JRAI Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute



# Doing time in old age: unsettling ethics in carceral circuits

Jason Danely *Oxford Brookes University*

Since the early 2000s, the proportion of older adults in Japanese penal institutions has risen dramatically, driven largely by high rates of recidivism. This trend has developed alongside growing social insecurity about crime, as well as anxiety about old age and care in a time of increasing neoliberal discourses of individualized risk and responsibility for maintaining health. This article examines the temporal dimensions of these changes and their implications for socially marginalized and criminalized older adults. Starting from Allison's concept of 'dis-belonging' (*muen*) as being out of time with others, I describe how old age inequalities of belonging are produced by chronocratic regimes, and how heterochrony emerges within the contradictions of those regimes. I argue that as old age becomes increasingly subject to chronocratic violence, new rhythms of doing and being time's body are emerging. Drawing on fieldwork in the impoverished area of San'ya, Tokyo, I show how ageing is produced through rhythms of recidivism that entail both agency and possibilities for care. Older men in San'ya see carceral circulation as a way of striving for a good life in what they call '*shaba*', or the world of suffering and endurance, and a way of making time of ethical potential in old age.

## Pickled plums and prison time

I took my seat under the bright chandeliers of the large hotel conference hall and opened the plastic bag that I was handed at the door. Inside was the program for the 68th 'Movement to Brighten Society' Tokyo City Recidivism Prevention Symposium, as well as a small pink packet of animal cookies with a large sticker (almost hiding a cartoon image of a cheerful blue duck), indicating that it was a charitable donation to the Japanese Ministry of Justice. I tucked the sweets away as the first speaker came to the podium and welcomed the audience of about 200 attendees, mostly men, dressed in crisp white short-sleeved shirts. Each of the speakers was in some way linked to Japan's corrections and probation sector, and as they clicked through their slides of various graphs and statistics, each told a similar version of a familiar story: Japan has a problem with older repeat offenders. While the overall number of incidents and arrests were slowly declining, the recidivism rate among those over 60 remained higher than any

*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)* **00**, *1-17*

other age group. The final speaker of the event, a journalist who had written several stories on Japanese prisons, offered his explanation:

> In Japan, juvenile delinquency has dropped significantly, but the prisons are still completely full, why is that? Well I've been able to go to several different prisons, and when you go inside, it looks exactly like a welfare facility – the atmosphere and the construction and everything. And the people inside are the same as well. A lot of elderly people and disabled people, or people who are poor, destitute, and have mental or cognitive disability too. When I talked to these old prisoners, I was surprised that they had such a strong resistance to receiving welfare support. They'd be people who'd been arrested ten or eighteen times and you'd think, that's enough! Shouldn't they be in some kind of care home or something? But if I think about it, the fact that they've been able to go to prison 18 times in the limited amount of time they still have to be alive is something of an accomplishment (laughs)! But dig a little deeper and it comes out that most were all alone, without much money, and so one day they're hungry and go to the supermarket and steal something. If you do it over and over, your prison time gets a little longer each time. And each time you get out of prison, the situation is the same, and you don't get support. I started to think, what is the point of prison for a person like this? To keep a guy in prison for one year costs a minimum 3 million yen [approx. $21,500]. All that for [stealing] a package of pickled plums that cost 300 yen?

This speaker, like others in the symposium, called for the development of community-based alternatives to prison for older and disabled offenders, and although he posed a 'common-sense' question about the ethics of incarcerating older repeat offenders, he stopped far short of directly criticizing the Japanese criminal justice system itself, let alone the broader political and economic structures that convert an ordinary package of pickled plums into prison time. What his talk did highlight was the vexed moral problem of old age, not only for the penal system, but for Japanese society more broadly. Can the prison remain at the centre of the justice system when it is a de facto care home that no longer functions to deter offending, rehabilitate, or even punish? Can the welfare system still claim moral legitimacy when older people see prison as a more favourable option to the day-to-day struggles of growing old on a state pension or other social assistance?

Noda-san, a formerly incarcerated man in his mid-70s who had been living between homeless encampments and single-occupancy flophouses (*doya*) since his release, gave an amused grunt when I told him about the symposium a few days later. 'And I bet there wasn't a single older ex-prisoner there, right?' As far as I could tell, he was right. 'And that's the problem!' he continued, 'I'm sorry to say this, *sensei*, but people who've never been to prison talk all day about "recidivism prevention" this and that, but they never think to listen to us! If I was there, I'd be dropping bombs!' Noda-san laughed, then twisted his face into a scowl and jabbed his finger at an imaginary audience. 'First of all, they call it "re-settlement (*shakai fukki*)"' he went on, 'but I can't go *back* to the way things were, and anyway, if I did, I'd probably end up doing the same things that got me in prison!' I asked him what he did instead, now that he's out. 'Well, I've been looking for work, but no one wants to hire an old guy. So, there's nothing to do. That's why some old guys return [to prison]'.

From the perspective of older ex-offenders like Noda-san, recidivism occurred within an unsettled space of temporal and existential confinement, where both past and future had become closed off by old age. For formerly incarcerated older people excluded from normative temporal regimes of social belonging (i.e. kinship, labour) and from possibilities to build viable futures otherwise, life drifted towards what Anne Allison calls 'dis-belonging' (*muen*), a way of being out of time with others, or alone in a 'non-time' (2013: 85). Dis-belonging means that life 'does not unfold in connection with

any aim or expectation that marks the end of the possible' (2013: 85), but rather, endures in conditions that are 'ordinary, chronic, and cruddy' (Povinelli 2011: 3). I argue that rather than viewing recidivism as an irrational moral failure, we think of it instead as a way of *re-temporalizing* the experience of ageing in conditions of deprivation that opens up possibilities for a 'good life', even as it may endanger others. In other words, for older chronic recidivists, life within carceral circuits, or 'doing time', is both a spatiotemporal practice and an ethical stance (Whyte, this issue). The limitations of the ageing body as it moves through carceral circuits means that, paradoxically, seeking a 'good life' in prison also risks life itself. But with the diminishing options and numbing boredom of dis-belonging outside prison, even these risks do not seem unreasonable.

In response to the chronic crisis of recidivism, Japanese activists and charities do a different kind of temporal work with ex-offenders, employing an 'ethics of immediacy' (Mittermaier 2014: 55), focused on listening to and accompanying them rather than aiming for objectives like reducing recidivism. Indeed, just like the 'bomber' above, Japanese organizations that assisted people released from prison voiced scepticism about the prison and probation system's notions of rehabilitation or resettlement, preferring instead to attend to the immediate situation of the person who needs help and offering this without judgement or expectation. However, like prisons, these organizations often struggled to provide adequate support for older people, especially when there were complex and significant health and care needs. The friction that sometimes resulted between older ex-offenders and supporting organizations highlights the subtle differences between the ethics of immediacy and that of durative time. Before turning back to the specific case of my fieldwork with formerly incarcerated older people, I want to first briefly discuss how this work fits into the broader frame of the anthropology of ageing, time, and ethics.

