

How does "agenda-setting" in the sense that term is used in the "stage" model operate in the situation of a "hollow state?"

The "stage" model is a five-step process in developing a policy from agenda-setting to evaluation and is cyclical. The first step, agenda setting, is the process of moving a problem onto someone else's agenda; deciding what issues will be looked at. Under a hollow state, one in which the state can no longer be viewed as having the monopoly, expertise, or resources that are necessary to govern (SBF 53), agenda-setting is modified because it is no longer the state's agenda that issues need to be exclusively catered towards but to a number of different entities that help the state govern. Agenda-setting, under the hollow state, becomes the process of different stakeholders such as political actors, participants, interest groups, and public officials naming, claiming, and framing issues that they have interest in onto the political agenda of different actors besides just the state.

The hollow state illustrates an example in which a society has transitioned from a system of government to governance. The transition occurs when the government is no longer seen as the single central unit but rather becomes a mix of private companies with both the community and the state. Under governance, there have been shifts in who is capable of governing. These shifts can occur a number of different ways: vertical and/or horizontal shifts, that affect how different actors attempt to move an issue onto the policy agenda. For example, a vertical downward shift means the governing power has been decentralized and allocated to local powers. BFS illustrates an example of this occurring, "...in the Netherlands the urban and rural planning competences of the Ministry of Planning that also affect the balance between water management and nature preservation in a specific area have become decentralized in favor of the

municipalities and the provinces” (SBF 52). Here, actors no longer need to attempt to move an issue onto the state’s agenda but rather the agenda of municipality/province government actors instead. Ultimately, depending on the direction of the shift and to which societal/governmental domain, actors will need to adjust the way they present issues because they are now attempting to cater issues to different audiences’ agendas.

Under a situation of a hollow-state, many more actors are free to participate and attempt to move issues onto different agendas. Agendas tend to be highly selective, so not just any policy problem will automatically make it onto the agenda but rather be the result of human agency. In order for a policy problem to make it onto an agenda, different political actors will name a condition of the world that they disagree with and shape it as a problem. For example, BFS illustrates an issue where multiple different actors worked to move different issues, based on their own interest, onto the political agenda, “In the 1970s and 1980s as research identified specific environmental damages, such as rising sea levels, more frequent hurricanes...scientists’ interest changed to persuading governments to restrict carbon emissions. Environmental advocacy groups joined the issue. Meanwhile, oil and coal producers...suddenly had a concentrated interest in resisting change. In the U.S., industry leaders mounted campaign to discredit the science of climate change and to scare politicians and business owners by predicting complete economic collapse...In 1988, the patterns shifted again as the climate change issue went global...” (242-243). Here multiple entities help put forward different ideas regarding climate policy and specifically carbon emissions based on their own values. Additionally, there was a vertical upward shift in government that transferred governing power from the state to international governing bodies.

As the climate change example makes clear, political actors, keeping in mind that they need to present issues to different actors due to shifts in government, deliberately portray policy issues in terms of who benefits in order to mobilize support for and against proposals. This is the process of classifying who groups are and what they need in comparison to each other. Different political actors will frame groups and problems in a manner that best suits them in order to further advance an issue onto the political agenda. While the media works to influence the public agenda, interest groups and public officials generally work to influence the policy agenda. Interest groups often contain commercial interest driven by business concerns such as the industry leaders in the climate policy example, as well as different nonprofit groups that are driven by charities or ideological concerns such as the environmental group.

Ultimately, under a situation of a hollow-state, agenda setting can be seen as the process of placing issues that are normally dealt with by specific central actors such as the state onto the agendas of different governing domains that now hold governing power. Additionally, the transition from government to governance allows for the participation of more actors who were previously excluded.

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