A Textbook Case Revisited. Knowledge as mode of existence

Bruno Latour

Abstract: The paper starts by a visit to an exhibit at the Natural History Museum in New York which shows in parallel series of fossils of horse evolution and series of how paleontologists have varied in their reconstruction of this evolution. It is the occasion to test again an argument at the heart of science studies and history of science: is there a history of science ideas about nature, or also a history of the objects known by science. If the latter is the case, then do we have the philosophical resource to think this change of conception through? Using James, Fleck, Whitehead and more recent science studies results, the paper tries to "desepistemologize" knowledge on the one hand while "reontologizing" it on the other.

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A Textbook Case Revisited – Knowledge as a Mode of Existence. Bruno Latour, Sciences Po Paris, a chapter for the STS Handbook. “Would it not be possible to manage entirely without something fixed? Both thinking and facts are changeable, if only because changes in thinking manifest themselves in changed facts”. Ludwick Fleck (1981 [1935]: 50) “Knowledge and science, as a work of art, like any other work of art, confers upon things traits and potentialities which did not previously belong to them. Objections from the side of alleged realism to this statement springs from a confusion of tens This book is intended to be reasonably comprehensive, that is, to discuss most of the issues and problems that come up in translating. (In this aim, at least, the book is original.) In spite of the controversial nature of several of its chapters, it is therefore designed as a kind of reference book for translators. However, some of the shorter pieces in Chapter 18 are inadequate and can only offer you a few pointers. I hope to expand the book (my last one on translation) for a second edition, and I would welcome suggestions for its improvement many cases, and these were “hailed as a triumph of the doctrines of natural law and as signaling the overthrow of legal positivism”. But, he retorts, “the unqualified satisfaction with this result seems to me to be hysteria”.8. are in virtue of their office—their submission to authority—required to apply the law as it exists on the statute book. The Court thus assumes that the judges on the court-martial had no option but to decide as they did, and that is what marks the difference between the judges and the informer. But it follows that if the statutes had imposed a duty on citizens to report such remarks, the informer would also be able to rely on the statutes to absolve her of the crime of illegal deprivation of liberty.