■ EDITORS' NOTES

• Norman Gabriel (University of Plymouth) is teaching an intensive course on 'Norbert Elias and Process Sociology' at the University of Copenhagen, from 9 to 14 May 2005. Between 20 and 30 students have signed up for the 5 ECTS intensive programme. The course comprises sessions on: Situating Elias – Theoretical and Historical Orientations; Sociological theories of knowledge and perception; Long-term Processes – movements and directions; Established-Outsider Figurations and Communities; The Quest for Excitement. The course is designed for Master's-level students, but it is also open for international students at a BA level.

• Dr. Michael Levin, Senior Lecturer in Politics at Goldsmiths College, University of London, was a first year student at the University of Leicester in 1961–2, when Norbert Elias taught his Introductory Course in Sociology for the last time before he retired. Mike kept his student notes on the course and has now donated them to the Elias archive at Marbach. Mike says that he is not sure that Norbert kept close to his own outline and unfortunately he didn't reach part III in the reading list – the conclusion on the civilising process. But then we know about Elias's theory of civilising processes, so it is more valuable to know about all the other things that went into his course. Mike has recently published a book *Mill on Civilisation and Barbarism* (see note below), and comments 'as you can see one of his pupils, at least, continued to be interested in the idea of civilisation'. Any other readers who have notes on lectures given by Elias might consider following Mike's example and donating them to the archive.

■ FROM THE NORBERT ELIAS FOUNDATION

Elias Collected Works in English
Sir Keith Thomas has agreed to lend his name as Patron of the forthcoming Collected Works of Norbert Elias in English. One of the most distinguished of British historians, famous especially for his influential books *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) and *Man and the Natural World* (1983), Keith is a former President of the British Academy and of Jesus College, Oxford. He is now a Fellow of All Souls College. The Festschrift, *Civil Histories: Essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) edited by Peter Burke, Brian Harrison, and Paul Slack was reviewed in *Figurations* 14. Keith Thomas is a Elias enthusiast (though 'not uncritical', he remarks) and we appre-

ciate a great historian being associated with the works of a great sociologist.

Marbach Stipend

This year's 'Marbach Stipend' has been awarded to Dr Vera Weiler, of the National University in Bogotá, Colombia. As reported in *Figurations* 10, it was Vera who organised the international symposium on 'Norbert Elias and the social sciences at the end of the twentieth century' in Bucaramanga, Colombia, on 24–26 June 1998 as part of the celebrations of the centenary of Elias's birth. Vera will be working on the Elias papers in Marbach am Neckar, studying all the texts that led up to *Über die Zeit*.

Norbert Elias Gesammelte Schriften

Two more volumes of the collected works of Elias in German have been published, both of them edited by Johan Heilbron.

Engagement und Distanzierung (Gesammelte Schriften vol. 8). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004. 386 pp. ISBN: 3-518-58381-6.

Über die Zeit. (Gesammelte Schriften vol. 9). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004. 264 pp. ISBN: 3-518-58421-9.

Selected Works in Dutch

One new volume of the Selected Works in Dutch has appeared:
(with John L. Scotson), *Gevestigden en*

buitenstaanders. Groepscharisma, stigma-tisering en zelfwaardering. Amsterdam, Boom, 2005, 288 pp, ISBN 90-8506-076-1.

■ LANGUAGE IN THE CIVILISING PROCESS

The aim of this article is to suggest that attempts to reform language in early modern Europe, especially the rise of a codified language that was praised at the time as refined, urbane or 'polite', should be viewed as part of the 'civilising process' as described by Norbert Elias. Hence sociolinguists might gain from engaging with the ideas of Elias, and followers of Elias from concerning themselves more with language.

Elias himself did of course offer some observations on language in his famous book, notably in the 'excursus on the modelling of speech at court', thus exemplifying the sociolinguistic approach decades before it crystallised into a discipline. In so doing, he drew on a remarkable dialogue on the topic by one of Louis XIV's diplomats (Callières, 1693). All the same, Elias did not develop his idea of the link between changes in language and the civilising process.

Ordinary language (in a number of vernaculars) recognises a link between language and civilisation or self-control. In seventeenth-century England, Puritans such as William Perkins spoke of 'the government of the tongue', in other words avoiding oaths, blasphemies, insults and malicious gossip (Kamensky, 1997). In the nineteenth century, what was expected of well-bred people was described as a 'civil tongue' (Burke, 2000). Politeness in its various linguistic forms is one of the two main themes of this article. The term 'civilised' was and is also applied to 'high' or 'refined' forms of language, as in the case of 'general civilised Dutch' (*Algemeen Beschaafd Nederlands* – see Goudsblom, 1988). Hence this article has a second theme, the purification or standardisation of language. In what follows I shall mainly be concerned with speech, although similar standards of politeness and refinement prevailed in writing, especially in letters.

Politeness
Paolo da Certaldo, the author of a late medieval Italian conduct book, wrote about 'courtesy of the mouth', while the seventeenth-century French dictionary maker Antoine Furetière defined *civilité* as a polite style of conversation (*une manière honnête, douce et polie … de converser ensemble*). The literature of politeness or 'civility' (*civilité, civiltà*, etc.), as it was generally called in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, includes quite a few instructions about language, beginning with the correct forms of address to be used to one's social superiors, equals or inferiors, in order to avoid undue familiarity on one side and exaggerated deference on the other. The plural form 'civilities' came into use to refer to compliments and other formulaic polite expressions such as 'I kiss your hand', 'your obedient servant', or even your 'slave' (to this day Hungarians greet friends with the word 'Szervusz', derived from the Latin *servus*). Beetz (1990) gives the fullest discussion of early modern compliments.

The literature of civility had a good deal to say about the rules of conversation, a speech genre that was invented – or at least becomes visible in texts – at this time (Fumaroli,1993; Burke, 1995; Craveri, 2001; Godo, 2003). Conversation in the strict sense, as opposed to ordinary talking, may be viewed as among other things an exercise in self-control. The conduct books warned their readers not to interrupt, not to speak about themselves, not to make indecent jokes, not to use Latin phrases, and so on. It is worth adding that the early modern literature on conversation suggests that the advantage of viewing self-control not (or not only) in a negative manner, as constraint, as Elias did (at least in 1939), but also positively, as an art, game or (as we might say) a sport, in which the participants take pleasure in achieving their aims and showing off their skills within a framework of generally accepted rules.

Standardisation and Purification
In early modern Europe many attempts were made to codify and also to purify the language of the upper classes (Burke, 2004). Making the vernaculars more uniform and more dignified, on the model of classical Latin, entailed rejecting many words and also certain forms of syntax and pronunciation. A language without a standard was coming to be regarded as 'in a manner barbarous', as the poet

John Dryden remarked. Civilisation now implied following a code of linguistic behaviour. Using the received or high variety of language was, for many speakers at least, a form of self-control, since what came 'naturally' (or at least habitually) to them was another variety, notably dialect.

The preface to the famous Dictionary of the Académie française (1694) stated its aim as to give the French language the opportunity 'to maintain its purity'. At least three different kinds of purity need to be distinguished. Language had to be morally pure, so the French Academy excluded 'swearwords or terms which offend modesty'. Language had to be socially pure, in other words to follow the usage of the upper classes. For this reason the Academy's dictionary normally excluded the technical terms used by artisans. In the third place, language had to be what we might call 'ethnically' pure, employing native expressions rather than foreign ones.

Courts and cities
Who was responsible for civilising language? Two important problems demand discussion here, the relative importance of the court and the city and also of men and women.
Following Elias on table manners and other aspects of civilisation, it might be argued that the standardisation of the vernacular languages followed the process of state-building. As the warrior nobility were gradually tamed and turned into courtiers, they lost their local accent as well as their local loyalties. In the sixteenth century, Sir Walter Raleigh spoke with a Devon accent at the court of Queen Elizabeth, without anyone thinking him a man without breeding, but by the eighteenth century, at the latest, such an accent had become a sign of rusticity. The glamour of the court and its influence on provincial elites encouraged the spread of standard forms of language, regarded as higher and purer than other varieties. Their employment became a symbol of what Pierre Bourdieu called *la distinction*, a sign that its users were distinct from and superior to ordinary people.

It has been noted more than once that the different forms of linguistic regulation in early modern France and England reflected the different political systems of the two countries. In France, an absolute monar-

chy, there was an official institution, the Académie française, laying down the linguistic law. In England, on the other hand, regulation was left to private enterprise, notably to Dr Johnson and his famous *Dictionary*. The example of France supports what we might call the 'Elias thesis' on the links between state-building and civilisation, even if the example of England does not.

Even in England, however, some early modern writers on language deliberately advocated what we might call the 'court standard'. The Elizabethan writer George Puttenham advised poets to follow what he called 'the usual speech of the court'. In Italy, Dante and others argued in favour of a standard language that would draw on different dialects, following the usage of the courts (*lingua cortigiana*). The German writer Hieronymus Wolf proposed the practice of the imperial court as the norm for German. The Polish writer Jan Seklucjan wrote in favour of what he called 'courtly language' (*dworski mowy*). In France, the influential seventeenth-century writer Claude de Vaugelas defined the standard as 'the manner of speaking of the purest part of the court' (*la plus saine partie de la cour*).

This emphasis on the role of the royal courts in the standardisation of the vernacular contains important insights, but it also needs some qualification. If the early modern court was a model speech community, it was an institution that included not only the noblemen and women surrounding the king but the clerks in the royal chancery as well (Fisher, 1986). In England, for instance, what was known as 'chancery English' was spreading in the mid-fifteenth century. The printer Robert Estienne claimed in his grammar, published in 1557, that the chancery was one of the places where the best French could be heard.

In any case, as in the question of good manners in general, cities as well as courts helped spread the new linguistic standards. Linguists are well aware of this phenomenon, which they sometimes call the 'urbanisation of language'. In medieval Spain, the usage of Toledo was adopted as a standard, while in Renaissance Italy it was the usage of Florence. In the case of England, the adoption of the South-Eastern dialect as the standard

followed the location of the capital as well as the court. Indeed, Puttenham's standard included not only the court but also the speech of 'London and the shires lying about London within 60 miles'. In the seventeenth century, some French writers located the source of good speaking and writing not in the court alone but in the city of Paris as well, while the Dane Henrich Gensner advocated a standard language based on the usage of Copenhagen. In the eighteenth century, the scholar Mikhaylo Lomonosov suggested that the dialect of Moscow be taken as the Russian standard, not only as the language of the court but also 'on account of the importance of the capital'.

Men and women
To view standardisation in terms of purity makes it easier to understand the role of clergymen such as Perkins and also of ladies in the movement, a role on which a number of males commented in the early modern period. Erasmus, for example, wrote a treatise on pronunciation in which he placed the blame for the disappearance of diphthongs on women who thought it ladylike 'to open their mouths and move their lips as little as possible when forming their words'.

Molière's *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (1659) formed part of a cluster of satires against a group of French ladies who were equally notorious for their speech habits. This group introduced a number of neologisms such as *élégance* and *mérite* that later became standard usage. They used the adverbs *terriblement* and also *furieusement* to mean 'very much', thus anticipating the 'women's cant' condemned by Dr Johnson. They referred to themselves as 'one' instead of 'I', and employed euphemisms for 'bed' and 'chamber-pot' and other circumlocutions such as calling a mirror 'the counsellor of the graces' (*le conseiller des graces*). They were raising the threshold of embarrassment in the linguistic domain.

