

Figurations

Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

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■ MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to publish another issue of the *Figurations* Newsletter, which reports both exciting and saddening news. Earlier in the year, we received the upsetting news of Andrew Linklater's passing. Andrew was a stalwart character in the Figurations community, and an influential researcher in the field of International Relations. Whether you knew Andrew as a friend, mentor, or colleague, his charm and wit have brought laughter to all. Most importantly, Andrew's intellectual legacy will continue in his works and the memories of those who knew him. We, the editors, dearly miss Andrew's company.

Leon & Alex

■ PEOPLE

Debbie Kaspar has been promoted to full professor at Hiram College. We congratulate her in her promotion.

Henrietta O'Connor has been appointed as Provost and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Leicester. She worked with John Goodwin on the Youth Worker project (see Bibliographic Retrospect section). We wish her many successes in her new role.

■ IN THE MEDIA

Macron, Sociologists and the Middle Class: A Secret Elysée Luncheon
The French president, Emanuel Macron, lunched with four researchers who project the country toward an 'ecological civilisation.' From their discussion, Macron took away the controversial term 'decivilization.'
Link to article: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2023/05/27/macron-sociologists-and-the-middle-class-a-secret-elysee-luncheon_6028166_7.html

Response to above article: Macron, 'Decivilization' and the Far-Right

Figurations readers might have been puzzled to hear that the French president Emmanuel Macron said last week that France was currently undergoing a 'decivilizing process'. To put this utterance in context, the president used the phrase during a governmental meeting (the so-called *Conseil des ministres*) while paying tribute to three young policemen who tragically lost their lives in a road accident caused by a drunk driver at the weekend.

As many commentators readily pointed out, Macron's turn of phrase alluded to theories cherished by the far-right about the existential threats to a supposed 'European civilization'. Indeed, the

term civilization had replaced the less publicly usable ‘race’ in the parlance of the *nouvelle droite* – an intellectual movement whose main objective was to build a common political platform for the traditional and the post-fascist right – at least since the 1970s. It is no coincidence that the main intellectual circle promoting this project chose to call itself the *GRECE: Groupement de recherches et d’études sur la civilisation européenne*. Since the 1970s, and increasingly in the run-up to the latest presidential election in 2022, this discourse achieved greater public visibility, in particular through TV channels such as *CNews* and generalist newspaper such as *Le Figaro*, which all belong to the influential tycoon Vincent Bolloré.

Therefore, it is not surprising that many political commentators and politicians on the right seized upon the expression to give a semblance of scientific credibility to their exclusive, normatively laden, use of the term ‘civilization’. In at least one occurrence, Norbert Elias’s authority was explicitly convoked to caution the diagnosis of a general decline of civilization: the fact that he was Jewish being put forward as a definitive token of objectivity in this matter¹. Wholly ignoring Elias’ warning against such a use of the term didn’t seem to bother the author.

The controversy took another twist when *Le Monde* revealed that the expression was suggested to the president during a luncheon with ‘sociologists’ – a meeting that was meant to remain away from public attention². In fact, it turned out that among the four guests only one had a connection to sociology as an academic field. The putative author of the expression, Jérôme Fourquet, is the director of IFOP – one of the main French poll institute – but does not hold a degree in sociology.

So, many of us (French-speaking social scientists) were left wondering about what to do about this controversy and whether it was necessary to make clarifications. On one hand, the president’s political strategy seems to pursue an obvious political goal: to placate the right of the political

spectrum, and especially the deputies of *Les Républicains*, whose votes are necessary to pass law through parliament in the absence of an outright majority for the presidential party. But, on the other, to dismiss *any use* of the concept of ‘decivilization’ would amount to make it the preserve of the far-right³. Moreover, it would lead to assume the (as yet) far-fetched claim that the president was adhering to far-right theories when he was in fact only plagiating their vocabulary.

There are several ways out of this conundrum. One is to limit oneself to the basic call not to rush to conclusions by interpreting isolated episodes of violence as attesting of a general social evolution – a safe way with guaranteed limited political impact. Another consists in reinventing the continuing significance of Elias’s perspective in the current political context, but this time turning its light the other way around. In my contribution published in *Libération* on Friday⁴, I suggest that Elias’s works on the German Federal Republic can serve as a warning against the kind of politics the French government is currently pursuing. France has been shaken recently by massive demonstrations against the reform of the national pension scheme. Meanwhile, the ecological movement is gaining traction among the youth and recurs to direct action by organizing blockades of environmentally harmful projects. So far, the government’s response has consisted mainly in making an immoderate use of police forces to deter protesters. On March 25, two protesters were left struggling for their lives after a heavy-handed police intervention in Sainte-Soline.

If this evolution toward an increased use of force against the social movements is not wholly imputable to Emmanuel Macron and is also taking place in other European countries, there is no doubt that we are faced with something akin to the ‘generational conflicts’ that Elias diagnosed as the incipience of the dissolution of the Weimar Republic and the political crises of the German Federal Republic in the 1970s (especially in *Thoughts on the Federal Republic*). The issue

of this conflict still depends greatly on the capacity of those currently holding power *not* to create the conditions for further escalation. By giving free rein to the police forces and casting protesters as ‘uncivilized’ individuals, the current French government seems to ignore this warning, with consequences that could still yet become unmasterable.

By Christophe Majastre

Research fellow at the Belgian fund for scientific research Centre de théorie politique – Université Libre de Bruxelles

References

- 1 <https://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/societe/david-lisnard-emmanuel-macron-parle-de-decivileisation-daccord-et-ensuite-20230526>. Thanks to Sébastien Le Moing for pointing that out to me.
- 2 https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2023/05/26/emmanuel-macron-les-sociologues-et-les-classes-moyennes-recit-d-un-dejeuner-confidentiel-a-l-elysee_6174904_823448.html
- 3 In this sense, Edwy Plenel’s outright denial that Elias could ever have used the term “decivilization” only added to the confusion. <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/politique/260523/decivileisation-la-diversion-extremement-droitiere-de-macron>
- 4 https://www liberation.fr/idees-et-debats/tribunes/emmanuel-macron-et-le-processus-de-decivileisation-une-deformation-de-la-pensee-de-norbert-elias-20230526_RUWAHOAFSRC5RJPN7GR4O67PWQ



Photograph by Esther Boeles.

■ GOUDSBLOM ON CANVAS

On the occasion of the exhibition ‘Knappere koppen’ (*Cleverer minds*) in 2017, Joop Goudsblom (1932–2020) was portrayed by the Amsterdam painter Wendelien Schönfeld. The oil painting (90 x 65 cm) was recently commissioned by the Allard Pierson Museum of the University of Amsterdam, which safeguards the academic heritage. The acquisition was funded by the Norbert Elias Foundation and the Museum.

As its curator Esther Boeles explains, the painting deserves a place in the University’s portrait collection, consisting of professors affiliated with the University or Athenaeum Illustre, the University’s predecessor founded in the 16th Century. Since Goudsblom had a prominent role at the University in general and in Amsterdam Sociology in particular, the Museum will find a proper location for his portrait. Until then, it is stored in the Museum’s depot.

To celebrate the acquisition, a small reception was held in the painter’s studio in Amsterdam in the presence of – from left to right – Johan Heilbron and Arjan Post (both on behalf of the Foundation), Marian Schilder (Heritage Collections UvA), Esther Boeles, Nico Wilterdink, and Wendelien Schönfeld.

The painting was created in 2015 during seven sessions of several hours. It must have helped that the painter and the portrayed knew each other. Schönfeld was an acquaintance of Maria Goudsblom-Oestreicher’s sister. Earlier, she had painted Joop and Maria’s children. The canvas loosely alludes to the tradition of scholar portraits, depicting them in their natural environment. In this case, Goudsblom’s study, behind his main desk, in a characteristic posture.

