

Richard COOPEY and Peter LYTH, eds., *Business in Britain in the Twentieth Century: Decline and Renaissance?*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, pp. XII + 405.

This is a collection of essays celebrating the career of Terry Gourvish, long time Director of the Business History Unit at the London School of Economics, in the UK. The academic research agenda for British business historians has been transformed during Terry's tenure at the LSE because of the reversal in economic fortunes experienced by the British economy during recent decades. The effect of changing the prevailing research question from 'Why did Britain fail?' to 'Why has Britain succeeded?' has been to stimulate British business historians to focus on re-addressing long held core assumptions of 'declinism'. This volume aspires to showcase much of this in honour of Terry Gourvish.

On occasions the result is outstanding. Les Hannah rehearses his arguments for radically revising what became the Chandlerian consensus. Youssef Cassis summarises his research on elites in British business. Nick Tiratsoo is at his probing best on British management since 1945. Carlo Morelli is deliberately controversial in his discussion of food retailing. David Jeremy is thought-provoking in discussing ethics and religion in British business. Sally Horrocks is masterful on industrial R&D.

There are several contributions by colleagues at the University of Reading, for which modesty forbids me to highlight, but readers of this review would like to know that there are contributions from Lucy Newton and Geoffrey Jones (on retail banking and multinational banks), Peter Scott (on multinationals in Britain), and Peter Miskell (on the British film industry). In addition there are chapters by Geoffrey Owen (Industrial Policy), Andrew Popp (Business in the regions), Katrina Honeyman (Women Entrepreneurs), Jim Tomlinson (Post war productivity), Bob Fitzgerald (Marketing), Richard Coopey and Peter Lyth (Aircraft and IT industries), Mike Anson and Gerald Crompton (transport policy), and Dil Porter (Sport).

In truth few of the contributions meet the editors' aspirations to re-examine the renaissance thesis. Overwhelmingly this is a collection of repackaged research previously published elsewhere. But it is testimony to Terry Gourvish's influence that such a large pool of eminent authors have contributed.

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