

# Selected Abstracts from International Business History Journals

*Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte*  
[Journal of business history]  
Vol. 62, No. 1 (2017):

Julia Schnaus, “Unnoticed Disappearance: The Decline of the West-German Clothing Industry in the 1960s/70s.” In the beginning of the twentieth century, the German clothing industry was a considerable producer of consumer goods, manufacturing clothes for both home and export markets. In the 1960s and 1970s, this branch of the German industry began to decline, mainly due to the pay gap between labor in Germany and low-wage countries located in Eastern Europe and Asia. In response to this development, bigger German companies outsourced their production abroad to save labor costs. Smaller companies often lacked the needed financial resources and faced bankruptcy as a result. In the end, only services like planning and quality control remained in Germany. In consequence of this development, a lot of German seamstresses lost their jobs. The government did not care about these problems, and the enterprises did not receive subsidies. The unions in the sector were weak due to the high percentage of working women and the high ratio of small and medium-sized regionally dispersed enterprises.

Vol. 62, No. 2 (2017):

Michael C. Schneider, “The Scientific Enterprise: Chemical-Pharmaceutical Research at E. Merck, Darmstadt, ca. 1900 to 1930.” This article deals with the development of academic research within the pharmaceutical firm E. Merck, Darmstadt, between 1900 and 1930. One of the main purposes is to clarify to what extent the widespread notion is justified that external research gave way to internal research in order to maintain a leading position in innovativeness. Therefore the article analyzes the cooperation between Merck and Richard Willstätter in the case of cocaine-synthesis around 1900 and the cooperation with Adolf Windaus with regard to vitamin D during the 1920s. The article concludes that internal research was indeed intensified during the interwar

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period, on the one hand. But this development is, on the other hand, better understood as a necessary precondition if the firm wanted prospectively to be able to contribute to novel developments in vitamin chemistry. The cooperation between the chemical laboratory of the University of Goettingen, the Merck research laboratory, and the pharmaceutical laboratory of I.G. Farbenindustrie AG are more aptly interpreted as an interconnected research network in which each part contributed original insights and, occasionally, breakthroughs.

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*Entreprises et histoire*  
[Companies and history]  
Vol. 84 (Sept. 2016):

Denis Segrestin, "From Bureaucracy to Capitalism: How the Center on Sociology of Organizations Has Viewed Business Enterprise (1970–2015)." This article considers how business and economic activities were integrated into the research conducted at Michel Crozier's sociological laboratory after it was integrated into the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). Four different periods have been identified. Between 1968 and 1980, the concept of "organization" is broad and businesses and public administrations are treated similarly. During the eighties, more conceptual coherence is required and the studies conducted in the laboratory are more clearly focused on organizational issues in the public sector. Nonetheless, the commercial sector is integrated through related research questions such as how economic initiatives can contribute to the modernization of French society. During the next period, between 1990 and 2005, the maturity of the "theory of organized action" led researchers to delve deeply into the complexity of human systems. It is also during this period that markets are being liberalized and the business model inherited from Fordism is increasingly called into question as a benchmark of complexity. Business enterprises thus become the focus of studies conducted by the laboratory during this phase, but they are not the only subject of research as hospitals and universities in particular also attract the interest of researchers. Since 2005 another theme has emerged in response to the growing level of interest in the transformation of capitalism. The Research Centre on Sociology of Organizations has adopted elements of the economic sociology framework developed in the Anglophone world and has also integrated institutional approaches to the study of business. It is suggested that this development is not in contradiction with the Centre's heritage as it

continues to conduct organizational analysis using a “sociology of action” approach, thus preventing the complete and insurmountable dominance of one single approach in the field of social enquiry.

Vol. 85 (Dec. 2016):

Katherine C. Epstein, “The Other Visible Hand: National Security and Intellectual Property in the United States before World War I.” Using torpedo development as a case study, this article examines the tension between the national security interests of the state and the intellectual property interests of defense contractors in the United States before World War I. It suggests that this tension constitutes an underexplored part of the history of the modern “state secrets privilege” and that fuller comprehension of this history has the potential to reshape powerful narratives of modern U.S. history.

