located in a corner of the central city area. The lodging houses are never short of customers. As long as they can make a profit, the lodging houses stay in business. *Zainichi* Koreans, who are the lodging house managers and the owners of the land titles, are not hoping for big changes in Kotobukichō (O, a former employee of a public facility in the area, aged 57. 28 June 1995). Many *zainichi* Koreans own multiple businesses which they tend while running lodging houses (A, mentioned previously. 8 January 1997). As long as this situation continues, Kotobukichō will not change to any considerable extent.

The city of Yokohama keeps saying, with regard to the plan for integrating Kotobukichō – one of the business plans for Naka Ward in the '*Yumehama 2010 Puran*' – that 'in order to respond to changing conditions in the Kotobuki area, apart from putting forward an integrated policy for the area, we will refurbish the extremely old Kotobuki Life Center' (*Yokohamashi Kikakukyoku*, 1994: 19). However, when looking through official documents one will not come

across references, with the exception of this one, to an integration policy for Kotobukichō. There have been plans for the rebuilding of welfare facilities and the Kotobuki Life Center, however, because of the reassignment of the Section Head in charge of the city, who developed and refined the proposal, it reverted to the status of a white paper (A, quoted previously. 8 January 1997). There was also a plan to divide Kotobukichō into three areas – commercial, hotel and amusement areas – and redevelop it. This plan was also abandoned once the economic bubble burst (A. 8 January 1997). Furthermore, there was a proposal to 'turn the Kotobuki area into a Korea Town' (*Kanagawa Shinbun*, 10 October 1994). This proposal was put forward by the head of the Kotobukichō Self-Governing Group and probably had its genesis in the fact that there are large numbers of Koreans in Kotobukichō. In the newspaper article which reported on this proposal there were calls to set up an over the counter betting office and to develop an eating and drinking quarter and redevelop Kotobukichō as a commercial area. However, this too amounted to no more than the 'ideas of an individual person' (the land for an over the counter betting office has been secured) (A. 8 January 1997).

As the '*Yumehama* 2010 Plan' goes ahead, the administration, ultimately, has no plan for the redevelopment of Kotobukichō. This is perhaps an expression of the intention of the administration to leave Kotobukichō as it is, just as long as it fulfils its function as an 'accommodation facility' for day laborers, foreign workers, the aged, 'the disturbed' and the homeless without any abuses of law and order and or signs of 'social pathology '(A. 8 January 1997). It is certainly true that Kotobukichō, whilst a most valuable part of Yokohama as a whole, is a town that has been left behind (*Kanagawa Shinbun*, 10 October 1994).

Kotobukichō is a Hobbesian society permeated by the logic of capital, in the midst of a harsh economic environment. It contains poverty and discrimination. It would not do to exaggerate but there is, at the same time, another face to Kotobukichō. There are facilities in Kotobukichō for the aged, 'the disturbed' and children. There are also support activities to help the poor. Kotobukichō is also a diverse ethnic society in which large numbers of *zainichi* Koreans, recently arrived Koreans and other foreigners settle. People live separately on the basis of ethnicity. Finally, nearly all of the people living in Kotobukichō are former day laborers who have come into the area in the post war period. All of this has led to the growth of a common feeling of 'our town' between these people. The people of Kotobukichō

select one another as serving members on the Self-Governing Group and as district welfare officers. At the time of the Summer Festival, the administration, shops, lodging houses, the labor union, organizations and churches 'step outside of their normal roles' and make donations to the Summer Festival Executive Committee. All groups within Kotobukichō made a total of 144 donations to the Nineteenth Summer Festival. A paper with the names of contributors, and the amounts given, written on it was then posted up at the gathering place for the festival (15–17 August 1996). Children march around carrying a Shinto palanquin and shop-owners hand out drinks and other treats to them. In this way, there is a 'community'-building energy in Kotobukichō. People call Kotobukichō 'a welfare and territory-building-laboratory'[37]. This is yet another face of *yoseba*, 'Kotobukichō-style'.

4 The Urban Underclass and the Homeless

Part One: Japan's homeless

> Living is a non-stop business – 365 days a year. If you live in a park for a year, then you can get into a rhythm. Your life settles. Even if you reason that this path leads to a shorter life, when you have no other options open to you, you cannot help but do this (*Kamagasaki Ettōtōsō Iinkai* (Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Executive Committee), 3 January 2000).

'New' types of homeless people have begun to appear in the cities of the world. The homeless have become 'the exterior which cannot be concealed'[1] of poverty in the midst of abundance. Beginning in the 1980s in the United States a group of 'new homeless' has emerged; one that is diverse in terms of sex, age and ethnicity and different from the skid rowers of the past, who were made up of middle-aged and older white males (Livingston, 2004: 392). Since the1990s, in the large cities of developing countries (for example, Manila and Sao Paulo) there has been an increase in the numbers of homeless people who, unlike squatters (people who occupy houses 'illegally'), move to a different sleeping place on the streets daily. In the large cities of former socialist countries (for example, Warsaw and Prague) homeless people have appeared as these societies have moved from socialism to capitalism and in conjunction with the spread of the new liberalism[2]. Since the 1990s in Japan, there has been an increase in the numbers of people living on the streets (and experiencing status segregation). Homelessness has become the normal state for these people and they must rely on their own devices to survive. These homeless people differ from the homeless in the past who were temporarily homeless day laborers moving between the work site and the street (there are still some people who move between the work site and the street but they are a minority). These new homeless people are products of economic globalization and a feature of modern capitalism. The

homeless problem includes a wide variety of issues from exploitation, discrimination and exclusion to civility, public space and social movements and manifests, at a stroke, modern society's diverse problems. Who are the homeless? There is growing interest in research into the homeless in Japan, as elsewhere, and at present specialization in the subject is increasing[3]. We are also beginning to see comparative international research which is focused on the concept of 'the new homeless'[4]. What are the national characteristics of the homeless? The answer to this question depends on one's social and economic understanding of a particular country.

Bearing the above research conditions in mind, in this chapter I tackle three tasks regarding Japan's homeless. The first is to sketch an outline of the general image of the homeless in Japan. In order to do this I use data from the report of a survey (the National Survey) of homeless people throughout Japan, conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in 2003 (*Kōsei Rōdōshō* (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW)), 2003). The second is to analyze the work circumstances around the time when people become homeless: in this analysis I focus on the homeless in Osaka (city). The homeless are people without a home (home-less) but the reasons for not having a home vary considerably. The most important amongst these is work. Work determines the choice of where one lives. Consequently, I will focus on the work that homeless people do. After this, I will analyze firstly the process by which one falls in status to the bottom layer of the social groups in the city (moving down a class) ('How did these people become homeless?') and secondly the process of status segregation ('Why are they unable to extricate themselves from the homeless life?'). In the present discussion status segregation refers to separating off a particular status form other statuses and the forces and conditions by which this segregation becomes fixed. The data for this is based on a report from a survey of homeless people in Osaka (672 people), conducted by the Osaka City University Urban Environmental Problems Research Group in 1999 (the Osaka Survey) (*Ōsakashidai* (Osaka City University), 2001). The third task is to take a critical look at the naming of the homeless. A name is a definition and a definition contains a viewpoint and a position with regard to one's understanding of an issue. What is the best way in which to understand the homeless? I will examine the variety of names applied to the homeless and make clear the position regarding the issue of homelessness inherent in each of these.

Japan's homeless

> Kasai posited the following points as characteristics of Japan's homeless in 1995. One, there has been an explosive growth in the number of homeless. Two, the space occupied by the homeless is moving out of, and spreading beyond, *yoseba* (a widening of the area). Three, a fixed pattern of homeless life is appearing over a wide area (fixing). Four, the homeless are being thrown out of service industries and small and medium sized businesses outside the construction industry, Five, aged laborers are being thrown out of *yoseba*. Six, the homeless are joining together in groups. (These various characteristics have become even more pronounced over the past ten years.) (Kasai, 1995: 8)

Firstly, let us consider the National Survey. The problem of homelessness in Japan is prescribed by Japan's economy and society and has its own collective characteristics which differ from those for other countries. For example, according to a report on the homeless in twenty-five cities in the United States of America, there were 600,000 homeless in 2000 (60,000 in Los Angeles and 30,000 in New York to give two specific examples) (National Coalition for the Homeless, June 2001). Men living on their own made up the vast majority of these numbers but the number of homeless families with children (mainly single mothers) was as high as thirty six per cent. The reasons for becoming homeless include poor pay (poverty), high rents (housing), psychiatric illness (welfare) and domestic violence. Most of those with psychiatric illnesses are drug addicts and alcoholics who have experienced cuts in welfare resources and have been de-institutionalized. In terms of ethnic composition, most are either Afro-Americans or from South and Central America (Livingston, 2004: 108 and 392). Japan's homeless differ from their United States counterparts. There seem to be no drug addicts; very few alcoholics; either no or very few de-institutionalized people; and also no children in the ranks of Japan's homeless. Japan's homeless are also ethnically homogeneous (there are insignificant numbers of foreigners). By drawing on the National Survey mentioned earlier (and other surveys), we can also list the following as defining characteristics for Japan's homeless.

Small numbers

In 2003, in 581 municipalities nationally 25,296 homeless people were counted on the streets, in parks, by rivers and in railway stations. This is

a slight increase of 1,206 people over the figures in the National Survey for 2001. The number of homeless, broken down by city, were: Osaka 6,603, the highest number; Tokyo 6,361; Nagoya 1,788; Kawasaki 829; Fukuoka 607; Yokohama 470; Kita Kyushu 421; and Kobe 323. There is also a tendency for the homeless to spread out from the big cities to regional cities. Five large cities (Tokyo, Kawasaki, Yokohama, Nagoya and Osaka) account for 61.7 per cent of the nation's homeless people, a fall of 9.2 per cent on the figures for 2001. However, if we also include the homeless admitted to facilities and shelters, the real number of homeless has increased in the big cities. In Osaka the numbers of homeless people fell by 2,057 but this was also the result of admissions to facilities[5]. Despite the fact that many homeless people in Tokyo were admitted to facilities, their numbers increased by 327[6]. People who are active in providing support for the homeless throughout Japan argue that the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's calculations are not accurate and that, in fact, there are considerably more homeless people than stated[7]. Whatever the hidden figures regarding the true numbers of homeless, Japan's homeless population is smaller than that of other countries. This does not, however, imply that homelessness is a small problem in Japan. The homeless have spread out throughout city centers, living in clusters in parks and along riverbanks; young people frequently attack the homeless; and one often hears news of incidents concerning the homeless (for example, the 1980 Shinjuku Vagrants Bus Arson Incident; the 1983 Yokohama Killing and Wounding of Vagrants Incident; the 1995 Dōtonbori Homeless Murder Incident; the 1996 Forced Evacuation from the Shinjuku Nishiguchi Entrance; and the 1998 Shinjuku Nishiguchi Tent City Fire Incident). As a result of the homeless becoming visible and being acknowledged as a social problem, in 2002 the Diet, with bipartisan support, enacted the 'Special Measures Law Regarding Independent Support for the Homeless' (Homeless Independent Support Law, a temporary law with a ten year life span). The enactment of a special law for the benefit of 25,000 'citizens' is unprecedented in Japan.

Almost exclusively male
The breakdown of the homeless population by gender in the National Survey was 81.7 per cent men and 3.0 per cent women[8]. Because some homeless people were wearing heavy outfits to protect them against the cold and because they were found in dark, secluded places it was not always possible for those carrying out the observation survey to

determine their gender. This accounts for the 15.4 per cent recorded as gender unknown. We can assume that most of the people in this unknown group were also men.

In recent years there has been a tendency for the number of homeless women to increase. This notwithstanding, homeless women 'have not shown up quantitatively' (Mun, 2004: 54). This is because before becoming homeless most women in poverty are concealed within the service industry (bars), facilities and private residences (on welfare benefits). In fact, a considerable number of women in facilities are former homeless people[9]. Surmising on the basis of this actual situation, we can assume that the number of homeless women is considerably higher than suggested by the surveys. The totality of circumstances in which women become homeless is still unclear. What is clear, thanks to a survey – albeit of a mere fifteen women – commissioned by the city of Tokyo (the Tokyo Survey), is the nature of the longest-held jobs of homeless women (the work in which they were employed for the longest period before becoming homeless) and their immediate past occupation (the jobs in which they were employed immediately before becoming homeless) (*Toshiseikatsu Kenkyūkai* (Urban Life Study Group), 1999: 87–88). According to this survey, in the case of both the longest-held work and work immediately before becoming homeless, the main work for women had been a general work – a variety of manual work – (seven and five women respectively) and the service industry (six and five women respectively). With regard to occupation status: in the case of longest held work, seven were in regular employment and five in non-regular employment; and in the case of work immediately before becoming homeless, three were in regular employment and nine were in non-regular employment (six casual employees, two day laborers and one helping in an independently-owned business). The reasons for not having work immediately before becoming homeless were: five 'retired', two were 'dismissed' and one each for the following 'the work just dried up', the employment period was cut short', 'because of age' and 'still working'. Many women worked in general work or in the service industry immediately before becoming homeless and this fact has an influence on their occupation status and reasons for losing their jobs.[10] Maruyama also questioned six former homeless women and reports that their main work was as cleaners, factory workers, housewives, the sex industry and office workers (Maruyama, 2004: 19–21) In both reports, there is only a very slight history of past participation by homeless women in construction work[11].

Almost exclusively single

The National Survey carried out a questionnaire survey (2,163 homeless) at the same time as its observation survey of the homeless. According to this, 77.3 per cent of the total homeless surveyed were homeless 'on their own'. If we add those who were '(living with) friends and acquaintances' and 'others', then this number becomes 94.7 per cent. Meanwhile, the number of people who were homeless together with 'wives (including de facto)', 'children' and 'relatives' was limited to 5.2 per cent[12]. Also, the number of people who 'initiated' 'contact with their families or relatives in the past year' was a low 22.9 per cent. The reason for this figure is that a considerable number of the homeless were people who had no family, people who had difficulty forming families, bereaved people and people who had broken off (been forced to break off) contact with their families. According to a survey by the Tokyo Temporary Assistance Center, of the people using the center (918), those for whom the main support person in the family from which they had come was the father were 86.5 per cent, the mother 9.5 per cent and other 4.0 per cent (*Tokubetsuku Jinji, Kōsei Jimu Kumiai* (Human Affairs and Public Welfare Union for Special Wards), 2003: 58). Also, 46.8 per cent of people in the National Survey had never been married. The homeless people who had been married ended up being homeless on their own – without wives or children – as a result of divorce, breakdown of relationships or bereavement[13]. People become homeless because 'they do not possess the means which link people to networks in a mutually connected social structure' (Iwata, 1995: 17). Of all the aspects making up a safety net, the most important is the family. There are significant numbers of people whose families have cut relations with them after they became homeless. This is another distinctive feature of Japan's homeless. The homeless person is ashamed of their homeless life and the family is ashamed of having a relative who is a vagrant. With this level of discrimination against homeless people there is a wide gulf separating them from their families.

Almost exclusively middle-aged or elderly

The breakdown of homeless people by age, in the National Survey, was 4.5 per cent under thirty, 14.7 per cent in their forties, 45.5 per cent in their fifties and 35.4 per cent over sixty. The proportion of people over fifty was 80.9 per cent and the average age was 55.9. Average ages for the homeless were 54.0 in Tokyo in 1999 (*Toshiseikatsu*

Kenkyūkai, (City Living Research Group), 1999: 12); 57.5 in Nagoya in 2001 (*Kiso Seikatsu Hoshō Mondai Kenkyūkai* (Study Group on the Problems of Basic Life Insurance) 2001: 19); and 55.8 in Osaka in 1999 (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 14). This shows that in all the surveys the average stayed around the mid-fifties; this age group forms the axis around which there is a continuous turnover of homeless people as some people die and new people become homeless[14]. In response to a question about when people became homeless, 63.1 per cent of people answered that they first became homeless 'less than five years ago' and 22.1 per cent 'between five and less than ten years ago'. That is, the people who started their lives as homeless people around the age of fifty (or, at the youngest, in their late forties) exceeded eighty per cent of the total. If we take the average age of a homeless person to be in the late fifties, then the homeless people who have been in construction and other heavy physical work are already in their old age by the late fifties. Sixty-five is the age limit for the payment of welfare benefits to the homeless, in the majority of municipalities (sixty in Yokohama). For the homeless, the late fifties is the cruelest age.

Young homeless people began to appear in Japan in the late 1990s. In the down town areas and around the railway termini in large cities such as Tokyo and Osaka, there has been an increase in the number of young people speeding around in cars late at night, hanging around in groups in game centers and convenience stores and spending the night in subway passages. Young people doze on the seats of morning trains on their way home. We could only describe a tiny portion of these young people as living their lives primarily on the street. However, the walls separating these young people and the homeless are not as high as we might think. In October 1992 there was a riot in Kamagasaki. At that time, those at the head of the crowd throwing stones at the police were 'belligerent' young people, who had come in from outside the area. A number of these young people will undoubtedly end up forming the reserve army supplying the future ranks of the homeless. On 18 October 1995 an incident occurred in which two youths threw a homeless person – who then drowned – into a river at Ebisu Bridge in Dōtonbori, in Chuo Ward of the city of Osaka. These youths were also young people who move around from job to job and spend their nights down town. During the day they need to do day labor work in the construction, manufacturing and service industries and also casual work, to earn their entertainment money, and then at night they have fun; and when the money runs out they work again. The young people who live this sort of life style exist alongside the homeless[15]. These

young people, who endure problems such as the break up of their families, poverty and a poor academic record, are also from a social and economic underclass (*Buraku Kaihō Jinken Kenkyūsho* (Institute of Buraku Liberation and Human Rights), 2005). When we simply refer to them as living 'unplanned' lives we cannot see the problems which they face in their lives

There are many young people who work in the construction and service industries, moving around from job to job. They find work through information in help wanted magazines and newspapers and also from friends. They make telephone calls to employers from their own or friends' houses or from the cars in which they live and then get themselves directly to the work site. Although they spend the greater part of their lives on the street, this does not necessarily mean that they are completely cut off from their families. They are different from the homeless. We could, however, describe these young people, who look for work in magazines and newspapers and who work on the basis of contracts concluded over the telephone, as being even more isolated laborers than the homeless who get work from labor arrangers and labor recruiters[16]. Contracts with employers are one-sided and even if one is physically healthy and strong, the pay is poor. These young people usually pay no attention to the market rate for wages and lack even the will to negotiate with employers.

Former construction laborers make up the biggest group.
According to the National Survey, the people who had been construction laborers (laborers and skilled workers), immediately before becoming homeless, made up more than half of the total number (55.2 per cent) of homeless people surveyed. The figure becomes 61.2 per cent if we add to this other occupations in which the homeless are often found ('laborers and transport workers' and 'cleaning and collecting recyclable waste'). Also, 50.6 per cent of homeless people had experience of having sought work, or having worked, in *yoseba* specializing in the construction industry (for example, San'ya, Kotobukichō, Sasajima and Kamagasaki). Furthermore, for 42.7 per cent their longest-held occupation had been as a construction laborer. This indicates the following. First, that the construction industry is the main source of the homeless, with *yoseba* playing a considerable role in this. Second, that high numbers of people had worked in the construction industry as their longest held occupation and subsequently continued to work in the construction industry. In the Tokyo Survey (the street survey of fifteen women) 41.0 per cent had been construction industry laborers

(excluding skilled workers) in their work just before becoming home-less and 39.7 per cent had experience of having sought or found work in a *yoseba* (*Toshi Seikatsu Kenkyūkai* (City Living Research Group), 1999: 81 and 96). Amongst the homeless in Osaka, 69.2 per cent had been construction laborers immediately before becoming homeless and 57.9 per cent had experience of seeking or having found work in *yoseba* (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 51 and 264). Thus, the proportion of people with experience both as construction laborers and in *yoseba* differs between Tokyo and Osaka. In both cases, however, there is no divergence on the point that *yoseba* and construction work are the major source of the homeless. This is an indication of the significant position held by *yoseba* and the construction industry in the creation of the homeless.

The above are the group characteristics of Japan's homeless: *unattached middle-aged and elderly men who are former construction laborers*. This is the case with the vast majority of Japan's homeless. These group characteristics, including the fact that the homeless population is not large, are prescribed by Japan's economic and social structure and they are mutually interdependent.

Part Two: The homeless class

The origins of the homeless

Where are the homeless from? How are they enduring their homeless lives? Why can they not escape their lives of homelessness? In this chapter, I will analyze the circumstances which have led the homeless (*focusing on men)* to posses their own specific set of characteristics. Essentially, the homeless are the product of the capitalist economic system and of the urban industrial structure and labor market. There were also homeless people in Japan in the pre war[17] as well as the post war period. In the immediate post war period there have been the 'tramps' (*runpen – from lumpen*) and 'war orphans' created by fire bombing damage'; then the 'vagrants' and 'people without an address'; up to today's 'homeless'. The homeless have always existed at the very bottom of cities[18]. In that sense, the problem of the homeless is not a particularly new problem. Iwata used the term the 'poor of no fixed address' to refer to the people in cities who constituted the poverty problem which post war economic growth and the welfare system had been unable to solve – or, rather, which these developments had spawned. Iwata also gave a clear description of the formation of this

group and the mechanisms of class and spatial separation (Iwata, 1995). Iwata further discerned that the very process which was hiding these people 'of no fixed address' in the invisible bottom most layer of cities was the process which established Japan's modern and present-day welfare system (Iwata, 1995: 12–15).

The homeless have constantly kept changing the form of their existence. Sixteen years ago I analyzed the process by which *yoseba* laborers become homeless, by looking at the example of Kamagasaki (Aoki, 1989: II-2). That was, however, a time when the characteristics of the homeless which we see today were latent and when one could get away with simply describing the homeless as representing the 'fate' awaiting *yoseba* laborers. The mode of existence of the homeless which we see, under economic globalization and global urbanization, has shifted to a far bigger scale and has become far more complex. These days, we are no longer able to carry out research on the homeless without taking into consideration all of the changes in the urban industrial structure and the labor market, which would dismantle the *yoseba.*

Next, I will take a practical look at the circumstances in which the homeless, using the homeless in Osaka as an example, became homeless, focusing on the work place. The source for this will be the previously mentioned Osaka Survey. In the Osaka Survey 97.0 per cent of respondents were men (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 23). The average age of respondents was 55.8 (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 24). What was their work experience before becoming homeless?

Educational background

The first consideration is family background. We can think of family background as being the departure point for children's future employment record. In the Osaka Survey, 62.1 per cent of respondents had at most completed the period of compulsory education. In the State of the Nation Survey (2000), the number of people from this same generation who had not completed compulsory education was 30.0 per cent (*Sōmucho Tōkeikyoku* (Management and Coordination Agency Statistical Department), 2000). The gap in educational record between these two surveys is unmistakable. The majority of homeless people tend to have a poor educational background. This points to the following facts. Firstly, the families from which they have come were not well off (We do not have information regarding the mother and father's occupation and income). Secondly, respondents had limited

choices regarding their first job. Thirdly, their first job determined the low status of their longest-held employment.

The first job

In the Osaka Survey, 91.1 per cent of people whose last school attended was in Osaka also had their first job (the very first job they worked in after leaving school) in Osaka (*Ōsakashidai* 2001: 272). Osaka was the place where 38.1 per cent of all respondents were employed in their first job. Many homeless people had their first job in their home area and then moved to Osaka. They had already participated in the Osaka labor market when they were young. Their participation, viewed by industry, had been: in the manufacturing industry 43.6 per cent; the wholesale, retail and service industries 21.5 per cent; the construction industry 17.6 per cent; transport and communications industries 5.8 per cent; and the agricultural, forestry and fishing industries 6.9 per cent (Ōsakashidai, 2001: 262). The breakdown by occupational category is: manufacturing and transport 47.1 per cent; construction work 18.8 per cent; sales and service 18.2 per cent; specialist, skilled and office 6.3 per cent; and agricultural, forestry and fishery work 8.1 per cent. The occupation status was regular employment 42.2 per cent; non-regular employment 19.9 per cent; unknown 21.9 per cent; and working for oneself or for family 14.1 per cent.

Factory workers in the manufacturing industry were the major group in terms of respondents' first jobs, followed by laborers in the construction industry. The next group was laborers in the wholesale, retail and service industries. What is meant here by service work is not white-collar work: it indicates lower class service jobs such as sales assistants, cooks, employees in eating and drinking and amusement establishments and security guards. Also, only just over forty per cent were in regular employment. There were considerably more people in non-regular employment. The insecure nature of the work is further revealed in the length of continued employment in the first job and in retirement ages. Close to 70 per cent of respondents had stopped working in their first job within ten years of beginning: 46.4 per cent had less than four years of continuous service and 23.3 per cent had between five and nine years (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 263). Their ages at this time were: 34.2 per cent under nineteen and 43.5 per cent between twenty and twenty-nine. Most were non-regular employees, employed in insecure occupations, primarily factory workers, but also others such as laborers and sales assistants. Even the regular employees finished

working after a short period of time. This was the situation regarding the first jobs of the homeless.

Longest-held occupation
The breakdown by industry of the longest-held occupations of respondents to the Osaka Survey was: manufacturing industry 22.2 per cent; wholesale, retail and service industries 13.2 per cent; construction industry 51.3 per cent; transport and communications industries 7.1 per cent; and agricultural, forestry and fishing industries 2.4 per cent (The data for longest-held occupations is based on the introductory essay in the Osaka City University Report, Tsumaki, 2001: 186). The breakdown by occupation was: factory worker and laborer 78.5 per cent; sales and service (mainly shop assistants) 12.5 per cent; specialist, skilled and office 4.6 per cent; and agricultural, forestry and fishing industry work 3.0 per cent. The occupation status was: regular employment 26.6 per cent; non-regular employment 43.2 per cent (casual 6.9 per cent and day labor 36.6 per cent); unknown 17.1 per cent; and working for oneself or for family 11.4 per cent. The longest-held occupations for respondents, in contrast to their first jobs, display a reversal of the relative importance of the manufacturing and construction industries. In occupational categories also, laborers outnumber factory workers. There is also a reduction to just over one in four in regular employment. Factory workers are widely thought to be those in regular employment but, generally, large numbers stop working after a short period of time. Conversely, those in non-regular employment exceed forty per cent and, what is more, amongst these there has been an increase in the number of day laborers. That is, with regard to the longest-held occupation, more so than in the case of one's first job, there was a strong inclination towards insecure employment, primarily in the construction industry. People who have been laborers in their immediate past occupation have embarked on the path which will lead them into homelessness

Immediate past occupation
The breakdown by industry of the immediate past occupation of respondents in the Osaka Survey was: manufacturing industry 9.3 per cent, wholesale, retail and service industries 10.6 per cent, construction industry 75.4 per cent, transport and communication industries 2.9 per cent and agricultural, forestry and fisheries industries 0.2 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 264). The breakdown by occupation was:

manufacturing and transportation (mainly factory workers) 13.5 per cent; construction industry work (laborers) 69.2 per cent; sales and service 10.1 per cent; specialist, skilled and office 2.0 per cent; and agricultural, forestry and fisheries industries 0.2 per cent. The occupation status was: regular employment 7.0 per cent; non-regular employment 76.0 per cent (casual 10.5 per cent and day labor 65.5 per cent); unknown 9.6 per cent; and working for oneself or for family 5.9 per cent. Close to seventy per cent of all respondents had been construction laborers in their immediate past occupation. Also, three out of four people were in non-regular employment and many of these were day laborers. The insecurity of employment in immediate past occupations was decisive. In order to understand this point fully, let us take a look at the 'reasons which led to homelessness' and also at 'residence at the time of the immediate past occupation. Under 'reasons for homelessness' 69.6 per cent gave 'lack of work' and 11.4 per cent gave 'unemployment' (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 293). For 81.0 per cent work was the reason for becoming homeless. The situation regarding residence at the time of the immediate past occupation was that 44.9 per cent lived in 'work camps or company housing' and 29.3 per cent in apartments. A further 39.2 per cent lived in lodging houses (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 290). These men are all day laborers. Their conditions of residence are further indications of their insecure employment in their immediate past occupation. The majority of these people *lost their work and place of residence simultaneously.*

Influx into Osaka

Where were these people born, when did they come to Osaka (or were they born in Osaka) and when did they become homeless? People born outside Osaka (Prefecture) made up 82.1 per cent of respondents in the Osaka Survey (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 25). The number of people who worked in Osaka for their first job was 37.8 per cent; in their longest-held occupation 63.6 per cent; and in their immediate past occupation 90.3 per cent (*Ōsakashidai,* 2001: 269–276). Just short of ten per cent of the total had worked in other areas and became homeless soon after coming to Osaka. Moreover, the duration of the first bout of homelessness – which had ended in re-employment by the time of the survey (a period of moving between homelessness and employment) – had been: less than 8 months for 23.6 per cent; between 8 months and 1 year and 8 months for 34.7 per cent; between 1 year and 8 months and 3 years and 8 months for 22.7 per cent; and over 3 years and 8 months for 19.0 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 30). Whilst

Figure 4.1: Decline in Occupation Status (Directional arrows show the relationship that occurs next)

(Disadvantaged family background→) low educational background→ laboring work

(laboring work)

manufacturing → construction→ (*yoseba*) → unemployment→ homelessness

sales and service→ construction→ (*yoseba*) → unemployment→ homelessness

construction unskilled→ skilled → (*yoseba*) → unemployment→ homelessness

41.7 per cent of people experienced a long period of moving between homelessness and employment (more than 1 year and 8 months), for close to sixty per cent of people the period was shorter than this (under 1 year and 8 months). The majority of Osaka's homeless are people who have come to Osaka from other areas. Most came to Osaka early in their working lives and are people who have worked there for a long time. They came to Osaka in the prime of their lives and worked there following the period of rapid economic growth. They are also mostly people who have been homeless for short periods of time. Osaka's homeless have experienced a steady fall in occupation status and have recently become homeless.

Figure 4.1 is a summary of the work changes undergone by the respondents to the Osaka Survey before they became homeless. The homeless *started in low- ranked jobs and steadily fell down Osaka's job ranks*.

The road to homelessness

The *yoseba* is the main source of homeless people[19]. In the Osaka Survey 57.9 per cent of people had found work through a *yoseba* (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 48). Another 42.1 per cent of respondents streamed out of the general (underclass) labor market onto the streets, without having passed through a *yoseba*. If we consider the initial period of work in Kamagasaki, the figures for the homeless with some experience of having worked there are: 1990s 34.0 per cent; 1980s 26.5 per cent; 1970s 21.1 per cent; and before the 1960s 8.4 per cent. This largely accords with the circumstances, mentioned previously, in which day laborer numbers have increased in both the longest-held occupation and the immediate past occupation. Moreover, 66.0 per cent of the total have been moving in and out of Kamagasaki for the past ten years. They are people who have worked (longest-held occupation) as day laborers for a long period of time and who have recently become

homeless. The *yoseba* has lost its capacity to draw in a new labor force. The shorter one's period of homelessness, the higher the likelihood of not having had any experience of finding work in Kamagasaki. As one moves spatially closer to Kamagasaki, however, there is an increase in respondents with some experience of having found work through Kamagasaki. In the four wards around Kamagasaki (Naniwa Ward, Tennōji Ward, Chūō Ward and Nishi Ward) the proportion of homeless people who found work through Kamagasaki was as high as seventy-eight per cent (Shima, 1999: 34). The original *yoseba* laborers are a 'fluid' surplus population which moves between day labor and homelessness. In Chapter Two, I called them the 'base group'. As far as they were concerned, the street was a place in which to wait for the next work opportunity. Today, however, the *yoseba* laborers who can practise this fluidity have become a very small minority. Once they become homeless these days, they find it very difficult to escape from that condition. The longer a homeless person's stint of homelessness, the more reconciled they become to returning to day labor work. In Chapter Two, I called the people who stay on the street "the group on the periphery'. They move out of Kamagasaki in search of the resources with which to endure homelessness and also in search of an easy place in which to endure it.

> When I started out [as a homeless person], I got up early in the morning and traveled to Nishinari [in Kamagasaki] thinking I would get some work. Because of this I slept rough near Nishinari. Even so, no matter how often I went to Nishinari, there was never any work. I traipsed along uselessly, day after day, and in time I felt like a fool so I ended up not caring at all about finding work. Sleeping rough is the lot of an old man like me (early sixties). I get by somehow, doing lots of different things now. I have come back to Kamagasaki, after a long absence. I am grateful for the soup kitchen. Sleeping rough has also gradually got too much for me (A. Kamagasaki, 2 January 1999.)

The second source of homeless people is the group in insecure employment. Recently, there has been an increase in homeless people whose last job before becoming homeless was not in the construction industry: for example, drivers, boiler men, pachinko parlor assistants and restaurant employees. There are also increasing numbers of homeless people citing factors other than unemployment as their reasons for having become homeless. They are not yet a majority but their numbers are increasing. A major reason for this

is the restructuring and the bankruptcies which have accompanied recession. We know, for example, that there are large numbers of people in Osaka and in Ōgimachi Park, who know nothing of the existence of Kamagasaki and who have no history of day labor work in the construction industry. They have suddenly become homeless people after having been, for example, in labor occupations in small and medium sized enterprises and dispatched or casual workers in manufacturing factories (*Kamagasaki Patorōru*, 16 April 1998: 2)[20]. Having lost their jobs and with no day labor work, no unemployment insurance or savings, no family or relatives and driven out of the place in which they used to live, these men have poured out onto the streets (Nasubi, 1999). These days, there is no brake on a fall in class for the people in the insecure employment group.

The third source of the homeless is young people. There are accounts which say that the number of young people in the ranks of the homeless is still small (Kasai, 1995). Other reports claim that the number of young people in the ranks of the homeless has risen (Nasubi, 1999). Whatever the actual numbers, we are seeing young people in the ranks of the homeless. There has been an increase in the number of young people who cannot find regular employment and who have become *furītā* (people hopping from one job to another). The number of young people fleeing from junior high school and dropping out of senior high school has increased[21]. There have been an increased number of jobs in wholesale, retail and service industries, which young people have been willing to take. Their reasons for working differ from those of people in the prime of life and older, but these young people also move from one job to another under the insecure conditions created by vague employment contracts, low wages, poor working conditions and the like. A number of these youths then go on to become habitually homeless: spending the night on the street, sleeping in cars or coffee shops, moving from one friend's house to another's and, occasionally, going to a *yoseba* and looking for construction work. This type of life is taking root amongst a group of young people[22].

The class backgrounds of homeless people are changing. The pressures driving the fall from day laborer to homeless person are growing stronger within the urban underclass. If day laborers are the 'upper class' inside the urban underclass, then the homeless are the 'lower class'. The boundaries between the two have largely disappeared. In addition, some members of the group in insecure employment are falling directly into the homeless group. Added to these are the people who have had the bitter experience of company

bankruptcy or dismissal, elderly people who have left their homes and other facilities and young people who have left school and their homes. Shima used the term 'the gradual transfer zone' (*senitai*) to refer to the group of 'people living latent homeless lives', who were at the border between 'having no fixed residence' and 'homelessness' and engaged in miscellaneous work (Shima, 1999: 146–147). Shima says that it is this existence which makes it difficult to determine1 the domain in which the homeless dwell.

The labor arranging function of *yoseba* has receded and day laborers, naturally, but also others in the insecure employment group now face the risks of losing the *yoseba* and their ability to find day labor work and also of becoming homeless at any moment. Meanwhile, day laborers are becoming homeless and leaving the *yoseba*, with the result that they compete with those in the insecure employment group for work. In this way, the separation of living spaces for day laborers and those in the insecure employment group is crumbling. Moreover, the methods of labor arranging are becoming more diverse and there has been an increase in work picked up around railway stations and in parks, through help-wanted magazines and newspapers and through job banks of part timers (*pāto banku*). The number of labor recruiters' work camps, which keep day laborers shut inside them, has also increased. Work camps have sprung up everywhere throughout the inner city, in place of *yoseba*. The diffusion of this type of *yoseba* function has made coming and going between work and homelessness easier. The homeless become a class according to the length of their period of homelessness. The people who move between being construction laborers and homelessness are either day laborers in work or the mobile type of homeless people. As far as these people are concerned, homelessness is a time for waiting for work opportunities. Those people who have become firmly lodged in homelessness and those who cannot slip out of homelessness are the habitual homeless. For these people, homelessness is a way of life and the street is their residential base.

Social background

It was not only economic globalization and *yoseba* changes which created the homeless (Nishizawa, 2000: 30–32). In the opening passage of this chapter, I said that, compared with the United States and Europe, there are few homeless people in Japan. Why are they few? What are the peculiarly Japanese factors at work in this? As our next task we

must ask these questions in relation to the background to the creation of the homeless. Economic globalization can *only* proceed *by mediating the social formation* of capitalism in each country. Simply looking at the changes to the labor market, which have accompanied economic globalization in Japan, is insufficient for understanding the creation of the homeless in Japan. In order to do this we must also look at the specific social background in Japan (Osaka) with regard to the creation of the homeless. Osaka's homeless population is growing. Its numbers, however, are far fewer than those for Los Angeles, Paris and Sao Paulo. *This very fact is of strategic significance in understanding Osaka's homeless.* Japanese society is generally referred to as being based on group-ism (*shūdan shugi*). The principle of familism (*kazoku shugi*), a kind of group-ism, permeates the whole of society, in particular the company and the family. The power of these organizations is strong enough to subsume the members of society within the group. Japan's public systems for helping the poor are limited. Company welfare and family welfare offset this limitation (Arakawa, 1993: 124). It is precisely this 'Japanese-style welfare'[23] which is the social background staving off the direct descent of the poor into homelessness. Let us now examine some of the realities of this situation.

Welfare benefits

Firstly, welfare benefits. The general provisions of Japan's Welfare Benefits Law (S*eikatsu Hogo Hō*) state:

> This law is based on the ideas set out in Japan's Constitution. The Japanese state will provide the necessary benefits, in response to the degree of poverty, for *all of its citizens* who are facing lives of poverty, with the aim – alongside *guaranteeing their minimum standard of living* – of promoting their self-reliance. (Aoki's emphasis)

This says that any Japanese person living in poverty can receive welfare benefits in order to maintain a minimum standard of living. However, the actual administration of welfare benefits is a far cry from this ideal. Municipalities, in applying welfare benefits, impose three necessary conditions to be satisfied by the poor who apply for them (Iwata, 1995: 7 and 13)[24]. One condition is that poor people who do not have an address cannot apply for welfare benefits. Applications are made at the local welfare office, through the district welfare officer who is responsible for each particular address. However, day laborers and the homeless, who move from work camp to work camp, are non-residents who do

not have an address. Consequently, they are unable to apply for welfare benefits. The City of Tokyo regards lodging houses as an address and pays welfare benefits to day laborers and the homeless who live in them. However, even this is not enough to assist the growing numbers of poor people. Secondly, only people who are physically unable to work because of mental or physical impediments or old age can apply for welfare benefits. People are, however, homeless because they have no work. Even if people are able to work, they cannot if there is no work. This notwithstanding, they cannot apply for welfare benefits. Thirdly, there is an age limit on applications for welfare benefits. In Osaka, applicants must be over sixty. However, as we have seen, the average age of homeless people was 55.8. Thus the majority of homeless people are ineligible to apply for welfare benefits.

This situation means that welfare benefits are of no use to the majority of homeless people. They must get through their lives of poverty through their own efforts. The inadequate administration of welfare benefits is hastening the process of turning poor people into homeless people and has become a factor preventing any escape from homelessness. The premise behind this state of affairs is the principle that welfare benefits are a supplement to the private forms of assistance provided by the company and the family. In Japan, people cannot even become poor 'in peace'. If families or companies abandon people, then they are out and left to their own devices. This kind of administrative posture underpins and permeates all policy regarding the homeless[25].

Company welfare
Families and companies supplement the inadequate administration of welfare benefits. The management principles of Japanese companies are said to be familial. Familial management has three characteristics. First, the company employs employees until retirement via the lifetime employment system. The labor market is divided vertically within each group of companies and workers are moved and dispatched within their company labor market. Temporary transfers, new contracts and the move to contract work are all part of this. Any surplus workers are not directly released into the labor market. Company supplement this. Secondly, there is internal company work management. The company aims to heighten employees' loyalty towards the company and also their spontaneity regarding work and thereby to increase productivity (Fujita, 1984: 28). To this end, the company introduces fictitious familial ideas into the human relationships in the workplace.

Then, the company assists with its employees' lives and those of their entire families through a variety of health and welfare policies. Family assistance extends to a wide variety of areas of life such as housing, medical, one off lump sum payments for ceremonial occasions, mutual aid, insurance and leisure. In this way, the company becomes a lifestyle cooperative, with 'the company subsuming the family and the region' (Ogose, 1992: 43 and 52). Thirdly, each work group in the workplace conducts evaluations of an employee's work achievements. The principle of competition functions in a group dimension. Workers compete as a group unit. An individual's work achievements are evaluated on the basis of the group's productivity. This is the kind of management system which operates under Japanese company familial management[26]. The surplus labor force is not abruptly expelled from the company. Employees are dispatched anew in the labor market of the company group (parent company, affiliated company, sub-subsidiary company and trading company), in the form of temporary transfers, new contracts and a move to contract work.

This type of employment system reduces the risks of underclass laborers becoming homeless people. Labor control by companies fulfils a welfare function towards employees. A closed labor market fulfils the function of employment regulation within a group of companies. This type of system is collapsing under the march of economic globalization. Employment competition between people is intensifying and everyone is at risk of losing their job. Even so, large numbers of people are being kept in a state of *semi*-unemployment and increases in the number of completely unemployed people are being averted. Intensifying competition for employment and a subsumptive labor market – how will these balance out? This is the main background factor which will determine increases and reductions in the number of homeless people in future.

Family welfare
Not everyone without an income and a place to live will necessarily end up being a homeless person. Even if they are poor, people get through crises by various means such as taking out loans, relying on unemployment insurance and welfare and by depending on relatives and the families of friends. Only people who possess no safety net at all are forced out onto the streets. The homeless are isolated people who 'do not have the means which link people to the network of inter-related social structures' (Iwata, 1995: 17). The family is the most important component of the safety net. A variety of relations exist between the

homeless and their families: in the surveys there were people with no family, people with difficult family situations, people who had been bereaved of their families and people who had left (been forced to leave) their families. According to the Tokyo Temporary Assistance Center Survey, the main provider in the families from which people using the center came (918 people), was: the father 86.5 per cent, the mother 9.5 per cent and other 4.0 per cent (*Tokubetsuku Jinji, Kōsei Jimu Kumiai*, 2003: 58).

The homeless are people with a diverse range of family circumstances who have traveled a variety of life's paths before ending up on the street. In cases where homeless people maintain links with their families, the family plays the role of staving off the process by which that person would otherwise become homeless by giving occasional aid to the poor/needy person who has left. In these cases, the family fulfils the function of substituting for social welfare. However, there is no uniform set of relations between the homeless and their families. According to the Osaka Survey, 30.8 per cent of people 'had contact' with family *after becoming* homeless and 69.2 per cent 'had no contact' (672 respondents) (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 57). The number of people who maintain contact with their families after becoming homeless is limited to around one in three respondents. The family members with whom they tended to maintain contact were parents and/or grandparents who had brought up them, and children from one's own marriage.

In the case of the homeless, the family, generally, has not acted as a primary deterrent to homelessness. Conversely, for the people who do not become homeless, the family (particularly the family in which they were reared) is the main factor preventing homelessness. There is also no uniform correlation between whether one has been married and homelessness. Even though there may be cases in which the marriage family spurs a family member's move into homelessness, there are also cases in which it staves off homelessness. Cases in which one flees in order to escape the onerous pressures of being the family provider are examples of the former. An example of the latter would be cases in which one stays within the family precisely because of the existence of these onerous pressures. According to the Osaka Survey, 57.8 per cent of respondents had been married (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 56). Over 40 per cent of homeless people have never been married. Also, 30.8 per cent of respondents currently still keep in touch with family and relatives (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 57). Widowers were 15.4 per

cent of the homeless and 69.2 per cent of the homeless were divorced. The overwhelming majority were divorced. We can assume that this group has faced some serious family problems and that the decision to separate oneself from one's family was a bitter and difficult choice to have to make[27].

The same principle of subsuming the surplus labor force within the company (group) also permeates the familial social structure. The fact that there are not large numbers of homeless people in Japan is held to be a characteristic manifestation of Japanese society. Japanese society is generally made up of sets of close family relations. The Japanese family is structured along the axis of relatives in the direct line of descent and there are strong ties of mutual assistance between its members. The family (relatives) helps members who are poor. Throwing people who are failures out of the family would be to the 'shame of the family' (*ie no haji*). Difficulties experienced in getting by in life are held in common by the family (the sharing of poverty) (Geertz, 1956). This is the way in which the mechanism of alleviating family problems functions (Akimoto, 2003: 58). The family staves off the possibility of its members separating off from the family and of becoming homeless (Morita, 2001: 42). 'Internalized within Japanese family structure and company structure is a given level of social service' (Castells, 1997=1999: 134). Under economic globalization there is a loosening of this type of family structure. However, familial culture is still strong. Iwata says 'Although Japan has conspicuously large numbers of people living on the street in international terms, its citizens' responses are cold-hearted. I do not think that the problem lies with the homeless, it is perhaps a problem of the state of Japanese society' (Morita, 2001: 41). If this is the case, then there are two background factors for this situation. One is the significance of the fact that there are few shelters for homeless people in Japan. The second is the significance of the fact that the Japanese family is subsumptive with regard to the members who adhere to the norms of the family but cold-hearted towards people who have broken away from the family norms and gone out into the world[28]. Familism as an ideology functions simultaneously to subsume members of the family and to exclude them from the family[29]. We can say that the present increase in the number of homeless people is a sign of the ongoing weakening of the subsumptive nature (the mutual aid function) of the Japanese family, as a result of the severe economic circumstances caused by globalization (*Tōkyōto Kikaku Shingishitsu*, 1995: 28).

Part Three: Homeless people's work

Ways of enduring

How are the people who have become homeless getting through their lives of homelessness? How are they finding work and food? Are they able to escape their lives as homeless people? What is the future awaiting those who cannot escape? The next task is to provide an answer to these questions and to give a general outline of the work and lives of the homeless. The homeless must get hold of resources if they are to endure life on the streets. This is not, however, an easy thing. There are three ways in which the homeless can obtain resources. The first method is to find someone to employ them. The next method is to gain an income through one's own efforts. The final method is to rely on 'picking up' (*hiroi*) food (searching for any kind of edible food past its use by date) and to rely on soup kitchens. All of the above are 'work' in the context of enduring homelessness, [30]. In homelessness, the very act of enduring daily life is central to a life on the streets: the work process and the process of living are intertwined (Aoki, 1989: 110–111). Three fields cover the types of work in which the homeless are employed. One is employment in day work in the construction, manufacturing and service industries. The second is the type of employment in which one offers one's labor in services such as cleaners, security guards and removalists. The third is employment in 'miscellaneous work' on the street, for example, advertizing men, ticket scalpers' helpers (queuing), ticket separators and ball collectors (in Pachinko parlors). The ways of finding employment are: being employed by a labor arranger or labor recruiter; finding employment via help-wanted magazines or in the help-wanted columns of newspapers; and finding employment through being introduced to it by friends. Generally, many of the homeless people who change their sleeping places on a nightly basis enter work camps and become laborers and many of the homeless people who live in blue sheet tents and small, improvised huts work for themselves at jobs such as collecting recyclable materials. The former have been homeless for a short period of time and have a fluid pattern of life. The latter have been homeless for a long period of time and have a fixed pattern of life.

> There are lots of groups on the street – I'm from the Eastern Exit (Yokohama Railway Station) group and I consult, as the need arises, with the crowd from the underground passages. Why do we form

groups – to eat! If someone can get work, then we all share what there is and eat. On days when no one can work, we all go off to gather food and if someone manages to pick up some food, then we can all eat something, can't we? Staying in my own pre-fab. (temporary lodgings in Kotobukichō) means that I will be away from all of my companions, who are at Yokohama Railway Station, doesn't it? It would be unforgivable, wouldn't it, if I wasn't in when someone unexpectedly dropped by to see me? (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* (Kotobuki Supporters' Exchange Conference, 2000: 5).

The work camp pattern of work

In recent years, there has been a decline in the help-wanted positions available through *yoseba* and the Employment Security Office, as labor arrangers and labor recruiters have filled positions in the railway stations and parks where there are large numbers of homeless people[31]. Help-wanted magazines and newspapers and a help-wanted system for work on, for example, a part time and labor pool basis have become popular. Labor arranging for day labor has moved from the 'visible' format of employment in a *yoseba* to the 'invisible' format of the direct run from the streets to the work site, via labor recruiters' work camps and the pages of magazines and newspapers. The homeless can no longer find employment unless they enter a work camp. At the same time, there has also been an increase in employment which does not occur via work camps, such as in service occupations[32]. One hundred labor recruiting agents (construction industry) come and go from Tokyo's Ueno Park every day[33]. Agents for service industry jobs, such as the cleaning and maintenance of buildings, approach the homeless to do these jobs, and then take care of transporting them right onto the construction site (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* (National Conference of Day Labor Unions), 1999 and *Rengō Ōsaka – Airin Chiku Mondai Kenkyūkai* (Study Group Into the Problems of the Airin District, Osaka Branch of Japanese Trade Union Confederation), 1998: 13).

Meanwhile, companies have intensified their control over workers in order to secure, more reliably, the best work force possible and to prevent work accidents. Registering a person's name and contact details, at the time when they join a work site, has become obligatory. As a result of this, people without an address have been shut out of employment. In the past, many homeless people gave the office address of the day labor union at the *yoseba* as their contact address but these

days there has been an increase in the numbers giving the work camp as their contact address. The homeless people who have dispersed to the work camps cannot even unite and they have no alternative but to submit to the employment conditions which employers impose on them. As a consequence of this, there has been an increase in poor working conditions. We have even seen the emergence of 'prison-like work camps' (*takobeya*: octopus rooms) in which as many as five or six people are packed into a tiny room; a 'fearful overseer' imprisons laborers; they are not even allowed to go out; they are forced to work without rest; and they are not even paid proper wages. Even if the pay is low or or the working conditions are poor, homeless people who have spread out around the inner city have no choice but to submit to the employer if they want to work[34]. There are no agreements on minimum wages and not even any movements to protect the human rights of homeless people in work camps[35]. We are also seeing the appearance of employers who exploit the homeless, cutting personnel expenses in public works, in order to achieve low unit costs, and getting the homeless to work for practically nothing. Ther are even employers who engage laborers with no intention of paying any wages from the outset (these are entangled with yakuza) (Nasubi 1999)[36].

> When the boss told me to cut off a part of my finger [a punitive ceremony performed by yakuza] I became frightened and fled from the work camp. I had heard that I would be getting 5,000 yen per day in take home pay but in seven months of work things weren't done properly, I wasn't paid …About forty of my colleagues are still in the work camp now and they are probably all going through the same things (G, a homeless person. This boss is a self-professed 'member of H yakuza group') (*San'ya Rōdōsha Fukushi Kaikan Un'ei Iinkai* (Management Committee of the San'ya Laborer's Welfare Hall), 1999: 2).

There are some people who are not paid for extended periods of time and whose stay in work camps stretches out to one or two years. There are also cases of people who are unable to find work in the work camp and even though they earn some wages, their earnings gradually disappear because of exorbitant charges for room and food in the work camp (work camp residents are forced to pay excessively high fees). There are, however, homeless people who, even though they are aware of this, seek refuge in work camps once they are in them and knowingly work for nothing if it means they can secure temporary lodging, food and drink for themselves in these places. In the past, work camps

were places where day laborers awaited work opportunities when there was no cash work available. Now, they have become 'lodging houses' for the purpose of eating and staying alive. Employers know these types of homeless people and they take advantage of and exploit them[37]. When the homeless people's contracts with the employers end, they leave the work camps and then return once again to the streets. The homeless have no alternative but to return to the streets, even if they succeed in finding some temporary employment. Escaping from homelessness is just not possible. If they should meet with accidents or illness, then this is doubly the case.

> I won't go to any places outside of Takadanobaba! There are lots of scary work camps out there. Asakusa and Ueno are full of work camps linked to yakuza. Someone I know joined a work camp from Asakusa. He had an accident on the job and had to go to hospital. Naturally, it was a work accident, right? But, what they said to him was, 'You got hurt because of your own carelessness so you pay your own hospital costs! And, we are not going to pay you your day's wage (*dezura*) because of the trouble you have caused us!' After he got out of hospital he was quickly driven out of the work camp. It's just intolerable behaviour! (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1999: 6)[38].

Collecting recyclable materials

How are the homeless people who have gone out onto the streets enduring their lives? According to the Osaka Survey, of the total respondents (672), 80.0 per cent were 'currently in work', and 20.0 per cent were surviving their homeless lives by 'picking up food where they could (*esa tori*) (finding food by means such as asking for foods past their use date at convenience stores) and via soup kitchens (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 31). The types of work were: collecting recyclable resources 87.3 per cent; day labor 9.1 per cent; special cleaning 4.1 per cent; and other 0.3 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 32). Day labor refers to day labor work in the construction, transportation and service industries and special cleaning refers to work which the city gives to elderly laborers[39] and other refers to miscellaneous jobs such as selling (helping out in street stalls) and carrying advertising placards. The recyclable resources being collected were made up of aluminum cans 79.5 per cent; large items of furniture, electrical goods and the like discarded by people 34.8 per cent; copper wire 15 per cent; newspapers and magazines 7.9 per cent; and cardboard boxes

6.0 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 32). If we break down the figures for people in work on the basis of the length of the period for which they have been homeless: 55.4 per cent of people were homeless for less than four months; 80.2 per cent of people who were homeless for longer than four but less than eight months; 85.9 per cent of people who were homeless for between eight months and three years and eight months; and 80.0 per cent of people who were homeless for longer than three years and eight months (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 112). With three years and eight months as the peak, the proportion of people in work increases the longer the period of homelessness. When we look at the proportion of those in work, from the perspective of the type of homelessness they are living, the rate for those living in tents (the homeless who put up blue vinyl sheets in parks and along rivers) was 85.7 per cent and for those without tents (who sleep in their clothes covered with sheets of newspaper or who build cardboard houses) the rate was 58.6 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 98). As the period of homelessness increases, there is a tendency for the number of people living in tents to increase (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 81–82). People in work are also largely people living in tents who have been homeless for a long period of time. These people form the core of the homeless who collect recyclable resources. This tpe of work has, simultaneously, become a condition for prolonged homelessness.

How much do the homeless earn from their current work, which is predominantly collecting recyclable resources? According to the Osaka Survey, 19.0 per cent of people had a monthly income of less than 10,000 yen; 20.3 per cent earned 10,000 to 20,000 yen; 17.2 per cent earned between 20,000 and 30,000 yen; 17.5 per cent earned between 30,000 and 40,000 yen; 6.7 per cent earned between 40,000 and 50,000 yen; and 19.4 per cent earned over 50,000 yen (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 33). The number of people with a monthly income of less than 30,000 yen was 56.5 per cent and in excess of eighty per cent earned less than 50,000 yen. This is practically a starvation level income in Japan[40]. Given this, what do they think of their work of collecting recyclable resources? The responses were: 'I would like to keep doing the work' 26.0 per cent; 'I would like to stop work' 37.2 per cent; and 'There is no alternative' 36.8 per cent (*Ōsakashidai,* 2001: 44). People answering 'I am content' are included under 'I would like to keep doing the work'. There is probably, however, no significant discrepancy between this and the people who answered 'There is no alternative'. "There is no alternative' means 'I have no alternative but

to continue' because there is no other work: this means, if I could, 'I would like to stop doing the work'. As we see, seventy-four per cent of people are not satisfied with their present work. We are talking about the work of collecting recyclable resources, with its insecure income, and in which the competition is fierce and the work is heavy. The above attitude is understandable.

The will to change jobs

Would the homeless like to change jobs? According to the Osaka Survey, 84.4 per cent of respondents (655) answered 'I would like to work in another job' and 15.6 per cent answered 'There is not any work that I want to do' (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 45). 'There is not any work that I want to do' means 'if there were some good work, then I would like to change jobs'. In effect, *every single* respondent thought that they would like to change jobs. This is where the true meaning of 'I would like to keep doing the work' becomes clear. If we look at the desire to change work in terms of the work to which people aspired, we see: 'Anything at all would do' 42.1 per cent; 'Work which would allow me to use technical skills and abilities' 27.1 per cent; 'Light work' 14.9 per cent; and 'Secure work' 8.0 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 128). The response 'Anything at all would do' means 'Whatever the work, it would be better than the work that I am doing now' and is an expression of being at the end of one's tether. 'Work which would allow me to use technical skills and abilities' and 'secure work' are attitudes with a little more breadth than 'Anything at all would do'. 'Light work' is the predominant wish amongst the elderly.

Are the homeless, actually, actively seeking work? According to the Osaka Survey, 46.2 per cent were 'seeking' work and 53.8 per cent were 'not seeking' work (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 45). Despite the will to change work, the majority of people were 'not seeking' work. Why is it that they do not go out and look for work? The reasons given for this (by 350 respondents) were: 'illness and injury' 10.3 per cent; 'old age' 19.4 per cent; 'I cannot get labor arrangers to deal with me' 3.7 per cent; 'there is no work' 41.7 per cent; and 'other' 32.6 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 66). Over half of the reasons given for not looking for work were 'there is no work so it would be pointless' and 'there is no work suitable for my age and state of health'. The reasons covered by 'other' are again similar to these. The homeless are fully aware of the futility of looking for work. The people who are actually able to

change work are merely a handful of lucky ones. Whether one looks for work or not, the result is largely the same. Thus, the opportunity for changing work is practically closed to the homeless.

It is, naturally, advantageous for young people or those with special skills and abilities to change work. Some people with skills and abilities would like to undergo some occupational training. According to the Osaka Survey, 29.8 per cent of respondents (651 people) hoped for occupational training. The numbers hoping for some occupational training, when broken down by age, were: the under 45 group 68.6 per cent; those in the 45 to 55 age group 31.7 per cent; the 55 to 65 age group 13.1 per cent; and the over 65 age group 13.1 per cent (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 73). The number of hopefuls was higher the younger the age group. They can hope for opportunities in which to use their skills and abilities. The problem, even if one acquires skills and abilities, is whether opportunities for changing work exist or not. The figures for people 'not hoping' for occupational training were as high as 70.2 per cent of respondents. Latent within this is an attitude which says even if I acquire skills and abilities, 'I do not aspire to change jobs'. The answer 'I have skills and abilities' was given by 48.2 per cent of respondents (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 47). These people also are living a homeless life and eking out a starvation existence through their work collecting recyclable resources. It is natural that they think 'I have no desire to change work' even if I master some skills and abilities.

