

SCATOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS:

**EXCRETA AND EXCRETION
IN MODERNITY**

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ABSTRACT

This work is concerned to analyse the nature both of attitudes towards excreta, and of the ways in which defecation is carried out, characteristic of the modern period. Such peculiarly modern mores of excretion are described under the heading of the “modern mode of excretion”. This analysis is achieved by considering the historical genesis of such attitudes and practices in the course of early and high modernity. To this end, this work deploys a methodological position based upon the fundamental contention that changing forms of excretory mores are as much a result of alterations in social attitudes, deriving from mutations at the level of social structures, as they are a consequence of developments in medico-scientific knowledges. The transformations at the social structural level which impact upon the nature of excretory attitudes and practices are understood as involving shifting configurations of class power, at both the material and symbolic levels. The effects of these structural changes over the period are mapped out in terms of the notion of “faecal habitus”, an analytic term which links modifications in the realm of attitude and practice to ongoing processes of class struggle. It is through this lens that we analyse the various substantive issues involved in a history of excreta and excretion. These issues include: the generation of novel forms of bodily image; the restriction of previously socially-accepted forms of practice; the building of water-based sewer systems; the construction of systems of water closet-based disposal mechanisms; and the gradual adoption by ever lower social strata of these latter forms of disposal.

To myself, without whom this all would have been so much easier.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the material submitted in this work is wholly a result of my own research. None of the materials here have been textually presented before, in any other form.

"... performing one's natural functions with courage and conviction is much less vulgar than spinning fine phrases when one has nothing whatsoever to say,"

(Henri-Frederic Blanc, *The Empire of Sleep*)

"I can scarcely enumerate for you all the things that I (a modern Midas) turn into – excrement"

(Sigmund Freud, *Letter to Fliess*, 1897)

INTRODUCTION

Excreta and Excretion in the Modern World

When we feel the need to expunge waste materials from our bowels, why do we retreat to small, enclosed rooms, closed-off from the view of others? Why, when we arrive in these places, do we then expel our wastes into chair-like apparatuses upon which we sit, so that water currents may bear our detritus away? Why do these rooms and apparatuses have a range of ephemera surrounding them, from prettily coloured papers for the purposes of wiping away any dregs of detritus lingering on one's person, to scented devices that are placed inside the bowls of the seats, so that sweet air may be inhaled by any whose nose chances to come near? Why are such rooms and apparatuses called by such elaborate and round-about epithets as "toilet", "lavatory" and "water closet"? Why does the mention of words connected to lavatorial matters cause a certain modicum of unease, even embarrassment, among both the speaker and those who listen to such utterances? In other words, why is it that the ways in which we excrete today are enswathed in feelings of secrecy, disgust, guilt and complex ploys of euphemisation and disguising?

It is the purpose of this work to present some answers to these questions. We are here dealing with questions as to the characteristics of excreta and excretion as they are understood in the modern West. More specifically, we must inquire both as to what those characteristics are, and how they came to be as they are. This involves reflection upon the nature of peculiarly *modern* mores of excretion, and how these were developed historically in Western societies, such that they have the forms they possess today. Our investigations will take us from the later feudal period, through early and high capitalist modernity, and thence into the twentieth century.

Our approach to these issues is that of a *sociological historiography*. The account of the development of modern Western excretory mores contained in the following pages is based on the view that the attitudes towards, and practices of, excretion in the present day are as much a result of social and cultural factors, as of the medical and natural scientific aspects of such a history. The understandings of excreta and excretion that are common today are not exhausted by medico-scientific appreciations of these materials. For example, although it makes good “hygienic” sense to excrete into a water closet, for such a means of disposal bears excreta and the germs they may carry out of the living environment, the demand that a water closet must be located in a *private* locale, sealed off from view, is not derived from any medical or scientific appreciation of the qualities of excreta. Rather, the imperative that defecation and the means whereby excreta are collected should be located in a private space is the outcome of a long historical process involving the progressive regulation of defecation into delimited locales. Such a process was tied up with other developments that involved shifts in attitudes towards excreta and excretion such that these phenomena increasingly became regarded as sources of feelings of disgust as to their nature, and feelings of embarrassment as to the human body having such capacities. These various trends were the result of *changing socio-cultural circumstances* in the post-medieval period. The demand that defecation occur in private spaces had already been erected at a period substantially *before* the first modern medical and natural scientific appreciations of excreta and related matters had been formulated.

Thus if we are to understand the history of such matters, we must formulate them in terms of a model which appreciates the historical development of attitudes and practices of excretion as the result of *both* medico-scientific and socio-cultural factors.

The major aim of this study is to formulate such a model and then deploy it to comprehend the genesis of the excretory mores of the present day. As with any appreciation in historical terms of a modern phenomenon, we have to delineate exactly what we understand by the contemporary situation vis-à-vis excreta and excretion, and then examine the processes which over time produced this situation as we have defined it. The current situation as regards these matters we have dubbed the *modern mode of excretion*, and the purpose of this study is to delineate the characteristics and historical genesis of this mode. By this term we refer to two distinct, but interrelated, aspects of current excretory experience and practice.

In the first instance, the modern mode of excretion is comprised of the *universal faecal habitus*, that is, the typical attitudes held in the modern West as to the nature of excreta, and the excretory practices which are generated on the basis of such attitudes. Excretory practices involve the ways in which defecation is typically carried out, the fashions in which excretory matters are verbally referred to, and the sensory dispositions (visual and olfactory) towards excreta which are characteristic of the present day. As excreta are currently regarded through an evaluative nexus of feelings of disgust and embarrassment, it is on this basis that defecatory practices are carried out in private locales, excretory matters are only referred to (in “legitimate” forms of speech) in euphemistic and circumlocutory ways, and the sight and smell of excreta are little tolerated, so foul and unpleasant are such products deemed to be. But this set of attitudes and practices is a relatively recent historical development, which only fully came to fruition at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the various respects set out above, Western attitudes and practices were very different in the past. In the later feudal period, excreta were not viewed so comprehensively as sources of embarrassment, and the feelings of disgust they provoked were rather different in form from contemporary formulations of the repulsive nature of excreta. Even

in the early modern period, we can see significant differences between the excretory mores of the people of that period and our own attitudes and practices.

Our aim in this regard is to ascertain the changes that were wrought at the levels of excretory attitudes and practices in the period from later feudalism, until the beginning of the twentieth century. Such shifts are first of all due to changing socio-cultural circumstances, and thence (from the later eighteenth century onwards) due to a combination of these and medico-scientific factors.

Such socio-historical circumstances are understood as deriving from struggles between classes, as material struggles are made manifest at the symbolic level. The shifts effected in attitudes and practices over this period thus involves two key movements. First, from a situation where all classes in the feudal period generally held to the same attitudinal and practical forms, to a situation whereby in early and high modernity, the bourgeoisie adopted new understandings of excreta and excretory practices as means of symbolically distinguishing themselves from other classes, primarily the proletariat. We call this period that of the *bourgeois faecal habitus*. It was under the conditions of this habitus that there occurred the developments in forms of excretory practices and attitudes that led to the creation of the symbolic and practical aspects of excretion that we are familiar with today. The second key movement involved the creation of the universal faecal habitus itself, whereby, in the early twentieth century, the proletariat began to adopt the practical and symbolic forms first created by the bourgeoisie. With the proletariat taking on such forms, there was thus created the contemporary situation whereby all social strata generally share the same set of excretory mores.

The second aspect of the modern mode of excretion is the *means of excretory disposal* typical of that mode. The means of disposal involves two components: in terms of general means of disposal, large-scale systems of water-based

sewerage, and in terms of the means of disposal used by the individual, water closets. Our objective in this regard is to explicate the nature of these forms of disposal as they are informed by the characteristics of the universal faecal habitus. We can do this in terms of a historical examination of how these forms were developed in the nineteenth century, at the instigation of the bourgeois faecal habitus, meeting its demands for hygienically and socially legitimate forms of excretory practice.

Thus to analyse contemporary excretory mores we must examine them in terms of the modern mode of excretion. We must analyse this mode in terms of its historical development. We can do this firstly in terms of the creation of the attitudinal and practical dispositions produced initially by socio-cultural (i.e. class) factors in the post-feudal period, and then by a conjunction of these and medico-scientific elements. We may then investigate the generation of the means of disposal of the modern mode by viewing its creation by those attitudinal and practical dispositions throughout the course of the nineteenth century. In this way we are furnished with an account of the contemporary situation vis-à-vis excreta and excretion which allows us both to consider such a condition in terms of its historical genesis, and to compare today's excretory attitudes and practices with those of the previous several centuries.

In Chapter 1, we will set out the model with which we will comprehend these developments. We are here concerned to show how a *sociological* approach to excretory matters may be formulated, which examines the relations between socio-cultural and medico-scientific evaluations of excreta. This approach will be derived from a consideration of the work of Mary Douglas. We then consider how such a general sociological approach may be reoriented so as to be able to appreciate the particular contours of *capitalist modernity* and the place of excreta and excretion therein. This respecification will be carried out by casting some of Douglas's concepts into a framework suggested by the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

Here we introduce the crucial concepts of *mode of excretion* and *faecal habitus*, in both their generic and specifically modern forms.

In Chapter 2, we will continue to delineate our theoretical comprehension of the development of contemporary excretory mores by postulating the diachronic aspects of our model. That is, we will set out the processes that we understand as being involved in the demise of the faecal conditions of the feudal period, and the creation of the bourgeois faecal habitus. This model will be elaborated on the basis of a reading of the work of Freud, and a recasting of such in terms of the position set out by Norbert Elias in *The Civilising Process*. We then postulate the socio-historical factors involved in the creation of these processes; such factors are deemed to derive from class struggles at the symbolic level, first between aristocracy and bourgeoisie, and then at a later date, between bourgeoisie and proletariat. Class struggles at the symbolic level will be viewed as being underpinned and shaped by factors at the material level of class struggle.

In Chapter 3, we will interpret empirical historical material in light of the model set out in the previous Chapter. We will see that over the duration of the early modern period, the bourgeois faecal habitus was erected on the basis of three processes: increasing levels of negative evaluations of the qualities of excreta; the creation of a new set of symbols of the human body which denied the existence of excretory capacities in bourgeois physiology; and the increasing regulation of excretory practices of the defecatory, sensory and verbal forms. Throughout this period, among the bourgeoisie defecation was ever more likely to be located in private spaces, the sight and smell of excreta were progressively less tolerated, and excretory matters were increasingly referred to in circumlocutory and euphemistic fashions. Until the later eighteenth century, the negative evaluations of the qualities of excreta were purely “moral” (i.e. socially-derived) in aspect; after this period, medico-scientific evaluations

become conjoined to such socially-produced understandings of the “filth” of excreta. It is at this period of the conjunction of forms of denunciation of excreta that tolerance of faecal odours is reduced more dramatically than at previous periods.

In Chapter 4, we will examine how and for what reasons the large-scale water-based sewer systems characteristic of the modern mode of excretion, came to be erected from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. We shall view the construction of these forms as resolving various crises faced by the bourgeoisie of the first half of the century. Such crises were provoked by the bourgeoisie holding to the set of excretory mores developed over the course of several centuries, the demands of which were not met at this period by the urban environment in which this class dwelled. Sewer systems allowed the recasting of urban space in light of the demands of these mores.

In Chapter 5, we will examine the development of the corollary of sewer systems, water closets. We will examine the history of this form of excretory disposal in terms of its relationship with the bourgeois faecal habitus. Water closets in the form we know them today were developed in the context of the bourgeois home of the second half of the nineteenth century. The transposition of the spatial contours of this environment, and the water closet technologies contained therein, to proletarian dwellings in the later nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century, had the effect of bringing all social strata into the same conditions of excretory disposal. With the water closet came all the symbolic and practical aspects of the bourgeois faecal habitus, which had in effect generated this form of disposal. As a result, all strata now entered into the symbolic and practical conditions of this habitus. In such a fashion, the *bourgeois* faecal habitus was transformed into the *universal* faecal habitus, the set of symbolic and practical dispositions which characterise contemporary

excretory mores. With all elements of society sharing the same excretory dispositions and means of disposal, the modern mode of excretion was born.

In the Appendix, we will review some of the forms of circumlocutory verbal reference to excretory phenomena characteristic of the modern period, in the specific instance of terms used to refer to the means of excretory disposal located in the domestic sphere.

