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## Summaries in English

N.A.

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## Mededelingen

### Het schip van staat

Op 25 oktober 1985 zal aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden een conferentie plaatsvinden over de mogelijkheden tot sturing van de samenleving, mede ter gelegenheid van het verschijnen van M. A. P. Bovens, W. J. Witteveen (red.), *Het schip van staat; beschouwingen over recht, staat en sturing*. Nadere aankondiging volgt.

Inlichtingen: W. Derksen Vakgroep Politieke Wetenschappen, Hugo de Grootstraat 27A, 2311 XK Leiden. Tel. 071-149641 (toestel 347).

### Prof. Heinz Eulau

Vanaf 1 september zal voor de rest van dit kalenderjaar verbonden zijn als *visiting professor* aan de Vakgroep Politicologie van de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam professor Heinz Eulau, verbonden aan de Stanford University, oud-president van de American Political Science Association en specialist op het terrein van onder meer het behaviorisme, elite-massarelaties, en 'legislative studies'. Belangstellenden kunnen met hem contact opnemen via het secretariaat van de afdeling Politicologie, p/a mevr. T. Wolff, tel 010-525511 (toestel 4174).

## Summaries

### Individual preferences vs social choice rules: an undecided game?

by G. P. de Bruin.

For those social choice rules which satisfy the properties of privacy and aggregation, the question is raised whether their outcomes are vulnerable for manipulation by participants. It is firstly shown that recent efforts of research into the existence of nonmanipulable procedures may be fruitfully subdivided according to whether they start from necessary or from sufficient conditions for manipulation. Subsequently, it is argued that although no democratic voting procedure is theoretically full-proof nonmanipulative, the actual potentialities for manipulative behavior are virtually nonexistent. On the other hand, those newly devised mechanisms which can be formally proven nonmanipulative, seem to defy any practical implementation. Finally, some arguments are given why the current analytical devices of economic theory fall short as far as research into the manipulability of agenda-building processes in society is concerned.

### Welfare Policies: the Interaction Effects of Collective Demands and Liberal Democracy in a Cross Sectional Analysis of 115 Countries

by J. W. Letterie and R. A. G. van Puyenbroek

In most recent cross-national studies the relative effects of political and socio-economic factors on the welfare policies of governments have been investigated by considering these factors to be autonomous determinants of policy, by treating them as independent causal variables. Consequently, linear additive regression models have been employed to analyse such effects. In this study we have looked at the correlates of welfare policy from a different perspective. We believe that some of our chief theoretical notions do not justify viewing political

factors as autonomous determinants only. Rather, these notions seem to suggest that characteristics of political systems should be analyzed in their role as conditioning factors. To explore this issue empirically, we have investigated the extent to which the conversion of demands for welfare into public policies is or is not facilitated by the existence of democratic channels for expressing such demands. This was done by analyzing cross-sectional data on 115 countries by means of a statistical interaction model. The findings suggest that more attention should be paid to interaction in future studies.

### Towards a theory of evaluative discourse

by J. J. van Cuilenburg, J. Kleinnijenhuis and J. A. de Ridder

In the social sciences, texts are often studied by means of 'content analysis'. 'Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages' (Holsti, 1969, p. 14). The rules to identify characteristics should be as explicit as possible. Application of these rules produces measurements of textual content. The measurements have to be 'reliable' in the sense of 'intersubjective'. In this article a technique is presented to identify 'meaning objects' and 'two place predicates' in order to make inferences about the structure of discourse. This technique bears, among other things, upon social psychological approaches, especially on Osgood's 'evaluative assertion analysis' (Osgood *cs*, 1956).

An entity in a world people are thinking and talking about, might be called a 'meaning object'. One can think of a variety of meaning objects:

1. Actors (persons, political parties, political institutions, social movements).  
For example: the Labour party, Khomeiny, Saddam Hussein, the zionists.
2. (Polytomous) empirical variables. For example: the unemployment rate, criminality, political cynism.
3. Attributes. For example: 'to be a democracy', 'to be a communist'. From a

### Public Opinion in a polluted area (*Acta Politica* XX nr. 2, 209-223)

by Gerard Hulsen, Wilma de Haas en Harm 't Hart

This study was to test a hypothesis about the pattern of issue-definition discernible in public opinion processes. A series of six phases of issue-definition was hypothesized: 'the problem', 'the solution', 'the problem solvers', 'the political solution', 'the decision' and 'the output'. The suggested definitions did occur, although not in the expected pattern – neatly following one another – but clustered in three successive pairs.

methodological point of view attributes are dichotomous empirical variables.

