What if we *Talked* Politics a Little?

Bruno Latour

Ecole des Mines Paris, 60 bld St Michel 75006, Paris, France.
E-mail: latour@csi.ensmp.fr

Political enunciation remains an enigma as long as it is considered from the standpoint of information transfer. It remains as unintelligible as religious talk. The paper explores the specificty of this regime and especially the strange link it has with the canonical definition of enunciation in linguistics and semiotics. The 'political circle' is reconstituted and thus also the reasons why a 'transparent' or 'rational' political speech act destroys the very conditions of group formation.
Contemporary Political Theory (2003) **2**, 143–164. doi:10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300092

Translated by Liz Libbrecht. First published in French in *Politix* 15 (58): 143–166 (2002). Revised and updated for *Contemporary Political Theory*

Complaints about a loss of interest in politics are heard all over.[1] But what if the famous 'crisis of representation' stems simply from a new misunderstanding of the exact nature of this type of representation? As if, in recent years, we had begun to expect it to provide a form of fidelity, exactitude or truth that is totally impossible. As if talking politics were becoming a foreign language gradually depriving us of the ability to express ourselves. Could it be possible to *forget* politics? Far from being a universal competency of the 'political animal', might it not be a form of life so fragile that we could document its progressive appearance and disappearance? This is the hypothesis that I would like to explore in this paper.

The idea can be formulated simply: by attempting to explain politics in terms of something else, we might have lost its specificity and have consequently forgotten to maintain its own dynamics, letting it fall into disuse. To retrieve the invaluable effectiveness of political talk, we need to start with the idea that, as Margaret Thatcher so forcefully put it, 'society doesn't exist'. If it does not exist, we have to make it exist, but in order to do so we need the *means* to do so. Politics is one of those means.

The recent resurrection of Gabriel Tarde allows a sharper contrast between two diametrically opposed types of sociology: that which assumes that the problem of the constitution of society has been solved, and that which studies the fragile and temporary construction of social aggregates. The former, a

descendant of Emile Durkheim, uses social explanations to explain why some political forms of coordination are so sturdy. I call this type 'sociology of the social'. The latter type I call 'sociology of association' or 'of translation'. When political sociology sets out to explain politics *through* society, it renders politics superficial and replaceable. By contrast, when the other political sociology strives to explain the very existence of social aggregates through political discourse, that discourse immediately becomes *irreplaceable*. In the former instance, if we were to lose politics we would not lose much; in the latter, we would lose all means of social articulation — at least for all the associations in which the 'us' and 'they' is in question.[2]

Yet the Tardian sociology also has problems. Sociologies of translation encounter a difficulty that sociologies of the social avoid since they always begin with the existence of aggregates: how are the aggregates themselves produced? The question that Gabriel Tarde put to Durkheim becomes more complex because sociologists of mediation have deliberately deprived themselves of any type of already existing social structure to coordinate interactions (Tarde, 1999). In my opinion, the most fertile solution is to investigate modes of deployment — what I call more technically 'regimes of enunciation' — in search of the source of coordination that sociologies of the social impute to underlying or pre-existing structures. As Antoine Hennion has shown, following Howie Becker, there is for example an aesthetic regime of the unfolding of mediations peculiar to the world of art (Becker, 1988; Hennion, 1993). I have explored some others, in science (Latour, 1995), in technique (Latour, 1992), in law (Latour, 2003), and in religion (Latour, 2000). Every time, a precise form of contamination, concatenation, connection, mediation — irrespective of the word — makes it possible to account for the type of association that the term 'social link' leaves unclear.

In keeping with this programme of systematic comparison of enunciation regimes, I would like to raise the question of what is at play when one talks to someone about something in a political way. What is the tone characterizing this enunciation regime? What vehicle conveys the political way of relating to one another?

By politics, I do not mean conversations on explicitly political topics, such as parliamentary elections, corruption among elected representatives or laws that need to be passed. Nor do I limit the term to the statements of men and women called politicians, as if there were a particular sphere or domain distinct from economics, society, law, etc.; nor to all the ingredients comprising politics as an institution, as defined in the corridors of political science departments, that is, international relations, constitutional law, power struggles, etc.

It is clear that politics, like science, law or religion, forms heterogeneous institutions which simultaneously belong to all enunciation regimes. However, precisely, I would for the moment like to suspend any definition of institutions,

subjects, genres or political agents likely to bind us to a certain type of *content*, and rather to focus on a regime of talk, a particular *manner of speech*. One can be a member of Parliament and not talk in a political way. Conversely, one can be at home with one's family, in an office, at work, and start talking *politically* about some issue or other even if none of one's words have any apparent link with the political sphere.

If we could define this particular enunciation regime with some precision, we would be able to identify the times, places, topics and people who do actually 'knit' politics, without any concern for the fact of belonging or not to what political science refers to as the political. If, as so many commentators claim, there is a 'crisis in politics' or a 'crisis of representation', it is perhaps because we have not been able to distinguish this peculiar enunciation regime from the far more restricted domain that elected representatives and their voters talk about.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Political Talk

Political expression is always *disappointing*; that is where we must start. In terms of the transfer of exact undistorted information on the social or natural world, we could say that it always seems to be totally inadequate: truisms, clichés, handshakes, half-truths, half-lies, windy words, repetitions mostly, *ad nauseam*. That is the ordinary, banal, daily, limp, tautological character of this form of discourse that shocks the brilliant, the upright, the fast, the organized, the lively, the informed, the great, the decided. When one says that someone or something is 'political', one signals above all this fundamental disappointment, as if it were no longer possible to move forwards in a straight line, reasonably, quickly, efficiently, but necessary to 'take into account', 'a whole lot of' 'extra-rational factors' of which one fails to clearly understand all the ins and outs but which form an obscure, soft, heavy, round mass that sticks to those with the best intentions and, judging by what they say, seems to slow them down. The expression 'that's political' means first and foremost 'it doesn't move straight', 'it doesn't move fast'; it always implies that 'if only we didn't have this load, we'd achieve our goal more *directly*'.

Why are the curved, the cumbersome and the slow so much part of this form of talk? Since it is always *evaluated* by other forms which do not understand it. It is impossible to use the word 'political' without immediately having to justify oneself, as if it had to appear before a tribunal to receive permission to be used.

