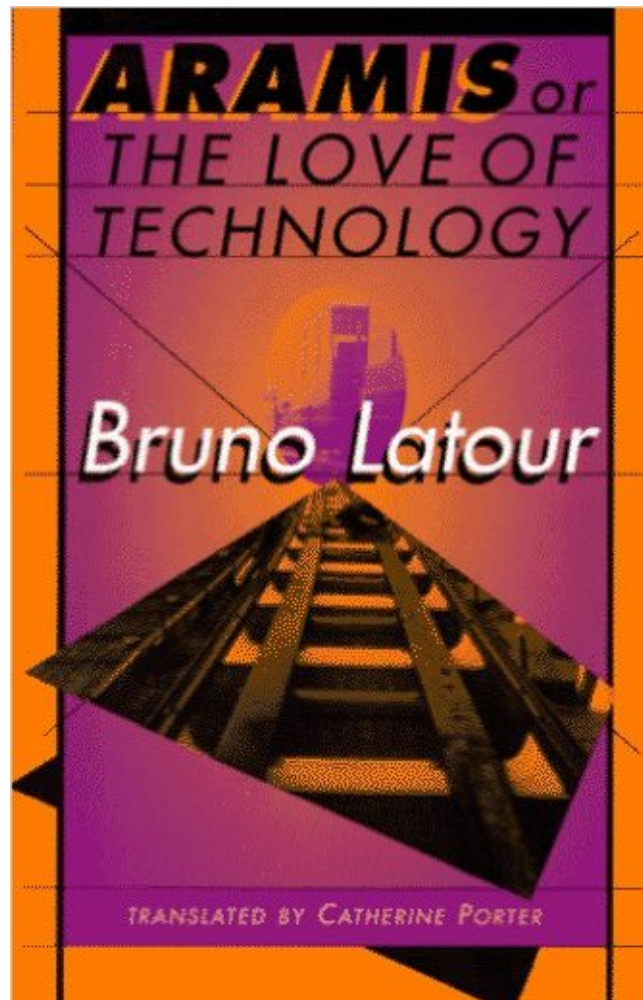


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Aramis, Or The Love Of Technology



Synopsis

Bruno Latour has written a unique and wonderful tale of a technological dream gone wrong. As the young engineer and professor follow Aramis' trail--conducting interviews, analyzing documents, assessing the evidence--perspectives keep shifting: the truth is revealed as multilayered, unascertainable, comprising an array of possibilities worthy of Rashomon. The reader is eventually led to see the project from the point of view of Aramis, and along the way gains insight into the relationship between human beings and their technological creations. This charming and profound book, part novel and part sociological study, is Latour at his thought-provoking best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Aramis, or the Love of Technology tells the story of the birth and death of a high-tech publictransportation project. The story is told not only from the viewpointof reports on the failure of the project, but also from the viewpointof Aramis itself, also mixing in expositions on the nature oftechnology, and interviews with the main actors in what appears to be a really complicated affair. The conundrum the author is after: Whydid such a promising project, into which millions of francs wereinvested in 13 years, and positive reports of progress were written inregular intervals, suddenly get cancelled without getting deployedanywhere?The answer lies, according to Latour, in te nature of high-techinnovation. Before they become "objects" that are out there and usedby people, technological visions are vaguely overlapping fields ofinterest through which different groups aim to achieve differentthings. As the subject of the project becomes 'objectified' more andmore, these

fields converge through compromises and realignments. In the case of Aramis, the RER, RATP, ministry of transport and the realizing company each had different interests, but assumed that the technology created would carry the project forward, giving it a reason to exist and a momentum. What they forgot, or didn't care about, according to Latour, was the fact that before becoming objects, technological entities need love and caring from their creators. Specifically, they have to be argued for, represented, taken sides with etc.

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