

Summaries

Pillarization (verzuiling) and political parties

by R. Steininger

Since considerable time sociologists studied pillarization as a peculiar societal structure. Trying to explain the origin of pillarization they drew up two hypotheses.

First: pillarization is the structural effect of a triple (catholic, protestant, socialist) emancipation movement.

Second: pillarization is a consequence of the churches' retreat into a ghetto in order to preserve their integrity against surroundings hostile to religion. It can be shown that both hypotheses contain internal contradictions. The importance of democratization — especially the development of the political parties — was not adequately taken into consideration. This led to the alternative hypothesis: pillarization has to be considered the structural result of the political parties' mobilizing campaign based on religion and ideology. Pillarization, its origin and its dynamics, can be explained sufficiently by this hypothesis. The sociology of pillarization is conceived now in the frame of the sociology of political parties referring especially to the "parties of integration".

The development of effect-research in mass communication

by Cor Boef

This article deals with the changes taking place in the theoretical orientation of mass communication research. Special attention was paid to the development of defining the problem.

Extra-scientific factors focused research on the effects of mass communication. They also stimulated the use of a psychological frame of reference. A very narrow definition of effects was promoted. The authors failed to note the reciprocal relationship between the source and the receiver. This has resulted in a delay in the theoretical development. The effects of the psychological orientation are only gradually now disappearing. The rediscovery of the primary group has played an important role in the sociological interpretation of effects. However, the way, in which, the problem has been formulated did not change, and is still based on a psychological frame of reference.

Now there are indications that this, too, is going to change. A more sociologically-oriented approach will direct mass communication research towards the sociology of knowledge.