



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

*International Journal
on Multicultural Societies
(IJMS)*

Vol. 7, No. 1, 2005

**“The Links between
Academic Research and
Public Policies in the Field of
Migration and Ethnic
Relations: Selected National
Case-Studies”**

International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)

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The Links between Academic Research and Public Policies in the Field of Migration and Ethnic Relations: Selected National Case-Studies

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Editorial

MATTHIAS KOENIG
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The present thematic issue of UNESCO's *International Journal on Multicultural Societies* (IJMS) takes up previous debates on migration and multiculturalism (Vol. 5, No 1 & 2; Vol. 6, No 2) by asking a particularly salient question: What has been the link between academic research and public policy making in the field of migration and ethnic relations?

This question, which at its more fundamental level is related to deep-seated epistemological and methodological controversies over objectivity in the social sciences, is of utmost practical relevance in the field of migration and multiculturalism which has been characterized by rather close relations to public policy concerns. By taking for granted the idea of the nation-state, with its strong external territorial boundaries and internal cultural homogeneity, academic research has tended to reproduce the historically contingent conceptions of statehood and national identity, thus falling victim to what is now being criticised as "methodological nationalism" (Glick-Schiller / Wimmer 2003). To be sure, recent debates on post-national membership and transnational migrant communities have gone beyond these orientations. However, large portions of empirical studies on migration and multiculturalism do continue to be related to short-term concerns of national public policy (see e.g. Favell 2001). In fact, not only do many scholars act as policy-advisors, public intellectuals or engaged citizens taking an activist stance on highly controversial questions such as border control, immigration quota, recognition of cultural differences and the like, but also the very research questions, analytical categories, and theoretical frameworks employed by academics are affected by policy-makers' modes of perception. Obviously, existing funding structures are a key factor in this respect; the availability of resources has drawn many migration scholars into projects framed by dominant political discourses. Its interdisciplinary character, often corresponding to its marginality *within* the major disciplines (sociology, political science, economics etc.), is perhaps another factor explaining the policy orientation of much migration research. Finally, strong competition with other providers of public knowledge, such as media, think tanks, or non-governmental organisations, has supported this approach.

Now, all this is not to say that policy-relevance of social sciences is undesirable. Quite to the contrary, one of the primary objectives of social scientific knowledge production is precisely to enhance our capacities of collective action. What can be undesirable, however, is when social science research is *driven* by governmental

policy concerns. Not only is such research normatively problematic, as it circumvents democratic deliberation, but it also produces short-sighted explanations and predictions. As Stephen Castles has argued, commenting on the reasons for the wide-spread failures of migration policies, “[t]he key point is that policy-driven research can lead not only to poor sociology but also to bad policy.” Castles’ quotation, which is cited in greater length in *Marco Martiniello’s* and *Eric Florence’s* thematic introduction to the present thematic issue, calls for a systematic reflection on the particular links between academic research and public policy in the field of migration and ethnic relations.

The major objective of this IJMS issue, guest-edited by *Martiniello* and *Florence*, is precisely to contribute to such systematic reflection. It adopts a comparative perspective by analysing research-policy links in Belgium, The Netherlands, Morocco and China. The selection of countries emphasises variation in both political and academic contexts. Thus, along with the two Western European destination countries, a prominent sending country and a country dealing with large-scale internal migration are included. Furthermore, the four countries display highly different profiles in terms of financial and academic autonomy of the social sciences. However, although these variations result in numerous divergences in research-policy-links, as shown by the four articles, some similarities may also be detected. Reading the present collection alongside with the studies on Australia, the Philippines and Thailand carried out by the *Asia Pacific Migration Research Network* (Iredale et al. 2001), one is tempted to draw two conclusions. *First*, the impact of social science on migration policy seems to vary within one and the same country as a function of typical policy cycles; the direct impact seems to be highest in initial stages of policy development, i.e. before the topics at hand have become strongly politicised. *Secondly*, social science research seems to have the highest potential of influencing public policy, if it is not only addressed directly to policy-makers, but also indirectly to larger audiences, thus contributing to public democratic deliberation. In any event, the articles collected in this thematic issue underline the necessity to critically reflect on the political conditions of migration research. If we wish to further internationalise social science research in the fields of migration and multiculturalism, such reflection may indeed turn out to be crucial.

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The Links between Academic Research and Public Policies in the Field of Migration and Ethnic Relations: Selected National Case Studies – Thematic Introduction

ERIC FLORENCE (*University of Liège*) AND MARCO MARTINIELLO
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Migration issues are often thought and debated in terms of societal security. The association of migration with a series of social ills such as crime, urban disorder, unemployment, etc. in the mass media and in some political statements is common to many countries. In these conditions, the task of social and political scientists is very delicate and complex, as they are asked to produce objective knowledge about a highly politicised set of issues. Could their work not contribute to the over-dramatisation of migration, even though their aim may be exactly the opposite? Is there not a risk for the results of their work to be misinterpreted in order to fit political strategies?

Academic sociologists and political scientists increasingly face competition with media specialists and non-academic experts. The latter often produce a more seductive discourse, even when it is not scientifically sound. As for academic researchers, they are sometimes accused of not engaging enough in social debates. But when they do so, their discourse tends to be disqualified because it is “disenchanted”, complex and even critical. At the end of the day, the impression is that they are only listened to when they can be used as an academic legitimisation for political action. In this context, the issue of the linkage between academia and decision-making has become topical.

Scientific knowledge is only one kind of knowledge and it may be competing with other types of knowledge and interests to exert some influence on agenda-setting and policy-making processes. The domestic and international contexts, the overall policy orientations and the ideologies of the nation-state are some of the important factors that may bear on the links between scientific research and public policies in the field of migration and ethnic studies.¹ The differences between political and scientific logics should be emphasised at this point.² Breaud (1998) has highlighted that political causality stressed the role of actors while scientific analysis rests on

¹ See Van Der Straeten and Adam for further elaboration on this in Brans et al. (2004).

² Penninx also elaborates on this in his contribution to this issue.

“a logic of global elucidation of processes”. Scientific research ought to put more emphasis on situational constraints, on the weight of overall trends, and it needs to question and demystify the categories of political language. But Breaud also notes that while the researcher needs to remain cautious about the use of political categories, there are pressures for the adoption of such categories in the scientific domain (Breaud 1998). On the issue of ethnic categorisation in scientific research, Simon has framed the problematic nicely: “Is it possible to produce new forms of classification that, while becoming independent from national categories, would not passively become submitted to the categories of common sense?” (Simon 1997). The attitude of researchers as to the use of categories of analysis ought to be one of caution, self-reflection and scrutiny: they should question the categories they use and try to uncover their historicity. To a certain extent, the national representation of migration and of the nation heavily influences the legitimacy of certain categories and renders the use of other categories problematic (Martiniello 1995; Simon 1997; Aspinall 2002). Sayad observed how much the way we think about, how we describe and give sense to immigration, as well as “to our whole social and political world”, are conditioned by “national or even nationalist categories”. For him, to “think about immigration is equivalent to question the state, to question its basic principles (...)”, which corresponds to denaturalise the categories the state has shaped, to “re-historicize the state” (Sayad 1996: 11–12, 14).

While in principle scientific categories are descriptive, due to their high degree of legitimacy and formalization, they may in some instances turn into categories of action and prescription that may have very concrete effects. As researchers, we have a heavy responsibility as to the historical conditions of emergence of categories of public action. We need to ask for what practical purpose are political categories used and what “the stakes of their use and their challenge are” (Breaud 1998: 548).

A similar and equally crucial issue is that of the questioning of research questions, of the methodological, epistemological and deontological stance of research projects. Should researchers simply leave unquestioned the way migration and ethnic relations issues are problematised in research projects/tenders? How can researchers develop approaches that depart from the way migration and ethnic relation questions are problematised in the politico-mediatic field?³ This may be a tricky, and at the same time even more crucial, task in contexts of high politicisation, when migration or ethnic relation issues become particularly loaded at the symbolic level. Several contributions to this issue stress how much the overall national and international political contexts may affect the weight scientific research may or may not have in the agenda-setting and policy-making processes.⁴

³ The use of some concepts or categories and specific epistemological choices rather than others may lead to a particular way of conceiving migration and migrants, of making them visible; it may underplay some issues or some dimensions of migration or ethnic relations.

⁴ See particularly the papers on Belgium, China and the Netherlands for an elaboration of this last question.

They are growing in importance as we witness an overall trend in Western Europe towards the multiplication of forms of non-academic “expertise” (semi-governmental agencies, NGOs, consulting agencies, individual researchers, etc.) and their increasing relevance in practices of government. Such non-academic “experts” often produce forms of action or diagnosis-oriented knowledge that are in high demand at the political level.

The French example of the constitution of a self-proclaimed expertise in urban issues and its effects on public policies is a case in point, as it highlights the dangers of a policy-driven expertise which is perfectly well formatted to the expectations of the polity and the media as well as “to the imperatives of the institutional rationality and categorization” (Milburn 2000: 339). Since the 1990s, the police or other professionals within the field of security have produced a vast amount of publications dealing with the issue of “urban violence”. These experts produce a catastrophist discourse on French suburbs that is grounded in scientifically questionable statistical evidence which has been refuted by several sociologists and criminologists. In these publications, systematic associations are made between delinquency and ethnic youth (of North African origin) or between crime and hip hop suburban culture (Mucchielli 2000). While such writings are not scientific per se, they often claim a certain scientific legitimacy and the statistical knowledge they produce aims mainly at “the detailed knowledge of specific so-called risky social groups” (Bigo 2001). These new non-academic experts have contributed greatly to the legitimisation of notions such as “urban violence”, “youth delinquency”, and “incivility”. These concepts are never defined clearly and their vague nature is proportional to their symbolic and performative power. They have now turned into real political categories of action⁵ and have penetrated part of the scientific rhetoric on deviance (Milburn 2000). This “expertise” has contributed to a change in how violence and delinquency are explained in the political and public spheres, from an earlier emphasis on structural factors to an individualisation of the causes of violence and crime. Pattegay describes a similar pattern with the category of “wandering youth” (*jeunes en errance*) which was defined and widely circulated by a number of actors in the social field (such as social welfare agents) as well as by self-proclaimed experts and private consultants. This notion has now become a category in French public policies. As with “incivility” and “urban violence”, the category of “wandering youth” has not been defined with much accuracy and this lack of precision allows a large spectrum of people to be covered by public intervention (Pattegay 2001).

Another interesting case is the one described by Kruikshank on the constitution of “self-esteem” as a political category and a form of governance in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. She documents the constitution of causal links between self-esteem and a series of social ills such as alcoholism and drug abuse, welfare

⁵ The concept of “incivility” has for example allowed for both licit and illicit deeds which are usually not dealt with by the law to enter the framework of public action. The category of “incivility” is therefore added to those of delinquency and crime. Note that the notion of incivility has also entered the political and media landscape in Belgium.

dependence, crime and violence, academic failure, etc. Although such correlations were not found empirically by researchers, social scientists devised methods to measure what was not there: the focus of research was on the lack of self-esteem and its (non)-relation to social problems.⁶ From the “discovery” of its absence, social scientists have created a tangible vision of a “state of esteem”. Kruikshank observes that this shows how “the social sciences can be seen as productive sciences: the knowledge, measurements and data they produce are constitutive of relations of governance as well as the subjectivity of the citizens”. She argues that it is the productive capacities of social science, in this case through social scientists who were members of the California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility, that produced “the subject, as one who lacks self-esteem, and it is social science research that sets the terms for telling the truth of that subject (...)” and eventually “it falls to social science to establish policy measures to regulate the subject according to that truth” (Kruikshank 1996: 237). As Dean observed, Kruikshank’s study reveals how some forms of expertise and knowledge can constitute categories of people such as the “poor”, the “unemployed”, the “migrant criminal”, etc. who then become the object of intervention (Dean 1999: 71). It also legitimises the constitution of various agencies and professionals to enact government programmes. These cases alert us to the transformation of modes of government and to the role of various forms of expertise and knowledge within such modes. How should scientific researchers situate themselves in an increasingly competitive research market, facing a growing number of non-academic researchers who may not necessarily follow the same deontological and methodological rules as those which academic researchers ought to adhere to? In this respect, the attitude of Belgian criminologists and sociologists is an example of good practice. A few years ago, the former Belgian Minister of Justice Marc Verwhilgen commissioned a study on the relation between people with an immigrant background and criminality. All Belgian criminologists refused to carry out the research on the ground that the very question was dubious.⁷ Eventually, the minister had to turn to a Dutch researcher. In reply to the commissioning of such a research project, several prominent Belgian criminologists and sociologists edited a volume entitled *Mon délit, mon origine* (My Offence, My Origin) that aimed at historicising and deconstructing the kind of simplistic postulate upon which this research was grounded. The authors

⁶ Kruikshank notes that as the social scientists of the California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility did not find clear links between self-esteem and the social ills they had highlighted, they urged increased funding for this topic. In the 1990s, reference to “empowerment” and “self-esteem” became “almost mandatory in mission statements and grant applications for non-profit agencies” (Kruikshank 1996: 236, 238).

⁷ They criticized the very postulate of this research that associated criminality with one single variable: the culture of origin. They noted that the minister had ignored the insights of the scientific literature on immigration and crime. The fact that the minister had stated that by carrying out such a research project he lifted a taboo had also been disapproved on the grounds that existing research on this topic showed that there was no such taboo. It seemed that the minister was questioning the insights of scientific research that would be biased by “political correctness” (Brion et al. 2001: 7–8).

noted that their work aimed at “launching the scientific discussion the minister had skipped and at contributing to democratic debate” (Brion et al. 2001: 8)

Stephen Castles, who has been researching migration for more than thirty years, wondered why so many migration policies in most industrialised countries had often failed. In an attempt to address this question, Castles raises a series of important issues that are both challenging for scholars and political decision-makers. We quote a fragment of his argument as an opening to this exciting special issue:

(...) did the researchers get it wrong, or did the politicians and bureaucrats ignore them? The answer is both. Because social scientists often allowed their research agendas to be driven by policy needs and funding, they often asked the wrong questions, relied on short-term empirical approaches without looking at historical and comparative dimensions, and failed to develop adequate theoretical frameworks. They gave narrow, short-term answers to policy-makers, which led to misinformed policies ... The key point is that policy-driven research can lead not only to poor sociology but also to bad policy. This is because narrowly-focussed empirical research, often designed to provide an answer to an immediate bureaucratic problem, tends to follow a circular logic. It accepts the problem definitions built into its terms of reference, and does not look for more fundamental causes, nor for more challenging solutions ... Ministers and bureaucrats still see migration as something that can be turned on and off like a tap through laws and policies. By imposing this paradigm on researchers, the policy makers have done both social scientists and themselves a disservice. But we have to ask ourselves the uncomfortable question: why have so many of us accepted this role? (Castles 2003).

The aim of this issue is to compare the links between academic research and public policies in the field of migration and ethnic relations, in several regions of the world, from the point of view of academic researchers who have been involved in different forms of collaboration with policy-makers. The following three major questions were submitted to the contributors as guidelines for their paper:

- To what extent has policy design in the field of migration rested on the results of scientific research? In what respect have policy-makers been inspired by research on migration to elaborate public policies (agenda-setting and policy formulation)?
- What has been the role of researchers in the implementation of migration policies?
- How should social scientists stand in the face of increasing demands for short-term, often action and policy-oriented forms of “expertise” that fit media and political expectations, and what are the epistemological implications of such issues?

Content of the issue

In their paper on research on Chinese internal migration and its links with public policies since the 1980s, *Xiang* and *Tan* shed light on how social science research has affected the way migration is perceived at the political level. While most of the knowledge produced by policy experts in government and semi-government institutes focuses on whether migration is “progressive” or “destabilising”, the establishment of a “migrant-centred narrative which focuses on migrants’ experiences and problems” is described by the authors as one of the most important contributions of social science research. They detail the triangular relationship between research, media and policy and offer evidence of how researchers can influence policy indirectly via the media. They stress the importance for Chinese researchers of undertaking a critique of their own research postulates and conceptual frameworks, including the development of “new social thoughts beyond the notions of rights and the market”.

Based on his dual experience as government in-house expert and academic researcher, *Penninx* uses the concept of policy cycles as a heuristic device to examine the role of research in policy. He details the rather strongly structured research-policy relations in the Netherlands, and how these relations changed in the 1980s and 1990s. The paper uncovers the effects of various reports published by advisory committees and boards on ethnic minority policies. Such impact has been most straightforward in the framing of the “Ethnic Minorities Policy” between 1980 and 1983. One of the outcomes of this policy has been to generate an increase in the volume of research on migration and ethnic relations. *Penninx* draws attention to the growing politicisation of migration between 1996 and 2004 and the ensuing challenging of the “multiculturalist” policy. This period combined research/policy relations that were not institutionalised with an overall political mood of dissatisfaction about the outcomes of the Ethnic Minorities Policy. In such a context, it seems that the impact of scientific research on policy is much weaker, while political decisions are dependent on “the new ideology behind recent immigration and integration policies”.

The paper on Belgium presents the main results of a inter-university research project carried out between 2001 and 2003 using a methodological framework suggested by UNESCO. It clearly shows the influence of history and ideology – the dominant conceptions of the nation – on the processes of agenda-setting, policy-making and the implementation of policies in the field of immigration and on the impact of research on these processes. Furthermore, it demonstrates that the process of dissemination of social science research results is one of the relevant elements that has to be taken into account in analysing the links between social science and public policies. The role of structures that ease the interface between scientific, political and “third community” spheres (such as NGOs, trade unions, etc.) is also demonstrated, raising the issue of the institutional arrangements that can help social science results to feed into the policy-making process. Finally, the insights of this research also point to the relevance of an analysis that is not restrained to one particular factor or another, but that takes into account the role of

different elements – political paradigm, political context, specificity of field, etc. – in the process of knowledge utilisation at the political level.

Finally, the article by *Mohamed Charef* on the Moroccan situation presents relevant insights on a society which used to be a society of emigration and which has now become one of transit as well. Charef shows that migration has only recently been perceived as a crucial social phenomenon. This explains why migration studies have developed only lately even though migration specialists educated in Morocco and France have been in operation for several decades. The author also shows that the demands made on academics are not numerous and not very clear. The issue of the link between science and policy seems particularly complex and reveals the difficulties of a rapidly changing society.

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Does Migration Research Matter in China? A Review of its Relationship to Policy since the 1980s

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While China continues to attract the attention of social scientists worldwide and Chinese names and faces become a must at international forums, what can Chinese social researchers do in their own country? In the context of socio-political changes as well as intellectual development after the Cultural Revolution, this paper delineates how professional academic research on migration emerged in the 1990s through ideological debate and policy study. One of the most important achievements of academic research has probably been the establishment of a narrative focused on migrants' experiences and problems, as opposed to treating migration as an aggregate phenomenon to be managed by the state. The paper also calls attention to an emerging triangular relationship between research, mass media and policy-makers in which research influences policy through informing the public and promoting certain public discourses. Currently, interactions between the three parties and the subsequent policy changes are often driven by dramatic incidents, and researchers are therefore facing the challenge of making the triangle more sustainable.

While China continues to attract the attention of social scientists worldwide and Chinese names and faces become a must at international forums, what can Chinese social researchers do in their own country? Based on the authors' documentary studies over a number of years and, more importantly, their deep involvement in research, policy debates and actions relating to migration since the early 1990s, this paper reviews academic research on internal migration conducted by China-based scholars since the 1980s. In the context of socio-political changes as well as intellectual development in China after the Cultural Revolution, the authors delineate how professional academic research on migration emerged in the 1990s through ideological debate and policy study, providing scholars with more political autonomy and public influence. One of the most important achievements of this research has probably been the establishment of a *migrant-centred* narrative,

which focuses on migrants' experiences and problems, as opposed to treating *migration* as an aggregate phenomenon to be managed by the state, which paradigm prevailed in earlier discussions. By portraying migration as a human experience and revealing migrants' problems, this narrative has helped to win the wide sympathy for migrants that has directly shaped public debate since late 2002.

