



# Toward a Theory of Using History Authentically: Historicizing in the Carlsberg Group

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## Abstract

Drawing on interviews, archival material, and observation, this article investigates how and why, on two different occasions, actors at the Carlsberg Group headquartered in Denmark were inspired to use a particular historical artifact, the Latin phrase *Semper Ardens*, carved above a doorway. Used first as the inspiration for naming a new line of handcrafted beers, ten years later it became the motto featured in the company's identity statement. Findings describe a temporal pattern of micro-level activities that accounts for how actors used this historical material and, in doing so, lent the authenticity of history to their actions, a phenomenon we term organizational historicizing. Analysis of historicizing activities revealed five micro-processes: rediscovering, recontextualizing, reclaiming, renewing, and re-embedding of an artifact in organizational history. Relationships between the micro-processes, explained in terms of authenticity, power, and identity, are theorized in a process model describing organizational historicizing. The findings show the importance of history when establishing claims to authenticity and how history becomes relevant to present and future activities. We also show that latent history can be revived for use in future historicizing.

**Keywords:** organizational history, historicizing, brewing industry, authenticity, organizational identity, Carlsberg Group

Scholars interested in history have long accused organizational researchers of being ahistorical, suggesting they overlook the ways history contextualizes other organizational phenomena (e.g., Zald, 1993, 1996; Kieser, 1994; Coraiola, Foster, and Suddaby, 2015). Some of those promoting this “historical turn” go further by recommending that organizational history itself be made a focus of organization studies (e.g., Bucheli and Wadhwani, 2014; Kipping and Üsdiken, 2014; Rowlinson, Hassard, and Decker, 2014). Studies of the organizational

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uses of history are relatively rare within this emerging stream of research and so have yet to receive the attention they deserve from organization theorists. The literature concerned with the use of history in organizations also has yet to cohere, but it can be grouped into two broad themes. The first focuses on top managers who use history strategically, while the second describes both internal and external stakeholders engaging with history to make sense of organizational identity.

The majority of studies in the extant literature examine how history can be and often is manipulated to serve top management's interests. Organizational history scholars have claimed, for example, that managers mobilize power to establish what Rowlinson and Hassard (1993: 299) referred to as their preferred "history of the histories" and that they deliberately forget any part of history that exposes their political or ideological purposes. Although Anteby and Molnár (2012: 518–519, citing Halbwachs, 1992; Douglas, 1986) pointed out that forgetting is intrinsic to all human memory systems, Casey and Olivera (2011: 308) claimed that organizational memory studies "highlight the potential of the purposeful use of power and agency to shape what organizations remember and forget." Studies of top managers' rhetorical uses of history show the powerful using history to legitimize their decisions or actions, and while doing so they selectively represent or misrepresent that history. These findings present a cynical image of the use of history in organizations.

Some of the earliest evidence of power bearing on manipulative uses of organizational history was provided by studies of corporate museums. Although corporate museum studies, as documented by Duncan (1991), originally claimed that the curatorial practices of corporate historians, museum directors, and archivists represent the "authoritative truths" of their organization's history, interest soon shifted from authoritative truths to the authority establishing what is regarded as truth. Danilov (1992: 5) introduced this new interpretation by observing that top managers invest in corporate museums "to preserve and convey the company's history, to enhance employee pride and identification, to inform guests, and to influence public opinion about the company." Partially supporting Danilov's assertion, Nissley and Casey (2002: 40) argued that corporate museums constitute "strategic assets" intended to influence how an organization's identity and image are perceived by internal and external audiences. Critical work of this nature challenges earlier perceptions of corporate museums as repositories of authoritative truths by suggesting that exhibitions and displays of organizational history are influenced by the interests of organizational elites and exercised through "the politics of remembering" and "the politics of forgetting" (Nissley and Casey, 2002: 35).

Themes of power and legitimacy also emerge from studies of the rhetorical uses of corporate speeches, annual reports, press releases, newspapers, and corporate biographies. These studies find that, through storytelling, top managers make rhetorical uses of organizational history to legitimate their initiatives. For example, Kroeze and Keulen (2013: 1266) demonstrated the legitimating effects of carefully narrated organizational history in their comparative study of Dutch companies Akzo Nobel, Shell, Phillips, and AMB AMRO; in each case they concluded that leaders acted "as storytellers as a means to set up and justify change."

Other studies framed by rhetorical theory focus on how history is strategically communicated. For example, Demers, Giroux, and Chreim (2003) and

Chreim (2005) found that managers borrowed metaphors used in the past to create continuity in situations of large-scale mergers, thereby enhancing their legitimacy and reinforcing their change efforts. Brunninge (2009) found that when confronted by the spread of Internet banking, a bank's top managers created a narrative about continuing the company's history of decentralization through implementation of a new digital strategy in which each branch would design and manage its own (decentralized) website. Brunninge (2009: 23) concluded that when managers narrate history, "history becomes a powerful resource that can be instrumentalized by actors to legitimize or delegitimize possible strategic routes for the future." Making an opposing argument based on his study of a Dutch newspaper, Ybema (2014: 495) claimed that management created a sense of discontinuity that turned history into a "discursive battlefield between proponents and opponents of organizational change."

The focus on strategic uses of history was developed further by Suddaby, Foster, and Trank (2010: 215), who introduced the concept of rhetorical organizational history, defining it as "the strategic use of the past as a persuasive strategy to manage key stakeholders of the firm." Foster et al. (2011: 102) then showed how elements derived from Canada's national as well as organizational history were used in attempts to legitimate a corporate narrative for the Canadian fast food chain Tim Horton's. As the latter explained, "narrative accounts of a firm's history may be used to appropriate the legitimacy of broader socio-cultural institutions." By aligning the strategic uses of history with appropriations of history, the idea of rhetorical organizational history aligns well with critical studies that accuse the powerful of manipulating or misrepresenting organizational history.

As regards manipulation in organizational uses of history, Rowlinson and Hassard (1993), who studied invented tradition at Cadbury, found that managers misrepresented Cadbury's history to emphasize its origin in Quaker beliefs about caring for employees. They pointed out that the managers did this while openly engaging in other management practices that clearly contradicted these values. Anteby and Molnár (2012) provided a similar example of misrepresentation in their study of a French aerospace company in which managers deliberately and continuously omitted contradictory elements present in 50 years of the company's history to make that history appear more coherent than it actually was. They claimed that deliberate forgetting of contradictory elements manipulated impressions of the company's identity, thus making their study equally relevant to the second body of research on the use of history to make sense of organizational identity.

A second stream of literature describes organizational actors using history in the process of addressing organizational identity. These studies mainly involve organizational history in terms referring to heritage symbols, traditional cultural practices, or memory forms and are united by their common focus on meaning and the use of enactment and/or sensemaking theory (Weick, 1979, 1995; see also Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). Kroezen and Heugens (2012) studied the formation of organizational identities across 59 Dutch microbreweries and found that institutionalized attributes of the traditional brewing industry (e.g., symbols of artisanal brewing, concern for tradition and craft, and references to local history) were imprinted upon and subsequently enacted by the microbreweries. The researchers concluded that the brewers made sense of who they were as newcomers to an old industry by using elements from the

industry's history to forge their organizational identities. But by relying heavily on institutional theory, which in this study assumed an industry perspective, the study failed to provide details at the level of activities and actors and thus did not reveal when or how the idea to use history arose.

When facing severe threats to their existence, organizations sometimes redefine their identity as a crucial part of their response. Ravasi and Schultz (2006), for example, studied a 25-year period of Bang & Olufsen's history during which three severe threats were encountered. They found that, on all three occasions, management responded by asking, "Is this who we really are? Is this who we really want to be?" (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006: 446). These periods of questioning were followed by a search phase that included consulting the organization's history. The researchers found that invoking historical cultural practices helped the company successfully reinvent itself on each occasion, which they argued was instrumental to its survival. Similarly, Stigliani and Ravasi (2007) showed how historical artifacts drawn from the corporate museums of Alfa-Romeo, Kartell, and Piaggio (producer of Vespa) convinced stakeholders that their corporate identities would endure during periods of significant change in their markets. In both studies, actors used history as a cognitive authentication of their current identity, ensuring they were somewhat aligned with who they had always been. Yet the studies neither show how continuity was achieved nor question whether parts of the historical remains were transformed and used actively in defining a new identity.

Only two studies offer an active and embodied view of history use in organizations. Schultz and Hernes (2013) found that, on two occasions during an eight-year period, actors in LEGO Group used several memory forms (textual, oral, and material) to involve their company's history in its organizational identity reconstruction process. The researchers concluded that material memory forms were particularly important. They told a story about LEGO's new CEO, who placed the founder's handcarved sign bearing the corporate motto "Only the best is good enough" (company's translation from the original Danish) above his desk to remind himself and others of the company's long history and humble beginnings. Although this study points to the significance of introducing material embodiments in the use of history, it does not specify how material memories are created or the processes by which the influence of history is conveyed across time.

The second study to focus attention on the material embodiment of history was provided by Howard-Grenville, Metzger, and Meyer (2013: 114), who studied the resurrection of the Track Town identity in Eugene, Oregon and found that stakeholders experienced feelings about their "remembered and symbolized past" that were authenticated by encounters with the historic Hayward Field where Nike got its start. The authors concluded that authentication processes created consistency between the Track Town identity and memories of the past that enabled local leaders to attract both tangible and intangible resources (e.g., money, human talent) from within the local community. The study focused mainly on the power of identity to attract resources, and while it points to emotion and authentication, it does not define these terms or describe in any detail what led to authentication or how emotion factored into the process of resurrecting the old identity.

The literature thus stresses the uses to which history is put rather than the activities that occur at the micro-level of organizational actors as they use that

history or why it occurred to actors to use organizational history in the first place. This suggests a gap in knowledge about activities and processes constituting the use of history. Therefore we focused our study at the micro-level of analysis, which has not been done in prior research on the topic. Our discovery of the use of the Latin phrase *Semper Ardens* allowed us to describe micro-level processes and their drivers, based on which we formulated theory about the use of history.

While conducting a five-year longitudinal research project focused on transformational change at the Carlsberg Group (Hatch, Schultz, and Skov, 2015), we noted in the company's newly articulated corporate identity statement a reference to *Semper Ardens* and its English translation, "always burning." Investigation into Carlsberg's past revealed that in 1901 Carl Jacobsen, the son of Carlsberg's founder and the company's second patriarch, had the Latin version of what he described as a corporate motto carved in stone above the entrance to the headquarters building Carlsberg occupied at that time. In 1906 Jacobsen ordered an additional carving in stone above an entrance to the Glyptotek Museum, which holds the vast art collection he donated along with the building to the Danish people, as shown in figure 1.<sup>1</sup>

The stone carvings embodied what today is part of Carlsberg's past, where *Semper Ardens* lay captive for over a century before a group of master brewers set the motto free in the name of a micro-brewed line of beer they developed in the late 1990s. This first contemporary use of *Semper Ardens* was active for less than 10 years before it fell into disuse and lay hidden again for almost another decade, following which a team working on Carlsberg's corporate identity statement brought it to the forefront once again. Thus both contemporary encounters with *Semper Ardens* occurred after a period of latency when the motto was mostly ignored or forgotten, thereby presenting the puzzle this study investigates: how was it that, upon rediscovering *Semper Ardens*, two sets of actors on different occasions could, in the words of Marcel Proust (1997: 19), "recognize what lies within, call it by its name, and so set it free?" According to Proust, the past embodies itself in material objects where it remains captive unless someone should happen upon it and set it free. We were intrigued by the successive reappearances of this obviously symbolic artifact and felt compelled to follow up by collecting additional data focused on *Semper Ardens* and its history. We report here on the inductive empirical study we made while we delved into the literature on organizational history, which then framed our analysis of the activities informants reported to us and what we observed firsthand. We investigated the activities and processes by which actors used that part of Carlsberg's history concentrated in *Semper Ardens*.

