Parliamentary TA challenged by reflexive modernization in action

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Introduction

- PTAi are curious institutional creatures...
  - OTA (1972): early warning, then «OTA paradigm» (Van Eijndhoven 1997)
  - PTA in Europe: several coexisting generations from 1980s onwards (product or process-oriented)
  - TA in Japan soon?
- ... that occupy an hybrid position
PTAi facing changes

- PTAi can be connected to broad sociological diagnoses: risk society (Beck 1992) but also reflexive modernization (Beck et al. 1994)

- Emergence and evolution of TA reflect the move of Western societies into reflexive modernization process

- PTAi are indicators of reflexive modernization in action (Delvenne 2010; Delvenne and Rip, forthcoming)
Conceptual framework

Openness to plurality

Plurality of values, expertise/participation (e.g. Stirling 2008)

Blurring of boundaries

Boundaries become choices, Construction of new boundaries (e.g. Beck et al. 2003)
The reflexivity pathway

Caminante no hay camino
Se hace camino al andar.

Antonio Machado
PTAi on the reflexivity pathway
## Resilience of modern institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong parliamentary dynamics</th>
<th>Weak parliamentary dynamics</th>
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<td>OTA, STOA, TAB, POST, OPECST</td>
<td>DBT, Rathenau, TA-Swiss, IST</td>
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* Consequences: path dependence and lock in

* Responses: PTAi can resist or accommodate
Tracing PTA institutional path

- How did PTAi come to occupy such a position on the reflexivity pathway?
- How reflexive are they?
- Is there a lock in?
- Do we see openings occurring?
- Two constrained examples: STOA and DBT
STOA

- Instrumental, technocratic and political TA
- ETAG consortium
- DM support to elite
- Scientific reports
- Interface between science and politics

Participation is not accepted
DBT

- Discursive and social TA
- DM support and public participation
- Implication of various stakeholders
- Scientific reports, deliberative forums (consensus)
- Interface btw science, politics and society

Openness to plurality

- Orientation towards consensus + depoliticized approach
- From 1995: Inclusion of stakeholders
- 1988: Focus on public involvement
- 1985: Creation

Severe budgetary cuttings

Blurring of boundaries
Conclusions

- Reflexive modernization can be operationalized for empirical research
- It shows a complex co-constructed process (RM/TA) that deploys its effects on different polities
- PTAi progression on the reflexivity pathway is limited by modern institutions’ resilience (but also political culture, e.g. Horst and Irwin 2009)
- 3rd generation TA on the reflexivity pathway?
Thank you for your attention

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