



Environment & Society Portal



The White Horse Press

Full citation: Schmidt, C. "On Economization and Ecologization as Civilizing Processes." *Environmental Values* 2, no. 1, (1993): 33-46.  
<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5488>

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# On Economization and Ecologization as Civilizing Processes

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**ABSTRACT:** In this article the meaning and main phases of ‘economization’ as a civilizing process are outlined. It is argued that ‘ecologization’ of the current political-economic regime can in a certain sense be regarded as a continuation of this development. Due attention is given to social conditions which may be favourable or impedimental to an ecologization of ‘the economy’. It is pleaded that environmental policies should use the so-called trickle-down effect to their advantage.

**KEYWORDS:** Ecology, economy, historical-sociological aspects

1.

The English economist Michael Jacobs recently published a lucid book in which he outlines an inspiring green political-economic programme. He concludes it as follows:

But a green economic programme will not be introduced unless industrialised societies manifest the desire and the will to change. Describing the requisite policies is therefore only the first part of the task at hand. The second – perhaps the more important – is to encourage those political and cultural changes which will enable them to be put into practice.

It remains to be seen whether the Green programme can gain popular support. We do not know what it would take to encourage people to value the quality of life more highly; to give more weight to the interests of future generations and distant people and wildlife; to appreciate less materialistic forms of consumption. But that is not the point. For those concerned about the environmental crisis the task is surely to find out. (1991: 253)

In other words, according to Jacobs, we have to know under which social

conditions people are prepared to accept a green political programme based on a morality of 'economy' in the original sense of the word.

This is the question addressed by the present article. It does not deal with concrete measures that should be taken in order to solve contemporary environmental problems, but is concerned with the acceptance of such policies insofar as more is required than purely technical solutions. In order to be effective, environmental policies have to build on actual socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic developments. What is aimed at here is to identify these developments, which may be favourable or impedimental to an 'ecologization' of the economy.

## 2

Seen in an evolutionary perspective, many cultural elements of Western societies have developed from higher to lower social strata through the so-called 'trickle-down' effect (Fallers 1954). This not only holds true for consumer goods, but also for less tangible 'things' which are designated by the concept 'lifestyle'. What once belonged to the repertoire of the rich and educated – think for instance of holidays, air travel, automobiles, 'meat each day'; also of 'calculating behaviour', a feeling for nature or for the arts, and everything else that belongs to the manners and cultural stock-in-trade of civilized people – all this has developed 'top-down', so to speak, not only in a national but in an international perspective (Elias 1939, Munters 1977). The driving force behind this development was and still is the struggle for power and prestige between various social strata, again both nationally and internationally. Especially in individualizing market societies, people seem to identify themselves – consciously or unconsciously, in revolt or in admiration – with higher-status groups and, consequently, to distinguish themselves from lower-esteemed ones (Bourdieu 1979). In the long run, this process contributed, at least in Western societies, to a gradual spread of human welfare and civilization in general.

For many people, though certainly not for all, such development meant more income, more consumption, more status. In a sociological perspective, the struggle for status and comfort was the driving force behind the growth of consumption. Of course, the other side of the coin was what Karl Marx (1867) called, in order to stress the compulsive nature of the development, the 'sich verwertender Wert' or capital accumulation process. In the sphere of production, this process was triggered by the same social mechanism as dominates the sphere of consumption; that is, the struggle for power and prestige, in this case among firms and national states.

It is unmistakably true that 'the more the better' was the dominant trend in industrialized and industrializing societies during recent centuries. This trend did not erupt suddenly as a result of industrialization, but formed part of a long-

term development of increasing 'economization'. To comprehend this requires some discussion of the concepts of 'economy' and 'economics'.

3.

