

A person is pouring milk from a metal can into a large metal milk can in a field. In the background, there are several cows and a large tree under a clear blue sky.

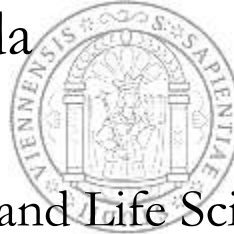
From Herding to Business

A Sociology of Translation of Dairy
Farming in Western Uganda

Frederik Oberthür, Ulrike Felt, Birgit Habermann, Christian Vogl

Background

- Part of the Project ‘Ways of Knowing – When Rural and Scientific Epistemologies Meet in Agricultural Development’
- Funded by the Austrian Science Fund
Der Wissenschaftsfonds.
- 2 PhD students covering case studies in animal breeding and forestry in Ethiopia and Uganda
- Institutions involved:
 - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
 - Department for the Social Studies of Science, University of Vienna
 - Institute of Development Studies, Sussex



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Development Studies

From Herding to Business

A photograph of a man in a white shirt and shorts milking a cow in a field. Other cows are visible in the background. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid.

- ANT-based analysis of the modernisation of dairy farming in Western Uganda
- Entry point: farmer-scientist interactions in an animal breeding research project
- Structure:
 - Historical Background
 - Theoretical Framework
 - The farmers' enactment
 - The scientists' enactment
 - Moments of Interaction
 - Questions and Reflections



