

FORUM THEORY & A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SCIENCE AND LEARNING

Forum Theory
&
A National Assembly of
Science and Learning

Thomas Colignatus

Samuel van Houten Genootschap

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JEL Journal of Economic Literature codes

- P16 Political Economy
- A11 Role of Economics • Role of Economists • Market for Economists
- C82 Methodology for Collecting, Estimating, and Organizing Macroeconomic Data • Data Access
- E01 Measurement and Data on National Income and Product Accounts and Wealth • Environmental Accounts
- E71 Role and Effects of Psychological, Emotional, Social, and Cognitive Factors on the Macro Economy
- E65 Studies of Particular Policy Episodes
- F34 International Lending and Debt Problems
- F53 International Agreements and Observance • International Organizations
- G01 Financial Crises
- G41 Role and Effects of Psychological, Emotional, Social, and Cognitive Factors on Decision Making in Financial Markets
- H12 Crisis Management
- H62 Deficit • Surplus
- H63 Debt • Debt Management • Sovereign Debt
- H83 Public Administration • Public Sector Accounting and Audits
- I18 Government Policy • Regulation • Public Health
- K14 Criminal Law
- K23 Regulated Industries and Administrative Law
- K31 Labor Law
- K42 Illegal Behavior and the Enforcement of Law
- M14 Corporate Culture • Diversity • Social Responsibility
- Q56 Environment and Development • Environment and Trade • Sustainability • Environmental Accounts and Accounting • Environmental Equity • Population Growth

- NUR
- 780 Economie en bedrijf algemeen
- 738 Wetenschapsfilosofie, logica en kentheorie
- 805 Bestuurs- en beleidskunde
- 916 Statistiek en methodologie

Abstract

There are eight inseparable storylines about the role of science and learning for democracy and its governance. *National statistics* originated around 1890 from *political economy* and the *management of the state* (Dutch “staathuishoudkunde”). National (economic) planning evolved decades later as a separate function. The governance of statistics and planning still leaves much to be desired. A solution approach may be found in *Forum Theory* and *A National Assembly of Science and Learning*. The argument is highlighted by these eight connected storylines.

- (1) There is *ensorship of science* since 1990 by the directorate of the Dutch Central Planning Bureau (CPB). This gives “*Dutch economics*”. Some important structural imbalances between economies in the European Union can be resolved when this censorship is lifted.
- (2) In *national accounting and environmental statistics* there is the approach by Nobel Prize in Economics laureate Jan Tinbergen (1903-1994) and UNEP Global 500 Award recipient Roefie Hueting (born 1929). This approach is not treated well in (environmental) economics and at CBS Statistics Netherlands.
- (3) There was the 2007+ financial crisis, the ordeal in Greece and the euro-crisis.
- (4) The UK Royal Statistical Society (RSS) rejected action when alerted that the *Brexit Referendum Question* wasn't fitting even for a statistical questionnaire.
- (5a) In 2018 the Greek Supreme Court convicted El.Stat Statistics Greece director Andreas Georgiou for breach of duty, because in November 2010 he sent figures to Eurostat *without first seeking approval by his board*. Statistical organisations ISI, RSS, ASA, IAOS, FENStatS and SFdS now protest against Georgiou's conviction as a miscarriage of justice, but they have failed to check (a) the original Greek law of March 9 2010 (that created El.Stat), and (b) the European Code of Practice of 2005: which both gave authority to the board. At that time the EU and IMF insisted upon a change of this law, which means that they acknowledged the original law that gave authority to the board.
- (5b) Walter Radermacher was DG of Eurostat in 2008-2016. He had started his career in environmental statistics. Since 1994 Radermacher treated the Tinbergen & Hueting approach with confusion, and thus hindered the monitoring of economic policy on climate change and extinction of species. In his position at Eurostat and involved with El.Stat in 2010, Radermacher must have known about the 2010 Greek law and the 2005 European code, but *he still collaborated with Georgiou in bypassing the authority of the El.Stat board*.
- (6) There are the governance and integrity of national statistical offices (NSO), in particular within the European Statistical System (ESS). The ESS changed its Code of Practice, from authority for a board in 2005 towards authority for only the director-general in 2011, so that DG = single head = head = board = NSO. However, a single person is much more at risk of commercial and political pressure. It is better to return to the situation of 2005 with multi-person boards.
- (7) The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic highlights the role of science and learning.
- (8) There is *Forum Theory*. Let researchers create *National Assemblies of Science and Learning*, to better deal with issues of science, knowledge and information in our ever more complex societies. With better investigation of problems, of which this book indicates some, we may get better policy making.

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Prolegomenon

High priests of high treason

March 7 2012 ¹

In the evolution of mankind there is a curious competition between the Prince and the Priest. The Prince bases his power upon the strong men, the knights of armour, the mafia mob, the army and police. The Priest foretells the paths in heaven, interpretes the astrological signs, reads the goat entrails, baptises the children and performs the rites of passage into the other world. In some cases the Prince is stronger than the Priest, and pays him with bread and wine to cement his power. In other cases the Priest is stronger than the Prince, and pays him with meat and beer to cement his power. In some cases Priest and Prince are united in one person and then he can pick his meal.

Traditionally there are three Estates: clergy, nobility, and the commoners (a.k.a. peasants). Charlemagne sent out his officials in pairs, clergy and secular. Yet he got his crown only from pope Leo. Apparently he held annual meetings with his "important men" (wikipedia ²). When parliaments developed they had those three estates in three Chambers. The dukes of Burgundy established the States General in 1464. ³ The separation of church and state apparently started with Martin Luther 1528. ⁴

In the French Revolution in 1789 the Chamber for the clergy was abolished. Apparently the high priests had committed high treason.

My suggestion is that the Priest could have developed into the Scientist. Studying the stars and wondering about the future could have become a serious enterprise. Many priests like Thomas Aquinas indeed had such imagination. Sadly the Priest failed. The wine tasted too good, the stars looked nicer at leisure. Rather than developing hard science, the Priest relied on magic with "hocus pocus" (thought to be derived from "hoc est corpus, Pilato passus"). ⁵

The Priest thus committed treason with respect to his historical and evolutionary role in society indeed.

In an alternative history, the Priest could have become the Scientist, and we would still have that third Chamber. We could call it the Economic Supreme Court. It would play an important role in scientific advice for government.

Thus, adaptation of the Trias Politica and installing an Economic Supreme Court would actually be a repair on the flow of history.