As the reader may discern even from this brief overview, the canvas of our investigations is broad, in that it deals with a chronological period of several centuries, and deals with various levels of reality: material and symbolic class struggle, means of excretory disposal, conceptions of human corporeality, evaluations of excreta both “moral” and medico-scientific, changing forms of the human senses, defecation, and verbalisations of excretory phenomena, and so on. Given this canvas, we are compelled to paint with broad strokes. The evidence that we shall adduce towards setting out these processes in empirical terms will primarily be derived from English and French sources, which, taken together, provide us with an ideal-typical picture of the history of excreta and excretion throughout the modern period in Western Europe,

The following piece should be treated as a “just so” story as to how modern attitudes towards excreta and excretory behaviours came to be as they are. This is because the level of generality we must operate at compels us to bend and shape empirical historical phenomena to the contours of sociological historiography. Like all such practitioners of this art, we should be resigned to the inevitable disputations of professional historians who can produce forms of evidence that seem to contradict either our periodisations of certain developments, or our characterisations of such developments per se. We must also be resigned to the attacks from the ranks of social theorists who doubt the value of our terminology on *a priori* grounds.

In defence, we can say to the historians that our model of historical developments was not conjured out of thin air. Rather, it resulted from a careful consideration of empirical material, from which we partly derived the model, which then in turn was used to produce a theoretically coherent account of historical processes. Such an account has the advantage of comprehending historical developments in ways only open to theoretical scrutiny, such as the relation between forms of class struggle and their impact upon phenomena at first glance wholly unrelated, such as acts of defecation. At the very least, a theoretically-informed model yields a picture of historical processes that amounts to something more than a view that this history, as with every other, is just the result of one damn thing after another.

To the social theorists who may quibble with the model here adumbrated, we can say that, if they are prepared to critique the present position from within its own terms, and to provide the present author with an account of the internal contradictions in his formulations, then their scrutiny is welcome. Those who wish merely to denounce our approach as lacking, merely on the grounds that it deploys Bourdieusian terminology, should look to their own laurels: the threadbare neo-Foucauldian dogmas of current writings on the human body, devoid of empirical evidence but abundantly endowed with postulates unconvincing even at a purely theoretical level, are striking illustration of the need for more neo-Marxian socio-cultural analysis, not less of it. If this piece contributes even in a minute way to such a project, then its author's aims will have been more than satisfied.

CHAPTER 1

SOCIOLOGISING EXCRETA AND EXCRETION:

A THEORETICAL RATIONALE AND SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Nietzsche once noted that no philosopher had yet spoken with reverence or gratitude about the human nose¹. The problem which faces us is that no sociologist or other social scientist has fully delineated the means whereby sociology can adequately grasp the history of the human anus and its products². The purpose of this Chapter is to set out the basic conceptual categories of such a sociology, at both a general level, and in terms of the particular, *modern* socio-historical conditions to which the general conceptual position must be applied. We must first set out the concepts of a general sociology of excretion, and then locate those concepts within an account of the contours of modernity and its historical development. In this way, we furnish ourselves with a sociological vocabulary to deploy in the analysis of specifically modern practices of excretion and attitudes towards excreta.

We must first demonstrate which characteristics of excreta and excretion are in general terms susceptible to sociological scrutiny. We must explicate how excreta and excretion, far from having the same characteristics in all times and places, are actually subject to socio-historical mediation, with different characteristics being possible at different times and different locales. That is to say, excreta “mean” different things, and excretion is carried out differently, in different societies (Bourke 1968; Moore 1984: 56, 276; Stockman 1989: 135)³. Furthermore, and related to this point, we must illustrate how the socio-historical mediation of these phenomena requires us to analyse them in appropriate terms. Such terms are specifically *sociological*, rather than purely “medical” or “natural scientific”.

These general claims have particular relevance within the context of an analysis of the modern period. It could be claimed that the history of excreta and excretion in

modernity is purely a function of developments in the fields of natural science and medicine, and applications thereof in wider contexts (e.g. through public health measures). On such a view, the historiography of excreta and excretion as they are typically manifest in modernity becomes a historiography the primary objects of which are medical and scientific knowledges. But if it is accepted that excreta and excretion are - at least in part - products of socio-cultural mediation, then it becomes possible to claim that a historiography premised on the view that the history of excreta and excretion in modernity must focus *solely* on medical and natural scientific knowledges, is far too narrow an approach. This is so because there are other, non-medico-scientific, *socio-historical factors* which are involved in such a history.

What then are these socio-historical factors and how may we conceptualise them? This takes us towards the issue of applying the premises of a general sociology of excreta and excretion to the specific context of Western modernity. It would be a rather feeble study which sought to utilise *directly* the general concepts of a sociology of excreta and excretion in the comprehension of their specifically modern manifestations, without accounting in some fashion for the characteristics of modernity itself, and how it developed over time. Our assumption is that modernity is best comprehended under the rubric "capitalist modernity". The modern is thus explicable under the headings of "capitalist mode of production" and "bourgeois society"⁴. The dynamics at work in the creation of modernity are class dynamics, primarily the struggles between bourgeoisie and proletariat. How do we relate the postulations of the socio-historical mediation of excreta and excretion, and the sociological analysis thereof, to such a society?

We hold that the concepts of a general sociology of excretion may be adapted to fit the specific conditions of modernity by allying them to the idea of "class habitus", as this is formulated by Pierre Bourdieu. The socio-historical mediation of excreta and excretion in the modern period is sociologically analysable in terms of class habituses. Analysis based upon the idea of habitus allows us to formulate how the ways in which members of different classes live out their routine existences are produced by "deep" social structural factors. More specifically, habitus analysis allows comprehension of the ways in which the *bodies and bodily practices* of these

individuals are “shaped” by their class position. This obviously relates to our specific concern with excreta and excretion. On our view, the ways in which excreta are viewed in the modern period are explicable as resulting from the development of class habituses over time. The ways in which acts of excretion are viewed and are actually carried out, result from the bodily dispositions produced by habituses. By viewing specifically modern attitudes towards excreta and practices of excretion in terms of habituses, we can then relate the generation of these characteristics to more general social-structural developments over the course of modernity. That is to say, the socio-historical factors which generate the characteristics of excreta and excretion are the class struggles involved in the genesis and development of capitalist modernity, as these impinge upon the nature of habituses.

The aim of this Chapter, then, is to set out the general and specific vocabularies we deploy to sociologically analyse excreta and excretion as these are manifest in the modern period. We turn first to the vocabulary provided by a general sociology of these phenomena. This involves reflection upon the work of the social anthropologist Mary Douglas. We will see how, through a sociological analysis of symbols of "dirt" and "cleanliness", Douglas provides the most elementary forms of a sociological approach to excreta and excretion. Once we have examined this general sociological approach, we move onto the issue of re-specifying its premises into a framework appropriate for analysis of capitalist modernity. We here introduce the key concept of "faecal habitus" to explain the socio-historical production and operation of modern attitudes towards excreta and characteristically modern excretory practices. This notion also allows us to designate the relationships occurring throughout the modern period between the socio-historical (class) factors on the one hand, and medico-scientific knowledges on the other.

Analysis of habituses touches upon two other aspects of social life in the modern period. The first aspect has already been briefly remarked upon: the role of class struggles in producing particular types of habitus. The crucial element as regards the history of habituses throughout the period is the changing nature of class struggles at the symbolic level. Habituses are both products of, and “players” in, systems of symbolic competition between classes. What forms such competition takes at a particular historical juncture is determined by factors exogenous to the symbolic

field. A key exogenous factor in this regard is the state of play in the realm of material class struggles, that is, struggles over the means of production. In the modern period, a crucial factor in material class struggles is the role played by the State, for the State can intervene in ways which shape the focal points over which classes struggle at the symbolic level.

The second aspect of modern social life which pertains to the issue of excreta and excretion is the physical means whereby excreta are collected and disposed of. The history of excreta and excretion cannot concern itself with attitudes towards excreta and excretory practices alone. The *material means* by which excreta are collected and disposed of are also crucial. How we may comprehend this aspect of our subject matter, as it is related to the attitudinal and practical aspects, will be dealt with when we introduce the notion of "mode of excretion", a concept which describes the interpenetration of a faecal habitus with particular means of excretory disposal. The aim of the overall study is to delineate the genesis of the *modern* mode of excretion, that is, the ways in which excreta are viewed, excretion is practised, and excreta are disposed of, in the West in the twentieth century.

By the end of this Chapter, we will have assembled in outline the battery of concepts which will be deployed in this study. Such conceptual issues are pursued here primarily in synchronic terms, whereas the historical, diachronic aspects of our conceptual apparatus will be the topic of the following Chapter.

We turn first to examine the conceptual structure of a general sociology of excreta and excretion. This will involve casting such a sociology in the terms of a "sociology of dirt", as postulated by the social anthropologist Mary Douglas. We then turn to see how Douglas herself attempted to formulate a sociology of excreta and excretion per se, and how her approach is limited in various ways. Next we begin to recast the abstract model suggested by Douglas's work into the terms of class habituses which are more appropriate for studying our topic in the context of capitalist modernity. Here we deal with issues surrounding the concepts of "general class habitus", "faecal habitus" and its various derivative forms, symbolic class struggle and related matters, and "mode of excretion".

We now turn to set out the postulates of a generic sociological approach to excreta and excretion.

A GENERAL SOCIOLOGY OF EXCRETA AND EXCRETION

Introduction

In the modern West, we hold that excreta and excretion are regarded as "dirty". Under that general rubric, excreta and excretion are viewed as, amongst other things, "filthy", "repulsive", "disgusting" and "unhygienic". The dirt of excreta and excretion thus involves a complex of factors, some based on perceptions deriving from medical and natural scientific knowledges (hence these phenomena are "unhygienic"), and others that derive from more "moral" and "aesthetic" concerns (excreta are "repulsive", excretion is an "unsightly" act). The first task of a sociology of excreta and excretion is to explicate the different aspects of "dirt" involved in such appreciations of excreta and excretion. The explanation of how excreta *historically* came to be viewed as "dirty" is the burden of the next Chapter. Here we are concerned to show how excreta and excretion may be analytically comprehended under a sociological rubric. They can be thus analysed if we hold that, since in modernity these phenomena are "dirty", *the sociology of excreta and excretion may be oriented upon the same lines as a sociology of "dirt"*.

The parameters of a sociology of "dirt" are set out by Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger* (1966). The fundamental claim of that work is that the "dirt" beliefs of a society, as expressed through symbols of "dirt", are not explicable with reference to natural scientific and medical knowledges alone. This is because the dirt symbols of a society are either wholly *social products*, or are products of a commingling of such socially-produced factors and medical and scientific knowledges. Douglas expresses it thus:

"There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder ... our ideas about disease [do not] account for the range of our behaviour in cleaning or avoiding dirt" (Douglas 1966: 2)

On this view, "dirt" is not the same in all societies. A phenomenon understood to be dirty in one society may not be understood as such in another. Due to the variance in dirt beliefs *between* societies, "ideas about disease" (i.e. medical and scientific knowledges) cannot be understood as the sole causal factors in the generation of dirt beliefs. As such, analysis of dirt cannot be focused upon these factors alone. Moreover, the nature of dirt beliefs *within* modern Western society itself mitigates against the utilisation of such a form of investigation. Dirt beliefs in this social context are compounded of both "care for hygiene and respect for conventions". That is, modern Western conceptions of what is dirty and what is not are generated by *both* medical and scientific concerns, *and* "conventions", i.e. component parts of the "moral fabric" of that society. These latter factors are socially-produced (Douglas 1966: 7, 35, 68-9). Hence modern notions of dirt are simultaneously *hygienic* and *moral* in aspect, where the former category derives from medico-scientific knowledges, and the former category derives from "social" factors.

