

Revitalization: Fate and Choice

Edited by Leonard P. Apedaile and Nobuhiro Tsuboi

Revitalization: Fate and Choice is the outcome of five years of joint research by Canadian and Japanese social researchers, working on rural revitalization in the Canada-Japan Project. This book is for rural activists, policy makers, bureaucrats and most of all for students of the co-evolution of rural and urban interests globally. The book is an investigation of concrete matters of investment, social capital, effectiveness of volunteering, the rural household economy, governance and policy issues.

The diversity of subject matter is an outcome of the synergies of the collaborative model of the Canada-Japan Project and of a comparative household survey carried out for a random sample across four research sites in Canada and two in Japan.

Three fundamental themes emerge in this book. First, the real differences in factors characterizing rural devitalization and influencing the likelihood of revitalization in the future were not as great as expected, despite the apparent and definite historical differences between Japan and Canada. Rural Canada and rural Japan share a common experience with depopulation, aging, wealth extraction, affirmative action, and the failure of agricultural policy as an instrument of rural development and alleviation of rural poverty. The main difference between Canada and Japan lies in the time available for adjustment to industrialization, about 100 years for Canada and about 50 years for rural Japan.

Second, revitalization is a choice; continuing devitalization is not fate. This is not to say that various forces and events do not devitalize a rural community or household, but rather that devitalization may be anticipated and met with strategies and activities that add and renew vitality.

Third, revitalization seems to be mostly about reorganization of rural assets and human energies to increase productivity and therefore to strengthen rural claims on global income and wealth. Reorganization involves a range of issues, including production, social capital, property rights, equity and technology joint ventures, risk management, forms of social cohesion, and governance.

This electronic edited by Leonard P. Apedaile, Professor Emeritus, University of Alberta and Nobuhiro Tsuboi, Professor of Agricultural Economics (retired), Tsukuba University, Japan, was sponsored through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Japanese Institute for Rural Revitalization in the 21st Century and the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, signed in January 1999. The e-book is published by the Rural Development Institute (Brandon University) in collaboration with the Canada Japan Project, Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, and the New Rural Economy project.

Watch for the launch of this e-book in September 2008.

<http://revitalization.brandonu.ca/>

