

Preface

The research project titled “Exploring Social Capital towards Sustainable Development in East Asia” (2009-2013), being conducted by the Institute for the Development of Social Intelligence, Senshu University / Center for Social Capital Studies, was selected as a Strategic Research Foundation Grant-aided Project for Private Universities by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2009).

The countries and regions of East Asia are engaging in diverse endeavors and have achieved remarkable economic growth since the latter half of the 20th century. That growth is not attributable only to the conscious, strategic resolve of the governments and people, but also to the fact that they were blessed in some ways by the international political and economic situation as well. Of course, that growth was not uniform, but was rather marked by several difficult situations, even within the economic front alone. Nevertheless, the establishment and penetration of a stable political situation along with a given level of economic results assures us of East Asia’s continued growth in the future. It is the aim of this project to focus on social capital and to look at and analyze it from the perspective of community, security, and civil society. Community as it is used here includes not only a local society in the literal sense of the word, but also families and the businesses their lives are based on. Security includes infrastructure (the “hard” aspects of which are social capital elements such as public facilities, while the “soft” aspects are various sorts of laws and systems) and a wide range of resources that are mobilized and utilized for the sake of stabilizing the country and society. For civil society, we will not only verify the establishment and penetration of modern civil society, but also study the traditions and innovations of modern culture and art in light of progress in information transmission and means of exchange.

Essentially, these three fields will serve as the basis for the research activities we plan to carry out. We will increase our knowledge by inviting experienced professionals in each area of expertise to serve as guest lecturers for regular workshops, and by conducting on-site studies and questionnaires in the target areas. Also, for our symposiums, we will invite keynote speakers from Japan and abroad who are distinguished either academically or professionally in relation to the subject at hand, and create opportunities for them to exchange opinions and ideas with the general public and, as appropriate, with our own research project members.

On that note, we are pleased to be publishing our works in the form of a journal in the English language. We hope you will find it useful. This sort of publication arrangement is expected to continue. We would be honored and happy if it serves as a source of information and knowledge for you.

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