

THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY: ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE DURKHEIMIAN TRADITION AND THE SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF NORBERT ELIAS



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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to understand the antagonistic concept of the individual and society from the Durkheimian tradition to the contemporary Norbert Elias. It is a theoretical text with bibliographic research, which reflects on the concepts addressed by these two authors. This reading contributes to highlight different perspectives in the understanding of the individual and society and that one perspective completes the other, although antagonistic, because both are concerned, each in its own time, with understanding this construction of the individual and society, emphasizing the importance of sociology as a scientific field of study.

Keywords: Individual. Society. Antagonism. Sociology.

INTRODUCTION

Sociology emerged in the nineteenth century and established itself as a crucial field in the study of social dynamics. Together with Anthropology and Political Science, it forms the pillar of the Social Sciences. Auguste Comte, often recognized as the father of positivism, coined the term "Sociology" when observing the transformations in European society, especially in France, where theocratic thought gave way to industrial and scientific logic.

The Social Sciences use scientific procedures and methods to consolidate their sociological analyses, allowing detailed explanations of social phenomena. Three major methodological strands emerge from the classical authors: functionalism, by Émile Durkheim (1858-1917); the comprehensive method, by Max Weber (1864-1920); and Historical-Dialectical Materialism, by Karl Marx (1818-1883).

The central debates of sociology, both classical and contemporary, include the relationship between the individual and society. In ancient Greece, the concept of individual, according to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, was linked to the polis, that is, to the city-state, where only those who actively participated in public and political life were considered individuals. In Rome, the individual exercised a strong civic duty and belonging to a larger collectivity, and his importance was measured by the possession of property and personal rights.

In the Middle Ages, the individual was directly linked to medieval society, where theocentrism predominated. With the Renaissance, significant transformations occurred and the individual began to be valued for his potential in relation to society, giving rise to humanism. In the Enlightenment period, the individual came to be seen as a subject of rights before society, and the need for social contracts that respected these rights and organized society arose. Furthermore, it became the duty of the State to protect and guarantee these rights, as emphasized by the contractualist philosophers of the time, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

In the nineteenth century, ideas about the individual and society continued to evolve with the rise of liberalism, which emphasized the defense of individual freedom and minimal interference by the State in the life of the citizen. At the same time, socialism, in the historical figure of Karl Marx, highlighted the importance of social and economic structures in the formation of the social consciousness of the individual. Among other things, Marx claimed that inequality among human beings was a consequence of private ownership of

the means of production. According to him, by abolishing this property, it would be possible to establish a communal society, where resources would be shared and social relations would be more egalitarian.

From the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the concepts of individual and society have been investigated and analyzed in various ways, especially by existentialism, a philosophy that emphasizes personal freedom, the ability to choose, and individual responsibility. According to this current, human beings construct the meaning of their existence through their own decisions and actions, instead of seeking absolute or universal truths. Sartre's existentialist proposal focuses on understanding the individual in an integral way, avoiding the division between internal aspects, such as the mind and feelings, and external aspects, such as the body and actions.

For Sartre, the human being must be analyzed as a whole, unifying these dimensions in their choices and experiences (Schneider, 2008; Reynolds, 2012). On the other hand, psychology emerges, highlighting the figure of Sigmund Freud, who began to explore the depths of individuality, highlighting the role of the unconscious. Thus, the concept of individual and society, over time, has undergone significant transformations with the changes that occur in the plane of ideas, transforming itself into a continuous historical process.

Since the emergence of sociology in the nineteenth century, as a science dedicated to the study of interactions between individuals and social structures, several authors, at different times, have contributed to the definition of the relationship between individual and society. The articulation between classical and contemporary sociological theories is fundamental not only for historical understanding, but also for the analysis of current social dynamics, recognizing society as an organism in constant transformation. From this perspective, Jeffrey C. Alexander warns us that "sociological theory is going through a crucial moment" and that "the project of a general theory must be defended, as well as the reasons for its exclusive relevance must be explained" (Alexander, 1986, p. 2). According to Sell, "sociology is a science deeply involved with modern society. Sociological research constitutes one of the means by which modernity became aware of itself" (Sell, 2015, p. 15).

