Centenary Conferences
Preparations proceed apace for the various celebrations of the centenary of Norbert Elias’s birth. Latest details of the centenary events are set out in the Centenary Supplement at the back of this issue.

There have been some changes – a certain thinning out the field. Most sadly, the Latin American conference being organised by Vera Weiler and her colleagues in Colombia has had to be cancelled. Speakers had been invited and – it was thought – finance secured. But then suddenly, in consequence of the Colombian government’s budget retrenchments, the money was quite suddenly withdrawn, and all arrangements had to be cancelled. Vera (medically) sends her apologies to all who had so willingly agreed to attend, and I am sure we all send her our sympathy.

For similar financial reasons, the conference which Paul Nixon and Ann Backley were organising in Cambridge has also been cancelled.

The conference in Bielefeld will now have just two working groups rather than the three envisaged at first.

A booklet outlining all centenary events in 1997 will be prepared early in the year and circulated to all recipients of Figurations.

If you wish to take part in any of the events listed – either to give a paper or simply to attend – you should contact the organisers in question. Full contact details are given inside.

Associate Editor Sought
With a mass of other responsibilities, I am finding it quite difficult to edit two issues of Figurations a year single-handed. I should like to hear from anyone willing to assist me in the task. Initial responsibilities would include chasing contributions who fail to deliver!

Contact me at Stephen.Mennell@bedf.ac.uk or at the address given on the back page.

The appointment will be made by the Elias Trustees.

Stephen Mennell
have a much smaller circulation?

Finally, starting a new journal in a fin-
ancial climate where in most congrega-
tion university libraries are cancelling exist-
ing journal subscriptions rather than or-
dering new ones would require eror-
mous commitment by the Editor and the
members of the editorial board. When-
ever the subject dries up, the Nickle
finger of fate seems to point at me as Editor! But, as long as I am a head of
Department (and that's indefinitely), I
can't possibly take on yet another task.

So let's have a wider discussion about
this. And, if there is enthusiasm for the
idea, let's also have some volunteers.
Write to me, or better still - so that
everyone can join in the discussion -
send messages to the Eliax-1 e-mail dis-
cussion list at:
Eliax1@lean.mrc.shef.ac.uk
Stephen Norsell

SCHIEFF ON PART/ WHOLE ANALYSIS - A TASTING
PIECE

Thomas J. Scheff, Emotions, the Social Bond, and Human Reality: Part/Whole

To what readers' appetites for Tom Scheff's provocative new book, here are some
'nodding chunks' from Tom's introduction.

This book outlines and gives examples of a new approach to research in the
human sciences. It puts into practice the recommendations of C. Wright Mills, for
what he called the exercise of the sociological imagination. But I would call it
instead the interdisciplinary, human imagination. Here I develop and elaborate
ideas that were proposed in an early form in my Microsociology (1990) and
in Suzanne Reetzger's Violent Emotions (1991). My goal is to describe an
approach to research that allows the in-
terpretation of theory, method, and
data in such a way that each equally
casts light on the other, generating a the-
ory that is based directly on observa-
tions of actual human behaviour, both
inner experience and outer contact.

At the heart of my approach is what I
call part/whole morphology. I borrow
the idea of morphology from botany,
where it has long formed the foundation
of that discipline. In botanical research, the
study of single cases (single spe-
cimens of plants) is just as important as
making comparisons between plants.
Morphology is based equally on single
cases and comparative study. By micro-
scopical study of the smallest details of
a single plant, the botanist learns how it
works as a system, even if no other spe-
cimens are available. To the extent that
other specimens are available, micro-
scopic analysis and comparative study can
be interwoven, each building on the other.
Botany is the study of both individual
and groups of plants.

Although not discussed as such, botani-
cal morphology employs what might be
called part/whole analysis, since it is
concerned with relating the 'less parts',
the exact details of an individual plant,
with the 'greatest whole', the architecture
and process of plant communities, and
their relationship to their environment.

The phrase 'less parts and greatest
wholes' is due to the philosopher Spi-
noza, who proposed that human under-
standing requires relating the least parts
to the greatest whole. Spinoza's pro-
position forms the basis of this book. As
Spinoza suggested and as recent re-
search demonstrates, human beings and
human relationships are so complex as
to require part/whole analysis, even in
cases of simple, everyday interaction...

