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Also by Norbert Elias

POWER AND CIVILITY

THE COURT SOCIETY

THE HISTORY OF MANNERS

THE CIVILIZING PROCESS:
VOLUME I

BY
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It is unseemly to blow your nose into the tablecloth.

C

From *S'ensuivent les contenance de la table*:

XXXIII

Do not blow your nose with the same hand that you use to hold the meat.*

*According to an editor's note (*The Babees Book*, vol. 2, p. 14), courtesy consisted in blowing the nose with the fingers of the left hand if one ate and took meat from the common dish with the right.

D

From A. Cabanès, *Moeurs intimes du temps passé* (Paris, 1910), 1st series, p. 101:

In the fifteenth century people blew their noses into their fingers, and the sculptors of the age were not afraid to reproduce the gesture, in a passably realistic form, in their monuments.

Among the knights, the *plourans*, at the grave of Philip the Bold at Dijon, one is seen blowing his nose into his coat, another into his fingers.

E

Sixteenth century

From *De civilitate morum puerilium*, by Erasmus, ch. 1:

To blow your nose on your hat or clothing is rustic, and to do so with the arm or elbow befits a tradesman; nor is it much more polite to use the hand, if you immediately smear the snot on your garment. It is proper to wipe the nostrils with a handkerchief, and to do this while turning away, *if more honorable people are present*.

If anything falls to the ground when blowing the nose with two fingers, it should immediately be trodden away.

[From the scholia on this passage:]

Between snot and spit there is little difference, except that the former fluid is to be interpreted as coarser and the latter more unclean. The Latin writers constantly confuse a breastband, a napkin, or any piece of linen with a handkerchief.

F

1558

From *Galateo*, by Della Casa, quoted from the five-language edition (Geneva, 1609), pp. 72, 44, 618:

You should not offer your handkerchief to anyone unless it has been freshly washed. . . .

Nor is it seemly, after wiping your nose, to spread out your handkerchief and peer into it as if pearls and rubies might have fallen out of your head.

. . . What, then, shall I say of those . . . who carry their handkerchiefs about in their mouths? . . .

G

From Cabanès, *Moeurs intimes*, pp. 103, 168, 102:

[From Martial d'Auvergne, "Love decrees"] . . . in order that she might remember him, he decided to have one of the most beautiful and sumptuous handkerchiefs made for her, in which his name was in letters entwined in the prettiest fashion, for it was joined to a fine golden heart bordered with tiny heart's eases.*

*This cloth was intended to be hung from the lady's girdle, with her keys. Like the fork, night-commode, etc., the handkerchief is first an expensive luxury article.

[From Lestoil, *Journal d'Henri IV*] In 1594, Henri IV asked his valet how many shirts he had, and the latter replied: "A dozen, sire, and some torn ones." "And how many handkerchiefs?" asked the king. "Have I not eight?" "For the moment there are only five," he said.

In 1599, after her death, the inventory of Henri IV's mistress is found to contain "five handkerchiefs worked in gold, silver and silk, worth 100 crowns."

In the sixteenth century, Monteil tells us, in France as everywhere else, the common people blow their noses without a handkerchief, but among the bourgeoisie it is accepted practice to use the sleeve. As for the rich, they carry a handkerchief in their pockets; therefore, to say that a man has wealth, one says that he does not blow his nose on his sleeve.

H

Late seventeenth century

The Peak of Refinement

First Highpoint of Modeling and Restrictions

1672

From Courtin, *Nouveau traité de civilité*:

[At table] to blow your nose openly into your handkerchief, without concealing yourself with your serviette, and to wipe away your sweat with it . . . are filthy habits fit to make everyone's gorge rise. . . .

You should avoid yawning, blowing your nose, and spitting. If you are obliged to do so in places that are kept clean, do it in your handkerchief, while turning your face away and shielding yourself with your left hand, and do not look into your handkerchief afterward.

I

1694

From Ménage, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française*:

Handkerchief for blowing the nose.

As this expression "blowing the nose" gives a very disagreeable impression, ladies ought to call this a pocket handkerchief, as one says neckerchief, rather than a handkerchief for blowing the nose. [N.B. *Mouchoir de poche*, *Taschentuch*, handkerchief as more polite expressions; the word for functions that have become distasteful is repressed.]

Eighteenth century

Note the increasing distance between adults and children. Only children are still allowed, at least in the middle classes, to behave as adults did in the Middle Ages.

J

1714

From an anonymous *Civilité française* (Liège, 1714), p. 141:

Take good care not to blow your nose with your fingers or on your sleeve like children; use your handkerchief and do not look into it afterward.

K

1729

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (Rouen, 1729), in a chapter called "On the Nose, and the Manner of Blowing the Nose and Sneezing," p. 23:

It is very impolite to keep poking your finger into your nostrils, and still more insupportable to put what you have pulled from your nose into your mouth. . . .

It is vile to wipe your nose with your bare hand, or to blow it on your sleeve or your clothes. It is very contrary to decency to blow your nose with two fingers and then to throw the filth onto the ground and wipe your fingers on your clothes. It is well known how improper it is to see such uncleanness on clothes, which should always be very clean, no matter how poor they may be.

There are some who put a finger on one nostril and by blowing through their nose cast onto the ground the filth inside; those who act thus are people who do not know what decency is.

You should always use your handkerchief to blow your nose, and never anything else, and in doing so usually hide your face with your hat. [A particularly clear example of the dissemination of courtly customs through this work.]

You should avoid making a noise when blowing your nose. . . . Before blowing it, it is impolite to spend a long time taking out your handkerchief. It shows a lack of respect toward the people you are with to unfold it in different places to see where you are to use it. You should take your handkerchief from your pocket and use it quickly in such a way that you are scarcely noticed by others.

After blowing your nose you should take care not to look into your handkerchief. It is correct to fold it immediately and replace it in your pocket.

L

1774

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (1774 ed.), pp. 14f. The chapter is now called only "On the Nose" and is shortened:

Every voluntary movement of the nose, whether caused by the hand or otherwise, is impolite and puerile. To put your fingers into your nose is a revolting impropriety, and from touching it too often *discomforts* may

arise which are felt for a long time.* Children are sufficiently in the habit of committing this lapse; parents should correct them carefully.

You should observe, in blowing your nose, all the rules of propriety and cleanliness.

All details are avoided. The “conspiracy of silence” is spreading. It is based on the presupposition—which evidently could not be made at the time of the earlier edition—that all the details are known to adults and can be controlled within the family.

M

1797

From *La Mésangère, Le voyageur de Paris* (1797), vol. 2, p. 95. This is probably seen, to a greater extent than the preceding eighteenth-century examples, from the point of view of the younger members of “good society”:

Some years ago people made an art of blowing the nose. One imitated the sound of the trumpet, another the screech of a cat. Perfection lay in making neither too much noise nor too little.

Comments on the Quotations on Nose-Blowing

1. In medieval society people generally blew their noses into their hands, just as they ate with their hands. That necessitated special precepts for nose-cleaning at table. Politeness, *courtoisie*, required that one blow one’s nose with the left hand if one took meat with the right. But this precept was in fact restricted to the table. It arose solely out of consideration for others. The distasteful feeling frequently aroused today by the mere thought of soiling the fingers in this way was at first entirely absent.

Again the examples show very clearly how slowly the seemingly simplest instruments of civilization have developed. They also illustrate to a certain degree the particular social and psychological preconditions that were required to make the need for and use of so simple an

*This argument, absent in the earlier edition, shows clearly how the reference to damage to health is gradually beginning to emerge as an instrument of conditioning, often in place of the remainder about the respect due to social superiors.

instrument general. The use of the handkerchief—like that of the fork—first established itself in Italy, and was diffused on account of its prestige value. The ladies hang the precious, richly embroidered cloth from their girdles. The young “snobs” of the Renaissance offer it to others or carry it about in their mouths. And since it is precious and relatively expensive, at first there are not many of them even among the upper class. Henri IV, at the end of the sixteenth century, possessed (as we hear in Example G) five handkerchiefs. And it is generally taken as a sign of wealth not to blow one’s nose into one’s hand or sleeve but into a handkerchief. Louis XIV is the first to have an abundant supply of handkerchiefs, and under him the use of them becomes general, at least in courtly circles.

2. Here, as so often, the transitional situation is clearly visible in Erasmus. It is proper to use a handkerchief, he says, and if people of a higher social position are present, turn away when blowing your nose. But he also says: If you blow your nose with two fingers and something falls to the ground, tread on it. The use of the handkerchief is known but not yet widely disseminated, even in the upper class for which Erasmus primarily writes.

Two centuries later, the situation is almost reversed. The use of the handkerchief has become general, at least among people who lay claim to “good behavior.” But the use of the hands has by no means disappeared. Seen from above, it has become “ill-mannered,” or at any rate common and vulgar. One reads with amusement La Salle’s gradations between *vilain*, for certain very coarse ways of blowing the nose with the hand, and *très contraire à la bienséance*, for the better manner of doing so with two fingers (Examples H, J, K, L).

Once the handkerchief begins to come into use, there constantly recurs a prohibition on a new form of “bad manners” that emerges at the same time as the new practice—the prohibition on looking into one’s handkerchief when one has used it (Examples F, H, J, K, L). It almost seems as if inclinations which have been subjected to a certain control and restraint by the introduction of the handkerchief are seeking a new outlet in this way. At any rate, an instinctual tendency which today appears at most in the unconscious, in dreams, in the sphere of secrecy, or more consciously only behind the scenes, the interest in bodily secretions, here shows itself at an earlier stage of the historical process more clearly and openly, and so in a form in which today it is only “normally” visible in children.

