Refuge Neighborhoods: Service Hubs and Homelessness in the US and Japan

SOUTHERN JAPAN SEMINAR 2019

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2019
9:00 AM–4:00 PM
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FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2019 (9:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

9:00 AM - 9:50 AM | Service Hubs and Inequality in Neoliberal Global Cities
◆ “Service Hubs: Anatomy of a Concept”
  Geoff DeVerteuil, Senior Lecturer of Social Geography, Cardiff University
◆ “Refuge Neighborhoods in the US and Japan: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Types”
  Matthew Marr, Associate Professor of Sociology, FIU Asian Studies Program

10:00 AM -10:50 AM | Community Organizing and Film in Los Angeles & Osaka
◆ “In Plain Sight: Informal Settlements in Bustling Los Angeles”
  Pete White, Director, Los Angeles Community Action Network
◆ “Kamagasaki, From Now On”
  Yoshiki Shigee, Documentary Film Maker, Gara Film

11:00 AM - 11:50 AM | Community, Supportive Services, and Religion in Osaka and Tokyo
◆ “Faith Based Organizations Supporting the Homeless in Osaka’s Airin District”
  Tatsuya Shirahase, Associate Professor of Sociology, Momoyama Gakuin University
◆ “Creating Community through Support: NPO Sanyukai Programs in Tokyo’s San’ya Neighborhood”
  Kazunori Yui, Board Member, NPO Sanyukai

12:00 PM - 12:50 PM | Lunch, catered for invited participants

1:00 PM -1:50 PM | Gender, Health and Housing in Los Angeles and Miami
◆ “Women Experiencing Homelessness in Los Angeles: Exposure to Risk and Creation of Community”
  Suzanne Wenzel, Professor of Community Psychology, University of Southern California
◆ “From Lock Down to Safe Haven: Women who Experienced Homelessness Describe Their Perceptions of and Experiences with South Florida Shelters”
  Asia A. Eaton, Assistant Professor of Psychology, FIU

2:00 PM - 2:50 PM | Permanent Supportive Housing and Welfare in Miami and Tokyo
◆ “Access Points in the Age of Housing First”
  Hilda Fernandez, CEO, Camillus House
◆ “The Unique Characteristics and Structure of the San’ya Neighborhood: An Analysis from the Perspective of the Livelihood Protection System”
  Hiroshi Goto, Associate Professor of Social Work, Nihon University

3:00 PM - 3:50 PM | Service Hubs, Social Ties and Spiritual Practice in Miami — Preliminary Findings from FIU-MDC Humanities Edge Faculty and Student Research
◆ “Socioeconomic Characteristics of Service Hub Neighborhoods in Miami and Los Angeles”
  Rebecca Young, Ph.D. Student, FIU Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies
◆ “Facilitating Trust and Social Ties: Non-Profit Organizations as Social Infrastructure in Single- and Scattered-Site Permanent Supportive Housing”
  Catherine Velarde, Ph.D. Student, FIU Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies
◆ “Access to Spiritual Practices After Homelessness: A Miami Case Study”
  Natalia da Silva, FIU Student, Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies
9:00 AM - 9:50 AM
Service Hubs and Inequality in Neoliberal Global Cities

♦ Geoff DeVerteuil, Senior Lecturer of Social Geography, Cardiff University
“Service Hubs: Anatomy of a Concept”

Geoff DeVerteuil is a Senior Lecturer of Social Geography in the School of Geography and Planning at Cardiff University. DeVerteuil is interested in inequality as it manifests itself in terms of mental health, substance abuse treatment, homelessness, precarious migrants, gentrification and the voluntary sector. He is also interested in the forces arrayed against inequality, including a critical articulation of social and spatial resilience.

♦ Matthew Marr, Associate Professor of Sociology, FIU Asian Studies Program
“Refuge Neighborhoods in the US and Japan: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Types”

Matthew Marr is Associate Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociocultural Studies and Asian Studies at Florida International University. His research focuses on homelessness in the US and Japan, showing how urban inequality is shaped by social conditions operating at multiple levels, from the global to the individual.

Abstract: Housing and social services addressing homelessness in urban areas tend to take specific patterns according to local context. However, they often cluster in poor, socially marginalized neighborhoods in the central city because of broad trends like housing markets segregated by income and race/ethnicity, opposition in many residential communities to housing addressing homelessness (NIMBYism), and sometimes explicit policies of containment. While affordable housing and social services targeting homelessness should not be ghettoized and should be available throughout an urban area, there can be some benefits to clustering in conveniently located neighborhoods.

