

Mathematical Management –The History of Operations Research in the U.S., Western Europe and Germany



Queuing in front of a toll bridge in Chicago 2008 – a research domain of Operations Research.
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Working Paper on the History of Computing No. 6/2019

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Section 11 was published in Richard Vahrenkamp, Nominal Science without Data: The Cold War Content of Game Theory and Operations Research, in: Real World Economics Review, vol. 88, 2019, pp. 19–50. Section 12 was published in Richard Vahrenkamp, Mathematik trifft auf Machtkalkül. Kybernetik und Operationsforschung in der Reformära der DDR 1962–1970, in: Zeitschrift des Forschungsverbundes SED–Staat, issue 44/2019, pp. 152–167. A short version of this paper is published in the journal Management Revue – Socio Economic Studies under the title “Mathematical Management” in 2023, vol. 34, issue 1, pp. 69–91.

Translated from German by the AI software DeepL

Status: 3 July 2025

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Summary

The rise of Operations Research, which provides mathematical models for the management of commercial enterprises, in the political knowledge culture of Cold War Science is shown and then transferred to the institutionalization of Operations Research in Europe and in the Federal Republic of Germany. The predecessor organizations of the German Society for Operations Research are presented and the interaction of the annual conference of this society with the conferences on a European and worldwide level. It tells how numerous chairs

for corporate research and operations research were founded at universities between 1960 and 1980. The connection between Operations Research and the macroeconomic field of econometrics in chairs, conferences and publications is explained and problematized. The great flood of publications on the subject of Operations Research between 1960 and 1980 is referred to, but the rise of the competing field of business informatics in the 1980s halted the success of Operations Research. Based on the historical study by Alexander Nützenadel, the difference between the field of econometrics, which is based on empirical data, and the field of operations research, which is more academically oriented, is worked out. The methodological approach of Operations Research is referred to as abstractification. An example for abstractification is the transportation model of linear optimization, which simplifies (abstractifies) economic reality to such an extent that it can be transformed into manageable formulas. However, the transportation model is unsuitable for applications in the real economy and thus serves only as a self-referential project for the academic sector. This contribution shows that Operations Research lacks the level of empirical implementation of mathematical models known from econometrics and the social sciences. How transport optimization was taken up in the political knowledge cultures of the Eastern bloc (1945 - 1990) and in the German Democratic Republic is dealt with in section 12.

1 Introductory remarks

This paper shows how the field of Operations Research (OR) has emerged in the political knowledge culture of the Cold War since 1945. First the rapid institutional rise in the social spaces of universities is illustrated, but then the low degree of empirical projects in the social spaces of commercial enterprises is described and reasons given. At the same time, the rapid proliferation of computers for corporate management has hindered the implementation of OR projects in companies. The decline of Operations Research in the social spaces of universities began in the 1990s, when more and more chairs were rededicated to business informatics and logistics.

As Alexander Nützenadel noted in 2005 in his historical scientific study "The Hour of Economists" on economics, econometrics and scientific policy advice in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the 1950s and 1960s,¹ the period 1950 – 1965, which was fundamental for the political and economic emergence and establishment of the FRG, had so far been little researched. In this paper I take up the approach of Nützenadel and extend its investigation from economics to the historization of mathematical planning procedures in economics and business administration in the Federal Republic of Germany.

¹ Nützenadel, economists, 2005.

The Operations Research chairs are located in universities' business administration departments and deal with mathematical methods for the planning of material flow systems in factories, for the circulation planning of means of transport and for the creation of personnel deployment plans.² The research guiding ideas are the minimization of costs or the maximization of profits of an individual company. The cost and profit amounts are linked by definition via the turnover of a company as follows: Profit = Turnover - Costs. Costs or profits are modeled as a function of variables, and the minimum or maximum of this function is attempted to determine. In so-called linear programming, these functions are modeled as linear functions of the sets used and become the object of algorithms when they are minimized or maximized by complex structures of constraints, mostly expressed by linear inequalities, by compact sets in the n-dimensional number space. Often the algorithms have a loop structure of the form Repeat ... Improvement step ... until termination condition.

So far, the publications on the history of Operations Research have been rather uncritical success stories, such as the "Timeline" by Saul Gass and Arjang Assad from 2005, William Thomas' history of OR 2015 or the history of the OR by Stephen Johnson from 1997,³ while the aim of this paper is to examine the field of Operations Research from the point of view of the history of science and to point out the social spaces in the Cold War science of the U.S., but also in the Eastern Bloc, in which the algorithmic knowledge cultures of Operations Research emerged. For evaluation purposes, a new approach is used to characterize the OR as a mathematical discipline based on the development of new mathematical methods, but less interested in obtaining empirical data.

If one compares Operations Research with the empirical sciences of econometrics, meteorology, astronomy and engineering, the OR's approach becomes clear. Atsushi Akera and Brent Jesiek have already highlighted the leading role of mathematicians in the development of the electronic digital computer.⁴ I would like to take up this kind of argumentation and show that Operations Research also provides a mathematician-driven view of the world that uses new mathematical methods to develop abstract models of the economic and social structures of society.

² Operations Research is also abbreviated to OR and is also known in German as corporate research.

³ Gass/Assad, Timeline, 2005. Johnson, Approaches, 1997.

⁴ Akera, Calculating, 2007. Jesiek, Origins, 2013. On the early history of the digital computer see also Rojas / Hashagen: The First Computers, 2000.

In the engineering sciences, econometrics, astronomy and meteorology, mathematical models are used to structure measured data in order to make better predictions. Computers are loaded with data to test models. The scholars work within the triangle data–model–computer and thus make this approach a data-driven one.⁵ Numerous contributions in the literature show the emergence of mathematical models in meteorology, the collection of data in this field and their evaluation on computers in John von Neumann's group at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton from 1945 to 1955.⁶ Gabriele Gramelsberger's contributions also demonstrate the empirical relevance of the branches of science biology and meteorology. The scientists mostly have personal experience with the material they are studying, as Nathan Ensmenger has shown using the example of laboratories in biological research.⁷ Alexander Nützenadel demonstrated in his historical study the role of empirical economic data in the application of mathematical econometric models of the economy as a whole for forecasting economic development.⁸

However, the empirical reference to other scientific disciplines outlined here is missing in Operations Research. Heiner Müller-Merbach, Professor of Operations Research in Darmstadt, had already critically pointed this out in 1981, and this paper follows his approach.⁹ Without an empirical research approach, the OR converts and abstractifies economic relations into mathematical models that provide material for academic practice and merely represent a value in itself, but do not serve to solve social and economic problems. Simplified mathematical formulas are used to create beautiful models for academic use, as shown below in the example of the transport model. It was simplified so much that it could not be applied in empirical contexts at all. However, it could provide material for courses and for countless publications on the subject. Also, the modeling of dynamic material flow processes in the manufacturing industry with Markov processes, which cut off the history, leads to beautiful formulas. But the OR promoter Rudolf Henn had to admit in one of his publications that industrial processes do not have a truncated history, but the Markov approach leads to beautiful formulas.¹⁰

⁵ Gramelsberger, Science, 2011.

⁶ Thompson, Weather 1957. Aspray, Neumann, 1990.

⁷ Ensmenger, Construction, 2012.

⁸ Nützenadel, economists, 2005.

⁹ Müller-Merbach, Empirical Research, 1981.

¹⁰ Lecture at the founding meeting of the SVOR in 1961 by Rudolf Henn: Wirtschaftliche Anwendungsmöglichkeiten stochastischer Prozesse, in: Industrielle Organisation, Volume 31, 1962, Issue 1, pp. 19-24, here p. 19. In Volume 4 of Operations Research Verfahren, 1967, Bernd Goldstein published on more than 300 pages a confused paper with mathematical formulas for Markov chains without a single line of text.

Operations Research is therefore not data-driven, but driven by new mathematical methods and belongs to the field of applied mathematics. This reference to applied mathematics is also seen by professors for OR, such as the leading OR promoter Hans Künzi, who held a chair for OR at the University of Zurich. In his opening lecture at the annual conference of the German Society for Operations Research in 1971, he stated: "One does not go wrong if one regards the theory of the new branch of research as a subfield of applied mathematics".¹¹ Unlike in the data-driven sciences described above, the researchers had no personal experience with the material of their field. Empirical data was not the focus of OR, and therefore the triangle data–model–computer often remained unused. The paper shows that the OR lacks a level of empirical implementation of mathematical models, such as those known from econometrics and the social sciences, and that this level has not been the subject of textbooks or research efforts in the field of operations research.

It should be emphasised that the process of modelling simplifies social reality to the extent that mathematical formulae can be applied at all and any necessary data collection is also simplified, as shown below using the example of the Berlin Air Lift. However, all models, even in the above-mentioned disciplines of engineering, econometrics, astronomy and meteorology, simplify reality. In contrast to the OR, however, the results of the model calculations are again applied in the real world. Examples are known from physics of how researchers simplify matter into a collection of vibrating atoms, as Max Planck did for his radiation formula and Albert Einstein for his theory of specific heat. However, these drastic simplifications in the models were countered by important results. Planck was able to derive his radiation formula using this approach, and Einstein was also able to explain the behavior of specific heat at low temperatures using this model.¹² However, the OR lacks this reference to reality, as this article shows using the example of the transport model.

2 The Origin of Operations Research in the Cold War Context

This section shows how Operations Research originated in the political knowledge culture of the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War. Many studies have already shown how operations research in the political knowledge culture of the U.S. and Great Britain emerged during the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War.¹³ During the Second World War, Operations Research was developed in Britain and the U.S. to investigate methods for detecting enemy aircraft and submarines. Great Britain founded the group for Naval

¹¹ Künzi: Corporate Research, 1971, p. 3.

¹² Föhlsing, Albrecht: Albert Einstein – eine Biografie, Frankfurt 1995, p. 142, 175.

¹³ Erickson u.a., How Reason 2013. Klein, Cold War 2015. William Thomas, Rational Action 2015, Krige, Hegemony 2006.

Operational Research and the U.S. the Antisubmarine Warfare Operations Research Group (ASWORG). After the Second World War, OR research did not break off, but the U.S. maintained special OR knowledge with the Navy Operations Evaluation Group, albeit with a reduced team. This group further developed the OR methods during the Cold War.¹⁴

In the social spaces of the mathematical departments in the U.S. armed forces, mathematicians strongly supported the development of the digital computer and related research in game theory and operations research. The Army's Ballistic Research Laboratory in Aberdeen, Md., was led by mathematicians and funded the development of the first electronic digital computer ENIAC at the Moore School of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The Navy maintained a Naval Research office in Washington, D.C. with a mathematics department and supported numerous research and development projects.¹⁵ The Air Force also operated the RAND Corporation (in Santa Monica near Los Angeles) with a Department of Applied Mathematics and the National Bureau of Standards (in Washington, D.C.) as agencies to finance and develop the digital computer, Operations Research and Game Theory. In the National Bureau of Standards, computer development was led by the Department of Applied Mathematics, which published a series of books on applied mathematics. The RAND Corporation was founded in 1948 in Santa Monica by the Air Force and was regarded as their think tank.¹⁶ Research there focused not only on the future of air warfare and strategic bombing, but also on academic activities. RAND organized conferences and published books. As a newly formed branch of the military in 1947, the US Air Force (previously part of the US Army) sought to make a name for itself by applying scientific methods to the programming and use of the digital computer - which was only expected in the future - for this task, as a Chief of Staff Circular of 13 October 1948 put it.¹⁷

The invention of linear programming was made independently by the Russian mathematician and later Nobel Prize winner Leonid Kantorovich in 1939 and the US mathematician George Dantzig in 1947 at RAND in the context of Cold War Science. Before Linear Programming was developed as a mathematical optimization method in the RAND Corporation, Kantorowitsch developed his Linear Programming Approaches in 1939, which had remained unknown in the U.S. until 1960.¹⁸ In 1947, RAND started the SCOOP project, which was intended to produce

¹⁴ Harris, Center, 1996, p. 62-64. Shrader, History, 2013, chapter one.

¹⁵ Rees, Computing, 1982, pp. 102-120.

¹⁶ Shrader, History, 2013, p. 60. For RAND Corporation see Edwards, World, 1996, p. 114–116. George Dantzig: Impact of Linear Programming on Computer Development, Lecture at ORSA/TIMS meeting on April 30, 1985, typewriter manuscript Stanford University, Document ADA157659, 1985 (Internet source). For RAND see Bhattacharya, 2022, chapter 7.

¹⁷ Paul Erickson et al., How Reason Almost Lost Its Mind, 60. On the history of RAND, see also the official presentation 50 Years Project Air Force, 1996.

¹⁸ The English translation can be found in Kantorowitsch, Methods, 1960.

planning documents and forecasts for the demand for spare parts and fuel for the various aircraft types on the worldwide Air Force bases. This project has already been described in various historical analyses of mathematization.¹⁹ The aim of this project was to accelerate the planning steps for a military operation, the so-called programme. In expectation of the electronic digital computer, the use of mathematical planning methods should shorten the program steps. The RAND mathematician Georg Dantzig invented a mathematical planning approach in 1947 and called it Linear Programming. It provided calculation techniques to maximize a linear function over a convex and compact set in the n-dimensional number space spanned by linear inequalities. The RAND Corporation owned numerous CPC-IBM machines, and Dantzig programmed, but not until 1952, his SCOOP optimization problem with 45 variables on this machine to identify the minimum cost of worldwide spare parts supply for the Air Force. After 8 hours he got the result. In 1952, he also coded this problem on the Univac I high-speed digital computer.²⁰ Among Dantzig's numerous research memoranda, applications of his model in the SCOOP project, which was to coordinate the Air Force's repair capacity worldwide, remained unknown. Dantzig's work at RAND seemed to be academic and without applications. The head of the SCOOP project, Murray Geisler, estimated that the Air Force's requirements were too extensive to be treated as a linear programme of the time in terms of scale.²¹

Independently of Dantzig's efforts, other scholars working on the SCOOP project have already been able to make decisions using methods other than linear programming to assemble air-transportable emergency crates of key spare parts, which are then distributed across all Air Force bases worldwide. It is remarkable from the point of view of scientific history that the development of linear programming was not marked by the expectation, otherwise expressed by economists, that economic science would be able to make similarly exact predictions to those in physics. These expectations motivated many mathematical economists in the 1940s, as Alexander Nützenadel pointed out in his investigation.²²

As a showcase project for linear programming in the political knowledge culture of the US Air Force in the context of the Cold War, the SCOOP group also developed a model for the Berlin

¹⁹ For the SCOOP Project see Ceruzzi, *Limits*, 1989, p. 41–43. Dantzig, *Impact*, 1985, p. 15. Dorfman, *Discovery*, 1984. Geisler, *History*, 1986, p. 3–17. Johnson, *Approaches*, 898. Erickson, *Mind*, 72. Klein, *Cold War*, 2007.

²⁰ Orchard-Hays, *History*, 1984, p. 300. For Dantzig's coding work, see also Dantzig, *Impact*, 1985, p. 26. For CPC machines, see Bashe et al., *IBM's*, 1986, p. 71.

²¹ Geisler, *History*, 1986, p. 5. I am talking here about digital high-speed computers in order to distinguish the use of electronic analog computers, which were common in the US aviation industry for solving differential equations, see Vahrenkamp, *Computing Boom*, 2019. Professor Jürgen Heinhold of the University of Munich applied in 1962 for a DFG project on application possibilities of the electronic analog computer to problems of nonlinear optimization, see Brusberg, *Unternehmensforschung* 1965, p. 313.

²² Nützenadel, *economists*, 2005, p. 91.

Airlift of 1948-1949 (Operation Vittel) and made it public at various conferences. Based on the wide range of aircraft models used in the Berlin Airlift, the project abstractified the aircraft fleet and considered only C7 and C47 aircraft. It determined the most cost-effective schedule, taking into account fuel costs, crews and spare engines. The model was never used in daily planning, but served as a tutorial example to demonstrate the benefits of linear programming. It attracted academic attention, and some dissertations on this model were written. Murray Geisler, the head of SCOOP, suspected that the air force's requirements were too extensive and exceeded the scale that a linear programme could handle at the time by a high speed digital computer with a tiny memory of that time. He assumed that 3600 variables and 3600 inequalities would be necessary.²³ The linear programming model for the airlift can serve as a prime example for the thesis of abstraction I advocate. This model depicted the airlift only for the academic arena, but it served neither to prepare nor to control the airlift.

Since in 1947, when Dantzig invented the method of Linear Optimization, a digital high speed computer was not yet available, but small models of Linear Optimization had to be calculated on table calculators, as shown below under 11.4 also at the example of the Diet problem, where Dantzig used the digital high speed computer for the Diet problem only in 1953, these considerations indicate that Dantzig had not conceived the method of Linear Optimization for the digital high speed computer at all. Also, the enthusiasm of the OR community for paper-and-pencil methods, discussed in more detail in Section 11.5 of the Transportation Model, indicates that OR was not even conceived in the context of the high-speed digital computer until the 1950s. Ignoring the computer even became the hallmark of the OR community, whose publications in the textbooks had not made any computer reference until 2010. It was understandable that in the late 1950s, when there was little computer capacity at U.S. universities, researchers helpfully turned to methods that could bypass actual computer use. These were the Monte Carlo method and the transport model. The use of the Monte Carlo method, however, mutated into the publication of tables of random numbers in print media from which researchers could draw. This turn to print media is particularly ironic since the Monte Carlo method was originally developed for the digital computer by John von Neumann.

As Nutzenadel had established in his investigation, the economists of the 1940s had a widespread idea that mechanical analogies, such as hydraulic machines, were to be sought for processes in the national economy. This also included the statistical determination of material flows between economic sectors, which were then formalised into input-output tables that reflect all upstream supply relationships.²⁴ In the Bureau of Labour Statistics of the U.S.

²³ Murray Geisler, *A Personal History of Logistics*, 6. Marshall Woon and Murray Geisler, *Development of Dynamic Models for Program Planning*, 1951. For operation Vittel see Paul Erickson et al., *How Reason Almost Lost Its Mind*, 2013, p. 56s.

²⁴ Nutzenadel, *economists*, 2005, pp. 104–108.

Wassily Leontief collected data for an Input-Output-Matrix of the U.S. and gained a high scientific reputation. But this matrix, let's say A , with 200 rows and 200 columns, could only be used with a high-speed digital computer that was not available until the mid-1950s. To use the table, the "Leontief Inverse" matrix $(I-A)^{-1}$ had to be calculated, which was only possible with a computer.²⁵ Wassily Leontief's research also influenced SCOOP. In Project SCOOP, Dantzig expanded the matrix, known as inter industries relations, to 400 industrial sectors,²⁶ whose Leontief inverse could not be computed by high speed digital computers at that time due to their tiny main memory. What is remarkable from the point of view of scientific history is how the SCOOP Group oscillated between local optimisation in a company or an organisation such as the Air Force and the macroeconomic level of the economy. Ideas on central economic planning ("market socialism") were discussed, which have asserted themselves in their enemy country – the Soviet Union. Under market socialism, the companies worked independently of each other, but the prices of the goods were calculated by a central computer ('super brain').²⁷ As a member of SCOOP, George Dantzig at the 1949 Activity Analysis Conference pointed out, like a Soviet planner, that Leontief's model could answer the central planning question of how much aluminum, steel, and electrical energy would be needed to meet the demands of increasing weapons production.²⁸ As Nützenadel critically remarked, however, it remained open whether the input-output tables merely represent an impressive collection of statistics or whether they provide a useful basis for economic policy decisions.²⁹

3 The transmission of the linear programming to other mathematization approaches

This section shows the rise of linear programming in the knowledge cultures of game theory and economics. When Dantzig presented his discovery of linear programming to John von Neumann in 1947, Neumann's mathematical genius was able to quickly make connections between linear optimization and two-person zero-sum play and also develop the duality theory of linear optimization.³⁰ Each linear program has a dual program with dual variables

²⁵ Frederick Moore, "A Survey of Current Interindustry Models", in National Bureau of Economic Research, 1955, 215-252. For the calculation time of matrix inversion on different machines see Gass, Programming Shoppe, 2002, 62.

²⁶ Dantzig, Operations Research in the world, 1967, p. 115.

²⁷ Dorfman, Robert, Paul Samuelson and Robert Solow, Linear Programming and Economic Analysis, New York, 1958, 395. This book appeared under copyright of the RAND Corporation. Philip Mirowski, Machine Dreams, 259.

²⁸ Marshall Woon and George Dantzig, "The Programming of independent Activities", in: Koopmans 1951, 15–18, here 18.

²⁹ Nützenadel, economists, 2005, p. 108.

³⁰ Dantzig, Impact, 1985. Von Neumann/Morgenstern, Theory, 1944. Morgenstern, Collaboration, 1976. Henn/Moeschlin, Mathematical, 1977. Oskar Morgenstern took over a lectureship at the chair of Professor Rudolf Henn at the University of Karlsruhe in 1973.

that uses the transposed coefficient matrix of the primal program. When solving the primal program, the dual program is implicitly solved at the same time. This primal-dual view considerably expanded the knowledge culture of linear programming. Whereas in the classical simplex algorithm the primary variables are always kept in the admissibility range, i.e. they are not negative and lie in the range of the admissible solutions of the polyhedron, in the dual program the dual variables are transferred step by step into their admissible range in parallel, so that at the end both the primary and the dual variables are admissible. Various algorithms are based on this primal-dual approach. The algorithm for the transport model examines how it can improve existing primary solutions by identifying attractive dual variables. The assignment problem as a specialization of the transport model proceeds differently. There, the dual variables are kept within the admissibility range at each step, while the primal variables are gradually transferred to the admissibility range.³¹ The transport model radiates mathematical beauty, and intellectually and the “game” with primary and dual variables is very fascinating.

Economics has also taken up the primary and dual approaches. In the economic models, primal models are quantity-oriented, while dual models provide corresponding price information. In economics, linear programming could provide models that could be applied to production with linear production functions, to general equilibrium theory, to welfare economics, and to the theory of duopolies. In this respect, linear programming developed into an important component of the static equilibrium models of neoclassical theory. The famous economists Robert Dorfman, Robert Solow and Paul Samuelson were grateful to the RAND Corporation that Linear Programming was considered a fruitful analytical tool and in 1958 supported the publication of their book "Linear Programming and Economic Analysis", as they wrote in the preface. This publication in the RAND Books Series was very influential in that an international student edition also appeared.

4 The successful institutionalization of Operations Research 1950 - 1980 in the U.S., Europe and West Germany

This section deals with the political knowledge cultures in which Operations Research emerged. This has already been researched by the group at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (MPI Group), which held a summer school on this topic in Berlin in 2010.³²

³¹ Mattfeld/Vahrenkamp, Logistics Networks, 2014, p. 173.

³² Erickson and others, How Reason 2013. Klein, Cold War 2015.

US Air Force projects have also driven the transition from military to civilian linear programming applications in administration and industry. RAND entered into agreements with the Universities of Chicago and Pittsburgh to apply the mathematical planning procedures summarized under the term "Operations Research" in the civil sector with the mathematical economist Tjalling Koopmans, with Abraham Charnes and with Herbert Simon.³³ In 1949 – just two years after Dantzig's discovery – RAND organized the later famous conference on Linear Programming at the University of Chicago, announced as "Activity Analysis of Production and Allocation", followed by the first symposium in Linear Programming in Washington, D.C., under the joint patronage of the RAND Corporation and the National Bureau of Standards in 1951. Both conferences took place without any experience with high-speed digital computers, which were only available at RAND in 1953.