In the later edition of La Salle, as in other cases, the major part of the very detailed precepts from the earlier one are omitted. The use of the handkerchief has become more general and self-evident. It is no longer necessary to be so explicit. Moreover, there is less and less inclination to speak about these details that La Salle originally discussed straightforwardly and at length without embarrassment. More stress, on the other hand, is laid on children's bad habit of putting the fingers in the nose. And, as with other childish habits, the medical warning now appears alongside or in place of the social one as an instrument of conditioning, in the reference to the injury that can be done by doing "such a thing" too often. This is an expression of a change in the manner of conditioning that has already been considered from other aspects. Up to this time, habits are almost always judged expressly in their relation to other people, and they are forbidden, at least in the secular upper class, because they may be troublesome or embarrassing to others, or because they betray a "lack of respect." Now habits are condemned more and more as such, not in regard to others. In this way, socially undesirable impulses or inclinations are more radically repressed. They are associated with embarrassment, fear, shame, or guilt, even when one is alone. Much of what we call "morality" or "moral" reasons has the same function as "hygiene" or "hygienic" reasons: to condition children to a certain social standard. Molding by such means aims at making socially desirable behavior automatic, a matter of self-control, causing it to appear in the consciousness of the individual as the result of his own free will, and in the interests of his own health or human dignity. And it is only with the advent of this way of consolidating habits, or conditioning, which gains predominance with the rise of the middle classes, that conflict between the socially inadmissible impulses and tendencies, on the one hand, and the pattern of social demands anchored in the individual, on the other, takes on the sharply defined form central to the psychological theories of modern times—above all, to psychoanalysis. It may be that there have always been "neuroses." But the "neuroses" we see about us today are a specific historical form of psychic conflict which needs psychogenetic and sociogenetic elucidation.

3. An indication of the mechanisms of repression may already be contained in the two verses quoted from Bonvicino da Riva (Example A). The difference between what is expected of knights and lords, on the one hand, and of the *donizelli*, pages, or servants, on the other,

calls to mind a much-documented social phenomenon. The masters find the sight of the bodily functions of their servants distasteful; they compel them, the social inferiors in their immediate surroundings, to control and restrain these functions in a way that they do not at first impose on themselves. The verse addressed to the masters says simply: If you blow your nose, turn round so that nothing falls on the table. There is no mention of using a cloth. Should we believe that the use of cloths for cleaning the nose was already taken so much for granted in this society that it was no longer thought necessary to mention it in a book on manners? That is highly improbable. The servants, on the other hand, are expressly instructed to use not their fingers but their foot bandages if they have to blow their noses. To be sure, this interpretation of the two verses cannot be considered absolutely certain. But the fact can be frequently demonstrated that functions are found distasteful and disrespectful in inferiors which superiors are not ashamed of in themselves. This fact takes on special significance with the transformation of society under absolutism, and therefore at absolutist courts, when the upper class, the aristocracy as a whole, has become, with degrees of hierarchy, a subservient and socially dependent class. This at first sight highly paradoxical phenomenon of an upper class that is socially extremely dependent will be discussed later in another context. Here we can only point out that this social dependence and its structure have decisive importance for the structure and pattern of affect restrictions. The examples contain numerous indications of how these restrictions are intensified with the growing dependence of the upper class. It is no accident that the first "peak of refinement" or "delicacy" in the manner of blowing the nose—and not only here—comes in the phase when the dependence and subservience of the aristocratic upper class is at its height, the period of Louis XIV (Examples H and I).

The dependence of the upper class also explains the dual aspect which the behavior patterns and instruments of civilization have at least in this formative stage. They express a certain measure of compulsion and renunciation, but they also immediately become a weapon against social inferiors, a means of distinction. Handkerchief, fork, plates, and all their related implements are at first luxury articles with a particular social prestige value (Example G).

The social dependence in which the succeeding upper class, the bourgeoisie, lives, is of a different kind, to be sure, from that of the

court aristocracy, but tends to be greater and more compelling.

In general, we scarcely realize today what a unique and astonishing phenomenon a "working" upper class is. Why does it work? Why submit itself to this compulsion even though it is the "ruling" class and is therefore not commanded to do so? The question demands a more detailed answer than is possible in this context. What is clear, however, is the parallel to what has been said on the change in the instruments and forms of conditioning. During the stage of the court aristocracy, the restraint imposed on inclinations and emotions is based primarily on consideration and respect due to others and above all to social superiors. In the subsequent stage, renunciation and restraint of impulses is compelled far less by particular persons; expressed provisionally and approximately, it is now, more directly than before, the less visible and more impersonal compulsions of social interdependence, the division of labor, the market, and competition that impose restraint and control on the impulses and emotions. It is these pressures, and the corresponding manner of explanation and conditioning mentioned above, which make it appear that socially desirable behavior is voluntarily produced by the individual himself, on his own initiative. This applies to the regulation and restraint of drives necessary for "work"; it also applies to the whole pattern according to which drives are modeled in bourgeois industrial societies. The pattern of affect control, of what must and what must not be restrained, regulated, and transformed, is certainly not the same in this stage as in the preceding one of the court aristocracy. In keeping with its different interdependencies, bourgeois society applies stronger restrictions to certain impulses, while in the case of others aristocratic restrictions are simply continued and transformed to suit the changed situation. In addition, more clearly distinct national patterns of affect control are formed from the various elements. In both cases, in aristocratic court society as well as in the bourgeois societies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the upper classes are socially constrained to a particularly high degree. The central role played by this increasing dependency of the upper classes as a motor of civilization will be demonstrated later.

VII

On Spitting

Examples

Middle Ages

A

From *Stans puer in mensam*:⁷⁰

27 Do not spit over or on the table.

37 Do not spit into the bowl when washing your hands.

B

From a *Contenance de table*:⁷¹

29 Do not spit on the table.

51 Do not spit into the basin when you wash your hands, but beside it.

C

From *The Book of Curtesye*:⁷²

85 If thou spitt over the borde, or elles opon,
thou schalle be holden an uncurtayse mon.

133 After mete when thou shall wasshe,
spitt not in basyn, ne water thou dasshe.

D

From Zarncke, *Der deutsche Cato*, p. 137:

276 Do not spit across the table in the manner of hunters.

E

1530

From *De civilitate morum puerilium*, by Erasmus:

Turn away when spitting, lest your saliva fall on someone. If anything purulent falls to the ground, it should be trodden upon, lest it nauseate

someone. If you are not at liberty to do this, catch the sputum in a small cloth. It is unmannerly to suck back saliva, as equally are those whom we see spitting at every third word not from necessity but from habit.

F

1558

From *Galateo*, by Della Casa, quoted from the five-language edition (Geneva, 1609), p. 570:

It is also unseemly for someone sitting at table to scratch himself. At such a time and place you should also abstain as far as possible from spitting, and if it cannot be completely avoided it should be done politely and unnoticed.

I have often heard that whole peoples have sometimes lived so moderately and conducted themselves so honorably that they found spitting quite unnecessary. Why, therefore, should not we too be able to refrain from it just for a short time? [That is, during meals; the restriction on the habit applied only to mealtimes.]

G

1672

From Courtin, *Nouveau traité de civilité*, p. 273:

The custom we have just mentioned does not mean that most laws of this kind are immutable. And just as there are many that have already changed, I have no doubt that many of these will likewise change in the future.

Formerly, for example, it was permitted to spit on the ground before people of rank, and was sufficient to put one's foot on the sputum. Today that is an indecency.

In the old days you could yawn, provided you did not speak while doing so; today, a person of rank would be shocked by this.

H

1714

From an anonymous *Civilité française* (Liège, 1714), pp. 67, 41:

Frequent spitting is disagreeable. When it is necessary you should conceal it as much as possible, and avoid soiling either persons or their clothes, no matter who they are, nor even the embers beside the fire. And wherever you spit, you should put your foot on the saliva.

At the houses of the great, one spits into one's handkerchief. . . .

It ill becomes you to spit out of the window or onto the fire.

Do not spit so far that you have to look for the saliva to put your foot on it.

I

1729

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (Rouen, 1729), p. 35:

You should not abstain from spitting, and it is very ill-mannered to swallow what should be spat. This can nauseate others.

Nevertheless, you should not become accustomed to spitting too often, and without need. This is not only unmannerly, but disgusts and annoys everyone. *When you are with well-born people*, and when you are in places that are kept clean, it is polite to spit into your handkerchief while turning slightly aside.

It is even good manners for everyone to get used to spitting into a handkerchief when in the houses of the great and in all places with waxed or parquet floors. But it is far more necessary to acquire the habit of doing so when in church, as far as is possible. . . . It often happens, however, that no kitchen or even stable floor is dirtier . . . than that of the church.

After spitting into your handkerchief, you should fold it at once, without looking at it, and put it into your pocket. You should take great care never to spit on your clothes, or those of others. . . . If you notice saliva on the ground, you should immediately put your foot adroitly on it. If you notice any on someone's coat, it is not polite to make it known; you should instruct a servant to remove it. If no servant is present, you should remove it yourself without being noticed. For good breeding consists in not bringing to people's attention anything that might offend or confuse them.

J

1774

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (1774 ed.), p. 20. In this edition the chapter "On Yawning, Spitting, and Coughing," which covers four pages in the earlier editions, has shrunk to one page:

In church, in the houses of the great, and in all places where cleanliness reigns, you should spit into your handkerchief. It is an unpardonably gross habit of children to spit in the faces of their playmates. Such bad manners cannot be punished too severely; nor are those who spit out of windows, on walls and on furniture to be excused. . . .

K

1859

From *The Habits of Good Society*, p. 256:

Spitting is at all times a disgusting habit. I need say nothing more than—never indulge in it. Besides being coarse and atrocious, *it is very bad for the health.*

L

1910

From Cabanès, *Moeurs intimes*, p. 264:

Have you noticed that today we relegate to some discreet corner what our fathers did not hesitate to display quite openly?

Thus a certain intimate article of furniture had a place of honor . . . no one thought of concealing it from view.

The same is true of another piece of furniture no longer found in modern households, whose disappearance some will perhaps regret in this age of "bacillophobia": I am referring to the spittoon.

Some Comments on the Quotations on Spitting

1. Like the other groups of examples, the series of quotations about spitting shows very clearly that, since the Middle Ages, behavior has changed in a particular direction. In the case of spitting, the movement is unmistakably of the kind that we call "progress." Frequent spitting is even today one of the experiences that many Europeans find particularly unpleasant when traveling in the East or in Africa, together with the lack of "cleanliness." If they started out with idealized preconceptions, they call the experience disappointing, and find their feelings on the "progress" of Western civilization confirmed. No more than four centuries ago, this custom was no less widespread and commonplace in the West, as the examples show. Taken together, they give a particularly clear demonstration of the way in which the civilizing process took place.

