

Networks as battlefield



The construction of a Very High Voltage (VHV) line in the south Aveyron declared of public utility

From the Amassada we are launching a call. From this hamlet made of pallets, clacks, clay, timber, straw bales, anchored there, facing the VHV lines, their icy network. We are rooted here. Building ever more links with other territorial struggles. As in the ZAD, as in Bure, as in Roybon, as in other countries in struggle, we made the bet to build, the bet of LIVE. To live in these places, precisely against concreting that RTE reserves them. Preferring to tinker with our techniques than to bend to their Plan. Preferring to mix the mud for our cabins than to flatten us in front of the metallic horror of their infrastructures.

While the declaration of public utility for the construction of mega transformer south Aveyron has just fallen and which should lead to the evacuation and destruction of the Amassada, a friend on the spot entrusted us with these few fragmentary considerations on what involves this kind of infrastructure project.

This sounds like a judgment: "PREFECTURE OF AVEYRON, DREAL OCCITANIE, Order number 12-2018-06-18-001 of June 18, 2018, Subject: declaring of public utility the work of creation of an electrical transformer station 400 000/225000 volts denominated "south aveyron" and declaring transferable in favor of RTE Network of electricity transmission the necessary grounds to the realization of these works and noting the urgency to take possession of the expropriated goods ».

But behind the empty words of the administration, behind this technocratic language, what lies hidden, if not the "taking possession", thus the expropriation legalized. Behind this icy decree and the little paper-scraping hands that produced it, what there is here except this global power that measures after measurements, devices after devices, figures after figures, has spread over the entire surface of the world. What there is here otherwise ? Economy and its machines? His bulldozers, his cops, his grenades? "Urgency to take possession": that means destroying the hamlet of Amassada, evicting a peasant comrade from his land, excavating thousands of cubic meters of rubble, transported by hundreds of trucks for 6 months, finish killing a village already overwhelmed by a transformer and VHV lines on all sides, and for what? To build another transformer and other VHV lines ... to "evacuate" energy from wind farms ... to connect another transformer to other VHV lines ... to "route" energy to metropolises, logistics platforms, the data center, Frontex Taking renewed possession. Homogenize any difference. Flatten the singularities.



That the prefectural decree was signed upstream by the energy transition minister Nicolas Hulot, does not change much the fact that politicians are here only "facilitators". Simple transmission belt of the Economy. It's no longer a secret that today's power is shaped like a huge network of technological devices. Devices that manage self-regulating systems, connected architectures. A mesh of technologies that mill environments and individuals that circulate among these environments. But individuals reduced to electrons.

This incessant machining, this internalized management, becomes what is "natural". As RTE says: "As the nerve impulse contracts our muscles, the electricity that flows through our network vibrates the economy." Surely the power is no longer where we were believed it was. To believe RTE, finished the institutions, the parties, the big trade union associations, the family, the nation ... all digested in the megamachine and its industrious wheels. This probably began in the nineteenth century and has continued to accelerate until today when power has been transferred from the deliquescent political body to the glorious body of technocratic engineers. The same who, allied

of industrials, bankers, could prophesy in 1866 "We have embraced the globe of our networks of iron, silver, gold, steam and electricity. Spread, by these new ways of which you are partly the creators and the masters, the spirit of God ".

In view of this, the managerial plan of Macronism is clearly the old industrial fanaticism of the Organization, now augmented by the power of algorithmic calculations. To govern is to make society and the world function like a big data company. By eliminating in the process the incapable, those who do not want to "take the train" ... The rest is a matter of raw material, and exploitable energy, is not it!?

