

Introduction for discussion with Thai Colleagues

Shunsuke Murakami[†]

Our research project, “Forming a Social Well-being Research Consortium in Asia,” started in 2014. This project builds on the fruit of a previous project, “Exploring Social Capital in East Asia, Community, Social Trust and Safety Net,” and develops from it. In that project, we conducted an investigation into social trust, maintenance and improvement of livelihoods, risk and social safety nets, and social rituals through a questionnaire implemented in cooperation with institutes in Asian countries. On July 27, 2013, we held a conference, inviting members from the cooperating institutes in Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, South Korea, China, and Taiwan.

The members had already prepared reports on the questionnaire results, and they summarized these beforehand for presentation at the conference¹. The institution in Thailand, the Social Research Institute in Chulalongkorn University, prepared a further article, titled “Social Capital in Thailand: Unraveling the Myths of Rural-Urban Divide.” The title alone suggests that it is intriguing and ambitious. The article, which interested and inspired us, has been published in *The Senshu Social Capital Review* (No.5, Feb. 2014), the English-language journal of the Social Capital project.

In December 2014, we visited the Social Research Institute in Chulalongkorn University and reconfirmed mutual cooperation. During that meeting, Shunsuke Murakami offered some comments on the aforementioned article, and our Thai colleagues gave us a reply to Murakami’s commentary.

We are unable to publish this very interesting and ambitious article by our Thai colleagues again. If you are interested in the original, you can refer to *The Senshu Social Capital Review*, No.5, Feb. 2014. The points of the article are introduced following the commentary by Murakami. Although only the commentary by Murakami and the reply by our Thai colleagues will be published in this review, we believe it is valuable to read them.

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¹ http://www.senshu-u.ac.jp/research/lab/sidrc/h25event_sidrc/20130727.html