

Figurations

Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

EDITOR'S NOTES

Figurations 5 reaches you slightly later than intended, mainly because of a last-minute switch of the venue of the Elias Foundation Centenary Conference from Marbach to Bielefeld. Preliminary details of this and other events in the centenary year of 1997 are listed in a supplement to this issue.

The first four issues of *Figurations* ran to 4, 8, 12 and 16 pages respectively. We are now going to try to keep the newsletter within bounds, and I apologise for having to hold over a couple of contributions for *Figurations* 6.

The last book that Norbert Elias published in his lifetime – *Studien über die Deutschen* – has now been translated into English by Eric Dunning and Stephen Mennell. Full details are: *The Germans: Power Struggles and the Development of Habitus in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. 494 pp. Oxford, Polity Press, January 1996, £45.00. ISBN 0-7456-0995-3. The first review, by historian Michael Burleigh,

appeared prominently in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 29 March 1996.

The fourth edition of George Ritzer's well-known textbook *Sociological Theory*, widely used in Departments of Sociology in the USA, contains a 15-page section on "Norbert Elias's Figural Sociology", pp. 511-25 in Chapter 13, "Micro-Macro Integration". The book is published by McGraw-Hill, New York, 1996.

Tom Scheff's *Bloody Revenge* (Westview, 1994) has been translated into French and will be distributed in francophone Africa and Haiti by the US Information Agency. Tom's next book, *Parts and Wholes: Can we Integrate the Human Sciences?*, is to be published by Cambridge University Press.

Annette Treibel has been called to a Chair of Sociology at the University of Karlsruhe.

Stephen Mennell

REVIEW ESSAYS

Waldhoff on strangers and civilisation

Hans-Peter Waldhoff, *Fremde und Zivilisierung: Wissenssoziologische Studien über der Verarbeiten von Gefühlen der Fremdheit – Probleme der modernen Peripherie-Zentrums-Migration am türkisch-deutschen Beispiel*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

This book tries to show how current international migrations do not affect just social relations in more complicated Western societies, but also the relations between economically stronger and weaker states in what Wallerstein has called the Modern World System, and – furthermore – the intra-psychic structures of the people involved. Waldhoff concentrates on the example of the relationship between Turks and Germans in Germany, and his remark that studying this relationship is like looking in a mirror, is reminiscent of Myrdal's famous statement about America's racial problem being a problem of its white population. Waldhoff shows how patterns of relating to 'strangers' mirrors patterns of relating to one's own 'strangeness', that is, to the part of oneself that has become 'unconscious'. By increasingly rejecting everything that seems wild, violent, dirty, indecent or lecherous, in order better to control or cope with these impulses and urges, they have sunk into the unconscious, thus creating an emotional 'estrangement', writes Waldhoff, referring to Robert Muchembled. And, combining the arguments of Erdheim and Gleichmann, he points to the fact that the process of domestication, in which all kinds of emotions and behaviour have been pushed behind the scenes of social life, has a sociopsychical counterpart in the societal production of unconsciousness (and *homo clausus* feelings). 'Thus,' Waldhoff writes, 'the strange and the unconscious have come to appear as belonging to the same incomprehensible rebus of an intangible nature' (p.82). This fits in with a

rigid way of relating to strangers and to one's own feelings of strangeness. In this phase, conceptualized as the disciplinary phase in civilizing processes, the established group's feeling of being threatened by 'strangers' and other outsiders remains explosive: if outsiders maintain a more dissolute lifestyle they are experienced as a threat to the more or less automatically functioning self-restraints, the 'Superego' of the established, whereas the more their lifestyle becomes 'impeccable', the more do they threaten the we-ideal and self-image of the established.

In his book, Waldhoff takes as a point of departure the fact that in this century the type and direction of international migration have changed: after a colonizing period, in which collective migrations resulted in the establishment of upper layers in agrarian societies, there was a shift towards individual migration to urban and industrial societies resulting in new lower layers or underclasses. With this periphery-centre migration, urbanization has become a global process. This fact poses the question of whether cognitive and psychic changes have kept pace with this dramatic change in migration. From a semantic study, analysing changes in what has been written about migration in handbooks and dictionaries in the last hundred years, Waldhoff concludes that they have not. He proceeds by presenting a sketch of early reactions to groups that were experienced as strange in his country, 'gypsies' and (East European) Jews among others, and then attempts to describe differences in defence to 'experiences of strangeness' between early modern and modern processes of state formation. Here, differences in the monopolization of the means of violence and taxation between Turkey and Germany are connected with differences in standards of controlling and civilizing behaviour. Psychic aspects of migration are systematically drawn into an elaborated established-outsider model. Special attention is given to differences in 'social timing' and in 'social orientation' in an attempt to integrate insights and concepts from civilizing theory and from ethno-psychoanalysis (G. Devereux, M. Erdheim) into a 'reflexive process of the sociology of knowledge', describing the 'reflexive civilizing of means of orientation and research methods'.

A crucial distinction in Waldhoff's book is between two types or levels of civilisation: a *disciplinary phase* and an *informalizing phase*. In the disciplinary phase, the austere and inexorable repression of urges and affects can only be accomplished, so it seems, by effacing them both socially and individually from consciousness and by warding off everything that is reminiscent of them with a rigor similar to that which was demanded in the original process of suppression. 'Of all people, strangers are most suitable as the "dirty" substitutes for one's urges and affects that are experienced as dirty, for repressed images and for feelings of inferiority that need to be defended' (p.270/1). When, in expanding networks of interdependency, the social and psychic dividing lines are opening up and social groups as well as psychic functions are integrating, the informalizing phase in civilising processes breaks through. This phase is characterised by an emancipation of emotions and impulses which had hitherto been repressed, resulting in a more 'reflexive civilising' of self-regulation. This less inexorable and martial defence also goes for people embodying 'strange' standards of self-regulation; it is a social as well as psychical de-hierarchization, opening up, or levelling. In order to understand this process, Waldhoff explicitly focuses on the connection between the affective process in which constraints by others are transformed into self-constraints and the cognitive process in which an orientation determined by others (*Fremdorientierung*) is transformed into 'self-orientation'. In this context, 'synthesis formation' is a key concept. In order to envisage connections of larger scope, a wider orientation in the symbolic universe is demanded and thus, the indiscriminate reproduction of *Fremdorientierung* becomes less and less sufficient. In these transformation processes, people (become the) 'master' (of) these constraints and orientations, which in psychoanalytical terms can be expressed as a strengthening of 'Superego'- and 'Ego'-functions in relation to 'Id'-functions, and subsequently also a strengthening of Ego-functions in relation to 'Superego'-functions. The same goes for an enlarged capacity for synthesis formation: this demands a stronger discipline to think oneself and thus a strengthening of 'Ego'-functions. This in particular is typical of the informalizing process. When people migrate and suddenly, as if transported in a time machine, find themselves in another phase of development, writes

