

**How Women Became Principals – Business Networks and Regional
Variations in Rhineland-Westfalia, Upper-Silesia, Cologne and Aachen**

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1. Introduction: Principals and Entrepreneurs – A Male Domain?

Despite some first studies on female entrepreneurs, the history of business women in Germany still has not been written. Not only is this true for the important role of female entrepreneurs in the industrialisation, but also for business women in the aftermath of World War II. What are the reasons for the fact that this part of history is still untold? Is business and the establishment of enterprises a male domain or are there other causes for this lack of research?

Hence, this paper is interested in analysing the insufficient representation of female entrepreneurs in German economic history – and theory. Economists and economic historians in Germany still focus on the male entrepreneurs and exclude the female ones even by linguistic means (or subsume the female entrepreneurs under the male term).

At the beginning of the 1960^s Fritz Redlich published his influential theoretical study on the ‘Unternehmer’.¹ He referred to the older fundamental entrepreneurial theories of the German and Austrian Historical School of Economics, especially to Max Weber and Joseph A. Schumpeter (1883-1950) in distinguishing several types of entrepreneurs: creative destructors, inventors, innovators, pioneers, first movers, managers, and followers.² What economists (and

¹ Fritz Redlich: *Der Unternehmer*. Wirtschafts- und sozialgeschichtliche Studien, Göttingen 1964. Also see Fritz Redlich, *Unternehmer*, in: *Handwörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften*, Vol. 10, Stuttgart 1959, pp. 486-498 and Dieter Karin Claessen, *Kapitalismus und Kultur. Entstehung und Grundlagen der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Düsseldorf 1973. For the history of the term see Hans Jaeger, *Unternehmer*, in: Otto Brunner e.a. (Ed.): *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol. 6, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 707-732.

² Joseph A. Schumpeter: *Art. Unternehmer*, in: L. Elster/A. Weber/F. Wieser (Ed.): *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, Jena 1928, pp. 476-487; Schumpeter: *Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung*, Berlin 1964 (FE Leipzig 1911) and Schumpeter: *Der Unternehmer in der Volkswirtschaft von heute*, in: Bernhard Harms (Ed.): *Strukturwandlungen der deutschen Volkswirtschaft*, Vol. 1, Berlin 1928, pp. 295-312; Arthur H. Cole: *The Entrepreneur: Introductory Remarks*, in: *American Economic Review* 58 (1968), pp. 60ff.; Max Weber: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 2 Vol., Köln 1964, Vol. 2, pp. 720ff. Also see Toni Pierenkemper: *Unternehmensgeschichte. Eine Einführung in ihre Methoden und Ergebnisse (Grundzüge der modernen Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Vol. 1)*, Stuttgart 2000, pp. 185ff. and Plumpe: *Unternehmen*, pp. 48f. Also older studies like Wolfgang Zorn: *Typen und Entwicklungskräfte deutschen Unternehmertums im 19. Jahrhundert*, in:

economic historians neither) have never doubted was that he attributed entrepreneurial competence and knowledge only to business men. Redlich argued that an entrepreneur is a man or a team of several men which have the ability to establish enterprises or which have the capability to make the decisions in an already founded enterprise. His argument on the special status of men went further in arguing that only men (or a team of them) can manage to keep an enterprise fit on the markets and thus creates welfare effects for the political economy and the whole nation.³

Though economists and historians such as Herbert Hax, Jürgen Kocka and Toni Pierenkemper clearly approved that not only the owner entrepreneur but also the manager with his operative function had played an important role in German economic history,⁴ the common gender discourse never has been reinterpreted.⁵ Entrepreneurial qualities and competences have apparently remained a male domain – at least in the perspective of business historians. This was highlighted in the recently published important textbooks on business history by Toni Pierenkemper and Hartmut Berghoff.⁶

It seems as if English economists fully supported the German approach concerning this gender dichotomy. Even the term ‘entrepreneur’, which was introduced into the English literature by Richard Cantillon (1697-1734), an Irish economist of French descent, has never

Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte 44 (1957), pp. 57-77 and Walter Däbritz, Der deutsche Unternehmer in seiner landschaftlichen Begrenztheit, in: Deutsche Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftskunde 1 (1936), pp. 255-267.

³ Original: Ein Unternehmer ist ein „Mann oder das Team von Männern, denen es gegeben ist, Unternehmungen ins Leben zu rufen und (oder) denen es zufällt, in der wie immer organisierten Unternehmung, die Entscheidungen zu treffen, die das Gebilde am Leben erhalten und es in den Markt und die Volkswirtschaft einordnen.“ Redlich: Unternehmer, p. 489.

⁴ Jeff Fear: Thyssen & Co., Mülheim (Ruhr), 1871-1934. The Institutionalization of the Corporation, Diss. Stanford 1993; Uwe Keßler: Zur Geschichte des Managements bei Krupp. Von den Unternehmensanfängen bis zur Auflösung der Fried. Krupp AG (1811 -1943), Stuttgart 1995; Jürgen Kocka: Industrielles Management. Konzeptionen und Modelle vor 1914, in: VSWG 56 (1969), pp. 332-372 and Hans Pohl: Zur Geschichte von Organisation und Leitung deutscher Unternehmen seit dem 19. Jahrhundert, in: ZUG 26 (1981), pp. 143-179; Pohl (Ed.): Legitimation des Managements im Wandel: Zur Diskussion über Funktion und Auftrag der Unternehmensleitung während der letzten 150 Jahre, Wiesbaden 1983; Kocka: Management und Angestellte im Unternehmen, pp. 162-201; Edgar Salin, Art. Manager, in: Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften, Vol. 7, Stuttgart 1961, pp. 107-113; Dietrich Yorck: Die Mannesmannröhren-Werke 1888 bis 1920. Organisation und Unternehmensführung unter der Gründerfamilie, Bankiers und Managern (ZUG-Beihefte 66), Stuttgart 1991. They followed the classical works of Berle, Means, Chandler and Daems: Adolf A. Berle/Gardiner C. Means: The Modern Corporation on Private Property, New York 1950 (1. Ed. 1932); Berle: Die kapitalistische Revolution des 20. Jahrhunderts, Meisenheim 1958 (FE 1954); Berle: Macht ohne Eigentum, Meisenheim 1967 (FE 1959); Alfred D. Chandler Jr.: The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business, Cambridge, Mass. 1977.

