Government by Expertise:
Technocrats and Technocracy in Western Europe, 1914-1973
Panel 3. Global expertise

Modelling Society through Migration Management. Exploring the role of (Dutch) experts in 20th century international migration policy.

Marijke van Faassen, Rik Hoekstra, Huygens ING, Amsterdam, 14-09-2017.

Introduction

Last May, when I was writing the abstract for this paper, my eye fell on a newspaper headline, announcing 'the end of the feasible migrant', written by sociologist Jan Willem Duyvendak and political scientist Saskia Bonjour.[1] In trying to explain the failure of the first attempt earlier this year to form a new Dutch coalition government, they noted that since the end of the 1970s there has been a transition from 'trust in the feasibility of society' to an increasing mistrust in the 'feasibility of migrants' – especially by the right-wing political parties. It was not so much their argument that struck me. It was the fact that by framing their observations in this way they implicitly noticed that the focus and the level of analysis in the debate on migration had shifted: from macro (society) to micro (the individual migrant). Given the similarity with the title of the latest study of historian Peter Gatrell -'The Making of the Modern Refugee' (2013) - this seems to represent not only a shift in the political debate, but also in scholarly discourse.

My previous research on the Dutch emigration system, which had its roots in the pre-war technocratic discussions on the desired socioeconomic order and its heyday between 1952 and 1967, showed that on the national level there was an almost inextricable connection between the migration policymakers and the social scientists. The Dutch Government Commissioner for Emigration, the chemical engineer and lawyer Bas Haveman, was of the opinion that migration policy had to be evidence-based. Planning an active migration policy - that is: facilitating *emigration* as an integral part of an economic structural policy in which emigration was complementary to industrialization - was only possible if he had an insight into the migration potential of the Dutch population. As a result, most of his research assignments to social scientists aimed at mapping the characteristics of the Dutch population. At the same time, these scholars had their own national and international connections in academia and their own research agendas. Paradoxically, although some of their studies are still used today, little is known about the aims and ambitions of these experts, how they viewed society, their connections with the international migration system and the way their discourses inspired or were deliberately used by policymakers in daily practice. Of course, this can be explained by the fact that international migration is a multifaceted issue and migration research is scattered over several social science disciplines and defined by different paradigms and political ideologies.[2] For this reason, writing the

[1] Saskia Bonjour en Jan Willem Duyvendak, 'Het eind van de maakbare migrant. Waarom de formatie wel stuk moest lopen', *NRC* 20-21 mei 2017.

[2] Cf Hein de Haas 2012, 15; Lackzo and Wijkstrom, 2004, 181.

'history of migration research' is indeed complicated, and while I do not pretend to bring salvation in this respect, the rationale for this conference sparked my interest to pick up this intriguing, but hard to get to grips with topic.

A promising terrain of historical research to emerge in the past few years is the so-called 'scientization of the social'.[3] The concept describes how, in the 20th century, many domains of social life had become permeated by the concepts and practices of the social sciences. Coined by the German social historian Lutz Raphael[4], the concept fits right in with the idea of exploring the various manifestations and conceptions of technocrats in 20th century Europe, tracing their rise, trajectory, crises and contestation in an attempt to understand some of the individual profiles within this broad group of experts or the shifts in ideas. In order to explore the complementary developments as well – 'the politicization of science' – Raphael uses Peter Wagner's concept of 'discourse coalitions'. These can be seen as constellations at any given time in which social scientists develop ideas 'that strengthen the arguments of a group of actors in the political system, whose policies might, in turn, support the standing of these scientists in academia'.[5] 'Ideas' or 'metaphors' often serve as the attractive and mobilizing forces in these informal alliances. Examples of these 'ideas' from the field of migration studies are for instance 'assimilation', 'integration' or 'mental health'. Changes in ideas or discourses do not simply follow or precede the sequences of topical political debates, rather they are connected to them and form their own cycles of intellectual style and exchange.[6]

In this paper I will start to unravel some of these discourse coalitions, particularly those concerned with international migration. I will do this by providing a genealogy (following Raphaels configuration or periodization) of both the Dutch national migration system and one of today's biggest players in the international field, albeit a fairly contested one: the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Both put down their roots before the Second World War but were legally founded in 1951-1952. In a general overview I will briefly outline their aims, how they related to each other, and how 'sensitive' their key actors were with regard to issues such as democracy and the legitimacy of their policy. Then I will zoom in on a group of international scholars that joined forces in the Netherlands in 1951 as the Research Group for European Migration Problems (REMP). I will argue that this group was the informal discourse coalition which formed the nexus between science and politics in what nowadays is called 'migration management'. I will address two key questions: "Who were the key scientists involved?" and "How were they connected to the key political actors and institutions mentioned above?". Finally, I will briefly reflect on what Raphael has called 'secondary scientization'. This is the phrase used from the 1970s and 1980s onwards, during a period when a general critical awareness and response towards social scientific knowledge was growing. These were also the years of Foucault's lectures on 'Security, Territory, Population', which inspired several 'Governmentality' researchers to critically reflect upon IOM's current promotion of 'border management'?.[7] Do these years mark the shift to a new

[3] Cf. Wim de Jong 2017, 1.