4. Norms and values. For example: 'to be good', 'to be beautiful', 'to be wise'. In this article alle positive norms are subsumed under the abstract meaning object 'G'. G denotes what is good according to some source. From a methodological point of view norms and values are a special kind of attributes.
5. Abstract philosophical entities. For example: W, the real world according to some actor.

There is no guarantee that different people will have the same thoughts about a meaning object. If one wants to know what an actor, for example the newspaper *The Herald*, is thinking about some meaning object, one can measure the way this actor perceives the relations between this meaning object and other meaning objects. One can think of the relation between a meaning object and other meaning objects as a graph (a network) comprised of a lot of two place relations. A verbal statement about the relation from one meaning object to another is called a 'two place predicate'. All kinds of two place predicates can be placed upon an axis ranging from 'very negative' to 'very positive'. One can use a thesaurus to see whether the common meaning of a predicate is positive or negative. In graph-theoretical terms a meaning object is a 'node', while a two place predicate is a 'directed arrow'.

A lot of political texts can be parsed in 'two place predicates' about the relation from one meaning object to another.:

1. *The Herald*: Khomeiny / 'throws out (-)' / the sjah;
  2. *The Herald*: Khomeiny: Saddam Hussein / 'is a friend of (+)' / the zionists.
- The abstract meaning objects G (the good) and W (the real world) are helpful to transform what looks like a one place predicates into a two place predicate.

For example:

3. *The Herald*: Khomeiny exists  
*The Herald*: W / + / Khomeiny  
(*The Herald* is telling that the World includes Khomeiny)
4. *The Herald*: unemployment / is on the way back.  
*The Herald*: W / - / unemployment  
(*The Herald* is telling that the World includes less (-) unemployment than before)
5. *The Herald*: The sjah / was a dictator  
*The Herald*: Sjah / was a dictator (-) / G  
(*'To be a dictator'* is a negative statement. *The Herald* is telling that the Sjah is connected negatively to G (the norms and values of the Herald).
6. *The Herald*: Khomeiny: zionists are enemies of justice  
*The Herald*: Khomeiny: zionists / are enemies of justice (-) / G  
(*The Herald* is telling that according to Khomeiny the zionists are negatively related to positive norms and values)

In order to make interferences about the structure of discourse we have to make a strong assumption. We have to assume that the parsed texts *represent* what the source thinks. This assumption is not satisfied if:

- only a very small portion of what a source announces is analyzed;
- the source deliberately deceives his public;
- the source leaves undiscussed a great deal because he assumes that his public knows already what's going on.

If this assumption is satisfied, we can think of the parsed sentences as a representative sample from a vase with the thoughts of the source. In this case, the principle of transitivity holds. For example, if we assume that the thoughts of *The Herald* about Khomeiny and the sjah are fully represented in the sentences 1 and 5, we can conclude that *The Herald* is thinking positive (+) about Khomeiny (because Khomeiny throws out (-) dictators (-)). In appendix A formulas are given to combine the parsed sentences about pairs of objects. Questions with respect to the structure of discourse can be answered if one applies these formulas to the parsed sentences. For example, if one wants to know how Khomeiny is evaluated by *The Herald* one should combine all the chains (paths) from Khomeiny to G in the world of the Herald and compute the total degree of postiveness/negativeness. If one wants to know why Khomeiny was evaluated this way, one should enumerate the different chains between Khomeiny and G (for example: 'because K throws out dictators').

Real texts are dealing with a lot of different worlds (or world views). Newspapers are telling about the world views of the political actors they are talking about. In order to combine different world views we have to apply axioms of *transparency*. For example, sentence 6 can be transformed into sentence 6a by axiom I.

- I.  $A : B : C / \text{positiveness} / G \Rightarrow A : B / \text{positiveness} / C.$   
 6 *The Herald*: Khomeiny: zionists / - / G  
 6a. *The Herald*: Khomeiny / - / zionists.

## Medewerkers aan dit nummer

Drs. G. P. de Bruin is als wetenschappelijk medewerker verbonden aan de Vakgroep Methoden en Technieken van Politicologisch Onderzoek van de Universiteit van Amsterdam

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Prof. dr. J. W. Letterie is als hoogleraar in de politicologie, in het bijzonder methoden en technieken van sociaal-wetenschappelijk onderzoek, met inbegrip van mathematische politicologie, verbonden aan de Vakgroep Nationale Politieke Systemen van de Katholieke Universiteit te Nijmegen

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