Call for Papers
Time(s) and temporalities of the Web

Paris, France
December 1-3, 2015

The concept of real-time, the promise of immediacy and the ever-increasing acceleration of exchanges are recurrent in the foundational discourses about new information and communication technologies. However, they are far from having disposed of time. Instead, the different ways in which we relate to time have multiplied, and structure the contemporary experience of our digital world: "revolutions" in technology follow one another uninterrupted, embedded in a long-term perspective, while the permanence of duplicated data lies behind the ephemeral discussion threads, and the complexity of events remains hidden behind the turmoil of the Net and its socio-digital networks.

This symposium wishes to bring to light and interrogate this variety of time(s) and temporalities, by means of analyses of the Web in its past, present and future dimensions, both individual and collective, social and technical, economic and political. Particular attention will be paid to practices that – from hyperconnectivity to cyber-flânerie, from data flows to Web archives – contribute to make the Internet a new experience of both instant and duration.

Five thematic axes will structure how this interdisciplinary symposium – organized by the team of the ANR Web90 project (http://web90.hypotheses.org) – addresses the temporalities of the Web, those it originates and those in which it participates, both in a diachronic and a future perspective.

Axis 1: The early Web

This axis will include the presentation of research on Web history, its periodization, its insertion in a long-term perspective (of media, communication tools, networks, identities, and so on), its evolutions over the last twenty-five years, and its adoption rates. The axis will also welcome epistemological, historiographical and methodological analyses on the ways in which it is possible to understand Web history. Presentations centered on the sources of Web history will also be welcome. The development of born-digital heritage, the "heritagization" of the Web and the variety of Web archiving efforts may also be taken as fruitful starting points for investigations of nostalgia, representations, instrumentalizations of the "early Web" history, and for the contextualization of memorial, patrimonial and historical issues.

Axis 2: Logics and formats of oblivion

The issue of digital "oblivion" – highlighted today by the claim of a "right to be forgotten" and by the multiplication of de-referencing demands by Internet users to the search engine Google – is now much more central than we previously thought in order to understand the evolution of Internet and the Web. Digital "oblivion" is, today, most frequently correlated with privacy-protecting procedures involving the deletion of traces; however, it is not and should not be limited to this dynamic, and it seems increasingly necessary to think about it as a major component of "becoming memory" as a process. In

this axis, presentations will thus highlight the sense and the diversity of formats of oblivion permitted or enacted by the Web, from the logics of obsolescence to the digital "wastelands" voluntarily created by users.

Axis 3: Analyzing the political and citizen's movements via Web archives and socio-digital networks

This session will aim at studying events, actors and processes that generate online and off-line mobilizations, and the role played by digital technologies in these mobilizations. This session will especially concentrate on the analysis of the transformations of political communication formats when spread out over the Web, be they carried by institutions or by more or less formalized groups, and will examine their complementarity with other forms of communication. It will aim at grasping the dynamics of "empowerment" of citizens via ICTs, the Web, and social networks in context.

This section will pay particular attention to temporality, to think the relationship between the rhythms of events, on one hand, and the rhythms of the Net and socio-digital networks on the other hand; to study the social and political conditions - for instance in terms of socialization or politicization - that encourage or discourage online engagement; or to question long-term consequences of online mobilizations. Presentations may also interrogate methods, needs and practices of leverage of Web archives by researchers, when it comes to the long-term understanding of social and political movements.

Axis 4: The digital memory of personal and biological data – Session organized within the frame of the ENEID ANR project, and the USPC programme Bodies, Networks, Digital Identities

The ENEID project (Digital Eternities – Post-Mortem Digital Identities and Memorial Uses of the Web through the lens of Gender), financed by the Innovating Societies call of ANR, and the interdisciplinary programme Bodies, Networks, Digital Identities, of Sorbonne University Paris-Cité, are both coordinated by Fanny Georges.

The explosive growth of uses of the Internet, of the Web and of socio-digital networks these past ten years has multiplied the possibilities of communication and expression for individuals, just as the occasions of surveillance, with the digitalization of identity and biological data. These formats of self-presentation on digital interfaces have deeply modified the relation to one's body, health and well-being, in terms of medical practices, prevention, and representations. Individuals are today able to measure by themselves their phenotypic, genotypic and biological data, or have it measured by a third party. This capacity to measure individual behaviours, and the unprecedented participation of users in the production of medical data, elicits what is both a societal and an entrepreneurial phenomenon (the quantified self). This double phenomenon, which we may associate to the emergence of beliefs in biological immortality, raises scientific, ethical and juridical issues, which will be interrogated during this session.

Axis 5: Human temporalities, technical temporalities

This session aims at interrogating the evolutions of our relationship to time, raised by uses of socio-digital networks and more generally of the Web – in a context where the fears

of cyber-dependence, typical of the Nineties, have been replaced by issues of hyperconnectivity and a "right to disconnection". Analyses may, for example, touch upon cognitive, social or economic aspects, but also on the communicative time, the "lived" or perceived time, the separation between different "times" of one individual, be they domestic or professional. Slow, cyber-flânerie, disconnection, hyperconnection will take center stage in this session.

This session will, at the same time, address the temporality of technical agents. Robots, bots, and other Web automates, their "life" as opposed to that of flesh-and-blood users, their interactions, their rhythms, may benefit from analyses drawing from Infrastructure studies, critical code studies and software studies, to name but three.

Practical information

The symposium will take place over a period of three days (December 1-3, 2015), in Paris, France, in particular at the Institute for Communication Sciences (CNRS, Paris-Sorbonne, UPMC), 20 rue Berbier-du-Mets, 75013 Paris, France (Metro: Gobelins).

There are no inscription fees, and the symposium organizers will support coffee breaks and lunches.

Participants will provide for their own accommodation and transportation costs. Practical information such as nearby hotels, transportation around Paris, etc. will be made available to participants in June 2015 at http://web90.hypotheses.org.

Languages of the symposium

The presentations, of a duration of 15 minutes, may be conducted in either French or English (the axis 3 will be entirely in English). In the absence of simultaneous translation, we thank in advance French-language presenters to provide for a video-projected presentation in English.

Submissions

The proposals are to be sent to ttow@cnrs.fr. They need to fit in one page, detail an explicit angle of analysis, and integrate a short bibliography. Authors can attach, in the body of their email, a short biography and a survey of their work.

Calendar

Deadline for the submission of proposals: May 10, 2015
Notification of acceptance: June 15, 2015
Inscriptions: October 10-November 15, 2015
International symposium: December 1-3, 2015
This information may be found on the Web90 project website:
http://web90.hypotheses.org
www.iscc.cnrs.fr

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