[4] Brückweh et.al. 2012, 2.

[5] Ibid, 8.

[6] Raphael 2012, 44.

[7] Foucault *Lectures 1977-1978*, 2007; Andrijasevic & Walters 2010, 977-999; Walters 2011, 140-143.

discourse and perhaps to a new coalition around this specification of migration management which could explain the disputes around IOM today'?

1910-1930s: The rise of social engineering[8]

Although today's polarized debates on economic migration seem to suggest otherwise, for more than a century States have considered (international) migration – and thus the regulation of it - as a sound instrument for the (re)allocation of labour or as a solution for demographic issues. Most migration scholars even agree that migration control was not so much the result of, but rather an important part of, state formation. National States and centralized power developed in conjunction with a steady increase in control over both the internal and international mobility of citizens and foreigners alike.[9]

In 1913, the Netherlands Association for Land Move (NVL) was founded. It was the first result of the co-operation between private organizations in the Netherlands with agricultural interests and the Dutch government. This hybrid public-private characteristic was retained in later mergers.

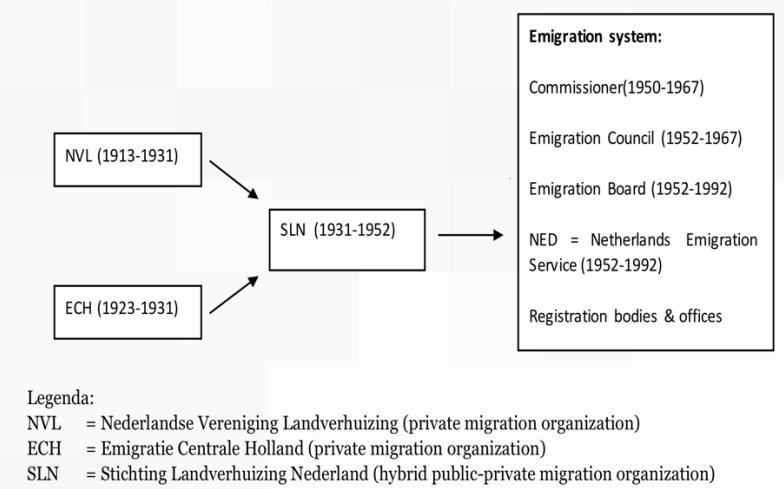

fig.1 Dutch national migration system 1913-1992

Amongst its initiators were the liberal Minister of Agriculture Willem Treub and an engineer from the Polytechnic in Delft, Isaac Pieter de Vooys. Both were still working on their final report by the State Commission on Unemployment, in which they explored internal and international migration as a possible solution.[10] De Vooys was also part of an intellectual movement that has been described as synthetic technocracy. Most of these intellectuals were involved in the quest for a synthesis that would bridge ideological differences and thus stop the fragmentation of Dutch society which was divided along religious lines (pillarization)

[8] Raphael 2012, 51-52.

[9] Cf. Van Faassen 2017, 2.

[10] Van Faassen 2014, 1.

at that time. During the interbellum this quest became increasingly connected with proposals for educational reform, according to David Baneke. [11]

At this point the movement began to coincide with the educational program of the socially engaged Professor Sebald Steinmetz. He developed a new research style called 'sociography' (the predecessor of sociology) in which empirical research on Dutch social groups and communities in relation to different people internationally was central. One of his students initiated the so-called People's High School Movement in the Netherlands. This had comparable aims to the technocrats and attracted other sociographers such as Evert Hofstee and Pieter Bouman. It also had ties with the Quaker-like religious movement known as the Woodbrokers in which theologist and sociologist Willem Banning played an active role. During the economic crisis in the 1930s the Bakkeveen High School (Friesland) organized combined employment and emigration courses. One of the teachers was the then 38-year-old Delft engineer Bas Haveman, who later became the Government Commissioner for Emigration. Consequently, during these years emigration came to the attention of the technocrats and social scientists and the discourse on social reform slowly became part of a new discourse coalition centered on ideas of 'community' and 'demography'.[12]

