

Call for Papers to Session 168

on the XVIth World Economic History Congress, Stellenbosch, 9-13 July, 2012:

Historical and international comparison of Business interest associations (19th-20th century)

Since 2009, on some French scholars' initiative a group of European and North American historians and social scientists have been carrying a research program on Business interest associations (BIA) from a comparative perspective in time and space.

The working hypotheses are that BIA have contributed to shape and transform economic, social and political systems at the local, regional or national levels and that not only peak association but also local, regional or sectoral ones deserve to be closely and jointly studied. Moreover, an empirical approach is the best way to address this topic.

Two international symposiums took place in Paris in 2010 and 2011. Another one is scheduled in June 2012. This session aims to enlarge the span of our comparative approach beyond Europe and North America and to extend the network of the researchers involved in the program. Consequently papers focusing on BIA in Africa, America especially Latin America and Asia will be welcomed.

Five preferred topics for paper submission are expected to address the following themes:

- *Roots, early stages and specific framework underlying BIA.* Why were BIA founded ? In what historical and legal context, for what reasons, and where (ie. were they local or nationwide)? Why did they last or why did their fail to last ?
- *BIA at work.* How were they managed ? By elective leaders or by paid officials ? What were their functions ? What services did they offer to their members ? What were the relations of these organizations with the members of the unions? How did the business organizations interact with each other?
- *Finances.* What were the sources of income and how much did they collect from their members and from other sources of assets? How did they use this money ?
- *Membership and representativeness.* How many members joined the business associations? Was there a connection between the representativeness of these organizations and the number of affiliates? What were the dominant features of this representativeness? What was the sociological background of their members?
- *Strategies.* What strategies have been adopted for the promotion and defense of business interest ? In what historical context ? How did BIA modify their strategies to a changing political, social, economic and legal context ? How did they contribute to the building of sectoral or overall identities ? In which fields of the economy were they best organized?

The proposed papers, including the title and a summary accompanied by a short CV (in French or English) must be sent **no later than 1st of March 2012 to** Corresponding organiser: **professor Danièle Fraboulet** (Université de Paris 13 – France) - danielefraboulet@wanadoo.fr