

Long-term temporality and e-infrastructure development

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A recent report identified time as one of the three main base-line tensions that complicate e-infrastructure development (Edwards et al. 2009). My interest is particularly on long-term temporality because it is an inherent consideration with infrastructures in that they typically grow and take hold over longer time periods and are expected to last for multiple decades if not centuries. Conversely, technology development is typically occupied with short-term, increasingly real-time, temporalities and carried out through short-term funded projects.

In my investigation of e-infrastructure work I have for several years used the notion of infrastructure by Star and Ruhleder (1994, 1996). It has worked well as a sensitizing concept with regard to the relational, historico-socio-technical aspects of infrastructure, but has not been particularly strong on temporal concerns. Recently we proposed an extension to the notion to more explicitly include the temporal dimension (Karasti, Baker and Millerand 2010). Currently my aim is to learn about other concepts, models and theories of infrastructure available in STS literature, and consider how they account for time and long-term scales. During my spring 2011 stay at IAS-STS I will read on both classics and more recent works, for instance, *Large Technical Systems* (Hughes 1983, Mayntz 1988), and *Biography of Artifacts* (Pollock and Williams 2009). My intention is to consider and relate them with studies of e-infrastructure development asking: to what extent are they applicable for the investigation of e-infrastructure development?