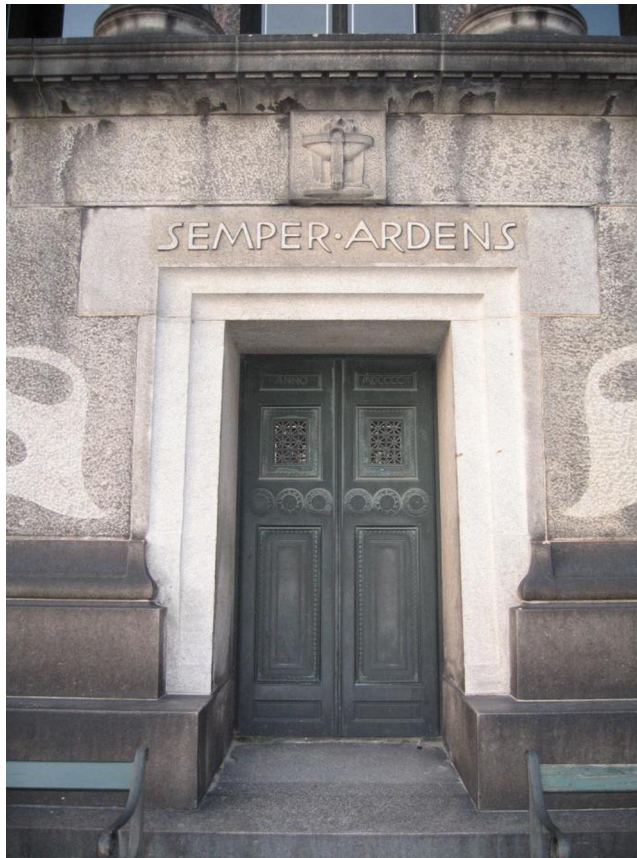
## METHODS

Our first encounter with *Semper Ardens* occurred as we began to study the global implementation of a new corporate identity statement for Carlsberg Group. We noted early in the development process a significant shift from previous tendencies to reference the founder's "Golden Words," which he included in his will to guide the future development of the company, to using

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<sup>1</sup> For a general introduction to the heritage of Carlsberg Group and its architectural landmarks, see <http://www.carlsberggroup.com/Company/heritage/Pages/default.aspx>.

**Figure 1.** *Semper Ardens* carved above the entrance to the New Carlsberg Glyptotek.



*Semper Ardens*, described at this time as the founding motto and seeming to generate new inspiration for Carlsberg's identity whenever it was invoked.<sup>2</sup> Our curiosity peaked when our informants told us they had no knowledge of the history of *Semper Ardens* in Carlsberg Group when it was first suggested, even though they sensed its potential for emotional impact. These early discoveries prompted our detective work and led us to study how *Semper Ardens* had been used, not once, but twice in Carlsberg's history.

The research reported in this article was designed to investigate actors' perceptions of what they were doing and why as they used that part of Carlsberg's history indicated by *Semper Ardens*. Because the motto was used on two occasions separated by roughly 10 years, we attempted triangulation by comparing and contrasting our analyses of the two occasions. The first occasion involved the creation and naming of Semper Ardens Beer and the second, the incorporation of the line "*Semper Ardens* means always burning" in Carlsberg Group's formal identity statement, known internally as the Group Stand.

<sup>2</sup> For a further elaboration of the Golden Words, see <http://www.carlsberggroup.com/SiteCollectionImages/Presskits/JC200/JC200%20Factsheets%20UK.pdf>.

## Data

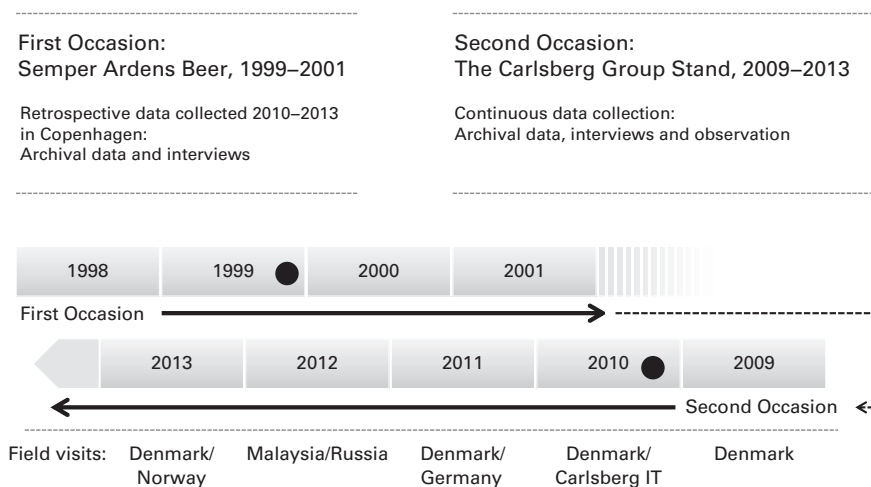
Types of data used in our study include interview transcripts, field notes, numerous corporate presentations, artifacts preserved in the archives of Carlsberg Group and on display at the Jacobsen Brewhouse (a microbrewery located on the company's grounds), a digital archive preserved by Claus Meyer (a culinary entrepreneur and food activist who was an external member of the Carlsberg team that created *Semper Ardens* Beer), and full documentation of the company's formulation and launch of the identity statement, including documents created by the external consulting company hired to lead the process and the internal team responsible for the identity project.<sup>3</sup> These data were collected in different ways: (1) semi-structured interviews, taped and transcribed in full; (2) archival search aided by Carlsberg's archivist; and (3) observations made during tours of four Carlsberg breweries and numerous visits to headquarters, local breweries, the offices of six subsidiaries, and at multiple internal and external workshops and conferences introducing Carlsberg's new identity claim. As part of our data collection process we made extensive field notes during and after field visits.

The senior vice president (SVP) of Group Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility (GCC); the SVP of Global Sales, Marketing and Innovation (GSMI); the VP of Marketing for the Carlsberg Beer Brand; and the director of Corporate Branding all served as key informants with whom we also met multiple times over lunch or dinner, where we engaged in informal feedback sessions. The director of Carlsberg Breweries in Fredericia, Denmark, also served as a key informant and sounding board with whom we discussed our emerging findings on multiple occasions. In addition to the formal interviews conducted (tallied in the Online Appendix), we met informally with the SVP of GCC on a bi-monthly schedule throughout the data-collection period. At the end of our study we presented and discussed our findings with several members of Carlsberg Group's Board of Governors, who stressed the potential importance of *Semper Ardens* to future developments in the firm. As we knew we could not keep the company anonymous, we took great care to ensure that our key informants approved our representations of their actions and the quotations found in this article. At no time were we employed by the company as consultants or acting in any other capacity than as researchers. The Online Appendix (<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/suppl/10.1177/0001839217692535>) summarizes the sources of our data.

We conducted purposeful sampling (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Kumar, Stern, and Anderson, 1993) of the data for our larger study of Carlsberg Group. We began by extracting all references to *Semper Ardens*, *Semper Ardens* Beer, and the Group Stand from our full database. Because we found in the extracted data multiple references to authenticity, which struck us as potentially important, we searched the full database again, adding references to "authenticity" and "originality." We then coded the resulting data according to whether they pertained to (1) *Semper Ardens* Beer (i.e., the Master Brewers Dream Project or the first occasion) or (2) the Group Stand (i.e., Carlsberg's new identity claim or the second occasion) and organized them chronologically by occasion. This

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<sup>3</sup> Jacobsen Brewhouse is a microbrewery located next to the first Carlsberg Brewery and part of the Visit Carlsberg Tour: <http://www.carlsberggroup.com/Company/VisitCarlsberg/Pages/Jacobsen.aspx>.

**Figure 2. Timeline showing the two occasions in relation to the data collection process.**

\* Bullets indicate dates of launch (i.e., of Semper Ardens Beer and of The Stand).

data structure indicated initial patterns that gave us reason to revisit the Carlsberg archives and re-interview several informants, including the archivist and a scholar with expertise in the company's early history who had assisted the actors involved on both occasions. Finally, in relation to the first occasion, we located and interviewed people no longer working for the company who had deep knowledge of how and why *Semper Ardens* had been used in the Master Brewers Dream Project. Our final interview database included 82 interviews with 52 informants, several of whom we interviewed multiple times.

Figure 2 shows the timeline of our data collection activities and notes the different data collection methods used. To delineate and compare the two occasions we applied "temporal bracketing" (Langley et al., 2013: 7; see also Langley, 1999), and within the brackets defining the beginning and end of each occasion we identified the progression of activities that we use to describe the uses of *Semper Ardens* in our data presentation below.

Because the first occasion took place a decade before our study began (1999–2001), we collected interview data and archival material retrospectively from 2010 to 2013, whereas all data pertaining to the second occasion were collected both as that occasion unfolded (2009–2012) and one year later (ending in 2013). Although informants seemed perfectly willing and able to recall the information they provided, on the first occasion there was more scope for forgetting or retrospective sensemaking. Whereas we cannot rule out the effect of nostalgia, we can say that informants held vivid memories of the occasions on which they reported. Apart from our prompting their memory, several of the informants were still working at Carlsberg and valued their participation in the Master Brewers Dream Project. Thus although the occasion was temporally distant, for our informants it was still an active memory.

## Analysis

Using the method of constant comparison during multiple iterations of our analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 73–74), we isolated



five different activity sets that we found to be similar across occasions. These similarities were based on a triangulation of all the types of data collected, for example, triangulation of archival data documenting activities referred to by informants, and on the second occasion participant observations of activities described by informants and documented in secondary sources. As triangulation proceeded we returned to the informants who seemed to know the most, asking them increasingly more-detailed questions about their involvement and for their reactions to the patterns we thought we were seeing in the data. The patterns emerged as we mapped our informants' activities (observed and/or reported) and started searching for concepts to describe the activity sets we found in the data. Following Van de Ven's (2007) event-based approach to process studies (see also Langley, 1999; Langley and Tsoukas, 2010; Langley et al., 2013; Hernes, 2014), we conceived each activity set (what Van de Ven, 2007; Langley et al., 2013; and Hernes, 2014, call an event) as a unit of analysis in our comparison of the two occasions.

As Langley and her colleagues (2013: 1) argued, process research "focuses empirically on evolving phenomena and draws on theorizing that explicitly incorporates temporal progressions of activities as elements of explanation and understanding." The evolving phenomena we study are the uses of *Semper Ardens* on two occasions involving different actors and activities. We mapped the progression of the activity sets observed within each occasion and compared them. This enabled us to identity five micro-processes constituted by different activity sets that unfolded within the temporal boundaries of each occasion illustrated by the bracketing shown in figure 2. The five micro-processes were rediscovering, recontextualizing, reclaiming, renewing, and re-embedding. On both occasions the processes occurred in the same sequence, although the chronological time of each process differed between the occasions; for example, the renewing of *Semper Ardens* Beer lasted more than a year, while renewing *Semper Ardens* in the corporate identity statement occurred over a three-month period.

We then turned to analysis of the role that authenticity played in the unfolding activities, the importance of which had been indicated by informants' explicit comments and material we found in the archive. As a starting point we went back to our full database and searched for the words "authenticity," "genuine," "true," and "real," and added these data to those pertaining to the five micro-processes, noting that references to authenticity were present across all micro-processes on both occasions. This approach allowed comparison of references to "authenticity" across the occasions and framed our understanding of its importance to the initiation and unfolding of the micro-processes. This understanding led to a second round of data analysis, in which we shifted focus from the micro-processes to what drove actors from one micro-process to the next, leading us to conceptualize the drivers of organizational historicizing. Direct evidence provided by our data showed authenticity to be a significant force engaging and motivating actors to use history.

Our data analysis was informed at times by our use of engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007), which encouraged us to openly debate findings with our key informants and several executives and middle managers during interviews. Of course we cannot know what we have not been told but are confident our five-year relationship with Carlsberg created a high level of trust, giving us unusual access to informants and opportunities to engage in discussions. At no

point did we feel censured or restricted from exploring any subject or using any data, and no one asked us to change or remove any material that appears in this article. This does not imply that our study excluded critical issues related to the occasions studied; rather, it is our belief that because both occasions are now considered history, our informants no longer perceived them as threatening or controversial.

## FINDINGS

Table 1 provides data supporting the five micro-processes of historicizing on each of the two occasions during which actors made use of *Semper Ardens*. All five micro-processes occurred on both occasions in the same sequence.

### First Occasion: The Master Brewers Dream Beer Is Named *Semper Ardens*

*Semper Ardens*' first contemporary re-emergence from the shadow of Carlsberg's latent history occurred at the time the beer industry in Scandinavia and Northern Europe was consolidating regionally, an occurrence that accompanied industrialization of lager beer production among the largest beer producers around the world. The spread of industrialized beer production evoked strong criticism among beer enthusiasts and the media (e.g., [www.ale.dk](http://www.ale.dk)), which inspired some brewers to reestablish craft-based brewing. This reaction created the microbrewery movement that continues to influence the industry today (Carroll and Swaminathan, 1992, 2000; Kroezen and Heugens, 2012; Gammelgaard and Dörrenbächer, 2013).

