The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society

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II

Social Structures of the Public Sphere

4 The Basic Blueprint

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reason (*öffentliches Räsonnement).* In our [German] usage this term (i.e., *Räsonnement*) unmistakably preserves the polemical nuances of both sides: simultaneously the invocation of reason and its disdainful disparagement as merely malcontent griping.[1] Hitherto the estates had negotiated agreements with the princes in which from case to case the conflicting power claims involved in the demarcation of estate liberties from the prince's overlordship or sovereignty were brought into balance.[2] Since the thirteenth century this practice first resulted in a dualism of the ruling estates and of the prince; soon the territorial estates alone represented the land, over against which stood the territorial ruler.[s] It is well known that where the prince's power was relatively reduced by a parliament, as in Great Britain, this development took a different course than it did on the continent, where the monarchs mediatized the estates. The third estate broke with this mode of balancing power since

it was no longer capable of establishing itself as a *ruling* estate. A division of rule by parcelling out lordly rights (including the "liberties" of the estates) was no longer possible on the basis of a commercial economy, for the power of control over one's own capitalistically functioning property, being grounded in private law, was apolitical. The bourgeois were privatere rsons; as such they did not "rule." Their power claims against jhe public authority were thus not directed.against the concentration of powers of command that ought to be "divided"; instead, they undercut the principle on. which existing rule was baseil. The principle of control that the bourgeois public opposed to the latter—namely, public ity—was intended to change dominations as such. The claim to power presented in rational-critical public debate (*öffentliches Räsonnement),* which *eo ipso* renounced the form of a claim to rule, would entail, if it were to prevail, more than just an exchange of the basis of legitimation while domination was maintained in principle (section 7).

The standards of "reason" and the forms of the "law" to which the public wanted to subject domination and thereby change it in substance reveal their sociological meaning[1] only in an analysis of the bourgeois public sphere itself, especially in the recognition of the fact that it was private people who related to each other in it as a public. The public's understanding of the public use of reason was guided specifically by such private experiences as grew out of the audience-oriented *(publikumsbezogen)* subjectivity of the conjugal family's intimate domain *(Intimsphäre).* Historically, the latter was the source of privateness in the modern sense of a saturatedjind free interiority^ The ancient meaning of the "private"—an inevitability imposed by the necessities of life—was banned, or so it appears,^ from the inner region of the private sphere, from theJxome, together with the exertions and relations of dependence involved in social labor. To the degree to whichconimQdii^LeJt,. change burst out of the confines of the household economy, the sphere of the conjugal family became differentiated from the sphere »f social reproduction. The process of the polarization of state and society was repeated_once more within_ society itself. The status of private man combined the role of owner of commodities with that of head of theTamily, that_of_

jaroperty owner with that of "human being" *per if,* The doubling of the private sphere on the higher plane of the ¡»timaiesphere (section 6) furnished the foundation for an identification of those two roles under the common title of the "private'; ultimately, the political self-understanding of the bourgeois public originated there as well.

To be sure, before the public sphere explicitly assumed political functions in the tension-charged field of state-society relations, the subjectivity originating in the intimate sphere of" the conjugal family created, so to speak, its own public. Even before the control over the public sphere by public authority was contested and finally wrested away by the critical reasoning of private persons on political issues, there evolved under its cover a public sphere in apolitical form—the literary precursor jpf the public sphere operative in the political domain. It provided the training ground for a critical public reflection slill preoccupied with itself—a process of self-clarification of privatepeople focusing on the genuine experiences of their novel privateness. Of course, next to political economy, psychology arose as a specifically bourgeois science during the eighteenth century. Psychological interests also guided the critical discussion (*Räsonnement)* sparked by the products of culture that had become publicly accessible: in the reading room and the theater, in museums and at concerts. Inasmuch as culture became a commodity and thus finally evolved into "culture" in the specific sense (as something that pretended to exist merely for its own sake), it was claimed as the ready topic of a discussion, through which an audience-oriented (*publikumsbezogen)* subjectivity communicated with itself.

