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## Summaries in English

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## Summaries

### **The Interconnection between Process of State and Class Formation: Problems of Conceptualisation.**

by G. van Benthem van den Bergh.

In this article the Marxian conceptualisation and implied theory of the interconnection between class formation and the development of the capitalist state is examined and found wanting. An alternative manner of conceptualising this interconnection is to be found in the theory of state formation processes contained in the second volume of Norbert Elias *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*.

In the first part of the article the Marxian concept of class is shown to refer to a relationship in process between interdependent human beings, arising from a particular kind of differentiation of social functions. Contrary to Marx' formulation it does not refer to an absolute but to a relative dependence relation. In the second part the Marxian theory of the state and the ruling class is criticized, because of its subordination of the state to class interdependencies. If the concept of the state is also seen to refer to a relationship in process between interdependent human beings arising from a particular kind of social integration, the interconnection between processes of state and class formation can be more adequately conceptualised. A schematised description of this interconnection as it developed in Western-Europe is offered in the last part of the article.

### **Rationality and rational behavior: definition and hypothesis**

by K. Koch

In the first part of this article the author argues that the concepts of rationality and rational behavior can only be meaningfully used as concepts referring to individual behavior, i.e. as concepts characterising the way individuals choose among perceived behavioral alternatives on the basis of preference and probability.

In the second part a great number of definitions of rationality or rational behavior (rationality as a psychic condition, as reasoning, as value-maximizing or satisfying choice, as maximizing expected utility etc.) are reviewed with the help of the criteria of unambiguous use of language and usefulness for theory building. The only definition, that seems adequate, is the rather vague one, that defines rational behavior as choosing among the perceived behavioral alternatives that alternative, that is in accordance with the preference ordering of the outcomes of the different alternatives and with the estimation of the probability of the occurrence of the outcomes of the different alternatives.

In the last section the author underlines the importance of the hypothesis of rational behavior in efforts of theory building, giving for one thing coherence to

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the whole set of hypotheses and theoremas. Because of the fact, that – explicit or implicit – most theories are built on a comparable vague notion of rationality the author rejects the dichotomy of rational and non-rational theories.

### **Public hearings in the Dutch parliament**

by W. Veenstra

Public hearings in the Dutch parliament have become possible in their present form by a modification of the Standing Orders of the Second Chamber in 1966. From a quantitative survey over the period from 1966 to 1975 it appeared that most of the hearings were held in the period 1969-1972, which largely coincided with the administration headed by Prime Minister De Jong against which the parties of the left were opposition. The permanent committees of the Second Chamber for Culture Recreation and Welfare and that of Home Affairs organized a relatively great number of hearings. This in contrast with for instance the committee in the financial-economic sector which in this field hardly showed any activity. Also the ad hoc committees held a remarkable number of public hearings.

A random test, held among 20 chairmen and deputy chairmen of permanent and ad hoc committees of the Second Chamber, showed that the majority of them was satisfied with the present practice, with a rather strong preference however for written reactions instead of verbal (i.e. by means of a hearing). Sixteen chairmen said they have changed their minds once or twice as a result of a hearing, especially when confronted with new facts.

In a concluding chapter the author attaches two functions to hearings, namely: I - the hearing held as a means for interested groups of the population to influence the decisionmaking process. It has to be prevented that expectations are raised of the people concerned which can not be fulfilled. II. The hearing as a necessary source of information for Parliament. In connection with the latter function one could think of selected invitations to experts and interested parties. It is of great importance that the parliamentary committees are aware of the fact that public interest is involved in serious investigations by means of the hearing and that Members of Parliament should not always let themselves guided by party political considerations.

The fundamental question is whether MP's would wish bigger expertknowledge and therefore more influence on the government and, if so, whether they consider hearings (eventually in an amended form) as an adequate means to realize these matters. According to the author, who has been a parliamentary correspondent for 6 years, the Dutch parliament has not given thought enough about this question.