

Figurations

Newsletter of the Norbert Elias Foundation

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■ FIGURATIONS NEWSLETTER HAS GONE DIGITAL

As most of you will have already noticed, our newsletter is now distributed electronically only. The Board of the Norbert Elias Foundation was reluctant to abandon printing, but in the end financial considerations won out: the cost will be reduced by four-fifths.

Starting with the current issue, subscribers will receive their copy by email, in the form of a PDF file. If you took the trouble to print it out two-sided on buff paper, the newsletter will for the moment not look very different from the printed version as it appeared from 1994 until now, although we can now use colour photos.

Figurations 45 would normally have been sent to you in July, but we have been in the throes of compiling a consolidated email circulation list. As well as those on the postal address list, all subscribers to the Norbert Elias Foundation blog will receive this issue of *Figurations* automatically.

If you wish to change your email address to which the newsletter is delivered, or wish to unsubscribe, please contact our Managing Editor, Barbara Górnicka, at figurations@norberteliasfoundation.nl.

It should be noted that all previous issues of *Figurations* have long been available as downloadable PDFs, at <http://www.norberteliasfoundation.nl/figurations.php>.

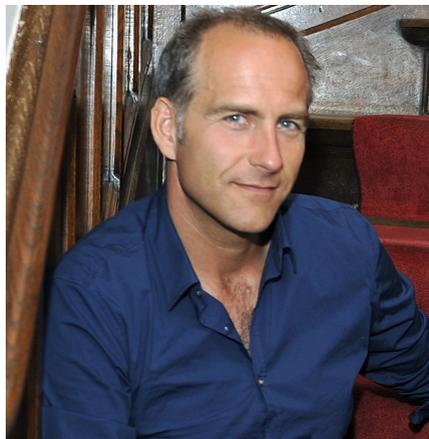
Dr Barbara Górnicka
Managing Editor

■ PEOPLE

- *His Bloody Project* by Graeme Burnet, who is the copy-editor for our online journal *Human Figurations*, is one of 13 novels on the 'long list' for the Man Booker Prize 2016. The Man Booker is the premier literary prize in the English-speaking world. Graeme's novel has been described as a 'masterful psychological thriller'. Film rights and translations are already in the offing, so Graeme says he will celebrate before the final prize-winner is announced. *His Bloody Project* was published by Saraband (Glasgow) in November 2015.
- François Dépelteau has been appointed as the new editor of the *Canadian Review of Sociology*, the journal of the Canadian Sociological Association (CSA). Transatlantic and figurational contributions are welcome.
- Ryan Powell is moving from Sheffield Hallam University to the University of Sheffield, where he has been appointed Reader in Urban Studies in the Department for Urban Studies and Planning.
- José Esteban Castro, currently Professor of Sociology at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, is moving back to Argentina to take a new position at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), a sort of Argentinian CNRS. He will be returning to his home country after 26 years abroad, 23 of them in the UK, but he will retain a relationship with Newcastle.

■ FROM THE NORBERT ELIAS FOUNDATION

Arjan Post appointed Secretary to the Foundation



Arjan Post has been appointed Secretary to the Foundation in succession to Esther Beijik. Arjan (born in 1972) studied cultural sociology at the University of Amsterdam and works as an independent editor for literary publishing houses. As a journalist he has written many articles and interviews on multicultural society and its discontents. His thesis, supervised by Nico Wilterdink, was a follow up to the study Brinkgreve and Korzec (1978) carried out on a Dutch advice column ('Margriet Weet Raad'); it resulted in articles in the *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* (27 (4) 2000) – see the summary in *Figurations* 15 – and the *Irish Journal of Sociology* (13 (2) 2004). Recently he published a transcription of the lecture Norbert Elias gave in Amsterdam on the occasion of a broad conference in 1984 against racism and discrimination (see *Human Figurations* 5 (1) 2016, also for an introduction to that lecture). He is currently working on a study of integration conflicts from an Eliasian perspective, with the working title *The Integration of Mankind. Civilisation and Conflict in the Twenty-first Century*.

His contact details in the Foundation's office remain the same:
elias@planet.nl.

New Norbert Elias Foundation website

Readers may be happy to hear that the Foundation has put Adrian Jitschin in charge of creating a long-overdue new NEF website, which should be completed in the coming months.

■ ROBERT VAN KRIEKEN'S YOUTUBE LECTURE CHANNEL

Robert van Krieken has established a YouTube channel for the Introduction to Sociology video lectures he has been producing:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/IntroductiontoSociologyChannel>

Robert writes that 'it is still really a prototype, the content is still being produced, and the links to external material is an experiment. But it conveys the basic idea, which can be developed in any number of ways. My 'vision' is for a channel that provides genuinely useful pedagogic content that any sociology teacher around the world could direct their students towards – a kind of a hybrid of a MOOC and face-to-face teaching practices.'

Robert has included a playlist of Bart van Heerikhuizen's videos from his MOOC on Sociological Theory, which includes a few on Elias. It would be possible to set up something similar but focused specifically on Elias and figurational sociology. The format would be important: the videos have to be tight, short, focused and relatively high energy, to nudge people towards Elias's book, events, workshops, and so on. If anyone would like to make a video lecture of their own on an important topic in sociology or on a theme in figurational sociology, please contact Robert van Krieken (robert.van.krieken@sydney.edu.au) to discuss how to do that.

■ IN THE MEDIA

Annette Treibel in Münster lecture series

In the series of lectures in Münster marking the fiftieth anniversary of Norbert Elias's arrival there as Visiting Professor, Annette Treibel's lecture on 26 January 'Neue Machtverhältnisse im Einwanderungsland Deutschland?' [New power relationships in immigration destination Germany] was reported at some length in the regional newspaper *Westfälische Nachrichten*, 26 January. Using the established-outsiders model, her lecture demonstrated once more how relevant a good theory is to a practical and very topical problem.

Interview with Esteban Castro on Zika virus

Esteban Castro also illustrated the relevance of a broad sociological understanding to grasping a current topical problem, in a long interview entitled 'Poverty and lack of essential water and sanitation systems are paramount in the outbreak of the Zika virus'. It can be found on the European Commission's Research and Innovation website. See <https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/index.cfm?pg=newspage&item=160225>

'(De)civilising processes, music and violence'

Dillion Tatum advances some novel ideas about the influence of pop music, drawing on Elias and Pinker, in the online journal *E-International Relations*. See: <http://www.e-ir.info/2016/05/30/decivilizing-processes-music-and-experiencing-violence/>

■ COOKING FOR ELIAS

The Frankfurt society lady Monika Reichert has published a book entitled *Auch Joyce saß mit am Tisch* ['Joyce also sat at the table'], about her experience of cooking for VIPs and the dinners given in the Reichert house. Among others, she cooked for Norbert Elias.

Elias was a visiting professor in Frankfurt in 1977 and he helped Monika's husband Klaus with his doctoral thesis on Shakespeare. As a mark of gratitude the Reicherts invited him and friends to a dinner that July, celebrating Elias's 80th birthday. The main dish was a country terrine with nuts and chicken liver paté, served with Cumberland sauce. The desserts were Orange mousse and shortbread.