By Arjan Post

■ FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CALL FOR PAPERS: RED LINES, RED TAPES: ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN SENSITIVE RESEARCH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Conference of ERC Abortion Figurations Project

30 November - 2 December 2023, University of Warsaw

Organizing committee: Marta Bucholc (University of Warsaw), Carmeliza Soares Da Costa Rosário (Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen), Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg (Carleton College, Northfield), Marta Gospodarczyk

(University of Warsaw), Lirio Del Carmen Gutierrez Rivera (Universidad Nacional de Colombia)

Submission deadline: 30 June

Submission form: <https://forms.gle/Xz8Ceqc2BgPYmL4ZA>

Notification of acceptance: 20 July 2023

Venue: Faculty of Neofilology, University of Warsaw, Dobra 55, Warsaw

Mission Statement:

Is there a golden standard of research ethics in studies that cross institutional, national and regional borders to look at things that are private, clandestine or just difficult to grasp? Throughout social sciences, the tension is growing between the need to know more and more about our realities, reaching beyond the easily accessible aspects of our lives, and the need to protect human beings from suffering, harm, damage, exposure, or discomfort that scientists’ striving for knowledge can cause. Despite vast global differences in norms, sensitivities, practices, and framings, social scientific research ethics show a tendency towards increasing standardisation and institutionalization. This current

tendency should make it easier to draw ethical red lines. On that, we can all agree. But too often, this chance of consent comes at a price: today, institutional red tape extends far into our research field. In sensitive research, where red lines are particularly important, institutionalized ethical standards help prevent social-scientific studies from taking an unacceptable course. They foster caution, attentiveness and self-reflection. Ethical awareness takes a long time to grow and proliferate, and the role of institutions, procedures and professional exchange in fostering it is pivotal. However, the expansion of regulation in research ethics can also stand in the way of producing meaningful new knowledge, not by eliminating risky practices, but by discouraging researchers to reflect on which risks may be worth their consideration. This is particularly true whenever, in sensitive cross-cultural studies, researchers need to leave their ethical comfort zone, whereupon they frequently find their institutions, professional association and funding agencies unwilling to follow.

The goal of this conference is to reflect on these and other matters related to the challenges which sensitive research poses to our ethical imagination. We invite researchers in any discipline of social sciences and humanities in the very broadest meaning of the term to share their reflections on the role of research ethics in their work, based on their experiences in the field, in writing, in their organisational careers, as policy-makers, as experts, or in any other capacity. This conference is designed as a forum of exchange for practitioners committed to the promotion of ethical awareness and responsibility. We invite the contributors to point out the areas to be developed further, to exercise productive critique of the existing solutions, and to engage with various disciplinary, regional, and cultural perspectives in order to revisit the question of red lines and red tapes.

The following topics would be of particular interest (accounts coming from the Global South as well as Eastern Europe are especially welcome; the list is intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive):

- institutionalizing research ethics (histories, pathways, agents of influence, structures of resistance and support);
- global and regional trends in research ethics in social sciences and humanities (comparisons between various institutional models and standards, agents and processes in the development of research ethics);
- research ethics as a field of struggles for recognition;
- law and ethics: legal compliance as an ethical issue;
- caught between loyalties (how to solve conflicting loyalties in fieldwork involving divergent loyalty norms);
- power-abuse in sensitive research (imposition, emancipation and unexpected consequences of power struggles in research practice);
- benefit-sharing in social sciences and humanities (concepts, best practices, limitations);
- expert's dilemmas (modes of assessment, sharing expertise and providing feedback in research ethics);
- researchers at risk (the role of ethical considerations of the researchers' own risk);
- interdisciplinary research cooperation: the clash of ethical imaginations?
- sharing ethical awareness (teamwork in complex, multicultural research collectives).

This conference is the first public event of the Abortion Figurations ERC Consolidator project based at the University of Warsaw (<http://abortion-figurations.uw.edu.pl/>). Many of the topics which we will discuss we have experienced already or anticipate coming across as a team conducting cross continental, comparative, cross-cultural, interdisciplinary research of abortion debates, stretching between sociology, law, and linguistics. We are very much looking forward to learning from all the speakers in this conference, and we will contribute our experience as a part of the common reflection on challenges that we and other researchers studying sensitive topics are facing.

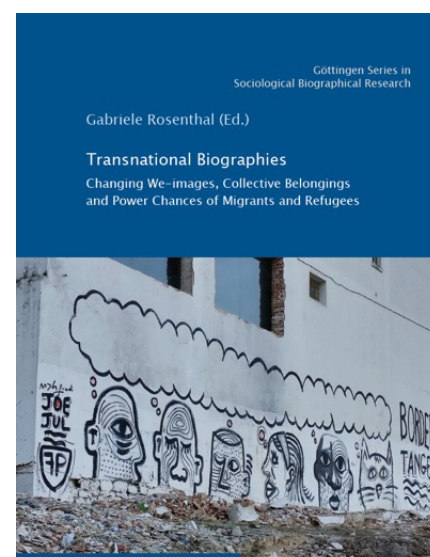
We are looking forward to receiving your abstracts (up to 300 words) sent by the end of June 2023 via this online form: <https://forms.gle/Xz8Ceqc2BgPYmL4ZA>.

Please note that the conference will be held on-site. Conference sessions will be live-streamed.

Conference registration fee will be EUR 75, a reduced rate of EUR 50 will apply for students and independent researchers.

Please kindly direct any questions to the following address: red_lines_conference@is.uw.edu.pl

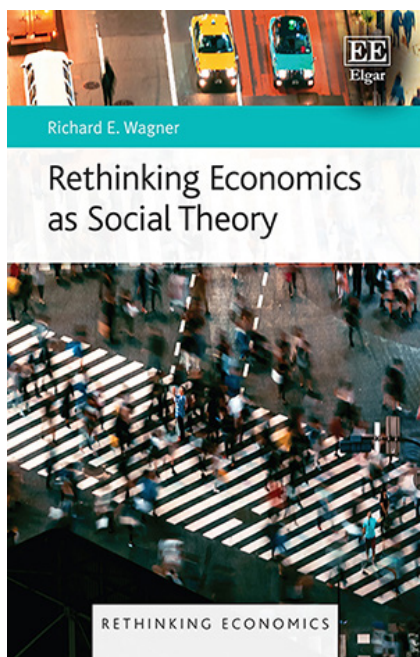
■ RECENT BOOKS & BOOK CHAPTERS



Gabriele Rosenthal (ed.), *Transnational Biographies: Changing We-images, Collective Belongings and Power Chances of Migrants and Refugees* (Göttingen: Göttingen University Press, 2022). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17875/gup2022-2187>

Abstract: Every day many people leave the place where they live and move to some other place, where they settle permanently or stay for many years. The contributions to this volume are based on the results of three empirical research projects which set out to investigate the situation of migrants in Jordan, Brazil, Germany and other European countries. The articles focus on migrants at their place of arrival and

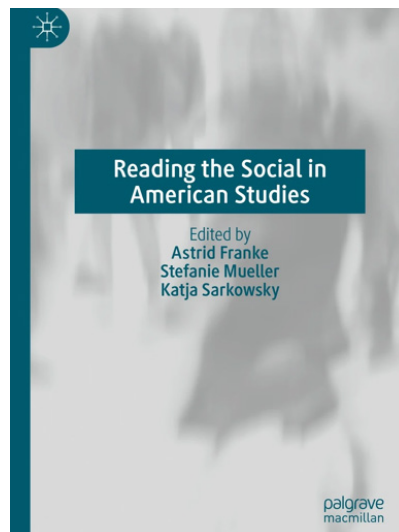
ask questions such as: How do they look back on their life histories and migration paths? What dynamics and processes led up to their migration projects and how do they explain their motives? The studies in this volume show that leaving and arriving are interrelated: leaving one's home region is part of a long process, partly planned and partly unplanned, which is determined by complex collective, familial and individual constellations, and which has significant consequences for the action patterns and participation strategies of migrants in their arrival societies. This book also shows which constellations enable some migrants to realize their goals in their present situation, and which constraints or obstacles make it impossible for others to do so.