The public sphere in the world of letters (*literarische Öffentlichkeit)* was not, of course, autochthonously bourgeois; it preserved a certain continuity with the publicity involved in the representation enacted at the prince's court. The bourgeois avant-garde of the educated middle class learned the art of critical-rational public debate through its contact with the "elegant world." This courtly-noble society, to the extent that the modern state apparatus became independent from the monarch's personal sphere, naturally separated itself, in turn, more and more from the court and became its counterpoise in the

town. The "town" was the life center of civil society not only economically; in cultural-political contrast to the court, it designated especially an early public sphere in the world of letters whose institutions were the coffee houses, the *salons,* and the *TiichgeselLschaften* (table societies). The heirs of the humanistic-aristocratic society, in their encounter with the bourgeois intellectuals (through sociable discussions that quickly developed into public criticism), built a bridge between the remains of a collapsing form of publicity (the courtly one) and the precursor of a new one: the bourgeois public sphere (section 5).

With the usual reservations concerning the simplification involved in such illustrations, the blueprint of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century may be presented graphically as a schema of social realms in the diagram:

Private Realm	'	Sphere of Public Authority
Civil society (realm of commodity exchange and social labor)	Public sphere in the political realm Public sphere in the world of letters (clubs, press)	State (realm of the "police")
Conjugal family's internal space (bourgeois intellectuals)	(market of culture products) "Town"	Court (courtly-noble society)

The line between state and society, fundamental in our context, divided the public sphere from the private realm. The public sphere was coextensive with public authority, and we consider the court part of it. Included in the private realm was the authentic "public sphere," for it was a public sphere constituted by private people. Within the realm that was the preserve of private people we therefore distinguish again between private and public spheres. The private sphere comprised civil society in the narrower sense, that is to say, the realm of commodity exchange and of social labor; imbedded in it was the family with its interior domain (*Intimsphäre*). The public sphere"in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of

letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society.

5 Institutions of the Public Sphere

In seventeenth-century France *le public* meant the *lecteurs, spectateurs,* and *auditeurs* as the addressees and consumers, and the critics of art and literature;[4] reference was still primarily to the court, and later also to portions of the urban nobility along with a thin bourgeois upper stratum whose members occupied the loges of the Parisian theaters. This early public, then, comprised both court and "town." The thoroughly aristocratic polite life of these circles already assumed modern characteristics. With the Hôtel de Rambouillet, the great hall at court in which the prince staged his festivities and as patron gathered the artists about him was replaced by what later would be called the *salon.*[5] The hôtel provided the model for the *ruelles* (morning receptions) of the *précieuses,* which maintained a certain independence from the court. Although one sees here the first signs of that combination of the economically unproductive and politically functionless urban aristocracy with eminent writers, artists, and scientists (who frequently were of bourgeois origin) typical of the *salon* of the eighteenth century, it was still impossible, in the prevailing climate of *honnêteté,* for reastn to shed its dependence on the authority of the aristocratic noble hosts and to acquire that autonomy that turns conversation into criticism and *bons mots* into arguments. Only with the reign of Philip of Orléans, who moved the royal residence from Versailles to Paris, did the court lose its central position in the public sphere, indeed its status *as* the public sphere. For inasmuch as the "town" took over its cultural functions, the public sphere itself was transformed.

The sphere of royal representation and the *grand goût* of Versailles became a facade held up only with effort. The regent and his two successors preferred small social gatherings, if not the family circle itself, and to a certain degree avoided the etiquette. The great ceremonial gave way to an almost bourgeois intimacy:

At the court of Louis XVI the dominant tone is one of decided intimacy, and on six days of the week the social gatherings achieve the character of a private party. The only place where anything like a court household develops during the Régence is the castle of the Duchess of Maine at Sceaux, which becomes the scene of brilliant, expensive, and ingenious festivities and, at the same time, a new centre of art, a real Court of the Muses. But the entertainments arranged by the Duchess contain the germ of the ultimate dissolution of court life: They form the transition from the old-style court to the *salons* of the eighteenth century—the cultural heirs of the court.[6]