This position becomes clearer when we consider that Douglas holds a Durkheimian view of the nature of social cosmology. That is to say, for the members of a given society, the unstructured flux of experiences of the world is rendered orderly, and thus meaningful, by the cosmology of that society. The structured nature of the cosmology imposes symbolic order on experiential anarchy; the orderly nature of the cosmology is achieved because it is based upon structured "ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating ... [which] have as their main function [the] impos[ition of] system on an inherently untidy experience" (Douglas 1966: 4). Such demarcations are achieved by rendering experience into the terms of dyadic opposites, such as male / female, above / below, within / without, and dirty / cleanly. The dyad of dirty / cleanly applies in the cosmologies of many (if not all) societies. It is a purely formal categorisation; which phenomena are actually categorised as dirty or clean depends upon the situation in a given society, hence the wide variation between societies as to which phenomena are conceived to be dirty. If this dyadic category is part of an overall cosmological system, then the phenomena regarded as dirty by a given society can only be comprehended as part of that society's cosmology; they cannot be regarded in isolation from all other phenomena classified by a given society's cosmology (Douglas 1966: 35). This means that, if it is admitted that the

cosmology pertaining in the modern West involves both social-conventional and medico-scientific elements, then the dirt beliefs therein cannot be understood as products of the latter element only; instead, intimations of dirt and cleanliness must be understood as products of both aspects⁵.

The dirt / clean dyad has a particular role to play in cosmological classifications of the world, according to Douglas. As a cosmology yields the flux of experience into order, it does so by selecting certain phenomena as orderly, and creating their orderliness against the disorder of other phenomena. The phenomena that are thus construed as disorderly are deemed to be "dirty", while the orderly elements that exist in contradistinction to these are classified as "cleanly". As Douglas phrases it "dirt is essentially disorder" (Douglas 1966: 2). Or again, "dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained" (Douglas 1966: 40)⁶. As cosmological classification involves classification of what is *morally* acceptable and unacceptable in a given society, the phenomena construed to be dirty are those which are understood to offend against the moral system of that society. Thus we may more clearly see the contention that dirt in the modern West derives from both "moral" and "hygienic" sources, and that phenomena characterised as dirty offend not only against medical and scientific imperatives, but also against the *moral* imperatives of that society. Such imperatives are socially-produced in that they derive from the cosmology and that, in turn, according to the standard Durkheimian position, is a product of the social structural configurations of a given society⁷.

Thus we may state the position that we wish to derive from Douglas's stance. First, dirt beliefs in the modern West, and the phenomena they classify as "dirty", derive from both "hygienic" and "moral" factors, where hygienic factors in turn derive from developments in the field of medical and scientific knowledges, and the moral factors are socially-derived. What we mean by this latter term will be explicated further below. As such, analysis of dirt beliefs and dirty phenomena must be *sociological*, if we are to comprehend the social production of the moral aspects of dirt. Furthermore, this sociological analysis, if it is to adequately account for the nature of dirt in this society, must explain the relations between the moral and hygienic elements.

Since in the modern West excreta and excretion are regarded as dirty, then the possibility of a sociological approach to dirt also implies a sociological approach to excreta and excretion. The translation of the terms of the former sociology into the latter leads to these basic postulations vis-à-vis a general sociology of excretion (as it would apply in the understanding of Western modernity):

- 1) As excreta and excretion are regarded as dirty, this must be so in both “hygienic” and “moral” terms. (That is, excretory dirt derives from both medico-scientific knowledges and socially-produced elements.)
- 2) A sociology of excreta and excretion must investigate the social production of the moral dirt of excreta and excretion
- 3) A sociology of excreta and excretion must explain the relations between the moral and hygienic elements of excretory dirt.

These then are the bases of a general sociology of excreta and excretion. But, as they stand, they are both somewhat skeletal and also give us little clue as to how to apply them to the specific contours of the society we are interested in - not "modernity" as such, but "capitalist modernity". We can begin to solve both problems by examining how Douglas herself attempted to carry out first a sociology of *excreta*, and then a sociology of *excretion*. While both Douglas's attempts are flawed, they yet point us in the direction of the manner by which the general postulates may be allied to an account of the contours of the specific social configuration we are interested in.

Douglas's general sociology of excreta

The fundamental premise of the sociological analysis of excreta pursued by Douglas in *Purity and Danger* is that excreta can figure as symbols of social structural patterns. This is so because such structural patterns are expressed at the level of cosmology. Cosmology is partly depicted in terms of symbols of dirt. If excreta are viewed as dirty in a given society, then they will figure as symbols in the cosmology of that society, depicting the social structural patterns which give rise to that

particular cosmology. Furthermore, it is *because* excreta are utilised in the cosmology as dirt symbols that they are regarded as dirty by that society in its everyday practices.

Generally speaking, the cosmology of a society can depict the social structural configuration which produced it, in terms of symbolising the human body and its parts, and using these symbols as analogies of social structural relations (Douglas 1966: 3, 163-64). There is thus a direct relationship between the way a cosmology depicts the social structures that produced it, and the way it symbolises the nature of the body, for the latter is used as a "map" of the former, in terms of how the former operates (or ought to operate). As Douglas expresses the point:

"The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures. We cannot possibly interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva and the rest [i.e. types of bodily effluvia] unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society, and to see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body" (Douglas 1966: 115)

Sources of concern and tension within and between social structures are made manifest in the cosmological realm in terms of dirt symbols (Douglas 1966: 121). Such symbols may be expressed in terms of bodily materials like excreta. As such, these materials are simultaneously deployed as a form of depiction of social structures, and are rendered as dirty, in terms of the collective perceptions of that society. The reason why bodily effluvia may be used as dirt symbols, and thus as depictions of tense elements in the social structural configuration, is that all three aspects (effluvia, dirt symbols, tense structural elements) involve, in differing ways, *transgressions of margins*. Tense elements in structures involve transgressions of the ordered structural components of the social order. Dirt symbolism depicts such transgressions in the realm of cosmology. Effluvia such as excreta come from bodily orifices and as such furnish the cosmology with a set of symbols of the transgression of the margins of the body, with effluvia leaking out from the "inside" of the body to the external world. In this sense, effluvia transgress the "order" of the body (Douglas

1966: 121)⁸. As such excreta and their ilk are a ready source of representations of transgressions of social structural order, through the medium of dirt symbolism.

From this position, it follows that excreta are understood as dirty in a given society if they are drawn upon as a dirt-symbolic representation of social structural tensions. If social structural tensions are depicted *without* using excreta as dirt symbolism, or if there are no social structural tensions in a given society, then excreta are not understood as dirty within that society (assuming we are dealing with a non-Western society where "dirt" is purely a social product, rather than also involving medical and natural scientific knowledges). Thus Douglas's conventionalist view of the relation of excreta to dirt is that differing forms of social structure generate different understandings of excreta, sometimes as dirty, sometimes ignored altogether, perhaps (a logical, if perhaps not empirical, possibility) even as "cleanly". According to Douglas there are four master types of structural-cosmological transgression of boundaries, and each of these gives rise to different forms of understanding of excreta and other bodily effluvia. The first type occurs when dangers are felt to derive from outside of the boundaries of a particular society, or a grouping within it. The second type occurs when dangers are felt to arise from the transgression of internal boundaries. The third type happens when dangers lurk in the margins of boundaries, and the fourth occurs when dangers derive from contradictory elements in the social structure and the cosmological expression of these (Douglas 1966: 122).

The details of Douglas's analysis are not important here. It will suffice to clarify her general outlook on these issues by considering the examples she gives of the first two types. The first case is exemplified by elite groups in the Indian caste system: "when rituals [as products of a cosmology] express anxiety about the body's orifices, the sociological [i.e. "social structural"] counterpart of this anxiety is a care to protect the political and cultural unity of a minority group" (Douglas 1966: 124). Hence the horror for excreta felt by those in elite caste groups is due both to these materials representing the polluting aspects of lower groups in the system, and to fears held by elites as to the retention of their means of social distinction (Douglas 1966: 123-4). In such a case, the ritual protection of bodily orifices such as the anus,

based on a viewing of excreta as dirty, is a "symbol of social preoccupations about exits and entrances" (Douglas 1966: 126).

The second type of transgression of social structural boundaries - where dangers inhere *within* the society or group - can be explicated with reference to witchcraft beliefs, where the symbolism of bodily effluvia such as excreta expresses fears as to maleficence from in-group members. While materials such as excrement and blood are viewed positively if used magically by the incumbents of important positions within the group so as to protect the status quo, they are viewed negatively if perceived to be utilised by "witches", that is, deviant members of the group (Douglas 1966: 120)⁹.

As such, Douglas's sociologising of excreta in *Purity and Danger* involves a model which postulates the primacy of social structural patterns, which generate corresponding patterns in cosmology, the dirt aspects of which express the transgressions of boundaries possible at the structural level. As excreta transgress the boundaries of the human body, they can be deployed as dirt symbolism. As such, excreta are rendered dirty in a particular society, as a result of the forms of patterning at that society's structural level. This is, on its own terms (and as Douglas herself would no doubt admit), a highly conventionalist view of the treatment of excreta within a given society. The nature of social structures is the primary factor in analysis, with the treatment of excreta, especially their rendering as dirt, "read off" from this primary element. Given this, various problems arise in transposing such an approach to the analysis of excreta in the context of capitalist modernity.

The view of excreta held by a society (at least, the socially-produced aspects of such views, rather than the medical and scientific aspects, in the case of the modern West) is understood *solely* as a function of the nature of social structures. This is not a problem insofar as it is merely expressing the basic postulate of a sociology of excretion - the *social* production of understandings of excreta - in terms of a claim that such production is carried out by the patternings of social structures. This position, however, does become a problem when we consider that "social structures" could mean anything - or nothing. Douglas understands social structures in a straightforward Durkheimian sense¹⁰. But such a conception is not congruent with

an understanding of Western modernity as *capitalist* modernity, for the structural contours of that social configuration are class-based structures, and these are ultimately to be located as the social relational aspect of the capitalist mode of production. Thus Douglas's sociologisation of excreta which posits the social structural production of understandings of excreta must be reoriented into an account of the *class-structural* production of such views. This cannot be achieved within Douglas's original, Durkheimian framework.

How the shift from social structures to class structures may be achieved in this context is actually to a degree latent within the next attempt that Douglas made at a sociology of matters excretory, this time not in terms of a sociology of excreta, but in terms of a sociology of excretion.

Douglas's sociology of excretion

The main contention that we may draw from Douglas's later work *Natural Symbols* (1970) is that the particular nature of a society's cosmology will shape, through forms of *social control*, the dispositions and activities of the human body within that society (Douglas 1970: 99). Therefore, (although this is only implicit in Douglas's claims) the cosmological evaluation of excreta will *shape* the ways in which acts of excretion are carried out in a given society.

As in the previous position put forward in *Purity and Danger*, the human body is understood to be a source of cosmological symbolism which represents the patterns occurring at the social structural level (Douglas 1970: 101, 112). The innovation in this later work is the drawing of a distinction between on the one hand, the materially existing, "physical" body, and on the other hand, the "social" body, i.e. the body as it operates within the terms of a given society and cosmology:

"The social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived. The physical experience of the body, always modified by the social categories through which it is known, sustains a particular view of society. There is a continual exchange of meanings between the two kinds of bodily experience so that each reinforces the categories of the other. As a result of this interaction the body itself is a highly

restricted medium of expression. The forms it adopts in movement and repose express social pressures in manifold ways ... all the cultural categories in which it is perceived, must correlate closely with the categories in which society is seen in so far as these also draw upon the same culturally processed idea of the body" (Douglas 1970: 93)

Thus not only is the (physical) body a source of cosmological symbolism, but cosmology in turn "shapes" the physical dispositions and actions of the body, transforming the physical body into the social body. As such, both the cosmological and practical realms "reinforce the categories of the other", that is, the "actual" body acts in light of the ways its various elements are cosmologically symbolised. In this way, "bodily control is an expression of social control" (Douglas 1970: 99). This is because social structures generate cosmology, as expressed in bodily symbols, and *bodily practices* are carried out in light of these symbols¹¹. That is to say, practices deemed *socially legitimate* will be the practices that conform to the symbolisations of the body and its elements held by the cosmology of that society.

