Technopolitics

A Conceptual Scheme for Understanding Politics in the Digital Age

H. Can Kurban, The New School University
Maria Haberer & Ismael Peña-López, UOC
Internet and Politics

• ICTs as isolated external variables
  • Online vs offline?
  • Internet = Democracy?
  • ICTs → Government 2.0?

• The Question of Power and Legitimacy

• Paradigmatic Change in 2008
Technopolitics Outline

• Context
• Actors
• Scale
• Direction
• Synchronization
• Purpose
Technopolitics Literature

- “constitutional integrity” (Lebkowski, 1997)
- “hybridity” (Hecht, 2001)
- contingency and multiplicity of actors (Kellner, 2001)
- contesting conceptions of citizenship, rights, and the polity (Hughes, 2006)
- the closed vs. the open (Rasmussen, 2007)
- power and strategy (Toret et al. 2015)
Conceptual Focus

The Origins of Antagonism:

- The Organizing Role of Communication (Internet Governance)
- The Value of Information (Big/Public Data)
Technopolitics Battles

- Post-2008 Context and Actors

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Major Contestations
Context – Contentious Politics

- New Digital Media Environment (Chadwick, 2009)
- Organizational change (Bimber et. al, 2012)
  - Resource mobilization
  - Participation
  - Collective Action

Pattern: networked practices travel from micro level individual behaviours and expectation) to meso level (collective action, campaigning, co-framing)
Scale

Individual => Organization => Contentious Networks

The connective logic (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013)

– Scale up more quickly
– Produce large mobilization
– Funding
– Flexibility in tracking moving political targets, and bridging different issues
– Build up adaptive repertoires, share open source software development, and embrace an ethos of inclusiveness.
Direction

Contentious Politics Moving From Outside to Inside the Institutional Politics

Cases: Barcelona En Comu, Ahora Madrid, The Pirate Party in Iceland
Synchronization

Internal

• New spaces for activism (Barlow, Echeverría, Castels), including no-places (Augé)
• Spaces that are not isolated, but behave as different layers of a same reality (Toret, Monterde)
• There are "synchronization" practices across spaces that spread information and enable coordination of action (Corsín & Estalella, Martínez Roldán, Monterde)

External

• D-Cent Project
Purpose

• Short term: take back politics
  – increasing civic engagement
  – taking the influence of big money out of politics

• Long term: hack the political system
  – Change the existing processes
  – Expose its shortcomings
Discussion

• Synchronize across Europe?
• Full Scalability?
• A New Constitutional Process?