'Economy/economics' is a notoriously complex conceptual couple. Currently, they refer to the way people meet their daily needs, and to a morality, an ideology and a science at the same time.<sup>1</sup> Because at present people meet their daily needs predominantly through 'the market', this institution is often wrongly equated with 'the economy' in general. This 'economistic fallacy', as Karl Polanyi (Block/Somers 1984) has called it, is nevertheless understandable, for, as I shall demonstrate below, next to state formation 'marketization' has played and still plays a major part in the process of economization,

As networks of interdependent people buying and selling goods and services, markets presuppose among other things a division of labour, some form of property rights and protection, and a certain commercial mentality (Hicks 1969, Hodgson 1988). Market societies are characterized by specific social pressures: adults are deemed to produce in order to earn an income, and must earn an income to be able to spend. Thus markets institutionalize strong incentives for productivity, efficiency and invention. Hence the enormous productive power of market societies, where producing, buying and selling are not only the major cultural preoccupation but a structural necessity as well.

In market societies people must learn to act 'economically', by rule but above all often by bitter experience. 'Economics' was and partly still is – think of business economics – a 'praxiology' (Lange 1974) or, in plain English, a kind of morality. The basics of this morality are that one should act 'rationally'; that is, on the basis of cost-benefit calculation so as to maximize the difference between the two. Consequently, one has to be as efficient or 'economic' as possible. Whoever refuses to act this way will be scored off by others.

Acting 'economically' in this sense is not only good for oneself, but also for society. Conventional economic wisdom holds that only in that way, under specified conditions, can an optimal allocation of resources be achieved. Therefore, 'economy/economics' is not only a morality, but also an ideology, for a vision of 'the good society' is involved: a society in which 'Pareto-optimality' has been realized.

Finally, economics is a science as well – a science which studies the interrelationships of variables that are set in motion by more or less 'economically' acting individuals, and in this way tries to further the rationalization of 'the economy'. So the conceptual couple 'economy/economics' refers to an extraordinarily intricate and multilayered social complex whose nature is both 'structural' and 'cultural' from a sociological point of view. This complex has not always existed, but is a result of the process of economization, a long-term

development in which a growing number of societies have turned into ‘machines for getting wealth’ (Polanyi 1944).

4.

The aforementioned four denotations of ‘economy’ can be regarded as coinciding with the main phases of ‘economization’ as a long-term process. The successive stages merged into each other until, finally, ‘the economy’ in the comprehensive modern sense was born.<sup>2</sup>

The first phase goes back to prehistory (Hodges 1982 and 1988). I refer here to the rise of the market, on which John Hicks (1969) has written a remarkable book. Hicks does not fall into the trap of the economistic fallacy mentioned above. He shows how markets, with their typical commercial culture, slowly evolved out of ‘non-mercantile’ societies in which custom and command regulated production and consumption. He describes in broad outline the slow and certainly not irreversible process of ‘mercantilization’ in which – under the often violent protection of some form of political authority – more and more, products, land, labour and knowledge turned into commodities. Merchants, often backed by state officials, played the key role in this story of commercial penetration of non-mercantile societies. By creating markets, they furthered the division of labour and, therewith, of production, until the limits of the new outlets were reached.

Both in non-mercantile societies and in societies where markets are only beginning to function, no writings on ‘the economy’ in the modern sense of the word can be found. ‘The economy’ as a relatively autonomous subsystem did not exist and markets, if at hand, were small and embedded in a social framework where custom and command prevailed. The small number of treatises on more or less ‘economic’ issues were for the most part moralistic in character and reflected the resistance of traditional agrarian elites against an excessive commercialization and monetarization which were experienced by them as serious threats to the stability of the existing social hierarchy (Redfield 1986, Morris-Suzuki 1989). The emphasis fell on economics as domestic science in which a morality of moderation was proclaimed, directed against money-making for its own sake (which, obviously, occurred anyway). Aristotle’s distinction between use and exchange value perhaps reflects the trauma commercialisation caused (Egner 1985, Klever 1986).

