

## PHD RESEARCH

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**The Law relating to the Network Industries 1830-2010. An evolution of the State's role as a founder of a law for the public services** - [Original Title :

*Le droit des industries de réseaux 1830–2010.*

*Une histoire de l'évolution du rôle de l'Etat*

*fondatrice d'un droit du service public]*

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This thesis follows the evolution of interactions between the public sector and the private sector to create, organize, manage, and finance public services such as transport, communications, water, and postal services. It focuses especially on the rules and statutes adopted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Belgian, international, and European law. For the history of contemporary Belgium, the research intends primarily to clarify the role occupied by these sectors in the construction and evolution of the Belgian state. This fascinating history exerted, from the nineteenth century, an exceptional influence on the functioning of the state. Political science often describes this operation in three successive models : Liberalism in the nineteenth century; the Welfare State at the heart of the twentieth century, and finally, since the late 1980s, the emergence of a new model, sometimes called the Regulatory State. Network industries have always been at the heart of these transformations. Historical analysis also reveals the shortcomings motivating the choices made by governments, notably through the political instrumentalization of these choices. The originality of this thesis lies finally in an interdisciplinary approach, with de Broux using his wide-ranging historical research to enrich an understanding of legal theory.