Waldhoff, their chances of success are dependent upon the established groups and their degree of 'mastering' and of liberating themselves from the tyrannical aspects of their 'Superego'-functions, the latter being the intrapsychical counterpart of diminishing social differences in power and dependency. As manners and relationships between social groups become less rigid and hierarchical, the same happens to the relationships between psychic functions, altogether opening up a larger and more differentiated spectrum of alternatives and more flowing and flexible connections between social groups and psychic functions. Drawing upon this insight, Waldhoff makes a differentiation within the theory of civilising processes, in particular Elias's concept of self-constraint. He shows that Elias usually refers to 'Superego'-constraints when using this concept and that his concept of the home clausus in most cases refers to a 'Superego'-dominated type of personality. In addition, Elias's concept of a *we-less Ego* (*wir-loses Ich*) is in fact better conceptualized as a *we-less Superego*, a type of personality that, although already quite 'Ego'-directed, suffers especially from a lack of 'Ego'-integration, from antagonistic psychical functions, and is more or less desperately trying to force a breach in the walls around its emotional life. In the informalizing phase of civilizing processes, more and more people become 'Ego'-dominated, developing a type of self-regulation that is not simply a stronger or larger control of affects, but a different pattern of controlling, a pattern that is more flexible, more individually malleable and more easily accessible to emotions. On the basis of these differences in self-regulation, Waldhoff also makes a differentiation in the *Fremdzwang* ↔ *Selbstzwang* balance (constraints by others ↔ self-constraints) and connects this differentiation to the two phases in civilizing processes: in the disciplinary phase the *Fremdzwang* ↔ *Überich* balance (constraints by others ↔ Superego) is central, whereas in the informalizing phase the 'Superego ↔ Ego' balance prevails. With these distinctions, drawn by Waldhoff in this extremely important book, historical and comparative research may reach higher levels of synthesis.

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McNeill on drill and dance

William H. McNeill: *Keeping Together in Time. Dance and Drill in Human History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995. ISBN 0-674-50229-9. viii+198pp. US\$ 22.00.

This 'little book', as its author modestly calls it, is indirectly the result of a formative youthful experience of military drill in the US army in 1941. Marching



William H. McNeill

up and down in the hot Texas plain, in step with large numbers of others, although a 'totally useless war tool', was an obligatory part of military training. He recalls that it gave him a feeling of pleasure and personal well-being, a process he has since come to describe as 'muscular bonding', and the sensations, '[s]omething visceral ... far older than language and critically important in human history, because the emotion it arouses constitutes an indefinitely expandable basis for social cohesion among any and every group that keeps together in time, moving big muscles together and chanting, singing, or shouting rhythmically' (p.2). Over the years William McNeill remained interested in further exploring the topic. Consequently, when invited by Trinity College Cambridge to deliver the 1992 Lees Knowles Lectures on military history, he chose to address the question, 'how emotional bonding among particular human groups aroused by dance and/or drill could plausibly be supposed to have changed the course of the

world's history' (p.v). Thereafter he presented the same material at the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research.

This book is an extension of these lectures on military drill into other areas of human behaviour, under the following headings: 1) Muscular Bonding; 2) Human Evolution; 3) Small Communities; 4) Religious Ceremonies; 5) Politics and War.

In Chapter 1, McNeill presents an overview of the scope of his study setting out his ideas on issues such as the collective pleasure of 'boundary loss' between self and others, heightened emotional excitement, relief from boredom, when engaged in rhythmic exercise of the large muscles in dance, in ecstasy and trance, in military drill, in agricultural work. He reflects on why the introduction of close-order drill to the Dutch army by Maurice of Orange in the 1590s quickly spread to all parts of Europe. Not only did it make troops more efficient in battle, it also became safe to arm the poor without fear of revolt, due, in the author's opinion, to the *esprit de corps* which was so lively 'that other social ties faded into insignificance' (p.3).

McNeill's argument turns on the hypothesis that we are here concerned with pre-linguistic or 'sub-verbal' bonding (thus with communication via the right hemisphere of the brain -- whereas language involves the 'reasoning' left hemisphere) and therefore presumably something very old in the history of our species. Such forms of human communication enhance psycho-emotional orientation through promotion of group bonding, channel frustration and anxiety by releasing tensions, and in specifically religious contexts, give 'meaning' to people's lives. They have retained their importance throughout human history; yet the author notes a relative paucity of evidence that people verbalised much about the feelings associated with them.

The remainder of the book is devoted to

an exemplification of these observations through a sequence of empirical examples. In Chapter 2, the author discusses human physical and social evolution whereby, in the process of learning to cooperate in groups, muscular bonding through coordinated movement led to emotional bonding in face-to-face pre-verbal communication. McNeill suggests that this capacity may have been a factor in genetic selection since the possibility of living together in ever larger groups led to advantage over other animals, greater capacity for food gathering and storage, cooperation in hard physical tasks, and division of responsibilities. He also points to the advantage of bipedalism for manipulating tools, and relatedly, for drumming and maintaining the beat as an aid to coordinated movement (though one might add that hand-clapping and striking of other parts of the body probably arose first).

In Chapter 3 discussion centres on the role of muscular bonding in small communities: its contribution to individual and interpersonal wellbeing at seasonal festival dancing; its role in mock fights and hunting exercises, in anticipation of engagement with the live prey; and under the following headings: i) *Trance and religion*: the idea of the soul (and relatedly, 'inspiration') as of central importance to the development of shamanism and healing, and eventually as a human universal; ii) *Work*: the role of worksongs, sea shanties, etc. in coordinating tasks and relieving the boredom of repetitive physical tasks; and iii) *Consolidation of sub-groups* and specialisation of roles, as, for example, in religious rituals and court ceremonial, serving to confirm constituted authority; but also in the development of 'ecstatic countercultures' such as the dancing prophets of the Old Testament and their early Christian successors; Roman Saturnalia, carnivals and revolutionary festivals as a channel for corporate expression of non-power (sometimes leading to further containment and repression).

