

T08P01 / For a Temporal Approach of Public Policies

Topic : T08 / Policy Discourse and Critical Policy Research

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

While there are many studies about the temporality of public policies (sequencing, stability, agenda), the number of cognitive studies on political time remains quite marginal (except for some general theoretical essays). Nonetheless, the understanding of political time from its representation and perception by the politicians offers a large amount of perspectives. The purpose of this panel is to display not only an overview of the question but mainly to open the way for a cognitive analysis of time in public policy studies.

Political time is always dealt with indirectly. As well as in philosophy, this concept raises numerous numbers of issues concerning on the one hand the definition of the notion and its mechanism, and on the other the use of a method and the object itself. Chronological time is often opposed to perceived time. The former is easier to consider because it is scientific. The events and actions of the actors are periodized which results in a linear history. On the contrary, the cognitive approach gathers tools capable of expressing and deciphering the politicians' motivations by contextualizing them. Time therefore becomes relative and fragmented, less cyclic and much more ambivalent.

The temporal study of politics can not ignore one or the other of the aforementioned approaches. These times are woven together, they coexist and conflict. The aim of temporal interpretation of the political sciences' objects is a better understanding of the ways in which the individual takes sides in a shifting context. It's a question to analyse our position as researchers, with the aim to understand the politicians' vision of both past and future whose pace is necessarily different to the one we subsequently encounter. It forces the political researcher to analyse not only the action but also the intent, in order to highlight the gap between the experience of the politician and his horizon of aspiration. This gap allows us to acknowledge the individual or collective frustrations that are the main chore in the implementation of public policies. This panel promote approaches that combine temporalities, therefore analysing the interlinking between the long and the short term, by specifying the place of events and individual actions in the production of public policies. Of course, that will imply interdisciplinarity (sociology, political sciences, geography, history, anthropology, philosophy). It is an suitable way to associate the different dimensions that compose the perception of time. The goal will be to answer a certain number of questions:

- How do politicians project themselves into the future and how it affects their construction of public policies?
- What makes a politician decide that an individual or a collective historical factor should be used to produce the political discourse of his action?
- How do politician produce history depending on the future that he envision ?
- How does the political discourse produce a representation of time that influences public policies ?

This list however isn't exhaustive, it is merely proposed as a framework for this panel.

References

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The papers (theoretical or empirical) will present and question the tools available for the temporal study of public policies. We will debate of their creation, evolution and diffusion, furthermore the way the action is implemented in the discourses.

We will focus on the submissions that will try to combine philosophical, sociological and political sciences approach. Like Daniel Innerarity and Dominic Desroches have tried to do it 2011 in their essays by exposing transformation and contemporary figuration of the political time. But it has be found complicated to applied an empirical approach of political time as it can be found in the liquid modernity of Zigmunt Baumann or the acceleration of Hartmut Rosa. Such points of view inform the reader on the massive research field which is time, temporality, paces and cycles. To some extent, Klaus Goetz' and Jan-Hinrik Shaling's works on temporality within European institutions have started to link theoretical and empirical approaches. They debate the terminology of temporality and how it as influence the functioning process of the European institutions.

In the sense of these approaches, I would like to submit two axes for contributions.

1. Axe 1 : A theoretical approach. This panel offers to create a link between those studies and the question of public policies in the empirical view. Due to the scarce literature on this subject doesn't allow us to point precisely the object of the communication, it encourages researchers to put forward heteroclite, interdisciplinary and daring approaches. In this way, we will be able to sum up the questions involving the link between time and politics.
2. Axe 2 : An empirical approach. Time is one of the factor to analyse public policies. In many cases, that's not the main focus. Nevertheless, this situation raise questions and results about possibilities to study time in politics. We will be interested by communications that enlightens temporal aspects of public policies. How temporalities influences policies' production ? How politicians manage their times ? How they anticipate temporalities in debates, discussions and negotiations ? And finally, how they manage unexpected temporalities ?