The approach outlined here is one that
attempts to generate increasingly accurate and gradual hypotheses by close exami-
nation of the actual reality of social life. By
bulking in examination in the
'minute particulars' as Blanke said, the
least parts of single cases and later in the
comparisons of those cases with one an-
other in the context of ever larger wholes,
one may generate hypotheses that are
general and important. As pointed out,
quantitative analysis leads to verification or
disconfirmation of a hypothesis. But
verification is the third step in part/whole
morphology. Before taking the last step, it
is usually necessary to explore at least
several of the earlier stages (exploration
(conventional eyewitness field work using
qualitative methods), microanalysis of
single specimens and comparison of spe-
cimens...
Elias and Olschki

During his time at Heidelberg between 1924 and 1930 Elias was accepted for habilitation with Alfred Weber. He participated in Weber's seminars on cultural sociology, and began a study on 'The Emergence of Modern Science'; the text of his seminar paper on this subject recently came to light in the papers of Alfred Weber.

Elias took many of the details of his paper from the work of Leonardo Olschki. Olschki, the son of a Jewish antiquarian from Florence, was Professor of Romance Philology at Heidelberg. A widely educated man, he had written three volumes entitled Geschichte der neusprachliche wissenschaftliche Literatur. In this work, Olschki presents the thesis that the beginning of modern science could not evolve out of the scholastic university milieus. It developed rather in circles of practitioners - the experimentierende Meister - who were, as Elias stresses, at once craftsmen and artists. Elias points to the gap between the vertical, God-centred medieval thinking and the horizontal world view of the rising epoch of the Renaissance, which for him represented a new stage in the history of thought.

Olschki is now forgotten. He had to leave Germany in 1933, and never sought to return after the war. He gave up writing in German, and these three volumes never appeared in English.


Reinhard Blümert
Prussiaallee 26
D-14052 Berlin

Elias's favourite word is a declaration of interdependence, of unity and difference. This idea suggests a way of correcting for the overspecialisation of knowledge in the modern world. There is a joke among academicians that they either know everything about nothing or nothing about everything. As in most jokes, there is some truth to this one. There are the parts people, who know everything about next to nothing, and the whole people, who know next to nothing about everything. By struggling to relate parts to larger wholes (the epistemices in psychology and history, for instance) to the parts of which they are to be composed (theorists in the human sciences and the humanities), perhaps at least some of the alienation and waste motion in our attempts to understand the human world can be overcome.

The full text of the Introduction can be had by e-mail on request from: scheff@alabatic.ssc.ubc.edu

**Recent Books and Articles**


The celebrated economist Robert Heilbroner has recently written: "Out of sheer self-protection I read most books less than once, quite content after the first chapter to spare my eyes. I read The Course of Human History twice - the first time with the sense that I was looking with astonishment into processes by which much social history has been - and undoubtedly still is - made; the second time for the sheer pleasure of reading again about the roots of economic growth long before the industrial revolution, the origins of early social stratification, of civilizing and decivilizing processes in Europe, Asia and elsewhere. I have not read so informative, imaginative, and engrossing a book for a very long time."

The contents of The Course of Human History are:

- Introduction: Bringing the Very Long Term Back to S.
  1. Human History and Long-Term Social Processes (S)
  2. Ecological Regimes and the Rise of Organised Religion (J)
  3. The Formation of Military-Administrative Regimes (J)
  4. Extensive Growth in the Pre-Moder Contemporary World (E)
  5. Recurrent Transformations to Intensive Growth (J)
  6. Civilizing and Decivilizing Processes (S)
  7. Asia and Europe: Comparing Civilizing Processes (S)

The book is a thoroughly revised and updated version of the same authors' Human History and Social Process (Oxford, University of Exeter Press, 1999).

This book tries to analyse the decision processes leading to the introduction of the first social security scheme for private sector employees in Thailand, placing them in a broader context of democratization and military coups in that country. The theoretical tool used to carry out this task is a synthesis of the "Concept of Strategic Groups" (first developed and used by authors at the Bielefeld Department of Development Sociology) and Elias’s Figure Theory.

