

FIGURATIONS

The Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

ISSUE 60 | FEB 2024



LATEST NEWS

*The Future of Human
Figurations (2012-2021)*

Norbert Elias Book Prize 2023
Recipient Announced

Meeting John Goldthorpe at

EVENTS

Norbert Elias in Practice:
From Human Sciences to
Application (20-21 September
2024 at Hochschule Esslingen,
Germany)

NEW PUBLICATIONS

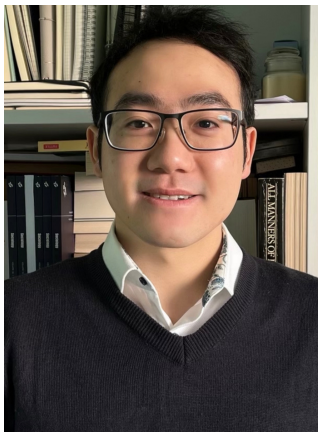
Norbert Elias and
Sigmund Freud: The
Psychoanalytic
Foundations of the
Civilizing Process

EDITORS



ALEXANDER MACK

Alexander Mack is an Independent Researcher & Photographer currently based in Brisbane, Australia. One of his photographs has been reproduced on the front cover of *The Palgrave Handbook of International Political Theory* volumes I and II published by Palgrave Macmillan. He has also written a handbook chapter that will appear in volume II.



WAI LAU

Wai Lau (AKA Leon Lau) is a researcher of sociology at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom. He is interested in examining civilising processes in East Asia. Currently, he is examining Japanese and Chinese societies from an Eliasian perspective. In addition, he is the author of *On the Process of Civilisation in Japan* (2022) published by Palgrave Macmillan and the recipient of the Norbert Elias Book Prize in 2023.

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Contributions should preferably be e-mailed to the Editor in the form of MS Word (.doc or .docx), Rich Text (.rtf), plain text (.txt) or Open Office Text (.odt) files. Do not use embedded footnotes. Where possible, Word files are preferred to PDF. Hard copy is accepted reluctantly. Photographs should be submitted in JPEG format.

The next issue of *Figurations* will be mailed in July 2024. News and notes should be sent by 1 June 2024 to the Editors at figurations@norbert-elias.com.

Cover Page: Portrait of Prof. J. Goudsblom painted by Wendelien Schönfeld, 2015, 70x90 cm, olieverf/doek, photograph by Thijs Quispel (Used with kind permission from Wendelien Schönfeld).

CONTENTS

Pg.4
A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Pg.6
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pg.8
OBSERVATIONS

Pg.14
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Pg.18
RECENT BOOKS
RECENT BOOK CHAPTERS

Pg.21
SPECIAL JOURNAL ARTICLES:
HSR SPECIAL ISSUE VOL. 48

Pg.26
RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

Pg.30
CONFERENCE AND SYMPOSIUM
REPORTS

Pg.34
PEOPLE

Pg.35
OBITUARY

Pg.37
BIBLIOGRAPHIC RETROSPECT

Pg.38
DONATIONS



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

This year marks the 30th anniversary of *Figurations*. Since its inception by Stephen Mennell in 1994, the newsletter has been an indispensable source of information for the latest news, events, and studies in the figuration community. To celebrate the anniversary, we are excited to unveil the new design of the newsletter.

After one and a half years of experimentation, we have decided on a series of changes that will expand our readership, enhance readability, and showcase the works of processual scholarship to new and existing readers. This new design adopts a two-column format, which improves the content's overall readability. The newsletter now contains the following changes:

- A cover page that features a picture chosen by the editors.
- A contents page that details the different sections.
- Key quotation pages that highlight a pertinent passage from featured books or journal articles.
- An observation section for readers to share process informed observations about people, events and wider societal occurrences.
- Use of pictures to expand on visual engagement.
- Greater use of hyperlinks for content engagement.
- Enhanced online and offline viewing on desktops, laptops, mobile phones, and tablets.

- Use of a different font and font colour: Alegreya and Prussian Blue.

We want to develop a polished, professional newsletter that represents both the Foundation and readers as a whole, to a wider audience of new readers and collaborators. For anyone new to the community, the newsletter functions as a door into the possibilities of processual research. For longstanding readers, the newsletter helps to bind us together in our shared endeavours.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Annette van de Sluis. For 30 years, Annette has been the typesetter for the newsletter. She has devoted countless painstaking hours formatting the newsletter into the familiar three-column format. We appreciate her distinguished service to the figuration community. Her longstanding dedication has given us the groundwork to take the newsletter into a new phase.

Ultimately, we aim to transform the newsletter into a multimodal and flexible publication that enables readers to craft their journey through processual research. Whether you are a longstanding reader or new to the figurations community, we look forward to assisting your journey. If you have any comments, suggestions, or submissions, please write to us at figurations@norbert-elias.com.

Wai Lau & Alexander Mack

Figurations

Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

■ EDITORIAL: BEYOND ELIAS

It is far from the intention of the Norbert Elias Foundation, in initiating this twice-yearly newsletter, to foster a cult of the dead. In his lifetime, Elias was often accused of wanting to attract "disciples" and to form a "theoretical school" in sociology. He always denied it. For he was at once both less ambitious and more ambitious than the charge suggests.

Less, because he had no wish to lay down a fixed set of doctrines of the type, often based on some philosophical or political stance, which underlie so many "perspectives" in sociology. He wanted rather to encourage people to pursue through further research some of the problems of humans' life together to which he had drawn attention. In this modest ambition of initiating a research tradition he had some belated success. Younger researchers in many countries and most of the social sciences - anthropology, history, political science and social psychology, as well as sociology - have taken up ideas from Elias, criticised, tested, extended and modified them. We shall be reporting some of their work in this and future issues of this newsletter.

On the other hand, Elias also had a far greater ambition. He believed he had diagnosed many of the faults which beset the social sciences throughout his long lifetime, and he wanted his

insights to find acceptance among social scientists in general. To establish a mere "school" would not assist, and would very likely frustrate, the attainment of that objective.

Elias's dissatisfaction with what he called the "lamentable" state of contemporary sociology - especially because of sociologists' "retreat into the present", their abandonment of the big questions about human society, and the fragmentation of the human sciences - is now widely shared. Several distinguished American sociologists - Peter Berger, Irving Louis Horowitz, Andrew Abbott and Immanuel Wallerstein - have recently expressed similar sentiments.* Indeed Wallerstein has announced an international commission, sponsored by the Gulbenkian Foundation, with the ambitious goal of "restructuring the social sciences".

Not all was gloom even in Elias's lifetime. True, during the middle decades of his life, most sociologists were indifferent to the issues that most concerned him - which might be succinctly described as the connections between power, behaviour, emotions and knowledge in long-term perspective. But even before he died there were strong signs of these once more becoming central questions for social scientists. One only has to mention the acclaim accorded the works of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. It is touching to learn that, in the last years of his life, Fou-

cault, for his own pleasure and private use, translated Elias's *The Loneliness of the Dying* into French. And Bourdieu, in his tribute on Elias's 90th birthday in 1987, in effect retrospectively claimed Elias as one of his own intellectual forebears. If these are striking instances of the meeting of great minds, they are only the tip of a sizeable iceberg that has floated the interconnections through time of power, behaviour and knowledge back into the centre of social scientists' concerns.

This newsletter will therefore have several purposes. For those who, in various countries, are using Elias's ideas in their own research, we shall serve as a notice board keeping them abreast of each other's work. But our broader objective is to serve as one channel for the wider intellectual stream which is flowing, if not actually under Elias's influence, then at least in the same direction.

Stephen Mennell

* Peter Berger, "Sociology: A Disinvitation", *Dialogue* No. 102, 4/1993, pp.38-42; I.L. Horowitz, *The Decomposition of Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993; Andrew Abbott, "History and Sociology: The Lost Synthesis", in E.H. Monkkonen, ed., *Engaging the Past: The Uses of History across the Social Sciences*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994; Immanuel Wallerstein et al. "Announcement: Gulbenkian Commission of the Restructuring of the Social Sciences", Fernand Braudel Center, SUNY Binghamton, October 1993.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Future of *Human Figurations* (2012–2021)



By Arjan Post

As dedicated readers may have noticed already, the online journal *Human Figurations* has had a languishing existence for some time now. The last issue appeared in 2021; Volume 9 consisted of only one issue, preluded by a call for new international editors. Replacing the outgoing editorial team proved more complex than initially anticipated, with a number of further difficulties relating to the journal's hosting on the University of Michigan platform (in particular, the absence of doi references for articles, and lack of indexing in databases such as Scopus). Perhaps more significantly, *Human Figurations* had, over the past decade, faced growing competition from successive issues of *Cambio* and *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, all of which ultimately raised questions as to whether the journal should continue at all, at least in its current form.

However, discussions are now well underway with a major publisher to relaunch the journal in a yearbook format. We expect to announce full details of this development in the near future. In the meantime, back issues of *Human Figurations* (2012–2021) can still be consulted, via the original link (<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/humfig/>) and via the website of the Foundation (<http://norbert-elias.com/human-figurations/>).