Apart from reviewing the content of research, the paper also calls attention to an emerging triangular relationship between research, mass media and policy-makers. In this triangle, research influences policy through informing the public and promoting certain public discourses. At the current stage, the interactions between the three parties and the subsequent policy changes are often driven by dramatic incidents. Researchers therefore face the challenge of making the triangle more sustainable. In order to achieve this, critical reflection may be needed on the meta-narrative of migration, which is currently underpinned by a liberal ideology of market economics and the concerns of individual rights, with a lack of labour discourse and structural analysis. At the same time, practical measures should be taken to improve the dissemination of research results and enhance the triangular interactions at local level.

Given the complexity of migration, this paper cannot claim to be comprehensive. Rather, aspects are highlighted that are probably special to China and that are particularly important for understanding the linkage between research and policy. In terms of discipline, the paper is confined to sociology in the broad sense (including anthropology, institutional economics and political sciences), to which the majority of existing literature on migration belongs. Section 1 gives a brief overview of the subject matter and points out why internal migration in China deserves special attention.¹ Sections 2 and 3 review how internal migration entered Chinese scholars' intellectual agenda and summarise the basic research trends. Section 4 delineates the triangular relationship that the authors regard as a basic infrastructure for effective research/reality interaction. Finally, recommendations are made on how to improve the influence of academic research on policy-making.

1. The "Floating Population"

Although large-scale rural-urban migration is almost universal for any country at a certain stage of development, it has special significance in China, both numerically and institutionally. According to the recently released fifth Chinese population

¹ International migration from China is still regarded within the country as a much less significant policy and social issue, although it has attracted much attention elsewhere. The annual international population outflow from China is currently about 450,000, about 0.37 per cent of internal migration. Research on international migration by China-based scholars has mainly concentrated on migration history, overseas Chinese communities and more recently, on skilled migrants (students and returning students). Note however that public debates on international migration are increasing, for example on dual citizenship and those prompted by incidents such as the violence against Chinese shoe shops in Elche (Spain) in September 2004 and the conflicts between Chinese merchants and police in the Russian Federation in recent years.

census of 2000 and other surveys in Beijing and Shanghai, we estimate the current volume of rural-urban migrants to be 106 million.² Furthermore, large-scale rural-urban migration is expected to last for at least another two decades, much longer than in other countries, where it has often levelled out in one or two decades. The fundamental mismatch between industrialisation and urbanisation in the Chinese economy – where agriculture made up only 15.9 per cent of GDP while employing 50 per cent of the total labour force in 2000 (National Bureau of Statistics 2001, cited in Bai Nansheng and Song Hongyuan 2002: 159) – requires a long time to reach a more balanced economic-demographic structure through rural-urban migration.

Far more important than the magnitude of migration is its institutional significance. Migrants in China whose mobility is not mandated by the state are undergoing not just a change of residence, in doing so they are also disengaging from state control and support. Because the administrative system in contemporary China is still highly territorialised – that is, it is delimited by rigid jurisdictional boundaries between urban and rural areas, and between provinces and municipalities – spontaneous migrants are no longer integrated in the established social system and have therefore become a special social category, the “floating population” (see Solinger 1993; Xiang Biao 1999; Zhang Li 2001). Although official documents and some research literature see large-scale migration as a phenomenon of “modernisation” – a supposedly universal economic process, an institutional analysis suggests that the floating population as a special social group is a product of the interplay between economic transformation (not only from “traditional” to “modern”, but more importantly from a command to a market economy) and state regulation. This special relationship of migration to the state and the larger institutional transformation, as we substantiate in a historical review below, is vital to understanding the relationship between research and policy.

A key policy for sustaining the territorialised administrative system is the household registration system (known as *hukou* – see Christiansen 1990; Cheng and Selden 1994; Mallee 1995; Chan and Zhang 1998). The registration system was set up in 1958 in order to prevent spontaneous rural-urban migration, but in the long run it functions to keep the grain price as low as possible to support rapid industrialisation (particularly in heavy industry) in cities by confining the majority of the population in the rural area. Under this system, people born in rural areas cannot move to the city and obtain urban *hukou* status unless mandated by the state. A person with rural *hukou* could not even purchase necessities such as food

² The census reported 121.07 million internal migrants as of 2000, of which 88.4 million were rural-urban migrants. The census defines “migrants” as those who lived for more than six months in a township or city district other than where their permanent residence was registered. Other surveys conducted in Shanghai and Beijing found that about 20 per cent of migrants in cities stayed less than six months. Our estimate of the 106 million rural-urban migrants is made on this basis. According to the census, rural-urban migrants are mostly young, almost 70 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 49, and 20 per cent between 25 and 29. As regards occupation, 40 per cent are self-employed or business owners, and 43 per cent are employees. The remainder are children, the elderly or occupation unknown (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2001).

and coal in the city, let alone access housing, health and education services. In addition, for a long time peasants needed formal documents from the township government where they belonged to in order to buy train tickets to travel to cities.

Peasants resumed their spontaneous migration, surprisingly, not after the Reform was introduced at the end of the 1970s, but in some areas during the peak of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) when the grass-roots administration could not function properly amidst the chaos (Xiang Biao 2000). Surprisingly again, the state in fact imposed stricter control of peasant movements at the beginning of the Reform, mainly because of the high unemployment rate in cities as a result of the return of large numbers of urban youth who had been sent to the countryside since the 1950s. Following directives from the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to stop peasant migration in 1980 and 1981 (CCCCP and State Council 1980; State Council 1981), urban government, particularly the public security bureaus, adopted the tactics of “surrounding, chasing, blocking and raiding”, as described in official documents and public media, to oust migrants. In response migrants had to resort to “guerrilla war tactics” to survive in the city (Xiang Biao 2000).

It was only in 1984, when the introduction of the household responsibility system for land tenure significantly increased agricultural productivity, thereby creating a much more relaxed atmosphere for policy-making, that peasants were allowed to move to cities on condition that they could arrange their own grain (CCCCP 1984). After that migration increased steadily and numbers increased from fewer than 2 million in the early 1980s to about 20 million by the end of the 1980s (Du Yin, Bai Nansheng et al. 1997: 1).

Internal migration, however, did not become a public concern until the late 1980s, when the Reform came to a sudden halt. The failure of “crash through” (*chuangguan*, similar to “shock therapy” in the former Soviet Union) in reforming the pricing system in 1988, the subsequent inflation, and the efforts by the then Premier Li Peng to calm down economic overheating and to strengthen government control over the private sector, put many construction projects on hold. As a consequence, great numbers of migrant workers were laid off. Enormous flows of jobless migrants then “journeyed” from one city to another looking for work, and the terms “floating populations”, “tides of migrants” and “blind flows” (*mangliu*) became new key words in policy and public debate. Responding to this, in early 1989 the General Office of the State Council (1989) issued the Urgent Notification to Strictly Control Migrant Workers’ Blind Outmigration, which was followed by more specific directives by the State Council and other ministries (Ministry of Civil Affairs and Ministry of Public Security 1989; State Council 1990; General Office of the State Council 1991; Ministry of Civil Affairs 1991). Around the same time, the State Council (1991) issued Suggestions on the Reform of the Rules of Detention and Deportation, which extended its 1982 regulation to include migrants as a subject to be detained and deported (back to their place of origin) if they failed to present the required documents.

This situation changed again in 1992 when Deng Xiaoping's series of speeches delivered during his tour to southern China resumed the momentum for rapid economic reform, which had been put on hold after the Tian'anmen Square incident in 1989. Real estate development, as one of the first sectors to recover, pulled in large numbers of migrant workers. The numbers jumped from 20 million at the end of the 1980s to 60–70 million in 1993 (Du Yin, Bai Nansheng et al. 1997: 1). After that China steadily moved to an open market economy and rural-urban migration increased year by year until the late 1990s, when the economy started to slow down. Central government policies once again became more favourable to migrants. The Ministry of Labour issued the Provisional Regulations on Trans-provincial Mobility of Rural Labour for Work (1994), which recognised migration as a legitimate activity. The Labour Law promulgated in the same year stipulated that migrant workers should in principle be entitled to the same rights as all other workers. In official language, this is described as a shift from a policy of “blocking” to a strategy of “channelling”: government no longer attempts to stop migration, but still regards tight regulation as necessary to achieve an “orderly movement” (*youxuliudong*). This policy ambiguity was clearly reflected at a high-profile national working conference on migration in 1995, in which various ministries participated. The very fact that the state council organised such a meeting signifies the authorities' acceptance of migration as a reality, yet all the participating ministries perceived migration as potentially problematic, with the exception of the Ministry of Agriculture which voiced a very weak defence of migration.

It is this kind of policy ambiguity in the second half of the 1980s and the second half of the 1990s, rather than the outright restriction of migration, that created the most difficulties for migrants. In order to achieve an orderly kind of movement, migrants were required to apply for three permits in order to work and live in cities: (1) temporary residence permit (*zanzhuzheng*), (2) work permit (*wugongzheng*) or business permit for the self-employed, and (3) proof of the marital and pregnancy status of female migrants issued in the place of origin. When applying for these permits, migrants had to pay various fees. As migrants are regarded as “outsiders” and managing them is seen by urban government as “extra” work, they are commonly charged levies to finance government to cover this (for how migrants are turned into a source of profit for local government see Solinger 1999: 86–91). Whenever the urban authorities wished to reduce the number of migrants, they could simply stop issuing the permits and make the migrants “illegal”, to be detained and deported.

The most significant policy shift regarding migration came in late 2002 when the leadership transition was finalised (though not fully publicised) at the Sixteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Among other movements away from the previous administration, the new President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao called public attention to disadvantaged groups (*ruoshi qunti*), of whom migrants are a major part. They also promoted the notions of “scientific view of development” (*kexue fazhan guan*) and “placing people in the centre”

(*yirenweiben*, a slogan which has replaced the mantra that “everything should be centred on economic development” – *yique yi jingji jianshe wei zhongxin*) to correct many local governments’ obsession with GDP growth and neglect of human and social development. Furthermore, Premier Wen Jiabao personally intervened to help migrants to obtain unpaid wages and he made a formal pledge in his report to the National People’s Congress in 2003 to clear all the back-pay owed to migrants within three years. In January 2003, the General Office of the State Council (2003) issued its Number 1 Document specifically on migrants: Notification on Improving the Work of Managing and Providing Services to Peasants Who Move to Cities for Work. In China, State Council directives are still more powerful and effective than laws or rules promulgated by any ministry and the 2003 Number 1 Document fundamentally altered the official language on migration.

The impacts of the recent change at the top were clearly felt at different levels of government. For example, the Minister of Public Security made an emotional speech in early 2003 criticising some policemen’s harsh treatment of “migrant brothers” in a southern province, language which was almost unthinkable in the public security system just a couple of years ago.³ Local government is now more willing to change its policies, at least to show that it is in line with the people-centred approach. This policy shift is more fundamental than that of 1984 and 1994, not only in that the new policy stance stresses the positive effects of migration but, more importantly, it places migrants at the centre. According to the new official language, government priority is to serve migrants and protect their rights, rather than regulate migration flow. This directly reflects the academic discourse on migration that has developed throughout the 1990s, as we review below.

2. “Floating Population” in Intellectual Agenda

In China, the floating population is on the one hand institutionally significant and politically relevant, but on the other it is perceived as an apolitical issue – it does not threaten any groups’ vested interests nor does it pose any ideological or political challenge to the authorities. This has allowed independent investigations and research on the topic. Furthermore, as migration is a new phenomenon that developed outside the state’s purview, the state needs information about it and welcomes academic research. As a reflection of this, rural-urban labour migration has been almost a standard topic in calls for research proposals from state funding institutes. International donors also identify internal migration as a funding priority of their China programmes. The Ford Foundation in Beijing, for example, granted US\$2.4 million between 1994 and 2001 for migration research projects (Ford Foundation 2001: 1). Oxfam, UNESCO and the Asia Foundation have also supported similar research. As a result, rural-urban migration became one of the best studied topics in China, along with such issues as township and village

³ Interview with an official of the Ministry of Public Security, Beijing, May 2003.

enterprises (TVE) and the reform of state-owned enterprises (SOE). Before moving to a detailed review of migration research, however, a reflection on the general intellectual landscape of China is in order.

Professional social research in general and on migration in particular in the People's Republic of China became possible only after the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese intellectual landscape after that was initially dominated by two types of activity: ideological debates and policy scheme designs. A national debate on the "criteria for truth" in 1978 was decisive in ending the Cultural Revolution, and it was followed by ideological reflections on Marxism and socialism. At the same time, the urgent need to get the economy and society back to normal called for new practical policies. As there were hardly any working economists or sociologists at that time, those with science and engineering backgrounds played the main role in developing new policies. This further enhanced the overarching notion of social engineering. The one-child policy, for example, was based on an alarming mathematical projection of population growth by systems control engineers. But the lack of understanding of the social aspects, particularly the outright ignorance of cultural sensitivity and the gross underestimation of public resistance, made policy implementation extremely costly, including creating an unprecedented level of tension between peasants and local cadres. Some Chinese demographers have suggested that a less draconian scheme could have achieved just the same demographic result but at a much lower social and political cost (e.g. Liang Zhongtang 1985; for critical accounts of the development of the "population science" and population policies in China, see Greenhalgh 1986, 2003).⁴

In the late 1980s, ideological debates developed to a new stage known as "culture heat" (*wenhua re*). Numerous new books were published, new journals launched, and various Western thoughts introduced. At the same time, a group of young economists, encouraged by the then Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, competed in designing schemes to reform the rural economy, state-owned enterprises, pricing system and other issues. In contrast to the earlier stage, ideological debate and policy study became closely interlinked. For example, the New Elitism theory, arguing for a strong technocratic leadership, was proposed by both ideology theorists and policy researchers.

Tian'anmen Square silenced both camps in 1989, and it was only after Deng's speeches of 1992 that academic activities resumed. Partly because of the state's tighter control over ideological debates, partly thanks to intellectuals' dissolution of abstract theories and grand policy prescriptions, empirical research gradually became the mainstream work of academics. Rural-urban migration in this context was a popular topic because, as a new phenomenon, it was particularly suitable for empirical inquiry. Symbolically enough, some intellectuals who used to be engaged in cultural debates or policy design chose migration as their first research project when they returned to China after 1992 from *de facto* exile. As opposed to the

⁴ We thank Dr Zhou Guangyu at the Australian National University for calling our attention to this case.

general debates that traditional Chinese intellectuals have been engaged in for thousands of years, on the one hand, and policy study on the other, professional academic research bases analyses on systematic examination of empirical evidence, and aims to accumulate knowledge rather than to seek quick practical solutions or to address the public directly. But the most critical feature of academic research lies in its “out-of-box thinking”, i.e. shedding new light on reality by thinking beyond established frameworks that often mirror the official set-up. Academic research also gained more autonomy from a “standardisation” (*guifanhua*) movement in Chinese social sciences in the mid-1990s, which emphasised that research is a profession that should comply with international standards. This movement was further entrenched by state programmes of university development, where academic publications almost determine the advancement of a researcher’s career.

Reflecting the changes in the general intellectual landscape in China, migration was discussed in three strands of literature: ideological analysis, policy study, and more independent academic research. Articles written by intellectuals in the 1980s and early 1990s on the one hand criticised the *hukou* registration system and exhausted migration as the “third peasantry revolution” compatible to the land reform of the 1930s and 1950s (the first revolution), and the disbanding of the commune system in the late 1970s (the second revolution). On the other hand, writings of similar styles called attention to the opposite – the possible deconstructive consequences of migration, relating to the popular discourse of “crisis” (*weiji*) at that time.⁵ The one-time bestseller *Seeing China from a Third Eye*, under a German name but widely believed to be written by a Chinese author (“Lo-i-ni-gel” 1994), warned that:

... [t]he tides of floating population is a ticking bomb for the society. From a psychological point of view, when hundreds thousands of people are moving around blindly, the resonance effect of emotion generates a great sense of being abused and the desire for revenge without reasons. Such emotion of each atom converges and constitutes a powerful deconstructive force, making imminent a death movement without leaders and without aims.

Both notions, celebration and doom, had a far-reaching influence on the subsequent public debates in the 1990s, which were very much centred on the question of whether migration was “progressive” or destabilising.

Instead of deconstructing these grand questions and replacing them with discussion on specific issues, experts working in government or semi-government institutes, a

⁵ The discourse of “crisis” projected an image that China was in the midst of all kinds of crises. But in general the crises were described in abstract and even metaphorical terms (e.g. “cultural crisis” rather than fiscal crisis) as represented by the highly influential TV documentary *He Shang* (The Death of the River). The sense and discourse of crisis can probably be traced to the tradition of self-denial and of seeking radical change among Chinese intellectuals since the May Fourth Movement of 1919, and was also supported by the reformist faction within the state which pushed for rapid institutional and cultural change. More work is needed to unravel and reflect on this discourse prevalent in the late 1980s.

major producer of “scientific knowledge” of migration in the 1990s, in fact reinforced this approach and particularly the negative aggregate image of migration. Although by that time grand scheme design had given way to specific policy study, the deeply ingrained desire for social engineering meant that the experts took a top-down perspective. Adopting a Foucauldian approach, Zhang Li (2001: 29) has summarised the research literature of that period thus:

Most [studies on migration] focus on two sets of interrelated issues: First is to define and describe the demographic background, economic activities, mobility scale, speed of growth, and spatial distribution of the “floating population”. Second is to assess the social impact of this migration and explore strategies that can be used to implement more effective regulation over the migrant population. Almost all official and scholarly publications are obsessed with the question of how to improve the government’s techniques to regulate rural migrants.

Zhang has pertinently pointed out that “such accounts in the name of scientific research and knowledge serve as a powerful means by which a particular kind of image of the ‘floating population’ is firmly established”. This image is often described in terms such as “dirty, silly, poor, aimless, uncivil, congregating, and money-driven” (Zhang Li 2001: 32).

But academic research on migration that developed parallel to policy study presented a quite different picture. While policy experts were regarded as more authoritative for the aggregate data that they mastered, writings by academia proved to have a longer-term impact on the public and policy-makers. What differentiated academic research most sharply from experts’ work was its focus on *migrants*. Academic research sees migration as a human experience with multiple dimensions and mixed consequences, rather than a phenomenon that can be either “blocked” or “channelled” like running water. Zhang’s above-mentioned analysis suggests a direct, causal relationship between “scientific knowledge” and public attitudes to migration: the public perceives migrants so because research literature says so. In the case of academic research that avoids massive generalisation and simplistic judgement but focuses on details of specific issues, readers are informed more on *how to think about migration* than on the question of whether migration is good or bad. The most powerful influence of academic research, it seems to us, lies in its more people-centred approach than in its specific conclusions. As the linkage between the first two types of research to the public and policy is self-evident, our ensuing analysis focuses on professional academic research on migration.

3. Snapshots of Academic Research on Migration

Sociological research on migration in China since the 1990s can be roughly divided into three types. First, as part of the standardisation and professionalisation of social research, a number of publications draw on Western literature and attempt to apply existing theories and concepts to the case of migration, as evidenced by the debates about “strong ties” or “weak ties” (Li Hanlin 2003; Li Hanlin and Wang Yi 2001; Qu Jindong 2001), “social capital”, “trust” (Liu Linping 2002; Zhai Xuewei

2003) and “rationality” (Huang Ping 1997; Wen Jun 2001) of migrants. There are many reasons why Chinese sociologists are particularly interested in concepts relating to “networks”, but one fact stands out clearly: that Chinese scholars have been eager to explore the “societal” as opposed to the statal aspect in understanding Chinese society in general and the Reform in particular. The network is seen as the basic unit for “building” a society (e.g. Xiang Biao 1999). Undoubtedly this literature deepens our scholarly understanding of migration, but its contribution to public debates and policy-making remains limited.

