

Summaries

Long-Term Processes in the History of Humanity

Johan Goudsblom

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

Kings and Civic Virtue: the institution of the Order of Orange-Nassau

Kees Bruin

In the nineteenth century so-called 'state-orders' were instituted as prominent forms of public honours all over Europe. These decorations marked a new phase in the development of the age-old orders of chivalry. Up to the first half of the nineteenth century these orders were above all instruments for the royal pleasure. Considered as private property of the prince, they were at his free disposal to reward the loyalty of his subjects. Constitutional monarchy meant of course a limitation of this freedom, which however, as this article shows for the Netherlands, did not come about without tensions and difficulties.

The article deals in particular with the events which gave rise to the institution of the Order of Orange-Nassau in 1892. This new state-order is described as a product of dynastical and social-political factors and also as a typical result of an ongoing process of democratization, in which the lower classes gradually come to play a more important role in the distribution of public honours.

Rotterdam Dock Workers: Bourgeois or Militant? Developments in their mentality and life style since 1900

Erik Nijhof

Dock workers traditionally belong to the most deprived layers of the working class; their position on the labour market is weak and insecure, their work is hard,

filthy and unskilled, their social status is correspondingly low. It is often assumed that this 'casual labour' position is related to an undisciplined and 'unadjusted' life style in the old lower class urban districts; and that this complementarity of work situation and living situation has led to the formation of a strong subculture which for a long time has remained immune to middle class efforts to 'civilize' these people and make them 'bourgeois'. On the basis of an investigation of Rotterdam dock workers in the period 1900-1987 it could be assessed, however, that for the majority of this group the assumed relationships between working conditions, living conditions and life style never existed. Coming from the surrounding countryside, these people developed a regular, 'bourgeois' family life, in spite of adverse working conditions.

The Novel as Reaction; the 1839 Staphorst witch case
Willem de Blécourt

In the social sciences novels are increasingly used as source material. This article examines the problem of reliability of this kind of source by comparing official documents with an anonymous novel - both texts dealing with the same witch case. While the records focus on maltreatment and hardly mention witchcraft at all, the theme of the novel ('falling in love with a girl from a family of witches') belongs to a literary tradition. Notwithstanding the similarities in content between both texts, it is concluded that in terms of empirical information the novel only has a signalling value. It contains no extra insights and makes itself redundant as soon as other, non-literary, sources are discovered. An alternative approach is proposed by considering a novel as one of the many conflicting views about a historical event.

Education as a Form of Intended Civilization. A penal 'civilizing offensive' during the Interbellum
Herman Franke

In some periods of the European process of civilization intentional attempts were made to lift up the lower classes through programmes of education and charity. In more or less the same way Dutch penologists and prison-experts between the first and second world war tried to educate and civilize prisoners and heighten their level of self-discipline and self-control. Whereas in the United States Thomas Mott Osborne initiated risky experiments with self-government in large prisons (Sing-Sing, Auburn), the Dutch penologists were, for a variety of reasons, more engaged in theory than in practice. They relied strongly on contemporary psychological theories which also stressed the importance of internal restraint.

These so-called 'civilizing offensives' reveal a theoretical tension with the largely unintended development of the civilizing process as described by Norbert Elias. These offensives also conflict with the assumed importance of a drift to social distinction in this process. In stead of keeping aloof from the lower class

people these educators seem willing to reduce the social distances. By a description and interpretation of the attempts to reform criminals in Dutch penitentiaries during the pre-war period, the author tries to clarify the theoretical tensions just mentioned.