Just in case anyone wants to cook what Elias ate in 1977, here's the receipt for shortbread:

Ingredients: 50gr. raisins, two tablespoons of Grappa, 400gr. flour, 200gr. butter, 150gr sugar, 2 eggs, baking powder, grated rind of an orange.

Soak the raisins in grappa. Blend the flour, baking powder, butter, sugar and eggs, add the raisins, cover with foil, and wait for half an hour. Then form the dough into rolls 1–1.5cm thick, wait another half an hour, then cut the rolls in pieces, put them on baking paper on a tin. Bake for 15 min at 180° C.

For more recipes and a picture of the evening see: Monika Reichert: *Auch Joyce saß mit am Tisch, oder das Lämpchen im Eisschrank: Aus den Erinnerungen einer Gastgeberin*. (Wiesbaden: Kramer, Waldemar Verlag, 2014). 245 pp. ISBN: 9783737404556.

Jan Haut

■ FIGURATIONAL JOURNALS ONLINE

Human Figurations: Long-term Perspectives on the Human Condition
Special issue: Social Character, Historical Processes, vol.5. no.2, July 2016:

http://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/humfig/11217607.0005.2?*rgn=full+text

Steven Loyal, Barbara Górnicka and Katie Liston, Editor's introduction: 'Stephen Menzell – The sociable character'

Johan Goudsblom, 'Guides on my way to Elias'

Abstract: This paper was originally presented as a speech in honour of Stephen Menzell. It consists of an attempt to reconstruct how, in the 1950s, the author as a student of social psychology at the University of Amsterdam, was made aware of, and became enthusiastic about, the work of Norbert Elias. Who were the people who served as links between himself and Elias? This 'intellectual genealogy' is followed by a brief discussion of how Stephen Menzell has become Elias's most prominent advocate in the English-speaking world.

Florence Delmotte, 'When European Studies meets *The American Civilizing Process*: A short tribute to Stephen J. Menzell'

Abstract: This paper proposes a comparative reading of Stephen Menzell's book *The American Civilizing Process* (2007) and of some major texts from Norbert Elias's political sociology. It is based on personal teaching experience of using this corpus with students in the humanities and law since 2013 in the framework of a course entitled 'Historical Sociology of European Integration'. The author aims to highlight three dimensions that are innovatively explored in Stephen Menzell's book and which help to improve the understanding of European political development. The first point concerns the benefits of comparison in

a long-term comprehensive approach. The second is related to the sociological treatment of political theories and ideas that is proposed by Stephen Menell in his book and which should be transposed into the political sociology of the European Union, which too often counterposes apologetics and Eurosceptic perspectives about the European project. Finally, *The American Civilizing Process* proposes and explicitly assumes a critical perspective on the politics of the United States that also may inspire political reflections on contemporary European politics.

Nico Wilterdink, ‘American exceptionalism? The growth of income and wealth inequality in the United States and other Western societies’

Abstract: The two central questions in this paper are: 1) How to explain the tendency of increasing income and wealth inequality in Western societies since the 1980s? 2) Why is this tendency particularly strong in the USA? It is argued that income and wealth differences in general have increased as a function of growing power differences within national states, which is related to the strengthening of international interdependencies. The particularly strong increase of inequality in the USA is explained as the result of the dynamics of American politics, the history of ethnic and racial dividedness, and the pervasiveness of the individualistic–meritocratic ethos. The question is discussed as how to combine these different explanations. It is concluded that the three conditions that together may explain the ‘American exception’ can be interpreted in terms of the power–interdependence model that is used to explain the overall trend of rising inequality.

Andrew Linklater, ‘The “Standard of civilisation” in world politics’

Abstract: The ‘standard of civilisation’ was used by international lawyers in the nineteenth century to defend the Europeans’ right to colonise and control non-European societies. The concept is one illustration of how the European civilising process influenced

world politics, and process sociology helps to explain its development. The analysis of the ‘standard of civilisation’ draws attention to the need to broaden process-sociological analysis to explain how state formation and conceptions of civilisation, the rise of overseas empires and the emergence of the international society of states shaped long-term patterns of social and political change that have affected humanity as a whole.

Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh, ‘Notes on the idea of a nation’

The author reflects on how it has become customary to think of all states as ‘nations’, a confusion with practical consequences. In fact, ‘There are no states with just “natural” borders’, and while states have become more similar than different in their organisation, ‘states do not automatically possess a specific identity’. The implications are explored in broad comparative–historical perspective.

Steven Loyal, ‘Bourdieu on the state: An Eliasian critique’

Abstract: This paper analyses Bourdieu’s theory of the state which remained largely implicit in much of his writing until the recent publication of his lectures *On the State* in 2014. It argues that although there are many parallels in their work, including, for example, a shared conceptual nomenclature of habitus and field, this can sometimes blind us to their theoretical and substantive divergences. Such differences are especially evident in their respective analyses of the state. In this regard I reflect upon Bourdieu’s theory of the state, which critically draws upon Elias’s work, and assess its theoretical and empirical relevance from an Eliasian perspective.

Cas Wouters, ‘Functional democratisation and disintegration as side-effects of differentiation and integration processes’

Abstract: In *What is Sociology?* (2012 [1970]), as he is about to outline the common origin of social science and social ideology, and building up to set sociology against ideology, Norbert Elias introduces the concept

of ‘functional democratisation’. More recently, in his *The American Civilising Process* (2007) and in two articles (2014a; 2014b), Stephen Menell launched the contrasting concept of ‘functional de-democratisation’. This essay opens with quotations from Elias and Menell in an attempt to show how the concepts and processes of functional (de)democratisation are introduced, followed by a discussion from a long-term perspective on processes of social differentiation and integration, in which I explore how functional democratisation and de-democratisation could fit together as trends and concepts in a wider sociological framework. The observation that, as a rule, integration processes go hand in hand with integration conflicts and also some disintegration leads to the hypothesis that the trend towards global integration is increasingly lagging behind the trend towards the global differentiation of specialised activities or social functions.

Christien Brinkgreve and Rineke van Daalen, ‘Sociological reading of diary fragments 1940–1945’

Abstract: How could people in a civilised society like the Netherlands go on living, with the horror of the Second World War around them? This is the focal question of our research, on diaries written during the German occupation of the Netherlands, by people who are neither perpetrators nor persecuted. We are especially interested in processes of identification and dis-identification, in the associated mechanism of compartmentalisation, physically and psychologically, and in the management of emotions. We use these concepts for a sociological reading of five diary fragments.

Marta Bucholc, ‘The Polish constitutional crisis 2015–16: A figurational perspective’

Abstract: In this paper, a framework is laid out for an analysis of the Polish constitutional crisis, which started with the electoral victory of the national-conservative party in Poland in Autumn 2015, in terms of Norbert Elias’s sociological theory. A brief statement of the basic facts is followed by an application of the established–outsiders

model, with particular focus on the institutional aspect of the crisis and on the symbolic operations used by the new government majority in order to challenge the validity of the legal order set forth by the Polish constitution of 1997.

■ RECENT BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Norbert Elias, *J'ai suivi mon propre chemin* (Paris: Les éditions sociales, 2016). 122 pp. ISBN: 978-2-35367-022-7.