The second body of literature, which makes up the majority, is descriptive and aims to document new phenomena and to reveal new problems. Wang Xiaoyi (2002), for example, observed that with economic development, some migrant-receiving communities became more closed and migrants were further excluded, challenging the simplistic view of “modernisation” which holds that the development of a market economy can only bring about more openness, and thus calls for stronger policy intervention. Li Qiang (2000, 2002) sheds light on the group of migrants whom he describes as the “underclass elite” (*diceng jingying*), based on survey data. The upward mobility of these migrants is blocked due to the *hukou* system and other institutions, despite their high human capital. The disparity between their status in their community of origin and in the city may result in deep frustration that can be socially destabilising. Wang Chunguang (2001) examined the “new generation” of migrants to cities in the 1990s, as opposed to those who migrated in the 1980s. Compared with the earlier migrants, the new generation has a much weaker attachment to the rural communities but faces the same obstacles in integrating into urban society. Research on the return of migrants (Ba Nansheng and Song Hongyuan 2002; Li Lulu 2002) established the fact that only a very limited number of migrants returned to home communities, and furthermore that their return was rarely voluntary. This research debunks the once popular myth of a possible reverse migration that may boost rural development, and instead reiterates the urgency of reforming the household registration system and speeding up urbanisation.

Research on gender and migration from a feminist perspective has been particularly lively and productive. It was once assumed that women benefited socially from migration because it allowed them more freedom and, for those women who were left behind, the absence of men meant more autonomy and power for them, particularly in agricultural production (Du Yin, Bai Nansheng et al. 1997: 40, 56; Cai Fang 2000: 152, 159; Si Xiu, cited in Cai Fang 2001: 103). Arguing against this, feminist researchers have pointed out that women left behind became more active in agriculture simply because agriculture has become more marginal, rather than women becoming more powerful (Jin Yihong 1990; Gao Xiaoxian 1994; Fei Juanhong 1994). In the cities, migrant women face systemic discrimination, have to work harder with less pay, and are expected to be obedient (Tan Shen 2001). Detailed research on female migrants’ life experiences, views and emotions (e.g. Tang Can 1996; Pan Yi 1999; Tan Shen 1997; Feng Xiaoshuang

2000) produced much valuable information helping the public to deepen their understanding of migrants.

The third type of research is action-oriented, where researchers use their expertise to help design or implement the programmes of non-governmental organisations or government agencies, and in turn advance their research through participatory observation. First experimented with by some individuals in the early 1990s (e.g. Xiang's experiment with a migrant traders' association in Beijing in 1994, see Xiang Biao 2000), action-oriented research became more common by the late 1990s. This was very much encouraged by international donors, particularly the Ford Foundation, but more importantly it was made possible by some significant changes in semi-government agencies and the emergence of NGO-type institutes. The three major semi-governmental "mass organisations" in China, the trade union, the youth league and the women's federation, have all started working more independently (from the party and the government) on issues that they deem important. As part of this development, they have initiated or supported activities to provide services to migrants. For example, in March 2002, the Migrant Workers' Association, possibly the very first migrant workers' union in the country, was set up in Zhejiang Province, south-east China. The association attracted 1,500 members soon after its establishment and was at least for a while acclaimed as a valuable experiment by the authorities (see Pan P. 2002). Xingyang prefecture of Henan Province in central China, an important source of migrants, organised outmigrants' trade unions based on villages and then set up corresponding branches in major destinations to protect migrants' rights. This initiative was backed by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions. In terms of migration-related NGOs, notable examples include the Guangzhou Migrant Workers' Document Handling Service Centre, which helps migrants to produce documents in legal battles to protect their rights, the Legal Assistance Centre at Beijing University, the Female Migrants' Club in Beijing and the Shenzhen-based Institute for Contemporary Observation. Many of the NGOs were either set up by researchers or keep in close touch with them for advice.

Apart from direct impacts on reality, action-oriented research has a special advantage in advancing knowledge by providing first-hand analyses of successful and failed practices, and identifying new, often unexpected, social forces that may contribute to improving migrants' living and working conditions. For example, Tan Shen and Liu Kaimin (2003) have argued that, contrary to expectations, large transnational corporations can be an effective working partner in protecting migrant workers' rights, particularly through their so-called Code of Conduct Movement.

Action-oriented research is different from policy study in that, while the latter is concerned with what the state can do through formal policies, the former focuses on actions of non-state parties in search of change. Although action-oriented research does not necessarily seek conceptual advancement, it shares with other academic research the basic stance of the migrant-centred approach. Apart from the

new information and insights that it brings about, the migrant-centred perspective has also contributed to developing a new relationship between research, media and policy, to which we now turn.

4. An Emerging Triangular Relationship

Research is of course not an intellectual exercise per se. How research as a social practice is carried out and how it relates to other institutions may be more important than research content in determining its public influence. There are channels whereby academic researchers in China can influence policy-makers directly, for example by participating in drafting laws, by lobbying members of the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to propose new bills,⁶ and by writing internal reports to the leadership.⁷ But the most significant development in recent years has been the increasing importance of *indirect* means of influencing policy. A triangular relationship between academic research, mass media and policy-makers has emerged, where research influences policies by informing the public and subsequently creating a certain public pressure through the mass media.

A brief overview of the recent changes in China's media is necessary in order to situate this triangle. The media in China are far from free and independent, but their transitional and somehow ambiguous nature, remaining a mouthpiece of the party while being allowed to report and comment independently on certain types of issue, compounded by the strong incentive to appeal to the public for commercial consideration (for further analysis and coverage of migrants in China see Florence 2003: 45–46), may have made itself fairly effective in pushing for policy change. This is because, firstly, the association of the media with the party-state accords them an unusually high level of authority and legitimacy, and views expressed in the official media, particularly when backed up by academic opinions, can thus influence and even mobilise a large audience. Similarly, due to this connection with the state, individual government institutions cannot simply dismiss media reports. When Xiang was helping to set up a migrants' association in Beijing in 1994, the association leaders repeatedly asked for media reports about them to be arranged. They knew very well that media reports would not only win them wide sympathy, but more importantly provide a "protection umbrella" in their dealings with local government (see Xiang Biao 2000). Xiang brought the association to the attention of a high-profile national newspaper and provided some analyses on the

⁶ For example, a group of members of the National People's Congress proposed the bill to ensure citizens' freedom of migration through an amendment of the Constitution at the Fifth session of the Ninth National People's Congress in March 2002. Members of Beijing People's Congress were also instrumental on more than one occasion in stopping some district governments from dismantling migrant children's schools.

⁷ For example, in October 2003, the Chinese Association of Population Studies sent an internal report, comprising abstracts of six academic papers presented at the annual meeting for 2003, to the all-powerful Politburo to urge *hukou* reform. The association managed this partly because its president is a former member of the State Council.

significance of the story. In the end the story appeared and was even reprinted in other media, and there is good reason to believe that the reports at least prolonged the life of the association. At a time when the public is sceptical of government statements and independent alternative information sources are yet to be established, state-controlled but commercialised media in fact constitute a common arena where both the public and the state interact.

The central government strategy of using the media to keep local government in check gives the media more teeth.⁸ Thus strengthened, the media have actively and critically engaged in migration issues. For example, in December 2000, the Beijing-based media criticised the Beijing Bureau of Labour and Social Security so harshly for its exclusion of migrants from certain jobs that the bureau had to assemble a press conference to defend its stance. The high-profile *Workers' News* carries a special column on migrant workers, as do two local newspapers in Shanghai (Ford Foundation 2001: 71).

The incipient autonomy of the media is also enhanced by their increasing professionalism, as evidenced by the growth of groups of journalists who commit to professional excellence more than to political loyalty. While the media of the 1980s often relied completely on official reports as their sole information source, since the 1990s academic research is commonly cited as a source that is more credible and more original in insight, thus more appealing to readers. The research approach that sees migration as a human experience instead of an object to be managed by the state makes academic work even more interesting to the media. Partly reflecting the influence of research, a subtle but significant change in media coverage of migration may be discerned in the increasing coverage of migrants' individual stories, particularly of the problems that they face. Photographs of migrants that appeared in the national press in the early 1990s were almost invariably of large crowds of faceless migrants packed into railway stations; but by the end of the 1990s the lens had shifted to their human face.

There is not only a convergence between China and more democratic societies in how research influences the reality of migration, but Chinese social researchers are probably more optimistic than their counterparts in other countries regarding their possible influence. A study sponsored by UNESCO and carried out by the Asia Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN) in Australia, the Philippines and Thailand clearly established that "the most striking impact of migration research on policy is through indirect mechanisms" (Iredale et al. 2002: iv) including via the mass media. But the APMRN research found that academic research in Australia and the Philippines had basically no influence on policy-making (Iredale et al. 2002). This is probably because in democratic societies pressure from the media is mainly associated with election concerns, but in China a government department is

⁸ The new leadership also set a policy in 2003 that the national TV station can allocate a limited time only for news about official meetings and politicians' activities, and that more coverage should be given to social issues and matters close to the people.

under pressure from higher authorities for immediate action once a problem is revealed in the media.

How exactly does the triangle work? The interaction has so far been ad hoc and event-driven. The recent changes in policy regarding migrant children's education and the detention and deportation of migrants are typical examples. Concerning the *hukou* system, the allocation of the state budget for basic education in China was based on the number of permanent residents of each locality and migrant children were therefore excluded. From the early 1990s, migrants in some major cities set up their own schools, but with very poor facilities and without licences. Zhao Shukai, a researcher based in the Development Research Centre of the State Council who has worked on migration since the early 1990s, came across a migrants' school at work and brought a group of television reporters there when he was interviewed on another topic in 1995, bringing the issue into the limelight. Since then widespread public debates have been triggered and central government has required all city schools to unconditionally admit the migrant children who apply. Although the policy is yet to be fully implemented at local level, various volunteer groups have been set up to offer either financial support or free teaching in schools. A number of research projects have been carried out on this issue over the last few years (e.g. Lu Shaoqing and Zhang Shouli 2001; Han Jialin 2003). Apart from specific suggestions, systematic information and new insights from the research have also helped to sustain public attention. Furthermore, the problem of migrant children's education has become a symbol for the entitlement disparity between migrants and urban citizens. Having a symbol is always important to keep up the momentum of debate and the kind of symbol used often shapes the direction of debate (it is clearly in migrants' favour to have migrant children's education as a symbol).

While researchers have helped to identify problems in the case of migrant children's education, in the campaign to stop the detention and deportation of migrants they played the role of translating an incident into a topic for debate and facilitating the debate by providing legal analysis and social critique. In March 2003 a young migrant, Sun Zhigang, was detained in Guangzhou, the major city of south China, after he failed to produce his temporary residence permit on the street. He was subsequently beaten to death in the clinic of the detention centre. When this was uncovered by the newspaper *Southern Weekend*, several groups of academics wrote open letters to the National People's Congress to urge reform of the systems of detention and deportation and of temporary residence. On 19 May, a public seminar entitled "The Question of Constitutionality of the Detention and Deportation System" was held in Beijing. Symbolically enough, the seminar was jointly organised by the Law School of China's Politics and Law University, China Review Net and Beijing Hua Yi law firm – an exercise of collaboration between research institute, media and civil society. Meanwhile, numerous researchers published their commentaries and interviews in the media, providing views from different perspectives. In response to the strong public reaction, the State Council swiftly abolished the system and changed all the detention centres to shelters for

voluntary shelter-seekers. But, even more significantly, the tragedy urged the entire society to rethink fundamental issues such as the rule of law, human rights and social justice. Public media, particularly through the internet, was the initiator and main actor in this debate. But the incident might not have been turned to a critique of a system and led to further action without academic input.

Event-driven interactions in the triangle can be highly effective because dramatic incidents easily attract public attention. They may however also render the influence of research unsustainable or inconsistent: public attention can be diverted quickly before any real change is made, and policy change in response to one event may conflict with an adjustment made on another occasion. Researchers in China thus face the challenge of how to stabilise the triangular relationship. In order to be more proactive in identifying problems and initiating debates, we may need to explore both new intellectual strategies and practical measures, which we specify in the final section of the paper.

5. Critical Reflections and Future Strategies

This paper has reviewed the evolution of migration research and its relation to policy change in China since the 1980s in both historical and institutional contexts. Two key developments stand out clearly – first, the establishment of relatively independent professional academic research on migration as opposed to ideological debate and policy study, and second, the emergence of the research/media/policy triangle. These two developments are interlinked, particularly in that both academic research and media reports of the late 1990s became increasingly migrant-centred, and in turn this narrative has changed the focus of public discourse on migration from concern with “blocking” or “channelling” to concern with migrants’ rights.

Despite this progress, however, we must recognise that academic research on migration and the triangle are both new. Although the migrant-centred approach has yielded significant achievements both academically and socially, it is not without shortcomings. Underlining the academic writing and media reports on migration after the late 1990s are two key notions: migrants’ rights and the free market. While the discourse of rights has obtained wide popularity, the ideology of the free market is in fact the most effective in convincing policy-makers to undertake change. It is argued that, as a market economy is the ultimate goal of the Reform, government must remove discriminatory regulations regarding migrants and treat all employees equally. The rights discourse is also largely based on liberal ideology with emphasis on *individual* rights and the ideology of populism. In a sense, the ideology of populism as applied here reinforces liberalism: it is argued that ordinary people (migrants) are capable of regulating themselves and therefore social engineering is unfeasible and even counterproductive. State regulations should thus be minimised. Xiang Biao (2005: xviii–xix) recently reflects on why his earlier work on Zhejiangcun had privileged business networks over labour relations. To paraphrase:

The Zhejiangcun study was carried out at a time (1992–98) when Chinese society was dominated by an elitist ideology that subscribed to the free market model (as developed in the West) as the ultimate and only goal for China, while regarding the poorly educated masses as the largest burden on development. To take issue with this discourse, I had to demonstrate the powerful development impetus within Zhejiangcun – a migrant business group made up of precisely such “low-quality population”. Concerned over the simplistic views on the “market” and goals for reform, I was eager to show that the market was a social construct, and that the networks and reasonings deemed “backward” could be conducive, even crucial, to building up a healthy market system. I was also driven by the desperate need for critiques of state policies and views. In other words, my ideological concerns may have made me more sensitive to Zhejiangcun’s dynamism and success in its overtly visible business activities and in handling the state, but it obscured the more silent businesses: the women and the workers turning out Zhejiangcun’s competitive products in cramped workshops behind the stage. I was preoccupied with refuting idealised versions of market models, but I ignored the pains associated with the market, particularly the inequality between capital and labour, and between men and women.

To date, a labour discourse and structural critical analysis are still badly lacking. For example, very little research has been conducted in China examining migrants’ factory life, resistance and strategies (Pan Yi’s 1999 work is a notable exception), and the public media have given even less coverage to these issues. In other words, migration is understood as a matter of economic development and rights protection rather than capital/labour relations or structural inequality. Researchers now clearly face new challenges: given the ever-deepening process of privatisation and the widening gap between rich and poor, it is not enough for the government to *undo* discriminatory regulations. Instead the government has to provide welfare services to the disadvantaged, including migrants. Developing new social thoughts beyond the notions of rights and the market is an urgent task facing Chinese researchers. Indeed, we may well see an intellectual movement that reverses the earlier trajectory, the increasing pre-eminence of ideological critique in academic research, after a period of domination by relatively descriptive and empiricist works.⁹

Apart from the intellectual agenda, various practical measures are also needed to make research more relevant and to stabilise the triangle. We would like to mention only two. First, a better information dissemination mechanism is needed. As mentioned earlier, triangular interactions are normally driven by dramatic, often tragic, incidents, which expose some fundamental problems. But in fact much academic research had revealed the problems much earlier. For example, a report by Cui Chuanyi and Pan Yaoguo published as early as 2002 provided extensive evidence for the problems associated with the detention and deportation systems. During separate field research by Tan Shen (2000) and Xiang Biao (1995) in

⁹ The “New Left” school in China has attracted some attention both at home and abroad since the late 1990s. Stressing increasing social inequality, it is critical of the Western, market-driven development model and the liberal philosophy of social and political development. But the New Left by and large remains at the “offence” stage, attacking mainstream liberal ideology but not yet developing its own systematic social theories.

Guangdong, 1994, both discovered that delays in wage payments to migrants were very common. But the problem was never taken seriously until an accidental encounter brought it to State Council Premier Wen Jiabao's personal attention. So far, researchers have done a good job in accumulating data and articulating views that allow them to react quickly once an incident occurs, but still fall short of being proactive in preventing tragic consequences. The Ford Foundation in Beijing has adopted the strategy of pairing academic scholars with government experts in carrying out sponsored projects. It is hoped that, in so doing, academia can inform government of new methodologies and analytical perspectives, while the experts can contribute their deep understanding of government concerns and indicate better channels for the dissemination of research results.

Finally, developing local research capacity should be given high priority. As in many other countries, the distribution of research resources in China is highly uneven. While major cities, particularly Beijing, possess large numbers of research institutes and national media, local places are hungry for information and analysis of problems specific to them. The triangular relationship as analysed in this paper works mainly at national level. But in order to make real changes, local media and local officials are of equal, if not greater, importance. The desire for research to have immediate effects on policy often limits donors' attention to a few researchers close to central government. This is valid to some extent, as most policies are promulgated at central level while local governments are normally responsible for implementation. But, given that a paradigm change in policy regarding migration has been made at central level, in coming years policy implementation at local level will be crucial. Furthermore, more so than in the case of policy formulation, the attitude on the street and opinions expressed in local media will profoundly affect policy implementation. Local researchers should have a much larger role to play.

Note

- * We thank Eric Florence of the University of Liège (CEDEM), Belgium, for his very valuable comments on an earlier version of the paper and Dr Ali Rogers at Oxford University for his careful reading and revision. Sun Liping is gratefully acknowledged for discussions held with the authors on various occasions in 1997.

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Bridges between Research and Policy? The Case of Post-War Immigration and Integration Policies in the Netherlands

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Cooperation between researchers and policy-makers is not self-evident: an explication is needed of the basic premises and rules on which such cooperation should be founded. This paper is organised into four parts. First, the question of what the shared assumptions of the two partners involved should be and how a research/policy nexus should be embedded in the wider context of liberal democracy. Second, the question of what function research may have for policy and how it fits into the policy cycle. Armed with theoretical notions deriving from these questions, the third step is to analyse the rich case of relations between research and policy-makers on migration and integration for the period 1945–2005 in the Netherlands. Finally, conclusions are drawn from the Dutch case.

A strong tradition of policy research and advice from the scientific world to policy-making has been developed in the Netherlands since the Second World War. The field of immigration and integration policies is no exception to this rule, although this did not take shape until the mid-1970s. Several analyses on the specific nexus between research and policies in this domain have been published (ACOM 1979, 1982; Biegel and Smit 1991; Entzinger 1981, 1986; Penninx 1984, 1985, 1988, 1992, 2000; van Amersfoort 1983; van Praag 1987).

That same tradition of research for policy has always been a topic of discussion and heated debate. Pros and cons, underlying paradigms, advantages and pitfalls were scrutinised, and quality of research and policy use debated (see e.g. Penninx, special issue of *Sociale Interventie*, 2000; Köbben 2003; Köbben and Tromp 1999). From this running debate it is clear that the relation between research and policy is not self-evident. Any such relation should be based on crystal-clear and shared assumptions on the role of both parties and on the basic rules that should be adhered to. I thus spend some time on establishing a frame of reference in Section 1.

We can then look back empirically on how the research/policy relation in migration and integration has developed in the Netherlands. A systematic and useful

description, however, also needs an analytical device. In this case I use the concept of the policy cycle relating to the specific functions of research (Section 2).

Armed with these two heuristic notions, in Section 3 I give a descriptive analysis of how the research/policy relation has developed in the Netherlands in the post-war period, drawing conclusions in Section 4.

