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Boekbespreking van: The Transformation of Governance in the European Union

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the answer to the question 'who will do the governing?'. Apparently, this implies that *if* a constitutional engineer takes a position somewhere in between on the scale, *then* he also takes a position somewhere in between on all aspects of democracies. He is not willing to trade off between various institutions. This 'voluntaristic' argument is not convincing. In many cases constitutions were not formed by engineers with a coherent conception of democracy. They were the result of historical processes, and of many incoherent ideas and problems. The third type of argument used is that of causal relationships between the variables involved. The electoral system, for example, is related to the number of parties by Duverger's Law. This argument to connect institutional features is, in a way, too strong. If the variables are causally connected, why ignore their causal order and use a data reduction technique like factor analysis? The fourth and final type of argument is that a common variable, like pluralism, explains all other variables. This means, in causal terms, that the relationship between the ten variables is spurious. This argument, however, is not elaborated on in *Patterns*, although it is mentioned a few times (pp. 61, 240, 251). Moreover, the current institutions are related to current levels of pluralism and not to the level of pluralism when the constitution was formed.

Even if we assume that the theoretical variables form a meaningful, complete and closely related set of democratic institutions, some operationalizations chosen are not convincing. A first example is the operationalization of cabinet types. Majoritarian democracies are characterized by one party majority rule (type 1), while consensus democracies are characterized by oversized coalitions (type 5). There are three other types of cabinets: (type 2) minimal winning coalitions, (type 3) minority coalitions, (type 4) minority, one-party cabinets. According to Lijphart, type 3 as well as type 5 are consensual. Types 2 and 4 are placed in an intermediate position (p. 91). Because Lijphart wants to characterize countries (a point to be discussed later), it would have been appropriate to count the time the government was of type 1 and add for example half the time the cabinet was of type 2 or 4. Lijphart, however, computes the percentage of the amount of time types 1 and 2 (!) are in the government ('minimal winning cabinets'), computes the amount of time types 1 and 4 (!) ('one party governments') are in government and averages the two resulting percentages. This operationalization is not clearly related to the aforementioned theoretical ideas.

A second example is the operationalization of executive dominance. In a majoritarian democracy the executive is dominant, while in a consensus democracy the legislative dominates the executive. Executive dominance is operationalized by the durability of a cabinet. Lijphart, however, also cites Taylor and Herman stating that "a considerable empirical study would be necessary before it could be said that [cabinet durability] was an indicator of *anything*" (p. 130). Lijphart, however, does not offer a 'considerable empirical study' to assess whether cabinet durability is a good indicator of executive dominance, nor does he offer any other argument. Lijphart himself is unhappy with this operationalization. Cabinet durability is not a good measure of executive dominance in presidential systems. It is also assumed not to exceed the level

in the United Kingdom (p. 133-134). Therefore, eleven of the thirty-six countries are assigned values of executive dominance on additional *ad hoc* arguments.

A third general topic to be discussed is the distinction between 'levels of analysis'. Although one can debate whether it is possible to formulate theories about systems without reference to lower levels, Lijphart does not make a proper distinction between levels of analysis. He uses hypotheses at a lower level, without explicating his 'bridge-assumptions' to the level of 'democracies'. He expects, for example, a relationship between the number of effective parties and the composition of a coalition. Multiparty systems will have coalition governments (or one party minority governments), while two party systems will have one-party governments. The units of this hypothesis are 'electoral periods'. In order to test this hypothesis, however, the 'mean effective number of parties' over the past decades is related to the '*percentage of minimal winning coalitions*'. This leads to an enormous reduction of variance, overestimating the explanatory power of the hypothesis. A second example is the 'averaging' of institutional features over time. The number of chambers in a parliament is a characteristic of a country. But how should institutional change be incorporated? Sweden, for example, changed its medium strength bi-cameral system into a uni-cameral system in 1970. Lijphart simply averages this into a 'weak bi-cameral system', a system Sweden never had. The problem is not just that this averaging does not take into account the proper levels of analysis, but that it will in some cases overestimate the true relationship between variables.

Despite these three general points of critique, this successor to *Democracies* will further stimulate the debate about democracies. It offers insight into the role of consensus in established democracies and explicates some arguments to be used by constitutional engineers. Its discussion of some aspects of democracies are enlightening, and some strongly held opinions, like the policy effectiveness of one-party governments, are theoretically and empirically put into question.

Henk van der Kolk

Beate Kohler-Koch and Rainer Eising (eds.), *The Transformation of Governance in the European Union*. London and New York: Routledge 1999. 0-415-21548-X. £ 60.00.

The time is certainly ripe for a 'break-through' book on the European Union. Everyone is complaining that the dialogue between intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism, which has long provided the basic structure for theoretical controversies over the dynamics of European integration, is no longer capable of performing that task. Moravcsik's recent effort (*The Choice for Europe*, 1998) to revive the former by 'liberalizing' its assumptions concerning national interest formation may have improved its descriptive content, but has at the same time only muddled our analytical

capacity to understand recent changes in policy and contributed nothing to our ability to predict where the process is heading. A much earlier effort to extend the latter, by arguing that neo-functional mechanisms would eventually exhaust their potential and be transformed via decisional cycles of increasing controversy into an overtly political process was simply ignored or discarded as excessively complex and speculative (Schmitter, in Lindberg & Scheingold (eds.), *Regional Integration. Theory and Research* 1971; in Marks et al., *Governance in the European Union*, 1996).