In the second phase – in Europe around the thirteenth century, though there were already traces in Classical Antiquity – the activities of what was later to be called the ‘third estate’ were increasingly justified as virtues (this was, apparently, urgently required). Affluence resulting from an industrious life and effective market transactions was promoted as dignified and legitimate by commercial circles, so that they were increasingly accepted alongside the ruling

establishments of warriors and priests (McGovern 1970, De Roover 1971 and 1974, Aertsen 1978). This increasing acceptance in turn resulted from the hopelessly divided feudal élites' dependence on the third estate's money and other resources. Torn by permanent power struggles, the priests and warriors slowly 'mercantilized', while the merchants reaped profit from the political division in Europe (Hicks 1969, Hall 1988).

Consequently, in the third phase the mercantile morality turned smoothly into an ideology in which the social utility of peaceful productive and commercial activity for cities and states was stressed (McGovern 1970). Domestic economics became 'political economy'. In the form of numerous 'discourses' and 'observations', a specifically economic rhetoric emerged in which the political élites of the day were advised how to further agriculture, trade and industry to their advantage; economic nationalism or 'mercantilism' was born (Letwin 1963, Bauer/Matis 1988, Tribe 1988). Despite their political bias, many treatises on trade and money included valuable elements of economic analysis of which economic science later took advantage (Schumpeter 1954).

To start with, the mercantilistic or 'proto-economic' advisers thought that economic growth was a zero-sum game and trade was the only source of value. Later, during the eighteenth century, they began to realize that labour was the chief source of value (Meek 1973). Increasingly, European governments started to envisage their land and subjects as 'resources' which could and should be used for the sake of the state's wealth and power. They began to realize what Japanese economists, pressured by the European expansion, phrased as follows in the charter of their professional association in 1890:

Power is created by wealth. It is unheard of that power can exist where there is no wealth. The competition which is occurring at present between nation and nation is nothing but a competition of strength and of productive power. (Morris-Suzuki 1989:61)

The Japanese obviously did not believe in the doctrine of *laissez faire*; on the contrary, they saw in this creed an attempt by the ruling superpowers to obstruct the industrialization of military-agrarian regimes:

The problem of a country's wealth is of more importance than the system of trade. This is particularly true in the present circumstances of our country. In these circumstances the only approach which we should adopt is that of national economics, i.e. the economic philosophy that each nation must treat its own self-defence and independent development as the most important factors. It is now urgent that we should exert ourselves to investigate the ways of pursuing this economic philosophy. Therefore we establish the National Economics Association and invite the membership of like-minded scholars. (ibid.)

And, indeed, that was the way it had all begun in Europe.

Finally, in the fourth phase political economy became an academic discipline

which tried to specify, systematize and elaborate on ‘proto-economic’ notions through theoretical analysis and empirical research (the latter particularly in the twentieth century). However, echoes of the previous phase continued to be heard in the method, theory and research of the new discipline. For example, it remained a problem to what extent economic theories describe or prescribe human behaviour, a matter that goes all the way back to Adam Smith’s indebtedness to natural law, which fused facts and norms together. The Dutch economist Klant (1982) has argued that economic models are idealizations. Just as the mathematical models of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century engineers described the working of certain instruments under ideal conditions so that they could serve as guidelines for the design of more efficient machinery (Dijksterhuis 1950:275), in the same way economic models could and can be used to further the efficiency of economic systems. If the models do not correspond with reality, they can always be used as ideals to which the ‘unnatural’ or ‘irrational’ reality should be adapted. That was the political relevance of *The Wealth of Nations*, that was the significance of ‘pure economics’ as developed by Walras (1874/1877) and Pareto (1896/1897), and that is still the way in which contemporary managers in business and government apply economic science.