Despite the satires, it was not uncommon for men to praise the speech of women for its *politesse*. The critic Jean Chapelain argued that social intercourse between the sexes helped make languages more polished – or polite – (*rendre les langues polies*), because women naturally speak in a softer way and so in talking to women, 'men learn to make their pronunciation

less harsh' (*adoucir la rudesse de la pronunciation*). It is surely significant that the language reformers Malherbe and Vaugelas both frequented the *salon* of Madame de Rambouillet in Paris.

It is tempting to conclude that it was the *précieuses* rather than their critics who had the last word. Although they wrote little and published even less on the subject, the role of aristocratic women in the purification of language should not be underestimated. As sociolinguists have often pointed out, women in many societies are more polite than men as well as displaying a tendency to hypercorrectness (Fumaroli, 1994; Holmes, 1995). Does this mean they are more willing or more able to control themselves than men?

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◼ ISAIAH BERLIN ON HUMAN NATURE, GOUDSBLOM ON THE INADEQUACY OF PHILOSOPHY

In the issue of 23 September 2004, *The New York Review of Books* printed a letter from the Oxford philosopher, the late Sir Isaiah Berlin, replying to a postgraduate student who in the 1980s had asked him for his views on 'human nature'. Joop Goudsblom was provoked into writing the following letter to the editors of the *NYRB*, which of course they did not publish. It therefore appears for the first time here in *Figurations*.

24 September 2004

The Editors
New York Review of Books
1755 Broadway, 5th floor, New York
NY 10019–3780, USA

To the Editors

Having just read the 'Letter on Human Nature' by Isaiah Berlin in the *New York Review of Books* dated 23 September, I wonder why the editors have selected this letter for publication. It was written in 1986, forty years after the last letter in the collection reviewed in the preceding pages. Did the editors wish to show what a gentle and generous correspondent Berlin could be? If so, they have succeeded. But is the letter a demonstration of clear and well-informed thought? A sample of a great mind at work?

A young Polish philosopher had found some contradictions in Berlin's writings about 'human nature'. She asked for clarification. Does Berlin 'believe in a fixed and unalterable human nature'? Sometimes it seems as if he does, sometimes as if he doesn't. Where does he stand on this issue? In his answer he reveals that he does not really know. All he can say is that there are two traditions in Western philosophy. According to one tradition,

represented by Plato and Rousseau, all men are created with the same human nature, including innate knowledge of certain truths. According to the other tradition, represented by Vico and Marx, the variety of customs and opinions among men is so great that we must conclude 'there is no human nature in this sense'. At first Berlin seems to opt for the latter position, but eventually he finds that 'men do have a common nature' after all, because they all share certain basic needs – 'for example, for food, shelter, security, and, if we accept Herder, for belonging to a group of one's own'.

The reference to Herder is typical. In order to answer his correspondent's question, Berlin does not consult the contemporary scholarly and scientific literature but rather relies on authorities from the classical philosophical canon. When these authorities are found to be contradicting each other, Berlin is at a loss. I wonder how Albert Einstein would have responded to a very general question about what he really meant by general relativity. Would he have invoked the names of ancient physicists? And would he have been equally hesitant and vague, trying to find his way through a mist of uncertainties?

Berlin's long letter is frank and modest. But these are moral and not intellectual qualities. There was plenty of confusion in the year 1986 about the issue of 'human nature'. However, there was also at that time a body of literature drawing upon research and reflection in several disciplines, including biology, anthropology, psychology and sociology, in which ideas could be found that were based on a broad range of empirical knowledge and theoretical sophistication. Instead of Herder, Berlin might have mentioned Norbert Elias whose introductory text *What is Sociology?* (1970; English translation 1978) contains a clear exposition about 'human nature' in the light of current knowledge. Elias emphasised the importance of a human need that was not included in Berlin's list of food, shelter, security and belonging – the need for orientation. Of course, Berlin would have readily admitted that this a fundamental human need and he implicitly acknowledged that fact throughout his letter. But he failed to explicate its crucial relevance for the problems raised by the concept of

human nature. Elias, on the other hand, stressed the fact 'that people are [naturally] adapted to change and constitutionally equipped with organs which enable them to learn constantly, to store up new experiences all the time, to adjust their behaviour correspondingly, and to change the pattern of their social life together. Their peculiar changefulness, which has arisen through evolutionary change, is itself the changeless factor at issue here' (p. 115).

This is a much stronger statement than 'I believe that variety is part of human existence'. Other writers could be mentioned who also were able to convey clear insights about human nature based on a solid knowledge of the state of knowledge in empirical natural and social sciences. In comparison, Berlin's groping in the philosophical traditions does not strike me as productive and worthy of imitation, no matter how disarming his confession of uncertainty may sound.

Yours sincerely

Johan Goudsblom

[The response was a postcard saying: 'Thank you very much for writing. Since we receive thousands of letters and comments, we cannot reply directly to each one. Nor can we say in advance whether a letter will be published, although each one is carefully considered.]

◼ HOW THE 'OUTSIDER' MIGHT BECOME THE 'ESTABLISHED'

An application and development of the established-outsider theory of Elias to the Catholic church in Ireland.
When first I heard Stephen Mennell speak on the established–outsider theory of Norbert Elias I was immediately aware that it had relevance to the Catholic church in Ireland. As a member of a religious order I belonged to the 'institutional church' who in the past were considered, by themselves and the 'laity', as the first-class citizens, with the laity as the second-class citizens. The question arose – was the established–outsider process at work here? In recent years the 'institutional church' seemed to be experiencing 'group disgrace'. Did this indi-

cate a change in the 'balance of power'? Can the established become the outsider and the outsider the established? I shall explore these questions in the light of processes at work in the Catholic church in Ireland over the last one hundred and fifty years.

Established–Outsider processes and the Catholic church in Ireland
In the Catholic church there are two groups – the institutional church (comprising the clergy and members of religious orders) and the lay members. The lay members or laity are all those who claim some identity with the 'Catholic church' and consider themselves 'Catholics'. They include Catholics who are committed and practicing, those of minimal practice, and lapsed Catholics. In the Republic of Ireland these would represent 90 per cent of the population. The institutional church and laity are locked in interdependency, since each has something the other wants. The laity desire access to the spiritual resources monopolised by the institutional church and the institutional church in turn need the laity for financial support and new voluntary recruits. The interdependency has the characteristic of a double-bind.

Where is the balance of power? At the end of the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century, the power balance was in favour of the institutional church. During the nineteenth century, particularly after the famine of 1845, the institutional church developed a 'chapel centred' Catholicism. Over 2,000 chapels were built and the practice of religion was moved from its traditional sites in the local landscape to the new chapels. The celebration of Mass in the homes, the corpse from the 'Wake', and the traditional devotions from the Holy Wells and Pilgrimage sites were all brought to the new chapels. New devotions, such as Devotions to the Sacred Heart and the First Fridays, were introduced. The institutional church took firm control of the religion of the people both in its cult aspect and morality. Through this the balance of power in the interdependency moved towards the institutional church. The institutional church became the 'established' and the laity the 'outsider'. The members of the institutional church considered themselves to be superior while the laity were considered inferior

and this understanding was accepted by the laity.

Praise gossip leading to group charisma and blame gossip leading to group disgrace developed to support this balance of power. The institutional church considered themselves the 'first-class' citizens. Members of religious orders were considered to belong to a 'state of perfection'. The clergy were segregated from the laity – wearing distinctive clothes, living in large houses, forbidden to go to race meetings, dances, theatres and public houses. Contact with the 'outsider', the laity, was only in the area of ministry. Contamination was to be avoided. Praise gossip was used to keep the established true to the values and rules of the group. Religious were praised for adhering to the 'timetable' which designated times for prayer, sleep, work, and recreation with the other members of the group. Examples of the lives of the saints were kept before them. To leave the priesthood or religious community was considered a disgrace and a failure. This constant 'praise' gossip of the established about themselves generated in them a group charisma.

The laity, as the outsiders, were faced with constant 'blame gossip'. From the pulpit their 'sins' were constantly put before them. These focused on missing Mass on Sundays, failures in the religious fast and abstinence, extramarital sex, dangers of divorce, abortion, drunkenness. The people came to believe that they were the second-class citizens and inferior to the clergy and religious. They experienced group disgrace.

For the established to generate the praise and blame gossip they needed control of the channels of communication. The primary channel was the pulpit – a channel closed to the laity. From the pulpit the laity heard the 'blame gossip' of their sinfulness and the 'praise gossip' about the established. With over 90% attendance at religious services on a weekly basis, the pulpit had a captive audience. The work of the pulpit was reinforced by the many religious magazines that entered people's homes and by institutional church's control of the education system through which the praise and blame gossip was spread to the young. The laity had no effective channels of gossip to hit back at the established.

Change to a 'more even' balance of power – Late twentieth century
In the second half of the twentieth century new-found wealth and prosperity, greater access to education and greater openness to the world outside Ireland led to new interdependencies among the laity and new power chances. Economic growth was accelerated by accession to the European Union. The post-Vatican II era with all its changes made the laity more aware of their rightful place in the church as the 'people of God'. In recent years the increasing numbers of immigrants, both of returning Irish and peoples from other nationalities and other cultures, was another force for change. The desire for more accountability and transparency in all public bodies has made all aware of the faults of the various 'established'. All these power chances led to a more even balance of power between the institutional church and the laity.

As the balance of power became more equal both sides still had a function for each other. The institutional church still needed new recruits and financial support from the laity. The laity still had spiritual needs that they wished fulfilled. The new power chances had changed the priority given to the traditional religious values of Catholicism among the laity. These now had a lower priority. But the survival of the 'spiritual' allows the interdependency between institutional church and laity to endure.

Elias suggested that one sign of a more even balance of power was when the 'outsider' begins to retaliate against the 'established' (Elias and Scotson, 1994). This has happened to the Catholic Church in Ireland. Dillon (in Breen, 2001: 74) wrote that 'there has been a swift and terrible revenge taken by both the media and the reading public against the forces in the church that had effectively controlled the lives of ordinary people in Ireland for over a century'. The new power chances for the laity allowed the retaliation to take place. This would indicate that the balance of power between the institutional church and the laity has become more even and the established are no longer in the 'powerful' position they had experienced in the early part of the twentieth century.

A new balance of power – from 'outsider' to 'established'?

What can happen when the balance of power becomes more even? On a theoretical level, with balance of power more equal between the established and the outsider there are several possible outcomes. First, one or other group may decline to the extent that the interdependency ceases. The second scenario is where the bond between the groups remains and the interdependency continues. Here there are three possible outcomes. The balance of power may remain at more or less equilibrium with small swings back and forth. The balance of power may swing back in favour of the established and their position as the superior group restored. The balance of power may swing in favour of the outsider who becomes the new established and the old established become the new outsider.

For the outsider to become the established, it would seem that a number of conditions should be met. The interdependency should survive the change in power balance. The balance of power must swing in favour of the old outsider so that they become the new established. To maintain their position they must generate group charism for themselves and group disgrace towards the old established. The new established must form channels of communication for spreading this new praise and blame gossip. These channels are controlled by them and closed to the old established.

How does this apply to the institutional church and laity interdependency? I would suggest that the interdependency between the institutional church and the laity survives the change in the balance of power. The laity still seek the spiritual and have place for the spiritual resources of the church in their lives. Recent surveys show that the laity in Ireland still believe in God, heaven, life after death (Greeley and Ward, 2000), still pray (Cassidy, 2002: 28–9) and want the church to be involved in baptisms, marriages and deaths (Cassidy, 2002: 27). On the other side the institutional church still needs the financial support and new recruits from the laity.
Who now are the established and who are the outsiders? This is answered by looking for the praise and blame gossip that is now circulating. Is it the same or has it changed?

