

Economies of Improvement:

TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS,
THE SCIENCES AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN
THE 18TH CENTURY

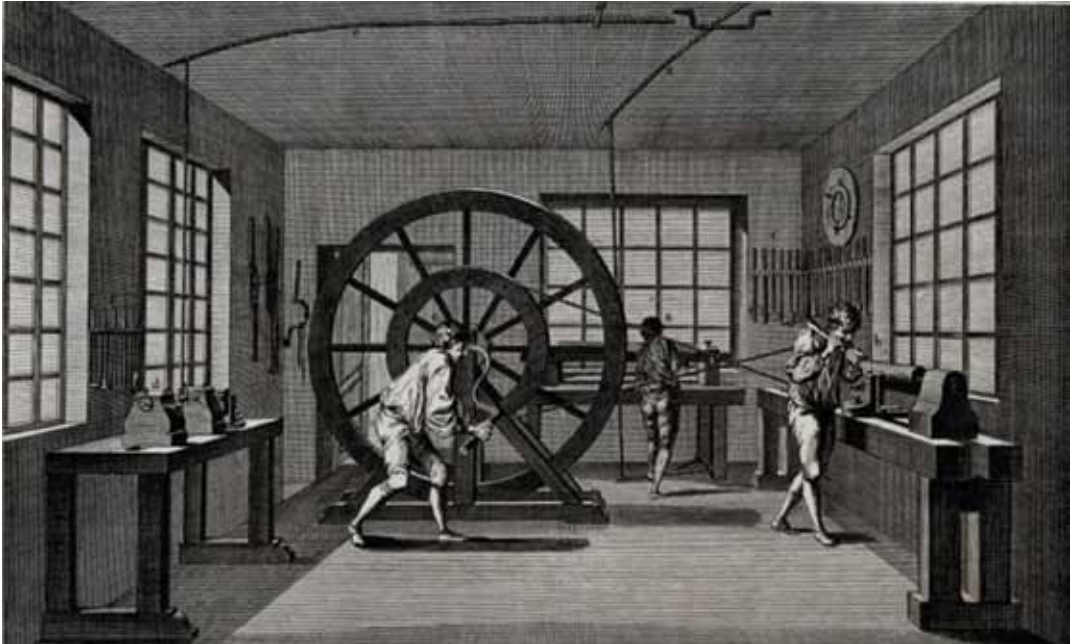


14 May 2010

One-day Workshop
IAS Seminar room
Millburn House
Warwick University

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

ECONOMIES OF IMPROVEMENT: TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS, THE SCIENCES AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN THE 18TH CENTURY



One-day Workshop

14 May 2010, IAS Seminar room, Millburn, Warwick University

This 1-day Workshop seeks to understand the range of motivation and social interaction which supported innovative activity during the C18th., and to highlight different forms of investment process. From this viewpoint, the market as such may be seen as embedded within a wider public sphere, whose resources could be variously mobilized. In addition, therefore, to a traditional economic understanding of business enterprise, the Workshop will analyze and characterize other modes of investment, whose nature could be as much civic, or cultural. Enlightenment conjoins individual emancipation and creative activity, material advance and public engagement, and further involves the emergence of cultures of technology in several key fields (including mechanics, chemistry, natural history, aspects of naval and military science, and colonial development). An economy partly motivated by the emergent notion of secular progress could also act as a powerful resource for markets claiming the interest of the public good as a counterbalance to the fictive economics of speculation. Our main challenge consists in crossing different fields (commercialization and consumption, enterprise, invention and the sciences, charity and philanthropy, subscription, governmental and other public body support). The researchers involved will help to explore new insights regarding the relation between cultures of civic improvement and those of science and technology, and can point the way to a reintegration of this notion of investment within the public sphere.

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Programme

9:30 Welcome and coffee

9:50 Introduction
Marie Thébaud-Sorger (Warwick)

Economy of innovation: the making of new markets, new knowledge and new objects

10:00 **Robert Iliffe (Sussex)**
Material culture in the Scientific Revolution

10:25 **Sarah Easterby-Smith (Warwick)**
Propagating commerce: plant breeding and market competition in
London and Paris, c. 1770-1814

10:50 **Lissa Roberts (Twente)**
Strategies of steam-engine entrepreneurs in the second half of 18-C France

11:15 Discussion

11:45 Working lunch

Economic and industrial changes facing the public good

13:00 **Koji Yamamoto (King's College, London)**
Public Service in the Early Financial Revolution: the Case of the Company of
the Mine-Adventurers of England, 1698-1710

13:25 **William J. Ashworth (Liverpool)**
The British state and Industrialisation during the eighteenth century

13:50 **Maxine Berg (Warwick)**
Industrial surveys in India in the 18thC

14:15 Discussion

14:45 Coffee

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Programme (Continued)

Innovation and the Sciences: Civil Benevolence and the Economics of the Public Sphere

15:00 **Emma Spary (UCL)**
Parisian pharmacy and the reinvention of *économie*: three cases, 1760-1810

15:25 **Christelle Rabier (Paris)**
For the Benefit of Mankind: Judging Medical Instruments at the Académie royale de chirurgie, 1750-1792

15:50 **John Christie (Leeds, Oxford, MPI Berlin)**
Science and Technical Innovation in the Enlightenment Public Sphere: Practice and Theory in Enlightenment Scotland.

16:15 Discussion

16:45 General discussion

17:20 Conclusive remarks: **Christine MacLeod (Bristol)**

17:30 Drink

Discussants:

Charles Withers (Edinburgh), Peter Jones (Birmingham), Mark Knights (Warwick),
Christine MacLeod (Bristol), Liliane Pérez (CDHTE-Paris)

Informations

Convenor: Marie Thébaud-Sorger, m.thebaud-sorger@warwick.ac.uk

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