In this talk, I will overview some of the strengths and weaknesses of these “refuge neighborhoods.” Strengths include effectiveness of density and diversity of social services, conveniences of centrality, community awareness and identity, incubation of social movements, fostering of ethical citizenship, and resistance to gentrification. Weaknesses include overconcentration of poverty, high rates of crime, degraded environment, and stigma. Also, I will use the cases of Skid Row (Los Angeles), Overtown (Miami), San’ya (Tokyo), and Kamagasaki (Osaka) to show how these neighborhoods vary due to local context and form various types of service hubs (Skid Row as a concentrated mega hub, Overtown as a sprawling mini hub, San’ya as a fading mini hub, and Kamagasaki as a fracturing mega hub). Given threats from the financialization of housing and gentrification, I argue that the role of these refuge neighborhoods should be recognized, invested in, and protected.

10:00 AM - 10:50 AM
Community Organizing and Film in Los Angeles and Osaka

♦ Pete White, Director, Los Angeles Community Action Network
“In Plain Sight: Informal Settlements in Bustling Los Angeles”

Pete White is the Founder and Co-Director of Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN), which builds indigenous leadership with the Central City East
(Skid Row) community to address the issues confronting the neighborhood’s extremely low-income, predominantly African American residents. LA CAN focuses on housing and civil rights, healthy food access, women’s rights and violence prevention.

♦ **Yoshiki Shigee.** Documentary Film Maker, Gara Film

“Kamagasaki, From Now On”

Yoshiki Shigee is a documentary film maker based in Osaka. He has produced a film “Sato-ni Kitara Ee-yan (You should come home)” about a free child care center in Kamagasaki, one of Japan’s poorest urban neighborhoods. The film has helped bring attention to the issue of growing childhood poverty in Japan. He has also produced short films about a special program in Osaka public schools to educate young students about poverty and changes affecting day laborers and the elderly in Kamagasaki.

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM
Community, Supportive Services, and Religion in Osaka and Tokyo

♦ **Tatsuya Shirahase 白波瀬達也**
Associate Professor of Sociology, Momoyama Gakuin University

“Faith Based Organizations Supporting the Homeless in Osaka’s Airin District”

「あいりん地区における FBO のホームレス支援」

Tatsuya Shirahase is Associate Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology at Momoyama Gakuin University in Osaka. His research examines the role of faith based organizations in addressing homelessness, and the formation of various neighborhood social safety nets over time. He has also worked as a social worker in Kamagasaki, Osaka.

**Abstract:** The Airin District is an area of 0.62 square kilometers in the northeast section of Nishinari-Ward, Osaka City; at one time, it was the most notorious slum in Japan. For a long time, the Airin District was deeply impoverished, and it came to face social discrimination, with public sector efforts in the district rather limited. Hence, faith based organization (FBO) activities expanded actively here. Among these, the presence of Christian FBOs was consistently strong. With over 40 years of history, the Kamagasaki Kyōyū-kai has, from its inception, not had the goal of proselytizing, and has striven to solve the Airin District’s social problems by working with a variety of support groups. It has had a particularly large influence on community development. For that reason, trust in them from groups not related to Christianity is deep (for example, neighborhood associations and labor unions). Conversely, since other FBOs that run homeless ministries prioritize spreading their faith over community development, they run the risk of engaging in self-righteous activities; consequently, there are many instances of over-supplying biased assistance.

あいりん地区は大阪市西成区の北東部に位置する0.62平方キロメートルの地域で、かつては日本を代表するスラムであった。あいりん地区は長い間、貧困が深刻であり、社会的に差別されてきた。あいりん地区に対する公的セクターの取り組みは限定的であった。そのため歴史的にFBO（Faith Based Organization）の活動が活発に展開されてきた。なかでもキリスト教を母体とするFBOのプレゼンスが一貫して大きい。

40年以上の活動の歴史をもつ釜ヶ崎協友会は、布教を目的とせず、様々な支援団体と協働しながら、あいりん地区の社会問題の解決に尽力してきた。特にコミュニ
ニティの開発に多大な影響を及ぼしてきた。そのため、キリスト教に関わりのないグループ（例えば、地縁組織、労働組合）からの信頼は厚い。一方、ホームレス伝道をおこなうFBOはコミュニティの開発よりも信仰を広げることを重視するため、独善的な活動になりやすく、結果として偏った支援を過剰に供給することが多い。