In the author’s opinion, this synthesis can help to overcome some problems of both approaches taken individually. The "Strategic Group" authors (Gieren and Figura 1981) did have some contact with Elias in Bielefeld during his time at the ZIF and mention his writings occasionally, although only Marx and Weber - and not Elias - are explicitly mentioned as important sources of theoretical inspiration. In spite of these references, the theoretical background remains somewhat shaky. Elias’s Figure theory, on the other hand, is a powerful tool for the analysis of any “figuration of something” but can gain a lot by adding some precision on this "something". The book is thus an important tool for the analysis of the formation of interdependent strategic groups (defined as groups of persons that compare for material and immaterial resources in a society) in Thailand.

In addition to Elias’s general figure concept, his relational concept of power and his concept of “functional democratization” (decreasing power differentials in asymmetrical relationships) complete the theoretical framework. The possibility of one particular group pushing through its demands does not only depend on its material and political resources (such as money, number of members, internal unity, liberty for political actors) but also on the shifting power balances between all the groups in the figuration.

The approach chosen in this book allowed an explanation to be given for the introduction of a social security scheme in 1990 after almost 60 years of vain efforts to be linked and the empirical case study to the broader context of power relations and democratization in Thai society. "The main weakness in the theoretical terms refers to the formation and definition of groups. Although the Concept of Strategic Groups adds some guidelines in the very general statements given by Elias in this respect, the problem of linking subjective and objective dimensions of group formation into a coherent framework remains an important challenge."

[Author's Abstract. Address: International Labour Organization, Luis Carriera 131, Valparaiso, Santiago, CHILE. Fax: +56 - 2 - 201 20 31, Email: rennecke@oicilie.ch]

The author is interested in learning about other applications of Elias’s theory to the analysis of political processes and power relations in industrialized as well as in developing countries."

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Eric Philippeau published a notable paper on the sociogenesis of the professional politician in France at the Colloquium on ‘Norbert Elias and Political Analysis’ in La Défense in April 1994 (see Figurations 1). It is a highly original fashion he drew on Norbert Elias’s little-read 1950 paper on the origins of the naval profession to shed light on the competition between the gentleman amateur and the skilled professional in the very different context of late nineteenth-century French politics. Now he has successfully defended the ambitious thesis from which that paper was drawn.

In his thesis, Philippeau asks: how are the changing conditions of success in electoral competition to be understood?

Figure 1

How was it that certain individuals rather than others came to anticipate and adapt to these changes? How did the advent of universal male suffrage in the second half of the nineteenth century shape the specialist skills of politicking? And how was this specialist knowledge used by candidates in their practical experience of electoral battles?

These questions are explored with particular reference to the career of one individual politician, Baron Armand de Mackau (1832-1918). In answering them, a wide range of ideas drawn from the writings of Norbert Elias are deployed. The first part of the thesis is entitled ‘The system of electoral expenses’, which immediately cross-references Elias’s famous account of the system of expenses in The Court Society, and under a section entitled ‘the obligation to spend’ there is a discussion of ‘the double-bird mechanism’. The second part of the thesis deals with ‘the rationalization of political work’, and part of the discussion of electoral figurations draws on established-outsiders theory. I would not wish, however, to give the impression that this is a dogmatically Eliasian thesis (whatever dogmatic Eliasian might look like!), but it is a first-class example of the rich use to which students at Nanterre are putting Elias’s writings in political science, under the leadership of Bernard Lacroux and Alain Garrigou among others.

Stephen Modell

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For his doctorate at the Charles University, Prague, Jiri Subrt has written the first general introduction to the work of Norbert Elias in Czech. The chapters deal with Elias’s career, the theory of civilizing processes, themes in his later work (sport, habitus, etc.), social processes and figurations (including established-outside relations, involvement and detachment), and civilizing processes at the end of the twentieth century (including informalization and bar- barization processes). There is a brief English summary. This very welcome book is sympathetic of the way in

Figure 1

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which Elias’s ideas are now becoming available to students not just in the major world languages but in the ‘small languages’ too.