What is this tribunal, this suspicious police that has political expression under constant surveillance? For a start, we could say roughly that it consists of information, transparency, exactitude, rectitude and *faithful* representation. That is the dream of honest thinking, of non-deformation, of immediacy, of the

absence of any mediator, what I like to refer to as *double-click* communication — not that communication nor information work that way, every mouse owner knows that, but that is just a way to designate a dream. It is in relation to this demand, this utopia, this myth, that political expression always has to admit to being skew, underhand, sly, compromising, unfaithful, manipulating, changing. As soon as we utter a political word, it is expected to correspond to a straight line of complete, ample information. If talking politics always seems indirect, it is because the curve is judged in relation to the straight.

Even when this judgement is favourable, it is always compared to another higher standard. We readily admit that it is sometimes essential to give in to dubious necessities and to act 'politically', in which case we give a *positive* value to expressions denoting skill, the art of compromise, a sense of tactics, adjustment to circumstances, the ability to be flexible. If need be, we refer to Machiavelli's *Il Principe*, the prince of distorted words for the good cause. However, even so, it will always be a last resort, due to the inability to go straight. Most often a *negative* value will be given to all these deviations from the straight line of faithful information and representation, and political utterances will be accused of concealment and lies, of corruption or fickleness, of falsity and artifice. In both cases, positive or negative, political talk agrees to being judged by a more demanding judge, who defines the criteria of validity of these acts of speech, what in speech act theory is called its *conditions of felicity* (Austin, 1970. See an important elaboration of the act of political language in Cooren, 2001).

However, as long as we judge statements conveying politics in relation to discourse that communicates, we have, in some or other way, to talk of politics as a *lie*, necessary perhaps but nevertheless a lie. How can we get rid of this burden on our tongues preventing us from judging our political talk in terms of its own criteria? How can we talk of this enunciation as of a form — particular indeed — of veracity, of truth?[3]

The solution consists firstly in no longer judging in relation to something else. Each enunciation regime elaborates its own criteria of truth and lies, its own definitions of felicity and infelicity. Saying that political discourse is 'twisted' has a very different meaning, depending on whether one has chosen the curve or the straight line as an ideal for all utterances. Straight lines are useful for drawing a square, but they are hardly so when we wish to outline an ellipse. In the former case political talk is judged in terms of another demand that in no way concerns it; in the latter, it is its own judge of what it wants to describe: its problem is no longer to diverge or not from the straight line, but to check whether or not it is drawing the *right* curve. In the toolboxes of the graphics software on our computers, we give our cursors the choice of drawing dead straight lines or wider curved ones. We would never dream of judging their qualities by comparing them with one another. Likewise, we should be

able to free political talk from the domination — the dictatorship — of straight double-click information. Can we find the conditions of felicity peculiar to it? That is at least my intention.

Why do we regret that politicians 'don't tell the truth'? Why do we demand that they be 'more transparent'? Why do we want 'less distance between representatives and those whom they represent'? Even more absurd, why do we wish that 'politicians wouldn't change their minds all the time', 'wouldn't turn their coats for the slightest reason'? These demands, repeated throughout the press like a complaint, a rumbling, a shout or, rather, like a mort, are good sense in appearance only, for they all amount to judging the conditions of felicity of one regime of talk in relation to those of another. The denigration of political talk would never be possible without this ignorance of its *key*, of its own peculiar tone, of its *spin* as English-language newspapers so accurately (albeit, mockingly) put it.

First, let us put an end to an ambiguity, an imposture: under no circumstances can double-click information don the white coat of scientific method to defend its right to represent the rectilinear way of faithful talk. If politicians are to be hated for their lies, what can be said about scientists? Demanding that scientists tell the truth *directly*, with no laboratory, no instruments, no equipment, no processing of data, no writing of articles, no conferences or debates, at once, extemporaneously, naked, for all to see, without stammering nor babbling, would be senseless. If the demand for transparent and direct truth makes understanding of the political curve impossible, remember that it would make the establishment of 'referential chains' by scientists even more impracticable. The direct, the transparent and the immediate suit neither complex scientific assemblages nor tricky construc-tions of political talk, as Gaston Bachelard has so amply shown.[4] If we start making direct and transparent processes the supreme law of any progress, then all scientists are liars and manipulators, and all politicians corrupt bastards. The 'crisis of representation' has nothing to do with a sudden loss of quality by politicians or scientists; it emerges as soon as we impose the impossible yoke of transferring double-click information to practices with very different goals. A stupid question deserves a stupid answer. One could just as well complain about the poor quality of a modem that was incapable of percolating coffee ordered on the Internet!

If we turn from the demand for transparent information and focus a little more directly on the conditions of felicity peculiar to political discourse, we discover an entirely different demand for truthfulness. Political discourse appears to be untruthful only in contrast with other forms of truth. In and for itself it discriminates truth from falsehood with stupefying precision. It is not indifferent to truth, as it is so unjustly accused of being; it simply differs from all the other regimes in its judgement of truth. What then is its touchstone, its

litmus test? It aims to *allow to exist* that which would not exist without it: the public as a temporarily defined totality.[5] Either some means has been provided to trace a group into existence, and the talk has been truthful; or no group has been traced, and it is in vain that people have talked.

Thus, true and false, in politics, cannot be compared to the usual type of veracity corresponding to a disfigured version of the scientific reference. The common sense of the philosophy of language says that if a statement corresponds to a state of affairs it is true, and that it becomes false if there is no state of affairs corresponding to it. This is how the truth or falseness of a statement is judged in textbooks: 'The King of France is bald': there is or there is not a King of France; there is or there is not hair on his head. But he who says 'I understand you', 'We're one big family', 'We won't tolerate this any more' or 'Our firm must conquer a bigger market share', those who chant 'All together, all together, all!', would be unable to withstand a true/false judgement of the same type. Yet they know what the difference is between true and false statements, but they detect that truth or that falseness not in the presence or absence of a reference, but rather — and we will understand this soon — in an entirely new phenomenon: the *resumption* or *suspension* of the continuous work of definition and materialization of the group that this talk intends to trace. Anything that extends it is true; anything that interrupts it is false.

