

Uppsala University

Department of Economic History and the Faculty of Social Science

Uppsala Centre for Business History (UCBH)

Call for Papers

European Business History Association Congress, 22-24 August 2013

Innovation and growth

Technical, financial and organizational innovations have all been important drivers of growth. From a global perspective, the interaction between enterprises, innovations and growth has been central in the process of economic growth during three industrial revolutions. European historical experiences also give us insights into these complex relationships on a national, regional and local basis. For example, in the Swedish economy innovation has been fundamental to structural economic changes, as well as functioning as an engine driving the country's development towards a highly industrialized nation. Scientific innovation and its implementation have also been and still are an important part of local economic development in Uppsala.

Innovation is key to development and sustainable growth, but as observed by Schumpeter, innovations as well as entrepreneurs assume different shapes and forms. As its main theme, this congress will identify the interrelationship between growth and innovation. It is obvious that innovations can result in economic growth. But also, since innovations often lead to changing economic and social structures, they may have a destabilizing effect as well, at least in the short term. It is important for us as business historians to dissect the preconditions for growth and innovation as well as to analyze such processes from a long-term historical perspective – even though they often appear complex.

Technical, financial and organizational innovations have often been interrelated – but in what ways? Is one kind of innovation a precondition for another? Technical development is an important part of innovation, and with, for example, the help of patent information and statistics it has been possible to identify clusters of company and regional innovation activities. These clusters have also sometimes provided the framework for economic growth. But does the same hold for financial and organizational innovations?

Suggested issues:

How can we understand the interaction between innovation and growth?

Are innovative activities more common during periods of economic boom or during times of economic downturn?

How can we define innovation today compared to 150 years ago?

What are the driving forces behind innovative activities?

What factors cause differences between innovations in different countries or regions and over time?

How have institutional frameworks supported and/or hindered innovation?

What role does the state play in the development of innovation?

What is the role of entrepreneurs and innovations in the emergence of enterprises?

How do science, innovations and economic growth interact?

Which role do innovative activities play for industrial latecomers?

How are financial innovations related to growth? Are they preconditions for, or the results of technical and/or organizational innovations?

Are financial innovations destabilizing – and, if so, in the long or the short term?

Proposals for papers and/or sessions related to the theme of the conference are especially welcome, although paper and /or session proposals not directly related to the theme will also be considered. For paper proposals, please submit a title and abstract of no more than 400 words (one A4 page) along with a one page CV to mail EBHA2013@ekhist.uu.se

Session proposals should include a brief abstract of the session along with a one-page abstract and a one-page CV for each participant.

Deadline for all proposals is the 1st of February 2013.