

NORBERT ELIAS

# *Essays I*

On the Sociology of Knowledge and the Sciences

*The Collected Works of Norbert Elias* VOLUME 14

Edited by Richard Kilminster and Stephen Mennell



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN PRESS

*Preas Choláiste Ollscoile Bhaile Átha Cliath*

First published 2009  
by University College Dublin Press  
as volume 14 of the Collected Works of Norbert Elias  
© Norbert Elias Foundation, Amsterdam, 2009

ISBN 978-1-906359-01-0

University College Dublin Press  
Newman House, 86 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland  
*www.ucdpress.ie*

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,  
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,  
without the prior permission of the publisher

Cataloguing in Publication data available from the British Library

Typeset in Baskerville by Elaine Burberry and Ryan Shiels  
Designed by Lyn Davies  
Printed in England on acid-free paper  
by Antony Rowe, Chippenham

## CONTENTS

Norbert Elias, 1897–1990	vii
Note on the text	ix

### ESSAYS I: ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE SCIENCES

1	<i>Sociology of knowledge: new perspectives</i>	1
2	<i>Dynamics of consciousness within that of societies</i>	42
3	<i>On nature</i>	53
4	<i>The sciences: towards a theory</i>	66
5	<i>Theory of science and history of science: comments on a recent discussion</i>	85
6	<i>Introduction to ‘Scientific Establishments and Hierarchies’</i> NORBERT ELIAS AND RICHARD WHITLEY	102
7	<i>Scientific establishments</i>	107
8	<i>On the creed of a nominalist: observations on Popper’s ‘The Logic of Scientific Discovery’</i>	161
9	<i>Science or sciences? Contribution to a debate with reality-blind philosophers</i>	191
10	<i>Thomas More’s critique of the state: with some thoughts on a definition of the concept of utopia</i>	212
11	<i>Thomas More and ‘Utopia’</i>	258
12	<i>What is the role of scientific and literary utopias for the future?</i>	269
	Appendix I	
	<i>Note on Kant’s solipsistic doubt</i>	288

Appendix II	
<i>Two extended notes to 'On the creed of a nominalist'</i>	290
Appendix III	
<i>The great evolution: note to 'Science or sciences?'</i>	293
Textual variants	294
Bibliography	298
Index	307