2. The examples show a movement with the following stages: The Latin as well as the English, French, and German guides to table manners bear witness to the fact that in the Middle Ages it was not only a custom but also clearly a generally felt need to spit frequently. It is also entirely commonplace in the courts of the feudal lords. The only major restraint imposed is that one should not spit on or over the table but under it. Nor should one spit into the washbasin when cleaning mouth or hands, but beside it. These prohibitions are repeated in so

stereotyped a fashion in the *courtois* codes of manners that one can imagine the frequency of this instance of "bad manners." The pressure of medieval society on this practice never becomes so strong, nor the conditioning so compelling, that it disappears from social life. Here again we see the difference between social control in the medieval and the subsequent stages.

In the sixteenth century, social pressure grows stronger. It is demanded that sputum be trodden upon—at least if it contains purulence, says Erasmus, who here as always marks the transitional situation. And here again the use of a cloth is mentioned as a possible, not a necessary, way of controlling this habit, which is slowly becoming more distasteful.

The next step is shown clearly by Courtin's comment of 1672: "Formerly . . . it was permitted to spit on the ground before people of rank, and was sufficient to put one's foot on the sputum. Today that is an indecency."

Similarly, we find in the *Civilité* of 1714, intended for a wider audience: "Conceal it as much as possible, and avoid soiling either persons or their clothes. . . . At the houses of the great, one spits into one's handkerchief."

In 1729, La Salle extends the same precept to all places "that are kept clean." And he adds that in church, too, people ought to get used to using their handkerchiefs and not the floor.

By 1774 the whole practice, and even speaking about it, had become considerably more distasteful. By 1859 "spitting is at all times a disgusting habit." All the same, at least within the house, the spittoon, as a technical implement for controlling this habit in keeping with the advancing standard of delicacy, still has considerable importance in the nineteenth century. Cabanès, in 1910, reminds us that, like other implements (cf. Example L), it has slowly evolved from a prestige object to a private utensil.

Gradually this utensil too becomes dispensable. In large sections of Western society, even the need to spit from time to time seems to have disappeared completely. A standard of delicacy and restraint similar to that which Della Casa knew only from his reading of ancient writers, where "whole peoples . . . lived so moderately and . . . so honorably that they found spitting quite unnecessary" (Example F), has been attained once more.

3. Taboos and restrictions of various kinds surround the ejection of

saliva, like other natural functions, in very many societies, both "primitive" and "civilized." What distinguishes them is the fact that in the former they are always maintained by fear of other beings, even if only imaginary ones—that is, by external constraints—whereas in the latter these are transformed more or less completely into internal constraints. The prohibited tendencies (e.g., the tendency to spit) partly disappear from consciousness under the pressure of this internal restraint or, as it may also be called, the superego and the "habit of foresight." What remains behind in consciousness as the motivation of anxiety is some long-term consideration. So in our time the fear of spitting, and the feelings of shame and repugnance in which it is expressed, are concentrated about the more precisely defined and logically comprehensible idea of certain illnesses and their "causes," rather than around the image of magical influences, gods, spirits, or demons. But the series of examples also shows very clearly that rational understanding of the origins of certain diseases, of the danger of sputum as a carrier of illness, is neither the primary cause of fear and repugnance nor the motor of civilization, the driving force of the changes in behavior with regard to spitting.

At first, and for a long period, the retention of spittle is expressly discouraged. To suck back saliva is "unmannerly," says Erasmus (Example E). And as late as 1729, La Salle says: "You should not abstain from spitting" (Example I). For centuries there is not the faintest indication of "hygienic reasons" for the prohibitions and restrictions with which the tendency to spit is surrounded. Rational understanding of the "danger" of saliva is attained only at a very late stage of the change in behavior, and thus in a sense retrospectively, in the nineteenth century. And even then, the reference to what is indelicate and disgusting in such behavior still appears separately, alongside the reference to its ill effects on health: "Besides being coarse and atrocious, it is very bad for the health," Example K says of spitting.

It is well to establish once and for all that something which we know to be harmful to health by no means necessarily arouses feelings of distaste or shame. And conversely, something that arouses these feelings need not be at all detrimental to health. Someone who eats noisily or with his hands nowadays arouses feelings of extreme distaste without there being the slightest fear for his health. But neither the thought of someone reading by bad light nor the idea of poison gas,

for example, arouses remotely similar feelings of distaste or shame, although the harmful consequences for health are obvious. Thus, disgust at the ejection of saliva intensifies, and the taboos surrounding it increase, long before people have a clear idea of the transmission of certain germs by saliva. What first arouses and increases the distasteful feelings and restrictions is a transformation of human relationships and dependencies. "Earlier it was permitted to yawn or spit openly; today, a person of rank would be shocked by it," Example G says, in effect. That is the kind of reason that people first give for increased restraint. Motivation from social consideration exists long before motivation from scientific insight. The king requires this restraint as a "mark of respect" from his courtiers. In court circles this sign of their dependence, the growing compulsion to be restrained and self-controlled, becomes also a "mark of distinction" that is immediately imitated below and disseminated with the rise of broader classes. And here, as in the preceding civilization-curves, the admonition "That is not done," with which restraint, fear, shame, and repugnance are inculcated, is connected only very late, as a result of a certain "democratization," to a scientific theory, to an argument that applies to all men equally, regardless of their rank and status. The primary impulse for this slow repression of an inclination that was formerly strong and widespread does not come from rational understanding of the causes of illness, but—as will be discussed in more detail later—from changes in the way people live together, in the structure of society.

4. The modification of the manner of spitting, and finally the more or less complete elimination of the need for it, is a good example of the malleability of psychic life. It may be that this need has been compensated by others (e.g., the need to smoke) or weakened by certain changes of diet. But it is certain that the degree of suppression which has been possible in this case is not possible with regard to many other drives. The inclination to spit, like that of looking at the sputum, mentioned in the examples, is replaceable; it now manifests itself only in children or in dream analyses, and its suppression is seen in the specific laughter that overcomes us when "such things" are spoken of openly.

Other needs are not replaceable or malleable to the same extent. And this raises the question of the limit of the transformability of the human personality. Without doubt, it is bound to certain regularities

that may be called "natural." The historical process modifies it within these limits. The degree to which human life and behavior can be molded by historical processes remains to be determined in detail. At any rate, all this shows once again how natural and historical processes interact almost inseparably. The formation of feelings of shame and revulsion and advances in the threshold of delicacy are both at once natural and historical processes. These forms of feeling are manifestations of human nature under specific social conditions, and they react in their turn on the sociohistorical process as one of its elements.

It is difficult to see whether the radical contraposition of "civilization" and "nature" is more than an expression of the tensions of the "civilized" psyche itself, of a specific imbalance within psychic life produced in the recent stage of Western civilization. At any rate, the psychic life of "primitive" peoples is no less historically (i.e., socially) stamped than that of "civilized" peoples, even if the former are scarcely aware of their own history. There is no zero point in the historicity of human development, just as there is none in the sociality, the social interdependence among men. In both "primitive" and "civilized" peoples, there are socially induced prohibitions and restrictions, together with their psychic counterparts, socially induced anxieties, pleasure and displeasure, distaste and delight. At the least, therefore, it is not very clear what is meant when the so-called primitive standard is opposed as "natural" to the "civilized" as social and historical. So far as the psychical functions of men are concerned, natural and historical processes work indissolubly together.

VIII

On Behavior in the Bedroom

Examples

A

Fifteenth century

From *Stans puer in mensam*, an English book of table manners from the period 1463-1483:

215 And if that it fortyn so by
nyght or Any tyme
That you schall lye with Any man
that is better than you
Spyre hym what syde of the bedd
that most best will ples hym,
And lye you on thi tother syde,
for that is thi prow;
Ne go you not to bede before bot
thi better cause the,
For that is no curtasy, thus seys
doctour paler.

223 And when you arte in thi bed,
this is curtasy,
Stryght downe that you lye with
fote and hond.
When ze have talkyd what ze
wyll, byd hym gode nyght in hye
For that is gret curtasy so schall
thou understand.*

Let your better choose which side of the bed he'll lie on; don't go to bed first, till he asks you to (says Dr. Paler).

When you're both in bed, lie straight, and say "Good Night" when you've done your chat.

B

1530

From *De civilitate morum puerilium*, by Erasmus, ch. 12, "On the Bedchamber":

When you undress, when you get up, be mindful of modesty, and take care not to expose to the eyes of others anything that morality and nature require to be concealed.

If you share a bed with a comrade, lie quietly; do not toss with your body, for this can lay yourself bare or inconvenience your companion by pulling away the blankets.

*To facilitate comprehension, the old spelling is not reproduced exactly. The philologically accurate text can be found in *A Booke of Precedence*, p. 63.

C

1555

From *Des bonnes moeurs et honnestes contenance*s, by Pierre Broë (Lyons, 1555):

If you share a bed with another man, keep still.

Take care not to annoy him or expose yourself by abrupt movements.

And if he is asleep, see that you do not wake him.

D

1729

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (Rouen, 1729), p. 55:

You ought . . . neither to undress nor go to bed in the presence of any other person. Above all, unless you are married, you should not go to bed in the presence of anyone of the other sex.

It is still less permissible for people of different sexes to sleep in the same bed, unless they are very young children. . . .

If you are forced by unavoidable necessity to share a bed with another person of the same sex on a journey, it is not proper to lie so near him that you disturb or even touch him; and it is still less decent to put your legs between those of the other. . . .

It is also very improper and impolite to amuse yourself with talk and chatter. . . .

When you get up you should not leave the bed uncovered, nor put your nightcap on a chair or anywhere else where it can be seen.

E

1774

From La Salle, *Les Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (1774 ed.) p. 31:

It is a strange abuse to make two people of different sex sleep in the same room. And if necessity demands it, you should make sure that the beds are apart, and that modesty does not suffer in any way from this commingling. Only extreme indigence can excuse this practice. . . .

If you are forced to share a bed with a person of the same sex, which seldom happens, you should maintain a strict and vigilant modesty. . . .

