

## **Homelessness in Osaka: Globalization, Yoseba and Disemployment**

### **Abstract**

Homeless people increased and became visible socially in Japan after the second half of the 1990s. There was a corresponding increase in sociological studies of homelessness too. These studies sought to analyze the unique characteristics of homeless people: rough sleepers, ex-day laborers, single men, the elderly and so on. The life conditions of homeless people have also been analyzed: how they get jobs, foods and shelter, how they make networks among themselves, how they resist violence from the mainstream citizenry and so on. However in order to understand the observed situations of homeless people correctly, the economic, institutional and structural backgrounds of homelessness in Japan must be analyzed on a macro and historical level. To date no such study has been undertaken. This paper seeks to fill that gap. It analyzes through what processes homelessness has appeared in Japan. It has three aims concretely. First, it is to analyze the economic background of homelessness by focusing on two phenomena brought by globalization in Japan; deyosebization which means the gradual disappearance of day laborers from yoseba (day labor market) and disemployment of casually employed unskilled workers in the general labor market. Second, it is to analyze the institutional background of homelessness to regulate the homeless population especially by focusing on the Social Welfare. Third, it is to analyze the structural background of homelessness to regulate the homeless population by focusing on two affiliate groups: company and family/relatives. The research field of this paper is the Metropolitan Osaka in the 1990s.

Key words: homelessness, deyosebization, disemployment

### **Introduction**

Economic globalization is going on in Japan. It brings the shift from manufacturing industry to services in the industrial structure and the intensification of the intercorporate competition. They lead to deyosebization of day laborers from the

day labor market and disemployment of casually employed unskilled workers in the general labor market. And both of deyozebization and disemployment make homeless people increase. Homeless people have increased steadily in Japan especially in the second half of the 1990s. They were 16,247 in 1998, 20,451 in 1999 and 24,090 in 2001 (homepage of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare 2001). How can this fact be explained ? I will analyze the relationships among deyozebization, disemployment, homeless policy, affiliate group and homelessness in Japan. This paper has three claims. (a) globalization brings deyozebization of day laborers and disemployment of casually employed unskilled workers in Japanese cities and forces many to become homeless. Deyozebization, which is my own personal coinage, means the process in which day laborer flows out of the yoseba (urban day labor market) and becomes homeless (1) and disemployment means job loss of casually employed unskilled worker in the general labor market in this paper. (b) Japan has social policies to support homeless people and to prevent people from becoming homeless but these policies are insufficient to meet the problem. (c) Japanese company welfare systems and family kinship networks help prevent people from becoming homeless but these institutions are weakening under the impact of globalization. All of these are summarized as that globalization positively causes homelessness and that the homeless population is regulated by three backgrounds: economic, institutional and structural. Thus, this paper has three tasks concretely. First, it is to analyze the economic background of homelessness in Japan: deyozebization and disemployment. Second, it is to analyze the institutional background of homelessness: social policies about job, shelter and Social Welfare. Third, it is to analyze the structural background of homelessness: exclusion from two affiliate groups: company and family/relatives. The field of study is Metropolitan Osaka: a global city where the central and managerial functions of the global economy concentrate (Friedmann 1986:25,40) (OCEA 2000:7). and that has Japan's biggest homeless population and is home to Kamagasaki, the biggest yoseba in Japan.

## **I . Theoretical Overview**

Globalization is proceeding apace in Japan. Metropolitan Osaka is becoming a global city. This process is apparent especially in Japan in the 1990s. Globalization itself is an inclusive concept with various aspects: economic, institutional, social and cultural.

But this paper refers only to its economic aspect. We have many studies about globalization and many discussions about its character in the United States: generalization and nationalization or localization of globalization in particular country. Most opinions about globalization seem to concur on two points. First, it is that globalization after the 1980s changes its character under new historical conditions: the appearance of literally global capitalism caused by the collapse of Soviet Russia and the shrinking of world in time and space caused by the revolution of information technology. Many studies have emphasized deindustrialization, the intensification of the intercorporate competition and the economic informalization especially in the last three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wilson 1987, Rossi 1989:32, Wagner and Cohen 1991:544, Blau 1992:10, Sassen 1996:98, Schwartzman 1998:167, Castells 1999:110, Wacquant 2000:110-111, Kano 2000:2152). Second, it is that although globalization originally means the process of constructing a unitary world market in the capitalistic system, it necessarily has a nationalized and localized form whenever and wherever it penetrates each country such as the nationalization of globalization (Castells 1999:79), the interpenetration of the universalism and the particularism of globalization (Robertson and Khondker 1998:28), globalization as the hybridization of supranationalism and subnational regionalism (Pieterse 1994:166), the crucial role of nation-state's economic policy in globalization (Sassen 1996, Fulcher 2000:522,529) and the contextualization of globalization in urban regions (Komai 1989:40, Machimura 1994:32, Tasaka 1998:4, Nishizawa 2000:30,32, Kano 2000:2149).

We have many studies about homelessness too. Although they have some differences one another, they seem to agree in that there appeared a new type of homelessness in the United States after the 1980s (Rossi 1989:39-44, Elliot and Krivo 1991:113, Castells 1999:236), and that deindustrialization, the intensification of the intercorporate competition and the economic informalization are the important factors forming new type of homelessness in the United States (Harrington 1984:102, Hopper and Hamburg 1984:126, Wagner and Cohen 1991:544, Hopper and Milburn 1996:126, Castells 1999:110,206, Osawa 1999:327, Elliot and Krivo 1991:115,122, Blau 1992:10,42, Koegel, Burnam and Baumohl 1996:27, Wacquant 2000: 110).

