

Social Capital in Japan

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1 Introduction

Japanese society is often said to be one with a high premium on social capital. Two major theses have been put forward with regard to social capital in the last few years. One, advanced by Putnam (1993), is that social capital enables democracy to work. In other words, the historically acquired and accumulated social capital in terms of the propensity of individuals to engage with others in community and associational life facilitates the task of democratically working out the resolution of conflicts of interest and collectively producing good public policy. The other, advanced by Fukuyama (1995), postulates that social capital allows the creation of prosperity. In other words, a high level of social capital enables business firms to

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take risks and stretch networks fully in the creation of wealth on a large scale for a prolonged period of time.

Japan is a very important case in terms of both theses. For the last half century, its political system has allowed Japan to successfully adjust to and negotiate the epochal technological, demographic, economic, and social transformations that have taken place in a very short time span. Similarly, for the last half century, Japan's economic system has enabled it to emerge from the devastation and demoralization of war and defeat when its per capita income fell to the lowest in Asia to become the second largest economy in the world, with a per capita income among the highest worldwide. Can these democratic and economic outcomes over 50 years be attributed, even in part, to social capital, or to the propensity of individuals to engage in community affairs, to trust one another, and to associate together on a regular basis (Putnam, 1995a, 1995b, 1997)? In other words, can the high level of social trust and civic engagement account for the outstanding performance of the democratic and economic systems of Japan?

Although the latter argument is no less interesting and both arguments are somewhat related to each other here, I shall here pursue the former separately from the latter. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the development of social capital as understood in terms of the networks of civic engagement in Japan over the past 50 years, keeping in mind the maturation as well as degeneration of its democratic institutions. This investigation will be informed by two questions. One, what are the forms, quality, quantity, and distribution of social capital? Two, what can account for the change in social capital?

Japan is an interesting case since it is one of the very few countries among non-Western nations that has been practicing democratic politics for as long as 50 years. The question I would like to address is whether or not social capital in fact plays a major role in facilitating the transition to democracy and consolidating its institutions. The examination proceeds in three steps. In the following section, I will assess overall trends in the formation of social capital in Japan over the past 50 years. Then I will examine some plausible explanations for these trends. Finally, instead of recapitulating the arguments and examinations, I will try to speculate about the nature and direction of social capital in order to point out emerging features in Japanese political culture as it is likely to change in the new millennium based on the historical periodization of political-culture change over the past half a millennium. On the basis of the above speculation, I will also discuss some conceptual issues of social capital in relation to: (1) the historical determinants of social capital in Japan and Germany; (2) the seeming incongruence between the Fukuyama and Yamagishi conceptions of trust; and (3) the current short-term difficulty of making a transition from what is called honorific collectivism to so-called cooperative individualism.

2 Trends as Seen in the Establishment Census

The Establishment Census conducted and published every five to three years

since 1950 by the Statistics Bureau of the Management and Coordination Agency (prior to 1987 of the Prime Minister's Office) contains macro-statistical figures on the number of non-profit organizations and of their members. The Establishment Census is focused on industrial and other business organizations. Therefore, only a somewhat elementary macro-picture of non-profit organizations emerges from the census. The total number established in 1996 was 6.7 million. Non-profit associations include the categories of religious organizations, social insurance and welfare organizations, and associations not classified elsewhere. The total number of organizations under these three categories was less than 200,000 in 1996. Trends since 1951 suggest a number of features.

The number of religious organizations was very high, at 128,440 in 1951, but from 1954 until today it has stood at around 90,000. Of religious organizations, the number of those affiliated with the Shinto religion has steadily declined, from 55,939 to 11,312 between 1951 and 1996. The number of Buddhist organizations has remained virtually stagnant at 63,000 for the last 45 years. Christian organizations have steadily increased in number from 1,933 in 1951 to 6,280 in 1996. The number of believers is difficult to determine, since it is customary to follow the teachings of different religions for different occasions in Japan. Wedding ceremonies tend to be held according to Shinto or Christian ritual, funerals and memorial services according to Buddhist ritual, and so forth. Followers of mainly Shinto and Buddhist beliefs form the vast majority, while Christians make up only a 1 or 2 per cent of the population (and this has been a constant feature of Christianity in Japan since the mid sixteenth century when it was introduced to Japan from the West).

Statistics on social insurance/welfare organizations exist only for the period since 1969. The largest increase in one category is for nursery schools, 30,273 of which were registered in 1996. Also noteworthy is the spectacular increase in the number of organizations for the elderly and for the people with mental or physical disabilities, registering 8,961 and 4,436 respectively in 1996 (increases of 40.1 per cent and 33.5 per cent for the period between 1991 and 1996 respectively (see figures 1a and 1b)

The numbers for associations not classified elsewhere exhibit a number of features. Business associations register a steady increase in number from 5,448 in 1951 to 14,728 in 1996. Union associations register a modest increase, from 2,218 in 1951 to 5,248 in 1996. Academic/cultural associations increased steadily from 349 in 1951 to 942 in 1996. Political associations slowly increased from 201 in 1951 to 840 in 1996. Overall, associations in this category showed a spectacular increase, from 2,002 in 1951 to 16,224 in 1996. They may be roughly described as 'interest associations' involving vested interests of various kinds. The Japanese-American comparison reveals a number of notable features (Tsujinaka, 1996)

First, in comparison with figures for the United States, those for Japan are overwhelmingly those for business organizations. The figures for the United States are overwhelmingly civil and social associations. Recently, however, Japanese figures for associations not classified elsewhere (largely civil and social service associations

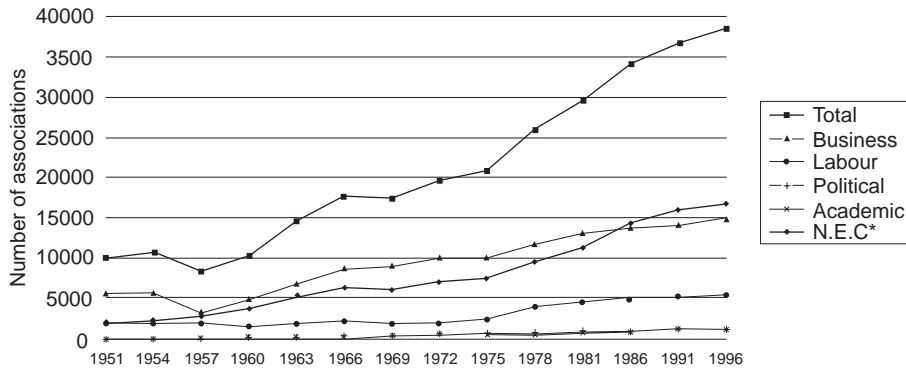


Figure 1a The number of non-profit associations in Japan, 1951–1996
 Source: Tsujinaka, 1996

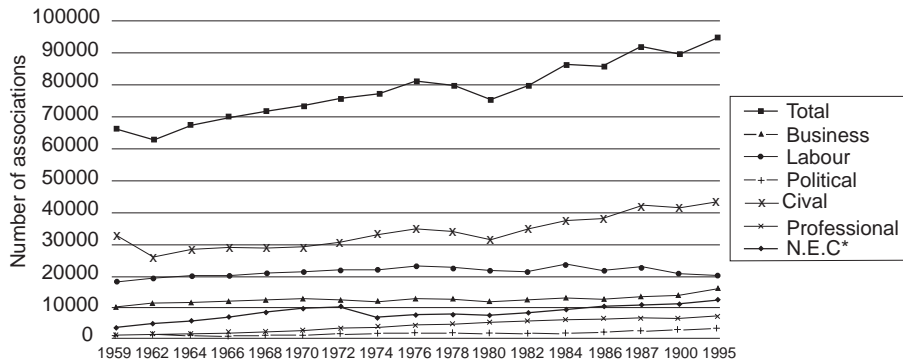


Figure 1b The number of non-profit associations in the United States, 1959–1996

have been dramatically increasing, whereas the dominance of businesses in the case of Japan has steadily dropped off. In this sense, one can say the trend is that of overall convergence. Second, the absolute number of Japanese business associations surpasses the American counterpart despite the overall size of the American association sector. While US anti-monopoly laws discourage the formation of business associations, the Japanese symbiosis between business and bureaucracy has led to a proliferation of business associations.

Some interesting features can be observed with regard to the three distinctive periods of Japanese political development, 1951–57, 1957–72, and 1972 to present (Tsujinaka, 1996). The first period is an era of ‘class struggle’, showing the decline of business associations and a corresponding increase in union and other associations. This period is known for the upsurge of the Japan Socialist Party and the occurrence of intense mass-protest movements. The second period is characterized by an upsurge in the number of business associations and a decline in union associations.

This is the period of the full-fledged one-party dominance of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. During the third period, the Liberal Democratic Party survived many adversities, basically clinging to dominance in government. It has invigorated its support base by shifting from traditional emphasis on the business and agricultural sectors to a large, somewhat amorphous middle-income strata (Murakami, 1996; Inoguchi, 1983, 1990). During the third period, the number of business associations has been stagnating in number. In contrast, the number of associations not classified elsewhere has risen. This category includes foundations, civic groups, and quasi-official bodies. The third period is that of the rise of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The governing Liberal Democratic Party seems to be vigorously incorporating NGOs into its own fold. Thus it is observed that the number of non-profit associations is fairly closely related to the development of political parties and party politics.

Let us examine somewhat further the number and nature of the associations not classified elsewhere (Hayashi and Iriyama, 1997). There are two broad categories within this classification: non-profit organizations (NPOs) created through private-sector initiative (NPO/PSIs) and NPOs created as affiliates of governmental organizations (NPO/SGOs). The former total 18,000 and the latter 7,000. Many NPO/PSIs were established in the period between 1945 and 1964, but, since 1965, their number has leveled off. Newly established NPO/SGOs have been steadily increasing since 1945, most markedly in the third period. This is directly related to the local government policy of subcontracting their services for maintenance of public facilities and for executing particular events to such organizations. These NPO/SGOs are established, in other words, to create and maintain social space for civic engagement on the grass-roots level with resources made available on the non-profit principle. This constitutes one arm of local governments' empowerment policies that have been underway for the last two decades or so. There are 3,000-odd local (prefectural, municipal, town/township and village) governments in Japan.