That said, the difference between the sociological concepts of individual and society of Émile Durkheim and Norbert Elias is a topic of great relevance and relevance in the field of sociology. Understanding the divergences and convergences between these two thinkers

is essential for a critical and in-depth analysis of the relationship between the individual and society in the current scenario, where social transformations and new forms of interaction raise reflections on this relationship.

The relevance of the theme is evidenced by the need to understand how classical and contemporary theories of sociology approach the processes of individualization and socialization, as well as the dynamics of power and social control. In this sense, the critical analysis of these concepts offers subsidies for reflection on the challenges of life in society in contemporary times.

Thus, this article performs a comparative analysis between what Durkheim defined as individual and society, establishing a relationship of logical equivalence and breaking epistemological barriers through the studies of contemporary sociology by Norbert Elias. The social relations defined by each author were highlighted, using bibliographic research as a method, after this work, we carried out critical reflections on the theories of Émile Durkheim, one of the main theorists of sociology and considered the founder of this discipline, as an object of study and specific method in relation to other sciences. We then explore the contemporary contributions of Norbert Elias.

ÉMILE DURKHEIM AND THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

The work of Émile Durkheim is extremely important for modern sociology, as his contributions have significantly influenced the development of this area of knowledge. Durkheim lived in a period of social and political transformation in Europe, marked by the Industrial Revolution and the consolidation of capitalism. His interest in sociology was driven by these changes and the need to understand the new social dynamics underway. In addition, his academic background and professional experience have had a significant impact on his theories and research, and it is important to consider these aspects when analyzing his contributions to modern sociology. His major works include: 1893 – *The Division of Social Labor*; 1895 – *The Rules of the Sociological Method*; 1897 – *Suicide*; and 1912 – *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Sell, 2015, p. 78).

One of the main Durkheimian theories is Structural-Functionalism, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of different parts of society and how they contribute to social stability. According to Durkheim, social institutions perform specific functions that maintain the cohesion and balance of society, as social groups specialize and become unique. He argues that society is more than the sum of its parts, and that each institution has a vital

role in maintaining social order. Durkheim also explored the relationship between the division of labor and social cohesion, highlighting the importance of social solidarity for the integration and stability of society, and developed, among others, the concepts of anomie, collective consciousness, and mechanical and organic solidarity. For him, it is the institutions that shape the individual. Each being is built in relation to his family, his religion and the institutions of which he is part in his social circle and/or that make up the social structure. In other words, society "is a *sui generis* reality that, once created, places itself above individuals" (Sell, 2015, p. 81 *apud* Durkheim, 1975, p. 83). As Sell describes, *apud* Durkheim:

Grouped together in a definite form and by enduring bonds, men were a new being which has its own nature and laws. Collective life is not a simple enlarged image of individual life. It has *sui generis characteristics* that the inductions of psychology, by themselves, did not allow us to predict (Seel, 2015, p.81 *apud* Durkheim, 1975, p.83).

Thus, it is the social structure that determines the actions of men (individuals), through social facts. Social facts are everything that leads individuals to think, act and feel in certain ways. When we are born, we are already bombarded by a set of social facts that exert an influence on us, making us become members of a society and submit ourselves to a process of socialization. Durkheim, in *The Rules of the Sociological Method*, argues that social facts should be treated as "things" to ensure scientific objectivity in the study of social interactions. He maintains that social facts have an existence independent of individual wills, which requires an impartial and external analysis, free from subjective influences.

By adopting this approach, the sociologist ensures rigorous investigation, focused on empirical observation and pattern analysis through statistics. Durkheim demonstrates that understanding the relationships between the different parts of society depends on a methodical and objective study, essential to reveal the mechanisms that govern social phenomena. As Durkheim states:

Our rule does not, therefore, imply any metaphysical conception, any speculation about the background of beings. What it demands is that the sociologist put himself in the state of mind in which physicists, chemists or physiologists are, when they enter a region still unexplored in their scientific domain. He must, when he enters the social world, be aware that he penetrates the unknown; He must feel himself in the presence of facts whose laws are as unknown as those of life before biology; He must be prepared to discover things that will surprise and disconcert him (Durkheim, 2001, p.06).