Homelessness in Japan closely resembles that of the United States. Population began to increase in Japan a little later than in the United States, that is, in the first half of the 1990s. An increase in sociological studies of homelessness followed (Nishizawa 1995, Nakane 1997, Shima 1999, Aoki 1999 and 2000). These

studies traced a new type of homelessness appearing in the 1990s to the worsening economic recession afflicting Japan at that time. But we have very few studies that specifically identify the positive relationship between globalization and homelessness. Shima wrote that homeless people in Osaka increased just after the collapse of the bubble economy in 1993 (Shima 1999:92). This recognition was shared by other analysts (Iwata 1997:115, Fukuhara and Nakayama 1999:25, Nishizawa 2000:27, Morita 2001:33, Tamaki and Yamaguchi 2000:76-90). Kasai labeled such homeless people of the 1990s as new homeless, differing in character from their predecessors (Kasai 1995:11). According to him chronic structural unemployment and insufficient low-cost housing made numerous people homeless appear after the collapse of the bubble economy in Japan.

The yoseba plays a special role in the dynamics of homelessness in Japan. Almost sixty percent of homeless people in Osaka come from the yoseba, Kamagasaki. A yoseba is a segregated district in a big city, where labor recruiters deliver jobs to day laborers. It might be compared with the skid row of the United States before the 1960s, and especially before World War II (Wallace 1965:23-24, Rossi 1989:39-44) (2). There are four big yosebas in Japan: San'ya in Tokyo, Kotobuki-chô in Yokohama, Sasajima in Nagoya and Kamagasaki in Osaka. In the case of San'ya, Kotobuki-chô and Kamagasaki, the yoseba is also a doya-gai, which means a town of doya – cheap single- room- occupancy hotels (SROs) for day laborers. The labor recruiter goes to the yoseba, negotiates with day laborers and takes them to work sites. There are ethnographic studies of San'ya (Nishizawa 1995, Fowler 1996), Kotobuki-chô (Gill 2001), and Kamagasaki (Aoki 1989).

Finally the concept of homelessness must be explained. The definition of homelessness is widely discussed in the United States (Jencks 1994:1-7), and indeed the definition is important when counting numbers of homeless people and understanding the theoretical and practical problems of homelessness. In the United States, homeless people are generally thought to include not only rough sleepers, but also people staying with friends and relatives on a temporary basis and those living in hostels or bed-and- breakfast hotels (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick 2001:2001). There are some Japanese studies on the definition of homelessness too (Kasai 1995:6, Nakane 1999: 209- 210, Aoki 2000:98-105, Nishizawa 2000:27). The definition of homeless people is much narrower in Japan than in the United States. In Japan it is common to confine homeless people to the visible rough sleepers or the shelter-less, that is, 'the most extreme manifestation of homelessness' (Third 2002:448). Rough sleepers in Japan are people who literally sleep on the roads, who

live in the makeshift shacks made of cardboard or vinyl at the parks, the riverbeds and the station yards and who are accommodated only temporarily in shelters managed by city government. There is one reason why the definition is so narrow in Japan. It is that only these immediately visible forms of homelessness are regarded as being important socially and politically not only by the citizenry but also by city government. But the problem of latent and invisible homeless people, who are now excluded from the definition of homeless people, is getting more serious at present.

## **II. Methods of Data Collection**

The data used in this paper include primary and secondary resources about yoseba and homelessness. They were collected by various methods mainly in Osaka. Surveys were practiced intermittently during the 1990s. The primary resources were collected through participant observation at informal meetings, political assemblies, rallies, collective bargaining with the city government and volunteer activities for homeless people, and through intensive interviews with day laborers, homeless people, labor activists and public officials. The secondary resources include statistical publications, reports of surveys, books, papers, pamphlets, newspapers and information gathered from e-mails and homepages. The main survey field was Kamagasaki and its surrounding areas in Osaka. San'ya and Kotobuki-chô were secondary survey fields.

Fieldwork aimed to maximize personal contacts with day laborers and homeless people, for example by befriending them, by staying at SROs and by participating in the activities of labor unions and various groups for supporting homeless people. Thus, my main method of collecting data may be summarized as the life history method. Those data were used in interpreting the inner worlds of lives of day laborers and homeless persons. They helped me to interpret the actual meanings of the macro and objective aspects of homelessness in this paper too.

## **III. Homelessness in Osaka**

Unfortunately we have only one large-scale survey of homeless people in Osaka, which has been made so far: the Report of General Survey Concerning Homeless People in Osaka given out by The Osaka City University's Study Group of Urban

Environmental Issues (OCUSG) in 2001, which was sponsored by the Osaka City Government. Let me begin by drawing the picture of homelessness in Osaka as revealed by this report.

## **1. Picture of Homeless People**

There were 8,660 homeless people in Osaka in 1998 (Shima 1999:20) (3), which was more numerous than the 5,800 recorded in Tokyo that year. The population of Osaka Prefecture was 8,805,081, which was smaller than the figure for Metropolitan Tokyo (12,064,101) in 2000. Mizu'uchi states that the size of labor market in Tokyo is about four times bigger than in Osaka and that the service industry especially absorbs more laborers in Tokyo than in Osaka (Mizu'uchi 2001:34-35). This helps explain why homeless people in Osaka are more numerous than in Tokyo. Although we do not have any material by which we may know the number of homeless people in Osaka before 1998, it seems certain that they increased markedly in the 1990s. Kamagasaki is the main center of Osaka's homeless population. The number of homeless people around Kamagasaki was 422 in 1990, 939 in 1992, 1,641 in 1994, 1,125 in 1996 and, very strikingly, 4,579 in 1998 (Shima 1999:19-22). OCUSG interviewed 672 homeless people in 1998 (OCUSG 2001). The results are summarized as follows.