"The policy of the future will be directed to the administration of the material interests of society; the general men of industry, the bankers and the engineers, will then be politicians at least equal to that of the reasoners, the regulators. Our efforts must strive today to reveal to them the political character that is in them and that they do not feel "

Michel Chevalier, The Globe, 1831



In the body of the reticular megamachine, a transformer, hideous in itself, must appear, by its very operability, as a central piece of power. A machine among the machines. The modernization of the VHV lines, according to the world electricity market, becomes "a national priority", not so much for the "energy solidarity between the territories" as RTE likes to remind, but for the purely technical organization of the territory. And those who dare to oppose this organization will be called "enemies from within". We must know that the nightmarish realization of the "Third Industrial Revolution", programming the complete assimilation of networks (whether informational or energy) is not the advent of the "horizontal power" that sells us this idiot Jeremy Rifkin, but that of a hegemonic totality. Through the technology of "smart grids" (Jacques Fradin The revolutionary genius, smart life ...), each being will be reduced to a watt and byte beam: a sensor-transmitter for this new Decentralized Order. An order multiplying its technologies of power into a set of peripheral machines, but all of which refer to the same totality. Smart cities, autonomous vehicles, the 5G, the Linky meter, google home, the scattering of connected objects, in short everything that makes the cybermanagerial texture of this system. But a system that remains deeply colonial. Who needs energy, a monstrous need of energy and information.

A system whose voracious appetite in megawatt and terabyte must find somewhere its fuel, come to excavate the resources it will devour. Hence continues the mad advance of extractivism worldwide, always further, ever deeper. And that Macron is ready for anything, even to open mines in all French territories, to root out the precious lanthanides, capital elements of the "third industrial revolution".

"By organizing the space for the purpose of a repeatable movement, by vectorizing it, by working the material so that it opens and responds to the appetites of human life than, the Hanseatic counters, the trade of silk, the influence of Venice, the conquest of the American West, Western military strategy ... could have taken place. Outside the lines of the network there is emptiness, the unknown or the hostile; and even within the network, one can feel a permanent effort to prevent the return of the unknown, the surge of the unexpected. The network first appears as a possibility of communication between points belonging to heterogeneous spaces. The network must make its way through the opacity of the different to establish a link of exchanges between foreign places to one another. The network is a work that denies the original heterogeneity of the world: wanting the reversibility of movement and exchange, it is forced to constitute itself as a continuous space tending to the Same, since it is a question of guaranteeing the safety movement. Also we will change the material terrain and possibly the social terrain on which the network must prosper, so that they do not present risks for the cross-linked user "*Philippe Forget, Gilles Polycarpe, The network and the infinite. Essay of Philosophical and Strategic Anthropology.*

By the political validation of the mega transformer RTE, there is clearly the will to accelerate an administrative process probably too long in the eyes of the industrialists who are so impatient not to see their "PROJECT" come true, slowed by what they call in block either the "contestation" or the "local population". As if to conjure up all the differences, all the singularities, all the friendships that make the beings who live on this territory. Where there is flesh, contacts, links, where life still promises some basic solidarity, encounters, party, building and eating together, they will only see abstraction. No doubt because they no longer understands life. The life they helped to make so unrecognizable. By dint of having put it into calculation.

And reduces everything to management. Their language oozes the Function. On the one hand, they intend to manage the possibility of setting up a "ZAD" on the other hand to reassure "an uninformed population". This is probably why from the beginning, the project was hidden from this same "population" ... A "population" too "rural" who refuses "to be connected" for his own good. .. Unworthy of the progress that is coming to him ... But in fact, who would want this progress? This progress makes you sick. Would these dear experts of the public inquiry come to build their house below the lines? We do not live under these cables 24/24 without one day or the other to suffer the deadly nuisances in his body. Diseases that are never recognized by the minions of RTE, escaping, when questioned, by an odious denial: "but finally, the electromagnetic waves of the lines are not worse than those of your microwave oven .. " And if the inhabitants of all the neighborhoods come to resist their bad prank public inquiry and well RTE will dispense with this "population". This is also why the investigators believed good in November 2017, and in perfect collaboration with the gendarmerie who feared "overflows" to relocate to the other end of the department. On the other hand, RTE seeing that his investigation did not take and that the "digital register" was flooded with good jokes, insults or arguments that disassembled his project, rectified the shooting by calling on a whole clique of communicators, and energy companies (EDF, ENGIE, EIFFAGE ENERGY, ENERIA, CAP SOUTH, EOSE ENGINEERING ...) to come and post their position "very favorable to the southern transformer project aveyron". Positions that have been included in full in the final report of the public inquiry. There is no longer any doubt about who holds the strings of this kind of "consultation procedure": invariably the developers and their cohort of underlings.