The blame gossip and group disgrace in the Catholic church was easy to identify. All the surveys show the drop in confidence in the institutional church. Stories of how the Church oppressed people with rules and regulations in previous decades and exhibited riches while proclaiming poverty, circulated by word of mouth and in the media. As the 'clerical and religious scandals' began to emerge into the media these fed what appears to be the 'blame gossip'. The sins of the few, the minority of the worst, were spread as if all clergy and religious were responsible. All felt responsible for the sins of the few. Religious and clerics saw themselves as under suspicion by the laity. Maxwell (in Breen, 2001: 66) expresses this as 'a pervasive experience of low morale in good people who once enjoyed a position of high esteem in Irish society'. Those who had once been the object of praise gossip and group charisma were now the objects of blame gossip and group disgrace. The presence of group disgrace would indicate that the institutional church has become the new outsider. The original praise gossip that had presented the institutional church as 'perfect' was now shown to have flaws. The new blame gossip exploited these flaws. Thus there is a link between the new blame gossip and the old praise gossip in that the new blame gossip has to undermine the old praise gossip.

What constituted the praise gossip and group charisma? This was less obvious but not less real. If the laity, the old outsider, were to become the new established they would have to generate praise gossip and group charisma about themselves. What type of praise gossip? A part played by praise gossip is to make the established feel good about themselves, and therefore superior to the outsider. It would be reasonable to suggest that the praise gossip would have to counter-balance the blame gossip that once made them feel bad about themselves. Thus things for which they were 'blamed' as the outsider have to be neutralised and their 'way of life' promoted as superior.

The surveys about Catholicism in Ireland show people are moving away from Mass practice and traditional sexual moral values, but at the same time holding on to beliefs and prayer (Greeley and Ward, 2000). It struck me that what they were moving away from was what had been

constantly presented to them as failings and constituted their previous group disgrace. In the last twenty years what used to be considered 'sins' and a 'disgrace' are now acceptable. Missing Mass is no longer an issue for most people. Divorce has been legalised and abortion in limited instances has become more acceptable. One is no longer stigmatised for having a child out of wedlock. The blame gossip has been neutralised and they can feel good about their way of life.

For the outsider to become the established they have to gain control of the channels of gossip. When the institutional church was the established, the channels of gossip were the pulpit, control of the schools and religious magazines. With fewer and fewer going to church these channels are no longer effective. At the same time with fewer religious vocations, the running of schools has been placed in the hands of the laity and the institutional church has less influence. The new channels of gossip are the mass media – newspapers, radio and television. Kirby (1984: 20) made the observation that in the late 1960s and 1970s the Saturday night *Late Late Show* on RTÉ television became, 'an alternative teaching authority to that of the church'. It opened up discussion and dissent on topics of belief and morals in a forum not controlled by the institutional church. Through these new channels the 'praise' gossip of the new established (the laity) and their new way of life are spread. It promotes their group charisma. It allows the spread of the 'blame gossip' about the institutional church. This is facilitated by the new climate of 'transparency' and 'accountability' that allows the publishing of the sins, faults and failings of the 'old established'.

I think Elias's established–outsider theory helps us to understand the current processes at work in the Catholic Church in Ireland. Its application helps to develop the theory to show how the outsider can become the established.

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■ A TENTATIVE APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF CIVILISATION AND FINANCE

Elias has left some unsolved questions behind, that we, interested in theory, cannot neglect. The one that is mostly mentioned is the question of the role of religion in society. But questions of the role of finance in society seem to me even as important. He himself knew that there are things like inflation that have not hitherto been very well analysed as social phenomena.

He pointed to the transformation of the role of physical violence, which disappears from sight, its forces being internalised into the self and constrained. The aggressive forces are civilised not by suppression, but by substantiating and transforming them through erudition into skills of conflict management by 'virtual violence'. We obviously cannot overlook that financial constraints are a sort of social power, deeply involved in the social formation of character. So finance is a sort of virtual violence, and a sort of exercise of power. What does this mean for the theory of civilising processes?

Taxation seems to be a sideline of the civilising process – raising taxes for maintaining the military and police power is a self-evident and necessary part of that process. But finance is more than taxation: debts and credits are the two sides of this power. The state has not only the power to tax, but also power over credit through fixing the rates at which banks can lend money. States regulate monetary affairs by supervising the institutions of banks or stock exchanges. This means not only rules for the functioning of the mechanisms, but much more: in every civilised nation you can find rules against usury. And the central bank's duty in most countries is 'taming inflation', stabilising the price of money. States have taken over the power of punishing in conflicts between private citizens – and so the cases of unpaid debts are no longer private conflicts, but scrutinised by courts and sentenced to prison (which does not work between states).

Saving is a sort of power exercised over oneself. But it is also a sort of power exercised over others. Shareholders with big percentage holdings in a company (which are normal on the continent, but not in the Anglo-Saxon countries) exercise much power over their corporation, and managers are their servants. In Anglo-Saxon countries managers have more power, but they need to have good relations with analysts: a financial analyst has power to come down hard on their corporation, which can lead to an exodus out of its shares and ultimately to the management losing its power.

My thesis is that the state is in the long run a necessary regulator and holder of the balance in the field of finance. As Elias put it, the balance of power has two sides: it binds those with little as well as those with much power.

If one looks at the excesses of the telecom sector in the roaring nineties, it can be seen that something went wrong in the United States. Stock market exuberance (to use Greenspan's term), profiteering by insider trading, analysts forgetting their duties and losing independence, accounting firms inventing creative bookkeeping methods: all this was possible with the loosening of state power through deregulation. State power over the finance sector is obviously not a game that is won once and for all. It has its backlashes. The American governments from Reagan to Clinton forgot the lessons of the Great Depression, when an exuberant market went bust through fraudulent manoeuvres of financial criminals and the shenanigans of managers of untransparent holding companies. The Great Depression brought about the biggest crisis of the Western world and ended in war and the strengthening of state power everywhere. In the USA, Roosevelt installed the SEC, supervision of the stock exchange, and the rules that were enacted in the 1930s were designed to make the stock exchange more controllable, democratic and fair. The lesson from the Telecom Bubble, as Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz teaches, is to restore the rules under which markets are controllable and can work in fair and democratic ways.

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■ AFTER 31 YEARS, THE *AST* MERGES WITH *THE SOCIOLOGISCHE GIDS* TO BECOME NEW DUTCH SOCIOLOGY JOURNAL *SOCIOLOGIE*

In December 2004, the final issue of the *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* appeared. After 31 years, the *AST* has ceased to exist in its familiar form. While open to all sorts of sociologies, the *AST* has for a long time been associated with the 'Amsterdam School' of 'Eliasian' comparative-historical sociology.

The *AST* was founded in 1974 by students and young faculty members of the sociology department of the University of Amsterdam. This was the height of the 'crisis in sociology', during a period of great social turmoil both in the sociology department and in society at large. Perhaps not surprisingly in a period of great social change and great social mobility, sociology had become very fashionable. Within a few years, the small sociology department had grown immensely, and many young assistants and lecturers were hired to deal with the large numbers of students. These young assistants and lecturers were the ones who started the journal, and who filled the pages of the *AST*. The older generation of sociologists, as well as the Parsonian sociology in vogue in the 1960s, was all but invisible and apparently quite irrelevant to the creators of the *AST*.

The early issues of the *AST* bear witness to the dynamics of this period: they are filled with fierce polemics and heated debates, both over sociological (and philosophical) theory, and over more political issues. There were debates on the dangers of reification, the role of philosophy for sociology, and the *finesses* of Marxist terminology, but also, for instance, a rather gruelling debate about the justification of deaths during the Russian Revolution. With my colleague Alex van Venrooij, I wrote an article about the first five years of the *AST* for the journal's last issue from the perspective of the 'younger generation'.[1] One of the things that struck us most was the sense of urgency: a great personal involvement with even the most abstract of theories, a feeling that sociology matters greatly, and a strong concern with the 'crisis of sociology', that had been announced by among others Alvin Gouldner, who was also working at the Amsterdam sociology department at that time. The editorial of the first issue explicitly addressed the crisis: 'The editorial board has no pretence to already having a 'new sociology' to bring forward, but does want to work hard to achieve that. We believe that the existing pluriformity is not an ideal situation, but challenges us to transcend the pillarisation of perspectives and to work towards a new sociological tradition.' The aim of the *AST* was, in the editors' words, 'an attempt to fit together fragments of the solutions that are at hand'.

The early years of the *AST* show – mostly young – sociologists seeking these solutions to pluriformity. Some people looked for this solution in microsociology, ethnomethodology, and symbolic interactionism. Some turned to Habermas and the Frankfurt School. In the Netherlands, both these traditions have remained rather marginal. Many others were looking to Marxism to solve the crisis; they were very prominent in the early issues of the *AST*, but today they seem to have disappeared altogether. Quite a few of the original editors of the *AST* turned to the philosophy and sociology of science – their work can, retrospectively, be labelled 'reflexive sociology'. And finally, some saw the sociology of Norbert Elias, who had been teaching in Amsterdam, as a perspective that could provide a way out of the crisis.

Within a few years, the *AST* developed into a serious, sophisticated, and successful journal. It was taken up by publisher Wolters–Noordhoff. Also, the content changed: reflexive and more theoretical articles gradually disappeared, to be supplanted by mostly historical-sociological articles. But the *AST* never became exclusively devoted to historical-sociological, or figurational sociology. A wide variety of methods and disciplines was always represented in the *AST*, as well as in the board. After many changes in the early years, the composition of the editorial board, consisting of sociologists as well an historian and an anthropologist, hardly changed after the 1980s. The *AST* published articles that were always well written and accessible to non-sociologists. Contributions were written by sociologists, anthropologists, historians and psychologists, based on methods ranging from archival research and participant observation to quantitative analysis. Formalistic methodology was as unwelcome as abstract theory – many of the theoretical debates and philosophy of science that was so prominent in the 1970s probably would not have been published in the later issues. The range of topics, and general tone of the *AST*, is probably best illustrated by the annual book issues started in the 1980s. The themes included the monarchy, globalisation, environmental issues, sexuality, crime, women's lives, social inheritances, social evolution, the internet, immigration, but also issues with sociologists' choice of photographs with sociological themes, and 'unknown masterworks': sociological books that sociologists felt were unjustly neglected.

When I became an editor of the *AST* in 1999, the situation had changed. Pressure to publish 'internationally' – that is, in English – had increased tremendously. Publishing in Dutch simply didn't earn you any 'credits' in a new system based on the counting and ranking of 'output' (as publications were called in the English management lingo increasingly popular in Dutch universities). Also, after the boom of the 1970s, the number of (active) sociologists had declined fast. As a result of this, there were fewer people to write articles, and fewer people subscribing to the journals. There simply were too many sociology journals, for too few sociologists.

The *Sociologische Gids* [Sociological Guide] was founded in 1953. Until around 1970 it was mostly associated with the American-inspired 'modern sociology', and after that had always steered a middle course in the Dutch divide between historical-comparative and empirical-analytic sociology. It had problems quite similar to the *AST*: lack of contributions, lack of subscriptions. Thus, the two journals decided to join forces.