The NPO/PSIs, too, have been refurbishing themselves in the attempt to cope with what has been called the post-industrial malaise of the third period. A major center-left/left-leaning weekly, the *Asahi Journal*, devoted a series of articles on 200-odd civic groups engaged in movements for the betterment of society in the late 1980s. This series offers a useful summary of the number and characteristics of these civic groups (*Asahi Journal*, 1988). These groups' activities are involved with environment and pollution (28), nuclear power station safety (6), and peace and nuclear weapons (12). There were 27 civic groups engaged in exchange and networking and 20 groups organized on a strictly local basis. Two were involved with technology, 14 with welfare and medical care issues, 21 in the areas of education and children, 14 on women's issues, and 18 related to agriculture and food. There were 17 civic groups involved with Third World and international issues. The number of civic groups in the broad area of society is 14 and of a broadly cultural nature eight. Most noteworthy with regard to these groups is that they are all grass-

roots based. A substantial number have transnational ties with groups of similar purpose abroad. We cannot go into the details of these civic groups here (see Inoguchi, 1993); suffice it to say, a reading of this series of articles confirms our belief that the often-heard characterization of Japan as consisting of governmental organizations (GOs) and non-governmental individuals (NGIs) may be corrected and that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) do exist in vibrant form.

3 Trends as Seen from the Time-Budget Survey

The time-budget surveys conducted every five years since 1976 by the Statistics Bureau of the Management and Coordination Agency (prior to 1976 by the Prime Minister's Office) is most useful to see how many people are engaged in civic activities. Notable trends are as follows. First, civic activities for neighborhood and larger areas have been more or less constant: at 19.6 per cent in 1981, 17.3 per cent in 1988, 19.8 per cent in 1991, and 18.8 per cent in 1996. (The figures for 1976 were not used because the different categories were adopted in 1981 and also continuously used thereafter.) Second, civic activities for social welfare facilities have been slowly rising over these years: 3.0 per cent in 1981 and 3.1 per cent in 1996. This is largely the result of the contributions of women. Third, civic activities for children, the aged, and the disadvantaged have been on the rapid rise over these years: registering 1.7 per cent in 1976 and 5.5 per cent in 1996. The most active are women in their thirties and forties. Fourth, civic activities in sparsely populated areas and disaster areas registered a slow rise over these years: from 1.1 per cent in 1976 to 2.1 per cent in 1996 (see figure 2).

The overall percentage of the population engaged in civic activities has been virtually constant over these years: at 26.0 per cent in 1981, 25.2 per cent in 1986, 27.7 per cent in 1991, and 25.3 per cent in 1996. Civic activities in the neighborhood and community do not seem to have been negatively affected by the onslaught of urbanization, industrialization, and market liberalization over the past 50 years, and the rise in civic activities for children, the aged, and the disadvantaged is dramatic. Women, especially those in their early thirties, contribute to the recent rise in civic activities. Of all age groups of men, those in their early forties participate most in civic activities. In the large cities, the few people engaged in civic activities tend to devote quite extensive amounts of time to this work, whereas more residents of rural communities and small towns devote smaller amounts of time more often to civic activities.

4 Political Trust As Seen in Opinion Polls

The National Character Survey conducted every five years (Ministry of Education, Institute of Statistical Mathematics, 1961–1996) asks the straightforward question: 'Do you think that most people can be trusted or that one cannot be too careful about them?' The trend seen in the surveys in 1978, 1983, and 1993 indicates that social trust has been on the steady rise from the fairly low level of 26 per cent in

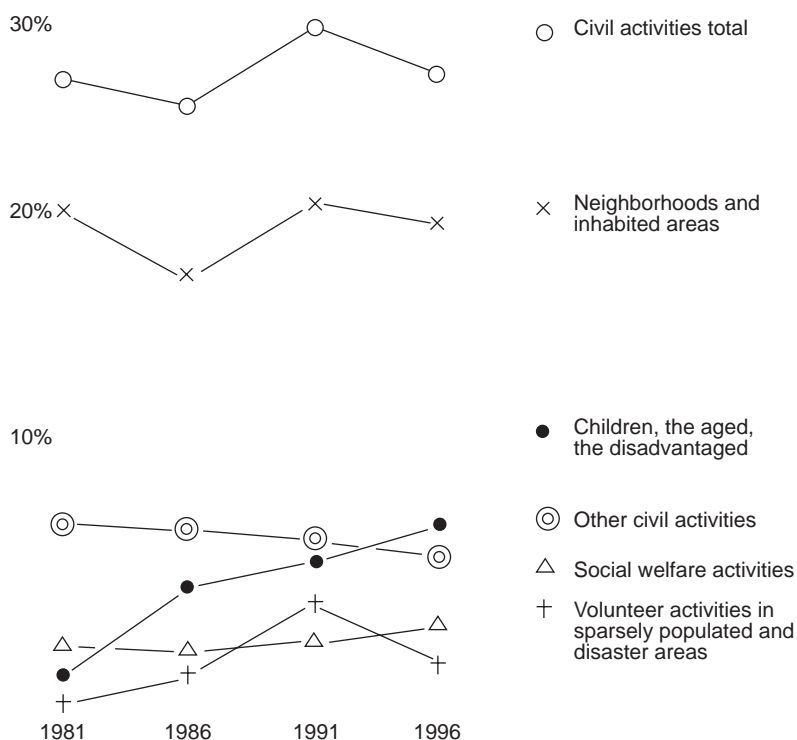


Figure 2 Civic activities
 Source: Management and Coordination Agency, 1981 – 1996

1978 to 31 per cent in 1983 and 38 per cent in 1993. A similar question was asked in the same survey: ‘Do you think that other people try to take advantage of you when you manifest a blind spot?’ The trend displayed is very much the same registering 39 per cent in 1978 and 29 per cent in 1983 and 25 per cent in 1993. It seems that social trust has been on the steady rise from a fairly low level over the past two decades (see figures 3a and 3b)

More directly, regarding political trust, a question about democracy was asked in the same survey, ‘What do you think of democracy? Which best approximates your view (good, depends on time and case, not good, other)? Please describe.’ The straightforward positive answer to the question registers 38 per cent in 1963, 38 per cent in 1968, 43 per cent in 1973, and 59 per cent in 1993. It shows clearly a steady and significant increase in the level of political trust in democracy.

Another question, pertaining to politicians, demonstrates an unmistakable trend toward trust in democracy. ‘It has been said that in order to improve Japan, it is better to choose the good politicians that come forward and entrust them to resolve problems rather than for the people to debate the issues. Do you approve or

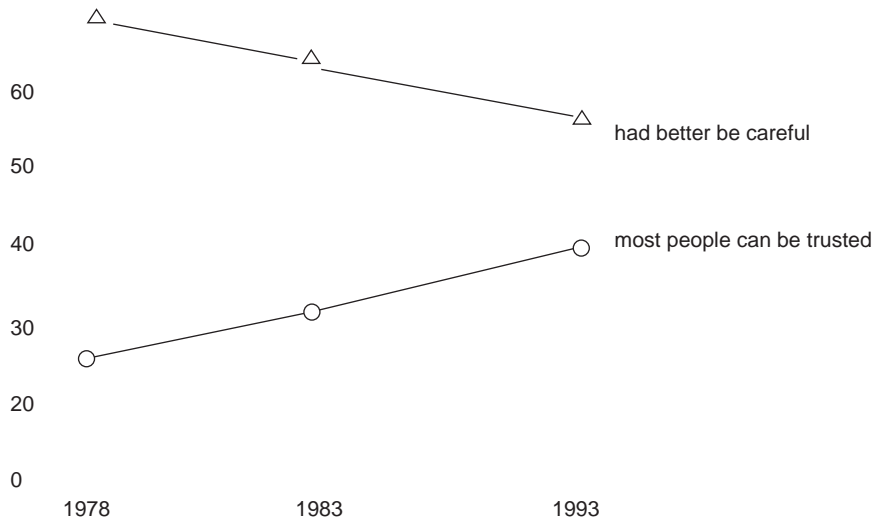


Figure 3 Social trust in other persons

(a) Do you think that most people can be trusted or that one cannot be too careful about them?



Figure 3

(b) Do you think that other people try to take advantage of you when you manifest your blind spot?

Source: Minister of Education, 1978–1993

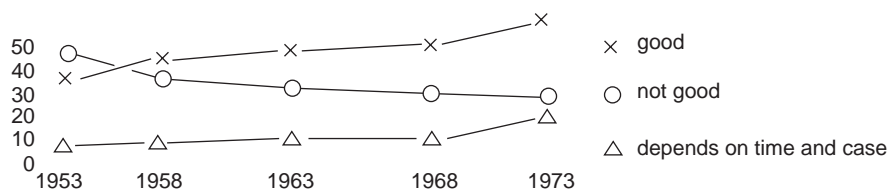


Figure 4a What do you think of democracy? Which best approximates your view good, depends on time and case, not good)? Please describe (1953–1973)

Source: Minister of Education, 1953–1973

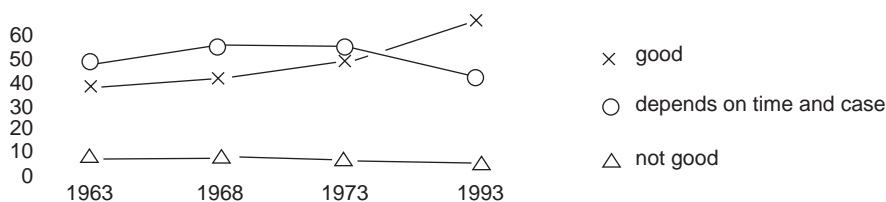


Figure 4b What do you think of democracy? Which best approximates your view good, depends on time and case, not good)? Please describe (1963–1993)

Source: Minister of Education, 1963–1993

disapprove of this view? In 1953 the approval rate was 43 per cent, in 1958 it was 35 per cent, in 1963, 29 per cent; 1968, 30 per cent; 1973, 23 per cent; 1978, 32 per cent; 1983, 33 per cent; 1988, 30 per cent, and in 1993, 24 per cent. This is a clear departure from what is called the subject political culture as discussed by Almond and Verba (1963).

Similarly, trust in political institutions has been registering a consistently high percentage. Surveys conducted by Joji Watanuki, Ikuo Kabashima, and other scholars report that people consistently confirm a strong confidence in such institutions as elections, parliament, and political parties (Watanuki, 1997).

