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**Europäische Wirtschaftseliten nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg /**  
**European Economic Elites after World War II**

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### **I. Abhandlungen und Studien**

#### **Marcel Boldorf: Kollaboration und der Wechsel der europäischen Wirtschaftseliten nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg / Collaboration and Change in European Economic Elites after the Second World War**

##### *Abstract*

This article explores the similarities and differences in the persecution of economic elites in Germany and the occupied countries after the war. The shift of power after the liberation deeply influenced the process by which national elites were formed. However, below the highest ranks of administration and business, a remarkable continuity among the industrial managers and entrepreneurs can be discerned. At the local level, the persecution of elites often stagnated because the commissions deployed in administrative capacities were not capable of affecting changes in personnel. Besides the punishment of criminal offenders, sanctions on businesses were enforced (confiscation of illicit profits) as well as career-related sanctions for individual collaborators. It was only in the state socialist countries that there was a major shift in elites due to the expropriation and nationalisation of the industrial sector. Ultimately, all the countries urgently needed skilled people – especially engineers and technicians – for the reconstruction of the post-war economies.

Keywords: Collaboration, National Socialist Economy, Denazification, Business History, Economic Elites, Economic reconstruction, Nationalisation of industries, State socialism, Sanctions on business, Illicit profits

JEL-Codes: F 51, J 53, N 44, N 84, N 94, P 26, P 39

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#### **Ralf Ahrens: Von der "Säuberung" zum Generalpardon: Die Entnazifizierung der westdeutschen Wirtschaft / From Purge to Pardon: The Denazification of West German Business**

##### *Abstract*

Immediately following World War II, the allied occupational powers started a process of "denazifying" West German business in more or less the same way as the political and administrative apparatus. Initial approaches to solve the task by a radical purge of highly incriminated company managers soon gave way to more extensive investigations of party members and Nazi sympathizers also on lower ranks. Denazification escalated into bureaucratic mass procedures and finally ended up in various forms of amnesty and pardon in the late 1940s and early 1950s. A key feature in this process was the

successively growing participation of German actors like various commissions, chambers of commerce and the companies themselves. On the one hand, comprehensive investigation and punishment under a re-installed rule of law had to rely upon cooperation of German actors and their expertise on the reality of the Nazi past; on the other hand, the integration of business itself into denazification procedures allowed company managers to benefit from informational advantages. Focussing the interaction between denazification authorities and business in the three West German zones of occupation, the article argues that under the general conditions of economic reconstruction and democratization the degeneration from purge to pardon was hardly avoidable, but that nevertheless the effects of temporary punishments should not be underestimated

Keywords: Denazification, Democratization, Business History, Regional History

JEL-Codes: N 4, N 8, N 9

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**Marcel Boldorf: Austausch der wirtschaftlichen Führungskräfte in der SBZ/DDR nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg / The Change in Business Elites in the Soviet Occupation Zone and the GDR after World War II**

*Abstract*

After World War II, a major part of the business elite managed to flee from the Soviet Occupation zone. Thus, in the period of trusteeship that followed, the volume of personnel changes remained rather low. In April 1948, when the industrial sector was finally nationalised, the SED reinforced personnel changes again. Key positions which dealt with the workforce were taken over by party members, whereas former engineers often succeeded in keeping their positions. Gradually, a widespread system of political control was introduced in order to survey the choice of cadres and to defend the party's leading role in the economy.

Keywords: Denazification, Elite change, Business History, Regional History, Soviet Occupation Zone /GDR

JEL-Codes: J 53, N 44, N 84, N 94, P 26, P 39

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**Jaromír Balcar und Jaroslav Kučera: Von der Fremdbesatzung zur kommunistischen Diktatur. Die personellen Umbrüche in der tschechoslowakischen Wirtschaft nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg / From Nazi Occupation to Communist Dictatorship. Upheavals in personnel in the Czechoslovakian Economy after World War II**

*Abstract*

During the post-war period Czechoslovakia experienced a radical change in business and economic elites, which took place in three stages. The first phase commenced immediately after the end of World War II, when factory counsels conducted a personal purge within their enterprises. While German directors had fled or had been expelled, many of their Czech colleagues retained their positions, because the new regime seemed in need these experts' 'know-how'. In 1948, the Communists triggered a second wave of purges mainly directed against members of other political parties or managers supposed to be opponents of the new regime. When the Communist Party started to search for "enemies" within their own ranks, the remainder of the country's economic elites familiar with the interwar period's market economy was eliminated during the show trials of the early 1950s.

Keywords: Retribution, Change of Elites, Business History, Regional History

JEL-Codes: J 53, N 44, N 84, N 94, P 29, P 37, P 39

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**Dirk Luyten: The Belgian Economic Elite and the Punishment of Economic Collaboration after the Second World War: Power and Legitimacy (1944-1952)**

*Abstract*

Punishment of economic collaboration was a priority for the Belgian judiciary after the Second World War. This led to a confrontation with the Belgian economic elite: during the occupation they had organized themselves in the Galopin-committee. This informal committee, dominated by the leaders of holdings and banks, elaborated a code of conduct concerning production for Germany. In so doing, the committee assigned itself a political role. This code of conduct was more or less put into practice in the key sectors of the economy. The judiciary did not agree with the political role the economic elite had assigned itself nor with the interpretation of what could be considered as acceptable economic collaboration. Repression of economic collaboration became an issue of confrontation between the economic and judicial elite: even if ultimately only a few big entrepreneurs were punished, the traditional economic elite's legitimacy was called into question. The elite's position was, on the other hand, enhanced by the Belgian economy's successful recovery after the liberation, which was combined with an increase in workers' purchase power and the introduction of a social security system.