⁵ Herbert Hax: Unternehmung und Wirtschaftsordnung, in: Otmar Issing (Ed.): Zukunftsprobleme der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft, Berlin 1981, pp. 421-440; Jürgen Kocka: Unternehmer in der deutschen Industrialisierung, Göttingen 1975, p. 14; Pierenkemper: Unternehmensgeschichte, pp. 185ff. Also see Anke Probst: Helene Amalie Krupp – eine Essener Unternehmerin um 1800 (ZUG-Beihefte 33), Stuttgart 1985, Master-Thesis Bonn 1981, p. 4 and Birgit Buschmann, Unternehmenspolitik in der Kriegswirtschaft und in der Inflation. Die Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft 1914-1923 (VSWG-Beihefte 144), Stuttgart 1998, Diss. Tübingen 1992, esp. p. 16.

⁶ Pierenkemper: Unternehmensgeschichte, pp. 185ff. and Hartmut Berghoff, Unternehmensgeschichte.

been widened by the French female form of an ‘entrepreneuse’. In this regard, one has to consider the changing role of the entrepreneur in economic theory. Although the term ‘entrepreneur’ came into wider use after John Stuart Mills classic study ‘Principles of Political Economy’ (1848), it disappeared from the English economics literature by the end of the 19th century. The mathematical models of mainstream economists of that time, which assumed that all people in an economy have perfect information, left no room for the entrepreneur.⁷ Thus, it seems that English researchers who want to bring the entrepreneur back into economic theory have no easy standing in their scientific community. Maybe this has been an important cause for the fact that modern English economists like Mark Casson even spoke of the self-made man, the chairman or the chief executive of a modern corporation, but avoided the terms self-made woman, chairwoman or business woman.⁸ Despite a few first economic studies on female entrepreneurship⁹ even sociological studies like Frank Taussigs ‘American Business Leaders’ are fixated on the dominant role of male entrepreneurs. An important thesis of Taussig highlights the role of decent in contrast to the American myth of the self-made man. He argued that many of the most successful entrepreneurs had been the sons of professionals and entrepreneurs – daughters were not mentioned. In the words of Taussig: ‘They owe much of their success to parental training and inherited family contacts. Thus, in most societies there is insufficient social mobility for entrepreneurial culture to change simply because of the changing origins of the entrepreneurial elite. In any case, “self-made-entrepreneurs” often adopt the culture of the elite.’¹⁰ And this culture seems to be an

⁷ Marc Casson: Article Entrepreneurship, in: The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics 1993, 2002. The URL for this site is: <http://www.econlib.org>. Also Mark C. Casson: The Entrepreneur: An Economic Theory, 1982. Reprint. 1991. In Redlichs words: „Die Theoretiker haben es schier fertiggebracht, diese farbenreichste Figur des zeitgenössischen Wirtschaftslebens zu übersehen“. See Redlich: Der Unternehmer and also Theodor Pütz: Das Bild des Unternehmers in der Nationalökonomie, Jena 1935; Hans-Oskar Zieschlag: Wandlungen des Unternehmerbegriffs in der Wirtschaftstheorie, Diss. Köln 1936; Heinz Sauer mann: Die Gestalt des Unternehmers, Berlin 1937; Gregor Winkelmeyer: Wandlungen des Unternehmertyps, in: Beiträge zur Wirtschaftsforschung. Festgabe für Walter Däbritz, Essen 1952, pp. 302-310; Guido Turin: Der Begriff des Unternehmers, Zürich 1947; Peter Kilby (Ed.): Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, New York 1971.

⁸ Marc Casson: Article Entrepreneurship, in: The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics 1993, 2002. The URL for this site is: <http://www.econlib.org>. Also Mark C. Casson (Ed.): Entrepreneurship. Vol. 13, International Library of Critical Writings in Economics, 1990 and Casson: The Entrepreneur: An Economic Theory, 1982. RP 1991.

⁹ S. Birley: Female Entrepreneurs – Are they really any different?, in: Journal of Small Business Management 27,1 (1989), pp. 32-37; S. Birley/C. Moss/P. Saunders: Do Women Entrepreneurs Require Different Training?, in: American Journal of Small Business 12,1 (1987), pp. 27-35; C. G. Brush/R.D. Hisrich: Women Entrepreneurs: Strategic Origins – Impact on Growth, in: Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research, Center for Entrepreneurial Studies 8 (1988), pp. 612-625; R. D. Hisrich/C. G. Brush: The Woman Entrepreneur – Starting, Financing, and Managing a Successful New Business, Lexington, Mass./Toronto 1986; Hisrich: The Woman Entrepreneur – Characteristics, Skills, Problems, and Prescriptions for Success, in: D. L. Sexton/R. W. Smilor (Ed.): The Art and Science of Entrepreneurship, Cambridge, Mass. 1986, pp. 61-73.

¹⁰ Taussig, Frank W./C. S. Joslyn. American Business Leaders: A Study in Social Origins and Social Stratification. 1932; David S. Evans/Linda S. Leighton: Some Empirical Aspects of Entrepreneurship, in: American Economic Review 79, 3 (1989), pp. 519-35; Mark Casson, Article Entrepreneurship, in: The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics 1993, 2002. The URL for this site is: <http://www.econlib.org>.

exclusively male one – and herein lies the problem according to researchers on female entrepreneurs like Elke Hlawatschek and recently Thomas Döbler, Christiane Eifert and Susanne Schötz.¹¹ This was also noted by Anke Probst, who adopted the wider definition of ‘entrepreneur’ from Jürgen Kocka, because it is suitable for ‘entrepreneuses’, too. Kocka defined an entrepreneur as someone who decides on the important (strategical) issues of an enterprise, on the goals of the organisation, on its position on the markets and on the relationship with its environment. Profit and viability are the main motivational factors in the decision making process regarding key production factors like capital and human resources.¹² In my paper I will try to illustrate that female entrepreneurs in the 18th and 19th century could take up entrepreneurial functions in the course of their development from trade women to industrial principals. In arguing that female entrepreneurship was quite normal in the 18th and 19th centuries, I will go beyond entrepreneurial theories with their dichotomous gender scheme and will follow recent studies on female entrepreneurship.¹³

2. Early Bourgeois Entrepreneuses

As Elke Hlawatschek already showed in her 1985 overview study there are many neglected examples of early bourgeois entrepreneuses. Although sources are rare, because women as entrepreneurs could more often be found in small and medium sized enterprises (SME), she presented quite a lot of interesting biographies of business women in big business. Her statistical panel for the years from 1800 till 1945 nearly reached the amount of 60.¹⁴ This

