



Actor-Network Theory



Black Team
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Recap



Technology

Human



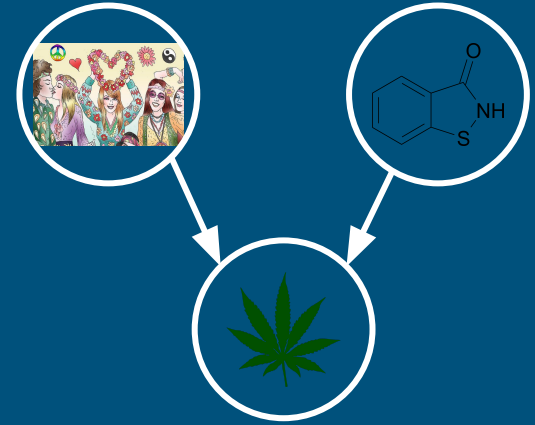
Technological
Determinism

SCOT

Question: where does ANT fit into this spectrum?

Departure from SCOT

- Criticism of SCOT
 - Materiality/Thingness
- The role of technology in the construction of society
 - SCOT: Weakened/downgraded
 - ANT: No technology, no society



Departure from SCOT (Cont'd)

- Agency
 - SCOT: Technology has no agency
 - ANT: Technology permit mediation
 - Interference
 - New associations
 - Fold time and space
 - Delegate
- Different types of explanation
 - SCOT: Archival
 - ANT: Present
- Stability
 - SCOT: Solid social base
 - ANT: Process of translation

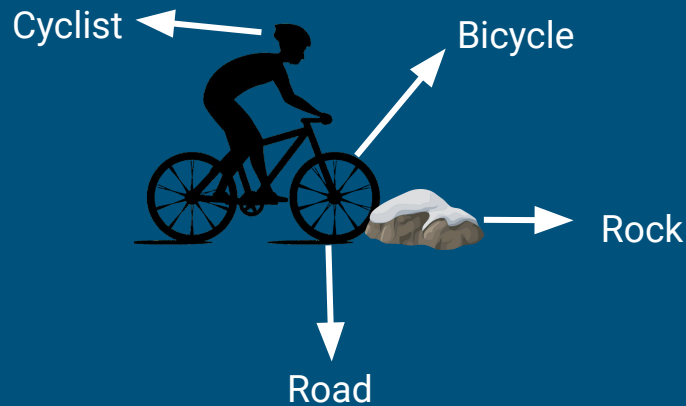


Question: Do you think technology has agency?

What is Actor-Network Theory (ANT)?



- Heterogeneous Actors
 - Human and nonhuman - Actants
 - Social regulation relinquishes to object
- Network
 - Interests
 - Associations
- Society and Technology
 - Network effects



The Sociology of Translation

- Translation
 - Actors act out of interest
 - Changing the ways in which actors act
- Characteristic
 - Does not entertain the idea of fixed frame of reference
 - Does not understand the world with dualisms: ancient/modern, nature/society, etc.
- Science and Technology
 - Translating material actions and forces

