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Summaries in English

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debatten gevoerd door sociologen, antropologen en bij voorbeeld historici, juristen, psychologen en economen. Daarnaast worden artistiek geschoolden benaderd voor het leveren van een bijdrage aan de verbeelding van het congressthema.

Onderzoekers die op de studiedagen een paper willen presenteren kunnen zich nu reeds aanmelden bij de congrescommissie. Zij dienen daartoe een beknopte omschrijving (maximaal 200 woorden) van hun bijdrage op te sturen naar: SISWO, t.a.v. Congrescommissie Vrouwen & Mannen, Postbus 19079, 1000 GB Amsterdam.

Een uitgebreide samenvatting van vijf à zes bladzijden dient medio december 1989 binnen te zijn. Op basis van deze samenvattingen worden de papers geselecteerd die voor presentatie in aanmerking komen.

Voor meer informatie kunt u contact opnemen met Cees Corver, tel. 020-240075.

Summaries

Charisma and Revolution: Max Weber in Iran

by Ron van Dooren

In spite of the fact that the term 'charisma' has become part of everyday language, the scientific appeal of this concept seems to have withered away over the last decade and a half. For some part this can be ascribed to the fact that charismatic leadership had almost exclusively been associated with the era of decolonisation, but for another part the new conceptualisation of politics in terms of processes, structures and institutions left only small room for charismatic 'great men'. In this article however, it is argued that even today, Weber's concept of charismatic leadership can still help to gain a better understanding of political developments.

The value of this concept is demonstrated in the rise of Khomeini and the religious establishment to revolutionary power in Iran during the 60's and 70's. It appeared that most of the current analyses fall short in explaining the breakdown of the Iranian monarchy because on the one hand they rely too much on social factors that were characteristic for Iranian society long before it entered the revolutionary decades, and on the other hand they fail to recognize the interrelationship between developments that can be rightly labeled revolutionary. If, however, one is prepared to acknowledge the charismatic (in the very specific 'Weberian' meaning of the word) character of Khomeini's leadership, charisma reveals itself as the most central element in the revolution and that the coincidence of the social, political, economic and religious 'causes' of the revolution mentioned by most authors on the subject, becomes explicable as a byproduct of this single fact. Because it takes into account the interrelationship between political or economic crises, religion and leadership in revolutionary upheavals, an interrelationship that tends to be overlooked far too often, the concept of charisma leads to a more coherent understanding of pre-revolutionary Iran. Thus, provided that the term is understood in its original meaning as given it by Weber and not simply made synonymous with 'widely popular' or 'beloved', the concept of charismatic leadership can still be of considerable value for our understanding of contemporary political developments.

Karl Popper and the better world

by M.L.J. Wissenburg

In this essay I try to analyse the consistency between Sir Karl's political theory and his more 'general' philosophical writings, taking a close look at his argumentation against utopianism. It is my thesis that Sir Karl's most pressing problem in the area of political theory was, and still is, to defend his policy of small changes ('piece-meal engineering') without identifying it with utopianism. It is much easier to draw a line between Popper's political alternative and historicism, than to draw one between his theory and utopianism.

In the first part of the essay I summarize (a) the essentials of Popper's contributions to epistemology, ontology, and ethics; (b) his political position (the thesis of the open society) with regard to historicism; and (c) the same with regard to utopianism. Two important points are stressed throughout. First, there is a striking congruency between his political and ontological positions: he starts with rejecting the determinist (historicist) theory, and then and only then distinguishes his theory from the opposite indeterminist (utopianist) position. Second, Popper's model of the open society depends largely on his variant of 'deontological liberalism', in which he leaves no place whatsoever for a concept of the GOOD.

Popper's defense against (or attack on) utopianism is aimed at the practice of utopianism utopian engineering. In general, one can distinguish between arguments against the holistic character of utopian policies, arguments against the utopian planner's capability to learn from mistakes, and ethical arguments. All of them can be traced back to his metaphysics.

Popper can only prove that the practical problems facing the utopian planner are some degrees greater than, but not fundamentally different from, his own. The utopianist counter-argument (Utopia's worth the risks) is answered by Popper's only absolute argument: there is no such thing as the GOOD, therefore no such thing as Utopia.

Sir Karl does not intend a total ban on utopianism (or, in general, on teleology), but there's not much honour or space for integrity in defending such 'irrational' positions.

I conclude with some critical remarks on the philosophical basis of this degradation.

Changes in the relations between newspapers and political parties

by J. Kleinnijenhuis and O. Scholten

The article addresses the question what kind of changes have occurred in the relationship between political parties and newspapers in the multi-party, multi-news-

paper political system of The Netherlands during the last few decades.

In the 1950's both parties and newspapers still relied upon voters and readers with an identical religious denomination and an identical social class background. This situation favoured strong ties between parties and newspapers: in some cases, party-leaders were editor-in-chief as well.

The first series of changes resulted from 'depillarization'. The market share of pillarized newspapers dropped. The floating vote came into being. Formal and personal ties between parties and newspapers were cut: newspapers became independent of political parties. As a result, clearcut distinctions between the good guys and the bad guys in political newspaper comments were getting somewhat blurred, as was shown in the case of De Waarheid, the former mouthpiece of the Dutch communist party (CPN). In the 1970's and the 1980's the process of depillarization continued. Nowadays the political stance of a newspaper does not strongly influence readers' decisions to read that specific newspaper. More than ever, the political preferences among the subscribers of a Dutch newspaper resemble the political preferences in The Netherlands as a whole. In order to reach their target group, political parties therefore have to reckon with an increasing number of newspapers.

The second series of changes resulted from the ever growing grip of the government on the media-agenda. Even in 1974 newspapers perceived the Dutch coalition government as the 'avarage' of the government parties. In the 1980's, however, the coalition government is perceived as an actor on its own, far more independent of the wishes of the government parties. More than ever political parties do have to restrict themselves to react to the issues which have been put forward on the media-agenda allready.

Although the impact of newspaper comments on voting behavior may have diminished when compared with the influence of television, Dutch newspapers still exert a significant influence upon voting behavior. The percentage of party voters among the subscribers of a newspaper tends upwards when newspaper comments are favourable with regard to that party ($R^2 = .13$, $n = 2$ elections \times 5 newspapers \times 3 parties = 30). This percentage tends upwards even more, when the general electoral trend in The Netherlands is removed ($R^2 = .21$, $n = 30$).

One may very well conclude that newspapers have become far more independent of parties, whereas parties remain dependent upon newspapers. The balance of power between parties and newspapers shifts towards the latter.