In the 1950s, the term Operations Research was used to describe heterogeneous mathematical methods such as game theory, dynamic programming, linear programming, warehousing, spare parts theory, queue theory, simulation and production control, which were used primarily in civilian industry. Scientific societies and journals on the subject of Operations Research were founded in the 1950s, such as the Operation Research Society of America (ORSA) in 1952 and the Institute for Management Science (TIMS) in 1953. Philip Morse, the head of the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group of the Pentagon, became the first president of ORSA and attracted the companies of the military-industrial complex to ORSA, which soon had more than 500 members.³⁴ In the 1960s, ORSA reached the amazing number of 8000 members.³⁵ Consulting companies also founded OR groups, as William Thomas emphasized in his study. In 1953, Abraham Charnes and William Cooper published the first textbook on linear programming.³⁶

This section deals with the social spaces that are described as the institutionalization of the OR by mathematicians in economics departments of universities. The creation of ORSA and TIMS was not based on industry demand for OR applications, but turned out to be an autonomous expert movement of mathematicians supported by military research institutions. The Office of Naval Research has published Naval Research Logistics Quarterly since 1953, which published models of battlefields and became the world's leading international journal for Operations Research in the 1950s. The Office of Ordnance Research of the US Army held its first OR conference in January 1955.³⁷ In his 1960 book on the automation movement, Herbert Simon

³³ Johnson, *Three Approaches to Big Technology*, 898. Paul Erickson et al., *How reason almost lost its mind*, 2013, 72. Klein, *The Cold War Hot*, 2007. Koopmans, *Activity Analysis*, 1951. Klein, *Cold War*, 2015.

³⁴ Krige, *American Hegemony*, 233s.

³⁵ Hanssmann, *Corporate Research*, 1971, p. 11.

³⁶ Thomas, *Operations Research* 2012. Charnes, *Linear Programming*, 1953.

³⁷ Churchman/Ackoff/Arnoff, *Introduction*, 1957, p. 429.

characterized Operations Research as a new science of management driven by mathematicians.³⁸ The autonomous OR movement of mathematicians was not unusual for the 20th century. One can also place Taylorism in the context of various expert movements in the 20th century, as well as the rationalization debate in Europe in the 1920s and the automation debate in the U.S. and Europe around 1960.³⁹

In the 1950s and 1960s chairs of operations research were established in the U.S. and Great Britain (from 1964 in Lancaster) in the management faculties of universities. Further influences from the U.S. on the development of Operations Research in Western Europe can be traced here. Thus authoritative OR textbooks from the U.S. were published in German and French (but not in Italian), such as the book by George Dantzig "Linear Programming"(1963) and the book by West Churchman et al. "Introduction to Operations Research"(1957). The latter was also published in Spanish in Madrid in 1973, opening at the same time Latin American readers to Operations Research. NATO gave important impulses for the spread of Operations Research in Western Europe. NATO headquarters SHAPE in France organised four conferences on OR in the 1950s - the one in 1956 with 120 participants - and thus brought OR to mainland Europe.⁴⁰ Within NATO, OR was also known as "Scientific Advisory" (SA) and was grouped together in the Advisory Group of Aeronautical Research and Development (AGARD).⁴¹ Both NATO institutions, SHAPE and AGARD, organized an OR conference in April 1957 at the Palais de Chailott in Paris - one of the most prestigious conference venues in Paris.⁴² If one reads the conference papers today, the Nato conferences stand out as extremely pale: There was a mutual assurance of the importance of OR. But the actual goals of NATO OR remained unmentioned: did they want to improve radar or the accuracy of anti-aircraft guns? How could the supply of spare parts be accelerated? When France left Nato, the transfer of Nato headquarters from France to Belgium in 1966 radiated to the institutionalization of OR in Belgium, where Jacques Drèze founded CORE, the Center for Operations Research and Econometrics at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) in 1966.⁴³ As early as 1956, the newly founded Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal

³⁸ Simon, Science, 1960, p. 15.

³⁹ Haber, Efficiency, 1964. Maier, Taylorism, 1970. Kline, Cybernetics, 2006.

⁴⁰ Operational Research in Practice, Report of a NATO Conference, herausgegeben von Max Davies und Michel Verhust, Pergamon Press London 1958, p. 1.

⁴¹ The AGARD history: 1952 - 1997 / NATO. Advisory Group for Aerospace Research and Development ; Bliet, Jan van der [ed.]. - Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1999. For the export of OR to Europe by Nato see Krige, Hegemony, Kapitel 8.

⁴² Operational Research in Practice, Report of a NATO Conference, edited by Max Davies und Michel Verhust, Pergamon Press London 1958.

⁴³ NATO Conference on the Role and Evaluation of Military Exercises in Operational Research, London, England, 25 August 1964. Kirby, M. and R. Capey, The Origins and Diffusion of Operational Research in the UK, 1998. Brusberg, Unternehmensforschung 1965, p. 52.

Republic of Germany awarded three small projects, not on weapons development but on the methodology of OR, to the universities of Munich, Münster and Kiel.⁴⁴

In the 1960s, OR chairs were also established in Switzerland and the Federal Republic of Germany (BRD). As early as 1958, the habilitated mathematician Hans Künzi held an OR chair at the University of Zurich and from 1966 an additional parallel OR chair at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich. Since 1962 he has been President of the Swiss Association for Operations Research (SVOR). In his opening lecture on "Operations Research in Science, Business and Politics" at the annual conference of the German Society for Operations Research in Bochum in 1971, Künzi reported on a project with the Swiss Ministry of Economics in which he modelled the cost-minimal allocation of arable land in Swiss agriculture using an optimisation model in order to ensure the supply of food to the Swiss population in the event of defence. To determine the optimal solution, the model ran for one hour on a high-speed digital computer. He also reported on a cost-minimized selection of a fighter aircraft for the Swiss military and the optimization of inner-city traffic light circuits.⁴⁵ However, these three examples lack industrial applications. From the title "Unternehmensforschung in Wissenschaft, Wirtschaft und Politik" ("Operations Research in Science, Business and Politics"), Künzi first refers to science and thus indicates the self-referential understanding of the social space of Operations Research.

In 1963, there were already three institutes for Operations Research at universities in Germany:⁴⁶

- Institute for Industrial Enterprise Research at the University of Münster, headed by Ludwig Pack, Professor of Business Administration.
- Institute for Econometrics and Operations Research at the University of Bonn, headed by Martin Beckmann, Professor of Economics, after working with the mathematical economist Tjalling Koopmans (see below) in the Cowles Commission at the University of Chicago.⁴⁷
- Institute for Operations Research at the University of Hamburg, headed by Herbert Jacob, Professor of Industrial Management and Organization.

⁴⁴ Benecke, Status of Operations Research in Germany, p. 23, in: Max Davies et al.: Operational Research in Practice, Report of a NATO Conference, London 1958.

⁴⁵ Künzi, Corporate Research, 1971, p. 8.

⁴⁶ Brusberg, Corporate Research, 1965, p. 253.

⁴⁷ For the role of Tjalling Koopmans in the Cowles Commission see Mirowski, Machine, 2002.

The boom in Operations Research observed by Thomas Bradtke⁴⁸ in Germany between 1960 and 1970 was given a considerable boost by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) when it included the field of corporate research in its priority programme in 1961. In 1962 and 1963, she financed 16 and 30 small-scale projects on Operations Research, respectively, with one to two man-years each, at the chairs of West German universities, which were predominantly set up in model theory without empirical reference, as the thematic list of all projects revealed.⁴⁹ The DFG commissioned a report on the state of Operations Research, which was published as a 400-page book in 1965. The author, Diplomingenieur Helmut Brusberg, recommended an extension of the DFG priority programme and the inclusion of "at least one mathematician" in the local OR research groups.⁵⁰ There was no mention of female mathematicians in the report. The Faculty of Economic Sciences at the University of Bonn benefited from the close proximity of the DFG headquarters in Bad Godesberg. Not only was a literature reference for OR in Bonn financed by the DFG, which already comprised 836 volumes in 1963.⁵¹ In 1962 and 1963, the faculty was also able to acquire two and three small projects respectively in the OR priority programme: Professor Horst Albach, who played a leading role in business administration, received the model theoretical projects:

- Operational issues of investment policy,
- Applications of Dynamic Programming in Investment Theory and
- Scheduling and production planning.

And Professor Wilhelm Krelle received two self-referential projects from the DFG: "Promotion of Operations Research."⁵² Krelle graduated with a degree in physics and already played a decisive role in the OR network when the DGU was founded and as its chairman. On the macroeconomic level, he developed large econometric models of the German economy ("the Bonn Model") and became spokesperson of the DFG Collaborative Research Centre 21 "Economic Prognosis, Decision and Equilibrium Models" at the University of Bonn from 1970 to 1984. In subproject B1, he conducted research on mathematical econometric prognosis models of the economy as a whole.⁵³

With an economic and mathematical education, Rudolf Henn occupied the Chair of Econometrics and Operations Research at the University of Karlsruhe in 1966 and became one

⁴⁸ Bradtke, Basics, 2003, p. 2.

⁴⁹ Brusberg, Operations Research 1965, pp. 313-316.

⁵⁰ See also Albach, Unternehmensforschung, 1967.

⁵¹ Catalogue of the Reference for Corporate Research, Institute for Econometrics and Corporate Research, University of Bonn 1963-1970, Institute for Econometrics and Corporate Research, Bonn, 1971.

⁵² Brusberg, Operations Research 1965, p. 313s.

⁵³ On Wilhelm Krelle see Nützenadel, Ökonomen, 2005, pp. 118-119.

of the leading OR promoters in Germany with his journal "Operations Research Verfahren" published since 1963. Volume 1, published in 1963, published the papers of the conference on OR procedures in industry held in Zurich on 9 and 10 December 1959. The conference was organized by the Research Center Operations Research and Econometrics of the University of Göttingen and the Institute of Business Administration of the University of St. Gallen.⁵⁴ Volume 2, published in 1965, contained the opening lecture by Henri Theil on "Econometrics and Operations Research ", which he gave at the joint meeting of TIMS and the Econometric Society in Zurich in September 1964, indicating the influence of TIMS in Europe and the link between the fields of OR and econometrics. With the publication of volume 3, the mathematician Burkhardt Rauhut, who holds a degree in mathematics, assumed the function of editor at the Henn Chair in the Institute for Economic and Social Sciences at the Technical University of Karlsruhe. In 1966, both Henn and Künzi jointly published the basic work "Einführung in die Unternehmensforschung" ("Introduction to Operations Research ") for university teaching in the Heidelberg pocket books of Springer Verlag in two volumes.⁵⁵

Five newly created OR chairs in Germany indicate a successful institutionalisation of OR in the social spaces of universities in the period 1969 - 1981:

- Hans-Jürgen Zimmermann (Chair of Corporate Research) at the RWTH Aachen University in 1969. Zimmermann completed his studies in the mathematical models strongly influenced course of studies of the graduate engineer and received his doctorate in mathematical economics. Zimmermann introduced methods of fuzzy sets into the OR.
- Christoph Schneeweiss (Chair of Operations Research) at the FU Berlin 1971. Schneeweiss received his doctorate in physics, a field strongly influenced by mathematical models. Schneeweiss was president of EURO from 1999 to 2000 (see below).
- Heiner Müller-Merbach, 1972 Professor of Business Administration and Operations Research at the TH Darmstadt. From 1961 to 1967 he was an assistant at the Institute for Practical Mathematics of the TH Darmstadt.
- Dieter Pressmer (Chair of Corporate Research) at the University of Hamburg in 1974. He completed his studies in the mathematical models strongly influenced course of the graduate engineer. Pressmer was President of the 9th World Congress of IFORS 1984 (see below).
- Wolfgang Domschke (Chair of Operations Research) at the Bundeswehr University Hamburg 1975. Domschke obtained his academic degrees at the Faculty of Economics of the Technical University Karlsruhe, which is strongly influenced by mathematics.

⁵⁴ For the history of econometrics, see Nützenadel, Ökonomen, 2005, pp. 91s.

⁵⁵ Henn/Künzi, Introduction, 1966 with biographical data of Henn and Künzi.

- Richard Vahrenkamp (Chair of Operations Research) at the University of Kassel in 1981. Vahrenkamp completed his studies at the University of Heidelberg with a degree in mathematics.

The boom in Operations Research observed by Thomas Bradtke in the Federal Republic of Germany continued after this constellation in the years 1970 to 1980.⁵⁶ The tendency to fill OR chairs at economics faculties primarily with mathematically trained applicants can only be stated here. The reason for the high reputation of this applicant category at the economic science faculties can only be explained by studying the archive holdings, where files of appointment procedures could provide information. One can generally assume a high reputation of the modern quantitative methods originating from the U.S. in Europe, which were also created and supported in the press by numerous picture reports about the arrival of large computers from the U.S. by air freight at airports in Germany and Switzerland.⁵⁷

Hans Künzi and Martin Beckmann gained a dominant position in the German-speaking area of the OR research network (including Austria and Switzerland) when they published a softcover Lecture Notes series at Springer Verlag in 1968: The "Lecture Notes in Operations Research and Mathematical Economics", which were renamed "Lecture Notes in Operations Research and Mathematical Systems" from volume 15 onwards in 1969. It was renamed to "Lecture Notes in Economics and Mathematical Systems" in 1971 from volume number 60 onwards. Künzi also used volume 1 of the OR series on decisions in cases of uncertainty as training material for the SVOR.⁵⁸ With these series, Springer Verlag opened up a new publication format based on the duplication of typewriter manuscripts using the offset process, thus avoiding the costly lead typesetting and enabling rapid publication after manuscript submission. The rows grew explosively. The series "Lecture Notes in Economics and Mathematical Systems" reached the number of 170 titles in 1979, i.e. 16 titles per year since 1968, as the editors documented in a special volume.⁵⁹ The other series already reached the number of 50 titles in 1970, i.e. also 16 titles per year.⁶⁰ Before the success of the Lecture Notes series, Hans Künzi and Wilhelm Krelle laid the foundation for the hardcover book series "Ökonometrie und Unternehmensforschung" at Springer Verlag. Volume 1 was Künzi/Krelle/Oettli: Nichtlineare Programmierung, 1962, then four years later Volume 2 was

⁵⁶ Bradtke, Basics, 2003, p. 2.

⁵⁷ See the great press echo of the arrival of a UNIVAC computer at Frankfurt's Rhein-Main airport in a PAN AM cargo plane on August 6, 1956. The computer was destined for the contract research company Battelle in Frankfurt a.M., see Die Lochkarte – Hausmitteilungen der Remington Rand GmbH Frankfurt a. M., No. 168, 1956, p. 1973.

⁵⁸ H. Bühlmann and others: Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Decision in Uncertainty, Berlin 1968, second edition 1969.

⁵⁹ Beckmann/Künzi 1979.

⁶⁰ Beckmann, Operations Research Today, 1971, Directory of Titles.

published in 1966 with the German translation of Dantzig's book "Linear Programming and Extensions". Within 10 years, 20 more volumes followed.⁶¹ The dictum "Hour of the Economists", coined by Alexander Nützenadel, seems to apply to the 1970s, considering the rapid expansion the Lecture Notes series and Künzi's and Krelle's hard-cover series.

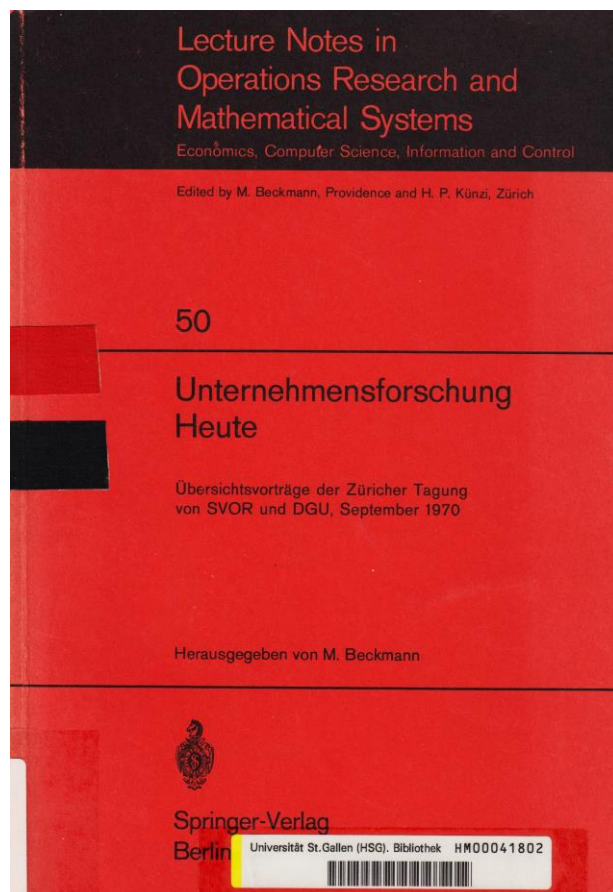


Figure 1: Lecture Notes, Volume 50, 1971

As the individual titles indicate, both Lecture Notes series united a colorful bouquet of diverse topics: e.g. OR procedures for operational applications, such as queue calculations. Then titles appeared on statistics, econometrics and economics. Together with Otto Opitz, Rudolf Henn published a textbook with a standard text on neoclassical consumption and production theory (OR series, vol. 25, 1970), which was used as accompanying material to the basic lectures at the TH Karlsruhe. But research reports were also published. Carl Christian von Weizsäcker,

⁶¹ A list of the published volumes is printed in Burkhard/Derigs: Assignment und Matching Probleme, 1980, backcover. Even before the Lecture Notes series, the Akademie Verlag in East Berlin published the protocols of the conference "Mathematics and Cybernetics in Economics" in a similar format to the Lecture Notes series already in 1965: Softcover, offset printing to enable rapid publication, as the foreword emphasized, and a colored, distinctive crossbar on the title (cf. figure 6). Apparently, this publication served as a model for the Lecture Notes series.

Professor of Economics at the University of Heidelberg, published a research report on Steady State Capital Theory (OR Series, Vol. 54, 1971). As volume 50 of the OR series, Martin Beckmann published the volume "Unternehmensforschung heute" in 1971, which contained six purely mathematical overview lectures at the joint conference of SVOR and DGU in Zurich in September 1970 (cf. figure 1):

- W. Dinkelbach: About a solution to the vector maximum problem,
- F. Fenschel: Recent developments in the field of queuing theory,
- D. Hochstädter: Recent developments in stochastic storage theory,
- P. Kall: Development trends in mathematical optimization,
- B. Korte: Integer programming,
- W. Uhlmann: Basic concepts of decision theory.

The fact that the editors of the Economics series combined the "Mathematical Systems" with "Economics" in the series title proved to be favourable for the marketing of mathematical OR methods and thus gave the "Mathematical Systems" a relevance in terms of content.

The history of the institutionalization of OR conveyed here shows the dual role of numerous chairs in the fields of OR and econometrics. These are the chairs of Drèze, Beckmann, Henn and Krelle. Also numerous conference organized panels both for econometrics and for OR. Beckmann and Künzi also offered a series of publications on both subject areas in their Lecture Notes. In 1979 Martin Beckmann together with Günter Menges and Reinhard Selten published the Handbuch der mathematischen Wirtschaftswissenschaften (Handbook of Mathematical Economics), which contained volumes on Operations Research and econometrics. In terms of scientific history, the dual role of OR and econometrics is remarkable because it is a coupling of two incompatible areas. Econometrics is macroeconomically oriented and uses empirical data on the national economy and its interdependencies, which it obtains from the Federal Statistical Office, as significant input for its mathematical models. Econometrics thus belongs to empirical economic research, which makes predictions and is therefore relevant for policy advice and in the economic departments of banks.⁶² On the other hand, Operations Research is focused on operational processes and provides mathematical procedures independent of empirical data without making predictions.

The ideas of Operations Research were also disseminated in the socialist GDR. There the term "Unternehmensforschung" was not used, but "operational research". The Grundlagenwerk by Werner Dück and Manfred Bliefferich appeared in 1971 in a three-volume work in East Berlin,

⁶² Nützenadel, economists, 2005, p. 92.

which can be seen as a remake of the book by Henn and Künzi.⁶³ Also in volume 1 there are, as with Henn and Künzi, only mathematical basics in analysis and linear algebra. Volume 2 deals with game theory.

⁶³ Dück/Blieferich, Operations Research, 1971.

5 The founding of OR societies in German-speaking countries

Before an increased institutionalization of OR at universities began in the FRG in the 1960s, the Arbeitskreis Operational Research (AKOR) was founded in Darmstadt in 1957 and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Unternehmensforschung (DGU) in Munich in 1961, whose membership reached 259 in 1962. These societies published the journals "Ablauf- und Planungsforschung" (five times a year) and "Unternehmensforschung" (four times a year)⁶⁴ AKOR was founded in February 1957 at the Institute for Practical Mathematics by Professor Alwin Walther of the TH Darmstadt at the instigation of the Committee for Economic Manufacturing (AWF) - associated with the Rationalisierungskuratorium der deutschen Wirtschaft (RKW) based in Frankfurt a.M. - in the run-up to the first IFORS conference in Oxford (Great Britain) in September 1957.⁶⁵ In 1971 AKOR and DGU merged to form the German Society for Operations Research (DGOR), which since then has held annual meetings and publishes its papers in annual proceedings. The number of personal DGOR members grew from 496 in 1972 to over 600 in 1978.⁶⁶

The founding of an international umbrella organization for national OR societies in Oxford in 1959, the International Federation of Operational Research Societies (IFORS), see section 6, exerted considerable pressure in German-speaking countries on how the respective national OR initiatives in Austria, Switzerland, and West Germany should position themselves in relation to IFORS. Which organization should represent German-speaking countries in IFORS? Should Austrians or Swiss be represented by their own organization? The Swiss OR community responded to the IFORS challenge by founding its own Swiss Association for Operations Research (SVOR) in Zurich in 1961. The foundation was not completed in time in 1960 for Switzerland to participate in the 1960 IFORS conference in Aix-en-Provence. Unfortunately, the SVOR has not published any documents on the process of its founding. At the SVOR's founding congress on September 8 and 9, 1961, at ETH Zurich, which was attended by 400 interested parties,⁶⁷ various OR researchers gave presentations, including Rudolf Henn, who later became an OR promoter in West Germany and was then a professor of Operations

⁶⁴ Brusberg, *Corporate Research*, 1965, p. 56f, p. 242-244. Albach, *Corporate Research*, 1967, p. 254.

⁶⁵ Davies, Max (ed.): *International Conference on Operational Research (Oxford)*, London 1957, p. 494. Professor Alwin Walther's Institute for Practical Mathematics was surrounded by scandal because of his cooperation with the SS in 1944. Walther planned a concentration camp for prisoners who were to perform mathematical calculations for the V2 rocket in forced labor, see Melanie Hanel: *Die TH Darmstadt im Nationalsozialismus*, Darmstadt 2014.

⁶⁶ 40 Reinhold Sellien, Helmut Sellien (eds.), *Gablers Wirtschafts Lexikon*, 10th edition, Wiesbaden 1980, column 1003f. Bradtke, *Grundlagen*, 2003, p. 3. German Society for Operations Research (ed.), *Membership Directory*, 1978, Niddatal 1978. Brusberg, *Corporate Research*, 1965, p. 241.