In Great Britain the Court had never been able to dominate the town as it had in the France of the Sun King.[7] Nevertheless, after the Glorious Revolution a shift in the relationship between court and town can be observed similar to the one that occurred one generation later in the relationship between *cour* and *ville*. Under the Stuarts, up to Charles II, literature and art served the representation of the king. "But after the Revolution the glory of the Court grew dim. Neither the political position of the Crown, nor the personal temperament of those who wore it was the same as of old. Stern William, invalid Anne, the German Georges, farmer George, domestic Victoria, none of them desired to keep a Court like Queen Elizabeth's. Henceforth the Court was the residence of secluded royalty, pointed out from afar, difficult of access save on formal occasions of proverbial dullness."[8] The predominance of the "town" was strengthened by new institutions that, for all their variety, in Great Britain and France took over the same social functions: the coffee houses in their golden age between 1680 and 1730 and the *salons* in the period between regency and revolution. In both countries they were centers of criticism—literary at first, then also political—in which began to emerge, between aristocratic society and bourgeois intellectuals, a certain parity of the educated.

Around the middle of the seventeenth century, after not only tea—first to be popular—but also chocolate and coffee had become the common beverages of at least the well-to-do strata of the population, the coachman of a Levantine merchant opened the first coffee house. By the first decade of the eighteenth century London already had 3,000 of them, each with a core group of regulars.[9] Just as Dryden, surrounded by

the new generation of writers, joined the battle of the "ancients and moderns" at Will's, Addison and Steele a little later convened their "little senate" at Button's; so too in the Rotary Club, presided over by Milton's secretary, Marvell and Pepys met with Harrington who here probably presented the re publican ideas of his *Oceana*As in the *salons* where "intellectuals" met with the aristocracy, literature had to legitimate itself in these coffee houses. In this case, however, the nobility joi ning-the upper bourgeois stratum still possessed the social functions lost by the French; it represented landed and moneyed interests. Thus critical debate ignited by works of literature and ait was soon extended to include economic and political disputes, without any guarantee (such as was given in the *salons)* that such discussions would be inconsequential, at least in the immediate context. The fact that only men were admitted to coffee-house society may have had something to do with this, whereas the style of the *salon,* like that of the rococo in general, was essentially shaped by women. Accordingly the women oF London society, abandoned every evening, waged a vigorous but vain struggle against the new institution." The coffee house not merely made access to the relevant circles less formal and easier; it embraced the wider strata of the middle class, including craftsmen and shopkeepers. Ned Ward reports tliaL the "wealthy shopkeeper" visited the coffee house several times, a day,[12] this held true for the poor one as well.[13]

In contrast, in France the *salons* formed a peculiar enclave-While the bourgeiosie, for all practical purposes excluded from leadership in state and Church, in time completely took, over all the key positions in the economy, and while the aristocracr compensated for its material inferiority with royal privileges, and an ever more rigorous stress upon hierarchy in social intercourse, in the *salons* the nobility and the *grande bourgeovir* of finance and administration assimilating itself to that nobility met with the "intellectuals" on an equal footing. The plebeian d'Alembert was no exception; in the *salons* of the fashionable ladies, noble as well as bourgeois, sons of princes and counts-associated with sons of watchmakers and shopkeepers.[14] In the *salon* the mind was no longer in the service of a patron; "opinion" became .emancipated from the bonds of economic depen-

dence. Even if under Philip the *salons* were at first places more for gallant pleasures than for smart discourse, such discussion indeed soon took equal place with the *diner.* Diderot's distinction between written and oral discourse[15] sheds light on the functions of the new gatherings. There was scarcely a great writer in the eighteenth century who would not have first submitted his essential ideas for discussion in such discourse, in lectures before the *académies* and especially in the *salons.* The *salon* held the monopoly of first publication: a new work, even a musical one, had to legitimate itself first in this forum. The Abbé Galiani's *Dialogues on the Grain Trade* give a vivid picture of the way in which conversation and discussion were elegantly intertwined, of how the unimportant (where one had traveled and how one was doing) was treated as much with solemnity as the important (theater and politics) was treated *en passant.*