1. Research, Politics and Policy-Making: a Frame of Reference

Cooperation between researchers and policy-makers is not self-evident: the basic premises and rules on which such cooperation should be founded must be explicit.¹ I start from the assumption that researchers and policy-makers agree that the most elementary rules that regulate their relations are derived from a political context of democracy. This implies that the primacy of politics in decision-making is recognised; in liberal democracies we start from the basic rule that political decisions relating to governmental policies are taken ultimately by the chosen representatives of that political system.

This primacy of the politician, however, is at the same time seriously conditioned: democracy is not just the application of formal majority rule; the quality of democracy can best be measured by the extent to which public debate is systematically used as an instrument to reach “consensus” or “compromise” among different interest groups.² In our case this “quality rule of democracy” is all the more important, as we focus on the position of newcomers in societies: groups that are often relatively small in number, groups that often have limited ways and means to express their interest effectively in the political system, and groups whose interests are not necessarily reflected in the political and institutional infrastructure of their new place of settlement, because that infrastructure is the outcome of the earlier political struggle of established groups in that particular society. Too early and too much application of the last resort of democracy – majority rule – may thus have perverse effects on immigrant and minority groups.

This implies that politicians may be expected to actively collect, scrutinise and weigh all relevant facts and arguments before taking decisions, and reconsider earlier decisions if new relevant arguments or data emerge. It also means that politicians can be asked to explain how they reached decisions. Openness, accountability and public responsibility for future developments are thus important conditions for a politician’s

¹ I leave to one side a comparable question of how to organize sound relations between politicians and policy-makers, and stakeholders in the policies concerned. There are some parallels but also significant differences.

² Whether one prefers the term consensus or compromise depends on the school of political theorists one adheres to. However, both “foundationalists” who speak preferably of consensus-seeking, and “non-foundationalists” who speak of making workable compromises, agree that public debate is an important instrument in democracy.

primacy. Since the task of the civil servant relates to that of the politician, civil servants in democratic societies have comparable obligations.

It is from this conception of quality of democracy and governance, and the role of public debate therein, that the specific role of researchers can in principle be derived: scientists can contribute significantly to the quality of public debate by defining problems soundly and adequately; by collecting and publishing high-quality information; by making clear what receiving societies and their institutions, on the one hand, and immigrants themselves, on the other, are able and willing to contribute; but also by indicating possible unintended consequences of policies, etc. Briefly, by bringing in well-founded ideas, analysis and facts. One could even say, as do some political theorists, that researchers as “responsible citizens” have an obligation to contribute to the quality of public debate.

In my view some basic observations follow from this thesis. The first is that all players should stick to the tasks attributed to them according to these basic premises: also in cases where tensions arise – and this often happens – the researcher should scrupulously stick to the rules of the scientific game, and the politician/policy-maker should do the same. The rules and tools of the game of good democratic decision-making and good governance should allow us to overcome such tensions. The second observation is that well-structured forms of communication and cooperation along the principles outlined above are a better guarantee of adequate research contributions to policy-making, even if accompanied by tensions, than having no communication and cooperation at all.

These are normative observations. A third, more empirical, observation is that the practice of cooperation between researchers and politicians/policy-makers is very diverse and fluctuating, both between countries and within countries. Where structural relations are organised, the form these take may differ significantly: they may vary from the one extreme in which researchers have their own and full responsibility and autonomy of deciding on the content and orientation of (academic) research, financed from funds that are earmarked by political decisions as funds for fundamental research; to the other extreme in which, within the framework of a specific policy domain, research budgets are made available to find a solution to a given policy question. Between these two extremes a number of hybrid positions are possible. Furthermore, the relation between policy and research may change over the course of time. By opposing the two extremes, it becomes clear that the organisation of the interface between research and policy is in itself an important question. The way in which these relations are organised may lead to specific forms of tension between the two.

2. Functions of Research for Policy and the Policy Cycle as a Heuristic Device

If any form of structured cooperation between researchers and policy-makers comes into existence, then the form and content of that cooperation depends primarily on

the “demand” articulated by policy-makers or politicians, as is implicated in the primacy of politics thesis of the previous section. Such “demand”, i.e. the kind of questions the researchers are required to answer, depends to a great extent on the phase of the policy cycle. Ideally, policy analysts define four different phases in such a cycle.³ For the present analysis I extend that notion of the cycle, claiming that each of these phases implies different questions and calls on different functions of research for policy:

2.1 *Phase 1: Recognition and Problem Definition*

In this phase there exists among politicians and policy-makers the feeling that there is a problem that should be tackled, but there is uncertainty as to *WHAT* the problem is and how it should (best) be defined. Researchers may be called upon to give an adequate problem definition, framing and delineating the field, including relations with other (policy) fields, a basic framework of causalities and consequences; in academic terms, studies of a strongly conceptual nature. Crucial in this phase is whether politicians and policy-makers accept the conceptual contributions of research and reformulate them in policy terms.

2.2 *Phase 2: Instrumentation of Policies*

The second phase starts at the moment political decisions have been made on the foregoing questions and policy goals have been formulated, mostly in the form of accepted laws or policy documents. Questions of policy-makers change: given accepted problem definitions and policy goals, *HOW* can such goals best be attained? The focus of research is moved to questions of instrumentation of policies: with what instruments can key variables be influenced (preceded in liberal policy/research relations by the question of which variables can be influenced in any way by policy interventions and which ones cannot).

2.3 *Phase 3: Evaluating Standing Policies*

When policy formulation has taken place and instruments are in place, the attention within the cycle shifts to the question: *DOES IT WORK?* Monitoring outcomes of policies becomes the central theme; efficacy and efficiency are the catchwords. Definitions and instruments are given, by that time engrained in an established structure of policy implementation that brings its own weight to the process. In general, the room to manoeuvre for researchers and their influence on policy has decreased.

³ I took my inspiration on this point from Winsemius (1986) who analyses the cycle of policy-making relating to environmental policies, but reformulated elements of his cycle to fit the research/policy nexus better.

2.4 Phase 4: Reformulating Policies

Finally, politicians and policy-makers may feel the need to reformulate policies. This may be based primarily on monitoring and evaluation, but it may also be inspired by a primarily political redefinition of the field. In the former case, partial redefinition is the most probable outcome. In the latter case, policies may change either partially or completely.

Theoretically a new policy cycle has started by such reformulation. In practice – and this is a weak point of this heuristic model – this new cycle does not start from scratch. The history of the earlier cycle brings its legacy to any new cycle. Notwithstanding this weakness, let us see to what extent the model helps to explain developments in the research/policy relation in the field of migration and integration in the Netherlands in the post-war period.

3. Research and Policy on Immigration and Integration in the Netherlands after 1945

3.1 Period up to 1979

Although the Netherlands has historically been an immigration country *par excellence* for a long time (1550–1800), the public memory and policy starting points are dominated by a later period (1800–1960) in which it was predominantly an emigration country (Lucassen and Penninx 1997). In the post-war period the central idea has always been, and still is, that the Netherlands is not and should not be an immigration country. Facts of substantial (ex-)colonial immigration from the Dutch East Indies/Indonesia (including Moluccan ex-soldiers of the colonial army) and later from Suriname, and growing labour immigration in the 1950s and 1960s, were fitted into this ideology by calling these immigrants either “repatriates”, or temporary migrants and “guest workers”. This contradiction between the norm of not being an immigration country and the facts of large immigrant groups that stayed for a long time or even permanently, led to mounting tensions in the 1970s (Entzinger 1975). This tension was felt most intensively within the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work (CRM), which had been made responsible for reception policies and welfare of most of these immigrants. It was this ministry that looked to the scientific world for advice (and for a strategic partner in its plea for more adequate policies), and in 1976 it set up an Advisory Committee on Research related to Minorities (ACOM). Although this committee enjoyed great freedom and prepared the ground for many studies and reports, its direct impact on policy was limited. First, it was composed of researchers to advise on research policy only; second, it worked for a politically weak ministry in charge of welfare, unable to influence key ministries such as those responsible for labour, education and housing.

3.2 1979–1989

The impetus for policy renewal was given by another advisory body: the Scientific Council for Government Policy (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, WRR), the government's highest general scientific advisory body, which in 1979 published on its own initiative a report called *Ethnic Minorities* (WRR 1979). It analysed the untenable situation of immigrants consequent to the assumption of temporary stay and the practice of long-term stay. It diagnosed that this could ultimately lead to "minority formation" and to second-rank citizens. In its advice the old message that the Netherlands is not an immigration country did not change, but the report made a well-founded argument that long-term de facto immigrants should be accorded an adequate place in society on the basis of political participation, socio-economic equality and to a certain extent cultural and religious equity, to be brought about by explicit and targeted integration policies. This was – in the opinion of the WRR – not only to the advantage of the immigrants themselves, but a necessity for Netherlands society as a whole.

The conclusions and recommendations of the 1979 WRR report were adopted almost literally by the government. In 1980, 1981 and 1983 policy documents were discussed and accepted in parliament that formed the basis for a completely different "Ethnic Minorities Policy" (henceforth EM Policy; see BZK 1980, 1981, 1983). The main principles of this policy were:

1. Equality in the socio-economic domain, inclusion and participation in the political domain and equity in the domain of culture and religion within constitutional conditions and to the extent feasible.
2. A targeted focus on specific groups that were in danger of becoming a distinct minority by the combination of their low socio-economic status and their being perceived as culturally different from mainstream society. Not all immigrants were included, but specific groups of low-class immigrants, former guest workers and their families, Moluccans, Surinamese and Antilleans, refugees and gypsies, plus some indigenous underprivileged groups such as travellers.
3. The policy should cover all relevant domains and thus ministries, and be anchored in a strong governmental organisation: the Ministry of Home Affairs became the coordinator. Substantial specific financial means should be made available and an adequate system of monitoring policies should be developed.

This early phase of defining the EM Policy (1979–83) fits perfectly into the first phase of the policy cycle described above.⁴ Looking back, the intriguing question is: how was it possible?

Three observations are often made in the literature as (complementary) explanations. The first refers to the strong tradition of cooperation between researchers and policy-makers in the Netherlands, mentioned above. This tradition opens a window of opportunity to influence policy-making – compared with some situations abroad – if and when researchers come up with an adequate analysis and problem definition. The second explanation relates to the strong political pressures for change created by the tension between the facts of immigration and the neglected consequences for integration. This took a specific form in the dramatic events of the 1970s caused by Moluccan youngsters (children of ex-soldiers of the colonial army in the Dutch East Indies, brought to the Netherlands “temporarily” in 1951): their violent actions of hijacking trains and occupying buildings were taken by politicians as a forceful sign of failed policy towards this group (Köbben 1979). In the aftermath of these events, new policies towards this group were formulated in 1978 and were taken into the more general EM Policy from 1980 onwards.

The third, most important, factor or condition for policy change was the existence of a broad political consensus among the elite of all political parties that endorsed the new policy developments. That consensus was symbolised by the fact that a right-wing Liberal/Christian Democratic government coalition appointed a socialist (of the opposition Labour Party) as head of the Coordination Department within the Ministry of Home Affairs. The essential point is that immigration and integration was not politicised at that time. On the contrary, it was kept deliberately off the agenda in political campaigns. As Rob Hoppe analysed in 1987, ethnicity (specifically the growing multi-ethnicity of the state through migration) was systematically depoliticised by removing it from the political agenda and defining it as a (pseudo-) scientific or administrative problem (Hoppe 1987). During the 1980s that same political consensus also led to a more or less explicit agreement not to allow (local and national) extreme rightist and racist parties “to play the migration card”. The *cordon sanitaire* that was built in 1983, after local elections in the municipality of Almere where such a party gained 13 per cent of all votes, persisted successfully throughout the 1980s.

The WRR report of 1979 and the first positive political reactions to it in 1980 (“Preliminary Reaction of the Government”) and 1981 (“Draft Minorities White Paper”) started the second phase of the policy cycle. ACOM was brought over from

⁴ A contributory factor is the continuity in the personnel involved: for example, I have been a member of ACOM from its inception in 1976; I was asked by the WRR to write the background report on which the WRR advice was based (Penninx 1979). I started work as a civil servant at the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work (and later Home Affairs) before the WRR report was published. In this capacity I wrote substantial parts of the draft (1981) and final policy document (1983) on EM Policy.

the founding ministry, CRM, to the Ministry of Home Affairs, now responsible for the coordination of the EM Policy. Part of the budget for this policy was earmarked for research, to be advised on by ACOM. In the years 1980–85 a series of research reports were commissioned in a deeper exploration of many subfields and policy instrumentation (for a detailed overview see Penninx 1988, 1992). In 1984 the first steps were taken to set up a comprehensive system of monitoring the target groups of EM Policy and the effects of the policy. The keywords of this nationwide system, covering all relevant domains, were *Evenredigheid en Toegankelijkheid* (Proportional Equality and Accessibility).

In my detailed analysis of the development of research/policy relations of the 1980s (Penninx 1992: 16ff), I draw two main conclusions for that period. The first is that the more the organisational structure for policy implementation was built up within various ministries, including budgets, the more specific the “demand” (research tenders and commissions) that was formulated. This significantly limited not only the scope and impact of researchers in general, but also that of ACOM as adviser in research matters. Towards the end of the 1980s this institution was seen more and more as “academic” and no longer living up to the expectations of policy-makers. The second conclusion was that the EM Policy had spurred a significant increase in research on migration and integration in general, within and outside universities in the Netherlands, financed by universities themselves, the National Science Foundation and others. The unique position of ACOM in the 1970s and early 1980s had eroded and the initial quasi-monopoly of research funding in this domain by the national government had ceased. ACOM was ultimately dissolved in 1990.

3.3 1989–1996

Interestingly, in the same period that the influence of specialists⁵ in ACOM was decreasing, a new report was published by the general advisory body, the WRR, this time by the explicit request of the government, which was not satisfied with the results of policies. This report formulated the first strong critique of the EM Policy (WRR 1989). Briefly stated, the message was that there was too little progress in two crucial domains of policy: the labour market and education. The interpretation was offered that too much attention was being paid to (multi)cultural aspects and subsidising organisations, suggesting that this could hinder participation in education and the labour market rather than enhance it. The advice was consequently that more efforts should be made in the key areas mentioned, and in a more compulsory way. Obligations of immigrants should be more focused on extended rights, and policies should focus less on cultural rights and facilities.

⁵ The list of ACOM members included many eminent researchers of that period, among them Hans van Amersfoort, Frank Bovenkerk, Han Entzinger, Kees Groenendijk, Hans Heijke, André Köbben, Rinus Penninx, Carlo van Praag, Wasif Shadid, Justus Veenman.

The direct effect of this new diagnosis on policy was limited in the sense that policies did not change immediately (BZK 1990), but the seeds for a different conception were sown and would grow later.

The structure of research/policy relations was revised in the early 1990s. Although ACOM had been dissolved in 1990, the feeling within the Ministry of Home Affairs was that it would be unwise to do away with all forms of specialist advice. Research on immigration and immigrant integration had grown at universities and elsewhere, and policy-makers were in principle able to harvest from that reservoir of knowledge, but that did not turn out to be easy. The need was felt for an intermediary body, consisting of both researchers and policy-makers at national and local levels to collect and translate the body of research, and test its usability and utility for policy-making. A Temporary Scientific Advisory Committee on Minorities (TWCM) was installed in 1992 by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The TWCM produced overview studies on the one hand, and policy recommendations built on such overviews on the other. Evaluating its impact, it is fair to say that its period of existence was too brief for it to be really influential, as it was dissolved in 1996 as part of a general operation to “clean” the governmental administration of too many advisory bodies. Only a few, large and general ones have survived.

3.4 1996–2004

The initial political consensus of the early 1980s changed in the course of time, as did the public discourse on immigrants and their integration. It is particularly during the 1990s that politicians and political parties started to take explicit and diverging stances that challenged the earlier political consensus. One of the first was Frits Bolkestein, a prominent member of the liberal People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD), who suggested in his statement in 1991 that Islam was a threat to liberal democracy and a hindrance to the integration of immigrants.⁶

The implications of Bolkestein’s message were potentially far-reaching, although it should be added that he himself saw mainly practical consequences of his thesis: a “modern Islam” should be stimulated in Europe. (For example, he took the initiative of bringing a liberal interpreter of the Koran and Islam to teach at the University of Amsterdam.) Later, however, others carried his critical stance relating to Islam much further, calling Islam a “backward” religion, as Pim Fortuyn did in 2002.

A second topic that challenged the political consensus and dominated the public and political discourse in the 1990s was the so-called “asylum crisis”. Asylum seekers

⁶ Earlier tensions around Islam as these emerged in the Rushdie affair and the Gulf War had been solved in a typically Dutch way: the Minister of Home Affairs called all leaders of Islamic organizations to the ministry to give them a double message: (1) we have rules for disputes that everyone, including Muslims, should respect, so no fatwas and book burnings in the Netherlands; and (2) if you are threatened because you are a Muslim, we will protect you.

from all parts of the world had started to apply to the Netherlands in significant numbers since the mid-1980s, but it was particularly in 1993, briefly after Germany had changed its lenient asylum policies, that asylum peaked at 53,000 applications in a single year. The initially very friendly asylum reception had already changed in the late 1980s to a sober system, but by 1993 both the reception and handling of evaluation procedures were completely jammed. Years of attempts to reform asylum procedures followed, but the crisis did not cease. The number of applicants in limbo for years, not allowed to work nor to follow education, increased. Asylum seekers denied access, but not sent back, increased and swelled the ranks of illegal residents. This coincided with measures taken to exclude illegal residents from all facilities of the welfare state through the linkage law (*Koppelingswet*) that required any institution of the welfare state to check the legal residence of applicants and clients before service could be delivered.

One can say that the first factor – that of Islam as a divisive factor in politics – has to a certain extent been one that was “imported”, and that the second one – that of the explosion of asylum migration – was also a consequence of global developments impacting on reception systems in the Netherlands. The third factor – that of a growing politically voiced dissatisfaction with the results of EM Policy and the consequences of continuing immigration – came clearly from within. A critical essay that brought this dissatisfaction to the surface was published by Paul Scheffer, a publicist and former member of the Scientific Bureau of the Labour Party, in the national newspaper *NRC/Handelsblad* in 2000 under the title “The Multicultural Disaster” (Scheffer 2000). His central thesis is that integration and integration policies have failed. Policies have been too liberal and focused too much on “retention of culture” of immigrants, they have neglected the negative aspects for the indigenous population and have ignored their voices and complaints. The consequences are that (social) segregation is flagrant and is threatening social cohesion; immigrants do not speak Dutch adequately and their knowledge of Dutch society is insufficient, as is their participation in society, let alone sharing its basic values and norms. Muslim immigrant groups most prominently reflect these trends. The direction in which solutions should be sought is thereby given as more mandatory policies for immigrants to learn Dutch and to participate and accept values and norms of the society of settlement, moving away from a “too lenient multiculturalist policy”. The essay was a normative political statement rather than a knowledge-based piece.⁷

⁷ Interestingly the essay was published at a time when it became apparent that the situation of immigrants, and particularly the second generation, was improving in the crucial domains of work and education. Reports of the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau of 2001 (SCP 2001a, 2001b), for example, indicated that the high unemployment rates of more than 30 per cent in the early 1990s had decreased to about 10 per cent in 2000, admittedly rather as a consequence of general (positive) developments in the local labour market than as a result of policy. Also immigrant entrepreneurship had grown significantly. In education, immigrant minorities were still significantly behind, but some progress was being made (more pupils in higher education, secondary and tertiary).

The divisive elements mentioned above have thus become stronger in the course of the 1990s, each of them separately. It was in the early twenty-first century that the populist politician Pim Fortuyn brought all these elements together in a political discourse that combined:

- the idea of failure of integration processes and policies;⁸
- the threat to democracy of Islam, particularly “fundamentalist” Islam;
- the accusation that the political elite (and researchers they had hired) were co-responsible for this failure of integration processes and policies by “hiding the real problems in politically correct speech” in the past;
- the thesis that the victim of all this has been the indigenous voter.

