Dissertations ERCOMER

Nederlandse Politieke partijen over minderhedenbeleid, 1977-1995

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Abstract:


The central questions are:

1. Have the Dutch political parties' views on minority policy generally changed between 1977 and 1995, and, if so, in what direction?
2. Was in the first half of the nineties more disagreement on this topic than in the eighties?
3. What exactly are the differences of opinion between the parties on the topic of integration of minorities?

The research proceeds upon the theoretical assumption that three concepts - including their counterparts - play a central role in the political discourse on the multi-ethnic society: socio-cultural diversity (or homogeneity), socio-economic equality (or inequality), and political-juridical unity (or fragmentation). It is assumed that the perspectives on multi-ethnic society will be seen to differ in the political parties' interpretation and application of these concepts. The object of the research is approached in two ways. First the attitudes towards multi-ethnic society and minority policy are investigated for each political party separately. Next, the viewpoints of the parties are contextualized by examining the standpoints of the parliamentary groups of the parties in parliamentary debates on important government documents concerning minority policy. In addition the reactions of major minority organisations on these government documents are analyzed. A short answer to the first question is, that in general the viewpoints of the major political parties has shifted from a preference for a multicultural and group-oriented policy of emancipation in the eighties, to a preference for a more obligatory and individual-oriented policy of socio-economic integration in the nineties. An reply to the second question is, that in the political discourse under scrutiny, the consensus between the main political parties about the minority policy has increased rather than decreased. In order to answer the third question, in the conclusion a classification is made of the political parties' perspectives on integration that stresses the socio-economic, the socio-cultural and the political-juridical dimensions.

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