For Durkheim, the sociologist must distance himself from his personal convictions and common sense, investigating social facts in an impartial way, without prejudice or pre-formed ideas. Only in this way is it possible to understand the individual and society in a deeper way. Émile Durkheim argues that, in order to be considered a social fact, it must have three characteristics: firstly, it must be coercive, that is, it exerts pressure on the individual. Secondly, it must be external to the individual; It is not an intimate desire, but something that exists in society even before the birth of individuals. Thirdly, it must be something general and collective, applying to the whole of society or to a large portion of it, and not just to a restricted group of individuals. Vieira apud Sell states that "Durkheim proposed, as an objective of Sociology, to understand the individual from society, without which it cannot be understood" (Vieira, 2021, p. 04 *apud* Sell, 2002).

According to Durkheim, society is an objective reality that exerts a great influence on individuals, and presents itself as a structure that decisively shapes people's ways of thinking, acting and feeling. Thus, individuals are seen as conditioned and largely determined by social norms, values, and rules that are beyond their will. Society, in this context, occupies a central position in sociological analysis, being the main factor that defines the formation and behavior of subjects. They act according to a set of rules and social facts that already existed before their birth, because social institutions, established previously, are superior to individuals.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY, ACCORDING TO NORBERT ELIAS

Norbert Elias (1897-1990), was a German sociologist who lived through the fears of World War II, having to leave his country during this period, fleeing the Holocaust. His works were belatedly recognized as worthy of attention, gaining prominence in the 1960s. He made significant contributions to sociology, one of the most relevant being his theory of the civilizing process. The sociology of processes is an aspect of social development that fulfills an explanatory function. In this way, he proposes that civilization is a continuous and prolonged process, which shapes human behavior over time. This means that changes in social structures are directly related to the evolution of society as a whole. Among his main works, the following stand out: *The Civilizing Process*, *The Court Society*, *Established and Outsiders* and *The Society of Individuals*.

In *The Society of Individuals*, Norbert Elias (1994) addresses the complex interrelationship between individual and society, exploring how both are interdependent and

shaped by each other. The individual being is inseparable from his existence as a social being, and there is no identity-I without identity-We. Elias proposes a dynamic and processual view of this relationship, where the concepts of "I" and "we" are understood as parts of a constantly adjusting scale, stating that "[...] the relationship of the identity-I with the identity-We of the individual, is not established once and for all, but is subject to very specific transformations [...]" (Elias, 1994, p. 04). The "we-me balance" is a metaphor that Elias uses to illustrate the dynamics between individual and collective identity, highlighting how this relationship is fluid and subject to historical and social changes over time, what he calls dynamic equilibrium.

Thus, according to Elias, the individual is not an isolated entity, but a being that can only be understood in relation to the social context in which he lives, and argues that individual identity is formed and transformed through social interactions, going through historical evolutions, with the individual being a product of his social relations and, at the same time, of agents that influence these relationships. In this sense, Oliveira (2021) states that

Elias, seeking to better illustrate his ideas, uses images from everyday life. For example, stating that the relationships between people can be imagined as the one that exists between pool balls, which hit and roll in different directions, but, differently, [...] the interaction between people and the 'reticular phenomena' they produce are essentially different from the purely summative interactions of physical substances" (Oliveira, 2021, p.75 *apud* Elias, 1994, p. 29).

In the contemporary perspective, Elias emphasizes that

At present the primary function of the term "individual" is to express the idea that every human being in the world is or should be an autonomous entity and, at the same time, that each human being is in certain respects different from everyone else, and perhaps should be. In the use of this term, fact and postulate do not have a clear dividing line. It is characteristic of the structure of the most developed societies of our time that the differences between people, their identity-self, are more highly valued than what they have in common, their identity-we (Elias, 1994, p.26).

The identity-We, was much more valued in antiquity, as for example in the Roman State. This balance has shifted as civilizations have advanced and the process of globalization has intensified. Nowadays, the individual's dependence on society is increasingly evident and intense. Today, when we compare this relationship between individual and society in more developed societies, we perceive significant differences with less developed countries, where the family relationship, for example, is stronger, with the

identity-We (collectivity and common values) predominating, while in more modern societies, the identity-I (individuality and personal autonomy) predominates more and more.