Another illustration of the ferment that has been surrounding recent work on the European Union is the proliferation of novel terms being used to describe either what it is or where it is going. As far as most observers are concerned, the EU remains "*un objet politique non-identifié*", though they have tried hard to invent labels to stick on it. Many, if not most, of these new labels can be found in one or other of the fifteen chapters in the Kohler-Koch & Eising volume, but the one that will probably determine whether or not this collective effort will succeed in gaining advantage over its many competitors is 'network governance'. The co-editors place a great deal of conceptual weight on its capacity as an ideal-type to capture the distinctive feature of this political system *in statu nascenti*. Not only do they provide two introductory essays laying out its (allegedly) distinctive characteristics, but they also conclude the book with a useful and critical discussion of the extent to which the findings from different policy areas conform to their initial assumption that the EU is moving in that direction. Not surprisingly (but with some notable exceptions), they discover that there is such a propensity.

What they do not explore, even speculatively, is whether this trend will be successful in consolidating itself into a stable form of supra- or trans-national political authority and hence provide the long-awaited and much-disputed 'end-state' for the process of European integration. Even if one accepts their descriptive conclusion concerning the proliferation of network elements in recent years across several (but not all) issue arenas, the possibility is still open that this is merely a temporary adjustment to a peculiar conjuncture of national interests or functional problem sets. In other words, the question placed on the table so many years ago, whether the EEC/EC/EU would remain just another, slightly more elaborate, mechanism for international cooperation or would transcend this and become a polity in its own right, remains unanswered by Eising and Kohler-Koch.

'Governance' has become a very fashionable concept – extending from the wilds of the African patrimonial state (according to the World Bank) to the labyrinths of EU *comitologie* (according to Kohler-Koch & Eising and several of their collaborators). Needless to say, any concept that can be stretched that far has to be very elastic, or risk being applied to completely different phenomena. Their (Europeanized) definition of it reads: "the structured ways and means in which divergent preferences of interdependent actors are translated into policy choices 'to allocate values', so that the plurality of interests is transformed into coordinated action and the compliance of actors is achieved" (p. 5).

The most important elements in this already complex notion are what seems to be excluded – namely, legitimate coercion exercised within a specific and unique territory by a super-ordinate and distinctive set of political rulers. If it exists and if it works, governance produces its benevolent effects of coordination and compliance without the need for either a state or a government.

This inference (of mine) is immediately countermanded by the discussion of 'modes of governance' that follows in the text. Kohler-Koch & Eising generate four types, one of which is 'statism', i.e., the exercise of good old-fashioned sovereign, centralized and coercive authority. They quickly set this aside as irrelevant for the EU (even if atavistically still present in the member states), and concentrate on the other three: 'corporatism', 'pluralism', and 'network governance'. The distinction between the first two (not, incidentally, as modes of governance but as modes of interest intermediation) is relatively well known and has been successfully applied to policy-making patterns within the EU. The novel mode is obviously the fourth ideal-type, and a great deal hinges on whether it can be both distinguished conceptually and measured discretely from the other three. Personally, I found this difficult to do based on the elements displayed in Table 1.1 (p. 6). Try, for example, to grasp the difference between "integrating conflicting group interests" (a corporatist trait) and "co-ordinating related interests" (a network trait), or between "state actors and multitude of interest groups and parties" (a pluralist trait) and "state actors and multitude of stake holders" (again, a network trait). Corporatism is said to reach consensus by concerted interaction, whereas network patterns of interaction do so by multilateral negotiations to approximate positions! As if this was not hard enough to follow, Beate Kohler-Koch in her subsequent chapter provides a different set of coordinates for generating the same four ideal-types (pp. 20-26).

In fact, I am convinced that there is something in this 'emerging concept' and that it lays somewhere between the more established notions of corporatism and pluralism. I am even willing to believe that it is peculiarly present at the EU level of aggregation (although by no means absent from national and sub-national policy processes), but it will take a good deal more fine-tuning before it becomes an 'inter-subjectively reliable' instrument of analysis.

It may also be necessary to question two very core assumptions that seem to be firmly attached to their notion of network governance: (1) that it is exclusively about collective problem-solving; and (2) that it thrives only in the context of "highly organized social sub-systems" (p. 25). As the EU moves increasingly into those second and third pillar issues of foreign and security policy, and internal security and policing, the conflicts involved are heavily laden with symbolic and emotional content and they tend to cut across those nicely differentiated policy compartments. Moreover, they are unlikely to produce effective results by only coordinating interests and taking 'approximate positions'. In short, national politics has never been only about solving problems and regulating specialized transactions – and there is no *a priori* reason (*pace* the intergovernmentalists) to believe that European politics will permanently confine itself to such low intensity and practical matters.