His populist campaign was very successful and electoral gains were probably enhanced by his assassination just before the national elections in May 2002. His Pim Fortuyn List (Lijst Pim Fortuyn, LPF) party won 26 of the 150 seats in parliament, a political landslide. However, the new government coalition with the LPF fell within 100 days after its formation. In the new elections held in early 2003, the LPF was decimated from 26 to 8 seats.

However, the harm was done. Other parties had taken over the populist thinking on migration and integration, particularly the liberal VVD.⁹ The media had followed this trend to a great extent. The result has been that the new Minister for Immigration and Integration, Rita Verdonk of the VVD, is outdoing the LPF minister Hilbrand Nawijn of the preceding short-lived coalition in reforming migration and integration policies.¹⁰

⁸ In September 2002 a majority of the Netherlands Parliament backed up a request to have a Parliamentary Inquiry on Integration and Integration Policy. The Blok Committee, named after its chairperson, published a voluminous report in 2004 after extensive hearings and studies (Blok Committee 2004). The conclusions of the report initially aroused strongly negative reactions from several parties and politicians, suggesting that it was not critical enough, but in the long run the report seems to function as a common point of reference for parliament (whose parties of course attach somewhat different interpretations to it).

⁹ There is an interesting and somewhat unexpected element in the polarised discussion in the Netherlands: a significant part is played by MPs and local politicians of immigrant origin, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Liberal Party MP of Somali background, being the most prominent. In general, immigrants are represented proportionally in parliament: 8–10 per cent of all representatives having different immigrant backgrounds and being part of all major parties, including the LPF. In that sense, integration of immigrants at this level could be said to be successful. A major advantage of this in the present polarised discussion is that the dividing lines among participants are not congruent with the indigenous/non-indigenous division.

¹⁰ The Department for Coordination of EM Policy within the Ministry of Home Affairs was moved to the Ministry of Justice and attached to the new Minister for Immigration and Integration within that ministry in 2002.

What has happened in this recent period of political polarisation to research/policy relations? Since 1996 there has been no institutionalised, regular forum for exchange between the policy world and the research world. This does not mean, however, that there has been no exchange at all. I briefly mention some developments below.

First of all, after the TWCM was abolished in 1996, the Department for Coordination of EM Policies within the Ministry of Home Affairs decided to form a small unit for Strategy, Research and Communication to harvest scientific knowledge and to commission research, if needed. Comparably, but on a larger scale, within the same ministry a Knowledge Centre for Urban Policies (Kenniscentrum Grotestedenbeleid) was established in which integration and diversity are important topics. Key in these developments was that the “function of research for policy” was brought directly and structurally *within* the ministry. Research is defined as a market “out there” to be recruited according to policy needs.¹¹ An exception to this rule seems to be the installation in 2000 of an advisory body of legal specialists, the Advisory Committee on Aliens’ Affairs, by the Ministry of Justice.¹²

Secondly, the general advisor of the government, the WRR, was once again asked to shed light on immigration and integration policies at the turn of the century. Its report “The Netherlands as an Immigration Society” (WRR 2001) appeared in the midst of a growing political turmoil and does not seem to have had a significant influence on developments.

In the recent polarised climate in the Netherlands a “pick and choose strategy” dominates among the politicians and policy-makers in charge, and their choice is coloured by the new ideology behind recent immigration and integration policies.

4. Conclusions

What conclusions can be drawn from this dense analytical description of relations between policy and research in the domain of immigration and integration in the Netherlands over a period of some thirty years?

First, on the most abstract level it has become clear that building bridges between research and policy in a liberal democratic society means bringing together two different worlds and logics. Researchers predominantly follow the logic of the “analytical-rational model”: they assume that better knowledge of how the mechanism of migration and integration works makes it possible to advise policy-makers how they can potentially intervene in these processes, at what particular point

¹¹ This had been the case already for years within the Ministry of Justice, which has its own Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC). Recently within WODC a special department for Migration, Integration and International Affairs has been set up.

¹² This happened before the Department for Coordination of EM Policy was moved from the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Ministry of Justice/Immigration and Integration.

in time, and with what instruments. They can also indicate what variables in such processes cannot be influenced and which ones can.

The world of politics and policy-making follows the logic of decision-making, within a system of majority/minority relations, as to the desirability of admission of newcomers and the conditions attached (immigration policies) and the desired outcomes of the incorporation of newcomers and ways to reach these goals (integration policies). The processes involved in this logic are normative in the first place, and the process that channels the struggle of interests involved is a political one. These different logics may lead to tensions as is illustrated in the case of the Netherlands.

Second, it has become clear that the policy/research nexus is one in which the power of the partners involved in influencing policy outcomes is unequal. This is a priori given, as I have tried to explain in Section 1. The case of the Netherlands shows this empirically in a particular form, making clear that the policy/research nexus is not situated in a societal and political vacuum. The changing place of the topic of integration in politics – from depoliticised in the beginning to strongly politicised and politically determined at present – affects the policy/research nexus strongly. The originally influential position of research has become marginal.

Third, the way of structuring the policy/research nexus changes as a consequence. If a structured relation is built up, there are questions to be answered on who are the important players in the nexus (specialists or generalists from the scientific world; mixed policy-makers and scientific advisory bodies) and how to structure them. Still more crucial is the question of whether politicians want to commit themselves to any form of structured relation, or whether they want to keep their hands free to pick and choose whatever fits the demand of the moment.

Fourth, the case of the Netherlands, particularly in the early phases between 1976 and 1989, can be explained relatively fruitfully by the heuristic model of the policy cycle. The analysis shows that research may be influential in the first phase; it also shows that influence decreases in later phases. Application of the model for the later phases – after 1989 – turns out to be a problem, however. The analysis leads to the conclusion that a depoliticised situation – as existed for a time, expressing itself in the openness of the political system to research input in all its forms, from framing through instrumentation to evaluation – is a precondition for a more or less orderly policy/research relation in a policy cycle. What we have seen in the Netherlands since the early 1990s is a gradual incremental redefinition of the problematique of integration which has been primarily politically driven (and is frequently even contradictory to straight empirical facts).

With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to say that both researchers and policy-makers have been somewhat naive in the late 1970s and 1980s in three aspects:

- in defining the institutional policy/research nexus (ACOM) too specifically, i.e. involving only researchers and advice on research (and some say too many anthropologists and sociologists accentuating the cultural aspects of the topic);
- in defining the topic too narrowly by the specific definition of “ethnic minority” and limiting the target groups for the policies;
- in taking for granted that such a definition of the problem was shared/accepted by the population at large.

What are the consequences of the present situation? Here I return to the premise laid down earlier about the tasks and responsibilities of both politicians/policy-makers and researchers. Ideally, politicians should actively collect, scrutinise and weigh all relevant facts and arguments before taking decisions, and they should reconsider earlier decisions if new relevant arguments or data are put forward. Actual populist policies in the Netherlands as voiced by the Minister of Immigration and Integration and condoned by a large majority in parliament, however, are far from this ideal. Hopefully the growing counter-movement at the local level and within civil society will be able to bring a new balance in the near future.

Researchers do not have much choice other than to act as “responsible citizens”. The privileged position of researchers who had structurally anchored relations with policy-making in this field that existed over a period of time does not exist any more. Researchers are now in a situation in which they primarily participate as citizens in “(re)defining the problem and the present situation” in public debate. It is their task to “market’ their knowledge and make it broadly available for use.

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Social Science Research and Public Policies: the Case of Immigration in Belgium

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This paper summarises the major insights of a two-year inter-university research project carried out between 2001 and 2003. The methodological framework gives a central meaning to the domestic and international political context. After building and analysing a database gathering all Belgian academic research relating to migration and ethnic relations from 1989 to 2002, the two most widely researched domains of education and the labour market were thoroughly investigated in order to assess how social research has affected policy-making and agenda-setting in the field of migration and ethnic relations in Belgium. The weight of history and ideology, the importance of disseminating research results, and the role of institutional structures between research and policy-making, are all highlighted as core determinants of the influence of research. The paper also points to the relevance of an analysis aimed at taking into account the role of different factors – political paradigm, political context, specificity of field, etc. – in the process of knowledge utilisation at the political level. Finally, a series of recommendations are made on improving the links between social science research and policy-making in the field of migration and ethnic relations.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Belgium was facing serious difficulties in recruiting labour for coal production. Despite efforts to improve working conditions and salaries for coal miners, domestic recruitment dried up, forcing authorities to look to foreign labour. Beginning with Italy in 1946, and continuing with Spain (1956), Greece (1957), Morocco (1964), Turkey (1964), Tunisia (1969), Algeria (1970), and Yugoslavia (1970), the government pursued several bilateral agreements. When a crisis struck in the 1960s, these immigrant workers left to find employment in other industries such as iron and steel, chemicals, construction and transport.

In the early 1960s, when the demand for labour was still strong, the Ministry of Justice stopped strictly applying the legislation governing immigration. The worsening economic situation and rising unemployment in the late 1960s, however, led the Belgian Government to reinforce immigration legislation: new laws were passed to control the granting of work permits in order to regulate the flow of

immigrants into the country in line with economic needs. The new immigration legislation took into account the establishment of a more united Europe. In effect, it had to comply with the Treaty of Rome, which envisaged, among other things, the free movement of workers. European unity was to have an important effect on the immigrant question in Belgium, dividing immigrants into two categories: one in the supranational political sphere of Europe and the other composed of what are referred to as third-country nationals, i.e. from non-member countries. The first category enjoyed many legal rights aimed at encouraging equality of treatment between nationals and foreigners, while the second group faced various forms of legal discrimination. As in other European countries, all new immigration of foreign workers was halted in 1974 but this did not succeed in stopping immigration. The government's various initiatives to persuade certain immigrant workers to return to their country of origin were not successful either. Thus, in the case of Belgium, the official ban on recruiting new unqualified foreign workers never completely closed the borders. In fact, Belgium has never ceased to be a country of immigration, although it occurs to a lesser extent than before. Immigration since 1974 has simply changed, especially with regard to the types of immigration and the national origins of the migrants.¹

Even though a focus of debate between sociologists of migration has slowly emerged while research has grown, it is difficult to see the sociology of migration and ethnic relations as a firm and coherent theoretical corpus.² Moreover, the sociology of migration and ethnic relations was for a long time marginalised in academic circles and universities as an undervalued field of research. In the course of the 1990s, research into migration has undergone a process of change and demarginalisation. The development of integration policy frameworks at various levels of power has created a demand for strictly policy-oriented expertise. As far as the key issue of funding and intellectual legitimacy are concerned, social scientists found themselves in acute competition with growing non-academic expertise, most often linked to various kinds of organisational interest groups.

Debates on migration often lack serenity. Since the early 1980s, the major social fact of migration has become increasingly mediatised and politicised. The fear of the invasion of Europe by armies of citizens from poorer countries has rapidly spread. In Belgium, issues linked to the cohabitation between "native" Belgians and immigrant ethnic communities have increasingly raised problems of crime, drugs, unemployment, school failure and insecurity. Indeed, a major obstacle to the constitution of an autonomous research field on migration and ethnic studies is the absence of any epistemological break (Bachelard 1983; Bourdieu et al. 1973). The construction of the sociological problematic of migration and ethnic relations in the early days of the discipline simply mirrored the intuitive theories of migration available in common-sense representations, i.e. a biased conception of immigration in terms of economic, social and political problems. This led to the development of

¹ The above two paragraphs are an abridged version of sections of Martiniello and Rea (2003).

² The remainder of this section is based on Martiniello and Busetta (2001: 160–76).

a literature which is rife in binary perspectives, such as immigrants and housing, immigrants and school, immigrants and criminality, immigrants and security, immigrants and health, immigrants and culture, immigrants and the labour market, etc. (Sayad, 1984). In so far as it has tended to more or less directly answer a social demand, the sociology of migration has been constrained to internalise the problematised and dramatised perception of common sense, which is itself largely determined by a concern for social order (Sayad, 1979).

In these conditions, the task of social and political scientists is very delicate and complex, as they are asked to produce objective knowledge about a highly politicised set of issues. Could their work not contribute to the over-dramatisation of migration, even though their aim may be exactly the opposite? Is there not a risk of the results of their work being misinterpreted in order to fit political strategies?

Like social and political sciences in general, ethnic and migration studies seem to lack credibility and social legitimacy in Belgium. Sociologists and political scientists increasingly face competition with media specialists and non-academic experts. The latter often produce a more seductive discourse, even when it is not scientifically sound. As for academic researchers, they are sometimes accused of not engaging enough in social debate. But when they do so, their discourse tends to be disqualified because it is “disenchanted”, complex and even critical. At the end of the day, the impression is that they are only listened to when they can be used as an academic guarantee for political action. In this context, the issue of the linkage between academia and decision-making has become topical.

In this paper, we discuss the main findings of a two-year research project funded by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office and aimed at evaluating the impact of research on public policies in the field of migration and ethnic relations.³ Three major questions were raised in this research project: (1) To what extent has policy design in the field of migration rested on the results of scientific research? In other words, have policy-makers been inspired by research on migration to elaborate public policies (agenda-setting and policy formulation)? (2) What has been the role of researchers in the implementation of policies in the field of migration (policy implementation)? (3) How can reciprocal knowledge utilisation between academia, policy-makers and stakeholders be improved? In other words, how to smooth the interactions between these three worlds in order to improve the quality of research, the quality of public policies and, more generally, to stimulate social change towards greater well-being.

³ The topic of this research was originally an initiative under the aegis of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme, which had invited Member States to take part in a programme on the use of the results of socio-economic research in decision-making. The Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (formerly the Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs) then decided to launch a proposal called “The Linkage between Social Science and Governance in the Field of Immigration in Belgium”.

The following section outlines the methodological approach. The second section elaborates on different ways of conceptualising scientific research and public policies, and the third section gives an overview of Belgian scientific research on immigration and integration. The major findings of our research are summarised in a final section.

1. Note on Methodology

In order to contribute to a structured exploration of the facilitators and barriers to knowledge utilisation, the project has followed the framework of inquiry suggested by UNESCO. This framework assigns a central meaning to political context and the characteristics of the issue arena, which itself is subject to polarisation as noted above. Appendix 1 summarises the key research questions, components and methods that have been used for hypothesis construction and testing.

We selected two domains, education and the labour market (more specifically, ethnic discrimination in the labour market) in order to answer the three central questions of this research with as much accuracy and relevance as possible. Our analysis of all research projects on immigration in Belgium confirms that these two domains were the subject of the greatest number of studies over the 1989–2002 period. It also highlights the differences between Flanders and Wallonia in terms of the overall approach to migration, as well as in the policies devised and implemented in the two regions.

1.1 Constitution of a Database

A database has been built gathering together all research projects on immigration and integration of people of foreign origin completed under the authority of university institutions between 1989 and 2002. Variables such as title of the research, institutions in charge of the project, topics studied, funding institution(s), etc. were included in this database.

The aim of such a database was to offer an overall view of the research projects that have been undertaken in Belgium, and thereby make a series of “snapshots” by comparing these variables. The links between variables were expressed in the form of figures, percentages and tables to better visualise the results of the analysis. It emerged that the domains of education and the labour market had been most studied in Belgium over the 1989–2002 period. On these grounds, we decided to carry out comparative analyses of research and public policies, as well as case studies, in these two fields.

1.2 Comparative Analysis of Research and Public Policies

Research and policy-related texts in education and the labour market were analysed using a grid based on a sample of some twenty research reports. For each of these reports, the main facts and problems underscored, the major explanatory

frameworks used, and the solutions put forward were highlighted. All research projects and policy-related texts in the two domains were analysed using the same grid, in order to compare the respective visions in scientific reports and policy-related texts and thereby highlight potential similarities or differences in the definition and interpretation of issues, as well as the proposed solutions. This comparative analysis also examined how the approaches to the issues of education and employment evolved with time. The working hypotheses for the case studies were then based on this analysis.

1.3 Case Studies

Through the case studies devoted to International Labour Organization (ILO) research on ethnic discrimination in the labour market and to the education of pupils of foreign origin in Flanders and Wallonia (Feld and Castelain-Kinet 1997),⁴ we have tried to discover *what kinds of research, and in what conditions, stand a better chance of influencing political decision-making and agenda-setting*. For this purpose, a series of semi-directive interviews with researchers, politicians, research initiators and evaluators, as well as members of the “third community” (associations, trade unions, etc.), were carried out. These interviews were conducted using an “interview guide” drawn up using UNESCO’s Management of Social Transformations (MOST) framework. For data analysis, researchers also used the conceptual and theoretical elements developed within the ILO research project.

1.4 Focus-Group Discussion on Categorisation in Ethnic and Migration Studies

The researchers in charge of this project took part in a focus-group discussion on categorisation in ethnic and migration studies, reflecting on the categories used in defining target populations. In other words, the researchers tried to reflect on their own practices of scientific analysis. Following Bourdieu, they put their own scientific classification practices under critical scrutiny. They raised the issue of whether the analytical concepts and categories they use and produce could have a certain autonomy from those used in the political field and through common sense. The fruits of this discussion have been integrated with the scientific literature on the topic.

2. Observations on the Conceptualisation of Scientific Research and Public Policies

To understand the process of knowledge utilisation, both knowledge and its use must be defined (Rich 1997). We have adopted a dynamic approach that conceives

⁴ Contribution to international comparative research for the ILO by the Belgian Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs, and the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism.

of “information” and “the use of information” as general categories. Knowledge as a term can then be replaced in scientific research as one type of information competing with other types, such as data and analyses. It is also empirically useful to distinguish between the content of information and its format, as some formats are more user-friendly than others. Moreover, the use of information, and hence research, is best approached as a process. Stress should be laid on the plurality of potential uses of research results, which can be used both positively and negatively in different phases of the policy process without always impacting on policy decisions. Research results can function as warnings and put problems on the agenda. They can contribute to the definition of problems, help to set goals, and explore policy options. They can also serve to (de)legitimise policy decisions, and help to evaluate implementation. Ultimately, the use of information and research is not the prerogative of policy-makers alone, but also of third-party players with a role in the policy process.

The approach we have chosen to develop in order to apprehend the conditions of research utilisation departs from the two communities metaphor — i.e. researchers and policy-makers — and includes third parties in the conceptualisation of interactions. Yet the number and nature of social actors, as well as the nature of policy-making, is sector specific. This implies that the analytical model should be broad enough to allow good research heuristics. Studies of research utilisation should include an identification of the nature of research, both in content and form; the nature of users, from the policy community as well as from civil society; the nature of interactions and coalitions between different users (Lindquist 1990; Oh 1997; Rich 1997).

Knowledge utilisation literature examines how political decision-makers use (or abuse) social sciences and identifies the factors that influence the utilisation of social science knowledge. Although political elements are important in understanding the utilisation of social sciences in the formation of public policies, knowledge utilisation literature has accorded little attention to these factors, as Carol Weiss has stressed. We have therefore decided to complement the tools from the literature with the agenda-setting theory of John Kingdon (1995) and with a cognitive approach to public policies, the “policy paradigm” concept from Peter Hall (1993).

John Kingdon sees the agenda-setting process as one wherein solutions search for problems and the outcomes are a function of the mix of problems, participants and resources. The agenda process may therefore be conceived, Kingdon argues, as composed of three separate and distinct streams: problems, policies and politics. Three mechanisms serve to bring problems to the attention of policy-makers: indicators, events and feedback. Social scientists can in this way contribute to putting a problem on the agenda by constituting an indicator that measures the scale of a problem or changes to it, or by giving feedback on political programmes by means of evaluation studies. The *policy stream* is the stream of solutions proposed by the policy community. A long period of softening up is needed for the

political community to become receptive to a new idea. The results of social sciences research and recommendations made by scientists, before being accepted by the political community or public opinion, may serve this process of softening up. Elements of the *political stream*, such as changes in the balance of power in parliament, election results, lobbying, etc., can have a very strong impact on the agenda. These elements are given too little attention in knowledge utilisation literature.