1945-1970s: planned modernization[13]

During the Second World War the Dutch government had already started to investigate possibilities for a so-called active migration policy, emanating from a Keynesian aspiration for full employment. These policy intentions coincided with strong, bottom-up pressure to take part in the migration policymaking process, first from the agricultural sector (as the land gain in the IJsselmeer polders was insufficient to provide every farmer's son with his own farm), followed later by women and other civil society organizations. The question of whether or not migration should be an issue of central governmental planning led to fierce public debates. To get out of this deadlock the Minister of Social Affairs Dolf Joekes appointed Bas Haveman as Government Commissioner for Emigration. Both men had a progressive liberal background and had been closely involved in establishing the 'Breakthrough' between related political movements by founding the Labour Party in 1945. They became the architects of the Emigration Act of 1952, which defined the Emigration system. Haveman had a surprisingly keen eye for inclusive economic citizenship for women and Joekes, who had been a member of the State Commission for Constitutional Reform in 1936, for more democratic forms of extra-parliamentary representation. They used the Emigration Act to experiment with. It strongly resembled the neo-corporate structures that stemmed from the Industrial Organization Act [*Wet op de bedrijfsorganisatie]* yet still deviated from it. In the case of both the Council and the Board (fig. 1), quotas for the representation of women and religious or refugee minority organizations were legally defined. Although the Board had legal powers, final decision-making remained the prerogative of Parliament.[14]

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[11] Baneke 2011, 91.

[12] Cf. Raphael 2012, 44.

[13] Raphael 2012, 52-53.

[14] Van Faassen 2014, Ch.1, 2 and *Slotbeschouwing*/ Summary.

At the international level, the refugee problem had still not yet been resolved by the time the mandate of the International Refugee Organization (IRO) had expired. The UN subsequently decided to establish the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, due to Cold War considerations and the 'white' migration policies of Canada and Australia, the Western countries were also looking for a continuation of the IRO services, outside the UN system with its communist and 'non-white' member states. Although the International Labour Organization (ILO) tried to enhance its position by arguing that migration was an ILO issue, it did not emerge as the winner of the fierce battle over the IRO's material legacy (the fleet, personnel and an administrative budget augmented by a US bonus of ten million dollars). This was allocated for one year to the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (PICMME), which was renamed as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) in 1953.

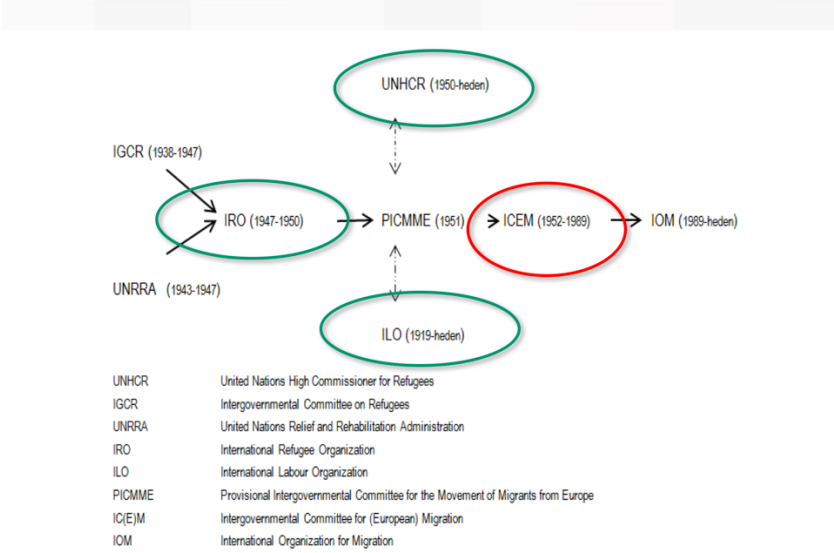


fig.2 International context: migration management

ICEM presented itself as a refugee organization, but the member states had agreed that its main function was to encourage and facilitate the economic migration of the labour surplus from a disrupted Europe. In a way, it was a depoliticized 'agreement to disagree': the preference for bilateral contacts remained, but at the same time ICEM facilitated multilateral discussions, without having too many commitments. Therefore, it functioned as a safety valve for an integrating and Europe: regulations such as the free movement of people within Europe - in which Germany the Netherlands were the 'receiving' countries - could be compensated by facilitating the overseas emigration of their own nationals. It was only in 1989, when it changed names yet again (this time to IOM), that ICEM obtained a permanent status. Although in its constitution ICEM stated that it was a global collaboration of 'democratic countries', the Executive Board, on which the Netherlands had an almost permanent seat until the 1970s, was only accountable to its own Council.[15]

[15] Van Faasen 2014, Ch.3; 2017, 3.

