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**The problem of Time in policy change:
a dia-synchronic perspective of the book-mark.**

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Introduction

The question of time in policy analysis is one of the most important problems but one of the hardest to take seriously. In this contribution, we will not only consider long term or historical perspective to consider Time as a variable of analysis. Let us start with a jump in time back to the first policy analysis studies. Time as variable was then always present, but frequently quite ambiguous. For example, Harold Lasswell considers policy as an important decision process (Lerner and Lasswell, 1951). In his writing, it seems that policy was a decision enshrined in a temporal reality with a period before decision, the moment of decision and a period after decision. The most important is thus not to analyse a timeless decision but to account for the effects of time on the reality observed.

More generally, one of the essential questions of policy analysis is how and why policies change. In order to resolve this kind of question, the researcher needs to integrate Time as a variable and to separate what characterizes a policy before change and what characterizes a policy after change. To perceive policy change, we always need Time: change and Time are consubstantial concepts. The main potential differences in analysis are often based on the unity of Time (short, middle or long period) to measure the extent of policy change, and to highlight the most relevant mechanisms in the causality of change. If we come back to the main authors, we can consider three different ways to take Time seriously .

First comes the stage approaches (Hupe and Hill, 2006). Harold Lasswell was probably one of the first theorists to propose splitting the policy process into different stages. For him, the policy scientist must identify the different policy stages, such as intelligence, promotion, prescription, invocation, application, terminaison, appraisal (Lasswell, 1971, Lasswell, 1942, Lasswell, 1956). This kind of approach was developed differently by certain authors like Herbert Simon (Simon, 1947), Charles Jones (Jones, 1984), Robert Mack (Mack, 1971a), R. Rose (Rose, 1973), or Aaron Wildavsky and Judith May (May et Wildavsky, 1978). The main

idea is to build an autonomous stage with its own logic and temporality. The “problem” stage is generally an unstable stage where a new problem blew away an older one to the agenda setting very quickly. The “policy formulation” stage and the “implementation” stage are generally more stable ones. In this model, the most ambiguous part is to resolve the question of Time between stages. For some authors like Lasswell, the “stage” model is a cyclic process, each stage process has a specific Time depending on the stage before and the stage after. In this kind of configuration, each stage depends on the previous one in a cyclic process. For example, generally the policy change depends on the problem agenda setting. But most of the time, the stage is firstly a heuristic cutting and the question of Time is ambiguous.

A second approach is a dynamic approach. This kind of approach needs to compare the policy-making process to a system which has its own logic (Bardach, 2006). The “dynamic” concept comes from natural sciences with the idea not only that the system is moved but that this move at the time T is dependant on the position of the Time $T-1$. So, in policy analysis, this idea is to understand that a policy change at the time T is essentially dependant on the policy at the time $T-1$. The path dependency model (Pierson, 2000) or the Punctuated and Equilibrium (Baumgartner et Jones, 2002) model is typically a dynamic approach for example.

To take Time into account, all these models need a medium period like a decade or more. The main idea is that policy change is a slow move and the researcher needs time to achieve observation of this real movement. By using a medium scale, the researcher manages to transform the policy as an object and policy change as a move from which he can produce law. The will to import concepts from natural sciences (like “dynamic”) is really symptomatic of these phenomena. In this case, the cost of the policy translation into a pure object is the incapacity to combine this observation with a micro behavior observation. Or, how can we epistemologically justify the incompatibility between the meso and the micro approach?

Historical institutionalism is one of the rare models which tries to produce hypothesis to combine the short and the medium Time. It proposes to consider that the effect of Time is to limit the possibilities of the actors' choice. Epistemologically, the difficulty here is that it was very difficult to distinguish the bias of Time from all the other biases that society produces by rules (Bachrach et Morton, 1963).

In this text, we want to examine the question of Time differently. We want to understand Time through some characteristics like irreversibility and ephemera. Firstly, we would like to come back to the traditional view of Time inside policy analysis. Secondly, we want to develop how a certain concept of Time questions in a different way the policy process. Our hypothesis is to consider that time constitutes the main issue for those actors who want to inscribe their decision inside a time-frame. To solve this kind of problem the actors try to block the time as a reader uses a book-mark.

