

## **The Pereire Family Strategy in the Field of International Finance in the 1850–1860's (proposal)**

**Christophe Bouneau** (Université Michel de Montaigne – Bordeaux 3 and Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine, France)

The Pereire (Emile 1800-1875 and his brother Isaac 1806-1880) are a family, a finance business and a dynasty. They came up very soon as the paradigm of Saint-Simon followers as well as Schumpeterian entrepreneurs **at an international scale**.

Their European Railway strategy combines the Saint-Simon movement universalist ideology as well as innovative behaviors and breakthroughs in products, financial processes and business management which characterize the Schumpeterian approach.

From 1850 onwards the Pereire brothers succeeded in combining the regional scale, the South-West of France, the French national space, at a time of railway 'boom', and their ambitious strategy abroad.

They strove to extend to the entire European continent, including Russia and the Turkish Empire, the 'credit mobilier' system, competing always with the Rothschild and their allies. The 'credit mobilier', founded in 1852, was understood as a model system for financing railway and economic development anywhere. The Pereire achieved prominent successes as the Austrian State Railway Society, in 1854, The Spanish Credit Mobilier and Norte (Northern) Railway Company (1855, 1859), the Grande Société des chemins de fer russes (1856) and their merging in the Commerce and Industry Bank of Torino in 1863. All these operations are similarly designed, with a Committee managing them from Paris. Nevertheless, failures were numerous. The Pereire international strategy

Golden Age is clearly enclosed in the years 1852-1867, which is a key period for the genesis of railway Europe.

When in 1867 they leave the Credit Mobilier the Pereire keep some interests in international affairs. Thus they keep their prominent influence in Spain.

The Pereire may be said to have played an essential role in the conception, structure and development of a European railway network at the full continental scale. Well ahead the initial ideology of Saint-Simon 'mediterranean system', and whatever their numerous failures, they may be well considered as the fathers of the European railway system.