Richard Wagner, *Rethinking Economics as Social Theory* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781802204766>

Abstract: Taking an innovative look at the origins of economics, this forward-thinking book relocates economics from a materialistic general theory of rational action into an idealistic theory of social organization and individual action. Adding new insightful analytical methods such as complexity theory, graph theory and computational modelling to the original insights of

the Scottish Enlightenment, Richard E. Wagner explores economics in an ever-changing society, looking at the key civilizing processes and the



important social questions.

Johannes Voelz, 'Reading Populism with Bourdieu and Elias', in: Franke, A., Mueller, S., Sarkowsky, K. (eds) *Reading the Social in American Studies* (Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, 2022). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93551-1_10

Abstract: This chapter explores the potential of relational sociology, specifically the work of Norbert Elias and Pierre Bourdieu, for the study of populism. It argues that populism can be deciphered as political struggles over status. More precisely, populist status struggles take place in a sociocultural sphere in which politics becomes culturalized, and culture becomes politicized. While Bourdieu is particularly helpful for understanding the synchronous dimension of the ways in which populism politicizes cultural styles, Elias emphasizes the diachronic dimension of the status struggles between what he calls "the established and the outsiders." Accordingly, the chapter suggests that social groups resort to authoritarian populism when they perceive their superior status position to wane and that populism is not so much an expression of social domination as of declining dominance. In this context, the aesthetics of populism performatively creates the 'true' or 'real' people: a fiction to shore up one's sense of status.

RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

Julia Katherina Mahnken, 'Digital Transformations in Drug-Related Crime: Figurations, Interdependencies, and Balances of Power', *Historical Social Research*, 47: 3 (2022), pp. 261–290. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.47.2022.33>.

Abstract: Digital Transformations in Drug-Related Crime: Figurations, Interdependencies, and Balances of Power«. The effects of digital transformations are already being researched in many ways in the context of the police. What this body of work has in common is that it refers to current developments. My research also focuses on current processes of change within a classic criminal phenomenon but places it in the context of long-term processes in order to derive both the resistances to innovation and possible specific opportunities for organisational change that result. The online drug platform "Chemical Revolution" serves as an exemplary case study. Norbert Elias's figuration and process sociological approach (expansion by Rammert's concept of distributed action) enables an analysis at micro, meso, and macro levels. It shows that long-term social processes continue under digital conditions and reproduce diverse modes of action. At the same time, power chances for crime investigation are shifting under digital conditions from consumers (microcrime) to markets (macro-phenomena). Although Elias himself did not deal with digital technologies, this illustrative study nevertheless makes clear the value of his process-oriented perspectives and tools (valencies, interdependencies, power balances, figurations).

Manuel Dieterich, 'Urban Threat Figurations. Boundary-Making in and across Unequal Neighborhoods', *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 52: 2 (2023), pp. 157–171. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/zfsocz-2023-2013>

Abstract: Building on ethnographic research in Johannesburg, this article introduces the concept of figurations

to segregation research to analyse the multi-layered relationships between unequal and diverse neighbourhoods. In this way, the equation of residential with social segregation, which is often found in global segregation literature, can be overcome. The figurative lens enables us to grasp the dynamics of relational intra- and inter group processes in and across residentially segregated neighbourhoods. I show this by means of three different figurations: 1) a victim-perpetrator figuration around the threat of criminality, 2) a Black-White figuration around the threat of losing Afrikaner identity, and 3) a locals-externals figuration around the threat of environmental pollution and health. The result is a more complex understanding of neighbourhood relations. Instead of reifying a static picture of segregated areas and the assumption of omni-relevant categorizations, the figural perspective facilitates the recognition of social change on the neighbourhood level.

John Goodwin, 'Slower Sociologies for the Sociology of the Future', *Sociology*, 57: 2, (2023), pp. 415–420. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00380385221127106>

Abstract: In this article the use of old photograph techniques is considered as a way of 'slowing sociology down' in order to have more thoughtful and immersive engagement within the field. This is contrasted with contemporary methods and their emphasis on speed, efficiency and perfection.

Nestar Russell, 'Disconcerting Insights: Milgram's Obedience Experiments, Elias's Civilizing Process, and the Perpetration of the Holocaust', *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11: 5 (2023), pp. 436-466. Link: https://www.scirp.org/pdf/jss_2023053014060927.pdf

Abstract: Social psychologist Stanley Milgram (1963, 1974) and sociologist Norbert Elias ([1939] 2000) are undisputed social science heavyweights whose scholarly contributions delve into the shared topic of violence. Despite this similarity, near nothing has been

written on any insights one might offer the other. With the aim of bucking this trend, this exploratory article illustrates how certain connections shared between both magna operas are mutually beneficial: Elias's thesis can shed new light into otherwise mysterious obedient subject behavior and Milgram's experiments can be used to bolster a central yet weak pillar in Elias's thesis. The strengthening of this weak pillar is of particular importance because it likely reinvigorates the ability of the Civilizing Process to offer unique and counterintuitive insights into German perpetrator behavior during the Holocaust. It is through these Milgram-Elias linkages that the author's paradoxical concept of *civilized killers* emerges.

■ E-IR PROCESS SOCIOLOGY FORUM

Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations) Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/tag/process-sociology-forum/>

The late Andrew Linklater and four of his students published a forum that discusses the different ways in which Elias can be used in the field of International Relations. They focused on five global challenges: 1) Covid-19 and pandemics as ambiguous symbols of orientation (Andrew Linklater), 2) the global ecological crisis illuminated with a focus on human-nature relations, fantasy-reality balances, the triad of controls and the development of global ecological processes (André Saramago), 3) animal cruelty, anthropocentrism's moral supremacy over the natural world, and the rise of new sensibilities in the development of the civilising process (Adrianna Kapek-Goodridge), 4) securitisation processes of transnational migration in liberal-democratic societies seen through the prism of established-outsider relations, normative codes and the involvement-detachment balances (Alexander Mack), and 5) the war in Ukraine as part of functional (de-)democratisation processes and of the increasing dis-entanglement of Russia from the West (Alexandros Koutsoukis).

A contribution from John Hobson is also forthcoming. The forum draws inspiration from Linklater's long battles to convince researchers in the field of International Relations that process sociology can make a vital contribution to the field, and tries to continue this conversation with this new audience. It appears in the world's leading open access website for students and scholars of international politics, E-International Relations.

Andrew Linklater, 'Process Sociology and Global Challenges: Reflections on the Covid-19 Pandemic', In: Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations). Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/2023/04/01/process-sociology-and-global-challenges-reflections-on-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

For those who have not found the relevant link, large claims about Elias's importance for IR may seem exaggerated.... But those who support Elias's process sociology have long had a battle on their hands to find effective ways of demonstrating the value of the approach (Mennell 1998: ch. 1 provides an overview of the challenges). This essay argues that Covid-19 provides one of the threads noted above, a link between elements of some common experiences of the effects of a global pandemic and Elias's writings.

André Saramago, 'Process Sociology and the Global Ecological Crisis', In: Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations). Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/2023/03/31/process-sociology-and-the-global-ecological-crisis/>

As the effects of the global ecological crisis become increasingly more evident, there have been growing calls within International Relations (IR) for the discipline to develop more sophisticated theoretical and analytical frameworks that are capable of encompassing the role of human/non-human nature relations in world politics.... Process sociology provides a particularly compelling approach to theorize and analyse these relations.

