



20 novembre 2014

Lieu & Horaire : de 14h00 à 16h30
Sciences Po Grenoble, Domaine Universitaire
1030 avenue centrale 38400 St Martin d'Hères
(salle Domenach)

Le groupe de projet PopAct organise, en partenariat avec le séminaire d'Etudes européennes du Laboratoire PACTE, un séminaire articulé autour de deux interventions sur le thème :

« Governments and parties' responsiveness to citizens. A comparative perspective »

■ Intervention de **Laura Morales**, professor at the department of politics and international relations of the University of Leicester (United Kingdom) sur **Electoral Mandates and Responsiveness. Comparing Government Reactions to Public Opinion in 'Normal' and 'Unexpected' Policy Junctures.**

This paper seeks to contribute in an innovative way to the study of democratic politics by examining the dynamics of governmental responsiveness to the different and multiple expressions of the opinions of the public between elections.

Some scholars contend that governments are not to be expected to yield to public demands and preferences between elections, as citizens have their chance to influence policy-making through the electoral process. Politicians are expected to anticipate and reflect citizens' preferences in their electoral platforms, and thus responsiveness should emerge during elections. Between elections, the reasoning follows, representative government entails citizens having already attributed a representative mandate to elected legislators and governments. If a mandate exists - or, at the very least, if elites perceive a mandate to exist - then, why should we expect governments to be responsive to public opinion's preferences and demands between elections?

However, the existing scholarship does not reflect much on situations when elections cannot be thought as providing a clear message about policy direction on a specific issue or matter. There are numerous occasions in which unexpected situations emerge or 'external shocks' happen that question the existence of a mandate even if the political parties in government might have previously (publicly) expressed their views on the issue. In these situations, responsible governments have a choice between following their own policy preferences - as legitimate representatives of the citizenry - or following public opinion - the responsive choice. Furthermore, when the policy issues become publicly contested at these unexpected junctures, governments must choose which side to take or how to balance contending views.

This relationship between mandates, representation and responsiveness is crucial from a democratic theory perspective, yet it has been little analyzed. Does governmental responsiveness differ depending on the capacity to claim that a legitimate electoral mandate on a given policy issue exists? How do governments react to the expressed opinions of the public when unexpected situations or decision-making junctures emerge?

To illustrate the normative and analytical implications of electoral mandates in the study of governmental responsiveness, this paper compares two different policy-making junctures $\frac{3}{4}$ nuclear energy policy after the Fukushima disaster and the policy making process that aimed at passing legislation regulating internet piracy $\frac{3}{4}$ in around 20 Western democracies. In the case of these two policy areas, the industry lobbies (i.e., nuclear energy production companies, cultural industry, etc.) and the collective action actors (i.e., environmentalists, internet-users, etc.) had opposing positions regarding the preferable direction of policy change and they often mobilized their positions in the public sphere. At the same time, the views of the general public were often known to the governments through the publication of opinion polls.

With a unique event history dataset collected through the ResponsiveGov (<http://www.responsivegov.eu/>) project from national news agencies' newswires, public opinion surveys, legislation and parliamentary databases, and newspaper editorials in around 20 Western democracies between 2007 and 2013, the paper compares the degree and conditionality of governmental responsiveness across countries and how it differs between 'normal' and 'unexpected' policy making junctures.

■ Discussion : **Simon Persico** (PACTE, Sciences Po Grenoble)

■ **Laura Morales** is a professor at the department of politics and international relations of the University of Leicester, UK. Before joining this department in May 2011, she held teaching and research positions in the Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM), the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), the University of Murcia and the University of Manchester. Her interest lies especially in the areas of political behavior, political parties, the politics of immigration and comparative politics. She is currently engaged in several projects on the politics of immigration, and on civic and political participation in established democracies.

■ Intervention de **Luis Ramiro** (lecturer at the department of politics and international relations of Leicester, UK) sur **Varieties of Radicalism. Examining the Diversity of Radical Left Parties and Voters in Western Europe.**

Radical left parties (RLPs) are one of the traditional party families in West European party systems. They have been present in some party systems since the 1930s, have experienced important fluctuations in electoral support, and gone through important episodes of crisis and party change. Despite having been considered a distinctive party family, some authors have distinguished several RLPs subtypes based on both, their different origin and their general ideological outlook. Whereas some RLPs have primarily stressed classical distributive issues, others have espoused Eco-socialism and the issue and policy agenda of the 'new' social movements. According to available descriptions, the RLPs family ranges from orthodox communist parties to a wide range of ideologically eclectic radical left-wing ones. However, the degree to which these RLPs subtypes are associated to significant differences in the policy proposal of parties that belong to the same ideological family has not been analysed. At the same time, little is known about whether these predicated West European RLPs subtypes are associated to differences in their voters' characteristics. In this paper, we dissect the radical left family of parties across different sub-types and then analyse their electorate. First, using manifesto and expert survey data on the policy positions of RLPs across a number of issues we distinguish among different types of RLPs. We find that RLPs differ in the extent to which they adopt 'new politics' issues, and we propose a classification of 'traditional' and 'new left' RLPs. Second, using cross-national survey data coming from the European Election Studies series and multilevel multinomial models, we examine the ideological, policy and social differences in the electorates of the varieties of RLPs. We find socio-demographic and attitudinal differences between the voters of 'traditional' and 'new left' RLPs that are consistent with the programmatic differences of the parties..

■ Discussion : **Simon Labouret** (PACTE, Sciences Po Grenoble)

■ **Luis Ramiro** is a lecturer at the department of politics and international relations of the University of Leicester, UK. He holds a BA, in Politics and Sociology (Universidad Complutense de Madrid), MSc Social Research Methods (University of Surrey) and PhD Social and Political Sciences (European University Institute). His research interests are in the study of political behaviour, organizations and parties. He has conducted work on the political and organizational strategies of different political actors, especially parties, on how they adapt to new environments and how they implement organizational innovations. In the field of political behaviour he is particularly interested in the analysis of political activism and involvement. Ramiro's most recent publications have appeared notably in *Party Politics*, *European Political Science Review* and *Mobilization*.

La séance sera animée par Céline Belot et Isabelle Guinaudeau (CNRS, PACTE, Sciences Po Grenoble)

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