

Kenji Kushida for 11/1/2005

McKinsey's job is to consult to corporations about the main issues they ought to consider when thinking about offshoring. Let us pretend that our job is to consult with social scientists about what issues they ought to consider when thinking about how offshoring will affect a variety of advanced industrial countries across the globe.

This week, let's look at Japan and see if we can extract several variables that are likely to matter when comparing how offshoring hits a variety of countries.

First, we need to frame the issue.

- The tasks for growth: Gershenkron excerpt [will be sent when scanned]
- How to manage dislocations caused the expansion of markets: Polanyi excerpt [attached]

Different countries have taken different (though evolving) solutions to what we may dub the Gershenkron and Polanyi problems. Here is where Japan sits:

- Grand political bargain linking competitive and uncompetitive sectors, and linkages between firms: Vogel [attached]
- Challenges facing Japan: Katz excerpt [attached]
- The nature of tacit information sharing and personnel in Japanese organizations: Aoki [will be shared in class]

Factors that may matter – beginning the list

- The level of competition pressuring lead users: Cohen et al, only abstract, pp.60-62 [attached]
- Language – tip of the iceberg: Dalien news article [attached]
- Bilateral relations – in which cases do they matter? Anti-Japanese protests in China news article