There is another method for opening up the path to changing work. The administration is assisting with work for homeless people. The Independent Assistance Center is one of these (at the time of the Osaka Survey, plans for this center were known but it had not yet been built)[41]. This center works together with the Employment Security Office in assisting the homeless with regular employment, and admissions are for a maximum of six months. People admitted to the center live in the center and, after some training, they go to the Employment Security Office where they use the telephone and other facilities to apply to companies' help-wanted advertisements. According to the Osaka Survey, 53.2 per cent of respondents (643 people) said that they 'hoped' to be admitted to the center (*Ōsakashidai*, 2001: 73). This means that close to half of all respondents said that they 'did not hope' to be admitted to the center. The reasons for this include: 'I want work that I am capable of doing now', 'I am opposed to going into the center', 'I am doubtful about whether going to the center will enable me to find a job' and 'they throw you out after six months, even if you have not

found a job'. The older age group shows a tendency to wish for 'work that I am capable of doing now'.

The Independent Assistance Center was completed after the survey. Few people, however, have found work through the center (this continues to be the case to date). Employers' prejudices towards the homeless are the barrier. People in the center use the Independent Assistance Center as their 'address' when applying for help-wanted positions. However, the very fact that they are in the Independent Assistance Center is an indication that they are homeless. The moment a homeless person gives his address on the telephone, the company operator hangs up on him (I heard this from someone who had been through the center in Kamagasaki. 14 August 2004). Six hundred people left the 'Independent Assistance Center Ōyodo' between 2 October 2000 and 30 November 2004. 'Leaving the center with work' was the reason given for leaving the center by 289 people and if we add to this the people who ' left the center hopefully, having found work' then 50.8 per cent were people who left the center having changed work[42]. The problem, however, is the content of this change of work. Even though people may leave the center with work, they quit (are made to quit) in almost no time at all[43]. Even if they are temporarily reinstated in a regular company, it is not long before they are thrown back out onto the street. Moreover, once one has been to the Independent Assistance Center, it is not possible to go there again. The people who 'have no desire to go to the center' anticipate this.

Changing occupation means changing to work which is better than one's current work and escaping from a life of homelessness. However, with the exception of an extremely small number of lucky people, this wish is frustrated. Even with skills and abilities it is not easy to change occupation. As we see in the example of the Independent Assistance Center, regular employment for the homeless is extremely difficult. Also, even if they find work they soon quit (are made to quit). There is, first and foremost, no work in which the homeless can be employed and when there is work, it does not come the way of homeless people[44]. The homeless know the futility of looking for work and they give up on the idea of changing occupation. At the point when this happens, any dreams of changing occupation and escaping homelessness are smashed. There is no alternative for the homeless but to continue with their present work. This is the situation for the homeless who have work. For the homeless without work, there is no choice other than 'picking up food', being reliant on soup kitchens, being admitted

to hospital or other facilities and receiving welfare benefits. For the homeless who cannot even manage this, there is nothing but dying out in the open. In this manner the spatial isolation of the homeless is complete. There is a deep gulf separating the homeless and 'general' workers, to be sure, but there is even one separating them from day laborers. The homeless are structurally isolated. The homeless take one step at a time towards death on the street.

> I have no work and no fixed address so if I fall, I won't be able to pick myself up again. You gradually fall and then you end up dead on the street! (A man aged 53 at the time of the Osaka Survey).

Escaping homelessness

There are two paths for the homeless to escape homelessness. One is to return to being a day laborer. However, returning to day labor is not easy: this road is, in reality, closed. The homeless do, however, sometimes dream about returning to day labor work. In surveys of the homeless overwhelmingly large numbers of homeless people, without regard to whether they are physically able or not, respond 'I would like work' or 'I am looking for work' (*Nojukusha, Jinken Shiryō Sentā* (Center for Resources on the Homeless and Human Rights), 1999: 11). The administration also places employment assistance at the basis of support policies for assisting the homeless. It is difficult to evaluate whether these policies are efficient or inefficient. Today, a labor market in which the homeless can simply return to work is out of the question.

> We want work. We get up at three or four in the morning and go off [to the *yoseba*] to get work. If it's not settled by six o'clock, then that means that there won't be any work. Even if we don't eat for two or three days, we go to find work. You can't understand what life is really like in our world unless you live it. The winters are cold! Even if you think that you want to work, there isn't any. Do you live or die? (*Nojukusha, Jinken Shiryō Sentā* 1999: 12).

The second path is collecting welfare benefits. The authorities recognize lodging houses as addresses for the payment of welfare benefits in the case of *yoseba* such as San'ya, Kotobukichō and Kawasaki[45]. Consequently, the welfare benefits rates for these areas are high. However, because day laborers and the homeless are not regarded

as residents in Kamagasaki and Sasajima they are not recognized as eligible for housing benefit. In these places admission to hospitals or other facilitiesthe is the only benefit for which they are recognized as being eligible. In any city, it is not an easy matter for homeless people who are isolated on the street to attain welfare benefits.

Whether one 'has an address or not' and whether one 'is able to work or not' have become points of issue in the application of welfare benefits[46]. What is actually at issue is whether a lodging house can be accepted as an address or not and whether one's age and physical condition make one capable of work or not. If the initial decision is that a lodging house can be recognized as one's residence and that one is not able to work, then welfare benefits will be paid. However, the homeless meet neither of these conditions. The reality is that, the most needy people cannot receive welfare benefits. In 1998, Osaka thought up a plan whereby the Welfare Office switched over to paying housing benefits by giving people in facilities money to be used for paying a deposit, placing them in apartments and then accepting this accommodation as their address. This is one step towards opening up the path for paying welfare benefits to the homeless, by instalments. There have, however, to date been very few cases in which this has been applied.

Ultimately, the first time when a homeless person is deemed to be eligible for housing benefits is when he falls down on the street because of illness or an accident, is found by a passer by, is taken to hospital by ambulance, receives a medical examination, is given the necessary medical treatment and is admitted to hospital. Not unless a homeless person is at death's door can he escape from his life of homelessness. The problem of aiding the 'tramps', 'vagrants', 'makeshift shack-dwellers' and the like has been an ongoing problem throughout the post war period. However, the authorities' application of welfare benefits has always been arbitrary. Iwata has the following to say about the meaning of the post war Welfare Benefits Law for people of 'no fixed address'.

On the one hand, the Welfare Benefits Law, with the requirement that people be Japanese and have an address, came into being as a guarantee of a minimum standard of living for times when any citizen of the country faced living difficulties. On the other hand, this law is not necessarily all encompassing in its response to those 'of no fixed address' who are having living difficulties. We can say that municipal enforcement agencies, who bear twenty percent of welfare expenses, exclude the vast majority of

people from [eligibility for welfare benefits] by their implementation of the provisions: the specification of a 'current place [of residence]' and the interpretation of what constitutes an 'urgent state', their method of acknowledging change of address expenses and their method of handling those who fall ill or die on the streets (Iwata, 1995: 57).

The last days of homelessness

The homeless who have been frustrated in attempts to escape their lives of homelessness have no alternative but to continue their homelessness and tread the path of illness and death on the streets. As the numbers of homeless people increase and as the homeless continue to age, the number of homeless people dropping down on the streets and dying on the streets and in parks will also increase. In Tokyo's Shinjuku Ward the number of 'dead of no fixed address' were 21 in 1994; 35 in 1995; 49 in 1996; and 56 in 1997 (*Shinjuku Renrakukai* (Shinjuku Liaison Conference), 1999: 28). The numbers of homeless who have fallen down dead on the streets of Osaka have also increased. In Osaka the numbers for people dead on the streets were: 252 in 1990; 225 in 1991; 248 in 1992; 238 in 1993; 201 in 1994; 191 in 1995; and 96 in1996 (Shima, 1999: 43). There are two views regarding this decline.

> One view regarding the reasons for this is that the decline accompanies the provision of an emergency medical treatment system The other viewpoint holds that there has been an increase in the number of cases not treated as 'deaths on the streets' because the police have elicited, before the event, homeless people's addresses, names and contact details (Noguchi, 1997: 50).

The drop in the number of people who have died on the streets is even higher in Nishinari ward, where Kamagasaki is located. The numbers fell from 124 people in 1990 to 13 in1996 (Shima, 1999: 43). The factors behind this decline include the police's accurate understanding of the sate of the homeless, volunteer groups' provision of soup kitchens and medical consultations and the efficacy of emergency assistance activities, such as patrols. The activities of volunteers are literally saving the lives of the homeless. The term 'people who have died on the streets' refers to people who were already dead when they were found. People who died after having been taken away by ambulance are not included in this figure. Given this, if we were to include those people who died in ambulances or in hospital, then the numbers would

rise. In reality, there is a yearly increase in the numbers of people who fall ill on the streets and are then taken to hospital by ambulance. In Nishinari Ward, we have seen a larger than two-fold increase over a fifteen-year period: 3,381 in 1980; 5,744 in 1985; 6,001 in 1990; and 7,103 in1994. In 1994 in Osaka, there were 5,448 people who fell ill on the streets. Nishinari Ward, which includes Kamagasaki, made up over half of this number (Noguchi, 1997: 51).

> Whatever the precise situation, the Nishinari Labor Welfare Center Labor Union might deal with in excess of 500 dead a year if we add to the number of homeless people who were found already dead on the streets the number of homeless people who died in hospitals – after having been taken there by ambulances – and who were taken to other places by their relatives after dying on the streets. The union estimates that only in Nishinari Ward do 'as many as 600 laborers drop down on the streets and die' (Noguchi, 1997: 51).

Part Four: The concept of homelessness

'New' homeless?

In this chapter, we have looked at the actual state of homeless people's birth, employment and fate, through the actual example of Osaka's homeless. The birth, employment and fate of homeless people today and homeless people in the past are different. Both the background and the circumstances behind the 1983 'Yokohama Vagrant Killing Case'[47] and the 1995 'Dōtonbori Homeless Killing Case' were different. Japan's homeless have changed from being 'vagrants' to being 'homeless'. The homeless are no longer able to move in and out of being day laborers. Homeless people with no experience as day laborers have appeared. Homeless people who collect recyclable resources have become more numerous. Homeless people who live in parks and along rivers have increased in number. We have seen the appearance of homeless people who are young, married couples and women. Kasai has called these homeless people the 'new homeless'. He has also argued that increases and decreases in the numbers of these people were indicators measuring the march of the demise of employment by companies (Kasai, 1995: 11). In 1995, these people had grown to forty per cent of Shinjuku's homeless. Are the homeless of recent years truly 'new' homeless? What does the term 'new' indicate? This very question is the fundamental issue which I have investigated

in this chapter. Its importance lies in the fact that this is by far the central question in terms of an overall recognition of how we are to understand, not just the various 'new' phenomena connected with the homeless but, issues such as the objective conditions faced by the homeless (the process which forms them, their employment and future) and the subjective conditions (actions, movements and meaning). This chapter has merely looked at a few aspects of these. Finally, in an attempt to provide help in answering this question, I will discuss the problem of naming the homeless (in Japan). An additional reason for doing this is because a name is a definition and a definition is related to the fundamental understanding of a phenomenon[48].

> The essence of this problem [the homeless problem] is not to be found simply in the phenomenon of not having an address; I consider this to be a problem of what kind of fate is being forced onto workers of a particular period as a class, under that period's industrial development and employment policies. […] As far as day laborers are concerned, a life of homelessness is an inevitable way of life given the lifestyle forced on them by industry: insecure forms of employment, low wages and remaining single and mobile (Kasai, 1995: 6).

The concept of the homeless

How should we define today's homeless? What should we call them? There have already been many debates about this. In this book, I have used the name homeless (*nojukusha*). Now, I would like to end this chapter by referring to the debates surrounding definitions and examine the appropriateness of the various names for the homeless in Japan.

Vagrants (*furōsha*)

This, along with 'tramp' (*runpen*), is one of the old names for the homeless. Numerous expressions of human contempt, such as 'derelict', 'lazy person' and 'scum', are condensed into the name 'vagrant' (Aoki, 1989: II-2). The dictionary entry for 'vagrant' is 'a person without a fixed address or work who roams about, living here and there' (*Sanseidō Henshūjo*, 1967: 1766). However, is a tent or a temporary shack not a 'dwelling'? Does not work collecting recyclable resources constitute 'an occupation'? Are not the homeless who have settled in parks 'people living a way of life'? Even if the homeless have no address or work for the time being, is this not because they

'cannot have' rather than 'do not have' them? We have here not just a logical problem of human contempt, but a problem related to one's basic viewpoint on how to understand the homeless[49]. In terms of official and mass communications terminology, 'vagrant' is already an obsolete word.

People of no fixed address (*jūsho futeisha*)
Alongside the meaning 'no housing', this term also has condensed within it a meaning of social contempt for the homeless, but, since it is more neutral than 'vagrant', some authorities use it (for example, the City of Nagoya). Iwata's 'the poor "of no fixed abode"' is a similar name (Iwata, 1995: 15). However, Iwata realizes that there are problems inherent in accepting the name 'people of no fixed address'. No fixed address indicates 'a state lacking a conventional, regular residence' and there are two problems with this which we ought to consider.

> The first point is that when we attempt to define what lacking a 'conventional residence' actually means, we cannot help being dogged by a certain sense of 'vagueness'. […] P.H. Rossi states that there can be various forms of insecurity between those who are 'literally homeless' and those who have 'stable residences' (Iwata, 1995: 17–18). The second point is concerned with essential meaning: even if we say that 'there is a lack of a conventional residence', if we concede that people's lives in modern capitalist society are, basically, supported by free occupational mobility and regional mobility, then we can say that in the short term, at least, all employed workers will be in a state of 'no fixed residence' (Iwata, 1995: 18).

Iwata's poor 'of no fixed residence' was a concept for looking at the life situation of the poor, from a welfare standpoint. It is a concept which indicates life aspects of the homeless. This is, at the same time, a concept which includes not only the homeless but also other people living with 'no fixed address'. Therefore, this is far too broad to be used as a concept indicating the homeless.

People living on the street (*rojō seikatsusha*)
This is the official name used by the City of Tokyo as the homeless become visible and as this problem is constructed socially[50]. It is a fact that the homeless make the street their home. There are, however, three problems with this name. The first is the problem of how to understand the forms of residence in between the 'stable residences'

and 'unstable residences' (of citizens) where there is no house. It is a question of how we view spending the night in lodging houses, work camps, hotels, saunas and coffee shops; living in huts and tents in parks and along rivers; and being admitted to hospitals and facilities. In short, this name is not a word which includes a variety of residential forms. Secondly, the homeless are not only on the street. They need to obtain the necessary provisions for living on the street. They are people who are employed in obtaining these provisions by various means – for example, as day laborers and by collecting recyclable materials – or poor people who rely on official emergency assistance and soup kitchens. This name does not include in its viewpoint this type of action (work) – obtaining the provisions for living. Thirdly, this name contains an ambiguity, based on prejudice towards the homeless, which leads us to think that living on the street is a lifestyle choice – 'they are living on the street because they like living a free and self-indulgent life' (*Shinjuku Renrakukai*, 1999: 2).

The homeless (*hōmuresu*)

This is a widely used name throughout the world. The people who sleep rough in Japan also end up being (one type of) homeless. There are, however, two problems with this name. The first is that homeless means 'having no home'. Leaving aside arguments about whether a home is a house or a family, the homeless are not in a state which enables us to bundle them together as people who have no house. Also, 'having no home' indicates only the residential aspect of the homeless. I have discussed this point previously. Secondly, Japan's homeless differ from both the homeless in Europe and the United States and also from the homeless of developing countries (the urban poor and squatters). The homeless as almost exclusively single men – over half of whom are day laborers in work or former day laborers – are a particularly Japanese phenomenon. The theoretical interest of this chapter lies in why homeless people with these types of characteristics appeared in Japan during the universal economic process of global urbanization.

People living a homeless life (*nojuku seikatsusha*)

Shima distinguished the homeless and people living a homeless life in the following way (Shima, 1999: 152–160).

> The day laborers of Kamagasaki are homeless but they are not living homeless 'lives'. Even though they may be homeless people, they are not 'people who are living a life' of homelessness. Ordinarily, the center, or

base, of their lives is Kamagasaki – the '*yoseba*' – and, more particularly, the center, which is their 'yoriba. Homelessness is, as it were, no more than a 'temporary' lifestyle (Shima, 1999: 103).

Shima drew a distinction between those living homeless lives (day laborers who were homeless) and homeless people, centerd on the pivotal question of where the central base of life was located. Using my framework, the former are the 'base group' or the 'fluid' surplus labor population and the latter are the 'group on the periphery' or the 'stagnant' surplus labor population (see Chapter Two). Shima makes the distinction with reference to 'whether or not the basis of living is homelessness'. By way of contrast, my reference point for making the distinction is the 'position in the labor market'. Naturally, Shima also mentions the deep relationship between homelessness and work (Shima, 1999: 31–37). There is also a gap between Shima's work and mine with regard to our interest in the 'problem' of homeless people. Shima attempts to paint a general image of people living a homeless life. My interest lies in class prescriptions of the homeless as an urban underclass. Moreover, if Shima emphasizes the deep relationship between homelessness and work, then why does he make the concept of people with a homeless 'life' and a 'lifestyle' that is merely 'temporary' central to the name homeless (*nojukusha*)? In any case, the name, people living a homeless life, is used by both the city and prefecture of Osaka as the official term (Are they adopting this term used by Shima and others?).

Homeless laborers (*nojuku rōdōsha*)
This is the name used by people who understand the homeless problem to be a labor problem. As a name linking the life process of 'homelessness' and the work process of 'labor', this is a name with which I can, by and large, agree (It is close to the viewpoint of the above-mentioned 'people living a homeless life). Homeless people are people who work. It is, however, unclear whether or not the proponents of this name regard collecting recyclable materials, searching for food and queuing in soup kitchen lines as 'work'. This term also contains a sense that 'the homeless too are leading actors in the labor movement'. This name, in its view of homeless people as subjects in the social revolution, fighting alongside *yoseba* laborers, is used with a specific self-interest. There are, however, also people amongst the homeless who are excluded, without hope, from the labor process. There is also the issue of whether it is acceptable to deal with the homeless solely

from the perspective of labor. As is the case in the various countries of Europe and the United States, there are also people amongst the homeless who have been excluded from family, facilities, hospitals and regions. In these cases, circumstances outside of the economy become the main causes leading to homelessness. These are people who, even when the recession is over and full employment is achieved, will continue to be homeless. Thus, the homeless are people who embrace a variety of problems, one of which is labor problems.

The homeless (*nojukusha*)

> The nub of the problem lies in the reasons which are forcing people into homelessness. Attempts to define these "people" solely on the basis of what is a partial mode of living – their homelessness, whether it has been for a long or a short period – are futile. Homelessness is, persistently, a part of their mode of living which has been forced onto these "people" (*San'ya Rōdōsha Fukushi Kaikan Un'ei Iinkai*, 1994: 3).

This is a name which points only to the fact of homelessness. In our search for how to define the homeless, who have an existence as people, there are necessarily aspects which cannot be contained by a single definition. The crucial point is how to understand the essence of the problem of the homeless. The way in which we do this will depend on our critical awareness. '*Nojukusha*' is the minimum definition for the homeless and it is the word which I use to refer to the homeless in this book. My aim in using the minimum definition is, conversely, to secure a way of extracting both the many aspects of the homeless problem – showing their rich variety – and also the aspects to be found inside the whole issue. If there are former construction laborers, then there are also former company employees. If there are people who have left facilities, then there are also people who have left families. If there are laborers who were formerly in work, then there are also people who have been on the verge of dying on the street. If there are people who earn a living working for themselves, then there are also people who rely on soup kitchens. If there are people whose 'fixed address' is a hut or a tent, then there are also people who carry a sack with them and 'wander about'. If there are people who think of themselves as wretched, then there are also people who feel pride. I have no option but to choose '*nojukusha*' as the name covering this entire variety of homeless people. What type of concrete image does this depict? A definition is no more than the starting point for doing this. This book

is no more than one step in this attempt. Definitions of the homeless, *at all times*, can only be used conditionally[51].

> It is difficult to give a strict definition of the so-called 'homeless' (*nojukusha*), but *in this work I make a point of* using 'homeless (*hōmuresu*)' to refer to people who – because of a variety of factors such as unemployment, family breakdown and flight from social life – have no specific residence and are living in places such as the street, parks, the banks of rivers and around railway stations (Matsushige, 1999). (Aoki's emphasis.)

5 The Urban Underclass and Foreign Workers

Part One: Entry into the urban underclass

Global urbanization and foreign workers

Cities as well as economies as a whole are experiencing globalization and Japanese cities are no exception. The globalization of Japanese cities has had two consequences. The first has been the reorganization of the urban underclass. While, on the one hand, the tendency for the underclass to spread out has made it invisible within the urban structure, this breakaway group is forming a new underclass which is separate from the rest of the urban underclass and which is once again becoming visible. The second has been the influx of migrant workers from other Asian countries and South America. Japan, 'an advanced' nation, encounters the 'world' which foreign workers bring with them and reveals its own 'developing' nature through its prejudice and discrimination against them.

Sassen has discussed the globalization of cities and the international movement of labor. The following four points summarize her view. First, the invasion of developing countries by multinational companies and financial capital promotes the industrialization of these countries, but this far from stemming the flow of immigration from developing countries, tends to encourage it (Sassen, 1988 (translation): 48). Second, immigrants from developing countries flow into the cities of advanced countries in the opposite direction to the flow of capital, money and information which is being sent out from these cities (Sassen, 1988 (translation): 49–50). Third, immigrants from developing countries enter various types of underclass occupations which have come into existence in advanced countries as a result of the trend towards a service economy (Sassen, 1988 (translation): 72). Fourth, the movement of immigrants across national borders is controlled by political powers in the country receiving the immigrants and/or the country sending the immigrants (Sassen, 1996 (translation):

147). Machimura was broadly accurate in arguing that this process also applies to Tokyo (Machimura, 1994: 251) although his statement that foreign workers have concentrated solely in Tokyo (Machimura, 1994: 251) is not quite true. There has also been an increase in the number of foreign workers in the Kansai and Chūkyō economic regions. The number of registered foreigners in 1995 was 213,479 in Tokyo and 118,258 in Osaka (including *zainichi* Koreans and Chinese). The proportion of foreigners to the total population was 1.0 in Tokyo and 0.8 in Osaka.

In this chapter I analyze the movement of foreign workers connected with *yoseba* and use Sassen's 'global urbanization and foreign workers' hypothesis to make some theoretical points about this movement. As shown in Sassen's hypothesis, the issue of foreign workers provides a key to understanding global urbanization in advanced and developing countries. I take the same view in this work, as I look at the urban underclass in contemporary Japan. For the purpose of this chapter, the term 'foreign workers' *refers to the most recent wave of foreign workers (those who arrived during and after the latter half of the 1980s) and joined some area of the urban underclass*, for example *yoseba*. They consist of foreigners who have overstayed their visas and who are working without the proper work documents and also working students and trainees (South Americans of Japanese ancestry are also found among foreigners working in underclass occupations but their employment is legal). The tasks to be addressed in this chapter are as follows. First, analyzing the process by which foreign workers enter the urban underclass. Second, analyzing the position of foreign workers in the underclass labor market. Third, analyzing the relationship between foreign workers and Korean residents in Japan (*zainichi* Koreans – see Introduction). Fourth, analyzing the relationship between the most recent wave of Koreans and *zainichi* Koreans by looking at areas in Osaka where these Koreans live in clusters.

The movement of foreign workers

During the latter half of the 1980s, the number of foreign workers increased in Japan. According to Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) estimates, the number of foreign workers in Japan, legally or illegally, was 260,000 in 1990; 631,000 in 1996; and 709,000 in 2000 (MHLW, 2002a: 293, 295). According to the same source, the number of overstaying foreigners was 106,000 in 1990; 283,000 in 1996; and 232,000 in 2000. The number of overstaying foreigners increased

rapidly in the 1980s and decreased gradually in the latter half of the 1990s[1]. In 2002, 72.9 per cent of all overstaying foreigners had entered Japan on short-term visas (such as tourist visas) (*Hōmushō* (Ministry of Justice), 2002: 3). The proportion of foreign workers without the proper work documents to all foreign workers was 40.9 per cent in 1990; 44.8 per cent in 1996; and 32.7 per cent in 2000 (calculated using MHLW, 2002a). This proportion decreased gradually after peaking in 1993. Many illegal foreign workers go undetected. They 'commonly work in small-scale businesses, restaurants or construction sites and are likely to be employed in workplaces not listed in published lists of companies or the *Establishment and Enterprise Census of Japan*' (Kuwahara, 2001: 41). In the 1990s, the number of foreign workers increased gradually, while the number of illegal foreign workers decreased gradually.

The number of foreigners from different ethnic groups has changed dramatically. In 1996 the number of overstaying foreigners was 52,387 Koreans, 42,547 Filipinos/Filipinas and 38,513 Thais, followed by Peruvians and Iranians in descending order. This ranking changes every year (*Rōdōshō Shokugyō Anteikyoku* (Ministry of Labor, Employment Security Bureau), 1998: 297). In 1992 foreigners arrested by the Immigration Bureau for overstaying were, in descending order, Thais, Iranians, Koreans, Filipinos/Filipinas, and Chinese. From the beginning of the 1990s, the number of Koreans and Chinese in Japan increased dramatically. This was mainly because of Korea's removal of travel restrictions (1989) and China's economic crisis. The number of Koreans, including those who entered Japan on tourist visas, increased from 220,000 in 1987 to 610,000 in 1989. This resulted in increased numbers of Koreans and Chinese arrested for overstaying their visas and/or for working without the proper work documents.

There were several reasons for the increase in the number of foreign workers in Japan in the latter half of the 1980s. First, during the period of the economic bubble the dual labor market[2] led to acute labor shortages in small and medium-sized manufacturing businesses. Second, this labor shortage – which had been caused by the practise of giving permanent employment to Japanese temporary workers – led to an emptying of the bottom of the labor market. The corporate strategy of attempting to survive the labor shortage by enforcing long working hours or using peripheral labor (women and the elderly) had reached its limits. The labor market had lost the flexibility which had previously enabled it to exercise some employment adjustment (Iyotani, 2001: 192–195). Third, as a result of the trend towards a

service economy, the number of jobs available in the service industry expanded, and (at the opposite end of the spectrum from the new rich) new unskilled job categories (the miscellaneous job class) increased (Iyotani, 2001: 205). Foreign workers filled some of these jobs[3]. Fourth, competition between companies intensified in the neo-liberal economic environment. Companies survived heavy pressure from their competitors by increasing employment flexibility. This resulted in an increase in insecure employment, such as casual work, day labor, dispatch work or part-time casual work[4]. In addition, labor procurement through staffing agencies or service contractors became common practise. Foreign workers were well suited to these changes in corporate employment strategy and labor procurement. Even though employment decreased and unemployment rose from the beginning of the 1990s, the number of foreign workers continued to increase.

Under these conditions of reduced flexibility in the labor market (depletion of the front-line workforce) and increased informality of employment (an increase in insecure employment) it was foreign workers who met the demand for labor. These men (women) were flexible workers. They constituted a labor force which was able to endure what was called 3D physical work (demanding, dirty and dangerous). Foreign workers were patient, taking heart from the thought that their toil in Japan would be (or, at least, was intended to be) only temporary and that although they were engaged in hard physical labor, it enabled them to make money. Foreign workers were also cheap. Even in cases where foreign workers' wages were similar to those of Japanese workers, Japanese employers could still cut benefits, insurance premiums and other expenses by using foreign workers. Foreign workers did not even have the right of collective bargaining. Finally, foreign workers were available for short-term employment (whether the term of employment was predetermined or not). Companies needed this type of surplus labor pool in the community[5].

The international movement of labor is determined by a variety of factors in the country sending its workers (Sending Country) and/or the country receiving foreign workers (Receiving Country). I have criticized the push/pull theory of labor used to explain the international movement of labor, and have explained that instead the international movement of labor occurs as a result of the complex interaction between economic, political, social and cultural processes which exist in the Sending Country and the Receiving Country (Aoki, 1995: 73–79). Table 5.1 provides a basis for developing an overview

of sending/receiving foreign workers – with a *focus on the economic process*. Please refer to Figure 5.1. This figure takes the Philippines as an example of a Sending Country and Japan as that of a Receiving Country. This figure is based on the following two views. First, the international movement of labor is an extension of the domestic movement of labor in the Sending Country. Second, the influx of foreign workers results in the reorganization of the urban underclass.

Figure 5.1: The departure/arrival process for foreign workers

Country of departure				Country of arrival	
Agriculture →	(Formal sector)	→	(Secure employment group)	←	Agriculture
	(Informal sector)		(Insecure employment group)		
Forestry →	High productivity sector		Specialized	←	Forestry
	Low productivity sector		Skilled		
Fishing →	Unemployment	→	Unskilled Work	←	Fishing
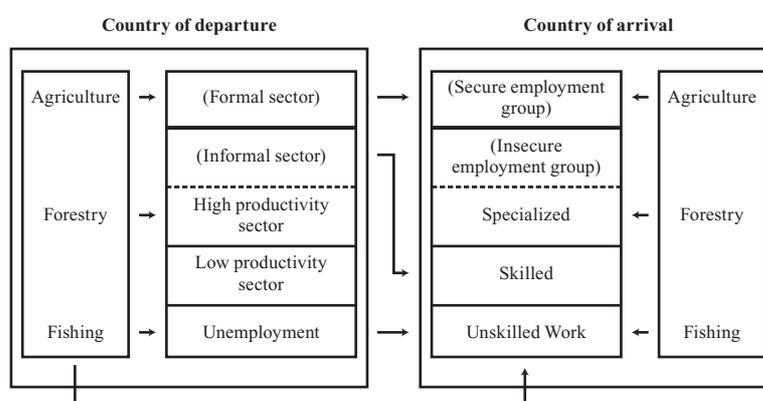
I'm unclear what to do with the arrow in the middle of the figure.

Table 5.1: The transfer of foreign workers

Analytical dimension	Situation in country of arrival	Movement	Situation in country of departure
Economic process		→ capital and goods →	
	Labor shortage		Labor surplus
Political process	Immigration control		Migration policy
Social process		→ information →	
	Labor brokers	← recruitment ←	Labor brokers
	Networks	← chain of immigrants ←	Networks
Cultural process	Work ethic		Views about emigrating in order to work
	Closed/open views on migrants	← adaptating ←	Mindset
Migration process	Employment	← departure ←	
		→ re-entry →	Reintegration

The labor movement process as seen in Figure 5.1 can be summarized as follows.

In the Sending Country (the Philippines), poor farmers move to cities and become 'squatters' in the capital city (Manila), finding work in the informal sector. They become part of the urban poor. Some 'lucky people' among them get the help of brokers and go to a foreign country to work. Japan is one of their likely destinations. This movement of workers continues today. In and after the 1990s, however, as the economy of the Sending Country has begun to globalize, the situation in which these international movements occur has changed. First, local cities have begun to industrialize, thus reducing the differences in living standards between cities and rural villages. This has resulted in a decline in population movement from rural villages to cities. Second, people in the middle and lower classes in rural villages no longer go through local cities to a foreign country: they travel directly to a foreign country, just as people in the middle and lower classes born in cities have been doing. This has partly been caused by changes in the methods used by brokers. Poor people can now borrow to meet the expenses of obtaining a passport and visa, the cost of passage and immediate living expenses, enabling them to go to a foreign country. Brokers have also expanded their brokering network to include local cities and rural villages.

In the Receiving Country (Japan), there has been a change in the (urban) industrial structure. The manufacturing and construction industries have stagnated, while the service industry has expanded. This has resulted in the increased relative importance of service jobs. In addition, with prolonged economic recession, the downward pressure pushing people out of secure and into insecure employment and from insecure employment into the urban underclass (day laborers and the homeless) has increased. Foreign workers have entered the labor market in which these people in insecure employment have been attempting to find work. The rate of increase in the number of foreign workers has fallen as employment opportunities have decreased. The increasing downward pressures also pushed foreign workers out of insecure employment and into the urban underclass. The longer they stayed in Japan the more stratified amongst themselves they became; they were also divided into those who went back and forth between Japan and their homeland or returned home and those who settled in Japan. The numbers of people going back and forth between Japan and their home country increased and '*dekasegi* (migrant work)' itself became a somewhat independent occupation among foreign workers of

Japanese ancestry in particular (Kajita, 2001: 195). Increasing numbers of foreign workers sent home for their families to come and live in Japan, and increasing numbers of foreign workers became the main breadwinners for their families. Ultimately, Japan saw the appearance of migrant workers who had no idea whether they would return to their home country or settle in Japan. Foreign migrant workers have also 'develop[ed] a propensity for excessive consumption' (Tanno, 2001: 237). These were foreign workers who intended to spend money in Japan instead of sending it back to their home countries. The decreased employment opportunities resulting from economic recession did not immediately drive foreign workers back home. Whether or not foreign workers return home is partly determined by the working environment in the host community. The number of foreign workers in Japan continued increasing for the following two reasons. Firstly, small and medium businesses, which had difficulty securing labor, did not dismiss foreign workers even in the period of recession. Secondly, even if a foreign family's main breadwinner lost his/her job, the family was able to maintain a minimal standard of living because other members of the family were able to work. Companies allowed their former foreign employees to stay in company flats, dormitories or houses subleased by the companies as long as these former employees continued to pay their rent. However, as the recession dragged on and unemployment grew, Japanese workers started to return to job sites. The need for foreign workers fell as increasing numbers of Japanese workers returned. This resulted in the dismissal of large numbers of foreign workers without the proper work documents. Even foreign workers eligible to work in Japan no longer had secure employment. Companies regarded foreign workers as cheaper labor which they could dismiss at their own discretion.

Part Two: Foreign workers and the construction industry

The structure of the labor market

An analysis of the employment structure of foreign workers requires a consideration of the whole labor market which they enter. Let us then take a look at the labor market from the viewpoint of the urban underclass. The characteristics of the labor market can be summarized as follows. First, the labor market is stratified into layers based on such factors as wages, working conditions and professional prestige. Second, employees in insecure employment form the underclass of

the labor market. With the growing trend towards a service economy and insecure employment there has been a growth in the number of employees in insecure employment. Third, the lower stratum of employees in insecure employment shares a common border with the urban underclass, which is at the bottom of the labor market. Fourth, the 'external labor market' composed of foreign workers is located outside the 'general labor market'[6].

Figure 5.2 illustrates the stratification of the labor market by type of employment. First, the labor force is discharged from traditional, stagnant industries (such as agriculture, fisheries and small commercial or industrial businesses) and enters the insecure employment stratum of the 'general labor market'. The lower part of the labor force enters the 'casual, dispatch and day labor market' such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, sales and service work. Second, some of the employees in insecure employment enter the '*yoseba* labor market' and circulate around different *yoseba* or work camps. The total number of day laborers in Japan is estimated to be about 200,000 to 300,000. A number of these are *yoseba* laborers. We have, however, seen a steady decline in the number of day laborers in work due to unemployment and aging and a corresponding increase in the number of former day laborers on welfare and homeless. Third, *yoseba* laborers rely on labor recruiters and labor arrangers to find work in the construction, manufacturing and service industries. Following the period of rapid economic growth the construction industry has been the main source of employment for *yoseba* laborers. In the latter half of the 1990s, however, they began to disperse and find employment in the service industry as well. Fourth, foreign workers find work through the same process as Japanese workers. They rely, in the first instance, on brokers to find work in the 'dispatch, casual and day labor market'. Some of them then go into *yoseba*, where they use labor recruiters and labor arrangers to find work as day laborers in the construction and manufacturing industries.

The work done by foreign workers

Foreign workers come to Japan with the help of brokers or employers, or by relying on help from their relatives and friends who are already in Japan. After their arrival in Japan, they move into a dormitory, a boarding house or a flat and start working immediately in workplaces such as factories. Some of these foreign workers lose their jobs for a variety of reasons including the expiration of their contracts, the
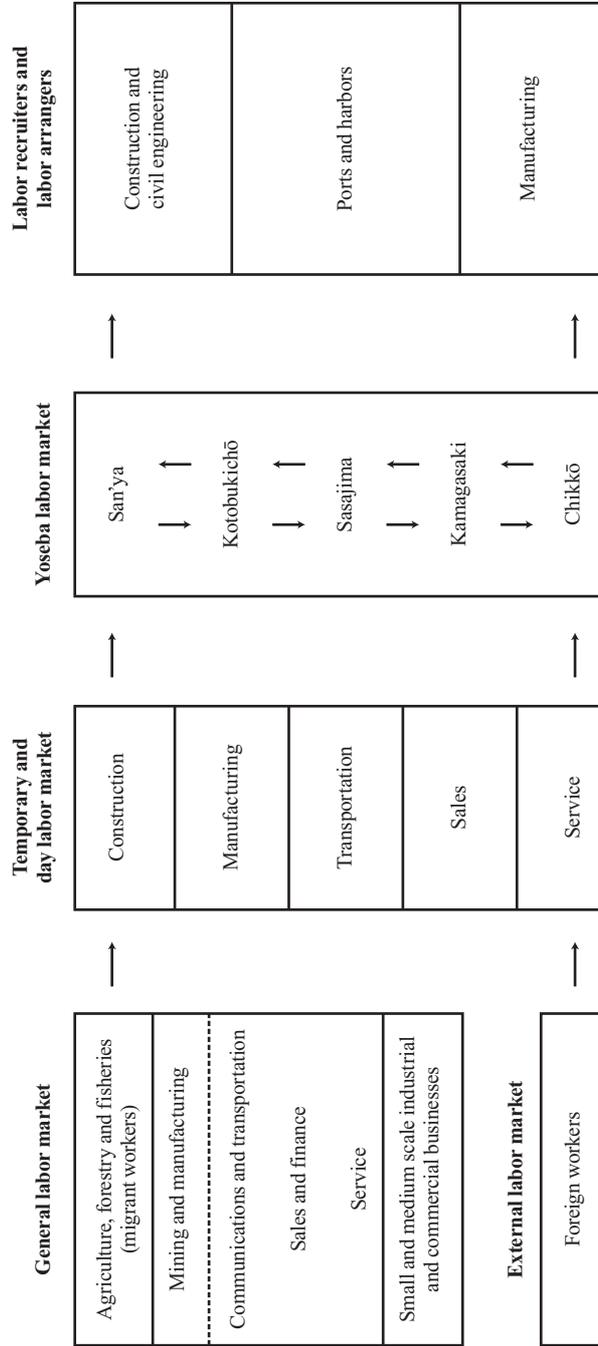
Figure 5.2: The multi-layered labor market

General labor market	Temporary and day labor market	Yoseba labor market	Labor recruiters and labor arrangers
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (migrant workers)	Construction	San'ya	Construction and civil engineering
Mining and manufacturing	Manufacturing	Kotobukichō	
Communications and transportation	Transportation	Sasajima	Ports and harbors
Sales and finance	Sales	Kamagasaki	
Service	Service	Chikkō	Manufacturing
Small and medium scale industrial and commercial businesses			

| External labor market |
|---|
| Foreign workers |

failure of the company employing them and because of their own decision to resign. After changing jobs many times, some become day laborers and enter *yoseba*, although in recent years growing numbers of foreigners have been entering *yoseba* directly through the network of their relatives and friends. Through this process a group of foreign workers become 'unskilled' workers[7] and join the lower end of the labor market. Foreign workers are extremely 'marginal' and 'peripheral' workers (Shimodaira, 1988.9: 28).

Many foreign workers are engaged in physical work referred to as 3D (demanding, dirty and dangerous). According to the MHLW, 141,285 foreign workers were employed directly by businesses in 2002. Manufacturing, construction and transport workers accounted for 60.7 per cent of these foreign workers (57.9 per cent of whom were engaged in manufacturing processes) and salespersons, cooks, waiters/waitresses or attendants accounted for 11.3 per cent (MHLW, 200b). On the other hand, 23.9 per cent of these foreign workers were engaged in professional, technical, managerial, operational or clerical services. This means that even amongst full-time foreign workers, a majority (72.0 per cent) were engaged in physical labor. In addition, according to the Ministry of Justice's data on 'illegal employment cases', 44,190 foreign workers were 'illegally employed' in 2000 (*Hōmushō Nyūkoku Kanri Kyoku* (Ministry of Justice, Immigration Bureau), 2002.6). Construction, manufacturing and other workers (including 67.1 per cent of all male workers) made up 42.1 per cent of these illegally employed workers, with another 43.4 per cent working as cooks, waiters or in other service jobs (including 74.3 per cent of all female workers). This means that all of the illegal foreign workers who were detected as being 'illegally employed' were engaged in physical labor such as manual or service jobs and, in particular, men tended to work as construction or factory workers while women tended to work in the nightlife business (in customer services, as waitresses, dishwashers and cooks). This data only describes the situation for those foreign workers without the proper work documents who were actually discovered as being illegally employed. There is thus a bias in these figures for job categories in which foreign workers without the proper work documents are more likely to be found rather than other job categories[8]. We can nonetheless glean information on the actual conditions of employment for foreign workers without the proper work documents from this data. Furthermore, according to a (case) study conducted by a physician who treated foreign workers with work-related injuries, male workers were engaged in

the following jobs (Tenmei, 1991: 18–19): construction-related jobs such as civil engineering and construction; packing; plating; press work; product checking at a light electrical factory; wood processing; moulding; leather dressing; automobile maintenance and repair; automobile production; fish packing and shipping; working at a port freezer warehouse; transporting catered lunches; customer service and dishwashing at a tavern or restaurant; miscellaneous services, dishwashing and laying out/putting away futon at a guest-house; and building cleaning. These are all examples of physical labor and clearly show the physical nature of foreign workers' jobs.

Let us now consider the working conditions of foreign workers. Their working conditions are closely connected with the physical nature of their jobs. First, let us take a look at their working environment. Inadequate safety measures, irregular and/or long working hours and poor work site conditions lead to an intensification of labor. The conditions of work under more intense labor in turn lead to work-related accidents. Foreign workers constitute a 'high-risk group' in work-related accidents (Hirano, 2003: 98). One frequently occurring type of accident is the loss of fingers due to the failure to fit safety devices properly to presses. Inadequate safety education is another factor contributing to work-related accidents suffered by foreign workers. 'It is no exaggeration to say that every investigation of a work-related injury suffered by a foreign worker reveals a violation of the Industrial Health and Safety Law or the Labor Standards Law' (*Zenkoku Rōdō Anzen Eisei Sentā Renraku Kaigi* (Liaison Conference of the Japan Occupational Health and Safety Resource Center, 1992: 82). According to the Management and Coordination Agency (S*ōmuchō*) (MCA), 167,316 workers were killed or suffered an injury (defined as an injury requiring at least 4 days off work) in the Japanese labor force in 1995; that is, 0.26 per cent of the labor force (calculations based on MCA, 1997 and MHLW, 1996). Of these, the percentage of killed or injured workers from the manufacturing industry was 0.31 per cent. In contrast, 847 directly employed foreign workers possessing the proper work documents were killed or suffered an injury; that is, 0.87 per cent of the labor force. The percentage of killed or injured workers in the manufacturing industry was 1.08 per cent. This data shows that foreign workers were killed or suffered an injury more than three times as often as the Japanese labor force both across industries and within the manufacturing industry. This is the reality of conditions for illegal foreign workers: they are likely to suffer more work-related accidents than other groups of workers. Work-related accidents are often settled

privately because neither the employer nor the employee wants the Immigration Bureau to find out that the employee is working illegally or neither knows that workers' compensation insurance also covers accidents suffered by workers without the proper work documents[9]. As a result, injured foreign workers are often 'left totally untreated or forced to discontinue treatment before an adequate amount of treatment has been given' (Tenmei, 1991: 85). These examples of actual conditions are an indication of the poor working conditions experienced by foreign workers.

Let us now consider wages. Foreign workers, because of their position as an external labor force, have a low wage rating. Low ratings result in cheap wages. The wages of foreign workers are cheaper than those of Japanese workers and are often not paid at all[10]. There are two factors leading to these cheap wages. Firstly, the insecure nature of employment for foreign workers keeps their wages low. They are often paid by the hour or the day, or receive monthly payments of accumulated daily wages. They are often not paid overtime or retirement benefits. 'In unskilled physical work such as construction work, factory work or miscellaneous services, the wages of foreign workers are about 70 per cent of the level of wages for Japanese workers. They are paid by the hour or the day, their labor agreements are merely verbal, their employment conditions are unclear, and no overtime pay or retirement benefits are promised to them' (Tanno, 1998: 36–37). Secondly, they are employed indirectly. Brokers take a kickback from foreign workers employed indirectly. Some brokers take a kickback from both workers and employers. A brokerage fee or commission is factored into the wage to be paid to the worker by the employer. Whatever the rate of this kickback, the worker's pay will be reduced by the same amount. Foreign workers have therefore started to look for jobs through their own information networks and to negotiate with employers directly instead of finding work through brokers. In some cases, foreign workers are paid as much as their Japanese counterparts. Small and medium businesses having difficulty securing labor will even resort to offering foreigners wages which are higher than the going rate. Comparing wages is thus not very meaningful. However, even in such cases, employers can save part of the labor costs that they would otherwise have to pay by not paying overtime or retirement benefits to their foreign workers or not insuring them for workers' compensation insurance.

Employment is insecure for foreign workers. The fundamental reason for this is that their very eligibility for employment is insecure.

When foreign workers are employed without a work visa, this employment is particularly insecure. 'Without a work visa' means 'illegal'. 'Illegal' has three connotations. First, there is no legal basis to their employment contract, allowing their employers to determine the terms and conditions of their employment arbitrarily. Second, statutory protections for their employment are largely ineffective. Labor laws, including the Minimum Wages Law, the Labor Standards Law, and the Workers' Compensation Insurance Law, all apply to illegal workers (Niwa, 1998: 28). If a worker without the proper work documents actually seeks the application of one of these laws, however, the Labor Standards Inspection Office is obliged to report to the Immigration Bureau that the applicant is an illegal worker. Therefore, workers without the proper work documents usually do not seek the application of these laws for fear of being forced to leave Japan. Meanwhile, their employers often settle work-related accidents privately taking advantage of the weak position in which workers without the proper work documents find themselves. Third, the authorities are vigilant in trying to detect this very type of employment. Although the number of 'illegal employment cases' accounts for only a fraction of 'illegally employed workers', each and every illegal worker is always at risk of being arrested. Most workers without the proper work documents are overstaying their visas, which means their stay in Japan is 'illegal'. In addition, employment offices, which have found employment for workers without the proper work documents, and businesses, which have employed these workers, are charged with 'aiding and abetting illegal employment'. Sometimes Japanese people (business colleagues or local residents) report (denounce) illegal employment to the police or the Immigration Bureau. In 2001, 437 offices were accused of an employment-related offence (under the Temporary Staffing Services Law (*Rōdōsha Haken Hō*)), and 1,176 foreigners were arrested (*Hōmushō Hōmu Sōgō Kenkyūsho*, 2002: 294). Although neither of these figures is large, workers without the proper work documents and their brokers and employers are under great psychological pressure. Employment is fundamentally insecure for these workers[11].

Finally, the employment systems under which foreign workers are employed are insecure. According to the MHLW, of all businesses investigated in 2002 (23,169 businesses), 82.9 per cent directly employed foreign workers who were eligible to work in Japan and 17.1 per cent employed them indirectly (through labor brokers) (MHLW, 2002b). Of all employed foreigners (227,894), 62.0 per cent were

directly employed and 38.0 per cent indirectly employed. Businesses avoid statutory penalties by avoiding employing workers without the proper work documents directly. This leads to an increase in the indirect employment of workers without the proper work documents. Of directly employed workers, 29.5 per cent were employed permanently (MHLW, 2002b). In terms of job categories, those employed on a full-time basis represented 10.9 per cent of salespersons, cooks, waiters/waitresses and hostesses; 21.9 per cent of manufacturing process workers; and 27.7 per cent of construction workers. This means that even of those directly employed, only one in three is employed permanently. Temporary employment (many are in fixed-term employment such as non-regular workers or seasonal workers) is found throughout service jobs, manufacturing process workers and construction workers. Even foreign workers who are eligible to work in Japan face this level of difficulty. Workers without the proper work documents are likely to experience considerably poorer conditions.

The temporary employment of foreign workers constitutes part of the employment adjustment strategy of businesses intended to increase the flexibility of its labor force, and is also applied to Japanese workers. Labor brokers play a crucial role in this. They not only find jobs for foreign workers and mediate contracts between these workers and businesses but also take care of the broad range of work and life issues facing them; for example, either providing them with or helping them to find dwellings and providing advice on various issues in their lives (this is true particularly for foreign workers of Japanese ancestry). The enormous power exercised over foreign workers by brokers is seen in the fact that businesses often pay workers' wages through brokers and brokers also often make lease agreements for dwellings on behalf of workers. These brokers exploit the work and lives of foreign workers as they broker deals on their behalf (Tanno, 2003.5).

Foreign workers and the construction industry

Many of the jobs available at *yoseba* are construction-related jobs. Laborers have been able to find construction work and earn money on the day of doing the work by going to a *yoseba*. In recent years, service-related jobs have been on the increase. In Kotobukichō, day labor jobs, such as dockside loading and unloading, still represent a significant portion of the jobs available. In contrast, the number of construction work jobs has decreased dramatically due to the economic recession

and the reduction in public works spending. Even so, construction work jobs still represent a significant proportion of day labor jobs. As is the case with Japanese workers, foreign workers are shifting from the construction industry to the service and manufacturing industries. Keeping these circumstances in mind let us now look at the relationship between foreign workers and *yoseba*/the construction industry.

The construction industry has a unique, hierarchical labor supply system which is suited to the process of carrying out construction work. This system is necessary for the following two reasons. First, mobilizing labor and assigning workers to work sites plays a particularly important role in the construction industry whose products are unmovable structures. Historically, the construction industry has created and maintained a labor supply system based on the work camp system. This emphasizes the hierarchical structure of workers in the construction industry. Second, the demand for labor in the construction industry fluctuates widely depending on trade cycle fluctuations. The construction industry thus constantly requires employment adjustment using the internal contract system or external labor such as day labor. The internal contract system is a system under which a major part of production is contracted out to one or more subcontractors and/or external workers, who in turn enter the general contractor's work camp and carry out the basic work. As a result, workers from the general contractor, subcontractor(s) and external workers work together on the same construction site. Foreign workers are included amongst these external workers together with *yoseba* laborers.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the typical hierarchical structure of businesses in the construction industry according to Yagi (Yagi, 1991: 36). At the top are general contractors (*zenekon*). *Zenekon* refers to businesses composed of managerial, sales and clerical workers and which undertake construction works directly for clients. At the second level are subcontractors (*sabukon*). *Sabukon* are businesses composed of workers assisting in the operations of the general contractor or dispatched from the general contractor to the construction site. At the third level are secondary subcontractors. They are construction businesses specializing in a variety of construction areas and composed of permanently employed skilled workers. At the fourth level are tertiary subcontractors. They are businesses employing non-specialist, unskilled workers. Many of the owners of these businesses are 'self-employed gaffers' (*hitori-oyakata*), who work together with their employees. These businesses employ Japanese migrant workers (*dekasegi*), *yoseba* laborers and foreign workers. The construction

industry is composed of 540,000 construction company owners and 610,000 companies. Ninety-nine percent of these are medium or small businesses, with the number of self-employed gaffers reaching 500,000. The hierarchical nature of the construction industry is striking (Sotoike, 1996: 1, 30 and 32). General contractors avoid employing foreign workers and make their subsidiary companies comply with this policy. Foreign workers are employed at the tail end – or the hidden side – of the construction industry. The hierarchical structure of the construction industry has a particularly heavy bearing on them.

Yoseba laborers are aging and the number of construction works has decreased due to economic recession. Yet, this has not meant a decrease in the demand for construction labor. While the new Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office Building was being constructed, as many as 3,000 day laborers were mobilized every day[12]. Even in the current recession, large-scale construction works ordered by clients in the service industry are under way. However, the demand for labor from medium and small businesses has decreased dramatically. Even some skilled workers have become mechanics' hands. An increasing number of former construction workers have become cleaners and other types of workers. Furthermore, an increasing number of younger people have entered the construction industry. This young labor force

Figure 5.3: The stratified structure of the construction industry
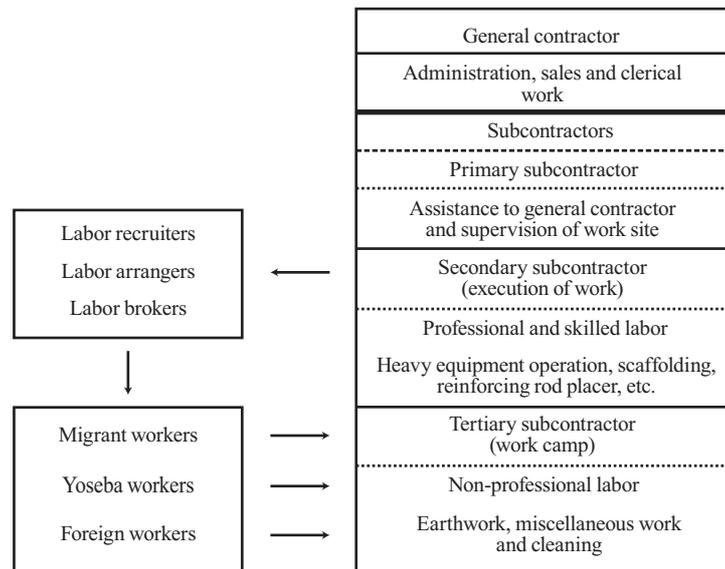
is, however, still far from sufficient to meet the needs of the industry. Even in the current recession, the construction industry needs foreign workers[13].

There are several routes for the employment of foreign workers in the construction industry. Table 5.2 sets out these routes (mainly *yoseba*). This table is a summary of information collected from a variety of sources including foreign workers, labor activists and foreigner support groups. In route 1, foreign workers live in low rent dwellings around *yoseba* or in the city, go to *yoseba* in the morning and get jobs through labor recruiters and labor arrangers. This route represents foreign workers who appear at *yoseba* such as San'ya, Takadanobaba and Sasajima. Foreign workers cannot readily adapt to living in single rooms in *doya*. Neither can they live in well-equipped flats or rental condominiums because the rents are too high. Most foreign workers live in low rent dwellings and visit *yoseba* regularly. In the case of this route, Japanese workers see foreign workers at *yoseba* in the morning and work with them on the same work sites.

In route 2, foreign workers live in *doya* near *yoseba* and go to a work site either after getting a job through a labor recruiter at a *yoseba* or after being offered a job by a labor arranger and spending some time at a work camp/work camps. This is the route taken by those foreign workers who live in *doya* – even in single rooms – where it is possible for them to live together with their fellow workers. The foreign workers who live in Kamagasaki or Kotobukichō correspond to this type. In the case of this particular route, Japanese workers live with foreign workers near *yoseba* and work on the same work sites.

In route 3, a broker or an employer brings foreign workers to a boarding house or work camp and the foreign workers travel to the work site from these places. In the case of this route, Japanese workers do not see foreign workers at *yoseba*, but they do work together on

Table 5.2: The process of employing foreign workers

Place of residence	Place of contract	Job
1 Around yoseba	yoseba	construction and civil engineering
2 Yoseba	yoseba	construction and civil engineering
3 Dormitory or boarding house	factory	factory labor
4 Work camp	work camp	construction and civil engineering
5 Station or park	station or park	construction and civil engineering

the same work sites. Sometimes employers, fearing that there will be trouble, separate foreign workers from Japanese workers by keeping them in different work camps and/or work sites.

In route 4, foreign workers live in low rent dwellings in the city without any reference to/without making use of *yoseba* and are signed up for a particular work site by labor recruiters who scout for laborers in stations and parks. An increasing number of foreign workers have been recruited through this route in recent years. The jobs on offer at stations or in parks generally pay lower wages than those on offer at *yoseba* and expose foreign workers to poor working conditions. Increasing numbers of foreign workers are seeking help from day labor unions or support groups in *yoseba*, alleging that they have not been paid for their work[14].

In route 5, foreign workers look for jobs in help-wanted magazines or newspapers, make an agreement over the telephone and get themselves to the assigned work site. This is a method of finding employment without the mediation of labor recruiters or labor arrangers and has been increasingly popular in recent years. Some foreign workers have also started to use this route to obtain employment.

> It is illegal to employ foreign workers in the construction industry (with the exception of technical engineers). Employers, therefore, sometimes split up foreign workers to make them stay at various dwellings in the city instead of corralling them in work camps. They do this to avoid detection of the foreign workers by the Immigration Bureau and to prevent trouble between foreign workers and Japanese workers (C, an Osaka foreigner support group member, 3 January 1994).

Part Three: The work of zainichi Koreans

The discussion has thus far been about the relationship between the urban underclass and foreign workers, focusing on the process by which foreign workers enter *yoseba* and the construction industry. Let us now deepen the discussion by looking at the actual conditions for foreign workers in Osaka, mainly in Kamagasaki. The relationship between foreign workers and *zainichi* Koreans is an important part of this story as it is impossible to discuss foreign workers in Osaka without talking about the area's *zainichi* Koreans. Such is the importance of the position occupied by *zainichi* Koreans in Osaka. First of all, I will provide an overview of employment for *zainichi* Koreans.

Zainichi Koreans and the labor market

The history of *zainichi* Koreans is replete with the same issues facing foreign workers today. Foreign workers do not follow the same path as *zainichi* Koreans, but the history of *zainichi* Koreans illustrates in many respects the issues still facing foreign workers.

Pre war

In 1995 the number of *zainichi* Koreans was 666,000 (MCA, Statistics Bureau, 1997: 30). Over 70 per cent of them lived in large cities such as Tokyo, Kobe, Nagoya, Yokohama, Kyoto and Fukuoka. Urban areas have had a higher proportion of Koreans in their population than rural areas. *Zainichi* Koreans constitute an extremely urban ethnic group (other foreign populations are even more concentrated in large cities). Table 5.3 shows changes in the Korean population which immigrated to Japan during the period before the World War II (including the period from 1938 to 1945 when Koreans were transported to Japan for forced labor). (Data on the Korean population in Japan before the period of transportation for forced labor varies somewhat depending on the source materials; these include, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Police Bureau statistics and National Census Statistics (Morita, 1996: 61)). After the 'Japanese 'Annexation of Korea', Japanese colonial policies such as land expropriation produced increased numbers of potential Korean emigrants, who flocked as migrant workers to Japan which was then in the throes of the boom which accompanied World War I.