In 1998, a small team of Carlsberg's younger master brewers and some colleagues from marketing, led by the master brewer responsible for Carlsberg's technological development, formed the Master Brewers Dream Project. Members of the team later told us that producing a high-quality handcrafted beer was seen as a means to demonstrate the superiority of the Carlsberg Laboratory, and by extension themselves as master brewers. The project was intended to continue a proud tradition of innovation that included Carlsberg's 1883 invention of clean yeast, which the company had shared with its competitors as a way to ensure the safety of beer drinking everywhere, an act of generosity and responsibility that made Carlsberg a respected name among master brewers worldwide (Glamann, 1990).

**Rediscovering *Semper Ardens*.** The Master Brewers Dream Project initially had no formal approval or budget from top management. As one of the participating master brewers put it: "In the beginning it was not at all signed off, it was an on-the-ground project where we just said, 'Well, we'll keep it low key,' so low cost, low everything, and let's start making a couple of products to demonstrate what it could be.'" A focus for the team was helping consumers reconnect drinking beer with eating food, a position they felt had been usurped by the wine industry (see Lunde, 2008: 58–59). Claus Meyer, a highly respected Danish food entrepreneur who joined the team as an outside member, was a major influence both inside the company and in the public domain. His speech entitled "Better Beer" given to the management of Carlsberg Danmark in 1999 challenged them with statements like the following:

Table 1. Data Supporting the Five Micro-processes of Historicizing

First occasion: Semper Ardens Beer	Second occasion: The Carlsberg Group Stand
Rediscovering	
<p>"If we should really change the perception of beer, we need to do something totally different. At that time everything was geared for mass production, and that was also how things were being streamlined, because the beer market was declining, everything was just about taking costs out of the system." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"It was also in that building [where] we had our tasting facilities until 2008. I think some of the networking is, or at least brief networking was done after or just before tasting." (Project member, master brewer)</p> <p>"And Marketing Denmark went out there to have a meeting with [their consulting agency], . . . and they [team from Carlsberg] brought out [<i>Semper Ardens</i>], and it was discussed." (Project member, master brewer)</p> <p>"When we presented it to the Management Team, they didn't know what it meant; [they asked us] "Where did you get that from?" (Project member, master brewer)</p>	<p>"[The consultants] brought in <i>Semper Ardens</i>. [They were] two months in Valby in the summer of 2009 . . . and they spent time in the archives, and they spent time in the [local] area. And I think there were two of them, especially one girl living here for two months, reading and interviewing a lot of people, and not just about the brand and the business. The focus of that process was digging back, and they were the first actually to take up the father of J. C., Christen Jacobsen, moving to Copenhagen, and tell that story—that story hasn't been really used before. So they really got deep into the heritage, and the archives. . . . She really understood us. We have discussed afterwards that we should [hire her] grab her in, because she understood our basic thoughts and the essence of the identity." (Director, Corporate Branding)</p> <p>"It came from two brainwaves. . . . The Stand came from a succession of the Winning Behaviour and all those discussions internally about the integration. And it came also from my brainwave, which was the brand, and what is the positioning, and going inside out, rather than outside in, and try to bring that about. So I think that it's two consciousnesses that came together at the right time, let's say . . . and became grounded in <i>Semper Ardens</i> and all that stuff." (SVP Global Sales, Marketing and Innovation)</p>
Recontextualization	
<p>"It [<i>Semper Ardens</i>] really represented that Carlsberg should always be burning and be passionate about new ideas, and it should also be the spirit that should be reflected in the Master Brewers, that they should always be searching for new innovative ideas and be burning all the time." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"The problem with creating a new Nordic cuisine is that we had no truly authentic and genuinely world class products in Denmark, because everybody had a product of this highly specialized bulk oriented mass producing industry that produced bacon, pork chops, lager beer, milk, almost everything. So we had this lack of products, but we also had a lack of history." (Project member, external food expert)</p> <p>"There were some people in Carlsberg that felt [using <i>Semper Ardens</i> for the beer name] was too high flying, they would have preferred we called it something more like <i>The Master Brewers' Dream</i>, or something more maybe eye-to-eye with more consumers, because each time you would say <i>Semper Ardens</i> you would have to explain the name, nobody would know that it meant always burning, or being passionate." (Project team manager)</p>	<p>"I think I actually said to them, if I should put Carlsberg into one phrase [to explain] what makes [Carlsberg] a good place to work then it's <i>Semper Ardens</i>." (Masterbrewer, member of Brewmasters Dream Team)</p> <p>"<i>Semper Ardens</i> is always burning for more. I mean aspire for more, and never be completely satisfied." (CEO)</p> <p>"<i>Semper Ardens</i> [was acknowledged by the ExCom] because we were trying to connect what is true about the past to what would be relevant today, and we said it's really difficult to avoid <i>Semper Ardens</i> because it is part of the culture, you see it on the buildings around, so that's something that was always seeping into the discussions that we had." (SVP Global Sales, Marketing and Innovation)</p> <p>"I think that somehow around this notion of doing always better, and I think in <i>Semper Ardens</i> we never settle, or we're always burning, there is an admission that you can always do better. And that accepting that things can be not good enough, and have to be accepted, and have to be worked on, is a notion that, trying to face the facts, is at the core a very cultural notion that is very Nordic in a way, because in other cultures there is emotions, and gets in between. Whereas I think that there is such a thing in the Nordic culture about that things can be done better, they can always be done better. Yeah, maybe it is at the core, but it's facing the truth, and having the courage to face the truth, and working to improve basically." (SVP, Region)</p>

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

First occasion: Semper Ardens Beer	Second occasion: The Carlsberg Group Stand
Reclaiming	
<p>"We found out how it [<i>Semper Ardens</i>] was carved into granite, and then we started really to look back into the story of Carlsberg, and the story of Carl Jacobsen, and the story of J. C. Jacobsen, and especially Carl was extremely innovative. It was a fascinating story." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"I think there's some kind of letter from this French artist, as I remember, using the reference <i>Semper Ardens</i>, and then coming into the vocabulary of Jacobsen." (VP, Group Technology and Innovation)</p> <p>"We had some very, very old things from the past. We also looked into recipes and found that a large number, basically all the beers had been changed slowly during the years. So even though some of them had the same names that they had 30 or 40 or maybe 70 years ago, all the recipes had been changed over time. I don't know exactly what we did, but we looked into facilities, recipes, flavors, everything." (Project member, external food expert)</p> <p>"They [team members] came back to the archive looking into the old brew house journals to find out how Carlsberg was brewing beer at the time and what kind of taste variation existed." (Archivist)</p>	<p>"We had interviews; we had obviously some kind of desk research, employee attitude survey, and a lot of background material, basically the same as you have got . . . and they start [finding] emerging themes. They had also worked on the Carlsberg Beer project, they were here for two months, I guess that would be summer 2009, and dug into all the heritage . . . all the background, so they knew about the company." (Director, Corporate Branding)</p> <p>"They spent a lot of time in the archive searching for the whole story." (Archivist)</p> <p>"And I think what the Stand did was that you use the language of a brewer, the thirst, I mean, the whole, we brew the link back to our heritage in that way, I think that has meant a lot." (SVP, Group Communication and CSR)</p> <p>"J. C. went and they basically showed to the world the new opportunities and the discovery and then they also shared a way to purify the yeast. And there was constant mail—letters between the head brewer of Heineken and J. C. around this yeast. So we just found them recently and they are being digitalized. . . . You can clearly see that J. C. is talking about the clean yeast and Heineken is in 2–3 letters asking for the clean yeast and saying ok I got it, but it was in bad quality. You know the yeast had to be put into a different container so the yeast can arrive in good quality. So it just goes on and on but it is very clear that Heineken was interested in getting the yeast and eventually got it." (VP, Marketing)</p>
Renewing	
<p>"It was very important that it have a different size compared to the standard bottle, in order to make the price comparison a little bit diffuse. It was brewed in a small brewing plant at a place underneath at Carlsberg, where they have the Jacobsen Brewery now. Then they brewed ten hectoliters, and it was filtered and brought over to the filling facility we had at the Research Centre, and filled there. So it was really handmade." (VP, Group Technology and Innovation Manager)</p> <p>"It was not ourselves just making some adjustments of a lager beer, it was really true product development. . . . We started purely inside out development, we were focusing 100% on the product, and then the story for each of the beers, it just simply originated from that." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"All this capacity they'd had for something like a hundred years being put solely at the disposal for making cheaper and cheaper beer . . . suddenly this machinery was put at the disposal for making potentially some of the best beers in the world." (Project member, external food expert)</p> <p>"We invented a whole new vocabulary, because we realized that if we are not able to capture the soul, and the flavor, and the functionality of a beer in a vocabulary, in a language that people can relate to, and that is decent, and not vulgar, it will never work." (Project member, external food expert)</p>	<p>". . . it was important, certainly for me too, to define who we want to be as a company, and if we were not there yet, how we get there." (CEO)</p> <p>"We need key definitions from top management on who we are. It's complex to work with a story when you don't really know who you are. As managers in different countries, we need that story. . . . Going forward, people want to be part of something bigger. They want to take pride in what they do locally but they also want to be part of something bigger. . . . To be honest, it is hard to do that. You want to be part of the family, but how do you brand the family and what does it stand for?" (Internal document, BrightHouse)</p> <p>"We had a meeting where together with [the consultants] and the CEO in early February we summed up the <i>Semper Ardens</i> themes to link to heritage; to the sharing things about working together. . . . You can imagine a top manager saying, 'Well that's very cute, but this is a business. We want to be out there winning.' That's actually where the phrase about ambition without aggression came from, and that's why the final paragraph in the Stand is about winning, and about being a company that wants to move forward and take risks, and we are there to make money, and we are there to grow and win, not just feeling passionate, and working together, and all that stuff." (Director, Corporate Branding)</p>

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

First occasion: Semper Ardens Beer	Second occasion: The Carlsberg Group Stand
<p>"Nobody should ever fuck around with [the Semper Ardens Beer project]. We had the worst, the whole marketing department that wanted to get their hands on it . . . whenever I was there nobody ever dared to touch this project. It was too authentic and sacred in some way." (Project member, external food expert)</p> <p>"We invited people like master brewers to come with their comments. We wanted to make 100% sure that what we said was the truth. So the master brewers, they had to stamp that they agreed." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"So for me scaling up this beer production within the hands of these fantastic craftspeople, the brew masters, was an eminent chance to prove that big could be beautiful and authentic." (Project member, external food expert)</p> <p>"As a consequence of Carlsberg's wish to explore the possibilities of beer in connection with meals, we were asked to convert existing international knowledge about judging beer quality into a precise language with clear concepts suitable for use on Carlsberg's beer labels in the future. . . . In addition, we will explain about the food types that bring out the best in the beer." (Extract from a manifesto called "The Language of Beer 2000," our translation)</p> <p>"That was mainly myself and it was the external food expert [who wrote the folder accompanying each beer]. We also used our advertising agency, but they were not the starting point. You know, they could fine tune the language a little bit, but they were not able to come up with the first draft because they didn't know the story that well, so it was him and myself who made the text." (Project team manager)</p>	<p>"We thought that <i>Semper Ardens</i> was a great reference to the passion in the company, the burning passion, the idea of burning and the Stand by saying we hope that the thirst will keep burning, and forever keep us thirsty, or something like that." (SVP, Region)</p> <p>"The <i>authenticity</i> here [in the draft version of the Stand under discussion] is appreciated, but we need to dial-down the soft sides of sharing and amplify its effect on performance, ambition, and the concept of growth." (Highlighted in the original, minutes from ExCom meeting)</p> <p>"This Stand is not about what we do on a daily basis, but the fundamental questions about who we are: What is the core of the Group? The corporate Stand must offer an authentic and inspiring Group story that encompasses the different companies around the globe and adds value to being part of a group of brewers." (Internal presentation material, April 2010)</p> <p>"Two weeks later [the SVP of GSMI] came back, and I mean he had read it over and over again, and he wanted to discuss if we could say motto instead of phrase, and it just turned. I mean it just showed that he was really into it. We replaced phrase with motto . . . it was his change. This is more correct. I think motto is more solid." (Director, Corporate Branding)</p> <p>"But the Stand in many ways is the, I mean it's the whipped cream. . . ." (SVP, Group Communication and CSR)</p> <p>"The Stand was developed by the ExCom. The process we had around development of the Stand means that they are really behind it. I mean, elements of the Stand [e.g., <i>Semper Ardens</i>] are being referred to when they sign [off on e-mails]." (SVP, Group Communication and CSR)</p>
Re-embedding	
<p>"Our idea about having these 30 chefs, which we were going to distribute the beer to, was to start to get some ambassadors. We simply need some credible and reliable beer ambassadors, and if we wanted to have a dialogue with these people we said we were going to launch a newsletter, which we sent out, I think it was at least quarterly." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"I really felt that we had seduced Carlsberg. I said to the chefs, 'We have a fantastic, it's a moment, a window of opportunity where maybe by talking to these guys we can transform the beer culture of our country with the help of Carlsberg. Right now there's a window open, but I need you to step in.'" (Project member, external food expert)</p>	<p>"I always talk to the Stand and highlight some key words from it, like <i>Semper Ardens</i>, like risk taking, like Brand As Many Stand As One, passion, there are some very, very strong words. If I read ours, and many other companies' vision/mission/stand, I think we have one of the better ones. . . . So in some markets <i>Semper Ardens</i> can be very important, and of course linked to our history, but I think it's more the underlying concept—always aspire to more; always strive for more." (CEO)</p> <p>"I mean so the <i>Semper Ardens</i> for instance, it is . . . you know I am extremely passionate about this business. I love getting to work, I love talking to people, I love moving the business ahead, I love seeing my CEOs succeed. I try to spread as much energy and as much passion getting things done in a way where people really yes, he is burning for this." (SVP, Region)</p>