When you have awakened and had sufficient time to rest, you should get

out of bed with fitting modesty and never stay in bed holding conversations or concerning yourself with other matters . . . nothing more clearly indicates indolence and frivolity; the bed is intended for bodily rest and for nothing else.

Some Comments on the Examples

1. The bedroom has become one of the most "private" and "intimate" areas of human life. Like most other bodily functions, sleeping has been increasingly shifted behind the scenes of social life. The nuclear family remains as the only legitimate, socially sanctioned enclave for this and many other human functions. Its visible and invisible walls withdraw the most "private," "intimate," irrepressibly "animal" aspects of human existence from the sight of others.

In medieval society this function had not been thus privatized and separated from the rest of social life. It was quite normal to receive visitors in rooms with beds, and the beds themselves had a prestige value related to their opulence. It was very common for many people to spend the night in one room: in the upper class, the master with his servants, the mistress with her maid or maids; in other classes, even men and women in the same room,⁷³ and often guests staying overnight.⁷⁴

2. Those who did not sleep in their clothes undressed completely. In general, people slept naked in lay society, and in monastic orders either fully dressed or fully undressed according to the strictness of the rules. The rule of St. Benedict—dating back at least to the sixth century—required members of the order to sleep in their clothes and even to keep their belts on.⁷⁵ In the twelfth century, when their order became more prosperous and powerful and the ascetic constraints less severe, the Cluniac monks were permitted to sleep without clothes. The Cistercians, when striving for reform, returned to the old Benedictine rule. Special nightclothes are never mentioned in the monastic rules of this period, still less in the documents, epics, or illustrations left behind by secular society. This is also true for women. If anything, it was unusual to keep on day clothing in bed. It aroused suspicion that one might have some bodily defect—for what other reason should the body be hidden?—and in fact this usually was the case. In the *Roman de la violette*, for example, we hear the servant

ask her mistress in surprise why she is going to bed in her chemise, and the latter explains it is because of a mark on her body.⁷⁶

This unconcern in showing the naked body, and the position of the shame frontier represented by it, are seen particularly clearly in bathing manners. It has been noted with surprise in later ages that knights were waited on in their baths by women; likewise, their night drink was often brought to their beds by women. It seems to have been common practice, at least in the towns, to undress at home before going to the bathhouse. "How often," says an observer, "the father, wearing nothing but his breeches, with his naked wife and children, runs through the streets from his house to the baths. . . . How many times have I seen girls of ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen years entirely naked except for a short smock, often torn, and a ragged bathing gown at front and back! With this open at the feet and with their hands held decorously behind them, running from their houses through the long streets at midday to the baths. How many completely naked boys of ten, twelve, fourteen, and sixteen run beside them. . . ."⁷⁷

This unconcern disappears slowly in the sixteenth and more rapidly in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, first in the upper classes and much more slowly in the lower. Up to then, the whole mode of life, with its greater closeness of individuals, made the sight of the naked body, at least in the proper place, incomparably more commonplace than in the first stages of the modern age. "We reach the surprising conclusion," it has been said with reference to Germany, "that . . . the sight of total nakedness was the everyday rule up to the sixteenth century. Everyone undressed completely each evening before going to bed, and likewise no clothing was worn in the steambaths."⁷⁸ And this certainly applies not only to Germany. People had a less inhibited—one might say a more childish—attitude toward the body, and to many of its functions. Sleeping customs show this no less than bathing habits.

3. A special nightdress slowly came into use at roughly the same time as the fork and handkerchief. Like the other "implements of civilization," it made its way through Europe quite gradually. And like them it is a symbol of the decisive change taking place at this time in human beings. Sensitivity toward everything that came into contact with the body increased. Shame became attached to behavior that had previously been free of such feelings. The psychological process

which is already described in the Bible by—"and they saw that they were naked and were ashamed"—that is, an advance of the shame frontier, a thrust toward greater restraint—is repeated here, as so often in the course of history. The unconcern in showing oneself naked disappears, as does that in performing bodily functions before others. And as this sight becomes less commonplace in social life, the depiction of the naked body in art takes on a new significance. More than hitherto it becomes a dream image, an emblem of wish-fulfillment. To use Schiller's terms it becomes "sentimental," as against the "naïve" form of earlier phases.

In the courtly society of France—where getting up and going to bed, at least in the case of great lords and ladies, is incorporated directly into social life—nightdress, like every other form of clothing appearing in the communal life of man, takes on representational functions as it develops. This changes when, with the rise of broader classes, getting up and going to bed become intimate and are displaced from social life into the interior of the nuclear family.

The generations following World War I, in their books on etiquette, look back with a certain irony—and not without a faint shudder—at this period, when the exclusion of such functions as sleeping, undressing, and dressing was enforced with special severity, the mere mention of them being blocked by relatively heavy prohibitions. An English book on manners of 1936 says, perhaps with slight exaggeration, but certainly not entirely without justification: "During the Genteel Era before the War, camping was the only way by which respectable writers might approach the subject of sleep. In those days ladies and gentlemen did not go to bed at night—they retired. How they did it was nobody's business. An author who thought differently would have found himself excluded from the circulating library."⁷⁹ Here, too, there has been a certain reaction and relaxation since the war. It is clearly connected with the growing mobility of society, with the spread of sport, hiking, and travel, and also with the relatively early separation of young people from the family community. The transition from the nightshirt to pajamas—that is, to a more "socially presentable" sleeping costume—is a symptom of this. This change is not, as is sometimes supposed, simply a retrogressive movement, a recession of the feelings of shame or delicacy, or a release and de-control of instinctual urges, but the development of a form that fits both our advanced standard of delicacy and the specific situation in

which present-day social life places the individual. Sleep is no longer so intimate and segregated as in the preceding stage. There are more situations in which people are exposed to the sight of strangers sleeping, undressing, or dressing. As a result, nightclothes (like underwear) have been developed and transformed in such a way that the wearer need not be "ashamed" when seen in such situations by others. The nightclothes of the preceding phase aroused feelings of shame and embarrassment precisely because they were relatively formless. They were not intended to be seen by people outside the family circle. On the one hand, the nightshirt of the nineteenth century marks an epoch in which shame and embarrassment with regard to the exposure of one's own body were so advanced and internalized that bodily forms had to be entirely covered even when alone or in the closest family circle; on the other hand, it characterizes an epoch in which the "intimate" and "private" sphere, because it was so sharply severed from the rest of social life, had not to any great extent been socially articulated and patterned. This peculiar combination of strongly internalized, compulsive feelings of delicacy, or morality, with a lack of social patterning with respect to the "spheres of intimacy" is characteristic of nineteenth-century society and not a little of our own.⁸⁰

4. The examples give a rough idea of how sleep, becoming slowly more intimate and private, is separated from most other social relations, and how the precepts given to young people take on a specific moralistic undertone with the advance of feelings of shame. In the medieval quotation (Example A) the restraint demanded of young people is explained by consideration due to others, respect for social superiors. It says, in effect, "If you share your bed with a better man, ask him which side he prefers, and do not go to bed before he invites you, for that is not courteous." And in the French imitation of Johannes Sulpicius by Pierre Broë (Example C), the same attitude prevails: "Do not annoy your neighbor when he has fallen asleep; see that you do not wake him up, etc." In Erasmus we begin to hear a moral demand, which requires certain behavior not out of consideration for others but for its own sake: "When you undress, when you get up, be mindful of modesty." But the idea of social custom, of consideration for others, is still predominant. The contrast to the later period is particularly clear if we remember that these precepts, even those of Dr. Paler (Example A), were clearly directed to people who

went to bed undressed. That strangers should sleep in the same bed appears, to judge by the manner in which the question is discussed, neither unusual nor in any way improper even at the time of Erasmus.

In the quotations from the eighteenth century this tendency is not continued in a straight line, partly because it is no longer confined predominantly to the upper class. But in the meantime, even in other classes, it has clearly become less commonplace for a young person to share his bed with another: "If you are forced by unavoidable necessity to share a bed with another person . . . on a journey, it is not proper to lie so near him that you disturb or even touch him," La Salle writes (Example D). And: "You ought neither to undress nor go to bed in the presence of any other person."

In the 1774 edition, details are again avoided wherever possible. And the tone is appreciably stronger. "If you are forced to share a bed with a person of the same sex, which seldom happens, you should maintain a strict and vigilant modesty" (Example E). This is the tone of moral injunction. Even to give a reason has become distasteful to the adult. The child is made by the threatening tone to associate this situation with danger. The more "natural" the standard of delicacy and shame appears to adults and the more the civilized restraint of instinctual urges is taken for granted, the more incomprehensible it becomes to adults that children do not have this delicacy and shame by "nature." The children necessarily touch again and again on the adult threshold of delicacy, and—since they are not yet adapted—they infringe the taboos of society, cross the adult shame frontier, and penetrate emotional danger zones which the adult himself can only control with difficulty. In this situation the adult does not explain the demand he makes on behavior. He is unable to do so adequately. He is so conditioned that he conforms to the social standard more or less automatically. Any other behavior, any breach of the prohibitions or restraints prevailing in his society means danger, and a devaluation of the restraints imposed on himself. And the peculiarly emotional undertone so often associated with moral demands, the aggressive and threatening severity with which they are frequently upheld, reflects the danger in which any breach of the prohibitions places the unstable balance of all those for whom the standard behavior of society has become more or less "second nature." These attitudes are symptoms of the anxiety aroused in adults whenever the structure of their own

instinctual life, and with it their own social existence and the social order in which it is anchored, is even remotely threatened.

A whole series of specific conflicts—above all, those between parents (usually ill-prepared for conditioning) and their children, conflicts arising with the advance of the shame-frontier and the growing distance between adults and children, and therefore largely founded on the structure of civilized society itself—are explained by this situation. The situation itself has been understood only relatively recently by society, first of all by small groups of professional educators. And only now, in the age that has been called the “century of the child,” is the realization that, in view of the increased distance between them, children cannot behave like adults slowly penetrating the family circle with appropriate educational advice and instructions. In the long preceding period, the more severe attitude prevailed that morality and respect for taboos should be present in children from the first. This attitude certainly cannot be said to have disappeared today.

The examples on behavior in the bedroom give, for a limited segment, a certain impression of how late it really was that the tendency to adopt such attitudes reached its full development in secular education.