Sociologies of the social obviously never address this question of the continuous creation of the public since they all take as their starting point the prior and unquestionable existence of social aggregates, irrespective of their dimension: from the individual to the nation, through culture, society, the state, the reference group, etc. As Harold Garfinkel taught us (after Gabriel Tarde's lessons had been forgotten), to study political talk we need to abandon the idea of a guaranteed existence of groups. These are continuously being formed and reformed, and one of the ways of making them exist, of making them 'take', as we say of a sauce, is by surrounding them, grasping them, re-grasping them, reproducing them, over and over again, by 'lassoing' them, enveloping them, in the curve of political talk. Without this enunciation there would simply be no thinkable, visible, viable and unifiable social aggregate.[6]

However, as soon as we start separating the group from the speech act defining it as such, we no longer see the point of political talk; it seems superfluous, redundant, parasitic, compared to the 'reality' of 'social relations' and of 'groups' which appear 'veiled', 'betrayed' or 'concealed' by the 'artificial' rhetoric of 'pure politics'. If other means existed to keep a group together, then politics would indeed be useless and we could safely join the unanimous chorus of those who despise this scandalous form of rhetoric, this 'spin'. But those who know that there are no other mediations to temporarily spawn the social have the duty to respect and treat with infinite care the fragile

forms of talk developed by political art — as they have already done for scientific, technical, legal, religious and economic mediations.[7]

Perhaps this helps to explain why political discourse cannot be said to pertain exclusively to one particular sphere or domain, that of 'political' life or that of 'political' men or women. For *any aggregate*, a process of redefinition is needed, one that requires curved talk to trace, or temporarily to retrace, its outline. There is no group without (re)grouping, no regrouping without mobilizing talk. A family, even an individual, a firm, a laboratory, a workshop, a planet, an organization, an institution: none have less need for this regime than a state or a nation, a rotary club, a jazz band or a gang of hooligans. For each aggregate to be shaped and reshaped, a particular, appropriate dose of politics is needed.[8] Accordingly, limiting political talk to the official form of public life would amount to saying that there is no other aggregate, no other group than the nation or the state, that the others have no need to exist, or that they must keep alive by other means, *sui generis*, unknown to us, which no longer require the very particular resumption of the constituent enunciation. This enunciation would be limited to the political sphere without affording the means for other groups to remain in existence.

Particularities of Political Talk

By saying that the aggregate is 'made to exist' by talk that groups together, I am getting dangerously close to a term that I would have prefered to avoid: performative. Very useful but over-used, it conceals the particularity of this specific performativity. Consider the movement of this 'lasso', of this envelopment, in the form of a theoretical diagram of this enunciation regime. Certain features will seem familiar because political philosophy elaborated them long ago, others will seem exotic or incongruous, while others are likely to appear fresh, unfamiliar (Figure 1).

From the point of view of the rectitude and the transfer of information, of its exactitude and fidelity, the object of what I call the political *circle* seems incongruous, contradictory and even scandalous. What exactly is it about? About transforming the *several into one*, initially through a process of representation — a polysemic word that I shall soon define more precisely — and subsequently through a process of retransformation of the *one into several*, what is often called the wielding of power but that I more bluntly call obedience. Note that with this diagram I am trying to consider simultaneously the two parts of political science, too often disjoint: (a) how to obtain a representation? and (b) how to wield power? In fact it amounts to the same question asked twice but at different points in the same circular movement. I shall revert to this.
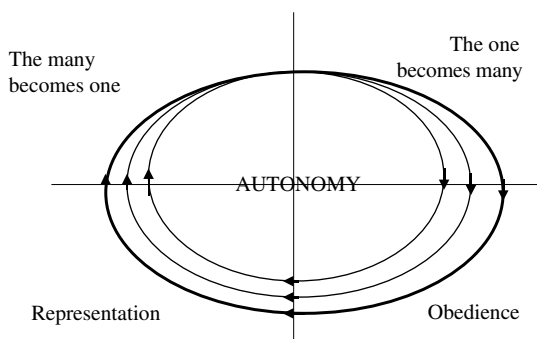
Figure 1 The circle of political autonomy transforms multiplicity into unity through representation and unity into multiplicity through obedience.

At first glance, we are familiar with the figure of this circle drawn and celebrated throughout political philosophy, from the Ancient Greeks through to the present. It is in the contemplation of this form that we find the expression of freedom, of the famous *autonomy* constantly sought, forever questioned: if we travel the full circle there is no order received — right-hand semi-circle in the diagram — that is not also produced by those who receive it — left-hand semi-circle. I am free when in some way or the other — we shall see how — I occupy both the top and the bottom of the diagram. Politics is tautological, not only in the above sense of signifying a stream of platitudes, but also because it does always say the same thing *again and again*, without any hesitation at being boring. It *has to be* repetitive. From the classical point of view I am *auto*-nomous (as opposed to *hetero*-nomous) when the law (*nomos*) is both what I produce through the expression of my will and what I conform to through the manifestation of my docility. As soon as this coincidence is broken, I leave the state of freedom and enter into that of dissidence, revolt, dissatisfaction or domination. The most exhilarating emancipation and the most abject dependence are not opposites; they qualify the movement, the path along this figure, depending on whether the circle is closed or not. (There is no need to specify that in no way does this circular form depend on the presence or absence of the very particular apparatus of election; we can find a thousand cases of elections without political talk and, conversely, a thousand cases in which a full circle is drawn without any vote whatsoever.) (Abelès, 1990)

Even if we are familiar with the figure of the circle, it should horrify us in so far as this constrained, 'forced movement' — to use a metaphor borrowed from physics — should be totally impracticable. The movement of autonomy is impossible by construction since in it the multitude becomes a unit — representation — before the unit becomes a multitude again — obedience. This transmutation is at first sight even more improbable than that of the dogma of transubstantiation of the host. Both one way and the other, the

singular becomes plural and *vice versa*. Thus, heteronomy is part of the circle — expressed in the diagram by the superimposition of *several* circles that intersect at the top. More precisely, the figure of autonomy — obeying one's own law — masks the process of metamorphosis, of translation of the representation and of obedience. She who talks in the name of all *must* necessarily *betray* those she represents, otherwise she will fail to obtain the transformation of the multitude into a unit; in turn, those who obey *must* necessarily transform the order received, otherwise they will simply keep repeating it without implementing it. In other words, either there is double betrayal and the loop is looped, or there is fidelity, exact transfer of information, straight talk and the circle will never be closed. Truthful political talk — in the sense of double-click information — is as impossible to achieve as perpetual movement or the squaring of the circle.

Hence, by an extraordinary paradox, autonomy would be impossible without this double betrayal — which goes some way to explaining the horror that the sudden appearance of politics never fails to arouse in reasonable people. Freedom, that supreme virtue, depends on a prior process that seems more like a vice: what an odious deception. Doubts on politics have no other origin: the worthy figures of autonomy and liberty mask the dreadful labour of composition, betrayal, transmutation and metamorphosis. Thus, autonomy hides the awful schemings of heteronomy.

To take this paradox a little further, we simply need to consider what would become of the circle if, both one way and the other, we sanctimoniously demanded fidelity, transparency, rectitude, immediacy and spontaneity; if we substituted straight for curved talk, and if, instead of looping the loop we drew straight lines that represented faithfully, rather than 'betraying' and 'lying'.

