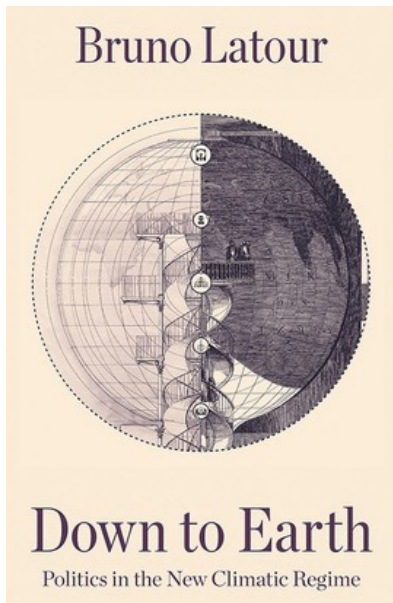


## Down to Earth – Politics in the New Climate Regime

Author: Bruno Latour, translated by Catherine Porter

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Just like *the Titanic*: the elites were busy boarding life-boats while the orchestra kept playing. If the common people of the world are in the same situation, left in a nightmare of post-globalization, how could they react? Bruno Latour, famous French philosopher, explores in anthropology and sociology to explain globalization. His study clarifies how newly oriented politics could work and how it would benefit society. He intends to bring people back down to earth.

The narrative in the book is questioning and metaphoric. It helps readers to understand the abstract topic, yet it obscures the underlying concept. Latour uses theories from his research fields to support his argumentation, though the long sentences in the English translation increase the complexity of explanation.

Latour takes an innovative approach to connect politics with human's attention to earth. He wisely avoids to explain which is better for the future, to keep on with the old globalization wave or to set more restrictions to protect local business. He provides a new argument: the increase of people's home-feeling on the earth will raise attention to where we belong. Besides the written argument, Latour makes vivid use of charts to help the audience to follow his dialectic journey.

There are however some critical issues. Firstly, it may not be a perfect book for people who are lacking a solid background knowledge in sociology, economics and politics. The explanation of concepts is not aimed at introduction, but at ongoing discussions with the well-known voices in the field. Secondly, it is a book which requires a long time reading and thinking; in other words, it is not suitable for "non-marathon" readers. Sometimes one sentence makes up an entire paragraph. It shows the author's dialectical way of argumentation and the complexity of the concepts, while in the same time, it loses audience interest easily. Thirdly, the book contains lots of new thoughts, yet they are provocative and may even be misleading. For those who don't agree with Latour's political preferences, it may be a struggle to be thoroughly persuaded. For instance, the idea of the European Union as the perfect model for future modernization in contrast to the UK as a closing country may sound unbelievable for Brexit advocates. Fourthly, it contains little discussion of the new climate regime, but takes it more as a settled condition. Those who want to get an answer may be disappointed after reading.

Overall, Bruno Latour wrote this book for people who doubt the current political situation and seek new stimulation. It is a book inevitably highly complex and abstract, while also containing a lot of strong personal preference. It is still an innovative book, proposing a different way to define traditional politics and the earth. If you are a marathon-reader who wants to get a sense of a new type of integration among politics, sociology, economics and regional-planning, it is a book worth reading.