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

First occasion: Semper Ardens Beer	Second occasion: The Carlsberg Group Stand
<p>"Each time we made a launch of the beer we had a lunch in the museum. So we invited all the top chefs, and some selected journalists with expertise in food and wine [to the] lunch. Each time we said we'd pick one of the chefs to make the lunch." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"He [critical journalist] was one of the people we invited for the first launch, because we said if we could convince him that the Abbey Ale was a real true and honest attempt from Carlsberg to innovate, then we could convince anybody." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"We said from there, then we can start having the dialogue with some of the top people in the world, like people who are writing for special magazines, or the restaurant reviews, etcetera. But we had to have an authentic story. I think that was the key word. Because I mean if you're sitting in marketing, I mean the basic concept was, "Yeah, yeah, we know, we need a PR campaign, and then we get the benefit, next year." I think some of us could see this was going to be a long term approach." (Project team manager)</p> <p>"The original deal was kind of saying 'OK this is the next step in our journey into micro brewing or super premium production' so we made first Semper Ardens [beer] in a pilot brewery, then we took it to the big industrial Carlsberg brewery and made some very nice products there. And then we built our own microbrewery to make new very special beers under the name of Jacobsen. And then just decided on, to have the first branch running at the same time." (Master brewer, Carlsberg Danmark)</p>	<p>"I could see it when she first was presented with the Stand. I could see it was love at first sight [laughs]. I could see how she used it, and then her boss." (SVP, Group Communication and CSR)</p> <p>"First of all after the Stand had been presented, we are talking half a day after the conference where the Stand was presented had ended. My director was flooded with requests for getting hold of the Stand and the film. So, that told us a bit about the big interest in showing the Stand. So, definitely you could say there was a phase one, where everybody came back from the conference and really wanted to show the Stand coming back home and say, 'so this is what we want to display that we stand for as a group.' So that was sort of the first wave you could say, that the information around the Stand was definitely working." (SVP, Group Communication and CSR)</p> <p>"To the <i>Semper Ardens</i> thing, when we are doing the e-learning, the introduction of the Carlsberg Group, we are of course mentioning that it started here, but we are doing it respectfully regarding our group companies, because we have breweries that started in the 1200s whose history goes back further than Carlsberg, so we are not trying to build it so much around the Carlsberg history here." (VP Corporate Learning Centre)</p>

In my judgment Carlsberg today has no gastronomic credibility! On the other hand you have far from burned all your bridges. Right now you have a unique opportunity to create long term alliances with the consumers and opinion leaders, who usually lead the way for hundreds of thousands of new consumers. But it requires dedication to innovation. It requires a new language for beer, which is needed in order to be able to communicate quality. It requires demonstrating a genuine concern for the inner qualities of beer. And it requires humility toward brewing (our translation).

By the time the Master Brewers Dream Project got underway, Carlsberg Group had outgrown the headquarters building in Copenhagen with the carving of *Semper Ardens* above its door. Carlsberg Laboratory was now using that building, and it was here the master brewers held their weekly beer-tasting sessions and where the Master Brewers Dream Team started experiments that would lead to creating a new line of micro-brewed beers. It was also the location of team meetings focused on naming their new product, during one of which the team came upon the idea of using *Semper Ardens*. They had been brainstorming names for their new beer, but none captured their imagination. It had not occurred to anyone to look into Carlsberg's history for name ideas, when history suddenly inserted itself. According to the team's manager, "We

were brainstorming about the names . . . [and] what happened was that someone remembered that just over the entrance of the old laboratory it [says] *Semper Ardens* on the door." A different master brewer present at that session recalled:

We were [asking ourselves] "What should we call this [beer]?" One of them called it "The Brew Master's Passion," to which another replied, "Yeah, that's fine, but isn't there something down there [on the wall of the building]?" [At which point another said] "You're right" [and turning to me asked], "You speak Latin . . . what does it mean?" [I said], "Oh, it's something burning and *Semper Ardens* I think is always burning." And when we presented it to the Management Team, they didn't know what it meant [asking us], "Where did you get that from?"

The team manager told us that after this discussion he added *Semper Ardens* to the list of names under consideration, including "The Master Brewers Dream Beer, which thus far had been the most popular option." He then phoned Meyer to ask his opinion, and he remembered Meyer saying: "*Semper Ardens*—it's perfect, it's perfect. . . . It has everything we're looking for, that's what we should go for." Soon after that *Semper Ardens* Beer was proposed as the name for the new beer.

Looking back on the team's discussions during our interview with him in 2013, the project manager mentioned authenticity as members' primary motivation: "I think first of all [we chose *Semper Ardens*] because it was authentic. It was not something that was invented by an agency or someone, it was coming really from the heart of Carlsberg, had been carved into stone, and I think it reflected the essence of what we wanted to do as a project team." Meyer similarly remembered that "leaning on those words [*Semper Ardens*], that were of course very sincere . . . associated the whole project with an element of authenticity that could release a very special feeling within all the players. I felt 'this is the truth.'"

When the external consultants (DDB Copenhagen) hired to advise the project heard the name, "they just loved it straight away, and it was finally decided at that meeting that this was going to be the product name." The SVP of Supply Chain, a master brewer and member of the Executive Committee as well as a strong supporter of *Semper Ardens* Beer, also remarked, "It was fantastic, and it gave so much energy, because now all of us brewers who already at that time felt, you know, we're all leaving, there aren't many of us left, and it is the marketers and general managers taking over this business. . . . So it gave a lot of energy and so forth, and good fun." Comments like these show that responses to *Semper Ardens* were immediate and emotional. But if it was history per se that had engaged them, none of those we interviewed acknowledged it, nor did they indicate knowing the history of *Semper Ardens* upon their first encounter with it.

**Recontextualizing *Semper Ardens*.** As they sought to explain to themselves and others why *Semper Ardens* should name their beer, team members engaged in activities that placed the motto in the fresh context of brewing a new line of beer. Thus old connections between *Semper Ardens* and brewing were recontextualized; for example, the micro-brewed beer was seen as an authentic expression of "what the old brewer intended to do with his

company.” It is important to note that this recontextualization was reported as taking place *after* the rediscovered motto had been proposed for the name. At that point the team’s project manager remembers Claus Meyer enthusiastically telling him that “[*Semper Ardens*] says exactly what we want to do. It has the roots into the past; it’s telling the full story. . . . It’s modern, but it’s still old fashioned.” In a similar vein another team member recalled:

Passion and pride and commitment, those things are what *Semper Ardens* told me. And also the heritage, so what the old brewer intended to do with this company. So for me there was also an obligation to be aligned to the bigger picture of what he wanted to do with this company [which] is also in the name of *Semper Ardens*. But it’s one of these things where you have to know the history of Carlsberg and Jacobsen in order to be able to interpret what he means. If you just [say] *Semper Ardens*, ah dedication, always burning, fair enough. Now it’s much bigger than that.

Eventually, the project was formally accepted as part of the Carlsberg Danmark subsidiary, and it was decided that *Semper Ardens* Beer was going to be promoted and sold exclusively through restaurants, for the purpose of which Meyer recruited 30 leading Danish chefs to the project. But not all members of the management team at Carlsberg Danmark were thrilled to be producing a micro-brewed beer, and some were quite critical. According to Meyer, *Semper Ardens* became a battlefield focused on whether or not Carlsberg should pursue opportunities that lay outside the industrialized beer market. In addition, some expressed skepticism about using Latin in the beer name, predicting this would confuse consumers who had no knowledge of either Latin or Carl Jacobsen.

Challenges such as these during the development of *Semper Ardens* Beer (1999–2000) did not prevent the project from moving forward; there was enough support in the management team to overcome criticism. But the issues raised influenced how the Master Brewers Dream Team presented the project and how they talked about it among themselves. In this context, concern about maintaining authenticity was expressed, as the project team manager explained: “We had to convince people in the company [that] . . . if we’re doing this, it’s going to cost a lot of money, it’s going to take a lot of resources, but we have to be authentic. It cannot be a marketing stunt, or a PR gimmick. And some people in Carlsberg would rather like to see it as marketing, as a quick fix.” Yet there was no doubt in the project manager’s mind that it was worth fighting against the “quick marketing fix.” He clearly saw *Semper Ardens* as a unique opportunity for Carlsberg: “For once I think Carlsberg had a fantastic credible story . . . it was about being authentic, and credibility was the key word.”

**Reclaiming *Semper Ardens*.** Carlsberg Group maintains a collection of artifacts related to its more than 150-year history in a large warehouse located on its Copenhagen campus. The Carlsberg Archive proved to be an important source of additional artifacts and information that team members used as they developed the Master Brewers Dream Project. Searching this archive for the origins of *Semper Ardens*, they learned that Carl Jacobsen first heard these words spoken by French sculptor Henri Chapu (1833–1891), whom he had commissioned to sculpt a Danish princess as a philanthropic gift for the people



of Denmark (Glamann and French, 1996). While working on the commission, Chapu told Carl the story of how, while studying art at the Ecole de Rome in Italy, he and several other students made up the name *Semper Ardens* to use as the name of their artist group. Carl later claimed: "I was immediately attracted to using the words" (Steenstrup, 1922).

Aided by the archivist, the team's search into company history took them well beyond Carl's stone carving and enabled them to reclaim the history of how he discovered, interpreted, and later used *Semper Ardens* in his company. As the archivist remembered, "I created a list of all the mottos that Carl Jacobsen had used, and I helped document the story of how the motto came to Carl from the French artist. Also we found Carl's own words [about] how he immediately embraced [*Semper Ardens*]."

In addition to validating the team's intuition to use *Semper Ardens* to name their beer, the archivist located journals revealing old beer recipes that identified the raw materials (such as herbs) and specific brewing methods for creating the different flavors of beer produced by Carlsberg during Carl's time. The master brewers, who were by then already experimenting with different ingredients and recipes, found the multiple descriptions in the old beer journals useful. A master brewer noted the role authenticity played in borrowing from the journals: "[Meyer] suggested that a wild old Danish herb might add to the taste and make it even more authentic."

Producing a label for *Semper Ardens* Beer was among the many tasks the team confronted, and the archivist provided them with images of Carl in profile, one of which they chose for the label. In another nod to authenticity, the archivist told us, "I showed them books about the artist Bindesboell, who designed the original Carlsberg logo, and they asked me to find all the artistic images of Carl Jacobsen in profile created at the time from books and posters. They ended up using the medallion [of Carl's profile] created by Bindesboell." Choosing a design for the beer label produced by the same person who designed Carlsberg's logo provided another connection to the organization's history for *Semper Ardens* Beer. Together the material reclaimed from the archive enriched the meaning *Semper Ardens* held for the team and enhanced its potential to communicate with others.

**Renewing *Semper Ardens*.** As the project developed, the team added newly created material to that reclaimed from the archive. For example, the herbs and brewing techniques from the old journals found their way into new recipes and ultimately some varieties of *Semper Ardens* Beer. Nonetheless, the new line of beer involved formulating something new: new flavors and in fact the beer itself. These new artifacts renewed *Semper Ardens* by expanding the material base on which the motto rested.