Assuming we demanded that politicians (and, once again, we do not mean professionals with that title but the political function associated with the composition of any group) 'talk truthfully' by 'repeating exactly' what their electors say 'without betraying nor manipulating them'. What would happen? The several would remain the several and the multitude the multitude, so that the same thing would simply be said twice (faithfully for information and therefore *falsely* for politics). Absurd requirement? Yet this is what we clamour for every day when we demand that politicians be 'close to the people', that they 'resemble us', that we be able to 'identify ourselves in them', that there be 'no more distance between ourselves and them', that they 'put an end to the social rift' through their 'spontaneity' and their 'authenticity' which would prove that they are 'indeed like us'. By demanding transparency, rectitude and fidelity, we are asking for the circle no longer to be a circle but a straight line so that the same can remain precisely the same in the most perfect (and mortal) similitude. In practice, this amounts to calling for the end of politics and

consequently the end of autonomy, despite it being so highly valued, for if the multitude never knows how to become one, there will never be a *gain* of representation. A faithful representation (in the sense promised by *double-click* information), if it were possible, would betray the very object of political fidelity! A choice must be made between authenticity, pursued in its most extreme consequences, and the difficult work of freedom which demands a particular form of 'lie', or at least of curve.

The paradox becomes even more intense if we now imagine politicians making the astounding claim of being 'faithfully obeyed'. This time it is the passage from one to several that would be impracticable. The order given would be required to be exactly, directly and faithfully transported with no betrayal, deformation, bias or translation! It would be expected to be executed with neither additions nor subtractions. We know that this is impossible since humans, as Ludwig Wittgenstein taught us, never follow rules, they simply 'embroider' on the pattern these provide. Nothing can fill what Don Norman has called the 'gap of execution' (Norman, 1988).

Moreover, even if this were possible, even if humans did follow rules, the circle could still not be closed since it is a *multitude* that gets moving, *not* a unit. To bridge this other gap, jump across this other transubstantiation, we can by definition rely on no resemblance of form between the statement of one and the action of a multitude — not only because words become actions but, above all, because one becomes several. Betrayal and 'lies' are as necessary for the return as for the outward journey.

Expecting an order to be faithfully obeyed is, once again, preventing the circle from closing and rendering the search for autonomy impossible. Yet, this unlikelihood does not prevent politicians from constantly complaining of 'being misunderstood', of 'having badly explained their message', of 'not having good enough teaching skills', of 'not having had enough time to implement their programme'. They also constantly deplore the 'cleavage' and the 'crisis' of representation, they complain that 'what they say has been misinterpreted'. Indeed, and fortunately so, otherwise how could they be understood! A representative who demands that citizens faithfully obey him has no more sense than citizens demanding that politicians faithfully represent them: dual infidelity, two-fold treason, the only way of looping the loop. Hence, the dread inevitably caused by the mere sight of the political process. To avoid being petrified by this face of Medusa, to ignore its monstrous impact, we will go to any lengths. Strangely, the more time goes by, extending the empire of double-click information, the greater the incongruity of the conditions of felicity of the political becomes. Perhaps, we are going to get to the point where talking in this way will seem as incomprehensible as uttering religious statements. Need we really seek other causes for the 'crisis of representation'?

Covering the Full Circle of Representation

If this circular movement is so impossible, if it appears like an imposture to our modern eyes saturated with double-click information, how is the very real process of achieving autonomy accomplished? What skills do countless people apply every day, enabling them to solve in practice this squaring of the circle that in theory is so insoluble. The answer stems from the new meaning that has to be given to *re*-presentation. In politics this word has never denoted some mimetic resemblance between the represented or the representative, for that would be meaningless; it has always signified the *recommencement* of the very process of quadrature. The only way of putting an end to the imposture constituting political talk consists in *taking up* one's pilgrim's staff and once again drawing the impossible circle by testing the double betrayal *in another way*.

We have to be careful here so as not draw the hasty conclusion that it is enough to be devious in order to utter political talk accurately. Unquestionably, politics is imposture; we are well aware that the virtue of autonomy can be secured only at the price of a fundamental vice, betrayal, both there and back; we acknowledged that lying — as opposed to the supposedly easy truth of faithful transfer of information — is an integral part of the work of composition; we know that expecting a spokesperson to 'tell the truth', to be 'authentic', amounts to killing the process of transubstantiation. However, this does not, for all that, mean that to be a good politician it is enough to lie, to be a phoney. That would be too easy. The Prince of Twisted Words would simply have replaced the White Knight of Transparency. Dissimulation, opportunism, populism, corruption, wrangling, and the art of compromise and *combinazioni* are not enough in themselves to guarantee the continuation of the circle. One can walk skew, think curved, cut across, be sly, without necessarily drawing the political circle.[9] It is not because they all differ equally from the straight line that all acts of envelopment are similar. 'Curved minds' are clearly distinct from one another, even if they are all an object of ridicule for 'straight minds'.

The specific nature of the political circle is not the fact of it squaring a circle — impossible by construction — but the fact that it practically resolves this impossibility, this impracticability, by the obstinate, ceaseless, overwhelming, exhausting *resumption* of the task of representation. The distinction amounts to this difference, perceived above, between the *suspension* of the act of resumption and its *recommencement*. The truthful spokesperson is not the one who is right while others are wrong, who is obeyed more than others, who sees further than others; it is the one who decides to tell the truth because, without fearing the cost, s/he travels the entire route again from the multitude to the unit and back, checking twice, both ways, that there is no *direct* relation between the multitude and its unity. Conversely, the most faithful proxy, the

most credible representative, the wisest councillor, the most inspired leader, the most visionary delegate starts lying when she *interrupts* the journey and starts drawing on a sort of political capital, expecting to be obeyed, confident that she is indeed for *once and for all* the spokesperson of the multitude.[10]

Truth and lies therefore refer not to the content of talk but to the capacity to cease or extend the impossible task of fusion, translation and metamorphosis through which the loop is looped — whereas, by definition, it *cannot* be looped since the multitude will always be unfaithfully represented, and never ever will an order be obeyed by a multitude which inevitably does something entirely different to what was ordered.

