

Abstracts

GENDA Yuji, Hope and Individuals (I)

At the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, we have been conducting “Hope Studies” to investigate the relationship between hope and society from social science perspectives. We have been looking at social aspects of hope through nationwide questionnaires, a field study in the city of Kamaishi, Iwate Prefecture, etc. This paper offers a quantitative analysis of the impact of personal and household attributes on the possession of hope. The data are based on questionnaire survey of about 2,000 respondents aged 20-59 living in Japan in 2006.

The survey found that approximately four in five respondents had some form of hope for the future and that three in five had expectations that their hopes would be realized. Many of these aspirations related to work and family. While the possession of hope is intimately linked to feelings of happiness, the extent to which respondents felt such happiness differed significantly according to whether or not they expected their hopes to be realized. Approximately 80% had a positive view of hope, regarding it mainly as a source of strength in lives while a small proportion has an opinion which is skeptical about value and role of hope.

NAKAMURA Naofumi, Does ‘Kamaishi’ have any hope?; The Social Sciences of Hope of an old company town

The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of the research on the Kamaishi region in 2006, investigated by the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo. The research is part of the ‘Social Sciences of Hope’ project which is one of the research projects at ISS. Through this work, I intend to gain some insight into the history and the present situation of this old company town. One of the special features of this research project is that a variety of researchers from different disciplines, applying their own research methods, are working together to analyze the “social phases of hope” in one particular region with a common aim to understand the social meanings of hope both historically and contemporarily. Starting from this point, we have decided to focus on the following two research problems: 1) an inquiry into the changes in hope among various socioeconomic strata due to the long-term process of restructuring of the core industry (i.e. the Kamaishi Steel Works, Nippon Steel Co.),

and 2) a multifarious examination of “the rebirth of hope” in a company town such as Kamaishi, undergoing changes in the local society and economy. Based on this, we (a total of 32 social scientists divided into the five research groups) met twice in 2006 (July and September) to discuss and conduct our research on the Kamaishi region. In this paper, I introduce the contents of this research and its implications.

AOKI Hiroyuki, Industrial Relations Relating to Restructuring in the Kamaishi Iron and Steel works: Hope of Organization and Employment Security

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the behavior of management and union toward restructuring in Kamaishi iron and steel works by applying interview method. Kamaishi iron and steel works was restructured from 1960, and, now, a wire rod plant only operated. This downsizing impacted employee and Kamaishi town.

There is serious conflict rather between head office and Kamaishi Works than between management and union. Union leader recognized that manager sufficiently try to secure employment and to resist the restructuring. About all, engineer’s efforts directly lead to development a wire rod plant. On the other hand, manager recognized that worker sufficiently try to answer the restructuring. Consequently, even under the serious restructuring, peace of industrial relation was maintained. In this paper, the behavior of management and union are reconsidered from the viewpoint of hope of organization.

KIKKAWA Takeo, Economic Renaissance in Kamaishi City and the Tertiary Industries

Some 60% of workers in Kamaishi City belonged to the tertiary industries as of 2004. Therefore, the revitalization of the tertiary industries holds a significant meaning for the revitalization of the economy of Kamaishi City as a whole. In this article, I advance the argument for the revitalization of the economy of Kamaishi City based on the tertiary industries.

In order for the shopping district of Kamaishi City to regain prosperity and to revitalize the city’s center, it is necessary to increase the number of visitors to the city. There currently exist three ways to increase the number of city visitors: (1) increase the self-reliance of the shopping district, (2) increase the population of city residents, and (3) increase the number of tourists and other visitors to the city. Of these three, the first is a necessary precondition for restoring the vitality of the shopping district,

but its results are limited. Although (2) includes measures such as calling back former Kamaishi workers who have spread out across the country, and therefore holds future possibilities, when the decrease in birthrate is taken into consideration, it is hard to expect any large results. Therefore, we can conclude that method (3), increasing tourism and other external visitors, holds the most promise for increasing the number of visitors to the city.

In order to draw more tourists to Kamaishi City, it will be important to propagate the image of Kamaishi as “Kamaishi of the Sanriku Coast” as well as the image of Kamaishi as “Kamaishi of the Galaxy Dream Line.” At the same time, I maintained that it is important to promulgate the message that Kamaishi is a place of delicious seafood, as well as a popular spot for ecotourism. As is the case with the Kamaishi Regional Wind Farm, in Kamaishi City there are a number of tourism resources which have yet to be mobilized to their full potential. If they were to be fully mobilized, I anticipate that the number of tourists visiting Kamaishi would increase, increasing the number of visitors to the shopping districts in the city, and revitalizing the center of the city. I think that a revitalization of Kamaishi City’s economy based on the tertiary industries would take this kind of path.

KASE Kazutoshi, Fisheries in Kamaishi: Households, Communities and Fisheries Cooperatives under the Economic Promotion Programme

Fisheries play a considerable role, economically and socially, in Kamaishi, while agriculture has almost disappeared. Fisheries including marine-products processing industries and refrigerator industries occupy rather an important position. As the total employment has declined because of the shrinkage of steel-related industries, self employment in fisheries is relatively reliable, particularly in the coastal hamlets. This paper, clarifying the economic and social situation of fisheries and aquaculture, analyses the fishers’ strategy, their hope and intention toward the future, through the interviews with fishers of each generation. Furthermore, this paper pay attention to the decision making process of fisheries cooperatives. There are 3 fisheries cooperatives in Kamaishi, who work to make the best use of fishing grounds for fishers.

OHORI Ken, The significance of green-tourism activities in Kamaishi City

Kamaishi City has suffered a significant decline in its population in conjunction with the rationalization of the Nippon Steel Corporation. In such circumstances, various efforts are underway to revitalize local economies and communities. Green-tourism is one such endeavor. The purpose of this paper is to consider the significance of green-tourism activities in Kamaishi City via an examination of the current state of, and challenges facing, the activities. It is difficult to imagine that such a municipality as Kamaishi City will develop from an iron town to a tourism center due to green-tourism, thus revitalizing its regional economies. However, even if the tourist industry does not significantly develop, ample significance can be found in green-tourism activities insofar as it fosters “local consciousness” among local residents.

YASUDA Hiroki, Changing Working Environments and Job Stress

This paper examines job stress as a proxy variable of hope of work. The analysis focuses on changing working environments and job stress, using micro datasets of Japanese companies and workers. The ordered probit estimates of job stress show that longer working hours, performance-based pay system and wage inequality have a positive impact on job stress. On the other hand, flexibility of working hours and definite of work role have a negative impact on job stress. In addition, flexibility of working hours and definite of work role are not referred for many workers. These effects are remarkable for managers. This paper implies that changing working environments affect negative impact on hope of work.