[Jiri Suhb’s address is: Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University, Cenele 20, 116 36 Prague 1, Czech Republic]


The definitional distinction made in organizational sociology, between organizations as entities directed towards the rational attainment of goals and a realm of society or culture which is not, results in an inadequate understanding of the relationship between organizational and extra-organizational subjectivity, and especially its historical development. This article examines the historical formation of organizational subjectivity, using Foucault’s concept of government and Elias’s concept of civilization, as well as the way their ideas might be interrelated and extended in analysing organizational life. It then addresses two problems which remain unresolved by this dual utilization of Foucault’s and Elias’s ideas in analysing organizational subjectivity: the question of contradictions within both governmentality and the civilizing process and that of the active contribution of the practices of the governed and the civilized. The concluding section introduces and argues for the concept of proto-governmentalization as a means of capturing the interplay between human subjects, organizations and wider networks of social relations.


The study deals with the origins of the idea of animal welfare in the civilizing

process of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: as cruelty to animals came under attack, this critique emerged not at the court society but in the milieu of the Protestant dissent. After a brief description of three characteristics shaping the modern conception of animal welfare, the view that popular cultures of early modern times had an inherent tendency to an emotionally unstructured cruelty to animals is criticized. Varieties of human-animal relationships at the court society are depicted, especially cruelties framed by the symbolism of the chase. In contrast, the religiously motivated positions of the Protestant dissenters, particularly the Quakers, display not only an advanced ‘ethical’ view of man’s ‘fellow creatures’ but also a tendency to monitor the animal-related behaviour reflexively. A last section clarifies the sociogenetic pre-conditions fostering the animal ethics of protestant dissent, especially the sectarian pattern of ‘short’ social interaction sequences. Some conditions of the social diffusion of the animal welfare idea during the eighteenth century are outlined.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RETROSPECT**


In the court of the Medici and the Vatican, argues Mario Biagioli, Galileo fashioned both his career and his science to the demands of patronage and its complex systems of wealth, power and prestige. Drawing extensively on Elias’s *The Court Society* in this important study in the cultural and social history of science, the author shows how Galileo’s courtly role was integral to his science.

We hope to include a brief article by Mario Biagioli in the next issue of *Figurations*.


Abstract: The theory of ‘figuration’ formulated by Norbert Elias is the basis of S.H. Fouleke’s concept of group analysis and the group as network. The author assesses the importance of The *Civilizing Process* and of the ‘civilizing theory’ of the Frankfurt School with which they were both involved [sic] and discusses the application of group analysis to research and understanding in anthropology and other areas of social science.

**FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

The European Sociological Association – 3rd European Conference

The European Sociological Association will hold its third conference on 27–30 August 1997 at the University of Essex, Colchester, England. The conference theme is ‘Twentieth-Century Europe: Inclusions/Exclusions’.

Sessions will be organised around the following themes:

Revisiting Classical Theory

Work, Welfare and Citizenship

Old and New Globalizations

European Processes, Boundaries and Institutions

Cultures and Identities

Abstracts of papers for presentation at the conference should be sent not later than 15 January 1997 to:

Conference Organiser - ESA Department of Sociology University of Essex Wivenhoe Park Colchester, CO4 3SQ UNITED KINGDOM e-mail: ESA97@essex.ac.uk Fax: +44-1206-873410

See also the call for papers by Kitty Verrips folded in this issue

Issue No.6 December 1996

Figurations 5
INTERDEPENDENCIES, FIRST NORTH AMERICAN NORBERT ELIAS CONFERENCE
The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, March 20–22, 1997

FOCUS
Is the world coming together or falling apart? At the end of the millennium, the opposing paradigms of globalization and fragmentation compete: on the one hand the coalescence of developments regarding global economy, communication, and increasing mobility is reshaping the world; on the other, as political boundaries change, factors of culture and ethnicity come to the fore in often bloody and destructive ways.

A distinguished inter-disciplinary group of international authorities are coming together at this Conference to evaluate the contributions of Norbert Elias (1897–1990), one of the outstanding social thinkers of this century and to explore our understanding of the interdependence of individuals in our global society. Join these academics as they look at both civilizing and retrograde processes at the intersections between race, gender, class, nationality and technology at the turn of the century.