## Ageing as time's body

In her ethnographic examination of ageing in Brazilian favelas, Annette Leibing (2014) defines ageing as 'the accumulation and embodiment of time' (2014: 225). Leibing does not dwell long on this definition, in part because her primary interest is place and not time, but also, perhaps, because it seems to state the obvious: ageing is not simply something measured *by* time, but it is a way of *being* 'time's body' (O'Neill 1974, in Hufford 2018: 164). Obvious as that may seem, Leibing's statement strikes me as a profound and generative claim that bears further reflection. One might rephrase it in a slightly different way: ageing is the accumulation of times coming into embodied being. The tempo, pacing, rhythm, or syncopation of time as it is embodied forth across the life course afford different sensitivities and feelings of the world as well as different capacities to get into sync with others, or to resonate (Danely 2022; Rosa 2019). As individuals reach old age, they have already experienced and inhabited a wide array of time bodies, and they find that others continue to emerge. For example, if the older person becomes dependent on care, or experiences grief and bereavement, or embarks on a legacy project, new embodied times may be generated that reorganize and resituate one in the world in ways that bring new selves and relationships into being.

Leibing reminds us that questions about age are about what it means for an individual to accumulate and embody time. How might this process impinge on or afford different capacities for individuals to achieve ways of 'being and doing' (Sen 1993) that they value for a good life in old age (Grøn & Mattingly 2018; Kavedžija 2019: 168)? One way to connect ageing, time, and the good life is by looking at cultural narratives. Cultural

narratives may provide the means to articulate and attribute value to the embodiment of different times, and these narratives may offer ways of including old age or excluding it (Cohen 1998; Lamb 1997; 2014). For example, narratives that value the propitiation of the ancestors may extend to older people who actively embody ancestor time in the observation of regular memorial rituals (Danely 2014). Anna Corwin's (2021) analysis of ageing in a US Catholic convent ties the habituated embodiment of time to everyday linguistic practices, arguing that the nuns' graceful acceptance of frailty and decline was less a product of ideology, than it was part of the rhythms and flows of particular speech acts used in the community.

Language and rituals, however, are subject to formalization and control, limiting the range of possible times, selves, relationships, and possibilities for the good by excluding other forms of embodied time. Older adults who fall out of the bounds of cultural scripts of the life course risk becoming bodies out of social time, precariously set adrift and ghostly (Danely 2019). This is just as true for secular time as it is for the more religiously oriented examples described above. Modern understandings of ageing as a natural, universal process that occurs alongside objective, linear, chronometric time (Arxer & Murphy 2013; Kirtsoglou & Simpson 2020) has been essential to the formation and global dissemination of modern geriatric and gerontological knowledge (Cohen 1998; Sivaramakrishnan 2018), and continues to underpin the biomedical model of ageing as a progressive loss of resilience towards bodily deterioration and frailty (Grenier, Lloyd & Phillipson 2017; Pickard 2014). Gerontological knowledge, techniques, and ethics constitute a form of *chronocracy*, or a fixing of time to social structures and power relations that reproduce difference, inequality, and exclusion (Bear 2020). Kirtsoglou and Simpson (2020: 6) have argued that chronocracy 'becomes our "everyday" and structures our ordinary experiences to the point that our common time thickens and becomes saturated with its effects and our labour to mitigate them'. For marginalized people, this labour is often in the form of waiting, hoping, and otherwise deferring the present to an ever-receding future (Berlant 2011; Crapanzano 2004; Hage 2009; Han 2011; Jeffrey 2010). Yet such labour can become increasingly untenable as old age brings an increasing awareness of diminished possibilities for existing within or mitigating chronocratic order.

Neoliberal welfare retrenchment has deepened not only economic, but also lifespan inequality. In the UK, for example, between 2018 and 2020 the Office of National Statistics reported a twenty-year difference between the healthy life-expectancy of those in the least deprived areas compared with the most deprived areas. At the same time as governments have disinvested in public welfare, making home care for older people one of the poorest paid and least desirable jobs, they have poured public funding into speculative investment in technologies of life extension and pharmacological silver bullets. The 'new gerontology' was one of several projects aimed at reimagining the life course in the context of neoliberal capitalist chronocracy (Clack & Paule 2019). In this paradigm, ageing was reduced to pathology, and the function of gerontology would be the 'compression of morbidity' (Neilson 2006), or the radical temporal contraction of later life infirmity. Ageing itself became a matter of individual risk, and maintaining one's health and independence for as long as possible became the ethical and aesthetic imperative of the new temporal order (Lamb 2014). The new gerontology chronocracy could be seen in healthy ageing leisure activities (Traphagan 2006), rehabilitative reablement schemes (Clotworthy 2020), and increasingly mainstream anti-ageing procedures and cosmetics (Mire 2014; Neilson 2006). While even the most affluent are

still likely to live several years beyond their healthy life-expectancy, frailty and cognitive decline have come to be viewed as signs of moral irresponsibility, deepening the stigma towards already disadvantaged groups. This stigma has extended towards rapidly ageing developing societies, where the rise of age-related infirmity has been accompanied by discourses on the moral decline of families (Cohen 1998; Sivaramakrishnan 2018). Measuring different societies on the same scale of new gerontological notions of healthy ageing reproduces colonial hierarchies of chronocratic denial of coevalness (Kirtsoglou & Simpson 2020: 7).

Ethnographic investigations of older people's lives have revealed a more complex relationship between ageing and time than linear chronological understandings would suggest. The idea that time is not an objective and universally standard experience, but rather that actors and communities are *temporalized* by their cultural and social positions and histories (Munn1992; Zigon 2014), allows ethnography to represent ageing as multidimensional and dynamic, and older people as retaining agency to shape and be shaped by multiple times, be they mythical, religious, aesthetic (Danely 2014; 2016b; Myerhoff 1979), or times related to class, culture, or geographic region (Degnen 2012; Tsuji 2005). Time, and therefore ageing, is always on the move, always unfolding, and as a result, the relationship between time and our experience of ageing is fundamentally uncertain, incomplete, and must be perpetually reconceptualized. Philosopher Jan Baars (2012: 53) compares this problem to the 'Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle' in particle physics, in that, 'we are living in time and cannot step out of it to pinpoint it clearly'. Because ageing is always changing even as we attempt to step back to look at it, Baars argues that, 'ageing can only be experienced or studied in specific persons and specific situations or societal contexts that influence and co-constitute the processes involved'. In this statement, Baars articulates the difficulty, but also the possibility for studying the variety of ageing experiences without reducing them to fixed categories.

Certainly, much more could be written about the many ways older adults use and embody time to pursue their versions of the good life; these are not limited to popular cultural narratives of ageing, but take on increasingly diverse and complex forms as more people from different backgrounds are reaching advanced age. However, as I have shown, powerful chronocratic regimes of the life course operate through social institutions to control the knowledge, techniques, and ethics of ageing in ways that amplify inequalities and deny alternative embodiments of time. From this point of view, the architectural 'family resemblance' between the prison and elder welfare institutions recognized by the speaker at the beginning of this article, makes sense. The following section describes how the temporal logics of welfare and prison institutions reproduce chronic dis-belonging, and how recidivism can be read as a form of unsettling political agency that re-temporalizes ageing otherwise.