Without further theoretical development, Chapter 4 is an application of the same theme specifically to religious ecstasy, and ranges from Old Testament to early Christian and Islamic manifestations of ecstasy; medieval flagellants;

Lutheran reformers and their offshoots; 18th-century Pentecostals, Quakers, Shakers and Mormons; modern charismatics and 'born again' Christians; Islamic dervishes; Hassidim; Brahmans, Buddhists, Hindus. In a broad sweep of the pen McNeill suggests that the impact of Moslem dervishes after 900 A.D. represents an enormous emotional surge which was to have a profound impact on the Islamic world for the next eight hundred years, comparable in effect to that of the ecstatic ancient Hebrew prophets, '... because the civilizational boundaries that divide humankind today were shaped very largely by those emotional ties and convictions ... all seeking direct contact with God, each in its own way' (p.94).

In a reflection on the importance of this form of stimulus, the author notes that when the ecstatic element abates, recruitment may fall off, as in the case of the Mormons (p.85). One is reminded of current efforts in Christian worship generally to foster popular music and dance – no doubt in an attempt to counter competition from the ecclesiastical theatre of 'hot gospellers'. An important point of McNeill's is the attraction such movements have always held for the socially marginalised, thus placing ecstatic religions largely within the category of 'counterculture' as described in the previous chapter.

Chapter 5, on 'Politics and War', is by far the most extensive, constituting one-third of the entire book. Here the Master is on familiar territory (as he himself acknowledges at the outset, pp.vii-viii). Discussion ranges over Ancient Chinese infantry; Spartans, Maoris, Aztecs and Zulus; medieval knights; Maurice of Orange and the consequences of his drilling reforms for the European military of the seventeenth century; the British in India; courtly dancing, military display and the 'mask' of manners at the court of Louis XIV; Russian expansion in Asia; muscular embodiment and new notions of citizenship in nineteenth-century Germany; the development of gymnastics and calisthenics in Sweden; their part in emerging nationalist consciousness in the Czech lands, and in promotion of industrial efficiency in post-War Japan.

Though he remains convinced of the role of close-order drill as what we

might call a 'civilizing spurt', in several instances McNeill shows how it lost its advantage on mountain passes, and in the face of bows and arrows, chariots, cavalry. (One minor quibble: in a book in which we encounter such sensitivity to terminological accuracy, e.g., glosso-lalia (speaking in tongues), catalepsy (trance), gymnosophists (scantily-clad hermits), and to reflection on the strategic advantages of compound bows, halberds and grieves, it is disappointing to discover an inaccuracy in the translation of *aulos* as a flute. This was an ancient Greek reed instrument (like an oboe or clarinet — scholarly opinions vary) which took some lung-power to play, as is often indicated on illustrations by the puffed-out cheeks of the player. (In specifically military contexts, it was sometimes referred to as *embaterion aulos*, one for accompanying the march, or marching songs.)

The study is eloquent testimony to the universal that innovation and change do not necessarily replace older ways. In spite of the high status of writing and literature, in spite of the high cognitive value of technology, the emotional power of muscular bonding has not diminished but remains a fundamental of human-social behaviour. However, the basic argument is not really developed, hence the unavoidable 'shopping list' presentation in the present review. Despite a lack of theoretical engagement, however, the relevance of this work for Figural Studies will be obvious. In addition to a wealth of data on group bonding, emotional orientation and interdependence, it offers insights on established-outsider relations; trends and counter-trends in religious and political movements; bids for power against dominant groups and its maintenance or replacement by others. Insight on shifting power balance is provided by instances where ecstatic countercultures, having gained dominance, immediately proceeded to repress the emotional excitement of others; e.g., once Christianity ceased to be a persecuted sect (after AD 312) and became the official religion of Rome, there was gradually less tolerance of public expression of strong emotions, coupled with a tendency to 'civilize' through standardisation of liturgical ceremonies and control of gesture. The role of muscular bonding in decivilizing processes is also apparent, for example, in the ec-

static frenzy of monks which led to the murder of the Neoplatonic philosopher Hypatia in Alexandria in AD 415 (p.175, n.29). An interesting observation is the effect of the introduction of pews in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a means of controlling excessive outbursts of excitement (a procedure which has been reversed in Pentecostalist churches of today).

McNeill repeatedly expresses surprise at a lack of interest among other scholars in studying such topics. It is somewhat remarkable, therefore, that he has not listed notable exceptions such as the path-breaking study by Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement. Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process* (1986, reprinted 1993). Dunning explores with much insight the problem of scholarly neglect of the field (Preface, p. 31f); and both authors' analyses of the role of sport and physical exertion in group bonding, as mimesis, as 'controlled decontrolling of emotional controls', as catharsis and emotional release, are surely fundamental. It seems unhelpfully isolationist to explore issues such as military drill, above all in a Greek context, without reference to the role of agonistic games. But more generally, drill and sport, music, dance and 'play' all belong to the same behaviour-processual spectrum, and McNeill's study is considerably the weaker for largely ignoring current theoretical debate.

Similarly, he has given insufficient credit to some dance anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, music therapists, and psychologists who have investigated issues such as the psychophysiological effects of music and dance. Contrary to his assumptions, experiments on 'normal' activity have been undertaken (for examples, see Robert Lundin, *An Objective Psychology of Music*, 1985). And one error, in which a statement is attributed to a book's editor (John Blacking ed., *The Anthropology of the Body*, 1977) rather than to the writer of the article (Judith Lynne Hanna, 'To Dance is Human', pp.210-232), is of more than bibliographical import. McNeill dismisses Hanna's statement on the 'selective advantage' of dance as a reference merely to its uses in developing hunting and other practical skills. However, both

Blacking and Hanna are among a handful of scholars with broader than average awareness of the importance of dance, *and music* (from which dance cannot be separated) in long-term human socialisation (*pace* McNeill, p.23: 'experts seem not to have considered dance as a factor in the process [of human evolution]'); similarly Roderyk Lange (*The Nature of Dance. An Anthropological Perspective*, 1975), whose reflections are underestimated, yet whose choice of source materials seems remarkably similar to those used by McNeill. The latter's admission that he 'made no effort to read widely in anthropological literature' and that his consultation of work by European folklorists was 'abbreviated' (p.vii) does rather beg the question why he did not consult relevant specialists, as he clearly was at pains to do for his chapter on human evolution.

McNeill's conclusion borders on prophetic doom: There is less muscular bonding nowadays... most people just watch TV... what will replace the beneficial 'emotions of belonging' aroused by religious movements and community festivals in the past? 'Large and complex human societies cannot long maintain themselves without such kinesthetic undergirding' (p.152); '[t]he dilemma is acute' (p.154). While one ought to be sceptical of any attempt to idealise the past, in his general concern at urban anomie and loss of 'face-to-face' communities McNeill echoes in part Elias's view that 'a society which does not provide its members, and particularly its younger members, with sufficient opportunities for the enjoyable excitement of a struggle which may, *but need not* [my emphasis], involve bodily strength and skill, may be in danger of dulling the life of its members unduly; it may not provide sufficient complementary correctives for the unexciting tensions produced by the recurrent routines of social life' (*Quest for Excitement*, Introduction, pp. 58-59).