The period of homelessness was short in general. Four out of ten of respondents were homeless for less than eight months (41.1 percent) (OCUSG 2001:29). People homeless for eight months to one year accounted for 34.2 percent of the whole. That is, more than three quarters of respondents were homeless for less than one year and eight months. Almost all respondents were men (97.0 percent) (op.cit.:23). Seven out of ten of respondents did not have any contact with families or relatives (69.2 percent) (op.cit.: 56). Seven out of ten of respondents had experience of marriage or cohabitation (69.7 percent) (op.cit.:56). Seven out of ten of respondents that had been married before were now divorced (69.2 percent). Most respondents lived alone at the time they were interviewed (87.9 percent) (op.cit.:31). Most homeless people were middle aged or elderly. More than four out of ten of respondents were between fifty and sixty years old (45.0 percent) and more than three out of ten of respondents were more than sixty years old (34.5 percent) (op.cit.:24). Only one fifth were below forty years old (20.3 percent). They were 53.4 years old on average.

Jobs that the respondents had before becoming homeless were mainly

manual and low in the job hierarchy. Former construction workers constituted 44.5 percent of the whole, factory workers 22.0 percent, workers in the service sector 10.9 percent (op. cit.:259). Their employment status was unstable. The full timers made up only one fifth of the homeless (19.1 percent), and the casually employed were seven out of ten of respondents (71.0 percent) (op.cit.:260). Jobs which the respondents had just before becoming homeless were more manual and lower in the job hierarchy than before. Seven out of ten of respondents had manual jobs mainly in the construction industry (69.2 percent) (op.cit.:164). The majority of them were employed on a daily basis (85.6 percent). The respondents became homeless because of no job (69.6 percent), no money (18.1 percent), dismissal (11.4 percent) and other reasons including business failure, loan, loss of will to work and so on (21.4 percent) (op.cit.:293).

There were two reasons of becoming homeless according to the respondents. First, it was the chronic economic recession in the 1990s. Many laborers lost jobs but could not get any job. Among them people who did not have any safety resource to survive such as other's monetary help, savings and pension and so on were rendered homeless. Second, it was difficult for many laborers to do heavy work such as digging and rock breaking because of old age and/or physical handicap. Eight out of ten respondents had jobs when interviewed (80.0 percent) (op.cit.:31). The majority of them did light work such as the collection of unwanted materials (79.7 percent) (op.cit.32). Less than one out of ten did heavy work such as construction-site laboring (9.1 percent). Finally more than half of respondents had previous job experience in Kamagasaki (57.9 percent) (op.cit.:48), and more than four out of ten respondents were seeking jobs at Kamagasaki when interviewed (44.3 percent) (op.cit.:51).

This picture of homelessness in Osaka largely applies to Tokyo too (CMHP 1998:2-10, SGUL 1999, Tamaki and Yamaguchi 2000, Hagiwara 2001), and indeed to provincial cities like Hiroshima (GSSL 1998:2-33), except for one characteristic. That is, the ratio of homeless people who had been construction laborers was bigger in Osaka than in any other cities. Likewise the size of the yoseba, a barracks for what Karl Marx called the 'reserve army' of labor serving the construction industry was bigger in Osaka than in Tokyo. Homeless people in Osaka have a closer relationship with the yoseba than those in Tokyo. The ratio of homeless people experienced to get jobs at San'ya (Tokyo's main yoseba) was 41.5 percent of the whole in 1999 (SGUL 1999:95). That compares with 57.9 percent of Osaka homeless people who had previous job experience in Kamagasaki in 1998 (OCUSG 2001:48).

Osaka's homeless people settle down together by making villages of makeshift shacks made of cardboard or vinyl at the terminal station (Osaka Station and Tennôji Station), the parks (Nagai Park, Osaka Castle Park and Ôgimachi Park), the riverbeds (Yodo River and Tenma River) and the business districts (Nanba and Kita). They have come to be regarded as an eyesore by pedestrians and neighboring residents and often are harassed by them violently. They organize themselves in order to resist against the demolition of shacks by the policemen. So the clashes between homeless people and the policemen sometimes happen. The biggest clash was one between about 200 homeless people and about 1,000 policemen at Shinjuku Station in Tokyo in 1996 (Nakajima 1996). In December 1998 there was a confrontation when policemen evicted 70 homeless people from the road near Kamagasaki (Nonomura 2000:54). These clashes were televised all over Japan. Homeless people got the public's attention because of their social visibility. Their existence itself was constructed as one of the most emergent problems in contemporary Japan.

## **2. Characteristics of Homelessness**

Homeless people in Osaka are characterized demographically by this 1998 survey as follows. Their uniqueness becomes clearer when compared with one in the United States. I will cite some data which gives a picture of homelessness in the United States for a brief comparison (Rossi 1989:39-44)(Blau 1992:10)(Koegel 1996:27) (NCH 1999). First, homeless population in Osaka is relatively small in comparison with the United States (4). Second, homeless people increased markedly in the second half of the 1990s in Osaka while increased before the first half of 1990s in the United States. Third, most homeless people were men in Osaka. Homeless people were composed of men, women and children in the United States although men were most numerous. Fourth, homeless people in Osaka had been separated from the families and the relatives and were living alone. Homeless families with children increased especially over the past decade in the United States. Fifth, most homeless people in Osaka were more than fifty years old. Homeless people composed of children, youths and the middle aged people in the United States. Sixth, homeless people in Osaka had been unskilled manual workers and their employment status had been unstable. They were day laborers especially in the construction industry at the time being interviewed. And they became homeless because they had lost jobs due to the economic recession and aging. Homeless people were composed of

victims of domestic violence, veterans, persons with mental illness and the persons suffering from addiction disorders in the United States. Seventh, homeless people did light work such as the collection of unwanted materials in Osaka. Homeless people were jobless in general in the United States. Some were employed sometimes, but their income was insufficient to afford one- or two-bedroom apartments. Eighth, many homeless people in Osaka came from yoseba as the urban day laborers' market and sought jobs there even after becoming homeless. Homeless people did not have any yoseba in the United States. And ninth, homeless people in Osaka composed of one ethnicity, Japanese. Homeless people composed of various ethnicities in the United States: African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic, Native American and Asian.

