

TJAR EDITORIAL

ACCOUNTING ENCOUNTERS OF THE TJAR KIND

Accounting theory has taken two distinct approaches: one supports understanding of environment-specific local accounting institutions in various economies, while the other generalizes American and West European accounting institutions across the world. It is easy, albeit costly, to overlook this co-existence of two kinds of theory in the rush to world-wide convergence or integration of accounting. Consideration and comparison of the two may allow us to carefully explore the foundations of the arguments for convergence. However, such exploration requires accounting scholars to observe, examine, evaluate, and critique the proposed systems and alternatives of which convergence itself is a salient element.

Encounters among cultures since the medieval times have created some commonalities but have not yielded a universal culture. Whether economic encounters among disparate social systems will yield, or even benefit from, a single system of accounting remains open. It is our hope that the Japanese Accounting Review can serve as a forum for accounting scholars across the world to observe, analyze, reflect, and report on encounters between the Western and other system of accounting. The obvious, but far too often neglected, recognition of this duality is a central theme of *TJAR*. The *TJAR* website states:

This new English-language journal, *The Japanese Accounting Review*, aims to present the world with quality research on diverse themes relating to accounting, thereby helping improve the economic welfare of societies around the world through better accounting systems. We welcome submissions, which will be judged solely on the basis of quality of their contributions, not on the status of the hypothesis, methodology, or the author.

Even the so-called capitalist societies differ in their stage of development, and may take very different paths employing quite different institutions. If internationalization is interpreted to assume that all these societies and their paths converge, there is little evidence in support. Accounting scholarship could focus on seeking a critical understanding of the current diversity, and evaluating alternatives for the future, without becoming a prematurely prescriptive cheerleader for convergence. *TJAR* aims to help serve this function.

While the pages of *TJAR* are open to empirical examination of whether the theories originating in the West are robust enough to afford us a better understanding of other economies, they also welcome alternative theories, and their empirical scrutiny, that arise from institutions specific to other economies. The current controversy in Japan about the adoption of IFRS is a good example of a subject for such studies. Development of theories, and analyses of data relevant to cross-economy encounters are important goals of *TJAR*.

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