But McNeill is too negative; he ignores much that *is* going on, and perhaps overplays the physical, rather than taking account of other types of social-emotional bonding. A glance at Ruth Finnegan's *The Hidden Musicians. Music-Making in an English Town* (1989) is eloquent testimony that many

people are not sitting passively at home: amateur music clubs seem more varied and active than ever; as are sport and leisure activities – aerobics, jogging, rap, discos and various forms of recreational dancing, children's games, pop concerts, 'raves', street carnivals and numerous other public festivities. Perhaps if he had read more widely, or preferably, discussed these issues with specialists in sport, music and dance, McNeill might have written a different type of conclusion, and given a more comprehensive treatment of some of the points raised, but not much developed, in chapters 3 and 4 especially.

Like any large survey, this one underlines the need for closer interdisciplinary engagement between scholars in examination of specific theoretical questions. It is nonetheless a provocative, stimulating and masterly overview of empirical data, all of which merit further exploration. In reaching beyond static structures and archival documents in an attempt to explicate the more reality-congruent dynamics of day-to-day living in social and emotional interdependence, McNeill belongs to a rare species among historians.

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RECENT BOOKS

Johan Heilbron, *The Rise of Social Theory*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995, 322 p. ISBN: 0-7456-1568-6 (paperback)

Modern social science has developed in two stages: a predisciplinary and a disciplinary stage. Contrary to most of the literature, this book deals explicitly with the predisciplinary stage. It is an attempt to understand the emergence of social theory as a modern and distinctive intellectual genre, by focusing mainly on France in the period from the Enlightenment to the mid-nineteenth century.

Part I deals with the rise of social theory. Montesquieu, Rousseau and the Scottish moral philosophers, all inte-

grated the analysis of political regimes with insights about morals and manners. In doing so, they defined the modern notion of 'society' as a differentiated, yet interconnected whole. What came to be called 'social theory' thus transcended the existing division in political theory, political economy and moral philosophy, and represented a more wide-ranging mode of analysis, centred on the structures of human interdependence in time and space.

Part II is concerned with the scientization of social theory in the decades around 1800. The expression 'social science' was coined, and the new science was now predominantly conceived as an extension of the natural sciences. The mathematician Condorcet and the physiologist Cabanis were its leading representatives. Efforts in this direction were made after Louis XVI ascended to the throne and became dominant in the revolutionary period.

Part III is largely about Auguste Comte, who was the first to advocate an uncompromising scientific approach without taking refuge in any of the established sciences. His differential theory of science, based on the notion of relative autonomy, implied the foundation of a new science, 'sociology', which would elaborate its proper theories based on the search for historical laws.

The primary aim of the book is to document this process of intellectual innovation and to propose a proper sociological account as to how and why this new intellectual genre emerged, in the relatively long period prior to the establishment of university disciplines.

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Fred Spier, *Religious Regimes in Peru. Religion and state development in a long-term perspective and the effects in the Andean village of Zurite*. 1994, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press.

This inquiry deals with religion and politics in Peru from the beginning of agrarianisation, *circa* 8000 B.C. up until

AD 1991. Of central importance for the analysis are state formation and development, the relations between church and state, the internal and external relations within and among the various religious groupings. These national themes are illustrated at a local level by the examination of the history of the Andean village of Zurite, situated near the regional centre Cusco.

The general part of the study is based on source publications, archival documents, and studies by archaeologists, historians and social anthropologists. The reconstruction of village history was possible through an exhaustive study of both the Zurite church books in the local sacristy and all listed documents in prominent archives in Cusco, Lima, and Seville, Spain. In addition, the author did participatory field research in the village in 1985, 1986, 1988 and 1991.

The study provides a wealth of new sociological insights as well as many novel historical facts, presented within an innovative general theoretical framework. This very long-term investigation is among the first of its kind, if not the first, that have been produced in this time-scale for any region in the world. The author views it as a part of the effort of writing human history.

Fred Spier. *San Nicolás de Zurite: Religion and Daily Life of an Andean Village in a Changing World.* 1995 Amsterdam. VU University Press.

This book provides the first detailed anthropological account of the politics of religion in a Peruvian Andean village. It traces the modern Catholic clergy's strategy of keeping the parish alive while their societal position is weaker than ever before. The emergence of evangelical churches is discussed by focusing on the question of why modern peasants willingly convert to Protestantism. By concentrating on the relations between local healer-sorcerers and their peasant clientele, the ever-continuing indigenous religion is analysed. Taking its departure from the sociology of Norbert Elias, local life is viewed as part of wider societal developments, such as the currently accelerating globalisation of society.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RETROSPECT

Very considerable debate about Elias's theory of civilising processes was sparked off – particularly in Germany – by the publication in 1988 of Hans-Peter Duerr's *Nacktheit und Scham* [Nakedness and Shame], the first of a projected four-volume critique with the overall title of *Der Mythos vom Zivilisationsprozess* [The Myth of the Civilising Process]. Now that Suhrkamp have brought out Duerr's second and third volumes (*Intimität*, 1990; *Obszönität und Gewalt*, 1993) the journal *Comparative Studies in Society and History* is publishing a review symposium on Duerr, to which Joop Goudsblom and I have contributed a counter-critique. In the midst of all this, another important book on nakedness, by Oliver König, drawing on Bourdieu as well as Elias, has been to some extent neglected. Because the 'civilising' of social standards in relation to nakedness seemed particularly complex and far from linear even in Elias's original 1939 account, and because of its centrality to continuing debates about pornography and the exploitation of women today, it is an especially interesting topic. So I asked Oliver König to write a brief note about his 1990 book. - SJM

Oliver König *Nacktheit: Soziale Normierung und Moral.* Opladen. Westdeutscher Verlag. 1990. ISBN 3-531-12175-8. 400 pp. DM 48,-.

This book deals with changes in manners concerning nudity, and with both the everyday and scientific discourse about these changes. The central theoretical background is the work of Pierre Bourdieu, especially his sociology of culture as formulated in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London, Routledge, 1984, original French 1979), in which he explicitly states his theoretical connection with Norbert Elias. This orientation leads to a fundamentally reflexive approach, which sees both scientific and everyday discourse as an expression of social disputes about 'legitimate' manners concerning the nude body.