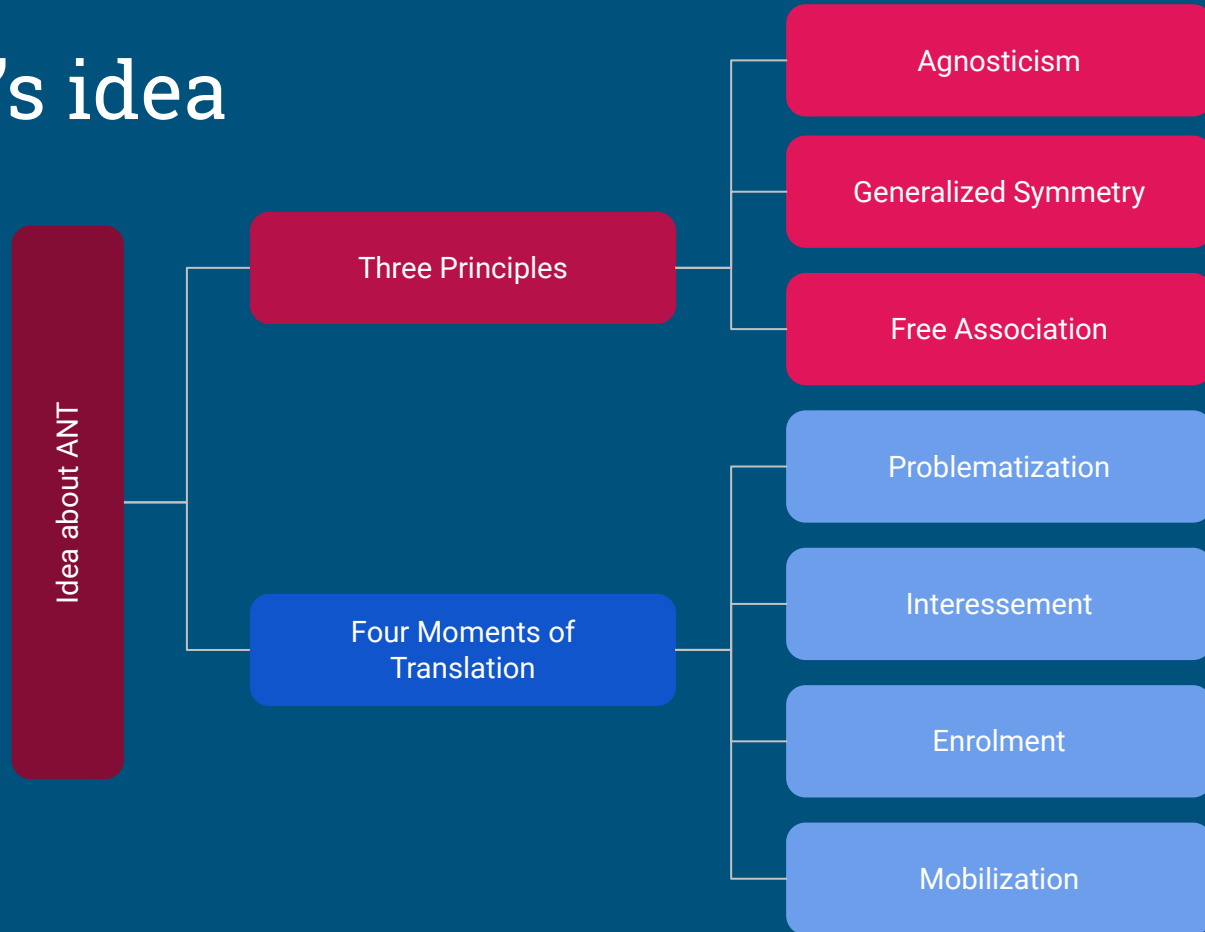
Discussion

“Actant often replaces actor in their accounts as actor suggests a strictly human agency, actor-network replaces social relations, delegation replaces social roles and translation replaces interaction”--Callon and Latour

Q: Why still call “Actor network theory” rather than “Actant network theory”?

Q: What do you think Translation means?