The main industries in which Koreans were employed in the pre war period were: public works (railways, roads, waterways, harbor projects, water supply and drainage works); mining (particularly coal); factory work (manufacturing); 'miscellaneous work' (for example, collecting and cleaning sand); traditional crafts where they worked as hands (for example *yūzen* dyeing, *nishijin* brocade and china); and female mill hands (for example, in spinning, and silk reeling). These were all examples of 3D physical work shunned by Japanese at that time. Korean workers were at the bottom of the labor market and provided a substantial part of the basis for Japan's industrialization, particularly its wartime economy. The history of *zainichi* Koreans contains most of the features currently facing foreign workers (Kim Chan Jong, 1990: 30). The first of these features was that Korean workers came to Japan, initially through Japanese recruiters, and later with the help of relatives who were already in Japan. As they began to stay in Japan for longer periods, their main immigration pattern shifted from male

Table 5.3: Changes in the zainichi Korean population

Year	Population	Significant events	
1895	12		
1905	303	1905	Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty
1911	2,527	1910	'Annexation' of Korea to the Empire of Japan Treaty; Cadastral project
1915	3,989	1914–19	First World War
1920	30,175	1920–	Program for increasing rice production
1925	133,710	1929	Great Depression
1930	298,091	1931	'Manchurian' Incident
1935	625,678	1937	Sino-Japanese War
		1939	Cabinet decision 'Matter regarding the transportation of Korean laborers to mainland Japan' (for forced labor)
1940	1,190,444	1941	The Pacific War in Asia
1945	2,365,263	1942	Cabinet decision 'Matter regarding the transportation of Chinese laborers to mainland Japan' (for forced labor)

Source: excerpts from Pak, 1993: 177

migrant workers who lived apart from their families to males who sent for their families from Korea to live in Japan and also to whole families coming to Japan together. Second, (the core of) Korean workers were 'unskilled' workers in such industries as construction, mining and manufacturing. Third, the conditions confronting Korean workers in Japan were hard work, poor environments (dangerous and unsanitary), low wages (the average difference in wages between Korean and Japanese workers reaching 20 per cent) and no rights (in areas such workers' compensation. Fourth, the dwellings of Korean workers and their family members, such as work camps, cheap lodging or rooming houses, and flats, were of an inferior standard. They were often unable to rent a house or room from Japanese landlords and had to squat in shacks (disputes concerning the properties being rented by Koreans frequently erupted in 1930s Osaka). Fifth, although Koreans faced severe discrimination, their employment was 'legal' because they were regarded as 'Japanese' in this period. In this respect, they were different from today's foreign workers.

Post war
According to official records, some of the job categories in which *zainichi* Koreans were employed in 1990 included: clerical workers,

24.3 per cent; skilled workers and manufacturing process workers, 23.3 per cent; other sales workers, 20.9 per cent; managerial workers, 8.5 per cent; transportation and communications workers, 7.3 per cent; service workers, 6.2 per cent; general workers, 3.2 per cent; and medical and health technicians1.7 per cent (*Hōmushō Nyūkoku Kanri Kyoku*, 1990: 88). The following information should be added here. First, regardless of occupational class, considerable numbers of *zainichi* Koreans are self-employed or work for a small or medium business run by their fellow countrymen. Under these circumstances, *zainichi* Koreans have gradually found employment in increasingly higher occupational classes[15]. This also means that they have been employed in increasingly diverse occupational classes. However, discrimination such as not having the right to bid for public works projects in the construction industry places limits on the extent of diversification of the types of occupations in which *zainichi* Koreans are employed. There are five main types of industry in which *zainichi* Koreans are employed. These are the construction industry; manufacturing industry (for example metals, vinyl and plastics); the sales industry (for example, food and real estate); the transportation industry (for example, freight and taxis); and the service industry (entertainment businesses such as pachinko parlours and restaurants).

Following the liberation of Korea in 1945, many Koreans in Japan returned to their country[16]. Meanwhile, those who remained in Japan had to rebuild their living conditions all over again. Some became construction workers or mine workers. Others started small-scale, family-run factories or restaurants. Sixty years on some have become owners of their own businesses. Others work as employees. Still others wander from one work camp or factory to another as day laborers. Some 'lucky' ones among them started their businesses with equipment and supplies disposed of by the US forces after the war and became the owners of construction firms. Most Korean business owners in Japan, however, saved the money themselves to buy construction equipment and set up their own businesses. Today, many of the Korean business owners are second or third generation *zainichi* Koreans who have taken over their grandfathers' or fathers' businesses.

Part Four: The stratification of foreigners

Models of stratification

Before considering the relationship between foreign workers and *zainichi* Koreans we need to consider the situation of ethnic groups

as a whole. Figure 5.4 shows a simplified illustration of the stratified structure of ethnic groups focusing on the underclass labor market, such as that of the construction industry[17]. In this figure, the horizontal lines and the oblique lines show divisions between different strata and between different ethnic groups respectively (neither takes population ratios into consideration). The figure shows that the dominant group is Japanese. However, the ethnic boundaries between Japanese and non-Japanese are not necessarily clear (for example, there are issues such as whether people in Okinawa are Japanese residents or a different ethnic group from the Japanese (Okinawans). Ethnic mixing and naturalization are additional complicating issues. In general, ethnic boundaries are determined politically in terms of the interaction between groups. The group ranked second is made up of former Korean immigrants who are now permanent residents in Japan. *Zainichi* Koreans have limited choices regarding where they can live because of discrimination. These Koreans are further subdivided according to their legal status. Ranked at the bottom of the various strata are foreigners from the most recent wave to enter Japan (with the exception of those who are married to Japanese or have become naturalized in Japan). Figure 5.4 also shows that *zainichi* Koreans are stratified amongst themselves[18]. Although small in size, groups of these Koreans occur in the upper stratum and also in the middle stratum. The overwhelming majority, however, are ranked in the lower stratum[19]. Another feature which emerges from Figure 5.4 is that there is stratification of foreign workers within the same ethnic group and

Figure 5.4: Relations between different ethnic groups in Japanese society

135
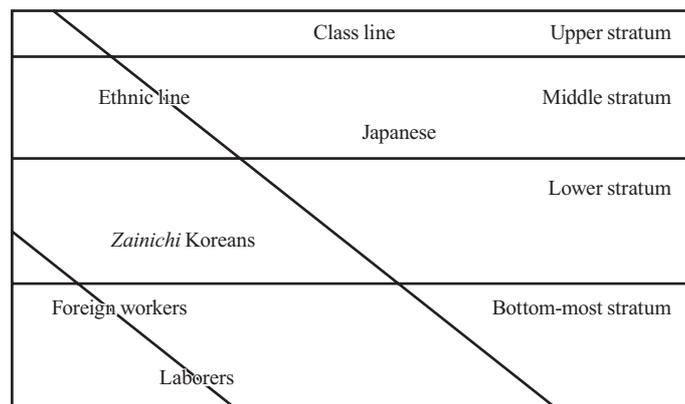
between different ethnic groups according to such factors as their work skills, the length of their stay in Japan and the basis on which they are in Japan (such as their legal status and networks). However, this stratification can vary depending on the times and settings and thus is fluid.

Measures for stratification

Foreign workers are socially positioned on the one hand as 'the most recent wave of foreigners', but they are stratified, on the other, according to the attributes of the groups to which they belong. It has been only twenty years since the massive inflow of foreign workers into Japan started. The number of these foreign workers is also smaller than those in Western European countries. Furthermore, the main countries of origin of ethnic groups have been changing from year to year. The stratification of the most recent wave of foreigners according to the attributes of different ethnic groups has, however, gradually surfaced under these circumstances.

The stratification of foreign workers is another aspect of their position in the labor market. 'As is the case with the domestic labor market, the market of foreign workers is becoming increasingly stratified on the basis of nationality, job category, gender and other attributes' (Kuwahara, 2001: 37). Kura argues that their employment eligibility (whether they are legal or illegal) is the determining factor in the stratification of foreign workers (Kura, 1995: 56). Kura then states that foreign workers of Japanese ancestry tend to be employed by large businesses, while workers without the proper work documents tend to be employed by small and medium businesses. Ōkubo deems foreign workers of Japanese ancestry to have a unique ethnicity and positions them in between Japanese and foreigners (Ōkubo, 25 October 2003). Stratification also extends to illegal foreign workers. Kura has reported that the following ranking has been observed – in descending order of monthly income: Koreans, Filipinos/Filipinas, Pakistanis, and Iranians (Kura, 1995: 53). By referring to previous studies we can devise the following hypotheses regarding the measures for and factors in the stratification of ethnic groups[20]. The influence of each measure in the stratification process cannot be determined mechanically. These measures determine the position of each ethnic group in the stratification by overlapping with and offsetting each other.

The first measure is the legal status of their eligibility to stay in Japan. This determines whether or not they are legally entitled to live and

work in Japan (Tanaka, 1991). Foreigners cannot be employed legally in 'unskilled' work in Japan. Therefore, those who can be employed legally in 'unskilled' work are limited to Japanese nationals or those who have been granted a special stay permit or a working permit. However, these restrictions do not apply to Brazilian or Peruvian nationals of Japanese ancestry[21].

The second measure is the social basis for their stay in Japan. In other words, this is whether or not they have contacts in Japan, such as relatives, people from the same town or village or friends. The size and depth of their mutual help network is crucial to foreign workers' lives in Japan. Many first-time foreign workers come to Japan through a broker and find employment. Later their relatives, people from their town or village, and/or their friends come to Japan with their help. Finally, they form families in Japan and bring their relatives and/or people from their town or village to Japan. This is chain migration. The earlier the move to Japan, the bigger and deeper their network becomes. Koreans are in a special position in this respect: they have (or had) a network of *zainichi* Koreans. Chinese are second to Koreans in this respect[22].

The third measure is work skill. Work skill has a critical influence on the position of an individual. Individuals are stratified within the same ethnic group according to their work skill. In general, foreign workers see an increase in their work skills and relative position in the strata in proportion to the number of visits they have made to, and their length of stay in, Japan. Apart from the different levels of work skill found amongst individuals, varying characteristic levels of work skill are found amongst ethnic groups. These are collective tendencies which result from the work experience of foreign workers in their homelands. In other words, they represent the part of the working class leaving their homeland as migrant workers. For example, it is said that many Korean workers are skilled because they have been engaged in construction work in Middle East countries or infrastructure construction work in Korea (C, 3 January 1994).

The fourth measure is the level of physical visibility. In other words, whether or not they have distinguishing features, or whether or not they resemble Japanese people. Ethnic groups whose members resemble Japanese people have an advantage over others in finding employment. Their alien identity will not be discovered unless they talk to Japanese people. In this respect, people from East Asia (Koreans and Chinese) have an advantage. This results in the assignment of East Asian workers to outdoor labor which is exposed to the public eye. This tendency

increases as the Immigration Bureau and the police tighten their control over illegal employment (D, a Kamagasaki laborer, 18 July 1999).

The fifth measure is cultural affinity. This means the level of similarity between an ethnic culture and Japanese culture in terms of lifestyles. Ethnic groups whose culture is very similar to Japanese culture in terms of food, clothing, socializing, religions and sense of values have an advantage over others in adapting to Japanese society. This gives them greater employment and living opportunities[23].

The sixth measure is cultural flexibility. This means the level of cultural flexibility in accepting a foreign culture. In other words, this is the level of exposure to a foreign culture, or the level of resistance to being exposed to a foreign culture. Ethnic groups with many experiences of exposure to foreign cultures historically and geographically have an advantage over others in adapting to the host society. This is the case with people from the Philippines, for example. As a nation they have developed a high level of flexibility as a result of their experiences during the periods of colonization of their country, under a pro-American cultural policy and a policy of encouraging people to work in foreign countries. They have relatively low levels of ethnocentrism and excel in accepting foreign cultures. This gives them a greater advantage over others in adapting to Japanese society (Hollnsteiner, M.R., 1974: Chapter 2)[24].

Employment and work

Having considered the basis for stratification amongst and within ethnic groups, I would next like to summarize stratified ethnic group relationships, focusing on the underclass labor market found mainly in the construction industry. Figure 5.5[25] shows the ranking of foreign workers on the basis of their ethnicity. This ranking should not be taken as fixed: it is determined on a case-by-case basis and influenced by the many measures for stratification.

In the case of Japanese workers, although there are some differences depending on job categories, construction workers are usually employed in San'ya, Kotobuki, Kamagasaki and other places by labor arrangers acting for the lowest-level subcontractor. Their work sites have a system under which they are treated as skilled workers and placed in positions superior to Koreans and Filipinos, below whom Iranian workers – who are effectively the lowest stratum – are used as general workers. The wages of Iranian workers are between 1,500 and 1,700 yen per day.

Considering that Japanese workers earn at least 50,000 to 200,000 yen per month, the gap is astounding (these wage figures are from the 1980s and are considerably lower than present wage levels) (Yamaoka, 1996: 128).

We must consider not only the overall picture of stratified ethnic group relationships but also individual ethnic group relationships. Only by doing this can we understand the actual relationship between *zainichi* Koreans and the most recent wave of foreigners. Let us now focus on day laborers in the construction industry in order to examine the various phases of the ethnic relationships in employment and work within the urban underclass labor market (Satō, 1991) (*Kensetsu Rōdō Kenkyū-kai* (Construction Labor Study Group), 1981: 77–111). All of the figures given below represent general images based on information obtained from the interviews I conducted. The stratified ethnic group

Figure 5.5: Ethnic group relations in construction work settings

Businesses

General contractor
Primary subcontractor
Secondary subcontractor   Japanese owners
Tertiary subcontractor   *Zainichi* Korean owners

Laborers
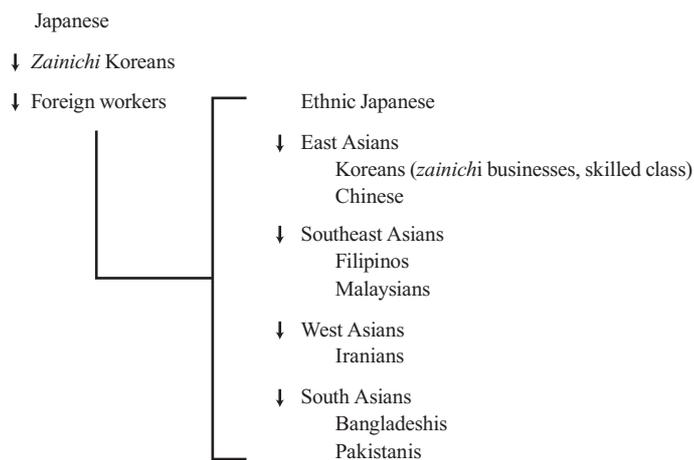
Japanese
↓ *Zainichi* Koreans
↓ Foreign workers   Ethnic Japanese
          ↓ East Asians
                    Koreans (*zainich*i businesses, skilled class)
                    Chinese
          ↓ Southeast Asians
                    Filipinos
                    Malaysians
          ↓ West Asians
                    Iranians
          ↓ South Asians
                    Bangladeshis
                    Pakistanis

relationships seen in employment and work settings are actually significantly more varied than the picture presented here.

First, let us look at the ethnic relationships seen in employment settings; these are illustrated in Figure 5.6. Japanese business owners hold a dominant position in business management because they are entitled to bid for the original contract for public works projects, because they can obtain loans from banks more easily and for other similar reasons. As employers, they also have an advantage over foreigners in employment relationships. However, in the recent harsh business environment, an increasing number of businesses are no longer financially able to employ even foreign workers and are failing.

Employers who are *zainichi* Koreans with solid business foundations as permanent resident foreigners hold the next best position in the employment setting. Their businesses are, however, generally more fragile than those owned by Japanese and management is more difficult for them. This puts them under greater pressure to obtain cheap labor. Their first labor source is Korean workers through networks of family, relatives and friends. Sometimes they employ Japanese workers. In these cases, the stratified positions of Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans are reversed. This is also the case for Japanese workers who get work through *zainichi* Korean labor recruiters or labor arrangers. Historically, *zainichi* Koreans have been extremely active in construction labor. As a result, it is said that (a majority of) labor recruiters and labor arrangers in Kamagasaki are *zainichi* Koreans[26].

Figure 5.6: Ethnic group relations in employment settings
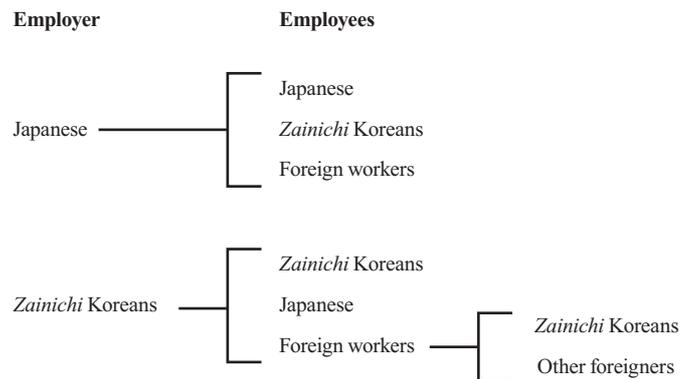
These disadvantaged Korean employers sometimes exploit their employees severely (as is the case with Japanese employers). Labor recruiters and labor arrangers are fundamentally in the business of making profits by taking kickbacks from workers' wages. This leads to the frequent eruption of cases of discrimination fuelled by the antipathy felt by Japanese workers towards *zainichi* Koreans – as seen in the fact that work camps run by *zainichi* Koreans are often scornfully referred to using the derogatory '*chōsen*' (Korean) by Japanese workers – and amplified by ethnic prejudice.

Next, Korean employers seeking cheap labor employ foreign workers and their first choice is Korean workers. The recruiting networks of Koreans extend beyond the sea to their homeland. The fellow feeling and cultural affinity between *zainichi* Koreans and Korean workers make their employer-employee relationship smooth (and difficult at the same time). Korean workers used to come to Japan on a family visit visa, but today most of them come on a tourist visa. At a work site, the *zainichi* Korean gaffer (*oyakata*) and Korean workers speak to each other in Korean. For these gaffers, it is easier to communicate with, and thus more efficient to work with, Korean workers. In this respect, they have ties which Japanese workers cannot break into. *Zainichi* Koreans and Korean workers are, however, not always on good terms. For *zainichi* Koreans, Korean workers are convenient labor which can be employed at low wages. For Korean workers, on the other hand, *zainichi* Koreans are 'no better than Japanese' and 'close ethnically but distant emotionally'[27]. *Zainichi* Koreans are also exploiters. *Zainichi* Koreans and Korean workers are both ambivalent towards each other.

Finally, *zainichi* Korean gaffers employ non-Korean foreign workers. For example, they may employ Filipino workers. Meanwhile, some Korean and Filipino workers have come to play a role similar to that of a labor recruiter by, for example, introducing friends to their own employer using the network of their fellow countrymen. They do not, however, take kickbacks as a brokerage fee in these cases. Workers from different ethnic backgrounds seldom work together at the same work site. Korean workers and Filipino workers look for jobs and go to work together with their fellow countrymen through their respective networks.

Amongst Koreans, old timers play the role of labor recruiters. They are labor recruiters and employers, and they take on recent arrivals. Filipinos, Thais and foreigners of Japanese ancestry – they all get there by totally

different routes from each other (A member of a foreigner support group from Kamagasaki in Katō et al., 1997: 20).

Second, let us take a look at ethnic relationships on work sites. Figure 5.7 depicts ethnic relationships on work sites under the construction industry's stratified structure of employment. The term '*sewayaki*' as used in Figure 5.7 means a senior worker who has mastered the work of the work site and who, acting on behalf of the gaffer, performs duties with respect to subordinate workers such as negotiating with the gaffer, taking care of work arrangements, the control and supervision of workers and the assessment and payment of wages (*Kensetsu Rōdō Kenkyū-kai*, 1981: 54). '*Bōshin*' perform roughly the same functions as *sewayaki*, but their power is more limited. '*Anko*'[28] refers to day laborers (at the lowest level). There is actually a richer variety of names for positions on work sites. Foreign workers tend to enter a work site as part of an ethnic group. The common labor relationships seen between different ethnic groups are as follows.

Gaffers and *sewayaki* are usually Japanese or *zainichi* Koreans and Japanese workers sometimes work under the supervision of a *zainichi* Korean. There have been Korean (from the most recent wave of immigrants) and Filipino *sewayaki* in *yoseba* in Yokohama, Osaka and Nagoya. Individuals amongst the most recent wave of foreigners improve their work skill level by increasing their work experience, as they make repeated visits to Japan and stay for longer periods of time. Over time, they earn the gaffer's trust in leading fellow workers and become *bōshin* or *sewayaki*.

This increases the opportunities for workers from different ethnic groups to work at the same work site. On the one hand, they have different languages, values and customs and they compete for work and run into trouble with each other. On the other hand, their experience as '*anko*' nurtures personal relationships amongst them which cross ethnic boundaries. People from different ethnic backgrounds eat from the same pot together. Intimacy grows between them[29].

Figure 5.7: Ethnic group relations in work settings

Gaffer	Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans
↓ Manager	Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans
↓ Assistant boss	Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans and foreign workers
↓ Day laborers	Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans and foreign workers

Part Five: Kamagasaki, Ikaino and Minami

Many foreign workers enter the urban labor market as workers without the proper work documents. They form a labor spectrum ranging from those engaged in skilled work to those in unskilled work. They also live in urban underclass areas and form part of the poor. Foreign workers thus become the new arrivals in the urban underclass. The urban underclass space becomes an ethnically pluralistic society in which multiple minority groups compete and coexist with each other.

In order to clarify the dynamics of this process, let us move on to an analysis of the employment and living relationships among the different ethnic groups in the urban underclass, focusing on the relationship between the most recent wave of Korean arrivals and *zainichi* Koreans. This analysis will demonstrate clearly the situation of these groups within the stratified spatial structure of the urban underclass. I will select three different areas in which *zainichi* and Koreans who are part of the most recent wave of immigrants live in clusters and have contrasting relationships, and sketch the respective images of Koreans in the three areas, focusing on their employment and living. I will look for signs of Osaka's globalization in the dynamism of these images. The three areas that I will look at are Kamagasaki, where Korean male new arrivals are employed; Ikaino, the largest *zainichi* Korean quarter in Japan; and Minami, where Korean female new arrivals are employed. All three of these area names are popular not official names. Please refer to Figure 5.8.

Koreans in Osaka

The Osaka Labor Bureau collated data on the actual conditions of the most recent wave of foreigners using data collected as part of the MHLW Employment Security Bureau's nationwide survey of businesses. This data looked at members of this group who were working legally for businesses within the jurisdiction of the Osaka prefectural government (MHLW, 2002b). According to this data, 1,304 businesses within the jurisdiction of the Osaka prefectural government employed a total of 6,742 foreigners in 2000. The industries employing foreigners included the manufacturing industry (42.0 per cent), the service industry (38.7 per cent) and the wholesale, retail and catering industries (12.6 per cent). Twelve point six percent of these foreign employees were employed indirectly (as, for example, workers dispatched by agencies/agents). Of those directly employed, 68.3 per

Figure 5.8: The location of the city of Osaka and related administrative wards

Kita Ward

Chūō Ward

Minami

Tennōji
Ward

Higashinari Ward

Naniwa Ward

Ikaino

Ikuno Ward

Taishō
Ward

Kamagasaki

Nishinari
Ward

Hirano Ward
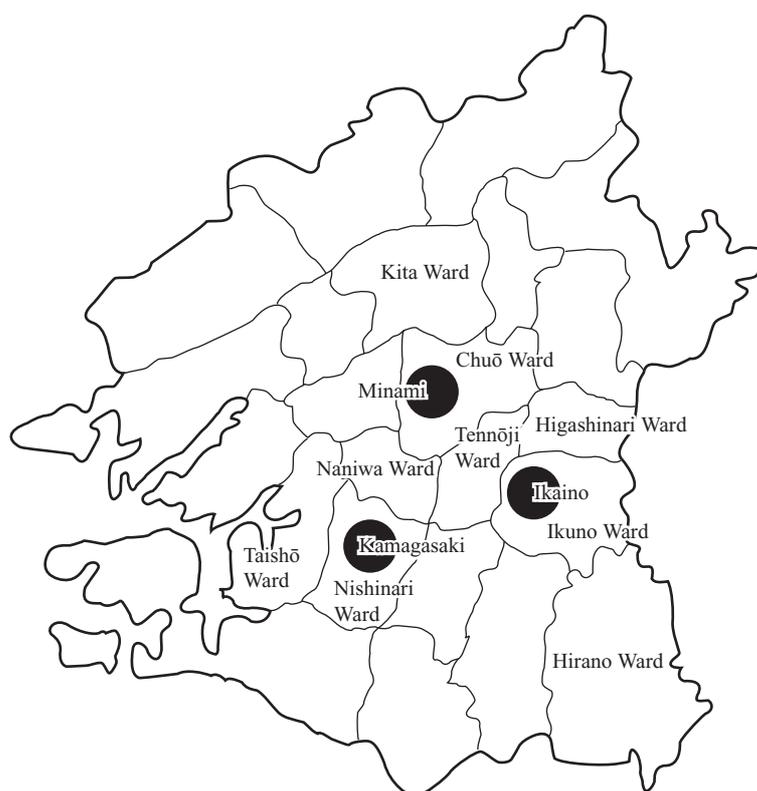
cent were temporary workers. These figures mean that the proportion of temporary foreign workers to all foreign workers was as high as 72.3 per cent. The nationalities of directly employed workers included, East Asian countries (42.2 per cent), Southeast Asian countries (10.3 per cent), Central and South American countries (16.2 per cent), and Western countries (22.5 per cent). In terms of visa status, 46.2 per cent held a specified visa, 34.4 per cent had permanent resident status as the spouse of a Japanese national, 8.4 per cent were foreign students or pre-college students, and 8.2 per cent were technical interns. With respect to job categories, 38.7 per cent were clerical or technical workers and 61.3 per cent were laborers. These figures help us to form an image of foreign workers in Osaka. They are mainly from other Asian countries and are employed mainly by small businesses,

largely in the manufacturing and service industries (including some clerical or technical workers) on a temporary basis. Although the actual numbers are unknown, if we include workers without the proper work documents (many of whom are from other Asian countries), this strengthens the image of the most recent wave of foreigners as temporary workers in small businesses.

Osaka Prefecture had a Korean population of 162,990 in 1998, which accounted for 78.6 per cent of its population of registered foreigners (*Osaka Rōdō Kyōkai* (Osaka Labor Association), 2000:166). Japan's Korean population for the same year was 638,828 (MCA, Statistics Bureau, 2001a), which means that the Korean population in Osaka represented 25.5 per cent of the entire Korean population in Japan. The city of Osaka had a Korean population of 96,901 in the same year, which accounted for 59.5 per cent of the Korean population in Osaka Prefecture (*Ōsakashi Keikaku Chōseikyoku* (Osaka City, Planning and Coordination Division), 2000a: 20). The number of Korean residents per 100,000 residents in Osaka Prefecture was 1693.8 in 1995, which far surpassed that of Tokyo (640.5) and the national average (446.3) (MCA, Statistics Bureau, 2001b).

Osaka's Korean population is concentrated in the eastern part of Osaka City, including Ikuno Ward (35,088), Higashinari Ward (7,755), Nishinari Ward (6,743), and Hirano Ward (6,175) (*Ōsakafu Shiryō* (Osaka Prefecture Sources), 2001). The pattern of *zainichi* Korean population distribution has developed in the context of the formation of each area and of occupational structure. Sugihara Tōru analyzed the geographical distribution of Koreans before the war and traced the history of their settlement in Japan (Sugihara, 1996: 99–108). This history has formed the basis of today's geographical distribution of *zainichi* Koreans and is, in turn, determining the population distribution of the most recent wave of Koreans.

Kamagasaki

Kamagasaki is a day laborers' area, including (parts of) the *machi* (city administrative units) of Hanazonokita, Haginochaya, Taishi, Tengachayakita, and San'nō. *Zainichi* Koreans have been very active in Kamagasaki since World War Two. Although we have no way of calculating the *zainichi* Korean population in Kamagasaki, a large number of *zainichi* Koreans still work in Kamagasaki as gaffers, labor recruiters and labor arrangers, day laborers and ship owners. Kamagasaki cannot do without *zainichi* Koreans who earn their

living by working in the construction industry[30]. This is also the case with Osaka Prefecture as a whole. There are many workers without the proper work documents in Osaka, including Koreans, Chinese, Filipinos/Filipinas, Thais and Iranians. Recently, Brazilians of Japanese ancestry who failed to find work at an automobile factory found their way into Osaka and some have become day laborers. However, *zainichi* Koreans, and Korean workers connected with them, are overwhelmingly the predominant foreigners in Osaka.

> Many *zainichi* Koreans [labor recruiters and labor arrangers] use Japanese-sounding names, so we have no idea how many *zainichi* Koreans there actually are. But I often hear that most labor recruiters and labor arrangers are *zainichi* Koreans. (G, a Kamagasaki laborer, 19 July 1999.)

A large number of foreign residents in Japan and the most recent wave of foreigners are in daily employment in the construction industry. It has been reported that the number of temporary employees (temporary or day laborers) in the construction industry is 600,000 for the whole of Japan and that more than 110,000 of them are foreign workers (Komai, 1993: 125–138). During the 1980s and the 1990s, a large number of recently arrived foreigners appeared in Tokyo *yoseba* (San'ya, Takadanobaba and Ueno) and in Yokohama *yoseba* (Kotobukichō). By contrast, employers, labor recruiters and labor arrangers in Kamagasaki tended to corral foreign workers into numerous work camps throughout the city, without going through *yoseba*. In addition, *doya* in Kamagasaki became larger and business hotel-like and raised their charges dramatically. They became too expensive for foreign workers. Their rooms became all single rooms (two to three tatami rooms), which do not suit foreign workers wanting to live in a community. For these reasons, foreign workers were rarely seen in Kamagasaki until several years ago. Meanwhile, areas outside Kamagasaki saw a continuously increasing number of foreign workers, particularly the most recent wave of Koreans, being employed by *zainichi* Korean gaffers. In the first half of the 1990s, the economy slowed down and daily construction employment decreased dramatically. This brought Japanese workers' antipathy towards foreign workers to the surface. 'They are depriving us of our jobs!' Discriminatory remarks and graffiti were frequently heard and seen. The police sometimes arrested illegal Korean workers using of tip offs from Japanese. In Kyoto and Amagasaki, the police discovered

large-scale work camps with Korean workers enclosed within them. Employers and gaffers ended up establishing separate work sites for Japanese and foreign workers because they were afraid of trouble with Japanese workers and also of being discovered by the regulatory authorities.

> I often used to see Koreans at work camps or work sites. They were recruited in Korea by *zainichi* Koreans and joined work camps, and came to work sites directly from there. They spoke Korean both in the work camps and on work sites; so few of them were able to speak Japanese. They hardly ever moved about and seemed to just work silently in a group. They rarely mixed with Japanese (H, a Kamagasaki laborer, 18 July 1999).

However, from the middle of the 1990s, annoyed with brokers who were taking kickbacks and with gaffers who were forcing work on them, Korean workers started coming to Kamagasaki to find work on their own. Although they had difficulty communicating in Japanese, they were young and eager to work. They sent their income regularly to their wives and children in their homeland. They looked like Japanese, which made it less likely that their illegal employment would be discovered. They mingled in amongst the Japanese workers in the anonymous community of Kamagasaki and got jobs from labor recruiters and labor arrangers. This was a convenient and easy way for them to earn money. In the prolonged recession, however, the availability of daily employment decreased dramatically. Korean workers had to make a tough choice between working at the current work site where wages were low but jobs were available, moving to work camps and work sites in the provinces, and returning to their homeland. Although they were having a hard time, Korean workers had their ethnic networks through which they were able to find work for each other. While many Japanese workers were failing to find work, Korean workers shared their work and managed to overcome the adverse circumstances. Korean workers in Kamagasaki continued to increase in number. At the end of the 1990s, pubs and restaurants run by *zainichi* Koreans and used by Korean workers appeared in one corner of Kamagasaki. Street stalls selling Korean products appeared along roadsides. As construction employment decreased, some Korean workers stopped being day laborers and became stall keepers. Even these changes were only possible because of help from *zainichi* Koreans[31].

Because jobs are scarce, more Koreans are switching from day labor to running stalls. The array of stalls is quite a spectacle. Their stalls occupy the prime land managed by *zainichi* [Korean] groups, leading to complaints from Japanese stall keepers. They deal in things like uncensored porn videos, alcoholic drinks and tobacco. They get all their goods on the black market. Some of them sell newspapers, magazines and dried food ordered directly from Korea to Korean workers. At the moment, fake brand name bags and wallets are sold in many stalls (C, 13 August 1999)[32].

Recently there has been an increase in the number of Chinese and Korean Chinese workers in Kamagasaki[33]. Korean workers, Chinese workers and Korean Chinese workers come to live in *doya* in Kamagasaki and go directly to work sites through their respective networks[34]. They have mobile phones and contact each other for help solving living and work problems. Because of this Kamagasaki has not seen the emergence of Korean workers who are so isolated as to end up having to sleep rough. In fact, some Korean workers who have parted from their *zainichi* Korean gaffers have married Japanese nationals and have even become gaffers themselves. Nowadays it is not uncommon to see Korean *sewayaki*. Some have transformed themselves from day laborers into owners of small businesses for Korean workers. Korean workers in Kamagasaki are steadily on their way to settling in Japan, as is the case also with Korean workers in Kotobukichō.

There are about 300 [in the most recent wave of] Koreans in Kama [Kamagasaki]. Many are from Pusan or Cheju Island. I failed in the sewing factory business and became a soldier but was discharged. I brought a lawsuit but it wasn't getting anywhere, so I came to Kobe by ship in 1990. I got hold of a tourist visa and 100,000 Japanese yen, said good-bye to my children's sleeping faces in the night and went to the port with my wife who saw me off. I went straight from Kobe to Kama, because I had been to Japan before and had heard about Kama. During the first two years I had a tough time, as I didn't understand the language or the work, and I worried about being illegal. My gaffer was demanding, but he understood my feelings and paid me nicely. I was lucky. I send 80,000 yen to my wife every month now. This is a relatively small amount because jobs are scarce. With my wife working too in Korea, we have bought a condo and my son is going to college. I work with Japanese only, because working with Koreans is a nuisance, as you get caught up in each other's interests. I do have acquaintances from Kama, but I

haven't told them my *doya*, because I'm going back to Korea sooner or later. But the number of Koreans living in Kama has really increased. Some become gaffers, and others get married (J, a Korean laborer in Kamagasaki, 15 August 1998).

Ikaino

There have been many immigrants (migrant workers and people transported for forced labor) coming to Osaka from the Korean Peninsula, particularly Cheju Island since the pre war period. Areas with considerable populations of *zainichi* Koreans have appeared, particularly in Ikuno Ward, Higashinari Ward, Hirano Ward, and the adjacent city of Higashi Ōsaka. The core of this zone is an area in Ikuno Ward commonly known as Ikaino[35]. Ikaino has a population of approximately 37,000 *zainichi* Koreans (ranging from the first to the fourth generation). Eighty-five percent of them are said to be from Cheju Island (Kim Dofan, 1989.4: 63)[36]. Ikuno Ward, where there are clusters of *zainichi* Koreans living together, is a manufacturing area producing, for example, sandals and shoes, rubber products and metalwork goods. Many of the businesses are small. There were 5,424 businesses in 1988. Ikuno Ward had a domestic market share of over 50 per cent in the production of slip-on sandals (Shōya and Nakayama, 1992). In 1996, 43.4 per cent of the working population in Ikuno Ward was employed in secondary industry, while the average for the whole of Osaka City was 23.9 per cent (*Ōsakashi Keikaku Chōseikyoku*, 1999a: 450). The businesses there are generally small, as seen in the fact that the average number of employees per business was 5.9 (*Ōsakashi Keikaku Chōseikyoku*, 1999b: 27). In December 2000, 36,329 registered foreigners lived in Ikuno Ward, 96.6 per cent of whom were Koreans (*Ikuno Kuyakusho Koseki Tōroku Ka* (Ancestral Register Division, Ikuno Ward Office), 2001). This number represents more than one-third of the Korean population in Osaka. In the same year, the net number of foreign immigrants (the number of foreign immigrants minus the number of foreigners who left Japan) in Ikuno Ward was 314. Their net numbers keep increasing each year (*Ōsakashi Shiminkyoku* (Osaka City Citizens' Affairs Bureau), 1994–2000). This represents an increase in the size of the most recent wave of foreigners. The number of Koreans in Ikuno Ward was 35,607 in March 2000, 32,792 of whom had been granted permanent residence (life long) or special permanent residence (inheritable). The difference between these figures, 2,815, roughly represents the number of people in the

most recent wave of Korean immigrants. This number increased most dramatically in 1985 when more than 4,000 Koreans were newly registered (K, a staff member of Ikuno Ward Office, 14 March 2001). The number of deaths had been increasing slightly each year and was 252 in 2000 (*Ōsakashi Shiminkyoku*, 1994–2000). These deaths represent deaths of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans who died of old age. Three hundred and seventy-three Koreans became naturalized in Japan in 2000. There has been a declining trend in the number of Koreans becoming naturalized in Japan (*Ōsakashi Shiminkyoku*, 1994–2000).

> Unlike former days, the naturalization examination is no longer strict. The number of people becoming naturalized is, however, decreasing. This seems to be because the naturalization procedures are troublesome and because Koreans don't experience any discrimination as long as they live in Ikuno. Some say naturalization costs money, but there should be no charge for the procedures themselves, you know (K, 14 March 2001).

In addition to this registered population, the most recent wave of Koreans who have not been registered or who are 'voluntary' immigrants without a special stay permit live in Ikuno Ward (although these immigrants were illegal, often stowaways, they refer to themselves – somewhat proudly – as having come to Japan 'voluntarily'). Their exact numbers are not known but are thought to be significant. Many Koreans, including this latter group, are employed in small factories and live on the first floor of these factories. This is the image of Ikuno Ward. Ikaino is at the heart of Ikuno Ward. Ikaino refers to a zone consisting of the *machi* (urban administrative units) of Tsuruhashi, Momodani, Katsuyamakita, Katsuyamaminami, Nakagawa, Nakagawanishi, and Tajima, all of which are in Ikuno Ward. Many immigrants have been coming to Osaka from Cheju Island since pre war days (Sugihara Kaoru and Tamai, 1986: 213–248). In those days, the regular ferry service between Osaka and Cheju Island had a significant role in this migration. During the 1920s, chemical, machinery and metal, textile and other businesses became concentrated in the Ikuno Ward area. This area was the core of the industrial city of Osaka, and Ikaino, in turn, was its core[37]. Relying on help from earlier immigrants from Cheju Island, immigration from that area continued into post war days. During the 1990s, as the economic situation in Ikaino grew more serious, Japanese workers gave up work and left Ikaino. This was followed by another influx of immigrants from Cheju Island.

> In my family, Grandpa came first, and he brought Grandma over to
> marry him and then their brothers and sisters came. Relatives came to
> Osaka one after another. Then they had babies and increased in number.
> Although Cheju Island is far from Osaka, it seems to be something like the
> neighbouring village to Grandpa and the others. Recently we visited our
> ancestors' graves (L, a *zainichi* Korean from Ikaino, 14 March 2001).

Koreans who came to Japan 'voluntarily' from Cheju Island during
the period of rapid economic growth joined *zainichi* Koreans and were
later granted a special stay permit[38]. Later, the most recent wave of
Korean migrant workers in the latter half of the 1980s also joined the
joined the *zainichi* population of Iaino. Ikaino thus has a history of
continuous influx of Koreans from South Korea, particularly Cheju
Island, beginning in pre war days and continuing today. The types
of Koreans coming to Japan has changed over time – we have seen
pre war Koreans, Koreans who chose to remain after the war, Korean
immigrants who entered Japan 'voluntarily' and finally the most recent
wave of Koreans. In this context, the influx of Koreans into Ikaino
in recent years is not a particularly new phenomenon[39]. Kim Dofan
refers to independent Korean immigrants as the 'new first generation
(*shin-issei*)' and the most recent wave of Koreans as the 'super-new
first generation (*shin-shin-issei*)', in order to distinguish these Koreans
from *zainichi* Koreans who came to Japan before the war (Kim Dofan,
1989.4: 64, 66). It has been reported that the new first generation, which
is the intermediate generation in terms of immigration, acts as a go-
between in inter-generational disputes between *zainichi* Koreans and
super-new first-generation Koreans (Sugihara, 1998: 31). There are
large numbers of Koreans from the Korean Peninsula in the ranks of
the super-new first generation.

> It's true that many *zainichi* Koreans in Ikaino are from Cheju Island, but
> not all of them. The most recent arrivals are from Seoul and its suburbs,
> and from all parts of South Korea. But some people have their present
> address in Seoul and their domicile in Cheju Island, so I don't know
> where I should say they are from (K, 14 March 2001).

Ikaino has concentrations of small factories run by *zainichi* Koreans
whose manufactures include products such as rubber, metals, plastics,
vinyl, glass and kimchi. Many of these businesses are cottage industries
paying for work by the piece. These businesses serve as subcontractors
for contracting firms who have been forced by the recession to reduce

unit prices for products or decrease the quantities ordered. These developments have led to serious economic difficulties for the small businesses in Ikaino. Desperate to survive, these businesses reduced their workforce and cut labor costs. The reduced wages caused Japanese and *zainichi* Korean employees to leave their employers. The resulting workforce shortage was filled from the ranks of the most recent wave of Koreans. From the beginning of the 1990s, Ikaino attracted people's attention because of 'an ethnic boom'. Ethnic goods produced in the area, such as clothes, bags and food (kimchi), gained popularity, and places such as Tsuruhashi Market, where storefronts are lined with food and other products imported from Korea, and 'Korea Town' thrived. The most recent wave of Koreans is engaged in the manufacture and sale of these Korean goods. It has not only been young women but also middle-aged women who have come from Korea. They have been employed in sewing, cleaning, dishwashing, and kimchi making. These women have lived and worked in shops, factories or blocks of flats. Because their employment is technically illegal, and because they have tended to work indoors, their numbers are unknown (N, a *zainichi* Korean from Ikaino, 6 January 1994). In addition, there are increasing numbers of a super-new first-generation of Korean women living in Ikaino and working in pubs and snack bars in all parts of Shinimazato. Christian churches have been established in Ikaino for the Christians from among this most recent wave of Koreans to gather (O, officer of a Christian organization and a *zainichi* Korean from Ikaino, 13 August 1999). These churches are not run by *zainichi* Koreans but are new churches with a pastor assigned from Korea who conducts services in Korean.

> The numbers of recent arrivals are increasing, particularly women. Middle-aged people tend to come counting on help from their *zainichi* relatives, while young people tend to come through brokers. Some people frequently travel back and forth between Osaka and Korea to make purchases for their businesses. Compared to former days, people travel a lot more often. The distance between Osaka and Korea has shrunk considerably (K, 14 March 2000).

Minami

Chūō Ward is a commercial area. In 1996, the service industry employed 88.6 per cent of the working population in Chūō Ward while

the average for service industry employment for the whole of Osaka City was 76.1 per cent (*Ōsakashi Keikaku Chōseikyoku*, 1999a: 441). In December 2000, 4,104 registered foreigners lived in Chūō Ward, 55.7 per cent and 27.9 per cent of whom were Koreans and Chinese, respectively (*Ikuno Kuyakusyo Koseki Tōroku Ka*, 2001). The net number of foreign immigrants in Chūō Ward was 197 in 2000 and continues to increase (*Ōsakashi Shiminkyoku*, 1994–2000). This highlights the increase that has occurred in the numbers making up the most recent wave of foreigners. The number of foreigners naturalized in Japan in 2000 was 39. This number is also increasing slightly (*Ōsakashi Shiminkyoku*, 1994–2000). It can reasonably be inferred that this population increase roughly represents an increase in the size of the most recent wave of Koreans and Chinese. In addition, there are immigrants who entered to Japan 'voluntarily' without a visa (Koreans and Chinese) and unregistered (overstaying) individuals from the ranks of the most recent wave of foreigners. Their numbers are unknown but are unlikely to be small.

Chūō Ward contains Minami, the largest entertainment district in Osaka. Many Koreans (and Chinese) are employed in the catering industry (nightlife businesses), which has many establishments in Minami. The 1999 National Census recorded 1,597 *zainichi* and members of the most recent wave of Koreans in Chūō Ward. They accounted for 60.4 per cent of all foreigners in the ward[40]. These figures for the number of Koreans also show a 35.1 per cent increase from the time of the 1995 census (MCA, Statistics Bureau, 1996: 805). On the other hand, the Korean population in the city of Osaka is showing a tendency to decline. The number of Koreans in Osaka City was 82,032 in 1999, which represents an 8.2 per cent decrease from 1995 (MCA, Statistics Bureau, 1996: 804). Sixty-nine per cent of the Koreans in Chūō Ward were women in 1999. The number of Koreans, particularly women, is increasing in Chūō Ward, contrary to the trend for the entire city. Minami shares this same feature with Chūō Ward. Minami is an amusement area including Nanba, Shinsaibashisuji, Dōtonbori and Sennichimae. The numbers of Koreans (and Chinese) are currently increasing in Minami. In southeast Minami, there were 33 Korean nightclubs and bars (snack bars and small pubs) in 2001, where more than 200 Korean employees worked (17 per cent men and 83 per cent women) (Chung, 2002: 43)[41]. According to Chung's research, using telephone directories and magazine advertisements), there are in addition to these over 120 Korean establishments in Minami (including

53 restaurants, 14 churches, 13 boutiques, 13 beauty parlours, 12 rental video shops, and 10 unlicensed taxi businesses (Chung, 2002: 43).

> More and more Koreans and Chinese are moving in, and more and more Japanese are moving out to the suburbs. It's a matter of time before foreigners occupy this whole neighbourhood, and there is no longer a place for Japanese to live in it. I feel really lonely. Maybe we'll have to close down our business before long (P, a Japanese woman running a hotel business. 6 January 1994).

> They don't just move into flats or condos. They buy the whole building. They make and save money in Minami – they are so powerful. We Japanese are being overwhelmed. There are always new immigrants moving in. It's quite tough to compete against their strength (C, 10 August 1998)[42].

In 2001, Chung interviewed 33 barmaids while working for a Korean club herself. The barmaids came to Japan on a variety of visas including visiting realtives, business, entertainment, family, permanent res- idence, temporary stay, student, or pre-college student visa, and had worked for an average period of 2.7 years in Japan (Chung, 2002: 42, 44). Many of the most recent wave of Koreans in Minami are said to come through brokers (C, 13 August 1999)[43]. Korean barmaids live in one-room condos or flats located in and around Minami within walking distance of their workplaces, within a 1,000 yen taxi ride, or in slightly more distant areas such as Imazato or Tatsumi and commute (Chung, 2002: 50). *Zainichi* Koreans own the bars and clubs where Korean women from the most recent wave of immigrants work and the condos and flats where they live. The Korean bars and clubs owned by *zainichi* Koreans are concentrated in one corner of Minami while blocks of flats owned by *zainichi* Koreans are concentrated in adjacent areas. There are also many recently arrived Chinese, Filipinos/Filipinas and Thais in Minami, but the Koreans are the dominant group amongst recently arrived foreigners. Their ties with *zainichi* Koreans are of decisive importance for Koreans in the most recent wave of immigrants.

> There are many *zainichi* Koreans working with Japanese in nightlife businesses in Nanba. Korean women solicit customers to come in. Chinese are also the target of crackdowns [by the Immigration Bureau] here. There are increasing numbers of Thai women engaged in prostitution (C, 13 August 1999).

> One night I went out to a bar frequented by Thais with a Korean barmaid, and when we were leaving we had trouble over the bill. Then the Korean barmaid, outraged, said in broken Japanese that she could use her connections to drive their business out of Minami. Then all the Thai guys shut up and looked down. After all, Koreans are more powerful because they have ties with *zainichi* (C, 13 August 1999)[44].

Some Koreans from the most recent wave of immigrants in Minami marry *zainichi* Koreans or Japanese. Once married, they are granted a marriage visa. Then they are free to stay or work in Japan. Eventually they obtain a permanent residence visa. It has been reported that an increasing number of Korean women follow this path[45]. An increasing number of recently arrived Koreans are settling in the entertainment district of Minami also. Minami now has Christian churches for Christians among the Korean women who have settled there. These churches have become important networking places for recently arrived Korean women. The following is a description of the events I witnessed during my visits to a Korean church[46]. Church services are conducted in Korean. After the services, the congregation shares a meal together around a single table, where the talk is about their businesses, lives and families. Many members of the congregation are Korean women who are married to Japanese. They bring their children with them to the services. After the Sunday services, there is a storytelling session for children. For these members of the congregation, the church is a networking place, a life school, and a shelter. These functions of the church can be inferred from comments made by the pastor and members of the congregation.

> When we opened this church [ten years ago], we had a membership of more than 100, but several years ago it had decreased to about twenty. Three quarters of the members returned to their homeland because of the recession. But children of the members continued to increase. Those who were able to go home did so leaving only those who had married Japanese. These days our membership has recovered to fifty. All our members are women. An increasing number of members marry Japanese or *zainichi*. Their children are about three to six years old. At Sunday school we teach religion and Korean. Children are used to being left home alone because their mothers work at night. They are always lonely because many of their fathers don't take care of them so they look forward to playing with friends at Sunday school. The only time

we visit their fathers is when the children are in some sort of trouble or are having problems (S, 4 January 2000).

In the past, people came to Japan because they were poor. These days the number of people coming simply to make spending money is growing. These people feel as though they were here for sightseeing. Japan is a nice place for Koreans to work. In Korea, they look down on men engaged in physical labor. In Japan no one's watching them. This is true for women too. No one will blame them if they work in the nightlife business. That's why Koreans are attracted to this place (Minami) (S, 13 March 2001).

A relatively small number of working women send money to their families in Korea. This is because many of their Japanese husbands don't work. So they have to earn a living. Some husbands threaten their wives by taking advantage of their situation – that is, of the fact that they can't go back to their families if they get a divorce. These Japanese husbands say, 'The only reason you can stay in Japan is because you are married to me. You'll have to go back to Korea if I divorce you.' Because Koreans are proud people, these women can't stand being treated like this by their husbands so they get a divorce. Some women have husbands who are gangsters [47]. So, women in trouble often come to me for help. I talk to husbands or accompany the women to help them with visa applications at the Immigration Bureau. Officials at the Immigration Bureau have threatened me, saying, 'if you do this sort of thing, you'll lose your visa too on the grounds of engaging in unlicensed activities.' But I want to be able to serve these women more, so I'm thinking of being naturalized in Japan (S, 13 March 2001).

Korean workers

In the past, *zainichi* Korean business owners in the construction industry (Kamagasaki), the manufacturing industry (Ikaino) and the service industry (Minami) used to sponsor/recruit Korean workers from their homeland directly through networks of relatives or people from the same town or village as themselves. Korean workers used to come to Japan on a family visit visa (effective for ninety days, usually renewable only once). Later, entry into Japan on family visit visas decreased in number, because this was a path available only for those who have relatives in Japan, and because their illegal employment risked causing their relatives trouble. Now increasing numbers of Koreans come to Japan on a tourist visa instead. This is an easier

way to enter Japan. In addition, Korea has removed its restrictions on overseas travel (1989). The fact that *zainichi* Korean employers and labor recruiters can also be exploiters of Korean workers has resulted in an increased number of Koreans coming to Japan via brokers and their connections with Korean relatives or friends who have some experience of living in Japan, rather than through connections with their *zainichi* relatives[48]. The growing number of Koreans living in Kamagasaki is a manifestation of this trend. In the case of foreigners from other Asian countries, the Immigration Bureau does not usually approve the renewal of a tourist visa, suspecting illegal employment. This has resulted in an increased number of foreigners overstaying their visas and working without the proper work documents. On the other hand, the economic recession in Korea is so serious that its government is even encouraging people to go to a foreign country to work (however, they are very sensitive about female international migrant workers, fearing a bad international reputation for 'exporting sex slaves')[49]. Korea's liberalization of overseas travel has redirected the flow of Korean workers from politically unstable Middle East countries to Japan.

In the Japan to which they are turning – specifically Ikaino in Osaka – Koreans are splitting into groups based on when they arrived in Japan (*zainichi* Koreans, new first-generation Koreans and super-new first-generation Koreans)[50]. In addition, super-new first-generation Koreans have split into different groups corresponding to the mutually diverse worlds which they inhabit (Koreans in Kamagasaki working in the construction industry, Koreans in Ikaino working in the manufacturing industry, and Koreans in Minami working in the nightlife business). Let us look at Figure 5.9. A huge Korean community containing these three subgroups has emerged.

What is the nature of the relationships between the three Korean groups? The networks relied on by the most recent wave of Koreans in Kamagasaki, Ikaino and Minami are practically independent from each other. In former days, there used to be some *zainichi* Koreans who went from Ikaino to Kamagasaki to find work. As jobs have become scarce in Kamagasaki, however, this type of activity by *zainichi* Koreans has disappeared[51]. In addition, as there are no labor arrangers' work camps in Ikaino, there is no need for those in Kamagasaki to recruit laborers in Ikaino.

> These days I don't hear very often that construction gaffers in Ikuno branch out into Nishinari (Kamagasaki) or go to find work there. It now

Figure 5.9: Korean work and living spaces

Osaka

Kamagasaki	Ikaino
Construction Industry *Zainichi* Koreans	Manufacturing Industry *Zainichi* Koreans
(*Shin issei*)*	*Shin issei*
Shinshin issei Korean workers	*Shinshin issei* Korean workers

Minami

Minami
Service Industry *Zainichi* Koreans
Shin issei
Shinshin issei Korean workers
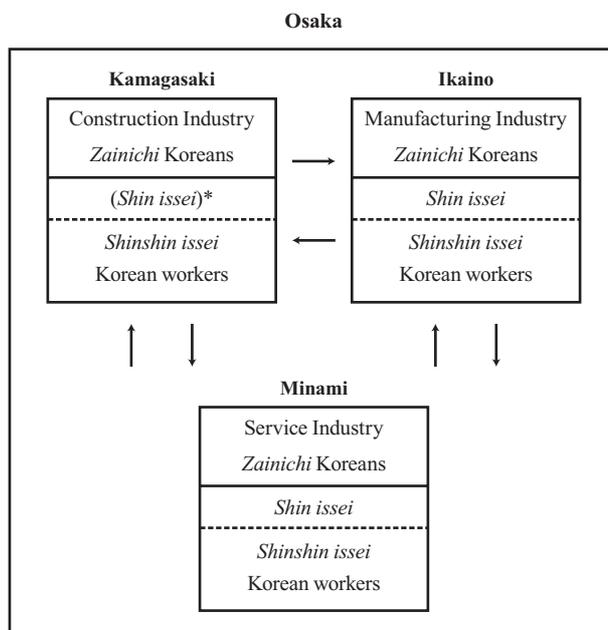
* Issei refers to the generation of Korean immigrants who came to Japan before World War Two. Shin issei refers to the second wave of Koreans immigrants who came to Japan between 1945 and the 1970s. Shinshin issei denotes the most recent wave of Korean immigrants who have come to Japan from the 1980s on.

seems that more gaffers are branching out into Nishinari from work camps in the coastal wards of Taishō or Suminoe. Those people are *zainichi* too (L, a Korean from Ikaino, 14 March 2001).

Some Koreans working in Minami become day laborers in Kamagasaki. Q was a cook-turned-snack bar manager, but three years ago he was attacked by a robber and seriously injured. After treatment and recovery, he moved to Kamagasaki as a day laborer (Q, 13 August 1999). Cases like this, however, are an exception.

When I was in Minami, I managed to become the manager of a snack bar, and then three years ago I was attacked by a robber on my way home from the bar. I was severely injured. I was hospitalized and when I was discharged from hospital, I no longer had either the energy or the will

> to go back to work at the bar. So I drifted to Kama [Kamagasaki]. Now I only ever go to Minami for fun. But I know everything about Minami. You can ask me anything about it (Q, 13 August 1999).

By contrast, Ikaino and Minami have a close relationship with each other. In 1929, Imazato Shinchi, adjacent to Ikaino, was designated as a licensed quarter. Subsequently, the Imazato area became a thriving entertainment area. Ikaino and Minami are historically connected to each other.

> *Zainichi* in Ikaino first branched out into Shinimazato, then expanded along the Kintetsu line, and finally reached Minami. They expanded their recruitment network to Korea and sent home for women. These women have moved into one-room condos in Shinimazato and commute to Minami. This is usually the case. After the Tsuruhashi subway line was extended, there were more blocks of flats in Tatsumi (an area adjacent to Ikaino) too (K, 14 March 2001).

These days, the numbers of recently arrived Koreans are increasing and helping to transform the whole Imazato area.

> These men (women) work at Korean restaurants or snack bars in not only Shinchi but throughout Osaka, or are engaged in various service businesses. They are jointly renting convenient, modern condos and start work in the evening. As if attempting to keep pace with their increasing numbers, blocks of one-room flats have covered this area also. There has been a string of Korean video shops and beauty shops with signboards in Korean opening up and even Korean pubs with 'open 24 hours' signs have appeared (Sugihara Tōru, 1998: 25).

Zainichi Koreans and the most recent wave of Koreans in Kamagasaki, Ikaino and Minami have formed the Korean communities in Osaka through processes of connecting to or detaching from each other. The most recent wave of Koreans flow in seeking places to work and live which have been developed by *zainichi* Koreans. Many of the brokers who recruit/sponsor the most recent wave of Koreans to those places are also *zainichi* Koreans. Even the many Koreans who come to Japan using their own connections find that their work and dwellings during their stay in Japan still connect them with the existence of *zainichi* Koreans. Such is the depth of the relationship between the most recent wave of Koreans and *zainichi* Koreans in Osaka.

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Section II:
The Urban Underclass' World of
Meaning

6 Methods of researching the urban underclass

Part One: The urban underclass and the life history method

The life history method

> This person always used to hang around with his friends – four or five of them sitting in a circle around a bonfire in the park, drinking noisily and getting drunk. But, then he spat blood and collapsed and wasn't conscious of anything at all. Even so, he wouldn't go to hospital; he said he hated hospitals. I finally persuaded him – I told him that I would call an ambulance, escort him to hospital and see that he was looked after. He looked depressed and said that he understood. But next day, he was back in the park! When I said you were admitted to hospital, he said my friends are here so I like it here. He was muddy and he told me that he had crawled back from the hospital and that even though he had been admitted to hospital, he liked it by the bonfire and being with his friends. No matter what I said, he stubbornly refused to move. There was nothing I could do so I left him there. Three days later he was dead. He had grown much worse by the fire; his mind had deteriorated, his body had felt cold and finally he had died.

A (a minister in a Christian facility in Kamagasaki. 1 August 1995) gloomily recounted the circumstances of this homeless person's death to me. It is a very sad story. The man had wanted to die near his friends. He had dreaded dying alone. As I listened to A talking, my thoughts travelled far away to what that man's feelings must have been. His hellish loneliness was, however, something that I could not possibly comprehend. I bit back my sense of inadequacy at being unable to express all of this in words while I listened, absorbed, to what A was saying. A line of tears trickled down A's cheek.

> How do people who live together in groups in cities read texts about themselves? What are the conditions under which this 'reading' is composed? And why are they forcibly organized as the subjects of this 'reading' (Yoshimi, 1987:11)?

