

# Management of International Cooperation of Japanese and German Universities – Historical Background and Actual Experiences –

**Karl-Heinz SCHMIDT**

University of Paderborn, Paderborn, Germany

E-mail: hedwig\_frieg@gmx.de

## *Abstract*

*Cooperation of universities is increasingly needed in order to educate productive and team-oriented young scholars at Western and Far Eastern Universities. The article refers to the historical background of international university-cooperation in Japan and Germany. The tendency from lagging or parallel research to research cooperation on the university level is pointed out by practical cases. Additionally experiences by research-networks of cooperating universities are pointed out, esp. as for economic research. Concerning teaching the reintegration of research and teaching in cooperating universities is exposed. The conclusions emphasize the actual problem and refer to experiences from university cooperation in Japan and Germany.*

**Keywords:** *Meiji Restoration, transformation process-phases of university research, effects of international university cooperation, reintegration of academic research and teaching*

**JEL classification:** I23, M16

## **1. Problems of the study**

Not only as an effect of the globalization of markets since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but already since Meiji Restoration in Japan during the 1860's international contacts between Japanese and German scholars of universities have been established (Fujise, H., 1992, pp. 1-3). Reviewing the longterm development of these contacts, several problems turn out:

➤ Since which phase of the economic and technological development in Japan and Germany were the “contacts” of scholars upgraded to regular university-cooperation?

➤ Is it possible to identify phases of research at the university level demonstrating the progress from isolated, lagging national research to parallel international research and further to international cooperation of universities in research and academic teaching?

➤ How can the positive effects of international university-cooperation be stabilized and utilized to the benefit of research and teaching in- and outside the universities?

The following paragraphs refer to the institutional preconditions and to experiences of international university-cooperation in Japan and Germany. The focus is to point out that international cooperation at the university level is increasingly needed to educate productive and team-oriented young scholars at Western and Far Eastern universities. Therefore the subsequent sections turn (2.) to the historical background of international university-cooperation, (3.) to the phases of the longterm development of university research, (4.) to experiences by research-networks of cooperating universities and (5.) to the problem of separation or reintegration of research and teaching activities at cooperating universities. Finally, conclusions concerning the future management of international university-cooperation are exposed.

## **2. Historical background of international cooperation of Japanese and German universities**

In Japan the historical background of university-cooperation is characterized by the change of the political system from the rule of the Tokugawa shoguns (1603 – 1868) to the development of an open mixed system, based on markets and strong public institutions. The policies of the Tokugawa period were orientated to the political objectives of the rulers: to control or even to restrict the expansion of domestic and overseas commerce and to create a static society in Japan. However, the stability of the Tokugawa system brought about the extension of internal trade networks and the establishment of new markets. Trade stimulated the exchange of goods, but also of ideas (Morris-Suzuki, 1989, 8 f). The economic and political circumstances, yet, remained different from the conditions and ideas of economic development in the Western world (Fukui, H. a.o., Eds., 1993, 1 f).

The Meiji Restoration of 1868 was a famous date in Japanese economic history and in the history of economic thought (Fujise, 1992, 1). Since that date Western ideas were imported to Japan at a growing extent. The government decided that everywhere in the world new knowledge should be sought in order to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule. Expanding sources of economic experiences and of social and economic thought were found in Western countries, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century mainly in Holland, England and Germany. But in Japan the imported ideas were not so much of a destructive impact as in other Asian countries, because foreign ideas were absorbed and incorporated into Japanese thinking and way of life. As a Japanese historian of eyes, Makao Maruyama (1961) proclaimed: "... we come across fragments of many ideas which have left their traces on our history. These include Buddhism, Confucianism, Shamanism and Western thought" (Maruyama, M., 1961, 8; cited by Morris-Suzuki, T., 1989, 44 f).

According to Maruyama, yet, many Japanese authors tended to combine Western and Japanese ideas in random and eclectic ways. Other authors

distinguished pre-Meiji traditions of economic philosophy and post-Meiji ways of economic and social thinking. The consequences may be identified as imitation, but the more realistic way of integrating the foreign ideas may be described as selection of certain Western ideas which were evaluated to be particularly relevant to the interests of Japanese authors, herewith "... giving these ideas a specifically Japanese interpretation" (Morris-Suzuki, T., 1989, 45).