The economization of human action is both a condition for and a function of the economization of human thought; world and world view can hardly be separated here. The optimum exploitation of scarce resources with alternative uses for the benefit of unlimited defined human needs counts as the guide and standard for ‘rational’ conduct (Mokyr 1990:4). In this respect, the only difference between the classical and the neoclassical versions of economics is that the first emphasized the goal of economic activity – the wealth of nations – while the second stressed above all the scarcity of means with alternative uses (Fraser 1937). At first sight it seems curious that precisely in an age of growing welfare, scarcity and choice became the basis of economics, but it has to be realized that previously most people had little choice whatsoever, because they lived at or below subsistence level. Intensive economic growth brought about enormous opportunities and temptations, and, therewith, both the necessity to choose and a permanent sense of scarcity. Seen in this way, ‘marketization’ can indeed be considered as the institutionalization of scarcity (Sahlins 1972).

Scientific economics, then, was at least partly a result of chronic public deficits, which were in turn a consequence of the endemic struggle for power and prestige among the various European states (Schumpeter 1954). The political economists of old taught the rulers, quite as their intellectual offspring do today, that their households could benefit from a flourishing ‘economy’. As ‘consultant administrators’ (Schumpeter) they had many differences of opinion about such questions as how to further the wealth of nations and even about the precise meaning of the concept ‘wealth’, but on one point – economic growth as a prerequisite for a ‘healthy’ governmental budget – they all agreed. Consequently, in the course of European state formation processes, not only a

‘Verhöflichung’ but also an ‘Ökonomisierung der Krieger’ took place: the bourgeois line, so to speak, of Norbert Elias’s civilizing process (1939:vol.II).

Before the economization of the warriors there was already an economization of the struggle for life, made possible through the monopolization of violence by the forebears of these warriors or by alliances of city-states; but the enormous growth of trade and money now gave the élites of the middle class, who increasingly found access to the court, so much power that they were more and more able to dictate the conduct of sovereigns and their less-fortunate subjects. In this way the interdependent capitalists and bureaucrats encouraged the growth of a society dominated by ‘free’ factor and commodity markets (of which the seeds had already been present). Such, in brief, were the socio-political and socio-cultural origins of market societies as machines for getting wealth (Polanyi 1944, Bauer/Matis 1988).

As said, economization is a form of civilization.<sup>3</sup> Economic activity in market societies is a kind of civilized warfare; that is, a power struggle fought with, at least formally, peaceful means. It is, above all, a productive struggle based on an increasing control over nature. Looting, Kenneth Boulding (1991) says, is a once-only event, while producing for the market is a cumulative process which demands permanent social and self-discipline (Weisskopf 1955). Economic activity structures and gives meaning to human life and generates wealth which makes violent distributional conflicts less attractive and less probable. Vico proved himself already acquainted with the miraculous civilizing effects of the political-economic mechanism:

Out of ferocity, avarice, and ambition, the three vices which lead all mankind astray, [society] makes national defense, commerce and politics, and thereby causes the strength, the wealth, and the wisdom of the republics; out of these three great vices which would certainly destroy man on earth, society thus causes the civil happiness to emerge. (Hirschman 1977: 17)

However, the economization of society evoked political counterforces as well. Not only labourers, but landowners, farmers, industrialists and other businessmen all tried to protect themselves, through the state, from the often harsh and unforeseeable effects of the market mechanism. As is well-known, some of these ‘countermovements of social protection’ (Polanyi 1944) even went so far as to abolish markets completely (but not to abolish the ideal of society as a smoothly running machine for producing wealth). From a ‘purely economic’ point of view the various forms of protectionism were seldom very efficient, and, what is more, governments remained dependent on the largely unplanned developments in the world market to finance their protective activities. That is why in welfare states a constant alternation of ‘politicization’ and ‘economization’ occurs.<sup>4</sup> The economization of public discourse in the 1980s – the rise of ‘Thatcherism’, ‘Reaganomics’, and other forms of neo-liberal rhetoric – has to be considered in that perspective also.



5.