Adrianna Kapek-Goodridge, 'Animal Suffering and the Civilizing Process', In: Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations). Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/2023/03/31/animal-suffering-and-the-civilizing-process/>

Can humanity consider itself civilised when analysing people's attitudes to non-human animals? This question is particularly evident when looking at human supremacy over the natural world and indifference to animal suffering that have persisted over many centuries.... this article considers and analyses shifts in European approaches to non-human animals throughout the centuries by using Norbert Elias' theory of the civilizing process.

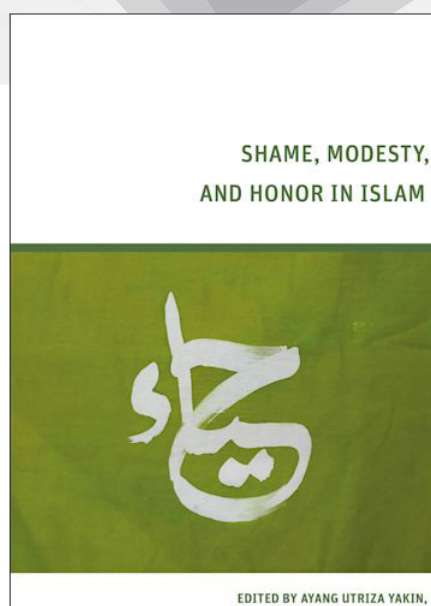
Alexander Mack, 'Shared Anxieties and Transnational Migration: Moralised Tensions in Liberal-Democratic Societies', In: Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations). Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/2023/04/01/shared-anxieties-and-transnational-migration-moralised-tensions-in-liberal-democratic-societies/>

Liberal-democratic societies find themselves torn between contradictory moral imperatives.... Current perspectives in International Relations (IR) such as securitisation understand these tensions through the conceptualisation of static slices..... Process sociology takes a more dynamic approach to the questions of how people/groups/things become and are sustained as threats across time, by synthesising conceptualisations of relational orientation with sociologies of risk.

Alexandros Koutsoukis, 'The War in Ukraine: A Process Sociological Perspective on How We Got Here', In: Alexandros Koutsoukis and Andrew Linklater (eds) *Process Sociology Forum* (E-International Relations). Link: <https://www.e-ir.info/2023/04/01/the-war-in-ukraine-a-process-sociological-perspective-on-how-we-got-here/>

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has been described as the return of geopolitics, the return of 19th Century imperialism or as a struggle between democracies and autocracies. Discussions tend to be reduced to the attribution of (direct) blame..... Process sociology can illuminate the gradual and increasing emotional and political disentanglement of Russia from the West by offering a distinct answer to the question of *how we got here*.

■ FORTHCOMING BOOK CHAPTERS



John Lever and İrem Özgören Kinli, 'Between family and friends: honour, shame, and the politics of eating and drinking among South Asian British Muslims', In: Ayang Utriza Yakin, Adis Duderija, and An Van Raemdonck (eds) *Shame, Modesty, and Honor in Islam* (Bloomsbury: London, 2024). Link: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/shame-modesty-and-honor-in-islam-9781350386105/>

Abstract: The dynamic interplay between honour and shame conditions the politics of eating and drinking among South Asian British Muslims in particular ways. Drawing on empirical material from a series of studies on halal food consumption and practice in Manchester in the North of England, in this chapter we look to insights from figurational sociology to explore the

complex networks of social and cultural interdependence that second and third generation Muslims encounter through the prism of honour-shame culture. Specifically, we investigate the extent to which family honour as an 'external social control', and shame as an 'internal control', influence the 'we-I balance' and levels of awareness and self-control. This allows us to explore how South Asian men and women attempt to handle shame and maintain family honour in complex cultural settings where they may be presented with opportunities to consume non-halal food and drinks containing alcohol in the midst of traditional family settings.

■ RECENTLY COMPLETED THESIS

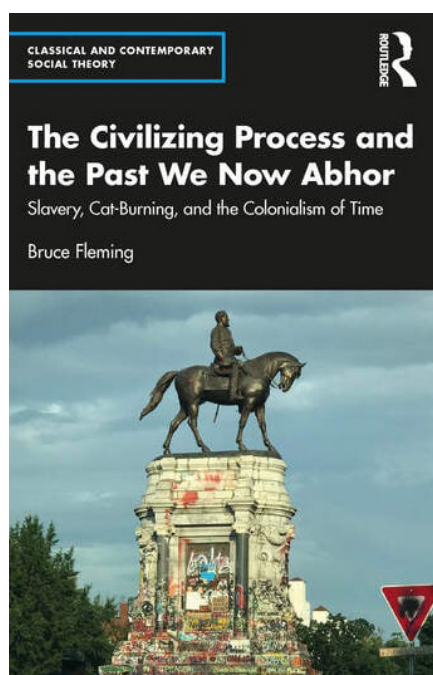
Jan Davis (2022). *The Sociogenesis of a Village: From Wicked to 'Wicked'*. Leicester: University of Leicester.

Abstract: The research village's history dates back over a millennium, with my family name, like many others, being traced back for centuries. Over time a cultural stock of symbols developed, expressing the feelings and attitudes of various stages of the historical development of processes of affective identification and disidentification. I examined the role of nostalgia and hauntology in these processes within the sociogenesis of the village, thereby making a novel sociological contribution. Different concepts, methods and data sources from various disciplines and subject areas were brought together in a multi-phased approach, providing a snapshot of life in an English rural village today, replete with its past which, through nostalgia and hauntology, is inextricably linked with its present. The village's sociogenesis is more than a chronicling of events; it unravels and reveals the structure and the direction of changes of the developing process, unattainable without my diverse approach. The multi-disciplinary synthesis and multi-phased approach has similarities with Norbert Elias's processual sociology. However, my observations, document examination and in-depth interviews, using both current and former residents' voices, found nostalgia and hauntology, although

often based on exaggerated versions of real, or even fictitious, events or circumstances, produce outcomes that are real in their consequences; a conclusion absent from the works of Elias. Furthermore, I found not only the significance of nostalgia's and hauntology's role in this small village, but drew conclusions applicable to local, regional, national and worldwide relationships and spaces. Finally, my empirical contribution, by presenting and examining a single village as an empirical crucible, showed how nostalgia has helped the village develop from one that was considered undesirable, wicked, to one that is now, using the modern sense of the word, a 'wicked' or highly desirable place to live.

Please note: This PhD thesis is under embargo until 2025.

BOOK REVIEWS



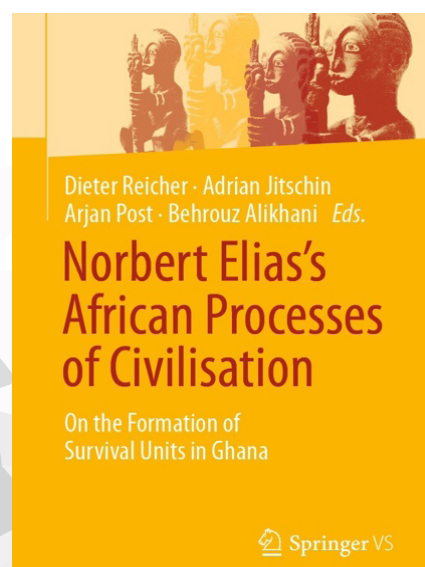
Bruce Fleming. *The Civilising Process and the Past We Now Abhor: Slavery, Cat-Burning, and the Colonialism of Time*. London: Routledge, 2022. H/B ISBN: 9781032127378, P/B ISBN 9781032134703, eBook ISBN: 9781003229360.