⁶⁷ Künzi 1960A.

research at the University of St. Gallen. The lectures were published in issue 11/1961 of the journal “Industrielle Organisation” (Industrial Organization) published by ETH Zurich, thus giving them an application context in industry.⁶⁸ Together with Hans Künzi, a mathematician who was elected president of the SVOR, Henn later published a two-volume work on management science. The Austrian OR community could not decide whether to found its own society or to be represented by the West German AKOR (Arbeitskreis Operational Research) at IFORS. The indecision of the Austrians also led to a delay in AKOR being accepted as the West German representative in IFORS. It was clear that the German Democratic Republic (GDR) would not be accepted into IFORS, as IFORS was anti-communist from the outset and was intended to represent the free West. As a separate state, the GDR was not recognized in the West anyway. The anti-communist orientation of IFORS was not predominant in the umbrella organization of national societies for computer applications, the International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP), which was also founded in 1959, as it also had members from the Eastern Bloc. However, Alwin Walther, as representative of the German Working Group for Computing Systems (DARA), insisted at the IFIP Executive Committee meeting in Rome in 1960 that the West German DARA also represent the eastern part of Germany.⁶⁹

What is striking about the founding histories of the OR initiatives in German-speaking countries (SVOR, AKOR, DGU, DAU) is the importance of the founding of IFORS as a catalyst. The OR conference in Oxford in 1957 spread to Switzerland, where it led to the institutionalization of operations research at three universities in 1958. Some of the innovations originated in the provinces. In the small town of St. Gallen, the business school created a chair for “Econometrics and Management Science,” which was filled by Rudolf Henn.⁷⁰ In the small university town of Fribourg, located between Bern and Lausanne, Professor Ernst Billeter established the “Institute for Automation and Management Science.”⁷¹ The University of Zurich opened a chair for “Electronic Data Processing and Operations Research,” which was filled by Hans Künzi. Public attention for OR was heightened by the conference on management science at ETH Zurich, which was organized by the Viennese statistics professor Slawtscho Sogaroff from October 21 to 23, 1958, but at which neither Henn nor Künzi gave presentations. Professor Walter Daenzer from ETH Zurich emphasized at the conference that operations research was needed for decisions of great significance in business and administration. Professor Ernst Billeter from the Fribourg Institute for

⁶⁸ Ablauf- und Planungsforschung, vol. 2, 1961, issue 3, p. 66.

⁶⁹ Protocoll of the Executivkommittee under [https://www.ifip.org//images/stories/ifip/public/Archive/MinHist/1960%20council%20jun%20rome%20\(it\).pdf](https://www.ifip.org//images/stories/ifip/public/Archive/MinHist/1960%20council%20jun%20rome%20(it).pdf). (visited on 20 Juli 2021)

⁷⁰ <https://www.archivportal-d.de>, Digitalarchiv KIT, Rudolf Henn.

⁷¹ Jürg Kohlas: Eine kleine Geschichte der Informatik an der Universität Freiburg, Freiburg 2003.

Automation and Management Research gave an overview of the methods of management research in his keynote speech.⁷²

The founding of the German OR societies highlights the division between practitioners and mathematicians. AKOR was founded in February 1957 at the Institute for Practical Mathematics by Professor Alwin Walther of the Technical University of Darmstadt at the instigation of the in the run-up to the international OR conference in Oxford (Great Britain) in September 1957 in order to obtain a platform for participation in this conference.⁷³ Although IFORS was not founded until 1959, the Oxford OR conference was considered the precursor to IFORS or even the first IFORS conference. The “Rationalisierungskuratorium der deutsche Wirtschaft” (RKW) already played the role of OR promoter in West Germany in 1955 when it organized a trip to the US, financed by the Ministry of Economics, for five experts – including Helmut Kregeloh from the Institute for Practical Mathematics at the Technical University of Darmstadt – to explore the state of OR implementation in large companies in the US.⁷⁴ The founding of IFORS in 1959 led to a professionalization of AKOR's image, as it began publishing the journal “Ablauf- und Planungsforschung” (Process and Planning Research) in 1960. AKOR was led by Helmut Kregerloh, a mathematician without a doctorate, but who nevertheless had an academic background as an assistant to Alwin Walther at the Mathematical Institute of the Technical University of Darmstadt. AKOR focused primarily on the consulting business in order to spread OR methods in companies. The consulting market was apparently attractive, as the Technical Academy in Wuppertal also wanted to offer OR consulting services. AKOR agreed with the Technical Academy that the latter should only offer courses lasting one to three days. Longer courses were to be reserved for AKOR.⁷⁵ In order to cover the consulting markets in Austria and Switzerland, AKOR meetings were also offered in those countries, for example on October 22, 1959, in Salzburg.⁷⁶

As vice president of IFIP in 1960, Alwin Walther succeeded in bringing the second international IFIP congress to Munich in 1962. This congress was attended by an overwhelming number of 2,800 experts and made it clear to the German OR community that they should not limit themselves to mathematical models, but rather recognize the importance of computer

⁷² Report on the conference in: *Unternehmensforschung*, 2. 1958, p. 208.

⁷³ Davies, Max (ed.): *International Conference on Operational Research (Oxford)*, London 1957, p. 494.

⁷⁴ *Rationalisierungskuratorium der Deutsche Wirtschaft (ed.): Ablauf– und Planungsforschung, Operations Research, Erfahrungsbericht einer deutschen Studiengruppe von einer Reise in die USA*, München 1958. As the participants indirectly admitted, they were methodologically overwhelmed by the task of investigating the status of OR implementation in large companies. Instead, they discussed various OR methods in the book, such as warehousing and queuing, which they had taken from well-known publications on OR.

⁷⁵ *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 2, 1961, issue 1, p. 16.

⁷⁶ *Unternehmensforschung*, vol. 4, 1960, p. 95.

applications in production and administration.⁷⁷ Numerous papers on this topic were published in the AKOR journal, the Journal for Process and Planning Research.⁷⁸

A tribute to Alwin Walther on his 65th birthday, including a portrait photo in the Journal for Process and Planning Research, glossed over his involvement in the Nazi regime.⁷⁹ Professor Alwin Walther's Institute for Practical Mathematics, which also promoted computer applications, was embroiled in scandal due to its intention to cooperate with the Nazi SS organization in 1944. The SS planned a concentration camp for prisoners who were to perform mathematical calculations for the V2 rocket under forced labor.⁸⁰

While AKOR was primarily made up of practitioners, i.e., employees or even senior staff from research and development institutions at large companies, mathematicians at universities took the lead in the German Society for Business Research (DGU). Compared to the practitioners, the mathematicians at university chairs in the DGU tended to marginalize computer applications. The founding of the Society for Management Research in Munich⁸¹ in 1961 can be traced back to the Technical Committee for Management Research, which was established in 1959 by the Society for Applied Mathematics and Mechanics (GAMM) as a result of the founding of IFORS at the Institute for Applied Mathematics at the University of Freiburg i. Br. with Professor Görtler as its chairman.⁸² This technical committee founded an umbrella organization of German societies for operations research—the German Committee for Management Science (DAU)—in order to obtain German and West German representation rights for the International Federation of Operational Societies (IFORS), founded in 1959, at the second IFORS conference in Aix-en-Provence in 1960. In fact, GAMM succeeded in sending a representative to Aix via AKOR. In order to gain academic weight, the German Committee for Operational Research organized a conference in Freiburg im Breisgau in August 1960 with speakers from England and the USA. Since the Freiburg research center of the German Aerospace Society was a co-organizer of the conference, it can be assumed that federal funds were available to finance the considerable travel expenses of the foreign speakers.⁸³

⁷⁷ Report of the conference by Heiner Müller–Merbach, in: *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 3, 1962, issue 1, pp. 113–115.

⁷⁸ Alwin Walther: *Der Rechenautomat und Operational Research*, in: *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 4, 1963, issue 1, pp. 146–157.

⁷⁹ *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 4, 1963, issue 1, p. 181.

⁷⁹ *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 4, 1963, issue 1, pp. 181–182.

⁸⁰ Mehrtens, *Angewandte Mathematik*, p. 344.

⁸¹ *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 3, 1962, issue 1, p. 14.

⁸² *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 2, 1961, issue 1, p. 15. *Unternehmensforschung*, vol. 4, 1960, p. 96s.

⁸³ Report of the conference in: *Ablauf– und Planungsforschung*, vol. 2, 1961, issue 2, p. 24.

According to the AKOR accountability report from 1960, following discussions with the incumbent president of IFORS, Sir Charles Goodeves, and the future president of IFORS, Philip Morse, AKOR was able to retain its German representation rights vis-à-vis IFORS.⁸⁴ Wilhelm Krelle, trained as a mathematical physicist and professor of economics at the University of Bonn since 1958, was on the board of the Society for Management Research and attracted many mathematicians to the DGU. Krelle was able to persuade AKOR that German applications for presentations at the third IFORS conference in Oslo in 1963 should go through his desk.⁸⁵ The DGU attempted to acquire the journal of the same name, *Unternehmensforschung*, as its association organ.⁸⁶ Although, as a member of the DGU board, he was actually interested in business research, Krelle took the liberty of publishing a purely mathematical book on nonlinear optimization without computer applications and without applications in business with Springer Verlag in 1962, together with the habilitated mathematician Hans Künzi. The German Society for Business Research reached 259 members in 1962.⁸⁷ In 1971, AKOR and DGU merged to form the German Society for Operations Research (DGOR), which has since held annual conferences and published the presentations given at these conferences in annual proceedings. The number of individual members of the DGOR grew from 496 in 1972 to over 600 in 1978.⁸⁸

The journal “*Unternehmensforschung*” (Business Research), subtitled “Operations Research,” was founded in 1956 by statistics professor Slawtscho Sagoroff at the University of Vienna, completely independently of the DGU, and was published by Physica-Verlag.⁸⁹ According to the editorial in the first issue, the journal *Unternehmensforschung* was very application-oriented and not merely focused on mathematical models. The editor brought together numerous prominent names on the journal's advisory board, including Alwin Walther and Oskar Morgenstern, who had worked in Vienna before his forced emigration. The journal also published numerous articles on the use of computers in production control. Sagoroff apparently coined the term “business research.” At the 27th annual conference of the German Statistical Society in Essen in 1956, Sagoroff further institutionalized the term “business research” and suggested in advance that the committee “Application of Statistical Methods in Industry” meet on the topic of “Business Research in Manufacturing Companies.”⁹⁰ Sagoroff attempted to establish operations research in Switzerland with a conference at ETH Zurich on

⁸⁴ *Ablauf- und Planungsforschung*, vol. 2, 1961, issue 1, p. 16.

⁸⁵ *Ablauf- und Planungsforschung*, vol. 3, 1962, issue 1, p. 31.

⁸⁶ *Ablauf- und Planungsforschung*, vol. 3, 1962, issue 1, p. 15.

⁸⁷ Brusberg, *Unternehmensforschung*, 1965, p. 56f, p. 242–244. Albach, *Unternehmensforschung*, 1967, p. 254.

⁸⁸ Reinhold Sellien, Helmut Sellien (eds.), *Gablers Wirtschafts Lexikon*, 10. edition, Wiesbaden 1980, Spalte 1003f. Bradtke, *Grundlagen*, 2003, p. 3. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Operations Research (ed.), *Mitgliederverzeichnis*, 1978, Niddatal 1978. Brusberg, *Unternehmensforschung*, 1965, p. 241.

⁸⁹ Adolf Adam: Slawtscho Sagoroff, *Leben und Wirken*. In: *Metrika* 14 (1969) 1, p. 133-137.

⁹⁰ *Unternehmensforschung*, 1. 1956, issue 1, p. 63.

October 10 and 11, 1958.⁹¹ It is striking that the journal *Unternehmensforschung* did not cover OR initiatives in Austria at all. After the German Society for Management Research was founded in 1961, it attempted to take over the journal *Unternehmensforschung* as its association organ.

What is remarkable about the numerous conferences on operations research in German-speaking countries in the 1950s and 1960s is the low content of new research results. In fact, in many cases, only results from England and the USA were presented by the speakers, who, if possible, should also be from England and the USA. At each new conference, the magic of mathematical methods was re-evoked for practitioners from the business world, such as linear planning techniques and Monte Carlo methods. In many cases, well-known topics from the 1930s, such as warehousing, queuing, and Markov processes, were also addressed and given the fresh label of operations research: Rudolf Henn took up the Markov processes known since 1906 and gave a presentation on Markov processes in industrial plants at the founding meeting of the SVOR,⁹² while Wilhelm Krelle gave a presentation there on decisions under uncertainty.⁹³ There were also presentations on queuing systems and warehousing. The book on nonlinear optimization published by Krelle and Künzi in 1962, which went through numerous reprints, also contained only US results from the 1950s, but no new research results from the two authors, who may have speculated that nonlinear optimization could become the third mega-topic in operations research, following linear optimization in 1947 and dynamic optimization in 1957. The debate in England in the 1950s, reported by John Krige, about whether operations research was really new did not take place at all in Germany.⁹⁴

The OR initiatives were primarily formed by academic interests. There are no known initiatives by large manufacturing companies such as Volkswagen, Siemens, or BASF to establish operations research in the founding phase. Nor is this the case in the banking and insurance sectors. Rather, the spread of operations research took place in reverse, with mathematicians promoting OR initiatives and presenting the advantages of operations research to so-called practitioners from the business world in training courses.

⁹¹ Tagungsbericht in: *Unternehmensforschung*, 2. 1958, p. 208.

⁹² Rudolf Henn: *Wirtschaftliche Anwendungsmöglichkeiten stochastischer Prozesse*, in: *Industrielle Organisation*, vol. 31, 1962, issue 1, p. 19–24. Henn conceded, that the model of Markov–Processes the production processes strongly simplicated.

⁹³ *Industrielle Organisation*, vol. 30, 1961, issue 11, p. 523–526.

⁹⁴ Krige, John: *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe*, Cambridge (Mass) 2006.

It is surprising that the computer pioneer Konrad Zuse and his computer production company, Zuse KG in Hünfeld and Bad Hersfeld, published numerous articles in the Viennese journal "Unternehmensforschung" (Business Research). Konrad Zuse published the essay "Große und kleine programmgesteuerte Rechengeräte" (Large and Small Program-Controlled Computing Devices) in Volume 1, 1956/57. He also published the text of his lecture at the award ceremony for his honorary doctorate at the Technical University of Berlin on May 28, 1957: "Thoughts on Automation and the Problem of the Technical Germ Cell," in Volume 1, 1956/57. A note on the honorary doctorate with a photo of Zuse also appeared there. With his lecture text, Zuse ties in with the heated automation debate that took place in the USA and Europe between 1955 and 1960.⁹⁵ Finally, Konrad Zuse KG published an article with author Adolf Adam about the Z70 computer, which was specially developed by Zuse KG to control production. The article in Volume 4, 1960 is entitled: "The Z70 as an information technology solution to a business organization problem." Although Alwin Walther's Institute for Practical Mathematics at the Technical University of Darmstadt is located in the same state of Hesse as Konrad Zuse's computer factory, Zuse never published in the AKOR journal, the journal for "process and planning research."

As an analysis of the DGOR proceedings revealed, the vast majority of contributions were model theoretically without an empirical part that would have presented collected data. The self-referential system Operations Research thus offered a platform for extensive model theoretical activities that shielded scholars from the need to collect empirical data. At the annual conference of the DGOR 1981 in Göttingen, Heiner Müller-Merbach, since 1972 Professor of Business Administration and OR at the TH Darmstadt, had already taken a stand against the hypothetical and nominal nature of many OR papers, which, for example, invoked a fictitious industrial enterprise with the words "An industrial enterprise has three machines..." to then continue the model-theoretical approach. He called for a stronger empirical orientation. However, his appeal had no effect and the congress machines of DGOR, EURO and TIMS continued undisturbed to gain reputation. The annual conference of GOR 2017 in Berlin was still attended by 900 people.⁹⁶

The image that AKOR, DGU and DGOR drew of Operations Research in the specialist public led to an exaggerated expectation of business leaders in Germany in the 1960s. The University Seminar of Economics of the University of Bonn, which saw itself as a education institute for business executives, criticized these expectations in a publication in 1971: "These ideas are taken to extremes when the mathematical procedures are seen in connection with the still

⁹⁵ For the discourse on automation see Richard Vahrenkamp: Von Taylor zu Toyota – Rationalisierungsdebatten im 20. Jahrhundert, Köln 2013.

⁹⁶ GOR was the successor organisation to DGOR. <http://www.gor-ev.de/rueckblick-or-2017-in-berlin>. (accessed on 30 May 2018).

mystical role of the computer... A member of the board of a large energy company, for example, had the expectation that one only had to collect some data and pull some machine programs off the shelf in order to receive the optimal investment plan at the other end of the computer....⁹⁷ In this respect, these expectations of business executives were exactly what the OR university researchers had pursued with their self-referential approach.

6 The Founding IFORS 1959

International cooperation between national OR societies contributed to the formation of an international, self-referential operations research system and explains its explosive growth. As early as 1959, the US, UK, and French national OR societies founded the International Federation of Operations Research Societies (IFORS).⁹⁸ The precursor conference to IFORS, held in Oxford (England) from September 2 to 6, 1957, and organized by TIMS, ORSA, and the British OR society, attracted 250 participants, mainly from NATO countries and the British Commonwealth, but including two Polish participants as the only representatives from the communist bloc.⁹⁹ A very carefully edited book with more than 500 pages was published as the conference proceedings. This book was elaborately produced using lead typesetting rather than cheap phototypesetting. The conference took place in September 1957, and by the end of 1957, the proceedings had already been published by English Universities Press in London as a very carefully edited hardcover. The high-quality publication within four months indicates a large staff in the background and generous funding for the project, presumably from the US. In addition to the technical presentations, the book also contains reports on panel discussions, e.g., on OR teaching and training. It also contains numerous reports on the state of operations research in various countries, especially in Europe. There is also a list of the more than 200 participants, sorted by country of origin. The volume is introduced by a group photo of 200 participants with an index of participants.

The photo of the participants at the Oxford conference can be interpreted from a gender perspective. It is striking that only a few participants are female. We find Dr. Anna Restelli from the Center for Operations Research at Bocconi University in Milan in position 186. However, the Center for Operations Research is headed by Professor Francesco Brambilla, a

⁹⁷ Hanssmann, 1971, p. 25.

⁹⁸ Rand, Graham: IFORS: the formative years, in: *International Transactions in Operational Research*, 7(2000), pp. 101–107.

⁹⁹ Davies, Max (ed.): *International Conference on Operational Research (Oxford), London 1957*, Forword, p. 523. The polish attendants were Professor Jan Oderfeld und Professor Rajski, both Institute for Mathematics at University Warschau.

man. We do not find any female OR researchers with the rank of professor on the list of participants. The situation has changed since 1957. The following table, obtained from Google searches by the author, provides an overview of female OR researchers with the rank of professor, including the years in which they were appointed to the professorship.

Name	Prenome	Professor since	University	Country
Fischer	Hannelore	1968	Economic Research Institute	East Germany
Speranza	Grazia	1983	University Milan	Italy
Werners	Brigitte	1992	University Bochum	Germany
Le Thi Hoai An	Le Thi Hoai An	1998	National Institute for Applied Sciences, Rouen	France
Schöbel	Anita	2004	University Göttingen	Germany
Pagel	Christina	2005	Clinical Operational Research Unit (CORU) at University College London	Great Britain
Ljubić	Ivana	2015	ESSEC Business School of Paris	France
Shen	Liji	2015	WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management, Vallendar	Germany

Table 1: Female OR researchers with the rank of professor.

The list also includes Anita Schöbel, who was president of Euro in 2024. The first female OR researcher with the rank of professor was Hannelore Fischer, who was appointed professor of operations research in East Germany in 1968. The author of this paper has created an entry for Hannelore Fischer in Wikipedia. Grazia Speranza followed in 1983 at the University of Milan as the second female OR professor.

Five members of the West German Operational Research Working Group (AKOR) participated in the Oxford conference 1957. According to the list of participants, these were Alexis Joseph from M.I.B., Helmut Kregerloh from the Technical University of Darmstadt, E. Liebel from Bergbau AG Koenig Ludwig, H. Olbricht from Bergbau AG Koenig Ludwig, and Dr. Wolfgang Wetzel from the Free University of Berlin. Helmut Kregeloh, a graduate mathematician, gave a presentation as chairman of AKOR on the spread of OR methods in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. He also reported on the founding of AKOR in Darmstadt in 1957 and the use of an analog computer to solve OR problems at his Institute for Practical Mathematics at the Technical University of Darmstadt.¹⁰⁰ There was only one participant from Austria: Dr. J.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 494. For the role of Analog computers in the aeronautical industry see Vahrenkamp, Richard: The Computing Boom in the US Aeronautical Industry, 1945–1965, in: ICON – The Journal of the International Committee for the History of Technology, volume 24, 2019, pp. 127–149.

Pfanzagl from the University of Vienna. Two participants were registered from Switzerland: Erich Soon from machine tool works Sulzer and J. Weidmann from Nestle.

Stafford Beer from the British company United Steel, who later became famous as a management consultant, gave a presentation at the Oxford conference on the simulation of production processes with mechanical analog computers: “The Mechanical Simulation of Stochastic Flows.” He drew on the consulting industry's bag of tricks and semantically shifted the focus of his remarks from computer applications in production to the question of what managers think about the use of computers. Although he did not strictly speaking provide any evidence for his thesis, Beer – who had studied a little psychology – argued that management had reservations about results calculated with digital computers on the basis of mathematical models and insisted on its own experience. With his mechanical analog computer, Beer wanted to show management clearly how stochastic processes work in steel production. Figure 3 shows the mechanical analog computer.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Davies 1957, pp. 166–175.

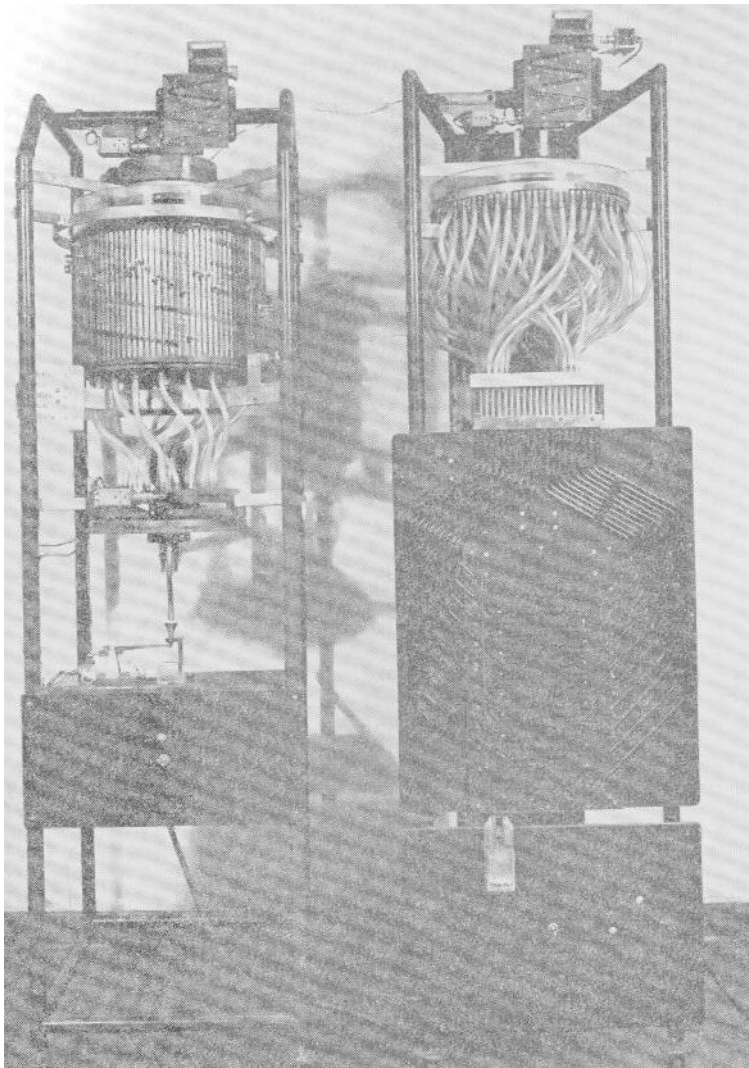


Figure 3: Beer's mechanical analog computer¹⁰².