In Germany at that time there was no "town" to replace the courts' publicity of representation with the institutions of a public sphere in civil society. But similar elements existed, beginning with the learned *Tischgesellschaften* (table societies), the old *Sprachgesellschaften* (literary societies) of the seventeenth century. Naturally they were fewer and less active than the coffee houses and *salons.* They were even more removed from practical politics than the *salons',* yet, as in the case of the coffee houses, their public was recruited from private people engaged in productive work, from the dignitaries of the principalities' capitals, with a strong preponderance of middle-class academics. The *Deutsche Geselhchaften* ("German Societies"), the first of which was founded by Gottsched in Leipzig in 1727, built upon the literary orders of the preceding century. The latter were still convened by the princes but avoided social exclusiveness; characteristically, later attempts to transform them into knightly orders failed. As it is put in one of the founding documents, their intent was "that in such manner an equality and association among persons of unequal social status might be brought about.""' Such orders, chambers, and academies were preoccupied with the native tongue, now interpreted as the medium of communication and understanding between people in their common quality as human beings and nothing more than human beings. Transcending the barriers of social

hierarchy, the bourgeois met here with the socially prestigious but politically uninfluential nobles as "common" human beings.[17] The decisive element was not so much the political equality of the members but their exclusiveness in relation to the political realm of absolutism as such: social equality was possible at first only as an equality outside the state. The coming together of private people into a public was therefore anticipated in secret, as a public sphere still existing largely behind closed doors. The secret promulgation of enlightenment typical of the lodges but also widely practiced by other associations and *Tischgesellschaften* had a dialectical character. Reason, which through public use of the rational faculty was to be realized in the rational communication of a public consisting of cultivated human beings, itself needed to be protected from becoming public because it was a threat to any and all relations of domination. As long as publicity had its seat in the secret chanceries of the prince, reason could not reveal itself directly. Its sphere of publicity had still to rely on secrecy; its public, even as a public, remained internal. The light of reason, thus veiled for self-protection, was revealed in stages. This recalls Lessing's famous statement about Freemasonry, which at that time was a broader European phenomenon: it was just as old as bourgeois society—"if indeed bourgeois society is not merely the offspring of Freemasonry."[18]

The practice of secret societies fell prey to its own ideology to the extent to which the public that put reason to use, and hence the bourgeois public sphere for which it acted as the pacemaker, won out against state-governed publicity. From publicist enclaves of civic concern with common affairs they developed into "exclusive associations whose basis is a separation from the public sphere that in the meantime has arisen."" Other societies, in contrast (especially those arising in the course of the eighteenth century among bourgeois dignitaries), expanded into open associations access to which (through cooptation or otherwise) was relatively easy. Here bourgeois forms of social intercourse, closeness (*Intimität*), and a morality played off against courtly convention were taken for granted; at any rate they no longer needed affirmation by means of demonstrative fraternization ceremonies.

However much the *TischgeselLschaften, salons,* and coffee houses may have differed in the size and composition of their publics, the style of their proceedings, the climate of their debates, and their topical orientations, they all organized discussion among private people that tended to be ongoing; hence they had a number of institutional criteria in common. *First,* they preserved a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether. The tendency replaced the celebration of rank with a tact befitting equals.[20] The parity on whose basis alone the authority of the better argument could assert itself against that of social hierarchy and in the end can carry the day meant, in the thought of the day, the parity of "common humanity" ("*bloss Menschliche"). Les hommes,* private gentlemen, or *die Privatleute* made up the public not just in the sense that power and prestige of public office were held in suspense; economic dependencies also in principle had no influence. Laws of the market were suspended as were laws of the state. Not that this idea of the public was actually realized in earnest in the coffee houses, the *salons,* and the societies; but as an idea it had become institutionalized and thereby stated as an objective claim. If not realized, it was at least consequential.