Human Figurations

Long-term perspectives on the human condition

Home Search Browse Editorial Board Submissions Contact  

Issues Title Author

Browse by Issue

Vol. 9
No. 1 (2021)

Vol. 8
No. 1: *The Sociology of Sociology in Long-Term Perspective* (August 2019)

Vol. 7
No. 1 (May 2018)

Vol. 6
No. 2: *Comparative-Historical Sociology as Antidote to the 'Crackpot Realism' of the Twenty-First Century* (September 2017)
No. 1 (May 2017)

Vol. 5
No. 2: *Social Character, Historical Processes* (July 2016)
No. 1 (March 2016)

Vol. 4
No. 3 (September 2015)
No. 2: *Reflections on Global Power Relations* (March 2015)
No. 1: *Civilising Offensives* (January 2015)


Vol. 3
No. 2 (June 2014)
No. 1 (February 2014)

Vol. 2
No. 3: *Everyday practices and long term-processes: Overcoming dichotomies with the work of Norbert Elias* (November 2013)
No. 2 (July 2013)
No. 1 (February 2013)

Vol. 1
No. 2 (July 2012)
No. 1 (January 2012)

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[TOP OF PAGE](#) 

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Norbert Elias Book Prize 2023

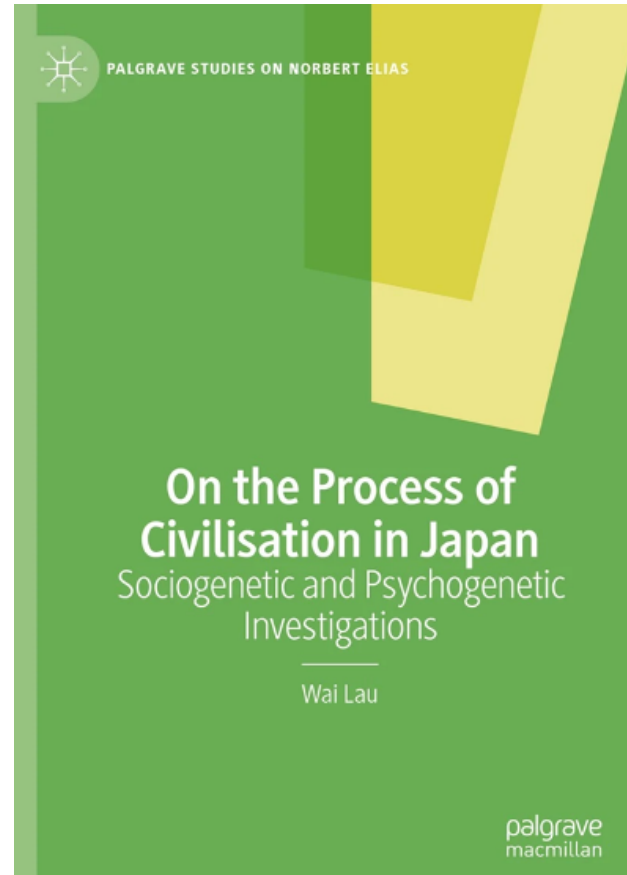
By Stephen Vertigans, Annette Triebel-Illian,
and Ademir Gabara

The Jury of the Norbert Elias Book Prize 2023
has selected the following book for the award:

Wai Lau (2022). *On the Process of Civilisation in Japan: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. XVIII+438. ISBN: 978-3-031-11423-6 (Hardback), ISBN: 978-3-031-11426-7 (Paperback), and ISBN: 978-3-031-11424-3 (eBook). £109.99 (H/B), £109.99 (P/B), and £87.50 (eBook).

This decision was informed on the following
basis:

By empirically applying Elias's theory of civilising processes to 1300 years of Japanese history, Wai Lau rigorously unravels the complexities of structural and psychological processes. In so doing he helps illustrate Japanese habitus and senses of civilisation that both highlight similarities and differences with neighbouring and Western countries. Written in an accessible and engaging style, the innovative yet classical manner in which Eliasian concepts are implemented indicated to the Jury that the book's impact and appeal will extend far beyond Japanologists. This extension will either further reinforce the rebuttal to the misplaced claims of ethnocentrism within Eliasian sociology or become another text for



critics to ignore. The quality of the book suggests the text should be at the forefront of the rebuttal.

We all thoroughly enjoyed reading the book and look forward to witnessing the text becoming an important source within the Eliasian canon. Many congratulations!

This book can be purchased from the publisher' website:
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-11424-3>

OBSERVATIONS

Meeting John Goldthorpe at 87

By Adrian Jitschin

In a presentation at the German Elias meeting held in June of this year, I gave an account of Elias's early time at the University of Leicester (1954 to 1962). At that time, the Leicester Department of Sociology was small and consisted of only a few people. In addition to Ilya Neustadt, who had been there since 1949, Elias's predecessor Joseph A. Banks, who was there from 1952 to 1954, and John H. Goldthorpe, who joined the team in 1957. To find out more, I had googled some of the names at the time and was very surprised to find that John Goldthorpe is still sociologically active. He is now Emeritus of Nuffield College, University of Oxford. During a more than sixty-year sociology career, John's primary research interests have been social stratification, social mobility, and comparative macro-sociology. He has published on methodological issues concerning integrating empirical, quantitative research and theory, focusing on matters of causation. He is now, among other things, a Fellow of the British Academy and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society.

Following my presentation at the German meeting, I sent a friendly email to Goldthorpe's address at Nuffield College and received an almost immediate response. He remembers Norbert Elias well, and, as he explained, this was a formative time in his

academic career. So, over the next few months, we had a regular email exchange in which John informed me about various details and developments in Leicester sociology in the 1950s and 1960s. We finally met in November of this year, and John told me how, as a very young man aged 21, he had landed a position in the Sociology Department in Leicester. The story goes that he had started to turn from history, where he completed his bachelor's degree, to sociology. John had studied at the LSE for over a year, primarily coming into contact with American sociology. One day, Professor David Glass asked the unsuspecting John Goldthorpe if he had time to meet with the head of the Leicester Department, who would be in town shortly. And so, Ilya Neustadt invited John to a succulent meal in an Italian restaurant. During the conversation, Neustadt explained how he planned to expand the Sociology Department into one of the largest in the country. He reported on the university college's projected expansion into a full-scale university and wanted to build a curriculum reflecting this greater significance. John ultimately decided to accept the offer of a post, even though the salary of £400 p.a. was only a slight improvement on his student grant.

When he arrived in Leicester, John found that Neustadt, as is well known, was heading to Ghana for a visiting professorship. Neustadt had expressed his profound regrets, leaving John with the keys to his apa-

rtment so he could initially live there for free. And so, it came to be that he and Elias were the only ones in charge of the Sociology Department for the academic year 1957-58. On meeting with Elias, John realised that the man was much older than he had expected. Yet, Elias greeted his juvenile colleague very warmly. He explained to John his vision for teaching, and in this way, John plunged into his work under the wise guidance of his more senior colleague. Elias described to him the philosophical debates in Germany from which his sociology emerged, how Max Weber and Karl Mannheim had influenced him and how, in his view, the discipline would integrate into the ranks of cultural studies. Elias became an advisor, and at the same time, John experienced the chaos with which Elias tried to take over Neustadt's organisational tasks. They met once a week to coordinate administration. After a dinner with plenty of alcohol, the two men would return to Elias's apartment. There, Elias had made it a habit to sit in his wing chair while John had to sit at the old typewriter. Elias would go through the university correspondence letter by letter and, lubricated with lots of Slivovitz; he dictated the answers to John. There may have been a more effective way of communicating with the university administration, but it was sufficient to bridge the gap during Neustadt's absence.

When Neustadt returned the following summer, he found the department still functioning, and John could now devote more time to teaching and making contacts

with colleagues in other departments. Among them were Addi Wasserstein, Professor of Classics, as well as Reuben Goodstein, who held the chair in mathematics. Through Goodstein, John developed an interest in Boolean algebra, which he would transfer to sociology in later years. Alfred Willener, a visiting scholar, brought him into contact with French and Swiss sociology. In this way, John came into much greater contact with continental science in Leicester than he had previously done in London. He met young scientists such as Eric Dunning, Richard Brown and John Scotson during a phase. He helped bring Sydney Holloway to Leicester.

After three years, this phase ended because John was appointed to Kings College in Cambridge. In taking his leave, he looked back with a certain sadness but simultaneously with some relief. It had been intended that he work with Elias on a project about female workers in the Corah hosiery factory, but from John's point of view, this failed due to Elias's disorganised work style. Instead of systematically developing and evaluating questionnaires, Elias only wanted to confirm his theory in random surveys. As John said to me, Elias hardly made any effort to enter into dialogue with the women; he did not accept the scientifically necessary openness of results. Elias's blanket rejection of American sociology was a second point of contention, particularly the Columbia model of integrating research and theory. Elias's intellectual breadth was, in some respects, vitiated by an unnecessary ignorance of this

popular view that John wanted to pursue. Therefore, John took the opportunity to go to Cambridge and continue on this path there. Still, today, he looks back with gratitude and relief on Elias, who, in his formative years, taught him many new insights and a theoretical perspective on sociology that was enriching in many respects.

I am grateful to John for meeting me on November 12th and for such a detailed and candid conversation. John emphasised that his autobiography is being prepared for publication and that these thoughts will also be available to everyone. Although John was never close to Elias in the sociology camp, he admires the man. His perspective as an observer complements the accounts of other people close to Elias and helps us understand how Elias placed himself in British sociology and the Leicester Department.

Remarks on John Goldthorpe

By Stephen Mennell

John was one of my teachers at Cambridge, and an inspiring one. We always got along very well, partly by being similar working-class Yorkshiremen by origin. He made me a Popperian in the very early stages of my career, before I met Elias, who taught me the error of my ways. One key point that is perhaps worth adding to your article is that John has never wavered in his devotion to Popper, even though Popper is not all that highly regarded now. More to the point, though, John told me that he still believes in a rigid, unsurmountable barrier between the disciplines of sociology and history. This is most clearly expounded in his book *On Sociol-*

gy (2000), which I - and many others - regard as rather silly. His early work was not so dogmatic and sectarian. Nevertheless, he has a brilliant, clear mind, which I have always admired even while disagreeing with him.

Notes on a Font Colour

By Alexander Mack & Wai Lau

Alert readers will notice that the font colour for the newsletter is now a shade of dark blue compared to the black font of the previous iteration. The primary font colour is now Prussian Blue. This subtle yet significant change reminds us that the newsletter is interwoven into the same wider socio-historical processes, which process-orientated research seeks to investigate.