Homeless people in Osaka are in stark contrast to those in the United States as we saw. By the way where such uniqueness came from ? This is the next problem. But before analyzing it I must see the processes making homelessness in Osaka by the data of OCUSG survey.

### **3. Two Types of Homelessness**

According to OCUSG survey the respondents who had previous job experience in Kamagasaki were 57.9 percent of the whole (672 persons) and the respondents who had not were 42.1 percent (OCUSG 2001:48). These are two main groups of homeless people. And there are two processes making homelessness in Osaka. First process is deyosebization which pushes day laborers out of yoseba, Kamagasaki. It formed the first type of homeless people who had been the ex-yoseba laborers (laborer getting job in yoseba). Almost all of them had been construction laborers. More than 1,000 homeless people stay in Kamagasaki now and more than 3,000 homeless peoples have emerged from Kamagasaki to other parts of Osaka. They amounted to almost sixty percent of the whole homeless population in Osaka (Shima 1999:34, 89, 95). Second process is disemployment which pushes casually employed unskilled worker out of general labor market. It formed the second type of homeless people who had been ex-casually employed unskilled workers. They had been construction laborers, factory workers and retailers (OCUSG 2001:283). Almost sixty percent among them became homeless after 1996 (OCUSG 2001:107). This contrasts with 42.2 percent of homeless people coming from Kamagasaki. Homeless persons coming from outside Kamagasaki tended to have been homeless for shorter periods.

By the way in what economic conditions were the uniqueness of homelessness and these two types of homeless people constructed in Osaka? I will answer to this question by focusing on economic background of homelessness next.

#### **IV. Economic Background of Homelessness**

##### **1. Deyosebization of Day Laborer**

###### **Yoseba**

I will begin with analyzing deyosebization making the first type of homeless people. I must give a brief history of yoseba, Kamagasaki in order to do it (NCDLU 1985, Honma 1993:24-67). But before that I will explain the yoseba a little. A yoseba is a segregated district where labor recruiters deliver jobs to day laborers who are mostly single men. Kamagasaki is the biggest yoseba in Japan (5). The labor recruiters are usually agents of companies as the actual employers or the employers of small-sized enterprises themselves mostly in the construction industry (6). Day laborers who use the yoseba are divided in two groups. First, it is the fundamental group of day laborers who can get jobs regularly. They belong to the core group of active day laborers. Second, it is the peripheral group of day laborers, who cannot get jobs because of aging and/or physical handicap. They are the core population of unemployed laborer and homeless people. The positions of both groups are fundamentally interchangeable. When the active laborer cannot get a job, he must become homeless because he cannot pay the rent of the doya. Conversely, when an unemployed laborer can get a job, he goes back to the doya. Thus, these laborers can be called the 'fluid over-population' in the labor market according to Marx's terminology (Marx 1867:670).

###### **Kamagasaki's History**

Kamagasaki has been through four stages since the start of the era of high economic growth in Japan. The first stage was the high-growth period in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. The high economic growth was led by two industries: heavy industry and manufacturing industry. Many people were pushed out from stagnant industries such as agriculture and absorbed in both of prosperous industries. The number of day laborers increased markedly and Kamagasaki grew steadily too. It

was in this era that Kamagasaki became the biggest day laborers' district in Japan. Kamagasaki was transformed from a traditional type of slum, which had included many women and children among its residents, to a doya-gai whose residents were predominantly single men working as day laborers. Many young laborers flowed into Kamagasaki. Day laborers worked in such industries as construction (33.8 percent of the whole in 1967), manufacturing (26.9 percent) and transportation (6.1 percent)(NLWC data quoted by Shima 1999:59).

The second stage was the era of lower economic growth and the so-called bubble economy in the second half of the 1970s and the 1980s. In the first half of this era the economic growth rate declined continuously. Heavy industry and manufacturing declined. Manufacturing was further mechanized and the system of production was rationalized. On the other hand the service sector expanded. The construction industry also continued to grow because of increasing orders from the service industry. These trends gave way to the bubble economy in the 1980s, when over-speculation in business led by land speculation and a policy of financial expansion among the banking agencies went on. Many day laborers of Kamagasaki were pushed out from manufacturing industry and absorbed in construction. More recruiters were sent to Kamagasaki by the construction companies. In this era more than 80 percent of day laborers of Kamagasaki worked at construction sites (NLWC 1999:6). The employment of day laborers resulted to become more unstable because they depended on the construction industry, which is highly sensitive to movements in the business cycle.

The third stage was the era of the immediate post-bubble economy in the first half of the 1990s. The bubble economy was collapsed in 1993. The business activities were shrunk across all industries. Many employees were laid off, resigned or retired from companies. The unemployment rate went up steadily. During this era the construction industry played a role in employment adjustment and absorbed workers excluded from the other industries. Public investment by the national and local governments was stepped up in an attempt to spend the economy out of recession. Demand for new building from the service industry increased too. Construction orders from private business amounted to 60.6 percent of all orders, with non-manufacturing business accounting for 82.5 percent of the whole of private business (MCA 1999:328). The number of construction workers resulted to increase. However day laborers decreased markedly because technical innovations cut the demand for them (Hippo 1992: 61-71). Day laborers in Kamagasaki decreased as well. The number was 18,836 in 1995, that is, 27.1 percent decrease

from 1990 (KRC 1999). Most day laborers (96.0 percent in 1995) continued to engage in construction or civil engineering jobs introduced by the NLWC (NCDLU 1999).