## Ageing and the carceral

It is impossible to approach and understand the experiences of formerly incarcerated older adults without first understanding their temporalization within two chronocratic regimes: social welfare and the carceral state. Social welfare consists mainly of public services and direct cash assistance for impoverished and unhoused people, managed nationally by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and locally by municipal or ward offices (e.g., pensions, disability allowance, long-term elder care, livelihood protection assistance, etc.). The carceral state comprises institutions such as prisons,

detention centres, and probation services that come under the Ministry of Justice, but might be expanded to include additional sites of policing and state surveillance, such as the *koban*, or ubiquitous police outposts seen frequently in urban areas (Young 2022). While there are important institutional separations between these two fields that result, for example in a lack of adequate healthcare within prisons on the one hand, or the lack of recognition of the specific needs of formerly incarcerated people in the welfare system on the other, there are also significant overlaps and grey areas, particularly in areas of disability, mental health, and addiction treatment (Biehl 2005; Brodwin 2014; 2023; Chapman, Carey & Ben-Moshe 2014; Garcia 2010). What interests me here, in order to better understand the lives of formerly incarcerated older people, is the way these complex systems of care, control, and punishment enmesh and unravel temporalized worlds in ways that unsettle experiences of age and the good life.

Until the mid-twentieth century, the predominant model of justice implemented through penal corrections was rehabilitative, which would continue after release through the coordination of prisons and welfare services (Garland 2017; Lancaster 2012). This chronocratic order followed a narrative of sin and redemption through the benevolence of the state – a narrative that was highly influential in the early formation of Japanese penal institutions (Lyons 2021). Foucault's (1979) influential genealogy of carceral forms, *Discipline and punish*, argued that underlying this seeming benevolence of incarceration (as opposed to corporal punishment) was a new form of power operating through technologies of surveillance and control that produced docile, self-disciplining subjects (Fassin 2017: 15-16). This narrative, however, changed with what has been called the 'punitive turn' (Lancaster 2012: 532; Pratt 2006), or *genbatsuka* in Japanese (Hirai 2010; Miyazawa 2008: 48). *Genbatsuka* was a turn away from the rehabilitative, towards the logic of retribution, a logic that hinges on both a growing popular perception of threat and insecurity (Bykowski 2020; Hamai & Ellis 2006: 174; Miyazawa 2008) and on the political labour of separating categories of the good citizen and bad criminal – those who belonged, and those who dis-belonged. Just as the prison–welfare nexus defined the rehabilitative link between inside and out, the logic of *genbatsuka* has extended the punitivity of the carceral beyond physical sites of imprisonment to institutions like welfare and housing services, typically thought of as sites of care (Khan 2022; Kim 2021; Wacquant 2009).

Foucault described this expansion of carceral logics' places like almshouses, hospitals, and schools as the 'carceral archipelago', or the 'great carceral continuum that diffused penitentiary techniques into the most innocent of disciplines' (1979: 297). The disciplining effects of neoliberal welfare retrenchment have been felt acutely by those who are most dependent on public welfare assistance, and whose behaviours are under constant moral scrutiny under suspicion of somehow 'cheating the system' (McRobbie 2020; Wacquant 2009). In Japan, the stigma associated with accepting welfare assistance, which perpetuates the demand that the poor repeatedly navigate state bureaucracies to prove their claims of deservingness, explains why so many incarcerated individuals voice hesitance about enrolling in these programmes (as noted by the speaker at the beginning of this article). Lawson (2015) has even gone so far as to argue that prison remains an attractive alternative because it is the only place formerly incarcerated older people can feel relief from stigma.

Carceral chronocracy has typically been understood as forming precarious zones of exception and abandonment (Agamben 2005; Foucault 1979), but as Gill, Conlon, Moran and Burridge (2018) have argued, boundaries of carceral sites are often much

more porous and flexible than these totalizing images suggest. Although the penal–welfare continuum allows a passing of knowledge, techniques, and ethics across the chronocratic meshwork, they remain disjointed at the level of practical administration. The carceral continuum is littered with the rubble of systems in disrepair that become obstacles to any efforts to sustain belonging. Inadequacies in the welfare provision can lead an ex-offender back to prison, but a repeated record of imprisonment can further restrict the ability to resettle after release. Thus, formerly incarcerated older people's efforts to pursue their version of a good life within this chaotic mesh does not follow a straight line, but results instead in a temporality of repetition and circulation (Danely 2024). Their movement back and forth from one side of the prison wall to the other is not only spatial, but also constitutes a form of temporal and ethical world-building, a refusal to be disposed of, a demand to be cared for. This re-temporalization of ageing through a circuitous rhythm of recidivism is what carceral geographer Dominique Moran (2012) has described as 'doing time', or the spatiotemporal practices of carcerality in specific instances, that are constitutive of and constituted by the body. By doing time across carceral sites, back and forth, older bodies affectively stitch these together. While recidivism is perceived as a failure by both the prison and probation services and by humanitarian resettlement assistance organizations alike, from the perspective of the formerly incarcerated older person, the temporal rhythms of this stitchwork also do the work of repair, keeping together a world of shreds (Martínez & Laviolette 2019).

The reparative work of ageing recidivists is an ethical response to carceral dis-belonging that works both within and against processes of 'carceral churn', described by Moran (2015: 106) as 'the repeated release, reoffending, re-sentencing and re-imprisonment of former prisoners'. Russell, Carlton and Tyson (2022: 152) point out that the use of the visceral quality of the word 'churn' conveys the violent movement of bodies as well as the cold and mechanistic process of 'churning out' carceral subjects. This sensory quality, they argue, should not be ignored, since carceral churn is registered through 'visual, auditory, and other sensory cues' that 'variously dull, distort and deprive and assault the senses' (Russell *et al.* 2022: 153). In this way, the abstract notion of chronocracy materializes in living, breathing bodies, accumulating in and flowing across different sites, and into the dreams and imagination of time beings. However, the body may also be a site of counter-chronocracy (Laszczkowski 2020: 78), where the incompleteness of carceral power becomes evident and subject to contestation by other social rhythms. As Carolyn Sufrin (2017) observed in her ethnography of pregnant women in US jails, for example, rhythms of recidivism can make jail a 'source of constancy', a place of 'familiarity, routine, rest, safety', and a means of 'being at home in the world' (2017: 215-17). The subjective experience of time, particularly in the context of capitalist and carceral modes of circulation and churn, produces a plurality of oftentimes contradictory representations and social rhythms that make time for an alternate politics and ethics of being-with (Al-Mohammad 2010; Bear 2014: 19; Jackson 2020).

