David Lepoutre wins the first Norbert Elias Amalfi Prize

The Norbert Elias Amalfi Prize, awarded for the first time in 1999 for a first book by a new author, was won by David Lepoutre of Paris, for his book *Coeur de banlieue*. The prize was presented to David Lepoutre in Amalfi on 29 May 1999. This is the text of Johan Goudsblom’s speech at the presentation:

Norbert Elias was the first recipient of the Premio European Amalfi. He was a truly European sociologist: born in Bydgoszcz (Wieprz), he worked in the sociology departments of the Universities of Heidelberg and Frankfurt, then had to go into exile, first to Paris, later to London.

He was an influential teacher of sociology at Lancaster University for a number of years, and after his retirement lectured at many universities in Western Europe, having his home base first at Bielefeld, and during his last years in his chosen residence, Amsterdam.

He made a great contribution to sociology, opening up new areas for research and reflection, and breaking through disciplinary boundaries between sociology and related human sciences such as history, psychology, and anthropology. The richness of his work is still being discovered and digested by scholars in all these fields.

Elias enunciated his legacy to the Norbert Elias Foundation. It was his express wish that the Foundation set up a prize to encourage and reward young scholars for excellent work in sociology and related fields.

The Board of the Norbert Elias Foundation is delighted that this prize can now be awarded for the first time, here in Amalfi, in close association with the prestigious Premio European Amalfi. We have set up a selection committee, made up of Alessandro Cavalli and Carlo Moggardini, as representatives of the Scientific Committee of the Amalfi prize, and the members of the Board of the Foundation, Hermann Konte, Stephen Mennell, and myself. We have followed a procedure similar to that followed for the Amalfi Prize – asking a panel of colleagues to name an outstanding and promising first book in sociology, published in the years 1996–98.

We have received a number of interesting and promising suggestions. On the basis of this shortlist we have been able to make a unanimous choice: *Coeur de banlieue.*

David Lepoutre

This is a first book, and we may look forward to further work in which the author

David Lepoutre

Coeur de banlieue is a very well-written, extremely readable study of the street culture of young adolescents – mainly boys aged between ten and fifteen – in one of the large, poor suburbs of northern Paris. Lepoutre takes care not to involve himself in value judgments, and also to avoid sociological clichés (echoed by politicians and in the media) about atomization, disorganization, and deviance. His work shows intimate familiarity with the social world about which he is writing – familiarity based on perceptive observation in fieldwork. He avoids lengthy theoretical discussions but, in a skilled and sophisticated manner, points to relevant theoretical viewpoints (including those of Norbert Elias) at appropriate moments. We are particularly impressed by his sensitive treatment of language, violence, and jokes of humour.

While focusing on the microcosm of the youngsters in the banlieue, Lepoutre goes further than most ethnographers in linking this microcosm to its larger context. He shows how influences from the outside world are selectively received, with positive and negative reactions. Detailed descriptions of street culture, including graffiti (football and martial arts) and street arts such as rap, break dance, and graffiti, enliven the general picture. And, again, the descriptions are informed by neo-innovative references to the sociological and anthropological literature (both French and English).

This is a first book, and we may look forward to further work in which the author
This issue of Figurations is brightened by several photographs. Readers are invited to send us photographs of people and events for future issues.

We try to include notices on all major books and articles which contribute to the figural or 'lacunar-voided' research tradition, and scan Current Contents for this purpose. But the volume of publications is now so great that it is difficult to spot them all punctually when they appear. So once again we appeal to readers to tip us off about their own books and publications. However - it is better that several people tell us about the same publication than that we miss it altogether.

Because Figurations makes no pretence to be a refereed journal, and does not have the resources to provide independent reviews of all publications, we often ask authors to send us notes about their own books and articles. We have therefore introduced a distinction in the issue between the headings: Recent Books and Articles - comprising independent reviews and journal abstracts - and Authors' Notes which are contributed by the authors themselves.

Appointment to a fellowship at Nya Neustadt (Nya Neustadt), a close collaborator with and supporter of Norbert Elias when he lived and worked in Leicester, is toured in an unmarked grave in the city. A fund is currently being organised to erect a headstone with the simple wording 'Nya Neustadt, Sociologist, 1915-1993'. Please send cheques to Pat Murphy, Department of Sociology, University of Leicester, LE1 7RH, UK. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Leicester, and marked on the reverse 'Nya Neustadt Headstone Fund'. The fund will be closed at the end of December 1999 and any surplus will be used to provide an annual student travel grant.

Norbert Elias's close friend Renate Rubenstein, the writer and columnista, is to be the subject of a forthcoming biography by Hans Goedkoop, literary critic for the Dutch quality newspaper NIC. Handelsblad. Mr Goedkoop will be working on the book during his tenure at the first Winter-in-Residence at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Wassenaar, in 1999-2000. A short essay on Renate Rubenstein by Elias himself can be found in The Norbert Elias Reader, edited by Johan Goedbloed and Stephen Mennell (Blackwell, 1998).

Manners at the Screen: Socialization, Civilisation and ICT

This paper summarises the figurational perspective adopted in an research project in progress on Lifestyles, Inequality and New Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) which is being financed by the Asociación Española de Estudios de Mercado, Marketing y Opinión.

To be sure, an array of theoretical perspectives are suitable for the sociological analysis of new ICT, particularly the Internet, and so they have already been developed by researchers - for example the post-structural Foucauldian approach (Jordan) or that used by Giddens' approach (Cardoso). As empirical objects of research, while the study of 'virtual communities' is advanced, other aspects are underdeveloped - for example, the socialisation of young people into the new ICT.

