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## Abhandlungen

### **Ulrich Fritsche and Mark Spoerer: Introduction: Digital History / Einleitung: Digital History**

**Abstract:** New digital methods are currently enhancing the historian's toolbox fundamentally. This thematic issue is a collection of papers discussing case studies in the fields of digitization, optical character recognition, distant reading, text mining, network analysis, and historical geographical information systems. The papers discuss opportunities and limitations in the application of digital methods in historical studies and point out fields of future applications.

**JEL-Codes:** C 49, C 88, N 01

**Keywords:** digital history, digitization, distant reading, historical geographical information systems, network analysis, optical character recognition, text mining, Digitalisierung, historisch-geographische Informationssysteme

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### **Jeremy Atack, Robert A. Margo and Paul W. Rhode: Digitizing Carroll D. Wright's "Hand and Machine Labor" Study / Die Digitalisierung der „Hand- und Maschinenarbeit“ Studie Carroll D. Wrights**

**Abstract:** We describe our digitization of a uniquely detailed study of 19<sup>th</sup> century production methods assembled by the United States Department of Labor (1899). The staff spent five years collecting and assembling data on the production of hundreds of highly specific products (as well as some services) at the production operations level using traditional

artisanal (“hand”) methods and by the (then) most modern “machine” methods, measuring productivity in terms of the time taken to complete a specific task or set of tasks. The data proved too complex and voluminous to use, except as a source of anecdotes, until now. We describe how we have made these invaluable data from the first industrial revolution tractable to modern analysis and how they might be used to provide insight and perspective into the effects of robotics and artificial intelligence on labor during the third industrial revolution.

**JEL-Codes:** N 03, N 06, N 08, J 03

**Keywords:** Keywords: automation, mechanization, steam power, hand labor, machine labor, PDF, OCR, gerund, deskilling, Automation, Mechanisierung, Dampfkraft, Handarbeit, Maschinenarbeit, Gerundium, Dequalifizierung

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### **Jørgen Burchardt: Are Searches in OCR-generated Archives Trustworthy? An Analysis of Digital Newspaper Archives / Sind Recherchen in OCR-generierten Archiven vertrauenswürdig? Eine Analyse digitaler Zeitungsarchive**

**Abstract:** Digitised archives are revolutionary tools for research that, in a few seconds, generate results that earlier often took years to obtain. But do they provide all results for the terms searched for? The accuracy of searches was tested by performing sample searches of leading newspaper databases. The test revealed several weaknesses in the search process, including an average 18 percent error rate for single words in body text, and a far higher error rates for advertisements. Such high error rates encourage a critical look at the 20-year-old sector. Although these errors can be reduced by a re-digitation and with new improved OCR engines and new search algorithms, searches will nevertheless return manipulated results. In response, and to identify infringed bias and skewed representation, database owners need to provide thorough metadata to ensure source criticism.

**JEL-Codes:** C 82

**Keywords:** optical character recognition, historical archive, source criticism, research methodology, Historische Archive, Quellenkritik, Forschungsmethodik, OCR

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**Anselm Küsters: Ordering *ORDO*: Capturing the Freiburg School's Post-war Development through a Text Mining Analysis of its Yearbook (1948–2014) / *ORDO* ordnen: Die Nachkriegsentwicklung der Freiburger Schule aus Sicht einer Text-Mining-Analyse ihres Jahrbuchs (1948–2014)**

**Abstract:** Current research on the long-term influence of ordoliberal and neoliberal ideas is hampered by an overly static and generalised picture of the Freiburg School. To address this gap, the paper analyses all articles published in *ORDO*, the flagship journal of the Freiburg School, between 1948 and 2014. This makes it possible to distinguish three phases of post-war ordoliberalism, to identify personal continuities and breaks, and to summarise thematic, methodological, and conceptual developments. Since the analysis utilises text mining methods, such as keyword identification and Topic Modeling, and validates the results of distant reading with close reading and external data, the paper also highlights some general methodological insights for using Digital Humanities in the historical sciences.

**JEL-Codes:** B 29, C 890, K 210

**Keywords:** Ordoliberalism, Freiburg School, Text Mining, Topic Modeling, Competition Law, Ordoliberalismus, Freiburger Schule, Wettbewerbsrecht

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**Lynn Rother, Fabio Mariani and Max Koss: Hidden Value: Provenance as a Source for Economic and Social History / Stille Reserven: Provenienzen als Quelle für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte**

**Abstract:** Building on the extensive production of provenance data recently, this article explains how we can expand the purview of computational analysis in humanistic and social sciences by exploring how digital methods can be applied to provenances. Provenances document chains of events of ownership and socio-economic custody changes of artworks. They promise statistical and comparative insights into social and economic trends and networks. Such analyses, however, necessitate the transformation of provenances from their textual form into structured data. This article first explores some of the analytical avenues aggregate provenance data can offer for transdisciplinary historical research. It then explains in detail the use of deep learning to address natural language processing tasks for transforming provenance text into structured data, such as Sentence Boundary Detection and Span Categorization. To illustrate the potential of this pioneering approach, this article ends with two examples of preliminary analysis of structured provenance data.