Si no è vero è ben trovato.

(One drawback to this tale is that some people might think that economists already are our high priests and that they committed high treason again.)

¹ <http://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2012/03/07/high-priests-of-high-treason/>

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_of_the_Carolingian_Empire

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/States-General_of_the_Netherlands

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation_of_church_and_state

⁵ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hocus_Pocus_\(magic\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hocus_Pocus_(magic))

Part 1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Political economy and econometrics

This book is an exercise in political economy and econometrics.

- *Economics* is the field that studies human behaviour towards optimisation, and concerning the use of scarce means for alternative ends.
- *Political economy* concerns the management of a state or a political unit. It focuses upon the subject (the state) and not the approach. Proper analysis of the subject requires other fields like law, history, (social) psychology, etcetera.
- *Econometrics* combines economics or political economy with mathematical modeling and empirical analysis by means of statistical methods. It is no specialisation but a generalisation, as it requires the use of more fields.
- *National accounting and national statistics* originated in the context of political economy, see **Appendix 38** for the history in Holland. Section 20.1 discusses the distinction between accountancy (*application of rules*) and statistics (*research on reality*).

The subject of this book is that the management of a state relies upon science and learning, and all three upon (1) (low level) data and (high level) information generated by national accounting and statistics, (2) information by planning.

On many aspects in this book, the present author is only a generalist and no specialist. It remains possible to highlight questions though. One would especially be interested in questions that may be overlooked by specialists.

1.2 Forum theory and Assemblies of Science and Learning

The main argument of this book suffers from these handicaps:

- A.D. de Groot (1914-2006) presented *Forum Theory* for science and learning. There is an English paper De Groot 1984 but there seems to be no easy access to it. My own main sources are in Dutch. I do not regard it as so very useful to extend much on *Forum Theory* when English readers cannot check easily. It would be better to refer to an English translation of De Groot & Visser (2003) that eventually would come available anyhow.
- *Assemblies of Science and Learning* do not exist yet, and it depends upon developments in each nation if they ever come about, in what format.

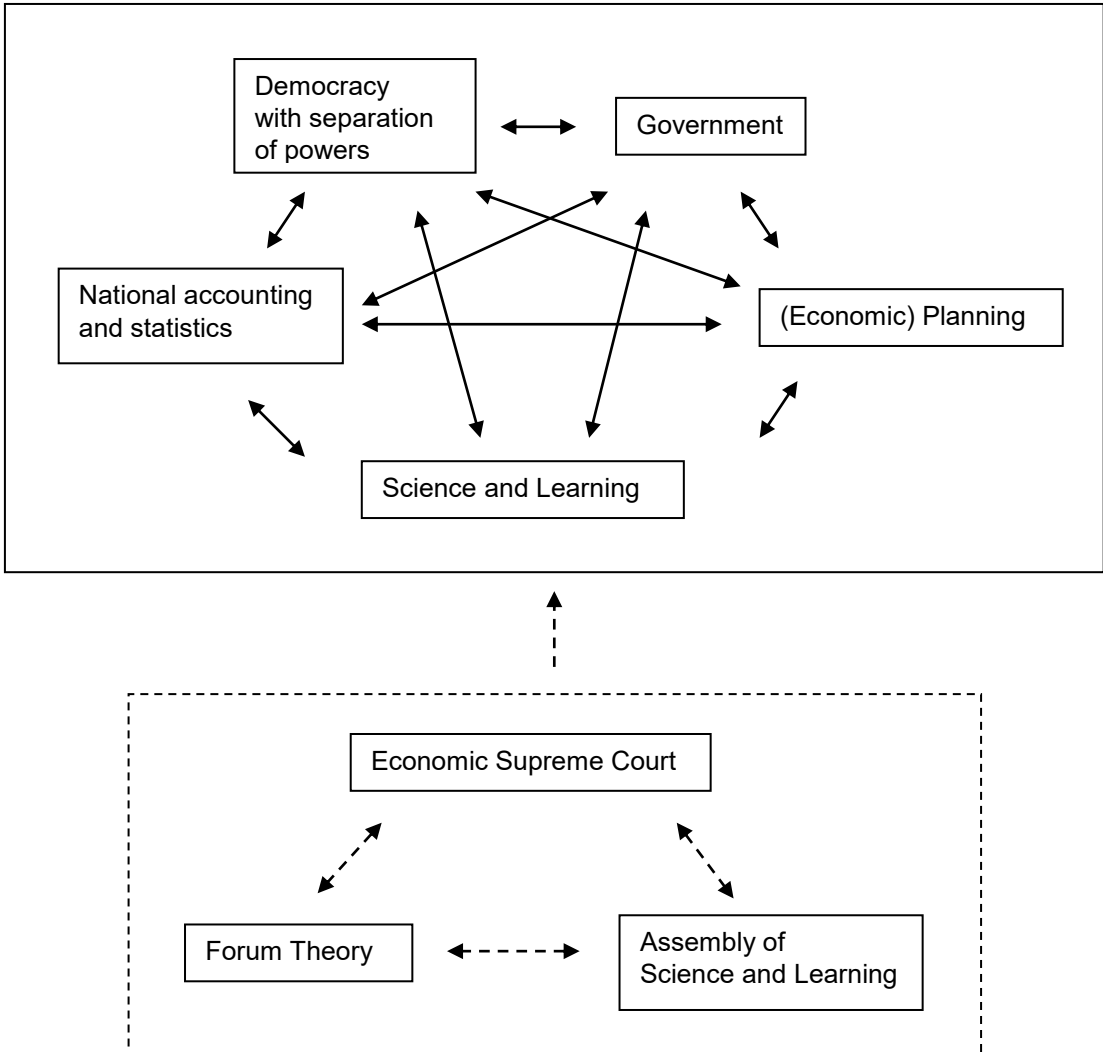
Subsequently, I cannot write much on the main argument of this book. The discussion below will mainly collect the relevant storylines and indicate why it makes sense to strengthen the forum and create such assemblies.

1.3 A diagram

Figure 1 gives the conventional mind map of democracy. National government has the separation of powers of the Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary. Often people wrongly associate “government” with the executive. The National Statistical Office (NSO) provides national accounts and statistics of the past. The planning agencies look to the future. Science and Learning are at academia and research

institutes. The news in this book are the *Economic Supreme Court* as part of government for planning, and *Forum Theory* and the *Assembly of Science and Learning*.