These figures, furthermore, are on the rise. Trust in elections registers 67.3 per cent in 1976, 77.9 per cent in 1983, 82.3 per cent in 1993 and 1995, and 76.5 per cent in 1996. Trust in the National Diet registers 58.3 per cent in 1976, 65.5 per cent in 1983, 65.9 per cent in 1993, 71.0 per cent in 1995, and 64.1 per cent in 1996. Trust in political parties registers 56.5 per cent in 1976, 70.1 per cent in 1983, 68.2 per cent in 1993, 71.3 per cent in 1995, and 66.1 per cent in 1996. The overall impression we get from the above is that these political institutions of parliamentary democracy have gained firm legitimacy and that public trust in democratic institutions is generally high and even on the slow rise over the last two decades (see figures 4a and 4b, 5a and 5b; table 1)

5 Social Capital and Societal/Institutional Performance

This section presents trends in social capital by simple regression models. This can be done by constructing two types of indexes. One is what I call the civic

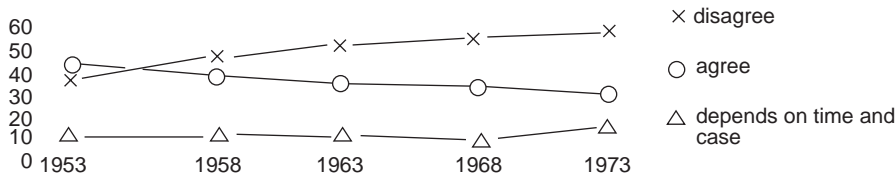


Figure 5a How do you think about democracy? Which is closest to your view, good, depends on time and case, or not good? (Please describe) (1953–1973).

Source: Minister of Education, 1953–1973

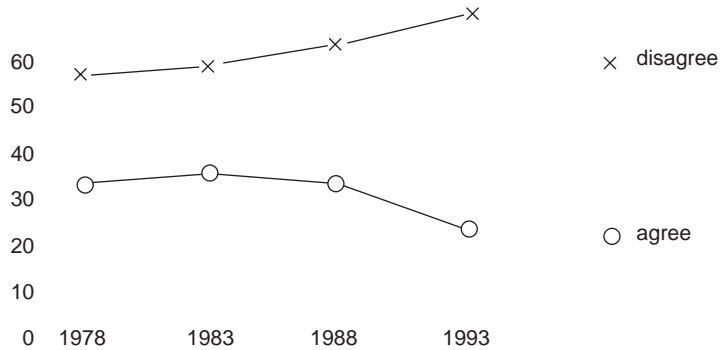


Figure 5b It has been said that in order to improve Japan, it is better to choose the good politicians that come forward and entrust them to resolve problems rather than for the people to debate the issues. Do you approve or disapprove of this view (1978–1993)

Source: Minister of Education, 1978–1993

community index. The other is what I call the societal/institutional performance index. The data used for this analysis are reported annually by the Social Policy Bureau (Kokumin Seikatsu Kyoku), Economic Planning Agency (1974–1997; 1980–1996). Briefly, the framework by which data are organized is as follows. Eight clusters focus on various aspects of people's lives: dwelling (the household), spending (consumption), work (the workplace), nurturing (children), healing (illness, injury, and debilitation, recreation, relaxation), learning (study), association (social activity). Each cluster includes data that reflect the four criteria of concern, freedom, fairness, safety/security, and comfort. The data cover 1980 through 1995 for this exercise. The unit of data is each prefecture.

The main point here is that the cluster 'association' is closest to what comes under the rubric of social capital, whereas the other seven clusters may be regarded as more closely related to societal and institutional performance. First, the civic community index is derived from the principal component analysis of the data set. The first dimension of such an analysis, explaining 45 per cent of the variance, is

Table 1. *Legitimacy of institutions related to parliamentary democracy*

1. Elections make it possible for people's voices to be heard in politics.				
	Agree	Disagree	DK/NA	Total (N)
1976	67.3	10.4	22.3	100% (1,796)
1983	77.9	6.7	15.4	100% (1,750)
1993	82.3	8.2	9.5	100% (2,320)
1995	82.3	9.5	8.2	100% (2,076)
1996	76.5	13.4	10.2	100% (2,299)
2. The National Diet makes it possible for people's voices to be heard in politics.				
	Agree	Disagree	DK/NA	
1976	58.3	11.7	30.9	
1983	65.5	11.9	22.6	
1993	65.9	17.6	16.5	
1995	71.0	16.5	12.6	
1996	64.1	20.7	15.2	
3. Political parties make it possible for people's voices to be heard in politics				
	Agree	Disagree	DK/NA	
1976	56.5	14.3	29.2	
1983	70.1	9.4	20.5	
1993	68.2	15.3	16.4	
1995	71.3	16.0	12.7	
1996	66.1	19.2	14.7	

Source: Watanuki, 1997.

closely related to the more general trend-related dynamics of complex societal institutionalization triggered by demographic, urban, and industrial increase. Therefore, skipping first dimension scores, the prefectural scores of the second dimension are used for the civic community index. The societal/institutional indices are seven-fold, in parallel to the other seven clusters of indicators, namely dwelling, spending, working, nurturing, healing, recreation, and learning. One approach might be to construct one composite index, but here, I shall keep the seven separate in order to more easily relate civic consciousness to performance. I shall relate, through simple regression analysis, the prefectural scores on the second dimension of each principal component analysis of each of the other seven clusters (the seven societal/institutional performance indices) and the prefectural scores on the second dimension of the principal component analysis of the association cluster (the civic community index). In other words, I have tried to see how much of the civic consciousness is 'caused' by a certain pattern of societal/institutional performance.

Those with high spending and working scores tend to have low scores on civic consciousness. Instead, positively contributing to civic consciousness are those high on the playing, dwelling, and learning scores. In other words, those high on these three scores tend to have high scores on civic consciousness. More specifically, those

prefectures with better facilities and incentives for studying and recreational activities, as well as spacious housing tend to score high on civic consciousness. To promote civic consciousness, a community needs to create places and occasions for civic engagement. This is where the NPO/SGIs briefly examined above come in. The non-profit organizations that subcontract local government tasks for creating and maintaining facilities and executing events do seem to play a large role here.

Since subnational differences through time are not a major concern of this article, I will not go into the details of this analysis. The lesson to be drawn from this analysis in terms of cultivating/maintaining civic consciousness is to institute innovative and proactive policy towards the construction of physical and social space and psychological incentives for civic engagement. Those prefectures where people work for long hours and spending is facilitated do not seem to display high scores with regard to civic consciousness. Policy makers may be advised to heed this finding in order to keep levels of social capital high (table 2).

6 Social Capital and Participation

So far I have examined either aggregate statistics or aggregated survey data. Here I will examine disaggregated data relating social capital to participation. Following Claus Offe's (1996) conceptualization, social capital can be conceived as composed of attention, trust, and associability. What I try to do is to relate attention, trust, and affiliation to participation. This exercise constitutes another main theme of social capital theory. The basic assertion of social capital theory is that good civic traditions accumulated over the years are conducive to good participation in and high distributive performance of democracy. I shall focus here on the relationship between social capital and participation. One component of associability is replaced by affiliation. The latter is different from the former in that the former means potentiality whereas the latter is reality. One must exercise caution in this regard.

By attention, I mean here the frequency of TV news program viewing. Participation data are observed at three levels: national, prefectural, and district. Participation means civic activities, local government-initiated group activities, contact through national politicians, attendance at political meetings, and involvement in political campaigning. A question was asked regarding each mode of participation. I then related the responses to the level of trust at the three levels of politics. I present the results of cross-tabulation of the 1987 and 1991 data of surveys done by the Association for the Promotion of Clean Elections (1987, 1991).

For both data sets, the relationship between attention and participation is fairly clear. Those paying attention to news programs on TV tend to register a high degree of participation at all levels and in all areas. There are surely somewhat weak associations between attention and participation in some areas and at some levels. But the overall impression one gets from cross-tabulated tables is that attention strongly determines participation and vice versa. The oft-noted strong influence of

Table 2. *Societal/institutional performance as a source of civic community consciousness*

1. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.11$	←	Societal/institutional performance in dwelling parameter estimate = 0.37 t -value = 2.6
2. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.46$	←	Societal/institutional performance in spending parameter estimate = -0.72 t -value = 6.4
3. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.37$	←	Societal/institutional performance in working parameter estimate = -0.82 t -value = -5.3
4. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = -0.02$	←	Societal/institutional performance in nurturing parameter estimate = -0.01 t -value = 0.1
5. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.00$	←	Societal/institutional performance in healing parameter estimate = -0.17 t -value = -1.1
6. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.20$	←	Societal/institutional performance in playing parameter estimate = 0.45 t -value = 3.5
7. Civic consciousness adj. $R^2 = 0.07$	←	Societal/institutional performance parameter estimate = 0.32 t -value = 2.1

the mass-media, especially of TV, seems to be real in this regard. The relationship between attention and affiliation is less strong than the relationship between attention and participation. By affiliation I refer to reported membership in community associations, women's and youth associations, PTAs, agricultural co-operatives, trade unions, commerce and industry associations, religious associations, recreational associations, and other categories. The relationship between the two is less strong in part because these groups and the institutions they are affiliated with are not necessarily related to political causes. Many have in fact little to do with politics on a day-to-day basis (table 3).

The relationship between trust and participation shows a no-less clear pattern. That is, the higher the level of trust, the higher the level of participation. Thus, when I compare the data between 1987 and 1991, it is clear that at the national level, in 1991 as compared to 1987, trust was much lower, and in 1991, participation was much lower. In 1987, Japanese national politics was under the Liberal Democratic party (LDP) led by Yasuhiro Nakasone, while in 1991 the LDP, while still the governing party, was in increasing disarray. Also clear is that at the lower level of politics, i.e., at the prefectural and district levels, the level of trust between 1987 and 1991 did not change much and the relationship between trust and participation was consistently high between 1987 and 1991 (see table 4).

The tendencies of the relationship between trust and affiliation are less pronounced than the relationship between trust and participation, perhaps for the same reason.