This agenda-setting theory, although very exhaustive, does not respond to the following two questions. First, that of multi-level governance. While previously the national authorities controlled the inscription of new questions on the agenda, today, in numerous fields, this agenda-setting is done at least in part at European level. For example, when the European Council decides to realise a political objective by means of a directive (which binds the Member States concerning the results, leaving the national authorities competence over the form and means of bringing them about), this inscribes a problem at national level where it has to be legislated on to realise the objective put forward by the European Union. So a decision taken at European level by means of a directive can, on its own, open at the national level what we will call here a “supranational window”.

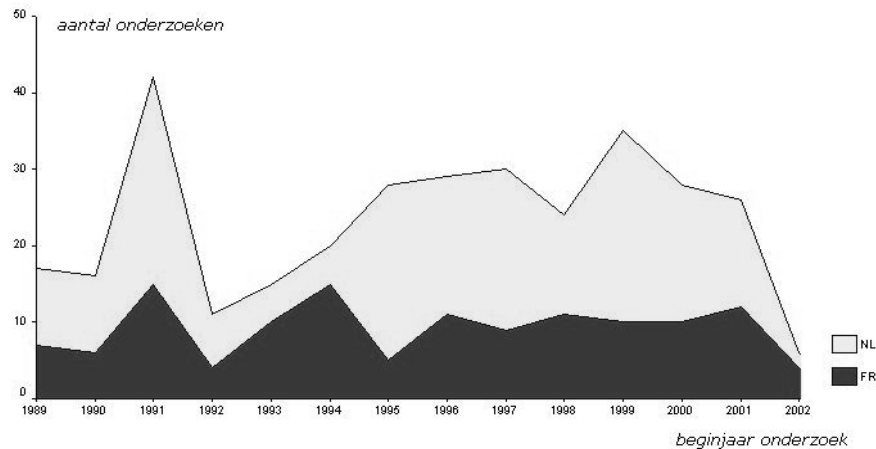
Second, although Kingdon explains that policy propositions must be compatible with the dominant values of members of the policy community to have a chance to survive, he does not explain how these “dominant values” can change and how alternatives previously unachievable at political level (because of their incompatibility with the dominant values) can be achieved later. This can be explained by Peter Hall’s “policy paradigm” (1993). This concept can be situated in the “cognitive approach” to public policies (Muller and Surel 1998) or the conception of public policy as “social learning” (Hecló 1974) that emphasise the role of ideas, values and representations conditioning the formation of public policies. Peter Hall, referring to Thomas Kuhn, defines the “policy paradigm” as “a framework of ideas and standards that specifies not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing. Like a Gestalt, this framework is embedded in the very terminology through which policy-makers communicate about their work, and it is influential precisely because so much of it is taken for granted and unamenable to scrutiny as a whole” (Hall 1993: 279). A radical change of public policy is associated with a change of policy paradigm. This process of change is, according to Hall, more sociological than scientific, as the choice between two paradigms can rarely be made on scientific bases alone. Issues of authority (such as a significant shift in the locus of authority over policy) and instances of policy experimentation and policy failure, are likely to play a key role in the movement from one paradigm to another. The cognitive approach to public policies, and particularly the policy paradigm concept, allows us to contextualise the role of information and ideas emanating from social science research in the construction of public policies. It puts the role of research into perspective, especially when its ideas are in opposition to the dominant paradigm.

We now turn, first, to an overview of Belgian scientific research in migration and ethnic relations during the period 1989–2002, and then to a discussion of the major insights of this research.

3. Overview of Belgian Scientific Research on Immigration and Integration (1989–2002)

We have constructed a database containing an inventory of all Belgian academic (or academically supported) research into immigration and integration of migrants or people of foreign origin from 1989 to 2002. During this period a total of 420 research projects were undertaken in Belgium, 239 of which took place on the Flemish-speaking side (57%) and 181 on the French-speaking side (43%). The year 1991 saw an important momentum for research into these matters, once the Royal Commissioner for Migrant Policy⁵ actively started to set out the blueprint for an integration policy and suggested numerous policy interventions. Later, the start of new legislatures seemed to stimulate new research on the Flemish side, but less so on the French side.

Figure 1: New Research Projects into Immigration and Integration in Belgium (1989–2002)



Legend: Aantal onderzoeken: Number of studies; Beginjaar onderzoek: Year of beginning of study; NL: Flemish-speaking community; FR: French-speaking community

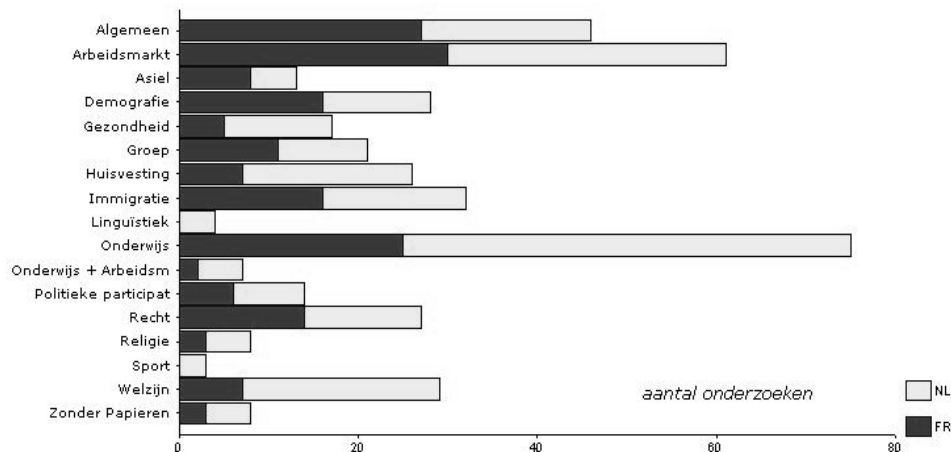
On the Flemish side, the Catholic University of Leuven (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) was most active on this topic during the entire period under study. The Universities of Ghent (Universiteit Gent) and of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit

⁵ This para-public institution was established in 1989 in a context of tension between ethnic youth and public security officials and along with the growth of the far right in northern Belgium at the 1988 elections. Its major aim was to design the main priorities of public policies aimed at immigrants. In 1993, it was replaced by the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism.

Brussel) come next, and both are responsible for comparable amounts of research investigations. On the French side, there is an even distribution between the University of Liège (Université de Liège), Louvain University (Université Catholique de Louvain-La-Neuve) and the University of Brussels (Université Libre de Bruxelles). A network analysis of cooperation structures shows a great deal of collaboration across universities and disciplines on Flemish and French-speaking sides alike. There are also joint projects that cut across the language divide. As far as financing is concerned, these cross-linguistic researches are – probably not so surprisingly – mainly financed with federal money.

The inventory allows us to look into what issues were most popular for research from 1989 to 2002. On both the Flemish and French-speaking sides, education and labour market participation are clearly in the lead as research topics. Together, they make up 35 per cent of all research on the Flemish side and 32% on the French-speaking side.⁶

Figure 2: Topics of Research Projects into Immigration and Integration in Belgium (1989–2002)



Legend: Algemeen: General; Arbeidsmarkt: Labour market; Asiel: Asylum; Demografie: Demography; Gezondheid: Health; Groep: Ethnic group; Huisvesting: Housing; Immigratie: Immigration; Linguïstiek: Linguistics; Onderwijs: Education; Onderwijs + Arbeidsmarkt: Education + Labour market; Politieke participatie: Political participation; Recht: Law; Religie: Religion; Welzijn: Well-being; Zonder papieren: Undocumented people; Aantal onderzoeken: Number of studies; NL: Flemish-speaking community; FR: French-speaking community

⁶ Belgium is a federal state composed of three regions (Flemish, Walloon and Brussels region) and three communities (Flemish-speaking, French-speaking and German-speaking). Each community and region has its own elected council and government. The Flemish region and community have merged, unlike the others. Communities are responsible for matters such as education, culture and personal issues (health care, etc.). Regions are responsible for the economy, environment, etc. For further details see http://www.fed-parl.be/constitution_uk.html

Since the late 1990s, the importance of research into the labour market position of people of foreign origin has clearly increased on the Flemish side. Furthermore, the Flemish Government increasingly pays for this research, whereas it used to be primarily financed at federal level. On the French-speaking side, federal financing has remained an important constant in research on this topic. Concerning research into education, the main funding is sourced at community level on both the Flemish and French-speaking sides, unsurprisingly, as education is almost completely – except for the compulsory age for education – a community matter.

4. Major Findings

4.1 Weight of History and Ideology

The influence of history and ideology – the dominant conceptions of the nation – on the processes of agenda-setting, policy-making and the implementation of policies in the field of immigration and on the impact of research on these processes have been highlighted throughout this study. In fact, our research shows how pervasive the differentialist rhetoric in Flemish-speaking Belgium and the universalist paradigm in French-speaking Belgium are (Martiniello and Manco 1993). The influence of this rhetoric on public policies relating to immigrants is most obvious in the case of teaching pupils of foreign origin. In the early 1990s, the Flemish Government tried to develop a coherent integration policy, the so-called “immigrant policy”. Soon after it also developed a genuine education policy for children of immigrant origin (Verlot 2001*a*, 2001*b*). Interestingly, the priority policy led to a very precise operationalisation of “target pupils” in which children and youngsters of immigrant origin were in fact being traced. Schools with large numbers of such pupils were accorded extra subsidies. As such, ethnic registration was already a fact of life in education in Flanders in the early 1990s, while similar monitoring remained impossible in other domains. In the operationalisation of “target pupils” – which boils down to ethnic registration – the scientific community played a considerable role.⁷ In French-speaking Belgium, few systematic public policies aimed specifically at the schooling of pupils of foreign origin have been designed, as most policy measures are global ones aimed at disadvantaged pupils and structured around the notion of “equality of opportunities” (Rea 2002; Rea and Ouali 1993). Such policies, contrary to those in Flemish-speaking Belgium, are characterised by the use of categories defined in socio-economic terms, not by ethnic or ascriptive categories. Similarly, few research projects are devoted specifically to the schooling of pupils of foreign origin and no long-term research programmes in this field have been implemented in French-speaking Belgium. We have argued that the general resistance in French-speaking Belgium to use categories linked to ethnicity and to therefore “act without naming” may have implications for the legitimacy of the constitution of a field of studies relating to the schooling of pupils of foreign origin, and more specifically to the study of

⁷ With a new decree on equal educational opportunities at the dawn of the new millennium, this specific operationalisation has been, however, once again abandoned.

ethnic discrimination in educational institutions.⁸ Hence, the influence of these universalist and differentialist paradigms is also noticeable in the nature of statistical data recorded in both parts of the country: the research object “teaching of pupils of foreign origin” is far more developed in Flanders than in Wallonia. We have argued that scientific production in social science in the field of immigration, when it raises questions that challenge the dominant paradigm, even when it is very rigorous and when it enjoys other favourable conditions, may not exert any influence, or only exert a limited influence, on the agenda-setting or decision-making process. This confirms Peter Hall’s point that scientific arguments cannot on their own generate a change in political paradigm. Other elements such as social pressure, failures of past policies, changes in the ideological balance within government, etc., may all contribute or hinder a change in paradigm. In the case study that dealt with ethnic discrimination in the labour market in Belgium, the universalist paradigm has also been put forward to account for the fact that positive actions have been resisted both in the French-speaking part of the country as well as by the trade unions, as such measures would imply the recognition of the target group — immigrants or people of foreign origin — as a specific group wherefore specific actions have to be organised to improve their situation. It is exactly this acceptance as a specific group that is problematic, mainly because of the universalist paradigm predominant in French-speaking Belgium.

4.2 Importance of Dissemination Process

The dissemination of social science research results is one of the relevant elements that has to be taken into account in the analysis of links between social science and public policies. The case study into the ILO research on ethnic discrimination in the labour market reveals the importance of working out a *dissemination strategy* of research results (Feld and Castelain-Kinet 1997). It has been argued that the way the ILO study was disseminated is one of the factors that largely contributed to its influence at political level. At the outset of this research project, contracts were concluded with partners, other than research institutes, for the valorisation of the results. The ILO was responsible for valorising the results at international level and the Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Fight against Racism at national level. So the valorisation activity was not left to the researchers, but rather to policy entrepreneurs as users of the results. As John Kingdon has argued, “political entrepreneurs” may play a crucial role of advocacy and brokerage within the coupling process of solutions, problems and political momentum when a “political window” opens (Kingdon 1995).

While the weight of dissemination strategies has been stressed, the time spent by scholars on dissemination is undervalued. The decision to spend time

⁸ The ethnic, and not solely socio-economic, dimension of discrimination in school institutions has been largely played down in French-speaking Belgium and no research has been commissioned on this topic, despite the fact that such research projects have been repeatedly called for both by scholars and by the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism.

disseminating research results is indeed often spent at the expense of other more highly valued activities such as scientific writing.

In addition to the importance of designing a dissemination strategy, we have also found that in some instances, the transmission of research findings – especially in the early 1990s – may be enhanced by individual research brokers, who are consecutively, and at times even concurrently, active as researcher *and* policy-maker. This has surely stimulated the transfer of research findings to the policy arena in the education of children of immigrant origin in Flanders. We have also found that the structuring of a more or less formalised long-term collaboration between academics, third-party and political actors may be important in the process of dissemination and *visibilisation* of ideas and concepts developed and enacted through such collaboration. In this way, these ideas and concepts may be made available to policy-makers when they may need to mobilise them.

4.3 Role of Interface Structures

The role of structures that ease the interface between scientific, political and third-party spheres (such as NGOs, trade unions, etc.) has also been demonstrated, raising the issue of the institutional arrangements that can help social science results to feed into the policy-making process. The case study on public policies regarding pupils of foreign origin in Flanders does indeed clearly shed light on the importance of such structures. In Flanders, structural links between policies aimed at the teaching of pupils of foreign origin and social science research have been established since the beginning of the 1990s. The government has facilitated a certain continuity of expertise with regard to practical educational support in schools by subsidising two specific centres of expertise (Steunpunt NT2 and Steunpunt ICO in Flemish) for a number of years (Schrijvers and Van de Velde 1999; Delrue and Hillewaere 2001). In addition, a number of research projects – both policy support as policy evaluation – have been set up with regard to the position of children of immigrant origin in the education system. Several of these studies seem to have had an immediate impact and have led to specific changes in the *modus operandi* of a number of schools. The construction of centres of expertise has led to stability and continuity. Thus, not only is the constant development of expertise in the scientific community guaranteed, irrespective of changes of legislature and changing political emphasis, but a forum is created in which the belief and perception of utility can improve among policy-makers and relationships of trust and credibility can develop with regard to research. Institutional embedding and the direct link between government and researchers seems to be a better guarantee for research results to be taken into account than when dealing with “independent” research.

If such institutional arrangements can facilitate the links between social science research and the policy-making process, they can also sometimes bring about problems such as a lack of transparency, as happens when scholars are not required to make public the results of their research. Another drawback stressed is that

research projects' agendas are mainly set by the funding bodies, which has resulted in an emphasis on research dealing with categorical policy measures, and to a much lesser degree with the position of pupils of foreign origin with regard to teaching in general.

4.4 *Relevance of Multi-Dimensional Approach*

The insights of this research also point to the relevance of an analysis that is not restrained to one factor or another in particular, but that aims at taking into account the role of different elements – political paradigm, political context, specificity of the field, etc. – in the process of knowledge utilisation at the political level. Through this research, we believe that we have demonstrated the importance of political factors in this process. It shows, in several respects, that elements linked to the political balance of power, such as changes within the administration or in parliament, or changes in the national mood, all influence the possibility of certain questions or arguments being put on the agenda. Moreover, this research has stressed the weight that the international context, especially at the level of the European Union, can have as to the impact of research on public policies. For example, a concept such as *cultural diversity* or a question that is targeted by a European directive, such as equality of treatment in the labour market, may have a greater chance to exert influence or appear on the national political agenda. It may be argued that changes in the national political context, as well as changes at the international level, can both facilitate the opening of John Kingdon's "political windows" and allow for ideas, conceptions about an issue and solutions developed by researchers to be acknowledged at the political level. In the case study dealing with the schooling of pupils of foreign origin in French-speaking Belgium, we have argued that some notions may be given a greater receptivity by being articulated or attached to some more legitimate and less polemic categories. This has been the case, we have suggested, with the concept of "intercultural education" as it was increasingly incorporated into the more global notion of "diversity education" and its potential legitimacy was enhanced, because the European Commission is promoting this latter notion. Furthermore, we have argued that the concept of "diversity education" may more easily be linked to the concept of citizenship, which is a key concept in French-speaking Belgium's political discourse. As Kingdon has observed, within the process of turning a question into a "political problem", an important aspect is the category within which this question may or not be put, for the category "structures people's perceptions of the problem in many important respects" (Kingdon 1995).

4.5 *The Stakes of Categorisation*

The dilemma that scholars often face, whether it is "possible to generate new forms of classification that, while they would be emancipated from national categories, would not be submitted to the categories of common sense" (Simon 1997), has also been examined in our research. Despite the fact that scientific activities relate more to description and analysis than to prescription, the categories mobilised by

scholars may well change into categories of action. Scholars are therefore often caught in this tension between description and prescription in their categorisation practices. This is especially so in the field of population statistics (Jacobs 2002). It was stated during the focus-group discussion on ethnic categorisation that scholars ought to define the terms they use as precisely as possible. The issue of precision of terminology is most acute when scientific information is circulated in the public and political spheres. In these circumstances, to what extent can or should scholars adapt their vocabulary, the scientific notions, concepts and categories they use according to the setting in which they are situated? Even though categorising does not necessarily equate with enacting separations, it may be assumed that mobilising categories and associating them with some social problems is somehow to take part in a classification struggle for the imposition of legitimate representations of the social world (Bourdieu 1980; Jenkins 2000).

While we agreed that this debate on the implications of ethnic categorisations is most important, we strongly emphasise that it is the need to objectify processes of ethnicisation or racialisation of social relationships, so pervasive in contemporary society, that justifies the utilisation of ethnic categories in scientific analyses (Simon 1997; De Rudder et al. 2000). Any struggle against ethnic discrimination therefore requires the deconstruction of both ethnicising and racialising categories. Debates about the relevance and implications of ethnic categorisation in social science should not prevent scholars from objectifying a whole set of phenomena relating to segregation, exclusion and discrimination.

5. Conclusions

Overall, our research shows that there is no systematic effort on the part of the authorities to monitor the participation of ethnic minorities in the different spheres of society. At present, no systematic data except on nationality exist that would allow people's ethnic origin to be taken into account. Consequently, it is difficult to judge how the situation of ethnic minorities is developing and to assess the effectiveness of policy measures aimed at equality of opportunities.

Our research also sheds light on the precariousness of the situation of researchers. Indeed, our analysis of scientific research on migration and ethnic studies over the 1989–2002 period confirms the great instability most researchers are faced with. Worse, there seems to be more and more funding of short-term research projects. This is taking place in a general context of transformation of European universities characterised by increased competition within and among universities and by greater job instability for academics and researchers (Piron and Couillard 1996; Bachelet 2003). We have not looked into the dimension of the progressive instrumentalisation of universities, but we may assume that the trends we have just highlighted may influence, and perhaps threaten, the autonomy of scientific production.

The two sets of recommendations put forward at the conclusion of this research are listed below. One set aims at research policy in social science in the field of immigration and the other at interactions between the scientific community, the political community and the stakeholders.

5.1 Recommendations Regarding Research Policy in Social Science in the Field of Immigration

- Long-term social science research programmes in the field of immigration ought to be carried out at the international, European, national and regional levels. The research programmes at these different levels should be integrated and articulated.
- Research projects that combine theoretical and methodological rigour, as well as empirical wealth, are most likely to generate policy-relevant knowledge in the long term. This type of research therefore ought to receive top-priority funding.
- An extensive quantitative and qualitative survey on the position of immigrants and their offspring within all institutions and spheres of Belgian society (employment, education, housing, politics, etc.) ought to be carried out every three to five years. Such a survey would require substantial funding and should be managed by the relevant Belgian scientific funding bodies (FNRS, FWO, SPST).
- The valorisation of research first requires the revalorisation of the researcher's status. It is most urgent to struggle against the increasing precariousness of the status of researchers. Substantial financial means ought to be allocated in order to allow researchers to carry out long-term research.