¹¹ Elke Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), in: Hans Pohl (Ed.): Die Frau in der deutschen Wirtschaft. Referate und Diskussionsbeiträge des 8. wissenschaftlichen Symposiums der Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte, 8.-9.12.1983 in Essen (ZUG-Beihefte 35), Stuttgart 1985, pp. 127-146; Thomas Döbler: Frauen als Unternehmerinnen. Erfolgspotentiale weiblicher Selbständiger, Wiesbaden 1998; Christiane Eifert, Unternehmerinnen im Nationalsozialismus. Paula Busch und Käthe Kruse blicken zurück, in: Angelika Schaser (Hg.), Erinnerungskartelle. Zur Konstruktion von Autobiographien nach 1945 (Herausforderungen Bd. 14), Bochum 2003, pp. ?-?; Susanne Schötz: Handelsfrauen in Leipzig. Zur Geschichte von Arbeit und Geschlecht in der Neuzeit, Köln 2004, Habil. Univ. Bielefeld; Schötz: Unternehmerinnen im 19. Jahrhundert – das Beispiel von Leipziger Handelsfrauen, in: Ulrich Heß (Ed.): Unternehmer in Sachsen – Aufstieg – Krise – Untergang – Neubeginn (Veröffentlichungen des Sächsischen Wirtschaftsarchivs 1), Leipzig 1998, pp. 55-63.

¹² In the original version: „Der Kern der Unternehmer-Funktion soll zusammenfassend verstanden werden als ‚das Treffen von wesentlichen (strategischen) Entscheidungen über die Zielsetzung des Unternehmens, seine Position auf dem Markt und seine Beziehung zur Umgebung überhaupt, wobei Profit- und Rentabilitäts-erwägungen eine hervorragende Bedeutung zukommt; zu diesen Entscheidungen gehören insbesondere Entscheidungen über die Mobilisierung und Kombination von Produktionsfaktoren, so vor allem über Investitionen und die Anstellung des leitenden Personals.“ Kocka: Unternehmer, p. 14. Also see Alfred D. Chandler, Recent Developments in American Business Administration and their Conceptualization, in: Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv 86 (1961), pp. 103-130 and Probst: Helene, p. 5.

¹³ Schötz: Handelsfrauen in Leipzig; D. R. Green/Alastair Owens: 'Gentlewomanly capitalism? Spinsters, widows and wealth holding in England and Wales, c. 1800-1860', Economic History Review LVI, 3 (2003), pp. 510-536; Alastair Owens: 'Backbone of the nation: women and investment in nineteenth-century Britain', in: R. Beachy/B. Craig/Alastair Owens (Eds.): Women, Business and Finance in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Rethinking Separate Spheres, Oxford 2006, pp.

¹⁴ Elke Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), 127.

period saw female entrepreneurs only as strategic decision-maker and as owner entrepreneur, but never as manager, as Hlawatschek showed in her study based on literature analysis.¹⁵ Besides firm histories she used biographies and autobiographies¹⁶ as well as the few existing overview studies of the 1970s and 1980s. The overview study of Roesch is more popular than scientific, whereas Grobe and Weber-Kellermann are more interested in the history of ideas concerning emancipation.¹⁷ Grobe and other researchers of women's history often neglected the concrete work in the mill or in the firm. Three further economically interested case studies focused on Sophie Henschel (machinery industry), Helene Amalie Krupp (colonial trade, trade, iron and steel production) and Käthe Kruse (industrial toy production).¹⁸ There is also a quantitative study on Western German business women, but only for the 1950s. Furthermore there are sociological studies for the former Federal Republic.¹⁹ Hlawatschek instead analysed female entrepreneurship under the following perspectives: start of and motivation of the entrepreneurial work; decent; education, studies and/or apprenticeship; forms of entrepreneurial leadership; self-comprehension as female entrepreneur; issues of the entrepreneurial work; end of the entrepreneurship. She divided her case studies into two different groups: heritage and founding. Hlawatschek did not find any examples which showed an exclusive heritage from father to daughter.²⁰ For the heiresses the main cause to take over entrepreneurial functions was the death of their husbands, which were approximately 10 years older than them.²¹ Examples from well-known German companies are: Aletta Haniel born Noot (1742-1815), who in 1761 married Jacob Wilhem Haniel (he died in 1782)²², Maria Zanders (1838-1909), whose husband Richard Zander already died in

¹⁵ Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), 129.

¹⁶ Good biographical material in: Ellen Soeding: Die Harkorts, 2 Vol., Münster 1957 and Hans Spethmann: Die Haniels in Ruhrort bis zu den Befreiungskriegen, i.O., o.J. (1942, vorläufige interne Ausarbeitung); Autobiographical are Käthe Kruse: Das große Puppenspiel, Heidelberg 1951; Paula Busch: Das Spiel meines Lebens, Stuttgart 1957.

¹⁷ Hans Roesch: Das dritte Talent. Die Leistung der Frau als Unternehmerin gestern, heute, morgen, Frankfurt/Main 1970; Heidemarie Grobe: Die Frauenfrage und das Problem der Unternehmerin, unveröff. Dipl.arbeit Univ. Hamburg 1968 and Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann: Frauenleben im 19. Jahrhundert, Empire und Romantik, Biedermeier, Gründerzeit, München 1983.

¹⁸ Wilhelm Treue: Henschel & Sohn. Ein deutsches Lokomotivbauunternehmen 1860-1912, in: Tradition 19 (1973/74), pp. 3-27 (I) and 20 (1973/74), pp. 3-23 (II); Probst: Helene Amalie Krupp; Ina Neumann: Käthe Kruse, in: NDB 13, Berlin 1982, pp. 150f.

¹⁹ Gerald Eberlein/Heinz Hartmann/Sigrid Unterfichter: Die Unternehmerin – Selbstverständnis und soziale Rolle (Dortmunder Schriften zur Sozialforschung 35), Opladen 1968; Heinz Hartmann: Die Unternehmerin, Köln 1968; Hartmann/Ulrich Hornung: Die westdeutschen Unternehmerinnen 1950-1961, in: Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik 178, Stuttgart 1965, pp. 316-334.

²⁰ Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), p. 131.

²¹ Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), p. 130.

²² Hlawatschek: Die Unternehmerin (1800-1945), p. 130. Also see Franz Haniel 1779-1868. Materialien, Dokumente und Untersuchungen zum Leben des Industriepioniers Franz Haniel, ed. by Bodo Herzog and Klaus Mattheier, Bonn 1979, pp. 15f.