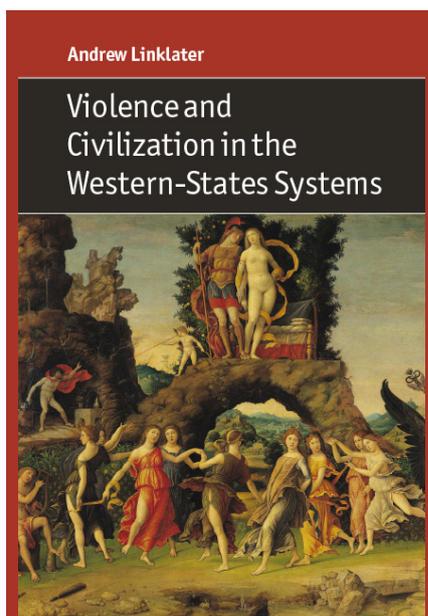
This little book, with an introduction by Antony Burlaud, contains two French translations of addresses given by Elias.

The first (pp. 19–91), here entitled ‘Un parcours dans le siècle’, is the transcription of what he said in a ZDF television programme shortly before his death, mainly in the way of autobiography, especially intellectual autobiography. The second (pp. 93–113), ‘Respect and critique’, is a translation of his Adorno Rede, or address on being the first recipient of the Adorno Prize of the City of Frankfurt in 1977.

The Adorno Rede was included in both the *Gesammelte Schriften* (vol. 14, pp. 491–508) and the *Collected Works* (vol. 16, pp. 82–92), but the television interview is not so readily accessible other than in the DLA, Marbach. Details of the television programme are as follows: ‘Zeugen des Jahrhunderts: Norbert Elias im Gespräch mit Hans-Christian Huf’, ZDF Fernsehen (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, Mainz, series ‘Zeugen des Jahrhunderts’), broadcast in two parts, 3 July and 24 July 1990. It was recorded in 1988, and re-broadcast on the occasion of Elias’s death on: ÖRF (Österreichischer Rundfunk), SRG (Schweizer Fernsehen), and three German channels (HR, BR, WDR).

Andrew Linklater, *Violence and Civilization in the Western States-Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). 500 pp. ISBN: 978-1-107-15473-5 (hbk); 978-1-3166-0833-3 (pb).

Andrew Linklater’s *The Problem of Harm in World Politics* (Cambridge, 2011) created a new agenda for the sociology of states-systems. *Violence and Civilization in the Western States-Systems* builds on the author’s attempts to combine the process-sociological investigation of civilising processes and the English School analysis of international society in a higher synthesis. Adopting Martin Wight’s comparative approach to states-systems and drawing on the sociological work of Norbert Elias, Linklater asks how modern Europeans came to believe themselves to be more ‘civilised’ than their medieval forebears. He investigates novel combinations of violence and civilisation through a broad historical scope from classical antiquity, Latin Christendom and Renaissance Italy to the post-Second World War era. This book will interest all students with an interdisciplinary commitment to investigating long-term patterns of change in world politics.



Florence Delmotte and Denis Duez (eds), *Les frontières et la communauté politique: Faire, défaire et penser les frontières* [Frontiers and Political Community: Making, Unmaking and Thinking about Frontiers] (Bruxelles: Presses de l’Université Saint-Louis, 2016). ISBN: 978-2-8028-0221-1. 249 pp.

In recent years, the prominence of topics related to frontiers has soared

in the political news and intellectual debates. Today, the dramas that are being played out at the borders of Europe are throwing into question the very foundations of contemporary political communities. In this context, this book is not a plea for or against the opening or the strengthening of

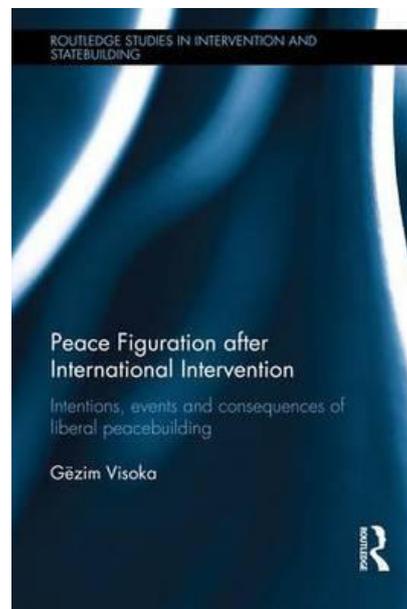


the borders of the nation-state type. Noting the progress of ‘border studies’, the contributors invite the reader to take a step back from a notion of frontier that seems

almost suffocating, and to do justice to a variety of meanings and usages that make a border. Through their different subjects and thanks to the complementarity of their approaches – anthropology, sociology, political sociology, European studies and political theory – the contributors shed light on how communities and their borders mutually construct each other.

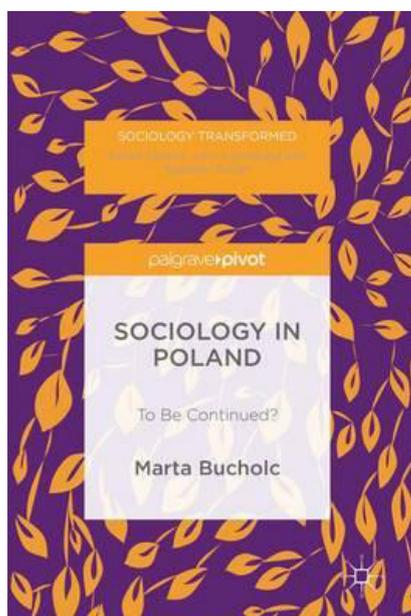
Gëzim Visoka, *Peace Figuration after International Intervention: Intentions, events and consequences of liberal peacebuilding* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016). xii + 195 pp. ISBN: 978-1-138-93847-2 (hbk); 978-1-315-67563-3 (ebk).

This book examines the adverse impacts of liberal peacebuilding



in conflict-affected societies. It introduces ‘peace figuration’ as a new analytical framework for studying the intentionality, performativity, and consequences of liberal peacebuilding. The work challenges current theories and views and searches for alternative non-conflicted research avenues that are suitable for understanding how peacebuilding intentions are made, how different events shape peace outcomes, and what are the consequences of peacebuilding interventions. Drawing on detailed case studies of peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Timor-Leste, the book argues that attempts to build peace often fail to achieve the intended outcomes. A figurational view of peacebuilding interventions shows that post-conflict societies experience multiple episodes of success and failure in an unpredictable trajectory. This book develops a relational sociology of peacebuilding impact, which is crucial for overcoming static measurement of peacebuilding successes or failures. It shows that international interventions can shape peace but, importantly, not always in the shape they intended. This book will be of much interest to students of state-building, peacebuilding, war and conflict studies, security studies and IR.

Marta Bucholc, *Sociology in Poland 2017: To be Continued?* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). 111 pp. ISBN: 978-1-1375-8186-0. This ground-breaking book provides



a compelling account of the social sciences in post-war Central and Eastern Europe. The first English-language monograph to analyse the history of sociology in Poland up to the present day, it maps transformations in the discipline against political and social change. Related in an accessible and engaging manner, it offers a comprehensive examination of sociology as a part of Polish society and culture after 1945. It can also be used as an introduction to the subject and a guide to further reading. Part of the influential Palgrave ‘Sociology Transformed’ series, *Sociology in Poland* will interest social and political scientists, historians and policymakers.