As for the relationship between the Dutch national migration system and ICEM: Haveman, together with his Australian counterpart and close friend, the Secretary of Immigration Tasman Heyes, became very important, informal advisers to the key financier: America. From 1961-1969 Haveman was Director of ICEM and has been the only non-American head in its history to date. Meanwhile, the Dutch migration system was reorganized due to falling departure figures and growing criticism, especially from the employers' unions. The Emigration Council became part of the Social Economic Council; while the Emigration Board kept its status as an independent administrative body and legal entity until 1999. However, in practice the Dutch Government asked IOM to establish a Dutch branch in 1987, at which point it transferred all its tasks, as well as the departmental migration staff, to this international organization (thereby maintaining its control from a distance).[16]

Let's keep this background in mind and return to 1950. On the day of his appointment Haveman received messages of congratulation from several of his former sociographic Bakkeveen connections. Some of them were partners in the demographic Institute ISONEVO. Others, like Hofstee and Groenman, had important functions in selecting Dutch farmers to populate the newly gained IJsselmeer polders in order to form new, socially sound, communities. They offered him their services (in the form of expertise and students) in exchange for new 'research material': namely, potential Dutch emigrants.[17] While Haveman created a research department within the new emigration system; Groenman and the German demographer Gunther Beyer, who fled to the Netherlands in 1933, founded the Research Group for European Migration Problems together with the Nijmegen catholic sociologist Zeegers, in February 1952.

In its Mission Statement, REMP highlighted the 'threat of overpopulation' for the future prosperity of mankind. Regional unemployment and a falling standard of living could be the results of the disproportional distribution of humanity over the earth. They considered it "the imperative duty of scientists and statesmen …to concern themselves with these local disharmonies, by studying them and if possible by indicating solutions to the present difficulties".[18] A new discourse coalition was born, with roots in the 1930s.

In order to unravel the REMP network and the development of its discourse, I applied text-mining methods on its publications with the help of my colleague, digital historian Rik Hoekstra. The first - aggregated - dataset[19] consists mainly of the REMP publications and the special issues of the *REMP bulletin*. This bulletin merged in 1962 – during Haveman's

[16] Van Faassen 2014, Ch.8.

[17] Van Faassen 2014, 277.

[18] IISH Amsterdam, Archive Gunther Beyer, ARCH03193, inv.nr. 30; National Archives of Canada, RG 26, vol. 117.

[19] Dataset 1 is still 'work in progress'. It was aggregated by a Picarta/Worldcat search for all the series of, or related to REMP and REMP's editor Gunther Beyer. It consists of the REMP *publications* 1-20; REMP *Bulletin*, Supplement 1-14; 3 digital article titles of REMP-bulletin; Studies over de Nederlandse emigratie 1-4; 9 titles concerning migration of a second series, edited by Beyer: Studies in Social Life. The dataset will be supplemented with all article titles of the first 10 years of REMP-bulletin, and any relevant additional facts from the Beyer-archive. Visualizations (wordclouds) *made by Rik Hoekstra using NLTK (nltk.org) and Andreas Mueller's python wordcloud https://github.com/amueller/word_cloud)*

directorship - with the bulletin of ICEM*, International Migration*. Consequently, from the 1960s the second dataset consists of all the online *IM* bulletins until the present day.[20]

REMP was supervised by a Board of Directors, while the daily course of business was done by a Managing Committee and a Working Committee out of their midst. The first Board consisted of 34 people from 10 European countries and three correspondent-members from the United States, Canada and South-Africa.[21] The areas of expertise of the members varied from sociology, demography, economy and geography to linguistics and statistics. Nine of them were Dutch, forming the majority in both the Management and the Working Committee. Gunther Beyer was Secretary and Editor until his death in 1984 (and Assistant Editor to *IM*). The French demographer and technocrat Alfred Sauvy, member of UN and European population committees, was Chairman.