The question we pose is: why should the figurational approach be better at analysing the social underpinnings and effects of ICT? The answer is because it focuses on the key question of the relationship between social interdependence and individualisation processes. Growing interdependence leads to growing self-control, individualisation and self-regulation are interconnected. As a result, greater demands for self-restraint emerge.

In fact the Internet can be understood as the paradigm of those 'very long and differentiated interdependence chains' which 'no longer stop at any particular state frontier, but almost literally link to each other people all over the world' (Wouters, 443). So it is not unreasonable to expect that the figurational approach will fit this object. However, as Mouzelis and others have pointed out, the hypothesis has to be substantiated in particular contexts. We have to 'look closely at context in time and space' (73).

Following this idea, I chose one concrete dimension and analyse consequences for education and socialisation. Latest data on access of children to ICT at home in several countries (UK, Flanders, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden) show that 9-17 year-olds are intensive users, spending more than half an hour a day on PC use, for games and other uses (Johnson-Szumigalski et al., Van der Voort et al.). As many as 85% of children in the Netherlands have access to a PC at home; the percentage for internet is 20%. In the UK percents are 50% and 18% respectively.

Interdependence and Equalisation

Interdependence is the social essence of the Internet. Virtual communities emerge when 'enough people interact for long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace' (Rheingold, 1996: 5). To achieve a 'critical mass' is a key variable in virtual communities.

Interdependence in the Internet is characterised by equalisation. There are several ways in which equalisation comes into play, fundamentally through identity and many-to-many communication (Jordan). Egalitarianism in identity is achieved through the reduction of interaction to the screen. First, signs of identity are removed on the Internet; gender, race or age are not evident. Second, recurs formulating hierarchies are absent. The novelty of Internet, compared to other ICT, is the complete decentralisation of control. It is totally anti-hierarchical. First, it allows greater participation, fostering liberation, grassroots communication. Second, it allows the possibility of information so that people can have more information (frequent).

Nevertheless, equalisation has social limits. New inequalities emerge around the Internet, especially in access to the computer. As Dutton has underlined, there is a clear-cut income effect, more than education or occupation. But also in the Internet, for instance in discussion groups, symbolic
capital is unequally distributed – prestige and status inequalities in "virtual communities" are maintained (Carcbos). But even so, both questions could be approached from the idea of the hidden-outsiders figuration.

Individualisation

ICT brings about a transformation of manners, beginning with the interaction with computers. Computers are close enough to encourage social responses. In fact they are treated as social actors (Reeves Naso). People are polite to computers. Manners change. But there is a much more interesting consequence of ICT for the transformation of manners.

There are many ways in which ICT means a change in civilising process in the direction of individualisation. ICT, from the Internet to cable communications, makes possible the individualisation of information and leisure. It is one step forward in the individualisation of consumption. Access to the Internet is greater among postmodern consumers (Lethblrocher Aschcangen) who are oriented to aesthetic reflexivity. Aestheticisation brings about the effort of self-discipline by the consumer (Giddens).

What is more interesting in this context is the change in manners associated with equalisation and interdependence. Interaction with people on the net has its own etiquette, or "netiquette". Take for instance a recent netiquette handbook: twelve norms of behaviour are quoted by Morse. As a consequence of equalisation, netiquette is characterised by informalisation. In a context of acute interdependence, "manners at the screen" are nurtured by self-control. As Morse writes, individuals in the Internet must be able to control themselves, to be responsible for their own behaviour. Equalisation means individualisation, and so manners are transformed by ICT.

From what has been said so far, the impression would be that ICT creates a strong individual. But here again the civilising effect of ICT has limits. New forms of technology make possible new forms of individualisation. Paraphrasing Foucault, it is a "technology of the self". A differential building of individuality emerges, so that the sense of self differs from previous conceptions of self. Identity is both present in cyberspace and different to non-virtual space. Identity is different enough online to be called something different" (Jordan). People are only "avatars". In the Internet and e-mail, personal identity is fluid. Identity is in permanent redefinition.

ICT, education and the civilising process

So far I have elaborated on the civilising consequences of ICT in terms of the duality equalisation-individualisation. I have also shown some limits of this civilising process. I have done all of it in an abstract way. Now let us have a look at a particular context: children's socialisation and education.

It has been argued that ICT brings about independence by freeing young people from the constraints of home and school. There are obvious consequences for education. Individualisation arising from the Internet allows the personalisation of learning. On the other hand, the anti-hierarchical nature of the Internet makes it possible for children to devote activities less dependent on parents and teachers. In the end, the result is challenge and resistance to conventional and traditional socialisation, and the individualisation of social control. So ICT means a "technic shift in the contemporary formation of adolescent identity" (Holmes/Russell).

But this way of understanding the consequences of ICT for socialisation is probably biased, since once again ICT does not always have a civilising effect. On one side, qualitative empirical research by Noller (1996-215) on three dimensions (individualisation, self-responsibility and self-description) showed that only a few young "computer fans" were more individualised. They were oriented to Fremdlage and not to Selbstzweige. On the other hand, civilising processes in the Internet emerge in many other ways. Violence is pervasive in the way young people use ICT: from video-games to the Internet games and neo-Nazi sites. If we look closely at manners at the screen we see that on the internet and in e-mail people are more likely to result each other than in face-to-face interactions. This case of being violent is called "flaming" (Jordan, 83).

In particular context of socialisation and education, as in general, ICT is ambivalent from a figurational point of view. ICT can have civilising and denationalising effects. We can only conclude with the possibility pointed out by Morals: "differential personalities, given the adoption of different cultural values, may interpret the growing interdependence in ways that might lead to either self-regulation or self-differentiation" (Morals, 74).

