

Enrichment Economy and Profit

Veranstalter Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung

Veranstaltungsort Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung

Termin 01.06.2017 17:00 Uhr - 18:30 Uhr

Lecture by Luc Boltanski and Arnaud Esquerre

"We call the processes that increase the value of objects "enrichment." Any object can be enriched, and the enrichment can be physical or cultural - through the use of a narrative device that highlights certain qualities of the object. The price of "standard objects" generated by mass production decline over time, while the price of "enriched objects" tends to increase over time. We analyze the specific way of generating a profit in this kind of economy by using the distinction introduced by Fernand Braudel in his history of capitalism, between surplus value based on work and surplus value based on trade. This distinction capitalizes on the displacement of commodities or consumers between places or between classifications."

Luc Boltanski is Directeur d'études at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris. He is the author of numerous books, of which the most recently translated into English are "Mysteries and Conspiracies: Detective Stories, Spy Novels and the Making of Modern Societies"; "On Critique: A Sociology of Emancipation and The Foetal Condition: A Sociology of Engendering and Abortion." With Arnaud Esquerre, Luc Boltanski has co-authored "Enrichissement: Une critique de la marchandise" (2017) and a volume on the expansion of rightism [right-wing politics] in French politics and thought: "Vers l'extrême: Extension des domaines de la droite" (2014).

Arnaud Esquerre is Chargé de recherche at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) in Paris. He is the author of two books on the sociology of contemporary astrology: "Prédire: L'astrologie en France au XXIe siècle" and the sociology of "cults" in "France: La manipulation mentale: Sociologie des sectes en France." He has also written a work on the disposition of dead bodies and has published most recently a book on testimonies of encounters with UFOs and extraterrestrials, under the title "Théorie des évènements extraterrestres: Essai sur

le récit fantastique“ (2016).

Further information

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