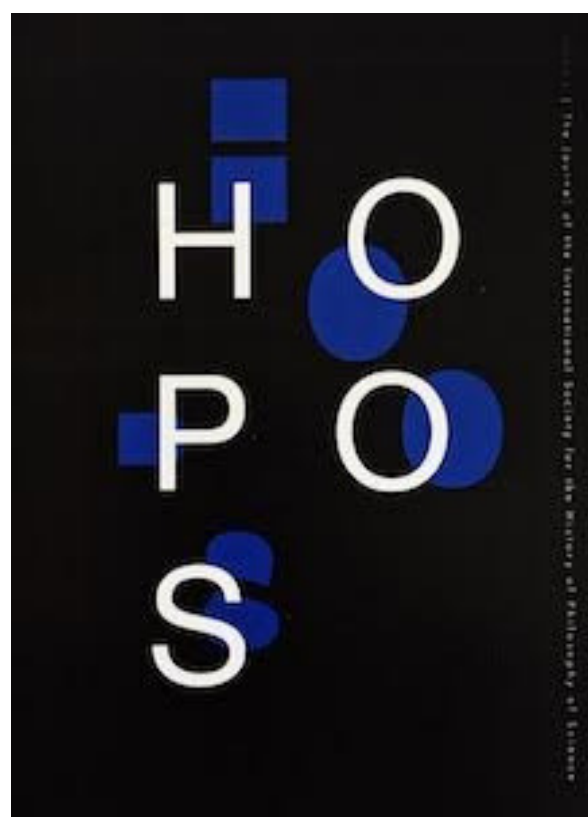


CFP: Nineteenth Century French Philosophy of Science: Positivism and Its Continuations



HOPoS Special Issue

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Post-positivism proves to be, in many respects, a post-neopositivism, which, in certain ways, revives elements of original positivism. The latter, in its ambition to be a general philosophy, had strong political implications, and nineteenth-century France provides interesting case study of the interplay between political thought and philosophy of science. Furthermore, like recent philosophers of science, nineteenth-century French positivists were also deeply concerned with the history of the sciences, as well as the various methods of reasoning that distinguished the sciences one from another. For these reasons, it seems particularly appropriate for us to examine the ways in which positivist epistemology developed in the wake of Comte—evolving and diversifying into different phyla. Yet this history has been relatively neglected. For example, Duhem and Poincaré are often treated as if their philosophies originated entirely with them, much like Athena springing from the head of Zeus, while in fact their philosophies emerged from a positivist tradition that includes the thought of not only Comte but Charles Renouvier, Edouard Le Roy, Abel Rey, and many others. Such a story deserves to be brought to light.

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