Asian values have been discussed in relation to cultural practices. Of these values, I would like to emphasize paternalism and harmony orientation (Ikeda, Kobayashi, & Nathan, 2011). These values are meaningful to the extent in which they are reflected in social networks; that is, in East Asia networks are hierarchically structured.

An early study of the effect of these social network properties in Japan (Ikeda & Richey, 2011) revealed that, despite the deficits in Putnamian social capital in social networks (i.e. horizontal networks), positive effects of political discussion networks were found. Political discussion among social network members promotes political participation, enables gains in political knowledge, and increases political tolerance. In this sense, Asian values are not incompatible with fundamental democratic practices. However, some negative effects were detected. The hierarchical nature of social networks often works as pressure to conform without deliberation, although it does not force people to participate in politics unwillingly. This paper will extend the investigation of the effect of social networks in the East Asian context, and focus on moral tolerance as well as personal/institutional trust, both of which are important elements in social capital development.

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The lecture will be given in English. It will take place on Thursday, June 12, 2014 at 06.30 p.m. at the DIJ. Admission is free; please register at: forum@dijtokyo.org or

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