## The age–crime relationship

The received wisdom from the beginnings of criminology, such as the work of statistical sociologist Adoplhe Quetelet in 1831, has upheld the notion even today that criminal behaviour peaks in adolescence or early adulthood and then declines with age (Ulmer & Steffensmeier 2014: 377). This age–crime relationship model has

been so persistent that some have concluded it is universal and invariant, owing to the physical and neuropsychological changes that occur in all humans with age regardless of sociocultural or historical differences (Ulmer & Steffensmeier 2014: 378).

More recently, however, the rapid rise of both the number and the proportion of older people held in custody across the world has been gaining increased attention by researchers and activists (Maschi, Viola & Sun 2013). This fact alone does not challenge Quetelet's age–crime relationship, since ageing prison populations mainly in Euroamerica, have been largely driven by longer sentences, mandatory sentencing changes, and increased prosecution of historical sexual offenses, rather than by an increase in elder crime. Then there is an interesting temporal question of how to measure old age for incarcerated people. In most research, prisoners are considered old at the age of fifty or fifty-five, reflecting the 'accelerated ageing' resulting from 'weathering' (Crane & Pascoe 2021: 320), or the cumulative physiological and psychological effects of high-effort coping in contexts of repeated exposure to social conditions of marginalization, discrimination, and deprivation. Incarcerated older people are (in research at least) physically comparable to adults chronologically ten years older, a long-standing convention that is only recently being questioned (Humblet 2021). Incarcerated people at any age tend to have significantly more chronic health issues than the general population, but when it comes to older prisoners, some estimate that between 85 and 90 percent are living with at least one major chronic illness (Lee *et al.* 2019).

In Japan, it is remarkably easy to find statistics on offenders over the age of sixty. There are currently around 47,000 people in seventy-five Japanese prisons and detention facilities, around 9,000 of whom are over the age of sixty. The number of older adults in Japanese prisons tripled between 1999 and 2019, while their proportion of the overall prison population quadrupled, from 3 to 12 per cent. What is most striking, however, is that in contrast to prison populations elsewhere in the world, the majority of older people in Japanese prisons are serving sentences for offenses *committed as older adults*. While overall crime rates in Japan are at their lowest in decades, 22 per cent of all arrests in 2020 were people over the age of sixty (65 per cent of those over seventy). The great majority of crimes committed by older offenders in Japan are non-violent property crimes (shoplifting, theft, and 'fraud' account for over 70 per cent) which carry very short sentences of less than two years. Many of these older offenders are living with intellectual or cognitive disabilities; an estimated 14 per cent (more than 1,200 individuals) living with symptoms of dementia (Ichimiya 2020).

Also, very unusual when we compare Japan internationally, is that those over the age of sixty-five have a higher rate of reoffending than any other age cohort: more than one in five will return to prison within two years of release, and almost half of those reoffenders will be arrested within the first six months (Ministry of Justice 2021: 248). If we extend the post-release period to five years, the rate jumps to close to 50 per cent. Around 70 per cent of older people arrested are recidivists (Yamamoto 2018: 35), and those with six or more prior offenses now make up the majority of older incarcerated people.

A small, but growing ethnographic literature on older prisoners has strengthened our awareness of what it means to be time's body within sites of penal confinement (Humblet 2021; Marti 2023; Parrott, Houben, Visser & MacInnes 2019), but because these typically focus on people serving long or indeterminate sentences, their analysis tends to stay within the routines of the institution space. Older Japanese offenders,

in contrast, tend to enter prison in old age, serve short sentences (without parole), and reoffend frequently. While the experience and embodiment of time ageing long-term prisoners are worthy of examination, I argue that the chronicity of older Japanese offenders provides a counter-case that reveals the role of social welfare in the criminalization of old age, and the importance of local cultural narratives of ageing and time to understand the complexity beyond the numbers.

## Time going nowhere

San'ya, is a small area of a few square blocks in north-eastern Tokyo, which used to be a major day-labour hub until the casual labour market declined around the 1980s. It was one of three main sites where I conducted fieldwork with ex-offender resettlement organizations operating in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area (an area that extends well beyond the city of Tokyo and includes around 37 million people) in 2018. I had not originally planned on doing fieldwork in San'ya, as I had already established a relationship with another ex-offender resettlement NGO elsewhere, but a chance encounter with a volunteer for one of the charities based in San'ya changed my mind. 'You'll have no trouble finding older ex-offenders in San'ya', he told me with a smile, 'I think most of the men there have a [prison] record'. I was intrigued. Despite the detailed ethnographic and historic literature on Japan's day-labour districts (Cassegard 2014; Fowler 1996; T. Gill 2001; Kim 2016; 2018; 2021; Marr 2021; Shirahase 2017; Stevens 1997), mention of crime seemed to be mostly limited to the operation of labour brokers linked to organized crime syndicates (yakuza). Although criminalization of the underclass, especially in dense urban areas elsewhere in the world was central to theories of stigma and punitive containment, such as Wacquant's (2009) concept of 'prisonfare', I wondered if Japan might offer a case where the connection between class segregation and prison was not inevitable.

The volunteer's assessment was, however, fairly accurate. After a few weeks of regular visits to San'ya, where I volunteered at a soup kitchen (*takidashi*), I had already spoken to a dozen older men who had some experience of past incarceration. If the case of Japanese underclass neighbourhoods like San'ya contributes to our understandings of prisonfare and precarity, it is that old age matters. While chronological age separates and excludes individuals in significant ways (e.g., when looking for employment or trying to rent an apartment), age also matters as a social position marked in time. San'ya's underclass had been marginalized and contained by a capitalist chronocratic regime that placed them outside of productive and reproductive times. This marginalization, understood through local concepts of *en* ('ineffable connection') (Goldfarb 2016) and *muen* ('dis-belonging') (Allison 2013) is not only spatial, but also temporal (Danely 2014; Kim 2018; 2021; Marr 2021; Nozawa 2015; Ozawa-de-Silva 2021). Here, I want to briefly consider how an ethics of being-with achieved through connection and belonging is temporalized through rhythms of recidivism and re-entry before touching briefly on the spatiotemporal concept of '*shaba*' as an intermediary zone of fugitive ethical potential.

All of the older men with experience of incarceration who lived in San'ya stayed in shelters or alone in one of the small, shabby, flophouses (*doya*) that lined the streets. Rent was paid out of their Livelihood Protection Assistance benefit (*seikatsu hogo*), which allocated a fixed daily allowance for accommodation. The *doya* generally set their prices at the maximum level (at the time, ¥1800/night [US$19/night] for *doya* in Arakawa Ward and ¥2200/night [US$23/night] in Taito Ward), though some offered

cheaper shared rooms. Although San'ya, like other day labour districts, lacks formal borders and is not marked on any official city maps, it continues to exist through the concentration of economic structures like the symbiotic relationship between welfare assistance and *doya*, which, in turn, provides a means of survival for those who lack stable work or housing, or for stigmatized and marginalized individuals, like those with a criminal record. San'ya separated and contained Tokyo's dis-belongings, its disposable 'denizens' (Standing 2010, quoted in Grenier *et al.* 2017: 322) who could claim neither a place nor a time in mainstream chronocratic order. Unlike prison, it was enclosed not by walls, but by an atmosphere and aesthetic that was as much about age and time as it was about place.