For Japanese scholars of economics the arguments to orientate their research along the methods and results of German economic historians and historians of economic thought since Meiji Restoration were found in similarities, but also in differences of trade and economic development and in the methods applied in related historical research (Fujise, H., 1970, 1 f). Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century many Japanese authors of economic history and of the history of economic thought therefore studied at German universities and researched under supervision by German professors (Ikeda, Y., 2005, 112 f).

Up to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, yet, Western liberal ideas of free trade, civil freedom and restricted power of government remained of low impact on other groups of scholars, businessmen and politicians in Japan (Fujise, H., 1992, 1 f). Liberal scholars of the Japanese universities at the 1870's instead at a growing extent turned to nationalist and conservative ideas. Yet, the later generation sought for ideas and concepts of economic development, which considered the specific economic and social structures of Japan and the opportunities of "Japanese" political economy at that time. Involved scholars and bureaucrats found relevant ideas in the writings of protectionist critics of the Western classical economics. Mainly the German author Friedrich List (1789 – 1846) and the American Henry Charles Carey (1793 – 1879) were increasingly considered (Herz, D./Weinberger, V., Hrsg., 2006). The protectionist views in List's writings and the approach of the German historical school turned out to be of increasing influence on the development of economic ideas, practical economic policy and the organization of economic research and advice. Especially the National Economics Association, established in 1890, brought together economists from a variety of educational and other institutions, but simultaneously encouraged the fragmentation of Japanese economic scholarship according to separate basic ideas and ideological lines (Morris-Suzuki, 1989, 61).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the social problems of economic growth became increasingly evident in Japan (For Germany: Schmidt, K.-H., 2006, II, 269 ff., esp. 273 f). As a consequence, the Association for the Study of Social Policy was established in 1896, "... and modelled on the German "Verein für Socialpolitik". The first members were some scholars who had returned from their studies at German universities, but during the subsequent decades the number of members and the channels of their influence on politics in Japan were diversified. The annual conferences of the Association represented a broad spectrum of economic ideas, and political opinions, "... from extreme nationalism to Christian Socialism and crypto-anarchism" (Morris-Suzuki, 1989, 64 f). Moreover, Japanese scholars travelled to Germany (Shionoya, Y.,

2005, 1 f), mainly to study with Gustav Schmoller (1838 – 1917) and Adolph Wagner (1835 – 1917) in Berlin (Ikeda, 2005, p. 112), or at other universities in Heidelberg, Halle and Munich. Some German university professors travelled to Japan to deliver lectures and to collect informations for their research. For example, Karl Rathgen taught statistics at Tokyo University, and later Emil Lederer (1882 – 1939) taught political economy and social policy at the Imperial University in Tokyo 1923 –1925 (Heimann, 1959, p. 552; Lederer, E. u. Lederer-Seidler, E., 1928)).

During the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century another development of Japanese political economy became effective: profound differences in the philosophical positions of members of the Association for the Study of Social Policy brought about divisions, even the separated organization of leftwing and liberal members. Furthermore, different organizations of the scholars of economic sciences and social sciences were established in Japan. This structure of the academic organizations basically also exists at the present time.

Conclusively, the historical background of the cooperation of Japanese and German universities dates back to Meiji Restoration and to the subsequent development of academic institutions and associations in Japan and in Germany.

The exchange of scholars and students between Japan and Germany after the second world war and at present should be taken as effect of the intensive interest and activities of former university professors, bureaucrats, journalists and students to go abroad for research and studies: from Japan to Germany and vice versa. This is demonstrated also by the continued research cooperation and actual programs of students exchange made up by specific universities in both countries.

### **3. From parallel research to research cooperation**

Reviewing the development of economic thought and of the organization of economic research in Japan (Sugihara, S./Tanaka, T., 1998), the pattern of a step-wise development of economic research focused on foreign countries becomes apparent. In the long run, since Meiji Restoration in 1868, four phases of research development in economic sciences can be distinguished.