Given the vague boundaries of the core concept of network governance, it is nothing short of astonishing that such a high quality set of policy analyses emerged from the collaborating authors. This should be regarded, in part, as a tribute to the ECPR workshop format. Only by bringing together independent scholars of differing backgrounds for such an intensive experience (and, then, following this up with other conferences and 'proactive' editorship) can one expect such a creative and original product. The points of departure may not have been the same, but the authors do manage to address a wide range of issues with a shared set of concepts. Moreover, they do not all agree. Kenneth Dyson makes a compelling case for what he calls 'core executive' (i.e., more statist) governance in the case of the common monetary policy. Andrea Lenschow (environment), Jill Lovecy (professional services) and Gerda Falkner (social policy) all come closer to finding the anticipated trend. Herbert Gottweis, in dealing with genetic engineering, shifts attention more to diversity in policy implementation than the mere taking of EU decisions. Mark Aspinwall's study of the transport arena comes up with a non-linear finding that includes the interesting notion of 'pre-governance' and faces the complex issue of coping with problems that overlap sub-systems. The case studies of EU impact on national patterns 'under siege' by Vivian Schmidt, Neil Christian Sidenius, George Pagoulatos and Rainer Eising all, needless to say, focus primarily on the clash between different modes of governance – and intergovernmentalists will be sorry to learn that they find compelling evidence of significant change that is not only determined by the 'liberal' interaction of domestic interests.

By far the most iconoclastic essay in the volume is the one by Klaus Dieter Wolf who calls into question several of the basic assumptions of the entire 'supranational governance' approach by asserting the predominance of what he calls a 'new *raison d'état*' hidden behind the tendency to enter into more and more 'self-binding' agreements at the European (and, for that matter, global) level. Traditional intergovernmentalists will be pleased by his conclusion that the underlying purpose is to strengthen not weaken the autonomy of the sovereign national state, although they may be surprised to learn that this is not because of the imperatives of the 'anarchic' international system, but out of a desire to avoid subordination to societal demands. He and Thomas Hueglin (from a more orthodox 'federalist' perspective) are the only authors in the collection to take seriously the implications for democracy of these transformations in the policy process (although Eising & Kohler-Koch at the very end of their concluding essay do suggest that the spread of network governance might raise problems of distributive justice and, eventually, democratic legitimacy).

This may not be the break-through we have been waiting for, but *The Transformation of Governance in the European Union* occupies a very prominent and valuable place on the shelf in my office where I have placed a burgeoning collection of recent books that make an original contribution to our understanding of this peculiar thing that is the emerging Euro-polity. It is not easy to theorize on the basis of a single case. One has both to recognize what is unique to it and what it shares with a wide range of

other polities that are trying to cope with the complexities of a rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent world. Beate Kohler-Koch and Rainer Eising have done both and, with a lot of help from a talented squad of collaborators, have produced a volume that should be read by all aspiring and established scholars working on European integration.

Philippe C. Schmitter

Herman R. van Gunsteren, *A Theory of Citizenship. Organizing Plurality in Contemporary Democracies*. Boulder: Westview Press 1998. ISBN 0-8133-6863-4. f 58.75.

Citizenship is hot. It figures prominently in at least two crucial debates. Within development studies the twin failures of statist import substitution and market-led liberalization strategies have inculcated a renewed interest in civic responsibilities. A parallel shift can be observed in the ongoing debate on the reconstruction of the welfare state. The 'quest for control' has backfired because of unintended consequences, because of the gap between legislation and actual behaviour, and because the paternalism of most welfare arrangements made them vulnerable to libertarian attacks – whether from the right or the left. So-called 'progressives' increasingly looked for a 'third way' between state and market, and suggested that this presupposed vibrant communities. This resulted in the communitarianism of the 1980s. Dissatisfied with both the libertarian market and the conservatism of most communitarian thought, progressives then turned to republicanism for a new 'master noun'. 'Citizenship' was to become that noun.

A good number of Van Gunsteren's intellectual preoccupations are present in this tale. His powerful critique of rationalist public policy-making prefigures today's fashionable topic of 'new public management'. His rediscovery of citizenship in the second half of the 1980s was also agenda-setting, at least in the Netherlands. In his latest book, Van Gunsteren addresses the topic of 'plurality', echoing Rawls in *Political Liberalism*. Unity and consensus can no longer be taken for granted. This is not a reason for nostalgia, however. 'Plurality', according to Van Gunsteren, should be welcomed as the logical outcome of the liberation practices that are the hallmark of Enlightenment. Nevertheless, pluralism has increasingly turned into a problem. How does Van Gunsteren deal with it?

This question is pertinent, because the discourse of citizenship has increasingly come under fire for perfectionist, statist and monist reasons. Reflecting its Renaissance forerunners, citizenship theories tend to prescribe political participation as the *summum bonum*. In that sense republicanism is perfectionist. Under conditions of pluralism, this is clearly unacceptable. Moreover, most citizenship practices are demonstrably statist, and even nationalistic. Embedded in national constitutions,