In a theoretical introduction, the basic categories are developed in relation to

historical material. These categories are seen as underlying the perception, description and evaluation of nudity, and at the same time are connected with specific positions in the social field. It can be taken as an expression of the marginal position of nudity that it is associated with the less powerful: with children, with women, with the lower class, and with 'primitive' cultures. In contrast to linear theories of cultural development, the argument is based on the general irregularity and discontinuity of the historical process.

In three historical sketches, about the development of public bathing since the Middle Ages, about the portrayal of nudity over the same period, and about the interpretation of lexical keywords since the eighteenth century, the broad horizon of meaning concerning nudity is illustrated. The central aim of the approach is to analyze the structure of the social disputes and the categories underlying it. These disputes did not decrease with the beginning of 'emancipation' (*Freisetzung*) of nudity at the turn of the century. On the contrary, they increased, in a subtle way.

The main part of the book is about the development of manners in the German-speaking countries since 1900. It deals with a wide range of social historical material, with an emphasis on the development of German nudism (*Freikörperkultur*) and the accelerated 'emancipation' of nudity since the 1960s, and discusses the contemporary theories about these changes in the work of Georg Simmel, Havelock Ellis, Sigmund Freud, William Graham Sumner, Max Scheler, David Riesman and Michel Foucault. Special attention is paid to Norbert Elias's theory of civilising processes, and the critique of it by Hans-Peter Duerr. The author's own critique of Elias deals with his neglect of contrasts within a particular society and the connected problems of power. The concept of a continual change from external constraint (*Fremdzwang*) to self-constraints (*Selbstzwang*) is replaced by Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' and its (unconscious) basis in the structure of social classes. The category 'gender', which Bourdieu treats as secondary, is central in a chapter about the different perception and classification of male and female nudity and sexuality.

This is illustrated through theories about 'narcissism' since 1900, which connect with the definition of male exhibitionism as pathological and the simultaneous commercialisation of female ex-

hibitionism, right through to the debate about pornography in the 1980s.

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■ RECENT CONFERENCE

THE ELIAS PARADIGM AND SOCIAL SCIENCE HISTORY

Roundtable at Annual Conference of the Social Science History Association (SSHA), Chicago, November 1995

At this roundtable, a session in the presidential network of the SSHA, the significance of Elias's work was discussed in the widest sense. It was one small building-block toward the reception of this work in North America. To begin with, let me say a few words about the SSHA itself.

At its foundation, twenty years ago, the SSHA was the domain mainly of quantitative history, with an emphasis on historical demography. At present, the association unites not only those historians who are oriented toward the social sciences, but conversely, sociologists, economists and others who are working from a historical perspective. It purposely fosters interdisciplinarity. At its annual conferences there are usually some 500 participants. There are 10 to 12 parallel sessions, which means that panellists have to try to attract listeners on a 'market' basis. The meetings are structured through networks, dealing with broadly defined fields such as criminal justice, urban studies, gender, race relations, etc. The presidential network comprises a special series of panels, commissioned by that year's president. This formula is now being tried in Europe as well: the first European Social Science History Conference was held in the Netherlands, 9-11 May 1996.

The overall theme of the 1995 presidential series was 'history and other social sciences.' I suggested to the president, Tamara Hareven, that it would be interesting to devote one session to an assessment of 'the Elias paradigm' as a major example of integration of history and other social sciences. So she asked me to organize it. It was set up as a roundtable with brief introductions by four scholars, the main purpose of which was to invite as much discussion as possible. The panel was composed with a view on disciplinary and geo-

graphical spread. It consisted of a European sociologist, a European historian, an American historian and a Japanese, America-based sociologist.

As the panellists' statements were intended to be rather general, much of their contents, supposedly, is familiar to readers of *Figurations*. Ali de Regt (University of Amsterdam; replacing Joop Goudsblom who had to stay at home for health reasons) spoke about 'civilizing offensives'. She argued that behavioral standards did not only spread through imitation of higher-status groups, but that in some cases elite groups, notably the bourgeoisie in the late nineteenth century, purposely wanted to influence the behaviour of lower groups. Actual behavioral change, however, was a consequence of structural changes in society rather than the efforts of elites. Peter Stearns (Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh), while recognizing the fruitfulness of the theory of the civilizing process, had some critical remarks as well. In particular, he argued that it was problematic to explain developments in modern America with the help of this theory. Bernd Roeck (University of Bonn), who, among other things, is preparing a study of the writings of Aby Warburg, compared these writings with those of Elias. Eiko Ikegami (Yale University) became acquainted with Elias's work while investigating long-term developments in Samurai culture and state formation in Japan. She found it a useful frame of reference, next to the theories of Bourdieu and Giddens.

As was the case among the panellists, the discussion initiated by the audience centered on the theory of civilizing processes, as the best-known aspect of Elias's work, at least in this company. His writings in general are relatively unfamiliar still to many American scho-

lars. Certainly, the personal motivation of the chair and organizer was to promote the recognition of Elias's contribution to social theory as being of crucial importance. At several points, I was tempted to intervene in the discussion, in order to clear up misunderstandings, but I stuck to my technical role. As it happened, there were a number of people from the criminal justice network among the audience. Due to them, the discussion focused especially on the subject of violence and homicide down the centuries. This theme is easily connected to that of the civilizing process. The longitudinal study of violence in general and homicide rates in particular is emerging fastly as a major subject in history and historical sociology. In this field of research, Elias's theories are increasingly accepted as the major explanatory frame of reference, even by American scholars. This may provide a base for the further reception of his work.

Pieter Spierenburg

Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam

■ FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

Santé Publique et Sociétés

5-6 June 1996

Université de Paris X - Nanterre

The central question of this interdisciplinary conference is 'Why are the Americans, the British, and other developed nations in which people's lives are longer, healthier and safer than any others are today or have been in the past, nevertheless so preoccupied with their health?'

The conference will bring together specialists in anthropology, sociology, economics, law, medicine, psychology, philosophy, political science and history.

For further details, or to offer papers, contact:

Dr Alain Garrigou

UFR de Sciences juridiques et politiques

Université de Paris X - Nanterre,

200, avenue de la République,

F-92001 Nanterre Cedex, France.

Fax: +33-1-40 97 76 56

Tel. + 33-1-40 97 76 52

Violence and the Future of Society

World Congress on Violence and Human Coexistence

Dublin, 17-21 August 1997

The World Congress will provide an interdisciplinary, multicultural forum for expression, research, exchange, and problem-solving on all aspects of the problems of violence. A deeper understanding of the many eruptions of violence in human life and history will help point to the conditions required for the fullness of human coexistence as we move into the next millennium.