Unfortunately, this interesting little book is founded on a misunderstanding of the work of Norbert Elias that critics

often make when reading volume one of *The Civilising Process* in isolation from volume two: that the West is the height of civilisation. This reading underpins Fleming's argument that by treating our 'own past' as we once treated 'other parts of the world', we alone are moral in ways that those who went before us were not. This can be seen, he argues, in demands that we apologise and make reparations for the actions of our ancestors, and in the dismantling and removal of evidence from public spaces of great figures from the golden age of discovery. But this violence against the past is not simply about the morality of the present. It is part of the ongoing development of the civilising process, and the tension between what is perceived to be 'civilised' or not (i.e. uncivilised) for people and groups in the past as well as in the present. Fleming is undoubtedly on to something when he claims that good manners and political correctness have the same goal. But as Dennis Smith once pointed out, although it is not politically correct to say so, those who lose colonial 'possessions' often feel resentful. In this sense at least, Fleming's book provides fascinating insights into the civilising process.

By John Lever

Book Purchase Link: <https://www.routledge.com/The-Civilizing-Process-and-the-Past-We-Now-Abhor-Slavery-Cat-Burning/Fleming/p/book/9781032134703>



Dieter Reicher, Adrian Jitschin, Arjan Post, & Behrouz Alikhani, eds. *Norbert Elias's African Processes of Civilisation: On the Formation of Survival Units in Ghana*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2022. ISBN 978-3-658-37848-6.

Eliasian scholars Dieter Reicher, Adrian Jitschin, Arjan Post and Behrouz Alikhani researched, compiled and edited the book *Norbert Elias's African Processes of Civilisation: On the Formation of Survival Units in Ghana*, published in 2022 in Germany by Springer. The editors received the precious help for correcting the texts and thus for the editing process from Barbara and Stephen Mennell. As the title indicates, the 247-page book deals with Norbert Elias' view of some sociogenetic and psychogenetic processes in Ghanaian society, including its civilisational processes. The book is not a second-degree interpretation of this vision –although the authors' introduction does the job impeccably–, but a collection of unpublished texts on the subject written by Elias himself. In them, the public will at last be able to read at first hand, and in the light of informed empirical and theoretical oriented discussions, the core of the positions Elias held with regard to low differentiated non-Western societies. Aware readers will thus be able to see for themselves that his positions in this respect have nothing to do with the ethnocentrism that some authors

attribute to him deductively, and sometimes projectively, due to the fact that he concentrated the main part of his work on elucidating the processes of development of Western European societies.

Part of the editors' work focused on choosing, editing and organising the different texts into a coherent argumentative line. It consists of three parts:

1. The first part, *Problems of Researching Traditional Societies*, brings together two texts written by Elias during his time as a Professor of Sociology at the University of Ghana between 1962-1964: "Overcoming 'tribe' and Other Static Categories" and "African Village-States: The Formation of Survival Units" (the latter written with his assistant and graduate student in Ghana, Hazel King). Both texts constitute chapters 2 and 3 of the book. In them he addresses, among other things, the limitations and effects of static modes of reflection and perception in anthropological research, especially through his analysis of the concept of "tribe".

2. The second part, *The Krobo People: Socio- and Psychogenesis of a Stateless Society*, which constitutes the largest part of the book bringing together the six subsequent chapters (4 to 9), was dictated by Elias near the end of his life to Dutch student assistants in 1987. The title of each chapter encompasses the kind of process of transformation of the Krobo people in Ghana that he studied in some detail in the light of the empirical evidence he gathered over the years: "Outline of an Early State-Formation Process", "A Tribe on the Move: The Development of Krobo Society", "Fission and Fusion: The Next Stage of Tribe Formation", "Religion in a Village Society", "Priests and Knowledge", and "Emotions, Violence and Rituals: On Traditional Klama Songs".

Throughout this part of the book, Elias explores central aspects of the development of Krobo people in terms of their own historical

narrative and with the help other sources. This allows him to fully connect the empirical material he had been working on with the theoretical reconstruction of the development process he aimed to study. The texts are easy to read, and, as the reader will discover, have a very captivating side, in which he fluently discusses the curious stories told by his main source, the book *Adangbe History* written by the Ghanaian author Noa Akunor Azu (an ascendant of one of his students in Ghana), without romantic impulses or arrogance towards the data, but seeking to give them a place in the clarification of the social, cultural, and cognitive transformation processes he is interested in.

(1) Finally, the third part, *African and Western Civilising Processes*, brings together the texts of two lectures Elias gave at different times: the tenth chapter, the text "The Formation of States and Changes in Restraint", is a paper Elias gave at a conference he himself hosted in 1984 at the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung in Bielefeld; and chapter 11, the text "Sociology and Anthropology", is a paper Elias presented in 1963 at the Second Annual Conference of the Ghana Sociological Association.

Part of the work of the editors concentrated on a comprehensive introductory study, published as the first chapter, in which they present, among other things, a preliminary study on the genesis of the collected texts, a thoughtful examination of the impact on Elias's later work of his two-year stay as a sociology professor in Ghana, and an interesting reflection on the question "Do African Processes of civilisation exist?". In addition, as an epilogue, Arjan Post presents a reflection on Elias's little-known and intriguing encounter with Malcolm X in 1964.

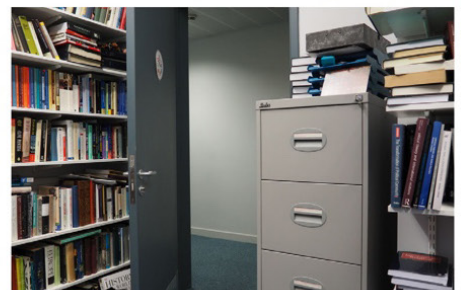
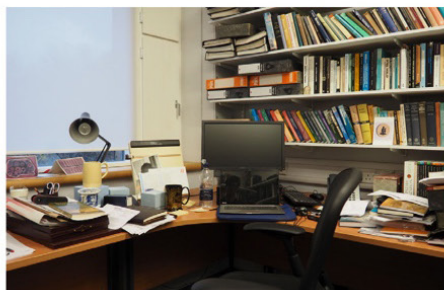
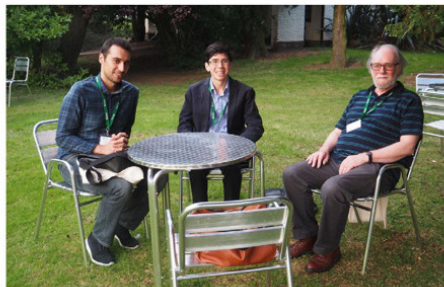
However, arguably the most laborious part of the editors' work concentrated on bringing order to a series of texts whose characteristics make them quite difficult to work with. The texts that make up the second part of the book

are to be found in Elias's personal archive located in the *Deutsches Literaturarchiv* (DLA) in Marbach am Neckar (Germany), more precisely in folders 801 to 810. Those who consult the contents of these folders can see for themselves that Elias explored and abandoned different routes to approach the subject. For instance, in the first folder alone, almost three versions of a same text can be reconstructed! There are paths taken by the author which, although they did not seem to satisfy him in the overall writing he was preparing, contain very interesting reflections, such as his position towards the Marxist explanation for understanding state formation, or on the overproduction of food in the neolithic revolution. One might be tempted to add them as notes here and there, but exercises like this do not restore the author's intentions, which must be respected in a serious work of editing. Under such conditions, the task of selecting what was worth rescuing in order to give coherence and robustness to the text must not have been easy.

Thus, thanks to the editors' work, that which until before this book appeared to us as isolated fragments in Elias's personal archive in the DLA, has acquired an order that is far from random and that does justice, one might say, to the core of concerns that occupied Elias's mind and work at various times around the problems with which anthropologists are ordinarily concerned, and which, for him, should also capture the efforts of sociologists.

By David Sierra G.