Figure 1. Mind map of convention (solid) and the news (dashed)



1.4 Genesis of this book and the storylines

This book started while writing Colignatus (2020a) (THAENAES). Looking at national accounting and environmental statistics at CBS Statistics Netherlands, the name of Walter Radermacher came up. A check showed that he had started in environmental statistics and had become director general (DG) of Eurostat, and there had become involved with Statistics Greece. Subsequently there arose eight inseparable storylines and roots for this book, fitting above diagram.

2. *Eight inseparable storylines and roots for this book*

This book highlights eight inseparable storylines. The first seven are roots for this book and the 8th issue of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic forms a confirmation.

2.1 *From Central Planning Bureau to Economic Supreme Court*

Colignatus (2000, 2011) discusses mass unemployment and the structure of national economic planning. The *Trias Politica* structure of current democracy allows too much room for political manipulation within economic planning. The solution is the extension with an Economics Supreme Court, see Chapter 14, into a *Tessares Politica*. In Holland, the Central Planning Bureau (CPB) is supposed to be a scientific institute but mass unemployment in Holland since 1970 can be explained by taking into account that there have not been adequate safeguards, either in respect by policy makers for CPB or in processes internal to economic science. Since 1990 there is censorship of science continuing to this day of writing. In 1988 / 1989 an official from the government bureaucracy, Gerrit Zalm, see Chapter 34, was appointed director of CPB without adequate background in science. Overall, the situation gives rise to the term “*Dutch economics*”.

2.2 *Environmental economics and national accounting*

There was environmental economics. Colignatus (2008) “*The Old Man and the SNI*” (now eSNI) is an interview with Roefie Hueting (born 1929). Jan Tinbergen, the Nobel Prize in Economics laureate of 1969, had been a pioneer in national accounting at CBS Statistics Netherlands already in the 1930s. Tinbergen read an article by Hueting 1968 that there still was a major error in *national accounting on the environment*. Tinbergen agreed with Hueting’s insight and advised CBS Statistics Netherlands to appoint Hueting in 1969 with the task to correct the national accounts for damages to the environment. Eventually Hueting found the solution approach of environmentally sustainable national income (eSNI) and the distance $e\Delta = NI - eSNI$ towards environmental sustainability. The Tinbergen & Hueting (1991) article presents that solution approach and also expresses Tinbergen’s support. The way how CBS handled the analysis is very problematic, and results into the case of “*Dutch national accounting*”. Colignatus (2009a) (2020a) (THAENAES) looks at the reception of the Tinbergen & Hueting approach and eSNI. See there for the problem at CBS, but it must be indicated here.

The Colignatus (2008) interview with Hueting also mentioned Walter Radermacher, who had become DG of Eurostat in 2008-2016, and who had started in environmental statistics at the German Statistisches Bundesamt. Radermacher judged eSNI to be politics rather than science, which Tinbergen, Hueting and I regard as a confusion. eSNI is based upon *conditional assumptions* required for statistical measurement and not upon *policy decisions*. In 2019, there was the new book Hueting & De Boer (2019), in which these authors present their analysis afresh, while I had assisted them at points, making drafts for better didactics. With their book finished, I had occasion in 2019 and 2020 to continue with the evaluation of the reception of the analysis, and also to look deeper at Radermacher’s confusion, see Chapter 33 below on this.

2.3 *The 2007+ financial crisis, Greece and the subsequent euro crisis*

There was also the 2007+ financial crisis. Colignatus (2000, 2011) had warned in 2000 that the financial system was risky. Subsequently, the risk materialised, and the problem with the Greek deficit and debt turned the financial crisis into the euro-crisis. Colignatus (2011b) is my discussion of a haircut on debt.⁶ Colignatus (2012b) collects papers about the crisis up to then. Remember how the two Marios saved Europe,⁷ though not tackling the main issues. For a perspective: apart from “*Greek statistics*” there is also “*Dutch economics*” to be wary about.⁸

See my weblog texts about Greece⁹ and statistics.¹⁰ Colignatus (2012a) is a letter¹¹ to the *International Statistical Institute* (ISI), suggesting that ISI sets up an investigation into the issue of Greek statistics and El.Stat Statistics Greece. I called attention to the point that not only director Georgiou but also the statistic and econometric members of the dismissed board of El.Stat were fellow scientists who deserved a fair hearing.

NB. Any investigation should at least follow the money. I also alerted ISI to some allegations of financial speculations on Credit Default Swaps (CDS),¹² see Section 30.8 below. Greek courts in 2013 and 2014 convicted economist and Greek parliamentarian Panos Kammenos for libel on such allegations,¹³ see Section 30.8.2. I still wonder (as wikipedia is a portal, and no source, and cannot really give answers) whether Interpol has investigated (and internet blogs neither provide such information). I later discovered that Georgiou (2009) (October 1) at IMF had been studying government policy w.r.t. financial speculation.¹⁴

2.4 *Brexit and a statistically inadequate 2016 Referendum Question*

There was Brexit. The outcome of the 2016 Brexit referendum caused me to look into the issue. The *Referendum Question* would likely be rejected (at least I do) for a statistical questionnaire, as highly confusing. It is binary only in legal manner but not on policy choices. See my reports in the Newsletter of the UK *Royal Economic Society* (RES).¹⁵ The UK Electoral Commission apparently is unaware of voting paradoxes, and uses a criterion that “people understand the question” while people are actually confused about policy issues and consequences.¹⁶ When I wrote the UK *Royal Statistical Society* (RSS) about the issue, their reaction was dismissive, and the RSS executive director Hetan Shah appeared to have no background in statistics, see Section 39.11.

⁶ <http://thomascool.eu/Papers/Drtp/Crisis-2007plus/2011-11-18-Haircut.html>

⁷ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2015/03/28/a-dangerous-trick-by-the-two-marios/>

⁸ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2012/02/19/dutch-censorship-versus-greek-statistics/>

⁹ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/?s=Greece>

¹⁰ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/?s=statistics>

¹¹ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2012/06/10/letter-to-the-isi-on-greek-statistics/>

¹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20120111064120/http://www.sovereignindependent.com/?p=21184>

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panos_Kammenos#Political_positions_and_controversies

¹⁴ A.V. Georgiou, “Excessive Lending, Leverage, and Risk-Taking in the Presence of Bailout Expectations”, IMF WP/09/233, 2009.