The line followed by this development scarcely needs further elucidation. Here, too, in much the same way as with eating, the wall between people, the reserve, the emotional barrier erected by conditioning between one body and another, grows continuously. To share a bed with people outside the family circle, with strangers, is made more and more embarrassing. Unless necessity dictates otherwise, it becomes usual even within the family for each person to have his own bed and finally—in the middle and upper classes—his own bedroom. Children are trained early in this isolation from others, with all the habits and experiences that this brings with it. Only if we see how natural it seemed in the Middle Ages for strangers and for children and adults to share a bed can we appreciate what a fundamental change in interpersonal relationships and behavior is expressed in our manner of living. And we recognize how far from self-evident it is that bed and body should form such psychological danger zones as they do in the most recent phase of civilization.

IX

Changes in Attitude Toward Relations Between the Sexes

1. The feeling of shame surrounding human sexual relations has increased and changed considerably in the process of civilization.⁸¹ This manifests itself particularly clearly in the difficulty experienced by adults in the later stages of civilization in talking about these relations to children. But today this difficulty appears almost natural. It seems to be explained almost by biological reasons alone that a child knows nothing of the relations of the sexes, and that it is an extremely delicate and difficult task to enlighten growing girls and boys about themselves and what goes on around them. The extent to which this situation, far from being self-evident, is a further result of the civilizing process is only perceived if the behavior of people in a different stage is observed. The fate of Erasmus's renowned *Colloquies* is a good example.

Erasmus discovered that one of the works of his youth had been published without his permission in a corrupt form, with additions by others and partly in a bad style. He revised it and published it himself under a new title in 1522, calling it *Familiarum colloquiorum formulae non tantum ad linguam puerilem expoliandam, verum etiam ad vitam instituendam*.

He worked on this text, augmenting and improving it, until shortly before his death. It became what he had desired, not only a book from which boys could learn a good Latin style, but one which could serve, as he says in the title, to introduce them to life. The *Colloquies* became one of the most famous and widely read works of their time. As his treatise *De civilitate morum puerilium* did later, they went through numerous editions and translations. And like it, they became a schoolbook, a standard work from which boys were educated. Hardly anything gives a more immediate impression of the change in Western society in the process of civilization than the criticism to which this work was subjected by those who still found themselves obliged to concern themselves with it in the nineteenth century. An influential German pedagogue, Von Raumer, comments on it as follows in his *Geschichte der Pädagogik* (History of pedagogy):⁸²

How could such a book be introduced in countless schools? What had boys to do with these satyrs? Reform is a matter for mature men. What sense were boys supposed to make of dialogues on so many subjects of which they understand nothing; conversations in which teachers are ridiculed, or between two women about their husbands, between a suitor and a girl he is wooing, or the colloquy "Adolescentis et Scorti" (The young man and the harlot). This last dialogue recalls Schiller's distich entitled "Kunstgriff" (The knack): "If you would please both the worldly and godly alike, paint them the joys of the flesh, but paint them the devil as well." Erasmus here paints fleshly lust in the basest way and then adds something which is supposed to edify. Such a book is recommended by the Doctor Theologiae to an eight-year-old boy, that he might be improved by reading it.

The work is indeed dedicated to the young son of Erasmus's publisher, and the father clearly felt no qualms at printing it.

2. The book met with harsh criticism as soon as it appeared. But this was not directed chiefly at its moral qualities. The primary target was the "intellectual," the man who was neither an orthodox Protestant nor an orthodox Catholic. The Catholic Church, above all, fought against the *Colloquies*, which certainly contain occasional virulent attacks on Church institutions and orders, and soon placed it on the Index.

But against this must be set the extraordinary success of the *Colloquies* and, above all, their introduction as a schoolbook. "From 1526 on," says Huizinga in his *Erasmus* (London, 1924, p. 199), "there was for two centuries an almost uninterrupted stream of editions and translations."

In this period, therefore, Erasmus's treatise must have remained a kind of standard work for a very considerable number of people. How is the difference between its viewpoint and that of the nineteenth-century critic to be understood?

In this work Erasmus does indeed speak of many things which with the advance of civilization have been increasingly concealed from the eyes of children, and which in the nineteenth century would under no circumstances have been used as reading matter for children in the way Erasmus desired and expressly affirmed in the dedication to his six- or eight-year-old godson. As the nineteenth-century critic stresses, Erasmus presents in the dialogues a young man wooing a girl. He shows a woman complaining about the bad behavior of her husband. And there is even a conversation between a young man and a prostitute.

Nevertheless, these dialogues bear witness, in exactly the same way as *De civilitate morum puerilium*, to Erasmus's delicacy in all questions relating to the regulation of instinctual life, even if they do not entirely correspond to our own standard. They even represent, measured by the standard of medieval secular society, and even by that of the secular society of his own time, a very considerable shift in the direction of the kind of restraint of instinctual urges which the nineteenth century was to justify above all in the form of morality.

Certainly, the young man who woos the girl in the colloquy "Proci et puellae" (Courtship) expresses very openly what he wants of her. He speaks of his love for her. When she resists, he tells her that she has drawn his soul half out of his body. He tells her that it is permissible and right to conceive children. He asks her to imagine how fine it will be when he as king and she as queen rule over their children and servants. (This idea shows very clearly how the lesser psychological distance between adults and children very often went hand in hand with a greater social distance.) Finally the girl gives way to his suit. She agrees to become his wife. But she preserves, as she says, the honor of her maidenhood. She keeps it for him, she says. She even refuses him a kiss. But when he does not desist from asking for one, she laughingly tells him that as she has, in his own words, drawn his soul half out of his body, so that he is almost dead, she is afraid that with a kiss she might draw his soul completely out of his body and kill him.

3. As has been mentioned, Erasmus was occasionally reproached by the Church, even in his own lifetime, with the "immorality" of the *Colloquies*. But one should not be misled by this into drawing false conclusions about the actual standard, particularly of secular society. A treatise directed against Erasmus's *Colloquies* from a consciously Catholic position, about which more will be said later, does not differ in the least from the *Colloquies* so far as unveiled references to sexual matters are concerned. Its author, too, was a humanist. The novelty of the humanists' writings, and particularly of those of Erasmus, is precisely that they do not conform to the standard of clerical society but are written from the standpoint of, and for, secular society.

The humanists were representatives of a movement which sought to release the Latin language from its confinement within the ecclesiastical tradition and sphere, and make it a language of secular society, at least of the secular upper class. Not the least important sign of the

change in the structure of Western society, which has already been seen from so many other aspects in this study, is the fact that its secular constituents now feel an increasing need for a secular, scholarly literature. The humanists are the executors of this change, the functionaries of this need of the secular upper class. In their works the written word once again draws close to worldly social life. Experiences from this life find direct access to scholarly literature. This, too, is a line in the great movement of "civilization." And it is here that one of the keys to the "revival" of antiquity will have to be sought.

Erasmus once gave very trenchant expression to this process precisely in defending the *Colloquies*: "As Socrates brought philosophy from heaven to earth, so I have led philosophy to games and banquets," he says in the notes *De utilitate colloquiorum* that he appended to the *Colloquies* (1655 ed., p. 668). For this reason these writings may be correctly regarded as representing the standard of behavior of secular society, no matter how much their particular demands for a restraint of instincts and moderation of behavior may have transcended this standard and, represented in anticipation of the future, an ideal.

In *De utilitate colloquiorum*, Erasmus says with regard to the dialogue "Proci et puellae" mentioned above: "I wish that all suitors were like the one I depict and conversed in no other way when entering marriage."

What appears to the nineteenth-century observer as the "basest depiction of lust," what even by the present standard of shame must be veiled in silence particularly before children, appears to Erasmus and his contemporaries who help to disseminate this work as a model conversation, ideally suited to set an example for the young, and still largely an ideal when compared with what was actually going on around them.⁸³

4. The case is similar with the other dialogues mentioned by Von Raumer in his polemic. The woman who complains about her husband is instructed that she will have to change her own behavior, then her husband's will change. And the conversation of the young man with the prostitute ends with his rejection of her disreputable mode of life. One must hear this conversation oneself to understand what Erasmus wishes to set up as an example for boys. The girl, Lucretia, has not seen the youth, Sophronius, for a long time. And she clearly invites him to do what he has come to the house to do. But he asks whether she

is sure that they cannot be seen, whether she has not a darker room. And when she leads him to a darker room he again has scruples. Is she really sure that no one can see them? "No one can see or hear us, not even a fly," she says. "Why do you hesitate?" But the young man asks: "Not even God? Not even the angels?"* And then he begins to convert her with all the arts of dialectics. He asks whether she has many enemies, whether it would not please her to annoy her enemies. Would she not annoy her enemies by giving up her life in this house and becoming an honorable woman? And finally he convinces her. He will secretly take a room for her in the house of a respectable woman, he will find a pretext for her to leave the house unseen. And at first he will look after her.

However "immoral" the presentation of such a situation (in a "children's book," of all places) must appear to an observer from a later period, it is not difficult to understand that from the standpoint of a different social standard and a different structure of feelings it could appear highly "moral" and exemplary.

The same line of development, the same difference in standards, could be demonstrated by any number of examples. The observer of the nineteenth and, to some extent, even of the twentieth century confronts the models and conditioning precepts of the past with a certain helplessness. And until we come to see that our own threshold of repugnance, our own structure of feelings, have developed—in a

*The text of this excerpt from the dialogue is as follows:

SOPHRONIUS: Nondum hic locus mihi videtur satis secretus.

LUCRETIA: Unde iste novus pudor? Est mihi museion,* ubi repono mundum meum, locus adeo obscurus, ut vix ego te visura sim, aut te me.

SOPH.: Circumspice rimas omnes.

LUC.: Rima nulla est.

SOPH.: Nullus est in propinquo, qui nos exaudiat?

LUC.: Ne musca quidem, mea lux. Quid cunctaris?

SOPH.: Fallemus heic oculos Dei?

LUC.: Nequaquam: ille perspicit omnia.

SOPH.: Et angelorum?

