



Unconference Critique Digitale Report- Oct. 21-22, 2021

Promesses et contraintes de l'intelligence des réseaux 5G

Promises and constraints of 5G network intelligence

Panel C3- Lausanne

21.10.2021, 15h45 - 14h30

Panel suggested by Adrien Tournier

Reporter: Jérémie Garrigues

Presentation and general issue

Adrien Tournier is starting a PhD on the deployment of 5G in France under the supervision of Loïc Petitgirard and Camille Paloque-Bergès in the HT2S laboratory (Histories of Technosciences in Society) at the CNAM (Conservatoire national des arts et métiers). Adrien Tournier offered a long presentation of his current thesis work on the governance implications of 5G. Tournier wants to interrogate the challenges of 5G deployment. He talks about an archipelago of distinct technologies, and how 5G proposes a form of integration that does not overwhelm the underlying technologies. Tournier insists in particular on the additional politicization that 5G will produce. The number of arbitrations will indeed explode. 5G integrates virtualization possibilities that will make it possible to prioritize the network according to this or that type of service, media or usage. Tournier therefore imagines new forms of conflict around these possibilities. The discussion will focus on one of the consequences of 5G: its greater visibility on the territory. The 5G equipment is indeed less spectacular than the big and old antennas, but much more dispersed, and much more numerous.

Discussion and issue

The discussion questions the effects of tension that could arise against this dispersed and insecure equipment, in a context where 5G will itself be an important object of politicization. The more general issue that the presentation and discussion raised was thus to take seriously the very properties of technology, its materiality on the territory and the way software architectures are implemented and extended. Through infrastructure studies and Internet studies, the presentation and discussion insisted on the need to get one's hands on technology, at least in terms of understanding its properties, in order to have the opportunity to anticipate the effects of the deployment of technologies, and to better understand, and better criticize if need be, the issues that are being set up.