

Reading guidelines and questions – Lecture 6

This lecture is about the relation between IT architecture and governance. This relation is important to understand as IT shapes how information infrastructures are put in place and develop over time.

Hanseth, O., & Modol, J. R. (2021). The dynamics of architecture-governance configurations: an assemblage theory approach. Journal of the Association for Information Systems, 22(1), 5.

This article presents an analysis of the relation between systems architecture and governance structure, and theorizes the concept of architecture-governance configuration. The parts that are more interesting for us in this course are the following:

1. Introduction: this explains why the issue of architecture governance configuration is relevant in Infrastructure research.
2. Related research: this presents the research done on the issue of tension when making sense of the evolution of information infrastructures (i.e. how and why information infrastructures change over time)
3. Assemblage theory: skip. You do not need to know this theory in this course.
4. Research design: skip
5. Coevolution of Rec@t and it's a-G configurations: this presents the empirical case of the study. Pay attention to why the three phases are different and what does it mean to have a centralized configuration, a dual configuration, and a platform configuration.
6. Rest of the article: skip.

Hanseth, O. (working paper). When stars align. The rise and fall of e-health infrastructure regimes.

This article presents an analysis of how the health sector in Norway has transformed over the years in relation to IT. The article makes use of the concept of “socio-technical regime”, and identifies different types of ‘regimes’. This is not a core article in the course, but it is a very good illustration on the evolution of the national infrastructure in the healthcare sector.

Guiding questions:

1. What does the author mean by sociotechnical regime?
2. How is a regime different from another? give an example.
3. How does the author explain why a regime changes and another start?

Overall questions:

- What does governance mean?
- What does it mean ‘centralised or decentralised’ when talking about governance?
- What is the IT architecture of an infrastructure?
- What does it mean ‘loose or tight’ coupling when talking about architecture?
- Why are governance and IT architecture related?
- How are architecture-governance configurations related to stability and change in infrastructures?