*Kazunori Yui* 油井和徳. Board Member, NPO Sanyūkai

"Creating Community through Support: NPO Sanyūkai’s Programs in Tokyo’s San’ya Neighborhood"

「支援を通して、コミュニティを創る－山谷地域におけるNPO山友会の取り組み－」

Kazunori Yui is Director of Sanyūsō, a men’s shelter, and Senior Administrator of Sanyūkai, a free medical clinic in San’ya. Sanyūkai has provided free medical services, food, clothing, counseling and other supportive services to poor men, many of whom have been day laborers and/or homeless, for over thirty years. Yui also works with many community organizations in and around San’ya to enhance social services to vulnerable people in the area.

Abstract: The San’ya neighborhood is located in the northern part of Tokyo and was formerly a town where many laborers in construction gathered. Due to economic decline and industrial change, many of San’ya’s laborers became unemployed and fell into street homelessness. Due to support activities from private organizations and homelessness policies of government, the number of people living on the streets has declined continuously and people living on welfare in the San’ya area’s distinct simple lodging houses has increased. Many of these people are former laborers from San’ya or people who were living on the streets. Currently, among the 4,000 people staying in lodging houses in San’ya, approximately 90 percent are receiving welfare benefits and about 60 percent are elderly. Thus, there are problems of nursing, lonely death, suicide, addiction, and the like. NPO Sanyukai, which has been supporting day laborers in San’ya and people living on the streets since 1984, pays attention to the social isolation that often accompanies homelessness. We aim for the creation of a community for socially isolated people through support which responds to surface needs like a free clinic and consultation, soup lines, outreach, and supportive housing. In 2015, we created a community grave for people who had experienced homelessness and had a relationship with Sanyukai. This is to create a sense of security and hope that the community and relationships they created during life will continue after death.

東京都の北部に位置する山谷地域は、かつては土木や建設業に従事する日雇い労働者が多く集まる街であった。経済状況の悪化や産業構造の変化により、山谷地域の日雇い労働者の多くは失業し、路上生活に陥った。民間支援団体による支援活動や、行政により行われてきたホームレス対策の取り組みなどにより、路上生活者数が減少する一方で、山谷地域を特徴付けてきた簡易宿所には、生活保護を受給しながら暮らす人々が増加している。その多くはかつて山谷地域の日雇い労働者や路上生活者である。現在、山谷地域の簡易宿所宿泊者約4,000人のうち、約9割が生活保護を受給しており、約6割が高齢者である。そこでは、介護、孤独死、自殺、依存症など様々な問題が起きている。

1984年から山谷地域で日雇い労働者や路上生活者への支援活動を行ってきたNPO「山友会」は、路上生活に至る背景にある社会的に孤立した状況に問題意識
を持っている。無料診療や生活相談、炊き出し・アウトリーチ、ケア付き宿泊施設の運営など、山谷地域の路上生活者や生活困窮者の表面的なニーズに応える支援を通して、社会的に孤立した彼らのコミュニティを創ることを目指している。2015年には山友会と関わりのあった路上生活者や元路上生活者のための共同墓地を建立し、死後も生前に育まれた関係性やコミュニティが続いていく安心感や希望を生み出している。

12:00 PM - 12:50 PM
Lunch, catered for invited participants

1:00 PM - 1:50 PM
Gender, Health and Housing in Los Angeles and Miami

♦ Suzanne Wenzel, Professor of Community Psychology, University of Southern California
“Women Experiencing Homelessness in Los Angeles: Exposure to Risk and Creation of Community”

Suzanne Wenzel is Professor of Social Work and Chair in the Department of Adult Mental Health and Wellness at the University of Southern California’s Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. She conducts interdisciplinary research that seeks to understand and address health-related needs of vulnerable populations, particularly individuals experiencing homelessness in urban communities. She is investigating the process of transitioning to permanent supportive housing among individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and associated changes in personal relationships, behavioral health and risks, health service use, and quality of life.

♦ Asia A. Eaton, Assistant Professor of Psychology, FIU
“From Lock Down to Safe Haven: Women who Experienced Homelessness Describe Their Perceptions of and Experiences with South Florida Shelters”

Asia Eaton is a feminist social psychologist and Assistant Professor in Psychology at FIU. Her research broadly examines the social and psychological causes and consequences of sexism. Specifically, Eaton explores how gender intersects with identities such as race, sexual orientation, age, and class to affect individuals access to and experience with social power in intimate partner relationships and in the workplace.

