

Schriften zu Regional- und Verkehrsproblemen
in Industrie- und Entwicklungsländern

Band 49

Adjustment Problems in Advanced Open Economies: Japan and Germany

Edited by

Theodor Dams
Takashi Matsugi



Duncker & Humblot · Berlin

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Herausgegeben von J. Heinz Müller und Theodor Dams

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Editors' Foreword

This book of readings contains the results of the 10th Joint Seminar of the Faculties of Economics of Nagoya University, Nagoya/Japan, and of Albert-Ludwigs-University, Freiburg/FR Germany, held in October 1986.

The 10th anniversary of the joint meetings was marked with a jubilee symposium. The symposium was held in Freiburg and was co-sponsored by the regional Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK Südlicher Oberrhein). More than one hundred businessmen and businesswomen joined in the one-day event. Freiburg's Faculty of Economics and the Chamber sought to offer the local business world a comprehensive view of German-Japanese business cooperation. Keynote lectures included a report on how to manage a German subsidiary in Japan and how to manage a Japanese subsidiary in the FR Germany. Both of these lectures are included in this volume (papers by *Schneidewind* of Wella AG and by *Kuraku* of Panasonic). The afternoon session centered around a discussion of experienced businessmen, coordinated by *A. Meckel*, manager of the Deutsch-Japanisches Wirtschaftsförderungsbüro (German-Japanese Business Promotion Office), Düsseldorf. Among others, managers from regional small and medium enterprises and representatives of leading banks (Deutsche Bank, Sumitomo Bank) gave their views.

The public jubilee symposium again emphasized the pragmatic approach to the Nagoya-Freiburg cooperation: It not only intended to promote basic research on the Japanese and German economy, as well as on their international economic relations, but it should also help companies to gain an understanding on how to internationalize their business and assist them in finding a "niche" in the promising German-Japanese market by producing specialized products of high quality. This is done with a particular emphasis on the problems of small and medium enterprises (SME). Both in the Tokai region of Japan, with its regional capital Nagoya, and in the southern part of Baden, with Freiburg as the "capital of the Black Forest", SMEs make up a large proportion of enterprises. SMEs are both important innovators and employers. However, they are rather fragile institutions, which need to be studied well, if one endeavours to help them. The Economics Faculties of both Freiburg and Nagoya have chosen SMEs as one of their major research subjects.

The research-oriented 10th Joint Seminar, whose proceedings are documented in this volume, also gives evidence to this objective. Papers by management scientists *Yamada* and *Fahrion* give a very concrete idea of how new technologies enter the business world; SMEs in Japan are emphasized. *Hilke* and *Blümle/Hauser* discuss issues facing SMEs in the state of Baden-Württemberg. *Matsugi* and

Pascha analyze trends in the internationalization of the Japanese and German economy on a sectoral level. *Mizuno* and *Oberhauser/Scherf* examine how business issues are related to the macroeconomic level and its government policies. Insights into the methodology of how to analyze firms are offered by *Schmidt, Kishida, and Saito*.

These papers reflect the situation in 1986. As is well known, economic conditions in Germany, and possibly even more so in Japan, are changing very fast. Both the yen and the DM have been revalued significantly since 1985, and the effects of this change are still felt. Thus, the papers can but give a condensed view of one stage in the process of continuous change. Still, they may serve readers as documents of how economic change is appreciated while it is taking place and how actors react to limited information at a certain point in time.

In giving birth to this publication, many “midwives” have helped. We are particularly grateful to the continuous cooperation of the Nagoya working group under its new chairman, Professor *Takashi Matsugi*. Financial assistance from the Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft in Freiburg im Breisgau made this publication possible. Secretarial work was done in Freiburg University’s Institute of Development Policy. However, authors remain responsible for their individual contributions.

Freiburg, November 1988

J. Heinz Müller

Theodor Dams

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**"Unternehmensphilosophie" and Human Concept
- Questions to the Research of Real Theory -**

Ralf-Bodo Schmidt

A. At first: subject of the study

1. The theme which is to be treated causes a number of problems. The solution of these can't be possible here and today; in my opinion it's rather a task of a generation, what suggests, however, to offer a program. Nevertheless it's the very point in question to explore the efficiency of an "Unternehmensphilosophie" by the research methods of the real theory. Therewith - from my point of view - the scientific interest can be formulated as follows in a multidimensional manner:

A) Are we able to learn something from the history? At any rate it exists a plurality of chronicles of important industrial companies and trading-houses all over the world. They didn't only try to prove soundly their economic fortune, but also their (attendant) "social engagement".

Regarding to my previous studies this path of research won't have a great success because of the following three reasons:

1) The statements "rejoice", that means they emphasize successes, particularly of personalities, in the sense of "public relations" and with that they don't meet the demands which have to be addressed to a "Historical Research As A Strict Science", like they were required under this title by Victor Kraft latest in 1955.

- 2) It exists hardly any statistic material with the help of which the effectiveness of ethical values - as elements of an "Unternehmungsphilosophie"- can be measured. We didn't think of such an exact result testing as long as normativisms moulded several "concepts of the world"; furthermore the scientific instrumentarium lacked because of the insufficiently developed theory of social sciences.
 - 3) It seems to be sure, that "experienced Unternehmungsphilosophien" can't be copied, because basic conditions of the company - always active in a social environment - as well as most personal human concepts change in the lapse of time.
- B) Confirming this argument it's to be added that-corresponding to the general error of normativism-propagated action was lacking in content of instruction; that means therefore that several ethical postulates like for example liberty, justice, humanity and self-realization were characterized by a lack of precise concept formation, operationalization and time-orientation; not to mention an analysis of the interest in following such empty formulas.
- C) Pursueing the explanatory, prognostical and pragmatcal goal of science a real theory has to compound to facts. Corresponding to this it should be about now:
- 1) To outline the possible content of alternative "Unternehmungsphilosophien" with the intention of recommending important criteria of efficiency in this context.
 - 2) To address questions to the research of real theory.

2. In international literature we find references to a "Philosophy of the firm", and to "Corporate Identity" and "Culture of the company". These terms prove - more or less cogent - business principles, principles of leadership, the appearance of the enterprise in its social environment, and also - though very superficially - the basis of values (Wertbasis) in decision making. If there is talk of "Unternehmensphilosophie", then the question is whether and in what respect "ethical values" (ethische Werte) are connected with the occurrences within the company.

In the following it should be asked,

- to what extent in the goals and the company's decisions of goal achievement, and
- in which respect different "human concepts" ("Menschenbilder") value the "ethical values" (ethische Werte) which are instrumental in the goals and in the company's decisions of goal achievement.

Subsequent to this, it will be maintained, that

- Alternative patterns of an "Unternehmensphilosophie" could be offered to obey, by which they - interpreted as hypothesis in the real theory - are subjected to attempts at refutation.

B. Secondly: The term "Unternehmensphilosophie"

Figure 1 shows the relation of tensions between value and valuation. On the one hand the company is put in a framework of values (Wertrahmen), which depends on the particular culture area and is granted by the legal, economic and social system. Within this the influential members of the company (Unternehmungsträger) express individual conceptions of value, which are concretized in the goals and measures of