To describe this movement of incessant resumption that enables us to achieve in practice what is theoretically impossible or contradictory, the Ancient Greeks had a term close to autonomy but without the same brilliant descendants: *autophuos*, that can be translated as self-begetting (it is the same verb 'phuo' that still resounds in the word 'physics'). We find this astounding term in a key passage of Plato's *Gorgias* that I have commented on in detail.[11] Socrates no longer understands the meaning he ridicules by pretending to take this repetition merely for an echo through which the sophist, here his enemy-accomplice Calliclès, simply follows servilely, miming the hesitations of the crowd, the populace. For Socrates, *autophuos* is nothing but empty tautology. Yet, despite his sarcasm, *autophuos* and autonomy are terms related in such a way that only the former makes it possible to achieve the latter. Servility is only one of the values that this dual metamorphosis symbolized by the circle — which would currently be called demagogy or populism — can take. However, there are others, all those that, precisely, make it possible to achieve the two-fold transformation of several into one and one into several.

The fact that this operation was impossible in the eyes of Socrates, the first to have tried to replace curved talk by the rectilinear ways of epistemology, does not make it any less essential to achieve it in order to talk politics, even at the price of a radical break with the *diktats* of reasoning reason. The entire capacity for a form of talk to (re)group together depends on the maintenance of this slight difference between tautology and *autophuos*, between what we said a minute ago and what we say now, between the course of the circle and the relentless repetition of that course.

We can attribute two sources to the abhorrence that *autophuos* can arouse. The first, normal and positive, stems from the continuous din of the agora, the commotion of the crowd, the difficulty of listening to so many voices, of making oneself heard and obeyed by them, of being forced to decide in real time, life-size, scale one, without any assurance of cause and effect — all particular constraints of public talk repeatedly highlighted by the Sophists (Cassin, 1995). This constituent horror is known to most politicians, but they will never talk about it publicly due to the contempt in which they are held.

One has to wait for them to confide it, in the secrecy of their offices, to be able to grasp snatches of this admirable knowledge.

The second source, entirely different, stems from the artificial comparison that can be conceived of between the chaos of the agora and the serenity of controlled conversation resulting in a reasoned decision by listening to faithfully represented divergent interests — like the ideal conditions of communication invented by Jurgen Habermas. It is this second source, and none other, that is responsible for the contempt in which we hold those who devote themselves to the racket of political talk. Since Socrates, we feign belief that politicians have an *alternative* to talking skew and betraying what they hear, as if somewhere there were a miraculous resource for transcendence, with reason making it possible to bring a little good sense to the commotion of the agora. In reality, with this operation aimed officially at 'raising the debate', at 'making reasonable', at 'remaining among rational people', we simply aim at eliminating the particular, native, risky transcendence of *autophuos*.

Yes, political enunciation also has its own minuscule, essential, decisive, native transcendence which ensures that the collective, the group in the making, is never found twice in the same state. In a sense this allows it to boil or ferment and thus to pass, through successive betrayals, from multiple to single and then, in another form, from single to multiple. To be sure, compared to the admirable transcendences promised by sound reasoning, the mini-transcendence of politics is very tenuous. But since the former is simply an illusion, the light projected by the latter suffices amply to illuminate the way.[12] The minuscule difference between tautology and *autophuos* is enough to guarantee the slow distillation of autonomy.

As strange as it might seem, one has to admit that nothing has done more harm to political discourse than the astounding claim of putting an end to it through reasonable reason. The particular form of repetition and agitation of politics is risky enough without us adding to it the absurd dream of a substitution of skew talk by straight talk. We could get round the first source of confusion because it is part of the enunciation itself, but with the second, totally random and parasitical, we can do nothing, we are paralysed. Without the help of reasoning reason, politics remains difficult but practicable. Since we promised it the help of a reason superior to all its poor lies it has no longer been good for anything; it hardly dares to grumble while swearing, quietly : 'And yet it turns' …

Why is it important to free political talk from the superfluous weight of reasonable reason? Because by following the bad advice of rationality — transparency, serenity, rectitude, fidelity, authenticity, representation by repetition, etc. — we transform the group to be constituted into an aggregate of *fixed* elements and, in so doing, make the *variable* constitution of groups

impossible and the exercise of autonomy or liberty impracticable. As far as politics is concerned, all injections of rationality throughout time have been worse than the ill. Or, at least, before well meaning surgeons endeavour to graft a new heart and new lungs to a dying patient, it is better to check first the blood type of the donor. Similarly, with the best intentions in the world, those who have wanted to rationalize politics (and God knows that history has not been stingy in that respect!) have managed to do nothing more than generate monstrosities infinitely more serious than those they wanted to eliminate. The Sophists may have been expelled, but they were replaced by various types of 'commissars' — to put it bluntly. The unstable and sometimes perverted specialists of *autophuos* were supplanted by the masters who, like Socrates in *Gorgias*, claimed to reign over humans from Hades, the kingdom of the dead. And nor was there a lack of the dead.[13]

Double Imposture of Political Enunciation

Let us try to qualify anew the mini-transcendence of political talk without crushing it under a comparison, both dangerous and superfluous, with other forms totally unsuited to it. This will allow us to understand why the political enunciation regime has only a distant relation with the sphere, institution or domain of politics as such. If we go a bit lower down in the particular mystery of *autophuos* by qualifying the distance between what is said and what is *re-said*, we are able to see why there is never exactly tautology. The circle is possible only if the same voices occupy the two contradictory positions : 'What you are telling me to do is what I would have liked to do' — the expression of obedience; 'What you are saying is what I would have said if I had spoken' — the expression of representation; and 'So I do only what I wish and I am free' — autonomy.

Have we taken enough note of the fact that this relation between the one who talks and the one who *is talked to* corresponds exactly to enunciation as defined in speech act theory? Linguists and semioticians have taught us that each speech act triggers a reaction from a hidden, involved enunciator who delegates her/his/its voice (Greimas and Courtés, 1979; Ducrot, 1989). Just as any material form is accompanied by a shadow on a sunny day, so any act of language, no matter how insignificant, projects an implicit structure of the enunciation.

When I hear the sentence 'The little cat is dead', an enunciator immediately appears to utter it, even if I have no idea that it is Agnès in Molière's *L'Ecole des femmes* and that she is talking to Arnolphe. This enunciator is both inscribed in the statement and absent from it: 'it' is suggested or implied. The same would moreover be true if we started with the sentence 'I think, therefore

I am': at once *another* enunciator, involved, implied, would appear behind the 'I' who 'would send' him the words. Hence, the term enunciation, ex-*nuncius* (which still exists, for example in '*apostolic nuncio*'). If we follow these definitions, talk never belongs to the person who says it but always to the enunciator n^{-1} who has *given* it to her/him/it. Most of the time in narratives, interaction or interlocution in general, these structures pose no problem, either because, as in literature, the 'real' enunciator — the 'flesh and blood' author — has no importance and all that counts is the enunciator *n*, inscribed in the narrative or, by contrast, because in face-to-face interactions the presence of the speaker makes subtle shifts between the various levels of enunciation difficult to decode — which obviously does not mean that the speaker in the flesh talks 'about her/himself'.