1870²³, Käthe Ahlmann (1896-1962) of the Carlshütte in Rendsburg, and Sophie Henschel (1841-1915), involved in the machinery industry in Kassel. According to the testimony of her husband Sophie Henschel was given „die völlig unbeschränkte Verwaltung nebst freier Disposition über die Substanz meines Nachlasses“.²⁴ Lina Pfaff (1854-1929) was an exception, because after the death of her brother in 1917 she took over the job of an entrepreneur. She rested at the top of the machinery plant until 1926, when the enterprise was made a company limited by shares. After the death of her father and her brother in 1933 Elisabeth Tillmanns-Schmidt took over the Riloga plant in Remscheid, which produced brass pieces.

Bequests in their families were the main cause for women to take over the job of an entrepreneur. But the main motives were securing the survival or the well-being of the family.²⁵ Hlawatschek gave the examples of Helene Amalie Krupp and Elisabeth Eickhoff (1808-1888). In 1864 the latter took over a cast iron foundry which her husband founded in 1860. Interestingly the given motive for entrepreneurship is not only true for business women. As Kocka has shown it is an important motive for business men, too.²⁶ But Hlawatschek argued that the same motive probably leads to different actions. She differentiated between an expansive male company policy and a more passive policy of female entrepreneurs. For the researched business women it was important to justify their entrepreneurial strategies.²⁷ What Hlawatschek did concede, is that this might be the result of a problem with the sources. In the correspondence of business women other typical male entrepreneurial motives like rent- and profit-seeking, social acknowledgement and career prospects, sense of mission, self-realization and ethical or religious motives were rarely mentioned either.²⁸ But it has to be doubted that such motives were not relevant for female entrepreneurs.

²³ Hlawatschek: *Die Unternehmerin*, 131. Also see the older Biography from Anna Caspary: *Maria Zanders. Das Leben einer bergischen Frau*, Jena 1923.

²⁴ Treue: Henschel II, p. 9; Hlawatschek: *Die Unternehmerin*, p. 131.

²⁵ For England also see Alastair Owens: 'Property, gender and the life course: inheritance and family welfare provision in early nineteenth-century England', *Social History*, 26, 3 (2001), pp. 297-315; Owens: 'Inheritance and the life-cycle of firms in the early industrial revolution', *Business History*, 44, 1 (2002), pp. 21-46; D. R. Green/Owens (Eds.): *Family Welfare: Gender, Property and Provision since the Seventeenth Century* (Contribution to Family Studies, 18), Westport, Conn./London 2004.

²⁶ Hlawatschek: *Die Unternehmerin*, p. 132; Kocka: *Unternehmer*, p. 59.

²⁷ Hlawatschek: *Die Unternehmerin*, p. 134: 'Eine Unterscheidung zwischen männlichem und weiblichem Unternehmertum wäre somit möglicherweise nur in dem Sinne zu treffen, daß die Sorge um die Familie bei männlichen Unternehmern ein Motiv ist, um aktive, expansive unternehmerische Politik zu betreiben, wohingegen es bei Erbinnen eher eine passive Funktion zur Rechtfertigung übernahm.'

²⁸ Hlawatschek: *Die Unternehmerin*, p. 133.

As Pierenkemper has pointed out, it is not only important to integrate the perspective on single industrial sectors, but also to take a look at regional variations.²⁹ Therefore I will start with an analysis of noble women entrepreneurs in Upper-Silesia and go on with bourgeois entrepreneurs in Rhineland-Westphalia.

3. Female Principals in Upper Silesia – Business Networks of the Aristocracy

In her recently published study Katrin Keller argued that a wide spectrum of representative and economic rights were attributed to noble women – depending on the noble status of the family. In the words of Katrin Keller: 'Handlungsmöglichkeiten von Frauen in der Öffentlichkeit waren in der Vormoderne dezidiert an ihren Stand gebunden, also an ihre soziale Herkunft, an das Faktum der Verehelichung respektive den Witwenstand. Allgemein galt zwar der Rechtsatz „major dignitas est in sexu virili“, war die Frau dem Mann juristisch nicht gleichgestellt, allgemein galt, dass Frauen keine öffentlichen Ämter ausüben konnten. Genauso galt aber auch, dass die Ehefrau, obwohl rechtlich dem Regiment des Ehemannes als Hausvater unterworfen, gemeinsam mit ihm im Rahmen des Hauses Herrschaft über die Familie und andere Mitglieder des Haushaltes ausübte. Und insbesondere für die Frau adligen Standes galt, dass ihr kraft ihrer Zugehörigkeit zum „Herrschaftsstand“ schlechthin selbstverständlich ebenfalls herrschaftliche Befugnisse zukamen.'³⁰ Examples were the reign over the noble estates or the status as a representative for her son or her husband or the home sovereignty. Noble reigns were integrated in the sovereignty of the home family, and Keller highlighted, as did Alastair Owens, Karen Hausen and others, that there was no separation between the private and the public sphere – at least not in modern terms. If women publicly acted for the interests of their family, it still remained a private issue.³¹ Keller showed – in

²⁹ Toni Pierenkemper: *Entrepreneurs in Heavy Industry: Upper Silesia and the Westphalian Ruhr Region 1852 to 1913*, in: *Business History Review*, 1979/1, pp. 65-78 and Pierenkemper: *Einführung in die Unternehmensgeschichte*, pp. 185ff.; Hans-Jürgen Teuteberg: *Westfälische Textilienunternehmer in der Industrialisierung. Sozialer Status und betriebliches Verhalten im 19. Jahrhundert*, Dortmund 1980; Dirk Schumann: *Bayerns Unternehmer in Gesellschaft und Staat 1834-1914*, Göttingen 1992.

³⁰ Katrin Keller: *Frauen in der höfischen Gesellschaft des 17. Jahrhunderts: Amtsinhabung und Netzwerke am Wiener Hof*, in: *zeitenblicke* 4, 4 (2005) [2.2.2006], URL: [p. 1](#). Also see: Heide Wunder: *Herrschaft und öffentliches Handeln von Frauen in der Gesellschaft der Frühen Neuzeit*, in: Ute Gerhardt (Ed.): *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts. Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, München 1997, pp. 27-54; Olwen Hufton: *Frauenleben. Eine europäische Geschichte 1500-1800*, Frankfurt a.M., p. 57.