The organisers cordially invite everyone concerned with violence in contemporary society and its implications for the future to take part in the Congress.

A sample list of sessions includes:

- *Violence and civilisations
- *Violence in history and its impact on the future: e.g. colonialism, imperialism, totalitarianism
- Language and violence
- Eliasian and figurational analyses of violence
- The psychology of violence
- Alienation and social disharmony
- Domestic violence
- Torture and torturers
- Official and state violence
- Education for non-violence

Programme: The Congress will take place over a period of five days. Regular, special, and plenary sessions are scheduled for August 17,18,19,20,21. Participating groups may, if they so desire, hold their own meetings on Tuesday 19 at Dublin Castle.

Chairman of the Congress:

Dr Don Bennett, Dept Sociology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

email don.bennett@ucd.ie

Information:

Jessica Bates, Congress Secretary, Department of Sociology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. fax. +353 1 706 1125

email jess.bates@ucd.ie

More information on our www home page:

<http://www.ucd.ie/cgi-bin/unitel/SELECT/LIST/280>

RESPONSE TO PAOLO BARBESINO

Reading Paolo Barbesino's review of my book *Norbert Elias: Un ritratto intellettuale (Figurations 4)*, I was fascinated by the list of things missing from it. According to him, first, I ought to have considered 'the recent developments in the social constructionism', which I did not. Second, 'an analysis of the circumstances which in the late 1970s helped Elias achieve a more established position in contemporary sociology is almost completely missing'. Nor is there 'any mention of the impact of French authors like Ariès and Foucault'. (Barbesino's sentence continues: 'in previously shaping a discursive space in which any attempt at understanding modernity in terms of coupling of objectification and disciplining subjectivity, and increasing individualisation, might have gained relevance'. I am a bit unclear what that means.)

Here the intellectual history seems to be read the wrong way. It is necessary to consider the possible influence on Elias on Foucault but it is certainly not useful, in exploring the formation of ideas which found their classical expression in 1939, to mention Foucault who was at that time a schoolboy. I wrote an 'intellectual portrait' of Elias and was interested in the process of formation of his main ideas. Paolo Barbesino's criticisms are, in this perspective, inappropriate – and may be worse than that if they suggest that Elias's only importance is to have been a forerunner of Ariès and Foucault.

Now, of course, there is nothing much I can say about what Paolo Barbesino happens to find interesting or otherwise. But, as a general point, it seems to me that 'mentioning' a great man in the 'intellectual portrait' of another, because of some similarity, is doing them both a disservice. Similarly, I refrained on purpose from dropping names of 'recent developments' in social theories utterly unrelated to Elias's own. On the other hand, I would have been delighted to know how the reviewer feels about what I did write, as opposed to what he would have written in some other book. But he seems not to care to 'mention' that.

Simonetta Tabboni

APPEAL FOR OFFPRINTS AND PHOTOCOPIES

The small but growing team of sociologists at the University of Bucaramanga, Colombia is appealing for copies of articles relevant to all aspects of the figurational or process-sociology. Bucaramanga is not an old institution, and like our colleagues in Estonia on whose behalf Thomas Salumets appealed in *Figurations 4*, the Colombian group is short of library resources. They do have copies of all of Elias's books, but lack copies of many books and articles by his followers and his critics (the writings of Cas Wouters and Anton Blok were specifically mentioned as examples, if we may drop a direct hint to those two readers of *Figurations!*), as well as sets of journals such as the *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*. Photocopying is not problem, and if authors are willing to send copies of their books and articles and permission to copy, the originals can be returned to them. The long-term aim is to create an interdisciplinary centre for Figurational Studies at the University of Bucaramanga.

Donations or loans of material should be sent to Dr Vera Weiler, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Departamento de Historia, Bogota, Colombia, e-mail: vweiler@hermoteca.iefes.gov.co.

SUCCESSFUL CALL FOR BOOK DONATIONS

The call for book donations for the University of Tartu in Estonia was successful. Very generous contributions were made by the Norbert Elias Foundation and the University of Amsterdam (Vakgroep Sociologie). Among individual contributors were Johan Goudsblom (Amsterdam) and Stephen Mennell (Dublin). THANK YOU ALL - your help is much appreciated. There is still time to donate books. Please send contributions to:

Thomas Salumets, Chair, Programme in Comparative Literature, University of British Columbia, 1866 Main Mall, Bu E270, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1 Canada. Fax: +1-604-822 4978 E-mail: salumets@unixg.ubc.ca



ELIAS CENTENARY SUPPLEMENT

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

This conference will now be held in the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung at the University of Bielefeld, where Norbert Elias spent several happy and very productive years in the early 1980s. Ending on the centenary date itself, the conference will be sponsored by the Elias Foundation and by the Department of Sociology, University of Bielefeld.

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

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

- Reflection, Revision and the Future - the theory of civilising processes at the end of the twentieth century (Convenor: Annette Treibel).
- Decivilising Processes (Convenor: Stephen Mennell)
- Literature and Language (Convenor: Christoph König)

The working languages of the conference will be German and English - without simultaneous translation.

Calls for papers for the three groups follow:

Working Group 1: REFLECTION, REVISION AND THE FUTURE

Elias's classic study *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* is now nearly 60 years old. The debate about this *magnum opus* - like that surrounding comparable works, like Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* - is never-ending. Debate continues about how the central theses, the empirical basis, and the adequacy of the conceptual models are to be assessed. Any synthesis as wide-ranging as Elias's - linking as it does psychology, literature, political history, social history, and theoretical models in micro- and macro-social contexts - exposes itself to critical evaluation by representatives of many different specialisms and disciplines. That was true at the time it was written, but it must be even more so today. In view of the development of knowledge and science over the immense period of six decades, this working group will tackle the basic question: *What is the significance of the theory of the western courtly civilis-*

ing process in the light of the state of research today?

More specific facets of this basic question are:

- the empirical confirmation or correction of the thesis of the courtly civilising process (manners, violence, sexuality, etc.)
- state-formation processes and feudalism: for example, explanations of French absolutism from the viewpoints of history and political science.
- the civilising of emotions and changing feelings of shame: the findings of anthropology, psychology, social psychology, or the sociology of emotions.
- comparisons of Elisian methodology with contemporary approaches in historical and interpretative sociology.
- philosophy and logic of history: the foundations of the theory of civilising processes.
- the theory of civilising processes in comparison with (among other things) macro-social theories of development and historical sociology.
- comparison with economic and other approaches to unintended consequences of human actions.