Historical Background

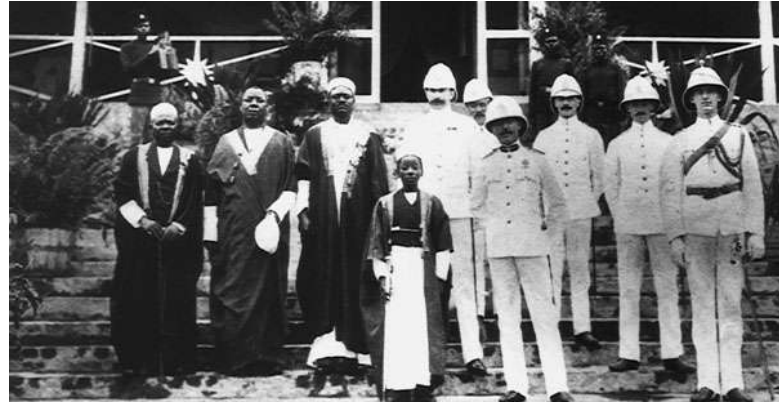
The Ankole Kingdom



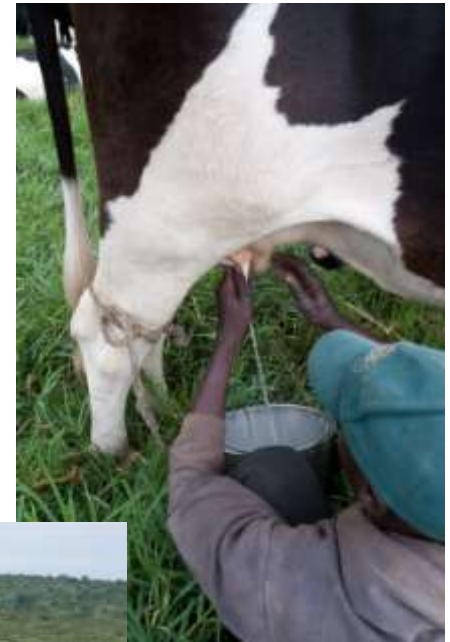
A Pastoralist Livelihood



Settling down



Establishment of a dairy industry

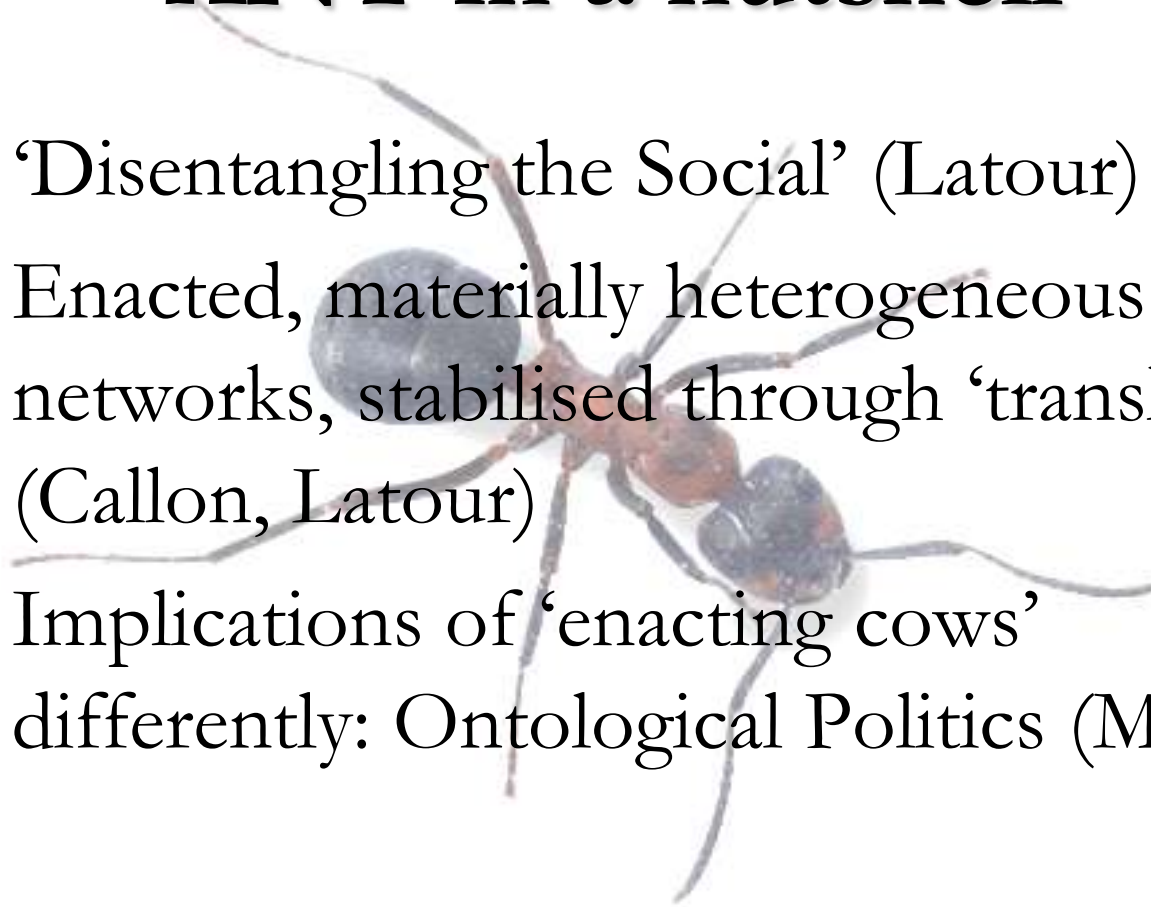


Theoretical Framework



ANT in a nutshell

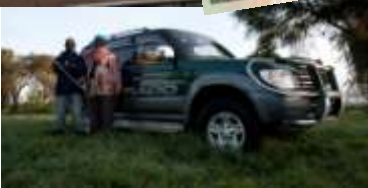
- ‘Disentangling the Social’ (Latour)
- Enacted, materially heterogeneous networks, stabilised through ‘translation’ (Callon, Latour)
- Implications of ‘enacting cows’ differently: Ontological Politics (Mol)