In April 2005, the first issue of *Sociologie* appeared. The editorial board consists of four former editors from each of the old journals, and a new book review editor. While the name is self-consciously, and perhaps a little provocatively, mono-disciplinary, the journal aims to be open to many perspectives and disciplines. The editorial statement of the first issue explicitly states that the journal is 'eclectic and pragmatic' vis-à-vis theory as well as methodology. Thus, in contrast with the founders of *AST*, but perhaps more in accordance with the twenty-first century, pluriformity is accepted, and maybe even embraced, rather than identified as a problem that is likely to be solved. We are still looking for 'fragments of solutions', but we are not so sure any more that these fragments can be put together to form one whole again. Still, they can all be subsumed under the one singular label of *Sociologie*.

Sociologie welcomes contributions in English. For more information, contact kuipers@fhk.eur.nl

Giselinde Kuipers

Note
1. Kuipers, Giselinde and Van Venrooij, Alex (2004) 'Een poging brokstukken van oplossingen in elkaar te passen.' De eerste vijf jaar van het Amsterdam Sociologisch Tijdschrift. *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 31(4): 448–65.

■ TWO REVIEW ESSAYS BY STEVE QUILLEY

Anton Blok *Honour and Violence*. Cambridge: Polity, 2001. 358 pp. ISBN: 0745604498

It is now common for even the acknowl-

edged classics of sociology, let alone the wider currents of social, historical and political thought, to fail to find a place in the ever more narrowly focused and temporally constrained programmes of undergraduate sociology. This partly reflects an undeniable lowering of standards in an era of mass education: students do not expect, and are not expected, to read anything like the volume of material that would have been required even twenty years ago. It is also a symptom of a paradoxical combination of a pervasive but somewhat faux technical specialisation ('number crunching empiricism' and an excessive preoccupation with 'methodology'), with its opposite – the 'anything goes' hermeneutic fundamentalism and epistemological relativism that is synonymous with 'cultural studies' (as if sociology, history or politics could be unconcerned with culture). And in consequence, universities produce a steady stream of sociology PhDs with an inadequate or non-existent means of orientation in relation to the intellectual history of sociology and cognate disciplines. Unfortunately it is also true that with the enormous expansion of the means of academic production during the course of the twentieth century, it is now difficult for any academic to read even a fraction of the available literature in any field. Whilst the figure of the well-rounded renaissance intellectual still figures in the self-aggrandising mythologies of university common rooms, in practice we all bear the curse of Babel and are tied to increasingly self-referential literatures. The social stock of knowledge is increasingly dispersed and the transaction costs for those moving between repositories ever more prohibitive.

Happily however, there are exceptions: broad ranging synthesisers able to focus on empirical minutiae without losing sight of the broader significance of their material and unconstrained by the sometimes artificial parameters defined by university disciplines. Anton Blok is a fine example of this rare breed. Being a younger and still bullishly underinformed product of the university system I described above, I have to admit that I had never read any of his work. I had heard the name, and was aware that he had done much to bring the work of Norbert Elias to prominence in the Netherlands. Nevertheless he remained on my list of 'things to do', along with learning to play the guitar like Kenny Burrell and

taking riding lessons. Anyway, I am glad to say that during the nine months of pregnant anticipation prior to my becoming a father, I both took some riding lessons and read *Honour and Violence*.

The book brings together a series of essays exploring the social and state regulation of violence or more specifically 'what happens to people when central control over the means of violence is weak or absent' (p. ix). Written during the last quarter of the twentieth century, these monographs mine Blok's extended anthropological sojourn in Sicily and southern Italy during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Besides being notable at the time for highlighting the social-psychological regulation of violence as an essential anthropological problem, Blok's work was recognised for its emphasis on process, flow and the flux of social life in contradistinction to system, structure and stability – which remain the habitual furnishings of sociological analysis. Drawing upon Norbert Elias's approach to the 'unintended conditions and unintended consequences of intended human interaction', Blok remains one of the most effective exemplars of historically-sensitive and scholarly analysis that is successful in attending to both sides of Marx's famous dictum about the making of history – or as he puts it, quoting C. Wright Mills (1959: 6–7, 143ff), '[the exploration of the] intersections of biography and history within society'. In putting this injunction to work, Blok first brought his historical anthropology to bear on the problem of the mafia in southern Italy, comparing it to eighteenth century banditry in the Dutch Republic. His analysis drew attention to the links between pervasive insecurity resulting from a failure of central monopoly in relation to violence, a process of defensive urban agglomeration on the part of peasants and pervasive tensions between landlords and tenants. Other essays consider variously the indispensability of dishonourable occupations (prostitute, beggar, executioner etc.); the anomalous position of chimney sweeps in early modern Europe; the role of blood symbolism in defining *mafia* coalitions and structuring the organisation of extra-legal economic activity; the narcissism of minor differences apparent in the regulation of relationships between social groups; Mediterranean totemism; and the biographical singularities of female leaders.

Honour and Violence brings together a lifetime of insight and reflection: too much for a single sitting, but rendered palatable by clear, incisive prose interspersed with conversational asides and anecdotes. His fluent familiarity with the broader currents of intellectual history, make the framing of his empirical analyses all the more compelling. I think it will be a while before he can be completely crossed off my list – but I can happily endorse the Anton Blok experience as being a 'must read' for historians who enjoy explanation with their erudition, anthropologists who are not embarrassed by the *longue durée* and sociologists who are not ashamed of their consanguinity with either historians or anthropologists.

Sutton, Philip W. *Nature Environment and Society*. London: Palgrave–Macmillan, 2004. 216 pp. ISBN 0-333-99568-6 (pb)

In 2004 British Prime Minister Tony Blair said of global warming and the wider environmental crisis that this was clearly the greatest challenge facing humanity as a whole, and Western politicians in particular. As in so many areas Blair's rhetoric has not been matched by any paradigm shift in public policy, such that the environment does not even figure in Labour's loudly proclaimed pledges for the 2005 general election. However the long-run relationship between the 'anthroposphere' and the biosphere will, without doubt, be the most important 'driver', influencing trajectories of social development, technological innovation, supra-national and regional state formation, demographic growth, processes of civilisation and/or decivilisation – and ultimately arbitrating the survival or possible extinction of the species, and even the expansion of humanity beyond the confines of our planet and solar system.[1] It is clearly something of which sociology should take note. And as Sutton points out in his introduction, over the last thirty years there have been a series of attempts to reconcile the discipline with the burgeoning environmental movement and its undergirding disciplines in ecology and the earth sciences. But despite the attempts to reformulate an encompassing environmental sociology according a central explanatory weight to the interface between social and ecological processes (Catton 1978; Bell 1998; Dunlap 2002), the ecology of social development has remained a stub-

bornly marginal concern; the sociology of the environment as one of a pot-pourri of exotic sub-disciplines available for the discerning undergraduates. In a sense, this is a reflection of the wider failure of sociology to defend its disciplinary boundaries, and the opening up of the floodgates to what Ernest Gellner described as a 'carnival of cheap relativism'.

Unfortunately this means that any attempt to develop a properly encompassing sociological framework for analysing the global environmental crisis must start from the periphery. More encouragingly, any sociological account of anthroposphere–biosphere dynamics is likely to be rooted in a more coherent epistemological framework, in which sociology constitutes the highest level of synthesis in the broader ensemble of human sciences (Elias 1987). In this sense, environmental sociology is potentially subversive, containing within it the seeds of a reconstituted sociological canon. Long time horizons and the interplay between mutually irreducible biological and social 'levels of integration', intimate the possibility of a *science* of social development. And a scientific sociology rooted in human ecology would go a long way to excluding the endlessly recursive and self-referential debates of the relativists and hermeneutic fundamentalists, and establishing some much needed open water between sociology and supposedly cognate disciplines such as cultural studies.

Even if he would not share such a partisan point of departure, Sutton's book is a welcome contribution to the debate, providing a concise review of the ways in which sociologists have responded to the environmental challenge. In particular the author provides a route map through a range of recent sociological concerns including the perception and management of risk, social movements and identity formation and concepts of self – as well as the epistemological and methodological debates associated with debates around modernity and post-modernity, critical realism and social constructionism. The book is organised around three sections. Early chapters (chapters 1–4) outlining the historical emergence of environmental ideas and movements, set the scene for the subsequent examination of the relationship between ecology and identity formation (chapters 4, 5 and 8), and finally the exam-

ination of theories of eco-social transformation (chapters 6, 7 and 8).

Running to just 210 pages Nature, Environment and Society is a well-crafted overview very suitable for use as an undergraduate textbook. All of the main debates are covered and the theoretical material is presented in such a way as to facilitate connections and cross-referencing with other areas of sociology as well as related courses in disciplines such as history, philosophy, politics and geography. There is for example a good exposition of Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society.

However in just a couple of places Sutton manages to do something that most textbooks struggle to achieve. In both the first chapter (pp. 24–25) and at greater length in the final chapter (pp. 176–84) Sutton refers to the possible relevance of Norbert Elias's theory of civilising processes. In particular he hints at the idea that nascent and ongoing transformations in social-psychological attitudes and orientations to the natural world might be understood in terms of the internalisation of constraints (or what might be called an ecological civilising process). Specifically he argues that Elias's 'triad of basic controls' provides a better starting point for the analysis of the 'ecological turn' than 'the entrenched division between social constructionism and realism' (p. 177). This is very true. But it is important to emphasise that the utility of the figurational point of departure in this respect, derives from the underlying theory of knowledge, and the way in which Elias combines epistemological concerns with a sociology of knowledge-processes. The spiralling dialectic of 'involvement and detachment' (Elias, 1987) defines an ongoing relationship between social and ecological processes that is as old as humanity (Goudsblom 1992; Quilley 2004, 2005). By placing the triad of basic controls, at least notionally, at the centre of the ecological problem, Sutton (along with others – see Aarts *et al*., 1995) intimates an environmental sociology that may yet reach out and retake the centre-ground of the discipline, refocusing the sociological imagination on the imperatives of a more broadly conceived human science (Quilley and Loyal, 2005). I hope he develops these ideas more comprehensively in another book. Meanwhile this volume will certainly find a place on my under-

graduate reading list.
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graduate reading list.
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Note
1. Those who doubt the utility of such long-range speculations might do well to refer to the informed futurological analysis of Britain's Astronomer Royal, Cambridge Professor and former President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Sir Martin Rees (*Our Final Century: Will Civilisation Survive the Twenty-First Century*, London: Arrow Books, 2004).

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Quilley, S. and S. Loyal 2005 'Eliasian Sociology as a "Central Theory" for the Human Sciences', *Current Sociology*, 53 (1).

■ RECENT BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Cas Wouters, *Sex and Manners: Female Emancipation in the West, 1890–2000*. London: Sage, 2004. x + 188 pp. ISBN: 0-8039-8369-7.

A slightly adapted version has appeared in Dutch:

Cas Wouters, Seks en de seksen. Een geschiedenis van moderne omgangs-vormen. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2005. ISBN 90-351-2712-9.

This major book is the culmination of one aspect of Cas Wouters's work over the last thirty years on informalisation processes. Another larger book on informalisation in general – that is, all those aspects that are not directly connected with sex, courtship and marriage – will appear in the not too distant future, and indeed the two were originally one massive book.

In view of the centrality of Cas Wouters's work to at least one major strand in long-running debates about the theory of civilising processes, it is hoped to arrange a review symposium on this book in *Figurations* 24. Apologies to Cas for the delay in taking adequate notice of his work.