Urban research currently makes widespread use of the life history method (*seikatsushi-hō*) and debates flourish concerning its actual practise. The life history method could perhaps best be described as a survey method which reconstitutes the individuality of people's lives. It achieves this by listening to other people's life stories and connecting these to the society and the times in which they live whilst simultaneously recording an interpretation of what is said on the basis of the context in which it is said. This may indeed be an effective method for discovering the meanings of the lives of homeless people, who are subalterns (G. C. Spivak, 1998) dispossessed even of the words which they ought to speak, striving daily and silently to live and lacking even a name. And yet, the feeling of inadequacy as one fails to discover the profundity of homeless people's words, no matter how much one attempts to listen attentively, persistently haunts those who carry out surveys. The life history method is a method for constructing and reproducing other people's lives, using their 'interpretations of interpretations' of the meaning of life and the contents of these interpretations. Throughout this chapter I ask a few basic questions about the life history method.

The life history method is not a method which is specific to urban (underclass) research. There are, in addition, numerous subtypes of the life history method. In this chapter, I will consider various methodological questions concerning the actual practise, recording and interpretation of information in the oral-personality-life history (life history through oral statements) approach which I use in my *yoseba* and homeless fieldwork. Following this, I will discuss the problems posed by the life history method when attempting to understand and interpret other people's worlds. In this way, I hope to produce a method for getting closer to the subjective existence/world of meaning of the urban underclass.

My life history method

One day I plunged into Kamagasaki. The things that I saw and heard were new to me. To my right and left the place was crammed full of people living there. Then, I went to San'ya, Kotobukichō and Sasajima.

Various things happened. I made many friends. I lost many friends to death. I met good-natured working people (*hatarakido*), cool working people, lonely working people, complaining working people and proud working people. They all became irreplaceable friends. My initial reason for entering the *yoseba* was to carry out a survey. That is still the case now. However, I have become a captive of the *yoseba*. My encounters with the working people have altered the meaning of the *yoseba* for me. In food halls and in lodging houses, on park benches and by the roadside, while eating, drinking, squatting and walking I listen to working people's stories of hardship. I listen to what they say about work and about their life stories. These stories make me feel excited, laugh, get cross and cry. This is indeed a personal experience survey! Working people do not tolerate a researcher's manner in the person asking them questions. Nor do they tolerate a researcher's way of seeing them. Even so, I listened attentively to what they said. I made supportive responses. I strove to remember all their stories. I cannot use a tape recorder. I cannot even take notes. When I leave them, I rush to a public toilet and write things down. The words of these working people are cries from the hearts of people energetically engaged in the business of living. It is an eventful drama. However, what is it acceptable for people carrying out surveys to ask? What is it acceptable for us to see? What is it acceptable for us to know? I frequently asked myself these questions. Whenever I asked myself, I went through a process of hesitating, changing my position, abandoning everything and then readopting some of these same things. I am still continuing this type of personal experience survey.

I stay in lodging houses (cheap digs) in Kamagasaki, San'ya and Kotobukichō. I practise *aokan* (sleeping rough). I take part in the Summer Festival and the Winter Struggle. As a result of these activities I have learned a variety of things, but the basis of my *yoseba* survey is provided by questioning day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers as well as labor union activists (who are also day laborers) and activists in support groups. I listen to their stories in lodging houses, coffee shops, parks, by the roadside, at gatherings and meetings. Fortunately, there are some occasions on which I am able to use a tape recorder, but usually I cannot. When I am unable to use one, I fervently memorize the words of the laborers. When I part from them, I record these words as field notes. The occasions on which I can formally ask for an interview and set up a meeting place are rather few. In the majority of cases, opportunities to talk with day laborers and homeless people arise completely by chance and I turn these

chances into hasty interviews. On some occasions I am able to hear their stories in detail. There are also times when the exchange consists of a few simple words and then it is over. Whatever the nature of an opportunity to talk, the person conducting the survey is also on the move as he/she has conversations with laborers and homeless people. This is how the actual practise of *yoseba* surveys occurs. Interviews are always participant observation and action research[1]. One never knows whether another meeting with any particular person will be possible. Interviews are always a one round contest.

In actual *yoseba* surveys, researchers do not rely solely on the life history method but make use of *any piece of* data shedding light on the actual state of work and life in the *yoseba* – for example, government documents and the questionnaire surveys of labor unions and volunteer organizations. In *yoseba* where one does not become friendly with the people being surveyed, one does not have the scope to choose a research method. In these cases, it is a matter, literally, of adopting a 'shameless syncretism' (Satō Ikuya, 1992: 66). The life history method, understandably, plays a central role in this[2].

In recent years there has been broad social interest in the homeless problem. The homeless now receive frequent media coverage and are often questioned by researchers. *Yoseba* laborers and the homeless are sensitive to this social environment. We have seen the emergence of some laborers who are open-minded about the coverage and surveys. This represents a change in the social identity of *yoseba* laborers and the homeless. As a result of this, it has become considerably easier to question them (understandably, the majority of *yoseba* laborers and homeless people still prefer to remain silent). To think how things have changed over the past twenty years! At the same time, doubts now assail us as to whether our research is not simply 'consuming' these people.

Now, we turn to the question of why use a *yoseba* life history method? My very first objective has been to analyze and reconstruct the work, lives and internal world of meaning of day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers. Next, I have sought to clarify the concealed structures of meaning within cities, using the stories of the people at the very bottom of those cities. I used this approach because I thought that it would enable me to detect new features of the times and in society. I wander around *yoseba* collecting the comments of laborers and the homeless. As I listen carefully to their stories, I can imagine the outlines of their individual lives. Then, by analyzing symbolic words in their stories I throw into relief the world of meaning

of the laborers and the homeless. Each time I accumulate a new story, I use it to revise and flesh out the human image of laborers and the homeless. This human image is provisional and serves as a guide in collecting the next story. In this way, I move back and forth between stories and the human image. I use a variety of theories to interpret the human image which I have constructed. I move between theory and the data and as I do this the world of meaning of laborers and the homeless gradually becomes clearer.

> In cases where there is a deep level of participation (in the activities of the people on site), the scribe has, 'in Geertz's words', a 'close' vantage point: expressing the details of happenings in just the same way as they are seen by the people on site and also recording the voices of the people on site by quoting the others' words (Emerson, 1995 (in translation): 139)[3].

Arisue crossed the 'research method interests' axis with the 'subject matter interests' axis and came up with four types of perspectives in the life history method. Let us look at Figure 6.1. On the basis of this figure, my *yoseba* research life history method would probably be described as a method in which: I collect qualitative data regarding individuals (type 2); analyze the composition of the hard facts on individuals (type 3); turn these into types, in the form of cases (type1); and via the preceding process, reinterpret these cases in terms of the social and temporal context (type 4). This entails an endless to and fro between 'data' (facts) and 'interpretation' (theory).

Part Two: Yoseba and surveys

The survey environment inside yoseba

The *yoseba* is an urban underclass society thoroughly permeated by the capitalist principle of competition. Single men become day laborers and eventually find their way into *yoseba* as a result of various life changes. There are 30,000 day laborers in Kamagasaki, 10,000 in San'ya, 6,000 in Kotobukichō and 5,000 in Sasjima. Cities throughout Japan are dotted with *yoseba*. The men in *yoseba* stay in lodging houses and go off to work at jobs which they have found through labor arrangers and labor recruiters. When they finish work they go back to the *yoseba*. There are some jobs for which they go away to stay in work camps but when their contract is over, they return to the *yoseba*.

Figure 6.1: Four perspectives in life history research

Interpretation

Life history
and social history

(Social change theory)

Process of modification
of subjective reality

(Phenomenological
sociology)

Facts

(Observations)

Bestowing
meaning

(Subjective)

Classification of cases

(People and life research)

Qualitative survey method
and 'individual' research

(Social survey theory)

Accumulation of data

Vertical: Method axis   Horizontal: Subject axis

Source: Arishue 1983: 353

'*Yoseba*' with dense concentrations of day laborers do not exist in Japan's cities (with the exception of the environs of major cities such as Tokyo and Osaka), but there are '*yoseba*' (or should we say '*yoriba*'?) which act as a market place for day laborers sleeping rough. We can think of day laborers who use *yoseba* as their basis for finding work as also being '*yoseba* day laborers', because of the similarities in their type of employment work. This is the case in places such as Sasajima in Nagaoya, Deyashiki in Amagasaki, Tikkō in Fukuoka and Harappa in Kawasaki. Given our inability to understand the overall picture of the '*yoseba*' which dot – to a larger or smaller extent – the cities of Japan, it is no wonder that we are unable to estimate the number of '*yoseba* laborers' (Ushigusa, 1993: 127).

Yoseba laborers are well aware of the fact that society is cold and harsh. Labor arrangers and labor recruiters skim off some of their wages. When they sleep rough people in the city despise them, calling then 'lazy' and 'vagrants'. The police patrolling the area treat them as thieves. People in the city and youths attack them while they sleep. The authorities chase them out of parks and railway stations. Day laborers,

who work in a different place each day, do not register as residents and have no voting rights. Because of this, the politicians ignore them. Even their families tell them not to come home because they have 'bad habits'. Their parents will not even collect their ashes when they die. These men – sadly, bitterly – never run out of personal experiences of indignation. Society gets these men down. Society intimidates these men, power intimidates them and they remain on their guard against authority. On the one hand, they feel 'shame' at living in a *yoseba*. On the other hand, their gloomy sentiments sometimes erupt in riots. Shūji Funamoto created a labor movement in San'ya, was pursued by the police, and finally, exhausted, committed suicide by setting himself on fire. The following are his words.

> Mass counter attacks, which have as their background the daily feelings of humiliation, hatred and anger of individual workers, and weapons in the form of collective self-expressions of class hatred by underclass laborers: this is the reality of riots (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* (National Conference of Day Labor Unions), 1989: 144).

As far as these laborers and homeless people are concerned, social surveys are just another act of power. Both tape recorders and notes and even the words 'social survey' become symbols of authority. One day a 'scholar' comes along. Then, he starts asking impolite questions. He pokes around into people's 'embarrassing pasts'. As far as these men are concerned, surveys are a form of violence which is forced onto them. It is a form of harassment which takes aim at these men's simple and honest feelings and makes them run for cover. This is how laborers and homeless people, whose human nature has been deceived over and over again because of its goodness, view surveys. As a result, they refuse to take part in surveys and roar out parting shots at those who would survey them.

> What are you doing? A survey? I haven't got anything to talk to you about. I don't have anything to show you. Why don't you leave me alone?[4]

This is the survey environment inside *yoseba*. Laborers' mistrust of surveys is perhaps natural. Surveys are, however, indispensable in *yoseba* research. In order to know a laborer's life experiences and his world of meaning there is no other way but to ask the person in question. This being the case, how are we to resolve this dilemma? This is the first aporia of *yoseba* surveys.

When a certain cultural anthropologist first went into San'ya, he started taking photographs, without any warning, of laborers who were squatting down by the roadside. The film was pulled out of his camera and one of the laborers punched him in the face (Fowler, 1996: 1–5). He, himself, realized that he had infringed the laborers' 'freedom not to be observed'. Then, in order to convey this to the laborers, he revisited San'ya without a camera. His attitude is sincere. Ordinarily, others might have kept their distance from 'fearful' San'ya. The problem, however, is not whether it was or was not acceptable for the cultural anthropologist to have gone into San'ya with a camera but whether he understood, in addition to the pain on his bashed face, that the laborers had thrown up the 'barrier of existence', which towers up between those who conduct surveys and laborers (Aoki, 1999: 248). The 'barrier of existence' cannot be overcome. Surveys are acts of drawing closer to the other in the full knowledge of this.

Past *yoseba* surveys

There are already numerous *yoseba* surveys. It cannot, however, be said that there has, to date, been any rigorous scrutiny of the problem consciousness or the survey methods behind these.

> When we consider the '*yoseba*/homeless' surveys carried out in every region during the 1990s we find that despite having constantly questioned our 'views' – the forcible intervention of the survey subject which rendered dormant relationships such as 'ask-be asked', 'observe-be observed' and 'consume-produce words' – we have neglected the need to inspect the aims and results of surveys and the problem of elaborating the steps and methods used for theoretical inspections of social surveys themselves (Mun, 1999: 110).

At the beginning of the 1990s the existence of the homeless became noticeable in cities throughout Japan and the social 'problem' of the homeless was constructed. Then groups assisting the homeless, the authorities and researchers – all armed with their own particular expectations and aims – began carrying out empirical surveys of the homeless. Now, we are questioning the logical and methodological meanings of these surveys.

The first type of *yoseba* survey is the official survey. The official survey has its own objectives and methods. These are carried out with the aim of understanding the actual situation for the purpose

of government plans. In most cases these methods are carried out by official powers. The conditions under which these surveys are conducted might be: a patrolling police officer surveying laborers and homeless people whom he 'detects' when they come to the ward office or those homeless people who (can) stay in lodging houses (with the help of owners and managers). However, this net will only pick up a limited number of laborers. This approach also displays a bias regarding types of laborers and homeless people. The authorities cannot gain the cooperation of laborers and homeless people who dislike 'power' or those who fear authority. Also, the large volume of surveys which have used questionnaire sheets could not have done so without the power of authority, money and an organization. Even labor unions and volunteer groups would not be able to carry out surveys if they were to lose the trust of laborers and homeless people, which they have built up over a long period. Moreover, even when those conducting surveys are trusted, not all laborers and homeless people respond to surveys. The fact that surveys which rely on the questionnaire method depend on the power and authority of the government does not render them meaningless. They are one basic method in the attempt to ascertain the overall image of the *yoseba* by accumulating a volume of facts.

There are various problems with this type of survey. Firstly, questionnaire surveys of *yoseba* have a coercive psychological impact on laborers. Being made to pour out their life stories onto a piece of paper is extremely difficult for laborers on their guard against the very authorities who are carrying out the survey. Thus, this aspect will restrict the soundness of the survey method and the reliability of the survey results. Secondly, we already have *yoseba* surveys which have carried out careful interviews of day laborers and recorded their life histories (excluding items such as reportage, practical reports and reviews). These were pioneering surveys in that they were the first to consider the solitude and suffering which lurked inside the life histories of laborers as integral aspects of the research. However, the perspectives and interests pursued in looking at laborers' life histories in these surveys introduced their own particular constraints. One of these is the life history research into day laborers based on labor economics. The survey carried out by Eguchi et al is an example of this type (Eguchi, 1979). In this survey, Eguchi et al, attempted to elucidate the mechanisms at work in the formation of modern Japan's poor classes. They prescribed San'ya laborers as a relatively surplus population and, through an analysis of the structure of their lives and

work, shed light on the process by which they become a separate class. They collected the stories of many laborers as part of their survey. Their analysis of San'ya laborers was, however, concentrated in historical and structural profiles of their work and lives. Also, the parts of the stories dealing with the laborers' lives served merely to supplement the analysis of historical and structural profiles. This resulted in a dilution and hiding away, inside class analyses of the modern poor classes, of the individual with a human existence, whom we first glimpse when we touch on the world of meaning of San'ya laborers.

> Eguchi closely followed factors such as age, sex, birthplace, the class to which one's family had belonged, position within the family, standard of living, educational attainment and occupational and regional mobility in order to 'confirm, "the logistical route" along which the separation of the poor class occurs. The concern is primarily with the process of class mobility itself while interest in the life process of each individual is weak (Kimoto, 1994: 205).

Another type of life history research into *yoseba* laborers is that based on social pathology. The research of Ōyabu et al is an example of this type (Ōyabu, 1981). Ōyabu's research took the form of following the individual life stories of day laborers through interviews and then attempting to interpret the meaning of their lives. This approach, however, interpreted the experiences and meaning of laborers mainly from the perspective of 'social pathology'. The result of this was that the diversity of the laborers' world of meaning was overlooked and practitioners of this method were confined to depicting a 'wretched' human image and one which was thoroughly coloured by 'pathology'[5].

> The students [who took part in the survey] leisurely roamed around Kamagasaki, detected some of the 'hopeless and lonely 'types about whom they had been taught and then went home. Those are the images that come to mind for them (Nishizawa, 1990: 203).

This type of life history research by Eguchi and Ōyabu, while based on mutually diverse theoretical positions and interests, has at its base a similar, shared basic outlook. This is a 'negative' viewpoint for looking at day laborers. Eguchi regarded day laborers as having a structurally marginal existence. Ōyabu regarded it as a spiritually marginal existence. Both are static viewpoints. These viewpoints assume a human image 'limited' by 'misery', one which gasps as it

is crushed by circumstances. Also, the complications in the dynamic lives of day laborers, which swing constantly from the world of 'misery' to the world of 'pride', have slipped out of the field of vision. When there is intense 'misery' at the basis of human existence, there is also intense 'pride'. However much *yoseba* laborers are buffeted about by circumstances, as long as there is life in them, they do not stop trying to determine the direction of their own lives. On occasion, as part of a larger body, they might act to change circumstances themselves.

> To date 416 people have come in (here). The year before last, there was an incident in which police poured boiling water over a man who was sleeping rough and because we all thought that this was horrible, the situation erupted into a dispute, which led to repeated furious bouts of administrative bargaining. That was what led the administration to take the decision to open this gymnasium as temporary accommodation from 29 December until 3 January. Homeless people, by their own efforts, look after everything – even the cleaning and patrols of the area. It's a case of totally independent management! There is amazing solidarity! The administration has also mobilized some managerial officers and they take part from precisely the same position as the laborers (B, a leader of the homeless movement in the city of Kawasaki. 2 January 1995)[6].

The *yoseba* is a human space for the urban underclass. It is a product of capitalism and a product of the laborers' and homeless people's struggles to stay alive. The substance of laborers' and homeless people's lives is the substance of *yoseba* society and culture. Consequently, as far as *yoseba* research is concerned, life analysis is an indispensable method. People live life through their actions. Actions, in turn, are a manifestation of the meaning bestowed on the situations in which people have lived. How do day laborers understand their own circumstances, how do they evaluate them and how do they hope to change them? When they are in harsh circumstances, how do they swing between 'misery' and 'pride' and 'drifting' and 'resistance'? It is the combination of this definition, by the human subject, of his situation and the individual's choice of actions that typify *yoseba* life. Through an analysis of the internal processes of life, we can, eventually, depict the lived face of the *yoseba*. This also guarantees an essential understanding of the underclass through the underclass' own eyes (to the extent that this is ever possible).

The survey method which grapples squarely with this group of problems is the life history method. The life history method records

and analyzes in microscopic detail the workings of the human subject. It dynamically interprets the motives (meanings) prompting these workings. Through this approach, it imprints an image of the natural colours of the times and the society. Consequently, life history is not confined simply to being a survey technique. It is a viewpoint for looking at people and a framework for perceiving the world. The more we look at past *yoseba* research, the more we must stress the positive significance of the life history method.

The *yoseba* as a boundary

The *yoseba* is a discarded and enclosed urban border space. As an area which is both prescribed by the historical formation of Japan's modern urban area/social structure and concealed on the edges of modern cities, the *yoseba* symbolizes one corner of the urban underclass zone. The *yoseba* is an enormous work camp where single 'fluid underclass laborers'[7] find day labor work and from which they 'travel' to the work site. It is also a street which is crowded with lodging houses and where laborers rest.

The city is a symbol of modern society. The *yoseba*, in turn, is a symbol of the modern city. All the possible human problems of modern society are to be found concentrated inside *yoseba*. An 'invisible barrier of class' (Mita, 1979: 41) rises up there and encloses the four corners of the quarter. Men excluded from society have been carried into *yoseba* after itinerant lives full of twists and turns. Inside the *yoseba* they enact emotional human dramas. Severe social problems accumulate inside *yoseba*. Work problems, accommodation problems, health problems, welfare problems, crime problems and discrimination problems: there are mechanisms at work in modern cities to trap a plethora of society's problems within *yoseba*. There are mechanisms which push the plethora of human problems into the underclass. In *yoseba* the structure of human deprivation – exploitation, discrimination and oppression – is clearly visible. The process of rejection and resistance by people who continue living, in defiance of their fate, is also clearly visible. Furthermore, the *yoseba* is a political space in which interests clash violently. It is a cultural space in which values clash violently. In this way, the frontier space of the *yoseba* is a viewing platform from which one can survey the whole of society and the times. 'From the *yoseba* one can see the world.'[8] Thus, the *yoseba* is a strategic base guiding research into society and the times.

> The city is the totality of the thick linkages of countless individualities crushing each other and the absoluteness of the acts and relations, which cannot reduce each other, of human beings who live "desperate existences" (Mita, 1979: 9).

The journey by which laborers finally find their way into *yoseba*, is a chain of 'chance' events which they encounter, individually, in the course of their lives. No one person's journey can be reduced to being like another's. People have 'slid along', following the path into *yoseba* via many large and small 'crises' and 'turning points'. Brutal 'class rules' permeate these 'crises'. These laborers, not knowing how to react to the minor 'chance' events which they have encountered, have quit work, separated from wives and children and been chased from their birthplaces and then flowed into the city. Once in the city, they finally find their way to *yoseba* after experiencing various difficulties. The dislocation of the 'crises' and 'turning points' through which laborers have passed is carved, like tree rings, into the lines on their foreheads.

This is precisely where the life history method demonstrates its usefulness. If tracing the chain of situations experienced by people, discovering the 'inevitability' which permeates 'chance' and describing the society and the times common to individuals are the main object of the life history method, then the *yoseba* is just the place in which to do this. The life history method finds out about an individual's life history. The life history method also takes the meaning of the facts and events which appear in an individual's story and decodes, reproduces and relates this meaning to the times and society and to the circumstances which the individual has abandoned. The life history method then reveals the tricks of destiny, which have tossed about a person, and writes up a reckoning of that person's happiness and misery.

Compatibility of subject and method

Laborers and homeless people who have repeatedly 'lost' in society do not readily reveal their 'shame' and 'regrets' to others. Laborers and homeless people often do not even call themselves by their own names. It is of no consequence to friendless people who move on a daily basis whether they use their own names or not. They do not even have proof of residence. The life history method is the only type of survey possible under these conditions. People carrying out the survey need to stand eye to eye with laborers and homeless people (make

efforts to do this). Then they need to be assiduous in following each individual, in building up a rapport with them and in listening to their stories. This is the only possible attitude for people to adopt when they trespass on *yoseba* with the intention of carrying out a survey. A survey must be based on a method which is capable of being equal to the weight of the life of the person being surveyed. It would be *difficult* for a questionnaire method to win acceptance in *yoseba* if it adopts the approach of suddenly delving into other people's worlds, rudely exposing others' secrets and forcibly reducing the three-dimensional structure of people's lives to a one-dimensional world of quantity [9].

The compatibility of *yoseba* research and the life history method is not simply based on a negative argument, which says that there is no viable alternative to the life history method in *yoseba*. There is, in addition to this, a positive basis, which argues that it is precisely in the *yoseba* that the life history method's advantages become apparent. The reason for this is to be found in the structural position of the *yoseba* in modern society. *Yoseba* are ignored and isolated fringe spaces in cities. *Yoseba* are modern 'laborers' *yoseba*' (*ninsoku yoseba*)[10], which were isolated as '*hinminkutsu*' (rookeries) and 'slums' at the bottom of modern Japanese cities during their formation process, and which later, as lodging house districts, saw a concentration of 'laborers' (*rōmusha*)[11] living together. *Yoseba* are enormous marketplaces where day laborers find work. They are also the 'old homes' to which homeless people return for the Summer Festival and the Winter Struggle (see Chapter 8). They are the 'terminal stations in life' where the socially weak, such as the physically and mentally 'handicapped' and the elderly, wash ashore (Stokes, 1962).

The various problems of modern society are concentrated in *yoseba*. The structure of people's deprivation, which is invisible in modern society, manifests itself in *yoseba*. When there is an economic downturn, the first thing to happen is that day laborers become unemployed. Then, there is an increase in the numbers of homeless and in the number of street thieves. When there are cut backs in welfare, the first thing to happen is that there is an increase in 'handicapped people' and elderly in *yoseba*. Then, there is an increase in the number of people collapsing on the streets. *Yoseba* are 'slums of despair' (Stokes, 1962).

> A steel frame fell and hurt my hip and while I was coping with this work accident, I drank. I came to hate the idea of working. What's more, even if I had wanted to work, my body was no longer capable

of it. So, I just ended up sleeping rough in Sankaku Park (a park in Kamagasaki). I've been in Kamagasaki for twenty years already. [My body] is rapidly getting worse. It's the sleeping rough that does it. How long can my body endure? (D, a homeless laborer aged 66, in Sankaku Park. 5 January 1995)[12].

Meanwhile, people in *yoseba* possess the working person's will which indignantly resists being deprived of humanity. People cannot live for an instant once they lose their 'pride'. In *yoseba*, there are struggles by people defying their heavy fate: laborers who live each day modestly; homeless people who resolutely go on living; laborers who unite and triumphantly challenge their circumstances; and relief activities, struggles for the acquisition of more shelters and self-policing activities to repulse street thieves by the labor movement and homeless people. 'Don't Die Quietly Out in the Open!' 'If Attacked, Counter Attack!' – these are both slogans from the struggles to get through the bitterly cold winters (*ettō tōsō*). The fierceness of the struggles in *yoseba* matches the fierceness of conditions there. These conditions are the starting point for people's lives. *Yoseba* are 'slums of hope' for laborers with an appetite for life; they are 'life's way stations' (Stokes, 1962) from which counter attacks are launched.

> The real situation is that, individually, our power is 'weak' and 'fragile' and we do our best just to stay alive in this 'precarious' life. Even with these miniscule existences, if each one of us were to join the rest, hand in hand, and share an awareness of our aims then we would, as one, be able to achieve something – however small. We make pledges, amongst ourselves: if, while carrying on our daily lives and through actions such as supplying food and 'making lunches', one of us were to think 'I give up' and leave his post, then, naturally, cracks would run through the whole body and we would very easily scatter – just like when a "hairpin", which has been holding a bundle of hair together, is removed. This is our present state. Because of the work of the '*Kachitorukai*' in embracing this 'fragility' and also urging efforts at self-consciousness on the members now assembled together, we have called our group a "hairpin" and hope that it will bind together as one the thoughts of each individual [original text] (*Kachitorukai*, 1999)[13].

In this way, *yoseba*, which are on the fringes, become a stage for human dramas whereupon heroic struggles are enacted. The life history method is a method which weighs each individual life, unravels the

threads of these lives and makes clear a person's human existence. There is no other way in which to learn the secret of the vitality of laborers who live bearing the burden of the social structure on their own shoulders but by courteously tracing their lives. The life history of day laborers is a series of links between self-interest and passion, hesitation and decisiveness, sorrow and happiness and despair and hope. The life history method courteously describes the life history of conflict-ridden and trembling men. In the course of doing this, it discloses otherwise invisible realities.

Part Three: The life history method and human relations

Human relations inside yoseba

The *yoseba* is a fluid society. Laborers move between *yoseba*, work camps and work sites in search of work. The homeless move between the *yoseba* and the street in search of something to eat. One does not know when it will next be possible to meet up with the laborers and homeless people met today. One does not even know when laborers who are in work will collapse or when homeless people will fall down ill or die. Consequently, interviews with laborers and the homeless are always one round contests, with no follow-up survey. Interviewers are always subject to the pressures of time.

The *yoseba* is an anonymous society. No one interferes in other people's 'personal affairs'. In *yoseba*, interference is 'in bad taste' and taboo. Laborers and homeless people do not divulge their pasts to others. Laborers and homeless people frequently make up 'lies'. They adapt accounts of their personal experiences. They also make 'self-justifications' for their presence in a *yoseba*. They repair their honor as 'men'. All of these things are 'self-presentation directed at other people's gazes' (Goffman, 1963). How much of their accounts are factual? No one can know the true intent of what they say. We can, at the very most, do no more than conjecture 'from the outside' – on the basis of people's manner, expression and gestures when they are talking – regarding the direction which the account takes and the accuracy of people's memory[14].

The surveyor and the surveyed

Social surveys are cases of contact between different cultures. The person carrying out the survey and the person being surveyed inhabit

Figure 6.2: Yoseba research (researcher) types

Top down

Academicalism type   Policy proposal type

Cognition   Practice
Orientation   Orientation

Research/movement   Integrated with
tension type   movements type

Bottom up

Vertical: Research viewpoint   Horizontal: Research significance
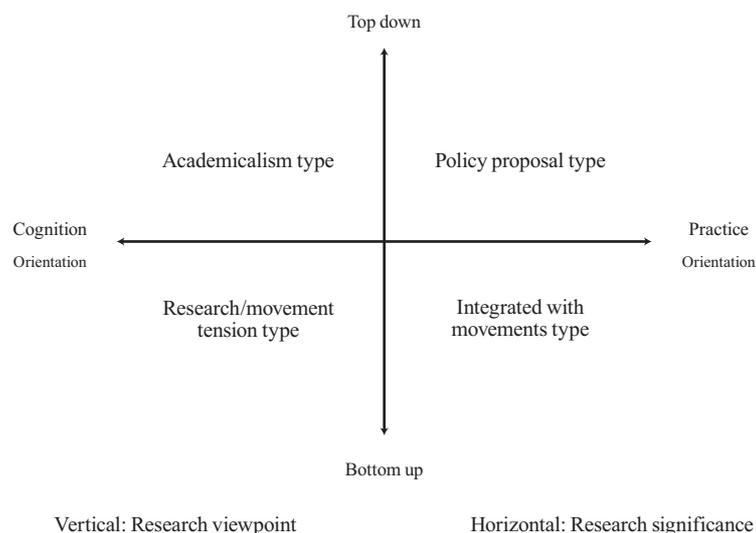
Source: Aoki 1989: 29

mutually diverse real worlds. There is a social existence wall that rises up between them both. Their lives differ and so too does their language. However, surveys are indispensable to *yoseba* research. This being the case, how is it possible to communicate in surveys? A vital point (only one) is to be found in the nature of the relations between the person carrying out the survey and the person being surveyed. Then, there is also the matter of how the person carrying out the survey conceives of these very relations.

I have previously constructed types based on researchers' attitudes to *yoseba*, listing four types (Aoki, 1989). Let us look at Figure 6.2. In this figure I have contrasted research 'from above', which adopts a specialist viewpoint, and research 'from below', which adopts the viewpoint of the people living the lives which are being observed, and have asserted the methodological and logical advantage of the latter approach. This might be likened to Becker's 'underdog' viewpoint (Becker, 1983). Naturally, from the viewpoint of the disparities in their existences, ideas such as 'joint actions' are illusory. Despite this, however, a survey is one type of 'joint action'. One person recounts his life story and the other listens to it. The person recounting recollects personal experiences in the course of telling his/her story and

objectifies this self whom he/she remembers. The listener imagines the other's personal experiences in the course of listening and reconstructs them. Then, he/she objectifies his/her reconstructing self. Given this process, how could even better survey 'joint actions' be possible? This is, for example, a question of how far the listener (the specialist) and the person telling the story (the person living the life) are able to keep facing each other. In other words, it is a question of how far the listener confronts the world of the person telling the story and also of the extent of the listener's 'imagination in enabling him/her to move freely between the dislocations' (Kurioka, 1986: 83) which divide the speaker and the listener. The objective is to construct these kinds of relations in which the speaker (as far as is possible) feels no need to be on guard. However, whether or not it is possible to construct relations in which there is no need to be on guard is a problem for which everyone conducting a survey must assume responsibility. It is precisely when even one part of the responsibility for constructing these relations is thrust onto the person being surveyed that we have a case of force.

Also, relations in which there is no need to be on guard do not mean familiarity of the type in which all threads of restraint have been severed, or reverence. Familiarity and reverence represent bowing down to tense relationships between those surveying and the surveyed. This is purely 'a problem which arises because the reality of the person conducting the survey is subsumed within the reality of the person being surveyed' (Nakane, 1997: 35–36). It is precisely because of this that the person conducting the survey must tighten the threads of restraint with the person being interviewed. Here too the problem rests entirely with the person conducting the survey.

> The *closeness* in 'relations between the speaker and the listener influences the *depth* of the 'contents' of the story (Kobayashi, 1992: 89).

This is, probably, a plausible fact. However, saying that 'the closeness of relations' influences 'the depth of the contents of the story' has a double meaning. It is not always necessarily the case that 'intimacy guarantees 'depth'. There are, conversely, also cases of it hindering 'depth'. In my experience, there are numerous situations in which one cannot talk precisely because relations are close. Thus, we can see that the problem is not a matter of the skill of the person conducting the survey in making use of the person being surveyed[15].

> There is a tendency, in groups of people being surveyed, for the contents of what those being surveyed say to differ according to how they define the type of surveyor before them. This tendency probably has a meaning of unparalleled significance for the rapport that exists in numerous social survey settings (Nakane, 1997: 47).

This is something which I also frequently feel strongly during surveys. How a day laborer defines me governs in a decisive way what I am told. The influence of this is particularly great in the case of *yoseba*, an urban underclass space, which is incessantly exposed to naked power. Consequently, those asking questions must objectify not only the contents of stories but also the looks cast at listeners by those being questioned. Having said this, the looks of those telling their stories are given elements in surveys, which the listener cannot alter.

> Who are you? You're not an anglerfish[16]. You're not from the union [a labor activist from the day labor union]. Perhaps you're a volunteer? Are you a schoolteacher? If not that – are you a policeman? What are you? An academic? That's it, isn't it?

Challenges of this kind are a frequent rite of passage which precedes the questions and answers. The person telling his story decides in this moment whether he ought to cooperate with the questioning or not and how much he feels comfortable saying.

In this way, the 'friendly' relations between the speaker and the listener, called the rapport, are no more than an expression of just one aspect of human relations. There are conditions between the speaker and the listener which the listener cannot alter. Moreover, the listener must accept all successes and failures in interviews. This is what I mean when I say that building relations with survey subjects is not a problem of technique.

> Fieldwork is building relations with others. It is a matter of choosing one's attitude to other people. These other people are not survey subjects, serving as a data source: they are, first and foremost, people who are partners in an exchange (Ukai, 1991: 107).

This is not so. It is not the case that we choose our attitude regarding the other person, it is the other person who chooses what his attitude to us is going to be. These quoted sentences express, in an artless manner, the posture running through the incipient problem consciousness of

phenomenological sociology: a posture which relativizes cultural anthropology – which reflects on the 'ethnocentrism' of people conducting surveys – and 'dominant sociology'. This is not merely a problem of logic, it is also a problem of how to carry out the actual practise of interviews. How could it be possible to carry out interviews which are gentle and not violent? In order to put gentle interviews into practise we must understand the words of the speaker within their own context. The listener must also lay the framework of his own thinking aside and 'suspend judgement' and, before all else, give himself up to the flow of the story. Having said this, it is not possible to do things such as lay aside the framework of one's own thinking and suspend judgement. What is required is merely for the listener to adopt, persistently, a posture of self-denial and to continue making efforts to maintain this.

Part Four: The life history method – types

Changing viewpoints

A considerable body of research into Japan's urban underclass was already in existence in the pre war period. Urban underclass research overlaps with the history of research on Japan's modern cities and capitalism itself. Research in all of these areas has followed the viewpoints and methods particular to each area and has provided a diverse image of the urban underclass[17].

The majority of urban underclass research in the past has been based on a macro-theoretical framework and has adopted the method of deciphering statistical sources. There was, however, an important problem inherent in this approach. This was, in short, the inability to give an open description of the subjective inner world of each individual within the urban underclass using this method. Whether in the case of Marxism or modernism, research in these fields confined all individual sources – such as, diaries, letters, records of observations and interviews – to the status of supplementary sources in the structural analysis of the urban underclass. The urban underclass, with its peripheral urban existence, was also, generally, analyzed only from 'the outside' (see Chapter One of Aoki, 1989). Because of this, there was no elucidation of the totality of the urban underclass' objective and subjective worlds.

An awareness of this shortcoming led to a change in viewpoint in urban underclass research: from positivist external structural analysis

to subjectivist internal meaning analysis. Correctly speaking, we gained the ability to close in on a realistic image of the people in the underclass by combining the two analyses and describing a whole image of the urban underclass. This type of change in viewpoint also coincided with a movement for reforming the post-structural functionalism paradigm – that is, a change in relations towards the research subject and a change in survey research methods. The various currents in modern sociology – for example, phenomenological sociology, which analyzes the multidimensional reality of the world of living; ethnomethodology, which exposes the power functions concealed in the everyday; and structuralism, which analyzes the processes of constructing social problems – flowed together in this paradigmatic reform movement and spurred on changes in empirical research. This paradigmatic movement formed the background to the emergence of the life history method, which delves into the 'lives' of people who lack even a name.

The urban underclass is variously defined as 'a fluid and stagnant surplus population' and 'a poverty class receiving relief'. The urban underclass is the social class found at the very bottom of the city. Simultaneously, those who make up this social class are people of living flesh and blood. Practical comprehension of a class is to be found in the 'lives' which people lead. Consequently, an analysis of life is indispensable to class research. Life, furthermore, is constructed from people's actions. Actions are given direction by the bestowing of meaning on people's conditions. How do people in the urban underclass acknowledge the circumstances in which they find themselves; how do they attach meaning to them; how do they submit; and how do they resist? The definitions of situations, actions and the results of these actions represent the practical image of the lives of the urban underclass. The accumulated total of all of the above makes a class. Thus, by following the processes of meaning and action, we can, for the first time, draw near to a lived image of the urban underclass. This also ensures that we achieve the quality of capturing the urban underclass through the eyes of the underclass themselves.

> Human beings have changed the micro situation even when it has not been possible to change the macro situation because they could change their own responses to the conditions around them even when it was too difficult to keep making positive changes. By doing so they might, at least, be able to overcome and survive (Nakano, 1981: 5).

Representativeness

Interviews progress with the speakers talking about conditions and meanings, themselves and others and the past and the present (and the future). Their rich stories bring to light all of the facts concealed by life's trivia. As a result, this is akin to the dramatic preparations when staging a play. There is not a single life which is insipid and arid. Every person has lived (is living) a life of struggling with his/her own set of conditions.

One criticism of the life history method is the issue of the representativeness of the survey sample. Interviews can only be held with a limited number of subjects. This fact gives rise to two questions. The first is a question regarding the inability of the life history method to confirm the representativeness of the subjects in the survey sample. The second question, which arises as a consequence of the first, refers to the inability to draw general theoretical hypotheses from the collected and recorded data[18]. I do not think that these criticisms of the life history method are baseless. However, I cannot support them unconditionally. I have two reasons for this. The first is the fact that a person can only live in the conditions-bound context which is patterned on the times and society in which he (she) is living. The situation into which a person has been thrown is opened up to the world. People participate in, and subjectify, conditions by playing their own role from their own position. These conditions are also connected to the world[19].

> I consider even the analyses of individuals to be a device for seeing how much we can deepen, via this method, our own sociological knowledge regarding the actual state of the society in which these individuals have lived and of their mutual interactions (Nakano, 1981: 5).

The existence of *yoseba* laborers and the homeless is also entirely the product of the times and society.

> The route which leads to Kamagasaki for day laborers starts in the agricultural or the fishing village, the Buraku ghetto [a Japanese outcaste community traditionally suffering discrimination], Korean ghettos and Okinawa. Coal mines and other mines which have been closed down; agricultural villages and other villages which are closed down by the will of the sate, after all of one's hard work; people who have been sacked as a result of rationalization; and people left with no

course of appeal when they are expelled from communities because of discrimination or poverty: the Kamagasaki district is a relay base for these various people who have no course of appeal (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1989: 56).

Every single human problem accumulates inside *yoseba*. Laborers and the homeless embrace and worry about human problems, each in their own individual way. The shadow of fate is stamped on each one of their expressions, words and actions. In short, laborers and the homeless 'represent and embody the existential meaning of social structure, at one extreme (Mita, 1979: 9). Consequently, any one life history 'represents' countless life histories. The life history method is a method which discerns the universality running through each individual and one which describes the universality inside an individual[20].

His short, precious life, like a cherry blossom, was fleeting. How his death will have grieved humane people! I thought that I could not even bear to imagine it. In the reality of hard physical labor in mid-summer he practised and mastered his work with the suffering of a laborer, with shouts of sweat and blood, personifying the true posture of a laborer and it is clear that he himself paid no heed to this suffering (original text) (Gotō 1985: 70–71)[21].

The second issue is the point that we need hypotheses (hypothetical ideas) in order to interpret data when we draw inferences, in a general direction, on the basis of accumulated data. As long as we do not adopt methods in which we, inductively, draw inferences from data which we have collected, we are in the same position with regard to needing a hypothesis whether dealing with quantitative or qualitative data. The disparities between the two are no more than problems on the level of connecting hypotheses (hypothetical ideas). The life history method is no exception on this point. Initially, there are usually hypotheses (hypothetical ideas). When listening to the other person's story hidden in the mind of the listener there are necessarily hypotheses (hypothetical ideas), which channel the other person's story, on the basis of what one wants to hear. The listener demands 'an understanding of life histories (sources) as meaningful statements…providing a context' (Mizuno, 1986: 170). Stories are always a 'thick narrative', including a variety of meanings and sentiments. Consequently, interpretations always make choices of meaning inescapable. Hypotheses are the threads leading to these choices.

> A thick description goes beyond simple facts and superficial appearances. It gives an account of details, the context and the workings of feelings; making clear the meshes of the net of social relations which ties people together. A thick description evokes the nature of the workings of feelings and self-feeling and incorporates history into experience. This establishes the meaningfulness of experience – that is, the casual links between actions – with regard to the individuals and groups in question. In a thick description we can perceive the voices, feelings, actions and meanings of the interplay between various individuals (Densin, 1992 (translation): 128).

As for the representativeness of the subject sample and data, this depends on the extent to which, and also the manner in which, one is able to analyze, interpret and explain, using hypotheses (hypothetical ideas) as a guide. In short, it depends on the extent of the breadth and depth of data interpretation. Consequently, the question of whether the survey sample is large or small is not the 'absolutely exclusive' standard determining representativeness.

However, in order to ensure, as far as is possible, that the actual state of affairs represents reality as it really is, it is best for there to be only a small amount of interpretative selection of the meaning of the account by the listener. Given this, what extent of interpretative artificiality do we permit on the part of the listener, with regard to the facts which have been related? How is a 'gentle', rather than a violent, interpretation of the facts possible? I think that there can be no answer to this if we abandon the inexhaustible work of going back and forth between facts and interpretation. In this sense, facts and interpretation are in perpetually strained relations[22].

Typifying

The life history method throws into relief, and portrays, the individual life and lifestyle of every single person considered. It then extrapolates, through the records of an individual, about the nature of the times and society experienced personally by him/her. Furthermore, a life history's individuality becomes all the clearer when it is compared with those of other people who have been in similar circumstances. Consequently, it is clearly better for the listener to have a large number of cases. Comparisons are intertwined with problems of typifying life histories.

Having said this, there is no methodological advantage – in the extraction, comparison and typifying of individuality – to be found in merely accumulating accounts randomly. In this also preparations are essential regarding what one wishes to hear about – that is, the hypothetical ideas and the selection criteria for the subject sample. Even in accounts from cases which have been, provisionally, randomly selected there will be some restrictions. The speaker cannot exhaustively recount all of his personal experiences. The listener cannot hear the whole story. Neither can he avoid selecting facts. In this sense, generalizations based on hypotheses and experiential generalizations are no more than differences of degree. The researcher moves back and forth between general theories and empirical facts, keeping the middle-range hypotheses centermost. This process of repeated work is (also) necessary in the life history method.

> There are interviews which are directed and interviews which are not. There are interviewers who approach an interview with specific topics in mind and who constantly keep the speaker to the topic, pulling the conversation back to the topic whenever the speaker begins to move away from it. […] One of the advantages of unstructured, or unrestricted, interviews is that they encourage spontaneity. Through this method it is possible for us to know what the speaker thinks is important or, at least, that the speaker considers the things which he tells the person conducting the interview to be important (Langness and Frank, 1981 (translation): 64).

I have previously analyzed the characteristic conditions of the existence of day laborers in *yoseba*, using the indicators of 'low' work skill levels, singleness and mobility (Aoki, 1989: 136–164). Under these basic conditions of existence, day laborers formed a world of meaning and a culture, making 'work', 'poverty' and 'drifting' the central symbols. Laborers speak about a diverse range of topics: work, gaffers, drink, endurance, other homeless friends, family, homelessness and much more besides. However, there is an ordering, based on the frequency of occurrence in stories and the importance attached them, ranging from topics and words repeatedly emphasized in stories to topics and words merely touched on while talking. All of these make up the practical contents of laborers' lives. These correspond to the ordering of various items into the center or periphery of *yoseba* culture and into a deep dimension or surface dimension.

In conformity with this analytical framework, I have constructed four types of *yoseba* laborers based on the individual accounts of laborers – the transcendent-type, the desperate-type, the affective-type and the conflictive type. Let us look at Figure 6.3. This is a hypothesis constructed from the viewpoint of the distance which laborers keep to the *yoseba* culture and the total culture of society. These types have also been constructed through the work of going back and forth between a basic recognition of *yoseba* and laborers and concrete data from accounts.

I have set out the procedures which I follow below. Firstly, I strengthen my basic image of day laborers, on the basis of previously accumulated, fragmentary information about *yoseba*. Then, I carry out a rough classification of laborers. In doing this I include amongst the laborers who will be survey subjects those whom I have intentionally selected and also, on occasion, people with whom an opportunity to talk has arisen. Next, I refine the previous classifications, on the basis of clues from this or that word used by laborers. Then, while keeping in mind the theoretical interest of the research, I gradually heighten the level of abstraction in the classifications and build these into types.

Figure 6.3: Yoseba cultural sub-types

Vertical: Center and periphery of general culture
Horizontal: Center and periphery of yoseba culture
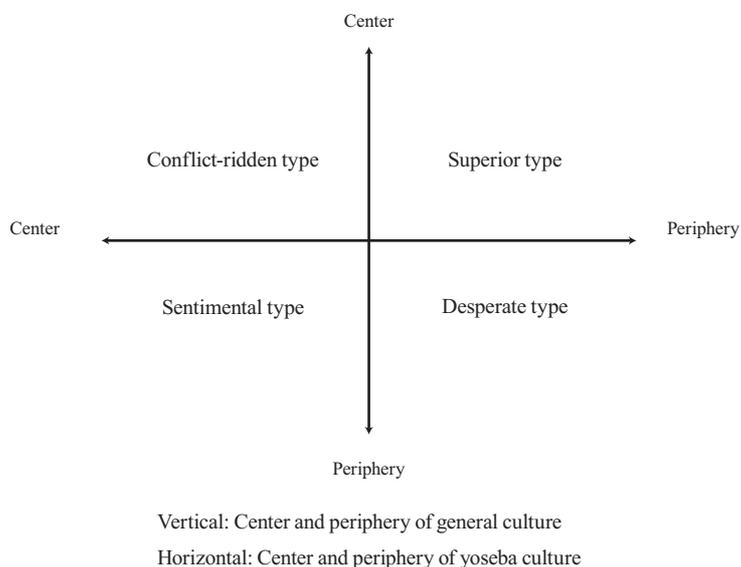
Source: Aoki 1989: 168

Finally, I select and order the laborers' words, while comparing them with the types. I now, once again, revise and flesh out the types on the basis of the new facts. Via these procedures, the types become the threads leading to the analysis, interpretation and explanation of the accumulated data. *Yoseba* which are sensitive to the times constantly undergo change. It is not only the population of laborers and their composition but also their lives and interests which rapidly change. Consequently, hypothetical types are tested according to new facts and constantly revised. Occasionally, it is also necessary to dispense with some types. In any case, the life history method demonstrates its efficacy as a method for data collection precisely in working with the hypothesis and framework, which are refined to construct types. Thus, the life history method is both a definite step in hypothetical testing and a rich source for discovering new hypotheses.

> In cases where the researcher hopes to elucidate changes and contra-dictions, which are full of daily subjective realities, by getting subjects to talk spontaneously and freely – without probing, persuading or asking questions – this elucidation will reach further into the subjects than other methods. However, it goes without saying that this is itself one particular theoretical direction (closely related to symbolic interactionism) and that it makes detecting diversity and contradictions easier (Plummer, 1983 (translation): 181).

Part Five: The possibilities of the life history method

In this chapter, I have discussed the various methodological issues concerning the position and viewpoint of the life history method, and its actual practise, in urban underclass research. All that I have been able to do here is to present one style of life history method research, based on my tentative experiences in *yoseba* research. The *yoseba* is a peculiar, marginal human space in modern cities. Consequently, I do not consider the type of life history method discussed in this chapter to be valid for use in any and all situations. As something which can be practised following practical procedures, or under diverse survey environments and conditions, the life history method is infinitely flexible. The skills of the life history method are not things which can be gained by researchers' individual mastery of their craft. The life history method is a scientific method which is actually practised by following the analysis, interpretation and explanation procedure. The precise meaning of the skills of the life history method is to be found

in the application of this procedure in a variety of survey environments and conditions and the consequent intrinsic understanding of people's lives. The *yoseba* is an appropriate place for analysing, interpreting and explaining the existential meaning of the social structures which affect individuals. The life history method is a vastly superior (there are others) method when it comes to *yoseba* research. The *yoseba*, in turn, is one of the most suitable venues for applying the life history method.

> There's no work. It's all a matter of *kaozuke* (personal connections). We don't get any work. The young fellows are still all right. I've been sleeping rough for over half a month now. I'm tired. On cold nights I sometimes think I'll end my days like this. At those times, I remember my dead father and mother (F, a homeless person, in his mid-fifties. 30 December 1994).

Just how far into the abyss of the disquiet and loneliness of this homeless person can the life history method pry? This is not simply a question designed to criticize 'the dominant sociology ' or to emphasize humanistic ethics. The actual problem is that sociology, which bases itself on social surveys, cannot obtain research results if it loses its prime interest in, and composed powers of observation with regard to, people. Also, cultivating researchers who are sensitive to the issues mentioned here is simply a question of the posture adopted by the very researchers who are listening to the stories of those people desperately living their own set of circumstances. This starting point is particularly important when researching people in the urban underclass who are continuously exploited, discriminated against, oppressed and ignored.

7 Yoseba: Discrimination and Meaning

Part One: Discrimination against Yoseba Laborers

The final moments

> Are you a volunteer, buddy? This man's gonna die like a dog if he stays here like this. It's started snowing too. He won't survive. Well, this reminds me, I frightened a man the other day saying, one man died there, another died here, and then, he didn't wanna die after all, you know – the limp fellow picked himself up and started to waddle off. Really! Sometimes you can cheer them up like that. Ha-ha-ha-ha! And look who's talking, I'm homeless too. This could happen to me. How unlucky. Tell me about it.

In this passage A, a homeless person, is speaking to a young man patrolling his area. It is late at night on 31 December 1997, in a shopping street near Kamagasaki. It is freezing cold. Snow is falling on the crouching man's head. A is speaking to the man, with a half-finished cup of *shōchū* (a Japanese distilled spirit) in his hand. 'Hey, wanna drink?' The traditional New Year's Eve singing contest broadcast on television blares out from inside shops which are closed.

We can read the following into this scene. First, the homeless man crouching by the roadside used to be a Kamagasaki laborer. The man speaking to the young volunteer is also a Kamagasaki laborer. Job shortages and aging of the laborers in Kamagasaki are producing increasing numbers of homeless people. The average age of laborers and homeless people is the mid-fifties and their average life expectancy is between sixty and sixty-five years. The man crouching by the roadside and the man speaking both seem to be in this age range. There are increasing numbers of people dying on the streets[1]. This man's self-mockery that it could happen to him is well founded[2].

This scene represents the world of day laborers and homeless people – the world of despair, anxiety and solitude. A man dies alone

by the roadside. The misery of this is beyond description. *On the other hand*, people do not let go of the will to live even in the final moments before facing the abyss of death. A homeless man in a haze still staggers to his feet if frightened (cheered up). A man fights for his life until the very moment of his death.

The man speaking above is confirming the fact that he is alive by frightening (cheering up) the homeless man[3]. His self-mockery shows his 'composure' based on the knowledge that he is not likely to die any time soon. He knows, however, that his own 'last moment' will come before too long. In this situation 'life is seen through death' (Huntington, 1979 (translation): 14). This is why he sympathizes with the crouching man. This is not compassion but empathy felt by a man who will suffer the same fate.

Discrimination against *yoseba* laborers is merciless. Discrimination prevails even amongst laborers themselves. When I confront this reality, I cannot help feeling depressed and angry. Day laborers are called '*anko*'. They are exposed to other people's alienating gazes as the lowliest laborers in Japan. They are called 'lazy fellows' and 'drifters'. It is not known that they are actually proud men who sweat at their jobs with empty pockets. A *yoseba* is a day laborers' area known as a '*doya-gai* (flophouse area)'. This sort of area, which is at the very bottom of the social ladder, is like a floating island in the midst of a large city. It is deemed a dangerous area full of vice and violence. It is not known that it is an area of genuine humanity, with a mixture of despair and hope, solitude and freedom, and calculation and passion.

Yoseba laborers are feared and despised as people belonging to the 'underworld'. Why? How can they be released from people's alienating gazes? These are not easy questions to answer. There are already a large number of social scientific studies on *yoseba*. From the viewpoint of sociology, the *yoseba* has been depicted as a 'disorganized area' where 'society's pathologies', such as poverty and decadence, concentrate. From the viewpoint of economics, *yoseba* laborers have been depicted as the most marginal part of the working class. From the viewpoint of social welfare studies, *yoseba* laborers have been depicted as poor and needy people who can hardly be helped. What are the pitfalls in the viewpoints commonly underlying these studies? These studies lack a viewpoint which sees *yoseba* laborers as people who are discriminated against (the discrimination issue) and as people who seek the meaning of living (the issue of the world of meaning). In addition, these studies have failed to pay attention to the culture created by *yoseba* laborers in their circumstances of discrimination.

Jobs are scarce. Laborers are becoming homeless. Homeless people sleep rough in railway stations, parks and riverside areas. They get hungry. They get cold. They may be assaulted by youths. What will happen to them? Can they survive this winter? Misery. Anxiety. And yet, homeless people survive. They look for jobs. They search for food. They make friends. They fight back against people who assault them. Beyond their solitude lies their will to survive, their pride and their dreams. How can social science understand the internal nature of such life experiences? How does modern sociology – phenomenological sociology, social constructionism or any other approach – which sees itself operating under the banner of humanism and takes sides with the world of the poor, hear the cries of the homeless? How will it describe their souls? My own sociology is being tested. My intention in this chapter is to examine the inside of *yoseba* and the people in them (laborers and the homeless), taking into consideration the modern transformation of *yoseba*. This will require two tasks. The first task is to analyze the discrimination surrounding *yoseba* laborers and the homeless. *Yoseba* laborers are discriminated against, and *yoseba* are spaces of discrimination. The homeless are discriminated against, and streets and parks are spaces of discrimination. The structures of discrimination and being discriminated against are present both in *yoseba* and on the streets. The second task is to analyze the world of meaning constructed by *yoseba* laborers and the homeless. Discrimination ranges from neglect to assault and is projected onto the world of meaning constructed by *yoseba* laborers and the homeless. The world of meaning refers to the framework of people's values and perceptions. Through 'interpretations of interpretations' of worlds of meaning the deep layers of people's lives become visible.

A laborer's story

The laborer 'Kamayan'[4] is 55 years old. At four thirty in the morning he wakes up in the room of a *doya*. By five he has to be waiting at '*Airin Rōdō Fukushi Sentā* (Airin Labor Welfare Center)' where labor recruiters come to find laborers. Fortunately, Kamayan gets a job today and heads for the construction site. In the evening he returns, worn out, to Kamagasaki. He takes a bath at a public bath and drinks *shōchū* at an eating house. He has to be up early again tomorrow. He goes back to the *doya* and crawls into bed. By nine at night Kamagasaki is quiet.

This is a normal day for Kamayan. His 'peaceful' days, however, are suddenly gone. Labor recruiters cease to appear. No jobs are available

in Kamagasaki. Day after day he fails to get a job. It has been one week today. It has been two weeks today. Kamayan still has no job. What little money he had saved has run out. He has no money to pay for meals or *doya* bills. There are still several ways to earn money. He could get day laborer employment insurance benefit. He has not, though, collected enough revenue stamps on his white passbook (day laborer employment insurance passbook). He attempts to borrow money by putting up his passbook as security[5], but a passbook without sufficient revenue stamps is not accepted as security. He resorts to borrowing money from a friend, but this can be done only once or twice. Kamayan then collects newspapers, cardboard or empty tins and sells them to a junk dealer. This, however, pays poorly. He goes to '*Shikōsō*' (*Shiritsu Kōsei Sōdansho* (City Rehabilitation Counseling Center, a regional office of the Osaka City Civil Administration Bureau)), but his application for social security is rejected on the grounds that he is still young. He depends on food handouts by volunteers, but they do not distribute food every day. Finally, he 'picks up' food from busy streets. He gets food which is past its use by date from convenience stores. Kamayan sleeps rough. Sleeping rough is not so bad in summer, but hellish in winter. The cold prevents him from sleeping at night. He gets hungry. He wants to get a job. He becomes anxious and gets a *ketaochi* job (a job with poor conditions). The work is demanding. His *oyakata* (gaffer) keeps after him. The work is hard on him. Unable to stand it any longer, Kamayan runs away from the construction site, forfeiting his wages. He goes back to Kamagasaki. Day after day he comes and waits at the Airin center in vain. He gives up looking for a job before too long. Kamayan leaves Kamagasaki. He wanders about the city in search of food. He becomes weaker and weaker. On the rare occasions when he has money, he drinks. This cheers him up for a moment. His money, however, is gone in almost no time.

One day, Kamayan cannot move. His consciousness dims. He falls on the street. A passer-by calls an ambulance. He is taken to hospital and hospitalized. Staying in hospital is hard for him to bear. He feels ill at ease in hospital. He is poor at complying with rules. He has no visitors. He has no pocket money to spend. He worries about disturbing the people in the beds next to his. He is wounded by a nurse's thoughtless words. Growing desperate he slips away from hospital and has a drink. Because of this behaviour he is forced to leave hospital. Kamayan starts sleeping rough again. One day he vomits blood and falls. He breathes his last. A passer-by finds him dead and informs the police. Kamayan is taken to hospital. An autopsy is carried out

on him. His body is then sent to a crematorium. There his dead body is reduced to ashes[6]. No one holds funeral rites for him. Nor do his parents appear. His urn is placed in a grave for those who have left no relatives behind. Kamayan is dead with no one to mourn his death.

Yoseba laborers become homeless and, sooner or later, generally meet the same fate as Kamayan. It is true that some are sent to asylums; some die in hospital; some return to work as day laborers; others are 'promoted' to permanent employees; and still others return to their hometowns. The usual fate of *yoseba* laborers and the homeless, however, is to go from being a day laborer to a homeless person, and to be transferred from the street to a hospital or an asylum and then to a grave for those without relatives. Poverty is followed by illness and then death. This is the fate of discarded people.

Yoseba and discrimination

Yoseba laborers constitute a unique class of *yoseba* day laborers. Their status as laborers with '(presumed) low-level skills', who are 'unmarried' and inclined to have a 'drifting nature', distinguishes *yoseba* laborers from people in insecure employment[7]. Their wages are low, their working conditions are poor, and their employment is insecure. For these reasons, their living standards are low, their personal relations are transient, and their lives are irregular. *Yoseba* laborers are poor, solitary and drifting (Aoki, 1989: 156–166).