Extrapolating from this position to the specific case of excreta and excretion, we can claim that, for society X, patterns of social structures produce the cosmological evaluation of excreta (primarily, if we follow the argument of *Purity and Danger*, in terms of dirt, for both dirt and excreta transgress boundaries); the cosmological evaluation is expressed in terms of symbolisations of excreta; practices of excretion in that society are carried out in light of such symbolisations. To put this latter point another way: *the evaluation of excreta held by a society shapes the way defecation (and other forms of excretory practices - see below) can be socially-legitimately carried out in that society.*

How does this position help us to understand the nature of excreta and excretion in capitalist modernity, and the appropriate mode of analysis thereof? It does so in two ways. First, the model posited here by Douglas is, in embryonic fashion and shorn of a theorisation of class structures, a form of habitus-based analysis which is the key to translating the premises of a general sociological approach to excreta and excretion into an analysis of the contours of capitalist modernity. This will be further explicated shortly. Second, Douglas herself takes us some way towards

formulating the substantive characteristics of this society. in terms of the ways in which the human body is typically viewed therein by certain groups, even if her account remains rooted in a Durkheimian notion of social structures. Let us see how this is so.

Douglas analyses different forms of cosmological shaping of bodily practices in terms of what she dubs "grid" and "group". These are scales of, respectively, relative levels of complexity of cosmological classifications, and relative levels of the strength of social pressures both to maintain such classifications and to structure (e.g. bodily) activities in line with their demands (Douglas 1970: 101). On the basis of such analysis, certain societies may be discerned as exerting relatively high levels of social control upon bodily practices (Douglas 1970: 16). This is due to the nature of the cosmological system. Relatively high levels of control can be a result of a cosmology which conceptualises social life as taking place "between disembodied spirits", rather than between "fleshly" human beings (Douglas 1970: 101). In societies with cosmologies which valorise non- or anti-corporeal entities such as Culture, Mind, Spirit and suchlike ethereal phenomena, and which derogate Nature (especially in its guise of the "physical" body), then "[b]odily processes are more ignored and more firmly set outside the social discourse". This is because a "natural way of investing a social occasion [or social life more generally] is to hide organic processes ..." (Douglas 1970: 12).

Extrapolating from Douglas's position, we would expect to find a derogatory treatment of excretory practices in a society which had a cosmology based around notions of the "immaculateness" of the human body (Douglas 1970: 101). Excretion would be derogated by such a cosmology if it was conceived of as an aspect of the body which was the opposite of immaculate. If immaculate is expressible in cosmological terms as "cleanly", then excretion would be classified as "dirty". As excretion is conceived of as dirty by a cosmology, so too must excreta be thus conceived.

From Douglas's account of the nature of bodily controls, it follows that in a society with a cosmology where excreta and excretion are derogated, there are high levels of control over excretory practices, and thus the socially-legitimate forms of such

practices must be relatively limited. in comparison to a society which had lower levels of control on the basis of holding less derogatory attitudes towards these phenomena.

Taking all these aspects together, the sum total of a generic sociological approach deriving from Douglas's various strands of thought, as applied to a society with relatively high levels of control over practices of excretion, is the following.

The social structural patternings of a given society produce a certain cosmology. That cosmology holds an immaculate-cleanly view of the human body. Excreta figure as dirt in this system; by extension so too do excretory practices, for the symbolisation of excreta as dirt leads to the representation of excretory practices as dirty. Excreta and excretion are the maculate aspects of the body derided by the immaculate conception of corporeality. Excreta as dirt represent some form of tension or transgression at the social structural level. The cosmology, due to the opposition immaculate-cleanly body / dirty excreta and excretion, effects high levels of control over excretory practices, imposing relatively high levels of limitation on the socially-legitimate forms these may take. Socially-legitimate forms of such practices are such as to diminish the appearance of excreta and excretion in the purview of the society, and to allow the establishment in the realm of practices (especially bodily practices) of the immaculate-cleanly conception of the body.

This position is important from the point of view of our study in two ways. First, it is the most elaborate aspect of a general sociology of excretion we have yet delineated. It must be translated into terms appropriate for the analysis of the specific contours of capitalist modernity. This is so because of the second aspect of this position's importance. The above is a description of a society with high levels of social control over practices of excretion. We hold that capitalist modernity is such a society. The above is thus a formulation of the situation of excreta and excretion in capitalist modernity, but expressed in abstract terms. The key point of translation is to replace "social structures" with class structures, and to replace some of the other (Durkheimian) terminology which goes along with this former category.

Before we turn to the process of translation, let us recap on what we are here claiming. Douglas's general sociology of excretion has shown that:

- 1) The representation of excreta as dirt allows us to carry out a sociological analysis of excreta, for dirt is, in modernity, both a socially-produced and medico-scientific phenomenon. This analysis must account for the relations between these aspects in the treatment of excreta and excretion in the modern period.
- 2) The socially-produced aspects of the dirt of excreta understood by a given society derive from some form of social structural tension in that society, and this tension is expressed at the level of cosmology in terms of dirt symbolism which classifies excreta as dirty.
- 3) Excreta as dirt is a fundamental aspect of a classificatory system, such as pertains in modernity, that produces high levels of control over practices of excretion, for a) that system's understanding of the cleanliness of the body is erected against the dirt of excreta; b) excretory practices are rendered dirty by the dirtiness of excreta; and c) excretory practices are thus controlled in terms of limiting the socially-legitimate forms they can take, so that their dirtiness is diminished in the practical realm, and the immaculateness of the body in that realm is thereby achieved.

We now must formulate these insights in a manner appropriate to an analysis of capitalist modernity. For these purposes, we turn to the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

A SOCIOLOGY OF EXCRETA AND EXCRETION IN CAPITALIST MODERNITY

Introduction

The translation from the terminology of a general sociology of excreta and excretion to the terminology of a sociology that accounts for the class-based form of the society in question, is facilitated by the very nature of the position Douglas arrives at in the course of *Purity and Danger* and *Natural Symbols*. The solution to the

translation problem is latent in this position. for it involves an account of the socially-derived shaping of bodily practices which is, in formal terms, similar to the account of such shaping processes to be found in the notion of class habitus, and it is this latter concept which facilitates the translation of the general terminology into class-based terms. Douglas held that the cosmology of a society deployed corporeal symbols both to represent social structures and to generate characteristic practices of the body. Bodily practices are thus the product of a symbolic ordering of the world in line with the social structural patterns of a given society. The notion of class habitus essentially involves the same claims, but views the social structural aspect in terms of relations between classes.

In order to show how this is so, and thus to effect a translation of the postulations of a general sociology of excretion into class-based terms, we will first set out an account of the *formal* characteristics of habituses. This involves both setting out Bourdieu's account of general forms of habitus, and also effecting a positioning of the general sociological approach to excreta and excretion within a class framework by coining the formal concept "faecal habitus". We will then turn to consider the formal characteristics of systems of habituses, the role of "symbolic capital" therein, and the shaping of the forms of such systems by factors exogenous to them. The final aspect of delineating the formal aspects of habituses involves considering the relationship between a faecal habitus and the material means of excretory disposal; we have dubbed the conjunction of these elements as a "mode of excretion".

We then turn to the setting out of the *substantive* characteristics of all these categories as they occur in capitalist modernity. This will involve setting out the elements of our key explanatory notion, the "bourgeois faecal habitus" and its particular historical manifestations. We will examine its relation to both the "general habitus" of the bourgeoisie, and also to forms of symbolic capital. We will examine how the bourgeois faecal habitus has been shaped and reshaped over time by alterations in the system of general habituses, and the exogenous factors that structure this system. This will involve positing the contours of both the pre-history of this habitus, and the situation which pertains after it has disappeared from the historical stage. The final section will deal with the relation of the bourgeois faecal habitus to the means of excretory disposal that are characteristically *modern*; taken

together, these factors furnish us with an account of the "modern mode of excretion".

With all these components set out, we will then be provided with the conceptual apparatus necessary to carry out a sociology of excreta and excretion in the period of capitalist modernity. Let us firstly turn to consider the formal aspects of this conceptual system.

The formal aspects of general class habituses

Let us recall that Douglas's position outlined above is in effect a form of habitus analysis without the social class component. Douglas's two main elements in this regard are "cosmology" (as structured by social structural patterns) and bodily practices (corporeal dispositions and the forms of action deriving therefrom). The same components are in essence at the heart of Bourdieu's theorisation of habitus, but they are expressed in a (class-based) terminology which of course has somewhat different connotations than those deriving from the terminology utilised by Douglas.

The most general difference between Douglas's and Bourdieu's positions is that, on the latter's conceptualisation, a habitus is the habitus of a particular class or class fraction, rather than a cosmological-practical system that pertains among all strata of a society. Different strata in the same society have differing habituses, unlike Douglas's holistic account which tends to emphasise a cosmology shared by all strata. The differences between the accounts can be seen more specifically when we consider the two main elements which are held by Bourdieu to constitute a habitus. A habitus is defined as

"... a system of practice-generating schemes which expresses systematically the necessity and freedom inherent in [a] ... class condition and the difference [from other classes and fractions] constituting that condition ..." (Bourdieu 1992a: 172)¹².

The latter aspect of the definition concerns a habitus as it operates within a system of habituses, which we will examine below. At the moment, the important point to note is the first aspect, "a system of practice-generating schemes". This involves two

notions. First, replacing the notion of "cosmology", there is a *symbolic-classificatory schema* which classifies phenomena germane to that habitus; such classifications are created in light of the *imperatives* of the schema. For example, if a schema is oriented around ideas of Spirit as superior in some fashion to Nature, then phenomena are classified in light of the imperatives to classify the world in this way. Second, on the basis of the classifications of phenomena by this schema, *practices* are generated. Such practices conform to the imperatives of the schema. Thus in the example given, practices would be carried out in a fashion that reflected in some way the understanding of Nature as inferior to Spirit.

These aspects of a habitus have ramifications at both the symbolic and practical levels. The ramification at the symbolic level is as follows. The symbolic-classificatory system of a habitus allows a class to represent itself and its practices (to its own members and to the members of other classes) in terms of the symbolism of the schema. Thus a class with the Spirit / Nature schema could represent itself as Spiritual, in contradistinction to the Natural qualities that this class would attribute as being characteristic of the practices of other classes. This is because the symbolic-classificatory schema generates systems of "classified and classifying practices" (Bourdieu 1992a: 171-2). That is, not only does the schema classify (i.e. shape) its own practices, it also classifies the practices of other classes in light of its classifications of its own practices.

The ramification at the practical level is thus. The symbolic-classificatory schema generates practices, and some of these practices are practices of the body. The bodily symbolism in the symbolic-classificatory schema generates characteristic bodily practices. This is done at a semi- or un-conscious level of an individual's psyche. The bodily symbols of the schema

"... embed ... the most automatic gestures or the most apparently insignificant techniques of the body - ways of walking or blowing one's nose, ways of eating or talking ..." (Bourdieu 1992a: 466)

In this sense, the body as moulded by the symbolic-classificatory schema is, in effect, a materialisation of the dispositions generated in the habitus of a class. The

practices of the body - ways of doing and being - are characteristic of a symbolic-classificatory schema, and thus characteristic of a class's or class fraction's habitus (Bourdieu 1992a: 190, 468)

Since the habitus generates bodily practices from the body symbolism of its schema, and since the schema allows both self-representation by a class, and also representation of other classes by that class, then a class can represent itself in terms of the bodily symbolism it operates with, and can classify other classes in these terms. Thus the way in which a schema symbolises the human body or parts thereof is drawn upon to produce forms of representation in bodily terms of both the class occupying that habitus, and classes occupying other habituses. As such, the bodily practices of a class both classify (from the vantage point of other habituses) those who carry them out, and are the means whereby these latter themselves may classify the body practices of other classes.

In essence, then, a habitus involves a symbolic-classificatory schema which 1) represents the class occupying that habitus; 2) classifies other classes and their habituses in relation to itself; 3) generates practices characteristic of itself. As part of a schema is the set of body symbolism characteristic of the overall nature of the schema, then such symbolism allows 1) self-representation of a class in bodily terms, and representation of the nature of that class's collective body¹³; 2) classification of other classes in bodily terms, and representation of the collective bodies of these classes; 3) the generation of bodily practices characteristic of such symbolism, which will be carried out by those living under the conditions of a given habitus.

The *general habitus* of a class involves the generic schema and generic practices of a class, including the bodily aspects of schema symbolism and practices. This habitus, for our purposes, pertains for a class over a relatively long period of time. This general habitus includes within it various habituses which are *subsets* of the general form. Each subset habitus is concerned with a specific dimension of social life that is in some senses important for the general habitus, and must be dealt with (classified and, perhaps, practised) in some way that is *congruent* with the imperatives of the general habitus. The general habitus may be seen as the master

template (both in symbolic and practical terms) from which derive the various subset habituses. The faecal habitus of a class is one such subset habitus, and it is to this we now turn.