A green political programme has to reckon with these compelling processes of economization and politicization. From a viewpoint of historical continuity this seems perfectly possible for, in my view, 'ecologization' can only be achieved by a further politicization of 'the economy'. On the other hand, politics have to be 'economized' further too, for 'greening' the economy basically means the logical application of the economic principle to what used to be called the 'production factor land'; that is, striving for an optimally efficient metabolism between humanity and nature within ecological constraints.<sup>5</sup> Such an ecologically constrained economy as suggested by Michael Jacobs (1991) can only be reached through a (preferably combined) political effort of as many as possible industrial states who jointly determine the ecological framework within which 'the economy' can prosper. This 'ecologization' will not only mean a more efficient use of energy and raw materials and more 'economic' disposal of waste, but in some cases, at least in industrialized societies, a more austere lifestyle as well. For obvious reasons this development should start in industrialized societies.

But is such development probable in the light of the above-sketched structural and cultural transformation of these societies into machines for getting wealth? Can an ecologically constrained economy gain popular support? Although it does not look like it, there are nevertheless some small rays of hope. For, in spite of the dominant 'more is better' development, there have also been some modest movements in the opposite direction. Think for example of eating and, more recently, of smoking and drinking. In these fields, a growing number of consumers show more self-control, either in consuming less (or even nothing at all) or in consuming in a more sensible or considered way (Sjilbing 1978, Ganzeboom 1988, Ney and Gale 1989, Van Otterloo 1990). If we broaden our outlook from material consumption to the more comprehensive concept of 'lifestyle', the same long-term tendencies can be observed with respect to reproduction (birth control), the exploitation of nature (conservation), and some forms of violent amusement (Elias 1939, Hofstee 1981, Gorter 1986, McLaren 1990). It is important to examine the social conditions which made these developments possible. Although one can interpret social developments like the health-food movement, widespread birth control and nature conservation in terms of 'rational choice' through which people were seeking to be better off, the fact that a growing number of people actually made this choice shows not only that different social conditions give birth to different preferences but also that, apparently, more and more people were able to instantiate the requisite socio-genetic self-control to make this 'rational choice' (Mennell 1989a).

Sociologically, it is significant that the above-mentioned exercises in economy have developed first within the more 'civilized' status groups who have access and sensitivity to knowledge, i.e. the owners of what the French sociologist

Pierre Bourdieu (1979) calls 'cultural capital'. Bourdieu is not the only observer to note certain 'ascetic' tendencies within this status group; for instance, the Dutch sociologist Harry Ganzeboom (1988) also found in his lifestyle research that people with high cultural and socio-economic status spend less on some luxury consumer goods than people with the same socio-economic but less cultural capital. (This appeared, alas, not to be true with respect to spending for holidays, but who knows? It may soon become fashionable to say, "What? Are you still going to Indonesia? By plane? But that's not done anymore, you know! Staying at home, or at least in your own country: that's the style nowadays!" Or, "Are you going to ski in the Alps? But that's not cool! Think of the crowding, let alone the environment!")

It is striking that, according to the American political scientist Ronald Inglehart (1990), members of the same 'new class' who distinguish themselves from others by their cultural 'competence' vigorously advocate so-called 'post-materialistic' values. They are also heavily over-represented in the environmental movement and are the chief consumers or, at least, supporters of 'ecologically sound' products (Balderjahn 1986, Pietersen/Verhallen 1986, Nelissen 1987 and 1991, Van der Linden/Luijten 1989). This group is growing in numbers and influence in Western societies, not only in the public but in the private sector as well. This kind of people – and the reader knows that I mean 'our' kind of people – and their cultural testators started nature conservation and the contemporary translation of that, the environmental movement (Humphrey/Buttel 1986, Cramer 1989, Nelissen 1991). Apparently, knowledge and civilization are – next to relatively pacified social circumstances, medicalization, and a certain degree of material welfare – important conditions for the rise of such behavioural tendencies and standards of conduct.