PROGRAMME
THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 20, 1997, Goethe-Institut, 944 West 8th Ave, Vancouver.
7:15 pm Welcome, Director of Goethe-Institut
7:30 pm Hermann Korte, University of Hamburg
‘A long life considered: Norbert Elias and the theory of civilization’
8:30 pm Reception

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 1997 Green College (Coach House), University of British Columbia
9:00 am Opening remarks
Shirley Neuman, Dean of Arts, University of British Columbia
Thomas Samuels, University of British Columbia
Hermann Korte, joint trustee of the Norbert Elias Foundation, Amsterdam

Session I Green College (Coach House), University of British Columbia
9:30 am to 11:15 am
Geoffrie van Bentheim van den Bergh, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, ‘Notions as symbols and processes’
Annette Treibel, University of Karlsruhe, ‘The changing balance of power between men and women. A figurational study on the public and the private sphere in min western societies’
Rheinhard Blomert, Berlin, ‘The civilizing restraints of money’
11:15 am to 11:30 am Refreshment break

Session II Green College (Coach House), University of British Columbia
11:30 am to 12:45 pm
Thomas J. Scheff, University of California, Santa Barbara, ‘Unpacking the Civilizing Process’
12:45 pm to 2:00 pm Lunch

Session III Green College (Coach House), University of British Columbia
2:00 pm to 3:30 pm
Ann Buckley, Cambridge University, ‘Interdependency and Medieval Studies’
Stephen Guy-Bray, University of British Columbia, ‘Civilizing sexuality: Marie de France’s lay with two names’
4:00 pm to 4:10 pm Tour of Museum of Anthropology (RSVP)
5:00 pm Dinner Salmon House on the Hill, North Vancouver (RSVP)

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1997 Green College (Coach House), University of British Columbia
Session IV Green College, Coach House
10:00 am to 11:15 am
Stephen Miccelli, University College Dublin, ‘North America and the Civilizing Process’
Paul Nixon, Cambridge University, ‘Kisch and Western inter-
11:30 am to 11:40 am Refrshment break

Session V, Green College, Coach House

11:30 am to 13:00 pm
Helmut Kazemic, University of Goa, ‘Sociology and Literature’

Red Wataou, University of Liège, ‘Personal pronouns, roles and Human Figures: A critical commentary on Norbert Elias’s approach to language’

1:00 pm to 1:30 pm
Clothing remarks: Stephen Mennell, University College Dublin, Thomas Salamuni, University of British Columbia

6:30 pm Dinner, Chautauqua, Vancouver (RSVP)

Costs
All lectures are open to the public and ADMISSION is FREE

Organized by The Programme in Comparative Literature, University of British Columbia, 1865 Main Mall, Canada

More Information
For more information contact Dr. Thomas Salamuni, Chair, Programme in Comparative Literature. Information is also available online at http://www.arts.ubc.ca/german/pic/elas.html

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STATE ELIAS CENTENARY CONFERENCE, PARIS, 15-16 MAY 1997

This conference, the principal celebration of Elias’s centenary in France, will focus on the relevance of his writings on state formation to the development of the modern democratic state. It is being organised by Bernard Lacroix and Alain Garrigou. Further details from: Prof. Alain Garrigou, Groupe d’Analyse Politique, UFR de sciences juridiques et politiques, Université de Paris X – Nanterre, 200 Avenue de la République, F-92001 Nanterre Cedex, France. Tel: 00-33-1-409-77652, Fax: +33-1-40977656.

The provisional list of contributions includes:
A. Cohen, ‘“Faire l’Europe”: De la concurrence au monopole dans la formation de “la Communauté-européenne”
G. Coutt, ‘L’uniforme ministériel’
M. Dezel, ‘Le modèle éluison et les expériences parlementaires dans le monde arabe’
L. Dussaurot, ‘La notabilisation comme tendance à la monopolarisation du capital politique’
H. Fayat, ‘Comment se tenir à l’Assemblée: la discipline en séance et la pacification des mœurs parlementaires’
M. Ferraté and A. Garrigou, ‘Comment la démocratie vient aux enfants après eux-mêmes’
P. Joubert, ‘Civislar la banlieue: les écosystèmes écologiques de contrôle de la violence urbaine dans les zones “pauvres”’
T. Madric, ‘Ledra-Relin, urbane de la mise in forme de l’organisation électorale in 1848’
N. Mennell, ‘La frontière de quoi? – la pacification et la démocratisation fonctionnelle dans la formation de l’Etat américain’
C. Veillon and L. Quero, ‘Travail éducat et pratiques administratives disciplinaires à l’écoute des élections cantonales’

ELIAS FOUNDATION CENTENARY CONFERENCE, BIELFELD, 20-22 JUNE 1997

This conference will be held in the Zentrum für Interdiszipli- när Forschung, Bielefeld, where Norbert Elias spent the highly productive years 1979-84. Ending on the centenary date itself, the conference will be sponsored by the Elias Foundation and by the Department of Sociology, University of Bielefeld.