Prussian Blue has a fascinating history bound to the webs of interdependences that interweave the growth of people and societies. Although the colours we perceive as visible light form only a small part of the electromagnetic spectrum. The emotional pulls and practical applications of colours offer insights into wider social processes. Medieval historian Michel Pastoureau remarks that the means of manufacturing the colour blue from organic and inorganic material were interwoven with the symbolic valorisation of blue across the socio-cultural growth of societies in form of art, clothing and religious artifacts. Chinese and Roman society devalorised blue as the colour of threatening, dishonest outsiders. In contrast, Capetian French kings adopted blue on their coat of arms as a homage to the Virgin Mary, who was embraced as the symbolic protector of the Kingdom of France.

The specific development of Prussian Blue as a synthetic pigment shows the webs of interdependence that have bound chemistry, commerce and art, and how each of these fields grew in concert. Ferric hexacyanoferrate (II) (to use its chemical name) was unintentionally developed and commercially produced in Berlin during the early 1700s through an inadvertent combination of efforts by Johann Jacob Diesbach, Johann Conrad Dippel, and Johann Leonhard Frisch. In 1710, it appeared in the first publication of Royal Prussian Society of Sciences as a commercial advertisement about a new material. The method of producing Prussian Blue was a commercially valuable secret that financially enriched Diesbach, Dippel and Frisch. That is until 1724, when the method was published in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society in London by John Woodward, plus some additional experiments by John Brown. This publication encouraged further experimentation by Etienne-Francois Geoffroy, a member of the Académie Royale des Sciences in Paris.

The research, experimentation, dissemination, and refinement of Prussian Blue shows the importance of national-scientific academies in the 1700s, which in turn contributed to the growth of a nascent chemical industry. Scientific knowledge was becoming intertwined into the we-identifications that distinguish French, English, and Prussian societies. Once the method of producing Prussian Blue became more widely known, this knowledge spurred the growth of factories across Europe to produce the colour. It is also known by addi-

tional names such as Paris Blue or Berlin Blue, which denoted the place of production. In the 1700s, one of the main sources of blue colorant was from the indigo plant grown in the Americas, and extracted through an agricultural production process reliant on slave labour. Prussian Blue heralded the contemporary development of synthetic colorants and dyes, which shifted the production of colours from agricultural to chemical industrial processes.

The colour became a commodified object, something that is industrially produced, sold, bought and traded. It shows the mixtures of cooperation and competition within and across the societies of the 1700s through efforts to make a 'better' product that could in turn be made into further items of practical and aesthetic value. The appearance of Prussian Blue fulfilled a demand by artists for a more inexpensive blue that was stable, non-toxic, with a depth of tonal variations that could be mixed to form other colours. It is a reminder that the 'art worlds' of Howard Becker were never completely isolated from wider society. The *Portrait of Jacobus Blauw* by Jacques-Louis David illustrates both the aesthetic attributes of Prussian Blue, and the wider socio-cultural shift in the perceptions of the colour blue. Identifications towards royal blue shifted to republican blue, becoming the chromatic defense of a socio-political movement in a struggle against royalist and Catholic white, for example during the wars of the Vendée (1793–1796).

Uses of Prussian Blue was not limited to European tastes. The same qualities that att-

racted European artists also appealed to Japanese painters and printmakers. During the Edo period (1603–1868), when Japan was ruled by the Tokugawa shogunate, foreign trade was severely restricted under the Sakoku (closed country) policy. The exception was the port of Nagasaki open to Chinese and Dutch traders. The latter were confined to the artificial island of Dejima. The import of Berlin blue by Dutch and Chinese traders stimulated the development of aizuri-e (blue prints) in Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock printing, which reached a degree of sophistication in the form of Katsushika Hokusai's (1760–1849) famous *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* created between 1830 to 1832.

In light of the socio-historical lineage of Prussian Blue, we believe that it is an appropriate font colour for the newsletter. In a more practical sense, the colour fulfils the AAA standard of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). This ensures that the text has a sufficiently high contrast ratio that makes it easier to be read by people with a range of visual abilities.

Further Reading:

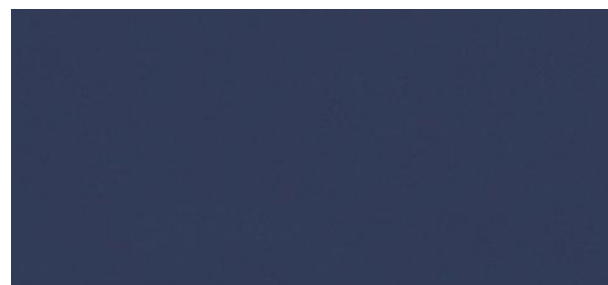
Wolfram Eberhard (2006). 'Blue'. In *A Dictionary of Chinese Symbols: Hidden Symbols in Chinese Life and Thought*. Oxon: Routledge. pp. 42–43.

Charlotte Guichard, Anne-Solenn Le Hô, and Hannah Williams (2023). 'Prussian Blue: Chemistry, Commerce, and Colour in Eighteenth-Century Paris'. *Art History*, 46(1), pp. 154–86.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.12695>.

Alexander Kraft (2008). 'On the Discovery and History of Prussian Blue', *Bulletin of the History of Chemistry*, 33: 2, pp. 61–67.

Michel Pastoureau (2018). *Blue: The History of a Color*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Link: <https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691181363/blue>

Henry D. Smith II (2005). 'Hokusai and the Blue Revolution in Edo Prints', In John T. Carpenter (ed.) *Hokusai and His Age: Ukiyo-e Painting, Printmaking, and Book Illustration in Late Edo Japan*. Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing. pp. 234–69.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-hxn2-xg81>



**SCIENTIFIC MODES OF THOUGHT
CANNOT BE DEVELOPED AND
BECOME GENERALLY ACCEPTED
UNLESS PEOPLE RENOUNCE THEIR
PRIMARY, UNREFLECTING, AND
SPONTANEOUS ATTEMPT TO
UNDERSTAND ALL THEIR
EXPERIENCE IN TERMS OF ITS
PURPOSE AND MEANING FOR
THEMSELVES. THE DEVELOPMENT
THAT LED TO MORE ADEQUATE
KNOWLEDGE AND INCREASING
CONTROL OF NATURE WAS
THEREFORE, CONSIDERED FROM
ONE ASPECT, ALSO A
DEVELOPMENT TOWARD GREATER
SELF-CONTROL BY MEN.**

NORBERT ELIAS

*Norbert Elias (2010 [1939]). On the Process of
Civilisation: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic
Investigations. Dublin: University College Dublin Press.*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

International Conference on Inclusive Education in Multicultural Classrooms (21-22 May 2024 at Izmir, Turkey)

We are delighted to invite scholars, researchers, educators, and practitioners worldwide to participate in the International Conference on Inclusive Education in Multicultural Classrooms. Hosted by Izmir Katip Çelebi University (IKCU), this conference provides a platform for interdisciplinary dialogue and knowledge exchange, focusing on 'Multiculturalism and Diversity in Social Sciences: Enhancing Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education'.

Higher education institutions are pivotal in nurturing inclusive and multicultural environments that celebrate diversity in today's globalised world. As part of the Erasmus+ KA220 Project, MULTICLASS-Multicultural Classrooms: Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, this conference is integral to further the project's objectives of enhancing the quality and multicultural dimension of Higher Education in Europe.

The conference objectives are:

- To explore innovative strategies for managing multicultural and diverse classrooms in higher education settings, encompassing insights from various social science disciplines.
- To share best practices, research findings, and practical insights related to inclusive learning and teaching while considering the dimensions of multiculturalism and diversity.
- To foster collaboration and networking among educators, researchers, and institutions dedicated to promoting inclusive education in higher education.

There is a conference fee of 50 Euros for attending the International Conference on Inclusive Education in Multicultural Classrooms. This fee covers access to all conference sessions, coffee breaks and conference materials.

Additionally, we are excited to offer optional touristic visits around the captivating city of Izmir during the conference, including a fascinating excursion to the historic Ephesus (Efes) site and other enriching destinations. While there will be a fee associated with these extra visits, we are dedicated to assisting you with the seamless organisation of these experiences.

Moreover, to ensure your stay in Izmir is comfortable and affordable, we will happily provide you with a list of recommended hotels in budget-friendly city areas. This assistance aims to facilitate your travel arrangements and make your conference participation and touristic exploration as convenient as possible.

For inquiries and submissions, please contact:

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4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability (SMUS Conference) & 4th RC33 Regional Conference Asia: Thailand (23–29 July 2024 at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)

The ‘Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability’ (GCSMUS or SMUS) together with the Research Committee on ‘Logic and Methodology in Sociology’ (RC33) of the ‘International Sociology Association’ (ISA) and the Research Network ‘Quantitative Methods’ (RN21) of the European Sociology Association” (ESA) will organise a 4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability (‘SMUS Conference’), which will simultaneously be the 4th RC33 Regional Conference Asia: Thailand, and take place on site at the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand) from Tuesday 23 July to Monday 29 July 2024. The seven-day conference aims at continuing a global dialogue on methods and should attract methodologists from all over the world and all social and spatial sciences (e.g. anthropology, area studies, architecture, communication studies, computational sciences, digital humanities, educational sciences, geography, historical

philosophy, psychology, sociology, urban design, urban planning, traffic planning and environmental planning). The conference programme will include keynotes, sessions and advanced methodological training courses. With this intention, we invite scholars of all social and spatial sciences and other scholars who are interested in methodological discussions to suggest an abstract to any sessions of the conference. All papers have to address a methodological problem.

Please find more information on the above institutions on the following websites:

- Global Center of Spatial Methods for Urban Sustainability (GCSMUS):
<https://gcsmus.org/>
- ISA RC33: <http://rc33.org/>
- ESA RN21:
www.europeansociology.org/research-networks/rn21-quantitative-methods

Norbert Elias in Practice: From Human Sciences to Application (20-21 September 2024 at Hochschule Esslingen, Germany)

Norbert Elias's goal was the theoretical and conceptual development of the human sciences - towards a consistent interdisciplinary process and interconnectedness thinking. In doing so, he opened up groundbreaking perspectives, including in application-oriented research and concrete practical application. These draw on his concepts and key terms - whether power balances, figurations or networks of relationships, established-outsi-

der relationships, balances of external and self-constraint, changes in hierarchies in work relationships, gender relations or surges of civilisation and decivilisation.