Javier Nego (UNED)
UNED, Spain

References


Elisas in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong

The social sciences in Mainland China have gradually resumed development in the past twenty years after a long period of stagnation due to political instability. Opportunities were open again for intellectuals to learn about the outside world. To catch up with the rest of the world, they
were eager to learn theories and research methods of various sorts and in different fields of study. Scholars like Weber, Habermas, Foucault and Giddens then became popular figures, especially in philosophy and sociology.

Elias was introduced into China by an historian in this atmosphere in the mid-1980s. Little had been followed up until last year when the Chinese translation of the first volume of The Civilizing Process was published. The second volume is scheduled to come out this year. Two authors from the Sociology Department of Beijing University contributed altogether three essays introducing Elias's works in two books, one published last year and the other one earlier this year. These two books are intended as textbooks or educational books teaching Sociology and Social Theory in the department. These achievements, though they remain introductory, are important for the dissemination of knowledge of Elias in China. One of the authors says that he has just completed his PhD thesis at Beijing, part of which includes an analysis of Elias's ideas concerning the body. This work is the first attempt, as far as I know, to study Elias in depth in China.

According to an observer, there is an obstacle that blocks interest in Elias among scholars in China. Elias had some effect on writing history, but this effect has been very limited because, traditionally, history as a discipline of study is not concerned very much with theories. Sociologists doing empirical research are not interested in theory, caters. Whereas those who have interest in theory feel that Elias's works are somewhat historical, and too empirical. Elias's situation seems rather paradoxical in the academic scene of China.

In Taiwan, people are more keen on integrating theory with research. They also show more interest in historical sociology. Quite a number of philosophers and sociologists holding teaching and research posts in Taiwan had studied in France and Germany before they came back there. Elias is not a new figure to them.

Elias was introduced in Taiwan at about the same time as in mainland China. In the last thirteen years or so, just about five articles on Elias were published. Elias's article "The Remains of Sociologies into the Present" was translated into Chinese. One student did a master's thesis on Elias at the Sociology Department in Taiwan National University.

I did my postgraduate studies at Leicester in England, and have been exposed to Elias's works since 1986. I started teaching Elias in Hong Kong in 1990. About two years later, the Sociology Department of Leicester started an MA distance learning program in sports management. In terms of publication, Professor Stephen Mennell published a journal article in the Chinese language introducing Elias in 1991. I published an article comparing Elias and Habermas's conceptions of power in a Chinese journal of social theory last year. A scholar in Taiwan published a book review on Mozart in the same journal this year; she told me that she was preparing a Chinese translation of that book to be published later. This is where we have got to in Hong Kong.

On the whole, Elias is not yet popular in any these three places. The reception of Elias remains at an introductory stage. Fortunately, more and more of Elias's works are being translated into Chinese. Also, I am looking for an opportunity to join together the effort of several scholars from these three places to publish a collection of essays discussing Elias in some depth. Maybe these small efforts will contribute to raising our understanding of Elias to a higher level.

Kit Man Li
Chinese University of Hong Kong

■ WORK IN PROGRESS
A Qualification to the Established Outsiders Theory

Doing ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative interviewing in a community located in the southern Austrian borderlands it was expected to find a negative attribution of Slovenians, just like "Yugos" are commonly perceived as lazy, dirty and little civilized throughout Austria. Instead, a very positive attribution of the Slovenians that was independent of the status of the attributing established people was found. This finding contradicts the "established and outsiders' theory of Elias. Following that theory, the established should depict themselves like the 'minority of the best', whereas the outsiders are depicted like the 'minority of the worst'. I suggest to interpret this finding as follows: The established and outsiders' figuration as described originally by Elias works only for a pride-based established community. In our case the old established elite has turned from a pride-based to a shame-based community through large-scale historic shifts, most of which involved setting new boundaries that turned the once centrally located wealthy town in to a dual-end-railway-station. In this case of shifting power balances, the lines of self- and other-depiction shift as well. There is a strong tendency of the old established group to depict the former outsiders as the 'minority of the fittest'. That depiction of the outsiders is independent of the status of the person watching, whereas the depiction of the insiders is dependent upon the status of the person watching. The higher the status the more the in-group depicts itself like the minority of the worst. The lower the status, the more the in-group depicts itself like the minority of the worst. That status-difference can be explained by the differing role-requirements: high-status people have to - by definition of their position - present a well-to-do public face to the audience whereas low-status people unfailingly present their own subjective experiences. In applied terms that means that the perception of outsiders, be it outsiders by gender, colour of skin or ethnicity is dependent (a) upon the shame/pride base of the established and (b) upon the behaviour of either the majority of the best or worst, as explained above. Thus, strategic points for counteraction are (i) leaders of established communities in their charge of own levelling communication aiming for reconception as Schütz suggests in his book Bloody Revenge and (ii) people belonging to the best and worse of the outsiders, since they are the ones the perception of the outsiders depends upon.

Sonja Elmaz
Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz
Joseph Maguire, (1999) Global Sport
Identities, Societies, Civilisations. Cam-

Global Sport by Professor Joe Maguire is an
exciting contribution towards sustaining
the idea that sport is central to sociology
and equality. That figurational sociology has
something distinctive to offer the sociology
of sport. The frame of reference adopted by
the author is global. He argues that modern
sport is global and has a pervasive influ-
ence affecting policy formation in areas as
diverse as education and health, affecting
national prestige and political relations. In
this fashion his work greatly contributes to
the globalization debate and the increasing
internationalization of global interconnected-
ness. Using the figurational approach,
Maguire develops a five-stage model of the
global diffusion and emergence of modern
sport. This long term process of the forma-
tion of global sport has emerged from the
past through structured processes. However
these processes also indicate that new vari-
cies of sport cultures have emerged alongside
a reduction in the contrasts between
sport cultures. This argument is a subtle
and interesting development of the Elision
concepts of increasing varieties and dimin-
ishing contrasts and established-outlier rela-
tions. These concepts help us make sense of
the global diffusion, patterning and dif-
ferential popularisation of sports.

