

Figurations

Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

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■ PEOPLE

Marjorie Fitzpatrick's book *Music and Power in Eighteenth-Century Court Society: Handel's Messiah and Protestant Ascendancy* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2016), have been awarded the D. Simon Evans award for the book 'for the most valuable contribution to 18th Century Studies in 2016'. Marjorie was awarded \$500.

Joop Goudsblom will talk about Norbert Elias in the 'Great Thinkers' series of lectures at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), on 25 September 2017 at 14.30–16.00.

■ FROM THE NORBERT ELIAS FOUNDATION

Relaunch of the Norbert Elias Foundation Website
The Norbert Elias Foundation has renovated its website. The new site can be found at this address: www.norbert-elias.com. The website is multilingual and includes welcoming texts and information about Norbert Elias in most major languages.

If you browse the site you will find that the blog and the image gallery have been revised. An important new feature is the extended interactivity of the website: users may now collaborate in working on the online texts and can compare different versions of what appears on the website. In addition there is the opportunity to promote new publications and conferences. A key feature of the new website is the calendar. Users can add dates for events such as calls for papers, conferences, courses and meetings. It is hoped that this will help to further connect the worldwide Eliasian community. Those wishing to keep abreast with current events may wish to subscribe to the RSS feed for news of worldwide events.

It is also planned to make available more videos, including interviews with leading process-sociologists, over the next few months.

Until all the contents of the old website www.norberteliasfoundation.nl have been added, this site will stay online. Once the changes have all been made this address will be linked to the new website as well.

The initiative for the relaunch was taken by the Board in 2015 when it was felt that the website had not kept pace with the development of the internet. Instead of upgrading it, it was decided to go for a relaunch. This meant that new features could be integrated from scratch and the operating speed of the website could be optimised. In early 2016 the Board agreed to commission Adrian Jitschin who had volunteered to co-ordinate the project and he has led the project group in executing the Board's wishes. Despite the enhancements and improved functionality the running costs of the new site will be lower than the old one, thus bringing savings for the Foundation.



'Board member Adrian Jitschin with Utsav Chawla whose company Chapter247 helped us with the Web Development.'

■ IN THE MEDIA

Brexit, Sociology and Elias
Peter Emmerson scored a bull's eye in his letter to the editor in the Spring 2017 issue of *Network*, the magazine of the British Sociological Association. Peter joined in a debate about why so few sociologists had foreseen the catastrophic vote for Brexit in the referendum of June 2016. He set the question in the context of mainstream sociological theorising over the last half-century, and the widespread wilful ignorance of Elias's alternative.

'[T]oo few sociologists either listened or understood ... [W]hen Parsonian/Marxian theoretical authority collapsed 50 years ago, theoretical sociologists, most notably Tony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, fell back on German and French philosophers for guidance rather than scientists. ... If sociologists had taken Elias's more radical, sociological approach to theoretical collapse by side-lining philosophical styles of analysis that rely on "noun-orientated" discursive conventions and spending more time researching "verb-orientated" possibilities that automatically incorporate change as a variable, we may well have been listening more carefully to ... colleagues at LSE who forecast Brexit.'

A philosopher strikes again ...

In *The Guardian*, 13 March 2017, the philosopher John Gray published an article under the heading 'Steven Pinker is wrong about violence and war'. The summary line read 'A new orthodoxy, led by Pinker, holds that war and violence in the developed world are declining. The statistics are misleading, argues Gray – and the idea of moral progress is wishful thinking and plain wrong.' (So have there never been any changes or development at all in human habitus?)

Gray mentions that one of the main underpinnings of Pinker's *The Better Angels of Our Nature* is the theory of civilising processes 'borrowed from the sociologist Norbert Elias' – something and someone apparently been entirely new to Gray. 'There is nothing new in the suggestion that war is disappearing along with the civilising process', says Gray, tracing it back in the history of ideas to Auguste Comte. Of course, Elias said no such thing: one theme of *On the Process of Civilisation* is precisely the increasing scale and destructiveness of war.

This is typical of philosophers, who still imagine they can 'correct' social scientists by ruminating on the history of ideas without systematic theoretical-empirical study of the actual world, and apparently without even reading carefully what social scientists actually say. Their contempt for social scientists would

justify contempt in return, but they still enjoy unearned and inherited prestige.

SJM

■ THOUGHT FOR THE DAY ...

Static conceptualisation and un-processual thinking, so roundly denounced by Elias, has practical consequences far beyond sociology, out in the 'real world'. Example: It has become conventional wisdom among businessmen and right-wing economists to say that 'the private sector creates all the wealth, and the public sector consumes it'. Where do they think the supposed 'wealth-creators' came from? Were they delivered ready-made by storks, or were they born in public hospitals and educated in schools and universities?

Stephen Mennell

■ ANDREW ABBOTT, *PROCESSUAL SOCIOLOGY*

The prominent and outstanding American sociologist Andrew Abbott – who, among other things was until recently Editor of the *American Journal of Sociology* – recently published a book entitled *Processual Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016). Like his earlier book *Time Matters: On Theory and Method* (2001), *Processual Sociology* is a collection of essays, but a more systematic exposition of his views, *The Social Process*, is foreseen. These writings are plainly important and deserve the close attention of those of us who follow in Norbert Elias's footsteps on the path of 'figurational' or 'process sociology'. And indeed Abbott would appear to be at least a fellow-traveller of ours.

Yet, astonishingly, Abbott makes not a single reference to Elias. It would seem that Elias's work remains more or less invisible to American sociologists. Almost all references to his work by Americans are solely to *On the Process of Civilisation*, and even then almost entirely to the (original) first volume, from which they mistakenly extract the static, unprocessual, concept of 'civility'.

It is very regrettable that Americans largely remain profoundly unaware of Elias's wider writings, and especially his process-sociological theory of knowledge (notably *Essays I: On the Sociology of Knowledge and the Sciences*, vol. 14 of the Collected Works, 2009).

I reflect that Elias was right, in the last decade of his life, to advocate that we use the term 'process sociology' rather than 'figurational sociology'. Unfortunately, 'figurational sociology' had by then become too firmly rooted, and 'process sociology' has not caught on so widely. 'Figuration' has never become a self-explanatory term, and I rarely use it myself; Elias introduced it as shorthand, especially to avoid the static idea of 'system', and never intended it to be a load-bearing structure. It can become a barrier, making us sound like an eccentric sect rather than people with important things to say to social scientists at large. Be that as it may, we should not reciprocate trans-Atlantic ignorance. Abbott's work is clearly of great interest.

I should like to invite readers of *Figurations* to study *Processual Sociology* and to send me their thoughts about it, whether in the form of shorter comments or longer essays. We could perhaps form them into a symposium and offer it for publication in *Human Figurations*.

Stephen Mennell

■ FIGURATIONAL JOURNALS ONLINE

Human Figurations: Long-term Perspectives on the Human Condition,

vol. 6, no. 1, May 2017:

http://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/humfig/11217607.0006.1*?rgn=full+text

Katie Liston, Editor's introduction

Stephen Mennell, 'Apologia pro vita sociologica sua: social character and historical process, and why I became an Eliasian sociologist'

Michael Dunning, 'The sociogenesis of terrorism as part of English-Irish relations during the nineteenth century'

Behrouz Alikhani, 'On the habitual dimension of problems of democratisation; using the example of Egypt after the Arab Spring'

Thomas Scheff, 'The Cooley-Elias-Goffman theory'

Cas Wouters, 'Informalisation and evolution: four phases in the development of steering codes'.

■ RECENT BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Norbert Elias, *Les Allemands : Luites de pouvoir et développement de l'habitus aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles* (Paris : Le Seuil, 2017). 582 pp. ISBN : 978-2-902-111742-4.

We finally have a French edition of *Über die Deutschen*, the last of Elias's books to be published in his lifetime. Translation from the German original – the larger part of the book – is by Marc de Launay, while the chapters originating in English (the 'Digression on nationalism' and 'The breakdown of civilisation') were translated by Marc Joly. The book is preceded by a valuable short essay entitled 'Barbarie et "dé-civilisation"' (pp. 7–12) by Roger Chartier, who has done so much over the last three decades to promote Elias's work in France.