Beer headed a large OR group at British Steel, founded in 1956, which had up to 50 members. As early as 1956, it acquired a Ferranti Pegasus medium-speed digital computer with 128 words of primary memory and a word length of 39 bits, contained in 8-word nickel delay lines. The rest of the memory was held on a 7936-word magnetic drum, which rotated at 3750 rpm.¹⁰³ Strangely enough, it remains unknown what problems were solved with the digital computer. Beer, on the other hand, became known for his book *Cybernetics and Management* (1959), where he used the prestige of British Steel's OR group for his publication on the title page (see Figure 6 below). In the early days of operations research, some researchers adorned themselves with the prestige of a computer. In 1958, Ernst Billeter published an article in the

¹⁰² Davies, 1957, p. 173.

¹⁰³ Weik 1957, S, 112.

journal Unternehmensforschung entitled “Electronic Computers in the Service of Operations Research,” which dealt exclusively with the method of linear programming but did not address electronic computers at all.¹⁰⁴

The country reports in the Oxford Proceedings volume are interesting. The Polish representatives reported, among other things, on the planning of locations for retail stores to supply the population – a problem facing the communist central economy. Francesco Brambilla highlights the high status of OR in Italy. He headed the Centro per la Ricerca Operativa in Milan, which was supported by the Olivetti company. The Centro had analog and digital computers and offered OR courses. The Italian military provided OR training. The Federation of Italian Industries also operated an OR unit and organized the first OR conference in Italy in Turin in 1956, with a proceedings volume published in 1957.¹⁰⁵

There was a large country report for the United Kingdom. I will highlight the transport sector. The two transport monopolies, London Transport and British Railways, had introduced a large number of special regulations that made it impossible for management to compare different units. As a result, there were several million different tariffs in the freight sector. The use of simple statistical methods made it possible to eliminate these special regulations. The shortest distances $X(i,k)$ in miles between different stations were calculated using an electronic computer. In the 1920s, the Deutsche Reichsbahn had calculated these distances for the German Reich and presented them in the graph-theoretical form of shortest path trees, publishing them in its 1930 freight timetable, see Figure 4 below. The methods on which this calculation was based are unknown to date.

¹⁰⁴ Billeter 1958.

¹⁰⁵ Unione industriale di Torino (ed.): Convegno La ricerca operativa 1956 Torino, Torino 1957.



Figure 4: The tree of shortest paths from the Bebra node in the German Reich's railway network in the 1930 freight timetable.

The great emphasis placed on OR training in the proceedings volume is interesting. For example, Stafford Beer's OR group reported on OR courses for British Steel employees. There were also OR courses in the country report from Italy. In West Germany, too, the provision of OR courses was big business on the consulting market. The country reports from Italy and the United Kingdom mention many applications of OR in large industrial companies. However, there is a lack of concrete information, such as: Method X has led to savings of \$100,000. Press reports of this kind also remained unknown.

The conference in Oxford was considered very successful, but in most countries there were no national OR organizations. They only existed in the US and the UK. Within a short time, national OR organizations were founded in numerous countries. The national OR organizations of the US, the UK, and France – Societ  Francaise de Recherche Operationelle (SOFRO) – founded the umbrella organization IFORS in 1959 as a result of the widely acclaimed "World Computer Congress" in Paris, which took place in June 1959 with 1,700 participants and at which the umbrella organization International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP) was

founded as a UN sub-organization in June 1959.¹⁰⁶ In the 1950s, there was a great deal of institutionalization in the field of operations research in France. In 1956, practitioners and researchers founded the Société Française de Recherche Opérationnelle (SOFRO). In 1964, it merged with the Association Française de Calcul et de Traitement de l'Information (AFCALTI) to form the Association Française de l'Informatique et de la Recherche Opérationnelle (AFIRO), which in turn merged with two other associations in 1968: AFRA (research in automation) and AFIC (instruments and control) to form the Association Française pour la Cybernétique Economique et Technique (AFCET).¹⁰⁷

The first IFORS conference took place in 1960 in Aix-en-Provence, France, with ten national OR organizations and 350 participants. The conference proceedings do not contain a list of participants. Although neither West Germany nor Switzerland were members of IFORS in 1960, delegates from these countries were able to attend the conference, such as Hans Künzi from Switzerland.¹⁰⁸ On its website, IFORS lists the Oxford Conference as the first IFORS meeting. For the second IFORS conference in Aix-en-Provence from September 5 to 9, 1960, which already brought together 350 participants, AKOR sent 10 German AKOR members and one representative from GAMM.¹⁰⁹ By 1960, IFORS already had 10 national members, all of which – except for India and Australia – came from the Western Alliance of NATO: the Netherlands, Norway, France, Belgium, Canada, the USA, and Great Britain.

It is interesting to note that IFORS – like EURO later on – was explicitly anti-communist in its orientation, as only countries from the Western bloc became members. This distinguishes IFORS from the International Federation of Information Processing, which was founded at the same time and, as a UN organization, also included members from the Eastern bloc. Its vice president was Russian. The anti-communist orientation of IFORS was already evident at the conference in Oxford, to which only two members from the Eastern Bloc were invited. These were the Polish participants Professor Jan Oderfeld and Professor Rajski, both from the Institute of Mathematics at the University of Warsaw.

IFORS, founded in 1959, elected Sir Charles Goodeve as its president. The proceedings of the IFORS conference in Aix comprise more than 800 pages and were also published by English

¹⁰⁶ Domolki 2008.

¹⁰⁷ Roy, Bernhard : Regard historique sur la place de la recherche opérationnelle et de l'aide à la décision en France, in: Mathematics and Social Sciences, 2006, issue 3, pp. 25–40.

¹⁰⁸ Hans Künzi: Bericht zur 2. Internationalen Konferenz über Operations Research, Aix-en-Provence, 5.-9.9.1960, in: Die Unternehmung, volume 15.1961, 1, pp. 55-59. Rand 2000.

¹⁰⁹ Ablauf- und Planungsforschung, vol. 2, 1961, issue 1, p. 15, Ablauf- und Planungsforschung, vol. 3, 1962, issue 1, p. 117.

Universities Press in London in 1961. The International Federation of Operational Research Societies was based at 11 Park Lane in London W1, as the proceedings indicate.¹¹⁰ The main topics of the proceedings volume were applications of OR in the steel industry, the transport sector, the oil industry, the nuclear industry and electricity generation, regional policy, national policy, military applications, and mining. As head of the largest OR department in Great Britain and chairman of the British Operational Society, Stafford Beer was able to exert his influence in IFORS and was appointed chairman of the Computer and Operational Research Section. Two papers dealt with simulation, one with heuristic decision-making processes, one with the retrieval of data from magnetic tapes, and one with the use of computers in production control. In the section on atomic energy and electricity generation, the paper by J. Andriot and J. Gaussens from the French Commissariat Atom Energie stands out as alarmingly poor. The authors use mathematical symbols to surround themselves with an aura of scientificity, but they cannot handle these symbols at all. On page 724, they describe a 2 x 2 matrix, but on the following page they deal with n-dimensional vectors. One wonders what model they are actually pursuing. Then, on page 724, they give a sum formula in which the running index is equal to the end index. This is mathematics as nonsense. J. Gaussens' contribution to the optimal development of electricity distribution networks indicates that he did not arrive in the age of computers but remained in the age of desk calculators. He starts from the question of which investment strategies are optimal in electricity networks when the demand for electricity doubles every 10 years. Over several pages, he derives the various cost factors that determine the investment strategy. For the optimal investment strategy, he presents a difference equation on page 491 without any derivation, with the time index n equal to the year of investment. To select the optimal strategy, he determines a complicated formula for the net present value of the respective selected investment sequence. On the following page, however, he points out that desk calculators ("machines arithmétiques") would be needed to determine this optimal strategy. So, he only offers the model, but no data on how to fill this model and no test run on desk calculators.

At the third IFORS conference in Oslo from July 1 to 5, 1963, two members of AKOR reported on practical work results.¹¹¹ These international contacts were extremely important for the young Federal Republic of Germany in order to gain a little reputation in post-war Europe.

John Krige described how, in the 1950s, the US sought to align the values of European scientists with the liberal values of the US by exporting soft power to Europe in order to build a bulwark against communism. The instruments used were exchanges of scientists, scientific conferences, and summer schools. Whether the founding of IFORS was financially supported

¹¹⁰ IFORS 1961.

¹¹¹ Brusberg, Unternehmensforschung, 1965, p. 242.

by the US remains unexplored. Nevertheless, the pattern of IFORS fits into the soft power policy of the US. The instruments used were exchanges of scientists, scientific conferences, and summer schools. Whether the founding of IFORS was financially supported by the US has not yet been researched. Nevertheless, the IFORS model fits into the US's soft power policy.¹¹² At the first IFORS conference in Oxford in 1957, 58 scientists from the US alone took part.¹¹³ It is obvious that Europe, impoverished by World War II, could not finance international conferences that required expensive transatlantic tickets. Rand points to the travel funds provided by UNESCO, the UN, or the OEEC.¹¹⁴ In 1957, a one-way ticket from New York to London cost 5,000 pounds in today's currency.¹¹⁵

As the internationalization of IFORS continued and many conferences were held outside Europe, the European members of IFORS founded a European subgroup, which was called Euro for short.¹¹⁶ In 1975, eleven national OR societies in Western Europe (i.e., excluding countries from the Eastern Bloc) organized the first EURO conference in Brussels under the newly founded umbrella organization Association of European Operational Research Societies and elected Hans-Jürgen Zimmermann from the Technical University of Aachen as president of Euro.¹¹⁷ While IFORS held its international conferences every three years, EURO offered its international conferences in the remaining two-year gaps, which were attended by up to 3,500 participants.¹¹⁸ While only about 500 participants attended the EURO conferences until 1988, the number increased to about 1,000 by 2000 and then to about 2,000 by 2024. The EURO conference in Rome in 2013 reached its peak with 3,500 participants.¹¹⁹ Since 1976, EURO has published the European Journal of Operational Research, whose explosive growth can be gauged by the fact that the 96th volume was already published in 1996. These international collaborations formed a self-referential system. An OR researcher at a university in the Federal Republic of Germany could attend the DGOR conferences every year, give presentations there, and publish them as papers in the proceeding volumes. These steps enhanced their scientific reputation. Without the quality of the papers increasing, researchers were able to present the papers presented nationally unchanged at the international level, thus doubling their reputation and combining it with a varied trip abroad.

¹¹² Krige, John: American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe, Cambridge (Mass) 2006.

¹¹³ Davies et al., First International Conference, p. 526.

¹¹⁴ Rand, IFORS, 2000, p. 104. Kline (2015) gibt ein Beispiel für die Finanzierung der Besuche des Symposiums Informationstheorie in London 1955, was auch gendermäßig interessant ist, weil die Anthropologin Margaret Mead keine Finanzierung erhielt, S. 113f.

¹¹⁵ Annabell Elliot: How far fallen ticket prices, in: Telegraph, London, 30. September 2021.

¹¹⁶ Rand 2024, p. 152.

¹¹⁷ Euro – The Association of the European Operational Research Societies, Newsletter 2, Brüssel 1975. Zimmermann, Founding 1995. Rand 2024, p. 37.

¹¹⁸ Rand 2024. Association 2025, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Association of European Operational Research Societies, Festschrift 2025, p. 6. Rand 2024.

5 The reluctant application of Operations Research in industry

In a clear difference to the flood of publications on theory-based OR topics, however, the use of OR methods in the industry remained low. Martin Beckmann simply reversed this relationship between theoretical supply and user demand when, in 1979, he claimed the opposite: "Mathematical processes are finding ever more applications in the economic and social spheres, especially where decision-making in complicated situations is at stake. Operations research in particular, which involves the application of mathematical models for economic decisions, has developed rapidly due to this need..".¹²⁰

The low use of OR in the social spaces of industry was addressed by Merrill Flood, president of TIMS and head of the mathematical department of RAND, when he concised in his presidential address in 1955 that OR, while generally recognised as important, was merely "in the air".¹²¹ As a promoter of linear optimization, Dantzig emphasized that the first application of this method in the industry was the design of aviation gasoline in a petroleum refinery in 1951.¹²² As Dantzig noted in his 1963 book, the industry's acceptance of using Linear Optimization in production planning was restrained.¹²³ In other publications he reports on the successful application in the oil industry.¹²⁴ Together with the head of an oil refinery, Bob Mellon, the University of Pittsburgh had carried out a linear programming project on behalf of the US Air Force for the most cost-effective blending of aviation gasoline.¹²⁵ The model contained 22 variables and was solved with the help of electro-mechanical desk calculators. The authors Charnes et al. did not mention the use of a digital IBM CPC machine or even a digital electronic computer. The motivation of the Air Force Treaty remains unclear. Was there a predominant shortage of aviation fuel? Or was the topic "aviation gasoline" a sufficient justification for an Air Force contract? These questions shed light on the Air Force's diffuse motivation in its R&D policy. In 1957, the linear programming approach in the oil industry was criticized by the RAND Corporation, of all people, as being too simplistic. The maximum profit of a refinery would depend on many other additional factors not included in the model.¹²⁶ These objections relate to the validity of linear programming approaches. Validity is a quality criterion of model construction cultivated by the applied statistics, which is otherwise ignored by the OR

¹²⁰ Beckmann, Operations Research 1979, foreword.

¹²¹ Flood, Objectives, 1956.

¹²² Charnes/Cooper/Mellon, Blending, 1952.

¹²³ Dantzig, Programming, 1963, p. 28. The book was published under the copyright of RAND.

¹²⁴ Dantzig, Operations Research in the World, 1965. See also Steinecke for applications, 1973.

¹²⁵ Charnes/Cooper/Mellon, Blending, 1952.

¹²⁶ Goldstein, Scientific Aids, p. 37.

literature. Behavioral economist Herbert Simon's approach, published in 1959, of settling for bounded rationality in modeling puts the cost of information acquisition as a bound on model refinement. Simon's behavioral approach is a counter to the mathematical paradigm of operations research.¹²⁷

The low success of OR methods is also related to the fact that US companies had already increasingly used scientific methods in management in the 1930s and 1940s and therefore the need for consulting was not pronounced. The consulting services for the introduction and improvement of punch card technology in business administration by the field organizations of IBM and Powers should be mentioned here.¹²⁸ In Germany, too, the performance mobilisation of the Nazi war economy led to a high level of scientific penetration of the production process, which initially did not trigger a need for OR consultants.¹²⁹

The situation was different in Great Britain, where the management of companies showed great deficits. There, OR was successfully applied in public utilities and in basic industries. There was talk of the "Golden Age of OR" in the period from 1945 to 1970 and OR was seen as a means of modernising the industry. OR research groups were installed mainly at the association level, such as the OR Research Group of the British Iron and Steel Research Association, founded by Sir Charles Goodeve in 1950.¹³⁰ The fairytale rise of Stafford Beer, born in 1926, to become an internationally renowned management consultant also began in the British steel industry. In the typical British career pattern of the gentleman manager, Beer had studied psychology and philosophy for only one year before he went into military service in India.¹³¹ When he left the army in 1949 rank of Captain, he joined a subsidiary of United Steel in Sheffield as a management trainee and was able to successfully set up an OR "Operational Research and Cybernetics" group, which he

¹²⁷ Herbert Simon: Theories of decision making in economics and behavioural science. In: American Economic Review. Vol. 49, No. 3, 1959, p. 253–283. Simon schwankte zwischen dem verhaltenswissenschaftlichen Ansatz und mathematischen OR-Papern, siehe Erickson et al., How Reason, p. 207.

¹²⁸ Atsushi Akera, Calculating a Natural World - Scientists, Engineers, and Computing during the Rise of U.S. Cold War Research, MIT Press 2007.

¹²⁹ Kirby, Maurice und R. Cahey: The Origins, p. 309. Flachowsky, Sören: Das Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau als Forschungsbehörde im NS-System. Überlegungen zur neuen Staatlichkeit des Nationalsozialismus, in: Technikgeschichte, vol. 82 (2015), issue 3, pp. 185–224.

¹³⁰ Kirby, Maurice und R. Cahey: The Origins and Diffusion of Operational Research in the UK, in: The Journal of the Operational Research Society, Vol. 49, 1998, No. 4, 307–326. Kirby, Maurice: Operational Research in War and Peace: The British Experience from the 1930s to 1970, London 2003.

¹³¹ The Bio-Data of Beer from Jonathan Rosenhead: IFORS'Operational Research Hall of Fame: Stafford Beer, in: Intl. Trans. in Op. Res. 13(2006), pp. 577–581. For the gentleman manager in Great Britain see Jon Agar: The government machine: a revolutionary history of the computer, MIT Press 2003

then which he was then able to extend to the entire United Steel Group. His OR Group resided in a villa in Sheffield, which Beer called “Cybor” and which is shown in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5: The Cyborg Villa of Beer’s OR Group¹³²

In his OR group, he employed 70 people at its peak - probably the world's largest OR group in a private company - and in 1956 he received the first large first large-scale medium speed digital computer (Ferranti Pegasus) in 1956 - medium-speed computer because of its drum memory - which was outside the field of field of scientific computing (i.e. primarily for defense projects) for management issues at United Steel.¹³³ What problems were solved with the digital computer were solved remained strangely unknown. Perhaps the computer was merely a prestige tool without much use. The Ferranti Pegasus computer was at least extremely difficult to program.¹³⁴ Beer's OR group was probably the first OR group in the world to have a medium-speed digital computer at its disposal.

¹³² <https://rensurveyors.co.uk/property/cybor-house-1-tapton-house-road-sheffield-s10-5by/>

¹³³ The bio-data on Beer are taken from Jonathan Rosenhead: IFORS'Operational Research Hall of Fame: Stafford Beer, in: Intl. Trans. in Op. Res. 13(2006), pp. 577-581. In his publication “The Scope for Operational Research in Industry”, London 1957, Beer still gives the size of his OR group as 25 people. For the Gentleman Manager in Great Britain, see Jon Agar: The government machine: a revolutionary history of the computer, MIT Press 2003. In his 1957 lecture in Oxford, Beer gave the size of his OR group as 25 researchers.

¹³⁴ John Ranyard (1988), p. 1075.

An important topic for Beer was the simulation of industrial production processes. His approach was similar to that of Jay Forrester to the simulation of industrial processes. At the IFORS OR Congress in Oxford in 1957, he presented a paper on mechanical analog computer for simulation, i.e. without using an electronic computer.¹³⁵ Beer was strongly influenced by Norbert Wiener's widely distributed book "Cybernetics" (10th edition New York 1952).¹³⁶ He advocated an interdisciplinary and participatory approach and also became known for his publications, such as the book "Cybernetic and Management", which appeared in 1959, received a third, extended edition in 1967 and was translated into numerous languages. On the cover, he referred to British Steel and earned the prestige of this firm, cf. figure 6. In the third edition of the book, Beer goes on a firework display about various disciplines from logic to the life of single-celled organisms to computers. He goes so far as to assert that all real organisms can be topologically isomorphisms of a primal system and claims that this procedure can "easily be extended directly to questions of production control".¹³⁷ In his book, he explicitly refers to operations research more than six times. The book "Decision and Control: the Meaning of Operational Research and Management Cybernetics" appeared in London in its fifth edition in 1967. In 2006, IFORS inducted Stafford Beer into the OR Hall of Fame.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Stafford Beer: The Mechanical Simulation of Stochastic Flow, in: Davies, Max (ed.): International Conference on Operational Research (Oxford), London 1957.

¹³⁶ For the history of Cybernetics see Thomas Rid: Rise of the Machines. A Cybernetic History, New York 2016.

¹³⁷ On page 136 in the German 3rd edition.

¹³⁸ Rosenhaed 2006.

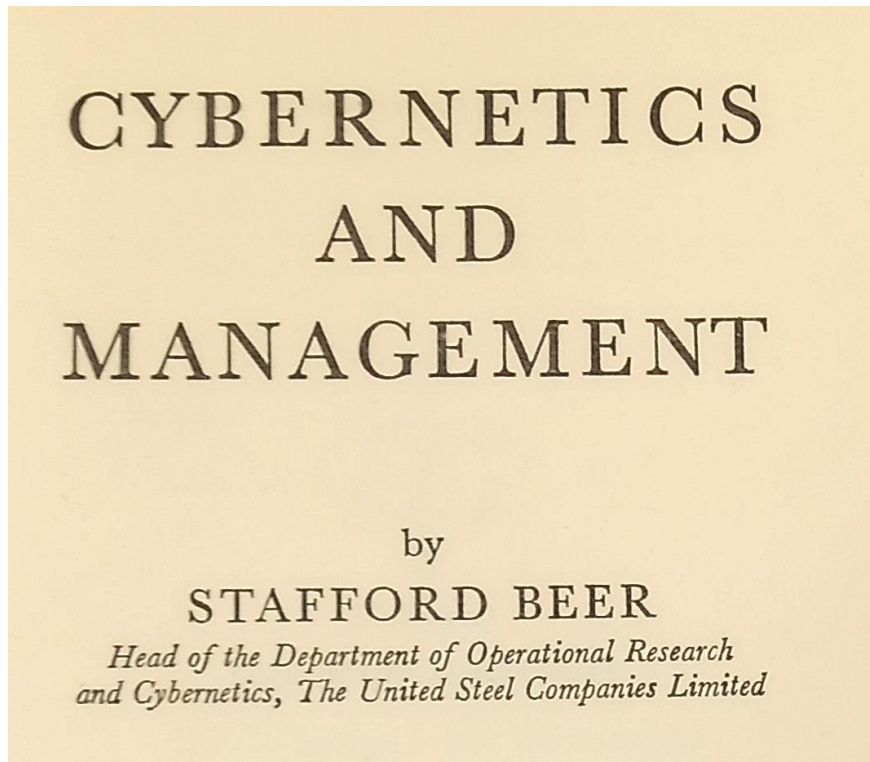


Figure 6: The book of Stafford Beer

In contrast to Great Britain, however, there were obstacles in the U.S. and West Germany to the broad application of Operations Research in the social spaces of companies, also to the extent that the models required empirical data in order to be able to calculate optimal solutions. However, the data were only to be collected in the enterprises. In OR publications, this data problem is mostly played down with formulaic statements. In his basic paper "Procedures of Operations Research and their Applications in Industry" in volume 1 of his journal "Operations Research Verfahren" Rudolf Henn writes: "In many operational processes it happens that one has a probability distribution in each time period for the variables." He doesn't say how to determine these probability distributions. Other professors could not answer these questions either. Rather, a division of labour between universities and "practitioners" in industrial companies developed. As the topics of the DFG small projects on OR by Professor Horst Albach shown above display, these are exclusively model theoretical without empirical reference. Albach also led the University Business Seminar at the University of Bonn, which saw itself as a further education institute for business executives. For this seminar he had the management consultant Friedrich Hanssmann write a paper on Operations Research in which Hanssmann vividly described the difficulties of data collection in the company.¹³⁹ Albach wrote the foreword and thanked Hanssmann for his hard work. Albach, whose DFG projects and his 1967 paper can be regarded as a promoter of Operations

¹³⁹ Hanssmann, Corporate Research, 1971, p. 25.