It is not easy to gain an overview of the diverse applications of the process and figuration approach in research and practice. Therefore, we warmly invite you to enrich our conference with short lectures (20 minutes) in German and ask you to submit suggestions. We need a description of your presentation (max. 2,000 characters) by 8 April 2024. After review by the preparation group, you will receive feedback in May 2024.

Registration to participate in the conference begins in June 2024; conference fees are not charged. Please feel free to pass this announcement on to anyone interested – whether for a lecture or participation.

Further information can be found at <https://www.hs-esslingen.de/soziale-arbeit-bildung-und-pflege/fakultaet/aktuelles/veranstaltungen/norbert-elias-in-der-praxis/> or contact Désirée Waterstradt: desiree.waterstradt@norbert-elias.com and Wolfgang Stadel: wolfgang.stadel@hs-esslingen.de.

Social Figurations: Long-Term Processes, Present Concerns and Future Directions (4–7 December 2024 at Prague)

Is historical sociology relevant for understanding and addressing contemporary social problems?

Papers are invited for a major international conference in Prague from 4th–7th December 2024 on the theme of ‘Social figurations: long-term processes, present concerns and future directions’. This in-person conference is a joint venture between Charles University and the Norbert Elias Foundation.

Taking inspiration from Elias, a central task of the conference is to explore the extent to which an understanding of long-term processes can be useful for understanding and addressing pressing contemporary social problems and issues. These include those that relate to developments in gender relations, military conflicts, colonial processes, and the expansion of global capitalism, plus inter-related processes relating to comparative civilisation theory/analysis, environmental degradation, emerging technologies and artificial forms of ‘intelligence’, shifting challenges to law and juridical practices, and the re-ascendancy of ethno-nationalism.

The conference organisers would particularly like to encourage contributions that interweave theoretical and empirical insights, though will also welcome more theoretically- or methodologically-focused papers. We invite papers on a breadth of topics, not restricted to those identified above, to allow for the development of emergent themes around which the final programme will be organised. Our ultimate aim is to explore the plurality of perspectives within historical sociology – featuring Elias-

ian work, but also encompassing a range of other theoretical approaches – and to consider how figurational and processual scholarship has been adopted, adapted and might continue to mature in ways that are alive to contemporary developments without a ‘retreat’ to the present.

If you are interested in presenting at the conference, please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words should be submitted to praguefigurationsconference@gmail.com by 19 July 2024.

Please include in your abstract four to five keywords to help with the streaming of your contribution, and details of your institutional affiliation including your email address.

Further information regarding conference venue, booking, etc. will follow shortly, with updates available from the Norbert Elias website: norbert-elias.com/news/.

We very much look forward to seeing you in Prague this December!

Restart of the Norbert Elias Lectures (21 November 2023, 16 January 2024, & 17 January 2024 at Bielefeld University, Germany)

The Norbert Elias Lectures present renowned research sharing personalities who stand out internationally through outstanding extensive research in the humanities and social sciences create excellent and with their questions scientific discourse across the respective subject boundaries have shaped b-

eyond. As part of an evening lecture and they give a master class for advanced students insights into their current research.

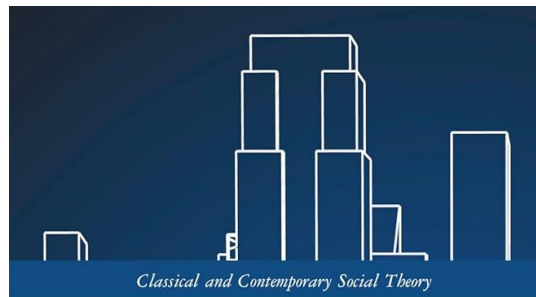
The lecture series bears the name of one of the most important cultural and social theorists of the 20th century. Norbert Elias belongs to a generation of well-educated scholars for whom the cognitive power of art and literature was in no way inferior to that of science. Since 1971, he stayed regularly at Bielefeld University and lived and worked as a permanent fellow at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research between 1978 and 1984. In 1980, he received an honorary doctorate from the university.

His interdisciplinary way of working and erudition, his research into outsidersness, theories of long-term change in the history of civilisation and the social significance of literature predestine him as the namesake.

In the future, the series will focus on phenomena intertwined with literature and art, history and politics and thus aims to keep alive the less systematic parts of Norbert Elias's thinking.



RECENT BOOKS



**NORBERT ELIAS AND
SIGMUND FREUD**

THE PSYCHOANALYTIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE
CIVILIZING PROCESS

André Oliveira Costa



André Oliveira Costa (2023). Norbert Elias and Sigmund Freud: The Psychoanalytic Foundations of the Civilizing Process. London: Routledge.

Abstract: This book explores the influence of Freudian psychoanalysis on Norbert Elias' theory of the civilising process –an influence acknowledged by Elias himself –conducting a dialogue with a view to analysing points of contact and distance between them. Examining the development of Elias' work, it sheds light on the integration of psychoanalytic concepts in his thought, considering the dynamics that exist between individuals and social processes, as the civilising process affects the psychic econo-

my of individuals and psychic structures serve to sustain civilisation. A genealogical study of Freudian concepts as expressed in the trajectory of Elias's sociology, it will appeal to scholars of sociology and psychology with interests in social and psychoanalytic theory.

To purchase this book, please visit: <https://www.routledge.com/Norbert-Elias-and-Sigmund-Freud-The-Psychoanalytic-Foundations-of-the-Civilizing/Oliveira-Costa/p/book/9781032458434>.

20% Discount Code: Please enter the code **AFL04** at checkout on the Routledge Website (expires on 1 March 2024).

RECENT BOOK CHAPTERS

Helmut Kuzmics (2022). GOFFMAN AND ELIAS: Between Deception and Embarrassment. In: Jacobson, Michael Hviid and Greg Smith (eds.) The Routledge Handbook of Goffman Studies, London: Routledge. pp. 323-335.

Abstract: Separated from each other by time and space and formed by a very different cultural, in particular scientific background, both Erving Goffman and Norbert Elias have not only become two of the most inspirational sociologists of the 20th century

(Scheff 2006: vii), but their work also shares manifold substantial interests and insights. A provisional list embraces everyday behaviour in public, politeness, good manners and civility; the conditions and consequences of danger and peacefulness in the public sphere; the emotions of shame and embarrassment; the pleasures of risk and excitement; the treatment of outsiders; rituals of etiquette and ceremony; and even impression management. Their very different points of departure – historical-processual analysis of state-formation and personality (social habitus) in Elias, ethnographically detailed classification of situations in Goffman – makes it even more rewarding to compare them, since these differences in scope and method can be very fertile ground for every further study by way of complementing the perspectives of both authors to overcome potential limitations of their respective approaches.

Helmut Kuzmics (2022). Power and Politics: State Formation in Historical Sociology. In: D. McCallum (ed.) The Palgrave Handbook of the History of the Human Sciences, Singapore: Springer. pp. 1-42.

Abstract: This chapter first outlines the history of questions and research problems predating and constitutive for the historical sociology of state formation as it exists today. It deals with three main stages of state formation and the development of both internal and external power-relations, starting with the joint process of the formation of early states and civilisations ta-

king place in Neolithic societies, including the rise of empires. It then shifts focus to the diverse developmental paths towards the early modern European states, from more liberal to more absolutist states. Finally, theories are discussed that attempt to explain the rise of the industrial nation state entangled in a worldwide web of inter-state relations with the tendency to transcend nation states by supra-national associations of states. Since historical sociology assembles various approaches – Marxist, Weberian, Structural-Functionalist, Eliasian and others, this chapter characterizes them according to five criteria:

What is the theories' dominant problem or question related to the power aspect of the state? How far back do they follow the processes that are responsible for today's institutions, patterns, problems or solutions? Do they predominantly treat the relevant processes in a comparative way or do they rather study them as historical individuals on their own? What is the place they give to first-hand historical sources and their 'emic' interpretations by their contemporaries or do they put more emphasis on secondary, theoretically modelled 'etic' interpretations? Is their historical, processual understanding based on the uniqueness of a specific development with universal relevance, as 'universal history'?

Helmut Kuzmics (2023). Emotion, Habitus and State as Reflected in Semi-fictional Literature: On the Sociological Interpretation of Pjotr N. Krasnów's novel "From the Tsar's Eagle to the Red Flag" (1922). In: Magerski, Christine and Christian Steuerwald (eds.) *Literatursoziologie. Zu ihrer Aktualität und ihren Möglichkeiten*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS. pp. 9-37.

Abstract: A very special text stands out from the large number of literary attempts to cope with the dramatic or even tragic transition of Russia from a dynastic multi-ethnic state to a revolutionary, supranational workers' and peasants' state: the novel by the Cossack general Pyotr N. Krasnów, first published in 1922, *Vom Zarenadler zur roten Fahne*. It is very much based on personal experience and can be read as a semi-fictional autobiographical document. It is about the descriptive and explanatory value of strong 'we-feelings' (Elias), among them 'nationalism', attached to the survival unit 'state'. How did the tsar and regime lose their authority, and how did their 'hereditary' or 'gentile' charisma (Max Weber) be eroded or destroyed? What is the significance of the celebration of blood sacrifice, which could be considered part of a Russian warrior's habitus? The conclusion of this essay is that insights gained from literature also enrich sociological research on nationalism and habitus, both theoretically and empirically, if they can be viewed as valid in a sociology-of-knowledge interpretation.

Wai Lau & Deborah Giustini (2023). A Clash of Habitus: Britain and the COVID-19 Pandemic. In Onur Arun & Jonathan Basilio (eds.) *The Quest for Justice: Theoretical Insights, Challenges, and Pathways Forward*, Ankara: Nobel Academic Publishing. pp.168-194.