Paddy Dolan, ‘Adult and child identities in Irish primary schools, c.1830–1909’, *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society* (2016). DOI:10.1080/0046760X.2015.1136358.

Abstract: Drawing on teaching manuals, government reports and school inspectors’ reports from the 1830s up to the early twentieth century, this paper traces the changing conceptual and social distance between childhood and adulthood in Ireland. Using Norbert Elias’s figurational approach, it is argued that children became increasingly involved in both unplanned civilising processes and deliberate civilising missions framed by state functionaries, religious elites and pedagogic experts. Young children were civilised in the broader context of unintentional, but ordered social processes developing over the course of the nineteenth century. While both pupils and teachers were at first addressed and depicted in similar ways, a growing social and cultural differentiation between adult and child gradually developed. This is related to the increasing status of teachers, their position as civilising agents of the state, and the gradual acceptance by elites that Irish teachers of humble social origins had become more emotionally self-controlled.

Shiping Tang, ‘Order: A conceptual analysis’, *Chinese Political Science Review*, 1:1 (2016), pp. 30–46.

Abstract: Order is one of those terms that have been much talked about but never rigorously defined. After a critical survey of existing definitions of order, I propose a more rigorous definition of order. I then develop a framework for measuring and comparing order. I go on to show that without a rigorous definition of order and a proper framework for measuring and comparing order, a central debate regarding order has committed the error of conceptual conflation. Finally, I illustrate the value of the new framework with Norbert Elias’s *The Civilizing Process* as a masterpiece on the forging of order.

Richard Crisp and Ryan Powell, ‘Young people and UK labour market policy: A critique of ‘employability’ as a tool for understanding youth unemployment’, *Urban Studies* (2016). DOI: 0042098016637567.

Abstract: This paper presents a critical analysis of the contemporary policy focus on promoting employability among young people in the UK. Drawing on analysis of UK policy approaches to tackling youth unemployment since the late 1970s, we suggest existing critiques of employability as ‘supply-side orthodoxy’ fail to capture fully its evolving meaning and function. Under the UK Coalition Government, it became increasingly colonised as a targeted tool of urban governance to legitimise ever more punitive forms of conditional welfare. We argue that this colonisation undermines the value of the notion of employability as an academic tool for understanding the reasons why young people face difficulties in entering the labour market. The paper suggests that the notion of youth transitions offers more potential for understanding youth unemployment, and that more clearly linking this body of research to policy could provide a fruitful avenue for future research. Such a shift requires a longer term, spatially informed perspective as well as greater emphasis on the changing power relations that mediate young people’s experiences of wider social and economic transformations. The paper concludes that promoting employment among

urban young people requires a marked shift to address the historically and geographically inadequate knowledge and assumptions on which policies are based.

Lone Friis Thing, Maria Gliemann Hybholt, Andorra Lynn Jensen and Laila Susanne Ottesen, “Football Fitness”: constraining and enabling possibilities for the management of leisure time for women’, *Annals of Leisure Research* (2016). DOI: 10.1080/11745398.2016.1178153.

Abstract: The aim of the article is to identify constraining and enabling aspects for the management of leisure time for women participating in ‘Football Fitness’, a new ‘sport for all programme’ carried out in associative sport clubs in Denmark. The article is based on six focus group interviews with white, middle-class female participants ($N=32$, aged 27–56). An analysis combining Hochschild’s conceptualisation of the *second* and *third shift* [*The Second Shift* (New York: Avon, 1989)] with Elias and Dunning’s perspective on leisure as part of the *spare-time spectrum* and leisure sport as a *quest for excitement* [*Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process* (rev. edn, Dublin: UCD Press 2008 [1986])] demonstrates that leisure sport participation must be understood in relation to both spare time, family life, and work life, as these spheres are interrelated. According to the women, both doing and planning housework are constraining for their leisure sport participation. On the other hand, Football Fitness is enabling in the sense that the women experience it as something pleasurable and a ‘free space’.

Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, ‘The Power Game: continued reflections on the early development of modern football’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33: 3 (2016), pp. 239–50.

Abstract: In this paper the authors seek to continue the debate on the development of modern football. They note the support offered by Tony Collins to the long-standing reservations of Graham Curry and Eric

Dunning regarding the weaknesses of the revisionist case, which has sought to lessen the influence of public schoolboys on the game’s early years. The authors do, however, offer some correctives to Collins’s thoughts, particularly in terms of the complex Sheffield footballing subculture. Curry and Dunning support the need for more research based on local studies and attempt to gather together current thinking in this area.

John Goodwin and Henrietta O’Connor, ‘From young workers to older workers: Eliasian perspectives on the transitions to work and adulthood’, *Belvedere Meridionale*, vol. 28 (2016), available at: http://www.belvedere-meridionale.hu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016_tavasz_web%20%20TELJES.pdf#page=5.

Abstract: Since 2000 we have been undertaking a detailed re-study of Norbert Elias’s lost Adjustment of Young Workers to Work Situations and Adult Roles project from 1962–1964. Our interest in this project began over ten years ago when we rediscovered 850 interview schedules that had, since the late 1960s, simply been left in an attic office. Led by Elias, the project team interviewed nearly 1000 young people in Leicester, UK exploring every aspect of this cohort of young peoples’ lives. What the researchers produced were detailed interview schedules that richly documented the experience of leaving school in the 1960s. From the outset it was clear to us that these interview schedules, left largely unused for over forty years, represented an extraordinary opportunity to both revisit the transitional experiences of these young workers and to retrace some of the original respondents to explore their subsequent lives and careers. As Laub and Sampson (2003: 302) suggest, this data afforded us a fantastic, if very rare, opportunity to ‘examine within-individual variability over nearly the entire life course’. We have two main aims for this paper. First, we provide an overview of the original 1960s phase of the research and outline Elias’s theory of ‘transition’. In his lost writings on youth, Elias argued that the transition to work requires the young person to become ‘civilised’,

learning adult behavioural standards as well as job related skills. Yet inevitably, according to Elias, difficulties arise in the transition process as the ‘norms’ of working adults differ considerably to those adults the young people are already familiar with. Second, following on from our re-interviews with a sub-sample of the original 1960s respondents, we examine the extent to which the initial predictions for this group actually came true in terms of their early transitional experiences. These interviews reveal that their work histories did not follow exactly the linear and smooth trajectories predicted for them. Instead, careers were characterised by greater levels of individual complexity, insecurity, multiple ‘transitions’ and ‘critical moments’ that could not be fully explained by family background, social class or education. We conclude by reflecting on the implications these two for contemporary research on the transition from education to work and by highlighting Elias’s legacy in this area.

Michael Dunning, ‘Terrorism and civilisation: the case for a relational approach’, *Belvedere Meridionale*, vol.28 (2016). Available at: http://www.belvedere-meridionale.hu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/03_Dunning_BelvedereMeridionale_vol28_2016_01.pdf.