Formal aspects of faecal habituses

The *faecal habitus* of a class is the concept we use to understand how members of a given class or class fraction, understand and evaluate excreta, and how, on the basis of such a system, they carry out excretory practices. The faecal habitus is comprised of, first, a *symbolic-classificatory schema* which has certain symbolisations of excreta, which evaluate the qualities of excreta in positive, negative or neutral ways. The process whereby excreta are evaluated by a habitus over a period of time, is here referred to as *charging*. Second, on the basis of the evaluations of excreta, excretory practices characteristic of such symbolisations of excreta are produced.

Practices are thus generated on the basis of the *imperatives* of a schema. These imperatives are such that practices are made congruent with the symbolisations of excreta in the schema. For example, if excreta are viewed as dirt, then so too will excretory practices be viewed as dirty. As such, following one of the postulates in the preceding section, excretory practices will be highly regulated forms of practice. This is because excreta as dirt offend against other aspects of bodily cleanliness. So that such dirty practices do not contravene the schema's imperatives of cleanliness in the realm of practices, they will be subjected to high levels of regulation (higher, certainly, than the levels of regulation meted out by the same habitus to bodily practices understood as cleanly).

Excretory practices produced by a schema are of three types, and each type exists on a particular scale of levels of regulation also produced by the schema. Our contention is that the more excreta are regarded as dirty by a symbolic-classificatory schema, the greater degree of regulation will be effected over these excretory practices. This is because regarding excreta as dirty involves regarding excretory practices as dirty; regarding excreta in this light involves viewing other aspects of the body as cleanly: thus practices will be regulated so as to minimise the presence of dirty aspects of the body in the practical realm.

The first type of excretory practice is the set of *defecatory practices* i.e. the ways in which defecation is carried out. The scale of regulation here involves the ways by which defecation is practised in a socially-legitimate fashion, i.e. so that it is congruent with the schema's imperatives. Legitimate forms of defecation are worked out in terms of *licit and illicit times, locales and receptacles* for defecation. Thus if excreta and excretion (defecation) are regarded as dirty, we would expect the set of licit times, locales and receptacles to be highly circumscribed, and consequently the illicit forms of these to be great in number.

The second type of excretory practice is the set of *sensory practices*. We will focus on *practices of smell (olfactory practices)* under this rubric, for *visual practices* (vis-à-vis levels of tolerance of viewing excreta and excretion) are already involved in the carrying out of defecatory practices at licit times, locales and receptacles. Practices of smell operate on a scale of regulation based on *relative levels of tolerance of the odours of excreta*. Levels of tolerance impact upon the forms of means of excretory disposal. For example, a low level of tolerance of such odours, deriving from an evaluation of excreta as dirt, can be concurrent with imperatives for excreta to be borne swiftly and efficiently (i.e. without leaving any traces) from the original physical location of excretion.

The third form of excretory practice is the set of *verbal practices*. The scale here concerns the legitimate and illegitimate ways, in which excreta, defecatory practices, and the means of excretory disposal (see below) may be *named and referred to*. Legitimate and illegitimate forms of verbalising these phenomena in turn involve relative levels of what a particular habitus regards as "direct" and "indirect" (i.e. circumlocutory and euphemistic) forms of reference to a thing¹⁴. If excreta and excretion are viewed as dirty, then we would expect more euphemistic designations than direct forms of reference, as the "direct" naming of a dirty thing would contravene the imperative for the bodily cleanliness of the schema to be operative in the verbal aspect of the practical realm.

The faecal habitus of a class is *a subset of the general habitus* of that class insofar as a) the symbolisations of excreta are congruent with the set of bodily symbolism in

the general habitus's schema; b) excretory practices are congruent with the overall set of bodily practices generated by the general habitus.

If a faecal habitus is understood to be a subset of the general habitus of a class, then it follows that changes in the nature of the generic habitus will effect changes in the faecal habitus, such that the characteristics of the latter are made congruent with the characteristics of the former.

A faecal habitus in a given form thus pertains for as long as the bodily (and other) aspects of the schema and practices of the general habitus remain (relatively) constant. As these latter are held to pertain for relatively long periods of time, so too does the faecal habitus of a class. This relatively enduring faecal habitus will be dubbed the *general faecal habitus* (GFH) of a class. This general habitus can, however, take various particular forms at different historical periods. Each particular form is called a *particular faecal habitus* (PFH). Generally, only one PFH is dominant in the life of a class at any one time, but there are of course periods of transition between one PFH and another when two (or even more) may be at large; at such periods, generally one PFH will be in decline and one will be ascendant. PFHs differ from each other in certain ways, but, because they are subsets of the GFH, they may only vary within the overall parameters set by the GFH. The manner of variance between PFHs lies in the differences in the symbolic "terminologies" each PFH deploys to express the overall evaluation of excreta posited by the schema of the GFH. PFHs produce practices which, while characteristic of the general practices of the GFH, yet have particular inflections which are characteristic of the *specific* version of GFH evaluations of excreta formulated by the terminology of a PFH.

Such reflections lead us to the issue of how we may understand the role of medical and scientific knowledges in relation to faecal habitus schemas. The evaluations of excreta produced by a schema's charging of these can be due to *either* socio-culturally-derived factors alone (as in pre-modern societies), or from a mixture of these and medical and natural scientific knowledges (as is the case in modernity). In the latter case, while the medical and natural scientific knowledges involved in the charging of excreta arise "independently" of the socio-culturally-derived factors (in

the field of scientific and medical innovation), to be efficacious in the process of charging, they must be congruent, or *be made* congruent, with the evaluations of excreta produced by the socio-cultural factors. Logically, this could mean that *either* the scientific evaluations are made to “fit” the socially-produced evaluations, *or* that the latter are made to fit the former. Analysis based on the view that the history of excreta and excretion in modernity is purely a function of medical and scientific knowledge developments would agree with the latter option. We agree with the former option - that, in modernity, the medical and scientific evaluations were rendered congruent with the socio-culturally-derived evaluations¹⁵. Why this is so is due to a peculiarity of the chronology of the development of modern evaluations of excreta, as we will see below.

Returning to the issue of PFHs, these differ in the terminologies they deploy to express the master evaluation of excreta in the GFH. Such terminologies may be derived from the terms deployed by particular variants of medical and scientific knowledges. Thus the terminology deployed by a PFH to express the GFH evaluation of excreta may be derived from an emergent, dominant, or declining form of such knowledge, as it is manifested at a given historical juncture. Changes in the field of medical and scientific innovations, in terms of the ascending and descending fortunes of forms of knowledge and their means of expression, may result in changing terminologies of expressing GFH evaluations, that is, in changes from one PFH to another.

But regardless of changes in terminology, and the minor particularities of expression each terminology is allowed, PFHs still use these terminologies *only* as expressions of the master evaluation contained in the GFH. The evaluation of the GFH may be derived from wholly socially-derived factors, or from a mixture of these and medical / scientific knowledges. However, the specific GFH at issue, that of the bourgeoisie, derives from purely socially-derived factors, as we will argue below.

As we will see later, the PFH derived from the general faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie which is expressed through the terminology of scientific theories of miasma, differs from the (chronologically later) PFH which deploys the terminology of bacteriology. But both (especially given the peculiar nature of the bourgeois

GFH) use different means to express the same GFH evaluation, in this specific case, that excreta are dirty. The *nature* of excretory dirt is formulated (slightly) differently, but both agree that excreta *are* dirty.

Formal aspects of systems of habituses

Thus far we have mostly considered the nature of habituses and faecal habituses in isolation from other habituses of the same type. But a habitus of any variety does not, according to Bourdieu's formulation, exist in isolation. It generally exists in a *system of habituses* of the same type. Thus a general habitus of a class will exist in a system of general habituses held by other classes. How does Bourdieu formulate the relations between habituses, and thus the relations between classes (the approach which is to replace Douglas's "social structures")?

Bourdieu's position is based upon the view that in all class-based forms of society, the fundamental social structural division is "between the dominant and the dominated, which is inscribed in the division of labour" (Bourdieu 1992a: 469)¹⁶. This division between dominant and dominated is also the fundamental division at the symbolic-classificatory level. The symbolic classifications of the dominant will seek to denigrate the dominated, for classifications are "not so much means of knowledge as means of power, harnessed to social functions and overtly or covertly aimed at satisfying the interests of a group" (Bourdieu 1992a: 477). The aim of the dominant class in a society is to reproduce its means of symbolic domination, so as to reproduce the conditions of its material domination (i.e. to control the means of production) (Bourdieu 1992a: 480). This provides us with a useful distinction between the *material* and *symbolic* aspects of class struggle, to which we will return.

The materially dominant class is thus always the symbolically dominant class. The general habitus of this class is the *dominant general habitus*. Each of the dominant class's subset habituses is the dominant habitus of that particular type.

A dominant general habitus can (seek to) reproduce its symbolic dominance as the schema of a habitus classifies both itself and the habituses of other classes, i.e. the practices of individuals who occupy a habitus classify the practices of those in other

habitus, and in turn classify the practices of the original individuals. These processes of classification are now explicable as hierarchical. The dominant habitus in a system can classify itself as superior and all the others as inferior, with further inferiority being ascribed to habituses which are increasingly lower down the hierarchy. The dominant habitus has the symbolic power to effect the classification of all habituses in a system in its own terms. Its own superiority is achieved through its classification of various levels of inferiority ascribed to other habituses (Bourdieu 1992a: 48)

But the dominant habitus cannot achieve its symbolic domination merely by classifying in this way at one particular point in time. It must do this constantly through time, so as to retain and reproduce its dominance. This is because a system of habituses is not static; rather, it changes over time. The dominant habitus seeks to reproduce its dominance by deploying ever new *strategies of distinction*, where this latter term refers to *qualities of superiority* (in relation to other habituses), which are sought by all habituses in the system. The habituses in the system are thus engaged in a *distinction competition* (which we also refer to as a *distinction system*). The dominant habitus in a system is that which is most *distinct* (or *distinguished*). Strategies which attempt to win distinction involve the deployment of forms of *symbolic capital*, that is, phenomena (such as symbols, material artefacts or practices which are germane to the particular system) which are classified by the overall system (and especially by the symbolic system of the dominant habitus) as more or less distinguished. The dominant habitus has the symbolic power to define which forms of symbolic capital are most valorised, which are valorised to a certain degree, and which are not valorised at all. As such, the dominant habitus always has a greater volume of valorised forms of symbolic capital than other habituses, as it valorises the type of capital that it happens to have in its possession. In such a system, it follows that the lowliest habitus has the least volume of valorised capital.

But in such a distinction competition, the dominant habitus is always, in a sense, threatened because subordinate habituses attempt to capture some of the dominant habitus's distinction for themselves. They do this by aping its characteristic symbols and practices. That is, they try to deploy valorised forms of symbolic capital (that is, capital valorised by the dominant habitus). To reproduce its symbolic dominance,

therefore, the dominant habitus is compelled to generate new forms of distinction, i.e. new forms of valorised symbolic capital, because types of capital previously valorised are taken over by lower habituses and thus lose their distinctive capacities (Bourdieu 1992a: 251-52). Given this, a distinction competition involves trends over time towards the subordinate habituses seeking to ape dominant forms of distinction, and the dominant habitus producing ever more novel forms of valorised capital.

Given this, the dominance of the dominant habitus in a system is never *truly* threatened, at least in terms of the *internal* dynamics of the system. This is because the dominant habitus has the power to define which are distinguished forms of capital and which are not. It can always define the form of capital it happens to possess as the most distinct. As all other habituses must take on this classification, the capital they happen to have will always be less valorised. Thus, although they may seek to gain distinction by aping the capital of the dominant, the retention of valorised capital will always elude them. As such, lower habituses are condemned to play a game they cannot, by definition, win.

Two final aspects of distinction competitions need to be outlined.

First, each system has a characteristic *locus* where it takes place. This is decided by the class with the dominant habitus. It will generally be an environment in which they customarily operate. For example, the distinction competition between early modern aristocracy and bourgeoisie, where the former was dominant, takes place primarily (though of course, not exclusively) at the royal courts of the Absolutist period, where the aristocracy gathered collectively.