SJM

Sophie Chevalier and Jean-Marie Privat, eds, *Norbert Elias et l'anthropologie: 'Nous sommes tous si étranges ...'*. Paris: CNRS Editions, 2004. 260 pp. ISBN 2-271-06285-3

This book is the product – after some delays that must have frustrated the editors – of the conference they organised at the University of Metz on Norbert Elias and anthropology, on 21–23 September

2000 (see Heike Hammer's report in *Figurations* 14). The outcome is a rather substantial book which, after a general introduction by the editors, contains as many as 23 chapters in six sections. Not all the participants were anthropologists themselves – sociologists, historians and literary scholars are also prominent among the contributors – and not all are wholehearted enthusiasts for Elias's work, although the overall tone is of appreciation for the rich seam of relevant ideas in his writings that can be mined for use in anthropological research. All the old debates are revisited, but generally in a constructive mood.
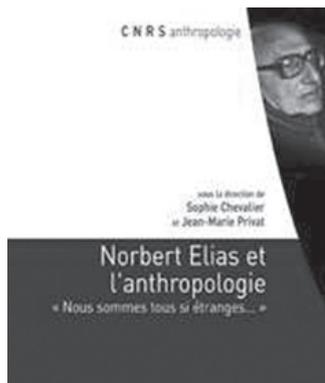
Rather than writing at great length about the book as a whole, and duplicating the report of the conference, it is probably most useful for readers of *Figurations* simply to list the contents of the book, which (the titles being translated into English) are as follows:

General Introduction
1. Elias for today and for tomorrow – Sophie Chevalier and Jean-Marie Privat

I. Elias and general anthropology

2. Working with Elias: the relations between sociology and anthropology – Eric Dunning
3. Elias and the anthropological tradition – Jack Goody
4. Anthropologists and developmental agnosticism – Stephen Mennell
5. Civilisation as self-reflexive dynamic – Wolfgang Kaschuba

II. The civilising process and its critics

6. The concept of self-constraint and its historic usage –André Burguière
7. Norbert Elias and the court: the attentive observer confronting the great theoretician – Jeroen Duindam
8. A 'court society' in the tropics – Jurandir Malerba
9. The civilising process and human history – Johan Goudsblom

III. Anthropology of politics

10. The empty centre – Anton Blok
11. Rethinking the Eliasian concept of 'figuration' – D. Guillet
12. 'We' Europeans: images and sentiments – Pablo Jáuregui
13. Elias as ethnographer of contemporary Germany – Freddy Raphaël and Geneviève Herberich-Marx
14. Sport and political anthropology – Jean-Paul Callède

IV. Elias by the test of contemporary societies

15. About the constitution of the private sphere – Sophie Chevalier
16. Lonely death? – Jean-Hugues Déchaux
17. Scholarly socialisation – Elias contradicts Foucault – Eirick Prairat
18. 'True' politeness must come from the court – Elisabeth Timm

V. Exploring new cultural fields

19. Elias, Bhaktin and literature – Jean-Marie Privat
20. Is *La Ventre de Paris* a 'civilised' novel? – Marie Scarba
21. Norbert Elias and the anthropology of art – Jean-Marc Leveratto

VI. Have you re-read Norbert Elias?

22. 'Les plus vieux ont le plus souffert': reply to Daniel Gordon – Roger Chartier (this is a fuller version of the arguments that Chartier made in his article in *Figurations* 9; see also Daniel Gordon's response in *Figurations* 13)
23. Universalism, equality and authenticity – Nathalie Heinich.

The conference took place under the auspices of the Société d'ethnologie française. The apparent openness to developmental thinking among French anthropologists that this seems to betoken is very welcome. Would that it were emulated among English-speaking anthropologists. For them, even to think about many of the large questions that preoccupied Elias. Some of them, nevertheless, are aware that taboo is not a concept applicable only in their fieldwork. One of my anthropological colleagues in Australia used to comment that modern postgraduate training in anthropology largely consisted of putting up large red notices reading 'Wrong Way – Go Back'.

SJM

Chris Rojek, 'An Anatomy of the Leicester School of Sociology: an Interview with Eric Dunning', *Journal of Classical Sociology* 4 (3) 2004: 337–59

At its peak in the late 1960s, the Department of Sociology at the University of Leicester had about 29 staff, probably the largest in Britain, and it was certainly one of the most influential. An extraordinary number of subsequently prominent British sociologists either studied as students or began their academic careers as lecturers in the Leicester department. Eric Dunning did both, arriving as a student intending to read economics until he fell under the influence of Norbert Elias, who gave the first-year introductory lecture course in sociology, and then he went on to be a postgraduate student, junior member of staff and finally Professor, all in the same department. In this interview, he reflects on the complementary talents of Neustadt and Elias – Elias the dominant intellectual partner in building up the Leicester school of 'developmental sociology', but Neustadt the supreme academic politician without whom it would not have been possible. Dunning recalls the intellectual disputes that made the department so stimulating in the 1960s, passionate but amicable – as he thought at the time. Later, he began to realise that it had not been quite so amicable as he had believed as a young lecturer – that, in particular, some of the younger staff had resented the dominant voice of Elias. He notes that although Elias denied wanting to create a 'school' in his own image, at a deeper level that probably was his ambition.

Reflecting on the interview, Chris Rojek observes that the British do not like 'schools'. In British sociology there have been fleeting movements and fragmentary groups, but rarely 'schools'. The nearest (literally and figuratively) rival to the Leicester school was the famous Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, founded by Richard Hoggart and then led by Stuart Hall. Rojek makes a revealing comparison between the two. Birmingham became an import agency for continental ideas – Gramsci, Althusser, structuralism – and ultimately a bastion of 'culturalist' relativism hostile to any idea of 'science' in social investigation. Yet, Rojek points out, in practice it continued the British tradition of insularity, its members own theoretical–empirical work all addressing British history and experience. In all these respects, the contrast with the comparative perspective of the Leicester school, and its adherence to the ideals of detached scientific investigation, could not be greater.

Bruce Mazlish, *Civilisation and Its Contents*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. xvi + 188 pp. ISBN: 0-8047-5082-3 (hb); 0-8047-5083-1 (pb).

Bruce Mazlish, proponent of the 'New Global History' (http://www.newglobal-history.com), has recently taken emeritus status after teaching at MIT for several decades. Many readers will be familiar with his Freud-influenced writings from much earlier in his career, so his receptivity to Elias and concern with large-scale problems of civilisation should come as no surprise.

At first glance, Mazlish seems to be dealing with 'civilisation' in the old sense of a geographically bounded cultural entity (the West, China, India, etc.). Quite the contrary. He notes that few apart from 'the eccentric Samuel Huntington' (p. xi) use the word in that sense any more. Others, such as William McNeill, 'have liberated it from its fixed boundaries, and are interested in cross-border and trans-civilisational encounters'. Mazlish argues that we must now go beyond that and 're-imagine' the concept of civilisation. And that re-imagining takes him in the direction of thinking in terms of civilising *processes*, with major acknowledgements to Norbert Elias.

The first three chapters, 'The origins and importance of the concept of civilisation', 'Civilisation as a colonial ideology' and 'Civilisation as a European ideology' succeed in breathing new life into old debates, drawing on recent scholarship and making reference to interesting figures (such as Dugald Stewart and Thomas Carlyle) who do not feature in the classic essays by Febvre and Elias.

Chapter 4, however, is actually entitled 'The civilising process'; it is devoted to the writings of John Stuart Mill, Sigmund Freud and – inevitably – Norbert Elias. But then Mazlish takes the reader back, in the light of this discussion to 'other civilisations' in the older sense – notably to Egypt, Japan, and China – and then to the 'dialogue of civilisations in a global epoch'. In effect, he provides a lively dialogue between the old discourse of 'civilisations' and the newer discourse of 'civilising processes'.

In his conclusion, Mazlish reflects upon George W. Bush's reaction on 11 September 2001. Bush 'immediately cast the attack as one on "civilisation", perceived to be embodied in the United States, and, almost as an afterthought, the West. Unthinkingly, President Bush thus at the outset embraced Huntington's "clash of civilisations" thesis' (p. 143). As an antidote, Mazlish prescribes *The Civilising Process* and *The Future of an Illusion*.

Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh, *Niet Leuk: De wereld van depressie en*

*mani*e. [No Fun: the world of mania and depression] Amsterdam: Mets & Schilt, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 90-5330-392–8

In a modest sort of way, this little book has become something of a best seller in the Netherlands, and there is talk of an English translation. Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh is a familiar name to readers of *Figurations*. A political scientist who taught for many years at the Institute for Social Science in Den Haag and at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam, he was, along with Johan Goudsblom, Anton Blok, Maarten Brands and others, among those who befriended and championed Norbert Elias when he began to teach in the Netherlands in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Then, already a prominent intellectual figure, more than twenty years ago when he was just starting a year's sabbatical leave at NIAS (the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, at Wassenaar), he was suddenly hit by the onset of depression. He writes movingly and eloquently about the experience – what it feels like – and the various solutions he sought, including psychotherapy, before finally taking lithium relieved him from the manic-depressive cycle. He was not an obvious candidate for becoming a firm believer in the physiological approach to mental illness. Here he takes on the medical profession and discusses the merits of their radically different approaches.

Robert van Krieken, 'The "Best Interests of the Child" and Parental Separation: on the "Civilising of Parents"', *Modern Law Review*, 68 (1) 2005: 25–48.

The concept of the 'best interests of the child' is both pivotal in family law and yet essentially contested. This paper reflects on the concept's position within a number of longer-term histories of the jurisprudence surrounding child custody, of the social construction of childhood, and of the emotional constitution of family life more broadly. The turn to a co-parenting model from the 1970s onwards and the rise of the concept of the 'civilised divorce' is analysed by drawing on Norbert Elias's analysis of 'processes of civilisation' in Western social life. The paper argues that the post-separation co-parenting model is only partially explained as the outcome of political manoeuvring by particular social and professional groups; it should also be

understood as part of longer-term trends in family life, emotional management, and the socio-legal construction of childhood, as part of the ongoing 'civilising of parents'.

J. Carter Wood, *Violence and Crime in Nineteenth-Century England: The Shadow of Our Refinement*. London: Routledge, 2004. 224 pp. ISBN: 0415329051

This is an interesting book that grapples with some of the key issues that accompanied the 'civilising offensive' in nineteenth-century England. It highlights the tension that existed between an emerging civilised mentality that idealised self-restraint and abhorred brute aggression, and more deeply rooted customary notions that saw direct confrontation as legitimate, necessary and even playful.

The customary mentality was defined by a preference for physical retribution, an emphasis on community autonomy and the maintenance of norms through fist and fear. The tendency towards refinement was characterised by a progressive narrowing of the circumstances where violence could be justified (with the remainder dismissed as the product of unfathomable rage and atavistic savagery), together with a determined linking of violence to social causes and effects. The further that the middle classes pushed violence behind the scenes the more they were repulsed by the working class enthusiasm to resolve conflict through blood letting.

Violence and Crime in Nineteenth-Century England is theoretically informed by the ideas of Elias and Foucault and empirically grounded in first-hand accounts of violent acts. This combination of strengths makes it a useful addition to the growing body of work that attempts to explain long-term trends in violence. One of the organising ideas for the book is that violence is best conceived of as a performance or a narrative. It is seldom random and never meaningless. The task for the scholar is to discern what is being communicated through an exploration of the context, in particular by capturing the views of participants and witnesses. (These were regularly available as a ritual fight without an audience was a contradiction in terms.) To this end the book draws heavily on pre-trial depositions. These usually contained long unbroken descriptions of what had transpired and

although obviously the end product of a dialogue with the investigating magistrate or police officer yielded rich detail and an intriguing range of possibilities.