In this path or process of development, the individual, in society, changes his way of being, acting and thinking through his mutual relationships and the identity of the self is an integral part of a person's *social habitus*. In relation to the social *habitus*, Elias says that it "allows us to introduce social phenomena into the field of scientific investigation, which was previously inaccessible to them" and that "the idea that the individual carries within himself the *habitus* of a group and that it is this *habitus* that he individualizes to a greater or lesser degree can be defined with a little more precision" (Elias, 1994, p.24).

Elias sought a balance in the relationship between the individual and society, breaking with the classical theories that placed society above the individual and vice versa. He developed the concept of figuration, where individuals are interconnected in a network of reciprocal dependence. As stated by Vieira and Freitas Júnior (2024), "it is the different relations of interdependence that define the characteristics of a given social figuration.

Despite its particularities, there is a common property in all social formations: a fluctuating balance of tensions, which tends now to one side, now to the other" (Vieira; Freitas Júnior, 2024, p. 04). According to Elias, "the greater the impermanence of the US-relationships, the more emphasis is given to the SELF, in the person itself, as the only permanent factor, the only person with whom one has to live one's entire life" (Elias, 1994, p.38).

IMPACT OF HISTORICAL AND SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXTS ON THE SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF ÉMILE DURKHEIM AND NORBERT ELIAS

Sociology, as a field of study, is deeply influenced by the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which its main theorists developed their works. Émile Durkheim, considered one of the founders of modern sociology, elaborated his theories in a period of great social transformations in Europe, marked by the Industrial Revolution and the consolidation of capitalism. These changes influenced his perception of the importance of social cohesion and solidarity as fundamental elements for the stability of modern societies (Ferreira, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, Durkheim emphasized the importance of social facts, which are patterns of behavior external to the individual and endowed with coercive power. These facts are fundamental for understanding society and its structures, which, according to him, shape individual behavior (Jones; Vogt, 1984). His analysis of anomie, a state of absence

of clear norms in society, reflected his concerns about the negative consequences of the rapid social and economic changes of his time (Friedland, 2005).

On the other hand, Norbert Elias developed his theories in a different context, influenced by the traumatic experiences of the two world wars and by his own experience as a Jew fleeing the Nazi regime. His theory of the civilizing process highlights how behavior patterns and social structures have evolved over time, shaping the psychogenesis⁹ and sociogenesis¹⁰ of individuals (Elias, 2000). Elias proposed that civilization is a continuous and long process, influenced by complex interdependencies between individuals and their societies (Costa Oliveira, 2021).

Elias's approach, which emphasizes the interdependence and power dynamics between individuals and society, differs significantly from Durkheim's more static and structuralist view. While Durkheim saw society as an entity superior to individuals, Elias perceived society as a set of interconnected individuals, whose actions and relationships shape and are shaped (Gabriel and Mennell, 2011). Norbert Elias uses the concept of "social configurations" in his theory. For him, social configurations are networks of interdependence between individuals, which form dynamic and mutable structures. Elias rejects the idea of static social structures and points out that the relationships between people are constantly changing, which affects the organization and dynamics of societies. It seeks to understand how these interdependencies shape social behaviors and interactions over time (Cunha *et al.*, 2023).

Durkheim and Elias also diverge in their methodologies. Durkheim used empirical and statistical methods to study social facts, seeking to maintain rigorous scientific objectivity (Ferreira, 2010). Elias, on the other hand, took a more historical and procedural approach, considering long-term changes in social structures and human behaviors (Kilminster, 1991).

These differences reflect the distinct historical and sociopolitical contexts in which each author lived and worked. Durkheim was concerned with rapid industrialization and social fragmentation in nineteenth-century Europe, while Elias was more interested in the long durations and cultural transformations that occurred over the centuries (Vieira, 2021).

⁹ Psychogenesis is the field of study that investigates the origin and development of mental processes, psychic functions, and psychological causes that can influence or modify behavior. The term derives from the Greek, where *psyche* means "soul" and *genesis* means "origin" (Bartelmebs, 2014).

¹⁰ Sociogenesis refers to the cultural history of a group and is directly connected to the psychological development of individuals, influencing their ways of thinking, acting and relating within a society (Elias, 2000).

