

# Work rationalisation and intellectual work of engineers in high performance work organisations: tools of rationalisation in the IT sector

## Overview

- The IT industry has lots of things in common with other sectors, but some crucial differences regarding rationalization and pressure on workers.
- Extremely high pace of technological and job change, constant learning and training
- Both harbingers and recipients of rationalisation and automatisisation
- Software developers resistant to commodification, but have their own forms of precarity; guild ethics and mentality

## Research method

- Unstructured qualitative interviews with software developers, snowballing method
- Survey in three languages about first starting out in the IT sector, the current job in the IT sector and current company, and experiences with control, stress and autonomy. Finally some general questions about the career, the IT sector and future prospects are asked.
- Small ethnographic project involving programmers working on a hobby project

## Research questions

- What is the nature of knowledge work within an IT framework compared to other sectors?
- How does the work rationalisation of intellectual work of IT workers in Europe express itself? More rigorous supervision, the deskilling of work, splits in skill evolution within the IT profession?
- How does this link with the financialisation of capitalism? Does IT lead to new or other forms of capitalism?
- In a framework of occupational sociology, what groups can we distinguish in the IT sector today?

## Next steps

- Future technological evolutions: internet of things, open source movement, peer to peer, ...
- Notions of self service and netocracy (Google, Facebook, ...) and impacts on work and rate of profit
- Notions of collaborative economy, p2p and open source movement undermining cognitive capitalism
- Notion of knowledge production through creative commons