The focus of the conference will be at least as much on the present and future importance of Elias’s ideas – the theory of civilising processes at the end of the twentieth century – as retrospectively on Elias’s life. It is anticipated that there will be two opening lectures, one on the relations between individual life-history and the history of societies, as exemplified in the senses of Norbert Elias, and the second comparing processes of biological evolution and social development.

The rest of the conference will take the form of a colloquium, with two working groups:

Working Group 1: REFLECTION, REVISION AND THE FUTURE
Convenor: Prof. Dr Annette Treibel, PH Karlruhe, Postfach 4000, D-76043 Karlsruhe, Germany
Tel: 00-49-721-925-4626
Fax: 00-49-721-925-4000

Elias’s classic study Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation is now nearly 60 years old. The debate about this magnum opus – like that surrounding comparable works, like Max Weber’s Protestant Ethic – is ever-ending. Debate continues about how the central thesis, the empirical basis, and the adequacy of the conceptual models are to be assessed. Any synthesis as wide-ranging as Elias’s – lacking it does psychology, literature, political history, social history, and theoretical models in micro- and macro-social contexts – exposes itself to critical evaluation by representatives of many different specialisations
The empirical verification or correction of the thesis of the cubic coils of the current history of European progress (morality, violence, sexuality, etc.) states premises and conclusions; for example, explanations of French absolutism from the viewpoints of history and political science, the civilization of emotions and changing feelings of shame: the findings of anthropology, psychology, social psychology, the sociology of emotions; comparisons of Eliasson methodology with contemporary approaches in history and interpretative sociology, philosophy and logic of history: the foundations of the theory of civilization processes, the theory of civilization processes in comparison with (among other things) macro-social theories of development and historical sociology, comparison with economic and other approaches to unintended consequences of human actions.

Participants from various disciplines will be able to draw on their specialist and methodological backgrounds in their reflections on, and contributions to, the theory. Contributions should be as specific and specialized as necessary, and as interdisciplinary and generally understandable as possible. The general outcome of this working group will be to frame the questions for a 'theory of civilization processes for the future'.

**Working Group 2: DECIVILISING PROCESSES**

Claremont: Professor Stephen Mepham, Department of Sociology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. Tel. +353-1-706 8504. Fax: +353-1-706 1125. e-mail: stephen.mepham@ucd.ie

The notion of decivilizing processes has in recent years become increasingly central to debates about the work of Norbert Elias. Critics of Elias's theory of civilization processes can be broadly divided into two categories. First, there are those (such as Hans-Peter Damer) who usually from a standpoint of radical cultural relativism, simply deny that there is any such structured process of civilization as Elias identified, whether in Europe or elsewhere. Second and more important, there have always been critics who, even if they accepted the substantial validity of Elias's account of changes in the European tradition from the late Middle Ages up to the nineteenth century, argue that the trend was reversed in the twentieth century; and, furthermore, that this invalidated a key element in Elias's theory, the connection between decivilizing social complexity, lengthening chains of interdependence, and social formation processes on the one hand, and changes in habits on the other.

Early discussions of apparently decivilizing trends include the debate about 'sacralization' processes (Wusters, Brinkgreve, Koptyn et al.), that about contemporary sports-related violence (Dunning et al.), and that about the consequences of nuclear weapons in the Cold War (Van Beuningen van den Bergh, and Elias himself) over recent years—especially since the publication of Elias's Studien über die Deutschen / The German: there has been a growing recognition of the need to think in terms of a fluctuating balance between civilization and decivilization processes, which added presupposes each other.

The aim of this working group is decisively to advance the discussion of the connection between civilizing and decivilizing processes. It is hoped that participants may wish to apply the ideas to a range of contemporary social problems, both to the past and to contemporary processes such as globalisation, non-European contexts, and perhaps to areas such as the effects of the media on which Elias and these influences have had little to say.

