

Summaries

JOHAN HEILBRON

Changing regimes of knowledge and the discontent in academia

Besides an ongoing flow of policy studies and irregular public debates, few studies have systematically tried to analyse the current condition of higher education in western societies. In this article some of these attempts are critically reviewed, in particular the ideas proposed by the group of influential scholars and policy advisors around Michael Gibbons and Helga Nowotny. Their books *The New Production of Knowledge* (1994) and *Re-Thinking Science* (2000) are contrasted with the proposals of two independent scholarly initiatives, one led by Immanuel Wallerstein, the other directed by Pierre Bourdieu.

RENÉ MOELKER

The military sociology of Norbert Elias Studies in the genesis of the profession of naval officer

In 1950 Norbert Elias published the first of three 'Studies in the Genesis of the Naval Profession' in the *British Journal of Sociology*. The two other studies were never published (although part of the second study was published in Dutch translation in 1977). Elias at that time was not the established scholar that he was to become in later years, and the published article on the naval profession was hardly noticed, even though it contains several of the major themes of *The Civilizing Process*. This paper presents an overview of the main arguments in the three studies as well as other manuscripts on the same topic which were found in the Norbert Elias archive in Marbach a/N, Germany. Taken together, these writings may be the basis for a book. They are an important contribution to sociology in general and military sociology and the sociology of professions in particular.

SARAH BRANTS

The power to negotiate: The prison worker as a street-level bureaucrat

As street-level bureaucrats in a so-called frontline organisation, prison workers regularly encounter situations in which they have to make immediate decisions about their clients, the prisoners. For that purpose they have a great discretionary freedom. Except in the case of statutory (basic) rights of prisoners, this discretionary power allows them to interpret day-to-day situations and so deviate from semi-official regulations, a practice known in the Netherlands as *gedogen*. This article focuses firstly on the consequences of prison workers' discretionary powers on the daily practices of a penitentiary institution; and secondly, on how these practices influence the power relationship between prisoners and their 'guards'.

DICK KOOIMAN

Hierarchy and mobility: States and castes in colonial India

The British in India were inclined to consider the existing caste ranking as being ordained from time immemorial. Post-independence research however, has shown that the caste system was far from rigid. The position of particular castes was often fiercely contested and frequent attempts were being made to rise in caste hierarchy. A similar upward mobility can be observed among Indian states. Before Independence (1947), British India numbered a large number of princely states that were allowed to maintain a semi-independent existence under the aegis of the British paramount power. These states tried to rise within the princely order by arrogating the rights and ceremonial distinctions pertaining to more dominant states. This article will make an attempt to analyse the dynamics of the Indian states with the help of terms and concepts that have become usual for the study of the caste system.

FRANK HERMANS

The increasing effects of traumatic events

This review article takes at its starting-point a book by Jolande Withuis. The theme of the book is the belated recognition of the traumatic effects of the Second World War and the subsequent emergence of a 'culture of complaint' in the Netherlands since the 1970s. This article focuses on the social context of

this development from a long-term perspective. According to Withuis, public opinion after the war was dominated by the idea that the Dutch nation as a whole had struggled heroically against the common enemy and by worries about a moral breakdown afterwards. As a consequence, the Jewish survivors of the genocide were under pressure to keep silent. Only twenty years later did the possibilities for speaking out about this and many other traumas increase significantly, in connection with processes of democratization and 'emancipation of emotions'. Unfortunately, according to Withuis, this ended in a culture of complaint and a proliferation of dubious claims by all kinds of self-defined victims. This is only one part of the story, however. Post-war changes can be understood within the framework of the long-term trend of growing networks of human interdependence, which is the basic condition for, on the one hand, the growing scale of potentially traumatising events (wars, terrorism, disasters, media events) and, on the other, the tendency towards widening identification with victims and increasing sensitivity to pain. The interactions among involved groups who together 'produce' recognized traumas (victims, therapists, government officials, lawyers, journalists) are viewed from this long-term and figurational perspective.