One strange fact is that, eight years before Elias's book could be read in French, it was possible to read a book about the book: see the discussion among contributors to François Lartillot (ed.), *Norbert Elias: Études sur les Allemands – Lectures d'une œuvre* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009).

Norbert Elias, *La dynamique sociale de la conscience* (Paris: La Découverte, 2016). 332 pp. ISBN: 978-2-7071-76532-5.

This book is in effect a welcome translation into French of volume 14 of the Collected Works of Norbert Elias in English, *Essays I: On the Sociology of Knowledge and the Sciences*, with some omissions and one interesting addition. Left out, for separate publication as a smaller book, are Elias's three essays

on utopia. Also missing is the essay 'The sciences: towards a theory', which apparently posed insuperable obstacles to translation. But this volume makes available to French readers the bulk of Elias's sociological theory of knowledge, which many of us consider as important as the theory of civilising processes for which he is best known. There is also one interesting addition: the synopsis (on pp. 325–7) of a lecture that Elias gave on 26 November 1985 on 'Continuités et discontinuités dans la transmission du savoir'.

The title chosen for the book by the publishers is a bit quirky. I am of course aware that the French word *conscience* can be translated into English as either 'conscience' or 'consciousness' – and in this context it means 'The dynamic of consciousness'. I can see that it is clever marketing, echoing the French title of volume 1 of *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, namely *La dynamique de l'Occident*. And it is undoubtedly a sexier title than *Essays I: On the Sociology of Knowledge and the Sciences!* But I hope it does not mislead the French social scientists who ought to be reading these important essays.

The book contains both a preface by Bernard Lahire and a 'Présentation' by Marc Joly. Lahire's preface is entitled 'Science des sciences et sociologie scientifique: sortie du labyrinthe philosophique avec Norbert Elias' ['Science of sciences and scientific sociology: escaping from the philosophical labyrinth with Norbert Elias']. The translation from English is by Marc Joly, Delphine Moraldo and Marianne Woolven, and the single essay originally written in German ('Über die Natur') was translated by Hélène Leclerc. Sad to say, the book contains no index; for an academic work, that is spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar. But hearty congratulations to Marc Joly and his collaborators for completing this very important labour of love.

Stephen Mennell

Norbert Elias, 'L'espace privé: Privatraum ou privater Raum?', trans. Marc Joly, *Socio* 7, décembre 2016, pp. 25–37, with an éclairage by Marc Joly, pp. 38–43.

This is the text of a lecture given by Elias in Berlin in May 1983. The occasion was a seminar under the title ‘À propos de l’histoire de l’espace privé’ in which he was engaged, not for the first time, in a polite debate with Philippe Ariès, who was the opening speaker. Elias expresses scepticism about the static concept of *espace privé* used by Ariès, and shows that it only becomes intellectually interesting if viewed through the lens of a long-term *process* of privatisation and individualisation arising from changes in the structure of social relations between people.

The essay was published in the original German under the same title (except for *oder* in place of *ou*!) in the Elias *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 15, *Aufsätze und andere Schriften II* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006), pp. 345–59, and in English as ‘L’espace privé: ‘private space’ or ‘private room’ in *Essays II: On Civilising Processes, State Formation and National Identity* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2008), pp. 41–51.

Marc Joly, *La révolution sociologique: de la naissance d’un régime de pensée scientifique à la crise de la philosophie (XIXe–XXe siècle)* [The sociological revolution: from the birth of a regime of scientific thinking to the crisis of philosophy (nineteenth–twentieth centuries)] (Paris: La Découverte, 2017). 583 pp. ISBN: 978-2-7071-8311-8.

The year 2016–17 has been an *annus mirabilis* for Marc Joly, as the list of publications in French alone demonstrates. Marc is both sociologist and intellectual historian, skills both apparent in his earlier book *Devenir Norbert Elias* (2012 – see *Figurations* 38). In this new and very new and substantial volume, he renews the process-sociological onslaught on philosophy begun by Elias and continued by Johan Heilbron and by Richard Kilminster. (In fact Joly respectfully acknowledges that he borrowed the title of his book from Kilminster’s 1998 *The Sociological Revolution*.) To put it more mildly, Joly traces sociology’s and sociologists’ emancipation from the thrall of philosophy and the philosophers’ academic establishment

– though the process obviously remains incomplete in this age of fads and fashions in philosophoidal ‘social theory’.

This is a bold book. Its thesis is that at the turn of the nineteenth–twentieth century, the order of thinking, knowledge and interpretation was shaken by the emergence of sociology: the image of ‘man’, of human existence, was turned upside down. This bloodless revolution began through philosophy: faced with the idea of the autonomy and irreducibility of social facts crowning the development of objectivist approaches to the ‘human spirit’, philosophy found itself in a dead end, forced to redefine itself and – at least provisionally – abandoning to sociology the territory of morality and the bases of knowledge. In the growth of sociology, this was the terrain of Max Weber, Georg Simmel and Ferdinand Tönnies in Germany, and in France especially of Émile Durkheim and Gabriel Tarde. Joly argues that a large part of philosophy in the twentieth century can be read as a response to this cognitive revolution. In this light, the book grills the work of major twentieth-century philosophers: Henri Bergson, Georges Canguilhem, Martin Heidegger, William James, Karl Jaspers, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and even Bertrand Russell.

By the way, this book *does* have index – so this ship at least will not leak.

Stephen Menell

Norbert Elias, *Shinboru no Riron* (Tokyo: Hosei University Press, 2017), xiv + 330 pp. ISBN: 978-4-588-01053-8.

This is the Japanese translation of Elias’s *The Symbol Theory*, by the ever-energetic Akira Ohira, who has done so much in the last dozen or so years to promote the work of Elias in Japan.

Reinhard Blomert, trans. Wolf Feuerhahn, ‘Norbert Elias et les études sur la Renaissance à Heidelberg au cours des années 1920’, *Études sur la Renaissance* (Paris: Centre Alexandre Koyré, 2017), pp. 1–13.

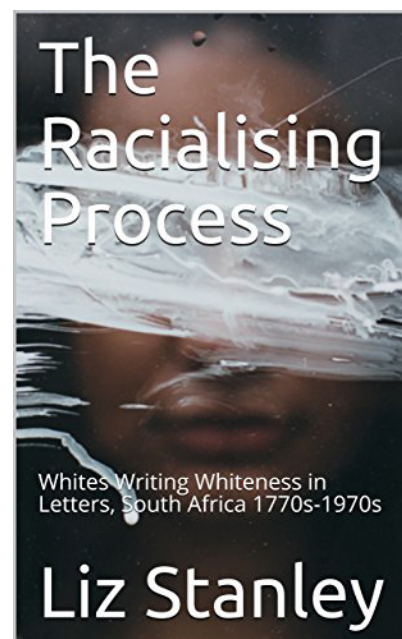
Reinhard Blomert, who some years ago discovered the outline of Elias’s never-completed Heidelberg *Habilitationsschrift* among Alfred Weber’s papers, here situates Elias’s projected study of the arts and sciences in Renaissance Florence in the wide context of Renaissance studies in Heidelberg in the 1920s.

Wolf Feuerhahn, ‘Was ist Streitbegriff? – Über den Prozess der Zivilisation bei Norbert Elias’ [What is a contentious concept? – On Norbert Elias’s *On the Process of Civilisation*], in Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, Edith Hanke and Barbara Picht (eds), *Geschichte intellektuell: Theoretische Perspektiven* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), pp. 219–37.

Feuerhahn points out that the use of an essentially contested term like ‘civilising process’ is often a means by which an author is able to intervene in an ongoing academic debate, and this article locates *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* in the academic controversies of the 1920s.