The fourth stage was the second era of the post-bubble economy in the second half of the 1990s. The recession continued. Business activities remained stagnant. But the amount of public investment shrank markedly. Many construction companies including some general contractors consequently went bankrupt. Over 5,000 construction companies went bankrupt in Japan in 1997, a 32 percent increase from 1996 (AN 1998). Day laborers decreased from 550,000 in 1975 to 300,000 in 1997 (NLWC 1998). Day labor contracts transacted by the NLWC were 3,740 per day in 1995, 3,225 in 1996, 2,351 in 1997 (NLWC 1998) and 1,864 in 1998 (KDLU 1999). A day laborer in Kamagasaki could work only 6.5 days monthly on average (Shima 1999:72). The construction industry lost its ability to absorb the unemployed from other industries. Not only the unskilled but also the skilled day laborers such as scaffold constructors, plasterers and carpenters were excluded gradually from the day labor market. On the other hand unskilled jobs in service areas such as cleaning, building maintenance and security guard work increased. Many laborers transferred from civil engineering and construction to services.

### **Present-Day Kamagasaki**

Such Kamagasaki's history offers clues as to the cause of the increase in homeless people – predominantly single and middle-aged men – in Osaka. The history is summarized as deyosebization of day laborers. The number of single-day cash-in-hand labor contracts (genkin shigoto) (7) transacted yearly by the NLWC at Kamagasaki changed spectacularly in the last 20 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: 589,982 in 1981, 868,519 in 1985, 1,874,507 in 1989, 889,731 in 1993 and 775,740 in 1997 (data from NLWC, quoted in Nakane 2001:86). The sharp increase at the end of the 1980s and the sharp decrease in the 1990s bear eloquent testimony to the historic transformation that I call deyosebization. And it changes the method of management of day laborers in Kamagasaki in four ways. First, as the demand for day work in the construction industry decreased, the labor recruiters retreated from Kamagasaki. The number of recruiters registered at NLWC was 2,764 in 1991 and 1,860 in 1997 (Fukada 1998). Second, the method of labor delivery has diversified. Day laborers used to get jobs mainly within Kamagasaki. But now many laborers get jobs through the help wanted ads of newspapers and magazines and at places outside Kamagasaki such as train and subway stations, parks and riverside areas

where many homeless people live together and so the recruiters turn to look for day laborers. Third, many day laborers and homeless people get jobs in the service sector, working as baggage carriers, packers and security guards because of difficulty in finding construction jobs. Fourth, many day laborers go to the work places without any arrangement with recruiters by negotiating with the employers directly. Thus,, the number of recruiters decreases (Aoki 2000:41-42).

Given the decreasing demand for day work, many day laborers cannot get jobs at all now. The unemployment insurance for day laborers becomes useless because he cannot register as an active laborer. Even if he can register, he cannot get the benefit if he cannot work for 26 days over a period of two months. Additionally, the employer sometimes refuses or is unable to pay the day laborer's wage. Labor disputes in Kamagasaki have increased markedly (8). But day laborer has to go to work even under poor conditions in order to get money for day-to-day food and lodging. Thus, the status of active day laborer and one of homeless person is no longer interchangeable. Only a very few skilled, healthy and young laborers can get jobs regularly. Most unskilled, disabled and elderly laborers cannot get jobs. Now the laborer is not homeless temporarily but permanently. Thus, they can be called the 'stagnant over-population' in the labor market according to Marx's terminology (Marx 1867:672).

## **2. Disemployment of Casually Employed Unskilled Worker**

### **Some Economic Trends in Osaka**

Globalization has hit Osaka especially in the 1990s. I will see some economic trends which are interpreted to owe to globalization in Osaka. Globalization has brought the shift from manufacturing industry to service. The ratio of worker in manufacturing industry was 29.7 percent of the whole in Osaka in 1985, 27.8 percent in 1990 and 23.8 percent in 1995 (OPCILD 2000:112). The ratio of worker in service industry was 20.2 percent of the whole in 1985, 22.1 percent in 1990 and 25.1 percent (op.cit.:112). The decrease of ratio in manufacturing industry was brought not only by the shrink of manufacturing industry but also by mechanization of manufacturing process and rationalization of labor management caused by the intensification of intercorporate competition. The intensification of intercorporate competition has brought two results. First, it is the decrease of the self-employed and the increase of the employee of company. The ratio of the self-employed was 12.4 percent of the whole occupied persons in Osaka in 1992 and 6.2 percent in 1997 (OPCILD

2001:91). The ratio of employee was 89.5 percent of the whole in Osaka in 1992 and 91.2 percent in 1997 (op.cit.:91). Second, it is casualization of labor owing to cut off the employment cost by the company. The ratio of full-timer was 80.4 percent of the whole employees in Osaka in 1992 and 74.3 percent in 1997 (op.cit.:91). The ratio of the casual employee composed of day laborer and part-timer was 19.6 percent of the whole in 1992 and 25.7 percent in 1997 (op.cit.:91). One out of four employees was causal worker in 1997.

Globalization accompanied the chronic recession of Japan's economy. Osaka which has so many small-sized companies and the casually employed unskilled workers was hit by globalization and recession seriously. The intensification of intercorporate competition was accelerated by the recession. It brought two results. First, it is the increase of business failure. There were 19,164 companies bankrupted with more than 10 millions yen debt in Japan in 2001 and it was 29.2 percent increase of in 1996 (TSR 2002). The bankrupted companies in Metropolitan Osaka occupied 23.0 percent of the whole in 2001. Second, it is the increase of unemployment rate. The unemployment rate was 4.7 percent in Japan in 1999 and 5.2 percent in 2002 (MCA 2001:85)(Asahi June 1, 2002). It was 7.5 percent in Osaka in 2001 surprisingly (Asahi June 1, 2002).

