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The academic study of the American corporation largely commenced with the famous study by Adolf A. Berle and Gardiner Means, published in 1932. However, it did not reach maturity until the 1970s through the work of the American historian and theorist Alfred D. Chandler, whose work *The Visible Hand*, which provided analysis on how firms abandoned the invisible hand of the market to the visible hand of the manager. In doing so, he explained how the large corporation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century emerged and, in the process, created a new subfield for management and economic research. This shift from the market to the hierarchy of management has played a tremendous role in shaping labor relations in the United States.

There have been many critics of Chandler's work over the years but despite the reproaches, it remains a vast and foreboding edifice in the fields of business, management and economic history. However, there is a new structure that has emerged, a work written by Richard N. Langlois, an economist at the University of Connecticut. This work represents perhaps the most thorough challenge of Chandler that has emerged. Indeed, the work is a stunning and monumental accomplishment, one that few scholars would consider doing and even fewer could accomplish. I regard this work so well that I believe it will be a classic in management the same way Chandler's has been.

There are at least two types of readers that could read this work profitably. Firstly, if someone wants to understand basic economic and business trends in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (such as the economic impact of the New Deal) this would be the first source to read. Indeed, the bibliography alone is worth the cost of the book—given the vast scope of his research, very few studies are ignored across an array of business, economics, and history historical works regarding 20<sup>th</sup> century America. Secondly, for people who wish to understand whether a firm should internalize or externalize business activities, this will be a book to read. This is a dense read—but the patient student will find wisdom and insight in almost every single paragraph.

Langlois basic idea is that the emergence of the 20<sup>th</sup> century corporation was not foreordained. Rather it was a combination of crises (two world wars, great depression, and a cold war) that lead to the establishment of the corporate behemoths of the mid 20 century. Each of these crises led to the establishment of a state far more involved in economic activities than even Abraham Lincoln or an Alexander Hamilton would have imagined. The state created regulation, tax, and contractual mechanism that provided reasons for corporatization to become the common framework. Indeed, under these conditions, it was not profitable or wise for a corporation to use the market mechanism. For example, how could a corporation utilize the market during World War II when there was no price mechanism?

Likewise, Langlois punctures the myth of the omnipotent government. In old fashioned political science and a lot of political history, politicians are created as philosopher kings who could master the economy and through the selection of correct policies, create higher degrees of bounty. Langlois correctly points out that the reverse is more likely: that when government gets involved, they get the very thing that they wanted to avoid. An example of this would be anti-trust policies, which often, as in the example of the Radio Act, become dominated by the precise businesses they sought to regulate. When examining the state and its relationship with business, Langlois does not focus on the intent of politicians but the actual outcome of government action.

The blurbs on the back cover of the book note the relationship between Langlois and Chandler, with some commentators arguing that Langlois supplants Chandler's work. Langlois's work does nothing of the kind. Rather he supplements Chandler in that he demonstrates when the visible hand is superior to the invisible hand and when the visible hand should vanish. This thesis has been the major thrust of Langlois work and career and, is artfully supported in the book. Future scholars who seek to understand business and the creation of organizations will do well

contemplate both works. I believe consideration of both would provide the reader with a thorough understanding of the nexus between organizations and markets.

There is no such thing as a perfect book, no matter how brilliant. This work is no exception, and I have a few criticisms. Firstly, Langlois is correct to point out the role of the government in shaping the corporate world, but I wish he mentioned more explicitly the idea of business shaping government and creating government policy. Although this is a theme in the book to be sure, I believe this point should have received more consideration. Secondly, Langlois focuses a lot on technology, I wish he spent more time on culture and its role in shaping corporate and government action. As he (and other scholars) has noted, the zenith of the 20<sup>th</sup> century corporation was at the mid-point of the century. Although he provides some reasons for this (government), I wish the idea of culture had been a larger idea. Namely, the generations that survived the Great and Depression and fought the Second World War wanted stability above all. As such, the structures of the corporate world made sense. However, the following generations, growing up in abundance and peace, tended to be far more entrepreneurial.

One of the implications of the book (and a potential driver of future research) is that labor conditions could change based upon whether a firm decides to use markets or hierarchies. This potential insight could be used to examine the rise and decline of unionization and salaried work based on employment. At present, we are witnessing the ordainment of the gig economy, driven through technology. Scholars interested in employment should consider this book carefully.