My attempt to relate attention, trust, and affiliation, and participation in the framework of social capital through massive cross-tabulation of data leads me to suggest the following set of propositions:

First, the initial social-capital-theory hypothesis that overall level of civic

Table 3. *Attention (TV news) and participation (attendance at political meetings) in 1991*

Participation	Attention					total
	very high	high	medium	low	very low	
high	359 (18.0%)	25 (8.3%)	3 (8.8%)	3 (11.1%)	2 (8.6%)	392
medium	376 (30.9%)	49 (16.3%)	6 (17.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (4.3%)	432
low	1218 (62.4%)	226 (75.3%)	25 (73.5%)	24 (88.9%)	20 (87.0%)	1513
total	1953 (100%)	300 (100%)	34 (100%)	27 (100%)	23 (100%)	2337

Table 4. *Trust (in local politics) and participation (local political meeting attendance) in 1987*

Participation	Trust					total
	very high	high	medium	low	very low	
high	23 (23%)	214 (21.7%)	123 (15.3%)	4 (2.6%)	5 (2.2%)	369
medium	19 (19%)	175 (17.7%)	141 (17.5%)	20 (13.2%)	23 (10.1%)	378
low	58 (58%)	597 (60.5%)	542 (67.2%)	127 (84.1%)	199 (87.7%)	1523
total	100 (100%)	986 (100%)	806 (100%)	151 (100%)	227 (100%)	2270

consciousness positively affects the participatory performance of democracy seems to be supported. The higher the level of attention, trust and/or affiliation, the higher the level of participation.

Second, the level of trust goes deeper as politics becomes more local and more established at the grass roots, and does not seem to be particularly susceptible to the vicissitudes of politics at the national level. Locally, trust is consistently high and participation at the local level goes with it much more closely than at the national level.

Third, the level of trust is high with regard to the Japanese system in general but not necessarily with regard to specific political actors and institutions. The level of affiliation at the local level is generally high, but not necessarily at the national level. At the national level, the degree of attention and trust tends to be more strongly affected by mass-media operated news, which accentuates certain events in national politics. This point has been made clear by Watanuki and Miyake (1997), using the 1983, 1987, 1991 data sets.

Table 5. *Income and participation (attendance at political meetings) 1991*

Participation	Trust								total
	extre- mely low	very low	low	moder- ately low	moder- ately high	high	very high	extre- mely high	
high	29 (14.6%)	40 (13.4%)	63 (19.6%)	45 (21.3%)	29 (26.9%)	36 (33.0%)	16 (18.8%)	19 (15.2%)	277
medium	43 (21.7%)	57 (19.1%)	71 (22.1%)	46 (21.8%)	20 (18.5%)	21 (19.3%)	23 (27.1%)	20 (16%)	301
low	126 (63.6%)	201 (67.4%)	187 (58.3%)	120 (56.9%)	59 (54.6%)	52 (47.7%)	46 (54.1%)	86 (68.8%)	877
total	198 (100%)	298 (100%)	321 (100%)	211 (100%)	108 (100%)	109 (100%)	85 (100%)	125 (100%)	1455 (100%)

7 Sociological Attributes and Participation

I will try to relate some sociological attributes to participation. They are income, education, region, city size, family size, and TV. The data used are the same as those referred to in the preceding section. The initial hypothesis underlying this exercise is that these attributes more or less determine the level of participation, albeit with some notable exceptions.

Income and participation

Though never strong, there are positive correlations between higher income and political participation (see table 5).

Education and participation

Of the four categories of educational records, the intermediate categories seem to have stronger positive correlations with political participation/affiliation. Those completing only compulsory education (through ninth grade) and those completing college education seem to participate and be affiliated less than those who have completed high school or high technical school. Those with higher education seem to take into account other factors such as opportunity costs of participation (see table 6).

Region and participation

There are no salient areas where particular regions register high participation/affiliation except for the Hokuriku region. On this observation two hypotheses may be offered. One is an explanation of political culture à la Toscana and adjacent regions. The Hokuriku region is noted for the prevalence of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, known for their pragmatism, thrift, diligence, tenacity, and honesty. The other is an explanation by way of noting the higher institutionalization of seniors clubs and other types of community organizations that may reflect the conscious

Table 6. *Education and participation (campaign work) 1987*

Participation	Education				total
	very low	low	high	very high	
high	90 (11.8%)	137 (12.1%)	36 (9.7%)	0 (0%)	263
medium	80 (10.5%)	113 (10.0%)	46 (12.4%)	2 (22.2%)	241
low	591 (77.7%)	881 (77.9%)	323 (86.8%)	7 (88.9%)	1802
total	761 (100%)	1131 (100%)	405 (100%)	9 (100%)	2273

policy of policy makers, the lower degree of urbanization and higher degree of internal migration to metropolitan areas.

City size and participation

There are discernible correlations between smaller (but not very small) city size and higher political participation/affiliation as smaller size makes possible a more closely knit community and thus higher trust and attention among residents. At the same time, metropolitan areas exhibit a fairly high level of participation/affiliation as they allow more room for functionally organized interaction and activities (table 7).

Family size and participation

Three-generation families exhibit the highest degree of correlation with participation/affiliation in general. They may be more firmly established at the grass-roots level for longer periods of time than other types of families (see table 8).

TV and participation

There are clear positive correlations between TV and participation/affiliation. In other words, TV is a positive factor (see table 9).

My examination of these cross-tabulated data leads me to suggest the following propositions with regard to the social capital theory. First, the overall level of wealth and knowledge is important to the accumulation of social capital. In the case of Japan, the degree of literacy was among the highest in the world even in the seventeenth–nineteenth-century context and has been continuously high: now at around 98 per cent (which is also the percentage of newspaper subscription). With regard to wealth, Japan achieved steady economic development over the last two centuries, especially for the last half century, and now ranks among the highest per capita income countries.

Second, nonetheless, an ‘optimal’ size of city and family may be necessary to keep such accumulated social capital from being rapidly depleted. To overemphasize freedom and mobility, efficiency and scale of economy tends to create some negative

Table 7. *City size and participation (campaign work) 1987*

Participation	City size					total
	very large	large	medium	small	very small	
high	12 (8.3%)	26 (8.7%)	79 (10.4%)	63 (13.3%)	83 (14.8%)	263
medium	6 (4.1%)	15 (5.0%)	88 (11.6%)	64 (13.5%)	68 (12.2%)	241
low	126 (87.5%)	257 (86.2%)	664 (87.5%)	347 (73.2%)	408 (73.0%)	1802
total	144 (100%)	298 (100%)	831 (100%)	474 (100%)	559 (100%)	2305

Table 8. *Family size and participation (civic movements) 1987*

Participation	Family size					total
	very small	small	medium	large	very large	
high	5 (3.9%)	27 (8.7%)	78 (6.5%)	63 (10.2%)	3 (8.1%)	176 (7.6%)
medium	7 (5.5%)	20 (6.1%)	103 (8.6%)	40 (6.5%)	2 (5.4%)	172 (7.5%)
low	115 (90.6%)	279 (85.6%)	1013 (84.8%)	517 (83.4%)	32 (86.5%)	1956 (84.9%)
total	127 (100%)	326 (100%)	1194 (100%)	620 (100%)	37 (100%)	2304 (100.0%)

Table 9. *TV news and participation*

TV news						
Participation	very frequently	frequently	occasionally	once in a while	rarely	total
high	151 (8.0%)	23 (17.3%)	2 (3.9%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	177
medium	150 (8.0%)	20 (6.4%)	2 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)	173
low	1575 (84.0%)	270 (86.3%)	47 (92.2%)	34 (97.1%)	29 (96.7%)	1955
total	1876 (100%)	313 (100%)	51 (100%)	35 (100%)	30 (100%)	2305

social consequences in terms of disintegrating social cohesion, loosening solidarity, and jeopardizing the sense of community. To overemphasize equity and equality, security and comfort tends to generate different kinds of negative social consequences that may not help cities and families to maintain their self-rejuvenating capacity. The salience of the Hokuriku region as No. 1 in terms of overall liveability may have something to do with this proposition, as well as its civic cultural traditions going back some five to six centuries.

8 Plausible Explanations

Social capital in Japan, as above summarized by aggregate and survey data and as analyzed, albeit briefly, by elementary causal models and cross-tabulations, has been resilient over the past 50 years. Since confidence in the legitimacy of democratic institutions has been consistently high, the resilience of social capital may vindicate the theory of social capital as articulated by Putnam (1993).

More specifically, the number of non-profit organizations has been on the steady increase, especially civil and social associations and engagement-facilitating organizations at the grass-roots level. In terms of time-budgeting, civic activities for neighborhoods and larger communities have been more or less constantly at a high level. In contrast, civic activities for children, the aged, and the disadvantaged have been rapidly rising over the past decade.

Some notable differences in terms of sociological attributes are as follows. Women register the high level of civic activities in the latter half of their thirties while men do in the former half of their forties. In urban settings, a small number of people devote an enormous amount of time to civic activities, while a proportionately larger number of citizens of rural communities devote small amounts of time to such activities.

The two questions regarding social trust and trust in democracy indicate that both have been steadily rising. Conversely, the view of politicians as authority figures has been steadily declining over the years.

More institutionally, trust in elections, parliament, and political parties register a steady increase over those same years, yet at a somewhat lower level than trust in democracy. Trust in politics and politicians has been registered at an even lower level. The discrepancy between high support for the political system and often glaring distrust in politics and politicians must be noted. Since this discrepancy has been given quite a bit of attention and analysis (Pharr, 1997a), let me summarize the following three arguments first and then try to come up with some synthesis toward making sense of social capital and democracy in Japan. The three arguments are Watanuki's 'cultural politics', Pharr's 'videocracy', and my own 'karaoke democracy'.

Cultural Politics

On the basis of surveys of society over half a century, Watanuki (1967, 1995, 1997) argues that certain patterns of incongruence between political party support

and sociological attributes may be the result of cultural factors. Hence cultural politics. Watanuki's focus is on the underdevelopment of political parties and the party system. In contrast to the typical European image, lower income levels are not necessarily linked to left-wing party support; urban dwellers do abstain from voting more; the high educated abstain more; the young do not necessarily support left-wing parties. All these factors are related to the underdevelopment of political parties and the party system. In contrast to the typical image in the United States, party identification does not play a strong role; generational effects are not visible in the pattern of 'post-materialist' voting; personal support organizations of individual candidates in voting constituencies remain the locus of politics at the grass-roots level. All these contribute in another way to the underdevelopment of political parties and the party system. The underdevelopment of parties and the party system gives rise to incongruence between high confidence in the legitimacy and institutions of democracy and low trust in politicians and politics.