Abstract: Integrating Elias's concept of civilising offensive and Bourdieu's concept of habitus, the article contributes to sociological understanding by exploring the transformation in habits of the British population in response to governmental anti-pandemic policies. Drawing on secondary analysis of quantitative data involving the UK Office for National Statistics 2020 Opinions and Lifestyle Surveys mapping the social impact of COVID-19 in Britain, we argue that since the objective conditions of British society have changed under the pandemic as a result of governmental civilising offensive measures imposed top-down onto the population, then habitus has also changed as a consequence of the new social disposition imposed on individuals. Our study finds that the measures enacted by the British government have changed the public and private spheres of individuals in the country, creating a 'clash of habitus' in that 'old' and 'new' dispositions are continuously forming, generating tensions and conflicts. An integrated Bourdieusian and Eliasian analysis permits a nuanced understanding of these changes, seeing them as bound up and produced in correspondence with the broader policy and societal context, interacting with the everyday life that unfolds under anti-pandemic measures in Britain.

SPECIAL JOURNAL ARTICLES: HSR SPECIAL ISSUE VOL. 48

The following articles appeared in a special issue of Historical Social Research titled 'Long-Term Processes in Human History' edited by Johan Heilbron and Nico Wilterdink.

Johan Heilbron & Nico Wilterdink (2023). *Studying Long-Term Processes in Human History*, *Historical Social Research*, 48(1), pp. 7-34.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.01>

Abstract: Studying long-term processes in human history has over the past decades become a broad and multidisciplinary affair, which draws on various intellectual traditions. The work of sociologist Johan Goudsblom, to whom this special issue is dedicated, was an effort to transgress disciplinary boundaries and to synthesise different perspectives in this field. In this introduction we distinguish four important scholarly lineages: social evolutionism, Darwinian theory, historical sociology, and world history with its extensions into environmental history and big history. We characterise in broad outlines each of these traditions and specify how Goudsblom combined parts of them in his own work on long-term social processes, extending in particular the sociology of Norbert Elias. The



final section of this introduction gives a summary overview of the content of this HSR Special Issue.

Stephen Mennell (2023). *Remembering Johan Goudsblom*, *Historical Social Research*, 48(1), pp. 35-44.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.02>

Abstract: This paper is the slightly revised text of the opening address of the conference on 'Long-Term Processes in Human History: A Tribute to Johan Goudsblom', held in Amsterdam on 17-19 March 2022. It pays tribute to the Dutch sociologist Johan Goudsblom (1932-2020), leader of the Amsterdam School of Sociology and major champion of the work of Norbert Elias. The author sketches Goudsblom's early life and reminisces about his own debt to Goudsblom as a friend and mentor. Tribute is paid to the extraordinarily wide range of Goudsblom's interests, his prolific output as a sociologist and essayist, and the number of postgraduate theses he supervised. The connecting thread running through all his work was a concern with long-term social processes and the inseparability of sociological thinking and historical evidence. The breadth of his learning is especially obvious in his magnum opus, the book *Fire*

and Civilization, and his late multidisciplinary collaborations in the study of ecological regimes.

Johan Goudsblom (2023). Long-Term Processes in the History of Humanity, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 45-61. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.03>

Abstract: ‘Humanity’ is no longer an ideal but a reality. Its history does not date back a few hundreds of generations, as was still believed in the 18th century; it encompasses many tens of thousands of generations. A synthesis of historical, sociological, anthropological, archaeological, and biological approaches is now possible. An attempt in this direction is made here in the form of a few simple overall ‘process models’. The three major ecological transformations brought about by humans serve as benchmarks: the domestication of fire, the rise of agriculture, and the ‘industrial revolution’. Each new stage in control over nature signalled a simultaneous increase in dependency on that which was being controlled. Against this background, secular trends of growth, concentration, specialisation, organisation, and stratification of human populations have been dominant over the last ten millennia.

David Christian (2023). The Trajectory of Human History, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 62-83. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.04>

Abstract: This paper asks both whether it is possible to identify a clear shape or trajectory

to human history as a whole and what significance or meaning we can attach to such a trajectory. It will argue that modern historical research within many different disciplines does indeed allow us to identify some striking shapes to the history of our species. It will also argue that those shapes are full of meaning for understanding the nature and significance of our strange species. Finally, it will end with some speculative ideas about how human history may evolve in the distant future in an attempt to see if we can perhaps glimpse what human history will look like when the human story has ended.

Nico Wilterdink (2023). Goudsblom's Law of Three Stages: The Global Spread of Socio-Cultural Traits in Human History, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 84-104. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.05>

Abstract: In several publications, Johan Goudsblom advanced a simple three-stage model of the spread of certain socio-cultural traits (x, y, z....) over humanity. In the first stage, no human society has trait x; in the second stage, some societies have that trait; and in the third stage, all societies have the trait. Important examples of such traits pertain to what Goudsblom has depicted as the great ‘ecological transformations’ in human history: the control of fire, the domestication of plants and animals, and mechanical industry. Other examples are metallurgy, writing, money, state organisation, clocks, and computers. This paper elaborates this model and explores its scope, validity and usefulness for understa-

ending long-term trends in human history. It discusses the model's general theoretical implications (section 2), causal interconnections between socio-cultural traits that spread according to the model (section 3), explanations for the transition from the second to the third stage (section 4 which includes a brief discussion of cultural Darwinism), and ways in which certain socio-cultural traits spread to more societies (section 5). Section 6 deals with the consequences of this spread for power relations between societies. Section 7 focuses on recent developments, including the digital revolution and the transition from the use of fossil fuels to the exploitation of other energy sources. The concluding section discusses briefly the scope and validity of Goudsblom's "law of three stages" in view of these recent developments.

Nina Baur (2023). Long-Term Processes as Obstacles Against the Fourth Ecological Transformation: Ecological Sustainability and the Spatial Arrangements of Food Markets, *Historical Social Research*, 48(1), pp. 105-145.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.06>

Abstract: Human social life is deeply embedded in ecological processes, and as Johan Goudsblom has stressed, the interdependencies between humans and their 'natural' environment have changed in the course of history. According to Goudsblom, three great ecological transformations can be observed in the course of the civilising process: the control of fire, the transition from gathering and

hunting to producing food by agriculture and animal husbandry, and industrialisation. In recent years, both scientists and the public of Western societies have become increasingly aware that a fourth ecological transformation (towards more sustainable consumption and lifestyles) is necessary in order to minimise the effects of climate change. However, although most people are aware of the need for more sustainable consumption, very little seems to change, and even consumers desperately struggling to change their lifestyle, seem to fail in their efforts. Using the example of the Berlin food market, I argue that the causes for this lack of change cannot be understood without understanding the structure and power balances in global value chains which are deeply rooted in history, which have evolved in the course of centuries, and which in the course of the third ecological transformation (industrialisation and urbanisation) not only became the keystone of modern capitalism but since then are also deeply engrained in material urban, transport routes and production infrastructures. These spatial arrangements not only stabilise a specific mode of production by forcing social processes into path-dependence. They also hide power balances and drive human social life to an unsustainable lifestyle. Knowledge plays a key role in maintaining both circulation along the commodity chain and the existing power balances.

John McNeill (2023). Bison, Elephants, and Sperm Whales: Keystone Species in the Industrial Revolution, *Historical Social Research* 48(1): 146-169.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.09>

Abstract: Three giant-sized mammals, bison, African elephants, and sperm whales, faced sustained hunting in the 19th century. Demand for hides, ivory, and whale oil, all of which were useful in industrial production, animated the hunts. Most of the industrial production in question took place in the northeastern United States, while the hunts took place thousands of kilometers away, linking regions in what I call ‘ecological teleconnections’. The hunts dramatically reduced the populations of all three species, most drastically the bison. For ten thousand years, bison had helped to regulate their biome, the North American prairie grasslands, playing a role of a keystone species. East African elephants on their savanna grasslands, and sperm whales in oceans, had functioned for even longer as keystone species. The sharp and sudden reductions in populations of these animals after 1800 produced a variety of indirect ecological effects, reshuffling the ecosystems in question, making for difficult times for human communities that had come to depend on them.

Marina Fischer-Kowalski (2023). On the Mutual Historical Dynamics of Societies’ Political Governance Systems and their Sources of Energy: The Approach of the Vienna School of Social Ecology, Historical Social Research 48(1): 170-189.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.08>

Abstract: This article combines a brief overview of the theoretical approach of the Vienna School of Social Ecology with a report on the results of a long-term study on the coincidence of countries’ first access to fossil fuels with social revolutions.

The theoretical approach views societies in a system-theoretical perspective as hybrids of materiality and meaning, with ‘social metabolism’ and ‘colonisation of nature’ as key links. Historical changes in the energy metabolism of societies are viewed as key drivers of change in social organisation, distinguishing broadly between foraging and agrarian societies, both solar based energetically, but distinct by the latter applying elaborate colonisation technologies that allow for higher energy returns at the price of a higher labor burden, the emergence of cities, and land-based steep social hierarchies. Finally, we report on a series of studies on the coincidence of countries’ access to fossil fuels as allowing a transition to industrial societies, again on a much higher energy level. The very early transition phase (‘critical energy transition period’), as we show empirically for a large number of countries worldwide across the past 500 years, was typically marked by what we characterise as social revolutions. Finally, we ask what societal changes a next energy transition, required to avoid catastrophic climate change, will bring about.

André Saramago (2023). Dualism and Anti-Dualism in the Anthropocene: Process Sociology and Human/Nature Relations in the Great Evolution, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 190-212.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.09>

Abstract: The contemporary ecological crisis challenges the human sciences to develop analytical frameworks that do not treat ‘nature’ as simply the background of human activity. In this context, there are numerous

calls for an abandonment of the 'anthropocentrism' that colours most approaches to the human sciences, along with the dualism these establish between 'nature' and 'humanity', and their substitution with more 'ecocentric' perspectives. This article is a contribution to this ongoing debate. With reference to a process sociological understanding of human/nature relations, it proposes a theoretical avenue to overcome anthropocentric dualism via the process sociological conception of 'levels of integration' in the 'great evolution' of the planet, while making the case for the need to preserve a theoretically relevant awareness of the evolutionarily emergent distinguishing characteristics of the human species. Without an understanding of these emergent characteristics, and the developmental paths these have opened in the history of the species and the planet, neither the origins nor the adequacy of the answers to the ecological crisis can be properly understood.