Now, political enunciation has the singular characteristic of giving substance and reality to the question of delegation that makes us talk: 'When I talk, someone else makes me talk — I obey — and that someone else says only what I tell her/him to say — s/he represents me'. As in classical enunciation, this is not a question of similitude, of resemblance or of overlap between the person who talks and the one who makes her/him talk, as Socrates so naively believes when accusing Calliclès of a 'follow-my-leader' attitude. On the contrary, the abyss is infinite between the enunciator inscribed in the discourse and the one who occupies the hidden position of s/he who 'causes to talk'. However, unlike all the other forms of enunciation that I have mapped until now, this position is not for all that implicit, inaccessible or simply presupposed; it is filled by a host of activities: I can see the one who obeys me, and I can reveal myself, for intance through street demonstrations by those who claim to talk on my behalf.

To be sure, uttered talk never belongs to those who say it, but its origin is nevertheless identifiable and it is this identification that defines the political form of talking: '*In the name of whom, of which other agents are we talking?*' The continuous presence of all these others, all these *aliens*, either in the form of their irreducible multiplicity, or in that of their indispensable unification, partly explains the weight, the slowness and the curvature of political talk noted at the beginning of this article. This also explains why the question of the author, of authority, of authorization is consubstantial to the political way of talking. All the other forms of talk can be freed from their enunciator, can omit or disregard her/him/it — which is why they fly, glide, sweep along, go straight and fast — but not political enunciation.

This is particularly true since the very form of the circle compels the enunciator to occupy two positions which, in the theory of enunciation, is impossible. As Figure 2 below indicates, s/he who talks delegates the practice of speech to the person who talks on her/his behalf. The technical word is 'shifting' in another space, another time, another actant. There is nothing
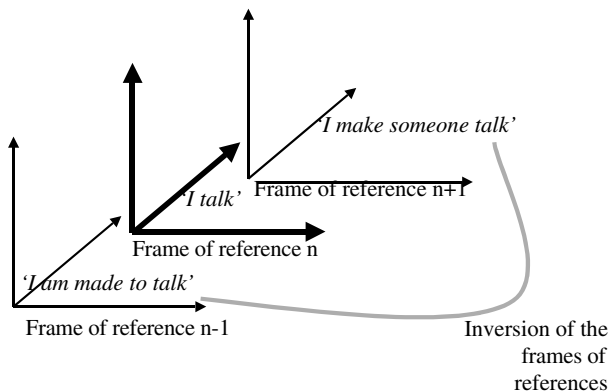
Figure 2   In other enunciations the frame of reference n−1/and n+1 are clearly different from the frame of reference of the enunciator; not so in political talk where there is a confusion between who makes us talk and whom we make talk.

original about that; it is what any narrator, writer or teller does, as in 'The little cat is dead' or '*Ego cogito*'. Now, here is what disrupts the usual frame: the one to whom talk has been delegated *also* occupies the position n^{-1} by prompting the speaker who makes her/him/it talk, to talk. 'You don't make me say anything other than what I make you say; it is from this that we draw the possibility of our autonomy and hence our liberty'. The 'I-me' is thus both the one who delegates and the delegate: s/he has been given the right to speak and s/he gives it. There is nothing less authentic, primitive, natural, indigenous than the person who delegates. Like the 'Me, I think' and for the same reasons, it is necessary for an enunciator of the first degree to have 'sent her/him to say' something, for her/him to start talking. And, of course, this enunciator ranking n^{-1} is not a unit but a multitude. We now easily see why political talk arouses a feeling of discomfort every time political forms of talk are judged in terms of reasonable reason — which, remember, cannot either account for the real artifice of the sciences, for it always seems outrageous to those who believe they master what they say.

There are at least four reasons for this weightiness, this slowness, this total lack of authenticity and naturalness so typical of political enunciation: (a) the person who 'causes to talk' remains visible and sensible instead of simply being implied, as in all other enunciations; (b) s/he occupies two contradictory positions, both in front of us — the person to whom we address our speech — and behind us — the person who delegates, who utters, the speech to us; (c) in these two contradictory positions s/he differs essentially, radically, from the one who talks, so that no resemblance is ever possible, no transparency, no immediacy, no *mimesis*, no overlap; (d) lastly, political talk is always the effect

of multiplicity: when I talk, it is the multitude of others who talk at the same time — their names, like that of devils in the Gospel, are Legion. Hardly surprising that no effort will be spared to avoid talking politically about something.

Above all, do not explain politics by something else

Finally, I would like to draw a conclusion that will enable us to revert to the difference between sociologies of the social (Durkheim) and sociologies of translation (Tarde). Basically, as I have said, the former take as a starting point groups whose aggregation is what the latter set out to explain. Sociologies of the social can afford to despise political enunciation (and do not deny themselves that scorn) by seeing in political rhetoric a 'lie that veils the real issues and relations of domination'. However, for sociologies of translation, there is no other way to produce groups than the (re)grouping allowed by the constant resumption of political representation — always in the broad sense. Consequently, any effort to rationalize political talk — by imposing on it Procrustes' bed of transferring information without deformation — precludes the only process, the circle, whose object is to create temporary groups. If we suspended the continuous resumption of the circle, *(re)grouping would simply become impossible*. We would find ourselves with agents with set shapes who would be the exclusive owners of their words; they would be totally identical to their interests, wills, identities and opinions. They would be neither utterable nor denounceable; their members would no longer be able to be represented, nor to command, nor to obey — nor even to belong.

If we are to accomplish the impossible feat of (re)composing a group from a multiplicity or, equally impossible, making a plurality obey a common order, it is necessary *above all not to start* with beings with fixed opinions, firmly established interests, definitive identities and set wills. This would guarantee failure, for any work of composition appears only as an intolerable compromise, even a dishonest one, and would break, shatter or annihilate wills, opinions, interests and identities. Conversely, if we set out to 'recognize' all affiliations, to 'take into account' all interests, to 'listen to' all opinions, to 'respect' all wills, we would never manage to close the circle — neither one way nor the other — since multiplicities would triumph, doggedly stubborn in their irreducible difference. The only way of making the circle advance, of 'cooking' or 'knitting' politics, of producing (re)groupings, consists in never ever starting with *established* opinions, wills, identities and interests. It is up to political talk alone to introduce, re-establish and adjust them.