³¹ Katrin Keller: *Frauen in der höfischen Gesellschaft des 17. Jahrhunderts: Amtsinhabung und Netzwerke am Wiener Hof*, in: *zeitenblicke* 4, 4 (2005) [2.2.2006], p. 2f.; Forthcoming R. Beachy/B. Craig/Alastair Owens (Eds.): *Women, Business and Finance in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Rethinking Separate Spheres*, Oxford 2006; Karen Hausen: *Öffentlichkeit und Privatheit – Gesellschaftspolitische Konstruktionen und die Geschichte der Geschlechterbeziehungen*, in: Hausen/H. Wunder (Ed.): *Frauengeschichte – Geschlechtergeschichte*, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1992, pp. 82-88. Also see C. Pateman: *Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy*, in: C. Pateman: *The Disorder of Women*, Stanford 1989; Valentin Groebner: *Außer Haus. Otto Brunner und die 'alteuropäische Ökonomik'*, in: *GWU* 46 (1995), pp. 69-80; Gisela Bock: *Frauen in der europäischen Geschichte. Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, München 2000; Clarissa Campbell (Ed.):

particular for the princesses at the Vienna court of the 17th century – that noble women were respected as political, social and economical acting authorities and dignitaries. This, however, was not only true for the *Kaiserin*, but also for the princesses and other female members of the royal court (*Hofdamen* and *Hofmeisterinnen*).³² Not only did they receive a bureaucratic position, but they gained further attention in the networks of the nobility. A fact that was underlined by older English studies for the development of the English court as well.³³ Keller described the importance of social networks for women at the Austrian royal court, which profited from the direct access to the *Kaiserin* and her family. Thus, aristocratic women at the court had the opportunity to become brokers of political and social chances in the courtly context. But such informal networks were not very stable, because they were based on favour, patronage and loyalty outside the family network. As Keller convincingly showed family interests were of prime importance and all other interests had to be subordinated to them.³⁴ Women at the court gained from insider's knowledge they received at the court. They can be seen as information brokers who created an important career network.³⁵

Modern economists have recently shown that social networks play an important role for companies to gain competitive advantages.³⁶ Maybe this is also one of the causes for the success of noble entrepreneurs in Upper-Silesia. The princess Christiane von der Osten-Sacken as a female entrepreneur of the early industrialisation has recently been researched by Gerlinde Kraus.³⁷ According to the results of Kraus the importance of women entrepreneurs

Queenship in Britain 1660-1837. Royal patronage, court culture and dynastic politics, Manchester/New York 2002; Gisela Riescher: ‚Das Private ist Politisch‘. Die politische Theorie und das Öffentliche und das Private, in: Ingrid Bauer/Julia Neissl (Ed.): Gender Studies. Denkachsen und Perspektiven der Geschlechterforschung, Innsbruck 2002, pp. 53-66; Maurice Aymard/Marzio Romani (Ed.): La cour comme institution économique, Paris 1998.

³² Keller: Frauen, pp. 3ff. Also see Karin J. MacHardy: War, religion and court patronage in Habsburg Austria. The social and cultural dimensions of political interaction 1521-1622, Basingstoke 2003 and Andreas Pečar: Die Ökonomie der Ehre. Der höfische Adel am Kaiserhof Karls VI. (1711-1740) (Symbolische Kommunikation in der Vormoderne 5), Darmstadt 2003.

³³ Keller: Frauen, pp. 3f., 9ff. and esp. 12ff.; David Starkey: The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War, London 1987; Linda Levy Peck: Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England, London 1996.

³⁴ Keller: Frauen, pp. 11ff.

³⁵ Keller: Frauen, pp. 13ff.

³⁶ H. Aldrich: Networking among Women Entrepreneurs, in: O. Hagan/C. Rivshun/D. Sexton: Women-Owned Business, New York 1989, pp. 103-132; H. Aldrich/C. Zimmer: Entrepreneurship through Social Networks, in: D. L. Sexton/E. W. Smilor (Ed.): The Art and Science of Entrepreneurship, Cambridge/Mass. 1986 (a), pp. 3-23, H. Aldrich/C. Zimmer: Entrepreneurship through Social Networks, in: H. Aldrich (Ed.): Population Perspectives on Organizations, Uppsala 1986 (b), pp. 13-28, S. Birley: The Role of Networks in the Entrepreneurial Process, in: Journal of Business Venturing 1,1 (1985), pp. 107-117; Buskens, Vincent Willem: Social networks and trust, Amsterdam u.a. 1999, zugl. Diss. Utrecht 1999; Bart Nooteboom: The dynamic efficiency of networks, in: A. Grandori (Ed.): Inter-firm networks: Organization and industrial competitiveness, London 1999, pp. 91-119; Mark Casson: Enterprise and Leadership: Studies on Firms, Markets and Networks. Cheltenham 2000.

³⁷ Gerlinde Kraus: Christiane Fürstin von der Osten-Sacken. Eine frühkapitalistische Unternehmerin und ihre Erben während der Frühindustrialisierung im 18./19. Jahrhundert (Beiträge zur Unternehmensgeschichte 10), Stuttgart 2001.

for the industrialisation in Upper-Silesia can hardly be denied. It is astonishing, that in one of her businesses, the ironworks, the princess von der Osten-Sacken even competed with various other aristocratic business women: at the beginning with the baroness von Dyhrn, the noble dame von Roussitz auf Ponoschau, the dame von Koschützki, the princess Barbara von Chroinsky and later on the dame von Blacha, the princess Gaschin, the dame von Koscielski and the princess Johanna Schaffgotsch (of bourgeois decent). Dorothea Wilczek was another outstanding example, because she led the company together with her husband Matthias.³⁸ Despite the enormous amount of female competitors, the princess von der Osten-Sacken was the leading producer of iron in special steel hammer manufactures.³⁹ Like von der Osten-Sacken many of the competitors were owners of huge noble estates and were accordingly called 'magnate entrepreneur'. Probably most famous among them were the prince Henckel Donnersmarck, the prince von Pless and the prince Ballestrem. These land-owners were not only pioneers in the development of the German iron and steel industry, but they were early users of coal and coke-technologies, too.⁴⁰ The 18th century certainly was a challenge for the aristocracy of German noble courts. Many aristocrats faced financial problems because of changes to their inherited rights and because of the mutual credit system among the international aristocracy. In case of the financial failure of one of them this amplified problems for the whole network. Additionally further difficulties for aristocrats in search of new financial sources and of long-term provision arose. If they chose a job in the trade sector, they suffered the loss of their noble status and privileges. As a result, noble families as the von der Osten-Sackens, the von Flemmings and von Hoym, later even the king of Saxony, began to built up manufactures, fabrics, mines and iron works. Hence, what seemed to be an

³⁸ Kraus: Christiane Fürstin von der Osten-Sacken, pp. 174ff. Also Hermann Fechner: *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der preußischen Provinz Schlesien in der Zeit ihrer provinziellen Selbständigkeit 1741-1806*, Breslau 1907 and Wladyslawa Slezak: *Johanna und Hans Ulrich Schaffgotsch*, Beuthen 1996.

