

FROM ACCELERATION TO TARDINESS. QUALITATIVE TEMPORALITIES IN THE TAMING OF VISIONS IN INNOVATION PROCESSES

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Abstract:

Modern innovation discourses are framed by promises and expectations of pioneering technoscientific renewal and groundbreaking future improvement. Often, these promises and expectations are based on technoscientific visions of the future. Once activated and socially relevant, these visions can provide resources for generating new meaning and orientation in contexts of impending social and technological innovation. They provide a narrative to temporally frame innovation discourses and structure their practices. Radical visions therefore have the potential to create interfaces between a present that is characterized as stationary, or slowly changing, and a surprising future that has escaped any notion of linear development.

In the process of activating visions in innovation discourses and attempts of putting these into practice, however, they often lose their radicality. This panel is concerned with the role of visions in innovation processes, their changing nature once they go through processes of institutionalization and the process of diffusion of visionary ideas of the future.

Panelists are asked to discuss and elaborate the central hypothesis that speedy realization may be central to notions of radicalness and disruptiveness in visions and in innovation discourses, whereas they often suffer from tardiness, delay, hesitation, deferral, procrastination, or deceleration. The precarious nature of original radicalness and intended disruption tends to fade out the closer it gets to realization, concretization or social diffusion of visions accompanying innovations. What may seem, at a first glance, like a commonplace description of adjustments necessary when moving from (utopian) thinking to practice, points at a deeper level to an interesting constellation: Particularly under the guiding principle of social robustness, sustainability and responsibility, technoscientific visions are often "tamed", but provide orientation, gain transformative capacity the more they are presented as solution-orientated and feasible. Thus, promised disruptive innovations often result in incremental innovation processes.

The panel seeks interdisciplinary thematic and reflexive contributions as well as specific case studies that answer to, elaborate on and add to the following questions and observations:

- What role do radical visions play in the course of innovation processes?
- How do visions change in the course of innovations processes?
- In how far are qualitative dimensions of temporality, such as, on the one hand, speed, acceleration, or pressure, and, on the other hand, tardiness, delay, hesitation, deferral, or deceleration, effects of institutionalizing visions?
- Can the qualitative dimensions of temporality be analyzed as tactical means on the level of institutions, policy makers, stakeholders, or society at large, to dilute and attenuate radicalness and disruption?
- What are concrete examples for the relevance of qualitative temporalities (from acceleration to

tardiness) in radical visions and (discourses and narratives about) disruptive innovations?
• How are disruptively staged visions tamed and transformed into social robustness?

Key words:

radical visions, disruptive innovations, qualitative temporalities