Keywords: Economy Belgium World War II; Economy Belgium 1944-1950; collaboration and punishment of collaboration; holding companies; Société Générale de Belgique

JEL-Codes: N 44; N 94; P 16

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**Harald Espeli: The German occupation and its consequences on the composition and changes of Norwegian business elites**

*Abstract*

The German occupation had dramatic consequences on the pre-war political and military elites in Norway, due to the ways in which they behaved during German rule. These elites were almost completely replaced by a younger generation of men. The occupation had no comparable effect on pre-war business elites. In light of the pre-war economic elites' extensive economic collaboration with the Germans starting immediately after the occupation, a different outcome might have been expected. One of the reasons for the lack of purges of the pre-war business elites was that very few of them were members of the Norwegian Nazi Party. Another important explanation is that a number of the leading men advocating and practising economic collaboration in the first phases of the occupation later became leading figures in the resistance movement. A third factor was that a purge of business leaders for economic collaboration could have undermined the economic recovery and growth of the nation state after the liberation.

Keywords: Business History, Business Elites, World War II, Norway

JEL-Codes: N 44, N 84, N 94

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**Dominique Barjot: Die politische Säuberung der französischen Wirtschaftselite nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg / The Purge of the French Economic Elite after World War II**

*Abstract*

Historiography on the French post-World War Two economic purge has in the past been very limited. Recently, however, a radical change has occurred as a result of the intersection of two previously separate research fields: on the one hand economic and business life during the Occupation, and on the other hand, the purge of elites and other social groups. A conference addressing French Firms during the Occupation period paved the way for a synthesis round three axes: Firstly, it was necessary to estimate the effects of measures to seize illicit profits and to assess the impact of purges on business mobility after the War. Secondly, regional approaches could be used to define a French typology, which could then be compared to other occupied countries (Belgium for example) or occupying

Nations (Germany). Thirdly, the study of branches, sectors and firms. Among these studies, two sectors have been privileged so far: the car industry as well as construction and civil engineering.

Keywords: Elite Change, Economic Purge, France after World War II, Business History, Regional History

JEL-Codes: N 44, N 84, N 94

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### **Žarko Lazarević: The replacement of economic elites in Slovenia after World War II**

#### *Abstract*

The replacement of elites was integral to the adoption of a centrally planned economy based on the Soviet model. As a result of the changes in the political and economic system pre-war elites were completely stripped of their social functions, and their members were politically and socially marginalised as individuals. The ways in which elites were recruited changed. Education or expertise did not remain crucial factors in the recruitment process, evident in the fact that in 1948 as much as 68 percent of the leading cadre of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had only primary school education, while an additional ten per cent had not even completed this level of education. Political loyalty in the form of Communist party membership was the most important criterion. In the centralised structure of that time individual members of the Communist Party leadership also played an extremely important role. A large group of collaborators and supporters formed around them, who then occupied the leading positions at various levels of economic life.

Keywords: Economic Elites, Centrally planned economy, Business History, Slovenia

JEL-Codes: N 44, N 84, P 26, P 39

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## II. Diskussion

**Friederike Sattler: Der „Napoleon des deutschen Aktienmarktes“ Hermann D. Krages und die Netzwerke des „rheinischen Kapitalismus“: Die Geschichte einer scheiternden Karriere / The “Napoleon of the German Stock Market” Hermann D. Krages and the Networks of “Rhenish Capitalism”: The Story of a Failing Career**

### *Abstract*

Taking as an example the career of the medium-sized entrepreneur Hermann D. Krages, who was attracting wide public attention by spectacular stock market transactions in the West German coal and steel industry during the 1950s and soon became a predominantly yield oriented financial investor, this paper discusses, why an economically successful outsider like Krages was not able to establish himself as a respected member of the business elites' networks within “Rhenish Capitalism”. For this purpose, the analysis focuses on a heavy conflict between Hermann Krages and Dresdner Bank AG between 1962 and 1966. As the article shows, Krages can be interpreted as an early, extremely stubborn and at the same time completely inopportune pioneer of shareholder value thinking. His initially so promising career finally failed, because his mentality and his business strategies, based on credit financed stock-market speculations, did not at all correspond to the notion of steady and responsible business of the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries.

Keywords: Stock Market, Speculation, German Universal Banks, “Bankenmacht”, Rhenish Capitalism, Business Networks, Business Careers

JEL-Codes: N 24, N 84, G 21

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### III. Forschungs- und Literaturberichte

#### **Engelbert Stockhammer, Annemarie Steidl and Hermann Zeitlhofer: The Effect of Wages and “Demographic Pressure” on Migration from the Habsburg Monarchy to the United States of America in 1910**

##### *Abstract*

The paper investigates the determinants of migration from rural districts in the Austrian part of the Habsburg Monarchy to the USA in 1910 by combining information from passenger records of ships to the USA and economic and demographic data on district level from the Austrian census and information on wages from an Austrian survey in 1893. The analysis focuses on the effects of the level of wages and “demographic pressure”. We find support for a non-linear effect of wages on emigration and fail to find evidence for a negative effect of “demographic pressure” along Malthusian lines on wages.

Keywords: wages, “demographic pressure”, migration, Habsburg Monarchy, Austria

JEL-Codes: N 33, B 16, C 12, F 22

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