Research,¹⁴⁰ had thus shifted the responsibility for empirical research to a practitioner. Albach also hinted at the reluctant application of OR methods in industry.¹⁴¹ Nievergelt and others talk in their practical studies on Operations Research about the "high sacrifices" that their company had to make when introducing OR.¹⁴²

In order to obtain data, the mathematically oriented OR researchers at the universities had to go into the social spaces of companies, for which, however, they did not have a social science education. From the perspective of a company's management, it is well known that collecting data about the individual operational processes within the company is both laborious and expensive. There is also resistance from the lower management to have their own decision-making area examined.¹⁴³ Management therefore balances the quality of the data against the cost of collection and tends towards simple rules. But OR consultants had to jump over the data collection barrier to gain high quality data that they could incorporate into their refined OR models. Because of these difficulties, the scale of Operations Research applications in the companies ultimately remained low. For example, Lewis Bodin wondered how low the level of vehicle route planning applications, such as milk collection from farms in the countryside or school bus planning in the suburbs, were in the 1990s, even though the scientific community had been researching route planning for 20 years.¹⁴⁴

If one considers the promise of cost reduction through the use of operational research methods, the OR consultants were only able to reduce a small proportion of the costs with their models, since many industrial processes carry high fixed costs, so that a reduction of, for example, 5 percent of the variable costs did not seem particularly convincing. In addition, many processes showed cost curves that did not show a sharp minimum, so that deviations from the minimum costs were only of minor importance and rough estimation methods could be applied. In literature there is no known cost curve with a sharp cost minimum, such as a crack in a rock, which would justify an elaborate search for the cost minimum.

In their OR book of 1957, Churchman et al. showed in detail how data collection methods, such as cost curves in steel mills or queues at toll stations on the New York city highway, were carried out and spread warnings that OR researchers should not concentrate on methods but

¹⁴⁰ Albach, Corporate Research, 1967.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 254.

¹⁴² Nievergelt, E, O. Müller, F. Schlaepfer: Practical studies on corporate research, foreword.

¹⁴³ Kaplan/Cooper, Cost 1998.

¹⁴⁴ Bodin, Years, 1990.

rather collect data in the company.¹⁴⁵ They should also become familiar with the social relations in the company from which they received the consultancy mandate.

However, the OR researchers did not turn to empirical projects in the social spaces of companies, but established themselves successfully in the social spaces of the economic science faculties of the universities. There they advanced the development of mathematical optimization methods and transformed their textbooks on Operations Research into pure method bibles. In volume 1, Henn and Künzi's two-volume work on Operations Research did not deal at all with Operations Research but only with mathematics: set theory, linear algebra, probability theory and statistics. Volume 2 also contained a chapter on game theory. Since Operations Research did not focus on economic relations within the company, empirically oriented research was largely lacking. The strong emphasis on mathematical methods has been rejected by business leaders since the 1950s. The OR specialists were accused of using incomprehensible "technical jargon", as Walter Trux, head of the mechanical engineering group Fichtel und Sachs, put it in his opening speech at the 1980 annual conference of the German Society for Operations Research in Essen.¹⁴⁶

6 The rise of business informatics as a barrier to operations research

If the dissemination of OR is historicized, after a phase of successful institutionalization at the universities until 1970 there was stagnation and decline after 1980, which is due to the rise of the competing fields of business informatics and logistics.¹⁴⁷ Since the end of the 1980s, chairs for Operations Research have increasingly been converted into the fields of business informatics and logistics. As a specialist representative of OR professors at German universities within the Association of Business Economists, the Scientific Commission Operations Research increasingly lost members with the Denomination Operations Research. In 2019 only two of the 100 professors (chairs only within Germany, without Emiriti) of the Scientific Commission Operations Research possessed the denomination Operations Research,

¹⁴⁵ Churchman et al., Introduction, 1957, chapter 21.

¹⁴⁶ Rider, Operations, 1992, p. 231. Trux, Deployment, 1981, p. 21.

¹⁴⁷ Bradtke, Operations Research, 2003, speaks of a crisis of the OR at the end of the 1970s, p. 3. Rudolf Henn stopped publishing his journal Operations Research Verfahren in 1979.

while the others possessed the denomination Business Informatics or Logistics.¹⁴⁸ A crisis of OR was also perceived in Great Britain.¹⁴⁹

Apart from these academic upheavals, the use of Operations Research in corporate social spaces has also been hampered by the rise of database systems for production control. This business management control of enterprises by computers can be historized as follows. The capacity of companies to modernise their own organisation was absorbed between 1960 and 2000 by the installation of ever newer and more powerful generations of computers for business management of production and could hardly pay attention to the advice of OR consultants. In the production industry the application of the relational database models preferred by business informatics for the control of the material flow in the production of the manufacturing industry stood in the center, while still in the 1960s IBM had favored hierarchical database models in vain. The relational database models became possible in the 1960s, when the transition from Turing-like linear storage on tape to random access to magnetic disks took place and file systems became possible for the first time ever. The example of Fichtel & Sachs AG in Schweinfurt illustrates the growth in disk capacity. In this company, the disk capacity grew from 2.8 MB in 1975 to 15 MB in 1980.¹⁵⁰

Dieter Pressmer, Professor of Operations Research at the University of Hamburg (see above), initiated a funding programme for the University's Information Systems department at the Federal Ministry of Education and Science in the 1980s and founded the Institute for Information Systems at the University of Hamburg in 1995.¹⁵¹ The programs developed by Business Informatics for production control in the manufacturing industry (also known as PPS) date back to the simple bill of materials processors of the 1960s. As the first programs to efficiently utilize high-speed digital computers, Job Shop Scheduling programs were developed in the early 1950s that determined an optimal sequence of application programs (jobs) that were read into the computer as punch cards in batch to minimize the total waiting time of the valuable processor. These job scheduling programs were later integrated into PPS. PPS has been extended to include the management of additional operational functions such as sales, suppliers, finance, human resources and building planning, including various locations at home

¹⁴⁸ Message from the Chairman of WK Operations Research, Professor Achim Koberstein, University Frankfurt/Oder.

¹⁴⁹ Fildes, R. and J. Ranyard: The foundation, development and current practice of OR: An editorial introduction and overview, in: *Journal of Operational Research*, vol. 49, 1998, 304–306.

¹⁵⁰ Opening lecture at the ninth annual conference of the German Society for Operations Research in Essen in 1980 by Walter Trux. Trux, *Mission*, 1981, p. 22.

¹⁵¹ The Pressmer obituary on the website www.bwl.uni-hamburg.de/iwi/ueber-das-Institut/pressmer.html, accessed on 15 March 2019.

and abroad and referred to as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).¹⁵² This meant that the entire company organization was mapped in this database program, but this did not always go smoothly. During the program installation in the companies conflicts arose between the rigidity of the intended software and the living organization of the companies.¹⁵³

In the manufacturing industry, database models split the structures of machines, materials and bills of materials into thousands of tables in atomized normal forms, resulting in long runtimes on the computer to create production plans for the following day due to numerous hard disk accesses. The computers were running all night. This disadvantage could only be remedied when semiconductor-based main memories in the gigabyte range became technologically possible from the year 2000 onwards and thus the slow hard disk accesses to the atomized tables could be shifted to the fast main memory. The SAP software group sold this new ERP software under the HANA brand. In the 1990s, SAP added an optimization tool based on linear programming called "Advanced Planner and Optimizer" to its R3 production planning product.¹⁵⁴ There is no empirical knowledge about the use of this tool. Whether it was useful for production companies or just a marketing campaign by SAP cannot be decided.

7 The initially problematic use of the large computer in mass data processing

In this section, the problems of mass data processing with large computers in the social spaces of companies in the 1950s due to the small size of the main memory are to be pointed out, in order to then lead over to the topic of OR as management science.

I follow Timo Leimbach here, who in his study on the software industry distinguishes between two types of use of computers for administrative purposes in companies. On the one hand the computer as an automation of simple employee work and on the other hand as a tool that provides information to enable the manager to make decisions.¹⁵⁵ In the 1950s, the large computer was introduced into companies to automate administrative processes such as sales statistics, payroll accounting and warehouse management. Many of these areas had already been partially automated by the use of punch card machines, and the computer was able to

¹⁵² Crank, Enterprise, 2011. Fleischhack, World, 2016. She reports on applications of job shop scheduling programs in municipal data centers as late as the 1970s, p. 58.

¹⁵³ For an example of the SAP R/3 implementation conflicts at M.I.T. see Williams, Solid, 2000, p. 641-668.

¹⁵⁴ Bartsch, SAP APO, 2000.

¹⁵⁵ Leimbach, History, 2010.

continue these approaches of the punch card departments in the companies, especially since the input and output of data still took place via punch cards.¹⁵⁶ John von Neumann had given the digital large computer a special architecture. He combined a fast arithmetic unit with a fast main memory. This architecture made it possible to integrate differential equations, in particular, by moving millions of iteration steps of small amounts of data back and forth between the main memory and the arithmetic unit in a very short time. For computer manufacturers, the large digital computer in business administration was not a particularly large sales market in the 1950s. The number of installations remained low. In fact, a different architecture prevailed which von Neumann had not taken into account. A fast arithmetic unit was combined with a slow main memory realized by a magnetic drum. Among the up to 70 types of digital computers with magnetic drums that appeared on the market in the U.S. in the 1950s,¹⁵⁷ the IBM 650 became the successful model of this architecture.

A large computer such as the IBM 701 or the Univac 1103 may have been successful in scientific calculations such as the integration of differential equations, but its application in administrative data processing looked less favorable. This application was accompanied by a great rationalization rhetoric of efficiency, speed and cost savings. However, as Thomas Haigh pointed out in his study on the introduction of digital computers for administrative data processing in the 1950s, this path was extremely laborious because large computers only had tiny main memories and the processing of mass data had to be split into numerous separate runs. The speed advantage of the large computer was thus lost.¹⁵⁸ However, the classic tabulating machines did not have this main memory restriction.

In administrative data processing, sorted data stocks were particularly important. Sales data, personnel data, customer data, material data and supplier data were given numbering systems with which certain data records could be quickly found in a sorted inventory; the magnetic tape only had to be prewound until the data record number appeared. However, the data always had to be re-sorted as soon as changes occurred. Unlike punched cards, however, the linear magnetic tapes became cages for the mass data. Sorting mass data stored in magnetic tapes on large computer systems proved to be a major bottleneck, as the tapes with mass data had to be split into numerous separate runs due to the small main memory, while sorting on punch card machines was possible without any problems. Paul Ceruzzi estimated that large computer systems spent 25% of their time sorting. In an advertisement, the

¹⁵⁶ Vahrenkamp, Informationsexplosion, 2017, pp. 209-242. Extended version at http://www.vahrenkamp.org/files/Punch_Cards_Vahrenkamp_WP1_2017.

¹⁵⁷ Weik, Survey, 1955.

¹⁵⁸ Haigh, Tabulator, 2001.

Electronic Data Division of RCA even speaks of 40% for sorting.¹⁵⁹ The slow main memory of the IBM 650 and the slow mass memory with magnetic disks (600 milliseconds average access time) of the IBM 1401 did not play a role in the cumbersome sorting processes.¹⁶⁰ In computer science, sorting algorithms became an important field of research; Donald Knuth of Stanford University published a sorting bible in 1973 that was overflowing with over 700 pages.¹⁶¹

While the medium-sized IBM machine 650 did not yet have its own printing unit, but had to be connected to a tabulating machine, the machine 1401 together with the high-speed printer 1403 in 1959 brought IBM a breakthrough in administrative data processing with computers. The 1000 lines per minute high-speed printer was able to print an image of the company's data on huge piles of paper that were transported to the offices on small trolleys.¹⁶²

The success of the 1401 was due in part to the fact that many programs from the old IBM tabulating machines could be transferred to this machine with translation programs – as was already the case with the IBM 650. IBM further developed the tabulating machine-oriented approaches in administrative data processing when it introduced the S/360 large computer in the 1960s. In this machine there was a status that emulated the successful machine 1401. This allowed the old programs of the 1401 to continue to be used and convinced customers to switch to the 360 machine. The great success of IBM's punch-card oriented software product "Report Program Generator" (RPG), which lasted until the 1980s, with the sum¹⁶³ of a turnover list or similar lists being drawn over various criteria and printed out as reports on paper, on the IBM S/360 demonstrates this policy of continuing the old tabulating machine approaches of administrative data processing, which certainly also explains IBM's market success in part.¹⁶⁴ In a way, it seems absurd today if the old tabulating machine programs ran in the slow 1401 mode on the high-performance S/360 machine, but this indicates the great importance of report lists for company management.¹⁶⁵ As long as mass data was stored on tapes as the primary storage medium and not yet on random access disk drives, the high speed of the

¹⁵⁹ The advertisement of RCA Electronic Division can be found in *Datamation*, Vol. 6, 1960, p. 7. Ceruzzi, *History*, 2000, p. 89. Vahrenkamp, *Informationsexplosion*, 2017, shows the importance of sorting processes when punch cards are used.

¹⁶⁰ Baer, *1400 Series*, 1976, p. 629s.

¹⁶¹ Knuth, *Computer Programming*, 1973.

¹⁶² Haigh, *Tabulator*, 2001, p. 86. Ceruzzi, *History*, 2000 p. 73s.

¹⁶³ Other statistical functions could also be programmed, such as mean, minimum and maximum of the values in question. The function maximum was important for utilities. In industry electric power was rated according to the daily maximum use.

¹⁶⁴ Campbell-Kelly/Aspray, *Computers*, 1996, p. 133. On RPG see Rottmann, *IBM/360*, 1966. Heger, *100 years*, 1990, p. 140-144. On the use of hard disk drives for seat reservation for 1000 flights per day of the US airline United Airlines on the IBM machine RAMAC already in 1959 see Thompson, *RAMAC*, 1959. I owe this source to Dr. Daniela Zetti of ETH Zurich.

¹⁶⁵ Ceruzzi, *History*, pp. 149-151.

S/360 machine could not really be exploited anyway, so the slow 1401 mode did not carry much weight.

8 Management Science and Operations Research

In the automation debate of the 1950s, the second aspect of the use of computers was also strongly emphasized: to provide management with data to support them in decision-making situations, as the report lists already did. The explanations went so far as to formulate also the goal of automating or at least partially automating decisions of the management with the digital computer.¹⁶⁶ A recourse to the methods of Operations Research gave this field the aura to provide the necessary methods for the automation of management decisions. As early as 1955 – when hardly any large digital computers were installed in administrative data processing – Herbert Simon and Russel Ackhoff held a conference at Harvard to support management decisions using computers and OR methods.¹⁶⁷ In 1960, Simon published the book "The New Science of Management Decision", which was influential in the automation debate. In this book Simon enumerates the two possibilities of computer use, the automation of simple employee work and the support of management. Typical of the uncritical approach in the automation debate, he saw Frederick Taylor and Taylorism as precursors of Operations Research.¹⁶⁸ Simon could not provide concrete approaches to how management decisions should be supported, but he only presented keywords by enumerating the various methods of operations research, such as game theory, dynamic programming, linear optimization and simulation.¹⁶⁹ Looking at the stony path outlined above that computer applications had to take to automate simple employee work in the 1950s, Simon's remarks seem fabulous. At that time it was not possible to simply use the computer as a working tool, for example by approaching a computer and entering a query about turnover, stock or financial resources on the screen using the keyboard. Rather, the computers had only input consoles with switches and light bulbs, but without a screen. After all, punch cards for programs and data had to be produced, compiled and read into the computer.¹⁷⁰ How sophisticated programs for the analysis of large amounts of data should be executed in the tiny main memory, and thus even managers could be supported, remains a matter of fantasy.

¹⁶⁶ Simon, Management, 1960, p. 14. The automation of management decisions was also discussed in the Soviet Union, see Gerovitch, Cybernetics, 2002, p. 266.

¹⁶⁷ Ackhoff/Simon, Proceedings, 1955, where Ackhoff recommended the use of Operations Research for management.

¹⁶⁸ For the automation debate see Vahrenkamp, Botschaften, 1988. For the Taylorism debate see Vahrenkamp, 1977, updated as Working Paper at: http://www.vahrenkamp.org/files/WP20_2018.pdf .

¹⁶⁹ Simon, Management, 1960, pp. 14-16.

¹⁷⁰ For the process of compiling with the Fortran language on the IBM 650, see the Columbia University field report at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/computinghistory/650.html>. (Retrieved on 30 May 2018).

To use Operations Research, of all things, to support management was of little use, since the promoters had not taken into account the merely low empirical orientation of Operations Research. Thus, Operations Research could not provide the empirical methods to support management. The representatives of Operations Research were also the wrong addressees of Simon's automation thesis in so far as they had kept their field of expertise largely free of computer applications. In the textbooks on Operations Research, no reference is made to the computer. In the basic work by Henn and Künzi from 1966, the "electronic calculator" is mentioned only once in old-fashioned terminology.¹⁷¹ As in the textbooks, the same picture can be seen in research. In the proceedings of the annual conferences of the German Society for Operations Research and Operations Research, lectures on computer applications only occur occasionally: At the 1971 meeting not at all, at the 1972 meeting only two papers among 30 papers.¹⁷² As one of the few OR scientists, the graduate mathematician Ulrich Derigs, employed at the "Seminar for Industry" of the University of Cologne, published software for solving OR algorithms in 1980 together with Rainer Burkhard, Professor of Mathematics at the Mathematical Institute of the University of Cologne.¹⁷³

When computers became more powerful in the 1960s and screen terminals, timeshare systems, file systems on hard disk drives and database systems based on them could be set up, the idea arose to give upper management easy access to the information that was already available in the databases of the operative mass data processing systems. This led to a debate on management information systems (MIS) with a rapidly growing number of publications, with the focus on information provision, but Operations Research only playing a secondary role.¹⁷⁴ In MIS, the manager was designed as a user who could start terminal queries in the database. Setting up an MIS was considered expensive and its usefulness more difficult to prove than in mass data processing. It remained controversial whether the MIS promoters had promised too much. Some authors even saw a failure in MIS.¹⁷⁵ In the age of MIS Stafford Beer's cybernetic experiment in Chile took place¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Henn/Künzi, Corporate Research, 1966, Volume 2, p. 171. See also the computer free textbook of Nickel, Stefan, Oliver Stein, Karl-Heinz Waldmann: Operations Research, Berlin 2011.

¹⁷² Physica Verlag Würzburg 1972 and 1973, respectively.

¹⁷³ Burkard/Derigs, Assignment, 1980.

¹⁷⁴ Alavi/Carlson, Review, 1992, pp. 45-62.

¹⁷⁵ Teichrow, Management, 1976, pp. 845-847.

¹⁷⁶ Eden Medina: Cybernetic Revolutionaries, MIT Press 2011.

9 The Computer and Simulations in Operations Research

In the literature, the topic of simulation covers a wide area. This section is limited to discrete Monte Carlo simulations, without going into simulations that solve systems of differential equations with computer programs, as in meteorology, astrophysics and industrial dynamics by Jay Forrester.¹⁷⁷

In Operations Research, the discrete simulation of production systems or traffic systems was also a topic. They were used as software programs on digital computers when no closed solutions with mathematical formulas could be derived and parts of the system depended on random variables with certain distribution functions. They were also used when experiments with real systems were too expensive or too dangerous, such as chain reactions in a critical mass of uranium atoms.

The debate on Monte Carlo simulation takes up the complex of questions 7 on political knowledge cultures of the workshop Algorithmic Knowledge Cultures and places them in the context of Cold War Science in Los Alamos. John von Neumann was the first scientist ever to use simulation supported by random numbers. He wanted to get a heuristic impression of the scattering of neutrons during chain reactions in atomic bombs and "optimize" these bombs according to certain goals. His wife, Clara von Neumann, and Nicholas Metropolis programmed the ENIAC computer and together calculated neutron scattering in 1948.¹⁷⁸ Both were equipped with numerous punched cards containing random numbers. Klara von Neumann and John von Neumann both came from upper middle-class homes in Budapest and had personal experiences of visiting the gambling casino in Monte Carlo, Monaco.¹⁷⁹ Based on an idea by Stan Ulam, both Stan Ulam and John von Neumann had invented the use of randomised methods in 1946 in Los Alamos and gave the method the name "Monte Carlo method". This term fascinated mathematicians and scientists immediately, because Monte Carlo was probably associated worldwide with gambling. The RAND Corporation of the US Air Force jumped on this trend. Although she did not have a digital computer in 1949 and had no experience with simulation, she organized the first scientific conference on the Monte Carlo method in Los Angeles at UCLA University, which was later followed by others.¹⁸⁰ Remarkably,

¹⁷⁷ For simulation in meteorology, see Gramelsberger, *Computerexperimente*, 2010, p. 209. Forrester, *Industrial*, 1961. This book later provided the methodological model for the world model of the Club of Rome.

¹⁷⁸ On the ENIAC computer and the programming of Metropolis and Clara von Neumann, see Haigh/Priestley/Rope, *ENIAC*, 2016.

¹⁷⁹ For a biography of John von Neumann see Bhattacharya 2022.

¹⁸⁰ *Monte-Carlo-Method: Proceedings of a Symposium held June 29, 30, and July, 1, 1949*, in Los Angeles, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 1951 (volume 12 of National Bureau of Standards: Applied Mathematics Series). Dyson, *Turing's*, 2012, describes in Chapter 12 the calculations of Klara von Neumann and

the contributions of this symposium make it clear that no digital computer is needed to generate random numbers. Instead, RAND generated their random numbers with a kind of fast spinning roulette table and published tables of random numbers that other scientists could use. Also, the evaluation of simulation experiments using the Monte Carlo method did not necessarily have to be done on a high-speed digital computer. Most of the authors report on the use of standard IBM punching equipment such as the IBM 602, 603 and 604 punching computers, and only one article deals with the use of ENIAC, the only high-speed digital computer available at the time.

Operations Research also adopted the Monte Carlo method and gave itself a mysterious coat of paint. However, in chapter four the authors Henn and Künzi brought almost exclusively trivial applications to the Monte Carlo method of their book (volume 1), such as the erratic "way of a drunken man" (random walk), the needle experiment of Buffon from 1733 and the turnover of a newspaper salesman. With these examples, they were unable to convince business leaders of the benefits of operations research, demonstrating that they had no intention of doing so, but were merely targeting the academic arena to present material for OR courses. With the success of Monte Carlo methods, the need for random numbers increased greatly to allow simulations to be repeated with a different set of random numbers, thus ensuring the replicability of simulation experiments. Textbooks published tables with equally distributed random numbers. A RAND Corporation publication with random numbers became a bestseller in the RAND book program.¹⁸¹ In theoretical computer science, a separate branch of research grew up to develop software for the generation of equally distributed random numbers.¹⁸² From the 1960s, Hans Künzi reported on applications of simulations at his Zurich Chair of Operations Research in cooperation with the Swiss Military. Air battles were simulated on the computer in order to determine a cost-minimal procurement of a fighter plane of different types. He also reported on simulations of inner-city individual traffic in order to optimize traffic light circuits.¹⁸³ OR experts in the communist German Democratic Republic also used the term Monte Carlo, but without referring to the casino.¹⁸⁴

Nicholas Metropolis. Dyson's book is based on research in the Princeton University archives. Haigh/Priestley/Rope, ENIAC, 2016, Chapters 8 and 9 provide a detailed description of ENIAC programming. It is not known whether von Neumann achieved his goal of "optimizing" the atomic bomb with the Monte Carlo simulation. Monte Carlo Method, 1951. Galison, Computer, 2011, p. 125.

¹⁸¹ 50 Years Project Air Force, 1996, p. 50.

¹⁸² Donald E. Knuth: The Art of Computer Programming, vol. 2, chapter 3, Boston 1981 (second edition). Churchman et al., Operations Research, 1957, give on page 173 a table of random numbers they obtained from RAND Corporation. Henn and Künzi, Unternehmensforschung, 1966, give a table of random numbers on page 129s of volume 1. A history of producing a sequence of random numbers is given by Thomas G. Newman and Patrick L. Odell: The Generation of Random Variates, London 1971, pp. 2–5 and bibliography.