Durkheim emphasized the need for social cohesion to avoid anomie and fragmentation, while Elias emphasized interdependence and the continuous process of civilization as essential to understand social dynamics (Elias, 1997; Elias, 2000). The contributions of both continue to be fundamental to the understanding of contemporary social dynamics, enriching the field of sociology.

Durkheim's contributions are even more evident when we examine his writings in detail. When investigating the phenomenon of suicide, for example, he used a detailed empirical approach to demonstrate how suicide rates varied with the degree of social integration of individuals in different communities. Durkheim concluded that lack of social integration, or anomie, was one of the main causes of suicide, highlighting the importance of social cohesion for the mental health and well-being of individuals (Jones; Vogt, 1984).

Norbert Elias, in turn, developed a procedural approach to understanding the evolution of social and behavioral norms. In his work *The Civilizing Process*, Elias argues that changes in the norms of conduct and in the self-regulation of individuals are intrinsically linked to the development of social structures over time (Elias, 1997). He proposes that these changes are a result of complex historical processes that shape both individual psychology and social interactions. Elias's view of the interdependence between individuals and societies is exemplified by his metaphor of the "we-self scale," which illustrates how individual and collective identities are in constant adjustment. In this way, he understands that "the relationship between the identity-I and the identity-we of the individual is not established once and for all, but is subject to very specific transformations" (Elias, 1994, p. 4). This perspective contrasts with the more rigid view of Durkheim, who saw society as an entity with fixed norms and rules that shape individuals in a coherent and predictable way (Gabriel; Mennell, 2011).

Moral education, according to Durkheim, is a process of socialization that instills in individuals the norms and values necessary for social cohesion. Ferreira (2010) points out that Durkheim saw education as a means of self-control and rationalization, essential for the maintenance of social order. This focus on education as a mechanism of social integration is central to understanding Durkheim's view of the relationship between the individual and society. Elias also approaches education, but in a different way. He sees it as part of the civilizing process that shapes the behaviors and attitudes of individuals over time. In *The Civilizing Process*, Elias describes how norms of behavior evolve, becoming more complex and refined, reflecting changes in social structures and power relations (Elias, 2000), and

argues that these norms are not only imposed from the top down, but emerge from social interactions and the need to live in society.

Elias criticizes the traditional view of sociology, which often separates the individual from society. He argues that this separation is artificial and that individuals can only be understood in relation to their social context. Costa Oliveira (2021), reinforces this idea, stating that Elias sees social relations as dynamic and interdependent, with changes at one level inevitably affecting the other.

This interdependence is exemplified in Elias's analysis of figuration processes¹¹, where he examines how networks of interdependence shape individual and collective identities. Elias (2000) points out that these social figures are flexible and constantly changing, reflecting the complex interactions between individuals and their societies, and uses the example of civilizing processes to demonstrate how changes in social norms are influenced by historical, cultural and psychological factors.

Durkheim and Elias, although operating from different theoretical perspectives, recognize the importance of social structures in the formation of the individual. While Durkheim emphasizes cohesion and solidarity, Elias focuses on interdependence and the processes of civilization. These complementary approaches offer a rich and multifaceted view of the relationship between the individual and society, crucial for understanding contemporary social dynamics (Gabriel; Mennell, 2011; Elias, 1997).

Durkheim and Elias also share a concern with the influence of social structures on individual action, although they approach this aspect in different ways. Durkheim saw society as a coercive entity, whose norms and values shape the behavior of individuals from birth. In his theory, we understand that social facts, such as morality and religion, are externalities that exert pressure on individuals, shaping their actions and thoughts (Jones; Vogt, 1984). This perspective is crucial to understand how Durkheim saw social cohesion: as an essential element for order and stability within society (Ferreira, 2010).

On the other hand, Elias saw the formation of the individual as a continuous process of socialization, where norms and values are internalized through social interactions over time, in addition to emphasizing civilization as a long-term process, during which individuals learn to self-regulate their behaviors according to social expectations (Elias, 2000). This

¹¹ For Elias (2000), the concept of 'figuration' represents an expression of reality, functioning as a synthesis of the process of appropriation of social reality. In other words, 'figuration' is the conceptualization of the interactions between individuals, which constitute social reality itself.

internalization of norms is a key point in his theory of the civilizing process, where changes in norms of behavior reflect transformations in social structures and power relations (Costa Oliveira, 2021).