The book itself is divided into two parts.
Part One maps out the broader historical
and conceptual contents of the global sport
process and outlines, in preliminary form,
Maguire's five-stage model. This model es-
solutely combines globalisation processes
identified by Robertson with phases of
sportification. While there is no precise
overlap, there are common patterns. How-
ever, Maguire's essential point of departure
is that an understanding of the global
sportification process is bound up in an
inter-cultural analysis. He argues that the
present global sport formation has arisen out of
an interweaving between the intentional acts of
individuals and social groups that are grounded in the relatively
unplanned features of inter-cultural
processes. Building on this 'theoretical'
basis he leads us into Part Two, an explora-
tion of the range of cultural flows that con-
tinue to form the global sport. Focusing on
the interconnected patterns that sportification
processes flow from, in particular sports,
capital, personnel, technologies, landscapes
and ideologies, we are treated to a series
of substantively based case studies which
probe the intensification of global flows that
characterise the global sport formation.
Here there is a unique consideration of how
sport impacts upon our embodied identities
which in turn is embedded in wider 'local'
and national cultural processes. A feature of
Maguire's work and indeed of figurational
sociology as a whole, is the grounding of
theoretical concepts in reality and social
life. In this vein, he subverts the expla-
nationary problem that global sport pays
in binding us to habitus recreations and 'in-
vented traditions', yet also exposing us to
the values, fulness and images of the 'other'.
This involves changes at the level of personality, body department and social
interaction.

Global Sport helps us to more adequately
understand the power dynamics and inter-
dependency chains within which we are
located. It is a must for both undergraduates
and postgraduates in sociology, media and
social studies, history and geography, and
to those involved in sport and leisure.
Maguire gives us some insightful concep-
tual tools and a grounded sociological base
from which we may deconstruct, construct
d and develop a global sport formation that
is less wasteful of human lives and resources.

Kate Linton
University College Dublin

Willem Mastenbroek, 'Negotiating an
Emotion Management', Theory, Culture
and Society, 16 (4) 1999: 40-73.

The study of the sociogenesis of negoti-
ating skills demonstrates the civilising
of emotions. Civilising processes were
supplemented by an inter-county process
that worked towards the renunciation of
violence, deceit and humiliation. The chang-
ing ways in which people learn to deal with
emotions were crucial. Over the years peo-
ple learnt to become more versatile, they
learnt to deal with their feelings and re-
Sons. Our understanding of this individ-
ual learning process can be improved by
clarifying the collective learning process as
it has developed over the past two centu-
ries in the West.

This paper describes how negotiating was
experienced in early days. Luckily, some authors from ancient times provide us with penetrating insights. Their testimonies clarify in what discretion behaviour and underlying emotions changed over time. Negotiation has become common practice in some societies. Actual problems in the theory and practice of negotiating are better understood when we recognize the changing pattern of emotion management in the development of this precious skill.


This paper, derived from one which Dennis Smith presented at the Elias centenary conference in Bielefeld in June 1997, has three tasks. The first is to demonstrate that a high degree of overlap in argument and method exists between two major works by thinkers who are usually regarded as being fundamentally opposed in their approaches to understanding society. The two are Norbert Elias's The Civilising Process and Michel Foucault's The History of Sexuality, especially the second and third volumes entitled, respectively, The Use of Pleasure and The Care of the Self. The second task is to identify the modifications in Foucault's treatment of history, power and knowledge, which occurred between his earlier work, for example, Madness and Civilization and Discipline and Punish, and his later work, especially The History of Sexuality. The third objective is to set out a research agenda which confronts some of the main issues arising from a consideration of some important remaining differences between Elias and Foucault.

Ahrim de Swaan, "Widening Circles of Civilisation: On the Psycho-SocioGenesis of the Hatred of Distant Strangers - Reflections on Rwanda," Theory, Culture and Society, 14 (2) 1997: 105-22. Not noted previously in Figurations, this article forms a diptych with de Swaan's earlier essay "Widening Circles of Identification" (Theory, Culture and Society, 12 (2) 1995: 25-30), and points forwards to his current think about decivilising and dyscivilising processes.


Wilbert van Vree's book is studied form parts of a larger picture. He works on a broad canvas, and this is a work of major scholarly significance. The author shows how the rise of "meeting regimes" is linked to many issues of central theoretical interest to historians and sociologists. He demonstrates, for instance, how the development of rules of order in meetings is tied to the long-term processes by which states were formed, how it was linked with ethnic, and with the changes in royal courts. He shows how meetings were themselves a means of instilling discipline, how Calvinists used them for this purpose, and how there thus emerged a "Protestant meeting order". The Dutch Republic is seen to be a "game" of meetings. There was a meeting "class" with its code of "meeting class manners". The book is replete with comparisons of meeting manners in Britain, Germany, France and the USA as well as in the Netherlands. There are quite marked differences in national styles of meeting manners, and, for instance, the strictly adversarial debating style of the British
ide House of Commons — which rather alarmed many overseas viewers when parliametary proceedings came to be broadcast on satellite television — is very long-established.

