

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Curriculum Studies

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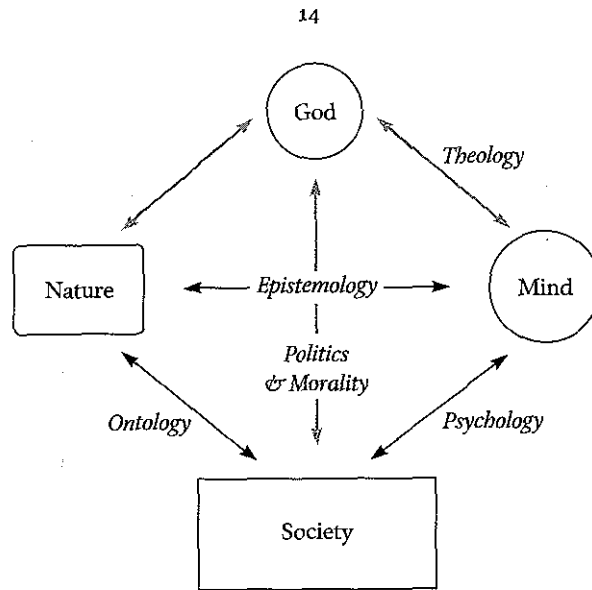
TSED 508a (031): Seminar on Bruno Latour

Lecture II

Pandora's Hope

1. Do you believe in reality?
2. Is Latour keepin' it real? What does he mean by a "more realistic account of science & technology (p. 15)?"
3. Specifically, in what ways is Latour building on *We Have Never Been Modern*?
4. What are the various historical or conceptual modes or models we adopt to describe or explain the processes of science and technology (or indeed, the world)? What does Latour say about the following?
 - a. Internalist Model (Content) pp. 84-85, 90-91, 109-112
 - b. Externalist Model (Context) pp. 84-85, 90-91, 109-112
 - c. Contextualist and Interactionist Models
 - d. Hybridity Models
 - e. Translation Model pp. 91, 95-96
 - i. Collective, seamless web, Gordian Knot, cosmos
 - ii. Actor-networks, hybrids, collectives, entanglements, cyborgs, imbroglios, desiring machines, monsters, tricksters, companion species, things
 - iii. Mixes of societies, symbols/texts, natures, and spirits
5. Indeed, what are the problems Latour identifies within STS and what are the goals or ends of STS as he defines them? What cannot the novelty of STS be registered so easily (pp 18-23)?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
6. What are the key ontological and epistemological issues Latour is resolving in chapters 2-4 of *Pandora's Hope*? Does he succeed?

7. Does Latour do justice to overcoming the modern ontological settlement (figure 1.1)?
What ontology is necessary to unsettle the modern settlement?



8. What does Latour's "chain of transformation" offer and what does it overcome (pp. 70-71) (figure 2.22)?

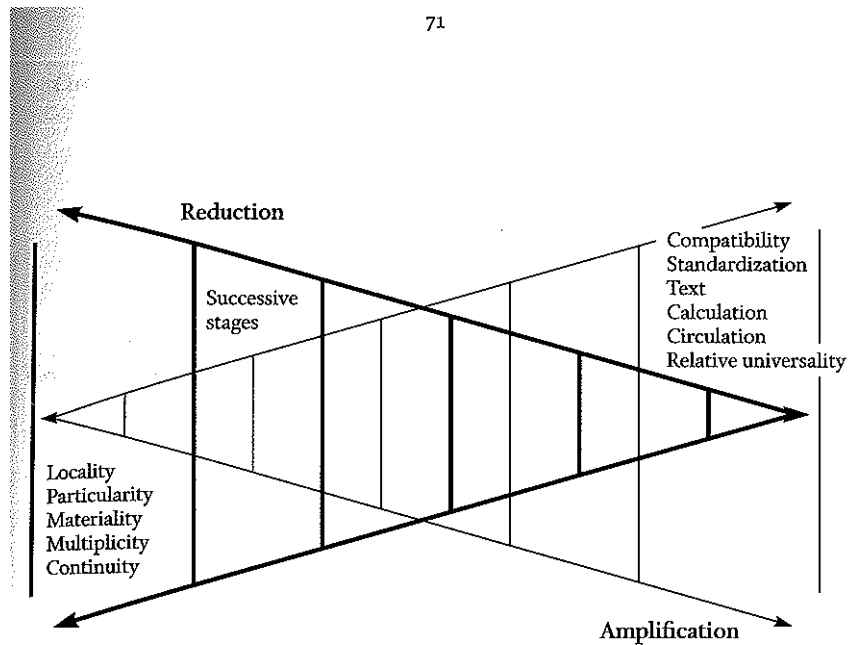


Figure 2.22 The transformation at each step of the reference (see Figure 2.21) may be pictured as a trade-off between what is gained (amplification) and what is lost (reduction) at each information-producing step.