Each time I made the fifteen-minute walk from the bus stop at the busy intersection of Minowa to San'ya's 'bridge of tears' (*namidabashi*), it felt like I was stepping into a grainy photograph of Tokyo, dim and discoloured with time. Broken windows and torn awnings became more common, vacant buildings and yellowed stucco gave the streets a visual sense of age. Even the exuberant fonts on shop signs that back in the 1970s or 1980s still may have exuded a kind of youthful joy, now just had a dingy retro feel, like a pair of old dance shoes on the shelf of a charity resale shop. I recognized that feel from my personal experience growing up on the outskirts of Detroit. Later, I thought one of the reasons I kept going back to San'ya was because of the way it gave me a satisfying glimmer of nostalgia each time. Despite the current state of neglect, the traces of better times still haunted the urban ruins in a way that had been erased from the busier areas of the city. San'ya seemed like a place where time had stood still, but also where you could get trapped in the inertia if you stopped walking for a moment.

Although I sometimes had the feeling that San'ya was stuck in time, the stories of residents reveal how this stuckness is actually a product of circular churn. One sixty-seven-year-old man explained how he had returned to San'ya after serving a one-year sentence for 'dining without paying' (*musen inshoku*). He had been working a part-time job as a cleaner in various pachinko parlours around the city, but one night while he was working he felt suddenly dizzy and lost consciousness. He was hospitalized during treatment, staying for two weeks while he recovered. 'I was just getting used to it' he told me, 'then they just told me to leave the hospital, and somehow my welfare benefits had been cut off and I didn't have anywhere to live. I was told that I had to pay back rent on my old room and they were just going to deduct it from my Livelihood Protection stipend. After that, I'd only have ¥25,000 [per month]! Who can live like that? It makes me think, maybe it's easier in prison?'

At many points during my research I would hear formerly incarcerated older people tell me that, 'life in prison was easy (*raku*), but life on the outside (*shaba*) is hard'. Some qualified this statement, assuring me that even though it was easier, they still didn't want to go back ('but at my age, if I go again, I'll be leaving out the *back* door [dead]'). One older San'ya resident told me that he had been sleeping rough, but his biggest concern was not poor weather, but other people. 'There are people with all kinds of things wrong with them, mentally', he explained. 'Some people commit suicide, or get into fights, or drink too much – you see everyone has a really sad face here? Look around!' 'People steal', he went on. 'No money, no life. You're always thinking, "I want to go spend some money!" It's lonely [outside of prison]'. One reformed yakuza member echoed this sense of distrust, describing places like San'ya as 'a world where trusted relationships, friendships, don't exist, or where people are [friends only when] in particular situations (*sono ba*), only when there is money or drink around. It is a world without affection,

love, connection. It's a world of loneliness and solitude'. Another older man who had lived in San'ya for forty years told me that things were getting worse: 'They just look out for themselves now. They don't help each other out like they used to. No, they just think they're the only person that matters. People want their own stuff now and don't want to share it'. In these narratives, San'ya is perceived as a place of dispossession and distrust, where the 'stuff' of life no longer circulates (or is displaced to volunteers and charity organizations), leading to dis-belonging rather than solidarity. This sense of isolation and alienation is cited as one reason prison retains its attraction as an alternative to work or family, as a place where care, and a feeling of shared life might be possible (Yamamoto 2018).

A different mood seemed to take hold of San'ya when I visited on a warm sunny day just after the monthly disbursement of Livelihood Protection stipends. The streets were busier, with groups of men sipping from cans, talking and joking with each other, some carrying plastic bags full of instant ramen and other groceries. As I walked through the neighbourhood towards one of the shelters, I heard a voice calling to me from a small side street. 'Hey you! Come over here! What are you doing in our neighbourhood?' Seated on the ground in a narrow strip of shade were three men, each with a tall plastic tumbler and a cigarette. In the building next to them a dark rusty hole in the wall and a rough plank of stained plywood counter served as a makeshift bar. The specialty was a kind of Korean vodka (*soju*) cut with cold green tea in tall plastic tumblers. By the look of it, the men had been drinking there since morning, and they had few inhibitions about striking up a conversation.

I walked over to the men and had a seat next to the one who called me over, explaining that I had been volunteering at the soup kitchen earlier but that what I was really interested in learning about was older people who had been to prison. This got a good laugh, and two of the men starting pointing at each other saying things like '*you* know something about *that*!' I couldn't be sure if these jokes were about age or past criminal histories (maybe both?). The man next to me, who looked to be the youngest, nudged my arm. 'Hey, look at this'. He turned around and lifted the back of his T-shirt, showing me a large tattoo of a Buddha seated on a lotus flower. For a man in his mid-fifties in San'ya, a tattoo like that was a clear mark of his involvement in the yakuza (Raz 2002).

A man with a head of thick grey hair sitting across from us brushed off this display and interjected, 'You know, there are a lot of old guys in prison nowadays. Most of old guys around here had been to prison a few times. But if you really want to know, go ask grandad over here! How old are you grandad? 100 years old? He's been to the worst of them too!'

He motioned to the man sitting next to him on a metal folding chair. While the other two had some grey hair, this man was clearly older than the rest. While the others had been laughing and showing off, this man had kept quiet and still, gazing out over the street and taking sips from his drink, his bloodshot eyes were set into stormy nests of folded skin, and his sharp jaw and thin lips squeezed shut. The man's wiry frame jutted out from beneath a thin white T-shirt and his bald head gave him an even more skeletal look. He appeared frail – hardly the way I had imagined someone who had been to prison multiple times – but his stony face was still intimidating.

I asked if he had been to prison as well, and he nodded, keeping silent. 'Why do people continue to go back?' He looked at me sternly. 'If you've been in once, you go a second time. If you've been in twice, you go a third'. I waited for him to continue, but

he simply leaned back and lit another cigarette. The others nodded as well, letting the older man have the last word.

The words looped around in my head for the rest of the day. It was the way he said it, so matter-of-factly, that made an impression on me. The cadence reflected the temporal rhythm of lives in San'ya, reminding me that the mood of being-with that came with the welfare payment was only temporary. Chronocratic time of the welfare system created temporal rhythms of abundance and scarcity, excitement and depression, belonging and dis-belonging. Risk was not evenly distributed across the month, but neither was it unpredictable. As the days passed, the high spirits would fade as the numbers in the soup kitchens would swell once again: 200, 250, sometimes more than 300 men, each taking his bowl of miso soup or curry rice, until finally the next payday would arrive. For individuals, the sense of regularity could be disrupted at any time by the many contingencies of life – health problems, temporary moves, prison. Sometimes one would cascade into the other. 'If you've been in once, you go a second time. If you've been in twice, you go a third …'.

