

Reflections on Theories of Science and Technology Studies in Anthropology

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Abstract

Human beings everywhere are now exposed to advances in science and technology. Science and Technology Studies (STS) is an umbrella term for inquiries of science and technology in social sciences and humanities disciplines. Emergence of STS as a field in anthropology has resulted in concepts and theories which are being utilized to address anthropological questions of human entanglements with science and technology. Since 1980s, ethnographic methods and anthropological ideas too have substantially contributed to the growing corpus of STS as interdisciplinary field. The present paper discusses major concepts and ideas propounded by anthropologists to address the ubiquitous presence of science and technology in contemporary human life. Paper in conclusion argues in favor of introducing STS themes, theories, and thinkers in anthropology course-curriculum of Universities in India.

Keywords: Science and Technology Studies (STS), Ethnography, Anthropological Theories

Introduction

Science and Technology Studies (STS) refers to inquiries of science and technology in social sciences and humanities scholarships. Various names have been given to this multidisciplinary field of inquiry, for example, 'Science, Technology, and Society Studies,' 'Social Studies of Science and Technology,' and 'Studies in Science and Technology.' The acronym STS is often used to incorporate these labels. Science and technology started to become a central tenet of life in the 20th century, and scholars of the time were puzzled to understand the increasing role of scientific temper in human life. Initially, Philosopher inquired about the impact of scientific knowledge in shaping society and culture. Therefore, it is believed that philosophers of knowledge and epistemologists dominated the field until the 1970s (Hess 2012), and historians, sociologists, and anthropologists subsequently popularized it.

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