Lecture III *Pandora's Hope*

9. Do you still believe in reality?
10. Is the metaphor of scenography helpful (chap. 4)... staging metaphor helpful (p. 135-140) (figure 4.3)?

PANDORA'S HOPE

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Metaphor	Benefits	Weaknesses
Para-Delegram	Explains why knowledge is neither just natural nor just social	Cannot focus on the two planes at once since they are contradictory
Theater	Shows the two planes at once	Aestheticizes and shifts toward fiction even more
Berish	Accounts for why the work is forgotten	Transforms the scientist into a dupe of his own false consciousness
Optical	Focuses attention on the independent thing	Says nothing of the work and takes all mediations as defects to be erased
Industrial	Links reality to the transformations	Takes things as raw material, losing features along the way
Trail	Turns every mediation into what makes possible the access to things	Does not modify the position of the thing sitting there and undergoing no event
Articulation	Stresses the independence of the thing; reveals the two planes at once; maintains the character of historical event; ties reality to the amount of work	Is not registered in a commonsense metaphor; leads to a set of tricky metaphysical difficulties (see Chapter 5)

Figure 4.3

11. "The more articulation there is, the better" (p. 143). What is articulation and why is it important (see M. Weinstein attached + lecture)?
12. "Did ferments exist before Pasteur made them up: (pp 145, 147, 169, 170)?

13. “one that captures historicity... Science studies documents the modification of the ingredients that compose an articulation of entities” (p. 162). “My solution, in other words, is to historicize more, not less” (p. 169). What is Latour suggesting here?

14. Trace the methodology from *Science in Action* (see attached) through *We Have Never Been Modern* to *Pandora's Hope*. What has been added? What has changed?

Lecture IV *Pandora's Hope*

15. Reality check: And do you yet still believe in reality?

16. Is the pragmatogony helpful (chap. 6)... (figure 6.9)?

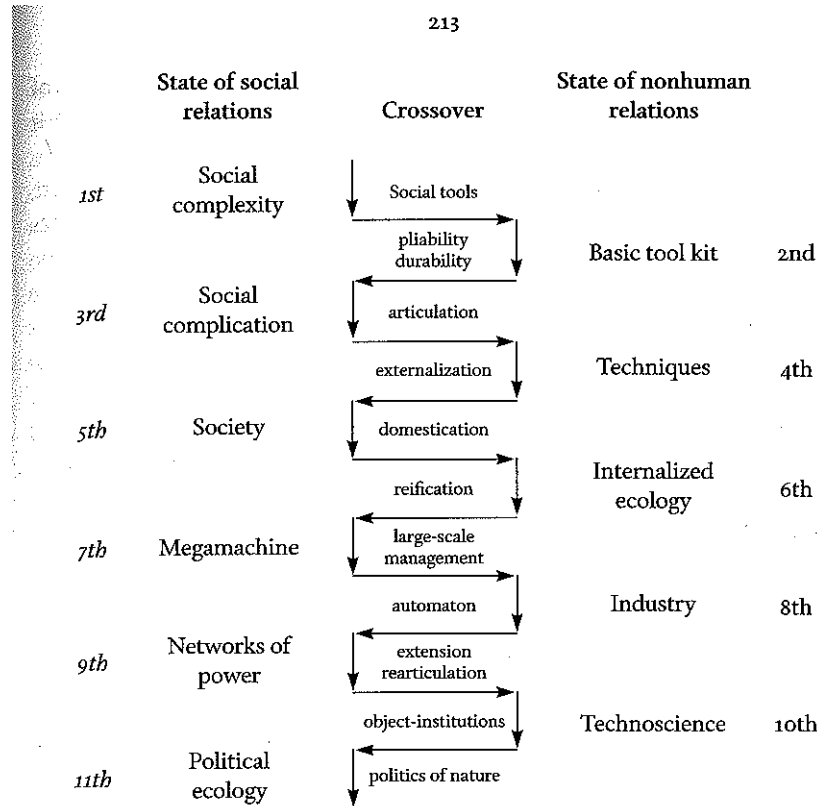


Figure 6.9 If the successive crossovers are summed up, a pattern emerges: relations among humans are made out of a previous set of relations that related nonhumans to one another; these new skills and properties are then reused to pattern new types of relations among nonhumans, and so on; at each (mythical) stage the scale and the entanglement increase. The key feature of this myth, is that, at the final stage, the definitions we can make of humans and nonhumans should recapitulate all the earlier layers of history. The further we go, the less pure are the definitions of humans and nonhumans.