But it would be wrong to look at this reticular power under the sole angle of its "greatness". There is not a single-big-network (be it energetic or computer), but a mega-network of miniaturized equipment. A mega network that supports all sizes and shapes of mesh. It is no longer the states, the communities, or the parties that hold these "public facilities" but rather a network of networks, a megamachine, which is at once everywhere and nowhere. Who no longer has the shape of the factory of modern times, but whose wheels crush men have become the norms themselves. The smoke

from the chimneys has given way to a fog of electromagnetic waves. And the discipline is more and more like widespread profiling. Each individual becomes a cybernetic sensor determined by his behavior, his phone calls, his site consultations, his GPS courses, his power consumption. Watch the Linky. In addition to bombarding with Khz the habitats, as a sensor, it is the archangel of the GAFA. It is the intercessor by which companies will come directly to the source of tons of information on the "habits" of each. Which has been understood by a lot of people. From the building to the smallest hamlet, neighbors are organized at least to block the installation of Linky by subcontractors of Enedis.



« Non seulement le pouvoir capitaliste avec ses polices, ses armées, ses administrations, s'exhibe à tous les coins de rue, s'immisce dans toutes les séquences de la vie quotidienne, ne cesse de prétendre aménager l'ensemble du territoire en super-équipement-goulag, mais, sous une forme moléculaire, il s'infiltré partout, dans l'école, dans la famille, dans l'inconscient. Pour pouvoir être partout à la fois il démultiplie son visage unique. » Guattari, *Equipements collectifs et assujettissement sémiotique*, 1979.

"Not only capitalist power with its police, its armies, its administrations, shows off at every street corner, interferes in all the sequences of daily life, does not stop pretending to develop the whole territory in super-Gulag equipment, but, in a molecular form, it infiltrates everywhere, in the school, in the family, in the unconscious. In order to be everywhere at once, it multiplies his unique face." *Guattari, Collective equipment and semiotic subjection, 1979.*

The twisting function of the "smart grids" that are being set up today in the name of the "energy transition" is due to this double face: on the one hand the gigantism of infrastructures (THT, transformer, central, wiring, data center) on the other, their incessant miniaturization. Making each body a producer and a control relay. This induces a "naturalization" of technological equipment, on a daily basis, in all the dimensions of space and time. A naturalization where it is a question of smoothing all the material constraints like to hide the internal functioning of each object within the networks. The more "simple" and "intuitive" an app is, the more "designer" an object is, the more it wipes out all the technological and normative chains that have contributed to its existence. What is the logistical framework that makes Amazon's Echo object work with her intelligent voice assistant Alexa who "anticipates your needs"?

Les *smart* constituent bel et bien une mise au pas des comportements dans un chantage incessant à l'efficacité et à l'auto-évaluation. L'idée même de transition, dont RTE comme EDF propulsent la propagande à un niveau inégalé, comme son nouveau mantra publicitaire pour légitimer les « réseaux de demain », cette idée participe elle aussi à la *régulation des conduites* au sein de la Mégamachine. La transition n'est que le nom d'un nouveau dispositif qui sélectionnera les bons et les mauvais « comportements énergétiques ». Elle n'est aucunement le passage de la société fossile-nucléaire à la société « bas carbone » mais la stricte perpétuation de l'état nucléariste. Elle est la neutralisation des discontinuités du vivant, l'effacement des brèches du temps, le *gommage de toute altérité*. Un monde où les capteurs et les algorithmes constituent le *milieu, l'ambiance* dans laquelle navigue l'humanité « en transition ». Mais une humanité qui ne répète que le plus vieux programme de l'inévitable Progrès, dans lequel toute bifurcation sera évacuée en tant qu'

« hérétique ». En bloquant une de ses infrastructures, par exemple la construction d'un méga transfo, on libère de fait, non seulement un fragment d'espace, mais aussi la possibilité d'une temporalité inédite, non linéaire, non continue. Une temporalité nôtre qui échappe au réseau.

