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## Boekbespreking van: The new politics of pollution

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thing beyond particularism for reflection, solidarity and change, but it is not articulated what exactly this will be. It is indicated, too, that there might be a potential loss attached to any wholesale abandonment by feminists of traditional approaches in sociology, political economy or political science. Yet, we do not obtain an idea what the new approaches in these fields will be. Moreover, it is denied that post-modernism implies depolitization, but the authors have not succeeded to envision in some detail the new type of feminist politics. The idea of undermining standard concepts in politics and intervening in cultural-political representation is still too vague to give the reader an idea about 'what to do?' Finally, it is unfortunate that the erudition of the essays appears to have been bought at the price of having constructed a dispassionate, anger-less feminism.

In conclusion, this collection of essays challenges in many ways the traditional discipline of political science. It questions all kinds of standard concepts, such as 'gender', 'women', 'reality', 'body', 'state' and 'interest'. The collection deals with many subjects of philosophy, political theory and sociology, but it is still a unity, and it gives a good indication of the way in which feminism has changed. On the other hand, reading the book raises more and more questions about post-modernism as source of inspiration for feminist politics and about deconstructionism as the major method for women's studies. I guess that this will be the content of the next feminist book published by Polity Press.

R. Voet

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A. Weale, **The New Politics of Pollution (Issues in Environmental Politics Series)**. Manchester University Press, Manchester 1992.

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Since the 1970s, Albert Weale argues, a new way of looking at the ecology-economics controversy has evolved, and with it new policies against pollution. The ideology of ecological modernization, as expressed in the influential Brundtland report, basically asserts that environmental protection is not at odds with, but is rather a precondition for, long-term economic development (p. 31, 76). It has played an important role in legitimizing post-1980 styles of anti-pollution policies, which are characterized by the expansion of the policy community (i.e. actors represented in the policy formation process), the creation of new government institutions (notably ministries of the environment), reforms in the structure and process of policy development, new techniques of pollution control, and the internationalization of pollution policy (p. 28 ff.).

Weale, professor in the Department of Government at Essex University, attempts to describe and explain the evolution of these new anti-pollution policies. The format he has chosen is that of a comparative analysis of explanations rather than one of national and international developments. The introductory chapter 1 being dedicated to distinguishing the old and new policy styles, Weale presents four scientific 'idioms' (paradigms) in chapter 2 and applies these in five case-studies (chapters 3-7)

to recent developments in Western countries. Within the rational choice approach, the first of the four idioms, the answer is sought in terms of rational individuals seeking optimal want-satisfaction, while on the other hand the systems idiom looks at the responses of interrelated parts of the social system. At an intermediate level, the institutional idiom identifies the organizational and institutional conditions under which distinct types of political strategies emerge. All three idioms overlook the importance of the cognitive aspects of the formulation and development of policies. The policy discourse or social learning idiom fills this gap by focusing upon understandings rather than upon interests (p. 57).

In chapter 3 Weale compares the differences in the content and pace of development of policies towards acid rain in Great Britain (the 'dirty man of Europe') and Germany (a classic example of ecological modernization). Unlike their British colleagues, German politicians preferred the principle of precaution to the (ostrich) principle of the scientific burden of proof (p. 81). Weale argues that the rational choice and institutional approaches, although both do indeed explain part of the developments in either country, obscure the importance of the discursive and legitimating aspects of policy development. A change in ideology might tip the balance of argument in one or the other direction – which is what happened in Germany.

Subsequently, the tension between, what is called, nature's interconnectedness and the fragmentation of pollution control arrangements is examined. As environmental problems are always interrelated, policies directed at the alleviation of one problem may well worsen others, e.g. because pollution is merely moved from one area to another. In order to be successful pollution policies should be attuned to one another. In chapter 4, Sweden, Great Britain, and the USA serve to illustrate both structural constraints of a more integrated administration and the implications of actual fragmentation for pollution control strategies. Weale convincingly argues that new processes, rather than a new structure, of administration should be developed in order to cope with environmental problems. As an example, Weale introduces the Dutch experiences with the National Environmental Policy Plan (NEPP, chapter 5) and the authorities' attempt to overcome the fragmentation of environmental policy.

Chapter 6 gives an account of two kinds of critique of, and alternatives to, regulatory environmental policies and their implementations: economic instruments (in particular Pigovian taxes) and public participation in decision-making. Neither one can really compete with, or solve the implementation problems of, traditional policy. Moreover, rational actors in an institutional setting often have good (i.e. self-protective) reasons not to change their traditional approach to pollution. According to Weale, the frameworks of rational choice and institutions suffice to explain bureaucratic inertia, but not to understand why these seemingly infeasible alternatives, and the issue of policy reform in general, keep reappearing in public debate. That can only be explained by turning to the policy discourse idiom: systems and institutions need legitimation, and the policy community is thus forced to discuss alternatives, whether it likes it or not.

The internationalization of pollution policies is described in chapter 7. Given Weale's initial characterization of the international system as a hobbesian state of na-

ture lacking a sovereign, the systems and especially the rational choice idiom have a hard time explaining the early cooperation between scientific elites and the willingness of states to bear disproportionate costs. If states are not seen as unitary actors, the role of elites becomes more prominent. To understand their behavior, a justice motive seems to be more appropriate than brute self-interest. Weale also stresses the importance of institutions in this context, but – as can be expected by now – mainly because they present opportunities to justify policies (p. 207).

