



UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRE FOR FUTURE.

**TECHNOLOGY FUTURES AS SSH
RESEARCH AGENDA**

TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Examines **short- and long-term consequences** (for example, societal, economic, ethical, legal) of the application of technology

Investigates scientific and technological developments with a focus on their **impacts and possible systemic and unintended effects**

Produces **analytical knowledge and assessments of socio-technical developments** in order to provide **policy and design options for decision-makers**

UNCERTAINTY OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF COMPLEX FUTURE CONSTELLATIONS

ACTION BASED ON
KNOWLEDGE OF FACTS !



KNOWLEDGE FOR
ORIENTATION !

DESIRE TO KNOW WHAT LIES AHEAD IN SOCIETY, POLITICS, ECONOMY

FUTURE AS EPISTEMIC CHALLENGE

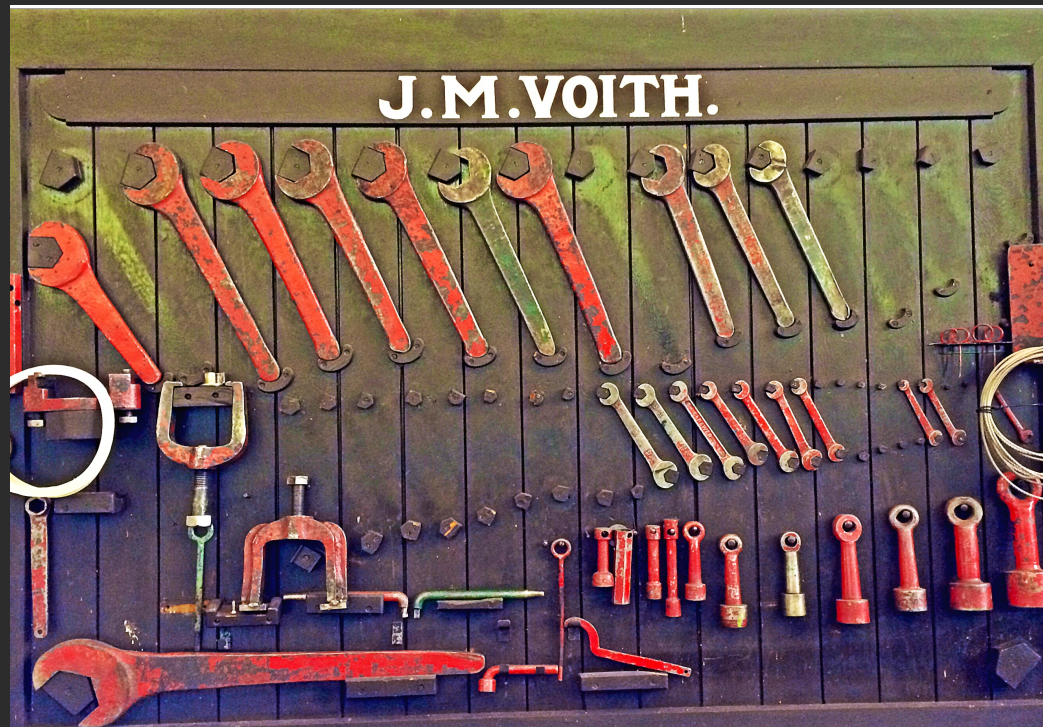
Is anticipation of future under conditions of uncertainty possible?

YES, BUT...

This knowledge is risky....we create it regardless!

NO, BUT...

There is a social desire for knowing the future — and we have to deal with it!



FROM ANTICIPATION TO DESIGN

ANTICIPATION

Assessment of possible/plausible future impacts

CRITICAL STATE OF NOT KNOWING

Social desire for future - how to respond?

KNOWLEDGE FOR GOVERNANCE FOCUSING ON REGULATION OF PRESENT PATH DEPENDENCIES

Future as semantic battle field - who comes first?