The first phase covers the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the First World War. This period was characterized by individual studies of Japanese scholars in Western countries and by subsequent individual research on these countries abroad and/or after return to Japan. It was a phase of transformation of the Japanese economy. Examples were the Japanese scholar of economics Noburu Kanai (1865 – 1933)(Ikeda, Y., 2005, 115), who had participated in lectures by the German professor of statistics, Karl Rathgen, and Tokuzo Fukuda (1874 – 1930). He had studied with Lujo Brentano (1844 – 1931) in Germany from 1898 to 1901 (Morris-Suzuki, 1989, 68). Fukuda wrote – in German – the first study on “Social and Economic Development in Japan”, which was published abroad (1900). Though he prepared this study “under Brentano’s guidance”, he probably was inspired by very different ideas and

concepts of economic and social organization. At the beginning of the 1920's Fukuda also contributed to expose the boundaries between the neoclassical school, and the Marxist school of economic thought in Japan (Morris-Suzuki, 1989, 69 f). On the grounds of Western ideas, but simultaneously based on former Japanese ideas and patterns of economic and social organization, the further development of Japanese economic research was prepared.

The second phase of economic research by Japanese scholars focussing on foreign countries covered the inter-war period and the time of the second world war. The Japanese economic research was increasingly determined by the separation of neoclassical and Marxist economists. Research activities continuously seemed to be organized as individual activities or as activities of a few authors within the neoclassical or the Marxist segment. Yet, a phase of renaissance of economic thought and related research turned out to be necessary after the war.

The attempts to rebuild the economy and the foundations of economic research characterized the third phase of research activities in Japanese economic sciences and social sciences (Fukui, H., a.o., Eds., 1993, 1 – 10). This reconstruction period was contrasting to the subsequent phase.

The fourth phase covered the economic research under the conditions of expanding international relations, even “globalization” of economic activities and social relations. It was also a period of further transformation of research (Kojima, M., 2010, 1 f): from individual research activities or separated group research to coordinated research cooperation. This research pattern turns out to be effective as determinant factor of the present and future academic research and teaching at the university level – in Japan and in Germany, probably even worldwide. This fourth phase of research development of economic sciences conclusively should be understood to be continued during the forthcoming decades (Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft, Hrsg., 2010/25, 3; 2010/1, 1). Some experiences and results of the ongoing research cooperation at the faculties of economic sciences at specific Japanese and German universities will be pointed out in the following section.

#### **4. Experiences by research networks of cooperating universities**

In order to keep up the data of the academic institutions in anonymous form, the examples of the university-cooperation will be described without documenting the empirical data of the involved universities, institutes, persons etc.

The first example refers to the continuing cooperation of the faculties of economics of two universities, one located in Southern Germany and a partner-university in Central Japan. The cooperation was started probably soon after the Second World War. Later, after a period of individual research of scholars at both universities – a cooperation contract was settled. It covers individual coordinated economic research performed at each of the involved universities, but moreover the establishment of research groups at both academic institutions, including the exchange of young scholars of the concerned universities and research institutes.

Additionally, programs for the exchange of doctoral candidates and of regular students have been arranged. This example demonstrates the development of university-cooperation from separate individual research at each of the concerned universities to parallel research activities of individual scholars and group research, but furthermore to coordinated joint research, based on a joint research program and combined with continuing programs of students-exchange between the involved universities. The results are documented by publications (books and articles in leading journals), joint lectures or seminars at both universities and considerable numbers of exchanged students and young scholars.

The second example performs a shorter “curriculum vitae”, but it also demonstrates a successful development and considerable amount of academic results – in research and in teaching. The combination of international relations in research and teaching is to be evaluated separately. First of all, the involved universities are to be exposed: on the Japanese side a state-university located in Southern Japan is concerned, on the German side a university of Northern Germany is the partner-institution. Thus, both academic institutions are state universities. Furthermore both universities are similar as to the number and structure of faculties and to the geographical origin and level of education of the new students (freshmen). Instead, the total number of students differs: the Japanese partner university has less students than the German university. Also, the Japanese university has other main important fields of research (f. e. medicine) than the German university (f. e. informatics). These differences, yet, seem to favour the international relations not only in research, but also in teaching. The high growth-rate of investment in buildings, technological equipment of laboratories, dormitories and social institutions for students are of favourable effect on the integration of research and teaching on campus.

