



School of East Asian Studies

**International Workshop
24-25 February 2011**

**The Varieties-of-Capitalism Revisited – Japan and the United Kingdom
since the 1990s**

Supported by:

The Japanese Embassy, London
The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, London
The White Rose East Asia Centre, Leeds & Sheffield

Organized by:

Dr. Harald Conrad, School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield

Venue:

Tapestry Room, Firth Court, University of Sheffield

One of the central debates in the business literature centres on the issue of convergence or non-convergence of business and management practices across countries (Degg and Jackson 2007). According to the proponents of the convergence school, increasing global competition forces companies to adopt best practices that are universally valid and applicable. This development contributes to a cross-national convergence of practices, an erosion of institutional differences among different national economies, and a trend towards more market-oriented institutions (e.g., Lane 1995; Kerr et al. 1962). In contrast, proponents of the non-convergence school stress the embeddedness of national management practices in their cultural and institutional context, with the comparative capitalism (CC) literature elucidating the institutional foundations of diverse national 'varieties' of business organization. According to this school, existing complementarities among institutional elements of national economies tend to thwart international convergence (e.g., Degg and Jackson 2007; Hall and Soskice 2001; Whitley 1999; Hollingsworth and Boyer 1997). In the CC literature, Japan has been characterized as a coordinated market economy as opposed to liberal market economies such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

The CC literature has unquestionably advanced our understanding of the embeddedness of practices in their national contexts, but it has tended to focus on the stable relationships and complementarities between the various actors and institutions in their respective national business systems. However, both Japan and the United Kingdom have undergone major transformations since the 1990s. How we can explain the dynamics of these changes with reference to the CC literature will be the central focus of this workshop. Questions to be addressed include: How and why have inter-firm and employment relations changed? What explains recent reforms in corporate governance? How have discourse coalitions shaped outcomes? How have FDI or supranational and transnational factors influenced national business systems? Is it (still) appropriate to theorize primarily about national differences or do we need other models of explanation?

Programme

24 February 2011

Opening

10:00-10:10 Glenn HOOK (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)

Welcome Address

Ken OKANIWA (Minister and Director of the Japan Information and Cultural Centre, Embassy of Japan)

Welcome Address

10:10-10:30 Harald CONRAD (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)

Introductory Remarks

Session I

10:30-11:15 Hideaki MIYAJIMA (Graduate School of Commerce, Waseda University)

Is institutional change responsible for economic decline in Japan? The results of hybridization

11:15-12:00 Andrew TYLECOTE (Management School, University of Sheffield)

After umpteen committees and reports, still outsider corporate governance fails in nurturing innovation in the UK

Discussant: Sierk HORN (School of Modern Languages and Cultures, University of Leeds)

12:00-13:00 Lunch Break

Session II

13:00-13:45 Jun IMAI (Graduate School of Arts and Letters, Tohoku University)

Strengthening control with no exit: Changes and continuities of employment relation of regular employees in Japan

13:45-14:30 Norifumi KAWAI (Mercator School of Management, University Duisburg-Essen)

The antecedents and outcomes of corporate downsizing in the institutional context: Evidence from Japanese companies from the early 1990s to the present

Discussant: Hiroaki Richard WATANABE (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)

14:30-15:00 Coffee Break

Session III

- 15:00-15:45 Cornelia STORZ (Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Goethe-University Frankfurt)
Structural reforms of labour markets and innovation - Game software development in Japan, UK and the US
- 15:45-16:30 Harald CONRAD (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)
Varieties-of-Capitalism in occupational pension reform: A comparison of the UK and Japan
- Discussant: Glenn HOOK (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)

25 February 2011

Session IV

- 10:00-10:45 Andrew GAMBLE (Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge)
The changing role the state in the UK's Liberal Market Economy
- 10:45-11:30 Kenji E. KUSHIDA (Shorenstein Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University) & Kay SHIMIZU (Department of Political Science, Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University)
The changing role of the state in Japan's Coordinated Market Economy
- Discussant: Hiroko TAKEDA (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)
- 11:30-12:30 Lunch Break

Session V

- 12:30-13:15 Kenji E. KUSHIDA (Shorenstein Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University)
Foreign multinational corporations and Japan's evolving model of capitalism
- 13:15-14:00 Leo McCANN (Manchester Business School, University of Manchester)
Moving beyond 'modelizing' in studies of international capitalism: Exploring workplace-level evidence from Japan and UK
- 14:00-14:15 Coffee Break
- 14:15-15:00 Sebastien LECHEVALIER (EHESS - Centre Japon, Paris)
Diversity of capitalism and neo-liberalism: Lessons from the Japanese trajectory

Discussant: N.N.

15:00-15:15

Harald CONRAD (School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield)
Closing Remarks

15:15-16:00

Final Group Discussion: *The Way Forward* (Presenters and Discussants only)



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