¹⁸³ Künzi, Corporate Research, 1972, p. 9s.

¹⁸⁴ Dück et al., Operational Research, 1971, Volume 2, pp. 383-387. Schubert, Efficiency, 1965.

While the Monte Carlo method had been developed in physics, it also radiated to engineering and operations research to try to solve complicated equations, which were created in a non-probabilistic environment and could not be solved by numerical methods, with randomly generated data sets. In this way, numerical mathematics achieved an experimental character, as is always emphasized in the literature on the Monte Carlo method. One can also include the Monte Carlo method in the use of random numbers and the concept of probability in the management of telegraph lines in the 1930s. Statistical considerations in the transmission of texts in telegraph lines were quite common. The letter E, which occurs most frequently in the English language, is designated in Morse code by only one dot. This coding is more economical than assigning a sequence of dots and dashes to the letter E. In cryptography, there were tables that indicated the probabilities that a certain letter would be followed by another in English texts (transition probabilities). As can be seen from Claude Shannon's 1948 information theory paper, the use of random numbers was quite common in science.¹⁸⁵ Claude Shannon gives an example of the random generation of pseudo English text using random numbers taken from a table in a book publication - not generated by a computer - from 1939. He also refers to Statistical Mechanics, in which discrete processes are simulated using Markov processes, which can also be applied to modelling the transmission of text in telegraph lines to save transmission capacity when transition probabilities from one letter to the following letter are taken into account.

The Monte Carlo approach was ideal for operations research because no computers had to be used for these experiments, but published tables of random numbers could be used. In fact, computers were only available in the OR community in the 1970s. At the same time, the reference to published random numbers shielded from the necessity of having to collect one's own empirical data. Operations Research was able to consolidate its position as desk research. Churchman et al. published in their OR textbook an example of how to determine a minimum-cost fleet of vans for delivering parcels to a department store using the Monte Carlo method on the desk. In their example the abstraction becomes clear. In the absence of empirical data, a normal distribution of the number of parcels arriving daily is assumed with a mean value of 1000 and a standard deviation of 100. Only five values from a table of a (0.1) normal distribution published in her book were taken, multiplied by 100, and the mean value 1000 added. With these elementary operations, the authors had random data for a calculation of the daily amount of packages. The authors were self-critical in their approach to abstraction, noting that the example of package delivery was "deliberately oversimplified".¹⁸⁶ In the same way, Henn and Künzi apply the Monte Carlo method to the maintenance of a machine park of "high-pressure injection pumps".¹⁸⁷ The reference to high-pressure injection pumps of all

¹⁸⁵ Claude Shannon: A mathematical theory of communication, in: The Bell System Technical Journal (Volume: 27 , Issue: 3 , July 1948), pp. 379 – 423, hier p. 389.

¹⁸⁶ Churchman et al., Introduction, p. 411.

¹⁸⁷ Henn/Künzi, Unternehmensforschung, volume 1, p. 135.

things suggests industrial applications of the OR. The examples of applications of the Monte Carlo method published by Churchman et al. in 1957 were widely used in the literature. For example, Henn and Künzi adopted the example of the path of a drunk man (random walk) without citing the source.¹⁸⁸ The Polish author Wieslaw Sadowski took over the example of delivery vehicles with reference in his OR textbook, which was published in German in East Berlin in 1963.¹⁸⁹

The historization of simulation can also take up question for the visualization of the workshop Algorithmic Knowledge Cultures. While in the 1980s the simulation languages SIMAN and ARENA, mainly used by mechanical engineers for the simulation of production systems in batch mode, were still in use, software packages with graphical user interfaces came onto the market in the 1990s. Like a construction kit, it was possible to put together working machines, waiting rooms and material handling systems, visualise them on screens and identify bottlenecks in the material flow. The individual elements were provided with randomised arrival and departure times whose distribution could be chosen (equal distribution, normal distribution and Poisson distribution). Critical to the application of this software was to obtain empirical data on the behavior of individual elements. Characteristic data of the working machines of the mechanical engineering manufacturers and the experiences of production engineers were used.¹⁹⁰ While practical applications of simulation software for the layout of production systems have no known failures in the literature, it should be noted in theoretical terms that the results of layout simulations only provide mean values, but that large deviations can occur in the realization of random variables.

As the computing power of computers rose sharply, randomized procedures from Operations Research were able to test millions of alternatives in a very short time. Huge search areas could be scanned with realizations of random variables for favorable solutions.¹⁹¹ In the 1990s, for example, numerous deterministic OR procedures were converted into randomised procedures. The use of evenly distributed random variables, which almost every programming language had implemented with a random generator, was now taken for granted, without even bombastically speaking of Monte Carlo. As a new research branch of Operations Research, genetic algorithms and simulated annealing were investigated.¹⁹² The latter simulates the cooling behaviour of crystals in order to jump out of local minima and obtain better solutions. The former imitates evolution in nature. Values of variables were modeled as

¹⁸⁸ A.a.O., p. 133. Bei Churchman et al., Introduction, ist das Beispiel des betrunkenen Mannes auf p. 184 zu finden.

¹⁸⁹ Wieslaw Sadowski: Theorie und Methoden der Optimierungsrechnung in der Wirtschaft, Berlin 1963, p. 204.

¹⁹⁰ Eley, Simulation, 2012. Wenzel et al., Simulation, 2008. Herbert Simon pointed out as early as 1960 that simulation studies have a need for empirical data that is difficult to satisfy, see New Science, p. 19.

¹⁹¹ For the one-dimensional cutting problem see Vahrenkamp, Random, 1996.

¹⁹² Michalewicz, Algorithms, 1996, pp. 250-252.

binary 1-0 strings. With the mutation, individual positions in the string were changed randomly. With recombination, parts of two strings were randomly exchanged. The selection process selected the most promising randomized solutions. Genetic algorithms and simulated annealing were ideal fields for OR, as they gave new impetus to the method orientation of OR and finally connected the OR with the computer.

10 OR-Algorithms in Transport Networks

For the modeling of global supply chains of sea and air freight¹⁹³ as well as for the supply of households on the last mile, Operations Research has developed different methods. In addition to the algorithms for location selection in networks (median and center problems), four different approaches can be distinguished in transportation networks: the shortest path problem, the traveling salesman problem, the route planning problem, and the transportation model.¹⁹⁴ These algorithms are quite different and have little to do with each other. Only the route planning problem can implicitly build on the Travelling Salesman Problem. While OR provided the models, empirical research on transportation was the subject of transportation science, but not Operations Research.

The transportation model is presented in detail in Section 11. It looks for a cost-minimal schedule of deliveries from suppliers to demanders and is relatively easy to program in a spreadsheet. One first seeks a starting solution that includes some total cost of transport and then improves this starting solution incrementally until a cost-minimal solution is found. The criterion for optimality is easy to test. Or one is satisfied with a heuristic solution (Vogel's approximation method¹⁹⁵).

The shortest path method searches for the shortest path from A to B in a network. It was developed by the Dutch computer scientist Edsger Dijkstra in 1959 and is a very simple and a very fast algorithm that can be programmed with a few lines of code. One can instantaneously determine the shortest path through millions of nodes, which is now a common cultural technique in electronic cartography.

¹⁹³ Richard Vahrenkamp: Globale Luftfrachtnetzwerke – Laufzeiten und Struktur, erweiterte Neuauflage, Igel Verlag, Hamburg 2014.

¹⁹⁴ Dirk Mattfeld und Richard Vahrenkamp: Logistiknetzwerke – Modelle für Standortwahl und Tourenplanung, 2. edition, Gabler Verlag, Wiesbaden 2014.

¹⁹⁵ Dürr et al., Operations Research, 1983, p. 105.

The Travelling Salesman Problem (TSP) searches for a closed round trip through all given nodes with the smallest sum of travelled distances among all alternative routes and is described in detail in section 11. A distinction is made between heuristic solutions, which are relatively easy to program and provide tours that can be about 3% (in tour length) above the optimal (shortest) tour, and the complex proof of a solution that is actually the shortest among all solutions of the TSP (optimal solution, exact solution). If one follows Simon's approach of bounded rationality with respect to data and computational performance, this approach is more in favor of heuristics for solving the TSP, especially since traffic data have a large range of uncertainty.¹⁹⁶

In the route planning problem, one plans how in a city a truck delivers to different stores from a wholesale base. As a restriction, consider that the delivery vehicles are not large medium-duty 18-ton trucks or even heavy 40-ton trucks, but small maneuverable 7.5-ton or 12-ton trucks that can maneuver well in the city center and drive into narrow yard entrances. However, this smaller truck type means that the truck bed is so small that only orders for 5 - 10 stores can be transported, and thus only 5 - 10 stores need to be hit per tour. (The same is the case with delivery tours of general cargo forwarding companies). Because of the small dimension range of the TSP, which can be seen here, it can be solved very well heuristically with simple methods, if the delivery area is projected onto the road network of the city. Here, there are not many different ways to map out a tour due to the nature of the road network. So, one can use simple heuristic methods to compose delivery tours of 5 - 10 stores in the city area. Therefore, the exaggerated claims about the exact solution of large TSP are merely dreams of mathematicians who expand the problem to millions of cities worldwide, but have no application in logistic reality.¹⁹⁷

In order to determine individual tours, it was necessary to define in advance the individual delivery areas in which the individual tours were to be optimized. There was no mathematical procedure for this decomposition until the publication of the British researchers G. Clark and J. Wright in 1964, where they were able to determine the delivery areas and at the same time optimized tours with the heuristic known as the Savings Procedure.¹⁹⁸ The approach of Clark and Wright is interesting in that it starts from an unusual initial solution, namely the one that is the worst of all solutions: Each store is served by a truck in a shuttle route from the depot, without including service to other stores. In an iterative process, shuttle tours are combined step by step that promise the greatest savings in travel distance back to the depot.

¹⁹⁶ Zur Kritik von Herbert Simon am Travelling Salesman Problem siehe Erickson et al., How Reason, p. 76.

¹⁹⁷ <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/tsp/world/index.html>. (Zugriff am 15. März 2020).

¹⁹⁸ Clarke, G. und Wright, J. W.: Scheduling of Vehicles from a Central Depot to a Number of Delivery Points, in: Operations Research 12 (1964), issue 4, p. 568–581.

The use of tour planning software was slow to catch on. In 1990, Lewis Bodin was surprised about the low degree of application of this software, although the scientific community had already been researching tour planning for 20 years.¹⁹⁹ It was not until the 1980s that the main memories of the digital computers available in companies in the FRG were large enough, at around 300 kilobytes, to be able to use route planning software, such as the TRAFFIC package from Siemens. Especially in the distribution organizations of the well-funded companies in the beverage industry and milk processing, this software was used to supply restaurants and retail stores in cities. In FRG, problems with abstraction arose in route planning. The stores served by the delivery vehicles wanted to be served by the same driver each time in the recurring tours - a request that the route planning software did not take into account. There were also problems with including stores with different delivery rhythms in a common tour.²⁰⁰ In the tour planning packages, the actual tour planning was significantly expanded into a truck fleet management system that included accounting for tours, vehicle costs and personnel deployment. However, high licensing costs by the software manufacturers hindered widespread use until the 1990s.²⁰¹ The cautious business strategy of the software houses was essentially based on equity rather than venture capital, which was not able to capture markets through low prices until 2000 with high initial losses.

11 The artificial content of Cold War Operations Research

The following section discusses the Transport Model, the Travelling Salesman Problem, and the Diet Problem and highlights their artificial content from Cold War Operations Research. But also other OR questions have this artificial content and were not used in business, so they remained academic. The literature reveals a lack of critical accounts on these OR-problems.

11.1 Dynamic Programming without application

Dynamic Programming designs models of optimal decisions over time and assumes a fixed future time horizon. As a RAND researcher, the mathematician Richard Bellman first published on this subject in 1957 and found many imitators.²⁰² It was assumed that Bellman could repeat Dantzig's success with a new

¹⁹⁹ Bodin, Lewis: Twenty Years of Routing and Scheduling, in: Operations Research, 38 (1990), issue 4, p. 571–579.

²⁰⁰ Lück, Wolfgang: Logistik und Materialwirtschaft, Berlin 1984, p. 437–473. Zum Problem des gleichen Fahrers siehe ebd., p. 458.

²⁰¹ Vahrenkamp, Richard: Marktstudie Tourenplanungssoftware, in: Deutsche Verkehrszeitung vom 17. Oktober 2006.

²⁰² See for example Martin Beckmann, *Dynamic Programming*, Berlin 1968.

approach 10 years after his Linear Programming. This approach explicitly included the time dimension of economic action and divided the future course of time into different periods in which different policy options could be chosen. In a sensational because contrainuitive approach, Bellman first determined the optimal policy in the end period and gradually worked his way back from there to the present time (backward recursion). Dynamic programming was ideal for OR models, since there is no empirical data on future developments, i.e. researchers do not have to work empirically. Like Linear Programming, Dynamic Programming was only able to find optimal solutions with the help of computers because of the complex calculations involved. In 1979, Christoph Schneeweiss pointed out the high main memory requirements of reverse recursion, which could only be met for very small models using the then state of the art computer technology.²⁰³ Thus Dynamic Programming was not in a position to provide calculation programs for the worldwide spare parts supply of the Air Force, as Judith Klein assumed in her study on Cold War Dynamic Programming.²⁰⁴

The question why Dynamic Programming was superior to simple decision rules based on uncertain assumptions about future developments, such as investment decisions, remained unanswered. With abstractification, Dynamic Programming transformed uncertain data about the future into seemingly secure, accurate data and does not reflect the curiosity of applying an elaborate, accurate algorithm to uncertain data. Judy Klein's critique of Dynamic Programming as Cold War Science also fails to recognize this weakness of Dynamic Programming.²⁰⁵

11.2 The network flow model

The network flow model simplifies the partial differential equations known as Navier-Stokes equations about flowing liquids in tubes developed by engineers and physicists in the 19th century. The network flow model abstractifies the complex Navier-Stokes equations to such an extent that no friction occurs during the transport of liquids in tubes, i.e. the transport is lossless and vortex-free. In this abstractified context, the mathematicians Lester Ford and Delbert Fulkerson were able to formulate the famous duality theorem "Max-Flow-Min-Cut" in 1956.²⁰⁶ But applications of network flow models remained unknown. The network models of Operations Research were not included in the debate about the network expansion of important infrastructures, such as the electricity grid or the gas pipeline network.

11.3 The Quadratic Assignment problem as mathematical stalinism

The Quadratic Assignment problem was first formulated by the mathematical economists Martin Beckmann and Tjalling Koopmans in a joint article in *Econometrica* in 1957, which became famous and was cited about 1500 times.²⁰⁷ Beckmann and Koopmans worked together at the Cowles Commission in

²⁰³ Schneeweiss, Christoph: Dynamische Programmierung, in: Beckmann, Martin, Günter Menges und Reinhard Selten (ed.): *Handwörterbuch der Mathematischen Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Teilband Unternehmensforschung*, Wiesbaden 1979, p. 32.

²⁰⁴ Klein, Cold War, 2007, cf. note 7.

²⁰⁵ Klein, ibidem.

²⁰⁶ Lester Ford Jr., D.R Fulkerson: "Maximal flow through a network." *Canadian J. Mathematics*, 8, 1956, p. pp. 399-404.

²⁰⁷ Tjalling Koopmans and Martin Beckmann: "Assignment Problems and the Location of Economic Activities." *Econometrica*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Jan., 1957), pp. 53-76.

Chicago.²⁰⁸ Their article deals with an question that only appears at first glance as an economic problem, namely the spatial arrangement of different production plants on given settlement areas. Hypothetical – empirical data were not available – supply relationships are assumed among the enterprises that are included in the model being measured in tons. The spatial distances in kilometres between the factories are known. The question is how the factories should be optimally arranged on the land so as to minimise the transport performance (sum of tonnes*km) when goods are exchanged between the factories. There were also publications at the company level dealing with the arrangement of machinery in an industrial plant with regard to the exchange of intermediate products.²⁰⁹ The abstractification underlying the Quadratic Assignment problem becomes clear in the one-dimensional goal of minimizing the transport performance. In contrast to Beckmann's assertion that Operations Research can be applied in complicated decision-making situations,²¹⁰ the authors Koopmans and Beckmann reduced the complexity of the decision-making situation of the Quadratic Assignment problem to one dimension of transport performance. In a democratic society, the Quadratic Assignment problem is hung in a vacuum. Only soviet planners in Stalinism could gather so much power to take such a one-dimensional approach to the settlement of factories. In democratic societies, however, a large number of criteria are incorporated into location policy. The configuration of factories with machines also has a similarly complex goal bundle, as Gerhard Waescher has demonstrated in his standard book.

In computer science and combinatorial mathematics, the Quadratic Assignment triggered a flood of publications, for example in the Handbook of Combinatorial Optimization, which was last published in five volumes in 2013 and already had predecessor editions.²¹¹ This problem could only be solved exactly up to a problem size of $n = 30$ by 2013. However, applications with empirical data remain unknown. Axel Nyberg claimed in his lecture on November 15, 2013 at the Abo University in Turku (Finland) that the hospital in Regensburg in Germany, built in 1972, had an optimal layout according to the Quadratic Assignment problem.²¹² However, this was only proven in 2000 and could therefore not have played a role in the construction.

11.4 Computed meals as mathematical entertainment

To attach a semblance of application, Dantzig invented new OR–problems to be solved with the aid of Linear Programming: the diet problem and the traveling salesman problem. Here I will focus on the diet problem. This problem was invented by the later Nobel Prize winner and economist George Stigler in 1945. It is a strange problem: How to nourish a person sufficiently

²⁰⁸ Mirowski, Machine Dreams, (cf. note 6), p. 252.

²⁰⁹ Waescher, Gerhard: *Innerbetriebliche Standortplanung bei einfacher und mehrfacher Zielsetzung*, Wiesbaden, 1982.

²¹⁰ "Mathematical methods are finding ever more applications in the economic and social spheres, especially where decision-making in complicated situations is at stake. Operations Research in particular, which involves the application of mathematical models for economic decisions, has developed rapidly due to this need..", (translated from German by R.V.) in: Beckmann, Martin, Gunter Menges und Reinhard Selten (eds.): *Handwörterbuch der Mathematischen Wirtschaftswissenschaften, Teilband Unternehmensforschung*, Wiesbaden 1979, preface.

²¹¹ Burkard, Rainer: "Quadratic Assignment Problems." In: *Handbook of Combinatorial Optimization*, pp. 2741-2814, edited by Panos M. Pardalos, Ding-Zhu Du and Ronald L. Graham, Springer Verlag, 2013. Burkard supplies a bibliography: Burkard, Rainer: "Quadratic Assignment Problems." In: *Handbook of Combinatorial Optimization*, pp. 2741-2814, ibidem.

²¹² Nyberg, Axel: "Applications of the Quadratic Assignment Problem", see: http://web.abo.fi/fak/tkf/at/ose/doc/Pres_15112013/Axel%20Nyberg.pdf.

for the lowest cost? Stigler contrasted the content of nutrients in various foods (such as vegetables, fruit and meat) with the cost of its procurement and asked how to serve a meal for a person with sufficient nutrients at the lowest cost.²¹³ Stigler's paper exists in a vacuum and is not linked to the economic situation of the US in 1945. Many consumption goods were rationed due to the war. The municipal and state run programs on social welfare focussed on poor people. Did Stigler want to reduce the cost of these programs? Why did Stigler search for the lowest cost, not for the second lowest or even the maximum cost? The strange diet problem survived for many decades in Operations Research textbooks, without any explanation as to why it might be useful. Dantzig even bothered John von Neumann for help in solving the diet problem. In his von Neumann biography Bhattacharya did not regard the curiosity of the diet problem but regards it as a serious scientific problem.²¹⁴

In 1947, Jack Laderman of the Mathematical Tables Project in the National Bureau of Standards solved the diet problem with the new technique of Linear Programming. His approach consisted of 9 equations and 77 variables, and he solved it with the aid of office calculators, as an academic exercise without application. Dantzig devoted even a chapter in his 1963 book to this problem. Even on IBM's high speed digital computer 701, he coded the problem at the RAND Corporation, but his computed meals were never served to the pilots of Dantzig's employer, the Air Force. Dantzig did not recognize the double curiosity of applying advanced computational techniques to an invented problem based on only weak data – a problem that was neither posed by industry, councils nor the Armed Forces. As empirical data, he displayed in his book a table with nutrients, where the content of ascorbic acid varied by more than 100 percent between various types of apples.²¹⁵ So Dantzig could not answer the question of whether a pilot should eat one or two apples each day. Whereas the MPI-group regarded the diet problem as a serious scientific problem, one can criticise by stating that Dantzig's procedure lowered the cutting edge technology of high speed digital computers to the level of a toy, made purely for mathematical entertainment.²¹⁶

11.5 The transportation problem as an abstractification

The transportation model discussed in the following shows the paradox that its discoverer was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics, but that his model was never applied in economic reality. The reasons for this failure will be explained. One can generalise this case to the effect

²¹³ George Stigler, "The Cost of Subsistence." *Journal of Farm Economics*, vol. 27, 1945, no. 2, pp. 303-314.

²¹⁴ Ananyo Bhattacharya: *The Man from the Future. The Visionary Life of John von Neumann*, Allan Lane 2021, Penguin Books 2022, p. 191.

²¹⁵ George Dantzig, *Linear Programming*, (cf. note 58), pp. 551-553. Georg Dantzig, "The Diet Problem." *Interfaces*, vol. 20, 1990, no. 4, 43-47.

²¹⁶ Paul Erickson et al., *How Reason Almost Lost Its Mind*, (cf. note 7), p. 65.

that the transportation model stands for many other models of the OR whose relevance is always only claimed. The transportation model is treated as such in OR and business administration. In economics it runs under the heading of the optimal use of resources, for which Koopmans received the Nobel Prize in economics. On both levels, however, the model is the same.

The Transportation Problem (or Model) is always an important chapter in every textbook on Operations Research and every curriculum of Management Schools and describes how to distribute the transportation of goods between various sources and destinations in order to minimize the total costs of transportation.²¹⁷ It describes, as a drastically simplified static model without including the time dimension, how transportations of a homogeneous good between different sources (for example wholesale) and destinations (for example retail) should be organized at a given constant transportation cost per ton so that the total transportation cost is minimal. The model is visualized in figures 2 and 5. The model contrasts suppliers and destinations and is based on transportation relations that run from suppliers to destinations. On these transportation relations, different cost rates per ton prevail, which can result from the different distances between suppliers and destinations. It should be emphasized that these cost rates are constant and do not depend on the transported quantity or on the passage of time. Furthermore, the quantities offered are given for the different suppliers and the quantities demanded for the different destinations. In the model it is assumed that the sum of the offered quantities is equal to the sum of the demanded quantities (equilibrium conditions). However, if there are differences in these sums, equilibrium can be reached by inserting dummy suppliers or dummy demanders. Within this model it is discussed how solutions look like, which bring supply and demand over the transportation relations to the equilibrium at minimal sum of transportation costs. Specifically to mark a solution, the question is to be answered, which transportation quantity is to be transported on the relation from supplier i to destination k . The sum over all transportation costs (quantity times cost rate) on each relation is to be calculated. This sum is the (total) cost of the considered solution. Among the different solutions, the solution with the lowest total cost among all other solutions is sought (optimal solution).

²¹⁷ George Dantzig, "Linear Programming", (cf. note 58), chapter 14. Dorfman et al., *Linear Programming*, (cf. note 56), chapter 5.