Liz Stanley, *The Racialising Process: Whites Writing Whiteness in Letters, South Africa 1770s–1970s*. (Edinburgh: X Press, 2017) 290 pp. ISBN: 9781521403648 (e-book & softcover);

The Racialising Process explores how white people from the 1770s to the 1970s in South Africa depicted whiteness and its racialised Others of black, coloured, Indian Chinese and other groups. It



focuses on their letters, over 50,000 of them, and uses them as an index of wider changes occurring.. It discusses many detailed examples drawn from a wide array of letters and explores the complexities in what people wrote and how to interpret this. It shows that there has been a long-term racialising process with distinctive features organised around regulation and categorisation. The book is also concerned to engage with, use, and where needed depart from the theoretical and methodological ideas put forward by Norbert Elias for understanding change in Europe and making these work as a way of thinking about South Africa and its racialising process.

Note that Liz Stanley's book is an example of a new departure in publishing. It is in effect 'independently published' via Amazon's KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing).

Robert Mears, 'Sociology: involvement and detachment', in K. Twamley, A. Scott and M. Doidge (eds), *Sociologists' Tales: Contemporary Narratives on Sociological Thought and Practice* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2015).

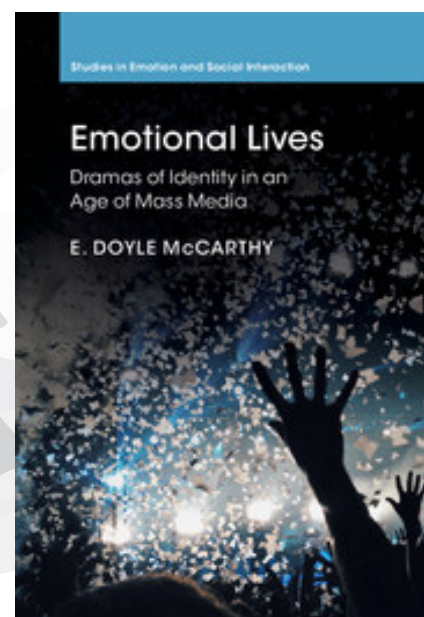
Abstract: What is sociology? Why is it important? *Sociologists' Tales* is the first book to offer a unique window into the thoughts and experiences of key UK sociologists from different generations, many internationally recognised, asking what sociology means to them. It reveals the changing context of sociology and how this has shaped their practice. Providing a valuable insight into why sociology is so fascinating, it gives advice to those wanting to study or develop a career in sociology reflecting on why the contributors chose their career, how they have managed to do it and what advice they would offer the next generation. This unique volume provides an understanding of sociology and its importance, and will have wide appeal among students, young sociologists thinking about their future and professional sociologists alike.

Emilia Sereva, 'Thinking with Elias about British Independent Funeral Directors', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh (2017).

Abstract: This thesis is about using rather than applying Norbert Elias's conceptual ideas, and its analytical procedure employs a 'fair play' approach to theorists and theory. This is put to use regarding British independent funeral firms by conceiving these as a figuration developing over the long-term, and exploring the accounts of funeral directors placed in dialogue with Elias's ideas. The thesis examines how the key Eliasian concepts of figuration, sociogenesis, habitus and de/civilising processes play out in context, including over-time developments within the British funeral industry. Its focus is 'thinking with Elias' about such matters in relation to the everyday working practices of independent funeral directors.

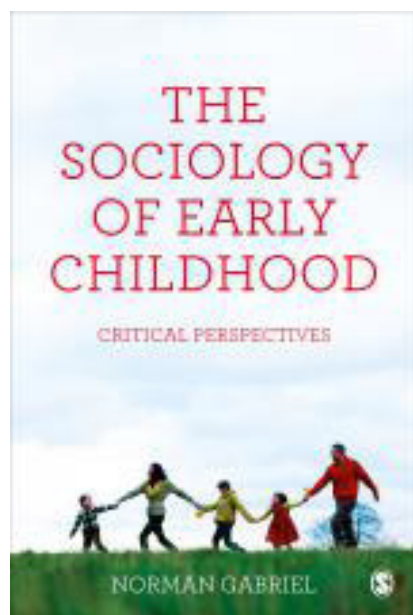
In using theory and thinking with Elias rather than against him, I have aimed to be a fair player in doing sociology. First, my thesis recognises the importance of context and that how concepts play out in 'real' life will vary significantly. Second, in adopting a fair play approach, the thesis provides a detailed empirical example of how to evaluate theorists on their own terms by following in their suggestions and engaging with their ideas in contextual and reflexive ways. It has neither replicated nor reproduced an Eliasian study, but instead demonstrated how actually using it in a context will play out. Third, the thesis has used the Eliasian key concepts of figuration, sociogenesis, habitus and de/civilising in a present-day setting so as to examine how these unfold in the present and can be explored through people's accounts. Fourth, it analyses the accounts of the independent funeral directors in a fair play way and establishes that their ideas work as theory, as exploring the dialogue between Elias and the funeral directors has shown. Overall, the thesis is a reply to Elias's call for sociologists to think for themselves, engage with and expand upon ideas and settings to hand, and to pursue the actual processes at work in society.

E. Doyle McCarthy, *Emotional Lives: Dramas of Identity in an Age of Mass Media* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). 206 pp. ISBN: 9780521820141.



Emotional Lives explores the changes in emotional cultures that have taken place during the last half century and continue to affect people's identities today. These changes are driven by the culture of consumerism in contemporary post-industrial society and by the emergence of new ideas about public and private life in a time when media culture generates new forms of social relationships and deep personal attachments to celebrity figures. McCarthy shows that people are drawn to public life, not only for entertainment and pleasure but also for its dramas, for memorialising events like disasters, acts of violence, and victimhood. McCarthy's cultural-sociological approach provides new insights about emotions as 'social things' and reveals how today's mass media is an important force for cultural change, including changes in people's relationships, identities, and emotions.

Norman Gabriel, *The Sociology of Early Childhood : Critical Perspectives* (London: Sage, 2017). 192 pp. ISBN: 9781446272992.



The Sociology of Early Childhood is a theoretically and historically grounded examination of young children's experiences in contemporary society. Arguing that a sociology of early childhood must bring together and integrate different disciplines, this book: synthesises different sociological perspectives on childhood as well as incorporating multi-disciplinary research findings on the lives of young children; explains key theoretical concepts in early childhood studies such as investment, early intervention, professional power and discourse; examines the importance of play, memory and place evaluates long term parenting trends; uses illustrative examples and case studies, discussion questions and annotated further reading to engage and stimulate readers. Invigorating and thought provoking, this is an invaluable read for advanced undergraduates and postgraduate students looking for a more nuanced and progressive understanding of childhood.

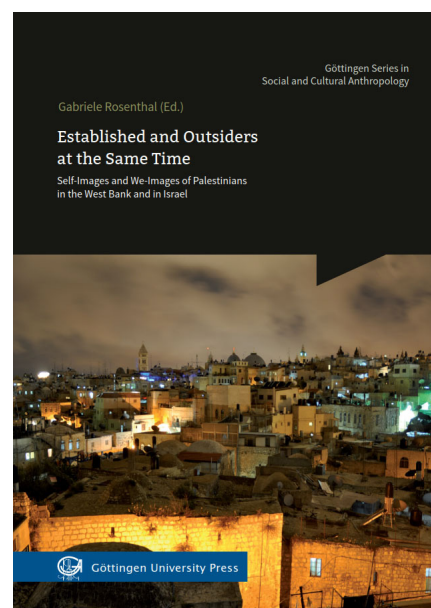
Cindy L. Corliss, 'The established and the outsiders: cyberbullying as an exclusionary process'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow (2017).