Policy cycle and stage approaches, the ambiguous use of Time

The introduction of Time began by the capacity to consider Time as an autonomous dimension. Certainly, it wasn't really conceptualized specifically but this dimension appeared very early. When Arthur Bentley explained that we must understand government as a process (Bentley, 1908), he wanted to break with the "idea of State" as a timeless concept and to speak about group activities. He preferred to use the concept of "pressure" rather than "stroke" which supposed movement and time (Merriam, 1921). The introduction of time as a specific dimension that the authors must take into account corresponds to observing movement and distinguishing a period before and a period after. During the time before decision, different "pressures" could be exerted. Introducing time allows to separate different periods and to identify several phases. In the same way, Charles Merriam considered that the "new aspect of politics" (Merriam, 1925) had become — with the capacity of political science

— the study not only of the law and its timeless logic but also of the political processes, including the historical development of ideas and institutions, all of this influenced by the method of natural sciences.

Herbert Simon introduced discreetly this question of Time in his famous study about rationality and administration (Simon, 1945). He began to analyze the classical concept of rationality to underline its paradoxes and ambiguities. He developed the idea that decision is a process with different stages: a stage to determine the goals; a stage to produce alternatives; a stage to consider the consequences of alternatives and a stage to compare these consequences with the goal. If he criticizes in this model each stage (considering that the actors can't identify all the alternatives, foresee all the consequences or simply organize them into a system) he reinforces the decision as a stages process.

Even in the stage process, we can notice that Simon takes time into account in different parts of his book. One of the problems he explains is that of Time. He shows that rationality forgets Time to understand behavior. He noted that a decision taken on Monday can restrict the strategies that the actors can choose on Tuesday. More explicitly, he suggests that the influence of the day before depends on its implementation. If the decision taken on Monday is implemented immediately, the range of possible strategies is reduced on Tuesday. But if it isn't, the decision could be completely revised. In the examples he chooses, Simon underlines the importance of long term. If you have built a shoe factory, you generally don't ask everyday if you must produce cars. In a certain way, we can say that Simon introduced the question of Time inside the problematic of the reversibility of decision. We will come back later to this essential concept of reversibility introduced indirectly (he doesn't use the term) by Simon.

A second aspect of Time in Simon's book is the criticism of rationality as a timeless concept. Objective rationality, understood as a perfect rationality, doesn't need Time, Space and actors to exist. It's only a cognitive operation. Simon explains that one of the reasons why the actors can't consider every alternative is a question of Time limit. The imperfect choice between some alternatives is inscribed in a specific time-space and can only be understood if we take into account Time as a specific variable.

A third aspect of Time is the question of memory and habit. The actor's memory and habit are inscribed in his behavior. The past invites itself into the present by different means like memory, note, trace, etc.

If Simon reinforces the stage processes, Harold Lasswell goes further by proposing a model of policy cycle (Lasswell, 1956). He identifies 7 stages of decision process: "Intelligence or obtaining and processing information; promotion or advocacy of general measures; prescription or the formulating of statutes and related norms; invocation or the provisional characterization of concrete cases by prescriptive rules; application or the final characterization; appraisal or the estimating of success or failure in the attainment of policy goals to date; termination or the cancellation of a prescription and the disposition of claims founded on expectations that were justifiably raised when the prescription was in effect" (Lasswell, 1966).

For Lasswell, these seven phases of decision process are what the political scientist must observe and they must become a guidance for policymakers (Lasswell, 1971). In this way, he wants to take into account the political and social context inside the decision process. He proposes that the researcher maps the process to "provide a guide to obtaining a realistic image of the major phases of any collective act." (Lasswell, 1927). Each stage is in this case a

specific operation with its own logic and its own temporality. The difficulty here comes from the ambiguity of the seven phases and the temporal link between.

This model is a guidance to produce policy. In this case, the recommendation to policymakers is to organize the phases one after other. The seven phases become a Policy Cycle with a temporal logic. This model is also a heuristic model to structure and organize the observation of a reality. In this case, the reality is complex and the model is a heuristic way to cut it and to make it intelligible. The ambiguities with this model are to know if the cycle is only a prescriptive way (“ought”) or if the cycle (the temporal succession of phases) is an observation too (“is”).

The cycle model encountered success and was prolonged by authors like Robert Mack, Charles Jones or James Anderson in the 1970’s (Jones, 1984, Anderson, 1975, Mack, 1971b). Charles Jones identified twelve phases for example. We generally find different stages for the problem, for the decision and for the implementation. But, in these more sophisticated stage approaches, the same ambiguities are still present. Upon first reading, we observe independently the problem agenda-setting in a specific time and space and the policy change in a second phase with its own logic. The ambiguous question is to know if the problem agenda-setting is a phase before policy change or if the problem ought to be a phase before policy change. In the case of “is”, the succession of phases becomes causality and time becomes linear. In the case of “ought”, the phases are only a heuristic instrument which enables to compartmentalise reality according to an a-temporal logic. This means that, most of the time, the different phases do not follow each other but intertwine.