Handcrafting and bottling the beer in distinctive oversized bottles exemplify other ways that the team renewed *Semper Ardens* in the process of producing its new beer. A master brewer and member of the project team explained:

At one point in time [the *Semper Ardens* Beer line] was becoming too large for the test facilities, and we had nowhere where we could make this beer. First of all, it was very difficult to make top fermented beer. It could be done in the basements of Carlsberg, but it's very difficult, and it was totally going to destroy the production process. Then we said we could make it in Falcon, in Carlsberg Sweden; [we] have a

production facility there, and there we could tap, we could bottle the big bottles, because the large bottles were quite an important part of the concept. So we said that could be done in Falcon, in these small batches [and] we moved it to Sweden. We made the beer—but that's not true, we made the beer in the basements actually, and then we transported it to Sweden and put it in bottles, and then [transported it] back to Denmark again.

For those involved, the effort it took to work out where to brew and bottle the beer embodied the very spirit of *Semper Ardens*, and embodying the spirit of *Semper Ardens* made Semper Ardens Beer an authentic extension of the old brewer's intentions for Carlsberg. Simultaneously the team gave the beer the patina of Carlsberg's past and renewed the history of *Semper Ardens*.

Small folders printed on old style paper and attached to the neck of every bottle of Semper Ardens Beer, shown in figure 3, also contributed to renewing the motto. Each folder told the story of J. C. Jacobsen's dedication to research and perfection in brewing, as well as Carl's philanthropy. On seven folded "pages," the text explained Carlsberg's origins and traced the history of *Semper Ardens* from its introduction to the naming of the beer. The folder for each variant of Semper Ardens Beer (e.g., Abbey Ale, Bock) carried a customized page that introduced the master brewer who designed that particular beer.

In addition to adding material artifacts, renewing *Semper Ardens* involved numerous launch events, each featuring a variant of Semper Ardens Beer. Instead of using large-scale marketing tactics, each brew was launched during a special luncheon for beer enthusiasts, restaurateurs, and the media at which one restaurateur created and served a meal inspired by the featured beer. The first of these, held in the Carlsberg Museum, launched 3,000 numbered bottles of Semper Ardens Abbey Ale. A press release dated June 4, 2000 reads: "*Semper Ardens* means the fire burning forever. . . . [Jacobsen's] philosophy was that a master brewer had to improve himself relentlessly to obtain the best possible quality." Following the launch, Abbey Ale was distributed via the 30 restaurants participating in the Master Brewers Dream Project.

The Master Brewers Dream Project team manager noted the importance of authenticity to the restaurateurs who were key promoters of Semper Ardens Beer: "If you take people like the top chefs in Denmark, they're willing to do a lot of things as long as they can see it's authentic. But what they don't want to go into is if it's a marketing gimmick, and they feel that they're being exploited, then they [take the position] that no way in hell they're going to participate in that." Another way in which the promoters participated in renewing *Semper Ardens* was through the Semper Ardens Newsletter (2000–2003, Carlsberg Archives), which was dedicated to disseminating the history, taste, and recommended food pairings of the new brews, and the master brewers who made them. Claus Meyer and several of the chefs contributed articles about how to develop recipes or entire menus around the ingredients of a Semper Ardens Beer variant. Twelve newsletters were published in all, and once a year a customer was honored with the Semper Ardens Award for "a person, restaurant or organization that, through a 'burning passion,' has contributed to developing the beer culture and the interplay between beer and gastronomy" (Semper Ardens Newsletter, October 2003). The award was given four times.

**Figure 3. Examples of *Semper Ardens* beer in specially designed bottles with customized folders and beer glasses (photo by DDB Copenhagen).**



**Re-embedding *Semper Ardens*.** As the market for Semper Ardens Beer grew, brewing was transferred to the Carlsberg brewery in Fredericia, and thus the very brewing process that was created to fight the image of industrialized beer was, ironically, industrialized. A few years later, over the team's strenuous objections, cost-cutting efforts then underway in Carlsberg Group led Carlsberg Danmark management to stop funding local marketing efforts for Semper Ardens Beer. Later, lured by the promise of greater sales volume, the beer line was offered to a large Danish discount retailer at non-premium prices. This action undercut the brand's premium positioning and severed its exclusive relationship with local restaurants. Looking back in 2013, the project team manager told us:

[People still connected to the project] became tired of fighting for [Semper Ardens Beer]. If you come as a new CEO for Carlsberg Denmark, [you have to ask] "Why are we spending X amount of million [Danish Kroner] on this? Clearly it's not giving us any profitability, we're under pressure, the beer market is still declining, so are we really going to continue this?" I think that there were too many ambassadors that left [the company]. The people that were left became tired of telling the story. I think that Carlsberg became too commercial.

In 2005 the Semper Ardens Beer line was closed. Apart from the annual brewing of Semper Ardens Christmas Beer, a variant that remains popular in Denmark, Semper Ardens Beer was relegated to Carlsberg's history.

The roughly 100 years that passed between Carl's carving of *Semper Ardens* over a door, and its use as the name of Carlsberg's new micro-brewed

beers, indicates that parts if not all of an organization's history can remain latent for long periods of time. The latency accounts for how the stage gets set for future rounds of rediscovery and so ends a singular occurrence of the historicizing process. Just before latency took hold in the historicizing that accompanied *Semper Ardens* Beer, we noted that *Semper Ardens* Beer artifacts entered the Carlsberg Archive.

Our informants noted a few everyday practices that were based on the master brewers' experiences of creating the beer, and in one case on personal experience that carried *Semper Ardens* forward in time. These artifacts and practices extended and embellished the company's history with its new material embodiments. For example, following the closing of the *Semper Ardens* Beer line, some members of the Master Brewers Dream Team kept the motto alive in their hearts and in the minds of those with whom they worked most closely by adapting *Semper Ardens* to new uses. In one case, a master brewer from the team was appointed brewery director for the newly established Jacobsen Brewhouse, a microbrewery located on the Carlsberg premises that produces premium micro-brewed beer under the brand name Jacobsen Beer. This individual carried on the spirit of the Master Brewers Dream Project in his development of the Jacobsen line of beer. Though there are differences between the beers—Jacobsen has fewer taste variations and little community involvement—it carries with it the idea of food pairings and borrows from the ingredient lists and recipes used in *Semper Ardens* Beer. Moreover, the Jacobsen Brewhouse honors its connection to *Semper Ardens* Beer by explaining the strong link between the two brands to Brewhouse visitors and displaying bottles of *Semper Ardens* Beer with their labels featuring Carl's image and the folders telling the story of *Semper Ardens*. Until 2013 *Semper Ardens* appeared at the top of all Jacobsen Beer labels; its removal, we believe, shows the motto disappearing further into a period of latency.

Another instance of keeping *Semper Ardens* alive was described to us by the master brewer, who became manager of Fredericia Breweries, the large industrial brewery that serves all of Denmark, located a 1.5-hour drive from Copenhagen. During a tour of the brewery there, he told us that he made use of *Semper Ardens* with employees to "celebrate when something unusually great has happened or someone has made an extraordinarily passionate effort." He also named his internal newsletter *Semper Ardens* and later the in-house blog used to announce special news and celebrate the brewery's collective achievements. He noted additionally: "Sometimes when I send e-mails to my colleagues, I put *Semper Ardens* before my name, instead of regards or something [else]. Obviously you can only do that to people who know what it means." Several former members of the Master Brewers Dream Project reported doing this as well. Intriguingly, when we shared with our primary informant the practice of using *Semper Ardens* to close e-mails, she started using it in her e-mails with us and, by her report, with others inside Carlsberg. Such activities, which may start simply as an insider's nod to an occurrence of historicizing, show how re-embedding can take place in many forms and crop up almost anywhere. Re-embedding does not require much notice or any intention with respect to history making, yet it leaves traces that may or may not be made part of history for potential rediscovery later. It is up to others to rescue them from latency through rediscovery.

## Second Occasion: *Semper Ardens* Features in the Group Stand

Others in fact did rediscover *Semper Ardens* some five years after *Semper Ardens* Beer had quietly receded into latency. The second occasion involved the motto being given a central position in the Carlsberg Group Stand, a corporate identity statement used to communicate internally what Carlsberg stands for as an organization. The identity project was part of Carlsberg's transition from dominant regional player to a global competitor having the strategic objective "to be the fastest growing global beer company" (Carlsberg.com/strategy) focused on supply-chain efficiency and growth through acquisition (Gammelgaard and Hobdari, 2013; Hatch, Schultz, and Skov, 2015). In pursuit of the growth objective, Carlsberg and Heineken jointly acquired Scottish and Newcastle (S&N) in 2008, thereby doubling the size of Carlsberg, which at that point owned 500 brands and was represented in markets covering more than half the globe. Continued growth was expected to come from expansion in Asia, but until the Asian businesses took hold, top management planned to rely heavily on profitability from the Russian Baltika subsidiary (the S&N acquisition had given Carlsberg full ownership of Baltika, along with Kronenbourg in France and several smaller breweries).

Acquisition activity brought significant challenges to Carlsberg's identity, as the SVP of Group Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility (GCC) told us in 2009: "This acquiring gave some questions to the identity of the company, . . . so coming in from that, who are we with these new brands and cultures coming in? Who are we now as the new Carlsberg?" The Executive Committee (ExCom, composed of Carlsberg Group's 10 top executives) sought to integrate the company's organizational identity, now fragmented by its many acquisitions. They saw a need to articulate how the top-management team would like the identity of the enlarged Carlsberg Group to develop. Their first step was to create a corporate identity statement, to become known internally as the Stand, which they expected to be shared among all Carlsberg subsidiaries. The Stand was intended to balance global integration needs with respect for what would remain of localized subsidiary businesses, recognizing that about 80 percent of Carlsberg's revenue at the time was generated by local brands (Gammelgaard and Hobdari, 2013). Eventually, the ExCom hoped, aspirations expressed in the corporate identity statement would be embraced by all Carlsberg employees and become part of their lived organizational identity.

**Rediscovering *Semper Ardens*.** At the time the Stand was proposed, the SVP of GCC was working closely with the SVP of Global Sales, Marketing and Innovation (GSMI) and an external consulting company (BrightHouse) that had spent several months doing research for a global relaunch of the Carlsberg Beer brand, known internally as the Brand. Based on their findings the consultants suggested that the ExCom formulate a new corporate identity statement for Carlsberg. In 2009 their formal pitch for the Stand stated:

As the Carlsberg Group continues to grow, we know that retaining individuality while, at the same time, having an authentic and inspiring Group story will be incredibly valuable in engaging the Carlsberg group employee base. Articulating this authentic and inspiring narrative for the Carlsberg Group, the Stand, will serve to align and

inspire the people within the organization and provide the foundation to support Group strategy.

As part of their research on the Brand, the consultants had searched through Carlsberg's historical records for inspiring stories. There they found stories including J. C. Jacobsen's giving Carlsberg's clean yeast away to his competitors to ensure the safety of beer for all consumers. During a tour of the brewing facilities led by a Carlsberg master brewer, the consultants were told the story of *Semper Ardens* Beer, much as it was told to us. One external consultant remarked that, in doing this type of research, "it is always crucial to find these elements of a company's history and to inquire how closely linked they are to the company's culture and operations."

The second occasion of rediscovery thus related to the first in that the external consultants encountered *Semper Ardens* when a master brewer who had served on the Master Brewers Dream Team told them how *Semper Ardens* Beer came to be named. That same master brewer confirmed these events for us:

I was interviewed by the consultant company and [I told them] if you want to encapsulate our passion for great beer and Carlsberg it is said by *Semper Ardens*—a bit like *Carpe Diem*—a powerful mysterious phrase in Latin, the ancient language. . . . And we found a saying in one of the buildings up here and thought that was a good name for the beer, so I was very pleased to see it in [the Stand] . . . *Semper Ardens*.

When the consultants suggested incorporating *Semper Ardens* into the Stand, the SVP of GSMI supported them via his own resonance with the motto, noting that it "links to what the original brewer was saying—that good enough would never be enough, and so . . . it has to be in a document like [the Stand]." The immediacy of his positive response to *Semper Ardens* echoes similar reactions by Carl Jacobsen and the Master Brewers Dream Team members reported earlier in this study.

**Recontextualizing *Semper Ardens*.** The consultants involved the ExCom in the wording of the Stand during two workshops designed for this purpose. During the months of work involved, *Semper Ardens* was recontextualized once again, this time by the Stand, in which it served as a key characterization of Carlsberg's shared identity, interpreted as "always burning for more." ExCom members saw the use of the motto in the Stand as an authentic reference to the relentless ambition of the founders and the passion felt by Carlsberg employees. In an interview, one of the consultants explained:

We saw *Semper Ardens* manifested as progress in the science and art of brewing, philanthropic projects through the Foundation, global growth and expansion in the company, as well as a general attitude held among Carlsberg Group employees. Therefore, *Semper Ardens* was an authentic expression of a belief and spirit held in the Group.