The cooperation of the faculties of economics of both involved universities is much “younger” than in the first example, because both universities were established much later than the formerly commented universities. This is, yet, another positive factor of the international relations of the academic institutions: “Young” universities mean investment in new, even latest technology, attractive research conditions and modern curricula in teaching. Presumably these are considerable causes of the increasing number of students coming from foreign countries, not only from Western countries, but also from Asia and the remaining continents. For example about 3–4 % of the students actually are of Chinese origin. The number of Japanese students at this German university is much smaller, but the development of the number of places – at no tuition – fees – for these students is decisive for the future international cooperation of the considered universities in research and teaching. Therefore, the results of recent direct negotiations of representatives of both universities on the basis of the existing cooperation contract are very positive. The number of students to be exchanged for a year in the near future can be increased by 40 % (bachelor or master students). Cooperative research projects simultaneously are to be continued, if possible, also expanded in both universities.

Results of research at the considered universities hitherto were published in academic journals or as special studies, series or books (Schmidt, K.-H., 2003). Actual recommendations concern additional publications by German and Japanese co-authors, also articles based on joint research projects and related studies. The most effective barrier to such additional activities in research and teaching, yet, is obvious: the scarcity of financial means. Furthermore, another basic problem is to be considered. It is acknowledged in the subsequent section.

### **5. Towards reintegration of research and teaching activities in internationally cooperating universities**

The examples of international cooperation by the faculties of economic sciences of two universities in Japan and Germany give rise to reconsider the longterm discussion on pros and cons of integrated research and teaching at the university. The pros have a long history in Germany, but the cons dominate the discussion since a long time, and the practice of present academic teaching is increasingly orientated to the separation of academic research from teaching.

On the contrary, recent experiences and results of international cooperation by faculties of economic sciences may be evaluated as reliable arguments and facts favouring the combination of academic research and teaching activities. Students from abroad can be integrated in teaching more effectively on the grounds of concrete research projects (Müller, B., 2010, 5). Young research scholars can participate in research activities more efficiently, if they are integrated in small groups of researchers and in related teaching activities or concerned preparations (See also: Whitakker, D. H. a.o., 2009). Conclusively, even against the “modern trend”, attempts should be enforced to reintegrate the diverse activities in academic research and teaching. Positive results of existing examples are available.

### **Conclusions**

The introduction of this article exposed three questions. They should be answered by the conclusions from the above paragraphs. Herewith the longterm path of economic development and the impact of changes of the political systems in the considered countries have to be acknowledged.

Referring to the first question, the beginning of “contacts” between Japanese and German scholars may be found several centuries ago. More important is the Meiji Restoration at the 1860’s in Japan and the foundation of the German “Reich” 1871. Both dates also indicate the process of economic growth and the increasing impact of the “social question”, related to the gap between poverty and wealth of the society. The industrialization of the economy increased the productivity of resources, but also enlarged the inequality of incomes and wealth. The take-off-phase of the process of industrialization and economic growth therefore can be identified as the beginning of a new path of economic growth, of growing inequality of distribution and of the need of regular cooperation by

scholars and institutions of research and academic teaching. The relevant time in Japan and Germany is the period from the 1860's to the beginning of the First World War.

The second question turned to the transformation of university research from individual research to international cooperation of universities in research and teaching. The performed examples of Japanese and German universities let conclude, that the progress from isolated to parallel international research and further to international cooperation of universities began at different dates, but again in close relation to the economic development. After the Second World War the need of international cooperation was increased because the destroyed countries had to be rebuilt and restructured on the grounds of innovations and international trade. Conclusively the international cooperation of universities was effective as a precondition and as impact of the reconstruction and economic growth in the considered countries.

The third question is to be answered by reference to the pros and cons of a reintegration of academic research and teaching. Though the barriers given by the lack of finance in the individual countries must be acknowledged, the conclusion should be emphasized: integrated research and teaching may contribute to stabilize and utilize the positive effects of international university-cooperation.

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