Vol. 86 (April 2017):

Mélodie Cartel, Franck Aggeri, and Jean-Yves Caneill, “The Unknown Story of the European Carbon Market: An Archaeology of the Electrical Sector.” In economic literature, the creation of the European carbon market is presented as a major institutional innovation that can be viewed as a direct application of economic theory. In this article, we propose another version of how the European carbon market came about, one that emphasizes the active role played by companies. For a period of three years, these companies designed and tested a prototype carbon market, while being observed by European experts. Drawing on archive documents, we analyze this experimentation process and examine in detail its influence on the European carbon market. We then discuss the role of companies in the process of institutional innovation, a process that generally remains invisible. Finally it is explained how such experiments, conducted in protected spaces, can facilitate the design and testing of new concepts.

Vol. 87 (June 2017):

Andrew Popp, “Industrial Heritage, Capitalism, and Business.” This essay first locates the idea of industrial heritage in relation to the dominant future orientation of capitalism and business, as well as concepts such as Schumpeter’s notion of “creative destruction.” Thus situated,

industrial heritage appears somewhat paradoxical and problematic, raising unsettling questions about the processes inherent to capitalism and business and their implications for social and cultural developments. Thereafter, we turn to consideration of why and how attention to industrial heritage might be usefully incorporated into the work of scholars in business, management, and organization studies.

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*Red de Estudios de Historia de Empresas*  
[Business history studies network bulletin]

The business history studies network (REDHE, by its acronym in Spanish) is issued every semester in Spanish. Its purpose is to provide virtual information and become a discussion forum for researchers from several fields who are interested in business history. This year the bulletin published its [twenty fourth issue](#) (January/August 2017). Divided in six sections, the bulletin presents a thorough review of 2017's most important publications and events among the business history discipline in Latin America.

No. 24 (Jan. / Aug. 2017)

The bulletin presents a review of some publications and events in the business history discipline on Latin America. In the debates section, Carlos Dávila discusses the links between business history and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As business history has become a discipline with its own identity, he claims the mainstream topics studied in Latin America (such as history of entrepreneurs, family businesses, and business groups) can serve the purpose of further study of CSR. After a review of the main tendencies in CSR literature and the research paths taken in the region, Dávila calls for more research to understand the evolution of CSR in Latin America and other regions. Moreover, he presents some latent questions, a few glimpses of case studies in Colombia, and calls for a future research agenda.

Three books are reviewed. Joaquin Viloria de la Hoz comments on a book about family businesses in Mexico during the twentieth century (Almaraz & Ramírez, 2016). This book is the result of two seminars discussing the evolution of nine families with no less than three generations in business. Roy Hora presents a study on colonization of the

Argentinean region of Santa Fe (Martirén, 2016). The aim of the book is to show the transformation of the agricultural economy in the second half of the nineteenth century. Virginia Mellado reviews a book about managerial hierarchies in Argentina's largest companies (Luci, 2016). The seven chapters explore different aspects of the evolution of the Argentinean managerial capitalism.

Also in this issue, the section *Reseñas de Eventos* (Event Reviews) brings a comment on the [IX Coloquio Grupo Iberoamericano de Estudios Empresariales e Historia Económica](#) which took place in Buenos Aires, March 22–23, 2017.

In *Novedades Bibliográficas* (New Books), three books on Mexican business history are presented. One about agricultural entrepreneurs during the twentieth century, one on the state-of-the-art of business and economic history of Northern Mexico, and one on the biography of a corporate lawyer. There is an invitation to browse the Harvard website on new perspectives on course development in Business History in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. There is also a call to use the international history statistics and the Digital Humanities Network.

The section on archives for business history calls attention to the Centro de Documentación e Información (CDI) at the Finance Ministry of Argentina. To close this bulletin, the editors listed calls for papers and events for the next academic year.