A similar interpretation was articulated by the Carlsberg Group CEO: "When I talk about constructive dissatisfaction . . . to me what is in *Semper Ardens*, is burning for more, always aspire for a little more, it's more of the same, but

adding constructive in front of dissatisfaction makes it quite strong in terms of concept and what we really are talking about.”

The Director of Corporate Branding, however, saw the authenticity of *Semper Ardens* as problematic due to Carlsberg’s recent M&A activity:

The thing is Baltika is 20 years old, Kronenbourg is 400 years old, how do we make an authentic reference to heritage? If we say the company is 160 years old, well we exclude basically everybody because [for example] Kronenbourg would feel 400 years old, Sinebrychoff in Finland is the oldest brewery in Scandinavia, so we always had a hard time deciding whose history, whose heritage are we talking about.

He further explained how the team working on the Stand came to see *Semper Ardens* as a way to overcome these different histories:

We have deliberately not written that Carlsberg Group was founded in 1847, but that the Group was founded on the motto *Semper Ardens*. We have the challenge that, for example Kronenbourg is 400 years old, so you can ask which part of the company was founded by whom, when? That is why we have chosen to focus on *Semper Ardens*. . . . It is the past, which at the same time points forward. We are able to use Burning Passion both as a modern way of thinking and as history. You don’t need to know [about Carl] Jacobsen to use that phrase, it’s a generic phrase.

Thus in the context of formulating the Stand, *Semper Ardens* became a way to generalize Carlsberg’s specific Danish founding history in a way that could appeal to all Carlsberg employees, no matter which subsidiaries and brands they served. The Stand’s recontextualization of *Semper Ardens* shifted its emphasis away from the idea of having a burning passion for beer and brewing to having a burning passion for Carlsberg as an organization, a passion that the acquired companies could feel they shared and shared alike with their “older siblings,” thereby paving the way for an integrated feeling inside and for the Carlsberg Group.

**Reclaiming *Semper Ardens*.** The team working on the Stand visited the Carlsberg Archives numerous times. There they found language and management principles in use at Carlsberg’s founding. They learned how Carl’s grandfather, Christen Jacobsen, had come to Copenhagen to serve as master brewer for the Danish King Christian IV, later training his son J. C. to be a brewer and providing (by inheritance) some of the capital with which J. C. founded Carlsberg. The king’s inspiration of a winning spirit in J. C. transferred to his son Carl, who later introduced *Semper Ardens* to the company to express this winning spirit. Also, they took a closer look at how, in the 1880s, J. C. and Emil Hansen, head of the newly formed Carlsberg Laboratories, had discovered clean yeast (*Saccharomyces Carlsbergensis*) and how J. C. decided to share it with other brewers (today every lager in the world uses Carlsberg’s clean yeast). Their search produced a letter from the founder of Heineken, who expressed his gratitude for the gift of clean yeast. Those working on the Stand associated the identity of the company with this winning spirit and saw the reclamation of *Semper Ardens* from the historical record as important. One senior manager explained:

The fact that there is a continuity for all the hundreds of years that Carlsberg is in existence, and that there is a clear line from the founder to today, and that there is . . . huge respect inside Carlsberg for that past, and for that respect for the founders, respect for what they did, how things turned out to be . . . it's a company that embraces its past, and I think it's important.

The consultants drew on these founder stories and historical associations of the motto with having a winning spirit to convince top management to give *Semper Ardens* the prominent position it holds in the Stand.

**Renewing *Semper Ardens*.** The CEO told us, "For me [the Stand] was all about defining who we want to be as a company, as a business. It was not an easy process, and as always you get into a lot of discussion on each word when you have a Stand discussion, and it was really, really difficult."

Detailed accounts of the two Stand workshops (we were not in attendance at these) provide a view into how *Semper Ardens* was renewed. The consultants created several drafts of the Stand, each emphasizing different aspects of the meaning of *Semper Ardens*. The first placed *Semper Ardens* under the heading "Courage to raise the bar," a reference to the story of founder J. C. Jacobsen's courage in giving away Carlsberg's clean yeast. The ExCom regarded this story as a foundation of the company's identity, just as they felt *Semper Ardens* was essential, thereby constituting one aspect of the difficulty of choosing between various drafts of the Stand, some of which emphasized Carl's role, and others J. C.'s influence. In revising these early versions of the Stand, the consultants proposed relating *Semper Ardens* to "thirst for the better," an aspirational idea being promoted at the time throughout the company as "a winning attitude" and a reflection of the company's "thirst for growth." They argued that remembering how the founders managed the company was just as essential to Carlsberg's identity as was courage and innovativeness. During the second ExCom workshop, the Stand was shortened, and links between passion and thirst were combined into the headline "Thirst for Great."

According to the Director of Corporate Branding, members of the ExCom struggled over how far to push the corporate ambition implied by *Semper Ardens*. Some members interpreted *Semper Ardens* as a means to create synergies among diverse subsidiaries, while others questioned whether it applied to the full portfolio of Carlsberg's brands, including premium brands such as the newly acquired Kronenbourg 1664, Grimbergen, and Baltika, rather than to the Carlsberg Beer brand alone. This echoed broader concerns to balance a more-integrated global corporation against the interests of local subsidiaries, as observed by the Director of Corporate Branding:

One of the biggest problems was between the regions . . . none of them agreed upon what the ambition should be used for, who was the target group, what was the idea of having an ambition—just the word ambition, what is that? One wanted some growth strategy; the other wanted some people guidance; somebody just wanted it to be guidance for ExCom, some wanted it to be for the full company. And ExCom and the CEO never agreed upon what was the task; what is it we need? Nobody really liked "fastest growing" [in the formal strategy statement], but nobody knew what to put instead.



Nonetheless, following the second workshop, it was agreed that *Semper Ardens* be featured in the Stand and referred to as Carlsberg's founding motto. An internal document (dated March, 2010) states that the criteria in any further elaboration and communication of the Stand should be "Is it authentic? Is the idea uniquely 'Carlsberg'? Is it true today or can it be seen as true and aspirational for Carlsberg Group's future? Is it universally motivating? Is it clear and simple?" Authenticity in this context determined conceptions of uniqueness and perceptions of what is "true" to Carlsberg among actors involved in formulating the Stand, which was titled "Thirst for Great":

Great people. Great brands. Great moments.

Founded on the motto, *Semper Ardens*—Always Burning—we never settle but always thirst for the better.

We are stronger together because we share best practices, ideas, and successes. We brand as many, but stand as one.

With the courage to dare, to try, to take risks, we constantly raise the bar. We don't stop at brewing great beer. We brew a greater future—for our consumers and customers, our communities, and our people.

This passion will continue to burn and forever keep us thirsty.

Once it was formulated, material communicating the Stand was introduced to the company and later the public, one important part of which was a professionally produced three-minute video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRclbnqlvws>) also entitled "Thirst for Great." Text embedded in the video describes *Semper Ardens* as Carlsberg's "one common ingredient": "That's Latin for 'always burning.' *Semper Ardens* isn't a slogan. It's a passion for Great. It's a hunger in the gut. A thirst in the throat." To drive the point home, an image of flickering flames burns through the words "*Semper Ardens*" as they appear onscreen. Additional communication material included large glossy posters and corporate merchandise such as Thirst for Great mugs and greeting cards. A section of the corporate intranet was dedicated to giving *Semper Ardens* digital form as well as global reach. These artifacts, along with the Stand video and posters, express the spirit of *Semper Ardens* and thereby represent renewals of the motto.

**Re-embedding *Semper Ardens*.** The Stand was officially introduced at two Growth Conferences, one involving managers throughout Carlsberg and the other targeting international media; both took place in Copenhagen in the spring of 2010. The three-minute video was played loudly and repeatedly at these major corporate events, commanding a great deal of attention. Organizers of the internal Growth Conference solicited electronic votes from the 360 attendees who registered their immediate responses to seeing the video for the first time. Results showed that 82 percent either "totally agreed" (51 percent) or "almost agreed" (31 percent) with the aspirations expressed in the Stand, and 71 percent either "totally agreed" (34 percent) or "almost agreed" (37 percent) that the Stand "could motivate their people" (field notes). These reactions mirror the enthusiasm of actors who made earlier uses of *Semper Ardens* when they first encountered the motto.

A top manager who attended the conference linked the video's message to the human need to serve a higher purpose:

There was a good reaction at the Growth Conference because you need to have a purpose, a higher purpose. And I think the Stand is the higher purpose that was formulated and now starting to be used. Basically the Stand is what you want to stand for when the dust falls. You know in a hundred years, and somebody looks back at this period of leadership, and the dust is gone, what is left? That's what we want to stand for.

One regional HR manager added, "I just think that they were reminded about what they're actually a part of. They're part of something really big. So I think that was the feeling. You said 'Wow!'"

In spite of strong and mostly favorable responses to it, top management decided not to fund a companywide campaign to formally implement the Stand. The CEO claimed he wanted uses of the Stand to be driven from the bottom rather than the top. Other factors influencing his decision included worries that employees would be confused by a new initiative launched so soon after HR's 2008 program directing employees' attention to "Winning Behaviors," and budgets were tight for global programs due to heavy investment in recent acquisitions and lower-than-expected returns from Baltika.

Lack of a formal Stand campaign did not impede some actors from different functions and subsidiaries using *Semper Ardens*, however, and their activities re-embedded *Semper Ardens* in Carlsberg's history by linking it to their local histories. Exemplifying subsidiary uses of *Semper Ardens*, one senior manager told us how he used the motto to assess performance in his unit: "It is a very nice encapsulation for judging as a yardstick of what we do. So: 'Is that *Semper Ardens* that we do? Is that piece of advertising *Semper Ardens*? Is that packaging *Semper Ardens*?' [Then] we can say it's not—it's not good enough." *Semper Ardens* also seeped into the vernacular of the company, re-embedding the motto's history by linking it to visions of what Carlsberg Group might become. For example, Carlsberg IT, in the midst of integrating its European units into one centralized IT function, created a team-building project known internally as "Brewing Greatness" (see Hatch and Schultz, 2013, for our full study of this project). Launched as an extension of the Stand, this project borrowed the metaphor of brewing contained in the video and translated the stages of the brewing process into a three-month-long team-building project. At the time Carlsberg IT occupied what was once Carl Jacobsen's private villa, and one of the two middle managers who co-led this project described the inspiration she found while sitting in Carl's former office: "I had the Stand music going, and the video going, nonstop. I was just on a roll, and then just brainstorming, and just thinking and trying to take some (like taking them out of the computer), I was like taking out the images, and the pictures, and the thoughts, and the wording, and then trying to think brewing, brewing, brewing." The Brewing Greatness IT project evolved out of the passion for Carlsberg expressed by images of brewing the video provided. The project involved most IT employees either on site or through digital media access, through which they designed and produced their own specialty beer under their chosen name Chill IT (chili being one ingredient, selected to represent passion).

Another example occurred during a turnaround in Carlsberg Germany where local managers sought something that could strengthen team spirit. One of them told us: "the old Carlsberg wording, *Semper Ardens*, came up and [we] said, 'Ah, this is always burning,' and then we could use that as a symbol because you have the fire, and that was easy to use these Latin words with the picture [i.e., the imagery of the flickering flame from the video], that was something that an average German employee could understand." Part of their endeavor to use the motto produced an image of the subsidiary logo for Carlsberg Germany burning within the same flickering flame shown in the Stand video where it embraces the corporate motto *Semper Ardens*.

Carlsberg Malaysia offers another example of *Semper Ardens* in local context. Emphasizing the coolness factor in Carlsberg's heritage, a subsidiary VP told us, "We show the [Stand] video and explain a bit about what exactly *Semper Ardens* means . . . I feel really proud to be a part of an international brewer. My history is in Denmark. It is very cool . . . because Carlsberg is an international brand. It's a premium international brand, a rich history, so that's really more cool." Later, this subsidiary created its own "Passion Video" that embedded *Semper Ardens* in local context by using local symbols, such as substituting a Malaysian elephant for the Carlsberg elephants famously guarding the entrance to Carlsberg Group's Copenhagen facilities.<sup>4</sup>

As final examples, Carlsberg Norway painted the Stand headline "Thirst for Great" on the side of each truck and van in its delivery fleet, and a master brewer from Baltika expressed his view of the potential for using *Semper Ardens* in that subsidiary: "The possibility of the growth, the behavior, every time burning, it's good mottos for us. . . . I like the motto . . . very useful. Every employee must see this motto every morning, for example, why not, maybe on the TV. It's good to go to work with happiness."