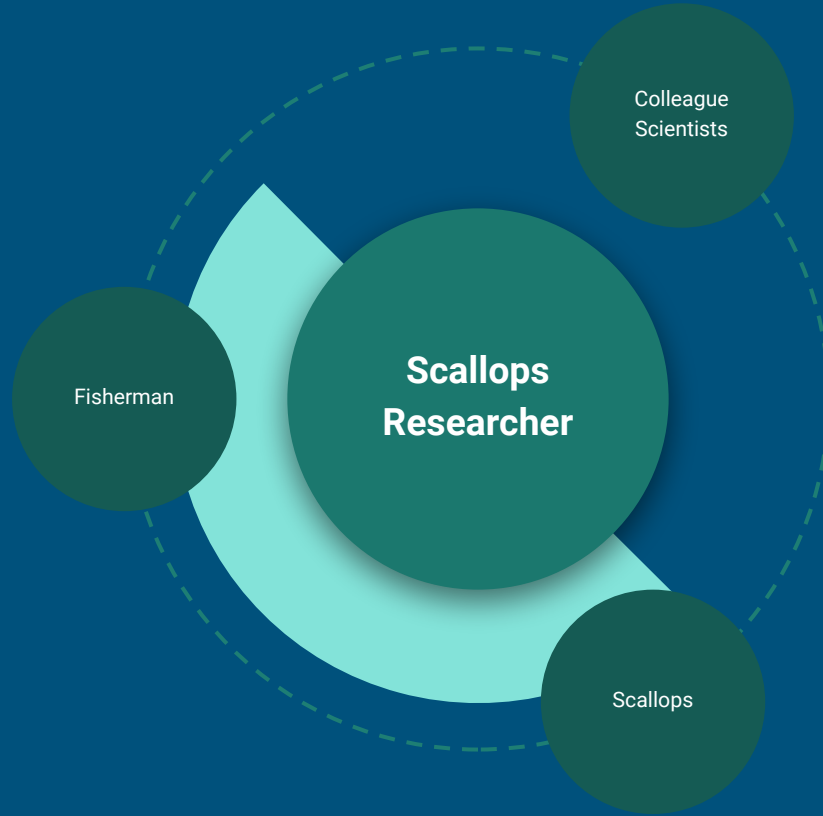
Callon's idea



Latour's rules of method

- Follow science and technology in the making.
- Ignore technology's intrinsic qualities and consider instead their subsequent transformations by other agents.
- Avoid the use of either nature or society to explain the settlement of scientific disputes as both are themselves the result of settled controversies.
- Think about the enrolment of humans and non-humans in the same way.
- Suspend judgement on the make-up of science and technology, instead focus on what and who does the work.

Scallops

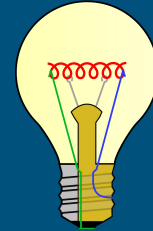


Operation of Power

- Definition of Power (Foucault and ANT):
 - Represent the ability to affect the action of others
 - Never Localize
 - Employed and exercised through a net-like organisation.
 - Only made possible through agencement concrets (concrete arrangements)
- Foucault's other Idea:
 - Moral dimension of technology
- Original ideas in ANT:
 - Relational materialism (spurious)
 - Focussed on empirical stories in the present

Criticism 1: human intention

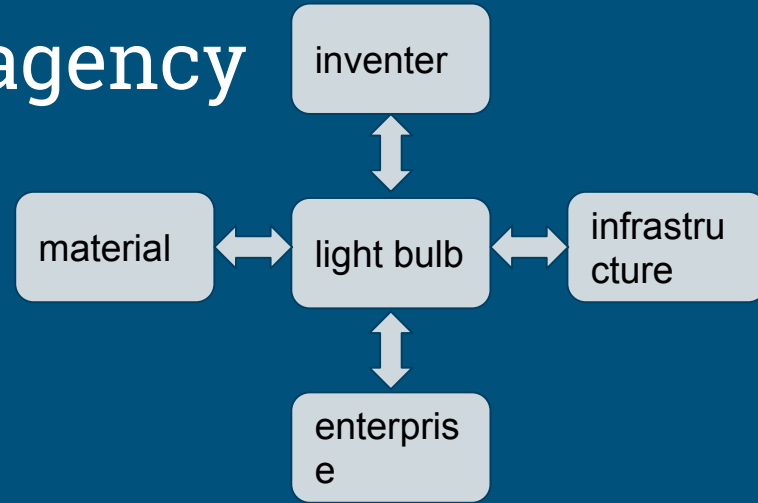
- Symmetrical around the human/non-human divide
 - ANT's actors are actants, things made to act
 - Agency is an effect of networks, not prior to them
- Example: the development of filaments in light bulb:



Criticism 2: distribution of agency

- Encourage analyses centered on key figures

- Network is built through interaction
- ignore the marginalized and the oppressed



- Still take light bulb for example.

- Other minor inventors in the process of improving light bulb
- Its effects on the working hours of labors,

Question: What do you think of this critique? Does it exist?

Criticism 3: only description

- A blunt version of constructivism
 - Things have no real and intrinsic properties
 - Disregard the structural determinants, like power, culture, etc.
 - Good at describing, but not at explanation

“.....To have transformed the social from a surface, from a territory, from a province of reality, to a circulation, is what I think has been the most useful contribution of ANT..... ANT should really be called 'actant-rhizome ontology'”(Latour, B. (1997, July). Keynote speech: on recalling ANT.)