Abstract: Cyberbullying has become increasingly problematic over the

past decade with extreme instances of young people committing suicide due to their victimisation. While the prevalence of cyberbullying along with its effects have been researched and identified, the theoretical underpinnings for determining why young people engage in these behaviours has been under researched. A clear understanding behind the motivations into cyberbullying as exclusion is necessary in order to help decrease the behaviours as well as addressing deficiencies in defining what cyberbullying is. This study used a mixed methods design, first using quantitative data via a survey designed to target pupils (n=450) in three Catholic Secondary schools in Glasgow, Scotland. Second, qualitative data was collected through interviews with educational professionals (n=13; nine teachers, four non-teacher educators). The discussion of findings focuses on the perceptions of cyberbullying through the eyes of educators and how they understand and recognise the exclusionary process. To facilitate understanding cyberbullying as exclusion, the results of this study were explored through the lens of the Established and Outsiders framework. The research finds that while teachers are undereducated and uninformed on social media and cyberbullying, young people continue to increase their knowledge and access to these sites for both socialisation and exclusion, which is having a significant effect on their physical and mental well-being. While most young people surveyed claim not to have been victims of cyberbullying, the evidence from both the survey and interviews agree that girls were more likely to engage in cyberbullying as both victim and bully. Teachers from the three participating schools experienced challenges in understanding and recognising cyberbullying and the usage of social media by young people. Their abilities to recognise these behaviours were often underpinned by their lack of training in areas of technology in conjunction with their negative attitudes toward social media. This study enriches the wider literature by examining cyberbullying as exclusion through the lens of Elias's Established and Outsider framework, providing a novel approach to understanding

the exclusionary process. The study also provides evidence asserting the need for providing in-service teachers education, training and support in understanding and recognising cyberbullying behaviours.

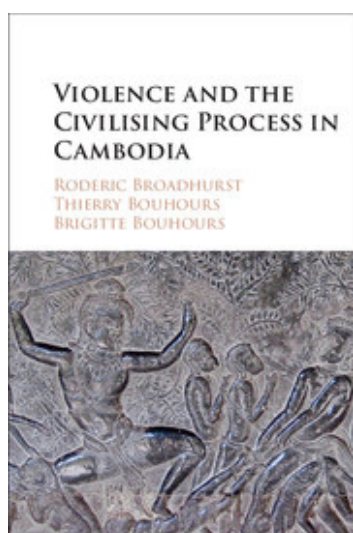
Gabriele Rosenthal (ed), *Established and Outsiders at the Same Time: Self-Images and We-Images of Palestinians in the West Bank and in Israel* (Göttingen: Göttingen University Press, 2016) 232 pp. ISBN: 978-3-86395-286-0.



Palestinians frequently present a harmonising and homogenising we-image of their own national we-group, as a way of counteracting Israeli attempts to sow divisions among them, whether through Israeli politics or through the dominant public discourse in Israel. However, a closer look reveals the fragility of this homogenising we-image which masks a variety of internal tensions and conflicts. By applying methods and concepts from biographical research and figurational sociology, the articles in this volume offer an analysis of the Middle East conflict that goes beyond the polar opposition between "Israelis" and "Palestinians". On the basis of case studies from five urban regions in Palestine and Israel (Bethlehem, Ramallah, East Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa), the authors explore the importance of belonging, collective self-images and different forms of

social differentiation within Palestinian communities. For each region this is bound up with an analysis of the relevant social and socio-political contexts, and family and life histories. The analysis of (locally) different figurations means focusing on the perspective of Palestinians as members of different religious, socio-economic, political or generational groupings and local group constellations – for instance between Christians and Muslims or between long-time residents and refugees. The following scholars have contributed to this volume: Ahmed Albaba, Johannes Becker, Hendrik Hinrichsen, Gabriele Rosenthal, Nicole Witte, Arne Worm and Rixta Wundrak. Gabriele Rosenthal is a sociologist and professor of Qualitative Methodology at the Center of Methods in Social Sciences, University of Göttingen. Her major research focus is the intergenerational impact of collective and familial history on biographical structures and actional patterns of individuals and family systems. Her current research deals with ethnicity, ethno-political conflicts and the social construction of borders. She is the author and editor of numerous books, including *The Holocaust in Three Generations* (2009), *Interpretative Sozialforschung* (2011) and, together with Artur Bogner, *Ethnicity, Belonging and Biography* (2009).

Roderic Broadhurst, Thierry Bouhours, and Brigitte Bouhours, *Violence and the Civilising Process in Cambodia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). 382 pp. ISBN: 9781107109117.



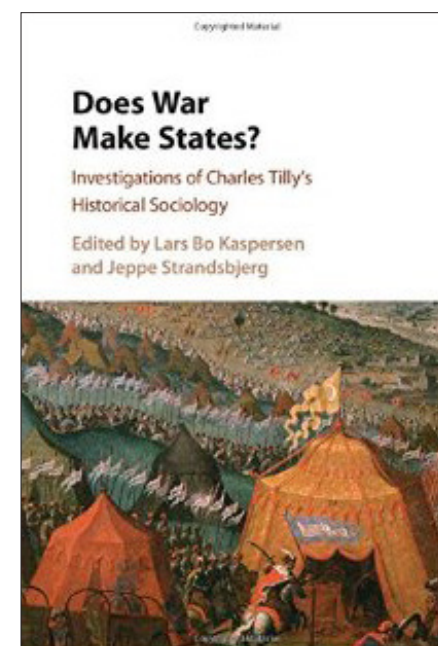
In this insightful new study tracing the history of violence in Cambodia, the authors evaluate the extent to which Elias's theories can be applied in a non-western context. Drawing from historical and contemporary archival sources, constabulary statistics, victim surveys and newspaper reports, Broadhurst, Bouhours and Bouhours chart trends and forms of violence throughout Cambodia from the mid-nineteenth century through to the present day. Analysing periods of colonisation, anti-colonial wars, interdependence, civil war, the revolutionary terror of the 1970s and post-conflict development, the authors assess whether violence has decreased and whether such a decline can be attributed to Elias's civilising process, identifying a series of universal factors that have historically reduced violence.

Daide Schmid, 'The poverty of critical theory in International Relations: Habermas, Linklater and the failings of cosmopolitan critique', *European Journal of International Relations* (February 2017): DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066117692654>.

Abstract: Within and outside of the discipline of International Relations, Frankfurt School Critical Theory faces a 'crisis of critique' that is affecting its ability to generate analyses and political interventions that are relevant to the present world-historical conjuncture. This article seeks to identify the theoretical origins of this predicament by investigating the meta-theoretical architecture of the prevailing Habermasian framework of critique. I contend that the binary ontology and methodology of society that lies at the heart of the Habermasian paradigm has effected an uncoupling of normative critique from substantive social and political analysis and resulted in a severe weakening of both Critical Theory's 'explanatory-diagnostic' and 'anticipatory-utopian' capabilities. Thereafter, I discuss the determinate ways in which these issues have manifested in critical theoretical interventions on international politics by exploring both Habermas's own writings on the post-national constellation and Andrew

Linklater's theory of cosmopolitanism and the sociology of global morals. Both projects, it is argued, rely on a reductive, functionalist analysis of global political dynamics and express a political perspective that lacks a definite critical content. Ultimately, the article contends that a revitalisation of Critical Theory in International Relations must necessarily involve a clarification of its fundamental categories of analysis and a recovery of the orientation towards totalising critique.

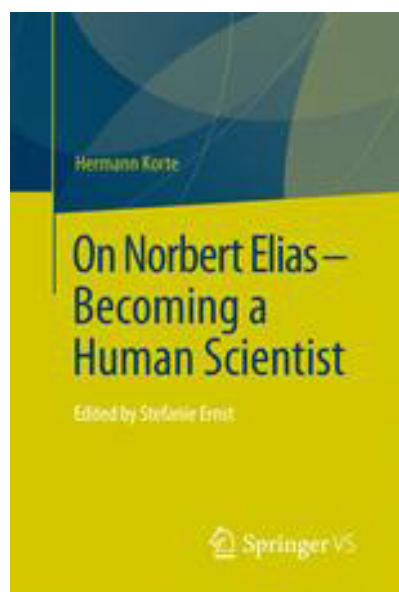
Lars Bo Kaspersen and Jeppe Strandsbjerg (eds), *Does War Make States? : Investigations of Charles Tilly's Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 352 pp. ISBN: 9781107141506.