³⁹ Kraus: Christiane Fürstin von der Osten-Sacken, p. 170.

⁴⁰ Konrad Fuchs: Guido Georg Friedrich Graf Henckel v. Donnersmarck, in: U. Haustein e.a. (Ed.), *Ostmitteleuropa. Berichte und Forschungen*, Stuttgart 1981, pp. 237-251; Fuchs: *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Oberschlesiens, 1871-1945*, Dortmund 1981; Toni Pierenkemper: *Die schwerindustriellen Regionen Deutschlands in der Expansion. Oberschlesien, die Saar und das Ruhrgebiet im 19. Jahrhundert*, in: *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 1992/1, pp. 37-56; Pierenkemper (Ed.): *Industriegeschichte Oberschlesiens im 19. Jahrhundert. Rahmenbedingungen - Gestaltende Kräfte - Infrastrukturelle Voraussetzungen - Regionale Diffusion*, Wiesbaden 1992; Pierenkemper: *Struktur und Entwicklung der Schwerindustrie in Oberschlesien und im westfälischen Ruhrgebiet 1852-1913*, in: *ZUG* 24 (1979), pp. 1-28; Pierenkemper: *Entrepreneurs in Heavy Industry: Upper Silesia and the Westphalian Ruhr Region 1852 to 1913*, in: *Business History Review*, 1979/1, pp. 65-78; Klemens Skibicki: *Industrie im oberschlesischen Fürstentum Pless im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Zur ökonomischen Logik des Übergangs vom feudalen Magnatenwirtschaftsbetrieb zum modernen Industrieunternehmen (Regionale Industrialisierung 2)*, Stuttgart 2002, zugl. Diss. Köln 2001.

almost unsolvable problem turned out to be a chance for aristocrats in need of financial resources and became a new dimension of entrepreneurial work.⁴¹

This leads to the question of how noble networks contributed to early industrialisation, which widely influenced the economic development of rural landscapes in Upper Silesia, Lower Silesia and Kurland. In her study on the princess von der Osten-Sacken and her royal family Kraus showed three different, but intertwined uses of networks: availability of risk capital, supplying knowledge and information.

Regarding the princess, there were various forms of networks: On the one hand networks of the nobility, which provided the princess with risk capital and information. Whereas risk capital was available from the wealthy inner family circle of her own and her first and second husband's families, the von Dieskaus, the von Hoyms and the von der Osten-Sackens,⁴² the information network was spanned wider.

Besides her wide-spread correspondence and personal contacts with her families and other members of the higher and lower aristocracy, her visits at noble estates and at the royal courts gave her the opportunity to get valuable political and economical information on an international level. An important source for information on the developments and opportunities of the international and colonial trade was Jakob von Kurland, who possessed the biggest desmesnes at the Baltic Sea. His trade networks reached as far as Great Britain and France. For his agricultural and raw materials he received manufactured and colonial goods from his business partners in Great Britain and France. He also was an excellent broker of news and information, because of his managers and traders who were situated at all important market places. From them he permanently received reports on the economical and political situation abroad.⁴³

Other important sources of information and knowledge for the princess were the local administrators and trustees on the noble estates and properties. Christiane von der Osten-Sacken chose Berlin as her first living-place, but possessed estates in Saxony (Oppurg), Silesia (Schlawentzitz, Lassowitz, Bytkow) and Kurland (Bathen, Piltten and Dondangen).⁴⁴ For the administration of the forestry and agriculture estates, later on the manufactures and industrial works, professional managers were installed. They provided the princess with

⁴¹ Kraus: Christiane, pp. 13ff.; Elisabeth Fehrenbach: *Adel und Bürgertum in Deutschland 1770-1848*, München 1995; Hans-Ulrich Wehler: *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, Bd. 1: *Vom Feudalismus des Alten Reiches bis zur Defensiven Modernisierung der Reformära 1700-1815*, München 1989; Rudolf Vierhaus: *Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert – Politische Verfassung – Soziales Gefüge – Geistige Bewegungen*, Göttingen 1987; Reinhart Koselleck, *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution*, Stuttgart 1967.

⁴² Kraus: Christiane, pp. 22ff., 49ff.

⁴³ Kraus: Christiane, pp. 80ff.

⁴⁴ Extensive analysis provided by Kraus: Christiane, pp. 43-66 and 78-188, especially pp. 44ff., 80ff.

permanent information on the development of her property.⁴⁵ Because of the widespread properties of the princess, this was indispensable. Without her local partners, who had to be reliable and trustful managers, she would not have succeeded as an entrepreneur. This is also true for the noble information network of the princess, which was not only important for her investments in developing markets and beginning industries, but also for the knowledge about new technologies and profitable supply markets.



Christiane princess von der Osten-Sacken and her first husband prince von Hoym

An important motive for the princess to take over entrepreneurial functions, to start up firms, to lean risk capital and to invest in new business sectors, was the provision of her family and the long-term securing of her family's welfare. In her extensive and knowledgeable correspondence, she especially stressed the well-being of her grandson and main heir, August prince zu Hohenlohe-Oehringen.⁴⁶

4. Principals of the Krupp family – Bourgeois Business and Family Networks

It is interesting to see how German popular chroniclers of the Krupp company judged Helene Amalie Krupp: They described her as an autocrat (*Alleinherrscherin*)⁴⁷ or a negligible special case.⁴⁸ Therese Krupp, the daughter-in-law of Helene Amalie Krupp, too, does not seem to be of a wider interest. Only the fact that her son Alfred forced her to make him the sole owner of the small iron and steel enterprise, is mentioned in popular business histories.⁴⁹ Another

⁴⁵ Kraus: Christiane, especially pp. 44ff., 80ff.

⁴⁶ Kraus: Christiane, pp. 45ff.