2:00 PM - 2:50 PM
Permanent Supportive Housing and Welfare in Miami and Tokyo

♦ Hilda Fernandez, CEO, Camillus House
“Access Points in the Age of Housing First”

Hilda Fernandez is Chief Executive Officer of Camillus House, one of Miami’s largest providers of housing and supportive services addressing homelessness. She leads a complex system of care serving more than 12,500 men, women and children each year through over 40 programs and services. A passionate advocate for the homeless, Ms. Fernandez is former executive director of the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust and is a member of Florida Coalition for the Homeless and Miami Homes for All.
Hiroshi Goto is Associate Professor of Social Work in the Department of Social Welfare at Nihon University in Tokyo. His research focuses on homelessness and public welfare in Japan. In particular, he has studied the role of transitional housing, livelihood protection benefits, and private nonprofit organizations in addressing homelessness. He has also worked as a social worker in San’ya, Tokyo.

Abstract: Tokyo’s San’ya is an area 1.66 square kilometers in size with a concentration of simple lodging houses called “doya” (often called Single Room Occupancy hotels, or SROs in English). In 2017, there were 153 doya in San’ya, with 5,520 residents. Approximately 60 percent of residents were elderly, 87 percent were receiving livelihood protection (welfare) benefits, and nearly all were male. Also, those who are living on the streets in the area are generally over 50 years of age and generally are homeless long-term. Because of these reasons, this area has been seen as a space of social exclusion. However, there are public and private welfare services that include people who are experiencing homelessness or are socially disadvantaged. Thus, it can also be said to be a “refuge neighborhood,” “welfare town,” or “service hub.” In this presentation, I will examine how these characteristics of San’ya came to be by looking at Japan’s social welfare services, especially focusing on the seikatsu hogo (livelihood protection) system. In doing so, I aim to shed light on the factors that make the attributes of people in similar neighborhoods in Japan and the United States different.

東京の「山谷」地域は、約1.66km２のエリアに簡易宿泊所（ドヤ[Single Room Occupancy]）が密集する地域である。2017年現在、「山谷」地域の簡易宿泊所数は153軒となっており、5,520人が宿泊している。宿泊者の高齢化率は約60％（2015年現在）、生活保護の受給率は87％であり（2012年現在）、そのほとんどが男性である。またこうした地域の周辺で生活するホームレスの人々（Street-Homelessness）は、50歳以上の高齢層に偏っており、路上での生活が固定化かつ長期化している傾向にある。以上のような理由から、こうした地域は、しばしば社会的に排除された空間と位置付けられるが、一方で、ホームレス状態にある人々のみならず、社会的な脆弱性を持った人々を包摂するための公的・民間の様々な福祉サービスが提供されてきており、いわば「避難地域」（Refuge Neighborhoods）、「福祉の街」（Welfare Area）、「サービスハブ」（Service-Hub）ともいえる一面をも有している。本報告では、現在の「山谷」地域のこうした特徴が、どのような経緯で形成されていったのかを、日本の社会福祉サービス、中でも生活保護制度に焦点をあてて検討する。この作業を通して、日本とアメリカの同様の地域で暮らす人々の属性の違いが生じる要因を明らかにしてみたい。

3:00 PM - 3:50 PM
Service Hubs, Social Ties and Spiritual Practice in Miami — Preliminary Findings from FIU-MDC Humanities Edge Faculty & Student Research

Rebecca Young, Ph.D. Student, FIU Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies
“Socioeconomic Characteristics of Service Hub Neighborhoods in Miami and Los Angeles”
Rebecca Young is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at FIU. Her dissertation research in Anthropology is focused on homelessness and Housing First initiatives in Miami, FL.

Catherine Velarde, Ph.D. Student, FIU Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies

“Facilitating Trust and Social Ties: Non-Profit Organizations as Social Infrastructure in Single- and Scattered-Site Permanent Supportive Housing”

Catherine Velarde is a second-year PhD student in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at FIU. Her research interests include urban issues, homelessness, and policy.