Book Purchase Link:
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-658-37849-3>



■ OBITUARIES & TRIBUTES

Andrew Linklater (1949–2023)

Andrew Linklater, Woodrow Wilson Chair in International Politics at Aberystwyth University, sadly passed away on 5 March 2023 in Bronglais Hospital, Aberystwyth, victim of Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. Andrew was a renowned international relations theorist and process sociologist. His first book *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations* (1982) set the research themes that would occupy him, in various ways, throughout his life. Aiming at nothing less than ‘to establish a basic framework upon which to build a general theory of relations between political communities’, in this book Andrew addressed what he considered to be the fundamental problem at the heart of international relations: the tension felt by all human beings between obligations to fellow members of their political communities and obligations to humanity. Engaging with the political thought of Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Hegel and Karl Marx, Andrew set out to develop a grand narrative of human development that sought to capture how the tension between ‘men’ and ‘citizens’ was addressed in different forms of political community throughout history. To this day, *Men and Citizens* is considered one of the foundational texts in the development of a critical approach to International Relations. It contributed to moving the discipline away from a predominant focus on the analysis of contemporary inter-state power politics to a discussion concerned with the historical development of political communities and the immanent potentials for their future transformation.

Andrew’s talent to find inspiration in a great variety of disciplinary fields and currents of thought was further evidenced in his following two books, *Beyond Realism and Marxism: Critical Theory and International Relations* (1990) and *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (1998). In this later book, Andrew set a research agenda for a critical international theory that opened the way

for an understanding of how modern states might be transformed into more inclusive forms of political community. Influenced by his engagement with the thought of Jürgen Habermas, this research agenda envisioned a critical international theory based on a synergy between its normative dimension (which denaturalized attachments to the nation-state and legitimized emotional and moral identification between human beings beyond sovereign frontiers), its sociological dimension (which inquired into how modern states came to be and how their clauses of exclusion of outsiders developed throughout history) and its praxeological dimension (which sought to identify immanent potentials within modernity for social, political and moral transformation towards more inclusive forms of political community).

In the last quarter of his career, Andrew became deeply influenced by Process Sociology and the work of Norbert Elias. In this context, Andrew continued to expand his theoretical concerns with the relations between insiders and outsiders of political communities, broadening them into a sociological investigation of ‘harm conventions’. His core research agenda was structured around the idea that all human societies need some form of harm convention to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable forms of harm, both between members of the political community and in their relations with outsiders. Andrew was particularly interested in investigating the possibility for the historical emergence of what he called ‘cosmopolitan harm conventions’, which protected all human beings from certain forms of harm, irrespective of their nationality, class, race, or gender. This research led to the publication of three books: *The Problem Harm in World Politics: Theoretical Investigations* (2011), *Violence and Civilization in the Western States-Systems* (2016) and *The Idea of Civilization and the Making of the Global Order* (2020). The last two books carried out a detailed investigation of the development of ‘civilising processes’ within European international society and in the context of its encounter with non-Western societies. Through this research, Andrew made a fundamental and

highly original contribution to Process Sociology via the study of the role of harm conventions in world politics and the inquiry of the historical emergence of ‘global civilising processes’. The full contribution of Andrew’s process sociological research to both Sociology and International Relations is still, in many ways, in the process of being discovered.

Up to the time of his death, and during his final weeks in Bronglais hospital, Andrew worked on what he considered to be the last in this series of process sociological books. Andrew’s last major work was once again remarkable in its ground-breaking and original synthesis between different areas of knowledge. Firmly grounded in a process sociological perspective, it combined insights from the natural and the social sciences to provide a discussion, impressive in its depth and magnitude, of the way that symbols of various kinds acted as factors of mutual identification/deidentification between human beings, both within and across the frontiers of political communities, from the Neolithic to the present day. Andrew was particularly interested in the historical potential for the development of ‘cosmopolitan symbols’ that expressed identification with humanity, or even with non-human species. The last sections of the book, on which he worked in the last days of his life, addressed how the emergence of symbols connected with the contemporary global ecological crisis, such as the notion of the ‘Anthropocene’, hold the potential to radically expand the frontiers of human emotional and moral identification. Andrew did not live to publish this book, a work that will be carried out by his former PhD student, André Saramago.

Andrew’s invaluable contribution to knowledge was widely acknowledged and finds expression in his membership as a founding Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, and as a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and the British Academy. Beyond being an incredible scholar, Andrew was also an inspiring human being and friend, recognized amongst those who had the privilege of knowing him

personally for his good humour and enjoyment of a good laugh, as well as for his qualities as a keen listener and conversationalist. These qualities were combined with a contagious enthusiasm for a multitude of topics, from pottery to the collection of gemstones and the observation of wildlife. Throughout his life, Andrew remained committed to the Enlightenment ideal of improving the human means of orientation, in the hope that the further development of the social sciences might help people better understand themselves and their conditions of existence and help them navigate the complex global webs of human interdependence in ways that increase collective chances of enjoyment and reduce prevailing forms of harm and suffering. The full extension of his contribution to knowledge will take many years to be explored, and Andrew's work will continue to be a source of inspiration to scholars everywhere well into the future.

By André Saramago

Tributes to Andrew Linklater

I first met Andrew when we were both at Monash University in Melbourne, but I did not know him well until later. Our two departments – his Politics, mine Anthropology & Sociology – were in two separate faculties, Commerce and Arts respectively; in such ways do universities contrive to impede contact between like-minded academics. In 1991, I hosted a small symposium on long-term social development, with Joop Goudsblom, Eric Jones, Mark Elvin and Jerry Bentley – but, incredibly in retrospect, I did not invite Andrew, because I did not know how his interests were developing. I had him pigeon-holed as yet another Frankfurt School enthusiast, with which Australia then abounded. We both left Monash in 1993, and it was not until 31 January 2002 that I received an email from Andrew, in which he said:

Dear Stephen

You won't remember me but I was in Politics at Monash ... We left about the same time. I went to Keele and

am now in International Politics at Aberystwyth.

I remember you gave a seminar on Elias whose work I knew just a little, but I've gone back to Elias, and been reading some of the secondary literature (your books, Fletcher's *Violence and Civilization* etc.) in connection with a big project that's gradually working its way to the top of the pile. It's about how far different international systems created harm conventions designed to save individuals and their associations unnecessary suffering. From that pencil sketch you will see why I find civilising processes important. The project may end up being a study of civilising processes in different international systems but it will certainly look at how far the modern system is different from the others in legislating against serious mental and bodily harm.

Well, the point of all of this is to ask for help in tracking down papers and people who have worked on the IR side of things. Can you point me in the right direction? I visited a couple of websites but I didn't get any leads from them. ... I think Elias is central, and might even be the key, to what I want to do, and I'd be grateful for any advice. Hope you enjoy living and teaching in Dublin, and hope to hear from you if time permits.

Best Wishes

Andrew

Time certainly did permit. There were dozens of emails between us in the rest of 2002 alone. I must have pointed him first to the pioneering work of Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh in applying Eliasian thinking to international relations. In December 2002 Andrew presented a paper on 'Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* and the Sociology of International Relations' at the annual conference of the British International Studies Association. We rapidly became firm friends. In 2009, the journal *History and Theory* commissioned him to write an appraisal of *On the Process of Civilisation*, and he asked

me to co-author it.¹ Some measure of his influence is that it attracted an extraordinarily wide readership. Last time I checked, not long before Andrew died, it had been read online more than 10,000 times; none of my own numerous essays about Elias has attracted anything like so much attention.

His 'harm' project did reach the top of the pile, and *The Problem of Harm in World Politics: Theoretical Investigations* was published in 2011 by Cambridge University Press. This and other books have made Elias's name familiar among International Relations scholars around the world.

What made Andrew an unusual recruit to the Elias circle was that he was already a senior figure with a big international reputation – most of us joined the club as youngsters influenced by our teachers. Andrew's distinction was recognised in 2005 by the rare honour of election as a Fellow of the British Academy – the equivalent for the humanities and social sciences in the UK of the better-known Royal Society for the natural sciences. Andrew in effect became instantly a senior figure amongst us. The first Elias conference that he attended was, I think, the one in Leicester organised by Anne Witz and Jason Hughes in April 2006. He slotted in immediately. He seemed quickly to get to know both young and old. In 2010, he was central to the Dublin conference on 'Globalisation and Civilisation in International Relations: Towards New Models of Human Interdependence'.²

Before he died, Andrew had almost finished his book on symbols. In what proved to be his last email to me, he said he was checking 180 references in the Collected Works in the symbols typescript.