⁴⁷ Karl-Otto Saur: Friedrich Krupp, Berlin 1999, p. 8.

⁴⁸ Karl-Otto Saur: Friedrich Krupp, Berlin 1999, pp. 13f. 'Ungeachtet der Leistung etwa von Friedrichs Großmutter Amalie Krupp galt das unumstößliche Gesetz, daß nur ein männlicher Erbe in der Lage sei, die Verantwortung des toten Vaters zu übernehmen. So wusste also der 14jährige Alfred, daß es an ihm sei, das Werk des Vaters fortzusetzen, auch wenn es eigentlich nichts Fortsetzungswürdiges mehr gab.'

⁴⁹ Karl-Otto Saur: Friedrich Krupp, Berlin 1999, p. 24.

popular chronic of the Krupp family did not mention neither Helene Amalie nor Petronella. Only Therese was mentioned as the ‘mother of the persistent Alfred Krupp’.⁵⁰ The legend of the male founders was constructed and is still present today: ‘Es gibt zwei Familiengeschichten. Die eine begann mit Schweiß und Sorgen, dem Erfindergenie und Unternehmerrückglück von Friedrich Krupp zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Sie wurde durch Sohn Alfred und Enkel Friedrich Alfred Krupp erfolgreich fortgeschrieben. Das ist die *eigentliche* Familiengeschichte Krupp.’⁵¹

The long and difficult history of the Krupp company from a wealthy bourgeois family firm and groceries trading company to a huge multinational conglomerate has been told over and over again – in scientific as well as popular descriptions.⁵² Though the narrative of the ‘self-made men’ of the Krupp family has become the ‘master narrative’, several historians have pointed out that the members of the trading family Krupp were well-known and wealthy citizen of the Ruhr-city Essen early on. Members of the family, who in the 16th century migrated from the Netherlands to Essen, reached high positions in the local government. During the first two centuries in Essen they held the titles of a ‘Rentmeister’, that means treasurer, secretaries and lord-mayor of the city. They started trading with wine and groceries quite early and since 1650 they began selling guns and rifles. But profits remained instable. As a result, the Krupp family followed an active company policy and never became a saturated family like so many others of that time. Lothar Gall has underlined that the active profit-seeking was also valid for the female members of the family – because they provided necessary dowries or became entrepreneurs on their own: ‘Sie traten immer wieder höchst aktiv in Erscheinung, als Geschäftsfrauen, als umsichtige Verwalterinnen des nie allzu großen Kapitals, auch als Agentinnen der Vermehrung von Besitz und Einfluss durch günstige, durch „passende“ Heiraten.’⁵³ In the early industrial revolution, the female entrepreneurs played an important part for the firm’s later growth to one of the leading iron and steel producing companies of the world. Helene Amalie Krupp, born the daughter of the wealthy, reformed trader Ascherfeld, brought with her the urgently needed risk capital for the founding of an iron and steel producing mill. She supported both, her son and her grandson Friedrich, as did her daughter-in-law Petronella Krupp, born Forsthoff and her granddaughter-in-law Therese

⁵⁰ Thomas Rother: Die Krupps. Durch fünf Generationen Stahl, Frankfurt a.M. / New York 2001, p. 12.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 29.

⁵² Recently Gall (2002 and 2000), Rother, Saur, Calogeras. Vorher Mühlen, Mann, Berdrow e.a.

⁵³ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 11. Vgl. auch Ernst Schröder: Krupp. Geschichte einer Unternehmerfamilie (Persönlichkeit und Geschichte 5), 4. Aufl., Göttingen/Zürich 1991, p. 9; Wilhelm Berdrow: Die Familie Krupp in Essen von 1787 bis 1887, Essen o.J. [1931] und Anke Probst: Helene Amalie Krupp – eine Essener Unternehmerin um 1800 (ZUG-Beihefte 33), Stuttgart 1985, zugl. Mag.-Arb. Bonn 1981.

Krupp, born Wilhelmi. Besides the material base they supplied the emotional support which was fundamental to the founding of risky enterprises and the entrance in new markets.⁵⁴

But how did Helene Amalie Krupp and later Petronella and Therese Krupp enter the world of business? And how relevant were their family and business networks with closer friends, trade partners, consultants and well-known citizens? Despite a few studies on the Krupp women, especially the estimable biography of Anke Probst, these questions have been ignored by historians hitherto.⁵⁵

Helene Amalie Krupp (1732-1810), who was already related to the Krupp family through her mother, married the trader and treasurer of the city of Essen, Friedrich Jodocus Krupp, in 1751. It was his second marriage and it was financially as attractive as his first one. Friedrich already died in 1757 and Helene became the owner of the company, which was now called the 'Widow Krupp Company' after her. From the early beginnings, she started as a business woman who thought strategically: She founded new mills, invested in developing markets and bought new estates. The property of the Krupp family, which had already been remarkable, grew from seven to 31 estates. Not only was she successful with new businesses like trade in linen and canvas, but also with trade in tobacco and porcelain.⁵⁶ She looked for important trade partners and found them not only in the Netherlands, but in Bremen, Hamburg and London as well. Maybe her trade partners suggested investing in the production and distribution of home made and home coloured textiles and in the growing mining industry in the later Ruhr district. She started to buy shares of the char coal mines very early. With her private credit system she was successful in buying the majority of the 'Gute Hoffnung'-ironworks at Oberhausen-Sterkrade in 1799.⁵⁷ Up to the resale of the mill in 1808 to Huysen, Haniel and Jacobi she had remained 'the boss' of this heavy industry enterprise, although she had made her less successful son Peter Friedrich Wilhelm and later on her grandson Friedrich (1787-1826) managers of the hut.⁵⁸ Only her daughter-in-law Petronella, which too was an early widow, received a part of the property rights of the mill together with her financial investments.⁵⁹ Petronella – like Helene Amalie – was an important financier of the second Krupp ironwork, which was founded by Friedrich after the death of his grandmother.

⁵⁴ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 11.

⁵⁵ Anke Probst: Helene Amalie Krupp – eine Essener Unternehmerin um 1800 (ZUG-Beihefte 33), Stuttgart 1985, Master-Thesis Bonn 1981; Ralf Stremmel: Margarethe Krupp (1854-1931) – eine verhinderte Unternehmerin?, in: Ulrich Soënius (Ed.): *Bewegen – Verbinden – Gestalten. Unternehmer vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert: Festschrift für Klara van Eyll zum 28.9.2003* (Schriften zur Rheinisch-Westfälischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte 44), Köln 2003, pp. 129-146.