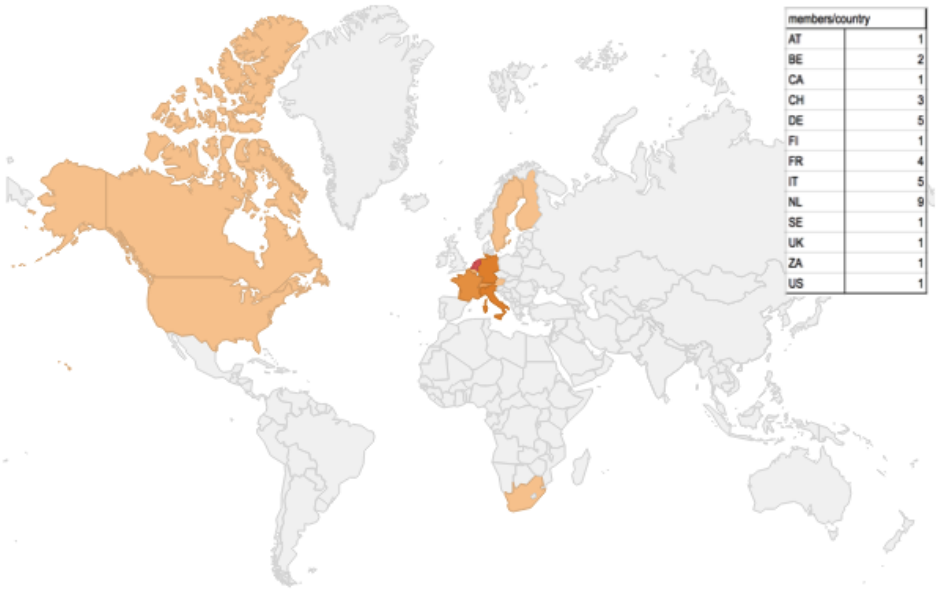


fig.3. Research Group for European Migration Problems: first Board of Directors by Country

To find out exactly how these experts were connected to key actors from the political sphere, such as Haveman, we went through the prefaces of the publications. We modelled the different roles of the key actors based on issues such as: who were writing forewords, prefaces or introductions to each other's work; Who ordered the research? Who financed it? etc.

When we visualize the **coalition** for every decade between 1950-1980, the complete network can only be shown for the 1950s (due to a lack of data after this decade). Nevertheless, we can show some developments. In the 1950 overview (fig. 4) not only do we see the sociographers mentioned earlier, we also see the names of international and

[20] http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-2435/issues (last accessed 2017-09-10). Almost all issues are available online; only 'original articles' (no 'editorials', bookreviews' etc.) are included in the dataset for textmining purposes on article titles.

[21] Cf. Publications of the Research Group for European Migration Problems VII, Hofstee 1952, backcover.

national political key actors and institutions (Beveridge, Sauvy, Emigration Commisariat (=RCE), ICEM).