Yoseba laborers are subdivided amongst themselves on the basis of a variety of criteria. They are stratified into the craftsman (skilled) stratum, the intermediate (semi-skilled) stratum, and miscellaneous workers (unskilled) on the basis of their levels of work skill. They are stratified into the travelling for business (*shutchō*) stratum who join a work camp), the direct run (*chokkō*) stratum (those who come to the work site directly without the mediation of labor arrangers), and the cash payment class who are employed by the day on the basis of their work arrangements. They are stratified into the working class in work, the 'miscellaneous work' class (those who are engaged in such work as collecting recyclable material), and the poor class (social security recipients and the homeless) on the basis of their lifestyles. They are stratified into the regular *doya* customer class, the occasional *doya* customer class, and the drifter class of no fixed residence on the basis of their resident status. Furthermore, the homeless are stratified into the occasional fluid homeless class and the regular permanent homeless class[8]. The criteria for these stratifications and classes overlap and

mingle with each other. Among them, the basis for the stratification of *yoseba* laborers is the classification which divides the class in work (the base class) and the homeless class (the marginal class). All these classifications are fluid, and in all these classes the downward pressure has become increasingly stronger in recent years.

Yoseba laborers are people who are discriminated against[9]. Each of them has been shunned by their family, community or social class[10]. Their status as '*yoseba* laborers' and as targets of discrimination is not something they were born with. They can cease to be '*yoseba* laborers' or pass themselves off as 'general workers'. In this sense, they are essentially invisible people (except foreign *yoseba* laborers who are physically visible). They become visible only through their work style and lifestyle. They suffer under double prejudice from civil society: namely, prejudice against day laborers as a class and prejudice against *yoseba* as a place (Aoki, 1989: 83–84)[11]. *Yoseba* laborers are positioned on the margin of civic values. 'Lazy fellows', 'drifters', 'loafers'… they have too many labels to list. No such norms as 'equality' or 'human rights', or words of encouragement such as 'aid the weak' or 'be kind to others', work in getting rid of discrimination against them. Discrimination against *yoseba* laborers is far too crude and violent[12].

> The other day when I was cleaning a roadwork zone, a mother walked by with her child and pointed at me and said, "My boy, if you don't work hard, you'll end up like that when you grow up." What do they mean by "like that"? Did I do anything wrong, buddy? Why do they say these things to me? They're driving me crazy (B, a day laborer in Kamagasaki, 14 August 1994)[13].

Yoseba laborers include people from minority groups suffering discrimination such as *Burakumin* (Japanese people who were born and/or live in communities called *buraku*, which have historically suffered from social discrimination), *zainichi* foreigners (foreign residents in Japan), Okinawans, Ainu and recently arrived foreigners. Discrimination against these groups from the general public deprives them of living opportunities and drives them into *yoseba*. Their numbers are of course unknown, but not small. Their origins are not very often visible in *yoseba*. Symbols of the original discrimination which they suffered before entering *yoseba* only become visible through personal relations between individuals. Once they step out of *yoseba*, however, they are discriminated against collectively as 'lazy fellows', 'drifters'

or 'loafers', regardless of their origins. On these occasions, symbols of the original discrimination recede into the background. This represents the conversion of symbols of discrimination, redirecting them from '*Buraku*', '*zainichi*', 'Okinawans' and 'Ainu' towards '*yoseba*'. Such is the degree of discrimination against *yoseba* laborers.

> I have always used my Japanese-sounding alias. It's all right if they find out that I'm *zainichi*. When I joined the [Kotobuki Day Labor] Union I told them I'm *zainichi* from the beginning. But I never say that at work. Some people say, "You should live by your real name". I understand what they mean, but do I get a job if I live that way? No. If they can find me a job, then I'd be glad to use my real name, but they can't, you know. Then they shouldn't talk big. It's not easy to live by my real name. I think other *zainichi* would understand what I mean (C, a labor activist aged 54 from Kotobukichō) (*Kotobukichō Shiensha Kōryū-kai* (Kotobukichō Supporters' Exchange), 1998a: 4))[14].

In addition, cities have mechanisms that push those who were born in the underclass back into the underclass. A majority of *yoseba* laborers are from the urban underclass.

> I had the following experience at the police station at which I was detained after a crackdown on the fourth of November. A gangster who appeared to be in his mid-20s came in for unauthorized bookmaking on horse races. He said that he was brought up in an area adjacent to San'ya and graduated from T Primary School and Y Junior High School. He told me his story saying that when he was at junior high he used to play catch with Big Brother [he still referred to the man this way] who belonged to a nearby union and he went to a Winter Struggle that took place in Tamahime Park and ate food being handed out there, which he thought was pretty good; that he now belongs to a crime family affiliated with S family (i*kka*); that some of his friends and his younger friends from his junior high are members of N family (i*kka*); and that Y Junior High School is now said to be something like a model school but that is because all students who do something wrong even once are sent to *Nerikan* (Nerima Juvenile Detention Center), whereas in the days when he was at that school parents or teachers used to get offending students released from police custody after their first one or two offences which really helped them out. Compared to his days he feels sorry for students there now (Yamaoka, 1996: 335–336)[15]. (Anonymity of people and places protected by the author)

Yoseba are competitive places where laborers are stratified on the basis of the 'quality' of their work capacity. Skill levels and physical strength determine this 'quality'. Craftsmen have more job opportunities and receive higher wages than construction laborers. Younger laborers have more physical strength, can endure hard labor and receive higher wagers. Older laborers have less physical strength, can work on light duties only and receive lower wages. Older laborers are most likely to descend from the class in work to the homeless class. This type of stratification of laborers directly represents the structure of discrimination within *yoseba*. Craftsmen and young laborers are at the center of *yoseba*. They can even get out of *yoseba*. Construction laborers and older laborers are on the periphery of *yoseba* and may slide into the homeless class at any time. The homeless settle down at the bottom of *yoseba*. They often cannot even remain in *yoseba*. The forces acting to exclude the weak inside *yoseba* represent the will of capitalism which permeates the day labor market and is indifferent even in the face of human deaths. It also represents the will of civil society which isolates and conceals *yoseba*.

The transformation of discrimination

Today, *yoseba* are changing in the midst of economic globalization and global urbanization. Different *yoseba* are transforming in different ways depending on the city's formative history and the structure of the labor market. In San'ya and Takadanobaba in Tokyo, *yoseba* are becoming smaller and breaking up. Kotobukichō in Yokohama is becoming an environment for social security recipients instead of laborers in work. In Kamagasaki in Osaka, laborers and homeless people looking for work crowd together at Airin Labor Welfare Centre (*Airin Rōdō Fukushi Sent*ā) every morning. These transformations of *yoseba* actually share the same background; that is the same set of economic and social processes permeating and determining the local day labor market. One element in this background is that the circumstances surrounding the demand for day labor have changed. First, employment offers for day laborers have decreased along with their wages. Second, the stratification of laborers has become more severe: skilled, younger laborers have remained in work, while unskilled, older laborers have been excluded from the labor market. Third, day labor jobs have been affected by the trend towards a service economy: namely, service jobs and transportation-related jobs have increased[16]. Fourth, labor arrangements made at stations, in parks,

through help-wanted magazines and newspapers have increased, resulting in decreased wages and poor labor conditions[17]. Contractors who corral able laborers in their work camps have increased in number. Secondly, the circumstances surrounding the supply of day labor have changed. First, laborers have grown older and the range of jobs available for them has narrowed, resulting in an increase in the number of laborers dropping out of the day labor market. Second, social security recipients have increased in number[18]. Third, the latest wave of foreigners have entered the day labor market, although in the latter half of the 1990s the prolonged economic recession produced a decline in their numbers. Finally, the *yoseba* world has changed. First, *doya* in Kamagasaki and San'ya have increased in size and have been upgraded to the level of business hotels. Second, this has resulted in the rising costs of staying in *doya* (staying at a remodelled, large *doya* now usually costs more than 2,000 yen per night). Third, this has resulted in a decreased number of laborers staying at *doya*. This decrease is being made up for by laborers on welfare (older laborers receiving social security benefits)[19]. Fourth, in Kamagasaki, labor arrangers' work camps have appeared in and around *yoseba*.

These transformations in *yoseba* have impoverished *yoseba* laborers. The situation has not changed in so far as they are in a discriminatory ranking based on skill and physical strength and that they are discriminated against as '*yoseba* laborers' in the society outside *yoseba*. Aside from this, the situation of discrimination against *yoseba* laborers has changed. First, middle-aged and older laborers have increased in number. The number of young laborers entering *yoseba* has, however, been small. This has resulted in an increased number of socially disadvantaged people in *yoseba* such as the elderly or disabled. The focus of labor movements in *yoseba* has shifted from labor issues to providing relief for the weak. Requesting special projects for the elderly, distributing food and going out on night patrols have become their central routine activities instead of dealing with labor disputes.

> A few years ago I could find a job three or four times a week and didn't have to worry about how to feed myself, but I can't find work at all these days. To be honest, I was reluctant to stand in line to receive food handouts, but there's no other choice. I appreciate your help until I find work (a man aged 40) (*Kachitoru-kai* (Winning Group), 1999: 19).

Riots have almost ceased. In 1990 a riot broke out in Kamagasaki, but it was instigated by youths who had come from outside[20]. This was the

last riot and was sparked by the shutting down of the counselling room of *Shikōsō*' (City Rehabilitation Counselling Center). The counselling room was shut down because loans for homeless relief had reached the upper limit and this triggered anger and rowdy behaviour among laborers and homeless people who had been waiting for their turn. After this, the number of laborers in Kamagasaki decreased dramatically and the whole area is now deserted, with no potential for a riot due to the lack of people. Only laborers who can afford to express themselves can object that a riot is 'the collective self-expression of class hatred by lower class laborers'[21]. It is hardly possible that a riot will break out in *yoseba* inhabited by elderly and homeless people who no longer have the energy to complain. This has resulted in a change in the public image of *yoseba*. Kamagasaki has shifted from being viewed as an area full of 'construction laborers' which is 'dangerous', 'frightening' and troubled by frequent 'riots', to being seen as an area full of 'miserable', 'poor' fellows: an area packed with 'loafers'.

Secondly, *yoseba* laborers and the homeless have overlapped with each other in terms of both class and space. In the past the homeless used to be 'ruined' laborers. Now a large number of laborers have become homeless[22]. This has made the homeless problem one of the major issues in society. The numbers of homeless people have increased not only in *yoseba* but also at stations, in parks, on busy streets and in riverside areas, making their existence visible. This increased visibility has been further enhanced by sleeping rough. In the past the typical picture of homeless people was as 'loafers' trudging along with paper shopping bags in hand in which they carried their belongings. In contrast, the typical picture of homeless people nowadays is that of a 'homeless' person who lives in a cardboard house or a vinyl tent. Their visibility has been further enhanced by the pattern of their behaviour. The battle, which took place in the Shinjuku area of Tokyo in February 1994 between the police who were evicting homeless people and the homeless people who were resisting being evicted, was televised nationwide. This increased public awareness of the homeless problem and caused the expansion of homeless (support) movements to many cities throughout Japan. *Yoseba* are a source of homeless people and also the place of origin of day labor movements. As a consequence homeless movements began to have close relationships with movements in *yoseba*[23].

Your superficial impression of homeless people may be that they look like 'self-indulgent, lazy people', but just imagine how difficult it is for

elderly laborers to find a job in the midst of the 'Heisei Recession'; how humiliating it is to live on the street; and how much time and work it takes to get food. They go around day and night collecting aluminium cans, sell the cans, live on food past its use by date, and live in a park or on the street in fear of being driven away at any minute. These are things that 'self-indulgent, lazy people' would not be able to do (*Dai 30-kai Kamagasaki Ettō Tōsō Iinkai* (The Committee of the 30th Kamagasaki Winter Struggle), 2000).

Discrimination against ethnic minorities

Following the entry of foreign laborers into *yoseba*, its discriminatory structure assumed a more pluralistic aspect, along the lines of ethnic relationships. Kamagasaki has always had *zainichi* Koreans and Okinawans, while San'ya has always had Ainu[24]. Both Kamagasaki and San'ya have many labor recruiters and labor arrangers who are *zainichi* Koreans. Kotobukichō has many *doya* owners who are *zainichi* Koreans. In these *yoseba* there were inverse ethnic relationships where *zainichi* Korean labor recruiters and labor arrangers provided Japanese laborers with work and *zainichi* Korean *doya* owners provided them with a place to stay (of course there are also *zainichi* Korean day laborers who stay at *doya*). *Yoseba* also have many Okinawans in them. Kamagasaki has one corner in which there is a concentration of bars run by Okinawans. San'ya has Ainu laborers. I have met some of them: they are not numerous and blend in invisibly there. Both Okinawans and Ainu are basically invisible in terms of their physical appearance. Discrimination against them is latent in *yoseba*[25].

Recently arrived foreigners have lately joined these other foreigners in *yoseba*. Recently arrived foreigners are younger and physically stronger than Japanese laborers and have an advantage over Japanese laborers in finding work. Being migrant workers, they also have a strong will to work. They frequently make phone calls to their wives and children in their home countries and many of them send money to their families. Koreans, Chinese, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Thais, and Iranians: the populations of ethnic groups appearing in *yoseba* fluctuate constantly depending on the trend amongst the most recent wave of foreigners entering Japan. In the latter half of the 1990s, all *yoseba* saw a sharp decrease in the number of foreign laborers due to a sharp decrease in jobs. Foreign laborers are stratified by ethnic groups and as individuals (see Chapter 5). On the one hand, some of them move up from the level of day laborers and start business (ethnic

business)[26]. Some become labor recruiters or labor arrangers. On the other hand, some leave (or are excluded from) their networks for reasons such as conflict with their fellow countrymen but are unable to return to their home countries for whatever reason and slide to the homeless level. There are some Brazilians of Japanese ancestry and Iranians amongst the homeless in Tokyo, some Filipinos in Yokohama, and some Filipinos and Chinese in Osaka. There have not as yet been reports of homeless Koreans.

> It was a room for sixteen [Iranian laborers] without an air conditioner or a shower. There was no dining space either. The room simply had beds in serried ranks. The moment I saw the Iranians' grim eyes on me in the dim light I could not help feeling that it was a slave camp (Yamaoka, 1996: 128).

The stratification of foreign laborers is a projection of the discrimination which exists in the day labor market. It also functions as discrimination amongst foreign laborers. Furthermore, foreign laborers in *yoseba* are surrounded by the following discriminatory circumstances. First, foreign laborers in *yoseba* are 'unskilled' laborers who are ineligible for employment (except Brazilians and Peruvians of Japanese ancestry). They also overstay their visas. Their employers often take advantage of their circumstances and abuse them and/or fail to pay their wages. Day labor unions are flooded with requests from foreign laborers for advice on labor issues[27]. Second, for the same reasons (ineligibility for employment or a visa), they are not covered by employment or welfare services provided by administrative agencies. However, some 'humanitarian' relief such as workers' compensation, maternity passbooks, childcare and children's school education is provided although not satisfactorily[28]. Third, Japanese laborers harbor anti-foreign sentiments against foreign laborers. When jobs decrease, Japanese blame this on foreigners[29].

> Kamagasaki was once full of graffiti. But I haven't seen or heard much about foreigners and Japanese actually having trouble with each other in *yoseba*. In fact, through working together, laborers in work have feelings like, hey, we are all laborers even if we don't understand each other's language (A foreigner support group activist) (Katō et al., 1997: 19).

The severity of discrimination against foreign laborers is determined by fluctuating job opportunities. Japanese laborers have discriminatory

sentiments against foreign laborers. In the 1980s when the number of foreign laborers increased rapidly in *yoseba*, Japanese laborers were alarmed. After the beginning of the 1990s, discrimination against foreign laborers became almost negligible under the new circumstances in which Japanese laborers were becoming homeless people. In the present job shortage, however, foreign workers are experiencing even greater discrimination in some respects[30].

> M, a foreigner, was engaged in the job of dismantling wooden frames for reinforced concrete for a secondary contractor of Company B, and he broke his finger. The contractor, however, plotted with the primary contractor and failed to provide proper workers' compensation to M, threatening that they would contact the Immigration Bureau and force him to return to his home country. *Sasajima Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai* (Sasajima Day Labor Union) staff members went to the site uninvited and bargained, and finally fixed up a firm agreement to pay compensation for absence from work, compensation for pain and suffering, and medical expenses (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* (Japan Association of Day Labor Unions), 1999.12.18: 3). (Anonymity protected by author).

In the midst of this type of discrimination, foreign laborers construct tight-knit networks and help each other in order to accomplish their aim of working in Japan. They stay in constant contact with each other by mobile phone and share information about members of their network regarding where they are and what they are doing. Through mutual labor recruiters they work at the same work site, eat at the same eating-house and stay at the same *doya*[31]. Their networks extend beyond the *yoseba* world. For Japanese laborers, the *yoseba* is a stigmatized community at the bottom of the social pyramid. For foreign laborers, in contrast, it is a workplace where they can earn money efficiently (Yamamoto, 1998: 61–63). They do not share the negative sentiments against *yoseba* held by their Japanese counterparts, at least not initially[32].

In San'ya, Kotobukichō and Kamagasaki, foreign laborers go to work from the same *yoseba* as Japanese laborers, work with Japanese laborers at the same work site, and return to *yoseba* where they live in the same *doya* as Japanese laborers. This kind of sharing of the same working and living environments creates ethnic relations that are unique to *yoseba*. There are a significant number of Japanese laborers with discriminatory sentiments against foreign laborers. This has resulted in the compartmentalization of foreign and Japanese laborers

in *yoseba* and work camps. On the other hand, foreign laborers and Japanese laborers share the same working and living environments. Whether Japanese or foreign, both groups of laborers are discriminated against as 'drifters' by the general public. Through their sharing of the same working and living environments as well as of discrimination, personal relations are created which transcend ethnic barriers. Considerable numbers of foreign laborers have intimate friendly relations with Japanese laborers. 'Coexistence' between foreign laborers and Japanese laborers has emerged in (some parts of) *yoseba*.

Part Two: The yoseba laborers' world of meaning

Structure and meaning

The relentless principles of capitalism permeate *yoseba*. *Yoseba* laborers fight for their lives by selling their labor each day. Those who fail to find work for many days drop out of the day labor market. They are forced out onto the street, where they are destined to collapse and ultimately die. They end up dying a solitary death with no one present at their deathbeds or to mourn their deaths, whether on the street, at a *doya* or in hospital. It is not uncommon even for parents not bother to hold funeral rites for dead sons whom they have 'disowned' (Based on comments made by H, a day laborer aged 50 in San'ya, 23 March 2000)[33].

Nakane mentioned the exclusion and detachment of *yoseba* laborers from their own family relations (Nakane, 1997a: 186–189). Broken ties with their 'blood' families, circumstances in which there is no one to witness the paths of their lives of toil and effort: this solitude of day laborers, who have no ties with the families in which they were raised or into which they married, is the root factor depriving their lives of meaning. Their solitude is so deep that any 'kindness' in the form of aid or welfare, regardless of the need for it or the satisfaction which it provides, can do little more than 'comfort' them. No one can fill the void of their loneliness.

> Coming to Yokohama hasn't made any difference at all. I go straight home after work. I don't hang around. I haven't even been to Yamashita Park more than a few times, I think. It's no fun to see dating couples. Why? Guess why! There's no way I can walk around such a place all by myself. Can you? I went there once for patrol and saw loads of dating

couples. You've been there too, have you? After you see all that, do you still think you want to go to Yamashita Park? (C in *Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1998a: 6)[34].

The structure of discrimination is determined by the interaction between acts of discrimination and acts of counter-discrimination. Acts of counter-discrimination are responses to discrimination, and discrimination is (or can be) a response to acts of counter-discrimination. The totality of this type of interaction determines the structure of discrimination. The 'problem' of discrimination against *yoseba* laborers is also created by the interaction between acts of discrimination against them and their acts of counter-discrimination. *Yoseba* laborers are subject to various forms (acts) of discrimination ranging from facial expressions, words, avoidance and violence. The degree of violence in this discrimination is doubled when the target is homeless. In recent years, as the homeless have become more visible and homelessness has become a central issue for society, the actual state of discrimination, rejection and violence against homeless people has been brought to light[35]. It is not uncommon for this violence to result in murder. On the eighteenth of October 1995, a homeless man was killed in Dōtonbori, Minami Ward, in Osaka[36]. In San'ya also, there was a case in which a homeless man who had lit a bonfire was beaten to death by a local resident because smoke from the fire allegedly stained the washing (Yamaoka, 1996: 352, 358). Recent years have seen an increasing number of cases in which homeless people are attacked and killed – these attacks have been fuelled by society's thoroughly savage sentiment towards the homeless. These cases, however, have been given only minor coverage in obscure pages of newspapers in which articles on them were buried within other articles.

Day laborers and homeless people do not just yield to the circumstances of discrimination all around them. The activities of laborers and homeless people as they struggle for survival in the severe circumstances surrounding them are part of the indisputable facts of their lives. Various studies have highlighted this fact. Yamaguchi Keiko analyzed personal relations among homeless people in Shinjuku and deduced their 'survival strategy', which consisted of a 'severing strategy' and a 'linking strategy' (Yamaguchi Keiko, 1997)[37]. Her analysis can be fully incorporated into the context of discrimination studies in an attempt to interpret the activities and meanings of the homeless and to describe their essence in a positive manner.

> An old man was found dead in his tent during the monthly removal. Poor guy. They said he'd been dead for more than a week. How regrettable! After all, I don't go so far as to say we should socialize with people around us, but we should establish some sort of relationships, or ties, you know, enough to ask after each other when someone is not seen around (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1998: 6).

Acts of counter-discrimination by day laborers and homeless people are manifestations of the meaning they attach to discrimination and their way of defining the situation of discrimination. This system of attaching meanings will hereafter be referred to as the 'world of meaning'. In this context 'meaning' is used as it was by Clifford Geertz, 'orientation in general including recognition, emotion and morals, which is a comprehensive concept encompassing perception, ideas, sentiments, understanding, judgments and so forth' (Koizumi, 1984: 248). Geertz described culture as 'the meshes of a net' for interpreting meanings. Meanings are always ambiguous, equivocal and 'broad'. This makes them open to various interpretations (Koizumi, 1998: 187). How, then, do third parties (researchers) know the meanings given by the parties involved (day laborers) to a situation? This is the starting point of a series of arguments in interpretive anthropology and social constructionism about the way in which 'interpretation' should occur (the interpretation of interpretation). In reality, third parties can only have a vicarious understanding of the meanings of certain events for the parties involved. These third parties, however, are unable to understand the exact nature of these meanings.

In the background to a third party's interpretation lurks the third party's own interpretative framework, whether explicitly or implicitly. One person cannot know another's reality without using his/her own framework of understanding[38]. The question is, then, whether or not a third party's framework for interpretation is useful. To what extent is it possible for third parties to understand the world of meaning of the parties involved in a 'gentle' manner?

> I think that voices from *yoseba* are revelations in which human beings, who we had formerly reduced to the level of objects, reappear before us as human beings – revelations of one of the things contained by this world In my opinion, in the face of these voices, the 'procedures' to be followed – in order to speak in a language that is not affected by commonplace, stereotyped justification – include opening up myself

to this rapidly changing situation in my world and straining my ears to listen to these voices thoroughly (Nishizawa, 1991: 153).

Misery and pride

I once described the world of meaning of *yoseba* laborers surrounded by discrimination as a dynamic process wavering amid the conflict between 'misery' and 'pride' (Aoki, 1989: 143–181). For the purpose of this work, the terms 'misery' and 'pride' refer to ultimate values and/or a collective mentality representing the actual existence of *yoseba* laborers. 'Misery' means the tendency of people in the world of those being discriminated against to accept their fate at once and in a resigned manner, which leads to 'death'[39]. In other words, it represents the world of meaning of people who yield (or are forced to yield) to the 'structure' of discrimination.

> '*Man Arrested for Stabbing Fellow Homeless, Kōshien Police Station Announces'*: Kōshien Police Station announced on 5 August that they arrested S, a man aged 44 who was a scaffolder (no fixed address), as an attempted murder suspect. According to investigation results, it is thought that the suspect stabbed K (aged 40, currently unemployed and of no fixed address) in his left foot with a fish slicer after a quarrel with him while drinking with five other friends in H Park, Nishinomiya-shi around 9:30 p.m. on 4 August. K is in a critical condition due to massive bleeding. K and Suspect S are said to have lived in the park. According to the suspect's friends who were at the scene, K said "I want to die", which led to a quarrel between Suspect S who responded, "Shall I stab you then", and K who answered, "Go ahead, if you want" (Anonymity protected by Aoki) (Kōbe Shimbun, 6 August 1996).

In contrast, 'pride' means the inclination of people in the world of those being discriminated against to overcome their situation in a positive manner, one leading to 'life'. In other words, it represents the world of meaning of people who resist the structure of discrimination[40].

> I don't know how many people I referred to W Ward Office with good results. (Although we were turned away at S Welfare Office,) I think it's our turn now. We are going to "Counter Attack if Attacked", you know. We are now retaliating. Not all of those people sleeping rough are bad guys. There are some unbearable guys, but apart from them, you know.

> There's welfare, but many of them don't know how the system works.
> I'd be sorry for them if they stay that way. So I work for them, that's all
> (I, a labor activist aged 48 in Kotobukichō) (Anonymity protected by
> author) (*Kotobukichō Shiensha Kōryū-kai*), 1996a: 29).

'Misery' and 'pride' are the source of meanings which are attached to
yoseba laborers' lives and which conflict with the central symbols of
their lives – 'labor', 'poverty' and 'drifting'. They also produce conflict-
ing identities: 'laborers' who yield to contempt for them and 'workers'
who throw off such contempt[41]. This creates a conflicting web of per-
sonal relations between laborers in *yoseba*. On one hand, laborers can
be formidable 'enemies' to each other. On the other hand, they can be
'friends' who are destined to live together and die together. Furthermore,
'misery' and 'pride' produce conflicting meanings that are attached to
the *yoseba* itself. On one hand, the *yoseba* is a 'living hell' permeated by
the cold violence of capitalism. On the other hand, it is an asylum where
the wounded huddle together and care for each other[42]. *Yoseba* often
experience (or used to experience) riots. Riots are full of 'the intentions
of those who live under extreme circumstances: even though they are
sure that they will be routed, with indomitable spirits and painful sad-
ness they pin their hopes on the action itself ' (Yamaoka, 1996: 39)[43].

> When I was leaving hospital the doctor told me, you can't work any more
> once you catch this disease. He was definite about it, the doctor. I can
> still see the face of the woman at the welfare office in Shinjuku [she
> had given this man a cold reception], that woman … I now think that I
> want to expose what she did to me and condemn her. But I couldn't do
> that at that time. I didn't know anything. It really made my blood boil.
> I've learned so much since coming here, so I'm going to join patrols and
> I now want to complain a lot to them. I'm happy that I've come here
> [Kotobukichō] (*Kotobukichō Shiensha Kōryūkai*, 1996a: 29).

'Misery' and 'pride' are tools for interpreting the human mind (or
one aspect of it) and are general concepts whose use is not limited to
yoseba laborers. These concepts were inspired by symbolic dualism,
such as life (rebirth) and death, health and illness and happiness and
unhappiness, as well as by concepts of ambiguity (Yamaguchi Masao,
1975), used in the field of cultural anthropology. They were extracted
and structured through a symbolic analysis of the words, acts and
etiquette of *yoseba* laborers. How useful are these concepts in analysing
yoseba laborers' world of meaning? In other words, how far will

they enable us to understand the words and acts of laborers? Before addressing this question, however, a brief word about the framework being used, which is based on several premises regarding values. First, the world of meaning of human beings in general – whether *yoseba* laborers or not – ultimately cannot be understood by others. Second, all human beings live (or must live) their lives wavering in the conflict between a positive orientation towards life and a negative orientation towards life. Third, the totality of life appears (or should appear) only in such conflict and wavering. Fourth, because of their peripheraland extreme nature of being on the 'outside' of civil society, or their circumstances of discrimination, *yoseba* laborers show keenly and clearly the conflict between positive life and negative life[44]. The next task is to describe in specific detail the conflict in *yoseba* laborers' world of meaning through an analysis of their words and acts.

> In Shinjuku, [homeless people] only ever [call food hunting] to 'pick up' and never say to 'forage'. In such subtle wording I can see their intention to attach as good a meaning as possible to what they do to survive, or to see what they do as positively as possible. I think that this is behind each of their words (Nishizawa Akihiko in Katō, 1997: 13).

In recent years, the nature of the conflict between 'misery' and 'pride' has been changing along with the changes occurring in *yoseba*. *Yoseba* laborers have grown older and now overlap with homeless people. At the same time, as a group they seem to be shifting from the world of 'pride' to the world of 'misery'. This is, however, merely one interpretation. There is no reason for others to determine that laborers in work are men of 'pride' and homeless people are men of 'misery'. This can also be understood from the fact that 'a human being cannot live in complete scepticism, or in a world where he is deprived of all meanings by scepticism' (Inoue, 1992: 24). Because of differences in their lifestyles, laborers in work and homeless people differ from each other in the actual state of conflict and wavering in their lives. In fact, however, a proud craftsman might be more ashamed of himself for being in a *yoseba* than a homeless person. In contrast, a homeless person squatting on the street may fight for survival until the last moment of his life. Whether 'misery' seems to beat 'pride' or the other way around in a person's inner self is a matter involving the context in which, and the perspective from which, others interpret the meaning of things for a person. Here again, our task starts with repeated detailed analysis of the process of conflict and wavering in

the lives of *yoseba* laborers and homeless people, on the basis of the context for the words and acts of each person.

> People's dissatisfaction, solitude, anxiety and weariness are main phenomenal forms of alienation, but these are never alienation *itself.* Alienation is an *objective* condition beyond people's perception, and these forms of unhappiness should be regarded as *subjective* consequences of this condition. […] Nor can we say that all alienated people are unhappy (Emphasis in original.) (Mita, 1965: 2.)

Classification

The use of methods of classification is inevitable in order to conduct a detailed analysis and understand the whole picture of *yoseba* laborers' world of meaning. For example, in his analysis of the life histories of (atomic bomb) victims, Ishida used a meaning of life 'thoughts' viewpoint to classify victims into the 'drifting' type, consisting of those who are in 'despair and solitude', and the 'resistant' type, consisting of those who 'liberate themselves' (Ishida, 1973: 20–41). Based on this classification, Ishida followed the process of 'leaping' from the former type to the latter in bomb victims' world of meaning. In light of the basic uniformity of human existence, Ishida's concepts of 'drifting' and 'resistant' correspond to Aoki's 'misery' and 'pride'.

Yoseba 'culture' has a system of meanings and values which has come into existence through the acceptance and rejection of dominant values ('diligence' and 'one gets what one deserves') forced on *yoseba* which are located on the periphery of civil society. It is a unique culture which displays continuities with the bottom end of the collective culture, but which is at the same time detached and excluded from the collective culture. In other words, *yoseba* 'culture' represents a self-contradictory unity combining the subculture of 'misery' and the counter-culture of 'pride'. Laborers and homeless people go back and forth between 'subculture' and 'counter-culture' in *yoseba* culture.

Based on this understanding of *yoseba* 'culture', I have previously constructed four human classes of *yoseba* laborers from the viewpoint of their orientation towards, or psychological distance from (close – remote), the collective culture (Aoki, 1989: 166–176). The first class consists of those who in terms of psychological distance are remote from *yoseba* 'culture' and close to the collective culture. I have called them the 'transcendental type'; meaning that they, despite the fact that they are in *yoseba* themselves, look down on other laborers

as outsiders do. *Many* (not all – the same proviso applies to the following remarks) laborers of this type belong to the skilled class, such as frame erecters for reinforced concrete and carpenters. The second class consists of those whose psychological distance is remote from both *yoseba* 'culture' and the collective culture. I have called them the 'despair type', meaning that they live in agony from the humiliation of not being able to return to work. *Many* of them belong to the poor class, such as social security recipients and the homeless. The third class consists of those who are psychologically close to *yoseba* 'culture' and remote from the collective culture. I have called them the 'emotional type', meaning that they assume a defiant attitude towards their severe circumstances and are proud of themselves just the way they are in *yoseba*. *Many* of them belong to the unskilled class, such as handymen and miscellaneous workers. The fourth class consists of those who in terms of psychological distance are close to *yoseba* 'culture' and close to the collective culture and who also aspire to the latter. I have called them the 'conflictive type', meaning that they waver between despair and hope and between humiliation and dignity. *Many* of them belong to the semi-skilled class, such as rod busters and drivers.

The *yoseba*, however, is a changed place these days. The number of skilled laborers has decreased and differences between skilled laborers and unskilled laborers in work and living conditions have increased[45]. In addition, the unskilled class is smaller. Furthermore, the boundary between the unskilled class and the poor class has ceased to exist. Finally, the poor class has expanded. These classes of *yoseba* laborers, constructed in the 1980s, essentially still apply. However, the main classes of *yoseba* laborers and the relations between classes have changed in response to the present class changes. In the past, the 'emotional type' consisting of unskilled laborers in work was the main type of laborer in *yoseba*, and personal relations evolved around their confrontation with the 'transcendental type' consisting of skilled laborers. This was also a confrontation between day laborers. Today, together with the shift which *yoseba* laborers are undergoing from the unskilled class to the homeless class, there is also underway a shift on the whole from the 'emotional type' to the 'despair type'. Analyzing 'misery' and 'pride' at deeper levels of the 'despair type' and describing the conflict between them has become a difficult task[46]. This also, however, is just one interpretation of the situation.

> I have never received social security, but I don't like receiving charity. I
> don't want to unless I have no other choice. They say you have the right

to receive social security, but I just don't want to receive it. We are more careful about health than other people. It's best to be careful before we get sick. About forty years ago I started living this way, I used to pay tax. I don't want to accept social security just because I'm in these circumstances now. If we go into hospital, they tell us, 'You guys get treatment for nothing'. I don't want to receive social security. We search rubbish bins for food, and you can laugh at us if you want (J, a homeless person aged 65 in Tokyo) (*Nojukusha/Jinken Shiryō Sentā* (Center for Resources on the Homeless and Human Rights), 1999: 37).

The fate of *yoseba*

Because I am so poor at writing I cannot write about the *Hanchō* (work camp leader) very well, but he was a great person, I can never be anything like as great as him. As a person, *Hanchō* was always completely honest, as bright as sunshine – he always looked at us with a smile. I think of him as still being alive. In my mind, he may be looking at the way I am living. I will join him some day. But I wonder if he will welcome me. Maybe he will scold me. Before he passed away, *Hanchō* was a person who had had to work himself before instructing other people. So he was always a friend of people in trouble. One time when I asked him, 'Have you eaten, *Hanchō*?' he said, "Not yet, would you like to have your lunch, E?" There were times when he said things like this. When I think of him now, tears fight to break out onto my black clothes and I can't help crying. Am I not supposed to cry? Would *Hanchō* laugh at me? *Hanchō*, please, save a place for me (*Hanchō Tsuitō Bunshū Henshū Iinkai* (Collected Memorial Works on the Work Camp Leader, Editorial Committee) 1996: 43–44)[47].

Yoseba have changed. The human meaning of this change hints at the total situation in which the cruel designs of capitalism are 'killing' laborers who are so eager, gentle and sincere. The dissolution of *yoseba* does not just mean the dissolution of the place or function of labor arranging for day labor jobs. Long before this present state of affairs, capitalism's heartlessness also presided over the dissolution of the people living in *yoseba*; depriving them of their 'pride' and precious 'friends'. However, as long as people continue to live in *yoseba*, there will always be traces of their struggles for survival. They have always played their roles in the drama by crying, laughing and getting angry. These dramas accumulate and construct the *yoseba*'s world of meaning. The *yoseba* is a theatre. Laborers have grown old, the homeless roam

about, and now they die one after another. In their last moments, each of them deducts the amount of his 'misery' from that of his 'pride'. Is the balance in the black or red? The sociology of '*yoseba* and meanings' must follow such calculations done by laborers and homeless people and calculate the sum total of balances.

With the reduction in size of the day labor market because of recession in the construction industry, laborers are disappearing. Where does the *yoseba* go? Will it revive at some point as an area full of day laborers' energy, and will the culture of labor bloom there once again? Alternatively, will it become an ethnic community of foreign laborers? It is not easy to forecast the *yoseba*'s future at present while it is changing rapidly. Whatever the anticipated situation might be, however, the significance of *yoseba* studies will never fade. This is because the urban mechanisms creating people suffering from poverty and humiliation will continue to exist, as they always have in the past, and because the meanings of the lives of people who survive these mechanisms will never fade.

> As soon as he tasted the stewed giblets, this fellow from San'ya sounded off, saying, 'Oh no, this is no good, poorly flavoured, it's not good at all', and he took the dipper away from the fellow from Ueno. When things reach this point, it is not long before a scuffle starts. … There were several other fights between fellows, and they were in work. Almost every day I heard someone say 'I am going back to Ueno [Park] now!' but no one went back in the end. The fellow from San'ya mentioned earlier gave a speech at the last meeting of the Winter Struggle, saying, 'I have limitations, but I do have strengths as well', which was applauded by all the other fellows[48].

The harsher one's circumstances, the more tense he becomes in life and the prouder of himself he feels for having survived. Where does their energy – this sparkling energy of the homeless who barely manage to survive on food handouts – come from?

Part Three: The homeless' world of meaning

From *yoseba* laborers to homeless

Some *yoseba* laborers can no longer find work. No work means no money. Other laborers have grown too old to do construction work. Nor can they get into a work camp through their connections with

labor arrangers. No work, no money. And yet, they do not want to die. This is how *yoseba* laborers are becoming homeless. People who have been excluded from their families, workplaces and communities join them.

In the past the homeless have continued to hold onto *yoseba* laborers' world of meaning, only with stronger sentiments of 'misery' and 'pride'. The homeless used to be 'ruined' laborers. But at present the homeless put up their tents in parks and live in groups. The lives of the homeless are different from those of *yoseba* laborers. Their world of meaning is also cut off from that of *yoseba* laborers. In the final part of this chapter I would like to describe (part of) the homeless' world of meaning, which will give a clear sense of the lives, the people and the large as life world of meaning of the homeless. The data for this comes from interview *raw data* and respondents' comments obtained from 130 homeless people (including 119 tent dwellers and 128 males) living in Osaka Castle Park (*Ōsakajō Kōen*) during the interview of homeless people in Osaka conducted by *Toshi Kankyō Mondai Kenkyūkai* (Urban Environmental Issues Research Group) of the Osaka City University from the fifth to the tenth of August 1999. (See the beginning of Chapter 4 for the entire Osaka interview (Osaka City University, 2001).)

> During my first days in this park, I was so ashamed that I stayed in my tent all the time. I haven't contacted my daughter since I started sleeping rough. If I call from here, she'll hear the sound of cicadas. I'm so frustrated and ashamed of myself for not being able to see my own daughter. I really can't help crying (a woman aged 57).

Homeless people feel miserable about their own circumstances. This sentiment of misery includes two feelings: They feel 'ashamed' of their homeless lives and they feel that it is 'hard' to live that way. Homeless people hope to escape from their homeless lives and return to 'normal life' as soon as possible. In this context, 'normal life' does not necessarily mean 'life as part of the general public'. To homeless people, 'normal life' just means escaping from a life of homelessness through employment, renting a place to live, and paying rent. This homeless life is a 'temporary' life that has been forced on them. This is how homeless people see the situation.

> I want to return to normal life. I want to work hard, rent a flat, and live a normal life. If I can, I want to escape from this life as soon as

possible. That's my wish. If you've got any pride you can't live this way (a man aged 50).

I get money by pulling apart stuff like aluminium products from rubbish collections of large items and selling them to dealers. I work when I've run out of money, so it's insecure. I want to go back to Nishinari (Kamagasaki) for a day labor job. I want to quit being homeless. Even if they tell me to leave, I have no other place to go because I have no job. If I get a job I'll leave right away (a man aged 51).

Homeless people tighten their belts and look for a job, dreaming of escaping from homeless life. They get up early in the morning and go to Kamagasaki. They go to a public employment security office. They read advertisements and newspapers. They ask their friends for employment information. They make phone calls to companies. They participate in job training. These are all extraordinary efforts for them. After all these efforts, homeless people realize that it is difficult for them to obtain employment, even a day labor job, not to mention permanent employment. Gradually, they become desperate. At first they want to obtain a specific job. Then they want just any job. Initially they also want to find a job by themselves. Then they just want to find a job, whether through administrative services or by any means. Before long they realize that their job-hunting efforts are useless and give up trying to find a job. At this point, their dream of escaping from a life of homelessness is finally shattered. Even so, they do not want to die. They start off collecting recyclable materials, occasionally getting a day labor job, or doing miscellaneous work. In the world of people on the streets, even the business of collecting recyclable materials has some status attached to it. Next, they 'search for food'. Again they depend on food handouts. Finally, they rely on welfare. In this way, the homeless follow *a path of falling down the class ladder of street society; from the upper homeless class to the lower homeless class.* They then gradually lose energy. They gradually give up living. There is no point living. They start their journey towards 'slow suicide' (Nukada, 1999: 144 and 185). In this way, and driven by structural necessity, the segregation of the position of the homeless becomes complete even in their own subjective world.

I don't want to live much longer. I'm old. I'm just quietly waiting to die soon (a man aged 64).

The struggle for survival

This is, however, only one side of the world of the homeless. A person's subjective self is not a mere projection of the circumstances surrounding him/her. Life is *always* ambiguous when contrasted with death. Life must therefore be interpreted in two ways. On one hand, a person yields to circumstances and crushes life. This leads to death. On the other hand, a person resists the circumstances and struggles to survive. People drift back and forth between both extremities. There is a *reinterpretation* of the homeless' world of meaning by the homeless themselves. From this point a journey in exactly the opposite direction starts. 'I want to live.' Homeless people survive the severe circumstances which engulf them. In their struggle for survival they aim to construct their homeless lives (Tsumaki, 2003). The business of collecting recyclable materials is a struggle with hunger. Next, homeless people aim to live a 'normal life'. They are driven by their desire to get rid of shame and obtain security. Homeless people look for a better job. Some do so by themselves, and others by relying on administrative services. They then gradually realize that their efforts are useless. They stop trying. Stopping trying means resignation, which, in turn, means despair. *At the same time*, it means a defiant attitude and a change in direction. Homeless people run about in 'search of food' and stand in line to receive food handouts. Finally, they rely on welfare provided by administrative authorities. They then start a new group life at a shelter or in hospital. They start a life in welfare apartments as social security recipients. All these activities are practical efforts by the homeless struggling for survival. Homeless people obtain wisdom to survive on the street (street wisdom) and crawl about the jungle that is the street. Yamaguchi referred to these activities of the homeless as their 'survival strategy' (Yamaguchi Keiko, 2001: 108). In this work, I outline the activities of the homeless aimed at their survival, as well as the place where these take place, and I refer to part of this strategy as a 'street smart strategy'[49]. These are activities aimed at surviving difficult living conditions in a smart manner and at constructing a life. Homeless people stop this struggle only in that moment when they have lost the will to live and begin waiting for 'a slow death' without making any more effort.

What specifically is the 'street smart strategy' of homeless people? It refers to all of the following: how to find a job, how to ward off the cold or heat, how to put up with humiliation and solitude, how to deal

with city residents, administrative authorities or the police, how to prepare yourself for forced removal and measures for escaping from homeless life. Let us now look at part of their street management strategy as revealed in the results of the Osaka interview. The following discussion focuses on the measures which are vital in *constructing a tent life*: (1) being work-wise; (2) getting food; (3) securing a dwelling; and (4) life skills.

Being work-wise

One job typically carried out by homeless people at present is the collection of recyclable materials. They have no end of trouble in carrying out their work.

> I go all over the city to collect large items of rubbish. I get a collection schedule at the ward office and check when rubbish is put out (a man aged 59).

> I download information on collections of large items of rubbish using the computer service at the ward office (a man aged 49).

> The best places to collect aluminium cans are places like housing complexes or condos because I can get a lot of cans at a time. There's a lot of competition between people in the same business. I leave early in the morning so I won't fall behind. I leave around six, but some people leave around three or four (a man aged 59).

> People come to the area around Osaka Castle Park from as far as Kamagasaki to pick up, so it's hard to collect much. Around Esaka residents separate garbage properly before putting it out, so it's easy to collect and this saves me trouble (a man aged 59).

> N [a junk dealer] in Sakuranomiya used to cheat on the weight of collected empty cans, so I soon stopped dealing with him (a man aged 59).

Some homeless people work with friends in an attempt to alleviate work difficulties.

> I have three friends, and we exchange information on the places and times of aluminium can collections with each other (a man aged 53).

I collect empty cans and bulky garbage items with my friends. We save part of our income as our common property and share the rest (a man aged 48).

Empty cans are 80 yen per kilo, and I earn about 1,000 yen a day, so I have quite a heavy load on the way back. It's pretty tough when I carry them all by myself. I carry them with my friend sometimes (a man aged 59).

Getting food

Homeless people cannot earn enough money to survive just from their current work. Some do not have work. They will be faced with hunger in no time. How do they get food? Resourcefulness in 'picking up food' determines life or death for homeless people.

At first I didn't know how to get food and I pleaded with people around me to share their know-how with me (a man aged 53).

I collect food discarded by convenience stores. I'm careful not to leave litter around the store area (a man aged 60).

I don't want to get into trouble with convenience stores, so I don't go to stores whose clerks have complained about us. I don't go to those that another homeless person relies on either (a man aged 49).

When I get food from a convenience store manager, I promise that I won't tell other stores how much it cost me (a man aged 53).

I get stale bread from bakeries. I pick up cigarettes and cut about 5 mm from the end that people put in their mouths before using them (a man aged 47).

Some people deal in food collected from convenience stores. This is unmistakably a business activity.

I started selling lunches provided by convenience stores which were past their use by dates. I talked to more than twenty store managers in person and at first seven or eight of them agreed to provide lunches, but competition is tough and now I have only three stores providing lunches to me. I sell a combination of rice balls and lunches for 100 yen in Nishinari (Kamagasaki). I start collecting around seven or eight in the evening and go to Nishinari around two or three in the morning and

sell them all in about an hour. Sales are between 1,000 and 2,000 yen a day. Some people sell whatever they have collected, but it wouldn't be right to give people stomach trouble, so I throw away any food that looks like going off soon. This then leaves me with about one third left to sell. Products are wrapped in plastic bags, so they are easily spoiled by humidity (a man aged 58).

Some homeless people cook for themselves. Their skills surpass those of 'housewives'.

I buy ingredients at the supermarket and cook things like Chinese noodle soup on my camp stove. I put in carrots, green peppers, canned fish and eggs, and flavour it with a curry roux. I'm careful about nutritional balance too. I normally eat this with a glass of *shōchū* diluted with water (a man aged 59).

I buy rice and other ingredients. I used to run a coffee shop, so I can cook almost anything. The lack of electricity and a refrigerator for me to use make it a bit tricky. I get water from a nearby tap (a man aged 64).

To get food at a low price I go to supermarkets just before closing time, when they give discounts. I occasionally buy meat, but when I buy things like wheat or salt I buy the cheapest I can and cook something like miso soup for myself. It gives me pleasure to buy some alcohol with any remaining money and have a little drink (a man aged 62).

Securing a place to live

Next, let us look at how the homeless secure a place to live. Many homeless people in Osaka Castle Park live in tents. They exercise their ingenuity in building their tents and storing the items they need for their daily lives in them. Their skill is amazing.

Three tents are connected together, surrounded by a tarpaulin; they have a roof and even a terrace. There is a space in the middle where a desk and chair are placed. Home furnishings include a gas stove, a refrigerator, a TV, a gasoline generator, a pot and a frying pan; all collected from large items which have been thrown out for rubbish collection (a man aged 58)

Under a tree a blue tarpaulin sheet has been set up and a tent has been built under this. A bicycle parking space has been secured. The roof is

covered with a sheet of tarpaulin to keep out the rain, and during the summer the sides are covered with reed or mesh screens to let in air (a man aged 64).

Underneath double blue tarpaulin sheets a camp tent has been set up so the dwelling has three-layer protection. That way rain will not leak in and some sunlight can also be blocked out. Inside the tent the ground level has been raised by several centimetres to prevent water from flowing in. Outside the tent a drain ditch has been dug to ensure good drainage when he has a wash. The inner part of the tent is the bedroom. The entrance is covered by a reed-screen and the door has a handle made of a wire coat hanger (a man aged 59).

The tent's framework was assembled using tubes found in the rubbish. These tubes are also used for a glass window frame. Some of his items for daily living were found in the rubbish and others were purchased. He has two bicycles, one of which has been remodelled specifically for his business, with a cart attached to the rear of the vehicle for carrying empty cans. This bicycle was made by remodelling a bicycle purchased for 4,500 yen (a man aged 58).

Figuring out ways and means to live

Being homeless is a way of life. In order to live comfortably in inconvenient living conditions homeless people must solve various problems.

I get water at the sink tap in the toilet. I boil water before drinking it. During the summer I wash myself at the tap. During the winter I clean myself up with a wet towel (a man aged 72).

The lavatory for the handicapped is spacious, so lock myself in there when I have a wash. So many people use it that a line forms in front of it in the evening (a man aged 51).

Living in a tent in summer means battling against mosquitoes and insects. I use a mosquito coil only once in a while because it's wasteful to use it all the time (a man aged 58).

I do have a generator. When I have to charge it I borrow my generator. I'm planning to buy my own generator because I want to use a word processor to keep a diary (a man aged 65).

I got most of the essential cooking utensils and things I need for daily living from large items left out for rubbish collection or from other people. With things where being careful about hygiene is important, such as some cooking utensils and toiletries, I didn't want to make do with things from large item rubbish or from other people, so I bought them new. With things like a bicycle and a radio, I bought used goods (a man aged 55).

Homeless people know that it is 'illegal' to live in a park. They are aware that their presence is a nuisance to neighbourhood residents. Residents' reports to the police may provide the pretext for administrative authorities to force them out of the park. In order not to cause a nuisance to local residents, homeless people carefully stay away from local residents and live a strictly disciplined life.

I'm sensitive about our relations with local people. It's actually wrong to live in such a place, so I'm trying to live so as not to cause a nuisance (a man aged 59).

I have no contact at all with the police, passers-by or civil servants. I avoid getting involved with other people as much as possible. That's the best policy (a man aged 64).

I don't leave litter lying around. I live using my common sense. I'm careful to keep my things neat and tidy all the more because we are exposed to more criticism than other people (a man aged 53).

I cut my hair, shave and wear neat clothes: I'm careful to look decent (a man aged 48).

I get water from the tap in the toilet. I take a bath only at night because it's embarrassing to come across a girl while I'm doing so (a man aged 61).

I pick up cigarette ends and plastic bags and keep the area around my tent neat and tidy (a man aged 61).

Struggles and resistance

The street-smart strategy of homeless people is all encompassing. So harsh are the lives of homeless people that they need to make endless efforts. This leads to a cluster of different images of homeless people.

It is homeless people's feelings about their circumstances and their identities that govern the subtle and persistent struggles in which they are engaged. On the one hand, homeless people feel that their homeless life is humiliating and regard it as a reluctant choice.

I don't want anybody to see me living a life like this. Because of this I haven't contacted anyone in my family. What would you think if you had a dad like me? Of course I'm human too and I wonder why I have to be in such a place, but wondering doesn't help (a man aged 72).

Because I live out here, in this kind of place, I think I'm disliked [by the local residents]. Though I know they dislike me, I have nowhere else to go. There can be no more kindness than letting me stay here (a man aged 72).

Every night young people let off fireworks and it's noisy, but I try not to mind as I live in a place where I'm not supposed to be living (a man aged 53).

What I'm most worried about is having my tent removed. I don't want anything; I just don't want them to do that. If they do that, though, I have no choice but to go along with it. In that case I have to go to another park (a man aged 49).

Meanwhile, homeless people also regard themselves as society's victims, and think that they have the right to live a decent life. Homeless people complain about unfair treatment they have received from residents and administrative authorities.

There are no really bad guys among homeless people. I want people to shed their prejudice against us: that is, that homeless people are dangerous and dirty (a man aged 48).

People litter and blame it on us. This is nonsense. Something's got to be done about it (a man in his fifties). When I was collecting aluminium cans, I parked my bike on a narrow street and it was in a car's way. Then the driver called me a bum, instead of simply asking me to move my bike. So I got into a fight with him (a man aged 53).

When I was sitting on a bus stop bench waiting for bread crusts to be thrown out by a bakery, an old woman was staring at me as though I

were a thief. I asked her why she was staring at me like that, and she said to me, 'Don't sit on this bench!" So I almost got into a fight with her (a man aged 55).

Homeless people do not submit to residents' discrimination against them. They are constantly trying to find meaning in their lives. This is why they are so proud. Next, I will describe their mental attitudes towards anticipated forced removal by the administrative authorities.

Once a month the park manager advises me to leave, but I have nowhere else to go. I just say, 'Yes. Yes, sir'. I'm going stay here as long as I have no job (a man aged 44).

My condition for complying with the removal request is that they provide me with a place to set up my tent near this park (a man aged 55).

Even if they provide me with a job with good conditions or accommodation, I'm not gonna move. Even if I'm removed, I'll go someplace else for a while and then come back soon (a man aged 55).

I'll leave here anyway once the economy gets better. They shouldn't be forcing me to leave before that (a man aged 53).

I want to organize a group to protest against the ward office. But I know that everybody will only come together if I say, 'Let's drink together' (a man aged 58).

If the tents are really going to be removed, everybody will run wild (a man aged 49).

This is the one and only home I have. If they're gonna force me out, I'll call my friends together and fight back (a man aged 56).

In that case I'll start a riot (a man aged 58).

We are humans too. We deserve to live. In these words we hear the voices of homeless people living lives on the breadline. How will these cries of struggle from homeless people turn into 'resistance' with the aim of overturning their circumstances (resistance raises the issue of authority)? Can homeless people be the 'multitude' (Hardt and Negri,

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2000) of our time? Homeless people (under the leadership of their supporters) have risen up in social movements. Homeless people in Osaka have also started a movement. Those who participate in these movements do not (yet) represent any more than a handful of homeless people. Nonetheless, their movements have made the homeless issue visible and have even caused the government to take some measures. What, then, can we see in this politics? We still do not know the answer to this. Homeless people's struggles, acted out as their lives, are a breeding ground for resistance which has as it aim overturning existing circumstances. Resistance will not be successful without an accumulation of struggles. Struggles, however, are not resistance. Where is the turning point at which one becomes the other? What kind of conditions would have to exist for things to turn? I have not been able to consider these questions in this section. From struggles to resistance: our next task is to find a theory which bridges the gap between these two stages.

8 The World of Meaning of the Winter Struggle

Part One: The stage for the winter struggle

Setting out the issue

> I sleep rough and my body's falling apart. I've been homeless for many years. There's nothing for it. I can't even attempt any hard work. Somehow, I managed to get into a lodging house but some day I will be found nearly dead in a ditch. I know what's going to happen. But, there's nothing for it. It's embarrassing to talk about this. There's someone I can't forget. It was a very long time ago. My older brother's wife – she was an excellent person, and pretty. I knew that it was wrong for me to be attracted to her. I wondered what to do and eventually I fled from home. That was the end of it. I wonder how she is now? I wonder whether she's still alive. I have no idea. Even so, I still dream about her. I see her, just as she was. I'm a fool! I think so, but nothing can come of it. I would really like to meet her one more time, somewhere. Life is an unlucky business (A, a day laborer in his sixties. 1 January 1995).

The laborers who have wandered from one work camp to another, constructing dams, railways, roads and buildings – going from being day laborers in work to homeless people, from homeless people to dead people, with no one to tend their graves – are now dying off, one by one, as they are injured, fall ill, age, follow the path that leads to Kamagasaki and are discarded. The cruel will of capitalism overwhelms people's destiny. Even so, however, it is not the case that laborers passively move towards their deaths doing nothing. These men cry, rejoice, anger and laugh – they struggle desperately, resisting anxiety, isolation and despair. In their struggles there is the distant flow – we could even call it the drama – of the lives of people living desperately. In this chapter, I would like to take a look into their world of meaning – although, admittedly, only its surface layer – going so far even as to examine the issue of the death of Kamagasaki's day laborers

and homeless people. By doing this, I think that we might be able to understand, albeit only partially, the human meaning of Kamagasaki, the *yoseba*. I will set the stage for the Kamagasaki 'Winter Struggle'. The reason for doing this is because the Winter Struggle itself is a time when, and a place where, day laborers' and homeless people's spirits are intensely heightened and the human meaning of the *yoseba* comes very clearly to the surface. The Winter Struggle is not simply a struggle 'to tide over the winter', it is also a struggle to 'tide over the year' from the beginning to the end of the year. The spiritual turmoil of day laborers and homeless people during the Winter Struggle is amplified by the struggle 'to tide over the year'.

In this chapter, I use various concepts from religious sociology as a framework in attempting to deal with the Winter Struggle as a ritual and to analyze its processes. By this means, I hope to make clear, both dynamically and symbolically, the ways in which day laborers and homeless people understand their own circumstances and also the emotional lessons which they draw from their lives. The very first point to make is that it is precisely winter which is the greatest time of crisis in Kamagasaki and precisely the Winter Struggle which is the biggest struggle in Kamagasaki.

I deal with three subjects in this chapter. The first is analyzing the processes in the Winter Struggle as a ritual, using the passage of time as the pivot. This then serves as the basis for interpreting the dynamic processes of the heightening and convergence of the consciousness and emotions of day laborers and homeless people. The second subject is analyzing the discord present in day laborers and homeless people's world of meaning, particularly at the time of the Winter Struggle, using some concepts from religious sociology. The third is analyzing the ritual meaning of the spaces related to the Winter Struggle and then examining the relationships which correspond to a ritual analysis of time. The Winter Struggle is a grand drama, which is arranged by time and space, and in which the *yoseba* assumes a temporally and spatially vibrant meaning.

The analytical framework

Homeless people's lives consist of desperate activities in severe circumstances on a daily basis. Surviving intensely cold winters is particularly harsh on them. Elderly and sick homeless people fall down dead on the street, one after another. Kamagasaki's day laborers and homeless people unite in order to survive the winter and carry out

a variety of activities aimed at their continued survival. Of prime importance amongst these activities is the 'Winter Struggle', which is undertaken every year from the end of December through to the beginning of January. During the Winter Struggle, people secure and share resources necessary for survival – such as, food, shelter and medical facilities. Members of Christian organizations, citizen activists and students participate in these activities as helpers and volunteers.

During the Winter Struggle, a religious atmosphere is created amongst day laborers and homeless people. Through the Winter Struggle, people ask themselves about the meaning of life and death. The Winter Struggle is a solemn festival in which the living meet with and revere the dead, and the dead soothe the living.

> Many cultures possess ideologies – regarded as indispensable devices – which attempt to invert death, converting and substituting it for life; and we ought to read the symbolic and metaphorical substitution of life for death as a death ritual (Namihira, 1998: 78).