To readers of *Figurations*, it will be obvious that Meetings, Manners and Civilities is a major application and extension of Elias’s theory of civilising processes. As more and more people became enmeshed in ever more extensive webs of interdependence, as they were forced increasingly to live at peace with one another, their emotional makeup or ‘habitus’ gradually changed: from generation to generation they slowly developed higher standards of habitual self-constraint. In other words, as people became more and more interdependent with each other, and as power ratios between individuals and between groups and categories became somewhat more equal, a process of mutual pacification could be observed. These processes, as van Vreec lucidly demonstrates, were very clearly at work in the formation of ‘meeting regimes’. Today, as he notes, the conduct of meetings is often more relaxed in style than was once common. This is a reflection of an ‘informalisation’ process widespread in western social life generally, which other American sociologists have studied extensively. However, though, it has been observed that the more ‘informally’ people behave in their dealings with each other in meetings — or in other contexts — the greater, rather than the less, the necessary degree of habitual self-restraint. The less rigid the social rules, the greater the demands imposed on emotional management.

One might ask in conclusion why this imaginative and original book of essays should be so relevant to us from the Netherlands. After all, meetings are an avascular part of business and social life in all industrial or post-industrial societies. Yet my impression is that most studies of meeting behaviour by English-speaking social scientists are either pragmatically concerned with helping businesses or the parties to conflict to negotiate more effectively, or they focus on the microscopic linguistic details of behaviour in meetings. They take the very institution of meetings for granted. Perhaps Wilbert van Vreec, almost in passing, shows why the Dutch should take a regime of meetings for granted only at their peril. In Holland, the sea poses a perennial danger, a danger which could only be met collectively. The dykes and canals which kept the land from flooding could only be maintained by common effort. Such were the realities of Dutch everyday life, and a regime of peaceful meetings emerged there at a remarkably early stage. Meetings, one may reflect, are a social activity sui generis, and in understanding them there is little room for Anthony Giddens’s general explanation of the kind that contends that ‘there is no such thing as society’.


This paper attempts to explain the rise incliffe rates since the 1950s in all Western countries, focusing on changes in the pattern of social controls and self-controls, as well as changes in the balance between these two types of control. Between the 1950s and 1980s, the old conviction that being open to ‘dangerous’ impulses and emotions would almost inevitably be followed by acting upon them, was destroyed. This conviction expressed a fear that is symptomatic of rather authoritarian relationships and social controls as well as of a rather rigid type of self-control, dominated by an authoritarian conscience. As social and psychic distance between people diminished, overcoming this fear came to be taken for granted. Social emancipation and integration demanded psychic emancipation and integration: only a more ego-dominated self-organisation allowed for the reflexive and flexible calculation that came to be expected. In these processes, increasing numbers of people have become aware of anxieties and temptations in circumstances where fears and dangers had been dominant before. This paper aims at suggesting an epistemological connection between these social and psychic processes and the rise in crime rates in all Western countries since the 1950s. The central hypothesis is that as more calculative and flexible self-controls have come to be socially demanded, most people made these acts more likely in general, and more likely in particular as the consent of those sections of the population that are relatively deprived.


This volume is one of a new series of “study texts” in sociology. Cas Westers here updates and supplements many of the essays which were published in Dutch in his book *On Love and Death*. The book begins by giving an overview of Elias’s theory of civilising processes and then poses the question of whether information represents a change in the directions of Western civilising processes. Subsequent chapters deal with informalisation in the relations between social classes, and in relations between the sexes, and the informalisation of mourning practices. The book concludes with a discussion of informalisation and social stratification in global perspective.

**Cas Westers, ‘Die verleigte Rae d’Amour’**UBER FRANZ PETER DIERK KRIKT UND DER ZIVILISATIONSGESCHICHTE VON NORBERT ELIAS’, Zeitgeschichte Sozialforschung 12 (1999) 33–57. A shortened version of this article can be found in *Figurations* 9.

**AUTHOR’S NOTES**


This book approaches the dialectic of Japanese modernity and its progeny from a civilizational perspective, i.e. with reference to distinctive and persisting civilizational patterns as well as long-term civilizing processes. Both these dimensions of historical experience have been thematised by authors working in the field; it has proved more difficult to integrate them into a unified theoretical framework. The constitution and continuity of a Japanese civilizational tradition is analysed in relation to the Chinese model which dominated
the region in the course of the seventeenth- century transformation of Japan, Chinese ideas and institutions were imported in such a way that space was left for a simultaneous reconstruction of Japanese identity and an imaginative link to archaic origins was institutionalized as a counterweight to the cultural identification with an external but never politically dominant centre. This complex constitution should be seen as the civilizational background to the long-term dynamics of state formation, which in turn was central to a broader set of civilizing processes.

The trajectory of state formation in medi eval and early modern Japan is discussed with reference to Norbert Elias’s work on painted developments in Western Europe. Elias’s analysis of feudal institutions as a context and counterpoint to state formation, rather than a final social order, is a very useful guide to the touchy-debat ed question of contrasts and similarities between Japanese and Western feudalisms: the two cases can be compared with regard to the changing relations between evolving state structures and the feudal setting in which state-builders had to adapt while making strategic use of some of its aspects. Efforts to monopolize violence and appropriate resources are as much a part of the Japanese experience of state formation as the Western one, but they sometimes took significantly different directions and led to different results. The early modern phase of the process (from the sixteenth-century unification to the collapse of the Tokugawa regime in 1868) was of particular importance, since the European contact triggered new developments, but comparisons with the absolutist state in Europe must be handled with care. The Tokugawa power structure was in some ways markedly less effective in monopolizing violence and taxation; these weaknesses were, however, counterbalanced by other mechanisms of control which were in certain respects superior to Western regimes of the same epoch.

