

Open Varieties of Capitalism

Also by Uwe Becker

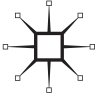
EMPLOYMENT 'MIRACLES'. A CRITICAL COMPARISON OF THE DUTCH,
SCANDINAVIAN, SWISS, AUSTRALIAN AND IRISH CASES VERSUS
GERMANY AND THE U.S. (*edited with Herman Schwartz*)

Open Varieties of Capitalism

Continuity, Change and Performances

Uwe Becker

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The basic ideas of political economies as open, system-like configurations as presented on the pages of this book originated in the late 1980s in theoretical articles published in *Theory & Society* (1988) and *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* (1989) on functional logic and the French *theorie de la regulation*, and have recently been further developed in a piece on 'Open Systemness and Contested Reference Frames' in the *Socio-Economic Review* (2007). The stress on accidental, non-policy factors, such as house price bubbles, in the explanation of economic performance goes back to the empirical work I did since the late 1990s – a time when social pacts to restrain wages were considered the primary explaining factors – on Dutch employment and welfare development in comparative perspective, which culminated in the compendium on *Employment Miracles* (2005; editor; together with Herman Schwartz). This empirical work was triggered by Visser and Hemerijck's *A Dutch Miracle* (1997). The theoretical work got a new push by the publication of Hall and Soskice's *Varieties of Capitalism* (2001) and the subsequent debate on their approach. I do not agree with many components of these books, but I am indebted to their authors for the stimulus they gave me to rethink my ideas. For comments on parts of the manuscript or on earlier drafts and their discussion I would like to thank Brian Burgoon, Peter Hall, Corina Hendriks, Martin Höpner, Franca van Hooren, Torben Iversen, Kees van Kersbergen, Peer Hull Kristensen, Cathie Joe Martin, Glenn Morgan, Daniel Mügge, Sofia Perez, Aimee Rindoks, Herman Schwarz, Vivien Schmidt, Kathleen Thelen, Barbara Vis, Jelle Visser, Natascha van der Zwan, the members of the EU-financed *Smallcons* project on the political economies of Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland as well as various attendants at conferences where I presented my ideas. I also thank the Palgrave reviewers. The English was considerably improved by the text editor, Ann Marangos. For having lot a patience with someone who is running for a deadline postponed twice I am deeply indebted to Janneke, Kiki and Max.

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