To examine shifts in attitudes, public priorities and strategies of pacification close attention is given to specific manifestations of violence such as street fighting and domestic conflict. This approach allows Carter Wood to trace the redrawing of boundaries around what was considered acceptable social behaviour. For example, before the Queensbury Rules became ascendant in the 1880s and 1890s, there was little difference between the antics of brawlers outside pubs and prizefighters in boxing rings. The rules of engagement were widely understood and there was a clear consensus about what constituted a fair fight. On those occasions where serious injury and even death occurred in street fights the courts were generally lenient. As the author tells us: 'The word "violent" was never used in descriptions of ritual fights, no matter how long or hard the men fought, so long as none of the blows were seen as unfair' (p. 89).

Over time however the emphasis on brute force and endurance came to be seen as unpalatable and even un-English. All that respectable society could countenance was modern amateur boxing where the scoring methods and equipment meant that good footwork and technical artistry became more significant than an ability to bare-knuckle an opponent into submission. The disruption of the connection between sport and everyday pugilism meant that by the end of the nineteenth century street fighting had lost its ritual form along with much of its cultural support and significance.

Interestingly domestic violence was not nearly as rule bound. 'Husbands used implements, kicked, threw things and slammed women against walls and floors, all behavior that would have been viewed as unfair – or even unmanly – in a street fight with another man' (p. 125). Battle between spouses was not organised according to a predictable structure and so lacked the kinds of limits placed on other types of customary violence. This is not to say that there were no constraints whatsoever. Although the boundaries were more fluid and a 'disciplinary' beating was considered acceptable there were occasions when a husband went too far

(e.g., the response was hugely disproportionate to whatever elicited it) or his *modus operandi* was inappropriate (e.g., a dim view was sometimes taken when a blow was administered with a closed fist rather than an open hand).

Carter Wood shows that as violence retreated to the cultural margins, public spaces were tamed and the police acquired greater profile and legitimacy in areas where their presence had formerly been enough to ignite disorder and invite attack. At the same time working class domestic life became increasingly private and impermeable. This may have served to increase male domination within the home.

One consequence of the disappearance of customary violence and the shared understanding from which it emerged is the construction of 'ever-finer distinctions regarding the specific nature of violent acts' (p. 147). These more nuanced understandings form the basis of the ongoing discourse about appropriate limits to individual behaviour and acceptable levels of public order.

Ian O'Donnell
Institute of Criminology
University College Dublin

Mike Levin, *Mill on Civilisation and Barbarism*. London, Routledge, 2004. ISBN: 0-7146-5590-2 (hb), 0-71468476-7 (pb)

John Stuart Mill's best-known work is *On Liberty* (1859). In it he declared that Western society was in danger of coming to a standstill. To understand how Mill came to this conclusion requires one to investigate his notion of the stages from barbarism to civilisation, and also his belief in imperialism as part of the civilising process. This study encompasses discourses on the blessings, curses and dangers of modernisation from approximately the time of the American and French revolutions to that of the so-called mid-Victorian calm when *On Liberty* was written. Current political issues concerning the West and Islamic countries have heightened interest in just the kind of question that this book discusses: that of how the West relates to, and assesses, the rest of the world.

Andrew Linklater, 'Dialogic politics and the civilising process', *Review of International Studies* 2005, 31, pp141–54.

This article poses the question of whether the discourse theory of morality can advance the civilising process in which actors have become less tolerant of acts of cruelty and violent harm to others. Criticisms of the discourse principle which stress its exclusionary and assimilationist potentials are considered; the need for constant awareness of the difficulties involved in deriving abstract moral principles from concrete ways of life are stressed. The case is made for a thin version of the discourse perspective which aims to protect vulnerable societies first and foremost from the actions of powerful liberal societies and from structures which cater for their interests. The inability to settle profound value-conflicts rules out the thick version with its totalising potentials. Notwithstanding this limitation − indeed because of it − the discourse approach remains one of the best means of advancing the civilising process in international relations.

David Lepoutre and Isabelle Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de Familles Immigrées*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 2005. 377 pp. ISBN: 2-7381-1271-4.
David Lepoutre was the first winner of the Norbert Elias prize for his book, *Coeur de banlieu* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 1997) when the prize was first awarded (see *Figurations* 12). *Souvenirs de Familles Immigrées*, his second book, continues the work of rich ethnography among the immigrant communities in the Paris suburbs. In particular, it explores the family memories that newcomers to French society bring with them, and the part that these memories continue to play from generation to generation.

Guillaume Devin, ed., *Les solidarités transnationales*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005. 210 pp. ISBN: 2-7475-7328-1

Devin's editorial introduction (pp. 11–26) to this collection of papers makes significant use of Elias's work, taking a developmental perspective on 'transnational solidarities' as a feature of globalisation and international stratification.

Ian O'Donnell, Lethal Violence in Ireland, 1841 to 2003: Famine, Celibacy and Parental Pacification, *British Journal of Criminology*, doi:10.1093/bjc/azi01525 pp. (Preprint: to appear in hard copy of journal later in 2005).

Criminologists, taking their cue especially from David Garland, have increasingly embraced the theory of civilising processes as a particularly promising way of accounting for trends in violent crime over time. That is also the case in this study of trends in Ireland. Examination of recorded homicides in Ireland over a 160-year period reveals a trend that is in the same direction as found in other European countries: declining for around 100 years, then rising again. However, when the killing of babies is disaggregated from other killings, a different pattern emerges in that the secular decline is not reversed. It is argued that the virtual disappearance of baby killing is related to increasing respect for infant life and a marked increase in celibacy after the Famine of 1845–50. Other killings remained at a relatively high and stable level for the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is attributed to the persistence of 'recreational' violence. The decline in homicide from the turn of the twentieth century is related to emigration and the foundation, after 1922, of an independent Irish state.

Pieter Spierenburg, 'Punishment, Power, and History: Foucault and Elias'. *Social Science History*, 28 (4) 2004: 607–36.

This article re-evaluates the work of Michel Foucault and Norbert Elias, in so far as it relates to criminal justice history. After an examination of the content of Foucault's *Surveiller et Punir* (1975), it discusses Foucault's receptions among criminal justice historians. Some of the latter appear to have attributed views to the French philosopher that are not backed up by his 1975 study. Notable the 'revisionist' historians of prisons have done so. As a preliminary conclusion, it is posited that Foucault and Elias have more in common than some scholars, including the author in earlier publications, have argued. They resemble each other to the extent that they both thought it imperative to analyse historical change in order to better understand our own world.

Nevertheless, Elias is to be preferred over Foucault when it concerns (1) the pace of historical change and (2) these theorists' conception of power. It is demonstrated that Foucault's notion of an abrupt and total change of the penal system between 1760 and 1840 is incongruent with reality and leads to ad hoc explanations. Rather,

a long-term change occurred from about 1600 onward, while several elements of the modern penal system (as claimed by Foucault) did not become visible until after 1840. With respect to the concept of power, Elias and Foucault converge again on one crucial point: the notion of the omnipresence of power. However, whereas Elias defines power as a structural property of every social relationship and acknowledges its two-sidedness Foucault's concept of power has a more top-down character, and he often depicts power as an external force that people have to accommodate. Although Foucault's notion of the interconnectedness of power and knowledge is valuable, Elias has a more encompassing view of sources of power.

John C.G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II: The Kaiser's Personal Monarchy, 1888–1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 1,287 pp. ISBN: 0-521-81920-2.

Published in German in 2001, this is the second of Röhl's projected three-volume biography of Kaiser Wilhelm II. We note it here for two reasons. First, it makes use of Norbert Elias's idea of the 'royal mechanism', developed in *The Court Society* and in *The Civilising Process*. (Here it is translated by Sheila de Bellaigue as 'the kingship mechanism'.) And second, Röhl's much more detailed study will be of interest to all readers whose appetite has been whetted by Elias's discussion of the *Kaiserreich* in *The Germans*. The first volume of Röhl's biography, *Wilhelm II: Young William*, appeared in German in 1993 and in English in 1998. See also his *The Kaiser and his Court: Wilhelm II and the Government of Germany*, published in 1994, also by Cambridge University Press.

Katie Liston, Playing the 'Masculine/ Feminine' Game … so he plays harder and she plays softer. Unpublished Phd thesis, University College Dublin, 2005.

This study is the first sociological study of its kind that focuses on aspects of the sport/gender nexus in Ireland. It endeavours to present a more reality-congruent understanding of sport in Ireland (including so-called 'Irish' sports) and the sport/ gender nexus through the application of the sociological concepts of 'field' and 'habitus' in order to understand better

the sociogenesis of females' increasing participation in traditionally associated male sports such as Gaelic games, rugby, soccer and hockey. In particular, it focuses on aspects of the social field of sports in Ireland including: the development of sport, physical education and the sports policy process in Ireland in the twentieth century (and the emergence of the Irish Sports Council); changing power balances between males and females in sport in a gynarchic direction; and, the consequences of this for aspects of females' (and males') habituses and behaviour. In the process, the study compares Bourdieu's and Elias's work on the sociological concepts of 'habitus' and 'field'. As a consequence, it is argued that a present-day phenomenon − in this case, females' increasing participation in contact sports in Ireland − is more adequately understood as a specific point in a longer developmental social phenomenon.

The study presents empirical data from a case study of the experiences of elite female athletes and data on the emergence and development of 'modern' sports and sports policies in Ireland. Data from a survey of three hundred young people's perceptions of the gender-appropriateness of sports are also presented to argue that gendered ideologies concerning male and female bodies have remained relatively consistent, despite changes in the balance of power between the sexes. Notwithstanding this, females have been enabled to participate in contact sports, at elite-level, as a result of broader changes in the wider society prominent amongst which are changes in the structure of social relations between the sexes. It is argued that females' increasing participation in contact sports are more adequately understood by looking at: (i) the position of sporting disciplines in the overall status hierarchy of sports in Ireland (including 'Irish' sports); (ii) female athletes' positions within these sports; (iii) the consequences of social relations for the self-conceptions of masculine and feminine habituses; and (iv) the ways in which changes in the self-images and social make-up of male and female athletes are inextricably bound up with changes in the social structure of gender relations generally.

Louise Mansfield, Gender, power and identities in the fitness gym: towards a

sociology of the 'exercise body-beautiful complex'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Loughbourough, 2004.

This thesis examines the ways in which female bodies are central to the production and reproduction of gendered social inequality, and the formation of feminine identities in the fitness gym. Ethnographic methods were utilised to investigate the patterns and relations of power that underpinned the production and reproduction of feminine body ideals and feminine identities and habituses in a fitness gym in the South-East of England. The potential usefulness of harnessing feminist and figurational concepts for understanding gendered bodies in the context of sport and exercise was also explored.

Some of the theoretical and methodological links between feminist and figurational perspectives are explored in this thesis. A feminist-figurational approach is presented as a useful way of understanding the complexities of female body image and feminine identification in the fitness gym. Central in this regard has been an examination of the unequal relationships between, and within, groups of people in exercise and fitness settings. The task of producing a relatively high degree of adequate knowledge about gendered bodies in the fitness gym has also involved consideration of several concepts related to Elias's theory of involvement and detachment including: the personal pronoun model, the use of development thinking, the interplay between theory and evidence and the adequacy of evidence. Feminist and figurational ideas about gender, power and identities have been of use in making sense of the relationships between working-out, female bodies and femininities. Elias's conceptualisations of power, established–outsider relations and identification have been particularly helpful.