Second, we must spell out which *types of class grouping* may be involved in a distinction system. A system of habituses involves two or more habituses, that is, two or more classes or class fractions. In the distinction competitions we discern to take place in capitalist modernity, there are two sub-forms of distinction competition. The first sub-form involves two generic classes. In one instance we analyse, this involves the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie (particularly its upper elements). In another instance, the competition involves (a generically-formulated

conception of both) bourgeoisie and proletariat. Such general "actors" are of course merely convenient analytic fictions. The second sub-form of distinction competition involves fractions of classes, with either lower fractions aping upper fractions within one class, or upper fractions of a generic dominant class being aped by lower fractions of the same class, and thence these fractions in turn being aped by upper fractions of a generic subordinate class. In turn, these are aped by lower fractions in the subordinate class. This is the situation vis-à-vis excretory symbols and practices that we locate in the faecal habitus system of the later nineteenth century, whereupon there were inter-bourgeois, and later, inter-proletarian, distinction systems operative .

From the above contentions it should be clear that we are not studying a particular faecal habitus in isolation, but rather situations where there is a *dominant faecal habitus*. The dominance of a faecal habitus involves two criteria. First, the dominance of that habitus may derive from it being the faecal habitus of the (symbolically and materially) dominant class. Or, second, the dominance of a faecal habitus may derive from it being the faecal habitus shared by most, or all, strata in a given society¹⁷. The strata occupying this habitus must include the dominant class. These two possibilities are mutually exclusive – *either* the dominance of a habitus comes about because only the dominant class occupy it, and it is thus a source of distinction, *or* the dominance comes about because both the dominant class and other strata occupy it, at which point it ceases to be a form of distinction for the dominant class.

Whether the dominance of a faecal habitus derives from one or the other criteria depends not on the internal dynamics of systems of general habituses (which are part of the symbolic aspects of class struggle), but on factors *external* to such distinction competitions, which shape the forms they take. Such factors involve aspects of class struggle at the material (i.e. socio-politico-economic) level. It is to this issue we now turn.

Formal aspects of the shaping of distinction competitions

As we formulate it, there are two sets of external (exogenous) factors involved in the shaping of the forms taken by *general habitus* distinction systems at given historical junctures. The first is the *field of power*. The second is the *nature of the system of social relations* pertaining at a given period

Let us consider the first factor. The distinction competition pertaining between a set of general habituses constitutes one aspect of the overall set of *symbolic class struggles* current in a given society at a particular historical period. The total set of symbolic struggles exists in relation to, and is in some senses determined by, the total set of *material aspects of class struggle*. By this term we refer to socio-economic struggles between classes, i.e. struggles locatable within and over the means of production, and the political expressions thereof¹⁸. Let us follow Bourdieu by dubbing this socio-economic-political arena the *field of power*¹⁹. The state of play, as it were, in this field affects the status (i.e. relative levels of dominance) of the “players” (classes or fractions of classes) in the symbolic arena of struggle, that is, in the various forms of distinction competition. Thus the relative positions of socio-economic-political power held by classes or class fractions in this field shape the forms that symbolic struggle can take; that is, the *contours of a system of habituses* are shaped by the positions of classes in the field of material forms of power.

The contours of a system of general habituses can be thus shaped by the situation in the field of power in various ways. Such a situation dictates:

- 1) which classes or fractions are involved in the system
- 2) which is the dominant habitus in the system (for the class with the dominant habitus in a system is also the materially dominant class)
- 3) the particular locus of distinction competition; the locus is decided by the dominant class (and their symbolic dominance is coterminous with their dominance in the field of power)

4) which forms of symbolic capital each class can deploy, and at which historical junctures these can be effectively deployed in the pursuit of distinction; this is particularly the case for the dominant class or fraction in a habitus system insofar as it is the habitus of this group which classifies all the other habituses and decides which form of capital is most valorised and which all subordinate groups must aspire to.

The second factor which we will consider as germane to the shaping of the contours of a system of habituses is the *nature of the system of social relations* which holds at a given period. Whereas the field of power involves relations between classes, this factor involves the social relational context in which such struggles are played out. Here we refer to two forms of *social density*. The first aspect is *social relational density* between classes and the individuals within them. Following Elias, such density is explicable in this way. The nature of *networks of interdependency* between different classes or class fractions, and thus between the individuals within those groupings, varies along a continuum between *looser* and *tighter* forms of interdependency (Elias 1995: 447). The relative level of interdependency will dictate a) which classes are involved in a habitus system; and b) how concentrated and severe the competition is between them, with more severe competition arising as a function of increasingly tight levels of interdependence between groups competing in a system²⁰.

The second form of social density involves *levels of population density*. Rising levels of population density may correspond to rising levels of social relational density. Rising levels of population may lead to *crises in the realm of governance of populations* faced by a dominant class. The responses formulated by that class to solve these crises may have an impact upon the nature of symbolic capital that class deploys in its distinction competitions.

The nature of the system of social relations, as expressed in the two forms of density and the crises produced by the second form, are interrelated with aspects of the field of power. The aspect of interrelation we will focus upon is the nature of *the State, as expression of dominant class political power*. The level of social relational

density at a particular juncture may well affect the particular State form taken by dominant class political power (Elias 1995: 345-7, 391, 470-71). Furthermore, the crises of population density faced by the dominant class may be solved by the State as expression of collective class power²¹.

Both the field of power and the nature of the system of social relations are the *exogenous factors* which dictate the form a distinction competition will take. The internal dynamics of a system are always such that the dominant habitus will retain its distinction. The exogenous factors, especially the field of power, are the conditions of possibility for such a dynamic. If the exogenous factors alter the dominance of a class materially, or alter the form of capital it can use, then the dynamic towards reproduction of distinction is not guaranteed. Instead, the system is thrown into disarray, with the results that *either* the dominant class finds a new means of reproducing distinction (i.e. it finds new forms of valorised symbolic capital), *or* a new class becomes symbolically dominant (on the basis of its coming to material dominance in the field of power).

All the above exogenous factors apply in the shaping and subsequent operation of a dominant general faecal habitus; but the relation of these factors to this system is *indirect*. That is, a dominant general faecal habitus is a subset of a dominant general habitus, which in turn operates within a system of general habituses. Thus the effects of exogenous factors can only be experienced at the level of the dominant general faecal habitus, insofar as these effects are refracted through developments in the system in which operates the dominant general habitus, which in turn impact upon the nature of that habitus. In effect, changes in the nature of the dominant general faecal habitus only occur as a result of changes to the dominant general habitus, and such changes to the latter are due to exogenous factors impinging on the distinction system between general habituses.

Now that we have theorised the relation of habitus systems to the external world of material class struggle, let us now see how faecal habituses relate to another form of external factor: in this case, the *physical world*, in the guise of the means of excretory disposal, and thus of the mode of excretion.

Formal aspects of the mode of excretion

Thus far we have examined the relationship that pertains between a faecal habitus, its attitudes towards excreta, and the characteristic excretory practices thereby generated. However, one particular aspect of excretory practices, defecation, must occur within a context created not only by the corresponding habitus, but by the means through which that habitus is connected to the physical world.

This is because defecatory practices take place in certain locales, and must be disposed of in ways, which are deemed legitimate by the faecal habitus. The legitimate means of disposal are located within the parameters of these legitimate locales. We define the legitimate means of removing excreta for a given habitus as that habitus's *means of excretory disposal*. These means involve two aspects. First there is the *intimate means of disposal*, which are the receptacles for excreta that an individual would use to excrete into. Second, there are the *general means of disposal*, that is, some form of technology which stores and / or removes excreta away from the original locale of excretion. Examples of the former include pots and water closets; examples of the latter include cesspits, middens and sewers.

The dominant faecal habitus (in its general guise, and in its particular manifestations) dictates the legitimate locales of defecation and means of disposal. Such factors can be understood as forms of valorised symbolic capital (when the dominance of the faecal habitus derives from the fact that only the dominant class occupy it). In this situation, the locales and means of disposal deemed to be illegitimate will be associated by the dominant habitus with the inferior practices of subordinate habituses. When the dominance of the dominant faecal habitus derives from the fact that most or all classes, including the dominant class, dwell within it, that habitus dictates which are the legitimate and illegitimate locales and means of disposal for all strata.

However, the relationship between dominant faecal habitus and valorised locales and means of disposal is not merely comprised of the attribution of legitimacy (and perhaps symbolic capital) by the one onto the other. Rather, there is a mutually-

implicating relationship between the dominant faecal habitus on the one hand, and the legitimated locales of excretion and means of disposal (general and intimate) on the other. The nature of both the spatial contours of the locale, and also the technologies of intimate and general disposal, are shaped and reshaped by the class inhabiting the dominant faecal habitus. That is, the *collective praxis* of that class, informed by the imperatives of the symbolic-classificatory system of its faecal habitus, generates characteristic means of disposal²². The class occupying the dominant faecal habitus have the material capacity to act in this manner as this class is also dominant in the field of power. The locales of excretion and the technologies of disposal are developed in line with the symbolic-classificatory system of the habitus, primarily so that they meet its imperatives for a) socially-legitimate forms of defecatory practices, and b) acceptable forms of sensory practice. Furthermore, locales and technologies are shaped in light of such imperatives so as to allow defecation to be carried out in fashions that agree with (or at least do not contradict) forms of bodily representation derived from the symbolic schema of the habitus.

In this fashion, the physical world is acted upon by specialist designers and workmen, informed by the imperatives of the dominant faecal habitus, to yield the material means of disposal into a form that is wrought in the image of the symbolic and practical demands of the habitus. Conversely, the locales and technologies thus formed serve as the *material preconditions* that allow the characteristic defecatory and sensory practices generated by that habitus to be carried out. By allowing such practices, locales and technologies also serve as preconditions for the operation and reproduction of the symbolic-classificatory schema of a dominant faecal habitus, and the forms of self-representation of a class deriving therefrom. Further generation of characteristic means of disposal thus may facilitate and reinforce existing symbolic and practical aspects of the habitus, and may encourage further developments in the directions it has already taken.

Taken together, the dominant faecal habitus and the corresponding means of excretory disposal constitute the *mode of excretion*²³. At a given period, a particular dominant faecal habitus will produce, and operate on condition of, characteristic means of disposal. These factors thus produce the mode of excretion that holds at this period. As the general form of a dominant faecal habitus pertains for a long

period of time, then so too must the mode of excretion of which it is a constituent part. The mode of excretion develops over time due to the creation of successive PFHs generating new forms of excretory practice and thus novel forms of means of disposal. However, as long as PFHs derive from the dominant general faecal habitus, the mode of excretion remains of the type which corresponds to that latter habitus. It is only when the dominant general habitus changes to another that the dominant general faecal habitus is replaced by the equivalent habitus of the newly-dominant class, and thus the mode of excretion changes in absolute terms, i.e. becomes another *type* of mode of excretion.

Formal concepts: conclusion

The above set of concepts represents our conceptual position on the sociology of excretion in abstract terms, which are theoretically applicable to any society at any period. However, we are interested in the specific cases of the *bourgeois faecal habitus* as dominant general faecal habitus, and the corresponding mode, *the modern mode of excretion*. We must now move from formal conceptual structures towards delineating the particular, substantive aspects of general and faecal habituses, as these pertain throughout the period of capitalist modernity.

The aspects of the dominant general habitus in capitalist modernity: the general bourgeois habitus

According to our scheme, the nature of, and changes over time effected in, the general habitus of the dominant class of a particular period will structure the forms taken by the faecal habitus of that class, both at the level of GFH and PFHs. As such, to understand the faecal habitus of the dominant class in the modern period, we must understand its general habitus, especially in terms of corporeal symbols and practices.

We hold that the dominant class in the field of power throughout the modern period is the bourgeoisie. Therefore, to understand the dominant form of faecal habitus throughout this period requires reflection upon the nature of the general habitus of

the bourgeoisie, that is, the master habitus which underpins all particular historical manifestations of that class's symbolism and practices.