In addition, Elias's approach to "figuration" highlights how individuals are always in networks of interdependence, where their actions are simultaneously shaped by social structures and influence those structures. He argues that power relations and social norms are fluid and changeable, contrasting with Durkheim's more static view of social institutions (Gabriel; Mennell, 2011). This perspective is particularly relevant for the analysis of contemporary societies, where social interactions are increasingly complex and dynamic.

Durkheim and Elias also differ in their methodological approach. Durkheim is known for his rigorous empirical and statistical methodology, exemplified in his study of suicide, where he used quantitative data to analyze the social causes of the phenomenon (Jones; Vogt, 1984). He believed that sociology should be an objective science, capable of studying social facts as if they were "things" (Ferreira, 2010).

Elias, through a more qualitative and historical approach, emphasized the importance of understanding the long-term processes that shape societies. He criticized the reductionist view of separating the study of the individual and society, arguing that both should be studied together, as interdependent parts of a broader social process (Kilminster, 1991). This methodological approach allows for a more holistic analysis of social dynamics, taking into account both structural aspects and historical processes.

For Elias, social norms are not only imposed from the top down, but emerge from social interactions and are continuously (re)negotiated by individuals. In this way, he saw the development of behavioral norms as part of a civilizing process that involves the increasing complexity of social interactions and the need for self-regulation (Elias, 1997). This perspective is fundamental to understanding how changes in social norms and power relations influence the formation of individuals and societies.

In contrast, Durkheim observed social norms and institutions as entities that exert a determining influence on individuals. His structural-functionalist view emphasizes the importance of social institutions in maintaining order and cohesion, arguing that the disintegration of social norms leads to anomie and social chaos (Jones; Vogt, 1984).

By comparing the theories of Durkheim and Elias, it is evident that both offer valuable contributions to sociology, each with its own particular focus on the relationship between the individual and society. Together, these perspectives offer a multifaceted

understanding of social dynamics, enriching the field of sociology with their complementary and innovative approaches.

The contributions of these authors remain fundamental, offering a solid basis for the analysis and understanding of social interactions and cultural transformations over time. The impact of his theories goes beyond sociology, influencing fields such as education, psychology, and political science. His ideas about the importance of social structures and norms of behavior for the formation of individuals continue to be relevant, providing valuable *insights* for the analysis of modern societies and the complex social relations that characterize them (Kilminster, 1991; Friedland, 2005).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this study, we observed that the approaches of Émile Durkheim and Norbert Elias offer contrasting perspectives on the relationship between the individual and society. Durkheim adopts a structuralist view, in which society plays a dominant role, shaping the behaviors of individuals through institutions and social norms. For him, social facts have an objective and coercive existence, prior to individuals, and social cohesion is guaranteed by the internalization of these norms, which ensures stability and order in collective life. This view privileges the role of social institutions as forces that shape individuality within a broader and more orderly context.

On the other hand, Norbert Elias proposes a dynamic conception of the relationship between the individual and society. His idea of "social configurations" suggests that society is formed by networks of interdependence between individuals, which are constantly changing. Unlike Durkheim, Elias does not see institutions as fixed and immutable entities, but as part of a continuous process of historical and social change. The civilizing process, as described by Elias, illustrates how patterns of behavior and self-control evolve over time, reflecting interactions between individuals and transformations in social structures.

Although they start from different premises, the theories of Durkheim and Elias can be seen as complementary. While Durkheim highlights the role of institutions and social norms in maintaining order and cohesion, Elias brings to light the procedural and fluid character of social relations, emphasizing that changes in social interactions and configurations also shape individuals. These two perspectives, when dialoguing, offer a more complete view of social dynamics, allowing us to analyze both the stability and the transformations that occur in contemporary societies.

Thus, this study allowed us to consider that the theories of Durkheim and Elias enrich the field of sociology by providing different approaches to the role of the individual in society. While Durkheim helps us understand how social cohesion is maintained through norms and institutions, Elias allows us to see how these same norms and structures change over time, influenced by human interactions. Together, these approaches provide a broader understanding of social dynamics, essential for the analysis of the challenges and transformations that characterize today's society.

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