PROACTIVE DESIGN OF FUTURE - CONSTRUCTION OF NARRATIVES

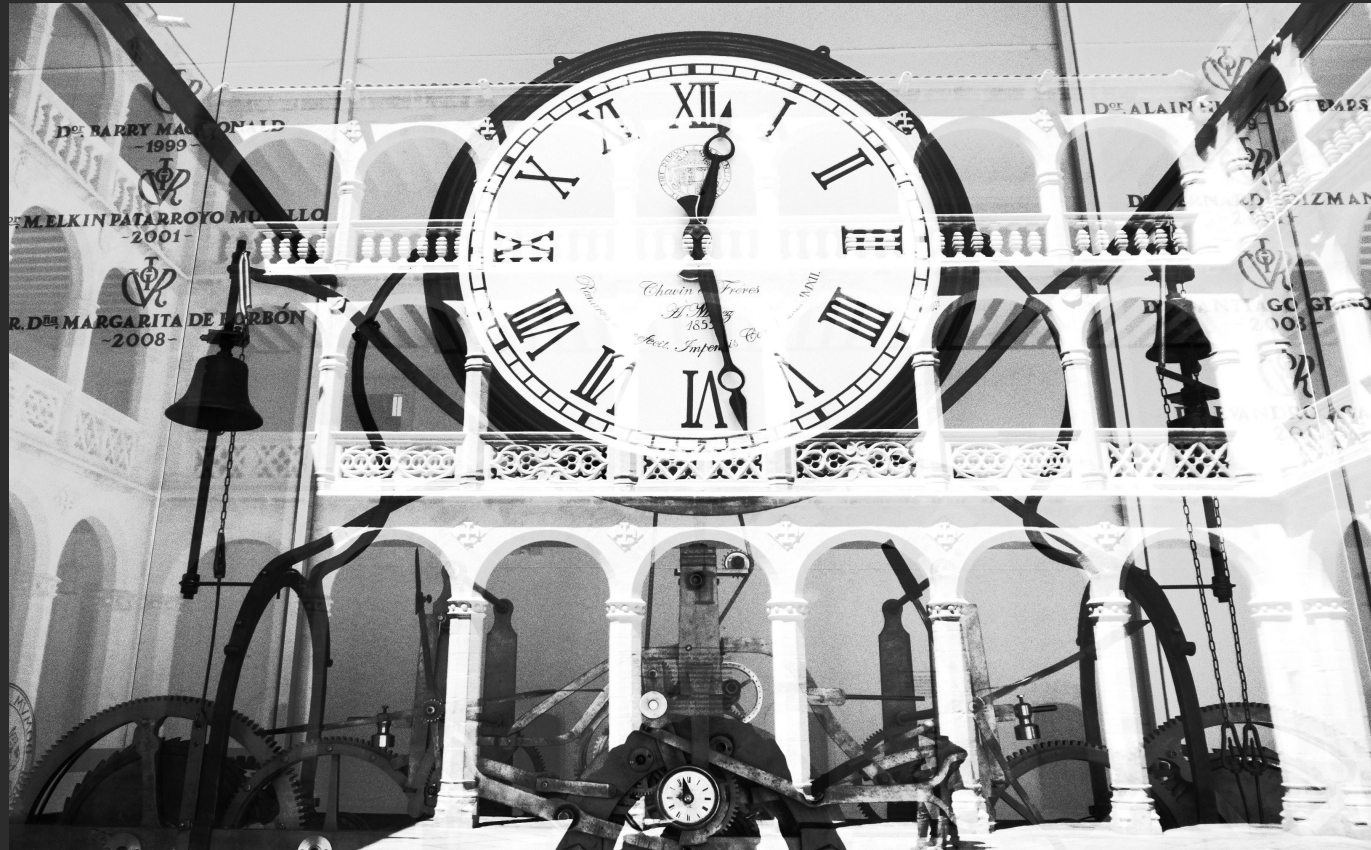
**Vision/Expectation assessment
(Discursive TA)** focussing on current
discourses and structures of expectation,
normative assumptions, legitimacy,
desirability

**Advise/ Mediation/
Participation (Participatory TA)**
focussing on power structures, political
constellations, organization of discursive
processes and controversies

**Reflexive Role of SSH in design
processes / integrative sciences**
Constructive TA

FUTURE AS EPISTEMIC CHALLENGE

- ▶ Future as a structure of expectations, practice of attributing meaning, story, narration, discourse
- ▶ formed in present times, relating to past experiences and knowledge
- ▶ setting pathways into possible and plausible futures, preselection





MOVING FROM THE EXISTING
TO THE PREFERRED . . .
**IS FUTURE A
DESIGN
PROBLEM?**

Winter Sleep

Role of SSH Critique and Reflexivity in an era of design ?



TRANSFORMATION IN UNDERSTANDINGS OF

SCIENCE – **DISCOURSE** – **FUTURE**

SCIENCE AS CULTURE:
NEW UNDERSTANDING
OF SCIENTIFIC
KNOWLEDGE AND
PRACTICES

Science in
Society

INSIGHT INTO
CONSTRUCTIONIST
POWER OF DISCOURSES
AND PATH
DEPENDENCIES

Intervention
in Narratives

RELATING TO FUTURE
WITH PRACTICES OF
ATTRIBUTING MEANING
AND UNDERSTANDING/
CREATING
CONTROVERSIES

Principle of
Responsibility