### **Picture of Workers Just Before Becoming Homeless**

These economic conditions seem to have brought disemployment of the casually employed unskilled worker from the general market and to give an economic background of making the second type of homeless people in Osaka. According to the OCUSG survey the respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki (the second type of homeless people) had just before becoming homeless had worked in the construction industry (55.6 percent of the whole), the manufacturing industry (18.9 percent) and the retailing industry (10.8 percent)(OCUSG 2001:283). It contrasts with the ratio of the respondents who had previous job experience in Kamagasaki (the first type of homeless people): 91.4 percent of the whole in the construction industry, 2.2 percent in the manufacturing industry and 1.7 percent in the retailing industry (op.cit.:283). The respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki had worked as construction workers (47.6 percent of the whole), factory workers (18.7 percent) and workers in service sector just before becoming homeless (op.cit.:284). Workers in service sector included clerks of pachinko parlor, factory guards, traffic guards, cleaners of hotel, distributors of fliers and carriers of signboards (op.cit.:294). It contrasts with

the ratio of the respondents who had previous job experience in Kamagasaki: 80.9 percent of construction workers, 3.2 percent of factory workers and 2.6 percent of workers in service sector (op.cit.:284). The respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki had been laborers employed on a daily basis (34.6 percent of the whole), part-timer (36.0 percent) and full-timer (15.8 percent), and were the self-employed (9.6 percent)(op.cit.:285). It contrasts with the ratio of the respondents who had previous job experience in Kamagasaki: 90.6 percent of laborers employed on a daily basis, 7.2 percent of part-timer (op.cit.:285). Finally the respondents of OCUSG survey answered that they had become homeless because of no job (69.6 percent), no money (18.1 percent), dismissal (11.4 percent) or other reasons including business failure, loan, loss of will to work and so on (21.4 percent)(OCUSG 2001:293). Among them part of respondents who answered 'no job,' 'no money' and 'other reasons' and all respondents who answered 'dismissal' seem to have disemployed and to belong the second type of homeless people. These figures are summarized as follows. First, although the respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki and who had been construction workers in construction industry were most numerous among them, there had been many factory workers and the workers in service sector including retailing industry. Second, their status in the job hierarchy had been lower wholly (9). Third, each trend becomes clearer when the respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki is contrasted with the trends of the respondents who had.

Thus, these trends seem to be the results of disemployment of casually employed unskilled workers in the general labor market and thus, a product of globalization in Osaka.

### **Minor Groups of Homeless People**

The respondents of OCUSG survey contain some minor groups of homeless people: youths (3.2 percent of the whole)(OCUSG 2001:24), former white-collar workers (18.1 percent), elderly over 70 years old (3.9 percent) and women (3.0 percent) (OCUSG 2001: 24,259). Each group is minor in number but increasing steadily. There is little data on their professional backgrounds. But most of them seem to belong to the second type of homeless people who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki. Homeless youths tended to have dropped out of school and/or adopted the life style of free workers (frieter) who had no regular job. But they could not get any decent jobs truthfully. Former white-collar workers became homeless because of the business failure of their companies or dismissal from them (10). The

elderly had escaped or excluded from the family, hospital or welfare accommodation because of personal troubles. Finally some women tended to have worked as cooks or maids at bunkhouses (hanba) (11) and to have lost their jobs because of the closure of the bunkhouses. Only these women belong to the first type of homeless people. Other homeless women often had escaped from the consumer financing firms and became homeless with their husbands.

Thus,, these minor subgroups of homeless people composed of youths, ex-white collar workers, the elderly and women have been disemployed in the general labor market and have belonged to the second type of homeless people in Osaka.

## **V. Institutional Background of Homelessness**

Next task is to analyze the institutional background of both of the first type and the second type of homeless people in Osaka. The government's social policies to save homeless people have alleviated the severity of homeless people's life conditions and made homeless people decrease in number. As homeless people increased in the second half of the 1990s, there have appeared many groups supporting homeless people especially in Kamagasaki (12). Among them nine supporting groups led by the Kamagasaki Day Labors' Union (KDLU), which organized day laborers in Kamagasaki, founded the Kamagasaki Conference for Security of Job and Life of Homeless People (KCSJL) in 1993. Next, the KSSJL founded the Kamagasaki Organization Supporting Homeless People (KOSHP) as a non-profit organization in 1999. The KOSHP forcefully has asked the Osaka City Government (OCG) and Osaka Prefecture Government (OPG) to carry out the homeless policies. As a result three measures were adopted by the both of Governments.

First, the OPG started to deliver jobs to the elderly over 55 years old in 1994. The measure was succeeded to the KOSHP in 1999. The registers to the project were 2,821 persons in 2002 and the KOSHP delivered jobs to 218 registers per day (KOSHP May 10, 2002). A register got job only three times monthly on average. It was too few for the register to get job constantly every day to survive. The KOSHP has asked the OPG to create more jobs and at the same time asked the elder registers over 65 years old (422 persons) to apply Social Welfare in order to make the registers decrease in number. But it is not easy for the elderly to get the welfare benefits because of its institutional insufficiency as I refer to soon.

Second, the OCG started to construct the temporary shelters for homeless people. It gave the permission to homeless people to use the ground floor of Nishinari Labor and Welfare Center as shelter only at night in 1994 (KCSJL 2001). The OCG constructed a tent shelter in 1998, another tent shelter in 1999 and a prefabricated shelter in 2000 at Kamagasaki. And it constructed another prefabricated shelter at Nagai Park in 2000. Moreover it constructed more three shelters for securing homeless person to get both of shelter and job. Thus, homeless people have some kinds of shelter in Osaka at present. But even those are very few. Each shelter can accommodate few hundred persons at largest. But there are almost 10 thousand homeless people in Osaka in 2002. So many homeless people result not to enter to shelters. Moreover all shelters are the short stay facilities and so homeless people must go out of them after the temporary stay. Finally it is difficult for homeless people to find jobs during staying at shelters because of job scarcity although the OCG asks them to look for jobs during their stay at shelters. After all most homeless people result to become rough sleepers again without any resource to survive.