The dynamic approaches, a prison Time

With the incrementalism approach, Charles Lindblom opens a new way to analyze the policy change (Lindblom, 1958b). If he uses the concept of the bounded rationality to observe the

decision process, he proposes to understand the decision of the actors in function of the decision taken before. The main difference with the policy cycle is that the main variable to understand the policy change is not the problem agenda-setting but the policy before. The object “policy” has its own move and we can use the concept of dynamic to underline this autonomous move.

Like Herbert Simon, Charles Lindblom wants to separate the “ought” from the “is” and he suggests that the incrementalism theory describes what it is and not what ought to be (Lindblom, 1979). For him, the behavior of actors is conditioned by the limitation of human capacity. The actors who participate in a decision process haven’t the capacity to explore all the alternatives and prefer to analyze and choose a solution which is near the existing policy, a “familiar policy alternative”.

If Simon explains that the actors choose the alternative they prefer, Lindblom defines the preference in function of policy. The introduction of the policy substantive aspects inside the approach changes the method in depth. Lindblom doesn’t concentrate his attention on the causality of change (like the emergence of the problem) but on the movement of policy.

At first glance, the question of Time is missing from this approach. Lindblom observes an instantaneous reality and the behavior. The past sneaks discreetly into the present through the actors’ experience and memory. The incertitude of the consequence of a not familiar alternative (the incertitude of the Future) is one of the main reasons constraining the present and the behavior. With Lindblom, the “incrementalism” becomes a universal concept to follow the policy change: the movement doesn’t depend on the Space-Time-Space it has created. Incrementalism is an ahistorical model which takes Time into account only to distinguish each stage of incrementalism.

The incrementalism process is a dynamic process in a way considering that the policy feedback is the first constraint for policy change. More generally, Eugene Bardach considers that a dynamic begins when a policy system's output becomes a system's input (Bardach, 2006). In this way, one of the first complete conceptions of policy dynamic come from David Easton.

Easton began by considering all the political interactions as a behavior system. The political system is made up of complex interactions that must react to a lot of perturbations. He refused the hypothesis that the actors of the system seek to produce or return to an "equilibrium" but understand the system in perpetual move.

Easton imagines two kind of perturbations. The first perturbation comes from society and other systems. The description of Easton of this perturbation is really close to the agenda-setting process. He considers that a problem comes from a collective group who can formulate a problem. He insists that formulating a problem is not enough. The problem needs to be translated into a problem that the participants consider that the public authority can solve. But this collective demand is not enough to stress the system. The collective group needs to collect enough support to densify their problem. In a certain way, the demand is the substance of the stress and the support is its intensity. In this way, David Easton insists on the work of the "spokesperson" to translate the problem and aggregate enough actors.

In this way, the first kind of input can be compared to the stage approach because the input is the cause of the system perturbation and of the possible answer that the system can produce: an output which is most of the time a policy. But the main idea of Easton is to combine this first kind of perturbation with another kind: the feedback from the outcome. Because he refuses this idea of returning to equilibrium, we can consider that the system is in dynamic.

As the Linblom's model, the Easton approaches takes time into account only to separate each stage, problem or feedback stage. But, for him, this model is universal and doesn't depend on the Space-Time operation. It's a unhistorical model too.

The punctuated equilibrium model from Jones and Baumgartner also tries to combine the agenda-setting process and the feedback effect. Their first idea is to explain that most of time, policies are stables. As they explain, "policy stability is a function of two distinct sources. The first is "friction" in the "rules of games" that make it difficult to take place in political system. The formal rules that govern policy require a great deal of energy to overcome. (...) The second source of stability may be found in the cognitive and emotional constraints of political actors – the bounds of their rationality." (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). In this way, the two authors' works are very similar to incrementalism's approach which understands policy changes marginally inside a stable system. This stable system is caused by the stability of institutions and policy monopoly which are "structural arrangements that are supported by powerful ideas".