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

Offers of papers for this group should be sent to:

Prof. Dr Annette Treibel, PHI Karlsruhe, Postfach 4960, D-76032 Karlsruhe, Germany

Tel. 00-49-721-925-4628

Fax: 00-49-721-925-4000

Working Group 2: DECIVILISING PROCESSES

The notion of *decivilising* processes has in recent years become increasingly central to debates about the work of Norbert Elias. Criticisms of Elias's theory of civilising processes can be broadly divided into two categories. First, there are those (such as Hans-Peter Duerr) who, usually from a standpoint of radical cultural relativism, simply deny that there was any such structured process of 'civilisation' as Elias identified, whether in Europe or elsewhere. Second and more important, there have always been critics who, even if they accepted the substantial validity of Elias's account of changes in the European habitus from the late Middle Ages up to the nineteenth century, argue that the trend was reversed in the twentieth; and, furthermore, that this invalidates a key element in Elias's

theory, the connection he discerned between growing social complexity, lengthening chains of interdependence, and state formation process on the one hand, and changes in habitus on the other.

Early discussions of apparently decivilising trends include the debate about 'informalising' processes (Wouters, Brinkgreve, Kapteyn *et al.*), that about contemporary sports-related violence (Dunning *et al.*), and that about the consequences of nuclear weapons in the Cold War (Van Benthem van den Bergh, and Elias himself). More recently – especially since the publication of Elias's *Studien über die Deutschen / The Germans* – there has been a growing recognition of the need *al-ways* to think in terms of a fluctuating balance between civilising and decivilising forces, which indeed presuppose each other.

The aim of this working group is decisively to advance the discussion of the connection between civilising and decivilising processes. It is hoped that participants may wish to apply the ideas to a range of contemporary social problems, to both the past and to contemporary processes such as 'globalisation', to non-European contexts, and perhaps to areas such as the effects of the media about which Elias and those influenced by him have hitherto had little to say.

Offers of papers for this group should be sent to:

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

Working Group 3 LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Beyond sociology, Norbert Elias has attracted a particularly strong following in the literary disciplines, and this has been growing in recent years. The reception of his work in literary circles has several different – even partly contradictory – facets. In medieval studies, for instance, Elias has been widely perceived as an historian, while in writings about more recent literary history (one thinks for example of Dieter Borchmeyer's essay on *Zmegac*) he has served as a methodological stimulus. Now there is a need for a systematic re-examination of the question of whether Elias's work theoretically and practically provides possible points of departure for the future in other areas of literary and linguistic studies. Four interrelated questions can particularly be asked:

1. How far does the theory of civilising processes serve as a paradigm for a social history of literature?
2. In what ways can the theory of civilising processes make a contribution to current discussions about cultural studies, especially towards a cultural studies approach to the literary disciplines?
3. What contribution does the theory of civilising processes make to the history of literature and the writing of literary history, for example in conceptualising epochs and the breaks between them?
4. To what extent does Elias's conception of language stand in opposition to concepts of text and language – intertextuality and deconstruction, orientated towards Foucault and Derrida – currently widespread in the humanities and cultural sciences?

Discussion of these questions may lead to important implications in the linguistic and literary disciplines, and contribute to establishing the relevance to these fields of Elias's work in the theory of knowledge and the sciences.

Offers of papers for this group should be sent to:

Dr Christoph König, Schiller-Nationalmuseum Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Arbeitsstelle für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Germanistik, Postfach 1162, D-71666 Marbach am Neckar, Germany. Tel. +49-7144-848-432; Fax: +49-7144-848-490

INTERDEPENDENCIES, INTERNATIONAL NORTH AMERICAN ELIAS CONFERENCE, 20–22 MARCH 1997 UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER, CANADA

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

THURSDAY EVENING, 20 March, Goethe Institute, Vancouver

- 19:00 Registration
19:30 Hermann Korte, University of Hamburg
'Life and Labour of a European Sociologist'
20.30 Reception

FRIDAY, 21 March, First Nations House of Learning, UBC

- 09:30 Opening remarks:
Thomas Salumets, University of British Columbia
Hermann Korte, Joint Trustee of the Norbert Elias Foundation, Amsterdam

Session I

- 10:00 Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh, Erasmus University, Rotterdam: 'Nations as Symbols and Processes'
Annette Treibel, University of Karlsruhe: 'The changing balance of power between men and women: A figurational study on the public and the private sphere within western societies.'

Session II

- 11:30 Thomas J. Scheff, University of California Santa Barbara: 'Unpacking the Civilizing Process'
Thomas Kemple, University of British Columbia: 'The Trials of Homo Clausus: Elias, Weber, and Goethe on the sociogenesis of the modern self'

12:45 Lunch

Session III

- 14:00 Ann Buckley, Cambridge University: 'Interdependency and Medieval Studies'
Stephen Guy-Bray, University of British Columbia: 'Civilising Sexuality: Marie de France's lay with two names'
16:00 Guided tour of the Museum of Anthropology
18:00 No-host dinner in Vancouver's Chinatown

SATURDAY, 22 March, Green College, Recreation Lounge

Session IV

10:00 Stephen Mennell, University College Dublin: 'North America and the Civilizing Process'
Paul Nixon, Cambridge University: 'Kitsch and Western Interest in the Exotic'

Session V

11:30 Helmut Kuzmics, University of Graz: 'Sociology and Literature'
Rod Watson, University of Liège: 'Personal Pronouns, Roles and Human Figurations: A Critical Commentary on Norbert Elias's Approach to Language'

Closing remarks:

Stephen Mennell, University College Dublin
Thomas Salumets, University of British Columbia
19:30 No-host dinner, Salmon House on the Hill, North Vancouver

For more information, please contact: Thomas Salumets, Chair, Programme in Comparative Literature, University of British Columbia, 1866 Main Mall, Bu E270, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1 Canada
Fax: +1 604 822 4978

E-mail: salumets@unixg.ubc.ca

Information is also available online at the LITERATURE AND PROCESS SOCIOLOGY website. The URL is: <http://www.arts.ubc.ca/german/lps/elias.html>

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

This conference, the principal celebration of Elias's centenary in France, will focus on the relevance of his writings on state-formation to the development of the *modern* democratic state. It is being organised by Bernard Lacroix and Alain Garrigou. Potential participants are asked to contact: Prof. Bernard Lacroix, Groupe d'Analyse Politique, Université de Paris X – Nanterre, 200 Avenue de la République, F-92001 Nanterre Cedex, France. Tel. 00-33-1-409-77652; Fax: +33-1-40 97 76 56.