Abram de Swaan (2023). The Global Coordination Problem: Collective Action among Unequal States, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 213-225.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.10>

Abstract: The most pressing problems facing mankind today require for their solution some form of worldwide collective action at the level of states. In order to combat the global threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, wealthy countries must cooperate to provide vaccines for people in low-income countries, if only to prevent these populations from becoming breeding grounds for new strains of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that will also en-

danger the richer nations. Another, even more pertinent case is the campaign against global warming, which requires concerted action by committed state regimes to curtail the worldwide emission of greenhouse gases. Such figurations give rise to the classic dilemmas of collective action. Throughout human history, with ups and downs, the scale of collective action has extended. This is a corollary of the gradual increase in the scale of governance, from villages to small kingdoms to nation states. National economies, too, have expanded with the increasing control and consumption of fossil energy, as Johan Goudsblom has demonstrated. By the end of the 19th century, nation states were the largest units of effective coordination, each one comprising between one and a hundred million citizens. In the course of the 20th century, a few entities have evolved to the next higher order of magnitude with hundreds of millions, or more than a billion citizens and with a gross national product exceeding in most cases 10 trillion US dollars: these 'gigants' are China, the USA, India, and the EU. They are at present the initiators and managers of global collective action. The recent COVID-19 pandemic created an urgent coordination problem. The enduring climate crisis evokes very similar dilemmas of collective action. The Russian invasion of Ukraine quite suddenly compelled the USA and the EU to join in antagonistic collaboration and overcome challenges that were much the same. State actors resort to a limited set of strategies and practices in order to overcome the pitfalls of collective action and the giants have a leading role in coordinating them.

Randall Collins (2023). Sexual Revolutions and the Future of the Family, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 226-239.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.11>

Abstract: The family is the oldest human institution. Modernity began by replacing family-based organisation with bureaucracy. The core of the family has become personal and sexual rather than political and economic. What is personal and sexual has become more a matter of individual choice than in the era of kinship politics; at the same time sexual behavior has become subject to state regulation, either restricting or permitting. From the early 20th century onwards, there have been increasingly militant social movements on one side or another of what is sexually permitted, encouraged, or prohibited. This paper reviews the sexual revolution in non-marital sex; the history of abortion struggles; mobilization of homosexual and transgender movements; and the battle of pronouns. Anti-abortion politics today is a counter-movement in identity politics, in response to the perceived threat to the traditional male/female family. Nevertheless, with a growing number of persons living alone and substituting electronic media for embodied social interaction, the family will likely survive as a privileged enclave of emotional solidarity and shared economic success.

Johan Goudsblom (2023). The Worm and the Clock: On the Genesis of a Global Time Regime, Historical Social Research, 48(1), pp. 240-258.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.48.2023.12>

Abstract: The spread of a unitary time grid over the whole world is a remarkable aspect of globalisation. Time is not a natural given; as suggested by Norbert Elias, it is a means, devised by humans, for comparing processes of various speed and duration. As such, it is function of 'timing' - an activity which is inherently place-bound. Four phases can be distinguished in the development leading up to universal global timing.

RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

İrem Özgören Kinli & Onur Kinli (2022). The Turkish Ordeal - A Historical-Processual Analysis of the Perception and Engagement of Elderly People in the Digital Transformation, Historical Social Research, 47(3), pp. 315-388.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.47.2022.35>

Abstract: This paper employs a process-oriented methodology for evaluating how digital access to private and public services alters social and everyday practices among older people in Turkey. We also focus on the reaction of elders to the technological infrastructure developed by the Turkish state. We analyse the dynamic interplay between turning points in macro-level historical events and adaptative responses in micro-level contexts. Through historical analysis of the visual turn of culture, the aim is to reveal different ways of digital inclusion of the elderly in processes of digital transformations in Turkey, as citizens of the digital state. We provide an analysis of the process pattern of Turkish digitalisation with qualitative data gathered through semi-

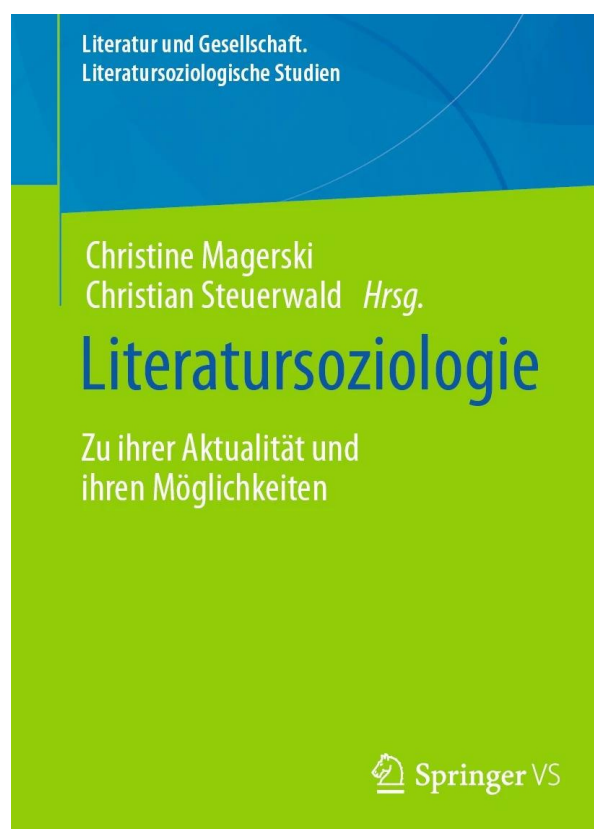
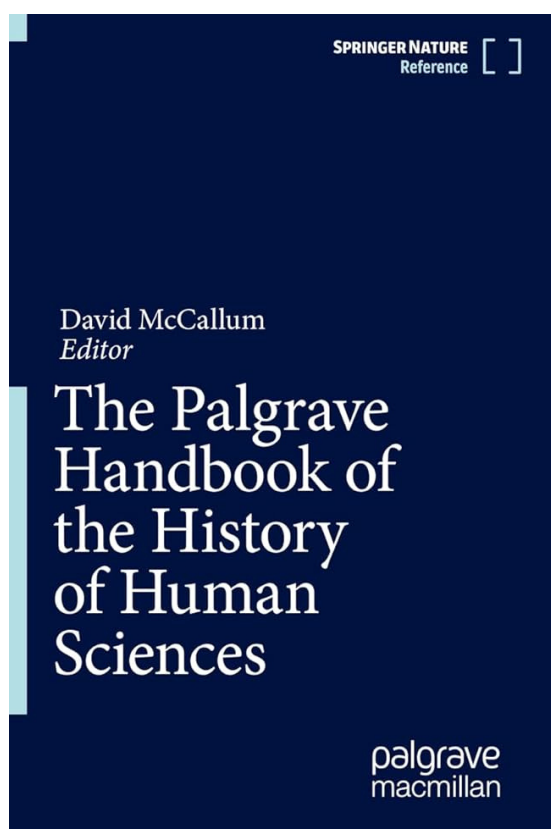
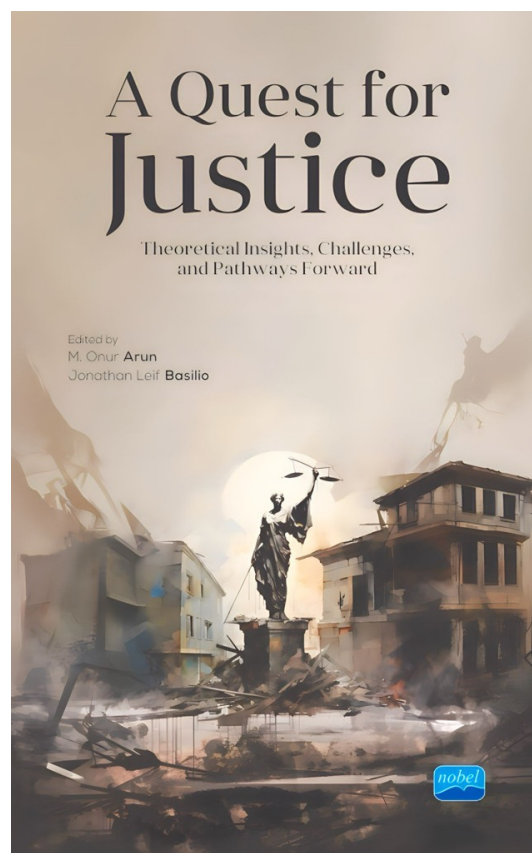
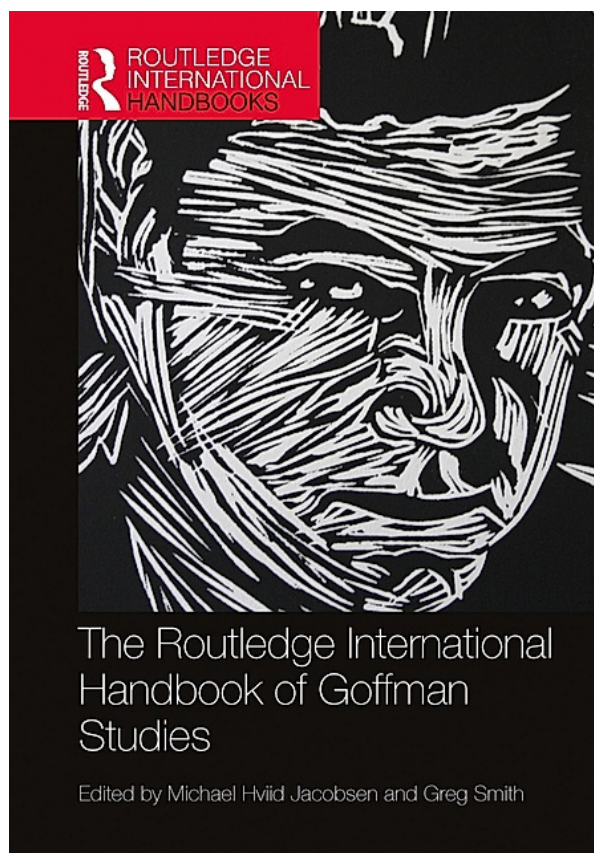
structured, in-depth interviews with middle-class elders in Turkey. To identify temporal patterns in the Turkish digital transformation process, interviews are analysed in terms of their transformative aspects in society. The research data are classified into three groups with respect to their level of analysis from the micro, through the meso, to the macro level: Creation of novelty; variation, continuation, and/or transformation; adaptation. The focus of the article is on the exploration of the impact of the usage of digital communication tools by elders in terms of novelties, continuations, transformations, breaks, and adaptations observed at the micro (individual), meso (social interactions), and macro (governance) levels of social analysis.

