

**Preface**

The present master thesis has been written in context of a double-degree program with the Technical University of Berlin (Germany) and the Tongji University in Shanghai (China). The research and writing process started in November 2014 and went until July 2015.

The vision for this thesis and the corresponding research questions have been jointly developed with my thesis supervisor, Mr. Daniel Roy, who was research associate at the logistics chair of Mr. Prof. Dr.-Ing. Frank Straube at the Technical University of Berlin at that time. The fact, that we could possibly lay at least a small part of foundation in the barely unexplored field of "Industry 4.0" has considerably driven our motivation during the whole research project. I would like to thank my supervisor for his excellent guidance and support during this process.

I also like to thank all of the respondents of my questionnaire, without whose cooperation I would not have been able to conduct the master thesis' results.

Special thanks goes to my family and friends. I benefitted from debating issues and developing cooperatively new ideas. My wife deserves a particular note of thanks: your wise counsel and kind words have, as always, served me well and helped me to stay focused.

I hope you enjoy reading.

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