

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

**THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM:
A CRITICAL STUDY OF ITS APPLICATION
TO EAST ASIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Shigehisa Kasahara

No. 169
April 2004

DISCUSSION PAPERS

THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM: A CRITICAL STUDY OF ITS APPLICATION TO EAST ASIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Shigehisa Kasahara**

No. 169
April 2004

** The author wishes to thank his colleague Richard Kozul-Wright, Senior Economic Affairs Officer of UNCTAD's Division on Globalization and Development Strategy, for his thoughtful comments and suggestions regarding the arguments presented in this paper. The author, however, remains solely responsible for any shortcomings in this study.*

UNCTAD/OSG/DP/2004/3

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD. The designations and terminology employed are also those of the author.

UNCTAD Discussion Papers are read anonymously by at least one referee, whose comments are taken into account before publication.

Comments on this paper are invited and may be addressed to the author, c/o the Publications Assistant,* Macroeconomic and Development Policies, GDS, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Copies of Discussion Papers may also be obtained from this address. New Discussion Papers are available on the website at <http://www.unctad.org>.

* Fax: (4122) 9070274; E-mail: mdpb-ed.assistant@unctad.org.

JEL classification: F02, F15, F21, F23, F43, N15, N65, N75, N95.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	1
INTRODUCTION	1
I. DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM	2
A. The original framework by Kaname Akamatsu	2
B. The product-cycle theory	5
C. The modern “multi-sequentialist” paradigm	7
II. COMPARISON BETWEEN DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM	10
A. The generic distinctions of analysis	10
B. The principal channels of technology transfer	12
C. The stability of regional hierarchy	12
III. CRITIQUE OF THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM	13
A. The ambiguity on the technology transfer mechanism	14
B. The “reverse import” based on perceived maturation pattern of production and technology	14
C. The general identification between a product/industry and a national economy	16
D. The question of contrasting catching-up processes	17
E. The IS-EP (import substitution-export promotion) sequence	17
F. The question of self-containedness of the paradigm	18
G. The question of China and overseas Chinese	19
H. The presumed diffusion of Japanese-style business practices and institutions	20
I. The prescriptive value for regional integration	20
J. Stability in regional hierarchy	21
IV. CONCLUSION: A SUMMARY OF CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS	22
REFERENCES	24

THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM: A CRITICAL STUDY OF ITS APPLICATION TO EAST ASIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Shigehisa Kasahara

(United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)

Abstract

It is often claimed that what is popularly known as the “flying geese paradigm” of dynamic comparative advantage has accurately depicted the East Asian catching-up process. This paper presents a critical study of the paradigm, as well as its application to the current situation in East Asian economic hierarchy. The paper first presents the various versions of the paradigm, and discusses similarities and differences among them. It then evaluates the application of the paradigm to the East Asian regional development context by identifying major theoretical, conceptual and empirical problems that come with it. It is the author’s hope that the arguments presented in this paper will contribute to the further enrichment of future discussions on the East Asian development experience.

INTRODUCTION

It is often claimed that what is known as the “flying geese paradigm” of dynamic comparative advantage has accurately depicted the East Asian catching-up process through a regional hierarchy consisting of Japan, the first-tier newly industrializing economies (NIEs) (the Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of China, Singapore and Hong Kong (China)), the second-tier NIEs (Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia), China, and other countries in the region. While the popularity of the paradigm has somewhat declined since its heyday during the late 1980s and the early 1990s, it remains arguably the most widely held conceptual framework for the catching-up process in the region. The paradigm postulates that, under appropriate conditions, North-South economic linkages, i.e., the relations between the developed and the developing economies, could be beneficial to all, and that the East Asian development integration is a case in point. Thus, economies in East Asia that have actively established such linkages through trade and investment have exhibited remarkable performances that challenge the dependency school’s doomsday scenario.¹

The flying geese paradigm originated in the 1930s with what Kaname Akamatsu (1896–1974) called the *ganko keitai* (a flock of flying geese) phenomenon of industrial development in catching-up economies. It is said that the paradigm became part of Japan’s propaganda during World War II by lending the intellectual legitimacy that was needed to create *The Great East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere*. After the war, this connotation continued for some time to tarnish the image of the paradigm.

¹ While they are few in number, some observers have questioned the extent to which the flying geese paradigm accurately depicts the overall situation of East Asia. Most of them, according to Kojima (2000), have done so from the dependency perspective. Yang and Lim admit that the dependency school provides some important insights in understanding development and underdevelopment in a global context; most importantly, the diagnosis of the dynamics of the world capitalist economy. Yet, they do point out that the dependency school tends to neglect internal factors within developing countries which may have contributed to their relatively unfavourable economic performance (Yang and Lim, 2000).

Consequently, the paradigm remained buried from public sight (Korhonen, 1994a). Furthermore, the fact that Akamatsu's own research based on a certain product-cycle theory was mostly published in Japanese² is crucial to why the FG paradigm remained relatively unknown in the West until recently, even after Vernon (1966) popularized the product-cycle theory which "dynamized" the neoclassical theory of international trade (Clark, 1975:6). Only in the second half of the 1980s was the flying geese paradigm taken up again in Japan, first by members of the academic circles, and then by public officials as a framework for the regional integration of East Asia through Japanese foreign aid and investment (Jomo et al., 1997). Since Akamatsu's time, the paradigm has undergone various modifications. Its modern versions are often presented for prescriptive purposes; i.e., propagating the notion that development policies adopted by Japan could be replicable for its neighbours (Kosai and Takeuchi, 1998).

The form of regional development as postulated by the modern flying geese paradigm presupposes the existence of hierarchy, with a dominant economy acting as the growth centre and followed by other developing economies. With the increasing interdependence among regionally clustered economies in East Asia being interpreted as a sign of integration, an additional element that the modern paradigm has presented is a framework for regional integration. Henceforth, the regional group as a whole gradually develops industrial sophistication, as each of the region's economies benefit from the externalities and linkages arising from transactions among them.

The following pages consist of four sections. Section I introduces versions of the flying geese paradigm; and section II compares and contrasts them. Section III discusses various issues surrounding the paradigm; and finally, section IV summarizes the critical discussions on the paradigm as applied to East Asia.

I. DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE FLYING GEESE PARADIGM

This section briefly describes the principal elements of Akamatsu's (A) original concept of the paradigm; (B) the modern product-cycle theory; and (C) the modern "multi-sequentialist" versions of the paradigm – hereafter collectively referred to as the modern FG paradigm.³

A. The original framework by Kaname Akamatsu

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_10514