SOPH.: This place doesn't seem secret enough to me. LUC.: How come you're so bashful all at once? Well, come to my private dressing room. It's so dark we shall scarcely see each other there. SOPH.: Examine every chink. LUC.: There's not a single chink. SOPH.: Is there nobody near to hear us? LUC.: Not so much as a fly, my dearest. Why are you hesitating? SOPH.: Can we escape the eye of God here? LUC.: Of course not; he sees everything. SOPH.: And the angels?

structured process—and are continuing to develop, it remains indeed almost incomprehensible from the present standpoint how such dialogues could be included in a schoolbook or deliberately produced as reading matter for children. But this is precisely why our own standard, including our attitude to children, should be understood as something which has developed.

More orthodox men than Erasmus did the same as he. To replace the *Colloquies*, which were suspected of heresy, other dialogues were written, as already mentioned, by a strict Catholic. They bear the title *Johannis Morisoti medici colloquiorum libri quatuor, ad Constantinum filium* (Basel, 1549). They are likewise written as a schoolbook for boys, since, as the author Morisotus says, one is often uncertain, in Erasmus's *Colloquies*, "whether one is listening to a Christian or a heathen." And in later evaluations of this opposing work from a strictly Catholic camp the same phenomenon appears.⁸⁵ It will suffice to introduce the work as it is reflected in a judgment from 1911:⁸⁶

In Morisotus girls, maidens, and women play a still greater role than in Erasmus. In a large number of dialogues they are the sole speakers, and their conversations, which even in the first and second books are by no means always quite harmless, often revolve in the last two.¹⁰⁷ . . . around such risky matters that we can only shake our heads and ask: Did the stern Morisotus write this for his son? Could he be so sure that the boy would really only read and study the later books when he had reached the age for which they were intended? Admittedly, we should not forget that the sixteenth century knew little of prudery, and frequently enough presented its scholars with material in their exercise books that our pedagogues would gladly do without. But another question! How did Morisotus imagine the use of such dialogues in practice? Boys, youths, and men could never use as a model for Latin speech a conversation in which there are only female speakers. Therefore Morisotus, no better than the despised Erasmus, has lost sight of the didactic purpose of the book.

The question is not difficult to answer.

5. Erasmus himself never "lost sight of his didactic purpose." His commentary *De utilitate colloquiorum* shows this quite unequivocally. In it he makes explicit what kind of didactic purpose was attached to his "conversations" or, more exactly, what he wanted to convey to the young man. On the conversation of the young man with the harlot, for example, he says: "What could I have said that would have been more effective in bringing home to the young man the need for

modesty, and in bringing girls out of such dangerous and infamous houses?" No, he never lost sight of his pedagogical purpose; he merely has a different standard of shame. He wants to show the young man the world as in a mirror; he wants to teach him what must be avoided and what is conducive to a tranquil life: "In senili colloquio quam multa velut in speculo exhibentur, quae, vel fugienda sunt in vita, vel vitam reddunt tranquillam!"

The same intention undoubtedly also underlies the conversations of Morisotus; and a similar attitude appears in many other educational writings of the time. They all set out to "introduce the boy to life," as Erasmus puts it.⁸⁸ But by this they meant the life of adults. In later periods there is an increasing tendency to tell and show children how they ought and ought not to behave. Here they are shown, by introducing them to life, how adults ought and ought not to behave. This is the difference. And one did not behave here in this way, there in that, as a result of theoretical reflection. For Erasmus and his contemporaries it was a matter of course to speak to children in this way. Even though subservient and socially dependent, boys lived very early in the same social sphere as adults. And adults did not impose upon themselves either in action or in words the same restraint with regard to the sexual life as later. In keeping with the different state of restraint of feelings produced in the individual by the structure of interpersonal relations, the idea of strictly concealing these drives in secrecy and intimacy was largely alien to adults themselves. All this made the distance between the behavioral and emotional standards of adults and children smaller from the outset. We see again and again how important it is for an understanding of the earlier psychic constitution and our own to observe the increase of this distance, the gradual formation of the peculiar segregated area in which people gradually come to spend the first twelve, fifteen, and now almost twenty years of their lives. Human biological development in earlier times will not have taken a very different course from today. Only in relation to this social change can we better understand the whole problem of "growing up" as it appears today, and with it such particular problems as the "infantile residues" in the personality structure of grown-ups. The more pronounced difference between the dress of children and adults in our time is only a particularly visible expression of this development. It, too, was minimal at Erasmus's time and for a long period thereafter.

6. To an observer from modern times, it seems surprising that

Erasmus in his *Colloquies* should speak at all to a child of prostitutes and the houses in which they live. In our phase of civilization it seems immoral even to acknowledge the existence of such institutions in a schoolbook. They certainly exist as enclaves even in the society of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But the fear and shame with which the sexual area of instinctual life, like many others, is surrounded from the earliest years, the "conspiracy of silence" observed on such matters in social discourse, are as good as complete. The mere mention of such opinions and institutions in social life is forbidden, and references to them in the presence of children are a crime soiling the childish soul, or at least a very grave error of conditioning.

In Erasmus's time it was taken equally for granted that children knew of the existence of these institutions. No one concealed them. At most they were warned about them. Erasmus does just that. If we read only the pedagogical books of the time, the mention of such social institutions can certainly appear as an idea emanating from an individual. If we see how the children actually lived with adults, and how scanty was the wall of secrecy between adults themselves and therefore also between adults and children, we comprehend that conversations like those of Erasmus and Morisotus relate directly to the standard of their times. They could reckon with the fact that children knew about all this; it was taken for granted. They saw it as their task as educators to show children how they ought to conduct themselves in the face of such institutions.

It may not seem to amount to very much to say that such houses were spoken about quite openly at the universities. All the same, people generally went to university a good deal younger than today. And it illustrates the theme of this whole chapter to point out that the prostitute was a topic even of comic public speeches at universities. In 1500 a master of arts at Heidelberg spoke "*De fide meretricum in suos amatores*" (On the fidelity of courtesans to their paramours), another "*De fide concubinarum*" (On the fidelity of concubines), a third "On the monopoly of the guild of swine," or "*De generibus ebriosorum et ebrietate vitanda*."⁸⁹

And exactly the same phenomenon is apparent in many sermons of the time; there is no indication that children were excluded from them. This form of extramarital relationship was certainly disapproved in ecclesiastical and many secular circles. But the social prohibition was not yet imprinted as a self restraint in the individual to the extent that it

was embarrassing even to speak about it in public. Society had not yet outlawed every utterance that showed that one knew anything about such things.

This difference becomes even clearer if one considers the position of venal women in medieval towns. As is the case today in many societies outside Europe, they have their own very definite place in the public life of the medieval town. There were towns in which they ran races on festival days.⁹⁰ They were frequently sent to welcome distinguished visitors. In 1438, for example, the protocols of the city accounts of Vienna read: "For the wine for the common women 96 Kreutzers. Item, for the women who went to meet the king, 96 Kreutzers for wine."⁹¹ Or the mayor and council give distinguished visitors free access to the brothel. In 1434 the Emperor Sigismund publicly thanks the city magistrate of Bern for putting the brothel freely at the disposal of himself and his attendants for three days.⁹² This, like a banquet, formed part of the hospitality offered to high-ranking guests.

The venal women form within city life a corporation with certain rights and obligations, like any other professional body. And like any other professional group, they occasionally defend themselves against unfair competition. In 1500, for example, a number of them go to the mayor of a German town and complain about another house in which the profession to which their house has the sole public rights is practiced. The mayor gives them permission to enter this house; they smash everything and beat the landlady. On another occasion they drag a competitor from her house and force her to live in theirs.

In a word, their social position was similar to that of the executioner, lowly and despised, but entirely public and not surrounded with secrecy. This form of extramarital relationship between man and woman had not yet been removed "behind the scenes."

7. To a certain extent, this also applies to sexual relations in general, even marital ones. Wedding customs alone give us an idea of this. The procession into the bridal chamber was led by the best men. The bride was undressed by the bridesmaids; she had to take off all finery. The bridal bed had to be mounted in the presence of witnesses if the marriage was to be valid. They were "laid together."⁹³ "Once in bed you are rightly wed," the saying went. In the later Middle Ages this custom gradually changed to the extent that the couple was allowed to lie on the bed in their clothes. No doubt these customs

varied somewhat between classes and countries. All the same, the old form was retained in Lübeck, for example, up to the first decade of the seventeenth century.⁸⁴ Even in the absolutist society of France, bride and bridegroom were taken to bed by the guests, undressed, and given their nightdress. All this is symptomatic of a different standard of shame concerning the relations of the sexes. And through these examples one gains a clearer perception of the specific standard of shame which slowly becomes predominant in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this period, even among adults, everything pertaining to sexual life is concealed to a high degree and dismissed behind the scenes. This is why it is possible, and also necessary, to conceal this side of life for a long period from children. In the preceding phases the relations between the sexes, together with the institutions embracing them, are far more directly incorporated into public life. Hence it is more natural for children to be familiar with this side of life from an early age. From the point of view of conditioning, there is no need to burden this sphere with taboos and secrecy to the extent that becomes necessary in the later stage of civilization, with its different standard of behavior.

In aristocratic court society, sexual life was certainly a good deal more concealed than in medieval society. What the observer from a bourgeois-industrial society often interprets as the "frivolity" of court society is nothing other than this shift toward concealment. Nevertheless, measured by the standard of control of the impulses in bourgeois society itself, the concealment and segregation of sexuality in social life, as in consciousness, was relatively slight in this phase. Here, too, the judgment of later phases is often misled because standards, one's own and that of the court aristocracy, are viewed as absolute rather than as inseparable opposites, and because one's own standard is made the measure of all others.

In this society, too, the relative openness with which the natural stages in a process of development, functions are referred to among adults is matched by a greater freedom of speech and action in the presence of children. There are numerous examples of this. To take a particularly illustrative one, there lives at the court in the seventeenth century a little Mlle. de Bouillon who is six years old. The ladies of the court are wont to converse with her, and one day they play a joke on her: they try to persuade the young lady that she is pregnant. The little girl denies it. She defends herself. It is absolutely impossible, she

says, and they argue back and forth. But then one day on waking up she finds a newborn child in her bed. She is amazed; and she says in her innocence, "So this has happened only to the Holy Virgin and me; for I did not feel any pain." Her words are passed round, and now the little affair becomes a diversion for the whole court. The child receives visits, as is customary on such occasions. The Queen herself comes to console her and to offer herself as godmother to the baby. And the game goes further: the little girl is pressed to say who is the father of the child. Finally, after a period of strenuous reflection, she reaches the conclusion that it can only be the King or the Count de Guiche, since they are the only two men who have given her a kiss.⁸⁵ Nobody takes this joke amiss. It falls entirely within the existing standard. No one sees in it a danger to the adaptation of the child to this standard, or to her spiritual purity, and it is clearly not seen as in any way contradicting her religious education.