Secondly, discussion within such a public presupposed the problematization of areas that until then had not been questioned. The domain of "common concern" which was the object of public critical attention remained a preserve in which church and state authorities had the monopoly of interpretation not just from the pulpit but in philosophy, literature, and art, even at a time when, for specific social categories, the development of capitalism already demanded a behavior whose rational orientation required ever more information. To the degree, however, to which philosophical and literary works and works of art in general were produced for the market and distributed through it, these culture products became similar to that type of information: as commodities they became in principle generally accessible. They no longer remained components of the Church's and court's publicity of representation; that is precisely what was meant by the loss of their aura of extraordinariness and by the profaning of their once sacramental

character. The private people for whom the cultural product became available as a commodity profaned it inasmuch as thev had to determine its meaning on their own (by way of rational communication with one another), verbalize it, and thus state explicitly what precisely in its implicitness for so long could assert its authority. As Raymond Williams demonstrates, "art" and "culture" owe their modern meaning of spheres separate from the reproduction of social life to the eighteenth century.[21]

Thirdly, the same process that converted culture into a commodity (and in this fashion constituted it as a culture that could become an object of discussion to begin with) established the public as in principle inclusive. However exclusive the public might be in any given instance, it could never close itself oil entirely and become consolidated as a clique; for it always understood and found itself immersed within a more inclusive public of all private people, persons who—insofar as they were propertied and educated—as readers, listeners, and spectators could avail themselves via the market of the objects that were subject to discussion. The issues discussed became 'general not merely in their significance, but also in their accessibility everyone had to *be able* to participate. Wherever the public established itself institutionally as a stable group of discussants, it did not equate itself with *the* public but at most claimed to act as its mouthpiece, in its name, perhaps even as its educator—the new form of bourgeois representation. The public of the first generations, even when it constituted itself as a specific circle of persons, was conscious of being part of a larger public Potentially it was always also a publicist body, as its discussions did not need to remain internal to it but could be directed at the outside world—for this, perhaps, the *Disburse der Mihlern.* a moral weekly published from 1721 on by Bodmer and Breitinger in Zurich, was one among many examples.

In relation to the mass of the rural population and tht common "people" in the towns, of course, the public "at large" that was being formed diffusely outside the early institutions of the public was still extremely small. Elementary education where it existed, was inferior. The proportion of illiterates, at least in Great Britain, even exceeded that of the preceding Elizabethan epoch.[22] Here, at the start of the eighteenth cen-

tury, more than half of the population lived on the margins of subsistence. The masses were not only largely illiterate but also so pauperized that they could not even pay for literature. They did not have at their disposal the buying power needed for even the most modest participation in the market of cultural goods.[23] Nevertheless, with the emergence of the diffuse public formed in the course of the commercialization of cultural production, a new social category arose.

The court aristocracy of the seventeenth century was not really a reading public. To be sure, it kept men of letters as it kept servants, but literary production based on patronage was more a matter of a kind of conspicuous consumption than of serious reading by an interested public. The latter arose only in the first decades of the eighteenth century, after the publisher replaced the patron as the author's commissioner and organized the commercial distribution of literary works.[24]

In the same way as literature, the theater obtained a public in the strict sense of the word only when the theaters attached to court and palace, so typical of Germany, became "public." Of course in Great Britain and France the populace—the *Pôbel* (people), as they were called in contemporary sources—had been admitted even as far back as the seventeenth century to the Globe Theater and the *Comédie.* This included even domestic servants, soldiers, apprentices, young clerks, and a lumpenproletariat who were always ready for a "spectacle." But they were all still part of a different type of publicity in which the "ranks" (preserved still as a dysfunctional architectural relic in our theater buildings) paraded themselves, and the people applauded. The way in which the *parterre* (main floor) had to change to become the bourgeois public was indicated by the Parisian police ordinances that from the royal edict of 1641 on were issued to combat the noise and fighting and, indeed, killing. For before long it was not only the "society" seated in the loges and balconies that was to be protected from the *filous* but also a certain part of the main floor audience itself—the bourgeois part, whose first typical representatives were the *marchands de la rue St. Denis* (the owners of the new fashion and luxury shops: jewelers, opticians, music dealers, and glove makers). The main floor became the place where gradually the

people congregated who were later counted among the cultured classes without, however, already belonging to the upper stratum of the upper bourgeoisie who moved in the *salons.* In Great Britain the change was more abrupt. The popular theater did not survive; at the time of Charles II a single theater managed to persist under the patronage of the court, "and even there it appealed not to the citizens, but [only to] . . . the fashionables of the Town."[26] Only in the post-revolutionary phase, marked by the transition from Dryden's comedies to the dramas of Congreve, were the theaters opened to an audience of which Gottsched in the sixties of the following century could finally say: "In Berlin the thing is now called *Publikum."*[27] For in 1766, as a consequence of the critical efforts of Gottsched and Lessing, Germany finally acquired a permanent theater, i.e., the "German National Theater" (*Deulsihes Nalionalthealer).*