The smart ones do indeed constitute a setting of behaviors in a blackmail incessant with the effectiveness and the self - evaluation. The idea of transition, which RTE as EDF propel propaganda to an unparalleled level, as its new advertising mantra to legitimize the "networks of tomorrow", this idea also participates in the regulation of conduct in the megamachine. The transition is just the name of a new device that will select the right and wrong "energy behaviors". It is not the passage from the fossil-nuclear society to the "low carbon" society, but the strict perpetuation of the nuclear state. It is the neutralization of the discontinuities of the living, the erasure of the gaps of time, the exfoliation of all otherness. A world where sensors and algorithms constitute the environment, the atmosphere in which humanity navigates "in transition". But a humanity that only repeats the oldest program of the inevitable Progress, in which any bifurcation will be evacuated as a "heretic". By blocking one of its infrastructures, for example the construction of a mega transformer, one releases in fact, not only a fragment of space, but also the possibility of an unprecedented, non-linear, non-continuous temporality. Ours temporality escapes from the network.

A friend wrote this lately

"The inhabited places exist only to ward off the totalitarian rise in a univocal way of imposing a World, the so-called" globalization "as warlike commodification, based on the reduction of the multiplicity of practices and relations to one: the general counterpart. Fanning all the carnal activities on the only abstract work, the flamboyant desires on the only standard of the money-king, the fabulous fictions on the only monetary credit. This is what it is to think: the autoimmune fiction of the One as a capture of the common people. And, correlatively, the negation of the irreducible disappearance,

the creative attachments, the living localities: the preventive conjuration of any possibility of the communisation of experience. "



If networks are a battlefield it is primarily because they constitute infrastructures of dispossession. Their time is the only one of the managerial organization of the world. Their decentralized power a canvas of capture. When reading history, the networks are only a hypothesis but constantly reactivated by the powers in place, and this in the West since the nineteenth century. It is a hypothesis that has since become increasingly operational. But its power is as powerful as its equipment imposed by force than by the imaginations it has put in place. It must be said that industrialism has always been, indiscriminately, a machine of war and a religion! And RTE works because it deploys a "religion of interconnection" where the abstract community of the faithful is made up of millions of consumers and especially their "faith" in the network. One does not fight a religion in the same way as an army of infantry. But we can desecrate the active principles, dismiss the

instances, and make its temples for common use, or leave them to brambles ... The hypothesis of networks is the hypothesis of a world where the bodies would be put in contact by the only intermediary of their devices. Networks becoming bodies. And bodies becoming networks. It's the nightmare that is coming up behind the chilling smiles of managers and their infamous "platform" that it is logistical or social.

On our side, it is a question of not allowing this hypothesis to continue its planetary destruction. By constituting itself into interrelated communes, it is a question of not allowing the networks to be the hegemonic matchmakers of any contact between the bodies. But to compose our own lines of passages, our own meeting points. To develop a network surely, not the unified one always referring to Himself, but the network of lives-in-struggle, always singular, always heterogeneous. Something like a vital tissue, an existential fabric woven into the Earth.

We will not accept to live like cyborgs in a cyborgs society. Preventing the totalization of the living could be the focal point of all those for whom the world is not reduced to an economic abstraction. Building ever more links with other territorial struggles, as in the ZAD, as Bure, as in Roybon, as in other countries in struggle, make the bet build, the bet of LIVE. To live in these places, precisely against concreting that RTE reserves them. Preferring to tinker with our techniques than to bend to their Plan.

Pas Res Nos Arresta !

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