Acknowledgements

There are quite a number of people who have contributed to the development and completion of the doctoral study on which this book is based. I extend my cordial gratitude to the following people.

I am grateful to Professor Jacky Swan and Mr. Glenn Morgan for their invaluable guidance as supervisors in bringing this research to a rewarding conclusion. They have not only extended their constructive critical comments on the work in progress of the doctoral study but also provided moral support in other aspects of academic life. I appreciate the viva environment of fair professional inquiry created by my external examiner, Professor Ray Loveridge, and internal examiner, Dr. Diana Sharpe.

This work would not have come to light without the access provided by the companies investigated. I am thankful to Mr. Bryan McGinity, the MD of Teniki UK, and Toshiya Tsutsumi-san for arranging my interviews at Teniki in Japan, as well as showing genuine interest and support in a context of sincere friendship throughout the study.

My gratitude is also extended to Chris Melbourne who arranged for my week-long work experience on the shop floor of Nissera UK, Shigeru Nirasawa-san for arranging my interviews at Nissera in Japan and Atsuo Nagai-san, the President of Nissera, for his cherishable hospitality during my visit to Nissera.

It was a pleasure for me to gain the insights of the electrical engineers at Rover through Ray Gibbard’s assistance. Rover members’ contributions to this study, in particular those of Malcolm Caston, Dave Rose and Adrian Smith, are immense. They have been very patient in responding to my never-ending list of questions. I must especially note Dave Rose’s forbearance in coping with my constant requests for feedback. He has served as a bridge between the academic and business world by sensitizing me to the practical concerns of the automotive world. I am also indebted to Shuko Hayashi-san, whom I met through Peter McVeigh and John Bacchus at Rover, and Kenzo Suzuki-san for supporting my visit to Honda Motor Corporation and Tochigi R&D Centre of Honda in Japan. Kenzo Suzuki-san, the Executive Vice-President of Honda R&D Europe at the time of this research, has helped me contextualize the Japanese perspective on my research topic by introducing me to the delicacy of the Japanese culture.
I must also thank the participants of the European Summer Research Institutes (ESRI) PhD Summer School on Comparative Study of Economic Organization organized by Copenhagen Business School in September 1999 for shaping my preliminary ideas, as well as those of the sub-theme convened by Professor Marie-Laure Djelic and Dr. Sigrid Quack at the 16th European Group for Organization Studies (EGOS) Colloquium in July 2000 in Helsinki for their detailed suggestions for the refinement and fine-tuning of my arguments.

My close friends – Chia Hsuan (Grace) Kuan, who has been a supporting pillar in my trough periods and Izumi Kubo, who has exposed me to the Japanese mode of thinking through her anecdotes and has hosted me in Tokyo during my data collection in Japan – have been a source of emotional strength.

The unflagging encouragement and confidence of my parents, Mehmet Polat and Gültten Saka, and two sisters, Banu and Çiğdem, have been an impetus in completing this research. The unconditional care and understanding they have shown me during the process can never be reciprocated.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Muğla University in Turkey for providing me with financial support for the research.