The shift which produced not merely a change in the composition of the public but amounted to the very generation of the "public" as such, can be categorically grasped with even more rigor in the case of the concert-going public than in the case of the reading and theater-going public. For until the final years of the eighteenth century all music remained bound to the functions of the kind of publicity involved in representation—what today we call occasional music. Judged according to its social function, it served to enhance the sanctity and dignity of worship, the glamor of the festivities at court, and the overall splendor of ceremony. Composers were appointed as court, church, or council musicians, and they worked on what was commissioned, just like writers in the service of patrons and court actors in the service of princes. The average person scarcely had any opportunity to hear music except in church or in noble society. First, private *Collegia Musica* appeared on the scene; soon they established themselves as public concert societies. Admission for a payment turned the musical performance into a commodity; simultaneously, however, there arose something like music not tied to a purpose. For the first time an audience gathered to listen to music as such—a public of music lovers to which anyone who was propertied and educated was admitted.[28] Released from its functions in the ser-

vice of social representation, art became an object of free choice and of changing preference. The "taste" to which art was oriented from then on became manifest in the assessments of lay people who claimed no prerogative, since within a public everyone was entitled to judge.

The conflict about lay judgment, about the public as a critical authority, was most severe in that field where hitherto a circle of connoisseurs had combined social privilege with a specialized competence: in painting, which was essentially painting for expert collectors among the nobility until here too the artists saw themselves forced to work for the market. To the same degree painters emancipated themselves from the constrictions of the guilds, the court, and the Church; craftsmanship developed into an *ars libérait.';,* albeit only by way of a state monopoly. In Paris the Academy of Art was founded in 1648 under Le Brun; in 1677, only three years after Colbert granted it similar privileges as the Académie Française, it opened its first *salon* to the public. During the reign of Louis XIV at most ten such exhibitions took place.[29] They became regular only after 1737; ten years later La Font's famous reflections were published formulating for the first time the following principle: "A painting on exhibition is like a printed book seeing the day, a play performed on the stage—anyone has the right to judge it."[30] Like the concert and the theater, museums institutionalized the lay judgment on art: discussion became the medium through which people appropriated art. The innumerable pamphlets criticizing or defending the leading theory of art built on the discussions of the *salons* and reacted back on them—art criticism as conversation. Thus, in the first half of the eighteenth century the *amateurs éclairés* formed the inner circle of the new art public. To the extent to which the public exhibitions received wider attention and, going over the heads of the connoisseurs, presented works of art directly to a broader public, these could no longer maintain a position of control. Yet since their function had become indispensable, it was now taken over by professional art criticism. That the latter too had its proper origin in the *salon* is at once demonstrated by the example of its first and most significant representative. From 1759 on Diderot wrote his *Salon* (i.e., knowledgeable reviews of the peri-

odic exhibitions at the *Academie)*[31] for Baron de Grimm's *Literary Correspondence,* a newsletter inspired by Madame de Epinay's famous *salon* and produced for its use.

In the institution of art criticism, including literary, theater, and music criticism, the lay judgment of a public that had come of age, or at least thought it had, became organized. Correspondingly, there arose a new occupation that in the jargon of the time was called *Kunstrichter* (art critic). The latter assumed a peculiarly dialectical task: he viewed himself at the same time as the public's mandatary and as its educator.[32] The art critics could see themselves as spokesmen for the public—and in their battle with the artists this was the central slogan—because thev knew of no authority beside that of the better argument and because they felt themselves at one with all who were willing to let themselves be convinced by arguments. At the same time they could turn against the public itself when, as experts combatting "dogma" and "fashion," they appealed to the ill-informed person's native capacity for judgment. The contexi accounting for this self-image also elucidated the actual status of the critic: at that time, it was not an occupational role in the strict sense. The *Kunstrichter* retained something of the amateur; his expertise only held good until countermanded; lay judgment was organized in it without becoming, by way of specialization, anything else than the judgment of one private person among all others who ultimately were not to be obligated by any judgment except their own. This was precisely where the art critic differed from the judge. At the same time however, he had to be able to find a hearing before the entire public, which grew well beyond the narrow circle of the *stlons.* coffee houses, and societies, even in their golden age. Soon the periodical (the handwritten correspondence at first, then the printed weekly or monthly) became the publicist instrument of this criticism.