Van Gennep said that in rituals, on the whole, there follows a shift from one state to another or from one universe to another (Van Gennep, 1909 (translation): 10). On the basis of this awareness, he constructed the concept of 'rites of passage'. He further classified rites of passage into rites of separation, or former borders; rites of transition, or borders; and rites of incorporation, or post-borders (Van Gennep, 1909 (translation): 11). Van Geenep also held that not all rituals applied to all people equally but that all rituals include these three aspects.

Turner went on to develop these three aspects further. The following is a summary of what he said. The very first aspect of separation rituals implies the separation of individuals and groups from their initial position in the social structure or from a specific cultural state. Secondly, in the intermediate 'marginal' stage, these individuals or groups pass through cultural levels in which the characteristics of the subject of the ritual (the person passing through) are vague – in short, the kinds of cultural levels which cannot be seen in either the first or third levels. In the third aspect the whole process ends with the holding of rituals of reunification with the social structure (Turner, V., 1969 (translation): 94). Turner introduced a further three concepts to be used in the analysis of these types of rituals. The first concept is that of 'liminality'. This refers to those aspects in which states and the personalities of individuals become vague as a result of deviating, or slipping, from the orderly framework with its normative positions.

The second concept is that of 'structure'. This refers to a system, with its own specific methods of differentiation, in assigning a ranking of political, legal and economic position. This ranking system employs a variety of forms of evaluation but always serves to segregate people from one another. The third concept is that of 'anti-structure' or '*communitas*'. This refers to the religious cooperative body made up of mutually equal individuals who submit to the complete authority of a *comitatus* or *communitas* – which has recently appeared in the border territory; is socially unstructured; or, as yet, only slightly structured and relatively undifferentiated – or of the ritual leader (Turner, V., 1969 (translation): 96).

Generally, we can, to some extent, regard all of people's collective actions, the shared common motives and aims of participants, as rites of passage. In short, 'The rites of passage schema does not only appear in the base of the ritual group at times of transition from one stage to another or from one social condition to another – easing, attaching conditions to and accompanying this process; it can also be seen in numerous independent systems in general society, in special societies and in order to look after the interests of individuals' (Van Gennep, 1909 (translation): 203). The struggle by day laborers and the homeless to survive the winter also have about them all of the fundamental distinguishing characteristics possessed by rituals. Briefly, in the Winter Struggle there are separation rituals in the form of the gatherings which launch the Winter Struggle; there is *communitas* in the direct and comprehensive meetings between the living and the living and also the living and the dead; and there are reunification rituals in the form of the final meetings of the Winter Struggle. The Winter Struggle contains reunification rituals but day laborers and the homeless do not, of course, move to 'new' ordinary social positions. They do, however, return to the world of work, having gone through the Winter Struggle, with refreshed spirits, a stimulated vitality for life and an invigorated mental attitude. In this sense, we could say that their spiritual phase moves to a new dimension. In the case of the Winter Struggle, we can interpret Turner's 'reintegration' in this manner.

During the Winter Struggle, day laborers and the homeless remember and mourn the dead who have fallen and embrace common feelings, as the living, of sharing the same destiny as each other. Thus, the Winter Struggle is a sympathy ritual (Van Gennep, 1909 (translation): 4) and also an intensifying ritual in which sympathy brings about the cohesion of the fellowship group.

> Beliefs do not lead to actions: crying out on established occasions, and in established ways, leads to an upsurge of appropriate beliefs in each person (Huntington and Metcalf, 1996 (translation): 70).

As mentioned above, the Winter Struggle is not simply a struggle 'to tide over the winter' it is also a struggle for 'tiding over the year'. At the end of the year, when their work has ended, day laborers and the homeless leave their work camps and return to Kamagaski where they participate in the year end and New Year events and take part in the Winter Struggle. In short, the Winter Struggle is one ritual containing two sets of meaning. People regard the last day of the year and the New Year as moments when they can meet the dead once again and strengthen ties with the living; and as moments when they rejoice in the fact that they have come safely through the past year and when they focus their happiness about living through the coming year. Thus, the last and first days of the year are doubly amplified solemn and bright days.

> I'm always tired so when am I going to enjoy myself if not at New Year? They say that the dead come back at *Obon* (All Souls) but isn't it true that here [in Kamagasaki] they come back at New Year too? *Obon* and New Year are the same thing! The dead and the living are all jumbled up together. Even yakuza treat us to *sake* and New Year's rice cakes. We're all together. Obviously, everyone likes it here. You could say it's like a second hometown. It might be New Year but just being here is all that matters to everyone. (B, a day laborer in his fifties. 2 January 1995. Sankaku Park in Kamagasaki.)

It is possible to employ Van Gennep and Turner's various concepts in the analysis of the Winter Struggle. This enables us to elucidate, dynamically and symbolically, the deep structure of the world of meaning of day laborers and the homeless.

Research methodology

I have participated in the Winter Struggle in Kamagasaki every year. In the course of doing so, I have heard the stories of a considerable number of day laborers and homeless people. In this chapter, I would like to consider the Twenty-fifth Kamagasaki Winter Struggle, held from the end of December 1994 until early January 1995, as one example of my participant observations and collection of people's stories In this

particular year, I attempted to participate comprehensively in activities such as gatherings, demonstration marches; the distribution of food and blankets to day laborers and the homeless; and recreation activities. I observed all of these things and recorded the course of events and the manner in which different people behaved. I also interviewed a total of twenty people, including day laborers, homeless people, labor movement activists and volunteers (These include some relatively coherent conversations during chance interview opportunities which I grabbed when they arose).

Having said this, the survey did not follow the Winter Struggle process punctiliously and in minute detail. Nonetheless, I was able to learn a considerable amount. Through participant observation I was able to draw closer to the laborers' and homeless people's way of seeing things and to observe just what went on during the Winter Struggle. Through concentrated interviews I was able to hear about (a part of) day laborers' and homeless people's life stories and to learn how these people interpret their own lives. To begin with there were two objectives to the survey of the Winter Struggle. One was to gain a practical grasp of the economic and social conditions experienced by day laborers and the homeless between 1994 and 1995. To this end, I accumulated various secondary sources – such as, the documents, pamphlets, leaflets and photocopies produced by the authorities and labor unions. The other objective was to gain a deep and dynamic grasp of the world of meaning and the cultural structure of day laborers and the homeless inside their social and economic conditions. In order to do this, I accumulated primary sources through participant observation and interviews. Finally, I made a thorough reading of all of the primary and secondary sources. At this stage, I endeavoured, on the one hand, to understand the general trends in the Kamagasaki day laborer market. On the other hand, my endeavours were in the area of the interpretation and formation of the day laborers' and homeless people's world of meaning. Particularly in the case of the latter, I read my records of participant observations and interviews with people repeatedly, analyzed words and meanings and their contexts and extracted terms and remarks which would serve as keys to interpretation. Then, using key the concepts of Van Gennep and Turner as clues, I set out to interpret the meaning of words and remarks and to reconstruct a world of meaning. In this chapter, I call this series of research procedures an analysis of the symbolism of the Winter Struggle. This chapter is one attempt at precisely this type of analysis.

You're not someone from this area. I can see it. Are you a policeman? What are you doing here – where are you really from? Oh, from Hiroshima? What has brought you here from so far away? What's that, you're doing a survey? A survey? That sounds difficult. Does doing a survey on tramps like us pay? You must be getting something out of it? You're doing it for nothing. Well, well – New Year here is exciting. So many people flock here, have singing contests, play tug-of-war and make rice cakes – it's very lively. We start quarrelling in the New Year. This is the only place that has such a lively New Year. So, why don't you forget about your survey and enjoy yourself? Here, have a drink. Go on, it's all right. (C, a day laborer in his fifties. 1 January 1995. Sankaku Park.)

Kamagasaki's history

Before starting the ritual analysis of the Winter Struggle, we need the briefest of explanations concerning Kamagasaki, the place where this struggle unfolds, even though this means some overlap with Chapter Two.

Kamagasaki is Japan's biggest *yoseba*[1]. Labor supply capital pours into Kamagasaki, in search of a day labor force. Day laborers are made up of the base group of laborers, who are regularly able to find work, and the peripheral group, which is largely unable to work. Relations between the two are not inherently fixed; this has been a 'fluid surplus population' (Marx, 1867: 670) moving repeatedly between having work and not having work.

Immediately following the end of the World War Two, Osaka's streets, railway stations and subways overflowed with homeless people who had been the victims of wartime fire damage. However, along with economic recovery – particularly around the time of the Korean War, from 1950 to 1952 – these people disappeared from the streets, having either been admitted to facilities or having acquired their own homes. Kamagasaki, which had been reduced to a burnt out plain by bombs, also revived as an open-air market where labor arrangers could pass on news of work to day laborers. Large numbers of unemployed people flocked to Kamagasaki and stood around looking for work in the street corner open-air market. This is how the words '*tachinbō*' (from the characters for standing and person: meaning a day laborer) and '*anko*' came into being.

Day laborers call themselves *anko* and so too do other people. The etymology of the word appears to lie in the fact that day laborers, since long ago, have stood in established places in large numbers waiting for

work opportunities They resemble the lantern angler fish (*chōchin ankō*), which waits, practically immobile, on the seabed for its prey to approach (Terashima 1976: 415).

In the 1960s period of heavy industry-led rapid economic growth, large numbers of people from industries such as agriculture, fishing, mining and cottage industries entered heavy industry, which was flourishing. At the same time, there was also an increase in the number of day laborers able to move from work camp to work camp for long periods of time to service the plethora of large-scale construction works to reconstruct the Japanese archipelago. Kamagasaki's population increased slightly in this period. Kamagasaki then changed from being a slum, in which women and children could also be found, to a *yoseba*/cheap lodging house quarter where single day laborers lived in large concentrations. Kamagasaki became a quarter for laborers brimming with vitality.

> There are lots of laborers here [Kamagasaki] from Kyushu. There are also some from Okinawa. They were originally coal miners and fishermen. Others have come here after having been employed as part of a group. People around here [the environs of Osaka] tend to stay away from Kama[gasaki]. Maybe they have a strong sense of themselves as being down and out. Maybe they are bothered by the thought of other people seeing them. Whatever the case, they are all getting on in years. They're coming to that stage where they will gradually start sleeping rough and then one or two will die. Working hard and then dying lonely: maybe that's all there is to life. (B, quoted previously. 1 January 1995. Sankaku Park.)

In the 1970s, manufacturing industry made large-scale cuts in production. Meanwhile, the service industry expanded. As related industries grew, the construction industry also saw sustained expansion. The economic bubble of the 1980s followed these conditions. The economic bubble was a period of excessive investment fuelled by easy money and land speculation. As a result of all this, large numbers of day laborers were mobilized to work on construction projects. In this period, over ninety per cent of Kamagasaki's laborers worked in the construction industry (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* (National Conference of Day Labor Unions), 1998).

> When I came to Kama[gasaki] [in the mid 1970s] there was some work around. Wages (*dezura*) weren't bad either. It was very different to today.

> In the mornings, even the [Airin Labor Welfare] Center was lively. There used to be mini-busses lined up in a row. That's why everyone was happy. There were a lot of riots. We even caused riots because we had so much energy. Since we worked like blazes, we felt extremely proud! We used to strut about in our workmen's trousers (*hichibu-zubon*). There were many quarrels. These quarrels were a matter of pride. They broke out, say, when someone took offence at the way they had been treated. It was different from these days of mean pride, when people won't give back the money you've loaned them. We felt that it really was a laborers' precinct back then. (D, a day laborer in his sixties. 31 December 1994. In a refectory in Kamagasaki.)

In 1992 the economic bubble collapsed and all industrial activity stagnated. In this period, the construction industry played an employment adjustment role as it absorbed the unemployed who had been expelled from companies. National and regional authorities increased their public investment. For this reason, this period saw a continuation of the preceding level of employment in the construction industry. However, there was a wide-scale decline in the number of day laborers. Their numbers declined from 1,870,000 in 1989 to 770,000 in 1997 (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1998). The number of laborers in Kamagasaki also declined. There were 18,836 in 1995 but this was a 27.1 per cent decline compared to 1990 (*Kamagasaki Shiryō Sentā*, 1999). The Winter Struggle discussed in this chapter occurred in this period.

> All the healthy people have disappeared from Kama[gasaki]. They've all spread out – off to work camps or regular work. People have no choice since there's no work. There's nothing but old people left now. I was in the work camp in Ehime prefecture for two months too. Before that I didn't have any work and slept rough. Even though the wages were low, it was better than sleeping rough. I just got back here yesterday. I was able to get a room in a lodging house. After the New Year, I'll go back to Ehime. To tell the truth it's a bit far, I'd like to be closer, but…. There's no doubt about it, I'm rather attached to Kamagasaki. That's so, but I have to travel for work so it can't be helped. (E, a homeless person in his fifties. 29 December 1994. Sankaku Park.)

Recession and the stagnation of economic activity are still features today. We are seeing a rapid succession of bankruptcies amongst construction companies. Large general contractors are not immune either.

The number of companies declaring bankruptcy in 1997 was 5,127, representing a thirty-two per cent increase compared with1996 (*Asahi Shinbun,* 6 June 1998). The construction industry is no longer playing an employment adjustment role. Kamagasaki has also changed. Firstly, there has been a decline in labor arrangers coming to Kamagasaki. The number of agents registered with the Airin Labor Welfare Center was 2,764 in 1991 and 1,860 in 1997 (Fukada, 1998). The lack of work and the failure of laborers to find work led to an increase in the numbers of homeless people. Then, it became difficult for the homeless to resume being laborers. Thus, they became habitual homeless – in short, 'a stagnant surplus population' (Marx, 1867: 672).

> I borrow a bicycle drawn cart from a junk dealer and collect cardboard in it – if I earn even 1,000 yen a day, then I'm doing well. Walking around isn't work that pays. I do lots of other things too. I work as a sandwich man in Minami (the biggest entertainment district in Osaka) and as a removalists' helper. But, I don't get to do these jobs every day. I can't rely on them because they aren't guaranteed to feed me. Collecting cardboard is more reliable. There is no work for laborers and even if there were, it is hard work and I can't manage it these days. My body can't take it any more. When people lose their jobs, they'll do anything. They'll even go to a soup kitchen, anything. I can't say if my appearance is disagreeable to people but no one can call us 'beggars'. (D, quoted previously. 31 December 1994. In a Kamagasaki refectory.)

Part Two: The labor movement and the Winter Struggle

The history of the labor movement

In the past, the Kamagasaki Winter Struggle was, as in the case of other *yoseba*, a day laborers' movement for 'tiding over the winter'. The homeless have, in the past, also formed the core of day laborers in work. With the increase in the numbers of habitually homeless people, the Winter Struggle has increasingly assumed the aspect of a relief movement for the homeless. The form of the movement is, however, an extension of the movement in the past. Both in the past and now, the sponsor of the Winter Struggle is the Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Executive Committee, in which volunteer groups participate – principal amongst them the Kamagasaki Day Labor Union. The Kamagasaki labor movement has a long post war history. This is a history made up of three periods.

The first period was the one in which the movement was a traditional labor union. At the beginning of the 1960s, Kamagasaki was changing from a slum into a *yoseba*. The first major uprising by day laborers, the First Riot, occurred in Kamagasaki in August 1961. Angry laborers yelled at the police, who had neglected a laborer with minor injuries following a traffic accident, 'Aren't you going to hurry up and call an ambulance?'[2]. The Osaka Branch – Kamagasaki Chapter of the All-Japan Free Trade Union (*Zennihon Jiyū Rōdō Kumiai*) (*Zennichi Jirō*) was set up in the September immediately after this. This was Kamagasaki's first-ever labor union. In 1969, the Kansai Regional Headquarters, Construction Branch – Nishinari Chapter of the National Harbors Labor Union (*Zenkoku Kōwan Rōdō Kumiai*) (*Zenkōwan*) was established. The 1960s was a period of riots in Kamagasaki. By 1971, during the period of rapid economic growth, there had been twelve riots (Uchida (Fugitive's real name), 1995: 1–6). In 1966, following the fifth riot, the 'Three Party Conference' – made up of the city and prefecture of Osaka and the police – renamed Kamagasaki the 'Airin area', which means Loving Neighbors, in an attempt to alter the fearful image which had stuck to Kamagasaki as a result of the riots. In the midst of the contemporary construction boom, considerable numbers of laborers were pouring into Kamagasaki. There were also frequent cases of employer abuse of laborers – for example, refusing to pay wages, using violence against laborers and refusing to accept responsibility for work accidents. The labor union played a considerable role regarding the improvement of day laborers' working conditions. However, the traditional labor union, which based itself on a movement of organized workers, had its limits in grappling with the range of problems found in Kamagasaki.

The second period of the labor movement was that of the period of the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference (*Kamagasaki Kyōtōkaigi*) (*Kamakyō*). In the period around 1970, the student movement was sweeping the nation's universities. In this political atmosphere, some student activists entered Kamagasaki (and San'ya). The students called on the laborers to rise up in armed struggles, even rioting if necessary. The 'First Kamagasaki Winter Struggle' was organized in this hot political climate, between the end of 1970 and the beginning of 1971. The former students not only built up labor struggles against employers and labor arrangers, they also organized political struggles against the government. In 1972 they formed the 'Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference for Pursuing Violent Labor Arrangers'[3]. The period in which this was the pivotal organization in

the labor movement is the second period of the Kamagasaki social/ political movement. The leaders of the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference were former students and laborers with a strong interest in politics. Their style of activism was firstly to censure employers and labor recruiters who abused laborers. Because a majority of these employers and labor recruiters were members of violent gangs, they were severely censured[4]. Large numbers of workers responded to the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference's call and took part in the struggles. Struggles at times also erupted into riots. For this reason, the police regarded the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference as a political society possessing dangerous revolutionary ideas. The 'groundbreaking arguments' of the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference, which held that 'it is precisely the *yoseba* laborers who are the main actors in the liberation of the working classes', resulted in their struggles being isolated from workers 'in general'. This and the ferocious tactics of the security police in stamping out the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference eventually led to its collapse[5].

> Winter in Kamagasaki is a seasonal expression of the structural contradictions in Japanese capitalism and of social poverty; it is the concentration – coalescing around the axis of the New Year – of the whole of the misery, poverty and oppression of the laboring classes. It is also the disposal of the no longer useful labor force commodities as they die of cold, starvation and illness. Even then, these dead bodies are forced to serve the bourgeoisie –right up until the end of the end – as guinea pigs used for dissections in medical faculties (*Kama Kyōtō-Sanya Gentōi Henshū Iinkai*, 1974: 100)[6].

The third period of the labor movement is the period of the Kamagasaki Day Labor Union (KDLU). This organization continues to be active in the labor movement today. Labor activists and laborers set up the KDLU in 1974. It retained some of the ideas of the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference regarding the movement. Meanwhile, it also adopted the style of the general labor movement. In practise this meant carrying out political struggles at times of significant political issues; and, on a daily basis, providing labor advice to day laborers, conducting collective bargaining with employers and labor recruiters and, furthermore, carrying out relief activities for laborers unable to work and for the homeless. The KDLU has held a Spring Offensive (*shuntō*) every year and also collective bargaining with employers and

labor recruiters in order to increase the minimum wage for laborers. It has also put on a Summer Festival between 13–15 August, to coincide with *obon*, with the aim of relieving the tiredness of day laborers and the homeless and also at building solidarity. Furthermore, it has participated in the Winter Struggle and relief activities for the homeless during the year end-New Year period. In 1982, the day labor unions of San'ya, Kotobukichō, Sasajima, Kamagasaki and Tikkō (Fukuoka) joined together and formed the 'National Conference of Day Labor Unions' (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*) (*Hiyatoi Zenkyō*). Availing itself of this opportunity, the KDLU dealt not only with the work and life issues of the Kamagasaki laborers but also deepened its ties with the labor movements in San'ya and Sasajima. In 1983, in San'ya violent gangs (the Nishido Group from the Kanamachi Family) attacked the labor union (the San'ya Struggle Group) launching offensive and defensive battles. The KDLU dispatched a struggle corps to San'ya to remain there permanently[7].

> With your spirits exasperated at not being able to find work and dragging along your worn-out bodies, you – a group of poor people – are made to roam around a hell in which you see people who have fallen down dead on the streets. Mobilization for national policy projects, which are aggressive and against the interests of the people, awaits those who are proud of still being able-bodied. For those who cry out no to this enforced destiny, there is systematic death – disposal by the security forces and death in prison: preparation for the death penalty. These are the conditions which surround us. However, even in the midst of despair there is a glimmer of light[8].

With the beginning of the 1990s, in conditions in which work declined sharply and the numbers of homeless people abounded, attempts to find work and to provide relief to the homeless came to the fore of the Kamagasaki movement. The KDLU and volunteer organizations providing help with matters such as medical advice, soup kitchens and night patrols joined together and formed the Kamagasaki Anti-Unemployment Liaison Committee (KALC) (*Kamagasaki Hanshitsugyō Renraku Kaigi*) (*Hanshitsuren*). Then in 1999, the Kamagasaki Support Organization (*Kamagasaki Shien Kikō*) – a Not for Profit Organization – acknowledged KALC as its parent body. KALC then began assisting aged laborers and homeless people in finding employment.

The Winter Struggle

The Twenty-fifth Kamagasaki Winter Struggle took place from December 1994 until January 1995. The following is a summary of the struggle.

Day laborers and the homeless are frequently exploited by employers, labor recruiters and labor arrangers; discriminated against by other citizens; ignored by the authorities; and abused by the police. They need to organize in order to survive the cruel circumstances in which they find themselves. The suffering of Kamagasaki's laborers increases considerably in winter, and particularly during the period of extreme cold from the end of December to the beginning of January. In this period, the vast majority of work camps close down and there is practically no work. Even the information windows of official facilities close and work stops. Meanwhile, however, day laborers and the homeless, who have no reserves, cannot stay in their lodging houses. They cannot even eat. They are left on the cold streets. Elderly and sick homeless people die on the streets, in ambulances and in hospital beds. The Winter Struggle gives day laborers and the homeless the resources and the energy to survive this bitter cold.

> The actual state of affairs in the winter season is that it is a period in which (1) the volume of work decreases. (2) In addition to this, large numbers of those who had gone away for work come flooding back. (3) 'People forget the summertime 'friendliness' of drinking rowdily with one's friends – one by one they are stripped away: some go off to work camps; some eke out a humble existence in lodging houses while using up their meagre reserves bit by bit; others sleep rough in the cold or are thrown into accommodation facilities (Yamaoka, 1996: 272).

'Not A Single Death!'

This is the slogan of the Winter Struggle led by the Winter Struggle Executive Committee. There were an average of 456 homeless people in the Kamagasaki district in 1994 (*Kamagasaki Iryō Renraku Kai*, 1995). The number of homeless for 1993 had been 333. This same year, in Nishinari Ward where Kamagasaki is situated, 324 people died of illness on the streets (*Kamagasaki Shiryō Sentā*, 1999)[9]. Two thirds of these deaths were concentrated in the months of December, January and February in winter. The homeless wander the streets; they starve and freeze to death. Loneliness, despair and the terror of dying assail them.

'If Attacked, Counter-attack!'

This is another slogan used in the Winter Struggle. The homeless are facing the crisis of death. However, one hardly ever hears of cases of homeless people having committed suicide. Even though they are in a crisis of survival, they do not simply choose the path of 'defeat'. They keep living through the cold, empty bellies and struggles. They know that without friends they cannot win the struggle against loneliness. Thus, the homeless keep participating in the Winter Struggle with friends in the same circumstances as themselves. Friends are 'other homeless people' with the same destiny.

> The Winter Struggle slogan, 'Live and take revenge on the fellows!' is the very reasonable and universal slogan expressing the utmost determination of Kamagasaki laborers in the face of capital's cruel and violent system of exploitation. The Winter Struggle, a base for launching activities – resting on the axis of a soup kitchen and a tent city, which we ought rightly to call a camp for the destitute – is itself the modern expression of the resistance put up to "winter" by Kamagasaki laborers, plagued by state powers which snatch the means of production by force (*Kama Kyōtō-San'ya Gentōi Henshū Iinkai*, 1974: 100).

The Winter Struggle is an organized and planned social movement. The membership of the Executive Committee is made up of day laborers and labor activists, citizens' groups, religious groups and students. The KDLU and various other groups providing medical help, soup kitchens and patrols all play their own parts. The Executive Committee is made up of eight teams. The first is the Labor Consultation Team which conducts collective bargaining with employers and labor recruiters regarding problems such as labor issues concerning day laborers and the non-payment of wages. The second is the Soup Kitchen Team which operates a soup kitchen for the homeless. The third is the Medical Team which conducts medical consultations and medical patrols for the homeless. The fourth is the Patrol Team which carries out night patrols of Kamagasaki and its environs. The fifth is the Security Guard Team which carries out all-night patrols of the makeshift camps where the homeless are camping out. The sixth is the Culture Team which plans and puts into action the singing contest; music show; rice cake making, baseball and wrestling contests. The seventh is the Propaganda Team which publishes '*The Winter Survival Daily*', a newssheet reporting on the events of each day of the Winter Struggle. The eighth is the Supplies Team which raises the supplies of

wood needed to keep the fires burning and the food supplies needed for the soup kitchen.

The most important activities of the Winter Struggle are relief activities aimed at the homeless who are on the verge of a crisis which could lead to death. The winter in December 1994 and January 1995 was extremely cold, with average minimum temperatures during the Winter Struggle of 3.2 degrees Celsius (*Nihon Kishō Kyōkai*, 1996: 164–165). There were also some snowfalls in this period. There is a distinct causal relationship between decreasing temperatures and the deterioration of the physical strength of the homeless. The bodies of the homeless are debilitated as a result of conditions of physical abuse through work and inadequate nutrition. There are also a considerable number who are ill and injured. In addition to all of this, their very state of homelessness saps their physical strength. Because of this, when night time temperatures drop by even just one degree, the homeless cannot endure and some freeze to death[10].

Part Three: The development of the Winter Struggle

The Winter Struggle process

The 1994–1995 Winter Struggle developed as a series of activities in which an Executive Committee of around twenty people, a considerably greater number of volunteers and more than 1,000 day laborers and homeless people participated. What was the meaning of the Winter Struggle for those who took part in it? What type of world of meaning did people construct in the course of the struggle? Below, I will attempt to analyze the human meaning of the Winter Struggle, in accordance with the framework of ritual analysis presented at the beginning of this chapter. I will carry out this analysis using the data recorded in my field notes. However, I will not note these data entries in detail.

The Winter Struggle is a collective and protective rite for day laborers and the homeless. By participating in the Winter Struggle, people encourage and help each other. The Winter Struggle is also a group intensification rite. Through the Winter Struggle, people reminisce about colleagues who have regrettably died. They also shout out their anger at the merciless circumstances which have robbed them of their colleagues. At the same time, they embrace their debt to the dead. As far as they are concerned, the dead – who have travelled to the very end of this hellish life – have reached the culmination of the

Table 8.1: Two worlds of meaning

World of meaning	Misery	Pride
Work symbols	Exploitation	Disputes
Place symbols	Slum	Yoseba
Identity	Laborers	Workers
Relationship symbols	Loneliness	Bonds
Way of life symbols	Attacks	Counterattaks
Ultimate symbols	Death	Life
Meaning intermediaries	The homeless	

various sufferings of the living. The living must die sometime and they dispatch their thoughts to that instant. Then they fall silent as they catch a glimpse of the destiny which they are not able to resist.

Meanwhile, the living bring about an inversion of the meaning of life during the Winter Struggle. People vow to the dead that no matter how miserable their circumstances, they will never die. The dead are resurrected in the hearts of the living. The dead call out. The living reply. The contrast between the world of the dead and the world of the living becomes clearer the more severe the winter. This is symbolized as a contrast between 'misery' and 'pride'. Let us look at Table 8.1. 'Misery', as used here, expresses feelings of despair about the deprivation of one's humanity in this world. The homeless know that death is not far away and that they cannot flee death. Thus, 'misery' becomes an inauspicious sacred symbol, acting as a metaphor for death itself.

> I think of so many things at night that I can't get to sleep. I've fallen as far as there is to fall. I think about not having long to go and I worry about what's going to happen to me. As long as I'm alive I won't die. When I was healthy I forgot all about them, now my father, mother, brothers and sisters randomly come into my thoughts. I feel sad. It's karma. I don't know if they are alive or dead. Even if they were alive, it's not as if I could meet them now. I do not want to think that this too is a case of reaping what we sow (F, a homeless person in his seventies. 30 December 1994 Sankaku Park)[11].

'Pride', by contrast, expresses feelings of the complete rebirth of all humanity. The homeless bravely reject the fate which leads towards death. They rally against fate. People cry out. 'Why are we forced

to experience anything like this!' The riots which broke out in Kamagasaki were frequently violent expressions of the resentments of the living and their desire for life. 'If Attacked, Counter-attack!' This straightforward slogan is itself proof of the will on the part of the homeless, who are on the verge of death, to live and it is an expression of the intent to recover one's self as a human being. Thus, pride becomes a sacred symbol signifying life itself.

> I'll tell you something friend. No matter how exhausted, we never do dirty things. We are innocent of that. We may be poor but we hate doing anything underhand. We always behave lawfully. Just look at my face and you'll see. See, you see! There was this fellow who accused me of being a thief –that made me angry. I remembered at the time. I used to send my mother money every month. Can someone who steals people's money manage to send money home? I can't forgive people who don't believe me! (G, a laborer in his forties. 2 January 1995. Sankaku Park.)[12]

In the course of the Winter Struggle 'misery' and 'pride' well up in considerable measure in the hearts of laborers and the homeless. The dead become the symbol of 'misery', symbolizing 'negative life'. The living become the symbol of 'pride', symbolizing 'positive life'. People drift passionately in and out of these two worlds. The Winter Struggle is a struggle between 'misery' and 'pride'. People's intentions and emotions vie with each other on a grand scale. Let us look at Figure 8.1. This figure shows the process through which the Winter Struggle of 1994–1995 progressed. The Winter Struggle process can be classified into three phases.

The first steps (from mid-November until 24 December)

In mid-November labor and religious bodies in the area and relief bodies (Christian, student and labor/civil movement activists) set up the Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shares out the work that needs to be done for the Winter Struggle between each of the teams. The members of the committee also divide themselves up amongst each of the teams. They hold meetings intermittently. In this way, the preparations progress for the Winter Struggle. Citizens, laborers and students gather together on 17 December and start the Twenty -fifth Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Support and Solidarity Meeting.

Figure 8.1: The process of the winter struggle
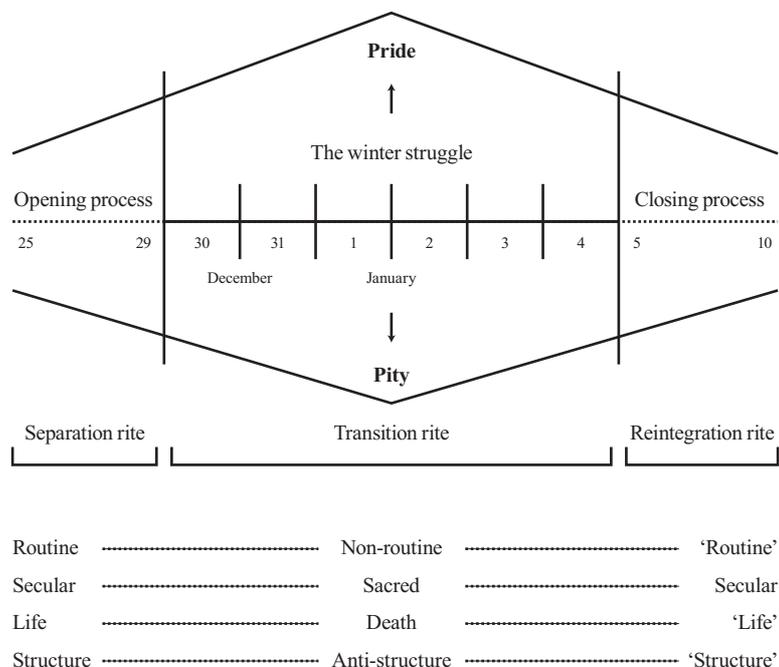
Phase One (25–29 December)

On 25 December the mass meeting inaugurating the beginning of the Twenty-fifth Kamagasaki Winter Struggle Executive Committee is held in Sankaku Park. This marks the beginning of the Winter Struggle. With most of the preparations for the Winter Struggle completed, the various activities of the Executive Committee now begin in earnest. In this period, work stops throughout Japan and Kamagasaki overflows with laborers who have returned from work camps. On 29–30 December, outside the City Rehabilitation Counselling Center (*Shikōsō*), the formalities are underway for admitting people to the Osaka Southern Port Temporary Accommodation Center, with the homeless being brought in by bus[13]. At this point, as people turn their attention to the central purpose of the Winter Struggle, a spirit of mingling, devoid of feelings of tension and filled instead with a sense of emancipation, rapidly takes hold.

Phase Two (from 30 December until 4 January)

This is the central phase of the Winter Struggle. On the night of 30 December the Executive Committee holds the Winter Struggle Festival. At night a singing contest is held on a stage in Sankaku Park. From this night until 3 January – the last day – bands play and popular ballads and singing contests are performed on the stage. The homeless sit on mats by the bonfire and enjoy the performances. During the intervals, the Executive Committee makes appeals. These appeals stress the fact that winter is a hellish season for the homeless. They censure the authorities for their reluctance to provide relief for the homeless. Then, an appeal is made to the solidarity upon which hangs the survival of the homeless. 'Let's Keep Persevering!' The homeless raise their arms in the air. This is how the Winter Struggle is acted out on the morning of 30 December. During this period, work sites are closed and there is no work at all throughout Japan. Large numbers of day laborers return to Kamagasaki from work sites and work camps. The homeless in the city center also return. All official service counters are also closed in this period. Employment assistance for laborers, the payment of insurance benefits to day laborers, assistance and advice for the needy, medical care and the like are all suspended. The result is that laborers and the homeless are thrown out onto the bitterly cold streets with nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep. Anxiety and terror at the thought of dying on the streets versus the aspiration to keep on living reach a fever pitch in people's hearts. The feud between 'misery' and 'pride' reaches a fever pitch.

Phase Three (5–10 January)

This is the final phase of the Winter Struggle. The Winter Struggle actually ends on 4 January. There is still no work to be had but day laborers' thoughts begin to turn once again to work. The homeless begin to spread out throughout the city. Government offices resume providing services for laborers and the homeless. On the afternoon of the fourth the Winter Struggle Executive Committee, along with laborers and the homeless, hold protest demonstrations aimed at the Osaka city and prefectural offices. They refer to these ironically as 'Thanksgiving visits' (*orei maiiri*). They then censure the authorities' meagre relief measures, and hand over a list of demands. This struggle is the final exciting scene of the Winter Struggle drama. The soup kitchen, night patrols and medical care continue until beyond the

fifth. However, the Winter Struggle essentially ends with this protest demonstration. In no time at all, the excitement of the protest cools off amongst the people. On the tenth the Closing Rally of the Winter Struggle is held in Sankaku Park. Then the rally makes a declaration of victory to the effect that we have survived the cruel winter! Everyone then vows to survive the rest of the winter[14]. With this the Winter Struggle Executive Committee completes its major activities. The laborers go off to their work sites having gained renewed vigor. After this, Winter Struggle Executive Committee holds meetings to review that year's Winter Struggle once a week (Tuesdays) for the whole of January.

Part Four: The Winter Struggle as a ritual

The ritual process

The Winter Struggle is a system of rituals made up of the world of extremes of 'misery' and 'pride' – in short, the various actions of people squeezed by the struggle between life and death. If we were to interpret the Winter Struggle from this viewpoint, using Van Gennep's framework, then the results would be as follows. Phase One of the Winter Struggle would correspond to a 'separation ritual' which severs day laborers and the homeless from the world of the living on this shore and beckons them towards the world of the dead on the other shore. Phase Two would correspond to a 'transition ritual' in which the living and the dead meet, as the living meet up with – and talk directly to – the dead. Phase Three would correspond to a 'reunification ritual' which reconnects the living with this world and urges a redefinition of this world on them.

The following describes what an attempt to interpret the Winter Struggle, using Turner's framework, would look like. Phase One would correspond to a 'structural' state in which laborers and the homeless live the social structure (the set of status and role). Phase Two would correspond to a 'liminal' state in which laborers and the homeless stand between the world of the living and that of the dead. In other words, it would correspond to a state of 'anti-structure' in which laborers and the homeless abandon the social order and face the dead; or, to a state of '*communitas*' which creates completely emotional and harmonious fusion amongst them. In this way, Phase Two would become a ritual scene in which people's actions strengthen the unity of the living. Phase Three would correspond to a new 'structural' state in which people's

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spirits are refreshed, their mutual ties strengthened, and in which they are restored to the social structure and reunified with it.

The phase two dimension

Phase Two is the most important ritual in the Winter Struggle. For the laborers returning from work sites and work camps, and also for the homeless who return from the city center where they wander about, Kamagasaki is a yearned for and affectionately regarded 'second hometown'. People linger in Sankaku Park, which is at the heart of Kamagasaki, and relax. On the last day of the year they enjoy the Red and White Singing Contest on a television screen in Sankaku Park and listen to the New Year's Eve bells. With the dawning of the New Year, they enjoy the special New Year spiced wine and rice cakes. Laborers and the homeless savour their joy at having persevered through another year's harsh circumstances. Then they regain their vitality for life and their morale. They vow, in their hearts, never to lose their human dignity no matter how harsh the circumstances that await them.

At this point, the Winter Struggle ritual becomes one with the year end-New Year events (ritual), which occur in both the harshest and the most 'cheerful' moment. In short, the Winter Struggle unfolds as a struggle to survive the year. People overlay their sorrow and happiness about 'surviving the year' with their sorrow and happiness about 'surviving the winter'. People remember the dead and think about the hardships of living while at the same time savouring the fact that they have come safely through another year. They then gain the cheer to live the coming year too. In this way, there is a redoubling of the exaltation of people's spirits and the maximum of emotional self-contradiction.

The Second Phase is a time of symmetrical meaning, one when 'misery' and 'pride' conflict sharply in the hearts of the living. This conflict can further be analyzed in accordance with a number of sub-dimensions. The first of these dimensions is the conflict between 'routine' conditions and 'non-routine' conditions. The Winter Struggle leads participants from the 'routine' conditions of the First Phase to the 'non-routine' conditions of the Second Phase and then, dramatically takes them back to the 'routine' conditions of Phase Three. This process implies that people are ranked by the 'strength'[15] of the living (Phases One and Three) or their separation from the dead (Phase Two). In 'routine' Kamagasaki it is the living who are dominant. Activists

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from the labor union and support groups, who make Kamagasaki the base of their activities, are the 'strongest' people. This is because they are the people who possess both physical and spiritual resources in abundance[16]. By contrast, in 'non-routine' Kamagasaki it is the dead who are dominant. The reason for this is the fact that the dead are people who have lost everything; who have gone through a variety of sufferings in this world, which the living can never experience; and who have complete knowledge of the extremities of 'misery'.

The second dimension of Phase Two is the conflict between 'secularity' and 'sacredness'. Firstly, the whole of the Winter Struggle is a sacred event severing people (and place) from this world. On this basis, Phase One corresponds first of all to the secular world. Here the ranking of meaning is erected on the basis of economic values attributed to things. Next, Phase Two corresponds to the sacred world. Here the ranking of meaning is erected on the basis of religious values attributed to things. Finally, Phase Three corresponds to the secular world which now has a new meaning attached to it. In this way, in Phase Two people and things are assigned a rank on the basis of the degree of psychological and emotional separation from death and the dead.

The third dimension is the conflict between the 'living' and the 'dead'. In 'routine' Kamagasaki laborers and the homeless endure their daily lives. This is a world of utilitarianism in which everyone acts as a wolf with regard to others. This principle permeates Kamagasaki, without a shadow of illusion. Laborers regard the homeless as piteous people who have lost their lives and who have already had advance notice of their impending deaths. The dead are flung to the other side of the living's oblivion. Before the strength of the secular world, the homeless frequently cannot even stay in Kamagasaki. In contrast to this, the ranking of the living and the dead is reversed in 'non-routine' Kamagasaki. Along with this there is also a reversal of the rankings amongst the living. Let us look at Figure 8.2. In this figure the dead, who have seen the hell of this life, reign over the living. The living respect and worship the dead. They do this because the dead know the destiny that awaits the living and because they are absolute beings. The living are then ranked on the basis of their separation from the dead. In short, the living are ranked from the elderly to the young; from laborers with no physical strength to able-bodied laborers; and from the homeless to those still in work. The homeless person who looks as if he could fall down dead on the street tomorrow leads the existence which is closest to the dead. He is the intermediary between the living and the dead.

Figure 8.2: The ranking of the living and the dead

The living   **The living**

Activists	The dead
Laborers	The homeless
The homeless	Laborers
The dead	Activists
Routine Kamagasaki	Non-routine Kamagasaki

Transition →
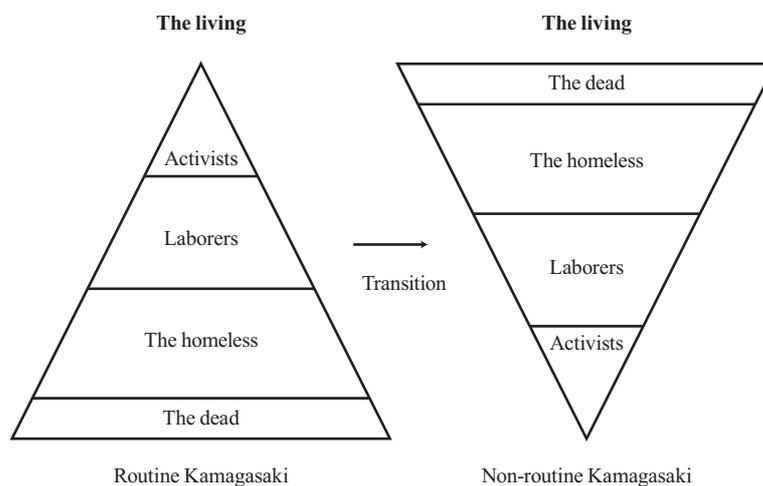
The final dimension is the conflict between 'structure and 'anti-structure'. 'Routine' Kamagasaki is inside the order based on the economic and social power of the living. Within this, people are controlled by competition to survive. However, this order is dissolved in 'non-routine' Kamagasaki. There, power relations between people are meaningless. Then, a world of *communitas* emerges in which people mix directly with one another. The living press their palms together in prayer before photographs of the dead on altars, erected in the park. Then, they think about the dead. They talk about the dead. In the course of doing this, the living arrive at thinking that they all share a common destiny. The feelings of being 'in the same boat' grow stronger amongst the living. Laborers help the homeless, the able-bodied help their weaker colleagues and together they make a stand against their common enemies. In the makeshift camp fellow homeless people who have met for the first time huddle in overcrowded beds, staving off the bitter cold as they warm each others' bodies. Dividing up the rice balls which have been handed out, they stave off starvation. If anyone has any money, they sit in a circle passing around a bottle of sake and toasting the New Year. Through these activities, the 'strategies linking' (Yamaguchi Keiko, 1997) the living develop fully.

> It's a good New Year. Last year I had no work and my friend died – I was
> exhausted. But there's something about New Year – they say it's a time of

renewal. I might not have any money but I have friends. They share their drink with me. People who don't have much money pool what they have and then sit in a circle passing around a bottle. It's very good – being happy with others. I have just come from offering incense sticks and joining my hands in prayer [at a stand for making incense offerings as an act of mourning for those who died during the past year]. My friend is there too. It brought back lots of memories. Everyone was sorrowful. But, it was the most restful time. Even if I die I know that my friends will offer up incense sticks for me. Friends are good. Better than brothers and sisters who are tied to us by blood. We have a saying about close friends rather than distant relatives. When someone doesn't feel well, we look out for each other. We even share whatever we have to eat. We quarrel sometimes but then we make up again. We must value our friends. This is the kind of thing we talk about at New Year. (B, quoted previously. 2 January. Sankaku Park.)

The setting of the Winter Struggle

The Winter Struggle develops in several locations throughout Kamagasaki. Kamagasaki is spatially and socially segregated from the outside society. The usually invisible wall of segregation emerges quite distinctly with the spectacle of the Winter Struggle. At the end of the year, day laborers, for whom work has finished, suddenly come pouring back into the 0.62 square kilometre area which makes up Kamagasaki. The outside society is an exclusive world based on power and status. In contrast to this, Kamagasaki is a world of psychological fusion, which consists of a system of religious meanings attached to people and things. The same can be said with regard to various places within Kamagasaki. These places are ranked on the basis of the degree of sacredness attached to them. The extent of sacredness of a place is further determined according to the distance between the place and the 'dead'. Let us look at Figures 8.3 and 8.4.

The most important place in the Winter Struggle is the front entrance to the municipal medical clinic, 'Airin Medical Clinic'. The Makeshift camp is set up at the wind-swept entrance to this building. Around 150 of the homeless who are frail of body and who have no place to sleep spend the night here, tucked up two to a bed. The Patrol Team of the Executive Committee of the Kamagasaki Winter Struggle stands guard around this area all night long. They keep an eye out for thieves (*shinogi*). However, even tucked up in these beds, weak homeless people sometimes breathe their last breath. Thus, the makeshift camp is a strategic place in the Winter Struggle, which

Figure 8.3: Sacred spaces – Kamagasaki (a rough sketch)

Private railway line   Private railway line

| JR Shinimamiya Station and platform |

① Airin General Center   ⑤ Stage

② Airin Medical Center   ⑥ Stands for offering incense

③ Temporary Accommodation Center   ⑦ Television

④ Sankaku Park
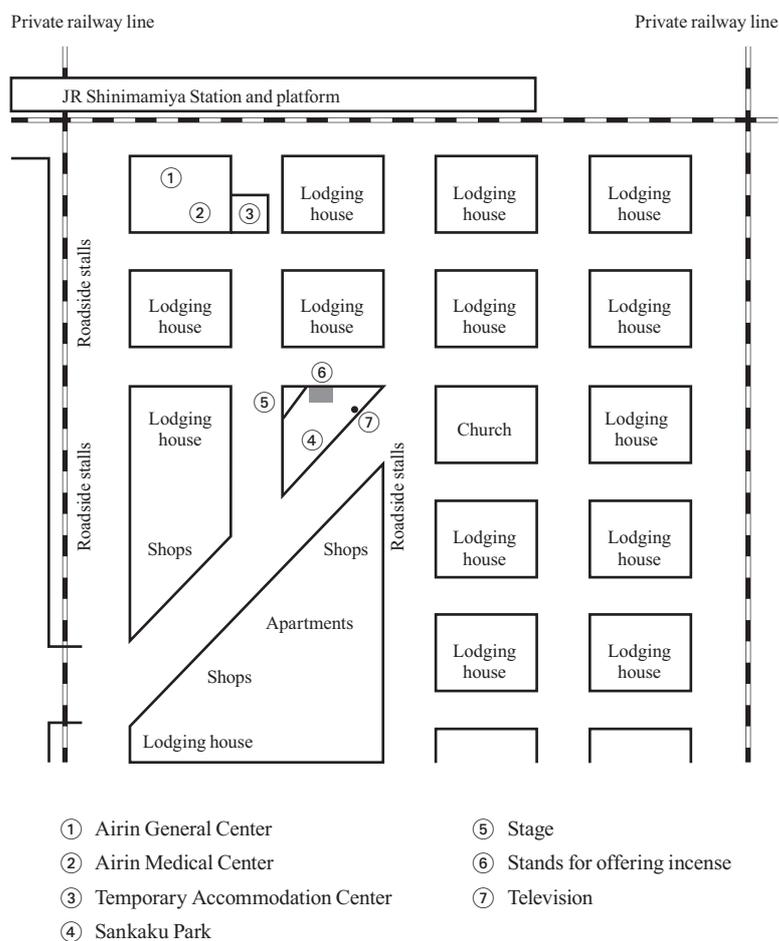
assists the homeless. It is the space which is closest to the dead and consequently the most sacred[17].

Strangers line up together, receive bedding, spread it out and go to sleep in it. In the morning we get up, tidy away the bedding and clean up. Everyone feels strong solidarity. Even if people are a bit drunk, they behave when they get here. We cooperate and help each other in everything. We even play our part in the night patrols. Even so, occasionally, someone is dead in his bed in the morning. When that happens we feel disheartened and angry – it is so regrettable! Enough snow falls to settle on top of the

Figure 8.4: The ranking of sacred spaces
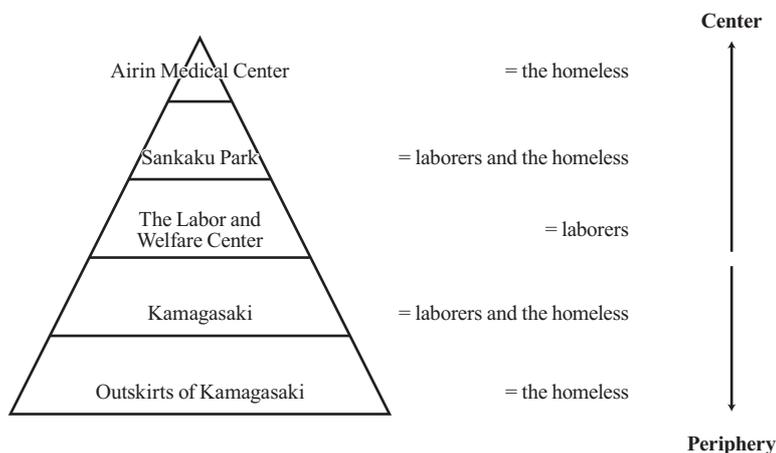
bedding so some people freeze. It is bitterly cold. Why do these honest people have to go through this kind of thing? (H, an Executive Committee member in his forties. 29 December 1994. At the makeshift camp.)

The second most important place is Sankaku Park, which is located in the heart of Kamagasaki. Sankaku Park is normally a place where day laborers who have failed to find work spend the whole day waiting for the next job. It is a place where the homeless make the most of the cool on hot summer nights and where they shake off the cold around a fire on cold winter nights. In that sense it is the most important space in 'routine' Kamagasaki. At the same time, Sankaku Park is one of the strategic spaces as far as the Winter Struggle is concerned. The important activities of the Winter Struggle, including gatherings, the soup kitchen and camps all take place in the park. Incense-burning stands are set up in a corner of the park and the photographs of deceased activists, day laborers and homeless people who have passed away in the previous year, are placed there. For the duration of the Winter Struggle, the smoke of incense rises all day long from the stands. The labor union's red flag flies at the side of the stage in the park. Photographs of the movement for that year are displayed, with explanatory captions below them, on a board to the side. The stage is where the singing contest and music show are held. The open space in front of the stage is where the rice cake-making contest and the tug-of-war are held. At night, the homeless lie down to sleep around

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the fire. Sankaku Park thus becomes a space with a double meaning in which the living and the dead gather together. It is through this that we see the mutual emergence of the secular, routine Kamagasaki and the sacred, non-routine Kamagasaki.

> Sankaku Park? It's in Kama[gasaki] and this is where I feel most at home. It might be a dirty and messy place but I feel at ease here because I always feel like I've got friends. It's strange. I especially feel like that at times like when I come back from work trips. I couldn't be anywhere else at New Year. I'd be sad if there weren't any singing contest, rice cake making and things like that. I've been coming to Kama for twenty years. I've been through a lot and seen a lot but I always feel like I am here. It's like a nearby playground from my childhood days. (I, a day laborer in his sixties. 2 January 1995. Sankaku Park.)

The third setting is the Airin Labor Welfare Center. This is normally the public facility where day laborers learn about job opportunities. The area around the massive building is lined with the minibuses of labor arrangers and labor recruiters and crowded with laborers looking for work (There has been an appreciable decline in the number of minibuses in recent years.). In the daytime, laborers lining up for their unemployment benefits (*abure*, employment insurance benefits) at the second floor Public Employment Security Office, form a long queue. Thus, the Airin Labor Welfare Center is the most important space in 'routine Kamagasaki'. In contrast to this, at the time of the Winter Struggle – the time of the year end-New Year – the Airin Labor Welfare Center suspends business. There is no work and the center does not carry out any of its other functions either. The center's shutters are down all day long and the surrounding area is quiet. There is therefore no reason for day laborers to go there. The homeless cannot even rest in the warmth inside the center[18]. During the Winter Struggle, the Airin Labor Welfare Center is thus the place which is the most distant from the dead and the most secular.

The fourth setting is the whole Kamagasaki area. Laborers find work and lodgings in Kamagasaki. Skilled laborers are influential as they can command high wages. Unskilled laborers fail to find work and sleep rough. In times of economic downturn, large numbers of laborers become homeless. The homeless secure a place to sleep on the roads and in the parks of Kamagasaki – any open spaces will do. Those who are still healthy go into the city center in search of food. Those people whose very vitality has faded, camp out along the roads

of Kamagasaki. There they await the imminent arrival of their last day. In this sense, Kamagasaki itself is the place in modern society which is closest to the dead and the most sacred.

> Nishinari [the ward where Kamagasaki is situated] is scary. There are a lot of thieves and people sponge off you. But it's good here. People call it a slum but you can find both duty (*giri*) and humanity (*ninjō*), and somewhere to stay here. It's already been over twenty-five years since I first came here. There have been times when I've been swindled. Many of my friends have died. It's my turn next. Whether I'm sleeping rough or whatever else I'm doing, I plan to live treasuring every single day. So, it doesn't matter when I die. My friends are waiting at *Sanzu no kawa* [the Japanese equivalent of the River Styx]. (F, quoted previously. 31 December 1994. In Sankaku Park.)

The final setting is the area around Kamagasaki. The Medical and Patrol Teams of the Winter Struggle Executive Committee patrol this area; it is a broadening of the area of assistance to the homeless. The Medical Team checks up on the health of the homeless. The Patrol Team hands out blankets and rice balls to the homeless. In the darkness of night they talk to the homeless whom they find lying down. 'I'm from the Winter Struggle Executive Committee. How are you feeling?' The homeless know very well who they are. They know that they are allies. 'Thank you'; 'I'm fine'; 'I'm cold'; 'I'm hungry'; 'My legs hurt'; 'I need some advice'. However, even with these patrols, the homeless still end up dying as they freeze, starve, fall ill or as a result of violence by the townspeople. Thus, the areas around Kamagasaki are spaces of harsh existence and sacred spaces close to the dead.

> Where do I sleep? Here [Nihonbashi, the area next to Kamagasaki], usually. This is a good spot because it's near Nishinari [Kamagasaki] and I feel safe here because there are a lot of people around [homeless people]. We look after each other's belongings; we help each other out. There are some people who have been here for a very long time. I'm still a newcomer. Everyone is kind to me. (J, a homeless person in his fifties. 27 December 1994. At Nihonbashi.)

Part Five: After the Twenty-fifth Winter Struggle

In this chapter I have attempted to capture and analyze Kamagasaki's 1994–1995 Winter Struggle as a ritual system in which the rivalry

between 'misery' and 'pride' is at its most extreme within the collective actions of day laborers and the homeless. I have also tried to analyze the human meaning and dynamism of the Winter Struggle.

The contents and development of the Winter Struggle have changed considerably along with, and following, changes in the conditions faced by laborers and the homeless. With growing numbers of homeless people, the movement in Kamagasaki has increasingly shifted its main emphasis towards a movement demanding employment security and living assistance for the homeless, as well as the securing of shelters. The homeless problem has also ceased to be merely a phenomenon of the winter season and has become a yearlong concern. Presently, the Winter Struggle has taken on the aspect of an extension of daily activities in Kamagasaki. The soup kitchen in Sankaku Park has reached a level of operations in which it provides in excess of 1,000 meals per day. In addition to the makeshift camp in front of the Airin Medical Center, there is now also the temporary accommodation center on the site of the old Airin Junior and Middle School (Osaka city) and the construction of prefabricated accommodation in the parks. Seen in terms of these changes, the borders have increasingly been disappearing between 'routine' and 'non-routine' Kamagasaki. The whole of Kamagasaki has become a space which is all the closer to the dead and all the more sacred. All of this notwithstanding, there is not the least change in the structure of religious meaning regarding 'life' and 'death' and 'pride' and 'misery' in the rituals found in the Winter Struggle, which is described in this chapter.

Conclusion

In this book I have discussed modern Japan's urban underclass by looking at the day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers who are connected with *yoseba*. My aim has been to achieve the following three tasks. Firstly, to construct and present the key concepts and an analytical framework for discussing Japan's modern urban underclass from a global perspective. The second task has been to analyze the work and class of the day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers who are connected with *yoseba*. Via these two tasks I have attempted to produce a 'macro-sociology of the urban underclass'. The third task has been to analyze the subjective world of meaning corresponding to the work and class of day laborers, the homeless (and foreign workers). I then discussed the various theoretical problems contained in the analysis. Through this analysis and discussion, I have attempted to provide a 'micro-sociology of the urban underclass'. The following is an outline of the practical steps which I took to achieve this.

In 'A Framework for Urban Underclass Research', the first chapter, I constructed and set out the analytical framework for the whole book. In this chapter I discussed the *respective* fundamental processes in urban underclass change – which is occurring *simultaneously* in both developed industrial countries (Japan) and developing countries (the Philippines) under economic globalization and global urbanization – in particular, class changes occurring at the very bottom of cities (the appearance of the new laboring class/the new poor class). The agents giving impetus to these processes have been the movements of a labor force across national boundaries – in short, economic migrants: foreign workers.

In Section I, 'The mode of existence of the urban underclass', I selected Kamagasaki and Kotobukichō as the research fields, analyzed the actual conditions of employment for day laborers, the homeless and foreign workers and considered the theoretical meaning of these changes. I then made clear the manner in which the labor arranging function of the *yoseba* has declined and the manner in which day laborers have been exposed to downward pressures leading to homelessness. I have also shed some light on the manner in which

ever increasing numbers of homeless people are swelling the ranks of the homeless in the major cities: the homeless – whilst being made up mainly of *yoseba* laborers – have increasingly come to include people from a variety of social origins. I have further made clear the way in which foreign workers, amidst attempts to reduce the rate of increase in their numbers, are taking the path of settling permanently in Japan and becoming a class of their own, with a number even joining the ranks of the homeless.

In Section II, 'The urban underclass' world of meaning', I used the life history method to examine the various methodological problems surrounding an understanding of meaning. I also discussed the methodological compatibility of urban underclass research and the life history method. Next, I examined the structure of discrimination facing the urban underclass, I discussed the world of meaning, which the urban underclass constructs within this discrimination, and looked at the various theoretical problems faced in analyzing this. I also dealt with the Kamagasaki Winter Struggle as a practical case study analysis of the world of meaning of day laborers and the homeless and, whilst employing various concepts from religious ritual analysis, I described the dynamic processes in the world of meaning of 'misery' and 'pride' seen amongst day laborers and the homeless.