## *Shaba* and the potentiality of endurance

When formerly incarcerated Japanese people talked to each other about life outside prison, they often use the word '*shaba*'. *Shaba* refers generally to the world outside of prison, a world where one is free, but where freedom has risks and actions have consequences. The term *shaba* originates in the moral cosmology of Buddhism (Sahālokadhātu in Sanskrit), and in Japan is mostly associated with and promulgated by Pure Land Buddhism, the sect that has dominated Japanese prison chaplaincy since modern prisons were first established in the 1870s (Lyons 2021). For Buddhists, *shaba* is the mundane world of illusion, desire, and suffering, where all are subject to the cycle of birth and death (*samsara*). Buddhist philosopher Daisetz Suzuki described *shaba* as the antithesis of the 'Pure Land': it was the 'world of defilement' over 'purity' and 'relativity' over the 'absolute' (Suzuki 1970: 22). Elsewhere, Suzuki refers to *shaba* as 'the world of patience or suffering' (1975: 3), suggesting that the ethical virtues that must be cultivated to survive *shaba* are those of endurance, forbearance, or restraint in the face of hardship.

The adoption of the word *shaba* in prison slang, then, suggests that formerly incarcerated individuals are not naïve about the difficulties of 'freedom', or the limits of endurance. Among formerly incarcerated men, there was a familiar saying, that, 'the winds of *shaba* are colder than [the air] inside the prison' (*shaba no kaze wa hei no naka yori mo tsumetai*) (Kimura & Sawaki 2013: 106). But for the older ex-offender, *shaba* was not only a cold place 'outside the wall' (*hei no soto*) but a time of out of joint: one of only momentary comforts and uncertain survival. Toru-san, a staff member of one of the shelters in San'ya who had his own history of incarceration, told me, 'It's more like living in *shaba* is harder than life in prison. Among the people we support there are several who have gone back to prison because they wanted to'.

He then mentioned the case of an eighty-four-year-old man who had stayed at the shelter but had recently died. He opened a cabinet behind us and found the man's file. We counted nineteen different arrests, all carrying short sentences for shoplifting or theft. 'He's spent a lot of the last 20 years in prison!' I noted. 'Most of it!' Toru added. 'For us, prison is a place you go when you've done something bad. For them, it's going home. That's their *home*'. Here, the idea of home is both a spatiotemporal site of refuge

and a familiar place of belonging (*ibasho*) (Allison 2013: 174-6; Yamamoto 2018), but it is also a place one leaves and returns to again and again, an anchor in unsettled waters.

The bed where he spent his last days was in a room at the foot of the staircase reserved for very ill and dying residents, separated from the corridor by just a curtain. While most of the building's interior was dull and undecorated, the walls of this room were covered with photographs of shelter residents and staff, birthday cards, a poster of two women dressed in kimono, two colourful calendars, and a clock. While the bed might be viewed as the setting for the tragedy of dis-belonging, the visual liveliness of the decorations expressed the potential to be with others, synchronized, in time's body. Jieun Kim (2021: 53), in her examination of the healthcare of older underclass men in Yokohama, describes the ways caregivers and receivers 'synchronize temporalities', attuning not only to bodily states, but also to the 'temporal affliction' of irregular lifestyles. This synchronization provides time for movement and rest, rhythms of attunement and moral agency, rather than mechanistic churn or the regimented care of prison life. Kim argues that the 'dominant affective and moral qualities' of this temporal care is not hope, but 'endurance' (2021: 56).

A different form of life endures in zones of social abandonment and dis-belonging like the bed at the end of the staircase or the makeshift drinking hole in the San'ya alleyway. As Mattingly (this volume) notes, even conditions of carceral containment produce 'fugitive spaces' like these as ways to 'prefigure other worlds, other pasts, other possible selves'. Doing time in prison produces the meantimes of *shaba*, a world that exists only in relation to incarceration, where ageing is made and remade in errant directions that refuse the post-welfare chronocratic regimes of active ageing. But Japanese prisons are also being remade as a fugitive space of ageing, where the older person can demand care and relief from the exhaustion of enduring life in *shaba*. In this way, the endurance and exhaustion folded within the temporal work of caring and being cared for in carceral circuits are not metaphors, but the affective signature of an unsettled ethics of ageing in the margins of Japanese society (Danely 2016a; 2016b; Povinelli 2011).

## Conclusion

'Human being', Tine Gammeltoft (2013: S170) reminds us, 'is always a potentiality-for-Being' and is therefore a central task of anthropology. It is in this potential where the good might be able to take root, as the 'morally viscous' act of endurance (Povinelli 2011: 128). Ageing itself is an act of endurance, a marathon rather than a sprint. Serving prison time or living on welfare benefits, surviving the churn of the carceral chronocracy – these too take endurance. Far from being captured, however, formerly incarcerated older adults inhabit a multiplicity of spaces and times, unsettling the image of the life-as-timeline as well as the ethical prescriptions that attach this image to the good old age.

Endurance is not free of suffering or violence, but it can make time. Time, perhaps to sense that slow suffering more sharply, to see oneself as a potential moral and political being taking shape in its wake. To make time in excess of temporal boundaries of the (re)productive is both a form of dis-belonging and of a potentiality for an alternate politics of being-with. The ways Japanese formerly incarcerated older adults make time and endure reflect the social conditions of containment and systemic violence that stem from and reproduce public insecurities towards old age in a chronocratic regime that can only see ageing as a moral failure. Rhythms of recidivism create times of

endurance and potential, new time beings that invite us to critique not only the morality of retributive justice and punitive welfare, but also the boundaries that constrict our social imagination of the life course and human longevity.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the JRAI for their support and enthusiasm for this special issue, and the anonymous reviewers for their diligence and sensitivity. Lone Grøn, Lotte Meinert, and everyone involved in the 'Aging as a Human Condition' project have been inspirational beyond measure. Research for this article was generously supported by the SSRC Abe Fellowship Program.

REFERENCES

Agamben, G. 2005. State of exception *(trans K. Attell)*. Chicago: University Press.

Allison, A. 2013. *Precarious Japan*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Al-Mohammad, H. 2010. Towards an ethics of being-with: intertwinements of life in post-invasion Basra. *Ethnos* **75**, 425-46.

Arxer, S.L. & J.W. Murphy (eds) 2013. *The symbolism of globalization, development, and aging*. New York: Springer New York.

Baars, J. 2012. *Aging and the art of living*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bear, L. 2014. Doubt, conflict, mediation: the anthropology of modern time. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* **20**, 3-30.

——— 2020. Preface: Chronocracy and its anthropological alternatives. In *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics* (eds) E. Kirtsoglou & B. Simpson, ix-xvi. Abingdon: Routledge.

Berlant, L. 2011. *Cruel optimism*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Biehl, J.G. 2005. *Vita: life in a zone of social abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brodwin, P. 2014. The ethics of ambivalence and the practice of constraint in US psychiatry. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* **38**, 527-49.

——— 2023. Interprofessional learning and psychiatric expertise in mental health courts. *AMA Journal of Ethics* **25**, 353-60.

Bykowski, M. 2020. *Techno-mediated safety: social atomization and the growth of residential security in recessionary Japan*. Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University.

Cassegard, C. 2014. Let us live! Empowerment and the rhetoric of life in the Japanese precarity movement. *positions: asia critique* **22**, 41-69.