The provisional list of contributions includes:

Godfried van Beuningen van den Bergh, Subject to be announced
Artur Bogner, "Tribe" in Northern Ghana in the late Twentieth Century
Christian Brinkgreve, 'Recent Developments in the Relations between Men and Women and Parents and Children in the Light of the Theory of Civilizing and Decivilizing Processes' Jood Boekelaar, 'The Control of Water and the Civilizing Process: The Valley of Mexico, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century'
Roger Charlier, Subject to be announced
Mosheff Duyaris, 'The Figurative Dynamics of Colonial Stratification in the Middle East and its Effects on Contemporary Arab Societies: A Comparative Historical and Sociological Study'
Elias Kistat-Kihl, 'The Process of Decivilization in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire'
Alain Garrigou, 'The Manners of Political Activity: Emotions and Civilization'
Douwd Gholam, 'Globalisation and Islamising of the Muslims' Movement'
Peter Geissman, "Are humans able to stop killing each other?"
Paul Kepsey, 'The European Mutations; Dominant or Re-
censive! - European Civilization in Global Perspective" 
Malcolm J. Kennedy, "The Interactive Process of War and Peace as Civilizing and Decivilizing Agents" 
Joseph Maguire, "Global Sports and Patriotic Games: Diminish- 
ing Contrasts and Increasing Varieties" 
Danie Nel, "The History of Conservation in South Africa in 
the Light of Elias's Theories" 
Steven Russell, "With-hunting, Civilizing and Decivilizing 
Processes" 
Richard Sennett, "The Relationship between Mass Culture and 
Globalisation" 
Pietro Spireni, "The Problem of Violence - Historical 
Processes and Present Developments" 
Paul Stokos, Subject to be announced 
Apraj Shukalok, "Decivilising Processes and the Desacrilization 
of Order, with reference to the Case of Eastern Far-M 
Ton Zwan, "State Disintegration, Violence and Decivilising 
Processes: Yugoslavia in the Perspective of the Theory of 
Civilising Processes" 

Jorge Arul and Stephen Mennell are organizing a session at 
the American Sociological Association 1997 Annual Meeting 
in Toronto. Anyone interested in participating is asked to con- 
tact: Jorge Arul, Department of Sociology, State University 
of New York Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14260-4146, USA. E- 
mall: arul@usa.buffalo.edu

STUDENT CONFERENCE IN BELFAST 
27 NOVEMBER 1997. 
Kenneth Bosh is organizing a centenary conference on 
'Manners, Emotions and Sociological Theory' at Queen's 
University, Belfast. In the recent years North East Lia's writings 
have found themselves upon the teaching syllabus of a numer- 
of Irish Universities: University College, Dublin; Queen's 
University, Belfast and University of Ulster. The aim of the 
conference is to take the opportunity to build upon the already 
expanding undergraduate interest in Lia's. Papers will be 
presented to Irish students by Johan Goudsblom, Stephen 
Mennell and Kenneth Bosh. Enquiries to Kenneth Bosh, 
Department of Sociology and Social Policy, Queen's Univer- 
sity of Belfast, Belfast BT17 1NN. Northern Ireland. E-mail: 
K.Bosh@qub.ac.uk

ORGANIZED VIOLENCE: THE FORMATION AND 
BREAKDOWN OF MONOPOLIES OF FORCE - 
CONDITIONS AND CONSEQUENCES 
NORBERT ELIAS CENTENARY CONFERENCE 
15-20 DECEMBER 1997 AMSTERDAM 
One of the pioneering contributions of Norbert Elias was 
to show that the civilizing process in early modern Europe was 
intrinsically connected with the process of state formation - 
the formation of increasingly more stable structures exercising 
a monopoly of taxation and force over a relatively extensive 
territory. As Elias made quite clear, the civilizing pro- 
cress did not begin in Europe in the early modern age. Nor did 
the process of monopolization of organized violence. In order to 
explore his ideas and to further his approach, the North 
Elias Centenary Conference in Amsterdam will focus on or- 
ganized violence.

At the conference we propose to distinguish three stages in the 
development of monopolies of organized violence: 
A stage in which organized violence became the monopoly of 
adult males, who excluded women and children from the use 
of weapons. Inheritance rites and taboos served to uphold the 
adult males' monopoly. 
A stage in which organized violence became the monopoly of 
specialists, the warriors, to the exclusion of other adult males. 
This may be called the stage of military-societal societies, of 
which medieval Europe is an example. 
A stage during which the relatively autonomous warrior elites 
were forced to yield the monopoly of violence to central state 
or organizations. This is the process of state formation described 
by Elias for early modern Europe. 
The three stages are part of a process model. We do not suggest 
that at any time a process of monopolization has been 
"completed". On the contrary, it makes sense to assume that 
throughout human history the monopolization processes have been accompanied by counter-tendencies veering toward 
undermining the established monopolies. 
The multi-stage model is intended to serve as an organizing 
principle for the plenary sessions of the conference. It may 
also serve as the organizing principle for some of the paper 
sessions. We expect that the model also may provoke dis- 
cussion on the possibility that human mankind is in the process 
of entering a fourth stage. If this indeed is so, the question arises 
whether the model sketched above is of any help in under- 
standing current developments.

We hope that, next to the plenary sessions, the thematic paper 
sessions will provide a forum and meeting point for all social 
scientists who are interested in the historical comparative ap- 
proach that Norbert Elias has advocated. The organizers in- 
tend that no-one should feel excluded, so although the plenary 
programme will focus on organized violence the paper 
sessions will deal with other topics as well.

PRELIMINARY PLENARY PROGRAMME: 
Thursday 16 December 1997 
Chair: Godfried van Bertelon van de Beek (NL) 
14.00 Introduction (Johan Goudsblom, NL) 
14.35 Male monopolic rituals (Donald Glassman, USA) 
Tea 
15.30 Male monopolies and collective fantasies (H.U.E. 
Tholen van Velzen, NL) 
16.05 The Formation of Warrior Societies: 
Contemporary Africa (Paul Richards) 
Break 
16.50 Forum with first discussant Jojada Verrills (NL) 
plus four invited speakers.

Friday 19 December 1997 
Chair: Johan Goudsblom, NL 
10.00 State Formation and Organized Violence in Japan 
(comp. to European Middle Ages) (Johannes 
Armstrong, Australia) 
10.35 State Formation and Organized Violence in China 
compared to Roman Empire (S.A.M. Adshead, UK)
Saturday 20 December 1997

Chair: Nico Wilbrant (NL)
10.00 Organized Violence in a Frontier Society: the United States (Stephen Mennell, IRL)
10.35 Breakdown of State Monopolies: What happened to the USSR? (Randall Collins, USA)

Coffee

11.30 The Violent State and Supranational Monopolies of Violence (Abram de Swaan, NL)

Lunch

14.00 Challenges to State Monopolies: Organized Crime (Frank Broenkler, NL)
14.35 Violence in Contemporary Chinese fiction (Mark Elvin, Australia)

Tea

15.30 Football Hooliganism as a World Problem (Eric Dunning, UK)
16.05 Stylized Violence: Martial Arts in Contemporary Society (John Heilbrun, NL)

Break

16.50 Forum with invited speakers

Thematic Groups

Thematic groups will be organised around three broad themes:

Violence in World History
Session co-ordinator: Fred Spier

Violence in Everyday Life
Session co-ordinators: Eric Dunning (hooliganism), Johan Heilbrun/Marina van Boosten (martial arts and other sports), Peter Spierings (interpersonal violence: long-term perspective)

The Sociology of Norbert Elias
session co-ordinator: Ann Buckley (medieval studies), Paul Nixon (process sociology and the performing arts)

Further details from: Judith van Rooyen, SISWO, Plantage Muidergracht 4, 1018 TV Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Fax: +31-20-622 9430. E-mail: rooyen@siswo.uva.nl

CONTRIBUTIONS

The next issue of Figurations will be mailed in May 1997. News and notes should be sent to the Editor, Stephen Mennell, in Dublin, by 1 April, 1997.

Contributions should preferably be e-mailed to theEditor, or sent on a disk (formatted for PC-DOS, not Apple Macintosh); WordPerfect (up to S.1), Microsoft Word and ASCII can all be handled. Do not use embedded footnotes. Hard copy is accepted reluctantly.

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