I am well aware of the fact that there remain a considerable number of issues with which I ought to have dealt in this book, but have not. Nevertheless, if this book manages to contribute to some degree to the progress of research into the urban underclass in present-day Japan, then I shall be very pleased. The tensions and rivalries between the theories and the realities regarding the right way in which to approach the rapidly changing urban underclass are still alive and well. The realities of the urban underclass are changing quickly. We also must steadily continue to make changes to our theoretical frameworks. Whilst holding on to the strong conviction that we can infer the state of modern Japan from the state of those at the very bottom of cities and foresee the direction in which the whole of society (cities) will go, I look forward to the positive and theoretical development of urban underclass research.

I dedicate this book as a humble expression of my condolences for those day laborers and homeless people who even in the course of this research survey departed this life. I should also like to express my deepest gratitude to all of the day laborers, homeless people and foreign workers connected with *yoseba* who cooperated with me in this survey; and also the many labor activists and volunteers.

This book is an English translation of a considerably revised and refined version of my degree thesis for Tsukuba University, which I then reworked for publication as *Gendai Nihon no Toshikasō – Yoseba to Nojukusha to Gaikokujin Rōdōsha* (Akashi 2000) (Japan's Modern Urban Underclass – *Yoseba*, the Homeless and Foreign Workers). The publication of this book has been made possible by a 'Grant-in-Aid for Publication of Scientific Research Results' from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, an independent body.

Professor Yoshio Sugimoto, of Trans Pacific Press in Australia, suggested the translation of the Japanese version of this book into English. At all stages, from the preparation up until the final publication of this book, Professor Sugimoto has provided a tremendous amount of encouragement and support. I should like to express my deepest gratitude to him. My deep-felt gratitude goes also to Akio Ishii, President of Akashi Publishers, for the generous consideration that he, once again, displayed with regard to the publication of this book. Teresa Castelvetere has produced a fine English translation of the specialist terms associated with Japan's urban underclass. I should like to express my sincere gratitude to her. My sincere gratitude goes also to photographer, Nishimura Hitomi, who generously supplied the photograph which appears on the front cover. Finally, my wife, Yasuko, has been unstintingly kind and patient in her emotional assistance with the work of preparing this book for publication. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to her.

I end this book in the hope of seeing significant developments in the sociology of the urban underclass, and, above all else, with a heart-felt prayer for a better tomorrow for the day laborers, the homeless and the foreign workers who are living in difficult circumstances.

April 2006
Hideo Aoki

Notes

Introduction

1 Later chapters contain detailed discussions and definitions of the Japanese term *yoseba*: very briefly, it is an urban labor market/meeting place where day laborers and homeless people gather to seek work.

2 The term *Zainichi* Koreans refers to Koreans who have lived in Japan, sometimes for several generations. *Zainichi* Koreans do not enjoy the full range of rights of ordinary Japanese citizens and they are also distinct from Koreans studying in, or visiting, Japan temporarily. It can be difficult to grasp the fact that even fourth generation *zainichi* Koreans are not entitled to Japanese citizenship. The reason for this is Japan's nationality laws which use a 'personal rather than territorial principle of nationality, determining one's nationality according to that of one's parents rather than according to the nation of one's birth' (Sugimoto: 2003) In the present book it is important to keep in mind the distinction between *zainichi* Koreans and recently arrived Koreans who form part of the most recent wave of foreigners (*shinrai gaikokujin*).

Chapter 1

1 Economic globalization refers to one, post-Cold War, stage of world capitalism under conditions brought about by the expansion of finance and the information revolution: a new period of reconstruction of the world markets for capital and labor (Hirsch, 1998 (Translation): 24–25). This is simultaneously a process of the expansion and deepening of the post-colonial conditions in which industrialized, advanced countries control and plunder developing countries.

2 Economic globalization proceeds only by combining with each country's particular historical and internal conditions and assuming an individual distinctive form based on these factors (Hill and Fujita, 2003).

3 Iwata, on the basis of her interest in 'poverty and welfare', says with regard to the poverty of the homeless, 'this demonstrates the poverty of those people who have been unable to safeguard for themselves "a place in which to go on living" within "our" society or, alternatively, [the poverty] of "those" who have been driven out from "our" society' (Iwata, 2000: 27). In this sense, the homeless of recent years and 'the poor found within neighbourhoods' differ from one another. I agree with this argument. However, we cannot dilute the reality of the exploitation of and discrimination towards the homeless, under a specific set up, with prescriptions regarding the homeless, which are based on Iwata's abstract distinctions of 'us' and 'them'

4 There are also women in *yoseba*. Women are also found amongst the ranks of the homeless and foreign workers. These women are also part of the urban

underclass and the problems faced by them are both large-scale and serious. Fully aware of this, in this book I focus on men who make up the overwhelming majority of the urban underclass and only occasionally refer to the problems encountered by women.

5 Globalization is also forging ahead in politics, society and culture. In this book I focus on, and use, the term 'economic globalization'. However, I will not discuss the scholarly economic debates surrounding economic globalization. I understand the term, for the purposes of this book, as meaning 'the systematization of transfers of capital, goods, information and labor force beyond national boundaries'. For a conceptual examination of 'globalization and the homeless', see another of my papers (Aoki, 2003).

6 Sassen mentioned the following as some examples of underclass occupations in New York State's service sector (Sassan, 1988: 200): maid, cleaner (light and heavy), janitor, porter, baggage porter, bellhop, kitchen helper, pantry, sandwich/coffee maker, food service worker, room service attendant, ticket taker, stock clerk (stock room, warehouse storage yard), washer, machine washer, dry cleaner (hand), spotter (dry cleaning, washable materials), laundry presser, laundry folder, rug cleaner (hand and machine), shoe repairer, delivery and route worker, parking lot attendant, exterminator, packager. What ought to astound us is the fact that the majority of these are common to the list of new unskilled and low paid jobs found in Manila. In the case of Manila, this list also includes unskilled and low paid service jobs in the formal sector and sales jobs: for example, salespeople and drivers in large-scale stores. Under the influence of economic globalization, new unskilled and low paid jobs are appearing simultaneously in both developed and developing countries.

7 There are several references to the concept of the new poor in previous research (Alock, 1993: 26) and (Ōta, 1997: 44). The problem consciousness of these works also shares a, more or less, common base with this book. However, this book is the first to use the concept of new labor. I am presenting a hypothesis whose appropriateness still needs to be tested. This book is one work aiming to do this.

8 Sumiya has used 'miscellaneous work' to refer to work which formed the principal axis in the formation of workers at the time of the dawn of Japanese capitalism – 'artisans' assistants and workers such as coolies and day laborers in, for example, the construction industry' (Sumiya, 1964: 66). In the past, the term miscellaneous work has been used to indicate 'a variety' of small-scale and simple work, particularly in the informal sector of cities in developing countries. Yamaguchi, focusing on the work done by the homeless, developed miscellaneous work as a concept indicating the present day, very bottom layer of work (Yamaguchi, 2001). The types of work intended by Yamaguchi included gathering recyclable resources, selling used magazines and holding up advertizing signboards. I also bundle together under 'miscellaneous work' the variety of work done by the homeless, which I analyze in this book, but there is as yet no clear definition of miscellaneous work as work (*rōdō*), job (*shigoto*) and occupation (*shokushu*).

9 Iga, using the concept of informalization, focused his attention on the transformation of the informal sector (slum economy) in developing countries and the informal economy in developed countries, as seen in organizations of small-scale production, which are organically tied to the formal sector, and

constructed a framework for systematically understanding the characteristic accumulation process formed through ongoing deviations from the Fordism of the core sector (Iga, 1992). This is a world system understanding, which focuses on transformations in the lower structures of the economy from a regulation theory viewpoint and its basic ideas coincide with the understanding in this book.

10 The service economy refers to an expansion of the relative importance of service industries in industrial activity. Service industries – broadly speaking – mean industries other than those which produce goods (tertiary industries). These include, for example, companies supplying electricity and gas, transportation and communications industries, wholesale and retail industries, restaurants, financial and insurance industries and the real estate industry. In the narrow sense, service industries are 'other industries' in this category. These can be further classified, on the basis of the nature of each enterprise, into: personal services such as inns, hotels, barbers and beauty parlours and health and leisure facilities and business services such as lease and rental of industrial machinery, information management services and legal and taxation services. Further, in addition to these profit-making services, there are non-profit-making services such as: cooperative associations, employee associations and welfare facilities. In 1997, 40, 390, 000 people nationally worked in service industries in the broad sense and of these 16, 480, 000 worked in service industries in the narrower sense. According to a basic survey of service industries by the Statistics Bureau of the General Affairs Agency, in 1994 there were 1, 190, 000 profit-making business service enterprises, representing a 9.3% increase over five years earlier. There were 78, 560, 000 employees in these industries – a 15.1% increase over the figures for five years earlier (*Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai* (Japan Statistical Association), 1998: 288). The industries which have stood out from amongst these are entertainment, movie and video production and the extension of information services. This is the actual state of Japan's service economy.

11 The increasing numbers of young people who hold ideas oriented towards consumerism and frequent changes of occupation – such as, 'I would like to match the way I work to suit myself' and 'It is a good thing to be able to change jobs easily' – have spurred on the emergence of this diversity in employment forms. Also, this wave of employment diversification is forcing moves such as contract employment and re-employment onto laborers of middle and advanced working age (*Asahi Shinbun*: 3 April 1998). According to an employment survey (1996) of employees in 2, 756 companies (companies employing ten or more people) in the prefecture by the Osaka Prefecture Labor Department, they were made up of regular employees 78.7%, part-time 12.1%, contract, registered 3.5%, temporary, day laborers 2.5%, temporary transfer 1.7% and dispatched workers 1.5% (*Ōsaka Rōdō Kyōkai* (Osaka Labor Association), 1997: 2). That is, a little short of one in five people was in irregular, insecure employment.

12 In the late 1990s, the construction industry experienced a rapid rise in bankruptcies and non-payment for work and wages as a result of bad bills of credit, a decline in house building and the reduction of public utilities. This

same year, 'Construction Number 110' was set up for business advice and assistance in the Tokyo Construction Industry Labor Union (the majority of organizations belonging to this are small construction companies with one foreman) (Yamaji, 1998: 40).

13 Japan's unemployment rate in July 1997 was 4.9%, the worst figure for the post war period. The rate was the same in March 2000 (*Asahi Shinbun*: 29 April 2000). In 1997, it was mainly restructuring and bankruptcies which pushed up the unemployment rate. In contrast to this, in 2000 an increase in the number of high school and university graduates failing to find a job kept the unemployment rate high.

14 There are distinctions to be made between *yoseba* with each particular *yoseba* format being prescribed by particulars such as those surrounding its formation, the industrial structure of the city and a particular city's policies. These distinct types of *yoseba* are: *yoseba* which have a flophouse area associated with them (for example, San'ya, Kotobukichō and Kamagasaki); *yoseba* without flophouse areas (for example, Sasajima); *yoseba* segregated away from the city (for example, Yokohama and Osaka); and dispersed *yoseba* (for example, Tokyo and Nagoya). The employers and types of employment for day laborers, the processes of separating off the homeless and the participation processes for foreign workers all vary, to some extent, depending on the particular format of the *yoseba*.

Chapter 2

1 *Yoseba* began as the labor *yoseba* (*ninpu yoseba*) of the Edo period; they then progressed from being boarding houses for workers under the prison-like camps and barn system of the time to become a system of temporary quarters for workmen; and in recent and modern times they have become the source for supplying an underclass workforce (Yamaoka, 1996: 347–348). The prison-like camps, which were effectively for debt imprisonment, are said to have first appeared in the middle of the Meiji period, during the infancy of Japanese capitalism (Hippo, 1991: 120). Labor recruiters (*tehaishi*) are middlemen who make employment contracts with workers in places like *yoseba* and then convey these workers to the worksite. Labor arrangers (*ninpudashi*) are middlemen who keep workers inside lodgings which they themselves control (labor arranger lodgings) and, ferry these workers to worksites as required by companies. The workers in both of these cases are employed indirectly and the labor recruiters and labor arrangers pocket a portion of the workers' wages under the pretext of a middleman fee. Labor middlemen are illegal in the Japanese construction industry. It is said that there are many gangsters in the ranks of the labor recruiters and labor arrangers.

2 The stratum in insecure employment refers to people in conditions of employment characterized by irregular and insecure work; extremely low wages and earnings; long hours and high intensity, work; inferior social security; and in an unorganized environment without labor unions or any other form of organization (Katō, 1987: 47). However, despite the fact that these workers endure poor working conditions, they occupy a higher stratum than members of the urban underclass who are in 'a territory into which urban

society's underclass – itself joined to a labor market which is increasingly excluded and has an internalized exterior – has poured' under 'mechanisms which are at work to convert heterogeneity into discrimination and to stratify it vertically' (Nishizawa, 1997: 80–81).

3 These *hanba* are distinct from the previously mentioned labor organisers' lodgings and are known as on-site laborers' lodgings. That is, they are laborers' lodgings at the construction site. These are pulled down with the completion of the construction work and transferred to the next construction site. Some workers also follow these to the next site. Labor arrangers' lodgings are, in a sense, cheap lodgings for laborers.

4 In western Japan also there has been a succession of factory closures and reductions in the scale of operations as a consequence of efforts to increase efficiency in the facilities of the biggest shipbuilding, construction materials, electrical machinery and appliances, textiles and foodstuffs companies. The re-employment of the people who have been dismissed has become a social problem (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1 July 1999).

5 Construction company bankruptcies were particularly numerous in the Kansai region with its high number of small businesses. For this reason alone, the impact on the Kamagasaki day laborers has been severe.

6 Labor recruiters' work camps are 'small *yoseba*', in the sense that they are a place housing a pool of workers, which contribute generally to construction capital. While these small *yoseba* are absorbed and amalgamated into large *yoseba*, when there is a recession new small *yoseba* mushroom. Large work camps are at present weeding out and rationalizing small and medium sized work camps in Japan.

7 The selection of workers because they are known to, and preferred by, the labor recruiter is carried out on the basis of workers' age and experience and also the recommendations of fellow workers. The selection of workers because they are known is an intermediate form of employment for 'cash' and 'fixed-term employment'.

8 Kamagasaki has 190 cheap lodging houses with 180,000 people staying in them; 3,400 homeless people in areas surrounding Kamagasaki; 3,500 recipients of welfare benefits in its hospital and other facilities; giving rise to the alternative figure of a total population of 24,900 who have some connection with Kamagasaki (*Asahi Shinbun*, 15 February 2000). However, the reliability of this data is difficult to determine.

9 For an informed work on the details of the move from 'Nagamachi' to present day Kamagasaki see Honma 1993: 34–45.

10 Rioting broke out in Kamagasaki in 1961 (The First Kamagasaki Riot). Following this, the name of the area was changed from Kamagasaki, with its 'violent undertones', to 'Airin' (The word for Airin includes the character for love and affection). This is the name that has been used officially thereafter. However, the laborers who live in the area persist in calling Kamagasaki 'Kama' or 'Nishinari'. The old name lives on. Nishinari denotes the Nishinari Ward in the city of Osaka, in which Kamagasaki is located.

11 The Airin Labor Welfare Center was established in 1970 as part of a multi-faceted policy –targeting areas such as labor, welfare, insurance and medical needs – in response to the frequent rioting which followed the First

Kamagasaki Riots of 1961. It houses a *yoseba* where labor arrangers make work offers to day laborers on the first floor; the Public Employment Security Office, which provides day labor employment insurance benefits to workers (it does not make work offers) on the second floor; and the Nishinari Welfare Center on the third floor.

12 The making of offers of work by labor recruiters and labor arrangers is illegal under the Employment Security Law and the Worker Dispatch Law. However, the face-to-face method of finding work is officially tacitly approved as it is considered a 'characteristic condition' of the construction industry, through which labor force demands are supplied under a highly stratified subcontracting structure. This was first introduced as a system for registering help-wanted, which acknowledged the realities of Kamagasaki's open-air labor market, during the formulation of the Construction Labor Law in 1976, immediately after the first oil shock.

13 Day labor employment insurance works through employers placing a stamp in the insured person's book of day labor insurance (called the White Book because of its white cover) for every day worked by the laborer and when he has accumulated twenty six stamps in a two month period (this must be done before the 17th of the following month), the worker is eligible for a maximum unemployment insurance payment of 7,500 yen (1994). In recent years, however, because people have been obliged to present a certificate of residence when applying for delivery of one of these booklets, there has been an increase in the numbers of laborers not possessing a booklet. There has also been an increase in the number of laborers who have booklets but are unable to accumulate stamps because they have no work, because they are elderly and cannot work and for other similar reasons. In 1996 the monthly average of days of employment per capita for Kamagasaki day laborers was a mere 6.5 days (*Nishinari Keisatsusho*, 1998). In 1998 there were 15,032 holders of the booklet (Kamagasaki alone accounting for a little over forty per cent of books held in all of Japan) and 5,000 people without booklets (Fukuhara and Nakayama, 1999: 23). What is more, from 2001 all White Book numbers throughout Japan have been computerized and direct control for them has been transferred to the Ministry of Welfare and Labor (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1999). This has given rise to misgivings about the booklet having become increasingly difficult to acquire.

14 Because requests for day labor work for sea cargo carriers and land cargo carriers shifted to the Public Employment Security Office of the port of Osaka in 1970, harbor-related day labor statistics did not form part of Airin Labor Welfare Center's data.

15 A, a labor union activist from Kamagasaki (aged 50), said, 'Things aren't like the old days. Now, it seems that people who have managed to find work file past those who can't find any work with their heads hung down low' (25 October 1998). The situation was practically the same in San'ya, Kotobukichō and Sasajima. 'It looks like lots of colleagues are flowing into Takadanobaba too from San'ya but eighty per cent of them can't find any work. Takadanobaba used to be famous for going until late in the morning. Why, it still goes until three in the morning now! The crowd of company agents also take mean advantage of the men's condition, cutting their daily

pay and making them do different work from what they were contracted to do – they act as they please, even getting people to do things we could never have imagined in the past' (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1998a: 6).

16 The situation in San'ya has progressed even further (Nakamura, 1998: 168–173; Nakamura 1999: 58). More than half of the primary subcontractors used by the largest general contracting firms have withdrawn from San'ya and the practice of recruiting laborers by means such as help-wanted newspapers and keeping them in work camps has become widespread. As a consequence of this, fewer than 500 construction laborers find employment in San'ya these days and there has also been a sharp decline in holders of valid White Books (apart from these, there are also 400–500 people employed in industries such as the service industry and who make up a separate group from those employed in the construction industry). Holders of the White Book have declined to a third of the numbers for the beginning of the 1990s and are now around 2,500. Approximately 6,000 people reside in cheap lodgings at the time of writing (a fifty per cent decline compard with the early 1990s) and 2,500 of these people receive welfare benefits. Meanwhile, there was an increase in forced work camps, with inferior working conditions such as shifting the responsibility onto the laborers for the portion of wages cut by general contractors, and also an increase in laborers coming to the San'ya Day Labor Union (the 'San'ya Struggle Group') for advice regarding unpaid wages and employers who had fled. San'ya is no longer a transit point for laborers. 'When laborers asked a counter attendant in the former '*Sekai honten*' – a stand-up drinking bar which became a 'Seven-Eleven Convenience Store' this spring – 'Why are you getting rid of the stand up drinking bar?' he answered 'Our usefulness has come to an end' (*Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1996.6.16). Needless to say, the regulars at the stand up drinking bar were the day laborers.

17 However, we do not know the nature of the relationship between the changes in the number of these works projects and the growing number of orders from the service industry.

18 Matsushige has analyzed the register of construction laborers for the Kansai International Airport works and says that despite the fact that news of the construction jobs at the airport site reached Kamagasaki, laborers flowing in from outside the region ended up taking the jobs, the news seems not to have spread as far as those laborers who were homeless (Matsushige, 1997: 107–120). This can also be seen as a manifestation of the overall condition of a construction recession in the *yoseba*. The fact is that laborers outside the district also have no work.

19 In the cities of Fukuoka and North Kyushu, rather than work camps, we see the revival of workers' boarding houses. Every morning labor recruiters stand outside the boarding houses in which workers are staying. Workers' boarding houses could be called the forerunners of labor arrangers' work camps – another sort of 'mini-*yoseba*'. Personal patronage relations persist between the people running and the people staying in these workers' boarding houses.

20 In recent years, work camps have also sprung up in the old red-light district adjoining Kamagasaki and the entertainment district of Tobita. Because

of a decline in customer numbers during the recession, the managers of establishments in the entertainment district have leased or sold their buildings to labor recruiting agents. These establishments were, undoubtedly, originally buildings catering for unspecified customers and the structure of these buildings rendered them easy to convert into work camps. What is more, the work camp managers who moved into these were Tokyo labor arranging agents (From comments made by A, quoted previously. 25 October, 1998).

21 According to the *Osaka Rōdōkijun Kantokusho* (Osaka Labor Standards Surveillance Office), the number of 'boarding houses affiliated with the construction industry' (work camps) in Osaka prefecture rose from 384 in 1995 to 400 in 1996 (Noguchi, 1997: 53). Even this, however, is but a portion of the actual numbers of work camps.

22 This is what is called a 'direct run' in terms of *yoseba* employment formats. As a result of this, workers from Kamagasaki, workers from work camps and workers from the streets work mixed together at the work site. Wage rates, from lowest to highest, are street group, work camp group and the Kamagasaki group. (Based on comments of C (aged 51) from Kamagasaki. 18 July 1999.) In recent years, even those preferred by recruiters and on a direct run are finding that work is scarce and when they miss work for even a day, they end up being kept as reserve workers, finding that they are easily fired. Because of this, they cannot have any time off work. This is a strenuous environment even for fit and healthy laborers.

23 The Labor Dispatch Law was revised in 1998 lifting the ban on the dispatching of labor, with the exception of dock, construction and guard work. That is, only the dispatch of people (labor recruiting) in dock, construction and guard work remained illegal. It was held that the intention behind this was to safeguard workers from excessive exploitation. However, the impact of once again declaring the dispatch of labor in docks, construction and guard work to be illegal was to give rise to disguised forms of exploitation of workers and this ended up causing an even greater worsening of working conditions.

24 *Hantako* means semi-*takobeya*-like. *Takobeya* 'suppressed contact with the outside and compelled work through violence; people working there hardly received any pay as it was skimmed off; they were coercive camps where people were locked in and could not even eat; in other words, they were prison-like camps' (Yamaoka, 1996: 118).

25 Tamai stipulated that *yoseba* laborers are the 'flow-type' laborers of non-regular employment and contrasted them to the 'stock' type of workers found in the lifetime employment system (Tamai, 1999: 89). However, this classification does not enable us to understad accurately the conditions experienced by *yoseba* laborers. The first problem with this classification is that it includes all worker groups in insecure employment, for example temporary workers, dispatched workers, part-timers and casual workers, in the non-regular employment category thereby rendering the major differences between these groups and *yoseba* laborers invisible. The problem arises because by simply referring to a flow-type, we cannot distinguish the major differences between the base group and the peripheral group found amongst *yoseba* laborers, which are discussed in this chapter. Day laborers who work on construction work sites and factories and homeless people who scrape

together a daily existence by doing a variety of service work on the street clearly belong to different social classes. Iwata has also suggested the term tramp-like day laborers (Iwata, 1998). 'Tramp' here corresponds to Tamai's 'flow'. This is a rather peculiar way of referring to the circumstances of *yoseba* laborers who repeatedly move through the cycle of work, unemployment and homelessness. However, the term 'tramp' on its own is, simply, inadequate as a definition of *yoseba* laborers.

26   The number of people in Kamagasaki with White Books who were successful in their efforts to find work for a year peaked at 24,458 in 1986 and fell to 15,130 in 1996 (Shima, 1999: 75). This decline was accounted for in large part by people who had abandoned the White Book because they had no work to do and others who simply misplaced theirs. Day laborers and homeless people who cannot find work do not refer to this situation as 'unemployment' but as failing to get work (*abure*). Castells has written the following about 'unemployment' in developing countries. 'Unemployment is the only work condition which we cannot find in dependent countries The reason for this is the fact that we can say that, strictly speaking, unemployment (that is, the absence of work practices conferring the payment of regular wages) is a 'privilege' of developed capitalist countries, to the extent that they have 'unemployment insurance' payments, and that the people who can receive this privilege in developing countries are only the extremely small handful who make up the labor aristocracy' (Castells, 1983 (translation): 330). Japan is one of the developed capitalist countries but for its day laborers also, who do not have a White Book and are left with no alternative but to become homeless when they cannot find work, 'unemployment' remains a 'privilege'.

27   The nightly rates for the *doya* in which I stay are 2,000 yen in Kamagasaki and 2,500 yen in San'ya (June 2006). Both are at the expensive end for *doya*. In general, *doya* in Kamagasaki are cheap (it is possible to find some for 800 yen per night) and those in San'ya are expensive. *Doya* in Kotobukichō are more expensive again because they are apartment-style cheap lodgings (I will discuss these later).

28   In my experience also *doya*, in recent years, find that they have rooms to let to day laborers even during *Obon* (The Festival of the Dead) and the New Year period, when many laborers return from work camps. I checked into a *doya* on 12 August 1999, the day before *Obon*, when according to the manager, there were still seven vacant rooms. This would never have been the case a few years ago. During *Obon* and the New Year period rooms were only given out to customers staying for a week. Nowadays, there are *doya* which rent out rooms for the night even during these periods. One also frequently finds *doya* which have reduced their rates. There are even newly built expensive *doya* which cut their rates by as much as 1,000 yen. *Doya* giving priority to elderly people in receipt of welfare benefits have also appeared. Lodgers receiving welfare benefits are good customers who can be relied upon to pay their board. Furthermore, we have seen the appearance of *doya* which devote one floor exclusively to rooms for female lodgers. There has also been an increase in *doya* which have become business hotels and which advertise on their own home pages. A look at these home pages shows that it is young

people and foreign travellers who are staying in these business hotels. These establishments all offer unfurnished accommodation.

29 The number of homeless people in Kamagasaki reached 1,660 in June 1999 (Matsushige, 20 May 1999). In a survey by the Osaka Civil Administration Bureau, the number of homeless in Kamagasaki, Naniwa Ward and Tennōji Ward was 713 in 1986 but this increased to 1,125 in 1996 (Shima, 1999: 22). These figures exceeded 3,000 in 1998. Even if we allow for temporarily more rigorous methods of counting the number of homeless people, we can glean from these figures a sense of just how abruptly the homeless numbers have increased.

30 According to comments made by E (aged 44), a member of a volunteer group, the figures for the soup run conducted at the Kamagasaki Summer Festival, between 13 and 15 August every year, were approximately an average of 800 meals per day in 1998 but this was halved with approximately 400 meals in 1999. (15 August 1999). E says that the fact that homeless people have left Kamagasaki and become scattered is the reason why they did not come to the soup run in Kamagasaki.

31 It is only in Kamagasaki that we see 150 to 200 people falling ill on the streets every year (*Kamagasaki Shien Kikō* (Kamagasaki Support Organization), June 2005).

32 In the course of this soup run, the activities of the Soup Run Team of the Winter Struggle Executive Committee, in which the 'Group for Achieving Jobs and a Livelihood for Kamagasaki's Aged Day Laborers' is the main actor, provide three emergency rice meals per day. Soup runs are also being carried out by other groups.

33 Because the Osaka City Government does not see the Kamagasaki laborers as residents of the district but treats them as 'travellers' (Fujii, 2000: 3) their treatment falls not within the remit of welfare facilities but the city' Relief Counseling Center.

34 Recently, the city' Relief Counseling Center has begun to forge a path towards residential protection, in the form of providing the deposit for renting apartments. This is restricted to the main recipients of benefits admitted to their facilities. In these cases, one applies for welfare benefits to the welfare offices of regions which have apartments. There have as yet, however, been very few actual cases in which this has happened.

35 According to a survey of elderly people working in cleaning work projects, the average age of the workers was 62.7 (Matsushige, 9 June 1999) and their average length of residence in Kamagasaki was 20.3 years. From this we understand that the majority of the elderly are people who have lived in Kamagasaki for a long period of time and who have been day laborers. These men are first and foremost 'people who have been discarded'.

36 In addition to this, the ***main*** facilities for the homeless in the city and prefecture of Osaka also provide the following services (Osaka City, 2004). Firstly, there are travelling consultations. Advisors travel around within the city giving interview consultations to homeless people on life matters and health; giving welfare assistance to invalids; and advice on getting in touch with the Self-Reliance Support Center for those who can work. In February 2004, there were a total of 30,699 interviews with 2,532 cases referred

to the Self-Reliance Support Center and 3,067 cases referred for physical examinations and to medical facilities. Secondly, there is the Self-Reliance Support Center. This center admits homeless people to the center, gives work advice in cooperation with the Employment Security Office, carries out mediation and encourages self-reliance through work. The Ōyodo Center admits 100 homeless people, the Nishinari Center admits 80 and the Yodogawa Center admits 100: all three opened in 2000. As a rule, these centers admit people for three, or at the very most, six months. The total number of admissions, as of February 2004, was 2,029. Thirdly, there is the Temporary Constructions Center. In its capacity as a facility for removing homeless people from parks, this center has set up temporary shelters in the three parks with large numbers of homeless people in them – Nagai, Nishinari and Osakanari Parks; it admits the homeless into the center while simultaneously removing their tents and huts from the parks. The homeless were allowed to stay for a maximum of three months, and the centers closed three years after opening. The Osakajō Park Temporary Shelter opened in 2002 and in 2004 it had 266 people staying there, with another 157 having passed through; Nagai Park Temporary Shelter opened in 2000 and closed in 2003, having admitted 206 people in this period; and Nishinari Park Temporary Shelter opened in 2001 and closed in 2005, having admitted 131 people during this period. Fourthly, there are temporary emergency night shelters. As a rule, admissions are on an overnight basis. The Kamagasaki Support Organization NPO (to be discussed later) is entrusted with the operation of these shelters. The Airin Emergengy Night Shelter, with a capacity for accommodating 600, opened in 2000 and the Imamiya Emergengy Night Shelter opened in 2004 with a 440 person capacity. Facilities for Osaka's homeless are the product of countermeasures aimed at Kamagasaki and the homeless (*Ōsakashi* (City of Osaka), 2004: 10–11). We are, at this point in time, no longer able to subsume the problems of the urban underclass simply under the heading of Kamagasaki countermeasures.

Chapter 3

1 Gang refers to a group of fifteen to thirty cargo handlers on board ship from the artisan class (*Kanagawaken Keizai Chōsakai* (Kanagawa Prefecture Economic Survey Group) 1965: 277).

2 Shortly after the relocation of the Employment Office, the laborers started to travel to Noge from the lodging houses in Kotobukichō, as the *yoseba* was still in Noge (*Kawase Seiji-kun Tsuitō Bunshū Henshū Iinkai* (Editors' Committee of Memroial Writing to Kawase Seiji) 1985: 203).

3 At their height, floating hotels numbered twelve ships and were able to accommodate 650 people.

4 'I hear that fifty per cent of the Korean cheap lodging house capital was invested by Koreans living in Tokyo and Asakusa. Perhaps the Koreans in Asakusa were in-laws of, or from the same villages as, the Koreans from the Nakamura River waterfront'. (Comments of A, a labor activist in Kotobukichō, aged 55. 28 June 1994.)

5 This is considerably younger than the average age of the population in either Kamagasaki or San'ya.

6 The Employment Office gives laborers with a White Book and information about employment opportunities. The Kotobuki Labor Center not only distributes job seeker cards and refers laborers with a White Book for work but also those who do not (cannot) have a White Book. The Kotobuki Labor Center was established in 1974 by the Kanagawa Prefecture Labor Welfare Foundation as a labor welfare vehicle.

7 'Practically all of the registered agents are agents for the whole of the Yokohama area. Since there is little work at the moment there is not even much scope for trouble to erupt between the agents and laborers.' (C aged 45, an employee of the Yokohama Port Work Branch. 30 June 1994.)

8 Harbor work, which had been the mainstay for Kotobukichō's day laborers, ceded this leading position to the construction industry in 1977 (*Kotobukichiku Jūmin Konwakai* (Kotobuki Ward Residents' Meetings) 1984: 15).

9 These figures also include, however, people coming in from outside Kotobukichō. Because the administration made it mandatory to present a resident's card as a condition for the issuing of a White Book in 1991, the number of holders of White Books has fallen in Kotobukichō also.

10 The places of employment for work arranged in San'ya are spread throughout eastern Japan, with the whole Kantō area at its heart. In the case of Kamagasaki, these are spread throughout western Japan, with the whole Kansai area at its heart. Compared to San'ya and Kamagasaki the sphere of labor arranging in Kotobukichō is small. This can be thought of as being due to the fact that the major labor recruiting agents do not go into Kotobukichō very much.

11 There has also been an increase in the number of homeless people who have not come from *yoseba* but who have been thrown out of their families and regions. Whilst the numbers are small, there are also some z*ainichi* Koreans and Okinawans, as well as women and foreign workers, amongst the homeless. Where have all of these people come from? Finding an answer to this question is one of the tasks for future research.

12 New homeless people, who have been expelled as a consequence of company restructurings and bankruptcies, are joining (former) day laborers at the Yokohama Railway Station terminal. The places in which homeless people can be found are also becoming more dispersed. This is because of the dispersal of the places in which labor arranging occurs for day labor work; the playing of pranks and attacks on homeless people by passers by; and the fact that the police and security guards move the homeless on to other areas.

13 Some poor people come to Kotobukichō because they have heard that it is easy to get welfare benefits there. Other welfare offices also forward cases to welfare offices within the jurisdiction of Kotobukichō.

14 In 1993, Kotobukichō, which is in Naka Ward of the city of Yokohama, had a rate of 31.2 per cent of its population on welfare benefits in contrast to a proportion of 5.9 per cent for the whole of Yokohama city. Kotobukichō was almost single-handedly responsible for the high proportion of welfare benefits in Naka Ward (*Yokohamashi Naka Kuyakusho* 1996: 24). Kotobukichō has concentrated in its mere 250 square metre area 83 per cent of Naka Ward's households on benefits and 25 per cent of those for the city of Yokohama. This trend continues. Kotobukichō has become an isolated enclave of welfare families.

15 Calls for the swift application of welfare benefits to people in need of benefits, such as the elderly and the sick, even when they do not have an address, came in the form of the first set of demands presented from 1994 to 1995 to the welfare office by the 'Guarantee Clothing, Food and Shelter! The Kotobuki Association for Securing Livelihood Rights' (eleven local groups participated). Next came the demand for an increase in the amount of bread tickets. This is what this same group told me on 28 June 1994.

16 The average age of welfare benefit recipients is around sixty (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* 1995a: 15). This is close to the life span of most day laborers. The choice they face is between stretching out their existence on welfare benefits or dropping down dead on the street.

17 Every year, between 28 December and 3 January, the city of Yokohama puts up prefabricated temporary accommodation in the parks of Kotobukichō. For the 1993–1994 period these accommodated an average of 251.5 people per day (*Arisu Sentā* 1993: 8) and in 1994–1995 the daily average was 86.2 people (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryūkai* 1995b: 17).

18 Around 500 of these Korean laborers come from Chejudo (Kō 1995: 55).

[19]Given the proportion of foreigners in the population of Kotobukichō, they experience a high rate of trouble. This suggests the extent to which foreigners are in disadvantageous and insecure relations with employers. There are also a large number of difficult to resolve cases. In the past one to two years, in particular, there has been a rapid rise in the number of Koreans seeking advice on labor matters.

20 However, although we call this a 'rise' in terms of class standing, this is the case, at the utmost, only within one's own nationality group. Because of barriers such as their position as over-stayers or workers without the proper work documents, the rise in status of these men and women has its limits.

21 'However, because *zainichi* Koreans use Japanese names we cannot know the actual numbers' (J, an employee of the Kotobuki Labor Center.)

22 According to K, there are extremely few lodging house managers from Chejudo Island. It is also said that lodging house managers are mainly from North Korea (Nōmoto 1974: 15).

23 'I sent for my wife and children from Korea three years ago. I would like to go back to Korea in around another two years' time but I don't know what's going to happen.' (L, aged forty-seven, a Korean who has been working in Japan without the proper work documents for six years. 30 June 1994.) In 2000, he was working in the construction industry, his wife was working in the food and drink industry and his two children were attending the local state primary school.

24 In Kamagasaki also Korean traders seeking the custom of Korean workers set up roadside shops and sell items such as foodstuffs, magazines and clothing.

25 Filipinos first heard about the existence of Kotobukichō through word-of-mouth communication from Filipino sailors on foreign ships anchored in Yokohama harbor. In 1975 there were six Filipino workers in Kotobukichō (Serizawa 1976: 64).

26 Work accidents, however, are one of the exceptions. The administration has not understood the actual conditions of work and life for foreign workers.

Consequently, there are no statistics regarding foreigners apart from those for the numbers staying in lodging houses.

27 Koreans make up a different society from *zainichi* Koreans. Korean men and women form groups based on provenance from the same place and then act as a group. Filipinos also act on the basis of groups which they have formed and, in similar fashion, form human relationships on the basis of the islands from which they come. 'In the past I have recruited Korean laborers, working with a group of about forty people. Because there is not much work now I can't make ends meet unless I also work.' (L, quoted previously. 30 June 1994.)

28 On 13 August 1994, at the customary Free Concert given as part of Kotobukichō's Summer Festival, Filipinos came to the meeting place as a group, enjoyed the rock music and then left for their lodging house as group. The meeting place overflowed with the newly arrived Koreans (and *zainichi* Koreans) for the performance by the Korean dance group. Only Japanese took part in the amateur singing contest. Based on my own participant observations on the day.

29 In restaurants run by *zainichi* Koreans, one orders Korean food from a menu written in the Korean alphabet. Outside, Korean workers sit in a circle as they relax, chatting for a moment after work. Naturally, they speak in Korean. At a stroke, the place becomes just like a Korean town.

30 It is only Japanese who relax in the recreation room of the 'Laborers' Welfare Association' (in the Kotobuki Welfare Center), which is equipped with a television, low dining table and a refrigerator. When foreigners do come in they sometimes meet with calls to 'Get out!' Inherent in this is the sense that the recreation room is the domain of Japanese people. Recently arrived foreigners, who live 'hidden away' because they have over stayed their visas, generally do not go near official facilities.

31 On 29 June 1994 I identified seven types of discriminatory graffiti along the lines of 'Koreans are bad people. Expel them!' I also saw rival graffiti in the Korean alphabet, written in response to these. This graffiti was written at the time when the availability of day labor work began to decline in Kotobukichō, in the early 1990s. Also at the August 1993 *Obon* Festival, there was an incident in which Japanese members of the audience threw empty bottles at a Korean dance group. This also occurred at a time when there was a decline in the amount of work as a result of recession. Many Japanese workers 'mistakenly imagine' that foreigners are taking jobs away from them and as a result of this there are frequent cases of discrimination against foreign workers (in particular Koreans). Incidentally, at the time of the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 Japanese vigilante groups were set up in the Nakamuragawa section of the city and these massacred very large numbers of *zainichi* Koreans. (*Kawase Seijikun Tsuitōbunshū Henshū Iinkai* 1985: 213)

32 In the mid-1990s around twenty Chinese female trainees were working in San'ya restaurants and bars as hostesses. They were, however, subsequently exposed as working without the proper work documents by immigration control officials and the establishments were closed.

33 The residents of Kotobukichō all came into the area post war and all are former day laborers. Kotobukichō has many long-term residents and, compared

with other *yoseba*, it also has a large number of married couples. There is a high level of local activism in Kotobukichō and also organizations to carry out these activities. Residents themselves select office bearers in resident committees and organizations and during the New Year and Summer Festivals lodging house managers, shop owners, administration employees, religious groups, the groups belonging to various movements and others 'step outside of their normal roles' to volunteer and make donations. Thus, whilst it is an intensely competitive society, Kotobukichō is also at the same time a politically and socially unified community.

34 Even violent gangs, who build grand shops and run ticket scalping which is unlawful, and municipally operated gambling, are hardly ever controlled.

35 In 1994, in Kotobukichō, there were 110 restaurants and bars, 15 food and general grocery stores, 6 Sunday grocery stores, barber shops, 5 hairdressers, 2 entertainment facilities, 2 bathhouses, 15 coin-operated laundries, 5 coin-operated showers and 15 ticket offices managed by private owners (*Yokohamashi Kotobuki Seikatsukan* 1993: 27*)*.

36 Lodging house residents in Kotobukichō are more than just customers. On one occasion when I was attempting to find a room in a lodging house a laborer, who happened to be there by chance, put in a good word for me with the manager saying, 'This fellow is my friend so do your best for him, as a favour to me' (4 January 1997). The relations between managers and boarders are not anonymous. There are many people who stay in the one lodging house for a long period because with the lodging house as their address they are able to receive welfare benefits.

37 The 'welfare' and 'territory-building' of Kotobukichō are limited. So too is the 'laboratory' metaphor. We cannot view these as being the same as the 'welfare' and 'territory-building' that exist in 'society at large'. What we are talking about here is, consistently, an isolated area. Do the struggles for survival of day laborers, foreign workers and the poor give rise to a spirit of cooperation surpassing that found in 'society at large'? This is an interesting question.

Chapter 4

1 'The exterior which cannot be concealed' is styled on Nishizawa's term 'concealed exterior' (Nishizawa 1995). Blau called them the 'visible poor' (Blau 1992).

2 I was able to confirm the emergence of the homeless on the basis of a survey conducted in Manila after the 1990s and through observations and discussions with sociologists in Sao Paulo in 2002 and in Warsaw and Prague in 2004.

3 Some of the new research topics in research into the homeless which I have read are: work camp work (Watanabe 2005); life structure (Tsumaki 2003); homeless women (Maruyama 2004 and Mun 2004) and religious disposition (Shirahase 2005). Furthermore, debates surrounding the exclusion of the homeless and the politics of public space are also flourishing (Iwata and Nishizawa 2005).

4 I am taking part in two comparative international research projects ('Los Angeles, Paris, Sao Paulo and Tokyo,' and 'Taipei, Seoul and Tokyo').

5 In January 2005 Osaka's accommodation facilities for the homeless had a capacity to take in a total of 3,228 people: 3 independent assistance centers 280 people; 2 temporary shelters 394 people; welfare apartments (lease of cheap lodgings) 2,000 rooms; and 4 Social Welfare Corporation (*jikyokan*) relief and rehabilitation facilities 554 people (Apart from these, there are emergency shelters offering overnight accommodation in Kamagasaki for 1,040 people). These various places also have some facilities for people who are not homeless and we do not know how many people are accommodated in each facility at present. However, given that these facilities are being used to capacity by the homeless, it would be rash to suggest that the number of homeless in Osaka has fallen.

6 In Tokyo, in January 2005, a total of 5,111 homeless people were admitted to various facilities: 3,558 people in accommodation places provided by the social welfare system; 928 people in 8 hostels provided by the independent assistance system; and 625 people in 8 rehabilitation facilities provided by the social welfare system (a researcher's report January 2005). If we take this into account, we could even say that there has been a rapid increase in the number of Tokyo's homeless.

7 The problem of defining just who is a homeless person is one of the difficulties faced in the calculation of the homeless population. Jencks discusses the relationship between the definition of, and population numbers for, the homeless and points out the difficulties of coming up with a firm decision (Jencks C., 1994: 1–7). Japan's homeless population is not large. The number of homeless people on the streets, however, are said to be higher than in other countries. 'In terms of worldwide numbers for people on the streets, Japan towers above other countries' (Iwata 2001: 41). If this is the case, then there are two reasons for Japan's low homeless population. The first is that Japan has a narrow definition of what it is to be homeless. In the United States even people who are living temporarily with their families and friends are counted amongst the homeless. The second is the fact that there are few facilities which can take in the homeless. There are no regional cities with shelters for the homeless.

8 In the Tokyo Survey there were 15 homeless women, representing 2.1 per cent of the total (*Toshi Seikatsu Kenkyūkai* 1999: 11).

9 According to the Japan National Social Welfare Association (*Zenkoku Shakai Fukushi Kyōgikai*), there were 122 former homeless people in facilities such as Tokyo's relief facilities, representing 7.8 per cent of total admissions (Maruyama 2004: 16).

10 Of the homeless people staying in facilities in the Tokyo survey 66.2 percent of those with some *yoseba* experience (133) had been in construction work immediately before becoming homeless whilst the corresponding figure for those with no *yoseba* experience (139) was 50.4 per cent (*Toshi Seikatsu Kenkyukai* 1999: 99). Meanwhile, 33.8 per cent of people with *yoseba* experience had had work that was not in construction, as did 49.6 per cent of those with no *yoseba* experience.

11 Contrastingly, Mun analyzes the job changes of four homeless women in the period before they became homeless and points out that there were close connections with construction work (Mun 2004: 55). There is still no

agreement on the question of which of these views is closest to the overall image for homeless women. Research into homeless women is at a very preliminary stage.

12 Many homeless women take up de facto relationships and live with men in order to survive the harshness of homeless life.

13 The proportion of married homeless men in Tokyo is 59.4 per cent and of these 8.9 per cent are still in contact with their wives, 12.5 per cent are widowers and 78.6 per cent are divorced (*Toshi Seikatsu Kenkyūkai* 1999: 17).

14 If we conjecture on the basis of the age of deaths from illness on the streets contained in official reports, we can say that the average life span of the homeless person lasts until the early sixties.

15 The figure of a young man lying on his side close by a homeless 'older man', in the square in front of the western exit to Shinjuku Railway Station in Tokyo, expresses the close connection between the social existence of both of these people who live in mutually different worlds. Based on my observations late on the night of 29 May 1999.

16 We are seeing the emergence of labor arrangers who house young people in rooms with heating and cooling facilities, apply for the necessary permits for construction work on their behalf and convey them to the work site (Nakamura 1998: 1).

17 Using Hiroshima to do my fieldwork, I attempted an analysis of the 'beggars' (*kotsujiki*), the homeless people of the Taishō period (1912–1926) (Aoki 2003). Research into the pre war 'beggars' exists as a part of research into slums (*hinminkutsu*): detailed analyses of the work, lives and groups of 'beggars' did not go beyond social reportage. For the post war period, there was Isomura's research in which he analyzed the war damage 'waifs' of the immediate post war (Isomura, 1954).

18 According to a state of the nation survey, there were 427 'vagrants' in Osaka (city) in 1946; 380 in 1948; 528 in 1950; 1,839 in 1955; and 862 in 1960 (*Kamagasaki Shienkikō* June 2005). The low number of 'vagrants' immediately after the end of the war, when there were large numbers of people suffering form the effects of war, may be the result of rough methods of counting.

19 According to the Policy Executive Committee of Nishinari Labor Welfare Center Labor Union, there are four to five thousand people for whom homelessness is the normal state in Kamagasaki and five to six thousand laborers who move between homelessness and lodging houses (Shirahase, 2005: 14).

20 The numbers are small but we are seeing the emergence of people who are from the group in secure employment – such as, skilled laborers and artisans, public servants and office workers, white collar workers, the chief clerks in sales and service enterprises and the managers of small businesses – suddenly becoming homeless people (Iwata, 2000: 181). Generally, they become homeless as they follow a step-by-step drop in their work careers, from secure to insecure employment. In recent years, however, there have been cases of people pursuing a direct drop in terms of work from the insecure employment group into homelessness. These people are also known as the 'necktie homeless' (*Osakakita*, 2 January 1999). These people are largely

found at the railway terminals of Osaka and Shinjuku Railway Stations. In the morning, at Shinjuku Station, there are even some homeless people who change into their suits in their cardboard houses and then head off to work. 'Middle level salary men who have been the victims of restructuring and older laborers have been thwarted in their attempts to find new employment and have been chased out of their low cost apartments as a result of the earthquake (which occurred in the Hanshin–Awaji area, including Kobe and Osaka, on 17 January, 1995). Over half of the homeless people whom I met outside of Kamagasaki were people with no experience in the construction industry) (*Kamagasaki Patorōru no Kai*, 13 December 1997).

21 Ogura argues that the increase in unemployment 'as a matter of choice' amongst young people corresponds to the increase in the numbers dropping out of high school and that these young people are becoming a 'new underclass' (Ogura, 1999). There are also indications that the image of large numbers of young people unable to rely on their parents, because of unfortunate home environments, who leave home and finally become homeless people, does not reflect reality (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 9 March 2000).

22 In January 1999 the 'Phone Voice-Mail Service Incident' occurred in which a young man used a phone voice-mail service to sell drugs to a young woman who died as a result of taking the drugs. The young man arrested was a twenty-three year old laborer – one of the young people whose life consists of living in a car and using a mobile telephone to find work (*Asahi Shinbun*, 8 January 1999).

23 In 1979, the Japanese government initiated the Japanese-style welfare debate: the idea that the individual's own efforts – in conjunction with his family, area and company (mutual assistance) – would be the basic condition and that public assistance would supplement this (*Keizai Kikakuchō* 1979). In this, public assistance is portrayed as a supplement to private assistance: that is, the family, area and company (Ōsawa 2003: 205).

24 Application of the Welfare Benefits Law is left to local municipalities. Consequently, there is scope for flexibility in the actual application of the law by these municipalities.

25 Osaka Prefecture is enacting a variety of welfare policies related to the homeless. These are, however, largely policies for those who are already homeless and not policies for the purpose of 'preventing' the process by which poor people become homeless people.

26 Kawanishi has called this kind of familial and group management 'a management leadership style of labor and capital co-operation' (Kawanishi, 1997: 60).

27 There are also reports that in the group who have never married many have insecure longest-held occupations and that most people who have been married fell into lives of poverty as a result of costs such as those associated with rearing children (*Tokyoto Kikaku Shingishitsu*, 1995: 27).

28 In 1997 B, who is working as a foreman in San'ya, looked up the details on the origins of ten homeless people, who had died of illness on the streets, in order to inform the families about the collection of the ashes and to ask them to come and collect any belongings. However, the parents of nine of the homeless people declined to come and collect the ashes and belongings

saying, 'he is no longer my son'. One older brother learned from B that there was a sizable workers' compensation payment owing for his younger brother and he travelled to Tokyo to collect the payment only. As far as parents were concerned, sons who had died as homeless people brought 'shame to the family'. This episode, contrary to what it appears to be saying actually, shows the strength of the bonds between the members of a family. (B in San'ya. September 1998.)

29 Members of *buraku* (*burakumin*), which had their origins in status discrimination in Japan's Edo Period, 150 years ago, still experience considerable discrimination in Japan today. There are many incidents in which someone who has married a *burakumin* is no longer acknowledged as a member of their own family, disinherited and ostracized (by, for example, the family not allowing meetings with any relatives and refusing to attend any ceremonial occasions). This type of pathological famil-ism can frequently be seen in the form of heartlessly excluding a member of the family who has become a homeless person. This type of famil-ism is at the basis of discrimination against the homeless in Japan.

30 There are ongoing debates about work in this period of de-industrializing (Sumiya, 2003: Chapters 1 and 2). We must also incorporate homeless people's 'work which cannot be called work' into our concept of work. Their work is also a part of the financial cycle of social consumption and reproduction.

31 Seventy per cent of the homeless in San'ya and around Ueno are employed in the construction industry but of these around ten per cent got the work via San'ya (Nakamura, 1999: 55).

32 During the recession in the construction industry, primary subcontracting companies, increased their operational capacity and became general contractors and they expanded work camp management and created secondary and tertiary subcontractors and brought about the further development of the work camp net. As can be seen also from the answers to a 1995 questionnaire survey of 625 people in the construction industry, close to half of all respondents said that increased subcontracting 'stratification' within the company had 'moved ahead' as a result of separate orders for jobs based on increasingly specialized works, a fall in work and reduced labor costs (*Koyōsokushin Jigyōdan*, (Employment Promotion Corporation), 1999: 12).

33 One group which runs a soup kitchen and gives work consultations for the homeless in Ueno Park is dealing with troublesome questions regarding fifty-five agents. The group says that the number of agents in the whole park is two to three times greater than this number (Nakamura 1999: 61). Six hundred are homeless people and 2,000–3,000 homeless people if we include those in work camps, go to work through these labor recruiters.

34 The market rate offered for recruitment advertisements in sports journals in 1999 was 9,000 to 10,000 yen in wages for laborers in work camps, with 2,000 yen taken from this for food and lodging; leaving a net income of 7,000 to 8,000 yen. For arranging done at Ueno Railway Station or Park, the market rate is 6,000 to 6,500 yen minus 1,500 yen. With the current fall in the unit cost of newspaper arranging, the gap between this form of arranging and the unit cost of railway station and park arranging has disappeared. In contrast

to this, seen in terms of the around 10,000 yen market rate in San'ya, the unit cost of labor arranging through newspapers, stations and parks is a mere half of the wages obtained through *yoseba* labor arranging. The market rate of the money which sub-subcontractors receive from above is around 16,000 yen and they skim off a large amount of this for themselves. There is an increase in the rate of skimming off during a recession. (C, a San'ya labor movement activist. 22 January 1999.)

35 In recent years day labor unions and regional unions have seen a flood of labor consultations about not having been able to get hold of wages after having left the street to work. Amongst these have also been cases of the imprisonment of laborers in work camps and people being made to work for nothing for up to three years (Nakamura, 1998: 171). Ninety-nine per cent of labor consultations sought by homeless people concern the issue of the non-payment of wages and this is in stark contrast to the various life and work issues which make up the bulk of consultations in *yoseba* (Nakamura, 1999: 59).

36 Ueno Park is divided up by agents affiliated with a clique/faction of gangster organization C, which levies a membership fee (3,000,000 yen) and monthly payments on agents under their jurisdiction. Agents who do not pay have to act clandestinely. These clandestine agents come in stealthily at night to arrange labor. Meanwhile, gangster organization D rules Shinjuku and Takadanobaba. There are strict spheres of influence amongst them. (E, a San'ya activist. 2 November 1999.) The situation is the same in Osaka. 'Behind the scenes in work camp management, the real situation is practically one of organization along the lines of yakuza affiliation. It's the same in the area (of Kamagasaki). Everything is controlled: this street stall is under such and such a group, the quarter adjoining this one is under such and such a group; this is the way things are' (F, an activist.) (Noguchi, 1997: 57).

37 When the Kanagawa Labor Bureau carried out an on-the-spot inspection of 267 laborers' quarters (work camps) in the prefecture, it ascertained that 47.6 per cent of the total were in breach of the provisions of the Labor Standards Law and the Ministry of Labor, in, for example, their lack of alarms or warning facilities and escape stairs and the failure to carry out evacuation and fire drills. The Labor Bureau directed the industry to carry out improvements. In 1994 eight people died in a fire in laborers' quarters in the City of Ebina and in 1999 one person died in a fire in laborers' lodgings in the City of Isehara (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 13 April 2000). There will be further incidents as a result of the actual conditions of contempt/disregard for human life in work camps.

38 The Day Labor Unions in *yoseba* are carrying out denunciation and negotiation activities with regard to pernicious labor arrangers and recruiters, in order to safeguard the interests of the homeless. The San'ya Struggle Group dealt with labor consultations concerning fifteen agents in the period from January to October 1999 and made them pay the wages and compensation to their fifty victims. (C, mentioned previously. 2 November 1999.)

39 The purport of the city of Osaka's cleaning works is 'Alongside the expansion of work on city land throughout the city, for example weeding work; the creation of employment opportunities for elderly day laborers; and the

promotion of independent living – in response to the grave social problem of a rapid rise in the number of people living a homeless existence, which has come about because of the large-scale decline in the help-wanted positions for day labor in recent years – this scheme also aims towards the beautification of the environment in all areas of the city' (*Ōsakashi Hōmu Pēji* (City of Osaka Home Page), January 2005).

40 Under the basic amount of welfare benefit, based on the welfare system, (minimum living expenses), in 2004 a single woman living in Osaka received 93,820 yen per month (*Hōmu Pēji* 'basic amount of welfare benefit 2005'). The homeless differ in that they have an average age of 55.8 and are almost entirely male but, even so, this gives us an idea of the starvation level of the income of homeless people.

41 In 2000 Independent Assistance Centers opened in Ōyodo (100 regulars), Nishinari (80 regulars) and Yodogawa (100 regulars). By October 2004 the total number of people admitted to the centers was Ōyodo 680, Nishinari 865 and Yodogawa 859 (*Ōsakashi Hōmu Pēji*, January 2005).

42 The following appears on the home page of the City of Osaka. 'Up until now, the Independent Assistance Center has provided employment assistance for the homeless, in cooperation with the public Employment Security Office, at a time of harsh employment conditions, and has achieved the positive result of a 40 per cent employment rate. However, in those cases where people do not find work during the maximum stay of six months with the center, unless we aim to ensure stable living conditions – for example, through the receipt of housing benefits or returning to live with one's family – then the precious road to independence will be closed off and there is the fear that these people will return to living on the street. For this reason, our task is to aim towards a further increase in the center's employment rate.' (Independent Assistance Center Ōyodo *Hōmu Pēji*, October 2004.)

43 The numbers and the rates for this are not known. In order to measure the Independent Assistance Center's efficacy, it is important that we conduct a follow up survey of people from the center who are in work.

44 There are indications that there has not been a decline in construction work but only the fact that the work does not find its way to day laborers and the homeless (Matsushige, 1997:107–120).

45 There were around 250 people a year [1997] on welfare benefits in Kawasaki, with an approximately forty per cent decrease in the numbers of homeless. The speed with which people received housing assistance surpassed the speed with which people were discharged anew onto the street. The application of welfare benefits to the homeless was a unique discretionary part of the city of Kawasaki's policy regarding the struggle to survive the winter (Mizushima, 1997: 104). However, these positive results were also the result of a movement, conducted by the homeless and their supporters, demanding the application of welfare benefits.

46 In 1993, E, who was fifty-five and lived in Nagoya, had hurt his leg and was unable to work; he had looked for work that he might be able to do but being unable to find any he applied for welfare benefits. The Welfare and Labor Office, however, deemed that E was able to work and rejected his application for benefits. E took the city and the Welfare Office to court, arguing that the

failure to grant him welfare benefits was an infringement of the constitution. The first judgement in the trial, in October 1996, was a victory on all points for E and the second judgment was a defeat on all points. In December 1999 E fell ill. Thereafter, his supporters continued to fight the case in the Supreme Court (Protect Life and Rights! Support Group for Hayashi's Lawsuit, 1998.) A similar lawsuit has been brought in Osaka and is still being heard.

47 The Yokohama Vagrant Killing Case is an incident in which, from 1982 and 1983, a group of ten youths bashed homeless people who were sleeping rough in Yamashita Park, in the environs of Kannai Railway Station, in the city of Yokohama; killing three of the homeless and inflicting serious injuries on thirteen.

48 For a consolidation of the debates surrounding the concept of the 'new homeless' in research into the homeless in Europe and the United States see Aoki, 2003: 362–364.