Although we paid visits to only six subsidiaries, our data suggest that other subsidiaries developed unique material for blending the spirit of *Semper Ardens* with their particular histories. Thus to some extent the CEO's intention that the Stand "roll out" bottom up was being realized at the time we concluded our study. This bottom-up movement indicates that each subsidiary needed to conduct its own process along lines similar to those indicated by our study, each starting with local actors rediscovering *Semper Ardens* in the context of their own subsidiary activities. By finding their own uses for *Semper Ardens*, the motto was passing from one part of the organization to another, to come to an end if and when *Semper Ardens* again disappears from view to enter a new period of latency. Since concluding our study a new CEO of Carlsberg Group was appointed, and in the last six months latency appears to once again be overtaking active use of *Semper Ardens* in the company as the Stand slowly slips from active memory.

### A Model of Historicizing

Although the actors studied occupied different levels of Carlsberg's hierarchy and were involved with separate projects, the sets of activities observed on each occasion converged on the temporal pattern modeled in figure 4.

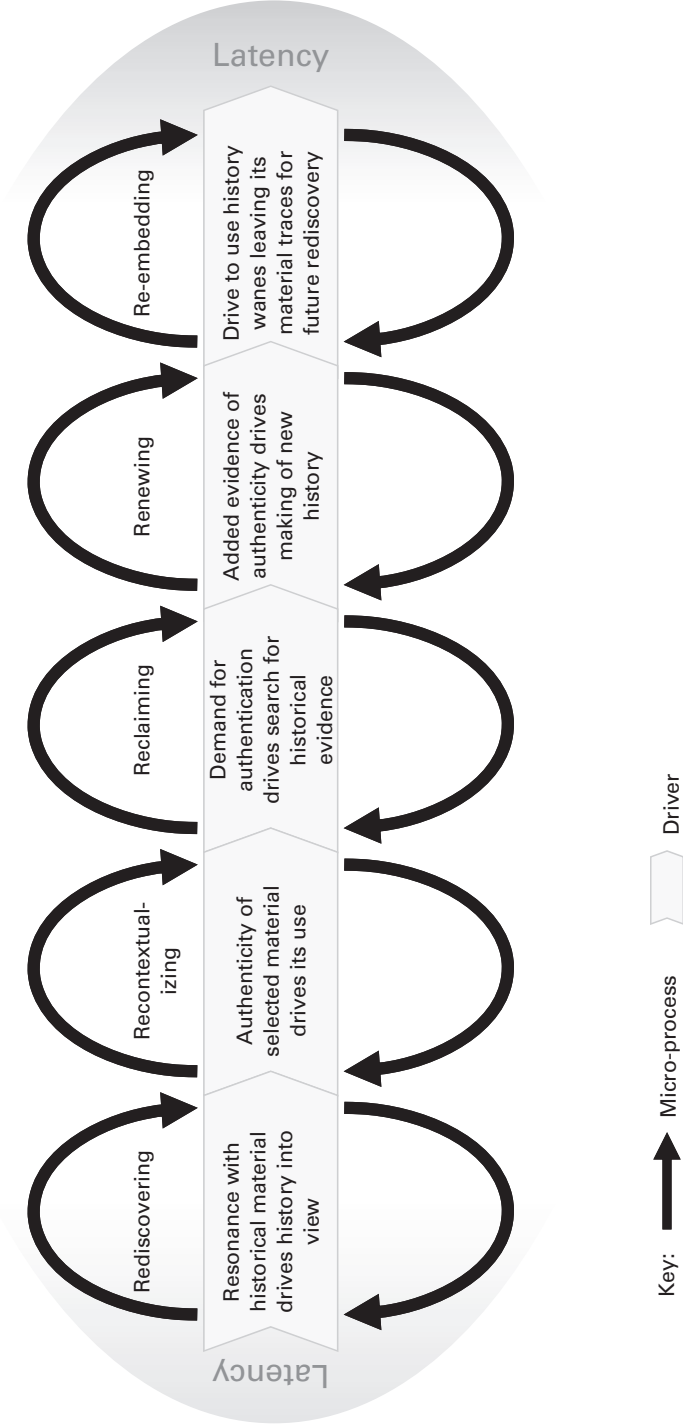
<sup>4</sup> The Elephant Gate at the Copenhagen facilities is a popular site for visitors to the brewery: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYx156VaLVc>.

Following advice about theorizing patterns like these (Langley and Tsoukas, 2010: 14; Langley et al., 2013), the model depicts the micro-processes on which observed activities converged and their temporal sequence. The model also shows what drove actors from one micro-process into the next, conceptualized here as drivers of historicizing.

The larger arrows shown in the middle of figure 4 briefly describe the drivers, while each surrounding circle refers to the micro-process that is activated by the driver that feeds into it. The larger right-pointing arrows suggest that drivers operate in sequence, each calling forth a micro-process; however, the thin arrows indicate that micro-processes also interact with these drivers. Thus the model indicates that drivers both shape and are shaped by micro-processes, as we believe our data indicate. Because we found that micro-processes activated earlier in a sequence were sometimes still active when later micro-processes were engaged, the sequential aspects of the model are likely more intertwined than the figure suggests. The entire historicizing process depicted by figure 4 is bracketed with periods of latency, which account for the time between re-embedding at the end of one occasion and rediscovery at the beginning of the next. Figure 4 therefore describes a single occurrence of organizational historicizing; other occurrences, some involving the same historical material, also take place as modeled but at different points in chronological time and in different locations. Below we walk through one generic occasion using examples drawn from our findings.

Rediscovery begins when actors stumble upon a latent historical artifact with which they immediately feel strong resonance (e.g., *Semper Ardens* carved above a doorway or heard in a story about *Semper Ardens* Beer attracted attention and stimulated imagination). Not yet knowing its full history, the actors nonetheless respond strongly enough to sense something potentially useful hiding within their rediscovery and treat it as authentic. By articulating its potential usefulness as an authentic relic of the past, they recontextualize the rediscovered historical material, and as they do so they appropriate its authenticity into their current context (e.g., *Semper Ardens*, perceived as lending authenticity to the newly named *Semper Ardens* Beer or to Carlsberg's identity project, is seen in the light of its contemporary relevance). Sooner or later someone, either within the organization or part of its stakeholder community, demands proof that the history is authentic. That demand leads actors to search more deeply into the organization's past, which produces (or not) additional evidence to support using history, some of which is reclaimed for the historicizing process. The additional support provides authentication (e.g., rediscovery of Carl's intense interest in developing new beer recipes, or his use of the motto to inspire employees to work harder, authenticated earlier responses to *Semper Ardens* and supported its use). If search denies authenticity, the historicizing process stops or morphs into a manipulation process, as will be discussed as an implication of our model below. Authentication validates actors' plans, the implementation of which allows new activities that produce additional embodiments of *Semper Ardens* by which history is renewed. Moreover, the renewed history carries authenticity forward so it can be perpetuated through other occasions of historicizing (e.g., bottles of *Semper Ardens* Beer that now occupy a shelf in Carlsberg's Jacobsen Brewhouse or the YouTube posting of the Stand video leave historical traces by which others may rediscover *Semper Ardens*). By such actions, the newly

Figure 4. Toward a theory of historicizing in organizations.



expanded body of material history is re-embedded in what is by then the past. As one occasion of historicizing passes into history, a new period of latency envelops it.

## DISCUSSION

Prior studies support our findings, but ours allow movement toward a theory of historicizing in organizations beyond anything previously offered. Below we identify the contributions our study makes to the extant literature in relation to the micro-processes, drivers, and two broadly integrative ideas suggested by our study: the temporal context of historicizing and the agency of history.

### Micro-processes of Historicizing

Although organizational history researchers have proposed activities that could be interpreted as recontextualizing, reclaiming, and renewing, our study allows us to refine these ideas and add rediscovery and re-embedding, two micro-processes that merge with latency.

**Latency brackets: Rediscovery and re-embedding.** Prior studies have found that actors intentionally use history for specific purposes, those identified being legitimation and sensemaking, driven respectively by power and organizational identity. But what prompts actors to use history in the first place? Because all of an organization's history cannot be active in the consciousness of every actor all of the time, there must be periods when some aspects of history are relatively invisible to those studied. In this sense our research broadens historical inquiry by bracketing the period during which specified aspects of history are visible and calling what lies outside the bracket latency, as shown in figure 4. Thus far organizational history researchers have taken no notice of when history becomes activated or when it sinks into latency. We propose that periods of latency reveal the roles played by the micro-processes of rediscovery and re-embedding to activate and deactivate the drivers of historicizing discussed below.

Our findings also suggest that occasions of historicizing are connected across sometimes extended periods of latency. This finding challenges the construct of forgotten history presented in studies of organizational memory (e.g., Walsh and Ungson, 1991; Moorman and Miner, 1998; Olivera, 2001) and strategic forgetting (e.g., Casey and Olivera, 2011; Anteby and Molnár, 2012). In the case of *Semper Ardens*, Carlsberg's history remained available even when it lay dormant for over 100 years. Therefore we propose, contrary to prior studies, that forgetting can never be assumed permanent and is in need of closer scrutiny using longitudinal research methods. In this regard, latency leads us to propose that history holds the potential for its own rediscovery. Because it is impossible to verify whether something has been forgotten for all time, a more fruitful framing of organizational memory research might involve temporal tracking. Specifically, studies could focus on memories of particular aspects of history and track how they ebb and flow through time, as we did in our study (for additional ideas on appropriate methodology, see Zaheer, Albert, and Zaheer, 1999).

**Recontextualizing.** Very few prior studies address the activities by which historical artifacts are recontextualized in current situations. One looked at how a motto (“Only the Best is Good Enough”) hand carved by the company’s founder on a wooden sign was reused in the context of a recent company turnaround at LEGO Group (Schultz and Hernes, 2013). The sign’s display in the new CEO’s office and his use of the motto to support his strategic vision is comparable to how *Semper Ardens* was reused by the Master Brewers Dream Team and later by the team that formulated the Stand. Another study, this one of Bang & Olufsen (Ravasi and Schultz, 2006), found that using aluminum in new products referenced the company’s historical reliance on this material, thereby recontextualizing the use of aluminum in contemporary design activities. Combining these studies with our own supports further study of material artifacts and their role in projecting historical traces into future activities (a similar point was made by Schultz and Hernes, 2013). Some work on this topic has been done by organizational culture researchers interested in recontextualization (e.g., Brannen, 1992, 2004), whose findings suggest linking organizational historicizing with material culture and culture theory more broadly.

**Reclaiming.** Nissley and Casey (2002) argued for the strategic relevance of corporate archives and museums, while Stigliani and Ravasi (2007) demonstrated their importance to sustaining corporate identity. These studies describe archives and museums as sources of historical material that can be reclaimed for reuse, as was demonstrated by the role the Carlsberg Archive and its archivist played both in the naming of *Semper Ardens* Beer and in featuring *Semper Ardens* in the Stand. Although the prior studies restricted their attention to strategic uses that legitimate top management’s power to shape history, our study found instances in which history acted on actors (via rediscovery) before those actors reclaimed that history. Our finding suggests expanding the purview of reclamation by showing how corporate archivists and historians can confront organizational actors with artifacts carrying the spirit of the past that can help them extend founders’ and past leaders’ visions for the company into the contemporary context: rather than using history to legitimate strategy, they can let it help formulate strategy.

**Renewing.** Most of the studies we reviewed examined activities we interpret as renewing. For example, those that showed top managers narrating history to claim legitimacy (e.g., Chreim, 2005; Brunninge, 2009) and/or persuade audiences (e.g., Suddaby, Foster, and Trank, 2010) can be interpreted as showing actors making new uses of history, thereby renewing it. When they retell history, narrators distribute its artifacts and meanings spatially (throughout the organization and/or to external audiences) and temporally (into the future), both of which imply renewal. But prior studies did not address what happens to renewed history. Our study found that renewed history is re-embedded, that is, new artifacts left by organizational actors as they use history become part of history’s forward arc, as happened when formulators of the Stand rediscovered the story of *Semper Ardens* Beer.

## Drivers of Historicizing

As noted above, the literature on uses of history identified power and identity as drivers that prod actors to use history in organizations. Our study adds authenticity, and its relationship with power and identity reframes the findings of the prior studies.