Party support patterns do not correlate neatly with patterns of economic well-being. In Europe, lower income strata tend to vote for left-wing parties and upper income strata tend to support right-wing parties. In Japan, the long-term rule of the Liberal Democratic Party focused on farmers and small business owners, and these sectors formed its electoral base since its founding. Agriculture and small business owners shrank in number with the first phase of industrialization and market liberalization, but the LDP portrayed itself as a party representing and working for the socially weak in the population. This strategy worked brilliantly in the 1970s and 1980s, enabling the LDP to hold on to power even while most industrial democracies experienced a decline in one party dominance (Inoguchi, 1983, 1990). Urban dwellers abstain from voting more often than rural community dwellers in Japan, presumably because the latter feel a greater sense of community spirit and can connect voting more directly to benefits in public policy (Inoguchi and Iwai, 1987). Voting participation by the highly educated is not steady or consistent. A more salient rise in right-wing voting is manifested among the young than among older voters who experienced or remember the traumatic effects of war and are often wary of the LDP stance on security issues.

In the United States, party identification does play a strong role in determining party support patterns. But in Japan individual candidates rather than party labels are a much more important factor in voting, except perhaps for the Japan Communist Party and the Buddhist-lay organization-based Komei Party. Also, post-materialist voting has been on the steady rise in Japan. It is based on practically the same increment of voters in all age groups. Generational effects are not displayed as in the United States for post-materialist value holders. Also, the support organizations of candidates, which are independent of party organizations, carry heavy weight in determining the outcome of elections in Japan (Inoguchi and Iwai, 1987). This is vastly different from the United States where adroit and aggressive TV advertising which sells both party labels and individual candidates, does make a major difference.

I shall not go into detail regarding the historical factors that contributed to the Japanese patterns summarized above. Watanuki seems to be saying that the inability of political party headquarters to either effectively mobilize district-level support or significantly design and shape policy platforms as a key vehicle of party competition has contributed to the phenomenon mentioned earlier of strong support for the political system as a whole but strong distrust of politics and politicians involved mainly with low-level issues overwhelmingly pertaining to the interests of local constituencies.

Videocracy

Ellis Krauss (1995) and Susan Pharr (1995, 1997a, 1997b) have developed a thesis concerning the influence of the mass media on Japanese politics in the last 20 years. Ellis Krauss has argued that video-legitimization does play a major role in Japanese politics. The discrepancy between the generally high trust accorded to democracy and the perennially high distrust in politics and politicians can be attributed largely to the role of video-legitimization. The quasi-state television network Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) carries news programs where high-level politicians and bureaucrats are televised as if they were shaping Japanese political development in an authoritative way. NHK or its predecessor, has played a vital role in the nation-building process since the early twentieth century through the dissemination of standard Japanese language and by cultivating loyalty and solidarity. It is not significantly different from the role in nation building performed by state-owned radio in Indonesia fostering an 'imagined community' in the latter half of the twentieth century as portrayed by Benedict Anderson (1972).

A new variable is the introduction of politics at a high level on television (Pharr, 1997b). Plenary and committee sessions of the national Diet are now broadcast on television. There is currently a proliferation of TV debate programs featuring prominent public figures who take advantage of the opportunity to engage in political rhetoric. The broadcasts of Diet and committee sessions expose the role of politicians and bureaucrats in a sometimes devastating way. In a committee session, a cabinet minister, instead of answering questions posed by the opposing party parliamentarian, calls upon a committee member of the government, i.e., a high-ranking bureaucrat, saying that the issue is too important for he himself to answer. This pattern has contributed to the debasement of Japanese politics by exposing some politicians, who are high-ranking but not necessarily skilled at debate, to showers of polemic and ridicule. It may be said that the development of the videocracy has turned out to be too much for a political soil where video-legitimization has long been practiced in more subtle forms. This makes its impact all the more devastating.

Karaoke Democracy

The term karaoke democracy was coined by Inoguchi (1994) and Inoguchi and Jain (1997), prompted by the frequent change of prime ministers over a very brief

period in 1993–95, from Kiichi Miyazawa to Morihiro Hosokawa to Tsutomu Hata through Tomiichi Murayama. Inoguchi's thesis focuses on the dominance of the bureaucracy in Japanese politics. The karaoke democracy developed against the backdrop of bureaucratic dominance in policy making and implementation in Japan, which is a tradition going back for at least four centuries, first in each of the 300–odd units of local government during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867), then in the central government unit of the modernizing state launched in 1868 (Inoguchi, 1997a, 1997b). When the Diet was established in the late nineteenth century, political parties were by definition the opposition, and the government was run by the central bureaucracy. Political parties and politicians were not held in high esteem in large part because the government portrayed itself as representing the general, neutral and enlightened interests of the entire nation above partisan interests. Bureaucratic dominance means that parliamentarians rely heavily on bureaucrats for information and support regarding drafting of legislation, policy implementation, budgeting, and administrative guidance. Most politicians, except for the most influential top 1–5 per cent in the governing parties, do not have much role in the shaping of policy at a high level. What they do is to take care of their own constituencies, a form of fine-tuning in response to the sentiments and grievances of their supporters (real and potential) by bringing back 'pork barrel' projects, attending meetings, funerals, weddings, and finding jobs for the children of their constituents. Their 'home style' (Fenno, 1979) requires them to spend an enormous amount of time in their constituency rather than in the Diet or in party headquarters in Tokyo (Inoguchi and Iwai, 1987).

Even if they are appointed to the post of cabinet minister or prime minister, they are often forced by established custom to rely on briefings from bureaucrats in preparing their parliamentary speeches and interpellations. The main menu of government, in other words, is prepared by the bureaucrats. The politicians may then select from this menu the policies they shall support. In this sense it is like karaoke, which provides the catalog of songs from which to choose. Given this set up, anyone feels they can participate in politics and anyone can be seen to perform reasonably well. Even if you do not have a firm grasp of the song, you can read the lyrics appearing on the video screen and follow the melody that springs forth from the machine. You simply follow the lead of the karaoke machine.

Needless to say, this is an exaggeration, but it does capture the sense of Japanese politics in the bureaucracy-dominant environment. What makes karaoke democracy slightly painful is that over the past 50 years egalitarianism and anti-authoritarianism have been consistently strong, more than ten times stronger than in the United States or the United Kingdom, for instance (Nishihara, 1987). The majority of people regard politicians as very ordinary people, but with mild disdain, and not with great respect for their authority. They are not much different from anyone else; they are in a position of authority but not because they are great or inspiring. They are there because we want them to work for us up there. The kind of 'deferential political

culture' as observed in the United States and the United Kingdom does not seem to be strong in Japan. Perhaps the legacy of individualism which flourished in Japan of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is being slowly resuscitated, triggered by the relentless tide of globalization that permeates every corner of the world in the twenty-first century.

Comparing the above three theses leads me to note a high-level similarity among them. All three point to the dissonance between high-level confidence in the legitimacy and framework of democracy and continuing distrust in politics and politicians. In addition to the above schemes explaining this dissonance, I will introduce Shigeki Nishihara's cross-national data and Toshio Yamagishi's thesis on results of cross-cultural comparisons relating to social capital. On this basis I will then develop a synthesis of my own (pp. 217–29).

Cross-National Surveys

Shigeki Nishihara (1987) presents comparative survey data findings in his attempt to elucidate the characteristics of Japanese political culture. The levels of satisfaction with family life, school life, working life, and friendship are roughly consistently the lowest or near-lowest of the countries surveyed: the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, South Korea, and Japan. Looking at data of this kind suggests that Japanese individuals tend to shy away from social activity and be largely passive toward it.

In a specific setting, such as response to a person at a loss on the street, responses from surveys show a similar pattern of Japanese being the most passive. The degree of trust placed in social institutions shows a distinctive pattern. Public trust in the judiciary, police, education, and the mass media is mildly higher than distrust, at 60–50 per cent. Trust in the military and the executive and legislative branches of government is low, with only 39–20 per cent expressing trust; trust is lowest in non-government institutions, such as labor unions, corporations, and religious organizations, at only 29–10 per cent. In the United States, the highest trust is placed in military, religious, police, and educational institutions, at 60–79 per cent. Next come political institutions, executive, judicial, and legislative, at 50–59 per cent. Thus Japanese show very low trust in their political institutions in comparison to Americans. The European patterns fall in between Japanese and Americans. The kind of lifestyle favored by the Japanese is a thrifty yet materialist, work-oriented, somewhat anti-authoritarian, and the least family-oriented. These are the most pronounced characteristics revealed here (see tables 10, 11, 12 and 13).

Cross-Cultural Experimental Data

Toshio Yamagishi (1990) provides a comprehensive account of cross-cultural comparisons of trust based on experimental data. His experiments are based on those of the prisoner's dilemma in which selfish utilitarianism has its limits in

Table 10. *Levels of satisfaction*

Family life	France 91%	UK 89%	US 88%	Germany 85%	Japan 75%	Korea 73%
School life	US 89%	UK 85%	Germany 79%	France 70%	Korea 67%	Japan 65%
Working life	Germany 86%	UK 85%	US 84%	France 73%	Korea 72%	Japan 54%
Friendships	UK 97%	US 96%	France 95%	Germany 95%	Korea 90%	Japan 89%
Society	Germany 67%	Korea 53%	UK 44%	US 44%	Japan 41%	France 33%

Source: Nishihira, 1987.

Table 11. *Speaking to a person at a loss on the street***Voluntarily speak to a person at a loss on the street**

US 60%	UK 46%	Germany 43%	Korea 38%	France 34%	Japan 29%
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Speak to a person at a loss on the street only when asked the way

38%	52%	55%	60%	63%	68%
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Source: Nishihira, 1987.

Table 12. *Do you approve or disapprove the following phenomena likely to take place in the future? (Approval)*

Simple and natural lifestyle respected	France 94%	Italy 92%	US 82%	Japan 78%	UK 76%	Germany 69%
Family-oriented lifestyle emphasized	US 94%	Italy 89%	France 88%	Germany 85%	UK 84%	Japan 76%
Individual experience emphasized	Italy 91%	US 86%	France 84%	Germany 76%	Japan 71%	UK 70%
Technological innovation emphasized	US 66%	Japan 63%	Italy 62%	UK 61%	France 61%	Germany 55%
Money and articles not so valued	Italy 69%	France 69%	US 67%	UK 62%	Germany 56%	Japan 31%
Greater respect for authority	US 85%	UK 73%	Italy 64%	France 56%	Germany 44%	Japan 6%
Work not really important	France 57%	Germany 30%	UK 26%	Italy 23%	US 22%	Japan 4%

Source: Nishihira, 1987.