49 The former mayor of Tokyo, Aoshima Yukio, said of the homeless, 'Those people like that kind of lifestyle'. His understanding is far from the real state of affairs. The following words of a volunteer make this clear. 'I slept rough for three days and, at first, I was afraid of the people sleeping around me but when I talked to them I found that there were many good people too. […] I would like to help them escape from homelessness. Sleeping rough is tough. I understand that. I do not think that there is anyone who has chosen to sleep rough because they like it. They are doing it because they have no choice: because of work, family or for other reasons. That is why I would like to decrease the number of people suffering in this way, even just a little' (*Kotobuki Shien Kōryūkai* 1999: 5).

50 Names for the homeless vary according to the municipality: 'people living homeless lives' (*nojuku seikatsusha*) in the cities of Osaka and Kawasaki, 'people living on the streets' (*rojō seikatsusha*) in the city of Tokyo, 'people living in the open air' (*yagai seikatsusha*) in Yokohama and 'people of no fixed address' (*jūsho futeisha*) in Nagoya (Fujii, 2000). Differences in the stance on, and interest in, the homeless 'problem' between municipalities emerges in these names.

51 In 1999 the government set up the 'Liaison Committee on the Homeless Problem' and that same year it issued a report, 'Urgent Countermeasures to the Homeless Problem'. In addition to defining the homeless as 'people who – because of a variety of factors such as unemployment, family breakdown and flight from social life – have no specific residence and are living homeless lives in places such as the street, parks, the banks of rivers and around railway stations', the report classified them in to (1) people who want to work but are unemployed because there is no work, (2) people in need of medical, welfare and other benefits and (3) people who reject social life. Under this definition of the homeless, however, the 'essential provision' that Japan's homeless are people who above all have been thrown out of the day labor market and driven into homelessness through necessity is not clear. The idea of classifying the homeless and making this the standard for policies is also problematic. In particular, the passage 'people who reject social life' is the Japanese version of the 'undeserving' in the United States and nothing other than the logic of exclusion (*Kawasaki Suiyō Patorōru no kai* (Kawasaki

Wednesday Patrol), 1999: 22–24). Even Iwata, the expert committee member on the Liaison Committee, judges that we will not solve the problem with 'short sighted' measures based on ideas of 'simply classifying, from the "outside" the characteristics and origins' of the homeless (Iwata, 2000: 72).

Chapter 5

1 The foreign population in Japan was 1,400,000 in 1993. Of these 800,000 were permanent residents (*zainichi* foreigners) and 600,000 were temporary residents (migrant workers). Of the migrant workers, legal and illegal workers both numbered 300,000 (*Sōrifu*, 1994: 62). From the beginning of the latter half of the 1990s, the number of foreigners decreased dramatically. According to the Ministry of Justice, the number of foreigners overstaying their visas was 268,421 in 1999 (Komai, 2000:11). Because of the job shortage due to the prolonged recession, foreigners who overstay their visas are splitting into those who settle in Japan and those who return to their homeland. This situation is clearly visible in the trends amongst foreign workers connected with *yoseba*.

   We can see the following changes in trends amongst foreigners who overstayed their visas and were working illegally in Japan during the 1990s. First, there was a diversification of the ethnic composition of foreigners (*Hōmushō*, 1993: 234–238). Second, an increasing number of foreigners settled in Japan by sponsoring their families to live in Japan or by marrying Japanese. Third, because of the aforementioned situation, the contrasting dichotomy between Japanese and foreigners has been collapsing. Foreigners of Japanese ancestry and children born in international marriages between Japanese and foreigners increased in number, partially blurring ethnic borders between Japanese and foreigners (Kajita, 1994: 165–166). Fourth, foreigners are becoming stratified by ethnic groups depending on the extent of barriers to their entry into Japanese society. This point will be discussed later.

2 The term 'dual labor market' refers to the dual nature of a labor market (of permanent workers) formed by monopolistic large businesses and small and medium businesses. Below this market there is a labor market of temporary workers. This is the market which foreign workers join. Iyotani referred to the labor market for lower permanent workers and the labor market for temporary workers into which Japanese and foreigners respectively are separated as the 'secondary labor market' (Iyotani, 2001: 188, 205).

3 This corresponds to Sassen's hypothesis which was mentioned earlier. New unskilled jobs include the bottom tier of low paid jobs and the 'tier of urban miscellaneous jobs' that have expanded together with the expansion of the information industry. On the basis of an analysis of cases in Manila, I have referred to people employed in those job categories as a 'new labor class' (Aoki, 2003: 122).

4 The MHLW's survey of 30,000 Japanese workers, conducted in October 1999, found that 27.5 per cent of all workers were temporary workers (MHLW, 2001: 33). This means that one in four Japanese workers was a temporary worker.

5 Tanno analyzed local labor markets composed of foreign workers, brokers and businesses (Tanno Kiyoto, 2001). This analysis, however, covers only

permanent workers who are mainly foreigners of Japanese ancestry. It is not easy to analyze local labor markets containing temporary workers who are employed in low pay and unskilled jobs whose existence is concealed. Neither businesses nor brokers can *count on* the existence of temporary workers as a *secure* labor force and control their work and lives *collectively and systematically.* There is constantly a search being conducted for them as 'illegal' residents and workers, which makes their very existence insecure. Their existence must inevitably be concealed. The role of brokers does not go beyond finding a job for *each individual* temporary worker.

6 In Japanese cities, Japanese and foreigners have not yet split up into different labor markets (there is no ghetto either) (Matsuzawa, 1996: 95). We can, however, see the rough separation of different ethnic groups into different job categories. For example, Koreans, Chinese and Bangladeshis are most often seen in the construction industry, the catering industry and the bookbinding industry, respectively. These remarks are based on comments made by A, a labor activist from San'ya. 18 August 1989. This situation still cannot be referred to as a division into different labor markets. No large-scale correspondence is seen between ethnic groups and job categories.

7 Foreign workers are often referred to as unskilled workers. "The term 'foreign workers' means … foreigners engaged in businesses that are categorized into the very vague category of "unskilled labor"' (Igarashi, 2003: 59). The term *unskilled* workers refers to untrained workers who face low barriers to finding work, or need *no particular* knowledge, technique or skill to be employed. Does this mean that foreign workers are really unskilled workers? The answer is no, for the following four reasons. First, a considerable number of foreign workers come to Japan with high-level knowledge, techniques and/or skills. A survey of Philippine entertainers, factory workers and construction workers (60 people) in Japan has found that their previous jobs included secretary, post office clerk, clerical worker, store clerk, traffic agent, product inspector, service agent, business consultant, variety shop manager, barber, civil servant, and policeman (Balescas, 1996: 104). In Japan, however, they can find work only in unskilled job categories. In other words, 'there is no correspondence between the quality of labor and the quality of jobs in terms of skill level' (Shikibu, 1992: 158). They are *latent* skilled workers whose work potential has not been realized. Second, foreign workers do include some professional and skilled workers, although their numbers are small. In 2000, foreign workers employed in professional or technical jobs accounted for 21.8per cent of all foreign workers (MHLW, 2002a: 295). Third, 'unskilled' labor does often require expert knowledge, techniques and/or skills. For example, day labor such as 'construction work', 'miscellaneous services', 'hands' and 'cleaning' cannot be done without knowledge and skill for doing various work at different sites on different days. In this type of labor, the ratings of job categories do not match the actual tasks. In addition, the mechanization of processes and work has simplified professional and technical work while complicating physical labor (Kajita, 2001: 215). Fourth, unskilled labor has acquired the image of being 3D labor. This is *generally true* for manual work, but there surely exist manual jobs which do not require 3D labor (though wages are low). Conversely, there are some professional or technical jobs that actually

require 3D labor. In other words, whether or not the job is 3D cannot by itself completely describe the actual situation of manual labor. 'Unskilled worker' is a name which roughly groups foreign workers together and keeps their occupational status low. It has its genesis in contempt for foreign workers.

8 A disproportionately large number of job categories in which workers without the proper work documents were arrested are in the construction industry (as compared to the actual proportion of foreign workers employed in the industry). This is because these job categories are easy targets for the surveillance activities of the Immigration Bureau and the police because they are jobs with a large amount of outdoor work, a high incidence of work-related accidents, the existence of labor recruiters who take kickbacks, and the existence of violently managed work camps.

9 With respect to the operation of the Workers' Compensation Insurance Law, the following provisions have been established: 'the Law shall be applied to all labor within Japan, regardless of whether the worker is Japanese or not, or an illegal worker or not.' (*Kihatsu* No. 41, 31 October 1988; Notification by Director of Inspection Division, Labor Standards Bureau, Ministry of Labor, to each Prefectural Labor Standards Bureaus)

10 A large percentage of complaints filed with the day labor unions of Kamagasaki, San'ya and Kotobukichō are filed by foreign workers. Most of these complaints are about *bottakuri* (rip-offs) or unpaid wages and the failure to acknowledge the occurrence of work-related accidents (complaints from Koreans and Chinese have increased in all these *yoseba* in recent years). Behind these complaints are problems such as violent work camps (semi-sweatshops) and gaffers who disappear without paying wages (based on interviews with each of these unions).

11 Since the latter half of the 1990s, the Immigration Bureau and the police have cracked down more actively on 'illegal stays', 'fake marriages' and 'fake Japanese' and have actively applied the offence of aiding and abetting illegal employment to these cases. Officers of the Immigration Bureau and the police have increasingly come to view 'illegal employment' as a 'crime' (Furuya, 2003: 25).

12 Comments made by B, a San'ya laborer. 13 June 1992. It has been reported that a large number of skilled workers were sent to this project, resulting in a serious shortage of skilled workers at construction sites in the suburbs.

13 The following are some of the changes in employment trends amongst illegal foreign workers caused by prolonged recession (Komai, 1998: 178–191). The employers of workers without the proper work documents have been shifting from construction and manufacturing businesses to service businesses (this has also been affected by the fact that foreign workers of Japanese ancestry have been forced out of the factory labor to the day labor market); this has resulted in a concentration of foreign workers living in the Kantō region into Tokyo; these employers have been shifting from corporations to private businesses; and as the length of their stay in Japan increases, illegal foreign workers have been shifting from finding employment through brokers to finding employment through their own information networks.

14 In addition to this route, many foreign workers in the manufacturing industry are recruited by a broker or directly employed by an employer while they are

in their home country and move into a dormitory or boarding house attached to the business establishment, from which they commute to a factory as factory laborers. This pattern is commonly seen particularly in the Chūkyō and Kansai regions. In this case, Japanese workers do not see foreign workers either in *yoseba* or factories. Even though they are in the same job category, Japanese workers and foreign workers form different labor markets in this case.

15 The occupations in which *zainichi* Koreans were employed in 1964 were: professional or managerial (6.1per cent); clerical (6.8per cent); sales (21.3per cent), agriculture, fisheries or mining (6.7per cent); transportation (7.0per cent); construction, technical, manufacturing process, or unskilled labor (48.5per cent); and service (3.4per cent) (Morita, 1996: 128). Compared to their occupations in 1990, these occupations included a small number of job categories and were generally of low status.

16 The number of Koreans who returned to their homeland after the end of World War Two was 1,410,000. A majority of these Koreans had come to Japan during the period of transportation for forced labor and they were able to return home under the Japanese government and GHQ policy of giving priority to the repatriation of mobilized laborers and demobilized soldiers (Morita, 1996: 20, 88). Of the Koreans who remained in Japan, 'a majority were those who had come to live in mainland Japan a long time ago and had established firm roots in the Japanese community' (Morita, 1996: 21).

17 The figure is based on Warner's race relations diagram (Warner, 1941: 10). I have substituted the terms 'stratum (*kaisō*)' and 'ethnic group' (*minzoku*) respectively for Warner's terms 'class' and 'ethnic'. In addition, 'ethnicity' was replaced by 'collective ethnic characteristics' (*minzoku no shūdanteki tokusei*) (such as languages, religions and lifestyles) and 'ethnic boundary' by 'boundary between ethnic groups' (*minzokuteki kyōkai*). This is because I do not use the terms 'stratum' and 'ethnic group' as constructive concepts with a psychological aspect, as used by Warner, but rather as structural concepts emphasizing labor as an objective aspect. *Zainichi* foreigners other than Koreans (*zainichi* Chinese, for example) have been not been included in this discussion.

18 Gordon referred to subclasses formed by the intersection of ethnicity and class as 'ethclasses' (Gordon, M.M., 1978: 135–136).

19 Sometimes those who are in the upper or middle stratum of minorities behave as a class outside the boundaries between ethnic groups. Discrimination against them in Japanese society, however, does not easily allow them to integrate or coexist with Japanese.

20 I have put together a framework describing the stratification of recently arrived foreigners using information collected during my visits to *yoseba* in *zainichi* Korean quarters and in foreign worker support groups in Tokyo, Yokohama and Osaka, as well as those conducted in Manila. It is still a hypothesis.

21 The control over illegal employment is gradually becoming stricter in Japan, and employers tend to employ foreign workers of Japanese ancestry who are eligible to work in Japan in order to avoid penalties. Particularly in the case of Peruvians, many are post war immigrants from Okinawa whose identity as foreigners of Japanese ancestry is sometimes difficult to prove

because of the absence or loss of their birth or marriage certificates. In this context, the issue of 'fake Japanese' has arisen. In 2000, the Immigration Control Law was revised with the aim of tightening control over foreigners entering Japan 'voluntarily' (stowaways). The preceding year (1999) saw frequent crackdowns on and arrests of foreigners who had come into Japan 'voluntarily'. During this period, false information spread among overstaying foreigners that those who were arrested would be fined 300,000 yen. This resulted in the return of 8,500 foreigners to their home country within the month of February of the same year (*Zainichi Ajia Rōdōsha to Tomoni Tatakau Kai* (*Junbi Kai*) (Preparatory Committee to Establish the Action Group Fighting with Asian Workers in Japan), 4 March 2000: 1). This is an indication of the level of fear with which overstaying or illegal foreigners live.

22 The collective basis for foreigners' stay in Japan is determined by the process of immigration of the foreigners. Higuchi argues that the immigration systems for the most recent wave of foreigners include the 'mutual aid immigration system', which is controlled by the 'principle of general, mutual reward circulating within the community', and the 'market-mediated immigration system', under which foreigners immigrate through brokers and which is controlled by the principle of market exchange (of a labor force) (Higuchi, October 2002: 61–62). Under the former system, networks within the group work actively, whereas under the latter they fail to work. In other words, the strength of networks is determined by the immigration system instead of ethnicity. Higuchi further argues that these immigration systems function as mezzo conditions of immigration realizing a foreigner's immigration through macro conditions (the imbalance between labor supply and demand) and micro conditions (private motives for immigration) (Higuchi, 2000: 76–86). In contrast, Shikibu asserts that the pricing mechanism of labor markets (the market-mediated immigration system) does not work (directly) and emphasizes the importance of systematic factors in the positioning of foreign workers (such as the social framework for employers' sorting of workers, the mechanisms of obstruction of entry, and exclusion of foreign workers by Japanese workers and the functions of networks within groups) (Shikibu, 1992: 158).

23 It has been pointed out that the Japanese labor market may be split into three segments – Japanese; Koreans and Chinese (foreigners from the kanji cultural sphere, that is, the region using Chinese characters as the basis of its writing system); and Southeast and South Asians (foreigners from non-kanji cultural spheres) (Miyajima, 1989: 22–23). The process of segmentation of the labor market according to the collective attributes of ethnic groups, however, cannot be explained completely by differences in linguistic culture; it is indeed much more complicated.

24 This writer has often been amazed at how quickly young Filipinos/Filipinas who stayed at his house learned Japanese. Their ability to bottle up the core of their culture at the bottom of their minds and efficiently adapt to a new culture derives not only from personal talents but also from memories that they as an ethnic group have engraved in their culture through their history.

25 The wage levels of different ethnic groups were traditionally said to be the highest in ethnic Japanese from Latin American countries, followed in descending order by East Asians (Koreans and Chinese), Southeast Asians (Filipinos/Filipinas and Thais), South Asians (Bangladeshis and Pakistanis), and West Asians (Iranians). However, as a good command of the Japanese language has become increasingly important in the economic recession in recent years, Iranians and Bangladeshis are said to have moved up in the aforementioned listing (Komai, 1998: 184).

26 *Zainichi* Korean labor recruiters and labor arrangers are said to exist in large numbers in San'ya also. In Kotobukichō, by contrast, only a small number of labor recruiters and labor arrangers are *zainichi* Koreans (reportedly about ten per cent), and most *zainichi* Koreans are *doya* owners or shop owners. In both communities, the occupations of *zainichi* Koreans have been determined by the historical process of formation of the construction industry and the labor market in the community surrounding *yoseba*.

27 The history of *zainichi* Koreans is not taught in school in Korea, according to comments made by E, 35-year-old wife of a Japanese residing in Hiroshima. 25 June 1999. In addition, there are disparaging names in Korea for *zainichi* Koreans, such as '*pan-choppari* (half Japanese)'.

28 '*Anko*' is short for '*chōchin-ankō* (lantern angler fish)', and is used to describe day laborers because they stand on the streets, waiting for labor recruiters to bring news of jobs, thus resembling the deep-sea fish which waits motionless for small fish to be attracted to its lure.

29 F, a Kamagasaki laborer, is a Japanese worker who found employment in a *zainichi* Korean gaffer's work camp through a Korean organiser's (*sewayaki*) introduction. All other workers at the work camp are Korean except F. He became friends with Korean workers and joined their network. (F. 3 January 1999.

30 There are many work camps run by *zainichi* Koreans throughout Taishō Ward, Suminoe Ward and Minato Ward in Osaka City. These *zainichi* Koreans go to Kamagasaki to recruit laborers. Kamagasaki is also visited by labor recruiters who come to recruit laborers at the request of companies. These are the basic forms of labor arrangements at *yoseba*.

31 According to I, Koreans from Cheju Island account for the highest proportion of Koreans in Kamagasaki, followed by those from Pusan (I, 13 August 1999). His comment that having to socialize with other Koreans is annoying to him shows the tightness of their ethnic networks. Later, as jobs became scarce, (informant) I returned to Korea in August 2000. In a phone call from Korea he told me that, 'Few people go to Japan because everybody knows that jobs are scarce in Japan. These days many people go to Beijing or Shanghai in China. I think jobs will increase in Japan during the lead up to the World Cup which will be held there in 2002. I want to go back again then.' (I, 26 February 2001.

32 '*Ōsaka Fukei Bōryokudan Taisaku-ka* (Osaka Prefectural Police Department, Organized Crime Control Division) and *Nishinari-sho* (Nishinari Police Station) announced on the eighteenth that they have issued a total of 120 cease-and-desist orders under the Anti-Organized Crime Law to five members of a Yamaguchi-gumi affiliated gang group, for taking kickbacks

from homeless people who have stalls selling second-hand clothes and the like on the streets of "Airi-chiku' (in Nishinari Ward, Osaka), an area of casual laborers. Kickbacks collected amounted to about 900,000 yen in one year and three months' (*Mainichi Shinbun* (Osaka edition), 19 August 2000). Cases like this one, however, involve not only Koreans but also many Japanese stall keepers and mobsters.

33   The work camp which F joined was composed of 15 Koreans and 5 Korean Chinese. According to F, these Koreans and Korean Chinese were kind to him. (F, 18 July 1999. Korean Chinese first enter Korea, which has diplomatic relations with China, on a family visit visa and then enter Japan on a tourist visa or 'voluntarily'. They enter Japan through mediation by the broker Snake Head, or using connections with *zainichi* Koreans, or using networks of their own friends and acquaintances. Mediation by Snake Head is expensive, and even if workers enter Japan successfully they will be hard pressed to pay back their debts. In addition, Korean Chinese have limited connections with *zainichi* Koreans. Therefore, an increasing number of Korean Chinese are coming to Japan relying on information about Japan that they hear from their friends and acquaintances. These people flow into the anonymous community of Kamagasaki. However, in the current situation where the media frequently report cases of '*mitsunyūkoku* (illegal entry)' of not only Korean Chinese but also non-Korean Chinese, Kamagasaki is one of the areas which have seen a succession of Immigration Bureau inspections of *doya* inhabited by (Korean) Chinese. (F, 13 August 1999).

34   Recently arrived Koreans purchase their mobile phones by borrowing the name of their gaffer or friend who is Japanese or *zainichi* Korean. According to A, as the length of their stay in Japan increases, they begin to settle problems in their work and lives using their own networks. They seek help from a support group only when they need assistance from Japanese, such as for visa applications. (C, 13 August 1999).

35   During the 1920s, lower-level jobs in chemical, machinery and metal, textile and other businesses of small or medium size concentrated in Ikuno Ward, Higashinari Ward, Hirano Ward and Higashiōsaka City. The whole area was the core of the industrial zone of Osaka, 'the Manchester of the Orient'. The history of formation of Ikaino is detailed in Kim Chan Jong, 1985. The distribution of *zainichi* Koreans in prewar Osaka (mainly Ikaino) is analyzed in Sugihara Tōru, 1996).

36   Japanese still constitute the dominant group in Ikaino. The ethnic relationship between Japanese and *zainichi* Koreans in Ikaino has been extensively studied in Tani, 2002. Kim Dofan, who was raised in Ikaino, says that community activities in which he was involved were nearly derailed because they were rejected by Japanese. This made him aware of the position of *zainichi* as a minority group in Ikaino (Kim Dofan, 1992.5: 84). This shows that *zainichi* Koreans are basically not accepted as community members.

37   Kim Chan Jong asserts that the concentration of Koreans in Ikaino began with craftsmen from Cheju Island who moved in after completion of the improvement works on Hirano Unga (the Hirano Waterway) (1923) (Kim Chan Jong, 1985: 21). On this point Kim Dofan argues that we cannot hope to explain the concentration of Koreans in Ikaino without mentioning the improvement works on Hirano Unga (Kim Dofan, April 1989: 63).

38 Kō reported the life histories of six men from Cheju Island who entered Japan independently and were granted special stay permits (Kō, 2000: 31). They came to Japan during the period between the latter half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s and are currently in their forties and fifties. Several of them have wives who have also entered Japan 'voluntarily'. Shōya and Nakagawa mention cases of foreigners who have entered Japan 'voluntarily' working in the sandal and shoe industry (Shōya and Nakagawa, 1992).

39 People engaged in the business of Korean fortune telling, called 'kut', have begun to appear in Ikaino (M, officer of an organization in Ikaino. 14 March 1994). Other Korean businesses have followed, including those providing Korean-style beauty treatment '*akasuri* (skin-scrubbing)', showing the considerable permeation of Korean manners and customs into Ikaino.

40 This figure is based on data obtained from Chūo Ward Office. 8 January 2002. Although this figure represents the population counted in 1999, it is considerably smaller than the population of registered Koreans in 2000 (2,024 people). This means that many Koreans are registered in Chūo Ward but live outside the ward. This is explained by the fact that Chūo Ward is an entertainment district (Koreans register Chuo Ward as their address because using their work place address, which is fixed, gives them a fixed residence).

41 How these estimates were calculated is unknown. Unfortunately, the total number of Korean barmaids (and male companions) working in Minami is unknown. It does seem, however, that the total number far exceeds Chung's estimate of 200.

42 The situation evolved as P had 'feared'. During the latter half of the 1990s, the numbers of Koreans (and Chinese) increased dramatically in the streets with condos and hotels adjacent to Minami. During a visit to a snack bar three Japanese barmaids unanimously told me that, 'Koreans are sensible. They are good at attracting clients and charge them without fail.' We can infer from their comments a surprise at the authority wielded by Korean barmaids.

43 Q, a Korean laborer in Kamagasaki, used to be a cook in Minami. Eight years ago he had a tourist visa and was on board an aeroplane to Japan intending to work there when he was recruited by the *zainichi* Korean woman sitting next to him. She employed him in her Korean club in Minami. (Q, 13 August 1999.

44 The entertainment district, Minami, has its underworld in which some recently arrived Koreans are active. The following is another comment made by C: 'In Nanba there are recently arrived Koreans working with Japanese or *zainichi* Koreans in nightlife businesses. In some cases, Korean women are in charge of soliciting and Thai or Russian women are in charge of prostitution' (13 August 1999). However, there is no way to validate the general applicability of this account.

45 There are stories behind the stories of marriage. The following are comments made by R, a Japanese laborer in Kamagasaki (15 March 2001). 'Gang groups use Nishinari (Kamagasaki) men's family registers to put Korean women's names in there as their married wives. Of course they pay the men. Some say they pay 200,000 yen per case. They make these men marry and divorce one woman after another, and when a man's family register gets filled up

they transfer his domicile to another place. I've heard of a man who married 10 women in a single year.' A marriage can be registered at a ward office not only in person but also through a proxy. According to F, quite a few of these marriages are registered by brokers (not all of them are gang group members) (14 March 2001). In this connection, studying gang groups is an important subject in urban studies. 'According to the Metropolitan Police Department, Korean police authorities have informed them that the current recession and the Anti-Organized Crime Law have caused cash-strapped Japanese gang groups to invade Korea. Meanwhile, recent years have seen many vicious crimes, such as the case of the Korean gangs of pickpockets that came to Japan and injured people, including policemen, using tear gas or knives, while the number of mass arrivals of illegal immigrants through Korea is reportedly increasing' (*Asahi Shinbun* (Osaka edition), 9 January 2000). The global urbanization of the ordinary world has been accompanied by that of the underworld, connecting the two worlds.

46 My visits to this church occurred on 15 August 1999, 4 January 2000, 11 and 13 March 2001, and 6 January 2002. During these visits I interviewed S, the Korean pastor, and some Korean feamle members of the congregation.

47 In this context, 'Japanese' husbands probably include *zainichi* Koreans. As is the case with Filipinas and Thai women, some Korean women are mistreated by their Japanese husbands. The circumstances surrounding these Korean women may be all the harsher because of their male-dominant Confucian culture.

48 Based on a survey of recently arrived Koreans in Kotobukichō, Kō, too, has pointed out that they tend to rely more on their relatives and acquaintances who have been in Japan than on *zainichi* Koreans (Kō, 1991: 114).

49 Although the recession in Korea is said to be over, the employment situation was still severe in 1999 with no likelihood of Korean workers in Japan being able to find work if they return to Korea. (I, 30 December 1999.

50 Merely being in an in-between position in terms of generations of immigrants is sufficient to put the new first generation in the position of mediator between *zainichi* Koreans and the super-new first generation (Sugihara Tōru, 1993: 132). In Ikaino, Japanese join these relations. As described above, Japanese constitute a dominant group in the Ikaino community.

51 This is supported by Q, who said that he had never heard of recently arrived Koreans in Ikaino going to Kamagasaki or Minami to find work. (Q, 13 August 1999.

Chapter 6

1 Satō Ikuya has called interview methods in which there is no pre-determined plan regarding the questions which will be asked – where questions are adapted to the circumstances, in response to the conditions which one finds and where data collection and analysis are carried out simultaneously in parallel – informal interviews (unstructured interviews) (Satō Ikuya, 1992: 161). *Yoseba* surveys also usually take this form.

2 Satō Kenji stresses the positive significance of the 'three dimensional use of sources' in life history research into individuals. This three dimensional use of

sources refers to the mixed use of sources such as autobiographies and diaries, letters, advice regarding one's future, the way in which one lives and also photographs. 'This implies "figures based on integration" (Lazarsfeld, P.F.) itself based on "the quality of the data" in various sources, which probably vary both in terms of time phase and historical nature' (Satō, Kenji 1995: 41).

3 'By way of contrast to this, in cases where one adopts a physically and emotionally "distant" vantage point – even when this is written up under a particular person's name – the result is a more general account and a voice which has the ring of reportage to it.' (Emerson 1995 (in translation): 139)

4 This is a parting shot that was repeatedly launched at me by homeless people and laborers during *yoseba* surveys.

5 Today some take the position that the social pathology concept ought to be modified and that this should take the form of social pathology being turned into 'the sociology of social problems' (Nakamura 1988: 6–7). By doing this, one could, naturally, insert the problem of people's 'totality of life' into the field of discussion.

6 The room of the Executive Committee of the Winter Struggle is at the entrance to the Kawasaki Public Gymnasium and volunteers are talking in it. In the interior, large numbers of mattresses are lined up and homeless people are lying down on them. Outside, a wintry wind blows. The gymnasium is a life space.

7 'Fluid underclass laborers' is the definition of *yoseba* laborers first used in the1970s by the San'ya Work Site Struggle Committee (San'ya On-Site Struggle Committee) and the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference for Purshing Violent Labor Arrangers (Kamagasaki Joint Conference). 'The commodity is essentially fluid. A "citizen"-like laboring class, which is necessarily fixed because of its life conditions, is not proof that the labor force is a commodity; it is, rather, the fluid underclass laborers, who are sold time and again according to the needs of capital – that is, a non-"citizen"-like laboring class – that personifies this (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai* 1989: 66). The term *yoseba* appeared later, as a logical extension of this.

8 In 1987, under this slogan, many researchers and labor activists participated in the establishment of Japanese *yoseba* societies. This was a tumultuous period in which laborers in San'ya clashed with groups of thugs. Everyone thought it possible to see through society from *yoseba*. These days, with the decline of the *yoseba*'s labor recruiting function and the accumulation of aged people and homeless people, the *yoseba*'s position is now invisible and it has become difficult to see society from there.

9 It is not that the questionnaire method cannot be used in *yoseba*. This, naturally, is also an indispensable survey method. Possibly as a result of laborers and homeless people having become 'accustomed' to questionnaire surveys in recent years, following the increase in media coverage and the variety of survey types, it has, generally, become easier to conduct questionnaire surveys.

C, a photojournalist (aged 43), says that it took him a year of living in a lodging house to be able to take photographs freely in Kamagasaki. Rejection, on the part of laborers and homeless people, becomes all the stronger when a laborer's face is the subject of a photograph (Sunamori 1989: 51). The appropriate formalities are necessary when one wishes to take a photograph.

The same is true of surveys. Also, this discussion is not confined to laborers and homeless people. The same applies in the case of foreign workers who have overstayed their visas and are in *yoseba*, working without permits. They tend not to cooperate with social surveys, as they are vigilant in preventing their identities from being discovered by the Immigration Office or the police. On 13 August 1994, large numbers of Koreans and Filipinos turned up for a 'free concert' during the Summer Festival in Kotobukichō. However, they came as a group, enjoyed the music as a group and returned to their lodging house as a group. A friend, who is in a support group for foreign workers, introduced me to a number of them. They were, however, wary of surveys and remained uncooperative.

10 '*Ninsoku yoseba*' were rehabilitation facilities built, in 1790, in Edo and Ishikawajima, by Heizō Hasegawa, Inspector General of arson-robbery as part of Matsudaira Sadanobu's Kansei Reforms. People who, despite having completed their prison terms, had no one to claim them or nowhere to live were forcibly kept in custody in these facilities and made to work at jobs such as carpenter, joiner, painter, straw work, river dredging and road and bridge construction. The *ninsoku yoseba* was the derivation of the term *yoseba*.

11 'Laborer' (*rōmusha*) has become a despised name, used to refer to laborers doing hard physical work. *Precisely because of this*, there are ways of using the term which reverse the meaning of the word: 'We want to thrust out our chests proudly and say that it is precisely we laborers who are the true workers and the true people' (Terashima, 1976: 312).

12 This man's face was completely blackened by the soot from the bonfire which he used for heat in the freezing winter.

13 These are the opening words of the founding issue of *Hairpin News* (*Kanzashi Tayori*), a pamphlet put together by the '*Kachitorukai*' (Society for Securing Work for, and the Lives of, the Aged and Day Laborers in Kamagasaki) – the soup kitchen group established by the laborers of Kamagasaki. In this issue the laborers and homeless declare their unwavering 'determination'.

14 People tell lies and tailor facts as self expressions directed at the looks of others. Laborers and homeless people are no different. These fictions and lies are one reality as far as they are concerned. Lies frequently become one part of their identities. There are also limits to lies. Laborers and homeless people are dispossessed of the power of imagination and words. Consequently, as a rule, reality is close to fiction and lies. At the same time, fiction and lies are themselves also one reality. Occasionally, it is precisely in these that the speaker's true feelings are expressed.

Nakano says that we ought to set fiction and lies, in the form of fanciful stories, in opposition to historical facts and exclude them from the raw materials of life history research (Nakano, 1995: 191–211). However, lies can also be un-factual facts and even if we ought to distinguish clearly between fact, fiction and lies, this is not as easy as one might think in the context of people's accounts.

15 Having said this, it is also certainly the case that friendly relations with the person being surveyed can assist in achieving the objectives of the survey. In reality, we cannot state unconditionally what 'ought to be' the relations between the surveyor and the surveyed.

16 The writings of Yokoyama (Yokoyama, 1899) and Kusama (Kusama, 1936) are famous works of the pre war period. Post war works include Sugihara and Tamai, 1986; Kida, 1990; Fukawa, 1993 and Kobayashi, 2001. Nakagawa views Japan's modern history as a process of raising the base from 'underclass society' to 'middle class society' and uses official documents to analyze the creation and disappearance of Tokyo and Osaka's 'modern urban underclass' (Nakagawa, 1985).

17 The problem of the representativeness of the sample is linked to problems with the reliability of procedures. The criticisms levelled at the life history method, ultimately, add up to problems of objectivity in the method and results.

18 In order to extrapolate about the times and society from an individual's life history, we must provide mediating items which connect the individual, the times and the society: these are 'cohorts' and 'classes' (Koyano and Aoki, 1995: 71–73).

19 Be it a case study or a survey, our original interest is not simply in trying to understand the subject himself but trying to deepen our understanding of a more general problem via the subject (Satō Ikuya, 1992: 99). Satō Ikuya maintains that methods in which it is possible to carry out repeated follow-up surveys (the qualitative method) are superior to one off surveys (the quantitative method) in gaining an understanding of general problems.

20 This is a memorial piece grieving the death of a laborer who was run over by a bulldozer on a building site in Kotobukichō. It was written by E, a laborer who had been a friend of the deceased man.

21 Mizuno stated this problem as the tension between two sets of restrictions. One is 'the restrictions on the method of analysis resulting from the nature of the materials' in the sense of 'the inevitably considerable limitations on the scope of the method of analysis brought about by the individual concrete nature of the materials being handled'. The other is 'the restrictions imposed on the method of bringing materials to life by the method of analysis' in the sense that 'the method of analysis prescribes a method which pushes materials to the fore as data (Mizuno, 1995: 141).

   Sakurai maintained that the world of stories as data is constructed via exchanges (politics) between the self-interpretation of the speaker and the interpretation of the other in survey interviews and he called one's own standpoint conversationalist constructionism (*taiwateki kōchikushugi*) (Sakurai, 2002 and Sakurai, 2005). Sakurai stressed the subjectivity of data (interpretation), saying that, taking this a step further, data itself was not a given (interpretative objectivism) but something which was constructed through the interview process.

Chapter 7

1 According to official reports, the number of 'people dying on the streets' (dead travellers: *ikutabi shibōnin*) has been decreasing yearly. This does not mean that the number of deaths of this type has actually decreased but that the police or volunteers have been able to identify homeless people before their deaths with the consequence that they were not treated as 'unidentified

bodies' after falling down dead on the street. In fact these deaths seem to be on the increase.

2 Because of their many years of physical abuse as a result of hard labor, *yoseba* laborers start to look elderly when they are as young as in their forties and become 'elderly' in their fifties.

3 'Death is the domain of meaning for life and people's cunning in living their lives lies hidden in their attitudes towards death' (Namihira, 1998: 78).

4 'Kamayan' is the name of the main character of a comic strip that Arimura published serially in *Sentā Dayori* (Center Newsletter), the information bulletin of the *Airin Rōdō Fukushi Sentā* (Airin Labor Welfare Center) (Arimua, 1987: 196). Kamayan is depicted as a typical Kamagasaki laborer.

5 Gang groups which have offices in Kamagasaki lend money to laborers against their day laborer employment insurance passbooks. Not surprisingly, they charge high interest rates. When a laborer receives benefits at the window of Airin Labor Welfare Center in the morning, he is accompanied by the bill collector from his lender gang group who collects the principal and interest from him. Today this business no is longer profitable because of job shortages.

6 When a dead traveller is cremated, an amount of 50,000 yen (as of 1995) is provided by the administrative authorities (Osaka City) to cover cremation expenses (as a funeral benefit under the social security benefits).

7 In the labor movement that took place in *yoseba* at the beginning of the 1970s, *yoseba* laborers were defined as 'fluid lower-class laborers who are sold from one employer to another as dictated by the needs of capitalism' (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1985: 66). The term 'fluid lower-class laborers' has not been used very often since then because of its description of labor power as a commodity without reference to any meditating factors. The definition, however, was filled with the sorrow and anger of helpless *yoseba* laborers who are exploited and discriminated against. This is why the meaning of the term '*yoseba* laborers' was reversed to mean laborers among laborers, and *yoseba* laborers came to be positioned as forerunners in the liberation of the working class.

8 Shima called temporary homeless people '*nojukusha* (people who sleep outdoors)' and permanent homeless people '*nojuku-seikatsu-sha* (people who live rough)' (Shima, 1999: 103).

9 Discrimination against homeless people, who have slid even further down than the *yoseba* laborer class, is harsher and more violent than that against *yoseba* laborers. Discrimination against laborers and against homeless people manifests itself in different ways. However, discrimination against homeless people is an extension and deepening of the discrimination against *yoseba* laborers. For this reason, these two types of discrimination are treated as basically the same thing in this chapter. I have discussed the structure of discrimination against *yoseba* laborers fully elsewhere (Aoki, 1989: 73–139).

10 Nakane listed the following characteristics in his attempt to define *yoseba* laborers: (1) detachment and exclusion from family ties and kinship; (2) detachment and exclusion from employment relationships (insecure employment, low wages and poor working conditions); (3) detachment and

exclusion from social security; and (4) targets of discrimination (Nakane, 1997b: 71). The 'detachment and exclusion' commonly included in (1) through (3) above result from (4), *yoseba* laborers' existence as a target of discrimination.

11 When a certain Kamagasaki laborer went on a business trip to a different part of the country, he wrote in the guest book of the inn, 'Nishinari Ward, Osaka' as his address, and was turned away. In this case, Nishinari Ward is synonymous with Kamagasaki. In this sense, residents of Kamagasaki are equally subject to discrimination on the basis of their domicile, whether they are laborers, business owners, or *doya* managers.

12 In 1996 the Nishinari Police Station installed their first surveillance camera on an electrical pole in Kamagasaki, which was then followed by the installation of fifteen other cameras. This is evidence of the fact that the police regard Kamagasaki laborers as 'dangerous fellows' in keeping with the way the rest of society sees them. In 1994 labor activists sued the police for human rights violations, and the Osaka District Court ordered the removal of one camera placed in front of the union office. In San'ya six cameras were installed. In 1988 residents sued the police but lost the case.

13 B's eyes shed tears as he talked to the author. Another story is that of a policeman who gave a lecture at a certain high school and said in his lecture, 'High school dropouts can't get a decent job. They end up being construction workers or something of that sort,' enraging people engaged in the construction industry (Asahi Shimbun, 22 April 2000). Kamagasaki laborers are also subject to discrimination based on their domicile.

14 In this context, he is talking as a *zainichi* Korean. His comments reveal the significant ethnic discrimination from which *zainichi* Koreans cannot escape even, at times, in *yoseba*.

15 Yamaoka, a labor activist, said that as he listened to the young man he felt that he too might have ended up in the underworld had he made one bad decision (30 December 1985). The relations between *yoseba* and gang groups are deep and complicated. These relations also include many significant factors in terms of discrimination. Many of the gang group members are from poor, discriminated against families. Some young people become underclass laborers and others become gangsters, depending on chance events or encounters in their lives. This leads to the social structure in which two groups of people from the same class confront each other, as seen in the conflict in San'ya between the labor union (*San'ya Sōgidan* (San'ya Dispute Group)) and a gang (*Kanamachi Ikka Nishido-gumi*). The issue of relations between *yoseba* and gang groups is an unexplored topic in urban underclass studies. 'Control of the lower class by yakuza gang groups does not at all represent something ambiguous like a remnant of pre modern times or feudalism; its core lies in the thorough enforcement of capitalist logic using violence in a place where the contradictions of capitalism are most heavily concentrated. In this sense, their control performs excellent complementary functions for the system of capitalism. The most typical example of these gang groups is the Yamaguchi-gumi in one area of Kobe' (Yamaoka, 1996: 121).

16 In San'ya, two thirds of people living in *doya* work on a part-time or temporary basis for bookbinders, transportation businesses and the like (*San'ya Rōdōsha*

Fukushi Kaikan (San'ya Welfare Center for Day Laborers), 15 July 1997). To day laborers, the dispersal of job categories from construction jobs to service jobs means a fall into lower classes. Many of the service jobs are light work. In addition, included under service jobs is 'miscellaneous work', such as *bataya* (rag pickers), *narabi* (handymen working for ticket touts), or sandwich men. These are the types of jobs held by homeless people.

17 In Kamagasaki there used to be a uniform unit price system of wages (cash) that had been agreed on between the day labor union and businesses (13,500 yen in 1998), but it broke down with the decrease of labor recruiters and labor arrangers and, instead, *ketaochi* (jobs with poor conditions) increased (*Kamagasaki Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai*), 1998.3.20). In a labor market which overwhelmingly favours buyers there is no room for bargaining between buyers and sellers. We even have a situation rife with crooked employers who have no intention of paying wages from the outset.

18 In San'ya one third of people living in *doya* are social security recipients (*San'ya Rōdōsha Fukushi Kaikan*), 1997). In Kamagasaki and Sasajima, the administrative authorities do not provide social security benefits to people who live in their own houses. In these areas, cases of institutional care (cases where social security benefits are provided on condition that the recipients be placed in institutional care settings) are increasing. In Kamagasaki, unable to neglect needy persons who have been increasing in number in recent years, the administrative authorities have extended the categories of individuals covered by the social security system by paying security deposits for needy persons to help them rent a flat and providing them with social security benefits as residents living in these flats.

19 In Kamagasaki increased numbers of *doya* now have signs that read, 'Welfare Recipients Welcome', at the entrance. To *doya* owners, social security recipients are good customers because they have a secure income.

20 They were a group of youngsters who worked as construction workers during the day and were in a motorcycle gang at night (*Nishi-Nihon Shibu* (Nishi-Nihon branch), 1991: 16).

21 During the period of rapid economic growth in the 1970s, there were so many young laborers in San'ya and Kamagasaki that 'they could not pass by each other without brushing shoulders'. Funamoto saw 'signs of revolution' in their pride which was what spurred them on to 'stand up' and riot (Funamoto, 1974: 120).

22 Standing in a line to receive food handouts was once regarded as 'uncool'. Laborers who failed to find work used to stand in a line with their heads bent down. Receiving food aid has now become part of their normal living activities.

23 For example, the homeless people's movement in Shinjuku is closely related to the day labor movement in San'ya. This is represented by the organization's name, '*San'ya to Shinjuku o tsunagu Han-Shitsugyō Tōsō Jikkō Iinkai*' (Anti-Unemployment Struggle Committees *Throughout* San'ya and Shinjuku) (my emphasis). Other *yoseba* are experiencing similar developments. In Osaka, the forum for day labor movement in Kamagasaki (*Han-Shitsugyō Renraku-kai* (Anti-Unemployment Liaison Committee)) extended from Kamagasaki to Tennōji and Nihonbashi. It also linked up with the homeless

people's movement based in Ōgimachi Park (*Kamagasaki Patorōru no Kai* (Kamagasaki Patrol Group)). The homeless people's movement in Kawasaki has been supported by activists from Kotobukichō and is linked with their day labor movement. Thus, homeless people's movements in Japan cannot be discussed without mentioning day labor movements in *yoseba*.

24 Okinawans are generally 'Japanese' from Okinawa Prefecture, and Ainu are 'Japanese' also. In this regard, their situation is different from *zainichi* Koreans who are regarded as foreigners. However, here I regard Okinawans and Ainu as well as *zainichi* Koreans (including naturalized Japanese who were formerly *zainichi* Koreans) as minority groups who are ethnically different from 'Japanese'. This is tied up with the issue of 'Japanese' identity.

25 People from discriminated against *buraku* are a Japanese minority. There are a considerable number of people from discriminated against *buraku* in *yoseba*. Some have revealed their origins to me. It is not easy, however, for these people to reveal their discriminated against *buraku* origins to others – even in *yoseba*, where people's origins do not matter (are not regarded as important) – because of the cultural structure of deep-rooted, offensive discrimination against *buraku* in Japan. It may be rather easier for foreigners, who have their own ethnic identity, to confess their minority origins.

26 Although it is true that the status of recently arrived foreigners has improved, this is true only within their world and does not mean that they can acquire higher positions in Japanese society. The fact that they find employment through their own ethnic networks makes it more likely for *sewayaki* or *bōshin* to appear within the group.

27 In Kamagasaki and Kotobukichō a majority of foreigners seeking advice are Korean laborers wanting help with labor issues. This shows the extent of the increase in the number of Korean laborers. Korean laborers also tend to assert their rights strongly, possibly because of experience in their home country.

28 The administrative authorities do not have detailed data on foreign laborers' actual employment and living conditions because these laborers are not covered by labor or welfare measures taken by the administrative authorities. This has often caused difficulties in the development of labor and welfare measures by the administration. The relative importance of human rights issues for foreigners overstaying their visas and/or working without the proper work documents is gradually growing.

29 When a foreign laborer support meeting was held in Kamagasaki, boos came from Japanese laborers who insisted, 'Our jobs come before those of *gaijin* (foreigners)' (Based on comments made by D, a member of a foreign worker support group, 13 August 1993). Needless to say, under existing circumstances foreigners can hardly compete against Japanese for jobs.

30 In 1994 Aoki et al. conducted a questionnaire survey of 395 Hiroshima residents. Results showed that Japanese people's discriminatory sentiments against recently arrived foreigners are strongest in the depths (true feelings) of Japanese people's consciousness and that Japanese people have different levels of discriminatory sentiments against different ethnic groups (Aoki, 1996: 65–82). It seems that in the case of Japanese laborers in *yoseba*, the discriminatory sentiments of Japanese people reveal themselves easily on

the surface of their consciousness and, that, contrastingly, differences in the levels of their discriminatory sentiments against different ethnic groups are minor. In general, the *yoseba* has a cultural climate in which people speak frankly. 'Once I settled in, I found a subtle charm to Kotobukichō that makes me want to stay here. I can be myself when I talk to people. In my relations with workers, if I'm useful to them they say, "Dear God, dear Buddha, dear K! (Anonymity protected by Aoki)", and in the opposite situation they say, "Get stuffed, you *kaichō*!" These relations are more charming than relations where I have to speak in a roundabout way all the time. It's good for my mental health' (E, a *kaichō* (head) of a neighbourhood association in Kotobukichō, aged 69) (*Kotobuki Shiensha Kōryū-kai*), 1998b: 7).

31 Kotobukichō has *doya* in which Koreans, Filipinos and Thais live in respective clusters. At *doya* in which Thais live even Thai food is available (Based on comments made by F, a Korean laborer aged 50 in Kotobukichō, 14 August 1998). Kamagasaki too has *doya* in which Koreans and Chinese live in respective clusters (Based on comments made by G, a labor activist in Kamagasaki aged 51. 18 July 1999).

32 Foreign laborers come to have negative sentiments against *yoseba* after they have learned the way Japanese people see *yoseba*. Although jobs from *yoseba* pay poorly, their wage levels are still at a satisfactory standard for foreign laborers.

33 Public discriminatory sentiments against *yoseba* and day laborers have taken root with their parents. Although a kinship group is kind to its family members and relatives, it is cruel to a former member who has been excluded from it. These remarkable double standards are characteristic of Japanese society. Of course there are some cases where the ashes of a dead homeless person are taken by his parent or relative.

34 C is (a *zainichi* Korean) from Osaka. As his comments reveal, *yoseba* laborers are deprived of their sexuality. This means that they are also deprived of opportunities to have a family and children. Being deprived of the possibility of passing on one's blood ties and proof of a one's life by being forced to remain single is the starting point of a person's solitude. In this regard, family plays a significant role.

35 The following paper reports the true conditions of 205 types (398 cases) of attack victimising homeless people which occurred in Kawasaki City (Mizushima, 1996: 71). Six other cases of this type of attack were reported from the same city during the period of the Winter Struggle between 29 December 1997 and 3 January 1998 (*Kawasaki Suiyō Patororu no Kai* (Kawasaki Wednesday Patrol Group), 8 January 1998).

36 Kariya conducted a sociological analysis of trial records of this case using social constructionist methods and clarified the process of the social formation of homeless issues (Kariya, 1997 & 2000).

37 In order to avoid doubt, the terms 'severing' and 'linking' are used relatively in the context of the meaning/interpretation of an act; they are not used to classify a specific act by defining the meaning of the act as one or the other.

38 For example, from the standpoint of 'ethnomethodological indifference' it is argued that the introduction of common sense as an *a priori* value judgment

without reflection should be restrained (Sano, 1998: 276). Although this argument may hold true as 'an academic attitude', 'phenomenological reduction' by 'temporary suspension of thought' or a 'naturalistic attitude' in the proper sense of these words would be strictly impossible.

39 'We have no choice but to choose from among several available nightmares one that is better, if only a little, than others, feeling thankful that we have a choice at all, and live in it' (Inoue, 1992: 27). As seen in this description, 'misery' exists as one form of life which has a common base with the absurdity of human existence.

40 'A human being's existence is structural and anti-structural at the same time, and develops through the person's anti-structural nature and is protected through this structural nature' (Turner, V., 1974 (translation): 275). This is the type complementary relationship which 'misery' and 'pride' share with each other.

41 In this context, the term 'laborers' is used as a disparaging name, meaning workers excluded from the ranks of ordinary workers. In the day labor movement there was once an argument that regarded 'laborers' as workers' among workers and saw a 'pioneer nature' in *yoseba* laborers. This argument asserted that: '(1) it is hard for the police authorities to paint a precise picture of *yoseba* laborers because they do not settle in one place; (2) they can struggle anytime and any place because they have nothing to protect, such as family, property or workplace; and (3) they can go from one work camp or *yoseba* to another all over Japan and lead struggles on a nationwide basis' (Yamaoka, 1996: 68–69).

42 Nishizawa described *yoseba* as the 'place of exile' as the 'internalised outside' (Nishizawa, 1995: 88). It is true that *yoseba* have 'serenity' and a 'sense of liberation' that releases the mental tension of people who have nothing of which to be deprived. This is, however, only one aspect of the *yoseba* world.

43 Funamoto, too, saw a 'popular counterattack motivated by individual laborers' daily sense of humiliation, grudge and anger' in riots (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*), 1985: 144).

44 *Yoseba* laborers as 'structural subordinates' bear symbolic values of life (Turner, V., 1974 (translation): 213).

[45]In and after the latter half of the 1990s, however, jobs became scarcer still and even skilled laborers were forced to sleep rough.

46 The following is a list of all songs sung by laborers and homeless people and their ages and origins (only in cases where the host asked for these details) in the singing contest held as part of the Kamagasaki Summer Festival on 13 August 1999. People sang, jeered and applauded. During the contest, they recalled their '*Otoko, hadaka ikkan no jinsei*' (Life of a man with no property but his own body) from the time when they used to be workers, and poured their hearts full of emotion into each *enka* (Japanese ballad). Elderly and homeless people wavered violently between 'misery' and 'pride'. The songs were: *Kamagasaki ninjō* (Heart of Kamagasaki), *Machi no sandoicchiman* (A Sandwich Man on the Street) (age 78), *Kizudarake no jinsei* (My Life Full of Failures), *Minato-machi 13-banchi* (Block 13, Harbour Town) (from Yokohama), *Fūfu shinjū* (Husband and Wife Double Suicide) (age 48, from

Fukuoka), *Honō no otoko* (Man on Fire), *Tabisugata 3-nin otoko* (Three Men On the Move) (age 50, from Shizuoka), *Okinawa min'yō* (Okinawan Folk Song) (by a trio), *Karazishi botan* (Lion and Tree Peony), *Ōshō* (The King) (by a trio), *Iwai-bune* (Congratulatory Boat) (from Hokkaidō), *Gikyōdai* (Blood Brothers) (from Kōbe), *Onna no sake* (Woman's Wine), *Aishū ressha* (Train of Sorrow), *Watashi no namae ga kawarimasu* (My Name Will Change), *Otoko wa tsuraiyo* (It's Tough Being a Man), *Namida no renraku-sen* (Ferryboat of Tears), *Kyōdai-bune* (Brothers' Boat); *Naniwa shigure* (Naniwa's Scattered Showers), *Muhōmatsu no isshō* (The Life of Matsu the Outlaw) (from Nagasaki), *Hamachidori* (Plovers), *Mina no shū* (Everybody), *Kaette koi yo* (Come Back to Me), *Akogare no Hawai kōro* (The Longed-for Flight to Hawaii), *Rabauru kouta* (Rabaul's Ballad), and *Sado Okesa* (Sado Island's Okesa Folk Song).

47 This is an essay written by K, a former day laborer who attended a literacy class in Kotobukichō, to mourn the death of a former fellow day laborer whose nickname was '*Hanchō*' and who died at the age of sixty-three. The writer's 'life history' was condensed into each and every expression which he used, as he spelled words while licking the tip of the pencil every now and then. K, too, passed away in 1998.

48 These are exchanges of words between homeless people from Ueno Park and those from San'ya who participated in food distribution activities conducted in San'ya (*San'ya Rōdōsha Fukushi Kaikan*), 5 February 2000.

49 Lerfgen, J. and Snow, D. A. extracted from homeless people's street smart strategy the following three methods for constructing relationships: distancing oneself from others; embracing others; and fictive storytelling (Livingston, 2004: 554). Using a particular urban community as the background, Anderson, E. depicted a world of streetwise people who are full of ideas for managing their lives on the street (Anderson, 1990).

Chapter 8

1 In 1996, Kamagasaki, with its 227 cheap hotels and 218 apartments, was Japan's largest lodging house quarter, capable of accommodating 22,254 people (Nakane, 1998).

2 At this time, the police contacted police headquarters using a radio but the radio number was '450' (pronounced *yogore*: dirt) (*Kamagasaki Shien Kikō*, June 2005). Laborers had long regarded this type of discriminatory feeling and action, on the part of police towards laborers as provocative. This type of resentment provided the background to the riot.

3 Immediately after this, people in San'ya who shared this same ideology formed the 'Work Site Struggle Committee for Pursuing Bad Businesses' (*Akushitsu Gyōsha Tsuihō Genba Tōsō Iinkai*) (*Gentōi*).

4 Most *yoseba* labor recruiters are affiliated with violent gangs. This is particularly the case in Kamagasaki. There are 22 violent gangs in Kamagasaki, with 800 members (*Kamagasaki Shien Kikō* May 2006). Many of the violent gangs in Kansai have grown on the strength of labor arrangers' skimming off activities in harbor industries. The Yamaguchi Family, which is the biggest gang group in Japan, is an example of this type. The Yamaguchi

Family consolidated its base through the jobs of labor arrangers in the port of Kobe. Then, in the 1960s, they progressed to Osaka's Southern port. At that time the laborers' side, organised by the All Ports Kansai Region Headquarters, fought fierce labor struggles against the Yamaguchi Family.

5 Just as in the case of the San'ya On-site Struggle Group, there was a nation-wide criminal search for the leader of the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference, Funamoto Shuji, on suspicion of having infringed the laws regarding handling explosives. By the time that he set himself on fire (committed suicide) in his hiding place in Okinawa in 1975, the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference had almost collapsed.

6 This is the Kamagasaki Joint Struggle Conference's definition of 'winter' in the *yoseba*. The leading theories of the *yoseba* laborers' movement, and ideas such as the prescription of what a 'laborer' (*rōmusha*) was, formed the basis for the definition of 'winter'.

7 This turned out to be a long dispute. During this hot political season, 1985 saw the making of the movie 'Yama – If Attacked, Counter-attack' and the movement to promote screenings. Satō Mitsuo, the director of this movie, began filming it but a member of a violent gang murdered him immediately after he started filming and Yamaoka Kyōichi, a labor activist from San'ya took over until the completion of the movie. In January 1986, immediately after the completion of the movie, a member of a violent gang killed Yamaoka also. In 1987 a national organization for *yoseba* research, the Japan Association for the Study of *Yoseba* (*Nihon Yoseba Gakkai*), was established. I also participated as one of the conference speakers and conducted an analysis of studies of political power surrounding *yoseba* and political authority in the case of one aspect of the San'ya struggles (Aoki, 1987).

8 This is a passage form the 'founding declaration' of the National Conference of Day Labor Unions (*Zenkoku Hiyatoi Rōdō Kumiai Kyōgikai*, 1984: 1).

9 Between 1990 and 1994 there was a yearly average of 354 deaths from illness on the streets of Nishinari Ward (*Kamagasaki Shiryō Sentā*, 1999).

10 In the past I have also personally experienced sleeping rough, in the interests of a survey. Through this personal experience I experienced for myself just how severely homelessness saps one's physical strength. In winter, the cold makes it impossible to take even a nap. I opened my eyes every one or two hours and walked around to warm up. I only really slept in the morning, after the sun had risen and the air had warmed up. As a consequence I felt totally exhausted in the morning.

11 F is permanently in Tennōji Park as a homeless person. Large numbers of homeless people, who are scattered throughout the city center, return to Kamagasaki for the Winter Struggle. During this period Kamagasaki has a soup kitchen which opens morning and evening.

12 For the moment it does not matter whether G is, in fact, sending money home to his mother or not. Even if we tentatively treat this as a lie, what he wanted to do was to show me that he had pride in himself.

13 The city of Osaka admits laborers and the homeless to the Osaka Southern Port Temporary Accommodation Center for the period from 30 December until 4 January. In 1994–1995 1,415 people were admitted (*Kamagasaki Iryō Renraku Kai*, 1995) but this was no more than a fraction of the homeless in the

city as a whole. On the morning of the fourth the laborers and the homeless are once again thrown out onto the streets. The prefabricated accommodation is put up and then dismantled again every year.

14 Medical consultations by the Medical Team (the Kamagasaki Medical Liaison Committee), the provision o f beds in the temporary camp and the soup kitchen continue to operate beyond this time; lasting, at the latest, until 28 February. Furthermore, the Osaka–Kobe Earthquake happened on 17 January of this particular year. As a consequence, the Kamagasaki Medical Liaison Committee took over providing assistance to those rendered homeless by the earthquake.

15 This 'strength' does not refer exclusively to the breadth of one's physical resources (for example, work skills, youth and networks); it also encompasses the breadth of one's spiritual resources – such as, human dignity, prestige and reliability.

16 This does not mean that the activists are wealthy in an economic sense. They work as day laborers and take on responsibility for the labor movement while barely eking out a living. Far from being wealthy, they are not even comfortable.

17 From 1990, the city of Osaka has set up a Care Center, with a two hundred-person capacity, on the site of the old Airin Junior and Middle School. This is also a sacred space, second to the makeshift camp.

18 In recent years, as an official countermeasure with regard to the homeless, the shutters enclosing the Airin Labor Welfare Center have been opened at the time of the Winter Struggle. This has allowed day laborers and the homeless to sleep on the floor inside the center at night.

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