¹⁵ <https://www.res.org.uk/site-search.html?q=Colignatus>

¹⁶ <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/elections-and-referendums/past-elections-and-referendums/eu-referendum/testing-eu-referendum-question>

2.5 *The role of statistics in Environment, Greece and Brexit*

There were the statistical organisations and their journals. When I looked at the journals of official statistics for making reviews of the Hueting & De Boer (2019) book, like (a) the *Journal of Official Statistics* or (b) the *Statistical Journal of the IAOS* or (c) *EURONA: the Eurostat Review on National Accounts and Macroeconomic Indicators*, I also noticed discussions about the EI.Stat and Georgiou case, like Georgiou (2019). I saw statements by ISI and other statistical organisations, but all defending only director Georgiou and mostly neglecting the other fellow statisticians who had been dismissed from the board.

Subsequently I also discovered:

- (i) Protests by ISI and other statistical organisations neglected the very law of March 9 2010 that established the EI.Stat board as the governing body. They referred to a later law that established the EI.Stat director as the single authority. Thus, they hadn't checked for the proper law.
- (ii) There arose the *combination* that Walter Radermacher as DG of Eurostat also was involved with Statistics Greece. From his position and involvement, Radermacher must have known that the March 9 2010 law gave authority to the board, but he still makes the same reference error ?
- (iii) Also Georgiou (2019) refers to the *European Code of Practice 2011*, while the 2005 Code was in force when he was in breach of duty in 2010. He must have known that he originally worked under the 2005 Code, but refers to a later code ?

2.6 *Governance of CBS Statistics Netherlands*

There was the governance of CBS Statistics Netherlands. Contacting CBS on the Hueting & De Boer (2019) book (see their kind invitation for an internal presentation ¹⁷), I observed that its governance had been changed in 2016. The independent Dutch Central Commission for Statistics (CCS) that had existed since 1892 had been abolished in 2016. All authority had been given to the DG, so that DG = chief = single head = head = board = CCS = CBS. Since Colignatus (2008) & (2020a) (THAENAES) also use interviews with CBS former deputy DG H.K. van Tuinen, I asked him about his view on this. He gave me the letters of protest addressed to the Dutch Senate by the former CBS DG Van Noort and deputy DG Van Tuinen (2016). ¹⁸ The abolition of CCS thus gets attention in Chapter 21.

2.7 *Forum Theory*

In earlier years I had been writing on Forum Theory. Chapter 7 gives an overview of this writing. The forum of science and learning had obviously failed on these issues on Environment, Greece and Brexit, and even in this seemingly innocuous area of statistics. Up to the writing of this book, I had very much relied upon the notion of an *Economic Supreme Court (ESC)*, see Colignatus (2000, 2011). However, such an ESC would tend to look at planning for the future and not at statistics of the past. This puts the following question in focus:

¹⁷ <http://www.sni-hueting.info/EN/NA-eSNI/index.html>

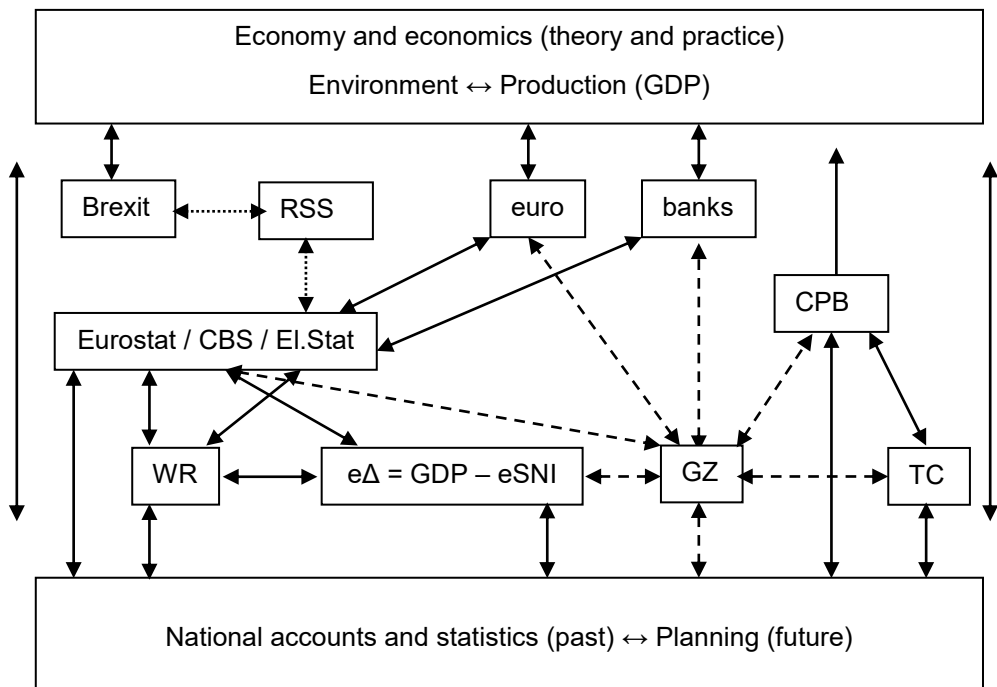
¹⁸ <http://thomascool.eu/Others/2016-oudCBS-VanNoort-VanTuinen-aan-EersteKamer-over-CCS-en-CBS.pdf>

What kind of organisation in science and learning might have prevented these mishaps to develop into the disasters that they have become ?
 What kind of organisation might have produced the information in time, and provided sound advice to the relevant decision makers ?

2.8 A second diagram

The first seven storylines generate the second diagram in **Figure 2**. This diagram would basically fit within the first diagram in Section 1.3.

Figure 2. Mind map of the seven storylines ¹⁹



Legend: WR = Walter Radermacher, GZ = Gerrit Zalm, TC = Thomas Colignatus,
 CBS = Statistics Netherlands, CPB = Dutch Central Planning Bureau,
 RSS = UK Royal Statistical Society

2.9 The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic

No discussion about the role of science and learning for society will seem complete without a perspective upon pandemics, like with the SARS-CoV-2 virus and Covid-19 disease. The 2nd edition of this book of July 2020 has the pandemic as the 8th storyline, in Chapter 36. Originally, the 1st edition of this book appeared on February 9 2020, just after the WHO *Public Health Emergency of International Concern* (PHEIC) of January 30 and before the pandemic declaration of March 11.

¹⁹ See Hueting & De Boer (2019) for the finding in Hueting's thesis 1974, translation 1980, that the environment, due to the new scarcity, *has become part of the subject matter of economics*. Alongside GDP for production there is eSNI = eGDP for environmentally sustainable production.