ELIAS CENTENARY SESSIONS AT THE ASA, TORONTO, 9-13 AUGUST, 1997.

Jorge Ardití and Stephen Mennell intend to organise a session at the American Sociological Association 1997 Annual Meeting in Toronto. A formal call for papers will be published in the ASA's *Footnotes* and in *Figurations* 6, but anyone interested in participating is asked to contact: Jorge Ardití, Department of Sociology, State University of New York Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14620-4140, USA. E-mail: ardití@acsu.buffalo.edu

AUSTRALIAN ELIAS CENTENARY CONFERENCE.

Robert van Krieken (University of Sydney), and Steve Russell (Monash University Gippsland) are hoping to organise a centenary event in Australia on 1-2 February 1997. More definite

news later. In the meantime, potential participants are asked to contact: Dr Steve Russell, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Monash University Gippsland, Switchback Road, Churchill, Vic. Australia. E-mail: stever@ghss.cc.monash.edu.au
Fax: +61-51-226359

ELIAS CENTENARY CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA. BUCARAMANGA, COLOMBIA, 19-21 AUGUST, 1997

Elias's writings are as yet not widely known in Latin America, though interest is growing, and several leading 'figurational' scholars from Europe – Goudsblom, Korte, Dunning, Treibel, Rieckenberg, Castro – will join Latin American colleagues in discussing all aspects of Elias's ideas. The organisers are, however, particularly keen to hear from any scholars who are applying Elias's ideas, or more generally using a process-sociological approach, in the study of non-European countries (and especially in Latin American conditions).

All who are interested should contact Dr Vera Weiler, Departamento de Historia, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. Fax: +57-1-222 5285; E-mail: vweiler@hemeroteca.icfes.gov.co

hpf – STUDY GROUP FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF HUMAN PROCESSES AND FIGURATIONS NORBERT ELIAS CENTENARY CONFERENCE, CAMBRIDGE 18-21 SEPTEMBER 1997.

The following themes will be addressed:

1. Norbert Elias and British Sociology, 1940s–1990s
2. Interdisciplinary applications of Figurational Studies

In addition, we are willing to accept a limited number of free papers.

Proposals are welcome from colleagues in all parts of the world and should be sent to:

Dr Paul J. Nixon, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RQ, United Kingdom
Telephone/Fax (direct line): +44-1223-360927
E-mail: pn203@cam.ac.uk or aab3@cam.ac.uk

ORGANIZED VIOLENCE: THE FORMATION AND BREAKDOWN OF MONOPOLIES OF VIOLENCE –CONDITIONS AND CONSEQUENCES, AMSTERDAM ELIAS CENTENARY, 18-20 DECEMBER 1997

The plenary sessions of the main Centenary conference in the Netherlands will focus particularly on one of Elias's central themes, the formation and breakdown of monopolies of violence. But, besides these, it is planned that each evening there will be thematic group meetings on a wider range of topics – these need not necessarily be concerned with violence. (It is anticipated that the meeting on 'Elias and the Middle Ages', already mentioned in *Figurations* 4, will be one of the thematic groups in Amsterdam – see below.)

If you would like to organise a thematic group at the Amsterdam conference, please contact Kitty Verrips (SISWO, Plantage Muidergracht 4, 1018 TV Amsterdam; Fax: +31-20-622-9430; e-mail: verrips@siswo.uva.nl) as soon as possible.

Session organisers will be given a maximum of four 1½-hour sessions (two on Thursday and two on Friday), but you may also request fewer than this; some thematic groups might require only one or two sessions.

The hall reserved for the conference will hold 200 people, so there should be room for everyone, and the organisers intend that no-one should feel excluded!

PRELIMINARY PLENARY PROGRAMME: Thursday 18 December 1997

Chair: *Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh* (NL)

14.00 Introduction (*Johan Goudsblom*, NL)

14.35 Male monopolistic rituals (*Donald Glassman*, USA)

Tea

15.30 Male monopolies and collective fantasies (*H.U.E. Thoden van Velzen*, NL)

16.05 The Formation of Warrior Societies: Contemporary Africa (*Paul Richards*)

Break

16.50 Forum with first discussant *Anton Blok* (NL) plus four invited speakers.

Friday 19 December 1997

Chair: *Johan Goudsblom*, NL

10.00 State Formation and Organized Violence in Japan (comp. to European Middle Ages) (*Johann Arnason*, Australia)

10.35 State Formation and Organized Violence in China (comp. to Roman Empire) (*S.A.M Adshead*, UK)

Coffee

11.30 Byzantium and Contemporary Societies (*Judith Herrin*, USA)

Lunch

14.00 Civilisation and Organized Violence in the Ottoman Empire (*Elçin Kürsat-Ahlers*, Germany)

14.35 The Inca State (*Fred Spier*, NL)

Tea

15.30 Church, State and Organized Violence in Medieval Europe (*R.I. Moore*, UK)

16.05 Forum with first discussant *Randall Collins* plus invited speakers

Saturday 20 December 1997

Chair: *Nico Wilterdink* (NL)

10.00 Organized Violence in a Frontier Society: the United States (*Stephen Mennell*, Ireland)

10.35 Breakdown of State Monopolies: What happened to the USSR? (*Randall Collins*, USA)

Coffee

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

Lunch

14.00 Challenges to State Monopolies: Organized Crime (*Frank Bovenkerk*, NL)

14.35 Violence in Contemporary Chinese fiction (*Mark Ehin*, Australia)

Tea

15.30 Football Hooliganism as a World Problem (*Eric Dunning*, UK)

16.05 Stylized Violence: Martial Arts in Contemporary Society (*Johan Heilbron*, NL)

Break

16.50 Forum with first discussant *Jojada Verrips* (NL) plus invited speakers

Elias and the Middle Ages

In consultation with Johan Arnason, Ann Buckley has agreed to act as coordinator for a thematic group on Medieval Studies at the Amsterdam conference. Short contributions are invited on the following topics: i) The place of Elias's work in twentieth-century reconstructions of the Middle Ages; ii) Potentials of Process Sociology for Medieval Studies. In addition to the more usual regional foci, contributions on non-European societies will be especially welcome. Proposals should be sent to: Dr Ann Buckley, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge CB2 1RH. Telephone/Fax +44-1223-360927; E-mail: aab3@cam.ac.uk.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The next issue of *Figurations* will be mailed in November 1996. News and notes should be sent to the Editor, Stephen Mennell, in Dublin, by 1 October 1996.

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

Editorial Address: Department of Sociology, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.
Tel. +353-1-706 8504; Fax: +353-1-706 1125.
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