

Abstract [English]

Norbert Elias' seminal text, *The Civilizing Process*, has influenced many subsequent generations of scholars interested in long-term social processes and figurational sociology. While previous analyses of the text have noted limitations regarding the positionality of both women and religion within the Elias' work, the central aim of this research has been to reincorporate both factors into a coherent theoretical framework. Through a combination of theoretical and empirical research, centring around the early modern phenomena of witchcraft prosecutions, this thesis constitutes a revision of fundamental Elisian assumptions regarding sociogenic and psychogenic processes of European state formation. Regarding gender, the assumption of a transformation in societal violence is reevaluated to position women as the primary unit of analysis. By focusing on women's relations to violence, the dissertation posits a divergence in both the timing and direction of the civilising process between genders. With respect to religion, the potential for the Church to act as an alternate gravitational centre for state formation and psychogenic processes has been evaluated. Given the centrality of religion within the medieval and early modern periods, it is argued that a 'third pillar' of state formation was necessary, constituting a process of religious 'de-centralisation'. Both gender and religion therefore formed interrelated and essential elements of the long-term European civilising process, as demonstrated through the development and decline of the ultimate 'outsider' figure: the witch.

Keywords: Norbert Elias; Figurations; Gender; Religion; Civilising Process; Historical Sociology