**JEL-Codes:** N 01, Z 11

**Keywords:** art, art markets, artificial intelligence, deep learning, digital methods, gender, inheritance, museums, natural language processing, provenance, provenance data, value formation, wealth. Kunst, Kunstmärkte, Künstliche Intelligenz, Deep Learning, Digitale Methoden, Gender, Erbschaft, Museen, Natural Language Processing, Provenienz, Provenienzdaten, Wertbildung, Reichtum

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**Alexander Engel: Patterns of Everyday Exchange: Big Historical Data and the Case of the Basel Advertisement Paper, 1729–1844 / Muster alltäglicher Austauschbeziehungen: Zur Analyse historischer Massendaten des Basler Anzeigenblatts, 1729–1844**

**Abstract:** With concepts like the consumer revolution or the industrious revolution, the changing behaviour of private households in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries has become of great interest. The article suggests a new way to observe intentions and decisions, by utilizing a database of 850,000 classified ads from the Basel Avisblatt over a span of 116 years. Changes in food prices constantly altered the discretionary income of households, which forced budget-related decisions. By cross-correlating indicators of discretionary income with the changing number of different types of ads, patterns of utilizing the Avisblatt can be identified, and strategies to stabilize discretionary income deduced.

**JEL-Codes:** D 12, N 33

**Keywords:** digital history, classified ads, household budgets, discretionary income, economic behaviour, Intelligenzblätter, Kleinanzeigen, Haushaltsbudgets, verfügbares Einkommen, Haushaltsentscheidungen

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**Bart Holterman and Angela Huang: Geospatial Methods and the Premodern Economy: Mapping the Institutional Landscapes of Northern Europe, 1350–1650 / Raumgestützte Methoden und die vormoderne Wirtschaft: Die Kartierung der institutionellen Strukturen in Nordeuropa, 1350–1650**

**Abstract:** The premodern European transport network was accompanied by a number of institutions that affected the transaction costs related to commercial travel, such as fairs, staple markets and toll stations. With digital techniques and big datasets, it is now possible to study these phenomena on a grand scale and to reveal patterns in supraregional economic exchange. Using the Viabundus dataset on premodern transport and mobility in northern Europe (1350-1650), this article explores the possibilities that such data offer for understanding large-scale economic activity. By employing GIS mapping for visualisation purposes and methods of network analysis such as the calculation of betweenness centrality, the data on fairs, staple markets and toll stations can help us understand the institutional structure of the premodern economy in which merchants operated.

**JEL-Codes:** N 07, N 93

**Keywords:** Northern Europe, Digital History, Overland Trade, Economic History, Transportation Costs, Nordeuropa, Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Transaktionskosten, Digitale Geschichtswissenschaft, Kartographie, Landhandel

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**Forschungs- und Literaturberichte****Dorothee Mävers und Jonas Pieper: Die Statistik der Betriebsrente. Eine Analyse zur Quellenlage der betrieblichen Altersversorgung 1949–1985 / The Statistics of Company Retirement Plans. An Analysis of the Sources of Corporate Funded Pensions 1949–1985**

**Abstract:** This paper investigates the sources of information and their quality as accessible to the government of the Federal Republic of Germany when trying to assess the situation of company funded pensions between 1949 and 1985 for the Company Pension Act of 1974. By taking a closer look at multiple government surveys as well as official statistics, the paper shows that the government only had very little access to verifiable and detailed information on the matter and relied largely on estimates. There were no coherent sources of information, and none were set up after the Act came into effect. The trend of a growing distribution and extent of corporate retirement plans from the late 1940s to the 1980s as seen in the government surveys is congruent with our findings. Furthermore, the Company Pension Act strengthened this already growing trend.

**JEL-Codes:** N 01, N 14, N 34, O 10, O 15, O 21, O 43

**Keywords:** Betriebliche Altersversorgung, Statistik, Bonner Republik, Betriebsrentengesetz, BetrAVG, betriebliche Sozialleistungen, company pension scheme, Statistics, Bonn Republic, Company Pensions Act, company benefits

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**Max Trecker: Neoliberalismus: Über ein intellektuelles Missverständnis / Neoliberalism. About an Intellectual Misunderstanding**

**Abstract:** The term *neoliberalism* is a faithful companion of current public debates. It often serves as a proxy for what is allegedly wrong with society. The term is used to criticize a perceived commodification of spheres of human existence that used to be shielded from a purely economic logic. Recently, the term *neoliberalism* has become the object of historical research. Its roots have been traced back as far as 1947 or 1918. I argue in this paper that historians have taken a methodologically questionable approach, by departing from the blurry concept of *neoliberalism* as it is perceived today and trying to trace it back in time as far as possible. Such an approach leads to severe contradictions as economists labelled ex-post as *neoliberals* were often opposed to *neoliberalism* as it is currently defined. It is methodologically more sound and analytically more rewarding to start the conception of the term with the economists who self-identified as *neoliberals*. This approach leads to a more coherent concept of *neoliberalism* that is better suited for further research and provides a clearer understanding of the history of economic thought in the interwar period and the first postwar years.

**JEL-Codes:** B 250, B 130

**Keywords:** History of Economic Thought since 1925, Austrian School, Neoliberalism, Wicksellian, Neoclassical, Neoklassik, Neoliberalismus

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