8. Only very gradually, subsequently, does a stronger association of sexuality with shame and embarrassment, and a corresponding restraint of behavior, spread more or less evenly over the whole of society. And only when the distance between adults and children grows does "sexual enlightenment" become an "acute problem."

Above, the criticism of Erasmus's *Colloquies* by the well-known pedagogue Von Raumer was quoted. The picture of this whole curve of development becomes even more distinct if we see how the problem of sexual education, the adaptation of the child to the standard of his own society, posed itself to this educator. In 1857, Von Raumer published a short work called *The Education of Girls*. What he prescribes in it (p. 72) as a model behavior for adults in answering the sexual questions of their children was certainly not the only possible form of behavior at his time; nevertheless, it is highly characteristic of the standard of the nineteenth century, in the instruction of both girls and boys:

Some mothers are of the opinion, fundamentally perverse in my view, that daughters should be given insight into all family circumstances, even into the relations of the sexes, and initiated into things that will fall to their lot in the event that they should marry. Following the example of Rousseau, this view degenerated to the coarsest and most repulsive caricature in the philanthropist of Dessau. Other mothers exaggerate in the opposite direction by telling girls things which, as soon as they grow older, must reveal themselves as totally false. As in all other cases, this is reprehensible.

These things should not be touched upon at all in the presence of children, least of all in a secretive way which is liable to arouse curiosity. Children should be left for as long as is at all possible in the belief that an angel brings the mother her little children. This legend, customary in some regions, is far better than the story of the stork common elsewhere. Children, if they really grow up under their mother's eyes, will seldom ask forward questions on this point . . . not even if the mother is prevented by a childbirth from having them about her. . . . If girls should later ask how little children really come into the world, they should be told that the good Lord gives the mother her child, who has a guardian angel in heaven who certainly played an invisible part in bringing us this great joy. "You do not need to know nor could you understand how God gives children." Girls must be satisfied with such answers in a hundred cases, and it is the mother's task to occupy her daughters' thoughts so incessantly with the good and beautiful that they are left no time to brood on such matters. . . . A mother . . . ought only once to say seriously: "It would not be good for you to know such a thing, and you should take care not to listen to anything said about it." A truly well-brought-up girl will from then on feel shame at hearing things of this kind spoken of.

Between the manner of speaking about sexual relations represented by Erasmus and that represented here by Von Raumer, a civilization-curve is visible similar to that shown in more detail in the expression of other impulses. In the civilizing process, sexuality too is increasingly removed behind the scenes of social life and enclosed in a particular enclave, the nuclear family. Likewise, the relations between the sexes are isolated, placed behind walls in consciousness. An aura of embarrassment, the expression of a sociogenetic fear, surrounds this sphere of life. Even among adults it is referred to officially only with caution and circumlocutions. And with children, particularly girls, such things are, as far as possible, not referred to at all. Von Raumer gives no reason why one ought not to speak of them with children. He could have said it is desirable to preserve the spiritual purity of girls for as long as possible. But even this reason is only another expression of how far the gradual submergence of these impulses in shame and embarrassment has advanced by this time. It is now as natural not to speak of these matters as it was to speak of them in Erasmus's time. And the fact that both the witnesses invoked here, Erasmus and Von Raumer, were serious Christians who took their authority from God further underlines the difference.

It is clearly not "rational" motives that underlie the model put forward by Von Raumer. Considered rationally, the problem confronting him seems unsolved, and what he says appears contradictory. He does not explain how and when the young girl should be made to understand what is happening and will happen to her. The primary concern is the necessity of instilling "modesty" (i.e., feelings of shame, fear, embarrassment, and guilt) or, more precisely, behavior conforming to the social standard. And one feels how infinitely difficult it is for the educator himself to overcome the resistance of the shame and embarrassment which surround this sphere for him. One detects something of the deep confusion in which this social development has placed the individual; the only advice that the educator is able to give mothers is to avoid contact with these things wherever possible. What is involved here is not the lack of insight or the inhibition of a particular person; it is a social, not an individual problem. Only gradually, as if through insight gained retrospectively, were better methods evolved for adapting the child to the high degree of sexual restraint, to the control, transformation, and inhibition of these drives that were indispensable for life in this society.

Von Raumer himself sees in a sense that this area of life ought not to be surrounded with an aura of secrecy "which is liable to arouse curiosity." But as this has become a "secret" area in his society, he cannot escape the necessity of secrecy in his own precepts: "A mother . . . ought only once to say seriously: 'It would not be good for you to know such a thing. . . .'" Neither "rational" motives nor practical reasons primarily determine this attitude, but rather the shame of adults themselves, which has become compulsive. It is the social prohibitions and resistances within themselves, their own superego, that makes them keep silent.

For Erasmus and his contemporaries, as we have seen, the problem is not that of enlightening the child on the relations of man and woman. Children find out about this of their own accord through the kind of social institutions and social life in which they grow up. As the reserve of adults is less, so too is the discrepancy between what is permitted openly and what takes place behind the scenes. Here the chief task of the educator is to guide the child, within what he already knows, in the correct direction—or, more precisely, the direction desired by the educator. This is what Erasmus seeks to do through conversations like that of the girl with her suitor or the youth with the

prostitute. And the success of the book shows that Erasmus struck the right note for many of his contemporaries.

As in the course of the civilizing process the sexual drive, like many others, is subjected to ever stricter control and transformation, the problem it poses changes. The pressure placed on adults to privatize all their impulses (particularly sexual ones), the "conspiracy of silence," the socially generated restrictions on speech, the emotionally charged character of most words relating to sexual urges—all this builds a thick wall of secrecy around the adolescent. What makes sexual enlightenment—the breaching of this wall, which will one day be necessary—so difficult is not only the need to make the adolescent conform to the same standard of instinctual restraint and control as the adult. It is, above all, the personality structure of the adults themselves that makes speaking about these secret things difficult. Very often adults have neither the tone nor the words. The "dirty" words they know are out of the question. The medical words are unfamiliar to many. Theoretical considerations in themselves do not help. It is the sociogenetic repressions in them that resist speech. Hence the advice given by Von Raumer to speak on these matters as little as possible. And this situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the tasks of conditioning and "enlightenment" fall more and more exclusively to parents. The manifold love relationships between mother, father, and child tend to increase resistance to speaking about these questions, not only on the part of the child but also on that of the father or mother.

It is clear from this how the question of childhood is to be posed. The psychological problems of growing people cannot be understood if the individual is regarded as developing uniformly in all historical epochs. The problems relating to the child's consciousness and instinctual urges vary with the nature of the relations of children to adults. These relations have in each society a specific form corresponding to the peculiarities of its structure. They are different in chivalrous society from those in urban bourgeois society; they are different in the whole secular society of the Middle Ages from those of modern times. Therefore, the problems arising from the adaptation and molding of adolescents to the standard of adults—for example, the specific problems of puberty in our civilized society—can only be understood in relation to the historical phase, the structure of society as a whole, which demands and maintains this standard of adult

behavior and this special form of relationship between adults and children.

9. A civilizing process analogous to that of "sexual enlightenment" could be shown in relation to marriage and its development in Western society. That monogamous marriage is the predominant institution regulating sexual relations in the West is undoubtedly correct in general terms. Nevertheless, the actual control and molding of sexual relations changes considerably in the course of Western history. The Church certainly fought early for monogamous marriage. But marriage takes on this strict form as a social institution binding on both sexes only at a late stage, when drives and impulses come under firmer and stricter control. For only then are extramarital relationships for men really ostracized socially, or at least subjected to absolute secrecy. In earlier phases, depending on the balance of social power between the sexes, extramarital relationships for men and sometimes also for women were taken more or less for granted by secular society. Up to the sixteenth century we hear often enough that in the families of the most honorable citizens the legitimate and illegitimate children of the husband are brought up together; nor is any secret made of the difference before the children themselves. The man was not yet forced socially to feel ashamed of his extramarital relationships. Despite all the countervailing tendencies that undoubtedly already exist, it is very often taken for granted that the bastard children are a part of the family, that the father should provide for their future and, in the case of daughters, arrange an honorable wedding. But no doubt this led more than once to "serious misunderstanding"* between the married couples.

The situation of the illegitimate child is not always and everywhere the same throughout the Middle Ages. For a long time, nevertheless, there is no trace of the tendency toward secrecy which corresponds later, in professional-bourgeois society, to the tendency toward a stricter confinement of sexuality to the relationship of one man to one woman, to the stricter control of sexual impulses, and to the stronger pressure of social prohibitions. Here, too, the demands of the Church cannot be taken as a measure of the real standard of secular society. In reality, if not always in law, the situation of the illegitimate children in a family differed from that of the legitimate children only in that the former did not inherit the status of the father nor in general his wealth, or at least not the same part of it as the legitimate children. That people

in the upper class often called themselves "bastard" expressly and proudly is well enough known.⁹⁷

Marriage in the absolutist court societies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries derives its special character from the fact that, through the structure of these societies, the dominance of the husband over the wife is broken for the first time. The social power of the wife is almost equal to that of the husband. Social opinion is determined to a high degree by women. And whereas society had hitherto acknowledged only the extramarital relationships of men, regarding those of the socially "weaker sex" as more or less reprehensible, the extramarital relationships of women now appear, in keeping with the transformation of balance of social power between the sexes, as legitimate within certain limits.