As always rereading the relevant pages raised new issues and led to a better grasp of E's position. My intuition is that the more one goes over the works and reads across them, the more one sees the significance of points that did not seem fundamental on the first, second or seventh read. Texts travel

with the reader and repay repeated reading. If that is not a mark of a genius in the social sciences then what is? ... I think after the book is over I will just read the Collected Works and the surrounding literature. I will learn something new every day and put writing to one side.

Andrew influenced me greatly, but more important than any influence on the old guard like me was the great encouragement he gave to so many younger scholars. Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about Andrew was how universally he was liked, indeed loved. A phrase that was used by several people after his death was ‘a great human being’.

By Stephen Mennell

Notes

¹ Andrew Linklater and Stephen Mennell, ‘Retrospective: Norbert Elias, The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations – an overview and assessment’, *History and Theory* 49: 3 (2010), pp. 384–411.

² His influence on me can be seen in that it was rather under his tutelage that I wrote, and presented at that conference, my *Abschiedsvorlesung* (for want of an English term) on ‘Realism and reality congruence: sociology and international relations’, *Human Figurations* 2 (2012), <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/humfig/11217607.0001>.

Intellectual openness was one of Andrew’s many personal traits. He would joke that after first reading the duality of nation-state normative codes, my hair was standing on end in sheer curiosity, ‘no one had told me about this [process sociology]’. Our relationship became more than just supervisor–PhD student. We quickly became fellow travellers on an intellectual journey, moving in unique ways, but in similar directions. Our research methods were diverse, yet we shared a bond that recognised the interdependencies between conceptualisation and empiricisation. In one conversation, he remarked that ‘you’re doing something different’, and before I could reply he continued ‘but then you would

say isn’t that the point’. I will always treasure our vibrant exchanges across breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. When he learnt that I was expanding my process reconstructions from textual discourses into photography, he encouraged me to keep snapping. So, I will keep writing and snapping, knowing that the journey continues.

By Alexander Mack

Andrew was a true intellectual giant, who never disappointed as a person. Whether it was admiring the simple beauty of field flowers or having deep conversations on the human condition during late night hours. Forever curious, forever kind and supportive. The world without him just will not be the same...

By Barbara Górnicka

Andrew was a prominent figure in my life, and I know that he meant a lot to many others, both academically and personally. Almost a decade ago, we became acquainted at Aberystwyth University, where I was Prof Linklater’s MA student taking his module ‘Violence and Civilization’ which, of course, focused entirely on Norbert Elias. Andrew’s passion for academia, Elias, and nature was truly inspirational, and I became enthralled in ‘The Civilizing Process’ from that moment on. Our shared love for the natural world initiated many stimulating conversations – before long, I started my own research on the civilizing process and animal suffering with Andrew as my supervisor. But he was much more than that. His engagement in our debates was unfaltering, his interest in new ideas always piqued, his curiosity in discovering more was unmatched. We stayed in touch until his untimely passing, working on a joint article project with other Aberystwyth scholars, and I am immensely proud to have been able to call Prof Linklater my supervisor, colleague, and mentor. Andrew, you are deeply missed.

By Adrianna Kapek-Goodridge

Andrew Linklater’s loss is a loss. We remain interdependent with his memory, his work and his teachings

but something will be forever lost: his human touch to the ones closest to him, his good mornings, his warm greetings to the rest of us. Andrew would likely express reservations to this sentiment, but I would also counter that it may have been because he was humble.

When I think of Andrew, him opening the door for me comes first. This made me feel so small and at the same time taught me a dear lesson in human dignity. Andrew’s *civilité* was present everywhere from the department to the amphitheatre, from the coffee shop back to his office. His dedication to knowledge would also be civil and keep him above the fray. A smile, a funny comment and a lot of good will seemed to be his preference. Of course a good bottle of wine, that we occasionally exchanged, could also make life more pleasurable.

When it came to his standards, he had a phrase that summed it all. He would describe certain academic works as too impressionistic. In Eliasian terms this meant insufficient synthesis and inadequate theorisation. For a student who had come from Greece carrying in his luggage his other mentor’s line that “theory is the distillation of scientific knowledge”, Andrew’s rebuke was as gentle as it was scathing.

For Andrew, the personal and the international were weaved together when he smiled at you, when he offered you feedback, when he asked for your opinion or for clarifications or when he praised you or your colleagues. This is ‘how we do it’ might be a good summary of his life. Always an example for us. Always in our memory. Always in our thoughts.

By Alexandros Koutsoukis

Like many people, I was deeply saddened by Andrew Linklater’s death. Like many, I am happy and consider myself lucky to have known him. Like many, I regret that I didn’t learn more from him while he was still alive.

The first time I ‘met’ him was when I read the article ‘Norbert Elias, the ‘Civilizing Process’ and the Sociology of International Relations’ published

in *International Politics* in 2004. I was writing my PhD at ULB, Brussels, and a slightly older colleague working in the field of critical security studies, who unfortunately also died too soon, had sent it to me. Reading this text was not far from being a 'revelation' for me, who did not come from the field of international relations but had already been working on Elias for several years. Thanks to this text and its author, I discovered a new reading of Elias, both political and philosophical, which never ceased to be sociological and which discussed, among other things, as brilliantly and usefully, the fruitful tensions in Elias's work between its Hobbesian, Grotian and Kantian dimensions. It's an important intellectual *souvenir* for me.

Then I met Andrew Linklater in real life, in Dublin in 2010, and after that conference he helped me, with infinite kindness and a lot of patience (I was, albeit behind my computer, on maternity leave), to rework my paper for publication in *Human Figurations*. It was my first piece of writing in English and it was another important moment for me.

Then I met Andrew again at, I think, the anniversary conference in honour of Eric Dunning, in Leicester. Alex (Mack) accompanied him and I was struck, touched, by the benevolence, fairness and esteem he showed his young PhD student.

The last time I met him was in Brussels in December 2018. He had agreed to give the closing lecture, on emotions, at the big conference we organised there. It's also a lovely memory. I also remember a discussion in a noisy café about Germany between the two world wars, the subject of an exhibition in Brussels. Then he confessed to me that he didn't have time to read novels on this period. I felt rather sorry for him at the time...

The last text I read by Andrew Linklater was his book *The Idea of Civilization and the Making of the Global Order* (2020). In it I rediscovered a way of thinking that was always both powerful and full of true modesty, with creativity intact. Since then, I've been

recommending it to my colleagues and students again and again.

As well as a great mind, we have lost a warm and humble person. Someone whose sparkling eyes and warm smile and voice made us forget that he impressed us. Thanks to his personality, the void he leaves is not really a void, as so many of his colleagues and friends will be keen to keep his work alive.

In the first text I mentioned, Andrew wrote in introduction: 'Among sociologists of his generation, Elias was unusual in recognizing the importance of international relations for the wider social sciences...'. I think we can just return the compliment and consider that among the internationalists of his generation, Andrew Linklater was unique in recognising the importance of Elias's sociology of processes for the wider political, social and human sciences, and pursuing and promoting it just as successfully.

By Florence Delmotte

French version:

La disparition d'Andrew Linklater m'a profondément attristée, comme beaucoup. Comme beaucoup, je considère toutefois que j'ai eu de la chance de l'avoir, un peu, connu, et j'en suis heureuse. Comme beaucoup, je regrette de ne pas avoir davantage encore appris de lui de son vivant.