Bourdieu furnishes us with a description of what we dub the *general bourgeois habitus* (GBH). The primary division of labour in capitalist modernity is between bourgeoisie and proletariat (Bourdieu 1992a: 469). It follows that such a division is reflected at the symbolic level: thus the general habitus of the bourgeoisie exists in a system of distinctions, with the general proletarian habitus (GPH) figuring as the negative reference point against which the distinction of the GBH is constructed and continually reproduced (Bourdieu 1992a: 48). This construction is carried out through the deployment of certain sets of dyadic categorisations, one part of which is distinguished, and the other part of which is derogated. Such dyads include high / low, spiritual / material, refined / coarse (Bourdieu 1992a: 468-9). In more substantive terms, the means of distinction in this system involves the GBH's postulation of the "refinement" of itself and its constituent elements, against the "unrefined" character of the GPH, where the latter term is taken to be equivalent to "natural" processes, and the former is taken to be "cultural" in aspect, i.e. a supersession of the (inferior) natural world (Bourdieu 1992a: 489). The division between "nature" and "culture" is thus deployed as a symbolic expression of bourgeois distinction and proletarian lack thereof. This division in turn can be expressed in bodily terms:

"[T]he antithesis between culture and bodily pleasure (or nature) is rooted in the opposition between the cultivated bourgeoisie and the people, the imaginary site of uncultivated nature" (Bourdieu 1992a: 490)

Thus the nature of the bodily aspects of the GBH is constructed around the denial in the collective bourgeois body of what that habitus asserts the nature of the bodily aspects of the GPH to be. The symbolic-classificatory schema of the GBH operates around

"denial of lower, coarse, vulgar, venal, servile - in a word, natural - enjoyment ... [and] implies an affirmation of the superiority of those [i.e. the bourgeoisie] who

can be satisfied with the sublimated, refined, disinterested, gratuitous, distinguished pleasures forever closed to the profane" (Bourdieu 1992a: 7)

As such, the GBH's representation of the bourgeoisie in terms of that class's collective body is in terms of the "immaculate" nature of that body. Bourdieu's position here is akin to the social formation described earlier by Douglas, whereupon the cosmology of that society operated on the basis of conceptualising social life as taking place "between disembodied spirits" (Douglas 1970: 101). In this sense, Douglas's description of such a cosmology is an abstract account of the symbolism utilised in the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBH. If this is so, then the investing of bourgeois practices with distinction involves a denial of bodily processes (such as excretion) being produced by the bourgeois body (following Douglas 1970: 12). The key difference between Douglas's account and Bourdieu's position is that the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBH is not a cosmology applicable to all social strata, but is created, further developed, and reproduced in terms of the immaculate nature of the bourgeois body, and the maculate nature of the collective body of the proletariat.

We may see these claims as to the nature of the corporeal symbolism and practices of the GBH in the work of other authors. At the symbolic level, Stallybrass and White²⁴ claim that the bourgeois world-view (i.e. in our terms, the GBH's symbolic-classificatory system) is constituted of "high" discourses which are centred around intimations of "refinement", and which stress the superiority of "Mind" and "Spirit" over the debased capacities of the body. Such discourses are created in antithesis to "low" discourses, which are expressive of such debased capacities. But the creation of high discourses is dependent upon their being defined against the low, thus always implicating lowly discourses in the claims of the high. It is on this logic that the "bourgeois subject" (i.e. symbolic-classificatory system) operates, for it "defined and redefined itself through the exclusion of what is marked out as 'low' - as dirty, repulsive, noisy, contaminating. Yet that very act of exclusion was constitutive of its identity" (Stallybrass and White 1986: 191)²⁵.

In terms of the practices which are generated by such a habitus, we would expect a derogation of bodily practices in favour of "non-corporeal" aspects of human life. If.

however, the collective body of the bourgeoisie is to be represented, then it must be rendered so as to be distinguished. Distinction is gained on the basis of the denial of "nature". If nature figures in such a system as organic processes, then bourgeois self-representation of the body denies such processes as being within the capacities of the bourgeois body. As such, the GBH portrays the bourgeois body as one which is, to borrow another author's terminology, "strictly completed, finished, ... isolated. alone", that is, it is immaculate in the sense that it has no apertures through which organic processes may occur (Bakhtin 1984: 29). Following this same author, we identify the primary locus of distinction competition as the bourgeois domestic sphere, as it was here that distinctive forms of practice, corporeal and otherwise, are generated throughout the modern period (Bakhtin 1984: 33)

The distinctions generated between GBH and GPH are cast in terms of dyadic opposites. The immediately preceding remarks - especially the extract from Stallybrass and White - strongly indicate that the corporeal symbolism of the GBH utilises the dyad dirty / cleanly as a means of distinguishing between itself and its proletarian equivalent. That is to say, "dirt" - in both the moral and hygienic senses of the term - figures as a means of symbolic capital in the creation and reproduction of bourgeois distinction. The key trope here would be that the bourgeois body is cleanly, whereas the proletarian body is dirty. However, it is our belief, contrary to the position of the above authors, who see dirty / cleanly as a constituent aspect of *all* forms of bourgeois distinction, that such symbolic capital was only deployed by the bourgeoisie for a delimited historical period; furthermore, it ceased to be a form of symbolic capital when certain exogenous factors transformed the nature of class competition between GBH and GPH. We will examine this issue further below.

At the moment, we must now turn to the faecal subset of the GBH.

Aspects of the dominant faecal habitus in capitalist modernity: the bourgeois faecal habitus

The faecal subset of the GBH is the *general bourgeois faecal habitus* (GBFH). It pertains for the bourgeoisie as long as the GBH pertains for that class, *insofar as* that general habitus utilises bodily cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital. When

the GBH relinquishes this form of capital, the GBFH is transformed. The nature of the GBFH is created and recreated against the *general proletarian faecal habitus* (GPFH), the faecal subset of the GPH. When the system of distinctions between GBH and GPH alters, so too does the relationship between GBFH and GPFH. Furthermore, just as the bourgeois domestic sphere is the primary locus of the generation of GBH forms of distinction, so too is this sphere the locus of GBFH forms of distinction.

We assert that the GBFH is the general faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie over a long period of time - from the beginnings of modernity until around the turn of the twentieth century (see below). The fundamental postulate of this habitus is that excreta are "dirty", both morally and hygienically. We may yield this postulate in the form of the equation *excreta = dirt*. Here we will assume this is the case. The burden of Chapter 2 is to show how we may theoretically comprehend the historical genesis of this equation, whereas the aim of Chapter 3 is to illustrate how this empirically occurred.

The GBFH is the "solution" to a problem posed for the bourgeoisie by the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBH. The bourgeois body - for a long period in capitalist modernity - is portrayed as cleanly. It does not have apertures which produce "dirty" organic processes. It especially does not symbolically have an anus as, within the terms of the GBFH, excreta are dirty. The bourgeois body, if it is cleanly, cannot produce excreta. Yet the bourgeoisie as individuals *do* defecate, for defecation is physiologically unavoidable. Thus there is a potential contradiction between (cleanly) bourgeois self-representation and bourgeois (dirty) practice. The GBFH solves this contradiction in two ways.

First, at the symbolic-classificatory level, the GBFH, whilst claiming excreta are dirty, follows the GBH's cleanly corporeal depictions by representing the bourgeois body as one which does not defecate. In that sense, the representation of the excretory capacities of the bourgeois body held by this habitus is that this body has no such capacities. Second, to allow this form of self-representation, excretory practices (the defecatory aspect of which is unavoidable) are generated by this habitus such that they can be carried out in a cleanly fashion. In this way, these

practices do not contradict the form of self-representation held both by this habitus and by the GBH: excretory practices as carried out by the bourgeois body are cleanly, just as the bourgeois body is itself cleanly. Thus practices which, if deemed dirty would jeopardise such self-representational strategies, are rendered cleanly so as to be congruent with these strategies.

Excretory practices of this cleanly form are as follows. First, defecatory practices are carried out in a very highly prescribed fashion. That is, they must occur in particular locales. These locales are "private", that is, they are not open to the view of anyone except the defecating person. Such practices reflect very low levels of visual tolerance held by this habitus as to the "public" perception of excreta and excretion. Second, and congruent with this sensory aspect, levels of olfactory tolerance of faecal odours are very low. This is because the smells of excreta are deemed to be dirty, and dirt is intolerable to the bourgeois outlook. Excreta and defecatory practices are only tolerated if faecal odours are minimised as much as possible. Third, verbal practices are highly indirect and circumlocutory in terms of their naming of excreta, defecatory practices, and the means of excretory disposal. Thus the imperatives of the GBFH are "privacy", "deodourisation" and "euphemism". These allow excretion to be carried out in ways which do not contradict the GBFH representation of the body as non-excretory and the more general GBH representation of bodily cleanliness, despite the facts that excretion is an inevitable aspect of human life and excreta are regarded by the GBFH as dirty.

The GBFH's symbolic-classificatory schema produces these characteristic forms of practice on the basis of its imperatives. This schema also operates as the master schema for all particular historical manifestations of the GBFH. These manifestations are types of PFH, and they are dubbed here *particular bourgeois faecal habituses* (PBFHs). PBFHs express the equation excreta = dirt through the terminologies of given medical and/or natural scientific knowledges which are dominant at a certain period. The two which we focus on are the *miasmatic PBFH* and the *bacteriological PBFH*. Our position is that such knowledges are the means whereby this master schema was expressed at different periods. The master schema, the GBFH's symbolic-classificatory system, is understood to be *purely* a socio-cultural product. How is this?

Simply put, the equation excreta = dirt appeared *historically prior* to medical and scientific knowledges which agree with this contention²⁶. More specifically, the equation excreta = dirt, *where dirt is moral in aspect*, appeared chronologically prior to the appearance of medical and scientific knowledges which held that excreta = dirt, *where dirt is hygienic in aspect*. We have *analytically* defined the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH as holding that excreta = dirt in both senses. But *historically*, the bourgeoisie first felt *moral* repugnance for excreta; only subsequently were hygienic considerations added to this conceptualisation of faecal dirt. The two were first conjoined in the miasmatic PBFH, and thence re-expressed in the bacteriological PBFH. The hygienic aspects could be accommodated to the moral aspects as both were expressed as "dirt", and dirt has, in the modern period, a Janus face, with one side deriving from socio-cultural factors, and the other from developments in the field of medical and natural scientific innovations. As such, the terminologies of medicine and natural science could be used to express already-formulated perceptions of excreta.

Thus while PBFHs are a mixture of moral and hygienic expressions of the equation excreta = dirt, the master schema from which these habituses derive, the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH, has a view of excreta as morally dirty; this evaluation was produced by socio-cultural factors prior to the development of medical and scientific views. We hold this on the basis of evidence adduced from a consideration of the work of Freud and Elias. In the first instance, the Freud of *Civilisation and Its Discontents* (Freud 1957) holds that "dirt" beliefs in Western society are first produced, historically speaking, by socio-cultural imperatives. Dirt in the moral sense is "incompatible with civilisation", for dirt is disorder, and civilisation is premised on orderly structurings of thought and practice. Thus as (Western) civilisation develops, it "extend[s] ... [its] demands for cleanliness to the human body". Hygienic conceptions of dirt, including those concerning the human body, are post hoc rationalisations of the original socio-cultural impulses (Freud 1957: 55).

Elias's work posits the same contentions, although based in empirical analysis of the later-feudal and post-feudal situation in the West, rather than in the speculative

categories deployed by Freud. What Elias calls the "civilising process" - the increasing levels of self-control of conducts held by individuals over the period of early modernity - involves changing forms of dealing with the human body. As we will see in the following Chapters, new defecatory, sensory and verbal practices - those of the GBFH - are produced at this time as a result of what Elias dubs as "the civilising process". Two points follow from this. First, like Freud, Elias sees hygienic rationales for changes in conducts as post hoc rationales of alterations of attitude and practice actually wrought by the socio-cultural imperatives of the civilising process (Elias 1995: 443, 490). We may extrapolate from this the position that if excreta are equated with dirt (in both senses) at a later period in modernity, then the socio-culturally derived aspect was produced historically first, and the hygienic aspect produced and conjoined to it only later²⁷. Second, as we will see in Chapter 3, Elias empirically identifies what we understand as trends towards the viewing of excreta as dirt in the moral sense from the later feudal period onwards: the view of excreta as dirt in the hygienic sense does not arise until the era of the miasmatic PBFH in the later eighteenth century.

As such, it is a peculiarity of the GBFH that its view of excreta as moral dirt was produced *before* there was a corresponding hygienic view; and that such hygienic views are explicable as terminological expressions of the moral aspect in the context of successive PBFHs.