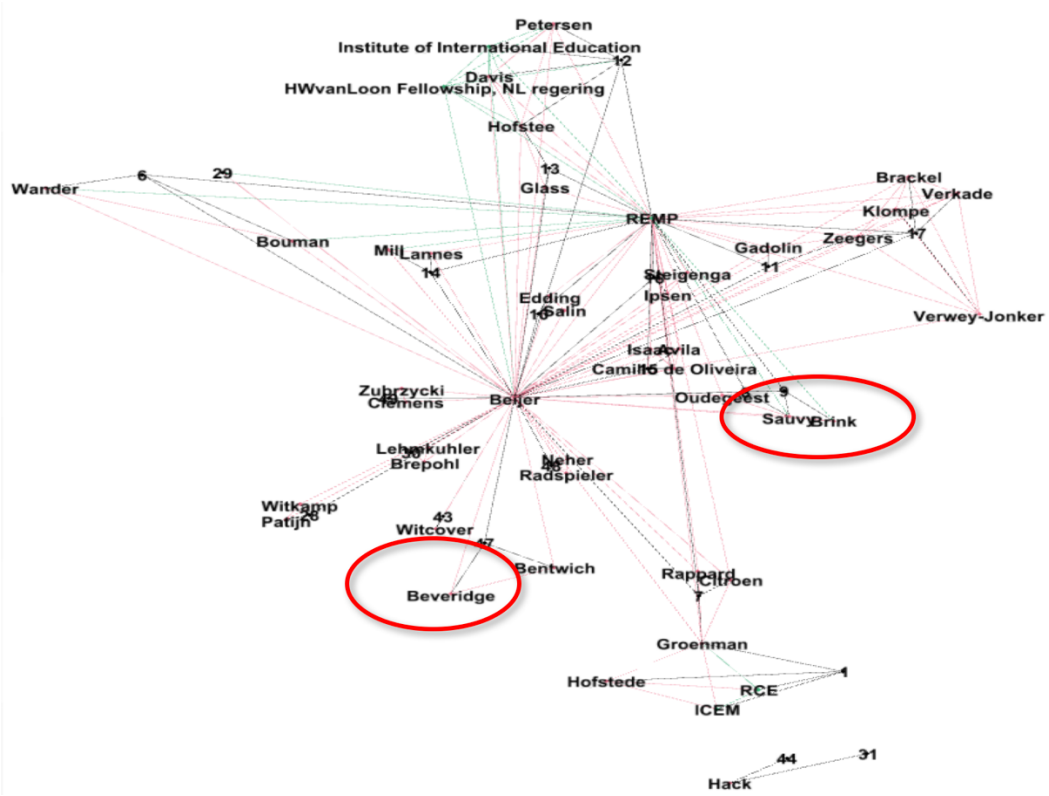


fig.4. REMP discourse coalition 1950s (all network visualizations made in Gephi).

To give a specific example by zooming in: figure 5 shows the relationship between the sociologists Hilda Verwey-Jonker and P. Brackel as authors of a study on assimilation. The then Minister of Social Work, chemist Marga Klompe, wrote the preface and the synthetic technocrat Verkade and sociologist Zeegers wrote the introduction; with all three of them emphasizing the relevance of the study for both policy and public debate.

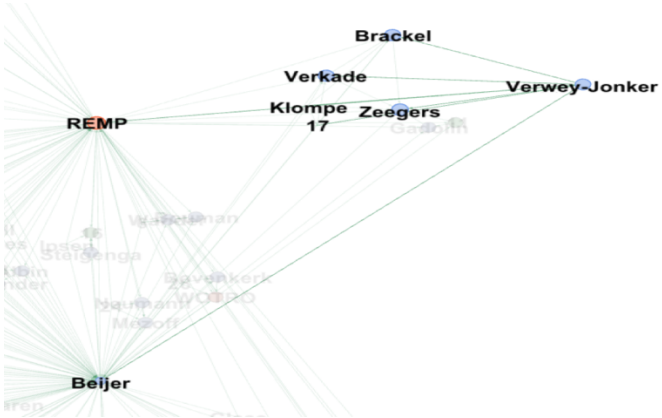


fig.5 Zoom of the 1950s REMP discourse coalition

An overview of the **content of the discourse** can be generated as a wordcloud by using the worldcat catalogue on the entire body of REMP publications. It shows us what we know by now: namely, the importance of 'assimilation', but also of 'Christian' sociology. When we restrict our analysis to the 1950s (dataset 1) we see the importance of the Netherlands as a topic, and of 'demography' (population aspects).

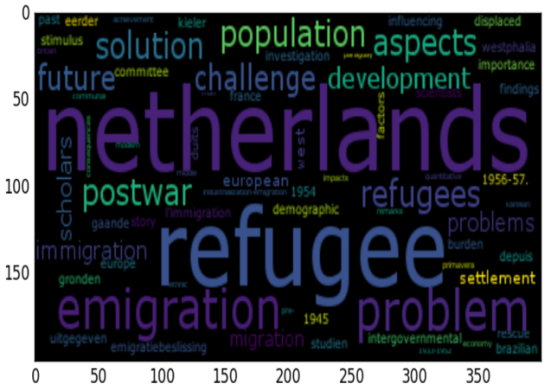
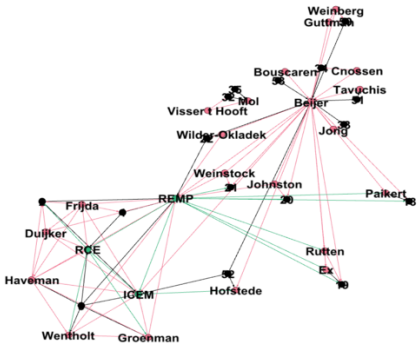


fig.6 Source: www.worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n50070935/ *fig.7 Source: dataset 1*

Zooming in on the **network** in the 1960s shows us that the studies commissioned by Haveman and the Emigration Commissariat (RCE) were done by Dutch researchers, with expertise and help from members of the Research Group (with Beyer in a role of PhD supervisor) and were partly funded by ICEM.