5.2 Recommendations Regarding Interactions between the Scientific Community, the Political Community and the Stakeholders

- While most of us are convinced of the importance of building a partnership between the scientific community, the political community and the stakeholders, a methodology of partnership has yet to be put forward. The roles and expectations of each community ought to be clarified.
- Following the Canadian experience, the possibility ought to be envisaged of setting up three centres of excellence in the field of migration, one for each region of the country. These centres would involve the scientific community, the political community and the stakeholders (third community). The aims would be to generate better communication among these three communities; to allow each community to redirect its own

practices in relation to the other communities' practices; to allow for the institutionalisation and cross-evaluation of each community's practices.

- The exchange of information and data between the different communities should be improved as part of a reinforced cooperation. For example, researchers ought to have easier access to national statistics data.

Note

- * This article has been written with Ilke Adam (ULB-GERME), Pascal Balancier (ULg-SPIRAL), Marleen Brans (KUL-Instituut voor de Overheid), Dirk Jacobs (KUB, KUL-ISPO), Andrea Rea (ULB-GERME), Marc Swyngedouw (KUB, KUL-ISPO), and Tinne Van der Straeten (KUL)

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Appendix 1

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH COMPONENTS FOR OPERATIONALISATION	
<i>INDEPENDENT VARIABLES</i>		
<i>What are the characteristics of the research and the researchers who conduct it?</i>	Initiation of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of initiators, purpose of initiation ▪ Formal proposal or request for proposal ▪ Funding agents
	Review of study proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who judges ▪ Conflicts of judgement ▪ Criteria for approval
	Researcher(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual and institutional reputation ▪ Research experience ▪ Disciplinary affiliation
	Conduct of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duration ▪ Capacity ▪ Stakeholders ▪ Theoretical and methodological frameworks ▪ Data-collection and analysis ▪ Nature of reports
	Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content ▪ Direction ▪ Nature of proposed changes ▪ Financial and institutional consequences of

		implementation
<i>What are the modes of dissemination or the linkage between researchers and the policy arena?</i>	Dissemination of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nature of dissemination ▪ Stakeholder debate ▪ Third-party dissemination: championing and media ▪ Networking
<i>What are the characteristics of potential user groups?</i>	Prospective users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disciplinary background ▪ Familiarity with issue arena ▪ Position in policy formulation ▪ Reception of findings
<i>What are the characteristics of the political domain that the research enters?</i>	Political context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History ▪ Path-dependency of debate ▪ Nature of polarisation ▪ Lobbying ▪ Evidence of crisis
<i>DEPENDENT VARIABLE</i>		
<i>What are the characteristics of knowledge utilisation?</i>	Utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reconsideration of policy ▪ Implementation of changes ▪ Nature of changes ▪ Duration of implementation
RESEARCH METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of documents, records, newspaper articles ▪ Multiple interviews with initiators, researchers, reviewers, disseminators, prospective users 	

Les migrations, un fait de société majeur, mais un champ de recherche encore marginal au Maroc

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Bien qu'elle soit l'un des éléments constitutifs de l'économie et de la société marocaine, il y a eu très peu de discours sur l'émigration et sur les émigrés au sein de la société marocaine. Or, la migration internationale marocaine représente l'un des moteurs de l'économie nationale, tant pour les transferts monétaires qu'elle génère (soit plus de 34 milliards de dirhams marocains par an) que par son rôle moteur dans un marché de l'emploi encore exigu. A ceci il faut ajouter que le Maroc n'est plus uniquement un pays d'émigration. Il est devenu par la force des choses et par sa position géographique pays d'immigration et espace de transit. Alors comment expliquer cette absence de discours sur la migration, à la fois par les décideurs politiques et la communauté scientifique?

La mobilité humaine est sans doute un des phénomènes les plus difficiles à saisir d'une manière rigoureuse, car elle s'inscrit dans l'ensemble des relations humaines, économiques, culturelles, linguistiques et politiques. Sa genèse et sa logique de fonctionnement résident autant dans les contradictions sociales internes aux zones de départs et d'arrivées, que dans la structure des relations internationales. Or, même si elles représentent moins de deux cents millions de migrants dans le monde, les migrations internationales occupent une place importante dans le système international d'échanges; et par conséquent dans les conflits socio-économico-politiques qui la secouent. Ainsi, elles occupent de plus en plus le devant de la scène politique, économique, sociale et culturelle même si, les chercheurs exerçant dans les pays de destination ont généralement tendance à ne s'intéresser qu'à leurs vicissitudes sans souvent chercher à déterminer la complexité du phénomène et les relations qui s'établissent avec le pays d'origine. Ce sont les manifestations voyantes qui attirent les spécialistes de tous bords. Il est souvent plus question de l'immigré que de l'émigré; et encore plus des problèmes liés à la présence de populations migrantes (soit travail, chômage, mobilités, écoles, islam, assimilation, acculturation, intégration, banlieue, deuxième génération, voile, etc.). Or, il ne peut y avoir émigré sans immigré mais, jusqu'à présent il est encore difficile de combler le déficit théorique dans ce domaine (Grabmann 1997). En effet, l'émigration possède non seulement une dimension

nationale mais également internationale. Aussi les problèmes liés au phénomène migratoire se trouvent placés de plus en plus au centre de l'actualité politique entre les pays du nord et ceux du sud, et rythment également les relations entre pays du sud eux-mêmes. La migration internationale cristallise donc de nos jours l'attention des politiciens de tous bords, et est devenue un sujet de société peut-être avec plus d'acuité pour les pays de destination que ceux de départ. Dans ce contexte, on s'intéressera à la formulation des politiques publiques dans le domaine des migrations. Si elles existent, dans quelle mesure repose-t-elle sur les résultats de recherches académiques ? Comment les chercheurs devraient-ils se positionner face à la demande d'expertise qui leur est faite, souvent au détriment de leurs préoccupations épistémologiques ? Pour tenter de rendre compte de la situation de la recherche sur les migrations au Maroc, il convient de considérer en premier lieu le contexte au sein duquel cette dernière a été amenée à s'inscrire ; puis de mettre à jour l'état de la recherche en général au Maroc.

1. La mondialisation de la migration marocaine

Les mouvements migratoires constituent de longue date un trait important du développement socio-économique marocain, tout particulièrement pour les régions dites « périphériques », telles que le Souss et le Rif. L'émigration est aussi lointaine que la mémoire des hommes qui rapportent dans leurs histoires les voyages que les arrière-grands-parents et les grands-parents ont effectué vers des horizons souvent inconnus. Tout au début c'était l'Afrique de l'Ouest, mais très vite l'Algérie, puis la Tunisie ont pris la relève pour servir non seulement de point d'accueil, mais aussi de tête de pont vers l'Europe. Depuis, la migration internationale marocaine s'est transformée sous les effets conjugués de déterminants endogènes (essentiellement les changements qui ont affecté les structures de la société et de l'économie marocaine depuis la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle); mais aussi exogènes (comme les politiques d'immigration élaborées et mises en application par les pays de destination). La migration internationale marocaine a perduré de la première guerre mondiale au début des années 70 selon un schéma classique entre deux espaces d'"expulsion-attraction". Ainsi, l'émigration binaire entre la France et le Maroc est à l'origine une émigration temporaire davantage imposée sous forme de mobilisation militaire, plutôt qu'un acte volontaire de nombreux émigrés. Suite à l'indépendance du Maroc, le nombre d'émigrés a fortement augmenté et les destinations migratoires se sont fortement diversifiées mais toujours selon le schéma de migration temporaire.

Ceci a changé en 1973, suite à la mise en place de mesures d'arrêt de recrutement dans la plupart des pays européens. La crise économique des années 70, le premier choc pétrolier, la montée du chômage, le retour de la xénophobie et des discours démagogique ont poussé la plupart des états à fermer leurs frontières. Cette situation a encouragé soit les retours des immigrés dans leurs pays ou bien le regroupement familial favorisant la féminisation et le rajeunissement du mouvement migratoire. Les mesures prises par les pays de destination habituelle ont poussé les candidats à l'émigration, à se déplacer vers des espaces situés hors

de l'espace migratoire traditionnel. Ce qui s'est traduit, bien évidemment par la diffusion et l'élargissement de l'espace migratoire marocain. Désormais, l'émigration va se diversifier: épouses et enfants rejoignent de plus en plus les pères, l'émigration volontaire et clandestine remplace l'émigration assistée, l'espace migratoire se dilate de plus en plus, le niveau de formation et les tactiques de migrations évoluent rapidement en s'adaptant au nouveau contexte grâce à l'aide de bons réseaux. Il y a alors passage d'une émigration temporaire à une émigration durable, pour tendre à devenir au final une émigration « définitive ». Néanmoins, il ne faut surtout pas prendre le terme « définitive » comme irrévocable ou synonyme de coupures des liens avec le « pays », comme l'a au moins démontré la première génération d'émigrés marocains.

Ainsi, malgré la fermeture croissante des frontières, on assiste à une amplification de l'émigration marocaine qui se distribue sur un grand nombre de pays dans le monde. Il existe aujourd'hui des communautés importantes de marocains en France, en Belgique, aux Pays-Bas, en Allemagne, en Espagne en Italie, en l'Afrique de l'Ouest et dans les pays arabes producteurs du pétrole. Cette dispersion a même atteint le Canada, les U.S.A, les pays scandinaves¹, l'Australie, l'Afrique du Sud, la Russie et le Japon. Plus de 85% d'entre eux vivent en Europe, 8,9% dans les pays Arabes, 6% aux Amériques, le reste en Asie, Océanie, et en Afrique. Le nombre de Marocains à l'étranger avoisine les trois millions, soit 10% de la population marocaine. Les transferts monétaires représentent la première source de revenu du pays, loin devant le tourisme et les phosphates. La migration est ainsi un phénomène amplement répandu au Maroc, et tout type de localité participe à ce processus, indépendamment de sa situation géographique, de sa taille et de ses ressources économiques.

Bien qu'elle soit l'un des phénomènes marquants de l'économie et de la société marocaine, il y a eu très peu de discours sur l'émigration et sur les émigrés. De même, jusqu'à la fin des années 80, il n'y a eu ni politique d'émigration, ni production scientifique majeure, à croire qu'il y a eu une volonté de négation d'un phénomène. Or, la migration internationale marocaine représentait et représente encore l'un des moteurs de l'économie nationale, tant pour les transferts monétaires qu'elle génère, que par son rôle modérateur sur un marché de l'emploi encore exigü. La migration internationale a également une fonction importante dans le maintien de la paix sociale, ceci, dans une société où la pauvreté ne cesse de prendre des proportions inquiétantes. Alors comment expliquer cet oubli, à la fois par les décideurs politiques et la communauté scientifique ? Ceci est la question à laquelle la suite de cet article va tenter d'apporter un éclairage.

¹ Ainsi « Paytikalâ est un organisme finlandais qui s'est chargé, pour les besoins d'une enquête, de recenser les populations étrangères dans l'Arctique. Et c'est dans une île perdue en plein pôle nord, qui s'appelle Svalbard, qu'ils ont découvert parmi les autochtones qui étaient peu nombreux du reste, onze Marocains qui vivaient dans la légalité la plus totale », Cf. L'Opinion du 19 avril 1999 (Journal marocain).

2. Les politiques migratoires marocaines, une préoccupation récente

On peut supposer que l'un des facteurs de cet oubli résulterait du fait qu'au Maroc, on a considéré pendant longtemps le séjour des travailleurs marocains et de leurs familles à l'étranger comme temporaire ou provisoire et c'est ainsi que jusqu'au milieu des années 70, la migration internationale qui constituait déjà un fait de société ne bénéficiait pas de la part des pouvoirs publics de toute l'attention qu'elle méritait. Certes, on la gérait à travers des conventions avec les pays d'accueil et on s'ingéniait à développer le rapatriement des devises, mais sans jamais aborder la question de la migration dans sa globalité, à croire que les problèmes concernaient plus les pays d'accueil que le Maroc lui-même. A l'intérieur du territoire national, les médias n'abordaient que très rarement le sort des compatriotes à l'étranger, que ce soit au niveau de leur travail ou de leurs conditions de vie. Il fallait des événements très graves pour que les journaux de gauche en parlent, mais la radio et la télévision n'abordaient presque jamais ces sujets dits « sensibles ». Ce sont surtout les cas de réussite qui ont toujours été de préférence mis en avant. Cette attitude renforçait de ce fait le fort désir de partir en vue de bénéficier des retombées supposées du miracle migratoire. Aussi l'émigration demeurait pour de nombreux Marocains le rêve grandiose d'accomplir là-bas ce qui semblait impossible ici (Charef 2000). On imaginait un monde économiquement meilleur où il faisait bon vivre et où le gain d'argent était facile. Il est à noter que ces stéréotypes véhiculés par les premiers émigrés résistent toujours. Ils sont renforcés par l'effet « magnétique » que joue « l'Occident » sur la jeunesse marocaine, à l'espoir déçu, aux rêves brisés et aux nombreuses frustrations.

En réalité comme le souligne à juste titre, M. Poinard:

« Si les pays de départ n'ont pas de politique d'émigration; du moins sont-ils contraints peu à peu, et sous la pression des circonstances, d'apparaître comme pays d'émigration. C'est à dire d'assumer la tutelle des expatriés, de concevoir des législations spécifiques à l'intention de ces derniers; et de légitimer leur action auprès de l'opinion publique restée au pays. Cette évolution n'allait pas de soi puisque la théorie de la chaîne migratoire niait précisément la pérennité de l'exode; et que les pays concernés ignoraient au départ combien l'émigration deviendrait un test de souveraineté nationale. Il s'agit alors d'aménager les situations de fait, de tirer les conséquences de législations sociales différentes. Soit en résumé, de multiplier les conventions bilatérales. Mais rapidement, les problèmes de main-d'œuvre, puis ceux que pose la présence des familles conduisent les pays de départ à demander un droit de regard sur leurs communautés en cours d'installation à l'étranger. » (Poinard 1988).

C'est ainsi qu'au lendemain de l'indépendance, le Ministère du Travail à travers son Bureau des Migrations a tenté de diversifier les lieux de destination, en s'efforçant de signer des conventions avec les pays d'accueil et tout en tentant d'orienter les agents recruteurs sur des régions bien délimitées. Mais dès le milieu des années 70, et faute de pays contractants, le travail du Bureau des Migrations consistait plus à gérer les Amicales des Commerçants et des Travailleurs Marocains à l'étranger (ATCME) et d'accompagner les émigrés à travers une présence d'attachés sociaux au niveau de certains consulats où la présence d'une

communauté marocaine est importante. Il a fallu attendre la deuxième moitié des années 80 et le durcissement des politiques migratoires européennes avec l'instauration des visas, pour que le mouvement migratoire marocain focalise de plus en plus l'attention des politiques, des promoteurs économiques et des chercheurs.

Le comportement migratoire commençait à changer, vu que l'idée du retour s'estompait, et la deuxième génération devenait de plus en plus revendicatrice de ses droits et risquait de ce fait de s'éloigner peu à peu du pays des parents. Quant aux « clandestins », ils mettaient de plus en plus leur vie en jeu et leur drame était colporté par les médias internationaux, nuisant de ce fait à « l'image » du Royaume. Les candidats proviennent ainsi en partie de régions limitrophes pour certains et de pays plus éloignés. Aussi, l'espace marocain est devenu pour eux une sorte de point de chute forcé devant l'obstacle de la mer méditerranée d'un côté et de l'océan atlantique de l'autre qui sont tout aussi infranchissables sans les moyens adéquats et une prise de risque accru.

Le Maroc n'était donc plus uniquement un pays d'émigration. Il est devenu par la force des choses et du fait de sa position géographique à la porte de l'Europe: pays d'immigration et espace de transit. Ainsi, à l'instar de certains pays de l'Europe Centrale et de la Turquie, le Maroc est invité à jouer la fonction de « filtre ». Il devient ainsi solidaire de la politique sécuritaire de l'Europe. En effet, le Maroc est implicitement chargé du rôle de garde-frontière, par l'obligation qui lui est faite de réadmettre sur son territoire non seulement ses ressortissants, mais aussi les immigrés clandestins qui y transitent.

C'est dans ce contexte à la fois propre à la réalité migratoire marocaine et sous la pression internationale que le Maroc se lance à la fin des années 80 dans la recherche d'une politique migratoire qui se veut plus homogène pour faire face à la fois aux flux de clandestins et à la stabilisation progressive de ses émigrés.² La création d'un Ministère de la Communauté marocaine à l'étranger en 1990³ et la marginalisation du Bureau des Migrations expriment de manière très explicite l'annonce d'une nouvelle politique migratoire : celle basée plus que par le passé sur une volonté d'ancrage et d'accompagnement⁴ sans pour autant tenter de gérer la communauté. Il y a également eu plusieurs tentatives de structuration de la vie associative. Quelques exemples de ce mouvement sont la création à Bruxelles du

² Ces derniers ne sont plus considérés comme travailleurs marocains à l'étranger (TME) mais comme marocains résidents à l'étranger (MRE). Dans une étape suivante, ils deviennent ressortissants marocains à l'étranger (RME). Il faut souligner, que la nuance est de taille, vu que le terme de « ressortissants » désigne dans le discours politique les individus, les groupes socioprofessionnels et les institutions à qui les politiques sont destinées (Warin 1999).

³ Ce ministère a depuis été remplacé par le Secrétariat d'état chargé de la communauté marocaine à l'étranger.

⁴ « Nous avons un objectif fondamental. Il s'agissait de réaliser la citoyenneté à part entière des Marocains résidant à l'étranger, aussi bien dans les pays d'accueil que dans le pays d'origine ». Déclaration de Mme Nezha Chekrouni, Ministre déléguée chargée des MRE, dans un entretien avec Leïla Ouazry de La Nouvelle Tribune (journal marocain).

Conseil Consultatif des Marocains à l'étranger (CCME)⁵, ou la création de l'Union Mondiale du Judaïsme marocain (UMJM) le 13 mai 1999 à Marrakech en présence du défunt Roi du Maroc et de nombreux ministres et députés israéliens de toutes tendances politiques. L'UMJM a également annoncé la création de douze délégations dans les pays à forte présence de juifs d'origine marocaine comme le Centre Culturel du Maghreb ouvert à Jérusalem en 1998 et le Centre de Recherche sur les Juifs du Maroc (CRJM) fondé à Paris en 1995 par Robert Assaraf. Son objectif est:

« d'approfondir les racines et consolider l'identité des juifs originaires du Maroc, de développer leur culture et pérenniser leurs traditions; de témoigner de l'exemplarité de leurs relations avec leurs compatriotes musulmans et de resserrer leurs liens avec le Roi et le peuple marocain [...], de contribuer à une paix durable entre Israéliens et Arabes dans le respect de la sécurité de tous les peuples du Proche-Orient ». (La Gazette du Maroc 1999)

De même fut créée en 1990 la Fondation Hassan II pour les RME. Parmi ses actions, on compte l'organisation des cours de langue arabe. Ainsi, il y a eu pour l'année scolaire 1996-1997, 40.572 élèves inscrits en France, contre 7.842 en 1985-1986. Cette structure d'enseignement touche des élèves de la maternelle au lycée et comprend plusieurs niveaux d'étude.⁶ Ces cours et l'organisation des colonies de vacances au Maroc pour les enfants des RME, sont considérés comme les moyens qui favorisent durablement l'intégration des jeunes dans la société marocaine, à la fois par la langue et par la connaissance du pays. La Fondation Hassan II sera l'unique organisme en charge des RME jusqu'à la création en septembre 2000 d'un Secrétariat d'Etat chargé de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Etranger (Charef 1999) et la désignation de la Fondation Mohammed V pour assurer annuellement l'opération de transit.⁷ Cette fondation tente aussi de concilier les impératifs internes aux enjeux externes de l'émigration en encourageant la vie associative jugée comme l'un des facteurs de maintien des relations fortes avec le Maroc. Cependant, jusqu'à présent il a été difficile d'aider la communauté marocaine à l'étranger à s'organiser et à dépasser les tensions qui opposent les différents leaders

⁵ Il y a également un projet de création du Conseil supérieur des marocains à l'étranger.