In the last section of the book, Japanese patterns of modernity are analy sed from a state-centered perspective. It is not being argued that a grand strategy of the Japanese state explains all distinctive aspects of advanced modernity in Japan. But it can be shown that a developmental state, capable of re-examining its policies and redefining its relationship to domestic forces as well as the outside world, was the most central component of a more complex pattern. In particular, the specific features of capitalist development in Japan are best understood in terms of a changing relationship to the state which initiated the capitalist transformation, intervened to regulate its unfolding dynamics, and adapted to its autonomous logic in inventive ways. The Japanese case is particularly instructive for the ongoing debate on state autonomy and its multiple meanings; in the last chapters of the book, this problematic is discussed in relation to Michel Mann’s theory of the modern state and its social crystallization.

Reinhard Biozzi Re, Интеллектуальное движение в Японии: Карл Маннхейм, Альфред Вебер, Норберт Элиас и Германские социалистические движения 1900–80.

The ‘Institute für Sozial-und Staatswis senschaften’ [InStSg] at Heidelberg Uni versity was created in 1924 by Alfred Weber out of the old University Seminar on National Economy. This book recalls this nearly forgotten institute, which was the most attractive institute for social sciences during the twenties in Germany. It deals with its teachers, amongst them the director Alfred Weber, the social scientists Emil Luhmann, Carl Brinkmann, Arnold Bergrup, Karl Mannheim and, as student of Alfred Weber and assistant of the Privat dozent Karl Mannheim, Norbert Elias, who spent six years at Heidelberg, which transformed the young philosopher into a sociologist.

The three branches of the social sciences—national economy, politics [late science] and (cultural) sociology—were interconnected through the curriculum, and in some cases through the persons who taught it. The book shows the theoretical impact of the leading scientists, the controversies they had with each other (especially Weber and Mannheim) and gives an impression of some of the works of the students.

The main conflict at the institute, typical of the problems of the social developments of the time, broke out through a controversy at civil relativism. It shows the opposition between two approaches: the neoplatonic approach of Alfred Weber, which represented the mainstream at that time (with, for example, Jacob and E.R. Curtius) and a distinct functional approach on the other part, represented by Karl Mannheim, de veloping the functional aspects in the work of Max Weber. Elias as the youngest and lowest ranking of the academic hierarchy was intended to set out a functional but especially historical approach, which has to be seen as the conclusion of the debate, initiated by Max Weber.

The newly found text of the proposal for the Habilitationsschrift which Elias had begun to write with Alfred Weber, ‘Zur Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaften’ is appended to the book.


Stereotypes are a one-hand abstract and basic explanation for women’s under-representation in senior leadership. On the other hand, argues Sophie Ernst, stereotypes have been underestimated and reduced to sex-pychological bits. Stereotypes are being legitimate in so far as one thinks that they refer to something that is true. In contrast to these common explanations the author outlines the specific function of stereotypes in leadership positions, for example in business leadership.

Using Norbert Elias’s theory about power balances between established and outsiders Ernn criticises what seems to be a common sense and what is reduced to functionalistic explanations. The author follows the long-term forward and backward movements in the construction of bourgeois positions, of educational and academic life and summarises the conditions of the inclusion or exclusion of women and men in leadership.

She refers to studies on the eighteenth century up to the present day career guides. This is possible because there are specific genres offer orientation on how to succeed and to rise socially. They serve as media for self-understanding and coping with ambiguity while society is changing and providing new possibilities for formerly excluded people, including women. It becomes clear that the ambivalences and super-
dependent process of establishing bour-geois professions and higher education is connected with the construction of gender differences. The Blame game formerly di-rected against "inferior" women has also been internalized by women and as well as men have had to overcome many stereotypes—for example the incompatibil-ity of family and business life, the neglect-ing of the family through so-called 'cogni-tive' careers, and so on. Ernst's thesis is that these ambiguities express the situa-tion that women in leadership positions find themselves in, the process of transition from once having been outsiders in the business world to moving now towards be-ing the established in certain leadership posts.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RETROSPECT**


Not previously reported in *Figurations*, this book is the product of the conference on the work of Elias held in Eisen in 1991. Besid-es papers actually presented at the con-fERENCE, it also contains articles by Mere-Bense and Schnitker, and a German transla-tion of Klimminger's essay on Elias and Mauss.

**RECENT CONFERENCES**

La santé et la presse—Entretenons Franklin 4, Paris, 5–9 April, 1999

The Entretiens Franklin are devoted to problems of public health, and the fourth annual meeting focused on issues of infor-mation about health and medicine. Under the chairmanship of Patrick Champagne (Centre de sociologie de l'éducation et de la culture), this colloquium studied the main changes in the coverage of medical issues in the press, and particularly the increasing number of health scares and scandals. Sev-eral of these cases, such as the contami-nated blood and the asbestos scandals, were analysed in detail. The development of popular medical knowledge was shown to be linked to transformations in the field of journalism in general and in particular to medical journalism's becoming more spe-cialised and increasingly recruiting its writ-ers from among the medically qualified. Various case studies showed complex as-pects and effects of the increasing promi-nence of these issues in the media.

Viewed as a process, the production of medical news is subject to the general con-straints which govern journalistic strategies in a competitive world, and more specific constraints related to the important effects of health information on the behaviour of consumers. Anticipating the effects and re-actions which can for example cause panic and bankruptcies no doubt plays an impor-tant part. This sensitivity to information probably explains the attempts made to 'manage' news nationally, as seen in the creation of new public health agencies.

A strictly ideological dimension of dis-course about health was seen through a giddy demonstration of the 'follies', namely the economic interests acting co-vertly against the achievement of public health objectives. A round table brought to-gether researchers, journalists and broad-casters for a fruitful and unusual exchange between parties normally much given to mutual mistrust.