2.10 Towards a possible answer

The 1st edition of this book had the first seven storylines. The 8th storyline of specifically the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic of the first half of 2020 comes as *confirmation in a case already built*. There is no need to fundamentally rewrite this book, and it suffices to affix the chapter on the pandemic. However, the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic changed the world for years to come and a discussion is no longer complete without discussing it. NB. The SARS-CoV epidemic of 2003 had been part of my research experience since 2003 when I worked at Erasmus MC in 2002-2004 on the modeling of screening for the human papilloma virus (HPV) and cervical cancer. Warnings about pandemics form an ingredient of environmental sustainability. For this book, the pandemic may attract readers from public health who would tend to regard the pandemic as their point of departure. For all readers and thus also those new ones: the overall point of entry for this book forms the management of the relation of *society* on one hand and *science and learning* on the other hand. Relevant distinctions are (i) between statistics and planning, and (ii) between advice (advisor) and decision making (politics) and control of the quality of information (expertise) – no longer only two but three functions.

The first seven storylines other than the pandemic already generated a rather large puzzle. Clear angles have been:

- For official statistics, it remains important to distinguish its management and its researchers. The researchers would be encouraged to study with an open mind and without pressure. Researchers are human and can make errors, and those errors can be discussed under colleagues and be reconsidered. Researchers are accountable on scientific integrity. Management is accountable for management issues. Criticism on official statistics unavoidably causes what some may see as pressure, but many issues would commonly be directed at management and not at individual researchers for who it would be important to maintain their open mind.
- Official statistics and national accounting has been maltreating the Tinbergen & Hueting approach. *Somehow* younger statisticians at official statistics no longer have the theoretical background to understand this approach. They neither have the respect to properly study it. This better changes. For an econometrician, the Tinbergen & Hueting approach is a no-brainer.
- Walter Radermacher was deficient as an environmental accountant. Who is deficient in his own area of expertise should rather not be trusted with responsibility for also other areas. (However, he may have gained popularity by giving a (wrong) reason to reject the Tinbergen & Hueting approach, when others did not know much about that approach but were not inclined to change and were happy to be given such an excuse.)
- In the Georgiou case, organisations in official statistics fail to check the facts, and suffer from mass hysteria. They treat the other statisticians of the EI.Stat board of 2010 in biased manner. *When information is lacking, one should not take sides, but establish a proper investigation.*
- The governance and integrity of national statistical offices (NSO) has been affected and is at stake. The European Statistical System (ESS) has arranged that all authority now is assigned to the DG = chief = single head = head = board = NSO. This is unwise, and it is better to have multi-person boards.

- Subsequently, there is the issue of the *overall governance* of science and learning.

For political economy, the main steps are the recognition of the *Economic Supreme Court* and *Forum Theory* and the suggestion of a *National Assembly of Science and Learning*. Arranging the puzzle, my presumption is that the last point in above longer list is most important for the world at large. The last two points in the list are the most relevant for the world of official statistics itself. Other issues are subsidiary to governance and integrity. However, the Tinbergen & Hueting approach is vital for the world too, and there is an urgent need for repair of past errors in management.

For the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic it is important to refer to Colignatus (2020c), with the redesign of didactics of some epidemiological models. In my current position I cannot contribute to actual epidemiological modeling but I may help a bit on didactics for quantitative researchers and students new to this area. The *didactic* exercise also clarifies that if the pandemic had run its course with $R_0 = 4$ and an infection fatality factor of 1.5% in Holland with 17.4 million persons then some 250,000 deaths could have occurred instead of the current 9000 deaths (517 per million, all excess mortality²⁰). The conditional (*if*) is a big one, because said scenario does not account for endogenous reactions to rising mortality. Perhaps Sweden indicates such endogenous reactions, with 388 per million (4000 deaths on 10.3 million persons, all excess mortality),²¹ though this does not correct for Sweden's much lower population density.²² (Pueyo (2020),²³ overall) With endogenous reactions, the base scenario might be a factor 10 lower (at 25,000 rather than 250,000 deaths) before making cost-effectiveness calculations on policy, but both would involve an economic downturn anyway (Koolman (2020),²⁴ Dutch²⁵). For cost-effectiveness, see Juneau et al. (2020). The statistical information about the pandemic still is remarkably weak but it would seem to be a correct conclusion that Holland and its Center for Disease Control RIVM did not do well, though it avoided a much worse outcome. See Chapter 36 for a discussion. Interconnections are: (1) RIVM also plays a role concerning the Tinbergen & Hueting analysis on environmental sustainability, see Colignatus (2020a). (2) In May 2020 Angelique Berg has been appointed as DG CBS Statistics Netherlands,²⁶ who has little background in statistics and who was DG Public Health since 2015 and who there did not prepare Holland for the pandemic, see e.g. Section 36.7. Her appointment was upon recommendation by the CBS advisory commission chaired by Gerrit Zalm, see Chapter 34.

²⁰ <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-excess-mortality>

²¹ <https://analysis.covid19healthsystem.org/index.php/2020/06/04/how-comparable-is-covid-19-mortality-across-countries/>

²² <https://www.maurice.nl/2020/04/27/zweedse-aanpak-kost-30-doden-per-dag-meer-2/>

²³ <https://medium.com/@tomaspueyo/coronavirus-should-we-aim-for-herd-immunity-like-sweden-b1de3348e88b>

²⁴ <https://aheblog.com/2020/05/28/its-the-virus-stupid/>

²⁵ <https://esb.nu/blog/20059629/het-is-het-virus-niet-de-lockdown>

²⁶ <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/corporate/2020/21/angelique-berg-appointed-as-new-director-general-of-cbs>

3. Democracy and its governance with and by science and learning

3.1 Economic planning

Colignatus (2000, 2011) looks at economic planning:

- Econometricians must forecast what policy makers will do in the future.
- Complications are: Policy makers might uncritically follow such forecasts (“self-fulfilling prophecies”) or policy makers might even deliberately do the opposite of the forecast.
- The governance of the Dutch Central Planning Bureau (CPB) appears to be deficient, with also censorship of science and abuse of power since 1990 by the directorship.²⁷

Colignatus (2000, 2011) gives the logic of an Economic Supreme Court (ESC), as an extension of the *Trias Politica* with a fourth pillar into a *Tessares Politica*.²⁸

Galbraith 2019 “The next great transformation”²⁹ (of which I read only the first page) would seem to get a partial answer from the suggestion of an Economic Supreme Court per nation.^{30 31}

3.2 Research fields other than economics

While the ESC is a logical approach from the point of view of Political Economy, with its subject of the management of the state – and “management” is actually the same as “economics” – there arises the question what to do with the other fields in science and the humanities, like psychology, biology, physics and engineering, and so on. Would we need to extend the *Tessares Politica* with a *Psychology Supreme Court*, and a *Biology Supreme Court*, and so on ?