Third measure is Social Welfare. It is the final measure to prevent the person become homeless effectively. But the welfare system is so poor for homeless people in Japan. Two requirements must be fulfilled if any person wants to get the welfare benefit. First, the Daily Life Security Law (DLSL) specifies that only a person who registers a place to dwell with the city government can get the benefit. But a homeless person cannot do that. They are homeless because of having no any dwelling place. Also the DLSL specifies that only a person who is physically or mentally unable to work can get the benefit. But the person who can work but who cannot find any job because of job scarcity cannot get benefit. Moreover the DLSL often is not applicable to the person who is below 60 or 65 years old in its actual operation because he/she customarily is regarded to be too young to get the benefit by the city officials. The method of how to operate the DLSL is different city to city. In 28 out of 80 cities in Japan only the person who has the resident's card, who can not work and who is more 60 or 65 years old can get the benefit in 2001 (Yomiuri Jan.1, 2001). In Tokyo the doya (SRO) is regarded as a dwelling house administratively. Therefore more than 5,000 ex-day laborers and ex-homeless persons live in the doyas in San'ya by getting the benefits for housing (13). But in Osaka the doya is not regarded as a dwelling house. It has been a cause why homeless people are so numerous in Osaka. Homeless person can get the benefit only when he/she enters hospital or the facility for senior citizenry and the disabled

in Osaka. Moreover homeless people are 53.4 years old on average (OCUSG 2001:24). They can not become the beneficiaries because it is too hard for them to be engaged in the heavy day labor, but they are regarded to be too young to get the benefits by the city officials. A typical case may be as follows. One day a homeless person falls ill or gets badly hurt in traffic accident on the road. A passer-by finds him/her and calls to the policeman. The policeman again calls to the ambulance station. The ambulance takes him/her to hospital. A doctor examines him/her and makes report to a case worker or a city official. Finally the latter decides to apply the DLSL to him/her. After all homeless person can get the benefit only after he/she falls on the crisis of near-death. This gives an explanation of the tragic fact that so many homeless people die on the roads in Osaka. Noguchi wrote that almost 600 homeless persons are estimated to die per year only in a Ward of Osaka where Kamagasaki is situated (Noguchi 1997:51). Among them so many homeless persons died to freeze in winter: December, January and February. Such government's poor operation of DLSL has been criticized severely (Iwata 1995, Iwata 1997:122-125, Fujii 1997, Fukuhara and Nakayama 1999:34, Yoshimura 1999:74-75, Tamaki 1999:42-44, Iwata 2000:279-296, Sasanuma 2000: 57-62). And there have been some court cases brought against the national and local government by homeless persons themselves asking to alleviate the qualifications to become beneficiary (14).

Summarily these governments' social policies have not functioned effectively as the measures to save homeless people or to make homeless people decrease in number in Osaka.

## **VI. Structural Background of Homelessness**

The final task is to analyze the structural background of both of the first type and the second type of homeless people in Japan. I will take two structural conditions: company welfare systems and family kinship networks. These regulate the homeless population in Japan directly or indirectly. We have 24,090 homeless people in Japan in 2001. It is not many in comparison with the United States(Burt 1996:20-21) although homeless people are increasing steadily. This fact has an important implication for understanding homelessness in Japan. I will analyze the structural backgrounds. But I only can give their minimum analyses because it is too big for this paper to draw the detailed pictures.

First, it is company welfare systems. They say that Japan's economy is

overcoming the difficulties caused to globalization by using the unique method of labor management which called toyotism rooted historically in Toyota Motor Corporation (Ôno 1980, Sekine 1981, Kadota 1991, Iida and Yamada 1992, Kamii 1993:64-78, Kano 2000:2149). Toyotism adopts collectivism in labor management: the method of evaluating the laborer's ability on the basis of achievement by a small work group. The company motivates the laborer to work hard by making him/her have loyalty to it and then raises labor productivity. Such toyotism is connected with the method of personnel allocation and recruitment. Regular employment plays the role of welfare to support the employee including his/her family through life-long employment, family allowance, bonus and so on. At the same time The casualization of labor is going on in Japan (OLA 1997). The company cuts down employment cost by replacing regular employee with casual employee (Ogoshi 1992:39-52). But incidentally, the company does not fire the regular employee directly even when needed. It fires him/her indirectly by using various methods of employment adjustment: external assignments, dismissal and re-contracting, early retirement, temporary layoffs and suspension of new recruitment. On the other hand the company treats casual employee effectively as regular employee by giving him/her a small bonus, and making him/her work at the core of the worksite. This style of labor management includes the employee wholly in the company and then makes up the closed labor market in Japan, which is segmented vertically in every affiliate company group (Ujihara 1996:414-425, IBES 1993, Thona 1993, Tsutiana 1994:123-125, Kamitani 1994:146-149, Yasumoto 1998:140-144, Tominaga 1998:89-99). Thus, the labor force does not flow out of the labor market limitlessly, but flows within each segmented company group's territory. Here is an important point for our discussion. This internal labor market functions as a mechanism regulating the direct exclusion of employee from the company and thus, as a cushion to prevent the employee from becoming homeless. That is why homeless people have not increased vastly even though we have so many laborers in unstable employment status and a high unemployment rate at present in Japan.