At the gala dinner which, as usual, ritually concluded the colloquium, the theme of 'What is Drug?' was proposed for the fifth Entretiens Franklin, which will be held in April 2000.

Adam Garrigou
Université de Paris X — Nanterre

ESA Amsterdam 18-21 August 1999
Will Europe Work?

The fourth conference of the European Soci-o logical Association was held in Amster-dam on 18–21 August 1999. The theme chosen this year was 'Will Europe Work?'. The conference was well attended by sociolo-gists from all over Europe as well as from other continents. The participants in the *Figurational Studies* sessions included at least one person from every continent.

The *Figurational Studies* sessions (as they were newly christened by Kitty Roukens, to avoid confrontation) were almost non-stop and included many excellent papers.

Abram de Swaan gave the opening plenary address, on the political sociology of the world language system. He summarised his argument for Figurations as follows. His lecture, entitled "Vicious Circles and Virtu-ous Squares", on the political sociology of the world language system was a testament to his forthcoming book, *Words of the World*. Humanity is fragented into some five thousand mutually unintelligible lan-guage groups. As they are connected by multilingual individuals, these groups nev-ertheless form a surprisingly coherent sys-tem. The many thousands of mostly unwritten, small peripheral languages are connected in chains to a central (state or national) language. At the translational level, the central languages are each connected to one of a dozen supercentral lan-guages. These are linked together by a sin-gle hypercentral language at the hub of the system: English. A simple measure, the O-value, characterises both the position of a language within this system and its utility as a means of communication.

These notions were applied to the language constellation of the European Union. For constitutional reasons all official languages of the member states are languages of the EU. Moreover, a latent 'voting cycle' oper-ates in the Parliaments, preventing any sta-ble solution from being adopted. However, an informal culture may well develop and allow two, or at most three languages to be used in ordinary sessions, in committee meetings and in corridor conversations. In civil Europe, the first second language is already English, which is increasingly taught in secondary schools. In national so-cieties an uneasy equilibrium of 'diglotism'
between English and the indigenous language(s) is emerging.

The first session was titled ‘Sociality and the indigenous and the English’. Stephen Menuell presented a paper on the Protestant as established and outsider in the Republic of Ireland and the English as outsider and the indigenous.cas Wouters gave a very interesting and innovative paper on new rituals in dying and mourning.

On the second day, we had two sessions. The first one was on De/Decivilisation processes. Abram de Swaan presented a paper revisiting his concept of Decivilisation and Denis Smillie discussed postmodernity and decivilising processes in postwar Europe in which he compared Elias and Bauman.

In the third session, we had three great papers and between Nathan Sznajder and Eric Dunning an extremely interesting discussion evolved. Richard Kilmister’s paper on ‘The Necessitation of Contemporary Societies’ seemed a little misplaced in this session but it was an extremely novel paper. Nathan Sznajder presented a paper on the Holocaust entitled ‘Compassion: Cruelty and Indifference: the example of the Holocaust’ and Eric Dunning then presented a paper on Bauman, Goldhagen and Elias on the Holocaust.

Zdzislaw Mach and Jason Hughes spoke in the fourth session on Friday morning. Mach gave a paper entitled ‘The Decomposition of National/Political Identity in Post-communist Societies’, and Hughes gave an entertaining paper on the use of tobacco in Civilising Processes. In the fifth session, Nico Wielinkink talked on the causes of crime, provoking some severe criticism. Rafal Mazariek presented what I would consider to be the best paper of all the sessions. It was full to the brim with fascinating ideas, very cleverly thought out and extremely well planned, written and presented and led to a lively discussion.

The final session was held very late on Friday evening which most people regretted. They had had their fill during the day and were tired. All the same it was well attended and as usual three extremely interesting papers were presented. First came Tim Newton’s paper entitled ‘Cruelty and Indifference: the example of the Holocaust’ and Eric Dunning then presented a paper on Bauman, Goldhagen and Elias on the Holocaust.

The Figurational Studies sessions were certainly a great success, with numerous new faces among the familiar ones. Figurational sociology made its mark at this thoroughly enjoyable conference.

Anthea Richard
University College Dublin

Norbert Elias in Wroclaw/Breslau 24–25 September, 1999

Among the thirty or so participants in this enjoyable conference, organised by Herman Tak and Don Kall, were several of us who had been drawn especially by curiosity to see Wroclaw. Norbert Elias’s home town—then, of course, the German city of Breslau, but in Poland since the realignment of the borders at the end of the Second World War. The opening highlight was the unveiling by Hermann Korte of a plaque on the wall of the apartment block in Podwalne Street, where Elias lived for much of his youth (i.e. actual birthplace has been lost since destroyed). The apartment faces the city moat, and the street is pleasantly tree-lined, though with tram clanking along it and with no doubt far heavier traffic than early in the twentieth century. Another plaque a few metres away, kindly translated

Professor Christian Brinkgreve

The plaque on the house in which Norbert Elias lived

Herman Korte unveiled the plaque

Figurations
Issue No.12 November 1999
for us by Rafal Mazanek, reveals that the building housed the headquarters of the local Communist youth movement for several decades after the war.

Breslau, like so many German cities, was badly knocked about by Allied bombing, and then scarred like so many Polish cities by charmless post-war worker’s flats. But the old town has been magnificently restored, the Poles having lavished as much care on it as they have on more historically Polish cities. Thus, for example, the rather stately building that housed Hermann Elias’s clothing factory still stands on the main square by the Town Hall.