Abstract: As mass homelessness has become an entrenched problem in urban areas across the United States, local efforts to address the issue have centered around the provision of permanent supportive housing. However, with urban housing markets thoroughly unequal and financialized, the creation of new permanent supportive housing has been limited by high cost and NIMBY resistance. Thus, many local-level private and public sector actors are focusing on using rental vouchers and providing supportive services in scattered-site arrangements. How are the experiences of persons who have exited homelessness to supportive housing affected by the form of housing they move in to? Also, since social ties can play an important role in long-term escape from homelessness, how does living in single- versus scattered-site permanent supportive housing affect the ability to develop social ties? In this paper, we analyze in-depth qualitative interviews with single- and scattered-site permanent supportive housing residents in Miami. We find that both groups faced issues of lack of trust, with some overcoming these issues to develop social ties. We argue that non-profit organizations who place people in permanent supportive housing can serve as a crucial form of social infrastructure to help individuals overcome lack of trust and form social ties. We also provide exploratory evidence that this role of organizations is stronger for single-site housing. This suggests local actors addressing homelessness fight constraints in urban housing markets that make creating single-site permanent supportive housing increasingly difficult.

Natalia da Silva, FIU Student, Dept. of Global & Sociocultural Studies

“Access to Spiritual Practices After Homelessness: A Miami Case Study”

Natalia Marques da Silva is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Sociocultural Studies at FIU. Her research interests include religion, materiality, and museology. For this project, she focuses on spirituality and homelessness.

Abstract: Studies on spirituality and homelessness have demonstrated that challenges endured during homelessness can influence fluctuation of religiosity, affiliation or dogma. It is unclear, however, whether experiences related to homelessness, such as lack of economic security or public scrutiny, impact day to day spiritual practices. This study examines this possibility through ethnographic research in Miami, a city with a diverse population of multiple faiths and backgrounds. Although not all religious affiliations are present in the sample, interviewees recorded a wide variety of spiritual practices, such as praying or reading a religious text, that are present across many groups. Preliminary results from 20 interviews demonstrate that lack transportation, lack of knowledge regarding new neighborhoods, and perception of societal stigma related to being homeless are factors that can negatively impact access to some forms of spiritual practices. Meanwhile, access to technology, such as smart phones,
television, or radio, has been found to potentially increase accessibility by decreasing physical and social boundaries. While more interviews are needed to fully comprehend accessibility issues, the centrality of spirituality in the lives of most interviewees suggests that is an important component of their wellbeing. For these individuals, spirituality is a need that requires fulfillment, but that sometimes is difficult to fulfill. Examining barriers to practice can ensure communities are better equipped to understand and address such needs.

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FIU’s Asian Studies Program and the Department of Global & Sociocultural Studies

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Humanities Edge Program
The Southern Japan Seminar (SJS) promotes the research and educational activities of Japan-related scholars in the Southeastern United States. Drawing upon the strengths and needs of regional Japan studies, SJS fosters critical inquiry, multi-disciplinary discussion, and the dissemination of knowledge concerning all Japan-related topics, both theoretical and practical.

The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) grant promotes collaboration between Japan and the United States with the goal of fulfilling shared global responsibilities and contributing to improvements in the world's welfare. This year’s Southern Japan Seminar is supported by the special CGP grant that Dr. Matthew Marr received, titled “US-Japan Service Hub Network.” This project connects researchers and advocates working in “service hub” neighborhoods in Miami, Los Angeles, Tokyo, and Osaka. The individuals that make up this network work in historically stigmatized neighborhoods where homelessness, aid organizations, and social advocacy have clustered. In recent years, all of these neighborhoods have seen expanding gentrification, neoliberal social policies, and demographic change. Amid these pressures, how can these neighborhoods retain their roles as “kakekomi chi’iki (neighborhoods of refuge),” bastions where those displaced by social, economic, and cultural forces can begin to rebuild their lives? Hence, this project builds a U.S.-Japan cross national network that aims to address this question theoretically and practically through intellectual exchange, publication and engagement with policy makers and community members. The US-Japan Service Hub Network is the first of its kind, bringing together academics and advocates, each with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, not only across service hub neighborhoods within each country, but across national borders.

Japan Studies Review (JSR) is a refereed journal published annually by the Southern Japan Seminar and Asian Studies at FIU. As a publication that addresses a variety of cross-disciplinary issues in Japanese studies, JSR includes contributions that deal with practical and theoretical topics in the areas of business and economic issues, politics, education and curriculum development, philosophy and aesthetics, gender issues, popular culture, and immigration issues. Visit http://asian.fiu.edu/jsr to view our archive and submission guidelines.

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