Arising from renewed engagement with Charles Tilly's canonical work on the relationship between war and state formation, this volume situates Tilly's work in a broader theoretical landscape and brings it into contemporary debates on state formation theory. Starting with Tilly's famous dictum 'war made the state, and the state made war', the book takes his claim further, examining it from a philosophical, theoretical and conceptual view, and asking whether it is applicable to non-European regions such as the Middle East, South America and China. The authors question Tilly's narrow view of the causal relationship between warfare and state-making, and

use a positive yet critical approach to suggest alternative ways to explain how the state is formed. Readers will gain a comprehensive view of the most recent developments in the literature on state formation, as well as a more nuanced view of Charles Tilly's work.

Hermann Korte, *On Norbert Elias – Becoming a Human Scientist* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017), 237 pp. ISBN: 9783658173517.



Edited by Stefanie Ernst and translated by Stefanie Affeldt, *On Norbert Elias* analyses the knowledge-sociological, biographical and intellectual background of the genesis of Elias's process-theory. The book focuses on the history of Elias's most famous and important work *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* in close relation to the historical and biographical context. It starts with Elias's childhood and intellectual background and paints a detailed picture of the development of German sociology in early twentieth century up to the Second World War.

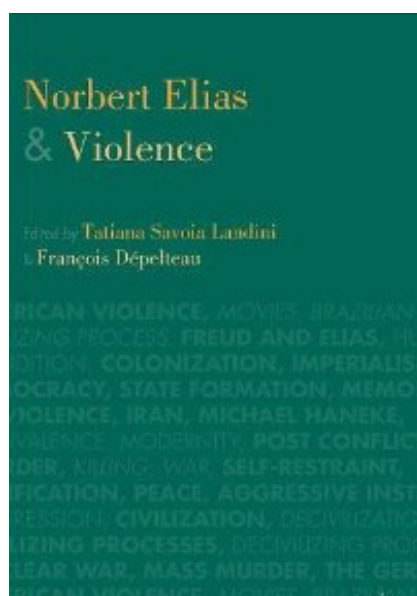
On the occasion of Hermann Korte's 80th birthday during a small celebration, Stefanie Ernst and Elke



Korte presented the overdue translation of Korte's German book *Über Norbert Elias: Das Werden eines Menschenwissenschaftlers*.

The well-wishers were: from left to right: Heike Hammer, Kerstin Nicolaysen, Gabriele Klein, Stefanie Ernst, Hermann Korte, Elke Korte, Stefanie Affeldt, Corinna Schönfeldt, Annette Treibel, Susann Kempe.

Tatiana Savoia Landini and François Dépelteau (eds), *Norbert Elias and Violence* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), 232 pp. ISBN: 9781137561176.



Blurb: This book presents key conceptualisations of violence as developed by Norbert Elias. The authors explain and exemplify these concepts by analysing Elias's late texts, comparing his views to those of Sigmund Freud, and by analysing the work of filmmaker Michael Haneke. The authors then discuss the strengths and shortcomings of Elias's thoughts on violence by examining various social processes such as colonisation, imperialism, and the Brazilian civilising process – in addition to the ambivalence of state violence. The final chapters suggest how these concepts can be used to explain difficulties in implementing democracy, grappling with memories of violence, and state building after democracy.

Contents:

Tatiana Savoia Landini, 'War, hope and fear: writings on violence at the end of a long life'

İrem Özgören Kınlı, 'Figurational analysis of Michael Haneke's *Time of the Wolf*'

Florence Delmotte et al., 'Violence and *civilité*: the ambivalences of the state'

François Dépelteau, 'Elias's civilizing process and Janus-faced modernity'

Juliano Souza et al, 'Civilisation and violence at the periphery of capitalism: notes for rethinking the Brazilian civilizing process'

Kyle W. Letteney, 'Self-inflicted wound: on the paradoxical dimensions of American violence'

Gëzim Visoka, 'Norbert Elias and state building after violent conflict'

Marta Bucholc, 'The figurational approach and commemorating violence in Central and Eastern Europe'

Behrouz Alikhani, 'Parliamentary form of government, habitus and violence: the case of Iran (1906–1925)'

Philippa Velija and Lucinda Hughes, "'Men fall like boiled eggs. Women fall like raw eggs": Civilised female bodies and gender relations in British National Hunt racing', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* (June 2017): DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690217712434>.

Abstract: This purpose of this article is to contribute to the existing research on the gendered nature of equestrian sports by discussing how power relations continue to position females on the margins of National Hunt (NH) racing. In the UK, NH racing is the most male-dominated form of racing; at the time of writing, 100 males hold a professional jockey licence, compared to just 4 females. In this article we draw on figurational sociology, specifically the concepts of the civilised body, interdependence and habitus to offer a critical analysis of the

gendered experiences of eight amateur and professional female jockeys. The experiences of female jockeys cannot be understood without considering their networks of interdependencies with trainers, owners, male jockeys, breeders and the wider racing industry. We argue that early involvement in the figuration through family ties supports the development of a gendered racing habitus that influences the social identities of female jockeys who normalise their own limitations. Civilised female bodies are positioned in the figuration as weaker than males and needing protection from potentially risky horses. We argue that because safe horses are chosen by trainers and owners, these limit the opportunities and number of rides for female jockeys, these (gendered) decisions obscure issues of power that enable male jockeys to dominate in the NH figuration.

Miklós Hadas, 'Violence control and the civilization of intimacy: remarks on Norbert Elias's sociology', *Historická sociologie* 1: 2017, pp. 39–53.

Abstract: This study is a modest contribution to the reception of Norbert Elias, one of the giants of twentieth-century sociology. The paper's overriding question concerns the relevance of the Eliasian big-picture narrative: whether the theory of civilisation is sufficient to explain this process or is it possible to include complementary factors? It will be argued that while Norbert Elias convincingly explores several key elements of the Western civilising process, he does not ascribe due importance to the long-term transformation of the intimate sphere. The paper claims that, from the seventeenth century onwards, the centre of family-life has shifted from paternal authority to maternal care and psychological harmonisation. Hence, it is justifiable to regard the shift of the power balance within the family as a key explanatory factor of the civilising process.

Iain M. Wilkinson, 'The controversy of compassion as an awakening to our conflicted social condition', *International Journal of Law in Context*, 13: 2 (2017), pp. 212–24.
Abstract: The study of law and emotion

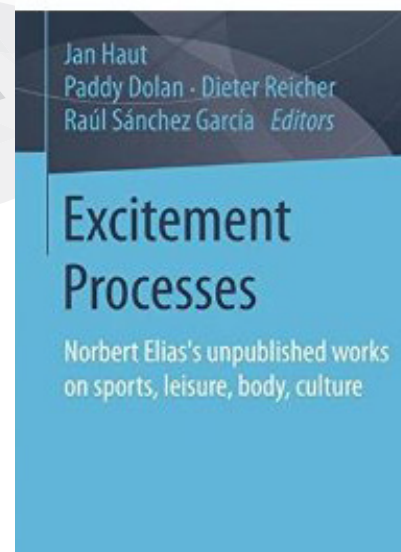
is now established as a distinct field of study in its own right. In this respect, legal studies has shared in a wider 'affective turn' that has involved twenty first century social science in a new concern to explain the contribution of emotional feelings to human thought, motivation and behaviour. This development has been accompanied by a pronounced debate over how emotion should be rendered accountable within a rational frame of analysis. On the one hand it is possible to portray this as being sustained by a movement to make us more emotionally literate and more sensitive to the ways people act and think through feeling. On the other hand, it might be interpreted as being rooted in a concern to make matters of emotion more amenable to rational discipline and the sanction of reason. In this article I contend that where a focus is brought to the experience of 'compassion', the volume is raised on these conflicts of interpretation. I further argue that opposing and contested points of view on the experience and value of 'compassion' provide us with valuable insights into the wider dynamics of social and cultural change that have inspired the 'affective turn'. These arguments are developed with reference to the social theories of Max Weber and Norbert Elias. Moreover, in taking note of Hannah Arendt's thinking on the cultural politics of compassion, I attend not so much to how the controversy of compassion might be resolved, but rather, to its potential to awaken critical humanitarian concern. Compassion is hereby celebrated as an inherently 'unstable emotion' that brings debate to the condition and bounds of human care and social justice.

Brett Bowden, 'Civilization: "It means just what i choose it to mean"', *Society. Symposium: Civilization and Its New Discontents* 54: 2 (2017), pp. 126–132.

Abstract: Civilisation is a complex and powerful word and idea that should neither be reviled nor revered, but it should be respected. It is said that the idea of civilisation can be used simply to describe; but as a binary term, the ideal of civilisation can be used to both to describe and evaluate; or pass judgement in the very act of describing.

The nature of such concepts is that they can be used to either commend or condemn the actions or peoples they are used to describe.

Jan Haut, Paddy Dolan, Dieter Reicher and Raúl Sánchez García (eds), *Excitement Processes : Norbert Elias's unpublished works on sports, leisure, body, culture* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017), 322 pp. ISBN: 9783658149116.



This book contains some of the most important of Elias's writings that have remained hitherto unpublished. It contains four papers by Elias himself, together with reflections on them by leading scholars of the present day on leisure, sport and culture. Besides the four editors, there are essays by Helmut Kuzmics, Dominic Malcolm, Jim Sharpe and Michael Atkinson.

The most substantial of Elias's papers published here for the first time is 'Spontaneity and self-consciousness', written first in 1958 and then enlarged in 1962. Stephen Mennell suggests in his Conclusion, this paper really ought to have been published as the very first chapter in *Quest for Excitement*. It contains, among other gems, Elias's first use of the key idea of 'controlled decontrolling of emotional controls', a far clearer exposition of what he meant by 'kitsch' than can be found in the earlier essay from 1935, and major discussions of jazz and dancing. Elias's later references to dancing (for example, passing remarks in *What is Sociology?*), now need to be read

against the background of this paper. In the same way, the great essay in *Studies on the Germans* on duelling in Wilhelmine Germany now reads like the final chapter of a book which began with the paper on 'Boxing and duelling' that now appears in this book.

The full contents are:

Introduction: Reconstructing Elias's work on leisure, sports and the body – Dieter Reicher, Jan Haut, Raúl Sánchez García and Paddy Dolan

Section 1: Leisure and culture

Spontaneity and self-consciousness – Norbert Elias

Elias's early approach to leisure activities: Notes on Spontaneity and self-consciousness – Dieter Reicher

Civilisation, happiness and the thinking millipede: A commentary on Norbert Elias's Spontaneity and self-consciousness – Helmut Kuzmics

Section 2: Sportisation and 'modernisation'

Fragments on sportisation – Norbert Elias

Completing sportisation: Elias on the diffusion and differentiation of sport in 'modern' society – Jan Haut

Elias on the development of modern sport: empirical error, interpretive insight and conceptual clarification – Dominic Malcolm

Section 3: Sport, violence and state formation

Boxing and duelling – Norbert Elias

Boxing and duelling: Critical remarks on Elias on violence and state formation from an historical perspective – James Sharpe

Class relations and the development of boxing: Norbert Elias on sportisation processes in England and France – Paddy Dolan

Revisiting duelling and fencing in

the sociology of Norbert Elias – Raúl Sánchez García

Section 4: The body

The 'rediscovery' of the body – Norbert Elias

Elias's contribution to the sociology of the body: The rediscovery of the hinge – Michael Atkinson

Conclusion – Stephen Mennell

■ BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RETROSPECT

Since the last issue of *Figurations*, we seem to have received an unusually large crop of bibliographical items that were missed in earlier years. They include:

Norbert Elias, 'Le Sense of Humour', translated by Wolf Feuerhahn, *Humoreques* 36 (2012), pp. 57–63, with a postscript by Wolf Feuerhahn, 'Humours nationaux: le regard situé de Norbert Elias', *ibid.*, pp. 67–80.

This is a French translation of an excerpt from Elias's 1960 lecture on 'Nationale Eigentümlichkeiten der englischen öffentlichen Meinung', the German text of which can be found in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 14, pp. 86–123. The English translation, 'National peculiarities of British public opinion' is in the *Collected Works*, vol. 15, pp. 230–55.

Sabine Dabringhaus, 'The monarch and inner-outer court dualism in late imperial China' in Jeroen Duindam, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt, *Royal Courts in Dynastic States: A Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

The author draws considerably on the model developed by Elias in *Die höfische Gesellschaft* in interpreting life and power at the late imperial Chinese court. We are grateful to John Hobson for sending us a copy of Dabringhaus's chapter, which then drew out attention to the whole book in which it appears.

Jeroen Duindam, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt, *Royal Courts in Dynastic States: A Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2011). xiv + 444 pp. ISBN

9789004206229 (hb); 9789004206236 (e-book).

Jeroen Duindam wrote the first systematic analysis by an historian of Elias's *The Court Society*, which itself had been based on historical scholarship as it prevailed in the 1930s. See Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995); the book he has now edited with colleagues broadens the scope of studies to court societies worldwide and in long-term perspective. The contents are:

Introduction: Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires, *Jeroen Duindam*

From Assyria to Rome

Pride, Pomp and Circumstance: Palace, Court and Household in Assyria 879–612 BCE, *Gojko Barjamovic*

Hellenistic Court Society: The Seleukid Imperial Court under Antiochos the Great, 223–187 BCE, *Rolf Strootman*

The Roman Imperial Court: Seen and Unseen in the Performance of Power, *Andrew Wallace-Hadrill*

Court and State in the Roman Empire – Domestication and Tradition in Comparative Perspective, *Peter Fibiger Bang*

Successors and Parallels in East and West

Court and Capital in Byzantium, *Paul Magdalino*

A King on the Move: The Place of an Itinerant Court in Charlemagne's Government, *Rosamond McKitterick*

Court Historiography in Early Tang China: Assigning a Place to History and Historians at the Palace, *Isenbike Togan*

To be a Prince in the Fourth/Tenth-Century Abbasid Court, *Nadia Maria El Cheikh*

Ceremonies and the City: The Court in Fourteenth-Century Constantinople, *Ruth Macrides*

The Early Modern World

The Pope's Household and Court in the Early Modern Age, *Maria Antonietta Visceglia*

The Monarch and Inner-Outer Court Dualism in Late Imperial China, *Sabine Dabringhaus*

Turks in the Ottoman Imperial Palace, *İ. Metin Kunt*

The Mughal Audience Hall: A Solomonic Revival of Persepolis in Form of a Mosque, *Ebba Koch*

Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Institutional and Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century, *Tülay Artan*

Versailles, Vienna, and Beyond: Changing Views of Household and Government in Early Modern Europe, *Jeroen Duindam*

David M. May, 'The interplay of three established-outsider figurations in a deprived inner-city neighbourhood', *Urban Studies*, 41: 11 (2004), pp. 159–79.

This article discusses Norbert Elias's theory of established-outsider figurations and applies it to the case of one deprived inner-city neighbourhood in Germany, Dortmund Nordstadt. According to this theory, the social cohesion of the established together with the stigmatisation of outsiders leads to status and power differentials that exclude the outsiders. In Nordstadt, three levels of established-outsider figurations overlap and influence each other. At the societal level, the legal system assigns to immigrants the position of outsiders. At the city level, Nordstadt is stigmatised as a neighbourhood for workers and immigrants. At the neighbourhood level, immigrants can, thanks to their greater internal cohesion, establish themselves to some degree, while the Germans attempt to implement the established-outsider figuration of the societal level. By way of conclusion, this article discusses the relevance of Elias's theory both for social theory and for urban studies.

Nico Wilterdink, 'Kapitaal en klasse: veranderingen sinds de jaren tachtig' [Capital and class: changes since the 1980s], *Sociologie* 11: 3–4 (2015), pp. 329–46.