But the most original aspect of the punctuated equilibrium system comes from the capacity to mix this stable system with a stage approach where specific attention to a problem may suddenly cause a significant change and destabilize the stable system. Studying the agenda-setting process, Baumgartner and Jones suggest that attention to a problem in the political arena is the occasion to observe controversies between old and new ideas and, sometimes, to modify the institutions, the ideas and the actor's power inside a policy subsystem.

"In the end, we depict a political system that displays considerable stability with regard to the manner in which processes issue, but this stability is punctuated with periods of volatile change". (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993)

In this approach, Time is important to delimit the stable period, generally the best part of a decade where there is no real change. The time scale then erases slight tremors over time to reveal a relatively continuous period. When sudden events arrive, the two authors propose to change the time scale to observe an instant time and the agitated activity.

This approach, trying to mix the incrementalism and the agenda-setting, the dynamic process and the stage approach, takes time seriously into account and used the idea of relativity to modify the scale time to be observed. But there is an epistemological ambiguity inside the time consideration. With a different time scale, the observation process of the researcher transforms itself. The first problem is to evaluate the period and the policy change inside such different periods. As we show in another article (Zittoun, 2009), the measure of policy change varied with timescale. Can we really compare two periods that are so different? Can we really measure change in a different referential? The second problem is to transform this observation into a law: a law of policy stability without time and a law of sudden lurch. The law of stability supposed the incapacity of actors to break the rules and the other law lent the actors the capacity to act. But why, epistemologically, are the first kind of actors depend on institutions while the second kind are not ?

Can historical turn take Time into account better?

After the discursive turn, the historical turn asks new questions in social sciences. The subject here is not to describe this turn but to underline how the question of historical factors modifies the question of Time in policy analysis.

We would like to begin by Lowi's work (Lowi, 1972). Lowi doesn't take the question of history into account directly but he develops the idea that there are different state situations that produce different models of policy change. In a certain way, confronted to different national policy changes, he proposes to refuse a universal model of policy change. Defining

different policy styles, he tries to identify some specific national characteristics to understand the difference of process.

The comparison between different national policies opens up new questions. The empirical observation of the variety of national policies introduces new kinds of questions about the influence of the national context and more generally about the importance of the Time-Space ratio in policy change. Heclo, who compares social policy in different states, proposes to consider the importance of civil servants in each state to understand their differences (Heclo et Wildavsky, 1974).

Theda Skocpol, who wants to understand some social events like Revolutions, proposes to relate it to the specific history of State development (Skocpol). In this way, it's not only the policy which is influenced by the historical event but the events which transform it.

The historical perspectives are confronted to the idea that the researcher can produce a universal model of policy change and needs to introduce the contingency and the singularity of any situation. Considering Time as an irreversible process which always produces different situations, they epistemologically confront any idea of scientific process which aims at observing the repetition and the regularity of a process to determine a model or a law.

The "historical institutionalism" approach tries to solve this paradox. The concept of "path dependency" developed by Paul Pierson proposes a way to combine the policy change and the historical perspective.

The main idea of "path dependency" is to consider that history and Time past produce rules, institution and therefore limit the human capacity to decide on change. Taking Polya's urn mathematic model, Pierson explains firstly that each event at a time T influences the probability of an event that will arrive at the Time T+1. This first aspect of the Pierson approach is really close to the idea of incrementalism. The second idea of Pierson's is to

consider that each policy decision designs a path that becomes shorter at each step. The historical aspect influences the actors' behavior by reducing their capacity of choice. If we come back to Simon's purpose, he suggests that idea but doesn't extend this idea on historical period.

If the actor's choice depends on a previous choice in Lindblom's incrementalism due to his bounded intellectual capacity, the actor is limited too in Pierson's model but by the historical.

To solve the paradox of historical singularity, Pierson reinvents a universal model of understanding policy change. This model becomes a universal process not dependent on the historical situation.

Rethinking Time in Policy Analysis

To take Time into account, we must come back to Time itself. Behind the concept of Time, we find a lot of really different aspects that could be the cause of ambiguities. Inside Time, we would like to distinguish between instant time, historical Time and period Time.

For Gaston Bachelard (Bachelard, 1931), time has a reality, that of the instant. Time is a moment alone without a past or a future, only included in a present that is continuously being renewed. Between the ghost of the past and the illusion of the future, the present moment is the only time in which the individual experiences reality. Forgetting the past means destroying moments off and letting the instant loneliness immediately. Bachelard rejects the idea that the instant arises between two monotonous time periods, a time design we finally found in Bautmgartner and Jones. He refused it initially because he considered the paradigm of the duration and the paradigm of the instant as incompatible.