Table 13. *Trust in social institutions*

%	US	UK	Germany	France	Japan	Italy
80-90		police military				
70-80	military religion police		police			
60-70	education	judiciary education	judiciary	police	judiciary police	police religion
50-60	executive judiciary legislative		military legislative	education judiciary military religion executive	education mass media	military education
40-50	mass media business firms	religion business firms executive legislative	religion education	legislative business firms		judiciary
30-40	labor unions		labor unions executive business firms mass media	labor unions mass media	military executive legislative	mass media business firms legislative
20-30		mass media labor unions			labor unions business firms	executive labor unions
10-20					religion	
average	39.7%	40.4%	44.3%	52.2%	55.6%	56.5%

Source: Nishihara, 1987.

maximizing the net benefits to each individual confronted with such a dilemma. In other words, he deals with experiments in which a scheme of cooperation or coordination is the only way to maximize the net benefits to each.

In his scheme, four persons receive 100 yen for participating in the experiment. Each of them is asked to make some donation to the other participants. The amount of the donation differs depending on the level of trust each places in the others. Among Japanese subjects, high-trusting individuals make donations averaging 55 yen, while low-trusting individuals make donations averaging 30 yen. Among the American subjects, high-trusting individuals make donations averaging 35 out of a 50 cent remuneration for participation, while low-trusting individuals make donations averaging 20 cents. In both Japanese and American cases, high-trusting individuals make higher donations. In other words, his hypothesis is that high trust fosters social cooperation.

Yamagishi moves on to examine further the relationship between trust and punishment. He is interested in how subjects cooperate in setting up a scheme for punishing those subjects whose cooperation is hard to win. In this situation, there is a framework for placing sanctions on non-cooperative participants. The results are dramatically different from those obtained from experiments not involving sanctions. Low-trusting individuals cooperate most when and only when such a framework is instituted. In other words, the lower the trust one has in other persons, the more cooperative one is in setting up a scheme for placing sanctions on non-cooperative participants.

In order to explain this eagerness of low-trusting individuals to cooperate in placing sanctions, he draws from internalized motivation experiments. In their experiments, kindergarten children are given felt pens to draw pictures. One third of them are given the instructions that if they draw good pictures, they will be rewarded. Two-thirds of them are not given such instructions. However, half of the un-instructed group, or one third of the entire group, were rewarded at the end of the session. The members of the remaining third of the group are given no instructions about a reward and no reward at the end. A few days later, the children were given felt pens to see whether they would be eager to draw pictures and which group of children would be unwilling to draw pictures again.

The results were quite dramatic. The children who were given instructions regarding a reward and who willingly drew pictures on the second round amounted to one half of those children who were not given instructions but who willingly drew pictures in the second round. In other words, children who were placed in a framework of participation conditioned on reward performed less than those who were not placed in such a reward structure. Without internalized motivation, trust is difficult to foster. An open and voluntary framework, this evidence suggests, works better in fostering trust.

The theory of internalized motivation can be applied to one's own individual behavior. The attribute theory of social psychology is used to explain how a similar argument tends to be used for the behavior of others. Put another way, the subjective explanation as to how behavior derives, not from internal attributes (e.g., attitudes and motivations of the actors themselves), but from external attributes (e.g., coercion by others), when sufficient external factors exist. In other words, when cooperation is facilitated by the carrot-and-stick method, not only is one's own internal incentive for cooperation enfeebled, but one also starts to think that other persons cooperate because they are forced to do so. Trust declines when such a structure is used to promote cooperation. Since the removal of such a framework makes cooperation more difficult to obtain, further tightening of such a structure is often required and enforced.

Michael Taylor (1979 and 1982) goes further to assert that such a structure is like drugs. Drugs facilitate cooperation, but they reduce the will for voluntary cooperation, and further doses of the drugs are required to keep the same level of cooperation

operative. In other words, the use of the reward-and-punishment structure not only reduces the altruism that is necessary for voluntary cooperation but also destroys the commitments that are the fertile ground for fostering voluntary cooperation, such as toward the resolution of a social dilemma. Once family, kinship-group, and neighborhood-community ties are destroyed by monitoring and regulation of individual behavior, through the development of government and other public institutions, selfish interests tend to take over, replacing voluntary cooperation.

The Nishihara analysis of social trust and the Yamagishi theory of cooperation can be critiqued from the following three perspectives. One is the purely methodological perspective of unobtrusive measures, the second is a socio-cultural view of differentiated expression of trust, and the third is the socio-cultural perspective of the waning of normative control.

Unobtrusive Measures

It is important to recall that interviews and experiments are conducted in a set of artificial and abstract human settings. If Japanese social trust is created on the basis of contextual interactions in bilateral and organizational settings, as argued by sociologist Eshun Hamaguchi (1982), any artificial and abstract instruments such as interviews and experiments seem to produce results that cannot be taken at face value.

Interviews are conducted by asking questions, for instance, about social groups and institutions the respondents trust, but without any sort of concrete setting or clear orientation to an established set of social relations. In the absence of such specific or concrete images of or means attached to such groups or institutions, the answers tend to be heavily slanted toward mistrust among Japanese respondents. Experimental data are no less obtrusive. Prisoner's dilemma games used for cross-cultural trust comparison have a set of features most inimical to Japanese. First, it involves encounter with unknown persons. Second, subjects are not allowed to communicate with each other. Third, the rules are based on pure utility rather than on basic human 'trust'. It seems that for this reason Japanese are noticeably more prone to defect than Americans in the prisoner's dilemma game. It may be natural in that under conditions of anarchy, which the prisoner's dilemma game seems to symbolize, Japanese are prone to behave distrustingly, given the much heavier reliance on contextualized rules of social interaction they are accustomed to. The lack of specificity and concreteness in addition to the unknown factor of the subjects, and the rule that they cannot communicate with each other means that such experiments cannot be used as an accurate measure of the trust people show in others. The call for unobtrusive measures is the lesson of this study (Campbell and Stanley, 1963).

Differentiated Expression of Trust

In cross-national and cross-cultural comparisons, it is sometimes necessary to take into account socio-cultural factors expressing sentiments like trust. It would be

useful to recall Albert Hirschman's comparison of an American Jew and a German Jew (Hirschman, 1970). They had known each other for a long time but had been separated for a long time when they happened to meet again in New York City. The German Jew asked his American friend, 'How have you been?' And the American Jew answered the question in a way that symbolizes the difference in how people of different linguistic and cultural traditions use seemingly the same words differently, 'I am very happy. Aber bin ich nicht so gluecklich.'

It seems that in American society one has to sound positive, be it about your life or your trust in other persons, at least in the public domain, given the fact that it is supposed to be the land God has given as the promised land of freedom and opportunity. You must be happy. You must be positive. In American society, when you encounter someone you do not know, you must start positively, at least in terms of words and gestures. You should not offend others by giving an impression of mistrust. It could be dangerous. You must sound friendly. You must sound as if you trust others. In Japanese society, this demand to be positive that we see in American society does not seem to exist. Given the relatively homogeneous setting and the ease with which trust can be nurtured among Japanese in a specific and concrete bilateral and organizational setting, Japanese tend to start off with a rather cautious, awkward, or skeptical attitude toward unknown persons and remote social institutions. Such attitudes are quite common among Japanese in first encounters unless unknown persons turn out to be associated with persons, groups, or institutions they know well or have associated with for a long time.

As seen in the comparisons by Putnam (1997a) of Japanese and American responses, it is the difference in verbal responses. In Japan it is context-specific behavior and context-specific verbal response that are both highly trusted. It is in context-less situations that Japanese are less trusting. Therefore, the distinction between America and Japan is that Americans tend to display a relatively broader degree of trust in comparison to the Japanese.

The Waning of Normative Social Control

Social capital is not only a sociological concept but also that of political culture. The organizing principle and disciplining norms of a society are normally a little hard to change in the short span of half a century. If one is to be serious, one should broaden the time span of observation to ten times that 50-year span. Although we cannot investigate trends in social capital over the past five centuries, backed by aggregate and survey data, as one often does for the late twentieth century, it is important to grasp the nature and direction of change in political culture over a long span of time.

In approaching Japanese political culture, I want to emphasize the historical metamorphosis it has undergone over several centuries. Eiko Ikegami (1995) contrasts with impressive skill the metamorphosis in early modern Japanese society from honorific individualism to honorific collectivism. She analyzes the transforma-

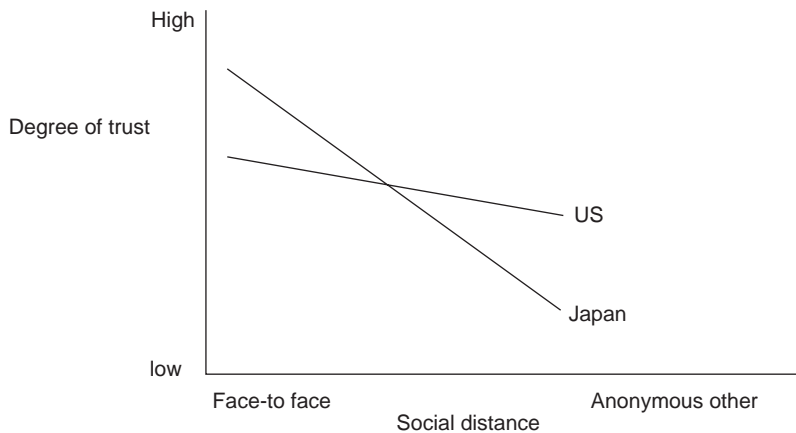


Figure 6 Differentiated expressions of trust
Source: Putnam, 1997.

tion of organizing and assessing principles of society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In medieval times, what mattered most was the individual capabilities of warriors. Thus a battle was prefaced by announcements by the leaders of their names, place of origin, and commitment to fighting for the honor of their name. Fighting was everything and it was driven by the individual pursuit of honor.

When Japanese absolutism floundered midway in the late sixteenth century, what emerged instead was the decentralized, quasi-feudal, highly bureaucratic Tokugawa regime. It demanded the collectivist pursuit of honor. The individualism of warriors was replaced by the collectivism of disarmed warrior-cum-bureaucrats honoring their collective organization, an organization derived from the structure and rules of the feudal lord's domains and family. Unlike in the case of European absolutism, despotic lords tended to be superseded by their bureaucrats, who ruled the territory honoring the spirit of a sort of extended family. They treasured loyalty, rectitude, honesty, diligence, commitment to the welfare of the populace, frugality, and physical and mental fitness to serve the collective cause. This spirit developed during the early modern period (seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries) was inherited by the modern Japanese state. Especially the modern bureaucracy further extended and expanded this spirit into a version of nationalistic and collectivist spirit for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Honorific collectivism was further enhanced in modern Japan.