Stephen Quilley (2023). A Complete Act: Conservatism, Distributism and the Pattern Language for Sustainability, Challenges in Sustainability, 11(1), pp. 46-59.

DOI: 10.12924/cis2023.11010046

Abstract: Linking Norbert Elias's concept of the triad of controls, to Andrew Willard Jones' analysis of the 'complete act', the paper outlines the relation between culture and personality and the implications of this for any project of localization and the re-embedding of the economy. Re-iterating the reality that degrowth cannot be a liberal project, the paper goes on to explore the relation between Western individualism and Judeo-Christianity. Shorn of the overarching ontology and orienting architecture of Christianity, individualism has become corrosive, unstable and, in the end, self-destructive. The socially conservative pre-

occupation with a decline in virtue is linked to eroding social capital, anomie, and unhappiness arising from a surfeit of freedom. Hyper-social and -spatial mobility is linked to the suppression of the domain of Livelihood, with its bottom-up, communitarian and family-based forms of social regulation; and a corollary expansion of both top-down collectivist regulation by the State and the transactional logic of the Market. Livelihood is a function of embedded individuals enmeshed in relations not only with other individuals and groups, but with God. In contrast, the materialist metaphysics of Market and State both depend on disembedded, free-wheeling citizen-consumers, severed from any relation to transcendent values. But these same phenomena are also the principal drivers of consumption and ecological degradation. On this basis it is argued that any culture of ecological restraint predicated on the re-embedding of markets must also entail an ontological re-embedding of markets must also entail an ontological re-embedding of the sacred conception of the individual (the Imago Dei) into a relation with the divine. Such a project implies a very different understanding of freedom predicated on an external, legitimate authority; a freedom that is 'fullest not when it serves itself but when it serves truths freely held' ([1], Loc. 419). Applying Christopher Alexander's theory of pattern languages, the paper goes on to explore what such a sustainability project might look like.



**ANY HISTORY OF COLOUR IS, ABOVE
ALL, A SOCIAL HISTORY. INDEED, FOR
THE HISTORIAN - AS FOR THE
SOCIOLOGIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST -
COLOUR IS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON.
[...] THE ISSUES SURROUNDING
COLOUR ARE ABOVE ALL SOCIAL
ISSUES BECAUSE HUMAN BEINGS LIVE
IN SOCIETY AND NOT IN SOLITUDE.
WITHOUT RECOGNISING THIS, IT IS
EASY TO FALL INTO A REDUCTIONIST
NEUROBIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OR TO
EMPLOY A PSEUDOSCIENTIFIC
APPROACH, WHICH RENDERS FUTILE
ANY ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH THE
HISTORY OF COLOUR.**

MICHEL PASTOUREAU

*Michel Pastoureau (2018 [2001]). Blue: The History of
Colour. Princeton: Princeton University Press.*

CONFERENCE AND SYMPOSIUM REPORTS

What is Regular about Long-Term Social Processes? Report of a Difficult Discussion

By Marjolijn Voogel

On the 1 December 2023, a symposium took place at the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) under the name 'Long-Term Processes in Human History: Central Questions and Contemporary Perspectives'. About thirty scholars were assembled in the pleasant library of NIAS, situated in the loft of the historic St Jorishof building in the centre of Amsterdam. The symposium was organised at the occasion of the appearance of the issue on 'Long-Term-Processes in Human History' of *Historical Social Research* (Volume 48/1, 2023). This special issue contains a selection of papers that were presented at an international conference held on 17-19 March 2022 in honour of Johan Goudsblom, who had passed away two years earlier.

One of the editors, the Amsterdam sociologist Nico Wilterdink, presented the issue in his opening talk. Subsequently, historian Peer Vries, Emeritus Professor of Global History of the University of Vienna, gave critical comments.

In his opening talk, Nico Wilterdink stated that studying long-term processes has unmistakably returned to the scholarly agen-

da and is vividly needed, prompted by the growing awareness of shared problems for humankind, such as climate change and migration. Solutions for these problems increasingly depend on interdisciplinary cooperation.

Wilterdink gave a short summary of the issue's introductory overview, in which he and co-editor Johan Heilbron distinguish four different scholarly lineages that come together in the study of long-term processes in human history: social evolutionism, Darwinian theory, historical sociology, and world history with its extensions into environmental history and Big History. Subsequently, he presented the list of contributions after the introduction; one is about Johan Goudsblom's life and work (Stephen Mennell), three discuss general and theoretical questions (Johan Goudsblom, David Christian, and Nico Wilterdink), four pieces deal with ecological problems (Nina Baur, John McNeill, Marina Fischer-Kowalski, and André Saramago), and three papers discuss other topics (Abram de Swaan on global coordination, Randal Collins on changes in sexual behaviour and family relations, and another piece by Goudsblom on the development of the 'time regime'). Against the background of the ecological crisis and other global challenges, the most fundamental question for scholars studying

long-term social processes in human history, according to Wilterdink, remains relevant: to what extent and in what respects follow these processes a regular course, and are explainable, and perhaps predictable, on that basis? Two polar answers have been given to this question. At the one extreme, there is the answer of classical, 19th century social evolutionism: all societies sooner or later follow the same path of development with the same stages according to the same evolutionary laws, leading to a pre-determined future. The other polar position, taken by many historians, is that history is irregular, chaotic, unpredictable, and therefore not amenable to any scientific analysis or explanation. Present-day students of long-term social processes generally reject both polar views, taking different positions somewhere between these extremes.

Peer Vries in his comments appeared to take a position quite near the pole of historical narrativism. He stated that historical events do not follow a regular course and can never be explained nor predicted as the outcome of long-term processes. Vries underlined his stance by quoting the British historian A.J.P. Taylor who once said that looking for long-term causes was like a car driver telling a police officer that he blamed his car crash on the invention of the internal combustion engine. According to Vries, the Taylor anecdote illustrates a main problem of many studies of long-term historical processes: being too vague and lacking sufficient data, scholars don't seem to be capable to explain when and why societies enter a next phase. As critics of Braudel's work already pointed

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HSR Vol. 48
2023 | 1

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out, the *longue durée* cannot explain short-term changes, let alone the history of events. And history without events is no history at all.

Implicitly referring to Goudsblom's first article in the HSR issue, Vries called the five long-term trends in human history advanced in this article into question: population growth, urbanisation, specialisation, integration, and stratification. There have been several time periods when these processes were interrupted and took an opposite course. The Black Death in the 14th century, for example, caused a dramatic decrease of the world population. In China, the urban population declined for centuries. Also, one could ask if it is really true that people these days are more integrated on the global level than in earlier times. Maybe technologically, but socially? According to Vries, a long-term perspective that posits one-directional developments neglects and cannot explain countertrends. Nor does a global long-term perspective explain satisfactorily what divides the world.

In the discussion following Vries' talk, the participants did not really converge. At most, they agreed that for various research questions, different perspectives are needed. The debate thus showed that there is still a considerable gap between (at least some) historians and (at least some) social scientists, even if they share a common interest in large-scale historical change over long periods of time. This is surprising in view of Goudsblom's well-argued plea for combining and merging the two traditions in

order to work toward a "common theory". After he published his first programmatic article on this topic 35 years ago (which has now appeared in translation in the special issue of HSR), not much progress in this respect seems to have been made. Yet to end with a positive note, this symposium showed that there are good reasons to continue the conversation between historians and social scientists. There are still important points for fundamental discussion, which requires openness on both sides.



**THE ELECTIVE AFFINITY BETWEEN
THE RELATIONAL APPROACHES OF
ELIAS AND BECK IS COMING TO
THE FORE: THE FORMER SEES
INTERDEPENDENCIES AS A BASIC
SOCIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE, THE
LATTER DIRECTS OUR ATTENTION
TO THE GROWING RECOGNITION
OF INTERDEPENDENCIES IN
GLOBAL POLITICS AND CULTURE
AS PRIMARY MECHANISM OF
REFLEXIVE MODERNIZATION.
THEY ARE MUTUALLY
REINFORCING.**

DANIEL LEVY

*Daniel Levy (2020 [2004]). 'The Cosmopolitan Figuration:
Historicizing Reflexive Modernization', In Ulrich Becks
kosmopolitisches Projekt: Auf dem Weg in eine andere
Soziologie, edited by Angelika Pöferl and Natan Sznaider,
2nd ed. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. pp.185-
95. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845291727-185>.*

PEOPLE



Dominic Malcolm

In February 2023, Dominic Malcolm was appointed Professor of Sociology of Sport at Loughborough University. Dominic has been studying sociological aspects of sport since his appointment as a Researcher Associate at Leicester's Centre for Research into Sport and Society in the early 1990s and this work has variously explored aspects of Elias's approach, especially civilising processes and sociology of knowledge. In 2023 he edited (with Ivan Waddington) *Eric Dunning and the Sociology of Sport* (Routledge). He is a Research Fellow of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport and Editor of the *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*.