It is important to find out whether traces of the so-called 'post-materialistic' outlook can also be observed in the consumption patterns of this 'new class'. Is it possible to detect beginnings of a trickle-down effect? Are there significant differences in the nature of consumption between the various income brackets differentiated according to educational level? At the Graduate School for Social Science of the University of Amsterdam we are searching for answers to these questions. Our main sources are the budget and the so-called socio-economic panel research done by the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, and market research on specific products/product groups.

Another section of our research<sup>6</sup> focuses on to what extent the rise of nature conservation and the environmental movement in industrial societies can be looked upon as a civilizing process, in the sense Elias (1939) has given to the latter term; i.e. a development in the direction of an increasing social pressure towards self-control, in this case for the sake of a more civilized way of handling the environment. The increasing technological and scientific knowledge of nature over recent centuries was an important condition for both the rapidly expanding exploitation of natural resources and the slowly growing understand-

ing of human dependence on nature (Goudsblom 1992). Appreciation of natural beauty reflects an absence of fear of natural forces and shows ‘good breeding’ at the same time. Is it possible and fruitful, theoretically and practically, to interpret the rise of the environmental movement as a sustained civilizing campaign which at the same time fulfils obvious social functions in the early institutionalization and professionalization of environmentalism?

In both sections we are focusing on the role of status aspirations and ‘trickle-down’ influences. We are doing this for both sociological and practical (or, if you like, political) reasons.

Sociological research reveals that status aspirations are enormously important in the formation of new behavioural standards and predispositions (Elias 1939, Bourdieu 1979). Every market researcher knows this about consumer behaviour, but it is probably also significant in the spread of environmental awareness and the growth of the environmental movement. Although the seriousness of environmental problems makes such organizational considerations as ‘trendiness’ seem petty and embarrassing, environmentalists often show a more or less hidden sense of distinction or superiority and a strong ‘we-feeling’ (‘us’ against ‘them’). For instance, it is often implied by environmentalists that they are not egotists who see humanity at the centre of the universe; they have an eye for a rational, scientific-method-based understanding of their fellow-creatures and the ecosystems in which they function; they are seeing further than the ends of their noses and are concerned with the welfare of generations to come – and they say they are willing to live according to these insights.

Of course, these things are hardly ever said that openly, but it often shows in the social critique and goals of environmentalists. They show a cognitive detachment that presupposes a high level of civilization: think of the refusal to see oneself or behave as the centre of the universe, and the willingness to think in terms of the distant future instead of the short term: these are typical characteristics of ‘civilization’ in the sense of Elias (1956, 1939). But that cognitive detachment is, probably partly unconsciously, social detachment at the same time; I mean detachment from people whose mental horizons reach no further than their own material welfare and next week. You have only to look at the beginning of the famous *Limits to Growth* of 1972. The first diagram on the mental horizon of people has two dimensions. The horizontal one shows the time span (from next week to the next generation), the vertical one shows the scope (from family to the world). The caption says that most people have to be placed somewhere near the angle of the figure, and that only very few – the true élite, like Dennis Meadows and the Club of Rome – identify themselves with the world and the generations to come. The point is not that this diagram is patently false, for it is not, but that it has a curious and unmeant side-effect on readers, who think, of course, that they belong to the élite of this figure. Another related example of the congruence of cognitive and social detachment is given by the French economist and essayist Bertrand de Jouvenel (1970:240) who wrote in

his *Arcadie: Essais sur le mieux vivre*: “We are collectively the great parvenues of the biosphere”,<sup>7</sup> By writing ‘we’ he apparently does not exclude himself, but by calling us ‘parvenues’ he takes a distance, for who wishes to be called a parvenue?