For political life to be thinkable, utterable, speakable, it is therefore necessary for agents not to have fixed opinions but to be likely to change their

minds; for them not to have an identity but affiliations that shift throughout the course of the debate; for them not to be sure of the interests they represent but for their wills to waver or, by contrast, to develop as the relations of all the other agents who make them talk — right semi-circle of obedience in Figure 1 — and whom they cause to talk — left semi-circle of representation — gather together and change. We can now understand the meaning of that fragile, contradictory, meticulous alchemy that the Sophists called *autophuos*, and which has nothing tautological about it, despite Socrates' irony: he who talks does not talk *about himself but about another*, who is not *one* but Legion. Nothing less than this constitutes frank, authentic political expression.

It is in this slight dislocation of discourse that the mini-transcendence of politics lies, the one that enables it to agitate public life, to cause it to ferment, sometimes to boil, to disrupt but also to 'stir' it, so to say, before clarifying it, in any case to increase its temperature. Contrary to Plato's fears, the collective is never simply similar to itself; public life is always agitated. The idea that this form of life might lack transcendence, exteriority, excellence or spirituality, and that it is necessary to *add* to it a sovereign to close it off from the outside, like the beam that Jupiter ends up sending to the frogs who were asking for a king, has no more meaning when the constituent stammering of political enunciation is recognized: he who talks does not have speech; he talks on others' behalf.

If, like Socrates, we start calling for citizens who belong to and own themselves, who reason, who talk only by themselves for themselves, who display scientifically proven opinions, who are rooted in such unquestionable interests that they are prepared to die for them, and who claim identities greater than those of society, then no more politics is possible except ruled from Hades, the kingdom of the dead. Strangely, the image of a body of responsible and reasonable citizens, confident owners of their speech, corresponds to the most deadly form of body politic — and by body politic, once again, I do not mean society, the state or the nation, but any group that has to make itself exist as such through political life consistent with its scale.

If opinions do not belong to the person who uttered them but to her/his/its enunciator, if wills are not those of the citizen but of the people/person/ collective who make(s) them act, if affiliations are not those of today but those of tomorrow, if interests are not fixed but dependent on the number of elements that 'interfere' with them, we understand the catastrophic effect that can be produced on the fragile ecology of political talk by the sudden necessity, proclaimed from the rooftops everywhere, to 'talk truthfully', to 'be transparent', 'faithful', 'natural', 'oneself', 'authentic', 'direct', 'without artifices', 'without manipulation', 'reasonable'. All speakers suddenly find themselves paralysed by two contradictory injunctions: the former work of political enunciation which pushes for agitation and the multiplication of enunciation frames, and the contrasting new demand for one to talk 'for

oneself and by oneself'. If the latter triumphs it will mean that public life, political talk, is becoming rare, incongruous, even shocking and, consequently, so are the aggregates that it alone can temporarily compose. There will be fewer and fewer (re)groupings. Opinions will remain stubborn, interests obtuse, affiliations rigid, wills (both good and bad) rare.

It would be extremely dangerous to count on the natural inertia of politics, for if we suspend the 'forced' movement of the circle, even just for one day, the interests, identities, affiliations and wills each resume their own course and scatter like a flight of sparrows. If we despise politics to that extent it means, precisely, that there is no inertial force to establish its capital once and for all. A group that is no longer (re)grouped together by the necessarily artificial, deceitful, painstaking processes of re-composition, re-summoning and re-mobilization will soon cease to exist.

It is this evanescent character that exhausts those who lack the courage to travel the full circle, even before they start. It is so much more comfortable to stop at the stage of unarticulated complaints, of hatred for the elite, or — if one move further along the circle — to stay in one's office draped in a legitimacy that no longer needs to be put to the test. How convenient it would be to invoke law and order to be obeyed or — still following the circle — to complain about the absurdity of orders given by 'those above'. However, nothing works: neither the grumble, not the complaint, nor the hatred, nor the legitimacy, nor the law, nor the order have any meaning unless we set out again to square the circle. Counting on inertia to effect the transubstantiation of several into one and one into several, is a crime which, sadly, is committed in broad daylight and which arouses no indignation since we are all so busy proclaiming our hatred for politicians. By becoming indignant about their tricks, we deprive ourselves of the only quality they actually have. This is the whole paradox of so-called critical sociology: we shower praise upon it because it has had the courage to have 'a political impact' when, on the contrary, it gradually smothers all political form of expression by *replacing* it by the repetitive deployment of 'symbolic relations of domination' hidden behind the lies of representatives.

The thing that can hide the progressive loss of this form of enunciation from observers is the confusion often made between discourse that expresses a political *content* and that which forms a political *speech act*. However, it is perfectly possible to talk of elections, of power struggles, of international relations, of influence, etc., without for all that saying these things *politically*. To make them lose their own meaning, their key, their tone, their *spin*, it is enough for us to attribute to the matters thus mobilized an ability to be transferred *without deformation*. By talking of 'relations of domination' we think we are talking politics, but since these power relations move *in a straight line*, like double-click information, and not in a curved line, by translation, we

are not talking about them politically. Those who are indignant or who think that politics is a form of teaching, think they are busy with politics because they talk the language of indignation or organization, of legitimacy or the struggle against tyranny; but if they do not wish to travel the full circle their ranting is futile.[14] Basically, they wish their talk to be straight and direct, whereas it seems to be filled with profound and radical political considerations, they have in fact lost the tone that would enable them to sound political, the audacity to go around the circle again by representing the totality differently. They have lost 'spin', this marvellous translation of 'autophuos'.

If my hypothesis is correct, we can well imagine times when political talk will disappear or at least become so strange that it would immediately be banned. I am not thinking here of the practice of censorship of opinions, of a lack of freedom of speech regarding content. No, what I am referring to is a disease infinitely more serious, which might strike the very substance of political talk. By constantly despising this type of talk, constantly judging it by the yardstick of the faithful and transparent transfer of double-click information or power struggles, we may well end up depriving ourselves little by little of all its resources, as I have shown us to have done with science and religion — like by neglecting a road network we may end up making all journeys impossible and allowing only local relations. In these matters there is no reassuring destiny, as if talk were an inherent of the political animal and we could count on the nature of things for this invaluable form of enunciation to be preserved. Invaluable and fragile, it survives only with meticulous care by a culture as delicate as it is artificial. By replacing distorted representation by faithful representation, impossible obedience by pedagogy, composition of new groups by rectilinear transfer of 'relations of domination', we may well finish off politics for good or, in any case, cool it down to the point of it dying of numbness, without even noticing, like a careless pedestrian lost in a blizzard.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Dominique Boullier, Noortje Marres, Bruno Karsenti and Arne Hessenbruch for their comments on this paper.