**Authenticity.** On both occasions studied, our informants contrasted rediscovering the authenticity of *Semper Ardens* with something invented or faked (e.g., the spirit of “real” craft-based brewing in contrast to a “marketing stunt”; the pursuit of an “authentic narrative” instead of an invented identity statement). Their attributions of authenticity to *Semper Ardens* highlighted its resonance for them (or vice versa), and explained why the actors claimed their use of history perpetuated the founders’ aspirations (i.e., their love of brewing, their winning spirit). In light of this finding, authenticity became one focus of our study, later revealed to operate as a driver of historicizing. Previously ignored by literature that explains why organizational actors use history (i.e., for legitimacy or sensemaking), authenticity played several roles in the historicizing in which our informants engaged.

First, as historicizing unfolded, actors recontextualized *Semper Ardens* by emphasizing different meanings of authenticity. Drawing on distinctions offered by Carroll and Wheaton (2009), we noted that our informants availed themselves of both craft- and moral-based authenticities. On the first occasion, actors called on craft-based authenticity (defined as being “true to craft,” Carroll and Wheaton, 2009: 268), by claiming their craft-based brewing methods and traditions were authentic, true to their craft. These findings echo studies of the Steinway Company (Cattani, Dunbar, and Shapira, 2017) and the wine industry (Beverland, 2005), where a long history of craftsmanship sustained claims of authenticity. On the second occasion, informants invoked moral authenticity (defined as being “imbued with moral meaning,” Carroll and Wheaton, 2009: 273) when they based their use of *Semper Ardens* on the moral values expressed by company founders. These different types of authenticity also appeared in relation to material reclaimed from the Carlsberg Archives, wherein on the first occasion old journals describing recipes and brewing techniques were used to enhance the craft authenticity of *Semper Ardens* Beer, and on the second, moral authenticity was gained from associations made between the Stand and founders’ philosophies and ideals.

Following recontextualizing, authentication was demanded of our informants. According to them, if they could show the motto was part of the historical record, they believed its authenticity would produce acceptance by senior decision makers and/or stakeholders. The anticipated demand for authentication thus drove the actors to locate additional relevant historical material in the Carlsberg Archive and interviews with old timers that added new reasons to believe *Semper Ardens* is authentic. Howard-Grenville, Metzger, and Meyer (2013) found a similar role for authentication in their study of how a famous stadium helped reclaim the Track Town identity of Eugene, Oregon, but they did not delve into the micro-process by which authentication took place, nor did they discuss authenticity per se.

As Carlsberg actors embarked on renewing *Semper Ardens*, they transferred the historical authenticity of *Semper Ardens* to newly crafted artifacts. The



new artifacts were perceived as authentic as opposed to being “fake” or “invented” in that they were infused with the spirit of *Semper Ardens*. Although actors have been known to “fabricate” authenticity, as was demonstrated in the case of country music (Peterson, 1997, 2005), our study shows that perceptions and attributions of *Semper Ardens*’ authenticity predate the creation of new artifacts that carry its meaning and challenge interpretations involving the fabrication of authenticity or the manipulation or abuse of power (see Rowlinson and Hassard, 1993, for examples of the latter).

We conclude that those who start by assuming manipulation end by failing to consider what authenticity means to everyday actors who employ this term when confronting and making use of their organization’s history. Organizational historicizing suggests that the authenticity the actors in our study attributed to history and its artifacts was transformed in the process of historicizing: it changed from the perceived authenticity of specific historical material to the authentic meaning(s) imparted by history. Driven by the quest to authenticate historical material that they intend to use, actors expand their knowledge of history at the same time that their organizational context compels them to elaborate the meaning the relevant history holds for them. This enables actors to extract meaning from the materiality of old historical material and start using that meaning to create new, soon-to-be-added material for the historical record. Further studies are needed to investigate how the meaning of authenticity morphs within historicizing processes.

**Power and authenticity.** Though we found that power was evidently involved on both occasions we studied, power was not involved in the ways predicted or described by scholars who focus on top managers’ manipulations or misrepresentations of history (e.g., Rowlinson and Hassard, 1993; Brunninge, 2009; Casey and Olivera, 2011; Anteby and Molnár, 2012; Kroeze and Keulen, 2013). Power appeared in our study when actors wanting to use *Semper Ardens* confronted audiences who had the power to accept or deny its authenticity.

Contrary to studies proposing the manipulation of history on the part of powerful actors, our study showed that the powerful had to be persuaded to use *Semper Ardens*. By their being exposed to a part of Carlsberg’s history they did not know, history acted upon the actors *before* they agreed to use it. For example, our data on both the naming of *Semper Ardens* Beer and inclusion of the motto in the Stand show that top managers did not immediately embrace the idea of using *Semper Ardens*. Before they accepted its use, powerful managers had to be persuaded that *Semper Ardens* was a part of Carlsberg’s history to which employees and other stakeholders would respond positively. Though the managers’ agreement to the proposed uses of history might yet be conceived as manipulative, both the master brewers working on *Semper Ardens* Beer and the consultants working on the Stand faced demands to authenticate *Semper Ardens*. Manipulation, if perceived, would likely have doomed their causes.

Though power is an important concern when investigating the uses of history, the ways in which power drives historicizing activities are in need of closer empirical scrutiny than prior literature has provided. Our study suggests challenging the assumption that those in power have the unquestionable ability to

use history to support their own intentions with the more-nuanced idea that anyone who wishes to use history needs to authenticate the intended historical content in the eyes of those on whose acceptance of its uses they depend. Thus our findings help to distinguish rhetorical uses of history (e.g., Suddaby, Foster, and Trank, 2010) from blunt power-based interpretations. Because the very construct of rhetoric implies the need to persuade others, other actors need to be included alongside top managers in studies of organizational historicizing activity.

**Identity and authenticity.** Both occasions of historicizing that we studied involved identity. On the first occasion actors focused on creating an identity for a new line of products to which the name *Semper Ardens Beer* provided historical input (Kroezen and Heugens, 2012, provided another example of history used to create product identity). On the second occasion, actors interpreted the inclusion of *Semper Ardens* in the Stand as imbuing the company's identity with the authenticity of history. In these respects our findings support other studies focused on organizational identity claims (e.g., Ravasi and Schultz, 2006; Howard-Grenville, Metzger, and Meyer, 2013; Schultz and Hernes, 2013), though we give greater emphasis to the role of authenticity. We agree with Peterson (1997), who argued that authenticity raises questions about whether a claim is a sincere representation of identity. Based on our findings, we hypothesize that if attempts to work with identity are ahistorical, they will communicate less authentically than they would were they to involve historicizing.

In their recent examination of the uses of history in creating organizational identity, Zundel, Holt, and Popp (2016: 217) referred to the "compelling authenticity" provided by uses of history, which are compelling because they elicit "emotive commitment" to an organizational identity by both internal and external audiences. Our study similarly sensitized us to the role emotion plays, first in the resonance it gives to history during rediscovery and then in accounting for why history is used to address identity issues. Howard-Grenville, Metzger, and Meyer (2013) made a similar point about the importance of emotional involvement with, connection to, and understanding of identity as authentic. Their point, and ours, is that emotional responses occur in the context of using history and are important to the endowment identity receives from attributions of authenticity.

Schultz and Hernes (2013) offered an illuminative example of the role emotions and material forms play in identity work. One of their stories recounts a visit by Jørgen Vig Knudstorp, the new CEO of LEGO Group, to the founder's house. His visit was made on the recommendation of several of LEGO's most senior employees who were visibly upset by his plan to sell the house. The CEO reported feeling a great passion while in the house that compelled him not only to retain the house but to make it part of the new Corporate Museum, where it later served as a creative space for employees, known today as LEGO Idea House. The preserved founder's house, along with the founder's hand-carved wooden sign proudly displayed behind the CEO's desk, acted as symbols of the company's long history and a reminder to Knudstorp that employees relate their history to LEGO's identity. The passion the CEO reported feeling from contact with these material artifacts left by the founder clearly

played a role in his appreciation of history and its ability to express LEGO's identity, and its power was reflected in the immediacy of his decision not to sell the founder's house. Through his rediscovery of a material artifact of history, the hand-carved wooden sign of authenticity, LEGO's history came again into play through a historicizing process that kept the company's history alive.

### **Keeping History Alive: The Temporal Context of Historicizing**

Just as actions may be embedded in organizational history, organizational history is embedded in action. In addition to the pressing need for studies of what constitutes organizational history, which are often invoked in the name of (historically) contextualizing the phenomena we study as organizational scholars, we ask organizational history researchers to (temporally) contextualize the uses of organizational history they study. Availing oneself of this two-part contextualization—organizations have both historical and temporal contexts—is part of our definition of historicizing. This definition implies that using history involves the present-centered immediacy of bringing history into consciousness and consciously contextualizing activity using historical material when creating the future.

Scholars of organizational process theory (e.g., Kaplan and Orlikowski, 2013; Schultz and Hernes, 2013; Hernes, 2014; Reinecke and Ansari, 2015) have questioned how the use of history is embedded in the passing of time. Our study suggests that conceptualizing historicizing as a process disentangles how actors connect their organizational past with its anticipated future, at least until history slides into latency. Enacting the micro-processes of our model enables actors to rediscover historical material and renew it for possible future use, which aligns with the theoretical argument in process studies that time is actively constructed by actors acting within events (Hernes, 2014: 61; see also Clark, 1985; Hussenot and Missonier, 2016). By reinterpreting our micro-processes as events unfolding in a series, our study indicates how actors, always caught in the present, move their attention from the past to an anticipated future. In this sense, historicizing keeps history alive by transporting it from past to future while expanding its material manifestation and meaning in the present.

Our study shows that bringing the past into the present can be as complex and comprehensive as directing the present toward the future. Historicizing actors go beyond merely reinterpreting the past to recontextualize it in relation to their envisioned future needs, which effectively changes the past by relating it to the future. As Mead (1932: 36) remarked, "there has never in experience been a past which has not changed with the passing generations." Our findings go beyond Mead's notion of what constitutes the past in suggesting that through historicizing in the present, actors distribute the past in both space and time in ways that enact the future. Our findings suggest at least some of the ways in which the past to which Mead referred changes with the passing generations as they create what the Moody Blues and X-Men both referred to as "days of future past."

## The Agency of History

One implication of our finding that actors in Carlsberg allowed history to act on them before they made any intentional use of history is that history has agency. Our temporal bracketing of historicizing acknowledges the possibility that actors resonate with history before it occurs to them to use it. That actors in Carlsberg responded to *Semper Ardens* with immediacy, intensity, and emotionality indicated that history inspired its own use and therefore possesses agency.

The argument that history has agency rests on our assertion that the uses of history we observed would not be explained in the same way if actors were only interested in using history to provide legitimacy or to align organizational identity with strategy. If this were the case, top managers would have moved too quickly into strategic action to have been subjected to the subtle powers authenticity held over those they meant to influence with their strategic uses of history. As it happened, the actors experiencing the authenticity of the motto were inspired by history, in the material form of *Semper Ardens*, to use it.

Because prior studies have been so focused on the strategic uses of history (e.g., Brunninge, 2009; Suddaby, Foster, and Trank, 2010), they overlooked the way history suddenly appears to actors at moments when it can be of use. Not examining the temporal context in which history arises can lead researchers to ignore or misread the role authenticity plays. Based on our observations concerning the resonance *Semper Ardens* had among those who responded strongly to it, we propose that manipulating history risks failure because it undermines the immediacy, intensity, and emotionality that history inspires in others and thereby denies its agency. Allowing history to have agency, in the sense of possessing the power to inspire those who use it, could bring additional insights into the field of organizational history research, such as those that informed this article.

## Conclusion

The difference between authenticity-inspired uses of history (strategic or otherwise), and efforts to make history appear authentic for strategic purposes, is a difference that we believe makes a difference to how research on authenticity and history should progress from this point forward. If managerial uses of history are to have any hope of being implemented even partially as intended, our study indicates that intentions must be forged within that history, not apart from it. This conclusion makes organizational historians valuable partners for strategists, not because they can manipulate history to legitimate strategy already formulated but because they can guide managers to use history authentically to align their strategic choices with knowledge of and wisdom extracted from the past. For their part, if strategists want to borrow the forces of authenticity that engagement with history can provide, they should align their strategic interests with history rather than trying to align history with their interests. Though this is not a guarantee against misrepresentation, it will encourage decision makers to be more responsible to those who came before them and bring the weight of history to bear on organizational responses to the pressures of the present and the future.

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