A clear answer is *no*: the issue is the management of the state, and thus we are dealing with economics, and thus the extension with an *Economic Supreme Court* should be adequate. When relevant, all issues on psychology, biology etcetera can be translated into *issues of management* (e.g. how to adapt the law to a particular issue), and then be submitted to all branches of the *Tessera Politica*: legislative, executive, judiciary, and economic supreme court.

3.3 But science and learning themselves are not perfect

As correct as this is, it still causes some dissatisfaction. Over the years I have encountered various topics with these properties:

- (i) mishaps that are internal to science
- (ii) huge consequence for policy making and society.

²⁷ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/about/>

²⁸ I have used “tetras” en “tessera” but Ancient Greek “tessares” (foursome) is best.

²⁹ <https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/the-next-great-transformation-by-james-k-galbraith-2019-11?barrier=accesspaylog>

³⁰ <http://thomascool.eu/Papers/Drgtpe/Index.html>

³¹ <http://thomascool.eu/Papers/Environment/2020-01-31-THAENAES.pdf>

Examples of *mishaps internal to science* are:

- (a) Research in didactics and teaching of mathematics, Colignatus (2015e),³² see e.g. Chapter 10.
- (b) Political science on electoral systems, see Colignatus (2020b),³³ see Chapters 11 and 12
- (c) Demographers do not succeed in clarifying to Climate Change engineers (collaborating in UNFCCC) what the relevance of education and family planning would be for the control of the world population and its impact on climate change, see Chapter 13.

If one could establish some misdemeanor somewhere then these cases are similar to the CPB-directorate censoring science (while CPB is supposed to be scientific), and the CBS maltreating the Tinbergen & Huetting approach (while CBS is supposed to be scientific), and in this book also the EI.Stat director breaching his duty and sending figures to Eurostat without seeking approval by his board.

This risk of mishaps exists more in general, whenever there is a science-society overlap. *Scientific and learned organisations*, like the statistical organisations ASA and RSS mentioned above, are focused upon research and the publication of journals, and not upon management (economics) of science and learning. The incompetence of the statistical organisations in the EI.Stat case is shocking, but actually the executive bodies of such organisations are not trained and focused on management (economics) of science and learning. (There is also the psychology that *managers like directors* and *dislike people who are dismissed* like the other EI.Stat board members.)

3.4 *Defence, support and promotion of science and learning*

Philosopher of science A.D. de Groot developed “*forum theory*”, see De Groot & Visser (2003) (in Dutch)³⁴ and Chapter 7 below. Above phenomena arise when the forum doesn’t function properly. It is management of science and learning to make sure that the forum functions in adequate manner. The world needs bodies for such management.

Some might claim a hierarchy: that professors are more informed about science and learning than the other members of the faculty and the PhD students. This gives the conventional hierarchical approach with top professors appointed at the national academy. Instead, forum theory suggests that science and learning are performed by all people involved, and there are ample arguments to apply the “one woman, one vote” principle also to the work floor in science and learning.

The Prolegomenon on page 17 highlights the genesis of current parliaments (locations to talk) at the time of Charlemagne in 800 AD.³⁵ The EU started as a collaboration of Member States and subsequently developed a European Parliament. Colignatus (2005) reflected that the United Nations require a World Parliament. In fact, citizens can already create a World Parliament and do not need to wait for the UN.

³² <https://zenodo.org/communities/re-engineering-math-ed>

³³ <https://www.aps.org/units/fps/newsletters/202001/index.cfm>

³⁴ <https://www.knaw.nl/nl/actueel/publicaties/het-forumwaarmerk-van-wetenschap>

³⁵ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2012/03/07/high-priests-of-high-treason/>

In similar fashion, the world of science and learning may create *National Assemblies of Science and Learning*, with the task to make the forum work adequately in a nation, manage science and learning, and monitor their quality.

- The *Floor of the Assembly* would be elected by all researchers in a nation (registered at the Assembly of Science and Learning)
- The *Senate of the Assembly* could be the current National Academia of Science and Learning. (In Holland the KNAW, dating from Napoleon.)

An example is that Assemblies of Science and Learning could support and promote open access publishing, without the current excessive “article processing charges” (APC), see my proposal for author databases at their alma mater ³⁶ (and see perhaps discussions at the Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP)). ³⁷

Key points are:

- Assemblies of Science and Learning would supervise national statistics.
- Assemblies of Science and Learning can enact investigations as discussed here on the EI.Stat, CBS and CPB cases.

PM. On the notion of *democracy with and by science and learning*, Dutch readers may be interested in Colignatus (2019a).

3.5 *Creation of Assemblies of Science and Learning*

The creation of an Assembly of Science and Learning is rather straightforward. A group or association of scientists and/or scholars – and do not think about only universities but include the research institutes and possibly think tanks – sets up a foundation of such name, (i) with a governance structure that is comparable to a national parliament, with a Floor (elected in equal proportions, see Colignatus (2020b), by an electorate of registered researchers) and a Senate (likely the national academy), (ii) with a stipulation who might be eligible for the electorate (masters degree, having research at least once in the last 20% of one’s life), and a registry of the (screened, accepted and paying) actual electorate. The Floor might consist of 99 members with a term of three years and annual replacement of 33 members. Subsequently, the various associations of science and the learned societies are informed, they pass on the information, members of the electorate are recruited, elections are organised, the Floor has a constitutional assembly, and starts its daily routine.

At first the Floor might convene perhaps twice a week, with four working days for its members. The annual salary of a member then is 4/5 of EUR 50 thousand. The annual wage bill would be EUR 99 × 40 thousand ≈ 4 million. Institutes like universities would support the Floor by maintaining employment and counting membership of the Floor like teaching or research. The membership fee for the electorate would be used to pay for the salaries of elected members of the Floor who originate from a less financially strong background. With 100,000 accepted members in the electorate and an annual membership of EUR 50, then a budget

³⁶ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2016/10/12/letter-to-vsnu-and-others-on-membership-dues-and-open-access-publishing/>

³⁷ <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/about/>

of EUR 5 million would be available to cover costs. Eventually, the membership would grow to all researchers in a country.