17. What has become— what will become of society? “In the newly emerging paradigm, we have substituted the notion of collective*— defined as an exchange of human and nonhuman properties inside a corporate body— for the tainted word ‘society’”... We Live in Collectives, Not in Societies” (p. 193).

18. Methodology: “how a collective of one given definition can modify its makeup by articulating different associations” (p. 194) (figure 6.5)?

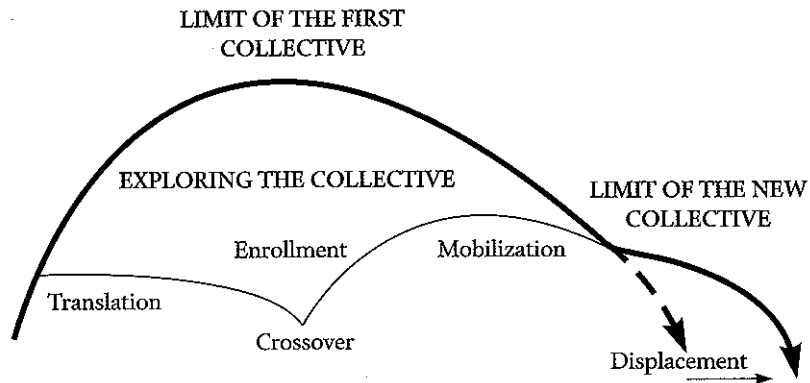


Figure 6.5 Instead of portraying science and technology as breaking away from the strict limits of a society, a collective is conceived as constantly modifying its limit through a process of exploration.

19. How does Latour resolve the modern settlement of fact and fetish (pp. 274-275) (figures 9.1 & 9.2)?

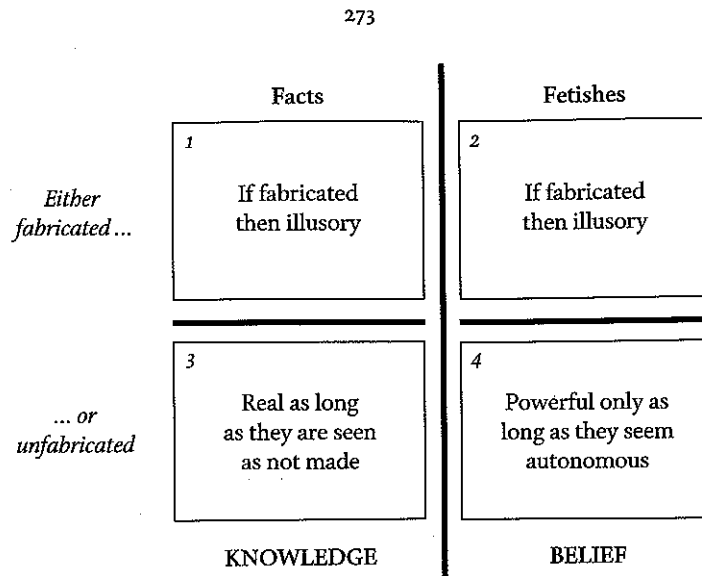


Figure 9.1 In the canonical division of fact and fetish, each of the two divided functions (knowledge and belief) can be exposed by the question: Is it fabricated or is it real? The question implies that fabrication and autonomy are contradictory.

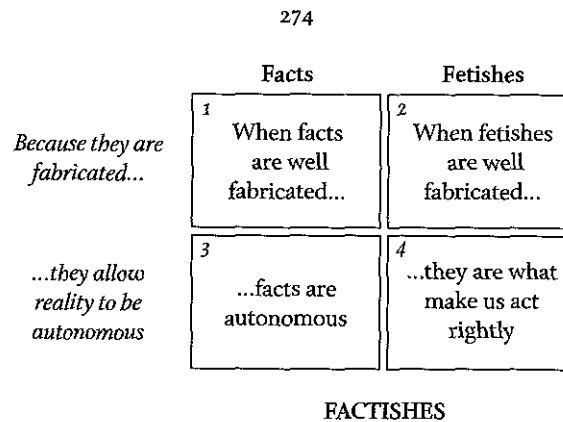


Figure 9.2 Once the fabrication is seen as the cause of autonomy *and* reality for both facts and fetishes, the vertical division between knowledge and belief of Figure 9.1 disappears; it is replaced by a new transversal question: What is it to fabricate *well* so as to make autonomy possible?