Rineke van Daalen, 'Op zoek naar de vergeten middenklassen' [Looking for the forgotten middle classes], *Sociologie* 11: 3–4 (2015), pp. 545–56.

The two essays above were contributions to a special double issue of *Sociologie* on the theme 'Voorbij de hype: naar verklaringen van ongelijkheid in Nederland' [Beyond the hype: explanations of inequality in the Netherlands], informed particularly by the massively influential writings of Thomas Piketty.

Evelin Gerda Lindner, 'Humiliation-trauma that has been overlooked: an analysis based on fieldwork in Germany, Rwanda/Burundi, and Somalia', *Traumatology* 7:1 (2001), pp. 43–68.

What differentiates trauma from humiliation? This is one of the questions this article tries to answer. Trauma may occur without humiliation, as in the case of natural disaster, however, humiliation may be the core agent of trauma. Furthermore, this paper suggests that the role and significance of humiliation for traumatic experiences has long been overlooked by researchers and practitioners. The paper highlights the macro-historical backdrop for this neglect. It is the unfolding of human rights as opposed to more traditional honour codes at all levels of society both national and international. This change is a major force in making the category of trauma increasingly important, and in moving such practices as 'breaking the will of the child', that were once legitimate and even prescribed, into the category of trauma. The paper also addresses the fact that social science is part of this transition and would benefit from making more visible how it is deeply interlinked with this process.

■ RECENT CONFERENCES

Colloque: Norbert Elias: sociologue des sciences et de la connaissance

Centre Alexandre Koyré, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 27 Rue Damesme, 75013, Paris, 19–20 January 2017.

This colloquium was organised by Marc Joly and Wolf Feuerhahn. It marked the publication of two important new books in French: Norbert Elias, *La dynamique sociale de la conscience* and Marc Joly, *La révolution sociologique* (see details above), and served to draw attention to Elias's sociology of knowledge and the sciences, which has hitherto in France been one of the less well-known aspects of his writings. It was an outstanding success, conducted on a high intellectual level, and drew a large audience of about 45 people.

The colloquium was opened by Antonella Romano, Directrice of the Centre Alexandre Koyré, which is the unit within the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) specialising in the history of science. (Alexandre Koyré, the great historian and philosopher of science, was helpful during Norbert Elias's sojourn in Paris in 1933–35 and, Elias recalled, the only French academic into whose home he was invited.)

After an introduction by Marc Joly and Wolf Feuerhahn, speakers over the two days were:

Reinhard Blomert (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung), 'Un projet de thèse d'Etat sur « les sciences dans la Florence de la Renaissance » sous la direction d'Alfred Weber' (by videolink)

Richard Kilminster (University of Leeds), 'Norbert Elias and Karl Mannheim: contrasting perspectives on the sociology of knowledge'

Claire Pagès (Université François-Rabelais Tours), 'La théorie éliásienne de la connaissance, entre Hegel et Comte ?'

Sabine Delzescaux (Université Paris Dauphine/LEGOS), 'La vocation de savant entre engagements et distanciations'

Stephen Mennell (University College Dublin), 'Norbert Elias and Karl Popper'

Olivier Orain (CNRS/E.H.GO), 'Elias, lecteur de la controverse Lakatos-Kuhn'

Florence Delmotte (FNRS/CRéSPo), 'Science et politique : Les affinités inattendues entre la vision éliassienne de l'histoire et le marxisme critique de Rosa Luxemburg'

The colloquium concluded with a round-table discussion involving: Anthony Burlaud (Université Paris 1), Nathalie Heinrich (CNRS/CRAL), Marc Joly (Laboratoire Printemps, UVSQ/CNRS) on 'Traduire, historiciser et penser avec la sociologie de la connaissance et des sciences de Norbert Elias'

It is worth mentioning that the conference dinner on the Thursday evening was in the restaurant *Le Temps des Cérises*, which has historic connections with the communards of 1871. On the eve of the installation of Donald Trump as President of the USA, this seemed an appropriate choice.

Stephen Mennell



Jason Hughes, Eric Dunning, Michael Dunning, and a flaming birthday cake.

Symposium in Honour of Professor Eric Dunning

*College Court, University of Leicester,
4 March 2017*

Eric Dunning's 80th birthday fell on 27 December 2016. For all of eight decades, his birthday has been entangled with the Christmas holidays, and so the celebration of his academic life took place two months later.

About 50 of Eric's friends came to College Court, many arriving on Friday evening to join Eric in his favourite pastime: a dinner and a drink. The next morning, Jason Hughes and I opened the programme proper with humorous and affectionate anecdotes about

Eric – not to mention a slide show, in which a large proportion of pictures featured pints of beer. A slightly more serious but no less affectionate note was struck in reminiscences by Ivan Waddington on 'Eric Dunning and the Sociology of Sport' and Patrick Murphy on 'Eric Dunning and the Centre for Research into Sport and Society'. More reminiscences came from Loughborough: Dominic Malcolm's and Joe Maguire's personal recollections of Eric. Steve Loyal spoke about what, as a young lecturer, he learned from Eric in the late 1990s and early 2000s when Eric was first External Examiner and then Visiting Professor at University College Dublin. While all of them conjured up the laughter and conviviality which always surrounded Eric, they also conveyed their respect for Eric as a seriously committed and original scholar who inherited from Norbert Elias the sense of sociology as a vocation, a calling that always had to be heeded.

Richard Kilminster, came to Leicester as a postgraduate student in 1971, meeting both Eric and Elias for the first time. He spoke about the postgraduate theory seminar that Elias taught that year, and the theoretical perspective that had also formed Eric. In the afternoon, several substantive papers about current theoretical issues were presented. Heloisa Reis represented the numerous Latin American followers of Elias and Dunning, speaking about 'The contribution of Eric Dunning to the



development of sport in Brazil and to the diffusion of figurational sociology in Latin America'. Then came two contributions from Aberystwyth and International Relations: Andrew Linklater on 'The duality of national state normative codes' and Alex Mack on 'Normative duality and migration: the anxiety of Tony Blair'. (I was glad to see confirmation of my claim that Elias and process sociology have a lot to say about contemporary political questions.)

Finally, I wrapped up proceedings by playing video footage from my archives of the younger Eric Dunning in action. First came the opening few minutes of Eric's appearance on Yorkshire Television's nationally networked Jimmy Young Show in 1987. In a discussion of football hooliganism, an astonishingly youthful-looking Eric (he was about 50 at the time) was pitted against a studio audience including a senior policeman – you can guess the rest. Then came a lecture recorded in 2003, when Eric was injured and unable to travel, for students in the Sociology of Sport at UCD, on the subject of rival theories of catharsis. Richard Scase commented to me afterwards that he wished he'd ever been able to lecture like that himself. (Richard, who was a student in Leicester in the early 1960s and went on to a distinguished career at the University of Kent, writing on organisations and on European

matters, had only seen the day before that this conference was happening, and immediately drove up from Canterbury.)

Then, as usual, this happy occasion concluded in the bar and in the dining hall, where Eric managed to blow out the candles on a slightly belated birthday cake.

Stephen Mennell

Roundtable on Andrew Linklater's *Violence and Civilization in the Western States Systems* at the 42nd Annual British International Studies Conference (BISA)

14–16 June 2017, Brighton, Sussex, United Kingdom

In the recent British International Studies Conference, a Roundtable was convened to discuss the newly published second volume of Andrew Linklater's trilogy on harm. *Violence and Civilization in the Western States-Systems* (2016: Cambridge UP, hereafter *V&C*) synthesises the process-sociological civilising process developed by Norbert Elias with the English School of international relations analysis of international society developed by Martin Wight. The Roundtable was organised and chaired

by John Hobson, with the support of the Historical Sociology and International Relations Working Group, and the journal *Review of International Studies* (RIS), with thanks to editors Ruth Blakeley and Johnathan Joseph. This roundtable was a prelude to a Forum in RIS (to be published later in 2017), which brings together a discussion and critique of *V&C* from a range of scholars in International Relations and Sociology. The four speakers were: George Lawson (LSE), Stephen Mennell (UCD), Hobson (University of Sheffield) and Linklater (Aberystwyth University).