Chapman, C., A.C. Carey & L. Ben-Moshe 2014. Reconsidering confinement: interlocking locations and logics of incarceration. In *Disability incarcerated: imprisonment and disability in the United States and Canada* (eds) L. Ben-Moshe, C. Chapman & A.C. Carey, 3-24. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clack, B. & M. Paule (eds) 2019. *Interrogating the neoliberal lifecycle: the limits of success*. Cham: Springer International.

Clotworthy, A. 2020. *Empowering the elderly?: How 'help to self-help' health interventions shape ageing and eldercare in Denmark*. New York: Transcript Publishing.

Cohen, L. 1998. *No aging in India: Alzheimer's, the bad family, and other modern things*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Corwin, A.I. 2021. *Embracing age: how Catholic nuns became models of aging well*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Crane, J.T. & K. Pascoe 2021. Becoming institutionalized: incarceration as a chronic health condition. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* **35**, 307-26.

Crapanzano, V. 2004. *Imaginative horizons: an essay in literary-philosophical anthropology*. Chicago: University Press.

Danely, J. 2014. *Aging and loss: mourning and maturity in contemporary Japan*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

——— 2016*a*. Affect, infrastructure, and vulnerability. *Medicine Anthropology Theory* **3**, 198-222.

——— 2016*b*. Hope in an ageing Japan: transience and transcendence. *Contemporary Japan* **28**, 13-31.

——— 2019. The limits of dwelling and the unwitnessed death. *Cultural Anthropology* **34**, 213-39.

——— 2022. *Fragile resonance: caring for older family members in Japan and England*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

——— 2024. *Unsettled futures: carceral circuits and old age in Japan*. Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press.
Degnen, C. 2012. *Ageing selves and everyday life in the north of England: years in the making*. Manchester: University Press.
Fassin, D. 2017. *Prison worlds: an ethnography of the carceral condition*. Malden, Mass.: Polity Press.
Foucault, M. 1979. *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (trans A. Sheridan). New York: Penguin.
Fowler, E. 1996. *San'ya blues: laboring life in contemporary Tokyo*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Gammeltoft, T.M. 2013. Potentiality and human temporality: haunting futures in Vietnamese pregnancy care. *Current Anthropology* **54**, S159-S171.
Garcia, A. 2010. *The pastoral clinic: addiction and dispossession along the Rio Grande*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Garland, D. 2017. Punishment and welfare: social problems and social structures. In *The Oxford handbook of criminology* (6th edition) (eds) A. Liebling, S. Maruna & L. McAra, 77-100. Oxford: University Press.
Gill, N., D. Conlon, D. Moran & A. Burridge 2018. Carceral circuitry: new directions in carceral geography. *Progress in Human Geography* **42**, 183-204.
Gill, T. 2001. *Men of uncertainty: the social organization of day laborers in contemporary Japan*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.
Goldfarb, K.E. 2016. 'Coming to look alike': materializing affinity in Japanese foster and adoptive care. *Social Analysis* **60**, 47-64.
Grenier, A., L. Lloyd & C. Phillipson 2017. Precarity in late life: rethinking dementia as a 'frailed' old age. *Sociology of Health & Illness* **39**, 318-30.
Grøn, L. & C. Mattingly 2018. In search of the good old life: ontological breakdown and responsive hope at the margins of life. *Death Studies* **42**, 306-13.
Hage, G. 2009. *Waiting*. Melbourne: University Press.
Hamai, K. & T. Ellis 2006. Crime and criminal justice in modern Japan: from re-integrative shaming to popular punitivism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* **34**, 157-78.
Han, C. 2011. Symptoms of another life: time, possibility, and domestic relations in Chile's credit economy. *Cultural Anthropology* **26**, 7-32.
Hirai, H. 2010. Riron keibatsu kenkyū no saikin no dōkō [Recent trends in theoretical penal studies]. *Social Criminology Research* **35**, 169-80.
Hufford, M. 2018. Curating time's body: elders as stewards of historical sensibility. In *The expressive lives of elders* (ed.) J. Kay, 153-72. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Humblet, D. 2021. *The older prisoner*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
Ichimiya, S. 2020. More than 10 per cent of those entering prison have 'likely dementia'. *Mainichi Shinbun*, 27 June. *https://mainichi.jp/articles/20200627/koo/oom/o4o/159000c*.
Jackson, M.D. 2020. Migrant imaginaries, multiple selves, and the varieties of temporal experience. In *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics* (eds) E. Kirtsoglou & B. Simpson, 31-44. Abingdon: Routledge.
Jeffrey, C. 2010. *Timepass: youth, class, and the politics of waiting in India*. Stanford: University Press.
Kavedžija, I. 2019. *Making meaningful lives: tales from an aging Japan*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Khan, A. 2022. The carceral state: an American story. *Annual Review of Anthropology* **51**, 49-66.
Kim, J. 2016. Necrosociality: isolated death and unclaimed cremains in Japan. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* **22**, 843-63.
——— 2018. The other city: alternative infrastructures of care for the underclass in Japan. *Asian Anthropology* **17**, 1-23.
——— 2021. Social exclusion and care in underclass Japan: attunement as techniques of belonging. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* **45**, 42-63.
Kimura, T. & S. Sawaki 2013. Kōrei/shōgai hanzaisha no shakai fukki shien shisaku genjō to kadai [The current state and issues of social rehabilitation support measures for elderly/disabled offenders]. *Nihon Fukushi Daigaku Shakai Fukushi Ronshū* **128**, 83-113.
Kirtsoglu, E. & B. Simpson 2020. Introduction: The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics and chronocracy. In *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics* (eds) E. Kirtsoglou & B. Simpson, 1-30. Abingdon: Routledge.
Lamb, S. 1997. The making and unmaking of persons: notes on aging and gender in North India. *Ethos* **25**, 279-302.