Bachelard came back to Bergson's work for which we have an intuition of length (Bachelard, 1938). It's the Time of Time physicists and mathematicians, a continuous-time that can be

measured and reduced to a figure (1 hour or 1 second). For Bergson, the moment is an artificial division from mind, only duration is sufficient.

For Bachelard, this theory led to many problems, starting with its inability to distinguish past, present and future. He shows how a philosophy denying the moment faces the paradox of the beginning: How to determine a beginning which is not an instant? How can we not see how a period can be easily divided into "one thousand incidents" clearly separated? For Bachelard, duration is a necessary artefact that allows sorting, prioritizing, and eliminating moments. It's like transforming numbers of finished and necessarily discontinuous points into a continuous and infinite line. Duration is an illusion just like the film that the eye distinguishes continues with 24 successive snapshots every second.

Bergson's approach leads to turning history into a continuous development where accidents are neglected while Bachelard's approach makes it more of a discontinuous series of acts. This is also the combination of both approaches suggested by Baumgartner and Jones laying the problem epistemologically. To define a stable period, we must build duration by linking a series of events and eliminating all the ups and downs along the process. The researcher must build not only the length but also apply to the observation a normative and smooth regard. It can only be confronted with this question: from what level of up must we consider that the process is not stable?

For Bachelard, we cannot combine the intuition of the moment and duration. Either duration is the central axiom, in which case the moment is pure illusion. Or the instant is the central axiom, in which case the period is a pure construction of continuity in a batch. Duration is then built by memory and measured by instruments. Quoting Einstein, Bachelard explains that the "length" of time becomes the instrument of measurement and structure. Because measure transforms time, we call it the time-measured to distinguish it from the time-instant.

To exist, the length must be produced from a series of moments combined, selected and ordered. We build the duration from two instants (or more) without duration and we relate the length to form it, as if we traced a line between two singular points. Bachelard thus emphasizes the act done in space-time which allows time to be located out of the forgotten and making artificial life in a moment of remembrance.

The contradiction Bachelard underlines between the time-instant and the time-period is quite close to that pointed out by Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers in their analysis of the relationship between Time and Eternity (Prigogine et Stengers, 1992a). According to them, the problem in the time design comes from natural sciences. Because they put phenomena into laws, the physical sciences built a reversible, deterministic and fundamentally unhistorical world. They broke with our experience of irreversible time, which produces the singularity of events and makes the future uncertain (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984).

It is this contradiction which puts in tension most of the policy analysis theories we have explored. They all seek to produce laws, law of causality for stage approaches or dynamic law for the incremental approach, which would follow public policy. As such, these laws are also deeply unhistorical and deterministic. They take into account Time to deny its first characteristic, irreversibility, and its corollary, historicity and singularity. Even historical institutionalism, seeking to establish laws equivalent to the path dependency, do the same thing and meet some paradoxes similar to those met by Boltzmann who tries to combine law inside a paradigm of irreversibility (Prigogine et Stengers, 1992b).

This shows the difficulty that researchers in political science have to combine a scientific approach requiring a universality of the situations with a unique and historical reality. Beyond this, it proves their desire to control Time by measuring it and transforming it into a period.

This process can be found among behavior researchers and can now be observed in the policymakers themselves. We can in fact consider the assumption that actors have the same capacity as researchers to design Time and transform it into a duration and period and, secondly, that these capacities are an essential aspect to influence the policy process. In other words, we consider that in the time-instant, the policymakers are continually faced with the forgetting of the past and the uncertainty of the future. To ensure a minimum of stability, they began to develop concepts like duration, or law of dynamics by which they would take control of the past, of the meaning of the present and of the future.

Consider an example to clarify this hypothesis. There are many works on the decision process. Decision, understood as a moment in which an actor makes a choice, has been widely questioned by researchers and largely relegated to the status of myth. On the one hand, some researchers have shown that an actor was never alone (Lasswell, 1956, Simon, 1945). It's a collective process which does not always begin by a problem to solve and even less by the study of alternatives (Lindblom, 1958a). On the other hand, policy analysts have emphasized the importance of the whole process in which every decision was tangled and could not be isolated inside a particular time (Jones, 1984, May et Wildavsky, 1978).