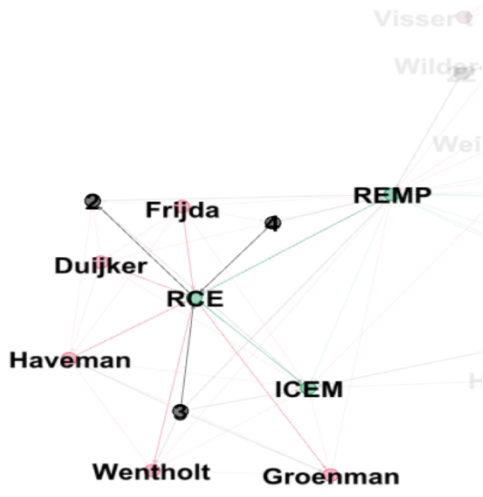


fig.8 REMP-discourse coalition 1960s

fig.9 Zoom REMP-discourse coalition 1960s

For the **discourse** itself we have to remember that the *REMP bulletin* and *International Migration* had merged.

fig.10 Source: dataset 2 International Migration articles

Analysing figure 10 shows an interesting shift: 'Australia' becomes topical, although it did not belong to the first members of REMP. The same applies to 'Latin America'. This can be explained by the informal contacts between Haveman and Heyes, and of both man with the US State department. By the start of the Kennedy administration, ICEM had come under serious criticism. Haveman advised the State department to let ICEM join Kennedy's vision on development aid to Latin America. This actually enabled him to create a positive sum game for the Netherlands emigration policy. Using the IJsselmeer polders as an example, he profiled Dutch farmers as experts in the exploitation of desolate soils, thus suggesting and promoting US-subsidized expert migration from the Netherlands and Europe. During his directorship (strongly promoted by Australia / Heyes), he actually started programs for Latin American.[22] So, in terms of discourse, besides 'assimilation', which is still important, 'population' or 'demography' gives birth to 'development' (which was still believed to be feasible).

Analysing the last decade until Beyer's death shows a shrinking network, with diminished Dutch influence and fewer mutual contacts. However, the discourse in dataset 1 shows another interesting shift from 'development' to a more neoliberal discourse: namely, 'entrepreneurship' (This shift is unclear in dataset 2, not shown).

[22] Cf. Van Faassen 2014, 375-379, 2017, 4-5.

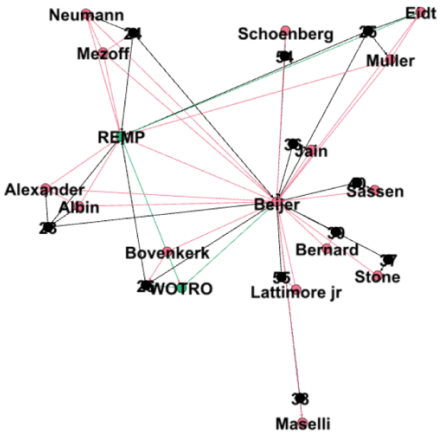


fig.11 REMP-discourse coalition 1970s-1980s

fig.12 Source: dataset 1

When we summarize the developments between the 1950s and the 1980s, we saw a declining coalition, with less connectivity and less input from Dutch experts. Furthermore we saw a shift in discourse from 'assimilation' to 'development' to 'entrepreneurship'.

1980-2010s: Era of secondary scientization[23]

Just a few words on the years after Beyer's death (and with that the silent demise of the REMP). In these years the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration ICEM twice changed names - to Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) in 1980 and to International Organization for Migration (IOM) in 1989. More important, having become a global agent in migration issues, IOM also started to frame its activities of assisting outward migration from Europe in a different way. Nowadays their core business in Europe is in assisting the 'voluntary return' of people of non-European origin. Compared to its activities of helping European nationals in leaving Europe in the first decades after the Second World War, this is merely a change in objects than in policy, which came, however, with growing criticism from academia.[24]

The last question we asked ourselves was: does the data support the observations made by political sociologist William Walters that, again, there is a shift in the IOM's discourse and perhaps in coalition, inspired by Foucault? Can we discern a shift over the years from a Steinmetz**'** Social Darwinistic inspired discours on the *'political biology of the nation'* via a Beyer's / REMP inspired discours on '*demography and assimilation*' to a Foucauldean discours on '*biopolitics of the migrant'* and '*border management'*?[25]

When we analyse the development in the discourse from the 1980s onwards and compare it with wordclouds from a 3rd data set (consisting of IOM policy documents), this seems only

[23] Brückweh 2012, 4.

[24] See Van Faassen 2014, 20-24.

[25] Foucault *Lectures 1977-1978*, 2007; Andrijasevic & Walters 2010, 977-999; Walters 2011, 140-143.

very implicitly to be the case. We see 'border'-related words such as 'human trafficking' and 'irregular migration', but hardly any sign of the actual word itself.

