

Seminar SAW
History of Science, History of Text, 2011-2016
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**Meeting on the "Collections used in The History of Science Scholarly value,
market value, patrimonial value"**

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Presentation

The historian of science who uses written objects kept in a collection as a source for his research may use information relating to the path of this object before they join the collection. It is for this reason that we are interested in the processes which led the objects into collections and some of the factors that affected their paths, by focusing specifically on issues relevant to historians of science collections. The process of building collections arise primarily the question of the value that different actors have given to these objects, of why they were torn from their original context, their circulation and their insertion or keeping them in a collection . It is more specifically to this question that day will be spent. Such objects from the time of their discovery until their use as exhibit or source for the work of a researcher, pass from hand to hand, those collectors, but also those of excavators, antiquarian or adventurers. It took each of them in turn to assign them a value so that they are inserted, ultimately, in a given collection.

However, these values differ, depending on the view that each has of the object and his objective in regard to that object. What is the value of a document for different actors who had it in the hands ? And how this valuation has affected the movement of the object relative to others ? To this general question, we associate, in the context of the SAW project, more specific issues. How the academic knowledge, especially mathematics, of which a document testifies, are interacted with the value that different types of actors gave him ? How the valuation of an object, in certain contexts, elicited historical research on the scholarly content, and in particular mathematics, related to these objects ? Can we identify different types of knowledge of the history of mathematics that would sometimes influence the value of a given object ? How a particular content knowledge of a document could, for example, transform his market value ? The objectives that govern the formation of a collection depend on different types of value given to objects and therefore these values influence the constitution of the collection. How these elements could change our approach of the sources of the history of science ? This is an issue that will remain to the horizon of our concerns during the study day.