The intensification of intercorporate competition is making this employment system of company collapse. The chronic recession also is accelerating to collapse it. As noted before, one out of four workers was the casual employee in Osaka in 1997(OPCILD 2001:91). And the unemployment rate of Osaka was very high (Asahi June 1, 2002). The employment status of casually employed unskilled worker is very unstable. He/she is fired firstly. And the unemployed who does not have any safety resource to survive is forced to become homeless. This is a reason why homeless

people increased in Japan in the 1990s. But for all of these facts the Japan's labor market functions as a cushion to prevent the unemployed become homeless still now.

Second, it is family kinship networks. The same thing can be pointed out about family kinship networks too. The fact that there are not vast homeless people in Japan owes to the safety network for mutual assistance among the Japanese. When a poor person asks for financial assistance to the family or relatives, the latter tend to accept his/her ask rather easily as if doing so was a social obligation for them. Such personal network constitutes a kind of system of 'shared poverty' (Geertz 1956) and functions as a private safety system, preventing poverty from leading to homelessness. Many also wrote that both of family and company in Japan function as the private welfare systems (Ujihara 1966:273-306, Kamino 1992, Kinoshita 1993:41-51, Mito 1994, Kimoto 1995:84-88, Hirayama 1995:198-234, Mori 1995:177-178). Castells conceptualizes such Japan's phenomenon as the 'internalization of social services' (Castells 1999:134).

The intensification of competition even on the individual person's level caused by globalization and chronic recession also is making the safety resources provided by the affiliate groups scarce and making the ties of those groups loose. Morita said that such systems are collapsing in today's Japan (Morita 2001:42). Person who is excluded from any personal network and who has not any safety resource is becoming a rough sleeper. Iwata said that the number of rough sleeper as the most miserable homeless people is more numerous in Japan than in the United States although she did not give any datum about that (Iwata 2001:41). These words can be interpreted in the context of globalization on the individual level. But for all of these facts the family kinship networks function as a cushion to prevent the unemployed become homeless still now.

## **Conclusion**

This paper analyzed the characteristics of homelessness and two types of homeless people made through two economic processes in Osaka: de-yosebization and disemployment. Three claims were proposed. (a) de-yosebization and disemployment as the Japanese forms of globalization positively has caused homelessness in Japan. (b) company welfare systems and family kinship networks have prevented people to become homeless in Japan. (c) social policies carried out

by the governments have prevented people to become homeless. This paper tried to verify these claims by analyzing the economic, institutional and structural backgrounds of homelessness in Osaka. The conclusions are summarized in three points. First, de-yosebization and disemployment have caused to increase homeless people in Osaka. Second, governments' social policies about job, shelter and Social Welfare have been insufficient to support homeless people or to make homeless people decrease so far. Third, the affiliate groups like company and family/relatives have prevented people become homeless although their function to do so is weakening gradually under globalization. Finally the claims were verified only partly in this paper. They must be developed and elaborated more explicitly with more data. It is my next task.

## Note

- (1) The Japan Association for the Study of Yoseba, JASY, was founded in 1987. The members are composed of scholars studying yoseba and the activists of yoseba in Japan. I am a member of its steering committee. It publishes a journal titled Yoseba every year.
- (2) Gill gave a detail comparison of the yoseba with the American skid row (Gill 2001:180-185).
- (3) The method of counting the number of homeless people differed from city to city then. In Osaka they were counted on the roads at night (Shima 1999:45). On the contrary in Tokyo they were counted in welfare accommodation and on the roads in the daytime and at night (SGUL 1999:2-4). The Kamagasaki's activists estimate more than 10 thousand homeless people actually in Osaka in 2002.
- (4) Each analyst estimated the homeless population in the United States with his/her method of counting: 250,000-350,000, 500,000-600,000, 2 million-3million or 7 million (Burt 1996 :20-21). Anyway the homeless population is much bigger in the United States than in Japan.
- (5) Nakane wrote that Kamagasaki had 227 doya and 218 apartments. They accommodated 22,254 persons in 1996 (Nakane 1998).
- (6) Almost all recruiters at Kamagasaki are said to be yakuza, members of Japan's mafia. The analysis of yakuza is indispensable to understand the actual conditions of day laborers and homeless people in Japan (Aoki 1987, Yamaoka 1996:118, 121, Noguchi 1997:57, Mainichi 2000.8.19). They exploit day

laborers and homeless people severely not only through job recruitment, but also by gambling, prostitution and drugs. The case of the United States may seem to be same. But I wonder why no study of American homelessness refers to the problem of gangsters who may abuse and exploit homeless people.

- (7) The Japanese term *genkin* literally means 'cash', but is also applied to the typical day laborer who gets a job in the morning and who is fired in the evening every day, since he works for cash in hand.
- (8) Data from an interview with an activist of Kamagasaki on October 25, 1998.
- (9) It becomes clearer when the ratio about job status is crossed with the ratio about the dwelling status. The respondents who had not previous job experience in Kamagasaki mostly had lived in apartments, *hanbas* and company dormitories (OCUSG 2001:291). Their dwelling status was lower too.
- (10) They sometimes are made fun of as 'necktie homeless' (NOEC 1999).
- (11) There are two types of *hanba* in Japan. First, it is the bunkhouse where the employer pools day laborers temporarily and from where he sends them to the work sites (*genba hanba*). Second, it is the bunkhouse where the recruiter pools day laborers temporarily and from where he takes them to the true employer (*ninpudashi hanba*).
- (12) The information about groups supporting homeless people was collected by myself in the 1990s.
- (13) The Yokohama City Government regards the *doya* as the dwelling house. On the contrary the Nagoya City Government has no special measure for homeless people so far.
- (14) The most famous case is the Hayashi Case that a homeless person named Hayashi, Katsuyoshi brought to the Nagoya district court in 1996., demanding to make the city government apply the DLSL to him. He died on the way to the Supreme Court and his supporters succeeded it. But the case ended in defeat in 2001 (Fujii 1997:78-82, 1998).

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