Abstract: ‘Terrorism’ has been a major staple of news media for several decades and even more so since the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States. Research on the phenomenon has grown at an unprecedented rate in recent years. However, most social scientific approaches tend to regard ‘terrorism’ as having thing-like properties. In this paper I seek to show that ‘terrorism’ should be approached in a relational and processual way and be considered as part of ‘established-outsider’ relations. In order to do this, I examine how the concept after it was first coined during the first French Revolution was closely related to the concept of ‘civilisation’. Using the examples of Britain and France, I go on to argue that the concept of ‘terrorism’ developed in antithesis to the concept of ‘civilisation’ and

was heavily influenced by intra- and inter-state processes between the two countries. Later, I explain how Britain's relationship with Ireland was also central to the 'sociogenesis' of the concept of 'terrorism'. I also show how the relationship between the concepts of 'terrorism' and 'civilisation' is perhaps one of the few regularities involving 'terrorism' since its birth in the late eighteenth century and add that the fact that 'terrorism' is used as a label to delegitimise outsider groups by established groups forms part of the same 'double-bind' processes and relations in which those designated as 'terrorists' act according to those designations.

Katie Liston and Joe Maguire,

'Sport, Empire, and Diplomacy: "Ireland" at the 1930 British Empire Games', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 27: 2 (2016), pp. 1–26.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2016.1169797>

Abstract: International sport, as Geoffrey Pigman has correctly observed, emerged 'as a quintessential case study demonstrating the part that public diplomacy plays in contemporary diplomacy'. The British Empire Games/Commonwealth Games [BEG/CG] are one such example, being the second largest multi-national multi-sport event today. Their origins lie in the interwar era when members of sporting organisations, many of whom were active in other formal aspects of public life, considered the organisation of specific Imperial events through international networking. Described as lacking a 'thoroughly analytical and interpretive account of their history', questions of identity politics, public diplomacy and statecraft are at their core because the BEG, inaugurated in 1930, represented qualities and values that appealed to governments, civil society, and sportspeople alike. In the waning of the British Empire, the BEG was one attempt to maintain imperial prestige and cement cultural bonds. Yet not only is there an absence of analytical accounts of their history, but the inter-relationships between the BEG and diplomacy, and among global sport and diplomacy more broadly, have been similarly under-investigated.

This absence is striking, representing a missed opportunity in understanding the development of global sport and international relations more generally.

Raúl Sánchez García,

'The development of Kano's judo within Japanese civilising/decivilising processes', *Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Science* (2016). DOI: 10.1080/21640599.2016.1186583.

Abstract: This paper analyses the complex development of judo from the figurational approach of Norbert Elias. Judo was not the creation of a sole genius, Jigoro Kano, but was progressively developed within a social blind process of whole figurations affected by specific balances between civilising/decivilising trends. Jigoro Kano systematised judo in order to offer a modern, formal educational tool for character-building of the youth. Nonetheless, it is argued that some unintended consequences from his original plan resulted in a very different and contrary phenomenon: Kano's innovations gave birth to systematised mass education means that would be later used to instil a militarised ethos among the whole population; Kano helped to link judo and modern *budo* with the sport world (through the Olympic movement) and tied their future development to the sport figuration towards professionalisation and 'striving achievement'.

Peter Ludes, 'Long-term power presentation shifts: from key audio-visual narratives to an update of Elias's theory on the process of civilisation', in H. G. Kippenberg and B. Mersmann (eds), *The Humanities between Global Integration and Cultural Diversity* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2016), pp. 188–210.

Norbert Elias highlighted three major long-term 'complementary processes of functional differentiation, social integration, and civilisation' as common characteristic of what other authors tried to subsume under various concepts of modernisation. The pace and rhythm of these processes as well as the modes of their complementarities and tensions vary considerably across historical epochs and world cultural

zones. Also the prevailing formats and scopes of societal self-observations via various mass media differ significantly and have been reshaped time and again, yet it is obvious, that throughout the twentieth century and accelerating in the beginning of the twenty-first century, mass-mediated audio-visual self-observations have become ever more important. The following interpretations of the detailed analyses of more than a hundred and fifty hours of centennial and annual TV reviews from Brazil, China, Germany, and the United States will focus on dominant power presentation patterns. Combining previous visual and textual analyses mainly from the United States and Germany with recent computer-aided analyses of centennial and annual reviews from the four cultures will allow for an updating of Elias's theory of civilising processes. Thereby, some general complementarities and tensions between various dimensions of functional differentiation, social integration, and civilisation will be integrated in a model of multiple modernisations.

Cas Wouters, 'Lust Balance', *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Ritzer, George (ed). (Blackwell Publishing, 2007) [Blackwell Reference Online](http://www.sociologyencyclopedia.com/subscriber/to/node.html?id=g9781405124331_yr2015_chunk_g978140512433118_ss1-63) DOI:10.1111/b.9781405124331.2007.x
http://www.sociologyencyclopedia.com/subscriber/to/node.html?id=g9781405124331_yr2015_chunk_g978140512433118_ss1-63

Abstract: The lust balance symbolises the connection between the longing for sexual gratification and the longing for an enduring intimate relationship. It highlights the tensions and changes in the balance between desire for sex and desire for love, both in the biographies of individuals and in the histories of peoples. Since the 1960s in the west, some people (mostly men) even came to see sex and love as contradictory; traditions providing guidance on how to integrate these longings disappeared; and the old 'marriage manuals' became suspect or hopelessly obsolete, mainly because they hardly acknowledged, if at all, the sensual love and carnal desires of women. Throughout the twentieth century, particularly since the 1920s,

there was a ‘sexualisation of love’ and an ‘eroticisation of sex’. An ongoing emancipation of sexuality coincided with warmer loving relationships, bolstering a more general emancipation of both love and lust. The concept ‘lust balance’ functions as a tool for historical and international comparison.

Nina Baur, Maria Norkus and Cristina Besio, ‘Innovationen aus figurationssoziologischer Perspektive. Zur Entstehung, Verbreitung und Auswirkung einer organisationalen Innovation am Beispiel der Projektifizierung der Wissenschaft’ [Innovations from figuration sociological perspective: On the origin, spread and impact of organisational innovation using the example of the ‘projectification’ the science] in W. Rammert, M. Hutter, H. Knoblauch and A. Windeker (eds), *Innovationsgesellschaft heute: Zur reflexiven Herstellung des Neuen*, (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2016), pp. 373–402.

A central question of innovation research is how innovation processes at macro, meso and micro-level interlock and are interdependent with each other (Hutter et al., 2011). We summarise this dynamic exchange ratio hereafter as ‘figuration-sociological’, and seek to show the fertility of figurational sociology for Innovation Research, using the example of science and focusing in particular on the phenomenon of the ‘projectification’ of science.

Ivan Waddington, ‘Theorising unintended consequences of anti-doping policy’, *Performance Enhancement & Health* 4: 3–4 (2016), pp. 80–7.

Abstract: There is a growing recognition of the fact that unintended consequences are a commonplace feature of everyday social life, not just in sport but in all aspects of social life (for a dramatic example, consider the many unintended consequences of Western intervention in the Middle East). In relation to doping, the most obvious unintended consequences – in this case collateral harms – include the fact that existing anti-doping policy

has (i) constrained athletes to use more dangerous but less detectable drugs and (ii) to use additional masking drugs to conceal their use of performance-enhancing drugs; (iii) driven drug use underground, thereby making it difficult to control the quality of drugs and (iv) making it more difficult for athletes, especially below elite level, to obtain medical monitoring of their drug use. This paper provides at least partial answers to these questions by, firstly, examining the ways in which social scientists have used the concept of unintended consequences and similar concepts. Attention is focused, in particular, on the Merton’s classic conceptualisation of ‘the unintended consequences of purposive social action’ as well as on Elias’s concept of ‘unplanned outcomes’ and his analysis of the relationship between planned and unplanned social processes. The paper concludes with the implications of these analyses for the practical processes of policy formation and implementation.

Stephen Quilley, ‘De-growth is not a liberal agenda: relocalisation and the limits to low energy cosmopolitanisms’, *Environmental Values* 22 (2013), pp. 261–85.

Abstract: Degrowth is identified as a perspective turning point in human development as significant as the domestication of fire or the process of agrarianisation. The Transition movement is identified as the most important attempt to develop a prefigurative, local politics of degrowth. Explicating the links between capitalist modernisation, metabolic throughput and psychological individuation, Transition embraces ‘limits’ but downplays the implications of scarcity for open, liberal societies, and for inter-personal and inter-group violence. William Ophuls’s trilogy on the politics of scarcity confronts precisely these issues, but it depends on an unconvincing sociology of individuation as a central process in modernity. A framework is advanced through which to explore the tensions, trade-offs and possibilities for a socially liberal, culturally cosmopolitan and science-based civilisation under conditions of degrowth and metabolic contraction.

John Connolly and Paddy Dolan, ‘Social class tensions, habitus and the advertising of Guinness’, *Sociological Review* (2016). DOI: 10.1111/1467-954X.12388.

Abstract: Drawing from an Eliasian perspective we examine how an ‘advertising subjectivity’ became more firmly embedded within the bourgeois habitus. We explain how and why advertising slowly developed and expanded within a commercial organisation despite initial opposition, ambivalence and even hostility from some of its bourgeois senior management towards the practice – the very social class sometimes identified with advertising’s origins and advance. Our empirical case is based on Arthur Guinness & Sons Ltd, the Irish company which came to be renowned for the alcohol beverage which carried its name – Guinness stout. We explain how the development of advertising was impelled by a series of processes that increasingly interlocked; a widening and intensification of competitive commercial interdependencies; a shift in the power balance between the bourgeoisie and aristocracy in favour of the former in Britain; and by a changing consumer habitus in several different nation-states. Central though, as we illustrate, was a process involving the changing power relation between various social classes in Britain – principally the increasing power chances of the bourgeoisie in relation to the aristocracy – a process that had advanced considerably by the turn of the twentieth century.

Lars Bo Kaspersen and Andreas Møller Mulvad, ‘Towards a Figurational History of Leicester Sociology, 1954–1982’, *Sociology* (2016). DOI: 10.1177/0038038516648550.

Abstract: This article applies Norbert Elias’s ‘processual-relational approach’ to an empirical case: the influential Leicester Department of Sociology between 1954 and 1982. Based on 42 qualitative interviews and extensive archival materials, we identify two phases: the early phase of cohesion is characterised by a strong sense of

purpose and a growing influence on British sociology. The second phase is characterised by social and intellectual fragmentation. In explaining this reversal, we argue that a critical juncture of youth rebellion around 1968 provided the portents of an anti-authoritarian civilisational trend, which increasingly put strains on the established power nexus: the autocratic leadership model embodied by the department's inspirational leader, Ilya Neustadt.

Jocelyne Cesari, 'Disciplining religion: the role of the state and its consequences on democracy', *Journal of Religious and Political Practice, Special Issue: Religion and Politics: Bringing the State Back 2: 2* (2016), pp. 135–54.

Abstract: This article presents the concept of hegemonic religion and its relationship with democracy. This concept entails not only a certain type of institutional relation between state and religion but, more importantly, a kind of national culture with religion at its core. Utilising Norbert Elias's figurational sociology, this article analyses how postcolonial states have built a national habitus that plays a decisive role in the politicisation of religion. It focuses on examples from Islam and Buddhism and discusses how hegemonic types of politicised religions have negative impacts on democracy.

Jack Black, 'As British as fish and chips': British newspaper representations of Mo Farah during the 2012 London Olympic Games, *Media Culture Society* (2016). DOI: 10.1177/0163443716635863.

Abstract: This article examines British newspaper representations of the 'Team GB' athlete Mohamed 'Mo' Farah during the 2012 London Olympic Games. In particular, attention is given to examining how representations of Farah were related to discourses on British multiculturalism. A brief discussion of recent rejections of multiculturalism is provided, with specific reference given to political and public calls for immigrants to assimilate with 'British values'. By turning away from a dichotomous understanding

of assimilation, this article suggests that processes of assimilation reflect a complicated coalescence of national inclusion and exclusion. That is, rather than simply highlighting how the national press serve to reproduce simple 'us' and 'them' binaries, this article draws upon Elias and Scotson's established-outsider perspective in order to examine how the discursive construction of the 'nation' rests upon a dynamic process of identifying and managing 'outsider' individuals. As a result, while 'outsider' groups are frequently subjected to negative media portrayals, it is argued that Farah's significance was underscored by discourses that sought to highlight his assimilated Britishness and through his promotion as a symbol of Britain's achieved multiculturalism.

Nicole Pepperell, 'The unease with civilisation: Norbert Elias and the violence of the civilising process', *Thesis Eleven* (2016). DOI: 10.1177/0725513616638480.

Abstract: Norbert Elias's concept of the civilising process is perhaps the most controversial aspect of his work, attracting frequent criticism for its perceived Eurocentrism, as well as impassioned defences that critics have misunderstood the concept. In this piece, I explore how *The Civilizing Process* channels unacknowledged Eurocentric stereotypes in ways that infuse the theory at a depth level. I then examine the downstream ramifications of these stereotypes by contrasting Elias's analysis of the Holocaust, as presented in *The Germans*, with his analysis of colonialism as presented in *The Civilizing Process*. I argue that Elias's failure to integrate forms of state violence directed at the colonial periphery undermines his ability to analyse state violence in the core. A more adequate approach would theorise 'civilisation' as an ambivalent and contradictory process whose violent character is often – though not always – more exposed and visible on the periphery.

Olle Edström, *Duke Ellington och jazz i Sverige* (Stockholm: Förlag Carlsson, 2015). Olle Edström writes: 'I have recently published a long book on Duke

Ellington and jazz in Sweden, and, of course, smuggled in Eliasian thoughts already at the beginning, as well as referring to Dunning and Hughes's book for further reading.' In English, he has published a long article on 'Ellington in Sweden', in the *Musical Quarterly* 96: 3–4 (2013), pp. 478–512 (although the Eliasian references do not appear there).

Inken Hasselbusch, Norbert Elias und Pierre Bourdieu im Vergleich: Eine Untersuchung zu Theorieentwicklung, Begrifflichkeit und Rezeption. [Norbert Elias and Pierre Bourdieu compared: an investigation into theoretical development, concepts and reception] PhD thesis, Pädagogischen Hochschule Karlsruhe, 2014, 300 pp.

Abstract: This dissertation searches for an answer to the question: why are Norbert Elias and Pierre Bourdieu used in similar contexts? Their theories are compared to each other to find similarities and differences in their concepts. The author analyses their ways of closing the gaps of common dichotomies within the social sciences. An overview of the reception of the work of Elias and Bourdieu is also given. But not only do their theories, concepts and methodology show some comparable aspects but also their lives and biographies. The thesis includes the letters they wrote to each other, published here for the first time.

