

Dear Toshio (if I may),

Many thanks for sharing this fascinating proposal with me and for allowing me to delve into your original work. It is a compelling, unique topic whose importance comes across clearly. I am certain that your book will contribute to the literature on postwar economies, corporate expansion, and comparative perspectives on economic history. As it stands, however, I believe that it requires some thorough revisions to make it as compelling as the topic deserves to be.

You will find 67 comments and changes in the proposal itself: they are both broad and detailed. As requested, I edited the language in the highlighted/colored text, but in any case, the comments about the *content* should be revised before you may accept any edit of the *language*. In what follows, I will only single out some general trends and offer recommendations that matter most in my opinion.

Argument and Scope

The more the proposal progressed, the clearer of an idea I had regarding the general argument. As of now, you repeatedly mention the “author’s original framework” without ever explaining what it is. You do not have the space necessary to develop this very much, of course, but one or two tight sentences might do the trick. Your book’s general argument is unclear as of now (not the “why” — two case studies of postwar Japan and Germany, but the “how”: what do you argue exactly? I could not really tell after reading it a few times). Some questions may help you state the general thesis: What relationship between Americanization, Europeanization, and Asianization, as you put it? How did postwar Japan and Germany evolve in their corporate expansion, both in their similarities and differences? To begin with, why compare those two case studies? The books you cite, particularly that of Christian Kleinschmidt, do explore them, but what is the scholarly rationale behind this comparison, and what new elements do emerge in your book? The answers to these questions will help reframe, I believe, the critical and essential category C (“short summary.”) I explored all these questions for each category within the proposal, but C seems the most important to revise accordingly. As a general rule, my comments relate to one or all of these questions throughout the proposal.

Existing Literature and Justification

The second primary revision should deal with the differences between the cited books/edited volumes and your book. The more one reads, the more one gets the impression that you tend to repeat the same arguments *for* your book

(regionalization, direct comparison, etc), but we learn very little about the cited books and *their* arguments. (see the comments for Kleinschmidt, to just give a concrete example. The author mentions “perceptions” in the title: what is the argument, in one sentence, and how do you differ from it?). Another example: the last book that you cite, the one by Schröter, features the exact same description as the previous ones. By revising the categories C and E, and I suggest doing it in this order, you will be able to single out your specific arguments (for example, as I understood: the differences between Germany and Japan, two postwar economies, the similar adaptations from the American model with different outcomes, the impact of regionalization/Europe and Asia, etc) that you can then use for E. I think the arguments made in the individual chapters/edited volumes do not come across clearly enough: what exactly do they argue, and how is your (revised and more clearly stated) argument different from them? You tell us little beyond the fact that you directly compare those two case studies in a single book, the impact of American business models, and the geographical scope of Europe and Asia.

Missing Pieces

One major gap I also noticed: you mention that you wish to attract the interest of economic historians, so the proposal should also mention briefly what material/data/documents you consider, and if there is enough space, the methods you used. I could not find much about these aspects, even in the (very) limited space of the proposal.

You will find many more specific and targeted comments in the proposal itself. All my comments intend to make your proposal stronger. I believe in the book and its broad appeal, so I wish you all the best in revising this promising proposal. I am sure you hold all the elements to end up with a persuasive and impactful book. Good luck with all — full steam ahead — and I’m remaining available.