The following are examples of associations who might either set up a new foundation or morph into the Assembly of Science and Learning. Such are examples only. Basically any motivated and resourceful group can do so.

USA	American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) ^{38 39} American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). ^{40 41}
UK	British Science Association ^{42 43} The British Academy ^{44 45}
Holland	Koninklijke Hollandse Maatschappij der Wetenschappen ^{46 47} or WOinActie ⁴⁸

Ever since the creation of national academies, there was the discussion about the allocation of seats. It often was easier to e.g. set up a “national academy of medicine” than try to discuss the number of seats for doctors in the national academy. One extreme is to grant each field an equal share, another extreme is to allocate in proportion to the number of graduates, or gainful employment in the economy. **Table 1** is an example somewhere between these extremes.

Table 1. Example seat allocation in a Floor of Science and Learning

15	Science
15	Engineering
3	Mathematics
10	Teaching (evidence based)
15	Humanities (other)
15	Social sciences
5	Medicine
3	Law
1	Theology & Religious studies
17	Free
99	<i>Total</i>

A tricky issue is that mathematics would generally not be regarded as an empirical science and thus actually belongs to the humanities, even though it is

³⁸ <https://www.aaas.org/mission>

³⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Association_for_the_Advancement_of_Science

⁴⁰ <https://www.acls.org/>

⁴¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Council_of_Learned_Societies

⁴² <https://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/>

⁴³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Science_Association

⁴⁴ <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/about>

⁴⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Academy

⁴⁶ https://www.khmw.nl/over_ons/

⁴⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koninklijke_Hollandsche_Maatschappij_der_Wetenschappen

⁴⁸ <https://woinactie.blogspot.com/p/over-wo-in-actie.html>

considered to be “exact”.⁴⁹ Theology might not be relevant here, i.e. not be regarded as one of the sciences or humanities, since the notion of a supreme being is as diverse as humanity itself, and perhaps religious studies might be regarded as a combination of history and sociology of religion. On the other hand, theology was the dominant faculty in the Middle Ages, and it would not be wise to exclude a prime interest for large sections of the population and encourage an environment with its own bubble outside of science and learning.

⁴⁹ <https://boycottholland.wordpress.com/2015/10/02/pierre-van-hiele-and-gerald-goldin-2/>

4. Conclusions upfront

(1) In the Netherlands, the Central Commission for Statistics (CCS) was created in 1892. There appeared to exist a great demand for statistical data, so subsequently in 1899 CBS Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek) was created, with a Director and department within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The CCS determined the programme (also non-CBS) and the CBS Director established the actual figures. In 2003 the DG had established an internal board for CBS itself, consisting of three persons while the deputy DG was charged with looking after the quality of the data. An Eurostat peer review by O'Hanlon et al. (2015) was quite positive about this structure. However, the ordeal with El.Stat Statistics Greece caused a reflex within Eurostat and the European Statistical System (ESS) to put all authority in the hands of only the director of the National Statistical Office (NSO). Also in Holland the law has been adapted now, so that multiperson head = board = CCS = CBS = DG = single chief. This development is unfortunate. It is better to return to the status quo ante. The role of information in society is too important to put all responsibility for national statistics both in the hands of a single person and closer to politics. Advisable for the countries in the ESS is to have a CCS for the work programme (also non-CBS) and the DG as the chair of a multi-person board with collective responsibility.

(2) The ESS Code of Practice of 2005 allowed that a statistical authority was headed by a multiperson board – apparently also to fit the Dutch situation, that was looked upon with favour by Eurostat. This Code of Practice was changed in 2011, potentially to better fit the ambition for Greece, to encourage the interpretation that DG = chief = single head = head = board = NSO. The discussion about the Greek case is much contaminated by authors who refer to the 2011 Code while they should refer to the 2005 Code that was in force in 2010.

(3) (i) The March 2010 law for El.Stat apparently had created a board that was also responsible for the data. (ii) The memorandum by the Greek government and the IMF in 2012 stipulated that this had to change. We can infer that the IMF in 2012 agreed that the situation in 2010 according to the Greek government and law gave authority to the El.Stat board for the data too, otherwise IMF would not have insisted upon change. (iii) The Greek Supreme Court in 2018 judged that the Greek law of 2010 was that Andreas Georgiou, director of El.Stat, had to seek approval by the board for the data that he submitted to Eurostat. (iv) Georgiou himself actually agreed with this, since in 2010 he had engaged in confidential efforts – advised by Eurostat's representative Hallgrímur Snorrason, former DG of Statistics Iceland – to have the law of March 2010 adapted, in order to assign all responsibility to himself as the director. The law was indeed already much adapted in December 2010. (v) However, apart from this confidential effort supported by Snorrason, and, in the open, to the board of El.Stat in 2010, to the Greek courts, to outside statistical organisations and to the (international) press, Georgiou claimed that legally only he, the director, was responsible for the data. Supported by Snorrason, he stated this to statistical colleagues of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), the UK Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and the American Statistical

Association (ASA), and he stated this while he and Snorrason and Eurostat knew that he actually wasn't. (vi) The Greek Supreme Court in 2018 convicted Georgiou for a breach of duty, since he hadn't sought approval by the board for the figures that he sent to Eurostat. He was guilty as charged. If he has been under oath, he also committed perjury. It is useful to put Eurostat and Snorrason under oath too. To his statistical colleagues, Snorrason presents himself as an independent outsider but he was a participant, and hired as a representative of Eurostat.

(4) Walter Radermacher, director at Eurostat 2008-2016, made his career in environmental statistics, becoming (deputy) director of the German Statistisches Bundesamt in 2003-2008 before going to Eurostat. His work shows misconceptions, logical errors and misrepresentation about the approach by Jan Tinbergen (Nobel Prize in economics 1969) and Roefie Hueting (UNEP Global 500 Award 1994) about environmentally sustainable national income (eSNI). With his positions, Radermacher has played a key role in blocking the Tinbergen & Hueting approach. With such errors in his field of expertise it is remarkable that he made this career. But, blocking eSNI has been popular amongst national accountants, and this might explain such career. In the case of EI.Stat 2010, he knew that Georgiou should not bypass the board but still assisted him in doing so, thus assisting him in violating the law of an EU Member State. Radermacher did not inform his colleagues at ISI, RSS, ASA, IAOS, FENStatS and SFdS but stimulated them while covering up the true state of affairs. He also put these falsehoods in his thesis of 2019 at Sapienza Univ. di Roma.