La première fois que je l'ai « rencontré », c'est à travers la lecture de l'article « Norbert Elias, The 'Civilizing Process' and the Sociology of International Relations » publié dans *International Politics* en 2004. J'écrivais ma thèse à l'Université libre de Bruxelles et une collègue un peu plus âgée que moi, Barbara Delcourt, qui travaillait dans le champ des études critiques sur la sécurité, et malheureusement décédée bien trop tôt, me l'avait envoyé. La lecture de ce texte ne fut pas loin d'être une « révélation » pour moi, qui ne venais pas des relations internationales mais travaillais déjà depuis plusieurs années sur Elias. J'y découvrais une lecture tout à la fois politique et philosophique

d'Elias mais qui ne cessait jamais d'être sociologique et qui discutait, entre autres, aussi brillamment qu'utilement, des tensions fécondes, dans l'œuvre d'Elias, entre ses dimensions hobbesienne, grotienne et kantienne. C'est pour moi un souvenir intellectuel marquant, une lecture tout à fait décisive.

Ensuite, j'ai rencontré Andrew Linklater « en vrai », en 2010 à Dublin et, à la suite de cette conférence, c'est lui qui m'a aidée avec une infinie gentillesse et beaucoup de patience (j'étais, bien que derrière mon ordinateur, en congé de maternité) à retravailler mon papier pour le faire paraître dans *Human Figurations*. C'était mon premier texte rédigé en anglais et cela a été un autre moment, et une autre étape, importants pour moi. Quelques années plus tard, j'ai recroisé Andrew à l'occasion, je crois, de la conférence-anniversaire organisée en l'honneur d'Eric Dunning, à Leicester, sous la pluie. Alex (Mack) l'accompagnait et j'ai été frappée, touchée, de la bienveillance, de la justesse et de l'estime qu'il témoignait à son jeune étudiant en thèse, lui faisant pour ainsi dire, et à raison, de la place.

La dernière fois que je l'ai rencontré, et côtoyé plusieurs jours durant, c'était à Bruxelles en décembre 2018. Il avait accepté de faire la conférence de clôture, sur les émotions, de la conférence Global Interdependencies qu'on y avait organisée. C'est aussi un très beau souvenir. Le souvenir aussi d'une discussion, dans un café bruyant, sur l'Allemagne de l'entre-deux-guerres, objet d'une exposition à Bruxelles à ce moment-là. Il m'avait confessé n'avoir pas le temps de lire des romans. J'en avais conçu quelque peine pour lui...

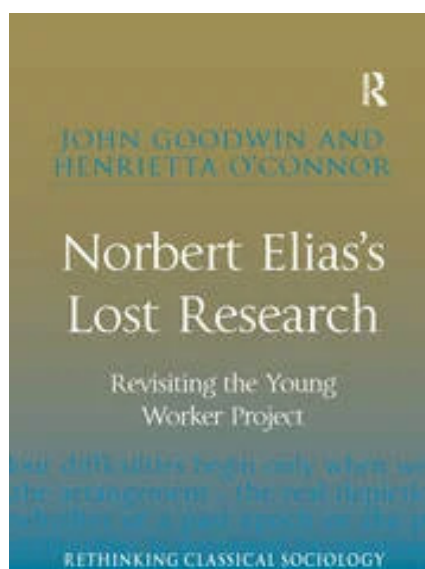
Le dernier texte que j'ai lu d'Andrew Linklater est son livre de 2020, *The Idea of Civilization and the Making of the Global Order*. J'y ai redécouvert une pensée à la fois puissante et pleine de vraie modestie, à la créativité intacte. Une lecture que je n'ai cessé de recommander à mes collègues et à mes étudiants depuis.

Autant qu'un très grand esprit, c'est une personne chaleureuse et humble

que nous avons perdue. Quelqu'un dont le regard pétillant, la voix et le sourire chaleureux nous faisaient oublier qu'il nous impressionnait. Grâce à sa personnalité, le vide qu'il laisse n'est pas vraiment un, tant sont nombreux et nombreuses ses collègues, amies et amis qui auront à cœur de continuer à faire vivre son travail.

By Florence Delmotte

■ BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RETROSPECT



John Goodwin and Henrietta O'Connor, *Norbert Elias's Lost Research: Revisiting the Youth Worker Project* (London: Routledge, 2015). Link: <https://www.routledge.com/Norbert-Eliass-Lost-Research-Revisiting-the-Young-Worker-Project/Goodwin-OConnor/p/book/9780367598365>

Abstract: Based on the re-discovery of a lost sociological project led by Norbert Elias at the University of Leicester, this book re-visits the project: The Adjustment of Young Workers to Work Situations and Adult Roles. Norbert Elias's *Lost Research* makes use of the interview booklets documenting the lives of nearly 900 Leicester school leavers at the time, to give a unique account of Elias's only foray into large-scale, publicly funded research. Covering all aspects of the research from the development of the research proposal, the selection and management of the research team, the fieldwork, Elias's theoretical work to the ultimate demise of the research project, this book makes a significant contribution to our understanding of existing Eliasian texts by introducing this project to a wider audience and investigating and applying Elias's theoretical work to the areas of youth and school to work transitions. Shedding new light on Elias's thought, whilst exploring questions of methodology and the relevance of older research to modern questions, this book

will be of interest to social theorists, as well as sociologists with interests in research methodology and the history of sociology.

Andy Furlong, John Goodwin, Henrietta O'Connor, Sarah Hadfield, Stuart Hall, Kevin Lowden, Réka Plugor, *Young People in the Labour Market: Past, Present, Future* (London: Routledge, 2018). Link: <https://www.routledge.com/Young-People-in-the-Labour-Market-Past-Present-Future/Furlong-Goodwin-OConnor-Hadfield-Hall-Lowden-Plugor/p/book/9780367354787>

Abstract: Levels of suffering among young people have always been much higher than governments suggest. Indeed, policies aimed at young workers have often been framed in ways that help secure conformity to a new employment landscape in which traditional securities have been progressively removed. Increasingly punitive welfare regimes have resulted in new hardships, especially among young women and those living in depressed labour markets. Framed by the ideas of Norbert Elias, *Young People in the Labour Market* challenges the idea that changing economic landscapes have given birth to a 'Precariat' and argues that labour insecurity is more deep-rooted and complex than others have suggested. Focusing on young people and the ways in which their working lives have changed between the 1980s recession and the Great Recession of 2008/2009 and its immediate aftermath, the book begins by drawing attention to trends already emerging in the preceding two decades. Drawing on data originally collected during the 1980s recession and comparing it to contemporary data drawn from the UK Household Longitudinal Study, the book explores the ways in which young people have adjusted to the changes, arguing that life satisfaction and optimism are linked to labour market conditions. A timely volume, this book will be of interest to undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as postdoctoral researchers who are interested in fields such as Sociology,

Nestar Russell, 'The Nazi's Pursuit for a "Humane" Method of Killing', In *Understanding Willing Participants, Volume 2: Milgram's Obedience Experiments and the Holocaust* (Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, 2019) pp. 241–276. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-97999-1_8

Abstract: When Nazis of all ranks spoke of a “humane” method of killing other human beings, what exactly did they mean? One outcome of this book is a tentative outline of the key characteristics—a Weberian Ideal-Type—of what the Nazi's regarded as the most humane method of killing. As Russell argues in this chapter, when Nazis spoke of such matters, what they seemed to desire was a method of killing that rated highly on four main conditions. First, victims should remain totally unaware that they are about to die. Second, perpetrators need not touch, see, or hear their victims as they die. Third, the death blow should avoid leaving any visual indications of harm on the victims' bodies. And finally, the death blow should be instantaneous.

■ CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIGURATIONS

The next issue of *Figurations* will be mailed in February 2024. News and notes should be sent by 30 December 2023 to the Editors at figurations@norbert-elias.com.

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