Hobson began proceedings noting the strong consensus held by many of the Forum's contributors that the main problem of *V&C* is its Eurocentric notion of world politics. This was further specified as 'Eurocentrism I' (the omission of non-Western forms of agency), which various contributors adhered to, and 'Eurocentrism II' (the exclusion of the structural power of the West), to which Linklater's book might be primed to critique according to Hobson. The second speaker was Lawson, who challenged the theorisation of history at the core of *V&C*. He questioned the synthetic scaffolding of the relational meta-theoretical commitments of Elias concerning the ever-changing nature of history, with the substantialist commitments of Wight concerning the claim that history is repetitive. The third speaker was Mennell, who remarked that misunderstandings of *V&C* might parallel common misunderstandings of Elias's work. Mennell sought to clarify *V&C*'s use of Eliasian vocabulary, which can often appear unfamiliar to International Relations readers, specifically the 'emic' and 'etic' aspects of his discussions of civilisation, and the development of people's habitus over time. Finally, Linklater responded to both Hobson and Lawson. To Lawson he argued that Wight gives an imperfectly processual account of state-systems but which can plausibly be remedied by applying Eliasian process-sociology. Replying to Hobson, he stated that process-sociological accounts of established-outsider relations could enhance analyses of power struggles within and between



photo by Gail Birkett

social figurations, which also includes academic disciplines, thereby adding to postcolonial analysis. The Roundtable concluded with a productive *Q&A*, furthering the ongoing dialogue between process-sociology and IR.

Alexander Mack
Aberystwyth University

■ FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

XIX ISA - World Congress of Sociology, RC 56: Historical Sociology, Warfare, Distance and 'Civilising Process'

July 15 – 20 July 2018, Toronto, Canada

Call for papers on sociological / socio-historical study of war and violence

Combat at a distance is not new and precedes what Elias called the civilising process, but the development and generalisation of firearms in warfare taking place between 1300 and 1600 seems, remarkably, to coincide with it.

The relations between the 'process of civilisation' and new types of weapons are striking and ambiguous. On the one hand, these transformations enabled killing on a new dimension and scale. And since the World Wars, not only soldiers but also great parts of the civilian population fall victim to mass killings because of new types of weapons. On the other hand, fencing, suffocating, stabbing, seem to lose their importance in the killing from a distance. The atomic bomb kills millions but it needs only a person pushing a button. Drone warfare is also an example of what may call ironically 'civilised warfare'. There is no need for the spontaneity, affectivity and other forms of fierce emotions that one could find on the battlefields of the past. This session invites sociologists, socio-historians and historians to question the transformation of the manners of making war and violence in its complexity. The intervention could consider the proxemic dimension (Hall, 1966) of a battle, but also the representation of violence at any given

time, or the fact that some modalities of violence are considered less 'respectable' than others, paradoxically independently of the number of victims they claim.

Organisers: Dieter Reicher (University of Graz) and Ilan Lew (University of Geneva)

Deadline: Abstracts must be submitted by **20 September 2017**, through the [ISA conference website](#).

■ ADVANCE WARNING: BRUSSELS CONFERENCE 2018

Elias Conference in Brussels, 5–8 December 2018

The next large-scale international gathering of Elias scholars – and we hope other sympathetic human scientists too – will be held in Brussels on 5–8 December 2018 (exact starting and finishing times are yet to be determined). It will be hosted by Florence Delmotte and her colleagues at the Université Saint-Louis.

Before the conference, on 4–5 December, Robert van Krieken and Stephen Mennell will give a workshop for PhD students on Elias and process sociology.

The call for papers is being drafted now. It will be published in September–October 2017 and submission of paper abstracts will close in March 2018.

It is intended that the conference be inclusive of all strands of research interest. Although the overall title has not yet been finalised, we are thinking along the lines of something like 'Global Interdependencies: the Political and Social Scientific Relevance of Elias Today'.

Nor have the session themes been decided, but here are some of the suggestions that have been informally received already:

De-democratisation, habitus (and Brexit) in EU and beyond
Uncertainty and the rise of populisms

Terrorism, violence and anger
Borders, migrations and security
The role of utopias
Public and private: what's new?
Sport, education and gender issues
Micro and macro, theory and practice, short and long term: How are doing?
Sociology, history, philosophy, law, political science and psychology: Is interdisciplinary dialogue just a myth?
Working with Elias: the role of anecdotes and quotations – roundtable
Teaching (with) Elias: experience and narratives – workshop
And 'new Eliasian fields'?

Further suggestions are welcome: please sent them to florence.delmotte@usaintlouis.be.

■ OBITUARY

Andrew Furlong
1956 – 2017



Professor Andy Furlong of the University of Glasgow died aged 60 on Monday 30 January. Andy was a student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Leicester. He was much influenced by the ideas of Elias, and used these throughout his distinguished career, including in the highly influential book he published with Fred Cartmel, *Young People and Social Change* (1997). In more recent work together with John Goodwin and Henrietta O'Connor, Andy returned again to Elias in the book *Young People in the Labour Market: Past, Present and Future* (Routledge 2017). A fuller account of his work and impact on the field can be found here: http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/headline_512283_en.html

Andy was well known in figurational circles, particularly by Eliasians connected with the Leicester department. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to his family.

Jason Hughes

Bruce Mazlish,
1923 – 2016



Bruce Mazlish died on 26 November 2016 at the age of 93. Bruce was a prolific historian of ideas, a psycho-historian, and an advocate of the 'new global history'. He spent virtually the whole of his career at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology – it may come as a surprise that MIT has a Department of History amidst all its world-leading natural sciences, but it does, and Bruce was a distinguished and prolific member of it. He took Emeritus status only in 2003, at the age of 80, but continued in full vigour on a part-time basis.

In our last conversation, we got round to the arid formalism of Talcott Parsons, whom Bruce had known well (MIT and Harvard, being only at opposite ends of Massachusetts Avenue, constantly interact with each other) but whose approach he did not appreciate. He said that he had instead been attracted at an early stage to the work of Norbert Elias. That should not have surprised me, because as early as the 1960s I had come across Bruce's efforts to synthesise psychoanalysis and history (see the edited collection *Psychoanalysis and History*, 1963).

In fact, to the educated American reading public, Bruce was best known for his book *In Search of Nixon: A Psychohistorical Inquiry* (1972), neatly published in time for Richard Nixon's resignation as President in 1974. Bruce admitted that, as an historiographical approach, psychoanalytic history had never quite gained the critical mass required to catch on widely, but he had many other strings to his bow.

His first book was *The Western Intellectual Tradition: From Leonardo to Hegel*, published in 1960 and never out of print. It was co-authored with Dr Jacob Bronowski, whom older British readers may remember as a ubiquitous intellectual – mathematician, historian of science, poet and litterateur – in the 1950s and 1960s, and presenter of the acclaimed television series *The Ascent of Man* in 1973. Bruce had similarly encyclopaedic knowledge.

Bruce had worked as a journalist in his early years, and wrote with great facility and clarity. His books, let alone his articles, are too numerous to list here, but I should particularly like to mention *Civilization and Its Contents* (Stanford UP, 2004) and *The Uncertain Sciences* (Yale UP, 1998). The title of the latter, on which Bruce invited me to write a review essay in *History of the Human Sciences*, was no doubt chosen *pour épater* his natural science colleagues at MIT; he advanced a view of the sciences akin to Elias's, but with the valuable addition of discussion of questions of *historical* explanation (and a view of historical method rather more contemporary than that propounded by Elias in his introduction to *The Court Society*).

Above all, Bruce was a good and kind man; I shall always be grateful for his encouragement when I was writing *The American Civilizing Process*.

Stephen Mennell

■ CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIGURATIONS

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