2 In a very different tradition, Lippmann (1927, 161–162) makes the point marvellously: 'Because liberalism could not accommodate the universal need of adjustment and the reality of individual purpose, it remained an incomplete, a disembodied philosophy. It was frustrated over the ancient problem of the One and the Many. Yet the problem is not so insoluble once we *cease to personify* society. It is only when we are compelled to personify society that we are puzzled as to how many separate organic individuals can be united in one homogeneous organic individual. This logical underbrush is cleared away if we *think of society not as the name of a thing but as the name of all the adjustments between individual and their things*' (my italics).

3 From this point of view, the situation of political talk is very similar to that of religious talk, also accused of lies in comparison with a standard provided by double-click communication. See Latour (2002).

4 See also Latour (2001). Need we recall that in no way does the multiplicity of mediations reduce the objectiveness of science since it actually allows that objectivity. See, for example, Galison (1987).

5 'Public' is understood here in the sense given by Dewey (1927, 1954). It is not the opposite of private but a result of the unexpected and invisible consequences of actions. Thus, the public is not the general will, nor the state, nor the 'public good', but only that which defies us, which we blindly pursue and in the pursuit of which we mandate specialists as blind as ourselves.

6 This is where the importance lies of the wonderful examples so finely analysed by Boureau (1990, 1992) or, more recently Boureau (2001), especially the chapters on the invention of political talk.

7 As regards the latter, see for example, Callon (1998).

8 This is why it is perfectly possible (a) to distinguish politics from other types of enunciation, (b) still detect politics 'everywhere' when some group formation is at stake and nonetheless (c) avoid the empty claim that 'everything is political'.

9 I think nevertheless that it is possible to posit that the surprising trust that voters have in their compromised representatives amounts to a test on the 'degree of curvature' of their talk. At least with the corrupted one knows that they are not going to bore us to tears, like the upright, with a 'rectilinear' educative speech, that they are not going to talk to the public as if they were primary school pupils again.

10 It is interesting to notice that those who talk of sovereignty so much like Schmitt (1976) are unable to see that political talk requires a curve in every single of its points, so they concentrate in one single point the oddity of political transubstantiation. In effect they confuse the curvature of the political circle with the 'state of exception' , as if putting in Zeus's hands the full power of thunder and lightning. The effect is more powerful, but the peculiar spin of political enunciation is hidden just as much.

11 See Latour (2001, Chapters 7 and 8): 'If you have in mind that someone is going to deliver to you the type of specialized knowledge that will enable you to count politically here, whilst you do not identify with our system of government (whether you be better or worse than it), I think that you are mistaken, Calliclès. If you wish to achieve some form of pleasant and constructive relationship with the Athenians […] then *it is not enough to imitate* them : you have to be the same as them by nature [*ou gar mimètèn dei einai all' autophuôs omoin toutois*]. In other words, this person should be capable of effacing all difference between themselves and yourself [*ostis ouv se toutoi omoiotaton apergasetai*], and thus make of you a rhetorician and the type of politician that you wish to be, because everyone likes to hear their own opinions in a speech and is annoyed by the unfamiliar — unless you disagree, my friend' (513a-c) [my translation].

12 This is one of the great lessons of Lippmann (1922). It is, moreover, striking to note that all those who have defended curved politics — the Sophists first of all, Machiavelli, Spinoza, Lippmann — have been accused of being awful anti-democrats whereas they were the only ones striving to discover, in the sombre difficulties of political talk, the practical conditions that might enable democracy to be practised.

13 This somewhat blunt affirmation is developed at length in the three last chapters of L'espoir de Pandore (Latour, B 1999).

14 This is the basis for Richard Rorty's critique of the cultural Left and his appeal for a non-foundational political sentiment (Rorty, 1999). It should however be possible to propose a non-foundational theory of political specificity, which has been forgotten by the 'cultural left' but also by political science in general. See Laclau and Mouffe (2001).

References

Abelès, M. (1990) *Anthropologie de l'Etat*, Paris: Armand Colin.
Austin, J.L. (1970) *Quand dire, c'est faire*, Paris: Le Seuil.

Becker, H. (1988) *Les mondes de l'art*, Paris, Flammarion.

Boureau, A (1990) '*Quod Omnes Tangit*. De la tangence des univers de croyance è la fondation sémantique de la norme juridique médiévale'. *Le Gré des langues* 1: 137–153.

Boureau, A (1992) 'L'adage Vox Populi, VoX Dei et l'invention de la nation anglaise (VIIIe–XIIe siècle)', *Annales ESC 4–5*: 1071–1089.

Boureau, A (2001) La loi du royaume. Les moines, le droit et la construction de la nation anglaise, *XI°–XIII° siècles*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres.

Callon, M. (ed.) (1998) *The Laws of the Market*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Cassin, B. (1995) *L'effet sophistique*, Paris: Gallimard.

Cooren, F. (2001) *The Organizing Property of Communication*, New York: John Benjamins Pub Company.

Dewey, J. (1927, 1954) *The Public and its Problems*, Athens: Ohio University Press.

Ducrot, O. (1989) *Logique, structure, énonciation*, Paris: Editions de Minuit.

Fontanille, J. (1998) *Sémiotique du discours*, Université de Limoges.

Galison, P. (1987) *How Experiments End*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Greimas, A.J. and Courtès, J. (eds.) (1979) *Sémiotique. Dictionnaire raisonné de la théorie du langage*, Paris: Hachette.

Hennion, A. (1993) *La passion musicale. Une sociologie de la mediation*, Paris: A-M Metailie.

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (2001) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London: Verso Book.

Latour, B. (1992) *Aramis, ou l'amour des techniques*, Paris: La Decouverte.

Latour, B. (1987) Science in Action. How to follow Scientists and Engineers through society. Cambridge Mass, Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (1999) Pandora's Hope. Essays on the reality of science studies. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (1996) Aramis or the Love of Technology. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (2003, 2002a) *La fabrique du droit, une ethnographie du Conseil d'Etat*, Paris: La Decouverte.

Lippmann, W. (1922) *Public Opinion*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Lippmann, W. (1927 [1993]). *The Phantom Public*, New Brunswick: Transactions Publishers.

Norman, D.A. (1988) *The Psychology of Everyday Things*, New York: Basic Books/Doubleday.

Rorty, R. (1999) *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Schmitt, C. (1976 [1963]). in George Schwab, Translator, *The Concept of the Political*, New Brunswick: NJ, Rutgers University Press.

Tarde, G. (1999 new ed.) *Monadologie et sociologie*, Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond.