



Cartesian doubts...

(after René Descartes):

I doubt about everything,
except the fact that I doubt;
but if I doubt I must think,
and if I think I must be.
I think therefore I am.
(*Cogito ergo sum*)

Body mind split—*First dichotomy*

Ethics (after Hillel the old)...

Do not judge another person until you
reached that person's [*zim, his, sie, em, her, ver*] place. Do not speak thinking
that your words will eventually be heard/
understood—someone is always listen-
ing. Do not say, "When I have leisure, I
will study!" Perhaps you will not have
leisure?

If I am not for myself, who will? If I am
only for myself, what am I? If not now,
when?—*Second dichotomy*

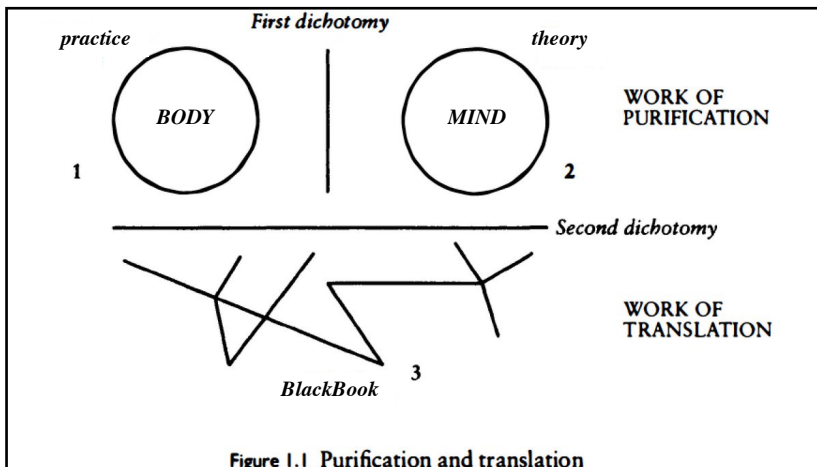


Figure 1.1 Purification and translation

Adaptation of diagram from Bruno Latour's book *We have never been modern* (1993).

The following lines are mainly *not* written as a teacher-response to the plenary we had in the after-care location at Ullevålsveien 15, going through the points of the course-evaluation sheet. But rather consider the responses as such, in perspective. It appeared that the students had read in advance.

The evaluation was structured into 1) the course premises, 2) the process, 3) short-term outcomes [the longer term outcomes are still in process]. Which means that we proceeded by the gross chronology of the course, starting with the beginning and concluding with where we are presently at this point.

Starting with the course-description, which this year was experimentally set up as a course *handbook*: the objective with the format being to reduce the number of e-mails, and also to facilitate the student's obligation to familiarise themselves with the course contents, structure, requirements and demands.

The hand-raise showed that about 12 students—of a 24 total—had downloaded the handbook. 7 had read through/familiarised themselves with it. 9 had consulted the handbook when in doubt. General comment: the handbook is as good as it gets, perhaps use the initial structure used in the evaluation-sheet.

Process. 14 students declared to have logged BlackBook entries from day-1. 4 declared to have started eventually. The question whether some did never picked up this regular activity, was not met with silence but a roaring laughter. About the process: learn from the QUADS—best to conclude and move on.

With regard to the *QUAD groups*, they initially tended to unfold as “therapy groups”. They give the chance to cross paths with students from the entire class. A rare occasion for that. To improve this function a *more consistent rotation of group-members* is needed. Bringing work to the QUAD will help.

It was suggested that alternating between *preset* topics and *bringing work*, could be a way to proceed. Also the participation of the course leader in all the QUADS, at some point. The QUAD-group eventually work best when the topic is covered, the questions are still open and move on. This duly noted.

Information. Still a lot of emails. They become multiplied by the parallel notifications on Canvas and Outlook. The repartition of information on the two Canvas pages—Home and Syllabus—is OK. However, a mention was made that the teachers all do this differently. Document-entries should be *dated*.

Contents. Environmental humanities, actor-network theory/science technology and feminism as conveyed through the 4 volumes on the curriculum and the 4 MA alumni presentations we had in the autumn: the answer was positive, but with the observation that the curriculum is rather Western.

We will have to find a way balancing the need to reflect on the *local* premises of the school, while letting the curriculum being infused by the input of references contributed with by the students over time. We had a short discussion of the need to look up some difficult words—or, ask: in/between classes.

Feedback was given on the form of delivery in lectures: some emphasising the trouble with an anecdotal form of delivery, others embracing the same challenges of makeshift contents as opportunities to learn. Maybe a counter-point to this discussion could be Edward Tufte's discussion of PowerPoint.

His critique of PowerPoint—as an infographics designer—is the it will prompt regimented forms of learning. Working as an agent of a cognitive style plugging in where the prompting of human experience in narrative, previously held sway in the crafts (W. Benjamin). We will deal more with this question.