The Transport Model of Operations Research

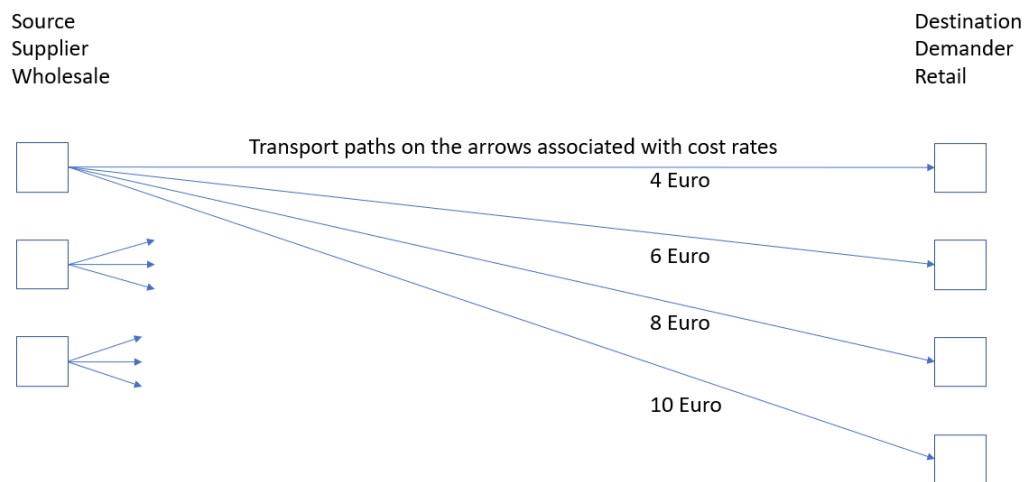


Figure 7: The Transportation Model (source: own drawing)

Regarding the Transportation Model, one can reveal the nominal nature of this problem. The economic world is used to identifying and abstractifying transportation problems and converting them into simple mathematical models for the academic world, without the intention of solving a problem in the real world.

Churchman et al. suddenly introduce the transportation problem in their textbook using the example of empty wagon coordination of railway companies, without giving any empirical basis for this example.²¹⁸ They merely use the reference to railways to give themselves an empirical appearance. Dorfman et al. claim in their textbook that there are numerous applications of the transportation problem in economics and business without providing any evidence to support this.²¹⁹ They call one of their examples "purely fictitious".²²⁰ In their textbook "Einführung in die Unternehmensforschung" Henn and Künzi completely dispense with an economic interpretation of the transportation model and merely give the mathematical model. Their approach does not make it clear what the transportation model has to do with corporate research. Dantzig also refrains from elaborating on the economic

²¹⁸ Churchman et al., Introduction, p. 283.

²¹⁹ Dorfman et al, Linear Programming, p. 106.

²²⁰ A.a.O., p. 117.

benefits of the transportation model in his textbook on linear programming. Instead, he simply speaks of an optimal transportation plan.²²¹

The transportation model was invented independently by the mathematicians Frank Hitchcock and Tjalling Koopmans in 1941 and 1942.²²² During the Second World War, Tjalling Koopmans, who received his doctorate as a mathematical physicist in the 1930s, formulated precursors of the so-called transportation model. As a statistician on the Combined Shipping Board in the U.S. during World War II, he observed bottlenecks in the transportation chain of worldwide ship circulations and asked which ship connections could be reduced in capacity if additional shipping space was needed for another connection.²²³ He reformulated these bottlenecks into a simple transportation model in which marginal costs of transportation could control the optimization of shipping routes. To give himself an empirical basis, he based his model on statistics from the German Reich Statistical Office in Berlin, which had published the incoming and outgoing quantities (in millions of metric tons) of dry cargo in the world's 15 most important ports in 1925 (The harbor Hamburg is omitted), see figure 3.

Koopmans published in his 1947 paper on the transport model, which can be considered as one of the first papers on the transport model ever, a table of 15 seaports worldwide, where he shows the entry and exit of bulk goods in millions of tonnes, see the following table in Figure 8. Of the 15 ports, three ports have a surplus, so that they have more tonnes in entry than in exit. These are the ports of Athens, Lisbon and Yokohama. The situation is reversed for the remaining 12 ports. Miraculously, the sum of the input quantities across the 15 ports is equal to the quantity of output quantities, so that, as required by the transport model, supply equals demand. Koopmans somewhat casually cites as the source for his table the Statistisches Reichsamtsamt with its publication "Der Güterverkehr in der Weltschiffahrt" from 1928. In fact, it is a supplement issue of issue 1 of the journal Vierteljahreshefte zur Statistik des Deutschen Reiches from 1928 in its 37th volume. This publication presents the worldwide trade in the six raw materials wood, coal, oil, iron ore, wheat and rice in millions of tonnes. Trade is broken down according to the geographical categories of the individual countries, but not according to ports. Ports do not appear at all in the supplementary booklet. How Koopmans arrives at the 15 ports in his table therefore remains unclear. As he writes in his publication, he aggregates the catchment area of his 15 ports. The port of Rotterdam, for example, serves the whole of north-western Europe, while New York covers the whole area of the north-western USA. He does not specify which countries the port of Lisbon is to aggregate. Apparently, the port of Athens aggregates the whole Mediterranean area. This is surprising, since the hinterland connection from Athens to the Balkans via railway lines is very poor. One can see from this that

²²¹ Dantzig, *Linear Programming*, p. 299.

²²² Zu Hitchcock see Hitchcock, Frank: *The Distribution of a Product from several Sources to numerous Localities*, in: *Journal of Mathematics and Physics*, vol. 20, 1941, p. 224–230.

²²³ *Exchange Ratios between Cargoes on Various Routes (Non-Refrigerated Dry Cargoes)*. Memorandum for the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board, Washington, D.C., 1942. Published in *Scientific Papers of Tjalling C. Koopmans*, Springer Verlag, edited by Martin Beckmann, Berlin 1970, pp. 77-86.

the table, which Koopmans ennobles with the source, the German "Statistisches Reichsamt", is more a fiction than based on verifiable statistical data. Koopmans asks how, in his fictitious model, ships can be guided in empty voyages from the surplus ports to the ports of demand at low cost in order to minimise the sum of transport costs over all these empty voyages. He thus contrasts the three surplus ports with the 12 deficit ports in a transport model and calculates dual variables in this model in order to work out the steering effect of the marginal costs. In calculating the dual variables, he proceeds in such a way that he starts from the three surplus ports of Athens, Lisbon and Yokohama. He sets the dual variable for Athens, referred to as potential, equal to zero and calculates dual values for the ports in the Indian Ocean and Pacific that can be reached from Athens by using the journey times in days, which are supposed to approximate the transport prices, as dual variables.

Net receipts of dry cargo in overseas trade, 1925

Unit: Millions of metric tons per annum

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Area represented by ¹	All cargoes other than mineral oils		
	Received	Dispatched	Net receipts
New York	23.5	32.7	-9.2
San Francisco	7.2	9.7	-2.5
St. Thomas	10.3	11.5	-1.2
Buenos Aires	7.0	9.6	-2.6
Antofagasta	1.4	4.6	-3.2
Rotterdam*	126.4	130.5	-4.1
Lisbon*	37.5	17.0	20.5
Athens*	28.3	14.4	13.9
Odessa	0.5	4.7	-4.2
Lagos	2.0	2.4	-0.4
Durban*	2.1	4.3	-2.2
Bombay	5.0	8.9	-3.9
Singapore	3.6	6.8	-3.2
Yokohama	9.2	3.0	6.2
Sydney	2.8	6.7	-3.9
Total	266.8	266.8	0.0

Source: *Der Guterverkehr der Weltschifffahrt*, Statistisches Reichsamt, Berlin, 1928.

Figure 8: Fictive data for the overseas trade in 1925 with the source Statistisches Reichsamt (Source: Koopmans, Tjalling: Optimum Utilization of the Transportation System, in: Proceedings in the International Statistical Conference, Vol. 5, Washington D.C. 1947. (Reprint in: *Econometrica*, vol. 17, 1949, pp. 136–146, Supplement, p. 136).

However, Koopmans lacked transportation prices in world trade, and he could not solve the model without this data.²²⁴ Although derived from the war economy, in which there was no

²²⁴ Koopmans, Optimum Utilization, 1949, p. 139.

economic competition, Koopmans relied on a theorem by M. Allais, according to which under competitive conditions the ratio of prices for transportation services optimally corresponds to the ratio of marginal costs.²²⁵ He shows, however, that regardless of competitive conditions, marginal costs can have a steering effect towards the optimum. The optimum is a transportation plan in which the sum of transportation costs is minimal. In fact, to explain his model, he assumes a "global organisation" that carries out the transports and not transports by independent companies under competitive conditions. This approach is confusing, since Koopmans on the one hand appears as a competition economist from the Cowles Commission at the University of Chicago and then at the same time assumes an economic central power. He published the model under the title "Optimum Utilization of the Transportation System" in the prestigious journal *Econometrica* in 1949. His paper has been cited over 500 times according to Google Scholar.

For this model he received the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1975 (together with the Russian mathematician Leonid Kantorovich for his discovery of linear programming).²²⁶ Martin Beckmann had paved the way for the Nobel Prize in 1975 with the publication of the scientific papers of Tjalling Koopmans in one volume at Springer Verlag in Berlin in 1970.²²⁷ In 1954, Abraham Charnes and William Cooper developed a solution for the transportation problem in the context of linear programming, which became known as the Stepping Stone Method. This work was commissioned by the Office for Naval Research, as the authors state.²²⁸ But no special utility of this method for the Navy is known.

The transportation problem abstracts the real world in different stages. For a homogeneous good ("dry cargo" of world shipping) it compares different suppliers with different demanders, whereby the transportation costs per tonne from supplier i to the demanders k are given. In a process of simplification, the diversity of goods is eliminated and only one homogeneous good is considered, so that it is irrelevant for a customer which supplier supplies him. It abstracts from different types of goods and also from temporal changes in transportation that occur in the real world. It also abstracts from the economies of scale that prevail in the transportation industry, where freight rates are higher for one ton than for 1000 tons.²²⁹ The model is also unable to represent the temporal fluctuation of freight rates. The drastic simplification of the economic reality in the transportation model is in contrast to the claim of the OR promoter Martin Beckmann that OR is particularly applicable in complicated decision-making situations: "Mathematical methods are finding more and more applications in the economic and social

²²⁵ Koopmans, *Optimum Utilization*, 1949, p. 136. Koopmans did not provide a source for the theorem of Allais.

²²⁶ Siehe die press release of Schwedische Reichsbank under:
<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/economic-sciences/1975/press-release/>

²²⁷ *Scientific Papers of Tjalling C. Koopmans*, Springer Verlag, edited by Martin Beckmann, Berlin 1970.

²²⁸ Charnes, Abraham and William Cooper: The stepping stone method of explaining linear programming calculations in transportation problems, in: *Management Science*, 1(1), 1954, pp. 49-69.

²²⁹ Richard Vahrenkamp already pointed out the fading out of Economies of Scale in his lecture at the annual conference of the Society for Operations Research 2008 in Augsburg.

field, especially where decisions in complicated situations are to be made. Especially corporate research, which is concerned with the application of mathematical models for economic decisions, has developed..rapidly due to this need".²³⁰

In the transportation model, supply and demand can even be graphically compared in a table. The abstract model of linear optimization could thus be illustrated with a table, as the following figure from the book by Churchman et al. on page 290 shows.

TABLE 11-5b. SECOND FEASIBLE SOLUTION: $C = 233$

Destina- Origins \ tions	D_1	D_2	D_3	D_4	D_5	Total
S_1	(3)	(5)	(0)	(1)	7	9
S_2	-11	[-13]	(4)	18	0	4
S_3	-10	-1	1	(5)	(3)	8
Total	3	5	4	6	3	21

Figure 9: Table of Churchman et al.

Churchman et al. enthusiastically show on page 283 how the complicated approach of linear optimization can be simplified with the transportation model and thus be brought closer to the mathematically little pre-trained management. The transportation model was an important marketing argument for Operations Research: "Look - Operations Research is quite simple!" This was the message.

The so-called network simplex algorithm could be applied to the transportation model, which can run completely in the integer range, since it is only about addition and subtraction of quantities, but not about division. This limitation to simple additions and subtractions was ideal for operations research, because it allowed a wealth of textbook examples to be generated without the need to resort to a computer. These examples were also ideal for exercises in university courses, which could use transportation tasks to suggest applications to students. Students could solve a problem in an exam with paper and pencil without a computer. Dorfman et al. emphasize this simple solution method with paper and pencil as a special feature of the transportation problem.²³¹ Churchman et al. even suspected that this simple arithmetic structure of the "pre-computer age" was suitable for letting simple office

²³⁰ Beckmann, Unternehmensforschung 1979, foreword.

²³¹ Dorfman et al, Linear Programming, p. 106.

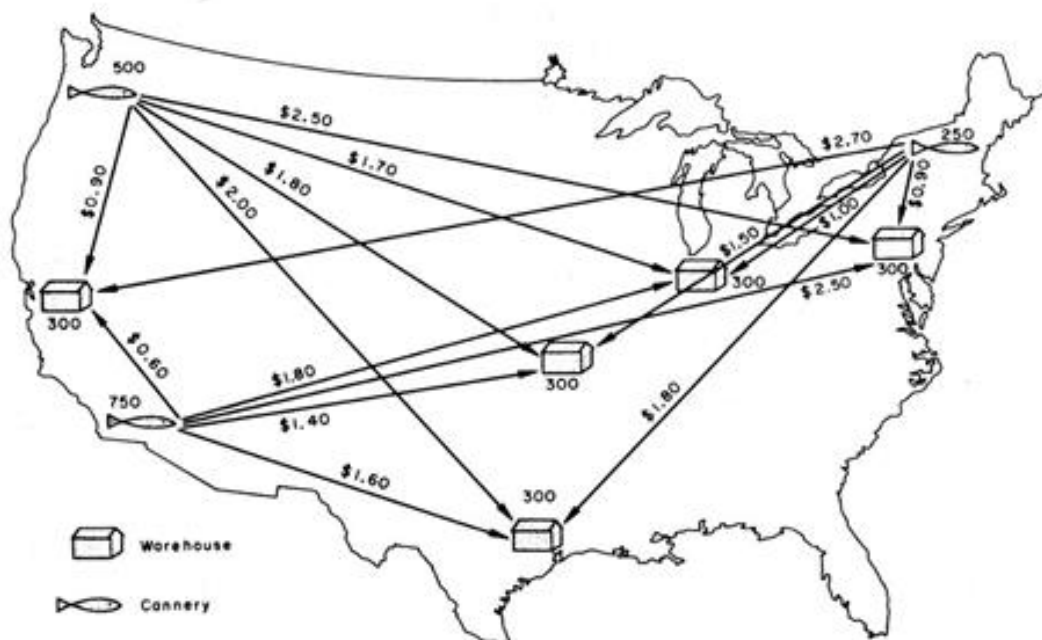
workers work through problems.²³² The authors thus indicate that in 1957 they were mentally still in the pre-computer age. Even William Thomas uncritically presents the transportation problem in his history of OR as a success story.²³³

In addition, the transportation problem can be impressively illustrated graphically, e.g. with a map of the U.S., as Georg Dantzig has already done on page three of his book, underlining the economic importance of his book. There he shows the locations of five warehouses and three fish processing factories of the fish canning industry. He also shows transportation relations between these locations and the transportation costs per tonne there:

²³² Churchman et al., Operations Research, p. 298.

²³³ Thomas, Rational Action, p. 181.

Figure 10 The Transportation Problem in Dantzig's book 1963. Transportation inside the US between canneries and warehouses with transportation rates.²³⁴ (Source: George Dantzig: *Lineare Programmierung und Erweiterungen*, (German edition) Springer Verlag, Berlin, 1966, p. 3)²³⁵



It is surprising that Dantzig specifically chose the fish canning industry as an example in a highly industrialised country with a strong high-tech industry like the U.S. instead of, for example, locations of warehouses for spare parts in the aircraft industry. It is possible that Dantzig was referring to John Steinbeck. John Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962 for his novel *Cannery Row*, published in 1945, which describes the fish canning industry on the US West Coast in Monterey - one year before Dantzig's book was published.

Also in Monterey, in 1951, the Navy set up a large OR department in the Navy Postgraduate School, which, according to OR promoter Saul Gass, became the largest OR department in the U.S. and even the world.²³⁶ If this assessment is correct, the thesis could be supported that Operations Research served to give the U.S. military a scientific outfit, with empirical

²³⁴ Also in their joint paper "A Model of Transportation" Koopmans and Reiter showed maps of shipping routes of the world, p. 245s, in Koopmans, *Activity Analysis*, (cf. note 60), pp. 222-259.

²³⁵ That Dantzig chose canneries as example reminds to John Steinbeck's book *Cannery Row* playing in Monterey. Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize in 1962 – one year before Dantzig's book appeared.

²³⁶ Lecture of Saul Gass on the yearly meeting GOR in 2008 in Augsburg, see <http://www.gor-ev.de/or-2008-in-augsburg>. (access on 30 May 2018).

usefulness of OR methods being secondary. Dantzig probably aimed his map at the large OR Navy base in Monterey in order to attract attention for his book.

As a nominal approach, Dantzig produced this map as an invention on his office desk, but not from empirical data of a contract with a cannery firm. While the map calls upon the authority of an important economic problem, this impression is misleading. Like Game Theory, until now, no application of the Transportation Problem has been published. Koopmans abstractified this problem so heavily that it remains in the world of numbers and could not gain traction in the real world. In the capitalistic economy, no enterprise in the transportation trade (ship, aircraft, railway, motor truck) called for a project to optimize routes by the transportation problem. The Eastern Bloc fell for the optimisation brilliance of the Transportation model and in the 1960s intensively brought it to mainframe computers.²³⁷ For application in the Eastern Bloc see below, section 12. The resistance against the implementation of the transportation model in the Eastern Bloc is based on the fundamental question of how rationalization gains in the transportation model can be distributed at all. If all consignors belong to one company or all consignees belong to one company, it can be assumed that rationalization gains that arise from finding the minimum cost in the transportation model can be credited to the consignor or consignee. The situation is different when different players are likely to appear on both the sender and the recipient side. Koopmans had not considered this situation in his transportation model at all, but only naively sought the cost minimum without considering a social context. That Koopmans insufficiently takes into account ownership and competitive conditions in his analysis also becomes clear in the introductory part of his 1947 paper, where he describes a problem of Arthur Pigou, how to estimate the costs of empty runs when 5 loaded goods trains travel from a place A to a place B, but for the return trip only 3 goods trains return loaded and 2 goods trains return empty.²³⁸ The costs for the empty runs can be passed on to the customers in different ways with the offered prices, depending on the ownership situation, which Koopmans does not even take into account. If the tracks and the 5 goods trains belong to one company, then a mixed calculation can be offered to the customers. However, if the track and the operation are separate and the 5 goods trains belong to 5 different companies, the journeys can be calculated differently.

Remarkably, many OR textbooks did not apply a spreadsheet software to present and compute the transportation problem but preserved old-fashioned methods for finding an optimal solution. The north-west rule and the stepping stone method were outdated in the age of spreadsheet software, where one can apply Excel's Visual Basic to determine dual

²³⁷ It is not surprising that in the 1920s a Soviet mathematician formulated precursors to the transport model, see Shrijver, Alexander: Combinatorial Optimization, Berlin, 2003, p. 362.

²³⁸ Arthur Pigou: Economics of Welfare, London 1920.

variables.²³⁹ In the mainframe software packages for linear programming in MPS format, the transportation model was not included at all, since it did not exist in the real world.²⁴⁰

In the academic field of Operations Research, scholars were interested in their models but not in application, and so the question did not attract their attention in the 70 years since its discovery of 'why' the Transportation Problem is insufficient to be applied to problems in the world of economy. At first sight, the coordination of empty railcars in a railway company to be sent back to the sources of material seemed to be an appropriate application for the Transportation Problem. However German Railways did not coordinate their trains loaded with coal but rather used shuttle trains between the sources of coal and consumption destinations. Empirical research into railway systems revealed the time structure of transportation. The railway company needed forecasts for the demand of empty railcars that the Transportation Problem could not provide.²⁴¹

11.6 The travelling salesman as invention

In the United States of the 1940s, the profession of the traveling salesman was held in high esteem by the public. Dantzig took this up when he invented the so-called traveling salesman problem. Also, this famous problem arose in the academic environment of the RAND corporation as an invention of the mathematician Dantzig to shed some light of application on Linear Programming, but not as a contract with a firm that wanted to improve its sales organisation. At RAND, the Travelling Salesman problem was seen as an additional intellectual challenge to game theory. Dantzig abstractified a problem of the daily life of a traveling salesman to visit customers and proposed with a small semantic shift that a traveling salesman has to visit not a number of customers but a number of cities. Dantzig's question was how to organise the travel visiting these cities with the least sum of distances to be travelled. The RAND researchers, the mathematicians George Dantzig, Delbert Fulkerson and Selmer Johnson, proposed on their office desk a route through the 48 states of the United States where they picked for each state one city. The route contained even the thinly populated state of Montana with less than half a million inhabitants where a salesman could hardly sell products in contrast to heavily populated states as California or Pennsylvania.²⁴² In addition, the district Washington D.C. was merged into the route – a route that a traveling salesman in the physical world never would travel. The road distances between the cities were derived as “desktop research” from a road atlas.²⁴³ The proposed route through the 48 states of the United States did not serve a sales organisation to guide its salesmen but was a good marketing story of Dantzig as he – supported by a map of the United States – appealed to the national proud of US citizens in every

²³⁹ See OR-Lecture of Daniel Lambert on www.wiwiweb.de: <https://www.wiwiweb.de/operations-research/transport/stepp-stone-methode.html>

²⁴⁰ Walter Dürr und Klaus Kleibohm: Operations Research, first edition, München 1983, p. 212.

²⁴¹ Michael Gorman, “Empty Railcar Distribution.” In Bruce W. Patty (ed.), *Handbook of Operations Research Applications at Railroads*, New York 2015, pp. 177 – 190.

²⁴² In their book Business Statistics, the authors Riggelman and Frisbee emphasize the importance of population density to generate the demand for consumer goods that is important for a travelling salesman. John Riggelman und Ira Frisbee: Business Statistics, London 1938, p. 428.

²⁴³ G. Dantzig, R. Fulkerson and S. Johnson, “Solution of a Large-Scale Traveling-Salesman Problem.” RAND Research Memorandum, P 510, April 1954.

state. He showed that Linear Programming is a unifying tie connecting the single states. Gass and Assad made the humorous remark in their timeline: "See the U.S. in a Chevrolet", underlining the not very serious approach of the Travelling Salesman problem.²⁴⁴ In the last 60 years the traveling salesman problem, with its semblance of application, fascinated mathematicians with a steady growing number of cities to be visited – parallel to the rising computing power of digital computers – until by the year 2017 they considered a route through 1.9 million cities of the world. Empirical surveys on the need for solution methods for the Travelling Salesman problem in industry remained unknown. From the great manufacturing firms, like Volkswagen or Siemens, no statement is known, that the use of advanced solution techniques, besides then simple heuristics of nearest neighbor and 2-opt, for great Travelling Salesman problems would result in substantial savings in costs for production or cost for logistics. The leading OR scholar in Germany, Andreas Drexel, who was the leading researcher at the University of Kiel (Germany) according to the press release of his University of Kiel, reported in a press interview that he was impressed by the beauty of the Travelling Salesman problem. Merrill Flood reported in his paper that he had heard of applications.²⁴⁵ But the justification for every new generation of supercomputers or even quantum computers refers to the alleged need to solve great Travelling Salesman problem for production or logistics.²⁴⁶

12 The boom in transport optimization in the German Democratic Republic

The application of OR methods in the Eastern Bloc was characterized by political knowledge cultures. While in the Soviet Union the use of mathematical planning methods – also known as cybernetics – in the national economy was initially rejected as "Western" in the early 1950s, Nikita Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin at the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956 and with a conference on economic mathematics in Moscow in 1959 changed the attitude.²⁴⁷ In 1967, George Dantzig, then professor of OR at Stanford University, estimated that in the Soviet Union several times as many mathematicians, OR researchers and computer science researchers were working in relation to the U.S. in order to catch up in the production of goods.²⁴⁸

In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), communist party (SED) leader Walter Ulbricht was sceptical about cybernetics and data processing at the beginning of the 1950s, but at the end of the 1950s he became the promoter of cybernetics and data processing. Cybernetics as a systems science has now been widely discussed. In 1964 the international conference

²⁴⁴ Gass and Assad, *Timeline*, 2005 (cf. note 12), p. 48.