As instruments of institutionalized art criticism, the journals devoted to art and cultural criticism were typical creations of the eighteenth century.[33] "It is remarkable enough," an inhabitant of Dresden wrote in justified a mazement, "that after the world for millenia had gotten along quite well without it, toward the middle of the eighteenth century art criticism all of

a sudden bursts on the scene."[34] On the one hand, philosophy was no longer possible except as critical philosophy, literature and art no longer except in connection with literary and art criticism. What the works of art themselves criticized simply reached its proper end in the "critical journals." On the other hand, it was only through the critical absorption of philosophy, literature, and art that the public attained enlightenment and realized itself as the latter's living process.

In this context, the moral weeklies were a key phenomenon. Here the elements that later parted ways were still joined. The critical journals had already become as independent from conversational circles as they had become separate from the works to which their arguments referred. The moral weeklies, on the contrary, were still an immediate part of coffee-house discussions and considered themselves literary pieces—there was good reason for calling them "periodical essays."[35]

When Addison and Steele published the first issue of the *Taller* in 1709, the coffee houses were already so numerous and the circles of their frequenters already so wide,[36] that contact among these thousandfold circles could only be maintained through a journal.[37] At the same time the new periodical was so intimately interwoven with the life of the coffee houses that the individual issues were indeed sufficient basis for its reconstruction. The periodical articles were not only made the object of discussion by the public of the coffee houses but were viewed as integral parts of this discussion; this was demonstrated by the flood of letters from which the editor each week published a selection. When the *Spectator* separated from the *Guardian* the letters to the editor were provided with a special institution: on the west side of Button's Coffee House a lion's head was attached through whose jaws the reader threw his letter.[3]* The dialogue form too, employed by many of the articles, attested to their proximity to the spoken word. One and the same discussion transposed into a different medium was continued in order to reenter, via reading, the original conversational medium. A number of the later weeklies of this genre even appeared without dates in order to emphasize the trans-temporal continuity, as it were, of the process of mutual enlightenment. In the moral weeklies,[39] the intention of the

self-enlightenment of individuals who felt that they had come of age came more clearly to the fore than in the later journals. What a little later would become specialized in the function of art critic, in these weeklies was still art and art criticism, literature and literary criticism all in one. In the *Tatler,* the *Spectator,* and the *Guardian* the public held up a mirror to itself; it did not yet come to a self-understanding through the detour of a reflection on works of philosophy and literature, art and science, but through entering itself into "literature" as an object. Addison viewed himself as a censor of manners and morals; his essays concerned charities and schools for the poor, the improvement of education, pleas for civilized forms of conduct, polemics against the vices of gambling, fanaticism, and pedantry and against the tastelessness of the aesthetes and the eccentricities of the learned. He worked toward the spread of tolerance, the emancipation of civic morality from moral theology and of practical wisdom from the philosophy of the scholars. The public that read and debated this sort of thing read and debated about itself.

6 The Bourgeois Family and the Institutionalization of a Privateness Oriented to an Audience

While the early institutions of the bourgeois public sphere originally were closely bound up with aristocratic society as it became dissociated from the court, the "great" public that formed in the theaters, museums, and concerts was bourgeois in its social origin. Around 1750 its influence began to predominate. The moral weeklies which flooded all of Europe already catered to a taste that made the mediocre *Pamela* the best seller of the century. They already sprang from the needs of a bourgeois reading public that later on would find genuine satisfaction in the literary forms of the domestic drama and the psychological novel. For the experiences about which a public passionately concerned with itself sought agreement and enlightenment through the rational-critical public debate of private persons with one another flowed from the wellspring of a specific subjectivity. The latter had its home, literally, in the sphere of the patriarchal conjugal family. As is well known,