It remains to be shown in more detail how decisive this first increase in power changes or, if one likes, this first wave of emancipation of women in absolutist court society was for the civilizing process, for the advance of the frontier of shame and embarrassment and for the strengthening of social control over the individual. Just as the increased power changes, the social ascent of other social groups necessitated new forms of drive control for all at a level midway between those previously imposed on the rulers and the ruled respectively, so this strengthening of the social position of women signified (to express the point schematically) a decrease in the restrictions on their drives for women and an increase in the restrictions on their drives for men. At the same time, it forced both men and women to adopt a new and a stricter self-discipline in their relations with one another.

In the famous novel *La Princesse de Clèves*, by Madame de la Fayette, the Princess's husband, who knows his wife to be in love with the Duc de Nemours, says: "I shall trust only in you; it is the path my heart counsels me to take, and also my reason. With a temperament like yours, *by leaving you your liberty I set you narrower limits than I could enforce.*"⁹⁸

This is an example of the pressure toward self-discipline imposed on the sexes by this situation. The husband knows that he cannot hold his wife by force. He does not rant or expostulate because his wife loves another, nor does he appeal to his rights as a husband. Public opinion would support none of this. He restrains himself. But in doing so he expects from her the same self-discipline as he imposes on himself. This is a very characteristic example of the new constellation

that comes into being with the diminishment of social inequality between the sexes. Fundamentally, it is not the individual husband who gives his wife this freedom. It is founded in the structure of society itself. But it also demands a new kind of behavior. It produces very specific conflicts. And there are certainly enough women in this society who make use of this freedom. There is plentiful evidence that in this courtly aristocracy the restriction of sexual relationships to marriage was very often regarded as bourgeois and socially unsuitable. Nevertheless, all this gives an idea of how directly a specific kind of freedom corresponds to particular forms and stages of social interdependence among human beings.

The nondynamic linguistic forms to which we are still bound today oppose freedom and constraint like heaven and hell. From a short-term point of view, this thinking in absolute opposites is often reasonably adequate. For someone in prison the world outside the prison walls is a world of freedom. But considered more precisely, there is, contrary to what antitheses such as this one suggest, no such thing as "absolute" freedom, if this means a total independence and absence of social constraint. There is a liberation from one form of constraint that is oppressive or intolerable to another which is less burdensome. Thus the civilizing process, despite the transformation and increased constraint that it imposes on the emotions, goes hand in hand with liberations of the most diverse kinds. The form of marriage at the absolutist courts, symbolized by the same arrangement of living rooms and bedrooms for men and women in the mansions of the court aristocracy, is one of many examples of this. The woman was more free from external constraints than in feudal society. But the inner constraint which she had to impose on herself in accordance with the form of integration and the code of behavior of court society, and which stemmed from the same structural features of this society as her "liberation," had increased for women as for men in comparison to chivalrous society.

The case is similar if the bourgeois form of marriage of the nineteenth century is compared with that of the court aristocracy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this later period the bourgeoisie as a whole is freed from the pressures of an absolutist estate society. Both bourgeois men and bourgeois women are now relieved of the external constraints to which they were subjected as second-rate people in the hierarchy of estates. But the intertwinement

of trade and money, the growth of which had given them the social power to liberate themselves, has increased. In this respect, the social constraints on the individual are also stronger than before. The pattern of self-restraint imposed on the people of bourgeois society through their occupational work is in many respects different from the pattern imposed on the emotional life by the functions of court society. For many aspects of the "emotional economy", bourgeois functions—above all, business life—demand and produce greater self-restraint than courtly functions. Why the occupational work that became a general way of life with the rise of the bourgeoisie should necessitate a particularly strict disciplining of sexuality is a question in its own right. The connections between the personality structure and the social structure of the nineteenth century cannot be considered here. However, by the standard of bourgeois society, the control of sexuality and the form of marriage prevalent in court society appear extremely lax. Social opinion now severely condemns all extramarital relations between the sexes, though here, unlike the situation in court society, the social power of the husband is again greater than that of the wife, so that violation of the taboo on extramarital relationships by the husband is usually judged more leniently than the same offense by women. But both breaches must now be entirely excluded from official social life. Unlike those in court society, they must be removed strictly behind the scenes, banished to the realm of secrecy. This is only one of many examples of the increase in reserve and self-restraint which the individual now has to impose on himself.

10. The civilizing process does not follow a straight line. The general trend of change can be determined, as has been done here. On a smaller scale there are the most diverse crisscross movements, shifts and spurts in this or that direction. But if we consider the movement over large time spans, we see clearly how the compulsions arising directly from the threat of weapons and physical force gradually diminish, and how those forms of dependency which lead to the regulation of the affects in the form of self-control, gradually increase. This change appears at its most rectilinear if we observe the men of the upper class of the time—that is, the class composed first of warriors or knights, then of courtiers, and then of professional bourgeois. If the whole many-layered fabric of historical development is considered, however, the movement is seen to be infinitely more complex. In each phase there are numerous fluctuations, frequent

advances or recessions of the inward and outward constraints. An observation of such fluctuations, particularly those close to us in time, can easily obscure the general trend. One such fluctuation is present today in the memories of all: in the period following World War I, as compared to the prewar period, a "relaxation of morals" appears to have occurred. A number of constraints imposed on behavior before the war have weakened or disappeared entirely. Many things forbidden earlier are now permitted. And, seen at close quarters, the movement seems to be proceeding in the direction opposite to that shown here; it seems to lead to a relaxation of the constraints imposed on the individual by social life. But on closer examination it is not difficult to perceive that this is merely a very slight recession, one of the fluctuations that constantly arise from the complexity of the historical movement within each phase of the total process.

One example is bathing manners. It would have meant social ostracism in the nineteenth century for a woman to wear in public one of the bathing costumes commonplace today. But this change, and with it the whole spread of sports for men and women, presupposes a very high standard of drive control. Only in a society in which a high degree of restraint is taken for granted, and in which women are, like men, absolutely sure that each individual is curbed by self-control and a strict code of etiquette, can bathing and sporting customs having this relative degree of freedom develop. It is a relaxation which remains within the framework of a particular "civilized" standard of behavior involving a very high degree of automatic constraint and affect-transformation, conditioned to become a habit.

At the same time, however, we also find in our own time the precursors of a shift toward the cultivation of new and stricter constraints. In a number of societies there are attempts to establish a social regulation and management of the emotions far stronger and more conscious than the standard prevalent hitherto, a pattern of molding that imposes renunciations and transformation of drives on the individual with vast consequences for human life which are scarcely foreseeable as yet.

11. Regardless, therefore, of how much the tendencies may crisscross, advance and recede, relax or tighten on a small scale, the direction of the main movement—as far as it is visible up to now—is the same for all kinds of behavior. The process of civilization of the sex drive, seen on a large scale, runs parallel to those of other drives,

no matter what sociogenetic differences of detail may always be present. Here, too, measured in terms of the standards of the men of successive ruling classes, control grows ever stricter. The instinct is slowly but progressively suppressed from the public life of society. The reserve that must be exercised in speaking of it also increases.⁹⁹ And this restraint, like all others, is enforced less and less by direct physical force. It is cultivated in the individual from an early age as habitual self-restraint by the structure of social life, by the pressure of social institutions in general, and by certain executive organs of society (above all, the family) in particular. Thereby the social commands and prohibitions become increasingly a part of the self, a strictly regulated superego.

Like many other drives, sexuality is confined more and more exclusively, for both women and men, to a particular enclave, socially legitimized marriage. Social tolerance of other relationships, for both husband and wife, which was by no means lacking earlier, is suppressed increasingly, if with fluctuations. Every violation of these restrictions, and everything conducive to one, is therefore relegated to the realm of secrecy, of what may not be mentioned without loss of prestige or social position.

And just as the nuclear family only very gradually became, so exclusively, the only legitimate enclave of sexuality and of all intimate functions for men and women, so it was only at a late stage that it became the primary organ for cultivating the socially required control over impulses and behavior in young people. Before this degree of restraint and intimacy was reached, and until the separation of instinctual life from public view was strictly enforced, the task of early conditioning did not fall so heavily on father and mother. All the people with whom the child came into contact—and when intimization was less advanced and the interior of the house less isolated, they were often quite numerous—played a part. In addition, the family itself was usually larger and—in the upper classes—the servants more numerous in earlier times. People in general spoke more openly about the various aspects of instinctual life, and gave way more freely to their own impulses in speech and act. The shame associated with sexuality was less. This is what makes Erasmus's educational work quoted above so difficult for pedagogues of a later phase to understand. And so conditioning, the reproduction of social habits in the child, did not take place so exclusively behind closed doors, as it

were, but far more directly in the presence of other people. A by no means untypical picture of this kind of conditioning in the upper class can be found, for example, in the diary of the doctor Jean Héroard, which records day by day and almost hour by hour the childhood of Louis XIII, what he did and said as he grew up.

It is not without a touch of paradox that the greater the transformation, control, restraint, and concealment of drives and impulses that is demanded of the individual by society, and therefore the more difficult the conditioning of the young becomes, the more the task of first instilling socially required habits is concentrated within the nuclear family, on the father and mother. The mechanism of conditioning, however, is still scarcely different than in earlier times. For it does not involve a closer supervision of the task, or more exact planning that takes account of the special circumstances of the child, but is effected primarily by automatic means and to some extent through reflexes. The socially patterned constellation of habits and impulses of the parents gives rise to a constellation of habits and impulses in the child; these may operate either in the same direction or in one entirely different from that desired or expected by the parents on the basis of their own conditioning. The interrelation of the habits of parents and children, through which the instinctive life of the child is slowly molded, is thus determined by nothing less than by "reason." Behavior and words associated by the parent with shame and repugnance are very soon associated in the same way by the children, through the parents' expressions of displeasure, their more or less gentle pressure; in this way the social standard of shame and repugnance is gradually reproduced in the children. But such a standard forms at the same time the basis and framework of the most diverse individual drive formations. How the growing personality is fashioned in particular cases by this incessant social interaction between the parents' and children's feelings, habits, and reactions is at present largely unforeseeable and incalculable to parents.

12. The tendency of the civilizing process to make all bodily functions more intimate, to enclose them in particular enclaves, to put them "behind closed doors," has diverse consequences. One of the most important, which has already been observed in connection with various other forms of drives, is seen particularly clearly in the case of the development of civilizing restraints on sexuality. It is the peculiar division in man which becomes more pronounced the more sharply