However, if researchers have abandoned the research field of a mythical decision, actors tirelessly continue to refer to the concept of decision. This gap needs to be questioned so as to go further. In work that we conducted about the Parisian tramway, we were able to observe that the actors regularly referred to the "decision of the mayor" who chose the project and its layout (Zittoun, 2008). The selection process is long and collective and not down to a particular time. This process is the construction of an agreement between the actors about a single project. However, beyond the many debates surrounding the project, the considerable controversies and the arguments, there were several moments when the mayor announced his position as a "decision". The term "decision" was used advisedly and repeatedly by different

actors so as to recall the existence of an "end" to a process, an "off" in the discussion. This account of the use of the term "decision" is the highlight of a moment not only to recall it but also to silence efforts to debate repeatedly.

Importantly, the use of the term is not enough to stop the discussion, opponents still have the opportunity to change the decision, i.e. to show that the decision does not last, that it is past time that we may return to forgotten ideas or find new one. Work on the tramway shows how the actors are faced with the reversibility of decisions understood as an agreement between the actors. In a way, the irreversibility of time and direction of the Time arrow can date the agreement and allow returning it to a forgotten past, rendering it obsolete (Zittoun, 2007).

We would therefore like to take time seriously into account in three ways. First, we can underline its irreversibility and its capacity to transform each event into a singular event that occurs in a particular space-time. This way of taking Time into account, historicizing all instants, generates an epistemological impossibility to find a "law" for public policy.

Secondly, we would like to develop the assumption that the first characteristic of Time is the major problem of all actors in the policy process. To act in an organized-space such as a bureaucracy, the actors need to sanctify their actions in fighting against their extinction in the maze of the forgotten. They then develop concepts such as "decision" and "duration", "stability" and "past" in an attempt to stabilize the moment in which they live.

They try to cut a moment or a period to select or identify one event so that they can put meaning in the present. It's like a book we read from beginning to end. Because there is an arrow of the book and a lot a pages to read, the reader can select a special event in a page, with a book-mark. The importance of the book-mark is not for the moment we read the page but for the future, a few pages after, when we want to remember the past without reading the book all over again, when we want to identify a moment and select it. Saying "already

decided" to an actor in a meeting is like reminding him that there is a time when the debate has stopped. It does not matter for the researcher if this is real, he will always find the existence of a prior and one-hand, what matters is to understand the role of this reference when it is pronounced and repeated.

The third way is to revert to the problem of historicity, not as a problematization of the term but as a necessity to put any event in the space-time in which it occurs. Michel Foucault's thoughts on the subject deserve attention. Refusing universality, Foucault thinks that reality is always a singularity, that truth is nothing but the enunciation of truth and the practice of truth. The Foucauldian project is thus to replace discourse inside the "rules of truth" that are characteristic of a certain historical period and its context. Foucault is in no way a judge of these rules of truth. Eventually, discourse is a set of statements that produces a specific order concerning an issue. In *Les mots et les choses*, "The order of things" (Foucault, 1971, Foucault, 1990), Michel Foucault studies the day-to-day activity of taxonomy and shows how categories, especially in the administrative sphere, produce a specific order. The main difficulty is to understand that statements do not change in every discussion. On the contrary, actors reproduce a same statement form in multiple situations. A statement is rare, it can only exist through the capacity of actors to reproduce it, to multiply its occurrences.

Conclusion

If you see an arrow flying from a bow and you are trying to cut and separate each instant time, the arrow is unmoved as in a picture and if you add all these instants, you must conclude that the arrow doesn't move. The problem of duration, understood as an addition of instant-measured is inside the Zenon paradox. To observe the arrow move, you can consider each intuitive instant where the arrow moves, cutting Time needs to transform reality.

As we saw, in policy analysis, there are two ways to take time into account. The first way is synchronic observation and analysis, attached to the policymakers' behavior and the immediate action. In this case, there is a real difficulty to take historicity into account. The second way is to produce a diachronic analysis by building a medium period. In this case, the construction of the period influences the observation and transforms it. If you observe policy change in a decade period or more, you need to have a big enough time scale and consider the policy as an object whose move responds to some independent laws or equations. If you observe policy change in a short period, you see all the actors' restlessness but you have the impression that nothing changes.

In this article, we have tried to propose a dia-synchronic way, when the researcher produces a synchronic observation of the diachronic process organized by the actors. Taking Time into account becomes necessary to consider each event as a singular event. But Taking Time into account is to observe the capacity of the actors to build some marks to stabilize an unstable present. As Kundera suggests, the behavior could be understood if you consider the lightness of Being inside a instant-time paradigm and the fight of actors against "the unbearable lightness of being".

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