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### PROJECT

## Agenda for a Reflexive History of Sciences

This book is supposed to take its place in the current discussions among social scientists dealing with the study of sciences, recapitulating and articulating three domains of inquiries: (1) a kind of history of sciences that studies the relationship between scientific objectivation and historical time, empirically focused on comparative questioning of the history of mathematics and of the history of social and economical sciences; (2) a renewal of intellectual history considered as a material history of abstraction; (3) a form of reflexive sociology of sciences that studies the formation of practical and theoretical elaborations related to conditions of possibility of any kind.

### Remarks for Other Fellows

For additional information see <http://www.ehess.fr/acta/brian>

### Recommended Reading

Brian, Éric, ed. Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales: Science 141/142. March 2002.

- . Staatsvermessungen. Condorcet, Laplace, Turgot und das Denken der Verwaltung. Vienna: Springer, 2001. First published as La Mesure de l'Etat. Administrateurs et géomètres au XVIIIe siècle. Paris : Albin Michel, 1994.

- . Revue de synthèse: Objets d'échelles 1, Jan./Mar. 2001.

## Le temps de l'abstraction, leçon de chose

## Zeit der Abstraktion, Sachkunde

## Time for Abstraction, Object-lesson

The talk will sketch out the first part of a book upon which I am working. Its aim is to make a contribution to the history of science by combining in a single approach four ways of constructing an object:

- the French school of historical epistemology (Bachelard) ;
- the sociology of symbolic instruments (Bourdieu) ;
- the intellectual and cultural history of abstraction (Perrot) ;
- critical erudition (Courmet).

My presentation will take into account the renewal of Italian historiography (micro storia) and diverse recent work in the history of mathematics and the history of the social sciences.

The propositions I advance are intended as a response to work in the domain of history of science and epistemology in the 1990s - whether it be in English, German or French - which has lost its way amid the relativism fostered by a slew of local studies and the hall of mirrors erected by recent philosophic, historical and sociological work.

I will proceed by analyzing the somewhat enigmatic object pictured above. One discovers this object in various guises in the work of statisticians of the second half of the nineteenth century, in surrealist exhibitions, and in current demography and the historiography of that discipline.

Using these diverse manifestations as a set of starting points, it is possible to trace the lines leading from the scientific objects themselves to their becoming objects of analysis in the history of science. Thus, I will be attempting to show the importance of a self-reflexive history of science.

By steps, and using the pictured object above, the talk will develop a schema for analyzing the relationship between time and abstraction. The schema will then be generalized and briefly applied to other related cases. The whole is intended as a phenomenology of abstraction integral to the social sciences.

Brian, Eric (2002)

Les objets de la chose : théorie du hasard et surréalisme au XXe siècle

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=177076500X>

Brian, Eric (2002)

La mémoire des gestes de science et ses enjeux

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773793445>

Brian, Eric (2002)

Vingt ans après

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773550445>

Brian, Eric (2002)

Transactions statistiques au XIXe siècle : mouvements internationaux de capitaux symboliques

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773547894>

Brian, Eric (2002)

Ad directionem ingenii

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773537287>

Brian, Eric (Paris [u.a.],2002)

Règlement, usages et science das la France de l'absolutisme : à l'occasion du troisième centenaire du règlement instituant l'Académie royale des sciences (26 janvier 1699) ; actes du colloque international organisé par l'Académie des sciences de l'Institut de France, avec le concours du Centre international de synthèse ; Paris, 8 - 10 juin 1999

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=669189790>

Brian, Eric (2001)

Les objets de la chose : théorie du hasard et surréalisme aux XXe siècle

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=828418241>

Brian, Eric (2001)

Le suffrage et les savants

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773545581>

Brian, Eric (2001)

Archives et mémoires des sciences : enjeux historiographiques

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=773538445>

Brian, Eric (Wien [u.a.],2001)

Staatsvermessungen - Condordet, Laplace, Turgot und das Denken der Verwaltung ; politische Philosophie und Ökonomie

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=328133892>

La mesure de l'état <dt.>

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=328133892>