Dominic Malcolm & Ivan Waddington (2023). *Eric Dunning and the Sociology of Sport*. London: Routledge.

Abstract: This book celebrates the life and career of Eric Dunning. Eric Dunning was a pioneer of the sociology of sport, firstly known for his ground-breaking theoretical work with Norbert Elias, and his study of the development of football. Subsequently he published seminal work on amateurism, professionalism and the development of rugby (with Kenneth Sheard) and on football hooliganism (with Patrick Murphy and John Williams) and became a focal point for figurational sociological work on sport. Such was the scope of his thinking and the force of his personality that he bestrode the sociology of sport from its inception and initial organisational formation to his retirement. This book charts the breadth and depth of Eric Dunning's influence through a series of chapters written by friends, colleagues and others who have worked with his ideas. Chapters provide an overview of his thinking, reflect on his own core research, and describe the departures this inspired across a range of topics embracing politics, sport, health and education, spanning different nations and sporting cultures.

This book can be purchased from:
<https://www.routledge.com/Eric-Dunning-and-the-Sociology-of-Sport/Malcolm-Waddington/p/book/9781032579009>

OBITUARY



Arkadiusz Peisert (1978-2019)

By the Editors of *Stan Rzeczy*

Arkadiusz Peisert, assistant professor at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Gdańsk, died on 13 November 2019 in Gdańsk. He was a valued researcher on cooperatives and civil society, a solid scholar, and a colleague with a great sense of humour. He was a graduate of interdepartmental individual humanist studies at the University of Warsaw and defended his doctorate in sociology at the UW Institute of Applied Social Sciences. He then moved to the University of Gdańsk, where he worked in the Department of General Sociology and next in the Department of Sociological Theory and Soci-

al Science Methodology.

He was an outstanding sociologist of law and of civil participation. His significant body of scholarly work contains publications of a quite varied nature, from in-depth empirical studies such as ‘Spółdzielnie mieszkaniowe: pomiędzy wspólnotą obywatelską a alienacją’ [The housing cooperative: Between the civil community and alienation] to theoretical essays such as ‘Społeczeństwo obywateli? Obywatelskość w procesie cywilizowania’ [A civil society? Citizenship in the civilising process], inspired by Norbert Elias’s book. The latter essay contains many valuable pointers on how organisational mechanisms can further the resolution of difficult social conflicts and the healing of deep divisions. It is thus particularly worth recommending to contemporary politicians, managers, and local government officials.

Arkadiusz Peisert was the author of numerous articles and expert reports and was engaged in the academic life of many institutions, associations, and discussion clubs. He was active in the Gdańsk branch of the Polish Sociological Society and in the European Sociological Association, where he was a member of the board for the Research Network ‘Sociology of Transformations: East and West.’ Among his many other activities, his work as a member of the editorial board of *Stan Rzeczy* should be mentioned. He was one of the group that established the journal. He passed away before he could bring many

of his creative ideas and scholarly projects to completion. He was always a helpful, sociable, and trustworthy person. It is very hard for his friends, colleagues, and students to come to terms with his death.

A Note from the Editors about Arkadiusz Peisert

Before the passing of Dr Arkadiusz Peisert, he was working on a book titled *Spółeczeństwo obywateli? Obywatelskość lokalna w procesie cywilizowania* (A Society of Citizens? Local Citizenship in the Civilising Process). Below is the abstract for the book:

The book has ten chapters divided into two parts. The first of them presents the concept of the civilising process, introduced by Norbert Elias as the key vector of development of modern Europe. One important element of this process was the English parliamentary system and English and Scottish Enlightenment with their glorification of the society of the day as civilised and, as such, civic. Several other 'national characters' have also displayed a certain potential for the civic ethos. After the fall of communism, civic society was found an attractive model in Central-Eastern Europe. In this context, the authors make references to such factors of the civilising process as civilisational competence (or its lack). The second part applies the concept of the civilising process to explain the potential of civic participation in Poland and barriers to its development. In empirical terms, it is a monographic study of Polish civic behaviour at the level of local co-

munities, which also explains limitations to civic participation in terms of barriers to the civilising process.



BIBLIOGRAPHIC RETROSPECT

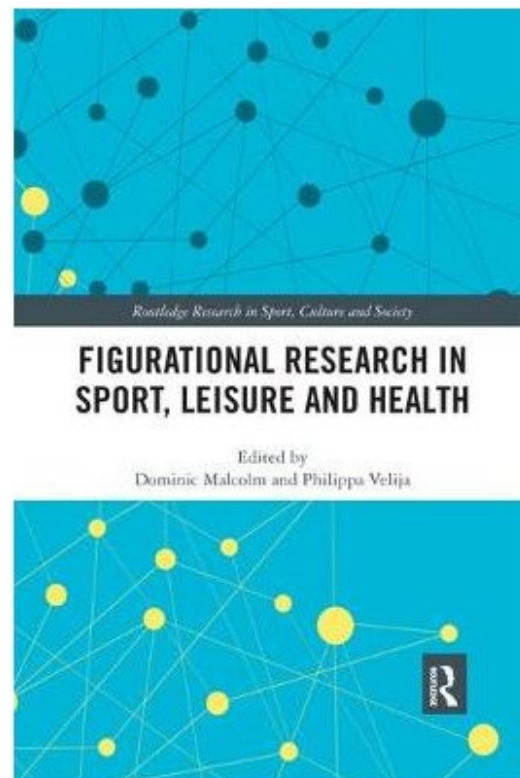


Richard Lachmann (2020). *First-Class Passengers on a Sinking Ship: Elite Politics and the Decline of Great Powers*. New York: Verso.

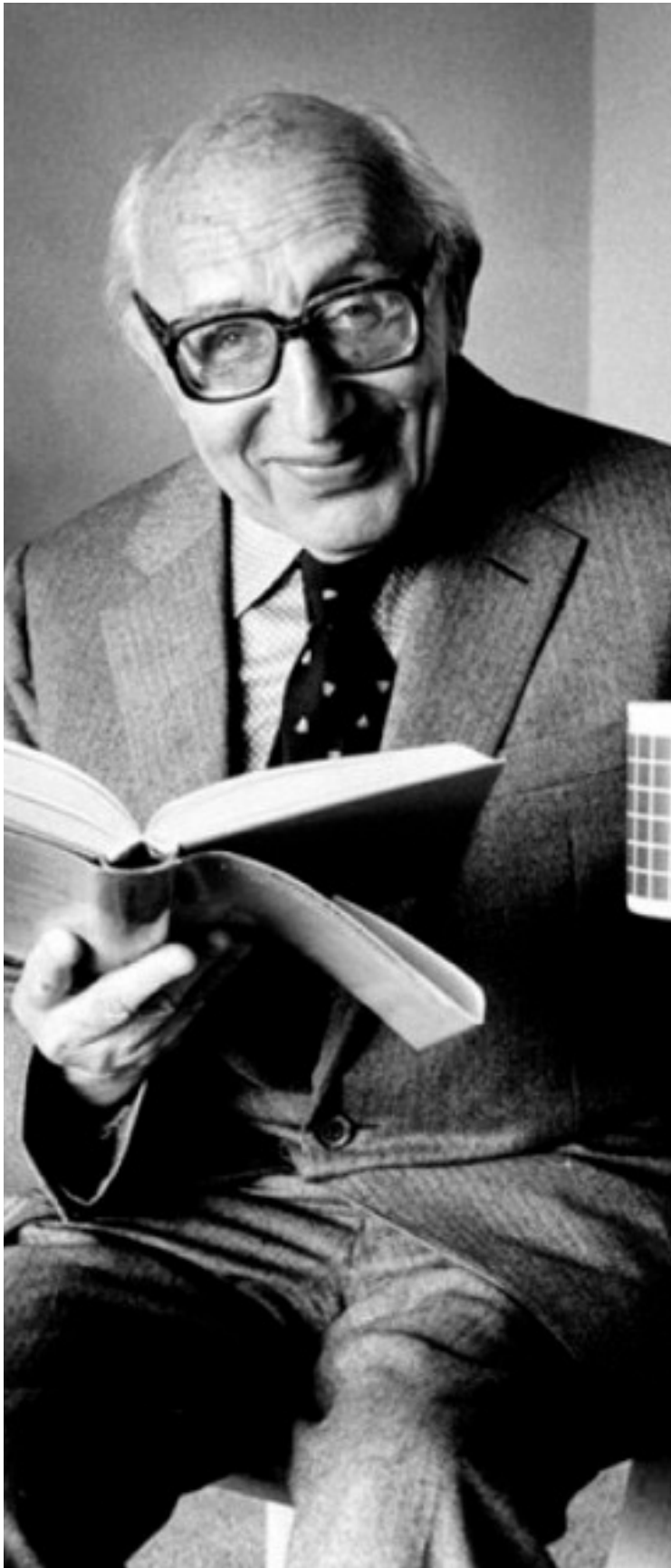
Abstract: The extent and irreversibility of US decline is becoming ever more obvious as America loses war after war and as one industry after another loses its technological edge. Lachmann explains why the United States will not be able to sustain its global dominance. He contrasts Americas relatively brief period of hegemony with the Netherlands similarly short primacy and Britains far longer era of leadership.

Dominic Malcolm & Philippa Velija (2019). *Figurational Research in Sport, Leisure and Health*. London: Routledge.

Abstract: This book brings together an international team of scholars working within the figurational tradition to explain the significance of figurational sociology in the development of the sociology of sport and to provide empirical case studies of figurational sociology in action. Covering core concepts such as the civilising process, and key methods such as interviewing and ethnography, the book presents contemporary research in areas as diverse as sport-related health, mixed martial arts, sports policy, gender relations and cycling.



DONATIONS



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The Foundation is grateful for any donation, large and small, specified or general, anonymous or denominated. For any queries relating to donations, please contact Arjan Post at the secretariat of the Foundation, at: secretary@norbert-elias.com.

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