When the regime based on honorific collectivism was solidified in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the challenge facing the Tokugawa shogun and the provincial lords was internal unity and stability. But with the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry at Shimoda in 1853, the challenge facing Japan became external. How to cope with external threat, military, economic, and institutional, was an entirely

new challenge for the leaders of the Meiji state. They were assiduous in establishing a 'wealthy nation and a strong military' (Samuels, 1991). The key was the mobilization of nationalism under the Emperor and the creation of a national bureaucracy meritocratically recruited nationwide. The Meiji bureaucracy was manned primarily by former samurai and their sons because they had lost their status and occupation after the Meiji state abolished class distinctions, as well as because they tended to be well educated and their ideology of honorific collectivism suited the needs of the Meiji state. Thus, the honorific collectivism of the early modern period was further developed in the modern period.

The Meiji state failed in its nationalistic outburst in 1941. But the new Japanese leaders succeeded in getting the country to catch up with the West in terms of wealth and equality by 1995. Yet the problem of Heisei (beginning in 1989) Japan is that the Japanese have been gradually undermining the bastions of honorific collectivism. The guiding spirit of the nation may be changing slowly but steadily toward something that is increasingly neither honorific nor collectivist. Needless to say, the new guiding spirit is not likely to be entirely similar to the kind of individualism observed in the United States.

The success of the post-war Showa state in terms of catching up with the West, however, began to loosen the intensity of the nation's forward-directed drive. Having savored the fruits of achievement, people are far more cautious and averse to taking risks. On the issue of security, their basic starting point is to avoid involvement. In direct investment, corporations may study an investment opportunity for ten years and still not take the risk. In domestic politics, they abhor the exercise of real leadership because it disturbs the comfortable web of vested interests. Both at the government and societal levels, this loosening of the resolve is all the more apparent because it has coincided with the end of three global movements: the end of the Cold War, the end of geography, and the end of history (Inoguchi, 1994, 1995). The bipolar confrontation that formed the bulwark of the global security system has ended. The market, further empowered by borderlessness and globalization, now reigns supreme. And the social and transnational forces that were inadvertently suppressed by the Westphalian framework of nation states have been unleashed.

These, in short, are the three stages of metamorphosis Japanese political culture has undergone. A fourth stage is in the offing. It will be the stage where individualism will be resuscitated to a significant extent and where organizations will become more flexible and more functionally malleable thanks to the individualist legacy of the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries as well as to the merciless forces of globalization that have been tangible at least since the Plaza Accord of the Group of Seven countries in 1985. This brief summary of Japanese political culture in terms of content and direction can offer a broader, more long-ranging, deeper historical context in which to examine and assess social capital in Japan. Today, the old stylized image of Japanese society cannot remain tenable for long.

9 Toward the new millennium

There are three major pointers for understanding the nature of social capital in Japan in the new millennium. First, the dramatic rise in the number and activities of social and civic organizations over the past two decades. One good example is the huge number of volunteers which flowed into Kobe when a massive earthquake left thousands dead and widespread devastation on 17 January 1995. This phenomenon was impressive in its own right, but it is all the more remarkable because of the contrast with the generally inept and slow action taken by the central government.

For instance, AMDA, the alliance of medical doctors in Asia, is a new kind of volunteer group. It is headquartered in a small local Catholic church in Okayama, west of Osaka and Kobe, lists on its rolls 1,500 medical doctors throughout Asia and their staff, and has participated in more than 100 missions of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations throughout the world including Kobe, Cambodia, Iraq, the Philippines, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Somalia, India, Indonesia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Chechen, and Sakhalin (Russia), the former Yugoslavia, Kenya, Zambia, Angola, and Mexico over the past 15 years. The fixed image that Japanese society is occupied by governmental organizations (GOs) and non-governmental individuals (NGIs) is eroding rapidly.

Second is the steady increase in the number of adherents to what are called post-materialist values such as participation and freedom rather than order and economy. Inglehart (1971, 1990) argues that post-materialism is closely related to generations. The younger generations may be more easily influenced by post-materialist values. In fact, his argument seems vindicated in most industrial democracies for the last two decades. But, as demonstrated by Watanuki (1995)'s important two-decade-long panel surveys, post-materialist adherents have been on the steady rise with almost the same percentage increases across generations. This means that change is rapid in the post-materialist direction, with the size of post-materialists registering 3.6 per cent in 1972, 7.6 per cent in 1983, and 14.5 per cent in 1993, because the increase is not dependent solely on the younger generations. The Japanese change in this regard has been very swift and substantial, perhaps a few times as steady as in the case where one has to wait for the effects of younger generations to take root.

Third, the fairly resilient neighborhood-related civic activities, such as autumn festivals, fire-prevention patrols in the winter time, garbage-collection management, and Red Cross donations, have been consistently observable until today. Although in metropolitan-suburban areas, neighborhood cooperation with police patrols has become more difficult, it is the result largely of the long daytime absence of many residents. Although the frequency of and time spent for such civic activities have apparently decreased somewhat, civic consciousness is to a large extent alive and well. Garbage-collection management is looked after remarkably well despite the huge space covered and the gigantic amount of waste produced daily.

These three very long-term pointers for understanding the nature of social

capital in Japan in the new millennium notwithstanding, we need to be more attentive to the historical and comparative complexities of social capital there. Of these, the following three points should especially be noted: in reference to the historical comparison of primary determinants of the transformation of the two totalitarian/authoritarian societies, Japan and Germany; in regard to the seeming incongruence between the Fukuyama and Yamagishi conceptions of trust and its conceptual resolution with Chinese–Japanese and Japanese–American comparisons; and concerning the short-term difficulty of making the transition from honorific collectivism to cooperative individualism in Japan.

First, in this article the primary comparison has been with the United States, as it is most familiar to the author as well as important to the other countries dealt with in this volume. Of the latter, two countries, Japan and Germany, are distinguished from the rest in that they represent the triumph of democracy and civil society in the aftermath of totalitarian/authoritarian failures. One obvious question one might ask is: How much of these trends toward civic engagement are due to socio-economic modernization, political or other factors? My answer to the question is as follows:

The socio-economic modernization that fostered the rise of the civil society, especially since the late nineteenth century, is apparently the primary contributing factor. Both Japan and Germany were late-comers to economic development in the nineteenth century and they did well in catching up with the early starters and in the first two or three decades of the twentieth century political and social liberalism made remarkable progress. Without the basis of economic development and social modernization, the rise of the civil society over the last half century in both countries could not be properly accounted for. Yet a no-less important factor in the equation in the mid twentieth century was the occupation by the Allied Powers following the Second World War. During the occupations of the two vanquished nations, the leader of the Allies, the United States, exerted powerful political influence in the democratization and liberalization of political and economic institutions and of people's mind-sets. Change in the governing regime is not uncommon in defeated countries after major wars. The power basis of a regime is normally shattered by defeat in war. The victor, victorious coalition, or international hegemonic culture, meanwhile, prevails, permeating the values and norms of the domestic system of the vanquished. Furthermore, the much longer historical legacy before the late nineteenth century in both countries, i.e., their long experience with a decentralized political systems seems to reinforce the rise of the civil society following the waning of suppressive factors, such as the grip of the nation-state as the fashionable organizing principle (*Zeitgeist*) and the predominance of a system of production geared to massive infusion of capital and efficient, concentrated use of labor. In other words, atavism plays a role in the rise of the civil society in both countries.

Second, while the vigorous rise of the civil society is quite visible, some constraints are also noticeable. They have much to do with the type of social capital

that has been created. What is the type of social capital Japan has been good at producing? To characterize types of social capital, we may combine Francis Fukuyama's (1995) distinction between Chinese and Japanese types of trust and Toshio Yamagishi's (1998) distinctions between American and Japanese types of social capital. Fukuyama compares what he calls the high-trust society and the low-trust society, focusing on the United States, Japan, and Germany on the one hand, and France, China, and Russia, on the other. To make his distinction clearer, let me contrast Japan and China according to the terms he proposes. He argues that Japan transcends family and blood ties especially in business, as seen in the frequent practice of having an adopted son run and expand a firm, whereas the Chinese do not quite transcend family/blood ties, sticking more firmly to family and blood lines. According to him, Japanese trust is much wider than Chinese and enables them to mobilize resources on a wider scale and minimize risks inherent in business, thus contributing to prosperity beyond what is accounted for by such factors as technology, capital, and labor.

Yamagishi's comparison is made between Japanese and American trust. In what Fukuyama calls the high-trust society, Japanese and American trust can be distinguished as follows. American trust is broader and more open, whereas Japanese trust is narrower and more closed. American trust is more based on generalized reciprocity, whereas Japanese trust is more restricted among 'known small groups', if not to narrow family and bloodline-defined groups, as in the case of Chinese. The key function of Japanese social capital among 'known small groups' is to reassure, so that uncertainty and risks are minimized within the group and yet do not extend beyond the group. The key function of American social capital is to express trust so that cooperative and productive reciprocity can be generated. The former type of social capital can be called 'non-bridging', whereas the latter type can be called 'bridging'. In the Japanese case, the task of risk assessment and risk avoidance in the uncertainty of social interaction is minimized within the group, whereas in the American case that task is inherent in social interaction of any kind. In terms of a sense of obligation, the stereotypical Japanese feels a very strong obligation only toward a narrow range of 'socially known' others, whereas the stereotypical American feels a weaker obligation, but toward a wider range of 'social anonymous' others. The former social capital can be called binding, whereas the latter social capital can be called extending.

Seen this way, the gap between Fukuyama's and Yamagishi's conceptions of social capital can be evaluated in a consistent fashion. The original puzzle posed by the Japanese data to Japan watchers and analysts seems to be resolved with conceptual clarity.

