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Abstract

The initiatives attempting to forge links between the academia and the industry flourished in France after World War I. The so-called “industrial institutes” shared a common goal: to reinvigorate the French economy through science. Because of their focus on applied research, they differed from traditional engineering schools that usually neglected laboratory work and innovation. However, while the industrial institutes were a distinct category that shows broader trends in science-industry relations, from a formal point of view they did not constitute a coherent category. The term “institute” was ambiguous and applied to various legal and administrative arrangements. While the French state attempted to unify terminology by introducing “faculty institutes” through the 1920 Decree on the constitution of universities, the measure was not sufficient to englobe all types of institutions. The diversity of organizational realities behind the industrial institutes is, however, useful for analyzing power structures and hierarchies in a given industrial sector. The legal form of an industrial institute

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was conditioned by the state and the robustness of the industry that funded it. As such, the history of the French industrial institutes may constitute a fertile ground for broader analyses on the impact of power relations on the legal reality behind the initiatives uniting science and industry.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)