(5) The world of science and learning is advised to create an *Assembly of Science and Learning* per nation. A Floor would be elected by national scientists and scholars, and the Senate could be formed by the national Academia of Science and Learning. The governance of statistics is only one of many other cases that require attention. The role of information becomes ever more crucial for society, and some organised quality control by the world of science and learning thus becomes crucial too. An *Assembly of Science and Learning* in a nation could monitor the quality of science and learning in a nation. Such assemblies provide for an environment in which such investigations, as discussed here, can be organised and monitored.

(6) The financial and Eurozone crises and the unemployment in Southern Europe have been much larger than otherwise could have been the case because of "*Dutch economics*". There is censorship of science since 1990 by the directorate of the Dutch Central Planning Bureau (CPB). Fellow economists, policy makers and the general public are blocked from key new insights that, when published, will allow for more and better employment and welfare. It is unwise to blame much unnecessary hardship to the directorate of CPB. Each nation better takes responsibility for its own actions. The economic conditions in Southern Europe were favourable at first because of the lower rate of interest due to the convergence into the euro. Southern European countries had an opportunity to increase their productivity. History took another turn. Apart from this, the CPB case must be judged on itself and with criteria of science. The world should not accept censorship of science. Thus my advice is to boycott Holland till the censorship by the directorate of CPB has been lifted.

5. Structure of this book

5.1 Top-down versus bottom-up

An Anglo-Saxon manner of exposition is bottom-up, compare Common Law, going from the particular to the more general – if there is any generality anyhow. A Continental approach is top-down, compare Roman law, with first a general theory and then cataloguing the particulars. This books has a mixture of these.

After *Part 1* with the introduction, *Part 2* has the main argument on *Forum Theory* and a *National Assembly of Science and Learning*. *Part 2* contains the main propositions of this book, and it is basically self-contained. It also sets the stage for the subsequent Parts with illustrating examples. The examples from economics, national accounting and statistics dominate the book, but *Part 3* emphasizes that there are many more problems in the world that require an *Assembly of Science and Learning* in each nation.

5.2 Education, democracy, world population

Part 3 provides indications for the research fields on education, democracy, and world population. Its chapters indicate problems that seem to be overlooked by the specialists in their fields and the chapters suggest solution approaches that fit theory and empirical research but also appeal to common sense. If I were a member of an Assembly of Science and Learning, then I would submit the chapters for discussion so that others (not only members of the Assembly) could recognise that it would be useful to have a hearing of the specialists. For example, political scientists on electoral systems now develop a tendency to refer to themselves as “electoral engineers” but they fundamentally lack a background in engineering and one would tend to warn the world of engineering. The example concerns the USA but this is easily translated to the UK and France. For Greece it is remarkable that the largest party in elections for the House of Parliament receives a bonus of 50 seats:⁵⁰ which is counterproductive since you would want to see that parties learn to respect each other and form coalitions.

5.3 Dutch economics

Part 4 is a top-down discussion of the notion of an Economic Supreme Court, and then focuses upon the example of unemployment. This Part also provides for the general macro-economic context of the Greek economy in 1990-2020, which is important for the subsequent Greek ordeal in statistics and its current economy.

The International Statistical Institute (ISI) claimed in 2013 that the Greek economy went wrong because it lacked adequate statistics, see **Appendix 40**, but this is reverse causality. ISI doesn't do macro-economics. Adequate statistics are a necessary but not sufficient condition for adequate policy making. The Greek economy went wrong because of its economic policies. The policy makers merely tried to *make it look good*, whatever the real figures. Our discussion on statistics does not quite concern a *Potemkin Village* (façades only) but rather a *House of*

⁵⁰ A portal no source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_Parliament#Election

Mirrors with different agents constructing their own distractions and narratives. Thus from economics we move onwards to official statistics and national accounting.

5.4 *Dutch official statistics and national accounting*

Part 5 is a top-down discussion on official statistics and national accounting. Since there is no “general framework” for such, it uses the particular Dutch situation. The discussion provides a wetting stone to judge the Greek case. Dutch official statistics has a sound reputation in the world of official statistics, and the International Statistical Institute (ISI) historically has its seat in the building of CBS Statistics Netherlands. However, in this Part we will also meet with the scandal of *Dutch national accounting* with respect to environmental sustainability.

5.5 *Greek statistics and the events in 2010*

For some readers the present recantation will rekindle bitter-sweet and even disgusting-hilarious memories of the events of 2010, when this Greek Drama etched itself in the collective memory of our generation.

We will use the term “Greek statistics” though “Greek national accounting” would be proper since the issue concerns the national budget deficit and debt.

In the *Conclusions upfront*, above, we already established – purely by referring to the *Greek law* – that El.Stat had a multiperson board and not a chief (single head). This observation is corroborated by the fact that the EU, Eurostat and IMF wanted this law to be changed, which means that they recognised the original setting. Obviously there is the judgement by the Greek Supreme Court that also used the actual law of 2010. Below we will elaborate on the details: not to further prove this elementary fact but to show how others evade it. We must check on the versions of the European Statistical System (ESS) *Code of Practice* 2005, 2011 and 2017.

Part 6 then looks at the details of the Greek case. The Georgiou case is a maze, with remarkable sloppiness in reporting by many, also about what Code of what year applies. Let us walk through this maze, step by step. Subsequently, while the major point has been established over and over again that Georgiou was guilty as charged, we can proceed with the more relevant issues. There is stewardship of how to publish a statistical figure that might send your country down the drain. There is the uproar of international protests by statisticians who didn’t do a proper fact-check on Georgiou’s breach of duty. Finally, we may give some attention to the hacking of Georgiou’s computer and the criminal charges on falsifying figures. (These tantalising aspects cause questions below too.)

PM. The name “El.Stat” is used consistently, and has also been adjusted in verbatim quotes when other authors used different monikers, except for the Greek law that had “ΕΛ.ΣΤΑΤ.” and the ECB that used “HSTAT”.

5.6 *Some key agents*

As already highlighted by **Figure 2**, these storylines assign particulare relevance to some key agents. By a combination of factors and not recognised yet in the public limelights, some agents have failed in their publicly assigned tasks, and