

Camille HENRI, “The French Post Office and the shipment : the messaging field and the competition learning (1969-2003)” [« La Poste et les transports : la messagerie ou l’apprentissage de la concurrence (1969-2003)], Ph. D. thesis in shipment, directed by Michel Savy and Muriel Le Roux, University Paris Est – Créteil, 2014, 681 p + appendix.

On the late 60s till the early 21st century, this thesis describes the issue of the French Post Office shipment, a focus on the dynamic large technical system and the historical network architecture starting inside the firm. This analysis reveals the considerable change inside the French Post Office across the years: the evolution of the shipment, the expertise and especially the way how they improve their business because of their competitors. All this lead them to develop their business in the messaging field and to restructure the way of packaging inside La Poste Group. This study reveals that their business has grown considerably over the years and that shipment research has contributed to give them the knowledge inside the company.

One of the assumptions of this thesis considers that the historical approach has lead the group to improve their way of shipment and to develop a change strategy: it’s the reorganization inside the group, the internal restructuring of the shipment and messaging, and also the new definition of a relationship between this exceptional way of shipment and the whole world.

The aim challenge of the operator is to be able to develop the business of the company trying to have a pole position on the market and insure a public service. This thesis also reveals that one of the major issues of the French Post Office by the past was to develop their business and to be identified as one of the leader in this section. This fundamental change linked to the expansion of the shipment messaging, make us consider that the influence of the shipment experience and the competitors postal service had contributed to define the knowledge of the firm, we consider it as a major step for the French Post Office and allow us to get more curious on the competitor’s learning since the late 1970s.