Evidence from participant observations and interviewing revealed that several mechanisms serve to reinforce, challenge and negotiate a variety of images of the female body beautiful in the fitness gym. These include: the insecurity and emotion that surround the acquisition and maintenance of an ideal physique, the monopolisation of corporeal power, the construction of group charisma and group disgrace, the formation of gossip

networks, and the corporeal logic of the 'exercise body-beautiful complex'. The findings also revealed that female bodies are central to the formation of feminine identities and habituses. Feminine identities are founded on both different and shared characteristics of the female body-beautiful. Some female exercisers also share some characteristics with other women, specifically in the context of the fitness gym. Linked to a desire for a high status body image, there is a tendency for white, western, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied women, who go to the gym, to share a preference for cosmetic fitness activities, and an emotional tie to aspirations for a slender, muscularly toned physique. The exercise histories of the women in this study indicted that the inculcation of feminine conduct and bodily preference happens over time, and in relation to a range of corporeal experiences including: physical education, sport, exercise, dance, dieting and adolescence.

Dominic Malcolm, An Eliasian or Process Sociological Analysis of Cricket: Violence, Nationalism, 'Race' and Imperial Relations, Doctoral thesis, University of Leicester, December 2004.

This thesis was submitted for a doctorate through published work, and contains eight journal articles and book chapters published between 1997 and 2004 (plus a summary and critical overview). The central themes in these publications are, as the title of the thesis indicates, cricket and the application of an Eliasian framework. More specifically, the readings examine: the organisational development of cricket and, in particular, the rise and role of the Marylebone Cricket Club; historical evidence relating to cricket spectator disorder in England between *ca.*1700 and *ca.*1900 and competing explanations for the identified trends; the emergence of cricket in eighteenth century England as a modern sports form, its codification and standardisation, and the implications of this for violence and its control which, it is argued, provides supporting evidence for Elias's theory of civilising processes; apparent de-civilising trends in the game (such as the development of over-arm bowling, the infamous Bodyline series of matches between Australia and England in 1932/33, and the tactical innovations of West Indian cricket teams in the 1970s and 1980s which led to perceptions of height-

ened violence in the game); issues of race and nationalism in cricket in contemporary Britain using Elias's theory of established–outsider relations; the links between Caribbean 'national' self-assertion, fast bowling and violence in cricket; the current equal opportunities policies of the English Cricket Board; and a group of English cricket spectators called the 'Barmy Army', a group which is distinctive in that it constitutes a direct challenge to the convention of pacified and placid cricket spectatorship, a group which has emerged as a consequence of the convergence of various social processes (related to class, gender and globalisation in particular), and a group whose rise to prominence in contemporary cricket tells us much about the power balances in contemporary sport. In the summary and critical overview, the author seeks to identify the contribution that this combined work has had to the sociology of sport sub-discipline, and to place himself within the figurational sociology of sport 'academy'. It is argued that an Eliasian approach provides unique insights into the convergence of nationalism, 'race' identity and violence in the British Empire and post-colonial Britain, and that the impact of this published work can only be understood with reference to the centrality of Elias to the sociology of sport, and the existence of the so-called 'Leicester School'.

■ FROM THE AUTHOR

Peter Imbusch, *Moderne und Gewalt: Zivilisationstheoretische Perspektiven auf das 20. Jahrhundert* [Modernity and Violence: the twentieth century in the perspective of the theory of civilising processes]. Wiesnaden: VS-Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2005. 579 pp. ISBN: 3-8100-3753-2
Besides an introduction discussing the possible relationships between modernity and violence, the main chapters of this book provide a comparative view of Sigmund Freud, Alfred Weber, Norbert Elias and Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno. The main question is how they dealt with the experiences of the Holocaust, Stalinist terror and the World Wars in their theories of civilisation and culture. Afterwards I tried to come to terms with these modern forms of violence in civilisational perspective by using concepts originally employed by Zygmunt

Bauman. The thesis of the book is that these major types of macro-violence form part of the modern civilisation and are only understandable as phenomena of modernity. They are at least the most fatal possibilities of modern development.

■ RECENT CONFERENCES

BSA Conference – Drugs, Sport and Society

On 11 February 2005, the Chester Centre for Research in Sport and Society (CRSS) hosted the British Sociological Associations's Sociology of Sport Annual Conference. The conference was well attended and delegates from the UK, Ireland and Italy were enthused by the presentations of Ivan Waddington (Development of doping and doping control in Britain), Pat Lenehan (Non-competitive use of performance enhancing drugs by bodybuilders), Barrie Houlihan (Accountability and governance of national anti-doping agencies), John O'Leary (Protecting athlete's rights) and Eric Dunning (Some neglected dimensions of drugs in sport). An open plenary session was perhaps the highlight of the conference, in which presenters and delegates engaged in some wide ranging discussions on aspects of the drugs-doping-sport complex. Full details on the conference can be obtained from the CCRSS website (www.chester.ac.uk/ccrss/) or by contacting either of the conference convenors − Katie Liston (k.liston@chester.ac.uk) or Andy Smith (andy.smith@chester.ac.uk).

'From Young Workers to Older Workers: Reflections on Work in the Life Process': Centre for Labour Market Studies, Leicester, 13 April 2005

In 1962, the Department of Sociology at the University of Leicester was awarded a research grant of £15,000 – then a very large amount – for a research project entitled [insert], and informally known as 'the Young Workers Project'. Norbert Elias was the principal investigator, and, besides Ilya Neustadt as Head of Department, the research team included Sheila Allen, Percy Cohen, Richard Brown and Tony Giddens, all subsequently prominent Professors of Sociology in Britain.

Unfortunately, when the project had barely started, Elias (who had just reached retirement age) went off to serve two years as Professor at the University of Ghana. Although he returned to Britain from time to time, this undoubtedly impeded the effective co-ordination of the project. To cut a long story short, many disagreements broke out among the collaborators, and the results of the study were never satisfactorily analysed and published.

Then, about three years ago, John Goodwin discovered a box full of more than 800 of the original questionnaires, in what is now the Centre for Labour Market Studies at Leicester. They had been carefully preserved by Professor David Ashton, in whose 1975 (?) book a partial report of the study had appeared. Sensing that this was a potential goldmine – or a time capsule – John, together with Henrietta O'Connor, obtained a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council not only to code and analyse the original data fully for the first time, but also to attempt to track down as many as possible of the original respondents.

The one-day seminar held at the CLMS on 13 April gave John and Henrietta the opportunity to report progress on their project, although they feel they are still only scratching the surface of the rich vein of evidence.

Participants in the seminar were welcomed by Professor Lorna Unwin, the current Director of the CLMS, and the seminar was opened by David Ashton, who had himself been a junior research assistant on the project. David admitted that the resurrection of the project and final analysis of the data had been quite an emotional experience for him. He had preserved the questionnaires because, like others among the original researchers whom John and Henrietta had interviewed, he had always had the sense that the project would surface again sometime. But he also had a vivid recollection of the bitter disputes that had broken out in the 1960s and finally halted the study in its tracks.

In the course of John and Henrietta's presentations in the rest of the day greater insight emerged into the disputes that David described. Tensions were evident even in the construction of the questionnaire – there is valuable material on this in the Elias archive at Marbach. Most of the research team had been raised within an older British tradition of factual-empirical survey research. Elias, on the other hand was more interested in the 'subjective' or emotional side of the experience of the transition from school to work. His major hypothesis concerned the 'shock' of the transition. Most of the younger staff researchers disagreed with the 'shock hypothesis'. Moreover, the dominant assumption of the time was that school leavers choose their career on the basis of rational consideration. It was, in other words, an explanation in individualistic psychologistic terms, anticipating what is now called rational choice theory. The survey however threw up much evidence that such choices were deeply embedded in family and peer-group networks, and the school leavers were under social influences of which they were largely unconscious.

The study, in many respects, anticipated debates that are current now, but were much less so in the 1960s. For example Elias encouraged researchers to reflect upon their own experience (see John and Henrietta's working paper 'They had horrible wallpaper'). The stress on the reflexivity long outdated the stress placed on it in feminist methodological discussions.

In the follow-up study, about 150 of the original respondents were traced in Leicester and further afield. Of these, 97 agreed to be re-interviewed after a gap of 40 years, as they face a new 'shock of transition', into retirement. Interestingly, very few of them had any recollection of the original interview, and many initially took a suspicious view when asked to take part in the follow-up.

The seminar ended with a wide-ranging discussion covering not just the changes in society at large that have unfolded since the 1960s, but also the changes in the disciplines of sociology.

A list of journal articles and working papers arising to date from the project follows; John and Henrietta promise there is much more to come.

Publications List: From Young Workers to Older Workers
Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2005) 'Exploring Complex Transitions: Looking Back at the "Golden Age" of Youth Transitions', *Sociology* 39 (2): 201–20.
Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2005) A Life-Time of Learning? The Experiences of Learning During 40 years at Work. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 7, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.
Goodwin, J. (2005) 'The Transition to Work and Adulthood: Becoming Adults via Communities of Practice' in J. Hughes, N. Jewson and L. Unwin (2005) *Communities of Practice: Critical Perspectives*. London: Routledge (forthcoming).
O'Connor, H and Goodwin, J (2004) 'She wants to be like her Mum', *Journal of Education and Work* 17 (1): 95–118.
Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2004) Boys' Gendered Transitions to Work in the 1960s. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 6, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.
O'Connor, H. and Goodwin, J. (2004) 'Girl's Perceptions of Adulthood in the 1960s', chapter 4, in J. Pilcher, J., C. Pole, and J. Williams, eds, *Young People in Transition, becoming Citizens?*

A familiar scene: after the seminar in the Marquis of Wellington

London: Palgrave.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2003) 'Entering Work in the 1960s: Reflections and Expectations', *Education and Training* (45) 1: 13–21 (Winner of Emerald Publishing Group Outstanding Paper Award for Excellence 2004)

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2003) 'The Young Worker Project Renewed', in E. Dunning and S.J. Mennell (2003) *Norbert Elias*. London: Sage.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2003) Exploring Complex Transitions: Looking Back at the 'Golden Age' of Youth Transitions. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 5, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2002) 'They had horrible wallpaper': Representations of Respondents in Interviewer Notes. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 4, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.

O'Connor, H. and Goodwin, J. (2002) She wants to be like her Mum: Girls' Perceptions of Adulthood in the 1960s. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 3, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2002) Forty years on: Norbert Elias and the Young Worker Project. ESRC Young Worker Project – Research Paper No. 2, Leicester: CLMS, University of Leicester.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H (2001) '"Learning the Ropes": Young Workers' Reflections on Workplace Learning in the 1960s', in J.N. Streumer, ed., *Perspectives on Learning at the Workplace*. Enschede: University of Twente.

The Amsterdam School

In December 2004 a group of Dutch PhD candidates at the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research organised a seminar on Figurational Sociology. They had found that, while this form of sociology once flourished at the University Amsterdam, nowadays it receives hardly any attention. To remedy this situation somewhat, a three-day seminar was staged with talks by sociologists and anthropologists who had contributed to the discussions about Figurational Sociology in the 1970s and 1980s: Bram de Swaan, Johan Goudsblom, Dick Pels, Bart van Heerikhuizen, Cas Wouters, Elly Lissenberg, Anton Blok, and Johan Heilbron. The seminar was concluded by a panel discussion in which De Swaan,

Goudsblom, Pels and Blok were joined by two younger members of the Amsterdam School, Jan Willem Duyvendak and Bernhard Kittel. All meetings were well attended and the participants expressed a lively and genuine interest in the theme.

■ FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

The 37th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology Stockholm, Sweden

5–9 July, 2005
http://www.scasss.uu.se/iis2005

Four sessions under the title 'New Directions in Figurational Sociology' will be held at the IIS conference in Stockholm in July 2005. They are being organised by Barbara Evers, of the University of Western Australia at Perth, in collaboration with Stephen Mennell.

Participants will include (with their universities in parentheses): Michael Atkinson (McMaster); Yi-Tung Chang (Marburg); François Dépalteau (Laurentian); Barbara Evers (Murdoch); Norman Gabriel (Plymouth); Ken Green (Chester); Utsimi Hirofumi (Osaka); Maarten Hogenstijn (Utrecht); Jason Hughes (Leicester); Lars Kaspersen (Copenhagen Business School); Helmut Kuzmics (Graz); Steven Loyal (University College Dublin); Tamás Meleghy (Innsbruck); Dominique Memmi (CNRS, IEP, Paris); Stephen Mennell (University College Dublin); Daniel van Middelkoop (Utrecht); Heinz-Jürgen Niedenzu (Innsbruck); Val Owen-Pugh (Leicester); Stephen Quilley (University College Dublin); Ali de Regt (Amsterdam); Ruud Stokvis (Amsterdam); Kirsti Suoranta (Helsinki); Philip Sutton (Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen); Stephen Vertigans (Robert Gordon, Aberdeen); Cas Wouters (Utrecht).

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LEICESTER UNIVERSITY

The adjustment of young workers to work situations and adult roles

Investigators: Dr. N. Elias
                          Dr. J. Neustadt
                          Mrs. S. Williams

Staff: Dr. P.S. Cohen
                          Mr. R.K. Brown
                          Mr. A. Giddens

Period of research: 1.4.62 – 31.3.65

The project is concerned with the problems which young male and female workers encounter during their adjustment to their work situation and their entry into the world of adults. When they go to work, or begin to train for work, young workers have to make a wider adjustment to a situation and to roles which are new to them, whose implications are often imperfectly understood by them and by the adults concerned, and for which they are in many cases not too well prepared. The project will differ from other studies in investigating this wider adjustment which young workers have to make in their relationships with older workers and supervisors in the factory or workshop; to job problems and to their role as workers; and to their roles as money earners in home relations and in their leisure time. The factors to be examined will include differences between age groups, between sexes, in size of organisation, in nature and status of job, and between young workers from working class and middle class home backgrounds. We intend to pay special attention to the overall characteristics of industrial societies responsible for the specific problems of adjustment for people in this age group.

Journée d'études: Le corps et la santé : lieux d'avènement d'un 'indi-vidu auto-contrôlé' ? Dia-logues autour de Norbert Elias

9 June 2005

Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Paris Nord, 4 rue de la Croix Faron, Plaine Saint-Denis, 93210 Saint-Denis
Organised by Dominique Memmi, the day-long seminar will focus on the prob-lem of 'self-constraint' and health, in the context of the prevalent rhetoric of 'indi-vidual autonomy'. French experts on mat-ters of the body and health Patrice Pinell, Patrice Bourdelais, Serenella Nonnis, Jean-Pierre Poulain, Didier Fassin et Dominique Memmi will take part, and participants from abroad will include Stephen Mennell, Johan Goudsblom, Cas Wouters and Jason Hughes.

All welcome. Contact:
Organisation scientifique: Dominique Memmi, 06 64 24 61 80,
memmi@iresco.fr
Service communication de la MSH Paris Nord: Myriam Danon-Szmydt, 01 55 93 93 13
mdanon@mshparisnord.org

Social Science History Association 2005

30th Annual Meeting, 3–6 November, 2005
Hilton Hotel, Portland, Oregon, USA

Big Social Science History

This year's conference, on the theme of Big Social Science History, will include a session on Bert de Vries and Johan Goudsblom's book *Mappae Mundi* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002 – see *Figurations* 18). Gouds-blom himself will take part, and Steve Quilley will be one of the discussants.

While traditional sessions and roundta-bles will form the bulk of the programme, the 2005 theme on 'Big Social Science History', initiated by President Richard Steckel of the Economics, Anthropol-ogy and History Departments at Ohio State University, explores the practice, prospects and results of large collabora-tive research projects within and across disciplines active within the SSHA. How

does social science history compare with other branches of academia in its embrace of large interdisciplinary projects? What do large projects provide that cannot be achieved by isolated individual efforts? How have the costs and benefits of col-laborative work changed in recent dec-ades? What have social science historians accomplished, and how were their suc-cessful projects organised and conducted? What leadership qualities are important for success? What are the trends in fund-ing large projects by research agencies? What are the obstacles and challenges for large projects with regard to logistics and coordination; departmental recognition; publication; graduate student participa-tion; and placement? What promising research opportunities of big social sci-ence history can be identified within and across networks? What projects are in the planning stages or underway? What are the important achievements of large interdisciplinary projects? Networks are encouraged to imagine the research pro-gramme they would conduct with a multi-million dollar grant.

The SSHA is the leading interdisciplinary association for historical research in the USA; its members share a common con-cern for interdisciplinary approaches to historical problems. The organisation's long-standing interest in methodology also makes SSHA meetings exciting places to explore new solutions to histori-cal problems.

For further details, see the SSHA website: www.ssha.org.

IX Symposium on Civilising Processes
The theme of the ninth Brazilian Sym-posium on Civilising Processes will be 'Technology and Civilisation'. It will be held at Ponta Grossa, Paraná, Brazil, on 24–26 November 2005. The organis-ers are Ademir Gebara and Luiz Alberto Pilatti.
Contact: lapilatti@pg.cefetpr.br
http://www.pg.cefetpr.br/

■ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

For the record

Just for the record I'd like to make two personal comments prompted by the volume *Norbert Elias et l'anthropologie*,

edited by Sophie Chevalier and Jean-Marie Privat, and published by CNRS Editions (Paris, 2004).

1. The editors write in their introduction that I do not consider case studies neces-sary ('J.Goudsblom, lui, ne considère pas necessaires les études de cas pour tester la pertinence de la théorie du processus de développement' (p. 16). This is a very odd opinion to attribute to a sociologist. Let me therefore belabour the obvious point unequivocally: case studies are an integral and valuable part of sociological research and knowledge.

2. Chapter 9 of the book consists of a paper by myself, on the civilising proc-ess and human history. The editors have added captions to the text. One of these captions is: 'From social constraint to self-constraint' ('De la contrainte sociale à l'autocontrainte', p. 102). This is unfor-tunate. As early as 1979 I criticised the authors of a Dutch sociological textbook for using precisely this expression instead of 'The social constraint toward self-con-straint' – the actual title of the relevant section in *The Civilising Process*. Elias's choice of words subtly reflects his own sociological perspective, whereas the for-mulation 'from social constraint to self-constraint' follows conventional usage. I am disappointed to encounter the very same lapse in the translation of a text written by myself.

Few things matter, and nothing matters very much, noted F. Scott Fitzgerald. Sometimes we owe it to ourselves, how-ever, and to the clarity of sociological writing and thinking, to make things matter, even if they are (or appear to be) small.

Johan Goudsblom

'Conventional' and Figurational Sociol-ogy: Scheff and Stokvis cross swords
From Tom Scheff:

In *Figurations* 22, Rund Stokvis dis-misses my chapter in the Loyal/Quilley volume as a rediscovery of the wheel. It claimed, among many other things, that in *The Civilising Process*, Elias's extensive and highly detailed treatment of shame implied that it was the master emotion. According to Stokvis: 'For those who have known Elias's work since the

1970's, this was not a big surprise.' But if everyone has known since the 1970s, why has no one mentioned it? With my 'conventional' (!!!!) scholarship, I have failed to find shame named by anyone else as the master emotion, or any comparable idea. Indeed, in a recent book review, Eric Dunning has specifically condemned the idea. Since his remark was offered only in passing, with no documentation or even argument, it was a bit like swatting at a pesky fly. But perhaps I have missed a key citation. If anyone knows one, I would be delighted to hear about it.

Furthermore, in figurational and conventional Elias scholarship alike, there is hardly any mention of shame itself. If everyone knew about it, they have succeeded in keeping their knowledge a secret, one that is still intact today. In the Loyal/Quilley volume, mine is the only chapter that mentions shame. The index promises one other mention (on p. 36), but alas, it's not there. In their introductory chapter on 'the scope and relevance of the sociology of Norbert Elias,' Loyal and Quilley fail to mention shame. Cas Wouter's chapter on 'changing regimes of manners and emotions' likewise. Like sex in the nineteenth century, even if one knows, one dares not mention it.

My sense is that the extensive interest in shame/embarrassment that Elias showed in *The Civilising Process* is deeply embarrassing to his band of figurational followers. But like virtually everyone else in modern societies, they hide their embarrassment with silence, even as Elias predicted. In earlier publications, I have documented similar reactions by virtually all the followers of Freud, Cooley, and Goffman.

The silence of these vast scholarly hosts provides clear support for Elias's prediction of the fate of shame in modern societies, more than any of his others. In my conventional opinion, his discovery of the wheel still needs to be rediscovered.

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Ruud Stokvis responds:

The word 'conventional', as applied to Thomas Scheff, can indeed create a misunderstanding. For me Thomas Scheff is the author of one of the most original and inspiring books in sociology: *Being Mentally Ill*. That was not a conventional book at all. Inspired by that book, in 1970 I initially decided to write a dissertation on the social conditions for mental illness. However, after some time I concluded I could do better in the sociology of sport. I did not follow Scheff's later work, but I was glad when I noticed him in figurational sociological circles.

I used the term conventional to describe sociologists who are living and acting in American sociological circles and who use the ideas and concepts current in these circles as their reference to judge ideas that originate in other circles.

Scheff's contribution on shame did not impress me very much, because shame involves a very simple social-psychological mechanism that is common in general sociology. In the social process the person learns to judge his/her own behaviour from the standpoint of relevant others. Shame originates from the realisation that one does something or plans to do something, or is associated with something that is disapproved by relevant others. It is a socially derived inner sanction. This general idea is a basis for Parsons's theory in *The Social System* (1951: p. 5) – he just does not use the word shame. And we find it with Elias (*Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, 1969, II, 398) and many other sociologists. What we miss in the work of most conventional sociologists is a more Freudian analysis of the precise nature of the feelings connected with this inner sanction and a specific term to describe these feelings: shame. Elias connects shame (and embarrassment) with the experience of being powerless in relation with certain others.

What I wanted to say in too few words is that indeed Scheff's chapter reminded me to the rediscovery of the wheel. Goffmann elaborated in a brilliant way a well-known social mechanism of self-control, which implicitly or explicitly is used by most sociologists that I know of. Elias and Freud analysed the nature of the feelings involved in this mechanism. With Elias, most figurational sociologists use terms like 'shame and embarrassment' to refer to the psycho-logical nature of this mechanism of self-control. However these are just specific words from a German tradition to describe the basic mechanism for the functioning of social life.

Dr Ruud Stokvis
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■ CONTRIBUTIONS TO *FIGURATIONS*