After concluding that pollution policies have grown in scope and depth, though not along the same lines everywhere, Weale returns to his four idioms in the last chapter. In his view, one can in general assert that rational choice, systems and institutional idioms may well account for the context of policy developments, but to account for their internal logic the institution of discourse is essential. As in all previous chapters, Weale concludes that civil servants and politicians, at least in this field, are not merely slaves to circumstances (*i.e.* system, institution, self-interest). They are also sensitive to argument.

*The new politics of pollution* offers many interesting and often surprising ideas on the evolution of current pollution policies, on the four basic explanatory models, and on what good policies for the future would have to look like. Unfortunately, being forced to read three stories at the same time, the reader repeatedly loses track of the overall picture. Weale has paid too little attention to the structure of his book. Even with some minor technical improvements, like using italics in all chapters (and not just in the last two), the book would have looked and read far better. The apparent lack of structure has serious consequences for both Weale's theoretical aspirations and his contribution to the development of viable and effective environmental policies. Using four explanatory models and a wide range of seemingly arbitrarily selected case-studies, Weale concludes that the four idioms are linked and should be integrated, but only on a few occasions gives an impression of what an integrated approach would look like. Thus, he does not seem to be wholly committed to the aim of a universally valid integrated theory. Apparently each case and each policy is different, and should be approached differently. However, Weale also refrains from defending or denouncing such a postmodern interpretation.

Another very disturbing characteristic of Weale's book is that it contains numerous unsustained empirical claims. To give just one example, consider his explanations of the salience of the issue of pollution in the Netherlands and the development of the NEPP. Weale definitely overestimates the impact of the queen's speeches on public opinion, he completely ignores the influence of pollution scandals, and he depicts former minister of the environment Nijpels both as the archprotector of nature and as an untrustworthy party politician (p. 143) without noticing the contradiction. Finally, his interpretation of the break-up of the government coalition in 1989 as being caused by the *environmental* aspects of tax deduction for commuters is highly original, to say the least.

All this is not to say that the book should not be read. Policy scientists, political scientists in general, and civil servants will find it quite inspiring. At times the text is very lively, and the book contains a diversity of interesting perspectives and hypotheses that could stimulate both further analysis and implementation. As a matter of

fact, it offers an impressive catalogue of variables that in one way or another could explain the development of policies. Furthermore, Weale goes beyond the usual rhetoric of true greens and nasty greys, by understanding ecological modernization as an ideology distinct from the nature-first and economic-first stances. With this approach Weale is one of the few to analyze the conditions under which green ideas are adopted and transformed by governments and civil servants.

M. Nas en  
M.L.J. Wissenburg

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Cornelis Peter Terlouw, **The regional geography of the world-system: External arena, periphery, semiperiphery, core.** Proefschrift Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht, Nederlandse Geografische Studies, nr. 144, Utrecht 1992.

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Eén van de belangrijkste problemen van de zogeheten werelddoelstellingstheorie, die vooral bekend geworden is door het werk van de Amerikaanse historicus-socioloog Immanuel Wallerstein, is wat het *werelddoelstellingstheorie* in empirische termen nu eigenlijk inhoudt. Dit probleem, waarvan men bij het ter hand nemen van werken uit de werelddoelstellingsschool vermoedt dat het is opgelost, is in tegendeel een belangrijk doelwit van critici van de theorie. In het verleden zijn er studies uitgevoerd die de onderscheiden samenstellende delen van het systeem – kern, semiperiferie, periferie – empirisch trachten aan te wijzen. Het werk van auteurs als Snyder en Kick (in de *American Journal of Sociology*), Nemeth en Smith (in *Review*, het tijdschrift van Wallersteins eigen Fernand Braudel Center) en Arrighi en Drangel (eveneens in *Review*) is in dit verband het bekendst.

C.P. Terlouw is het met de benaderingswijzen van de genoemde onderzoekers van het werelddoelstellingstheorie niet eens. Zijns inziens is 'the biggest hiatus in the research into the world-system [...] that the existence of Wallerstein's world-system is taken for granted. The most fundamental assumption about the spatial structure of the world-system – the existence of a *single* and highly *integrated* world-system – has never been the subject of quantitative research' (p. 48). Het is vanuit deze ontevredenheid met het bestaande onderzoek dat Terlouw, die eerder een verdienstelijk overzicht over Wallersteins werk en de kritiek daarop het licht deed zien (gepubliceerd in de reeks van het Comparative Asian Studies Programme van de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam), zijn promotieonderzoek naar de regionale geografie van het werelddoelstellingstheorie heeft opgezet. De probleemstelling van dit onderzoek valt in drieën uiteen en omvat de volgende vragen: 'Is there only one world-system? Are all states part of this world-system? Which states are core, semiperipheral, or peripheral?' (p. 13).

Terlouws proefschrift bestaat uit verscheidene delen, waarvan de belangrijkste een sterk kwantitatief-empirisch onderzoeks karakter hebben. Achtereenvolgens behandelt de auteur, bij wijze van inleiding: de contouren en belangrijkste begrippen van de werelddoelstellingstheorie, het verrichte kwantitatief onderzoek naar het