——— 2014. Permanent personhood or meaningful decline? Toward a critical anthropology of successful aging. *Journal of Aging Studies* **29**, 41-52.
Lancaster, R. 2012. Punishment. In *A companion to moral anthropology* (ed.) D. Fassin, 519-35. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.
Laszczkowski, M. 2020. The pulverous state: chronocracy and affect in the politics of environmental risk in Italy. In *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics* (eds) E. Kirtsoglou & B. Simpson, 65-83. Abingdon: Routledge.
Lawson, C. 2015. Reforming Japanese corrections: catalysts and conundrums. In *Who rules Japan?: Popular participation in the Japanese legal process* (eds) L. Wolff, L. Nottage and K. Anderson, 128-63. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
Lee, C., S. Treacy, A. Haggith, N.D. Wickramasinghe, F. Cater, I. Kuhn & T. Van Bortel 2019. A systematic integrative review of programmes addressing the social care needs of older prisoners. *Health & Justice* **7**, 9.
Leibing, A. 2014. Heterotopia and illness: older women and hypertension in a Brazilian favela. *Anthropology & Aging* **34**, 225-37.
Lyons, A.J. 2021. *Karma and punishment: prison chaplaincy in Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.
McRobbie, A. 2020. *Feminism and the politics of resilience: essays on gender, media and the end of welfare*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.
Marr, M.D. 2021. The Ohaka (Grave) Project: post-secular social service delivery and resistant necropolitics in San'ya, Tokyo. *Ethnography* **22**, 88-110.
Marti, I. 2023. *Doing indefinite time: an ethnography of long-term imprisonment in Switzerland*. Cham: Springer International.
Martínez, F. & P. Laviolette (eds) 2019. *Repair, brokenness, breakthrough: ethnographic responses*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
Maschi, T., D. Viola & F. Sun 2013. The high cost of the international aging prisoner crisis: well-being as the common denominator for action. *The Gerontologist* **53**, 543-54.
Ministry of Justice (Japan) 2021. Reiwa 3 nenban hanzai hakusho [2022 Crime White Paper].
Mire, A. 2014. 'Skin trade': genealogy of anti-ageing 'whiteness therapy' in colonial medicine. *Medicine Studies* **4**, 119-29.
Mittermaier, A. 2014. Bread, freedom, social justice: the Egyptian uprising and a Sufi Khidma. *Cultural Anthropology* **29**, 54-79.
Miyazawa, S. 2008. The politics of increasing punitiveness and the rising populism in Japanese criminal justice policy. *Punishment & Society* **10**, 47-77.
Moran, D. 2012. 'Doing time' in carceral space: timespace and carceral geography. *Geografiska Annaler Series B: Human Geography* **94**, 305-16.
——— 2015. *Carceral geography: spaces and practices of incarceration*. Farnham: Ashgate.
Munn, N.D. 1992. The cultural anthropology of time: a critical essay. *Annual Review of Anthropology* **21**, 93-123.
Myerhoff, B.G. 1979. A symbol perfected in death: continuity and ritual in the life and death of an elderly Jew. In *Life's career-aging: cultural variations on growing old* (eds) B.G. Myerhoff & A. Simic, 163-206. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
Neilson, B. 2006. Anti-ageing cultures, biopolitics and globalisation. *Cultural Studies Review* **12**, 149-64.
Nozawa, S. 2015. Phatic traces: sociality in contemporary Japan. *Anthropological Quarterly* **88**, 373-400.
Ozawa-de Silva, C. 2021. *The anatomy of loneliness: suicide, social connection, and the search for relational meaning in contemporary Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Parrott, J.M., F.R. Houben, R.C. Visser & D.L. MacInnes 2019. Mental health and offending in older people: future directions for research. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health* **29**, 218-26.
Pickard, S. 2014. Frail bodies: geriatric medicine and the constitution of the fourth age. *Sociology of Health & Illness* **36**, 549-63.
Povinelli, E.A. 2011. *Economies of abandonment: social belonging and endurance in late liberalism*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
Pratt, J. 2006. *Penal populism*. London: Routledge.
Raz, J. 2002. Self-presentation and performance in the yakuza way of life: fieldwork with a Japanese underworld group. In *Ideology and practice in modern Japan* (eds) R. Goodman & K. Refsing, 224-48. London: Routledge.
Rosa, H. 2019. *Resonance: a sociology of our relationship to the world*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Russell, E.K., B. Carlton & D. Tyson 2022. Carceral churn: a sensorial ethnography of the bail and remand court. *Punishment & Society* **24**, 151-69.
Sen, A. 1993. Capability and well-being. In *The quality of life* (eds) M. Nussbaum & A. Sen, 30-53. Oxford: University Press.
Shirahase, T. 2017. *Hinkon to chiiki – airinchiku kara miru kōrei-ka to koritsu shi* [Poverty and community – aging and solitary death as seen from the Airin District]. Tokyo: Chuokoron Shinsha.
Sivaramakrishnan, K. 2018. *As the world ages: rethinking a demographic crisis*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Stevens, C.S. 1997. *On the margins of Japanese society: volunteers and the welfare of the urban underclass*. London: Routledge.
Sufrin, C. 2017. *Jailcare: finding the safety net for women behind bars*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Suzuki, D.T. 1970. *Shin Buddhism*. New York: Harper & Row.
——— 1975. Reality is act. *The Eastern Buddhist* **8**, 1-6.
Traphagan, J.W. 2006. On being a good Rōjin: senility, power, and self-actualization in Japan. In *Thinking about dementia: culture, loss, and the anthropology of senility* (eds) A. Leibing & L. Cohen, 269-87. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
Tsuji, Y. 2005. Time is not up: temporal complexity of older Americans' lives. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* **20**, 3-26.
Ulmer, J.T. & D.J. Steffensmeier 2014. The age and crime relationship: social variation, social explanations. In *The nurture versus biosocial debate in criminology: on the origins of criminal behavior and criminality* (eds) K.M. Beaver, J.C. Barnes & B.B. Boutwell, 377-96. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
Wacquant, L. 2009. *Punishing the poor: the neoliberal government of social insecurity*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
Yamamoto, J. 2018. *Keimusho shika ibasho ga nai hito-tachi: Gakkōde wa oshiete kurenai, shōgai to hanzai no hanashi* [People who have no place but prison: the stories about disability and crime that schools don't teach]. Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten.
Young, A. 2022. Architecture as affective law enforcement: theorising the Japanese Koban. *Crime, Media, Culture* **18**, 183-202.
Zigon, J. 2014. Temporalization and ethical action. *The Journal of Religious Ethics* **42**, 442-59.

## Vieillir en prison : l'éthique dérangeante des circuits carcéraux

*Résumé*

La proportion de détenus âgés dans les établissements pénitentiaires japonais a connu une augmentation spectaculaire depuis le début des années 2000, en grande partie à cause d'un taux élevé de récidive. Cette tendance s'est développée en même temps qu'une insécurité sociale croissante face à la criminalité, doublée d'une angoisse à l'égard de la vieillesse et des soins en des temps marqués par des discours de plus en plus néolibéraux sur l'individualisation du risque et la responsabilité de chacun pour sa santé. Le présent article examine les dimensions temporelles de ces changements et leurs implications pour les adultes âgés marginalisés par la société et criminalisés. À partir du concept de désappartenance (*muen*) d'Allison, vu comme le fait d'être hors du temps des autres, l'auteur décrit la manière dont les inégalités d'appartenance dans le grand âge sont produites par des régimes chronocratiques, et comment une hétérochronie se fait jour dans les contradictions de ces régimes. Il avance que, tandis que le grand âge est de plus en plus soumis à la violence chronocratique, on voit émerger de nouveaux rythmes de faire et d'être le corps du temps. En s'appuyant sur un travail de terrain dans le quartier défavorisé de San'ya, à Tokyo, il montre comment le vieillissement est produit au travers de rythmes de récidive qui incluent à la fois agencéité et possibilités de soin. Pour les détenus âgés de San'ya, le passage en prison est un moyen de rechercher une bonne vie dans ce qu'ils appellent *shaba*, le monde de la souffrance et de l'endurance, et de consacrer un temps à leur potentiel éthique dans leur grand âge.