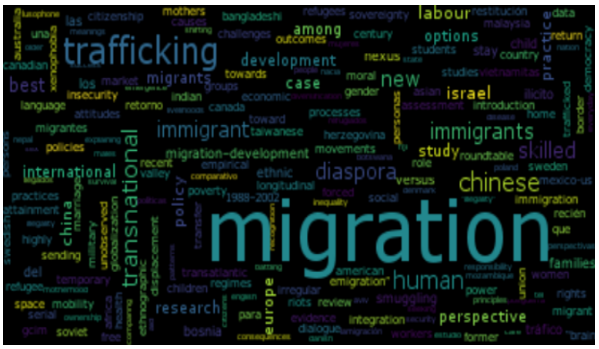


fig.13 dataset 2: International Migration 2000

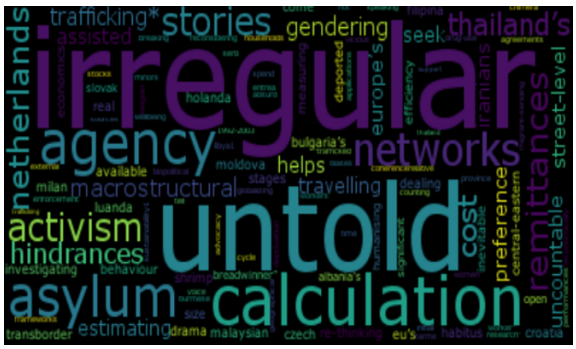


fig.14 dataset 2: International Migration 2010

What then is the case? When we look at today's criticism of IOM from academia – which is centred on IOM assisting States with the so-called 'voluntary return' of irregular migrants from Europe – this can help to explain the *International Migration* wordclouds in figure 13 and 14. On the other hand, when we look at the wordcloud for the public IOM policy documents in the figures 15 and 16 this shows us that 'development' is still (or again) an important discourse within IOM circles.[26]

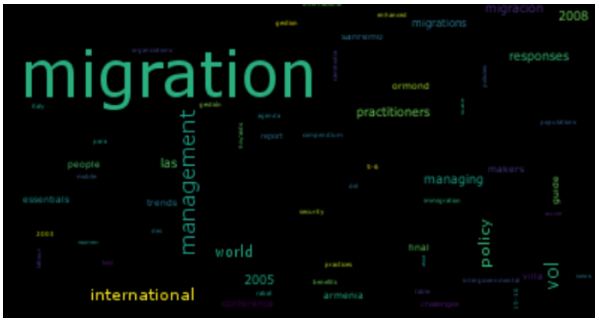


fig.15 dataset 3: IOM policy documents 2000

fig.16 dataset 3: IOM policy documents 2010

Studies on IOM practices, however, gives us reasons for another observation with respect to this era of secondary scientization. In its daily practices on a regional level, IOM is indeed training locals to work with biometrical instruments in order to manage borders. However, the experts IOM relies on today for such jobs are probably not so much connected to academia but rather to consultancy firms.[27] So, in our opinion, in this era we are not only facing a shift in discourse language, but also splits, or new 'layers', in the discourse coalitions themselves. This enables IOM to publish 'critical studies' in its own journal on the one hand, thereby showing that it is not afraid of criticism as a sign of good governance – and, on the other hand, still rely on the old technocratic mechanisms of 'control from a distance'.

[26] Cf. De Haas 2012.

[27] Cf. Klekowski von Koppenfels 2001, 72, 78-80; Andrijasevic & Walters 2010, 988, esp. note 17.

Concluding remarks

In this paper we explored the role of Dutch technocrats and experts with respect to 20th century migration management using the concept of 'discourse coalitions'. It enabled us to demonstrate that the Research Group for European Migration Problems, consisting of experts from several scientific disciplines, had close connections to technocratic policymakers. The discourse itself developed from 'community' and 'demography' before 1940 to 'population', 'assimilation' and 'development' in the 1950s-1970s. Then, from the 1980s onwards, we noticed a shift towards more neoliberal terms such as 'entrepreneurship'. Furthermore, we assume that this era also shows a kind of layering with respect to the expert networks themselves. With respect to the question of 'democratic sensitiveness' or the 'legitimacy' of the system, there seems to be a deterioration here. Whereas the Dutch technocrats in the 1950-1960s at least started from the premise of religious or humanistic-inspired liberal or social democratic ideas towards democracy, 'world community' and 'development', and had a keen eye for developing national systems which were accountable to parliament, in today's more neoliberal setting the international migration system is becoming more and more opaque due to the phenomenon of branching out to many more regions and the influence of many different experts across multiple layers throughout the system.

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