Olle Edström writes about this thesis, 'I have just read a really astonishing and excellent work on Elias and Bourdieu by Inken Hasselbusch'. A PDF of this thesis is freely available to download from the university website at: <http://phka.bsz-bw.de/frontdoor/index/index/docId/9>

Gabriele Rosenthal (ed.), *Etablierte und Aussenseiter zugleich: Selbst- und Fremdbilder ub den palästinensischen Communities im Westjordanland und in Israel*. (Frankfurt: Campus, 2015). 344 pp. ISBN: 978-3-593-50483-4 (pb); 978-3-593-43258-8 (e-book).

The Palestinian population often outwardly presents a homogeneous image of their own national identity. However, on closer inspection, this

image proves deceptive and fragile. This book employs methods and concepts from sociological biography research and figurational sociology to analyse the Middle East conflict beyond the polarity between ‘Israelis’ and ‘Palestinians’. Through a comparison of five urban areas, the importance of belonging, collective self-images and different forms of social differentiation is probed.

Marjorie Fitzpatrick, *Music and Power in Eighteenth-Century Court Society: Handel’s Messiah and Protestant Ascendancy* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2015). 571 pp. ISBN: 978 149550449 5.

This book is a revised version of Marjorie Fitzpatrick’s 2004 PhD thesis at University College Dublin. A summary can be found in *Figurations* 22 (<http://www.norberteliasfoundation.nl/figurations.php>) – but note that the book is published under Marjorie’s married name, whereas the thesis was listed under her maiden name of O’Neill.

Sabine Delzescaux, *Norbert Elias: Distinction, conscience et violence* [‘Norbert Elias: Distinction, conscience and violence’] (Paris: Armand Colin, 2016). 288 pp. ISBN: 9782200281182.

This book looks anew at Norbert Elias (1897–1990), placing him in his academic, historical, but also biographical context. Haunted by

the spectre of World War I, which profoundly and durably marked him, as a refugee in London from 1935, he had was certain of only one thing: that violence in all its forms can – and, according to him, must – be opposed by scholarly reason. That reason is what the process sociology that he developed is intended to embody. Elias’s ambition was to build a new model of social science, attentive to the contributions of biology, history, anthropology, psychoanalysis.

The book presents the wealth, the breadth and the unity of the sociologist’s intellectual project. By studying the secular process of the formation of self-constraints at the heart of the civilising process, it provides an understanding of this process which shows how it is all the more imperative that the conscience that is formed makes it never safe to return to violence.

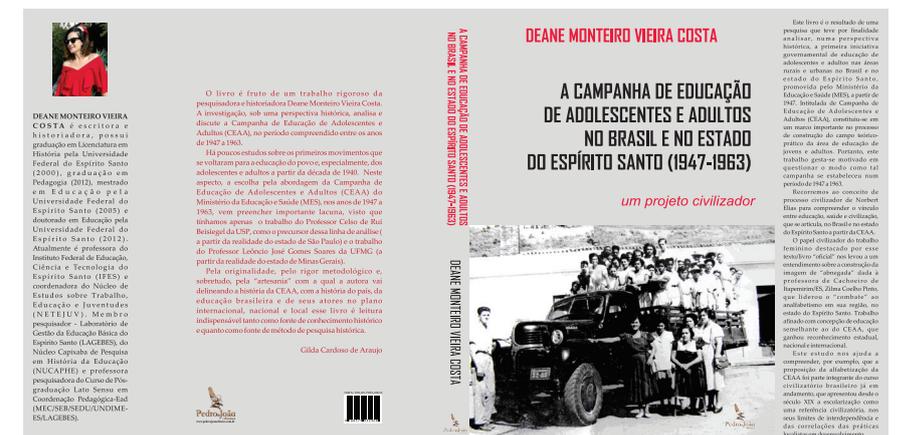
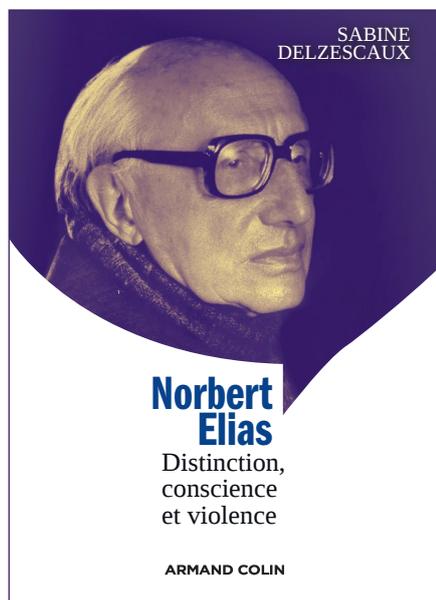
Deane Monteiro Veira Costa, *A Campanha de Educação de Adolescentes e Adultos no Brasil e no estado do Espírito Santo (1947-1963) - um projeto civilizador* [‘The Campaign for Education for Adolescents and Adults in Brazil and Espírito Santo (1947-1963) - a civilising project’] (Vitória: Pedro & João Editores, 2016). ISBN: 978-85-7993-290-8. 270pp.

The publication of this book based on the PhD thesis of Deane Monteiro Veira Costa is an undeniable and

significant contribution to the Brazilian History of Education and the History of the Espírito Santo education. There are few studies on the first movements that have turned to the education of the people and, especially, adolescents and adults from the 1940s.

The exciting and innovative way of articulation between the CEAA, the end of the Second World War and the contents of a moral improvement project of Brazilian society, along the lines of a civilising process from the theoretical framework of Norbert Elias, are elements that make reading this book indispensable for understanding the leitmotiv of the history of education and history of youth and adult education in the country in that period.

Steven Loyal, ‘Elias, Norbert (1897–1990) and established-outsider relations’; and **Stephen Mennell and Barbara Górnicka**, ‘Civilizing processes’, both in John Stone, Rutledge M. Dennis, Polly S. Rizova, Anthony D. Smith, and Xiaoshuo Hou (eds), *Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism* (Chichester: Wiley, 2016).



■ FORTHCOMING BOOK PUBLICATIONS

Steven Loyal, *Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of the State: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan) [Due to be published October 2016.]

Barbara Górnicka, *Nakedness, Shame and Embarrassment: A Long-term Sociological Perspective* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS) [Due to be published November 2016]

Norman Gabriel, *The Sociology of Early Childhood: Critical Perspectives* (London: Sage) [Due to be published April 2017]

■ INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

The new Research Committee 56 – a niche in the ISA for figurationists

In March, the Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association approved the upgrading of Working Group 02 (Historical and Comparative Sociology) to the status of full Research Committee – number 56 – under the title ‘Historical Sociology’. Although figurationist sociologists belong to RCs on many aspects of sociology, this one makes specific provision in its constitution for followers of Norbert Elias.

For those unfamiliar with the Byzantine world of the ISA, the word ‘upgrading’ requires explanation, seasoned with a little history. Within the ISA, there is a four-level hierarchy. The lowest rung is an Ad Hoc Group, and that is where we began when, at the 1994 World Congress in Bielefeld, I organised some sessions on figurationist sociology that met with great enthusiasm. (That Congress was also the occasion of the first issue of the *Figurations* newsletter, and of our first discussion of setting up our own journal, which did not come to pass until *Human Figurations* in 2012.) The snag is that one has to re-apply from scratch for an Ad Hoc Group at

every World Congress. At the Montreal Congress in 1998, we discussed seeking upgrading to the next level, a Thematic Group on figurationist sociology. That ran into difficulty: when Robert van Krieken put the proposal to the ISA, they asked ‘But *what* do you study?’, and became very alarmed when we replied ‘everything’. No go.