The Farmers' Enactment



Changes in Networks and Values



Translating Cross-breeds



People-based Information Storage and Sharing



Network Vulnerability



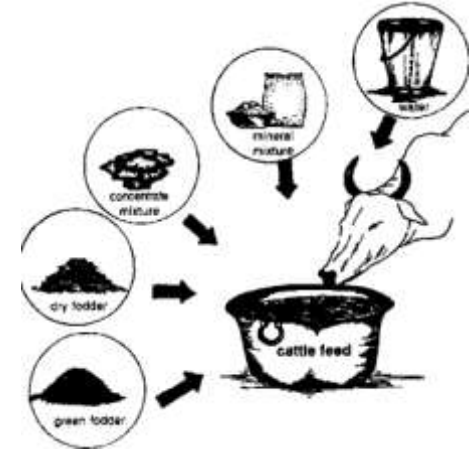
The Scientists' Enactment



Enacting Productivity and Control

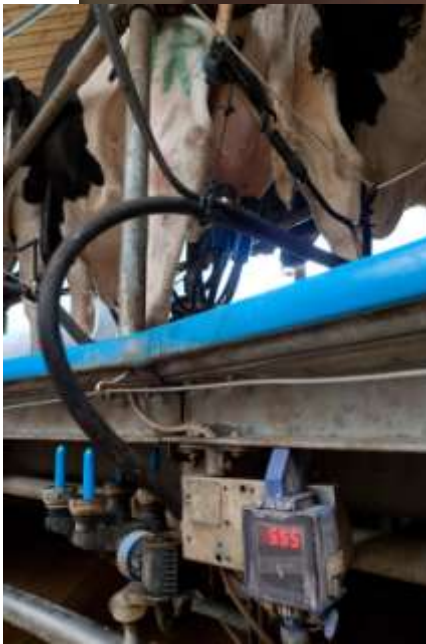


Breed as technology

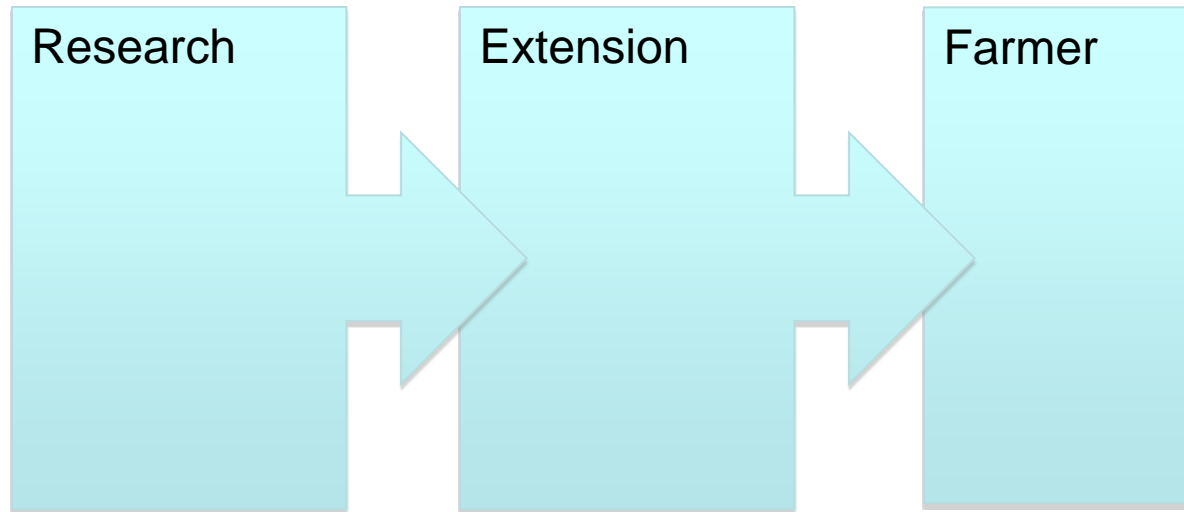


A screenshot of the Holstein Association USA website. The website features a blue header with the text "HOLSTEIN ASSOCIATION USA" and "The World's Largest Breed Association". Below the header is a navigation menu with links for "Home", "About Us", "Member Services", "Animal Search", and "Contact Us". The main content area includes a search bar, a "Recent Updates" section with a list of news items, and a "Learn more about Holstein Association USA's Genomic Testing Services" button. A photograph of a Holstein cow with a yellow tag numbered "4872" is also visible.

Trust in numbers



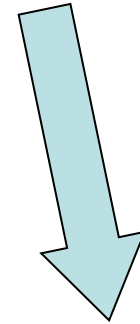
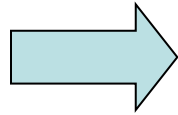
Technology Transfer



Interacting Enactments



Fact Creation and Maintenance



Workshops



Recording

A large sheet of paper with a grid, likely a data recording form, showing handwritten entries. The grid has multiple columns and rows, with some cells containing numbers and text. The paper is slightly crumpled and has some handwritten notes at the bottom.

Ontological Politics (Mol 2008)

Implications of ‘enacting cows’

The Question of Location



What is at stake?

Power and Control

- The issue of power. Not addressed, but highly relevant
- Use of findings: scientists as the farmers' spokespersons in spite of themselves
- Power-distribution in technological networks: the case of recording

Are There Options?

- Enacted networks as context-specific
- Not a matter of replacing one network with another
- Need for ‘fluid’ technologies (De Laet & Mol) to make translation easier

How to choose?

- ‘Styles of politics’: what roles should farmers and scientists take?
- Need for a more active role for farmers
- The researcher as ‘non-modern subject’ (De Laet & Mol)

Final Reflections

- Dairy farming/breeding as enactment of networks, addressing multiplicity of problems/solutions to keep them stable
- Tech-transfer not a transfer from lab to field, but a complex set of translations
- ANT/OP open these up to analysis, and lead to re-thinking of roles

Thank you!