

SCHOLTEN, PETER. *Framing immigrant integration: Dutch research-policy dialogues in comparative perspective*. 314 pp., tables, bibliogr. Amsterdam: Univ. Press, 2011. £39.50 (paper)

Anthropologists are pioneers in immigration research on both sides of the Atlantic, in particular because they have conducted fieldwork in migrants' homelands. This also holds for the Netherlands. Anthropologists like Rinus Penninx and André Köbben – who did research in Turkey and Surinam, respectively – became part of a group of 'founding fathers' of Dutch migration scholarship in the 1970s. Over the past four decades, migration studies has evolved into a multidisciplinary field. *Framing immigrant integration*, authored by Peter Scholten, a public policy scholar, is a product of this process.

Scholten highlights how research on immigrant integration in the Netherlands followed a development path strikingly in parallel to that of immigration policies. Since the 1970s, a 'research industry' evolved, situated 'not just in various centres and institutes, but also in numerous government-oriented advisory bodies' (p. 79). Early immigration researchers shaped the Dutch multicultural model of immigrant integration. Gradually research-policy dialogues became more complicated: 'Researchers tend to affiliate themselves to specific frames, whereas policymakers tend to ignore research containing a frame other than their own' (p. 277).

The most striking example is the controversy surrounding the 'Blok committee', which was assigned by Parliament to investigate integration policy after the 2002 elections (pp. 206-9). The committee did not conclude 'that the integration *policy* had been successful, but rather that the integration *process* had been successful' (p. 194, emphasis in original). The dominant discourse, however, remained that integration failed owing to multicultural policies for which researchers were held responsible, even if the multicultural model had already been abandoned in formal policy discourse a decade earlier (p. 225).

Scholten convincingly criticizes the Dutch government for promoting and exploiting research on social-cultural integration selectively and for ignoring research that challenges assimilationist policy frames with alternative ones (p. 226).

The aim of the book is to 'unravel how and why changes in the research-policy nexus were connected to changing definitions of immigration integration in policy and research' or so-called 'frames' (p. 15). Following Bourdieu, Scholten's approach is structuralist-constructivist. Surprisingly, the work of Foucault is completely left out in discussing 'power' and the production of knowledge and 'truth' and not even mentioned in the book.

After an overview of frames and frameshifts in Dutch immigrant integration policy and research, the book scrutinizes three episodes empirically (chaps 4-6). Drawing on policy documents, governmental reports, and interviews, Scholten distinguishes: the multicultural model (1978-83), universalism (1989-94), and assimilation (2000-4). During the 1980s a multicultural frame was dominant in both research and policy. In formal policy discourse this model was abandoned in the 1990s for a more universalist approach emphasizing active citizenship. Since 2002 – when the populist right-wing politician and integration critic Pim Fortuyn was assassinated – multiculturalism and the cultivation of migrants' homeland cultural identities were further denounced, while integration research became more international. This spawned a multiplicity of frames and a widening gap between policy and research (p. 279).

The final empirical chapter systematically compares the Netherlands to France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In most aspects the Dutch case is not exceptional: 'The Netherlands reveals a type of national-level co-evolution between immigrant integration research and migration policies that was clearly present in other countries as well ...' (p. 275). Scholten does, however, identify the 'ferocity of frameshifts and frame conflicts' in the Netherlands as exceptional: conflicts were found to be more intense in the Netherlands than in other countries.

The book is structured logically but unfortunately lacks an index, which makes it difficult to look up specific affairs or names of key players. The anthropological reader, who wonders how on a micro-level informal and 'invisible' political ties between researchers,

politicians, and policy-makers shaped the research-policy dialogue, will not be satisfied. That said, this is a must-read for anyone interested in the 'power of knowledge' (and its limits) in action. Moreover, it invites a new generation of migration scholars to be self-reflexive about the actual or potential impact of their research on policy-making in a highly politicized and securitized era when it comes to migration issues.

In short, *Framing immigrant integration* is indispensable reading for scholars interested in integration policies in the Netherlands and Western Europe, whatever their disciplinary make-up.

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