Another group, who loosely described themselves as concerned with ‘multiple modernities’ and with whom we had long been on good terms, were a bit luckier. Led by our friends the late Willfried Spohn (for whose obituary, see *Figurations* 37) and Manuela Boatcă (now of the University of Freiburg im Breisgau), they formed the Thematic Group on Historical and Comparative Sociology. At the World Congress in Gothenburg in 2010, we merged with them to form Working Group 02 (rung three); now we have reached the dizzying height of full Research Committee (rung four, the top of the ladder).

The title of the new RC 56, ‘Historical Sociology’, is perhaps not ideal from an Eliasian point of view. Norbert Elias himself always denied that he was ‘an historical sociologist’ – both because all sociology needs to be historical, in the sense that in his view time is always one axis of any sociological explanation, and because ‘historical sociology’ should thus not be seen as just one of many subdivisions of the discipline. Nevertheless, ‘Historical Sociology’ was the title available within the ISA: there is already RC 20 Comparative Sociology, of which many figurationist sociologists are already members. (Stephen Vertigans looks after figurationist interests on the board of RC 20.) For that matter, as Durkheim famously observed, all sociology is comparative too.

Actually, it is remarkable that there has never before been an ISA section on Historical Sociology, considering that in its origins sociology was historical sociology. *Nina Baur* recently suggested to me that a better title would have been ‘History and Social Processes’, but it is too late now. I think we can take pride in this final upgrading and in this title. I hope

that many readers of the newsletter will become members of the new Research Committee (see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/rc56.htm>).

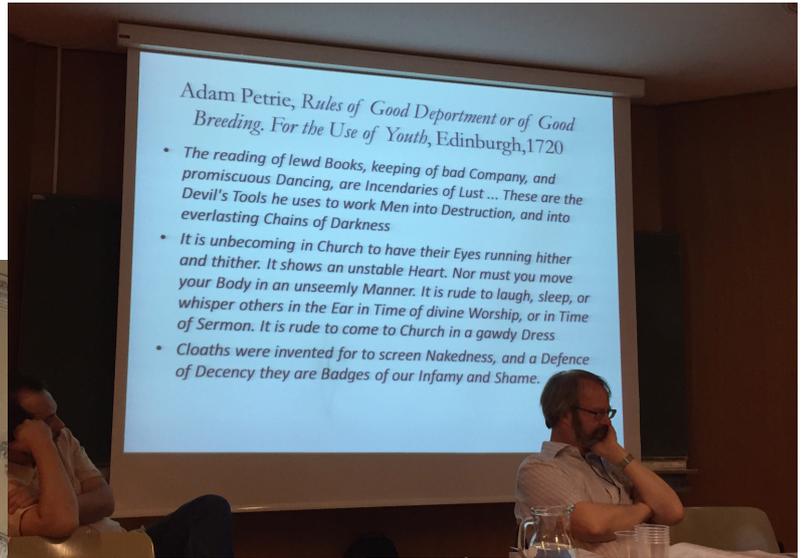
At the ISA Forum in Vienna in July this year, I stepped down as President of RC 56. Manuela Boatcă is my successor. Robert van Krieken continues as Vice-President, and Paddy Dolan is Secretary/Treasurer. Members of the Board are Nina Baur (Technische Universität Berlin); Jose Esteban Castro (CONICET, Argentina, and Newcastle University); Daniele Conversi (University of the Basque Country); José Maurício Domingues (Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Políticos, Brazil); Stephen Mennell (University College Dublin); Fumiya Onaka (Japan Women’s University); Elisa Reis (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro); Jiří Šubrt (Charles University, Prague).

Stephen Mennell

ISA 3rd Forum of Sociology, Vienna, 10–14 July 2016: ‘The Futures we Want: Global Sociology and the Struggles for a Better World’

The ISA Forums were instituted to fill the mid-term gap between the four-yearly full World Congresses, and were expected to be smaller gatherings than the Congresses. But they are steadily growing in their own right, and about 4,000 sociologists from worldwide showed up at the University of Vienna. Sociologists using ideas from Elias took part in sessions organised by many Research Committees, and it is impossible to list them all. I shall focus on just a few.

The ISA has organisationally always salami-sliced the discipline into any number of highly specialised empirical research areas, which is not much to the taste of figurationist sociologists. It was therefore a welcome development that the current ISA Vice-President for Research, Markus Schulz, organised a series of ‘Common Sessions’, in which representatives of all the specialised Research Committees were supposed



University of Vienna and Fernando Ampudia and Stephen Mennell during Alex Law's presentation]

to speak to a wider audience about how their own area was of interest to sociology in general. I represented the new RC 56, formerly WG 02, delivering what I hoped was a provocative address entitled 'History is not bunk'. The session was well attended, and I hope that these Common Sessions will become a feature of future Congresses and Forums.

A dozen sessions were organised by RC56. One of the themes that ran

through them – perhaps in a not entirely planned way – was how practically useful historical-comparative sociology can be. It brought to mind the old Marxist slogan, 'There's nothing so practical as a good theory'. Esteban Castro organised a session on 'Socio-ecological violences ...', Florence Delmotte one on 'Nation-building, Euroscepticism and transnationalism ...', and another session was devoted to Robert van Krieken's book *Celebrity Society* – all topical matters. The

session that I organised myself attacked the question of usefulness directly. It posed the question, 'In what ways can comparative-historical sociology help to improve the workings of the modern world?' My own paper revisited the old literature on the social foundations of democracy and drew attention to how, had it not apparently been forgotten, it might have prevented the ludicrous delusion that democracy could be imposed by bombing people in the Greater Middle East. Other papers

were given by Eric Royal Lybeck on the links between legal scholarship and comparative–historical sociology; Alex Law on state formation in Scotland; Behrouz Alikhani on the difficulties of the EU in providing a focus for common identification; Fernando Ampudia on the relevance of Elias to the financial crisis; and Mary Hickman on the Irish diaspora and multiculturalism.

Elsewhere, I attended a session on ‘Mass violence in the twentieth–twenty-first century and emotions’, under the auspices of RC48. This was organised by Ilan Lew and Dieter Reicher, and included papers by Akira Ohira and Sabine Haring. The principal discussant was Abram de Swaan, and afterwards, by arrangement, twenty-odd of us went across the road to the Café Landtmann for an excellent lunch, following which Abram gave an improvised talk about his book *The Killing Compartments: The Mentality of Mass Murder* (Yale UP, 2015).

Stephen Mennell

■ FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

Norbert Elias: sociologue des sciences et de la connaissance

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

This conference is being organised by Marc Joly and Wolf Feuerhahn.

■ CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIGURATIONS

The next issue of *Figurations* will be mailed in January 2017. News and notes should be sent by 1 December 2016 to the Editors at figurations@norberteliasfoundation.nl.

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Graphic Design and Desktop Publishing:
Annette van de Sluis.

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