⁵⁶ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 12.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 12f.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 13-17.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 16f. und FAH I B 132.

Together with his brother Wilhelm and his sister Helene, Friedrich inherited an enormous amount of money and properties.⁶⁰ Not only did he invest this in his already existing trading company, but in his steelwork, which was founded in 1811.⁶¹

Friedrich and later his son Alfried called Alfred Krupp (1812-1887) had to suffer from heavy difficulties in producing cast iron in sufficient qualities.⁶² Important reasons for the company to survive the early years were cheap credits from the women of the Krupp family.⁶³ Friedrich's mother Petronella and his sister Helene had to invest huge sums of risk capital to prevent Friedrich and Alfred Krupp from failure.⁶⁴ Despite enormous investments, the company nearly went bankrupt in 1824 and the family had to settle in a building beside the mill.⁶⁵ At that time, his mother refused to give any further credits to the nearly bankrupt company. After a further decline of his company Friedrich died at the end of 1826 and left his oldest son Alfred, aged fourteen.⁶⁶ Although Alfred started early as an apprentice in the developing iron and steel industry and tried to built up a network of communication and supply for the new and mostly unknown products⁶⁷, it was his mother Therese (1790-1850), who became the owner and leader of the company.⁶⁸ Notably there is a lack of intensive research and description of the entrepreneurship of Therese in the years from 1826 to 1848. Most historians and popular authors ignored Therese as the leading principal and described her underage son Alfred as the genius entrepreneur of that period.⁶⁹ But according to Gall it was Therese who was the entrepreneur and Alfred, who – like his predecessor at his fathers company, a man called Tacke – became the manager of the ironworks.⁷⁰ This was an usual procedure in early industrial companies. Therefore early industrialists were called bourgeois gentleman-entrepreneur respectively lady-entrepreneur. This type of entrepreneur has been

⁶⁰ Sources on the properties of the Widow Krupp are: Liegenschaftsverzeichnis FAH I A 1; Kaufverträge FAH I D 41; FAH I D 48; FAH I D 49, 50, 52, 53, 61 und 92; Nachlassverzeichnis mit Aufzählung der in ihrem Besitz befindlichen Grundstücke und Liegenschaften, Umfang der Bergwerksanteile und Zechen, die von Helene Amalie Krupp erworben wurden, gesamte Vermögenslage nach dem Tod der Witwe FAH I D 4.

⁶¹ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 17f. nach Probst, pp. 53ff.

⁶² Wegen seiner mehrjährigen „Informations-“Reisen in Großbritannien wurde aus dem deutschen Alfried das im Englischen populärere Alfred.

⁶³ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg eines Industrieimperiums, pp. 9-69. Popular descriptions are Karl-Otto Saur: Friedrich Krupp, Berlin 1999 and Rother: Die Krupps. Also See Firmenfestschrift „Zur Hundertjahrfeier der Firma Krupp 1812-1912“, pp. 5-18.

⁶⁴ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 28f.

⁶⁵ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 30. Krupp to Joh. Leopold Overbeck in Altena, 4.1.1825, in: FAH I B 80, reprinted in Berdrow: Friedrich Krupp Gründer, pp. 290f.

⁶⁶ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 31f.

⁶⁷ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 33.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 45. Her and her former husbands family supported her also with risk capital.

⁶⁹ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 32-42. Also see Kocka: Unternehmer in der Industrialisierung, p. 146 and Witt: Triebkräfte des industriellen Unternehmertums.

⁷⁰ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 40f.

contrasted to the type of the innovative owner entrepreneur of which Alfred Krupp, who shared daily operative business in technical and trading functions, was one.⁷¹



Theresia Krupp (1790-1850)

What was fundamental to both forms of entrepreneurship was the creation and stabilisation of the valuable family and business networks. Like the networks of the aristocracy in Upper Silesia bourgeois networks in the Ruhr district could be useful for the generation of risk capital as well as for the provision with knowledge and information.

Without the capital of Helene Amalie, Petronella and Therese Krupp, their wealthy families and their other helpful relatives like Petronella's uncle Carl Schulz, the Krupp company would not have survived.⁷² The bourgeois milieu of the Krupp family in Essen played an important part in providing these early industrialists with technical and trading knowledge.⁷³ A consultant of his grandmother, Franz Dinnendahl, whom he met in 1806 at his grandmother's house, was important for the development of Friedrich Krupp's technical knowledge. Dinnendahl was the founder of the first steam engine fabrication in Essen, one of the first production plants on the continent.⁷⁴ The information and knowledge the Krupps received from their families and business partners can be seen as a special form of capital. And the relevance of this 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu) as a base for entrepreneurship can hardly be denied. In the words of Marc Casson: 'Historically, family firms have drawn on two main sources of "cultural capital": the paternalistic idea that employees are adopted members of the founder's family, and the founder's own religious and moral values. The first is effective only within small firms.'⁷⁵ Whether these religious and moral implications are true for the female entrepreneurs of the Krupp family, will have to be resolved by further research.

⁷¹ See Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, pp. 38f.

⁷² Ibid., p. 45. Her and her former husbands family supported her with risk capital, too. For the later history of Krupp also see Stefanie van de Kerkhof: Von der Friedens- zur Kriegswirtschaft, Essen 2006.

⁷³ Probst: Helene Amalie, pp. 12ff.

⁷⁴ Gall: Krupp. Der Aufstieg, p. 15. Also see Hedwig Behrens: Mechanikus Franz Dinnendahl (1775-1826). Erbauer der ersten Dampfmaschine an der Ruhr. Leben und Wirken aus zeitgenössischen Quellen (Schriften zur rheinisch-westfälischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte 22), Köln 1970.

⁷⁵ Mark Casson, Article Entrepreneurship, in: The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics 1993, 2002. The URL for this site is: <http://www.econlib.org>.

5. Conclusion and Further Research

The displacement of women from the world of business has taken place in a double sense. On the one hand women were pushed away from the property rights and management functions of enterprises in the course of the 20th century. On the other hand historians and economists have not only ignored the role of female entrepreneurs, but it has become apparent, that they even constructed an economic history void of every memory of the important role pre-industrial trade women and female principals like the bourgeois Helena Amalie Krupp or the noble Christiane Princess von der Osten-Sacken played. Therefore further research is needed on the history of women entrepreneurs for example in the Ruhr district, in Aachen and Cologne.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ There are several companies in this area which provide valuable sources for historical research.