⁶ Le niveau débutants représente 52,7% de l'ensemble des scolarisés, avec 48,2% d'entre eux dans le primaire, 2,3% dans le secondaire et 2% dans les mosquées et les centres sociaux ; le niveau moyen représente 31,7% de l'ensemble des inscrits, avec 27,5% au niveau du primaire et 1,2% dans les mosquées ; le niveau avancé capte 11,4% de l'ensemble des inscrits, avec 8,7% dans le primaire, 2,1% dans le secondaire et 0,6% dans les mosquées et les centres sociaux ; le niveau des élèves possédant déjà un certificat d'arabe représente 4,2% de l'ensemble des inscrits, avec 2%, dans le primaire, 1,6% dans le secondaire et 0,3% dans les mosquées et centres sociaux. Ces cours sont donnés soit lors des heures de classe (cours intégrés) ce qui est le cas pour 36,6% de l'ensemble, soit hors du temps scolaire normale (cours différés). Logiquement ces cours sont dispensés dans 84 départements, mais c'est la région parisienne avec les postes consulaires de Paris, Nanterre, Pontoise, Villemomble, qui représentent la part la plus importante avec 28,3% des élèves inscrits, suivie du département Nord-Pas-de-Calais avec 14,37% et le Nord avec 10%.

⁷ C'est une opération d'accueil des ressortissants marocains à l'étranger dans les différents points d'entrées et de sorties sur le territoire national, durant la saison des retours, à savoir du 15 juin au 15 septembre. Cette année (2005), on ne parle plus de l'opération transit, mais de 'Marhaba', soit 'Bienvenue' en arabe pour les 1.600.000 RME qui retournent au Maroc pour passer des vacances.

communautaires. A ceci s'ajoute le fait que la communauté marocaine à l'étranger n'a plus de représentants ni à la première ni à la deuxième chambre (l'équivalent de l'Assemblée Nationale et du Sénat) malgré sa participation aux différents référendums. Ainsi, nous assistons aujourd'hui à une multiplication des intervenants dans le domaine migratoire, sans réelle concertation. Il est à craindre une concurrence entre le Ministère de l'Intérieur, la Fondation Mohammed V, le Secrétariat d'Etat Chargé des MRE (Marocains Résidant à l'Etranger) et la fondation Hassan II pour les RME (Fondation Hassan et OIM, 2003), ce qui se traduira forcément par une politique de saupoudrage et une dilution des actions dans ce domaine. A l'heure où tout le monde s'accorde à dire que les migrations internationales sont parmi les défis majeurs lancés à la société marocaine, il est donc urgent d'entreprendre des recherches sérieuses sur cette question. Les connaissances dans ce domaine sont fragmentaires⁸, aussi les recherches permettront non seulement de connaître plus précisément la ou les réalité(s) migratoire(s) marocaine(s) actuelle(s) (au niveau local, régional, national et international) mais aussi de mieux intégrer le facteur migration internationale dans les politiques à la fois nationale et de coopération avec les pays tiers.

Il faut signaler le référent juridique majeur qu'est devenue la promulgation d'une loi répressive de 2003, sa portée concernant tout à la fois les tentatives de migrations clandestines de ressortissants nationaux ainsi que d'étrangers. Tous sont désormais considérés comme relevant du droit pénal et risquent des sanctions de plus en plus accrues car la fonction de « passeur » est maintenant un crime. Les peines peuvent atteindre jusqu'à dix ans d'emprisonnement pour les contrevenants. Il va de soi que de telles mesures ont eu pour effet direct et immédiat la multiplication des arrestations de contrevenants, ainsi que le développement d'une situation particulière : la concentration de candidats à l'émigration clandestine dans des zones délimitées. Pour une connaissance des plus approfondies d'un tel phénomène, le lancement d'études et d'analyses ciblées paraît désormais plus qu'une nécessité.

3. Les migrations marocaines, un champ de recherches à l'image de l'état de la recherche au Maroc

Quand bien même le Maroc reste historiquement un pays de migration, les chercheurs n'en ont fait un thème de recherche qu'à partir de la fin des années 60, cela dans sa dimension interne et encore plus tardivement pour ce qui est de sa dimension internationale. Cette dernière est celle qui nous intéresse dans le cadre de cet article. En effet, on est amené à se demander la raison de cet oubli, voire de cette marginalisation dont a souffert un tel champ de recherche dans le domaine migratoire au Maroc, alors qu'il se développait ailleurs dans des proportions considérables. Cette absence d'intérêt pour un sujet important dans la vie sociale et

⁸ On ne peut que déplorer l'absence jusqu'à présent d'un ouvrage de synthèse sur les migrations marocaines, de même que l'absence de données statistiques fiables et accessibles au niveau national.

économique nationale est éloquent. Il contredit l'importance à la fois quantitative de cette population dans sa dimension récente, mais aussi qualitative dans sa profondeur historique. En réalité il nous semble qu'au-delà du contexte politique évoqué ci-dessus, l'un des éléments d'explication possible est l'état de la recherche au Maroc.

Il va de soi qu'il n'est pas notre objectif de détailler les conditions de la recherche scientifique au Maroc, néanmoins nous en dresserons les grandes lignes. On peut d'ores et déjà énoncer que la recherche scientifique proprement dite est une activité relativement récente au Maroc. Certes il y a eu de tout temps de grandes universités à l'instar de la karaouiyine à Fès (très orientée sur le corpus du savoir théologique), de même il existait de nombreuses écoles et institutions ayant souvent pour vocation les études religieuses. Avec l'avènement de la colonisation, il n'y a pas eu pour autant la création d'une université marocaine proprement dite. Ainsi jusqu'à la fin des années 40, il y avait à peine un petit millier d'étudiants marocains en Algérie ou en métropole, d'autres ayant pour leur part opté pour le Moyen-Orient en vue de perfectionner et approfondir leurs études en arabe. Ce n'est qu'en 1956 au lendemain de l'indépendance que s'opèrera la création du premier noyau de l'université marocaine à travers l'institution qu'est l'université Mohammed V de Rabat. Aussi, pour l'année universitaire 1955-1956, il y avait 4 301 étudiants marocains, recensés à la fois au Maroc et à l'étranger, mais aucun enseignants-chercheurs. En 1972, sur 542 enseignants-chercheurs, il y en avait 61 dans les Sciences Sociales et Humaines. C'est à partir de 1974 avec le lancement de l'Université Hassan II de Casablanca, que le nombre d'universités connaîtra une augmentation substantielle avec la création successive de l'Université Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah de Fès en 1975, du Cadi Ayad de Marrakech, de Mohammed Premier d'Oujda, d'Ibn Tofaïl de Kénitra, de Chouaïb Doukali d'El Jadida, de Moulay Ismaïl de Meknès et de Abdelmalek Saâdi de Tetouan en 1978, etc. Ainsi on compte actuellement environ quatre-vingts établissements universitaires et une vingtaine d'établissements destinés à la formation des cadres amenés à effectuer aussi des activités de recherche. Sur le plan des effectifs, on y trouve environ 14 000 enseignants-chercheurs et chercheurs, soit 10 000 dans les universités et le reste étant réparti dans les établissements de formation des cadres. On note que 50% de ces chercheurs opèrent dans le domaine des sciences sociales et humaines.

Mais pour des raisons essentiellement historiques, le système de la recherche au Maroc se caractérise par un certain nombre de difficultés. Ainsi S. Belkadi, directeur de la recherche scientifique et de la coopération universitaire au Maroc, relève lors d'un séminaire organisé sur l'Etat de la Recherche au Maroc⁹:

⁹ La plupart des données citées cette partie sont tirées des communications présentées lors de cette rencontre et sont accessibles sur Internet www.dfc.gov.ma/Recherche/inter/Seminaire%20NV1.htm

« une insuffisance en matière d'administration de la recherche se traduisant par l'absence de coordination de la recherche à l'échelon national, de planification, d'évaluation, de synergie et travail en réseaux, de même que la faiblesse des moyens alloués à la recherche scientifique (soit à peine 0,4 % du PIB), faiblesse des liens entre la recherche et le secteur productif, se traduisant par l'absence de mécanismes et de structures de valorisation de la recherche, inexistence d'une politique d'insertion des chercheurs dans le secteur productif, de mesures fiscales ou autres incitatives pour encourager le développement de la recherche dans le secteur privé, de même insuffisance des mesures d'accompagnement de la recherche, insuffisance en matière d'information scientifique et technique, de support à l'édition scientifique, déficience en matière de maintenance du matériel scientifique, absence de dispositions telles que les allocations de recherche pour encourager des chercheurs méritants à préparer des thèses.»

Cependant, plusieurs mesures seront prises pour pallier les insuffisances dans le domaine de la recherche au Maroc. C'est ainsi que fut créé pour la première fois un Secrétariat d'état à la recherche scientifique dans le cadre du gouvernement d'alternance en mars 1998. Il fut maintenu dans le gouvernement suivant de septembre 2000 puis qui sera supprimé. On verra également le lancement de programmes d'appui à la recherche scientifique (PARS) d'une durée de trois années, des programmes thématiques tels que PROTAS, la création de réseaux thématiques du type « pôles de compétence » et la restructuration du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique.

4. Les migrations marocaines, un champ heuristique en friche

Après quelques travaux fort utiles à l'époque coloniale (Cellérier 1934; Ray 1938; Devillars 1952), la recherche dans le domaine de l'émigration marocaine a connu une carence aiguë jusqu'au milieu des années 70, et seule la crise économique a poussé les pays d'accueil à financer un certain nombre d'études. Ces travaux, souvent menés à grande échelle et avec beaucoup de moyens, ont permis la connaissance des milieux d'origine, malgré leurs finalités sous-jacentes. La première finalité était de trouver le meilleur moyen de réintégrer ces derniers dans leur pays d'origine. C'était le cas notamment du projet R.E.M.P.L.O.D.¹⁰, lancé en 1974 par le Ministère de la Coopération au Développement des Pays-Bas. Le but principal était de faire des enquêtes socio-économiques au Maroc, en Tunisie et en Turquie, avec l'objectif « de savoir si l'utilisation de la migration ouvrière internationale pouvait être accrue ou bien le cas échéant si sa nocivité pouvait être réduite, en faveur du processus de développement socio-économique se déroulant dans les pays exportateurs de main-d'œuvre et si oui, dans quelles conditions » (De Mas, 1977, p 5). La seconde finalité était celle qui consistait à vouloir transformer à tout prix l'émigration en politique de développement économique. Cependant ceci s'est mis en place sans avoir développé de structures de recherche qui auraient pu ouvrir des champs d'étude et faire naître des vocations de chercheurs. Néanmoins, des partenaires marocains comme l'Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (l'I.N.S.E.A) de Rabat ont été associés à cette étude à

¹⁰ Reintegration of Emigrant Manpower and Promotion of Local Opportunity or Development.

travers notamment MM Berrada et B.Hamdouche dont deux ouvrages essentiellement statistiques ont été publiés, l'un en 1979 (I.N.S.E.A. 1979) et l'autre en 1981(I.N.S.E.A. 1981).

On observe ainsi très peu de contributions marquantes jusqu'aux années 80, exceptées le travail pionnier de J.Ray dans les années 30, de A.Gharbaoui en 1968 (Gharbaoui 1969) et A. Belgandouz en 1976 (Belguendouz 1976). Si le premier est accessible malgré son ancienneté, les deux derniers qui ont constitué une thèse en géographie à Paris et l'autre en économie à Grenoble, n'ont jamais été publiés. Elles s'inscrivaient dans le contexte à la fois idéologique et scientifique dominant dans les sciences humaines des années 60 et 70. Leur problématique est focalisée sur le prolétariat ouvrier immigré en terme macro-social et macro-économique et sur l'impérialisme (Baroudi 1978), faisant prévaloir les rapports de classe, les inégalités socio-économiques et les relations colonisateurs/colonisés tout en ayant très peu analysé le migrant en tant qu'individu.

Mais ce n'est qu'à partir du milieu des années 80, que les recherches sur les migrants marocains se développent de plus en plus. Elles se sont attachées à analyser les investissements des émigrés, l'acquisition de logements, les rapports avec le pays d'origine et s'inscrivent dans le cadre de thèses soutenues généralement par des marocains à l'étranger (une dizaine en France principalement). Durant les années 90, on assiste à la fois à des soutenances de thèse en Europe, mais aussi au Maroc. Et significativement on voit se développer de plus en plus fréquemment, l'intérêt que de jeunes chercheurs issus de la migration ou étrangers manifestent à ce sujet. Certains parmi ces jeunes issus de l'émigration sont désormais établis et se voient reconnus à la fois à l'étranger mais aussi au Maroc (comme c'est le cas de H. Bousseta¹¹ et N. Ouali en Belgique, M.Belbah¹², D. El Yazzami¹³ en France, etc). De même, de nombreux colloques sont organisés au Maroc, des livres publiés au Maroc et à l'étranger (Ouali 2004; Cabral 2003) et des revues y consacrent parfois un numéro spécial comme ce fut le cas pour celle d'*Hommes et Migrations* en 2003 ou *Migrance* en 2005. A partir des années 90, de petits noyaux de recherche se structurent sous forme d'avant-garde. La première structure créée au début des années 90 à Oujda est le Centre de Recherche sur les Migrations Maghrébines. Il fait suite à une réunion des chefs d'état maghrébins qui s'était tenue dans cette même ville. Malgré la non-appartenance de son directeur à la question migratoire (géomorphologue de formation), de nombreuses actions marquantes y ont été menées sous forme de colloques, publications... Cependant, les départs successifs du directeur (afin de

¹¹ Chercheur auprès du FNRS et maître de conférence à l'université de Liège, Réseau Euromarocain pour le développement-Belgique.

¹² Chercheur associé Groupe d'analyse des politiques publiques, CNRS-ENSC.

¹³ Diplômé de l'Ecole supérieure de commerce de Marseille (France) et du Centre de formation et de perfectionnement des journalistes de Paris. Il est Délégué général de « Génériques », une association spécialisée dans l'histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en France, et Rédacteur en chef de la revue « Migrance ».

soutenir une thèse d'état en géomorphologie) et celui du recteur Mekouar qui était très impliqué, ont fait péricliter le centre durant quelques années avant de reprendre son élan par la suite. D'autres centres ont vu le jour entre temps à savoir celui de l'observatoire Régional des Migrations: Espaces & Sociétés (l'ORMES) à Agadir d'essence pluridisciplinaire ; l'Association Marocaine d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Migrations (l'AMERM) à Rabat, principalement composée de juristes et d'économistes et enfin la création d'une chaire de l'Unesco à Casablanca sur « Migration et Droits Humains ». Tout autour de ces centres dont on notera la non connexion, des travaux sur la thématique migratoire sont également menés par des individuels au sein des différentes universités marocaines.

Les migrants marocains se voient enfin consacrer un colloque bilingue à Brighton par le centre de recherche sur les migrations (Colloque de Brighton 2005). Sur le plan thématique, on constate que dès le milieu des années 90, les travaux s'ouvrent sur les espaces d'arrivée et d'installation des immigrés; les espaces de départ ainsi que sur les parcours de circulation; et sur les migrations et développement local (Charef and Gonin 2004, 2005) etc.

5. Les migrations marocaines, de rares demandes d'expertise

Les commanditaires marocains, que ce soit du secteur public ou privé sont extrêmement rares pour ne pas dire inexistantes. A croire que, ni l'un ni l'autre ne jugent l'apport des scientifiques opportun (pour ne pas dire utile) dans la recherche de solutions à apporter aux multiples questions liées aux migrations. Les rares demandes sont généralement dépendantes de l'existence et de l'influence d'un réseau d'appui pour des raisons d'affinités personnelles ou politiques. Une telle démarche, même si elle permet aux chercheurs de développer leurs centres d'intérêt, leur problématique et d'appliquer leur mode d'approche, limite en réalité leur liberté d'action. En effet, par respect dû aux personnes qui ont permis la concrétisation de la commande, l'expertise ne doit pas nuire à ces personnes afin que les travaux restent utilisables. Les chercheurs doivent donc composer avec ces préoccupations afin parfois d'entrer selon Bourdieu dans un « processus de concurrence et de lutte pour l'appropriation de la légitimité ». Un autre obstacle à la publication d'expertises est la difficulté d'accès à l'information pertinente posée par les pouvoirs publics.

Aussi, il est évident que les recherches sur les migrations internationales n'occupent à ce jour ni la place, ni la visibilité qu'elles méritent. Presque rien n'a été fait pour qu'elles puissent se revitaliser en données, en informations afin de pouvoir financer des enquêtes. Même le dernier recensement de la population de septembre dernier, comme les précédents d'ailleurs, n'ont pas cherché à explorer les méandres des migrations internationales. Ainsi, la plupart des travaux qui se sont développés ces dernières années revêtent l'aspect de monographies locales. D'autres ont repris les rares résultats d'enquêtes passées. D'autres encore se sont consacrés à l'exégèse de problématiques débattues et rebattues.

6. Conclusion

Depuis fort longtemps, on a observé que la maîtrise du savoir est considérée comme un élément essentiel du développement social et économique. Aussi la question des savoirs, de leur production, de leur maîtrise, de leur acquisition et de leur transmission est l'une des pierres angulaires dans tout processus de développement. Cette constante est vraie pour les pays dits en « développement » et encore plus pour les pays « en voie de développement ». Pour autant on note qu'au niveau stratégique, les sciences n'ont pas les mêmes considérations aux yeux des décideurs. Ceux-ci ont tendance à privilégier la plupart du temps, les sciences dites « dures » au dépend des sciences de l'homme et de la société, les considérant comme des sciences « molles » jouant un rôle minime dans tout processus de développement. Cette forme de myopie qui a prévalu dans les différentes politiques menées, que ce soit au nord ou au sud, s'appuie sur l'argument essentiel que tout développement passe nécessairement par un développement technique. Ainsi pendant longtemps on s'est contenté de mesurer le développement par le niveau de revenu, en faisant pour cela abstraction de tout le développement humain, et ceci jusqu'à une date récente.

Or, on admettra aisément que c'est en quelque sorte une vue de l'esprit que de vouloir séparer ou minimiser le rôle d'une science par rapport à l'autre, car tout projet de développement, toute stratégie ou politique scientifique se base sur les savoirs qui requièrent à la fois la place des sciences de l'homme et de la société mais aussi les sciences exactes. Et sans la prise en considération de cet élément, il ne peut y avoir de progrès ou de réussite. Il convient par conséquent de favoriser et de renforcer l'interdisciplinarité entre sciences de la nature et sciences de l'homme. Certes on conviendra aisément que la science reste jusqu'à présent l'un des outils indispensables voire incontournables aux mains des décideurs pour orienter leur politique à moyen ou long terme. C'est ainsi que davantage de soutien à la recherche est nécessaire pour mieux comprendre la difficile question de l'émigration/immigration. Ce problème socio-économique est un des plus sensibles et des plus complexes car il touche des notions culturelles, symboliques, existentielles de l'individuel et du collectif transgressant parfois les lois et règlements en vigueur dans certains pays. Contrairement à d'autres problèmes sociétaux, la question migratoire a pour effet principal de générer des difficultés et des questions amenées très souvent à dépasser le cadre régional et national et posséder ainsi une dimension internationale et interétatique.

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