After the unveiling began the conference itself. Dr Peter Ohl, the German consul in Wrocław, was the opening speaker, and he was followed by Jörg Hackeschmidt on Elias’s youth in Breslau and Łukasz Kaminski on Wrocław since the war. Much discussion again centred on the puzzling question of why, late in his life, Elias took such pains to hide the fact that he had been a leading figure in the Zionist youth movement Blau-Weiß. Dinner followed in the appropriately-named restaurant The Polish Court.

On the Saturday, Dr Jan Właszkowicz of the Silesian regional government opened the proceedings with some interesting remarks about potential usefulness of Elias’s ideas in social planning, and the rest of the day focused especially on their relevance to understanding post-Communist Europe. Nico Wiltenlink spoke about the theory of state formation and its implications for the contemporary world order. Christian Brinkgreve and Selma Sevenhuijzen presented a thought-provoking paper on ‘Trust, Familiarity and Otherness: How to think about trust through the work of Norbert Elias’. This paper was intended as a contribution to a discussion with Piotr Szympka, who has been studying the growth of trust in Poland since 1989 – before which society was marked by a very low degree of trust. Piotr intended to be at the conference, but was unwell and unable to come.

Brun de Swaan presented a further refinement of his ideas concerning decivilising processes. Tom Zwaan gave a foretaste of his forthcoming book in a paper on nationalism and decivilising processes in Eastern Europe, and Zsuzsa Ferge discussed civilisation and the welfare state in east central Europe. Eric Dunning arrived belated, having missed his plane the previous day – provided a moving finale, championing Elias’s sociology against rival contemporary theorists.

All in all, a thoroughly worthwhile and valuable conference, albeit occasioned by a plaque! One sad note, however: the Department of Sociology at Wrocław University was entirely unrepresented: apparently its members are unaware of Elias’s work and his local connections.

SJW

---

**FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

International Conference: Norbert Elias and Social Anthropology 21-22 September 2000
French Society of Ethnology and University of Metz (France)

The work of Norbert Elias has attracted the attention of historians, political scientists...
and sociologists. At a time of renewed interest in Elias's researches, we would like to examine how his "cross-disciplinary" thought illuminates the anthropological approach. The conference will focus on two main topics:

- What is the place of anthropology in Elias's work? His work refers explicitly to classics like Radcliffe-Brown, Maud, Evans-Pritchard, Levi-Strauss. He lived in Africa, where he confronted the cultural "Other". This experience led him to reconsider European culture and more broadly the epistemological position of self-disassociation.

- How can Elias's works enrich anthropological history? Apart from occasional references to Elias in recent anthropological writing, there has been no systematic attempt to incorporate his perspective into the various fields to which it is obviously relevant. These might include: uses of the body, everyday life, organisation, and private space; etc., concepts such as habitus, process, interactionism, and the definition of culture.

This conference, beyond paying homage to Elias, will aim to stimulate a critical reading of Elias's works. We will explore the heuristic value and formative potential of his thought for contemporary anthropology.

For more information, including conditions of financial support, please contact Dr Sophie Chevalier, lecturer in social anthropology at the University of Franche-Comté, co-organiser of the conference. Sophie.Chevalier@comparaserve.com

The official languages of the conference will be French, German and English.

European Association of Social Anthropology 26-29 July 2000, Krakow, Poland

Civilising Process and the Comparative Studies of Civilisation

At the 6th Biennial EASA (European Association of Social Anthropology) Conference, which will be held in Cracow, Poland between 26-29 July 2000, a figural workshop will be organised by Rafael Mazañas. Its title will be "Civilising Process and the Comparative Studies of Civilisation".

The workshop aims at finding the relevance of figural and processual approaches to civilisations that are non-Western European. The organisers expect papers on different aspects of the civilising process, which can be traced in different world civilisations. Comparative papers drawing parallels between Western Europe and other civilisations are also most welcome. The organisers believe that the workshop could contribute to the discussion whether and to what extent the figural and processual approach is truly universal. It is also assumed that the workshop will be of interest for some of the 500 anthropologists who will arrive at the Conference. The beautiful, medieval city of Krakow (European City of Culture: 2000) and its summer gips should also attract some EASAs.

The conference has its Web page at: www.ub.crs/easa/wk.htm

The deadline (under EASA regulations) for 200 words abstracts is 31 January 2000.

The contact person is Rafael Mazañas, Centre for European Studies Jagiellonian University Rynel Główczy 34 31-003 Cracow Poland Tel/Fax: +48 (12) 422-54-66

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIGURATIONS

The next issue of Figurations will be mailed in May 2000. News and notes should be sent to the Editor by 1 April 2000.

Editor: Stephen Merrell
Assistant Editor: Aisling Rickard
Editorial Address: Department of Sociology, University College, Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.
Tel: +353-1-706 8504; Fax: +353-1-706 1125;
E-mail: Stephen.Merrell@ucd.ie

Contributions should preferably be e-mailed to the Editor, or sent on a disk (formatted for PC-DOS, not Apple Macintosh), WordPerfect (up to 5.1), Microsoft Word (up to 7). Rich Text and plain text files can all be handled. Do not use embedded footnotes. Hard copy is accepted reluctantly.

© 1999, Norbert Elias Stichting, J.J. Viiirtanen 13, 1017 JM Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Figurations is printed and mailed by SISWO: The Netherlands Universities Institute for Co-ordination of Research in the Social Sciences, Graphic Design: Peter de Kroon (SISWO), Desktop Publishing: Peter de Kroon, Comic Roma (SISWO).

Researchers, institutes or libraries who would like to receive this newsletter should write to the Figurations address file manager: Tineke de Koning, SISWO, Plantage Muidergracht 4, 1018 TV Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Fax: +31-20-6229430;
E-mail: tineke@siswo.snw.nl

Figurations will be sent to them free of charge.