This brings me to the practical or political reason for focusing on the status motive. By being attentive to the actual role of status aspirations, we can perhaps use them politically, through shrewd campaigns in the media, for instance, and in education. It goes without saying that in these campaigns the words ‘status’ or ‘prestige’ will seldom or never be mentioned, for civilized egalitarian people do not like to hear this too explicitly. By taking advantage, then, of people’s sensitivity to status, it may be possible to bypass that notorious monster called the paradox of collective action, for the benefit of moderate, ecologically sound behaviour is a direct one: prestige, a sense of belonging to the ‘right kind of people’.

So the essence of this approach is that environmental policies, at least ideally, do not have to appeal to moral qualities such as community spirit or self-sacrificing behaviour, because they make use of the all too human urge for distinction. Why should environmental policies not take advantage of the human sensitivity to status? Why should we not use the trickle-down effect, not towards showing off riches, but towards of showing off self-restraint or ecologically sound behaviour?

The approach outlined here could bear fruit not only in the sphere of consumption but in that of production as well, for there are signs that a growing number of firms are becoming more and more sensitive to their ‘ecological reputation’ (Elkington 1987, Maharaj 1992). It seems that the competition between cultural and economic ‘capitalists’ is already beginning to yield some profit. Acting as economically as possible in using energy and raw materials and marketing ‘ecologically sound’ products is nowadays becoming an act of self-preservation and also of distinction. However, in order to steer and further this development, government policies remain vital, for firms will economize on energy, raw materials and waste only as far as it is profitable for them to do so. Further measures, if necessary, also require use of state power (De Swaan 1989). This holds true as well for the spread of environmentally sound production processes to the less developed parts of the world. The governments of industrial societies have to create the necessary conditions for an effective ‘trickling-down’ in this respect (Jacobs 1991).

Finally, it can be observed that trickle-down processes can go rather fast. Henk de Feijter (1991) has written a thesis on innovators of demographic change in the Netherlands. It is amazing to see how fast attitudes and actual practices – the whole ‘emotional economy’, so to speak – have changed with regard to matters like unmarried cohabitation, divorce, premarital sex, homosexuality, and so on. In less than fifteen years, he records a real ‘Umwertung aller Werte’ through the trickle-down effect.

So let us use this mechanism to our advantage. Living in an ‘economic’ civilization seems to be our fate. What really matters now is to push the process of economization in the sense of making the most of scarce ecological possibilities. It will, however, be difficult, and not only from a ‘purely’ political-economic point of view. For if it is true, as the American philosopher William James once remarked, that the war against nature has been the moral equivalent to war between people (Leiss 1976:51-52), then the ecologization of the present political-economic regime will require a strong appeal to the human faculty of social and self-control; that is to say, to ‘civilization’ in the sense of Norbert Elias.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The subject of this and the following section is more fully elaborated and annotated in Schmidt (1991).

<sup>2</sup> As to the sequence of the stages I was inspired by McGovern (1970). The conceptualization is my own.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. for an abstract of Elias’s civilization theory Mennell (1989b).

<sup>4</sup> Parallel to Max Weber’s terminology, ‘economization’ can be defined here as striving for an optimally ‘formal rationality’ of ‘the’ market. ‘Politicization’, then, stands for striving for ‘substantive rationality’; that is rationality in terms of ‘non-economic’ standards like ‘environmental friendliness’ or ‘social justice’ (cf. Parsons 1947: 35 et seq.).

<sup>5</sup> The ‘economic principle’ (Lange 1974, Vol I: 167 et seq.) in its ecological form stands, then, for making the most of a politically restricted outlay of natural resources. Note that this principle does not imply zero growth. For instance, through greater efficiency and substitution in the consumption of natural resources economic growth remains possible. The so-called *Actieplan Nederland Duurzaam*, which was recently published by the Dutch branch of the Friends of the Earth, reasons from the same premisses (cf. Buitenkamp et al 1992).

<sup>6</sup> The project forms part of the Dutch National Research Programme on Global Air Pollution and Climate Change.

<sup>7</sup> My translation.

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