20. Historical Overview- temporal movements- *Science in Action*-> *We Have Never Been Modern*- >*Pandora's Hope*-> *We Have Never Been Modern*-> *Science in Action*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

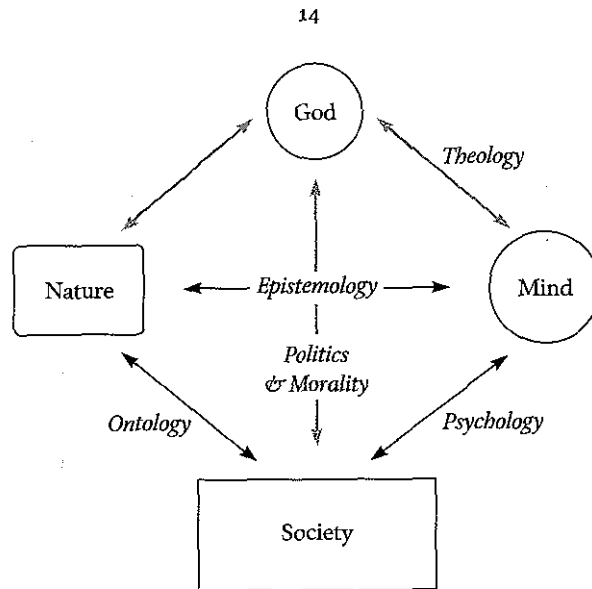
21. Core *Definitions*/Language: Collectives, Asymmetry, Scope, others?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

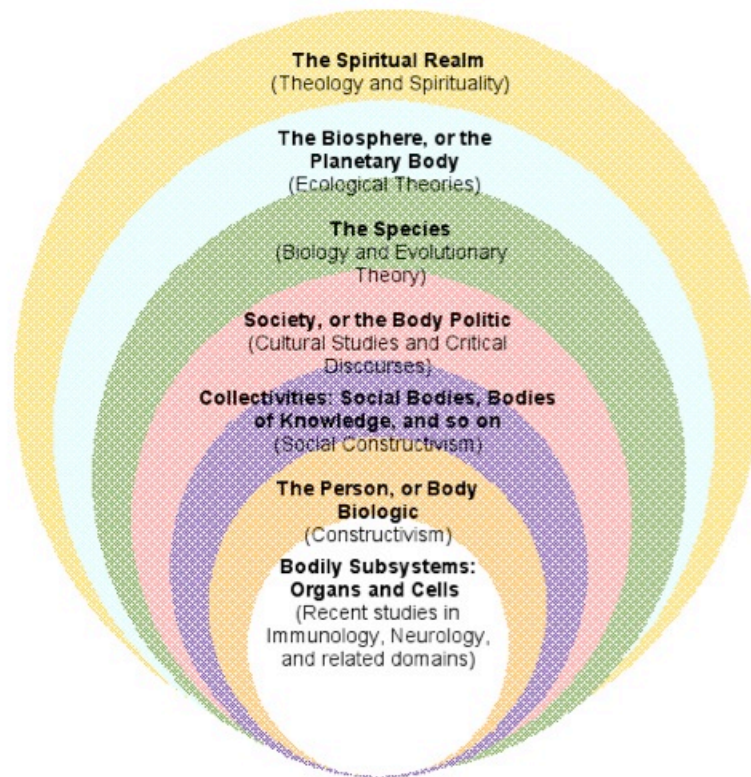
22. Core processes: mobilization, translation, inscription, others?

Lecture V *Pandora's Hope*

23. What ontology is necessary to unsettle the modern settlement (figure 1.1)? As Latour confesses at the end of *Pandora's Hope*, "In the settlement pictured in Figure 1.1, there is one box we have not touched yet, and that is the one labeled 'God'" (p. 267).



24. In complexity thinking, similarly, there is one thing not touched, “and that is the one labeled ‘God’.” So, how should we account for the spiritual? The image below is one way of accounting for the spiritual, albeit controversial. Model an alternative...



(Davis & Sumara, 2000, p. 836) *Spiritual Realm Added

Figure from: Brennan, K., Feng, F., Hall, L. & Petrina, S. (2007). On the complexity of technology and the technology of complexity. In B. Davis (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Fourth Complexity Science and Educational Research conference*, 47-73.