²⁴⁵ Press release University Kiel on 28 November 2005. Handelsblatt on 12 December 2005. "Flood, Merrill: The Traveling-Salesman Problem." *Operations Research*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Feb., 1956), pp. 61-75., here p. 65.

²⁴⁶ <http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/tsp/world/>.

²⁴⁷ On the debate on cybernetics in the 1950s see Seising, *Cybernetics*, 2010. On cybernetics in the USSR see Gerovitch, *Cybernetics*, 2002, here p. 155. Brusbeck, *Unternehmensforschung*, 1965, p. 46.

²⁴⁸ Dantzig, *Operations Research in the World*, 1967, p. 117.

"Mathematics and Cybernetics in Economics" took place in East Berlin.²⁴⁹ The computer was seen as an ideal tool of the planned economy.²⁵⁰ In 1963, the GDR Council of Ministers called for the establishment of a computer-assisted accounting system for the national economy in the guideline for the New Economic System of Planning and Management of the National Economy.²⁵¹ Even the Swiss OR promoter Hans Künzig was able to publish a paper on mathematical optimization with FORTRAN and Algol programs in the GDR in 1966 at the Leipzig publishing house Teubner Verlag.²⁵²

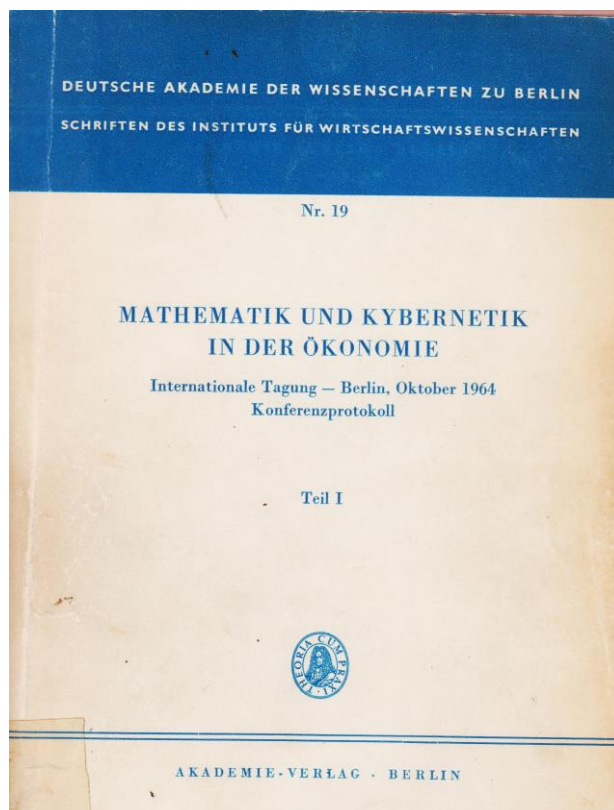


Figure 11: Volume Mathematik und Kybernetik, 1965

²⁴⁹ Dittmann/Seising, Cybernetics 2007. Mathematics and Cybernetics in Economics, International Conference in Berlin in October 1964, Proceedings, Akademie-Verlag Berlin 1965.

²⁵⁰ Donig, DDR-Computertechnik, 2006, p. 252. Potthoff, linear programming, 1961. Nützenadel, economists, 2005, p. 201.

²⁵¹ The directive peculiarly spoke of "highly mechanized computing systems". In the "Prague Spring" of 1968, Rudi Dutschke, the leader of the rebellious West Berlin students who grew up in the GDR, told the astonished students of the University of Prague who, after 20 years of communism, were actually striving for a market economy control of the economy that the planned economy was the superior system thanks to the IBM computer S/360, see Stepan Benda's memories of his meeting with Rudi Dutschke in Prague at <https://www.tschechien-online.org/blog/meine-begegnung-rudi-dutschke-im-april-1968-prag-01082016-17424>. (accessed on 30 May 2018).

²⁵² Hans P. Künzi, Hans G. Tzschach, Carl A. Zehnder: Numerical Methods of Mathematical Optimization: with ALGOL and FORTRAN Programs, Leipzig: Teubner, 1966.

Among the multitude of cybernetics methods, I will pick out the computer-aided transport optimization here. The entire Eastern Bloc experienced a boom in transport optimisation at the beginning of the 1960s. In contrast to the capitalist world, methods of computer-aided transport optimisation, such as route planning and the transport model, were eagerly adopted in the Eastern Bloc, as they seemed to correspond to the simplifying approaches of the planned economy. As emphasized by the chairs of Economic Policy at universities in Western-Germany, the planning approaches of central administrative economies can be characterized by simplification. The broad variety of goods that characterizes Western markets is reduced to only a few types of goods.²⁵³ During the reform era of the GDR from 1961 to 1970, numerous books on socialist economic management with the help of Operations Research were published. The reform fraction in the SED understood this approach as organizational science in order to be able to properly manage the large socialist corporations, such as the "Vereinigung volkseigener Betriebe" (VVB), within the framework of the New Economic System of the 1960s.²⁵⁴ From Operations Research, the SED expected management guidance, as Herbert Simon had suggested. Since 1967, the universities had the field of study "Marxist-Leninist Organization Studies" (MLO), in which Operations Research played a major role.²⁵⁵ The SED had been so hasty in founding the corporations "Vereinigung volkseigener Betriebe" that it lacked methods for managing these large conglomerates. The MLO seemed to offer a way out.

In the following, the social spaces of transport optimisation are dealt with. Since 1959, at party conferences of the SED and in recommendations of the highest management bodies of the GDR, reference was repeatedly made to existing "unnecessary, contrary and uneconomical transports" in the national economy, for example the transport of timber from the southern part of the GDR to the northern part and at the same time from other timber sources transports from the north to the south. These kinds of transport had to be identified and eliminated using modern methods in order to achieve a high economic benefit.²⁵⁶ In numerous research institutions, such as the Central Institute for Automation in Dresden and the Dresden University of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, these political guidelines were gladly accepted.²⁵⁷ Karl Hofmann studied the supply relationships in the basic industry at the

²⁵³ Eucken, Economic Policy, 1990, p. 78.

²⁵⁴ Gert-Joachim Glaeßner: Herrschaft durch Kader: Leitung der Gesellschaft und Kaderpolitik in der DDR am Beispiel des Staatsapparates, Opladen 1977.

²⁵⁵ Hartmut Schulze: Kybernetik und die Ausbildung der Ökonomen in der DDR, in: Dittmann, Frank und Rudolf Seising, Kybernetik, 2007., p. 433–445.

²⁵⁶ Hofmann/Schreiter/Vogel, Optimierung, 1964, p. 6. These authors as well as Potthoff (Linearprogrammierung, 1961) give extensive bibliographies with sources from Poland, Hungary, USSR and Czechoslovakia. It is not surprising that in the 1920s a Soviet mathematician formulated precursors to the transport model, see Shrijver, Alexander: Combinatorial Optimization, Berlin, 2003, p. 362.

²⁵⁷ Further research institutions took part in transport optimisation: The Test and Development Centre for Motor Traffic in Dresden, the Institute for Transport Research in Berlin, the University of Architecture and Civil

University of Transport and Communications in Dresden and established optimised supply relationships for wood, coal, sulphuric acid and building materials based on railway transport using the transport model. He awarded numerous diploma theses and dissertations. However, the extent to which the optimisations remained merely academic and were not implemented remained open.

In the coal industry, the abstractification in the model did not succeed smoothly, as many coal types had to be distinguished. Furthermore, the data set for the distribution of lignite briquettes was too large for the approximately 50 thousand bit drum memory of the digital computer ZRA1, manufactured by Carl Zeiss in Jena, which was common in the GDR at that time. The number of coal suppliers had to be reduced from 50 to 21, as did the number of customers from 3000 to 74.²⁵⁸ The optimisation programme also achieved unsatisfactory solutions for the supply of pine wood. Small wood-processing companies were assigned to distant wood sources, which resulted in high transport costs for the companies and caused resistance to optimisation.²⁵⁹ Figure 12 below shows the coordination of lime deliveries in the GDR.

Engineering in Weimar, the Institute for Economics of the German Building Academy in Leipzig, the State Planning Commission and the National Economic Council, see Hofmann et al., *ibid.*, p. 7. See also K. Kohlmay's opening lecture on the congress "Mathematics and Cybernetics in Economics", in: Deutsche Akademie, *Mathematik und Kybernetik*, 1965, pp. 4-11.

²⁵⁸ Hofmann et al., *ibid.*, p. 72.

²⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p. 90.

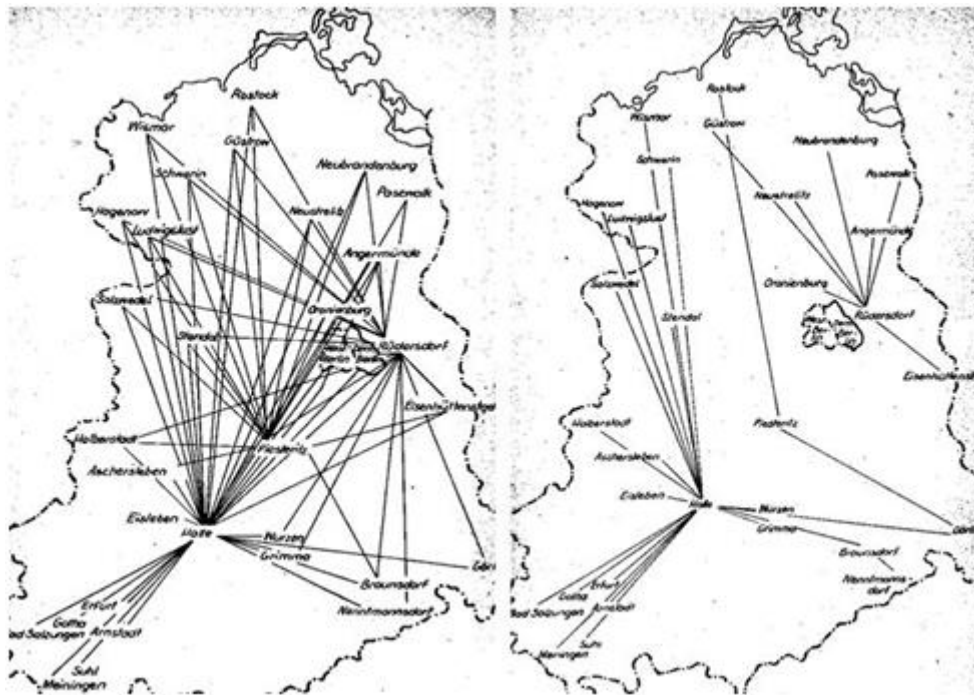


Figure 12: Centralization of transport relations for lime in the GDR

At the end of their publication, the authors Hofmann et al. also report on obstacles that stand in the way of abstractification in the transport model: The customers were to be convinced of the changed supply relationships and any necessary organisational or technical changes were to be discussed with them. In contrast to the optimizers' desire for stable supply relationships, changes in quantities and quality requirements are constantly occurring in lively economics. Long-term supply relationships in the state distribution offices, sales offices and associations of state-owned enterprises were changed without these enterprises benefiting from the advantages of optimisation.²⁶⁰ In the research reports of the Test and Development Centre for Motor Traffic at the Dresden University of Transport and in the journal "Der Verkehrspraktiker", it was also acknowledged that so far there have been few applications of the transport model, but examples of the supply of flour to bakeries in Dresden and the supply of bricks to construction sites have been mentioned.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 101.

²⁶¹ Experimental and Development Centre for Motor Traffic, *Methodology*, 1964. On pages 25f, the computers accessible for research in the GDR are compiled as a table. Annual reports of the Experimental and Development Centre 1962 and 1963, files of the Ministry of Transport, Federal Archives Berlin, file DM 1/7152. *Verkehrspraktiker*, 1964, pp. 6-7.

Hannelore Fischer reported in her book "Operation Research in the Socialist Economy" on the use of the transport model in forestry.²⁶² In her research area of Königs Wusterhausen she looked at 130 forestry operations that felled trees and transported them to 20 sawmills. She collected data on logging and transport services. In order to sufficiently abstractify, softwood and hardwood trees were considered separately. The project required 20 hours of computing time on the computer ZRA1 to find the cost-minimum transport allocation. The computer was located at the observatory Potsdam-Babelsberg. The Vogel approximation method was used to solve the transport problem. This program was programmed in the computer center of the Deutsche Reichsbahn and was in use since 1965. Another program variant after Dennis was written by the VEB Leuna plant "Walter Ulbricht". Fischer discussed the resistance of the forestry companies to carry out their timber deliveries according to the optimized plans of the transport model. The optimization achieved a saving of transport costs in the order of 238,000 marks, corresponding to 14% of the costs without optimization. The working group of Hannelore Fischer extended her optimization approach to the state forest districts of Belzig, Potsdam and Rathenow. While the optimization lowered the transport costs in the range of 10 - 15%, the transport performance, measured in solid cubic meters of wood multiplied by transport kilometers, even decreased by about 50%. Hannelore Fischer was an OR-scientist habilitated at the University of Jena in 1968 - probably the only female OR-scientist with the rank of professor in Germany, if not in all of Europe.

The resistance to the implementation of the transport model shown by Fischer and Hofmann et al. touches on the fundamental question of how rationalisation gains in the transport model can be distributed at all. If all consignors belong to one company or all consignees belong to one company, it can be assumed that rationalisation gains that arise from seeking the minimum cost in the transport model can be credited to the consignor or consignee. The situation is different when different players are likely to appear on both the sender and the recipient side. Koopmans did not consider this situation in his transport model at all, but only naively sought out the cost minimum without considering a social context. Even in the GDR, there was no optimization god who hovered over the model world and distributed the profits of transport optimization. Rather, the companies involved, including the transport companies, were either managed by the central ministries, or managed by the districts, or finally managed by the individual municipalities, among whom the distribution of the rationalization profits would have to be negotiated.

²⁶² Hannelore Fischer: Operationsforschung in der sozialistischen Wirtschaft: mit bewährten Modellen aus der Praxis, Berlin 1969, pp. 410–427.

The volume "Methodik für die Optimierung der Transporte mit Kraftfahrzeugen" published in 1964 by the Dresdener Versuchs- und Entwicklungsstelle focused on the transport of goods by truck. In addition to the transport model, the round trip problem ("Travelling Salesman Problem") and the route planning problem based on it are presented there. The route planning problem starts from a central depot and compiles the total number of daily grocery stores in a city into a series of separate delivery routes for delivery vehicles. The following figure visualizes this problem for 10 grocery stores and three tours.

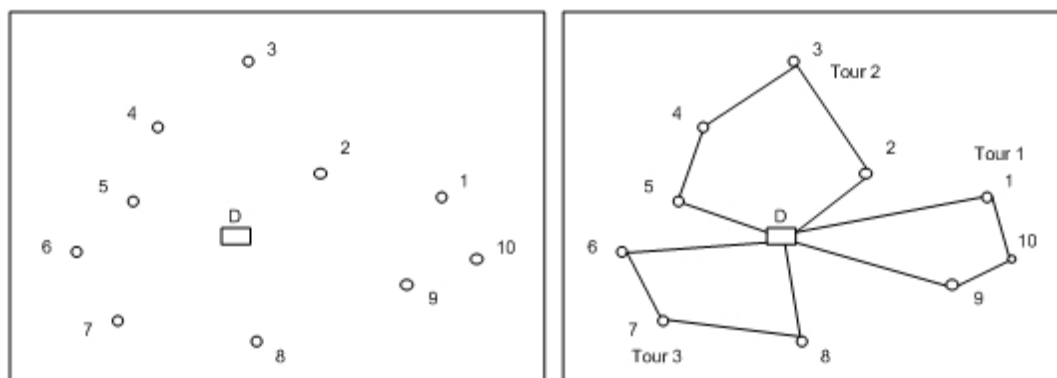


Figure 13: Delivery of 10 grocery stores in a city from a depot D, left without linking tours, right with three tours. (Source: drawn up by the author)

The tour planning problem asks how the stores are to be assigned to individual supply tours and how the shortest sequence of stores to be visited is to be determined in the individual tours - the latter a Travelling Salesman problem (see above).²⁶³ The aim of the planning is to determine a breakdown into daily routes and their sequence in such a way that the total number of kilometres driven by the delivery vehicles is minimised. The individual journeys of the delivery vans starting from the depot were optimized with heuristic procedures for the round trip problem to shortest routes. The application of Dantzig's optimization methods to the roundtrip problem with a computer was rejected, pointing out that this approach would test too many alternatives. Instead, simple heuristics were mentioned which were well suited for "manual calculations".²⁶⁴ Manual calculations carried out with the table calculator were unproblematic insofar as the problems were manageable and the individual supply tours seldom included more than 10 retail outlets.

In the Western OR literature, however, it was pointed out that the route planning problem described here was too much simplified as a "basic model" and therefore only suitable for academic teaching and that numerous additional conditions had to be taken into account in

²⁶³ Hoffman and Padberg, Travelling Salesman, 1996.

²⁶⁴ Experimental and Development Centre, Methodology, 1964, p. 20.

real-life applications, such as the return of empties or certain time restrictions on delivery. But precisely these additional conditions, which vary depending on the application, prevented the creation of a generic basic model to which the additional conditions could simply be "stuck". For this reason, the model had to be redefined from scratch for each application.²⁶⁵

The authors of the Experimental and Development Centre named the locations of institutions throughout the GDR that provided computers - mostly the ZRA1 - for calculations. These computer locations took over the programming and the actual calculation due to the delivered data, for which 160 German Marks were charged per computer hour and 12 German Marks for a mathematician hour for programming. Users should therefore weigh a "manual calculation" against the computer calculation.²⁶⁶ The authors also addressed data collection problems. The road network was to be created from map material, with applications for the purchase of maps being submitted to the State Geodesy Control if the maps were not commercially available. The goods to be shipped should be recorded by type and weight. Milk deliveries to retail stores in various cities such as Dresden, Berlin and Rostock are mentioned as an application of the route planning problem. In Dresden there was a shortening of the daily delivery routes from 730 km to 580 km. During the optimisation in Dresden it turned out that the former supply runs overlapped, so that the elimination of the overlaps made it possible to shorten the route without optimisation.²⁶⁷

In order to apply the round trip problem to the route planning problems, it was necessary to determine in advance the individual delivery areas in which the individual route was to be optimized. There was no mathematical procedure for this decomposition, as the authors complained in the 1964 volume "Methodik für die Optimierung der Transporte mit Kraftfahrzeugen" on page 19. The British researchers G. Clark and J. Wright did not publish their tour planning data until the same year, 1964, when they were able to determine the delivery areas using the Savings method.²⁶⁸ Clark and Wright's approach is interesting in that it starts from an unusual starting solution, the one that is the worst of all: Each shop is served by a truck in a shuttle tour from the depot, without involving the service of other shops. In an iteration process, shuttle tours are combined step by step, which promise the greatest savings in travel distance back to the depot. The authors Hofmann et al. also mention factors that stand in the way of abstractification. This is how the daily fluctuating needs of the grocery stores are called, so that one had to work with rough average values. Separate delivery schedules were recommended for the peak demand on Saturday. The plans for Sunday

²⁶⁵ Mattfeld and Vahrenkamp, logistics networks, 2012.

²⁶⁶ Experimental and Development Centre, Methodology, 1964, p. 20, p. 25f. Hofman et al., Optimization, 1964, p. 29.

²⁶⁷ Experimental and Development Centre, Methodology, 1964, p. 19.

²⁶⁸ Clarke/Wright, Scheduling, 1964.

delivery, however, meant that many stores remained closed, so that new plans had to be drawn up for Sunday.²⁶⁹

In the following, we will show how transport optimization was embedded in the political knowledge cultures of the GDR and met with resistance there. Mathematicians in the GDR were sceptical about the use of OR methods. The head of the testing and development centre for motor traffic at the Dresden University of Transport, the mathematician Werner Haering, complained at the 1964 meeting of heads of the motor traffic administrations (BDK) in Magdeburg that the shipping departments of industry was hardly interested in optimising the use of trucks.²⁷⁰ The negative attitude of the shipping departments resulted not least from the centralisation of truck traffic, which the SED had undertaken since 1959. The industry was deprived of its own truck fleets, which it had used in so-called factory transport, and centralised as state-owned transport companies, which now offered transport services to the shipping departments.²⁷¹ The Motor Transport Department of the Ministry of Transport wanted to take action against this hesitant attitude of the loading industry and launch a broad training campaign. Already in March 1963 in Weimar and in June 1964 in Zabeltitz, training programmes for transport optimisation for the shipping departments took place.²⁷² The mathematical transport optimization met the politicized field of the centralized truck policy of the SED.

In the application of tour planning, the GDR was about 20 years ahead of Western-Germany (FRG). It was not until the 1980s that the main memory of the computers available in companies in FRG, at around 300 kilobytes, was large enough to use route planning software such as the TRAFFIC package from Siemens. This software was used above all in the sales organisations of the financially strong companies in the beverage industry and milk processing. As already known from the centralised transport policy in the GDR, problems with the abstractification of route planning also arose in the FRG. The shops supplied by the delivery vehicles always wanted to be served by the same driver in the recurring routes - a wish that the route planning software did not take into account. There were also problems to include shops with different delivery rhythms in a common tour.²⁷³ In the route planning packages, the actual route planning was considerably extended to a truck fleet management system, which included accounting for routes, vehicle costs and personnel deployment.

²⁶⁹ Experimental and Development Centre, Methodology, 1964, p. 19.

²⁷⁰ Traffic Practitioner, Lacking Interest, 1964, p. 6f.

²⁷¹ Vahrenkamp, Dream, 2015.

²⁷² Verkehrspraktiker, Lacking Interest, 1964, p. 7. Versuchs- und Entwicklungsstelle, 1964, Preface.

²⁷³ For the use of route planning in the beverage industry and in milk processing, see Lück, Logistik, 1984, p. 437-473. For the problem of the same driver, see *ibid.*, p. 458 and Vahrenkamp, Dream, 2015, p. 15.

However, high licensing costs for software manufacturers hampered widespread use until the 1990s.²⁷⁴

The boom in transport optimisation in the GDR came to an end at the end of the 1960s. Researchers referred to the alleged relevance of the transport problem. The authors Dück et al. justified it tautologically in 1971 as follows: "In the economy the transport problem is given great importance ...because of its great economic significance."²⁷⁵ By "economy" the authors mean the national economy. However, the researchers could not point to any convincing applications.

²⁷⁴ Vahrenkamp, market study, 2006.

²⁷⁵ Dück et al., Operation Research, 1971, vol. 2, p. 186.

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