



**JAPANESE STUDIES
LEUVEN UNIVERSITY**

**International Workshop at the K.U.Leuven
September 24, 2010**

***Policy and Accountability in Japan after the 1990's:
A Global Perspective***

Convenors:

***Dimitri Vanoverbeke (K.U. Leuven)
Kadomatsu Narufumi (Kobe University)***

Outline and Goals:

After a long period of high economic growth Japan has experienced a major socio-economic and political crisis in the 1990s. The so-called 'lost decade' was also a period in which reforms were initiated that had to redefine the paradigm of policy making in Japan. The reforms on the domestic level aimed at bridging the gap between government and citizens through the implementation of accountability with respect to the powerful administration. On the international level, Japan also tried to redefine its position by fostering regional cooperation and emphasising its leadership in the rapidly changing region.

The section of Japanese Studies of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and the Law Faculty of Kobe University invite you to participate in the workshop which will discuss the domestic and international developments in Japan from a political and legal point of view. Leading researchers in the field will present the results of their research and leave ample opportunity for discussion.

You are most welcome to participate. Participation is free of charge, but it is mandatory to register. Please register by sending an email to Dimitri.Vanoverbeke @arts.kuleuven.be.

Venue:

K.U. Leuven
MSI 02.08
Blijde Inkomststraat 21
3000 Leuven, Belgium

Date: September 24, 2010

Programme:

13.45-14.00: Registration

14.00-14.10: Opening and general introduction

Dimitri Vanoverbeke (K.U.Leuven) & Narufumi Kadomatsu (Kobe University)

14.10-14.40: "Accountability of administration" in Japan after the 1990's (Kadomatsu Narufumi, Kobe University Graduate School of Law

Division of Professional Legal Studies KOBE University Graduate School of Law Professor (Public Law)

Abstract:

In this presentation, I would like to illustrate how the concept of “accountability” was introduced in Japan in the latter half of 1990s and how the concept substantiated itself into a set of legal schemes afterwards.

The concept was first introduced in Japanese public discussion during the legislative process of Administrative Information Disclosure Law (1999), which took place in tandem with the introduction of the “New Public Management”. Several important legal mechanisms such as Public Comment Procedure (1999(as cabinet decision), 2005 (as statutory law)), Policy Evaluation Law (2001), Public Record Management Law (2009) . I would like to call them as “accountability related legal scheme” (ARLS) and analyze its contexts and features.

The concept of “accountability” developed itself in the field of political science of public administration, where the concept was used in contrast to “responsibility”. The former emphasizes the use of objective, numerical-quantitative indicators in order to control the performance of administration. However, in examining the ARLS, its contradictory features will become evident. (1)The emphasis on accountability may lead to either “effect-oriented “managerism or “process-oriented” rigid control. (2)People also tend to have contradictory expectations on “accountability”. Some stresses the importance of clear numerical indicators which are intentionally produced in the policy evaluation process, while others emphasizes the necessity of the “raw” documents, which are to be used as primary source of discussion in the public sphere and allow room for attachment of various meanings.

14.40-15.10: Discussant and Presentation: Frederik Ponjaert (Universite Libre de Bruxelles & Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

15.10-15.50: From Responsibility to Compassion

– What Japan has learned from the debate over “Post-War Responsibility” (Naoki Odanaka, Professor of Socio-intellectual History, Graduate School of Economics and Management, Tohoku University)

This presentation will tackle the issue of “post-war responsibility” in Japan. Here I will especially focus on the debates over comfort women and make some considerations on “responsibility” in history. The link with the workshop’s topic is that the issue of “post-war responsibility” can be framed into the political issue of “responsibility “– namely “whether and (if yes) how people who were not directly involved are able to take responsibility”.

15.50-16.05: Discussant: Dr. Michael Schiltz (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

<i>16.05-16.30: Coffee Break</i>

16.30-17.00: (Hisaaki Fujikawa,, Professor Aoyama Gakuin University Faculty of Law, Labour Law)

17.00-17.30: (Yosuke Yotoriyama, Professor, Faculty of Education, Niigata University)

17.30-17.40: Closing Remarks

Narufumi Kadomatsu (Kobe University) & Dimitri Vanoverbeke (K.U.Leuven)