Third, the very challenges Japan now faces can also be explained in the same fashion. Japan may be in transition from relatively closed to relatively open social capital, from reassurance-oriented to trust-generating social capital, from binding to extending social capital. The transition is broadly in line with the transition from

what Eiko Ikegami (1995) calls honorific collectivism in the Tokugawa–Showa periods (approx. 1600–1989) to what Emile Durkheim might call cooperative individualism in the Heisei era (1989–) and beyond. The transition is also in line with the transition from the mode of production based on massive mobilization of capital and labor in concentrated and concerted fashion (Krugman, 1993; Reich, 1995) to the mode of production based on creative innovation of technology and deft manipulation of capital. The very success Japan achieved on the basis of relatively closed social capital, reassurance-extending social capital, and binding social capital has started to function negatively in an age of globalization. Honorific collectivism (Ikegami 1995) and the state-led economic developmental model have become obstacles to further success. Therefore, the very success of the recent past may delay the transition from relatively closed to relatively open social capital in Japan. That may explain the difference between Japan and Germany despite their similar experiences in the twentieth century. In the Japanese case, societal collectivism and state-led development went to the extreme in the second and third quarters of the twentieth century, whereas in the German case both ended by the mid twentieth century. In Germany it lasted for a briefer period and the state-led, collectivist German Democratic Republic was contained to a small territory, collapsing by 1989.

The tenacity of reassurance-oriented social capital can be glimpsed by looking at how the bad loans issue has been handled and how voters responded in the upper-house election on 12 July 1998 (Inoguchi, 1998). The financial institutions with heavy bad loans are most likely to be taken care of by the government (meaning using tax funds), preventing most banks and other financial institutions from going bankrupt. The government, which has laid out its ‘total plan’ for recovery, is clearly based on reassurance-oriented social capital. The logic is that we must help the bad/inferior financial institutions since we all make mistakes and also in order to keep depositors’ funds intact. Japanese voters’ performance at the polls displayed their deep distrust of the reassurance-oriented policy package. The governing party, the Liberal Democratic Party, has lost its simple majority in the upper house by losing a substantial number of seats to the opposition, especially the one-month-old Democratic Party, the Communist Party, and the Komei Party. The voters were angry and apprehensive. They are angry at the dismal failure of the economic policy the government has been conducting despite the deepening recession, steadily rising unemployment, and the steady slide of the Japanese yen *vis-à-vis* the US dollar. They are apprehensive about the future of their lives in an aging society when social policy programs are widely regarded as steadily eroding. The image of a steadily shrinking Japan is reinforced by the yen’s slide and the inability of Japan to do much regarding President Clinton’s July 1998 visit to China which was not preceded or followed by a visit to Japan.

It seems that the reassurance-oriented social capital of Japan cannot vanish overnight, but the fact that its weaknesses have also been revealed, as in the upper

house election of July 12, 1995, is a positive indicator of greater changes to come in the twenty-first century. Japanese society may move on to the fourth stage of Japanese political-cultural metamorphosis slowly but steadily. Deciphering the multidimensional and multilayered nature of change in social capital into the new millennium will be one of the major research tasks for those interested in the resilience and longevity of democracy (Inoguchi, Newman, and Keane, 1998).

Appendix: Social Capital-Related Indicators

(Economic Planning Agency, 1980–1995)

Dwelling (household)

1. percentage of persons who own their own homes
2. percentage of persons whose houses are dangerous or irreparable
3. percentage of persons whose houses are above the so-called minimum standard of living
4. real rent per tatami-unit size (house)
5. percentage of garbage and refuse processed to satisfactory sanitary standards
6. percentage of fires per 100,000 houses
7. traffic accidents per 100,000 persons
8. recognized penal-law violations per 1,000 persons
9. received complaints about pollution per 100,000 persons
10. ratio of housing loans paid off versus those still outstanding
11. ratio of medical doctors to number of dwellings within a 500-meter radius
12. Gini index of property assets
13. purchase price of house vis-à-vis annual income
14. proportion of for-rent dwellings being constructed among all houses
15. ratio of houses receiving sunshine more than 5 hours per day vis-à-vis all houses with residents
16. number of tatami mats per person
17. square meters of urban public parks per citizen
18. kilometers of pedestrian roads and bicycle paths versus kilometers of automobile thoroughfares
19. percentage of persons living in houses equipped with flush toilets vis-à-vis those without flush toilets.
20. ratio of houses within a one kilometer radius of the nearest train/subway station versus number of households.
21. amount of garbage and waste per person.

Spending

22. annual income
23. consumer price index
24. savings over annual income

25. liabilities in annual income
26. number of life-insurance policies
27. individual bankruptcy announcements accepted by local courts per 100,000
28. amount of consumer-risk-related collected per 100,000
29. ratio of welfare-program families among all families
30. Gini index (income inequality)
31. percentage of service expenditures versus consumption (goods and services) expenditures
32. retail shops per 100,000
33. department stores per 100,000 people
34. consumer credit outstanding per person
35. number of credit cards issued per person
36. percentage of household budgeted for dining out
37. number of home-delivery services used per person
38. proportion of durable consumer goods expenditures in all consumption expenditures
39. automatic teller machines per 10,000 persons
40. convenience stores per 10,000 persons
41. amount of mail-order sales per person

Work

42. proportion in the work force who have changed jobs within the last year per 10,000
43. number of publicly financed occupational training facilities per 1 million people 15 years and older.
44. percentage of fully unemployed persons in working population
45. number of workers injured or killed in work-related accidents per 1 million working hours.
46. real wages
47. percentage of businesses that extend retirement age or reemploy older persons against [number of] businesses with fixed retirement system.
48. number of workers on sick leave (longer than four days) per 1,000 workers under the Labor Standards Law
49. ratio of workers who live separately from their spouses because of work-related assignments
50. ratio of workers with disabilities among new employees
51. ratio of job-seekers per job announcements for young people (20–24 yrs.) vis-à-vis ratio of job-seekers per job announcements for older people (60–64 yrs.)
52. ratio of female executives over the total female employees
53. average worker salary over GNP
54. wage gap between men and women
55. percentage of women among management personnel of executive rank

- 56. ratio of successful job seekers to job announcements
- 57. number of workers who have changed workplaces within the past year
- 58. number of vacation days taken of paid annual leave
- 59. number of workers taking advantage of flex-time work schedules
- 60. real number of work hours
- 61. ratio of overtime work hours to real work hours
- 62. percentage of families whose main income-earner spends more than one hour commuting in one direction
- 63. percentage of workers who have two days off per week
- 64. number of hours women not employed outside the home devote to household matters and childrearing per day
- 65. square meters of office space per person

Nurturing

- 66. percentage of children being looked after in day-care centers (*hoikuen*)
- 67. percentage of children who died under 1 year old
- 68. number of pupils/students per class in school
- 69. number of juvenile patients suffering from adult illnesses
- 70. number of pupils/students absent from school for more than 50 days because they dislike school
- 71. percentage of junior high school students who go on to senior high school
- 72. number of minors aged 14–19 arrested for crimes per 1,000
- 73. average family expenditures for education
- 74. incidences of school violence per 1,000 persons aged 13–18.
- 75. percentage of primary school pupils whose eyesight is below 1.0.
- 76. number of juvenile reformatories
- 77. ratio of consultants for problems of fatherless families
- 78. percentage of children attending kindergarten
- 79. number of senior high schools
- 80. percentage of expenditures for preparatory classes in overall educational expenditures
- 81. number of public recreational facilities for children and youth
- 82. number of children's recreation centers (*jidokan*).
- 83. number of paper diapers (annual production in terms of tons)

Healing

- 84. ratio of elderly who are accommodated in public care facilities
- 85. number of beds in general-care hospitals
- 86. number of emergency care hospitals
- 87. number of nurses and nurse-trainees
- 88. percentages of persons who died of adult ailments
- 89. percentage of persons hospitalized

- 90. number of medical doctors
- 91. percentage of [household] expenses for health and medical care
- 92. ratio of medical expenses covered by public funds
- 93. average life span
- 94. percentage of persons who suffer from senile dementia over those 65 years and over
- 95. number of elderly who can be accommodated in special care nursing homes
- 96. average hours ambulance service
- 97. number of places in facilities for rehabilitation and training of persons with disabilities
- 98. number of places in special care nursing homes
- 99. ratio of extra-charge hospital beds whose cost is covered by medical insurance schemes
- 100. number of persons employed by facilities for the elderly not including welfare facilities
- 101. number of helpers who visit and provide home care for the elderly
- 102. number of helpers who visit and provide home care for people with disabilities
- 103. number of home helpers for the elderly
- 104. ratio of the elderly who are bedridden

Recreation

- 105. number of persons who suffer form accidents or are victims of crimes while making a trip abroad
- 106. number of continuous days of summer vacation
- 107. ratio of corporate expense-account spending to individual consumption expenses
- 108. number of movie theaters
- 109. number of newly published books
- 110. percentage of culture/leisure expenditures per consumption expenditures
- 111. number of rent-a-car vehicles
- 112. number of pachinko parlors
- 113. number of local-government sponsored horse-racing, bicycle-racing, or motor-boat-racing concerns
- 114. number of persons who go abroad for sightseeing
- 115. number of video rental shops
- 116. number of restaurants
- 117. number of sports facilities
- 118. number of satellite television subscribers
- 119. number of karaoke box units
- 120. average hours for leisure or recreation activities

Learning

- 121. percentage of college entrants to college aspirants (high school students)

122. number of senior high night-school attendees
123. percentage of Ikueikai scholarship recipients
124. number of college graduates who enter graduate school
125. ratio of foreign students per 10,000 citizens 15 years or older
126. percentage of students entering colleges, junior colleges, polytechnic and vocational/technical schools.
127. percentage of students studying in colleges, junior colleges, polytechnic and vocational/technical schools
128. number of bookstores and magazine stands per 100,000 persons
129. enrollment in adult education classes
130. enrollment in privately-run adult-education classes
131. number of libraries
132. number of museums
133. number of employees in adult education
134. length of studying and learning (minutes)

Association

135. percentage of first marriages that end in divorce
136. percentage of people who marry
137. percentage of people who do not marry
138. proportion of expense-account expenditures in consumption costs
140. amount (yen) donated to volunteer (social welfare) activities
141. percentage of people who volunteer for social welfare activities
142. percentage of persons belonging to seniors clubs
143. ratio of high school students from abroad received per 100,000 persons
144. ratio of persons joining youth overseas volunteers corps aged 20 to 39 per 1 million of the population
145. percentage of international marriages
146. ratio of persons who correspond with people overseas per 10,000
147. number of persons an individual can come in contact with within two to three hours/entire population
148. percentage of blood donors in population between ages 16 and 64.
149. percentage of members of women's associations
150. minutes of social activity
151. number of public halls per one million people.

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