On this basis, we can identify more precisely the nature of the PBFHs which occur in the modern period. One PBFH is generally dominant at a given time, except in periods where there is overlap between them, as one replaces the other. They differ from each other in that they use different medical and natural scientific terminologies to express the socio-culturally produced view of excreta as (moral) dirt in the symbolic-classificatory schema of the GBFH. As new terminologies arise and are taken on by the bourgeoisie, there is a shift from one PBFH to another. Each PBFH produces characteristic forms of excretory practice and means of disposal that are in line with the imperatives of the GBFH, yet which bear the particular, specific hallmarks of the PBFH in question. For example, the bacteriological PBFH is the particular manifestation of the GBFH which operates in conjunction with water closets and water-based sewer systems.

Now we have outlined the nature of the GBFH and PBFHs, let us now see how these were effected both by the nature of the forms taken by the GBH competition system operative at different periods in modernity, and by the external factors which changed the nature of this system.

Systems of general habituses in modernity, their shaping by exogenous factors, and the effects on faecal habituses

At the most abstract level, the faecal habitus of a class is the subset of the general habitus of that class. Alterations in the nature of the latter provoke alterations in the nature of the former. Thus the history of the GBFH, as regards the various mutations undergone by it over time, is also the history of the GBH. Since the GBH exists in a system of distinctions with the GPH, the changes effected to the nature of this system, and thus to the GBH itself, by external factors will be the social structural elements ultimately responsible for alterations in the nature of the GBFH. Here we will set out the nature of the changes effected in the realm of the GBFH, their relationship to alterations in the GBH system, and the external factors which provoked such changes.

The shifts in symbolisation and practice effected in the GBFH over the period of modernity will be theorised more concretely in the next Chapter. Here we are concerned to delineate the broad contours of the *genesis, development, and demise* of the GBFH.

The *pre-history and genesis* of the GBFH of course concerns the dominant faecal habitus of the era prior to bourgeois dominance in this area, and in other more general symbolic and material fields. The faecal habitus dominant before this period we dub the *feudal faecal habitus* (FFH). As will be shown in Chapter 3, all classes in the feudal period occupied this habitus. It is characterised by an *ambiguous evaluation of excreta* at the symbolic-classificatory level, in contrast to the wholly negative evaluation of the GBFH. In terms of excretory practices, it produced relatively low levels of regulation over defecatory acts; relatively high levels of tolerance of faecal odours; and relatively direct forms of reference to excretory

phenomena. All of these are (again relatively speaking) the antitheses of the forms of practice generated by the GBFH. The prehistory of the bourgeois approach to excreta and excretion, the shift from FFH to GBFH, thus involves a transition from diametrically opposed forms of faecal habitus, both in symbolic and practical terms. The transition involves a *qualitative* shift from one set of attitudes and practices characterised by relative *tolerance* of excreta and excretion, to another set characterised by relative *intolerance*.

The *demise* of the GBFH involves not a qualitative shift in the nature of symbolism and practices, but rather an alteration in the nature of social strata occupying that habitus. The shift from FFH to GBFH also involved a change in personnel, insofar as from a situation where all classes shared the same habitus - i.e. where excretory matters were not a means of class distinction - there arose a situation where only the bourgeoisie occupied a faecal habitus which was valorised. But the demise of the GBFH is more radical in terms of the changing of personnel, for it involves a transition from a situation where only the bourgeoisie occupies its own (hence valorised) faecal habitus, to one where all strata occupy it. The symbols and practices of this habitus do not change: they remain as they were formulated by the bourgeoisie. But now both proletariat and bourgeoisie occupy this habitus. We dub this habitus the *universal faecal habitus* (UFH). It is in operation from around the beginning of the twentieth century. With all strata occupying this habitus, excretory matters cease to be a form of class distinction, for all strata now hold the same symbolisations and practices. Chapters 4 and 5 illustrate how this habitus arose to replace the GBFH.

Thus, in broad outline, the types of dominant faecal habitus pertaining at particular periods in the history of the feudal and modern West are thus: FFH, GBFH, UFH. The transition from the first to the second in early modernity, the development of the second to its most consummate form, and the transition from this form to the third habitus listed above, are all due to shifts in the nature of distinction competitions at the level of general habituses.

Both the demise of the FFH, and the *first phase* of development of the GBFH are occasioned by the mutations wrought in the nature of distinction competition

between *aristocracy and bourgeoisie*. Following Elias, we hold that the nature of competition between these classes is the mechanism which effects changes in forms of conduct and bodily symbolism over the period from later feudalism, through the Age of Absolutism, to the period of early bourgeois rule. Competition between these classes effects at the level of general habituses (i.e. at the level of GBH) new forms of representation of the human body, and novel forms of practice, which exhibit progressively higher levels of regulation. The development of such forms of symbolism and practice constitute the first phase of development of the GBH. At the level of faecal habituses (i.e. at the level of the nascent GBFH) these symbolic and practical developments replace the symbolisations and practices of the FFH with new excretory mores. These new mores are a subset of the nascent form of GBH created at this period. As such, the competition between aristocracy and bourgeoisie produces the demise of the FFH, and the creation of the first phases of GBH and GBFH.

The *second phase* of both GBH and GBFH is produced by a shift in the overall nature of general habitus distinction competition. From a system based on struggles between aristocracy and bourgeoisie, the main form of competition is now (i.e. from circa the later eighteenth century) between *bourgeoisie and proletariat*. In the former competition, the aristocracy occupied the dominant habitus. Now that position is enjoyed by the bourgeoisie. Competition between bourgeoisie and proletariat develops further, in the same direction as before, the characteristics of GBH and thus GBFH. The GBFH becomes the distinct form of faecal habitus, in contradistinction to the GPFH. This is so because at this period of bourgeois / proletarian generic competition, the bourgeoisie deploy *bodily cleanliness* as a form of symbolic capital. As excreta and excretion are construed as dirty by the GBFH, they can be deployed at this time as a means of derogating the proletariat. It is in this context of excreta and excretion being viewed as dirt, and thus being deployed as a means of distinction, that the symbols and practices of the GBFH are further developed until the point where they reach a highly consummate form, i.e. a wholly negative evaluation of excreta, and the highly regulated forms of excretory practice noted above.

The transition from this consummate form of GBFH to UFH is a result of changes in the nature of the bourgeois / proletarian general form of competition. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the GBH progressively gives up bodily cleanliness, both in general and excretory terms, as forms of symbolic capital. As such, dirt is no longer attributed to the proletariat. As this class is no longer construable as dirty, it can enter into the conditions of the GBFH (and, conversely, because the proletariat enters into the conditions of this habitus, it can no longer be viewed as filthy, and thus excretory cleanliness can no longer operate as a means of bourgeois distinction). As such, the GBFH transmutes into the UFH.

The shifts described here at the level of generic forms of class competition (which lead first to the transition from FFH to GBH, and then from GBFH to UFH) are generated by changing external factors in both the field of power and in terms of the nature of social relations.

The competition between aristocracy and bourgeoisie arises as a result of increasing levels of social relational density between these classes, throwing them into a situation of mutual interdependence. This interdependence manifests itself in the close connections between these classes played out primarily at the royal courts of the Absolutist period, the major loci for this form of class competition. At this point the aristocracy is the dominant class symbolically as it is the dominant class in the field of power. But when the bourgeoisie comes to occupy this latter position, both in terms of economic control and in terms of the seizure of state power, it also occupies the former position. Class competition now occurs between the bourgeoisie and a class that has entered the historical scene as a result of bourgeois control over the economy - the proletariat. The prime locus for bourgeois distinction is primarily the bourgeois domestic sphere.

The symbolic capital used at this initial period of bourgeois / proletarian competition includes bodily cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital. However, this form is relinquished in the next phase. This is because the ever-increasing numbers of proletarians in urban areas provokes crises in urban governance in the later eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. A major aspect of these crises is that the proletariat - from the viewpoint of both the GBH and the

particular historical manifestation of the GBFH - are dirty in both moral and hygienic terms. As such, the bourgeois state is called upon to resolve these crises of dirt. One of the effects of such state reforms in the second half of the nineteenth century is the relinquishing of bodily cleanliness as bourgeois symbolic capital²⁸. We have already seen that this involves a shift from GBFH to UFH. At the level of GBH, new forms of symbolic capital arise to replace bodily cleanliness as a means of bourgeois derogation of the proletariat.

We may schematically outline these processes at the three levels of dominant faecal habitus, form of generic competition, and external factors.

History of forms of distinction competition and exogenous factors underpinning these

<u>Dominant faecal habitus</u>	<u>Form of generic distinction competition</u> (dominant class first)	<u>Locus</u>	<u>External factors</u>
FFH	Aristocracy / bourgeoisie	Royal court	Increasing levels of social relational densities
GBFH	Bourgeoisie / proletariat (Bodily cleanliness deployed as symbolic capital)	Bourgeois home	Seizure of economic and state power by bourgeoisie Urban population crises Bourgeois state resolves crises
UFH	Bourgeoisie / proletariat (Bodily cleanliness not deployed as symbolic capital)		

Now that we have set out the history of the generation of the GBFH and UFH, we must finally turn to the nature of the mode of excretion in capitalist modernity.

The modern mode of excretion

Each dominant faecal habitus gives rise to its own characteristic forms of the means of excretory disposal, with there being a corresponding mode of excretion for the FFH and GBFH. However, the prime focus of our interest are the excretory conditions of the twentieth century. These are explicable under the aegis of the *modern mode of excretion*.

The modern mode of excretion is constituted of the UFH on the one hand, together with, on the other hand, the water closet form of the intimate means of excretory disposal, and large-scale, water-based sewerage as the general means of excretory disposal. This is the condition reached by the period just after W.W.I.. However, just as the UFH is explicable in terms of the historical development of the GBFH, so too is the modern mode of excretion explicable in terms of the genesis of the characteristic forms of excretory disposal generated by the GBFH over its period of dominance. In essence, the forms of excretory disposal corresponding to the most consummate form of GBFH (the bacteriological PBFH) are identical to those corresponding to the UFH.

As such, to understand the nature of the modern mode requires explanation of how the imperatives of the most consummate form of GBFH, the bacteriological PBFH, shaped the nature of both general and intimate means of disposal, and how such means were the precondition for the characteristic excretory practices of that habitus. The imperatives of privacy and deodourisation were particularly important here, for these generated forms of disposal that allowed defecation to occur in private locales, and for the smells thus emitted to be minimised as much as possible. How this was achieved in terms of the general means of sewerage disposal will be charted in Chapter 4, while the history of the water closet in this light will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, we have set out the concepts of a general sociology of excreta and excretion, and the concepts (formal and substantive) of such as a sociology as applied to the conditions of capitalist modernity. In the first place, we held that a sociology of dirt furnishes us with the basic apparatus to be deployed in a sociological comprehension of faeces and their production. In this context, we saw that attitudes towards excreta characteristic of the modern West, which view such materials as dirty, may be formulated as comprising both socio-cultural and medico-scientific aspects. On the basis of such beliefs arise highly regulated forms of excretory practices.

We then set out this generic sociological position in terms of habitus-based analysis, such that the general concepts could be related to the specific contours of capitalist modernity. This involved the postulation of the formal categories of dominant general habitus and its distinction system, dominant faecal habitus, particular faecal habituses, and mode of excretion. We then examined the characteristics of these categories when they are applied to the substantive field of capitalist modernity. We here invoked the key notions of general bourgeois habitus (GBH) and its system of distinctions, general bourgeois faecal habitus (GBFH), particular bourgeois faecal habituses (PBFHs), and the modern mode of excretion. Finally, we traced out the history of the GBFH – from its genesis as a result of the decline of the FFH to its own demise as a result of its mutation into the form of the UFH.

These then are the primary conceptual tools through which the history of excreta and excretion in capitalist modernity may be discerned. We shall see them deployed in the subsequent Chapters. Our setting out of this series of concepts hopefully gives the reader a clear idea of the contours of our overall argument. For the moment, however, we must further specify the nature of perhaps the most important part of that argument: our claims as to how and why the general bourgeois faecal habitus was erected in the form described above. It is to this issue we now turn.

CHAPTER 2

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GBFH I:

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter, we set out the characteristics of the general bourgeois faecal habitus, the dominant faecal habitus of the period from later feudalism to the turn of the twentieth century. We regarded this form in primarily synchronic fashion – that is, in terms of the symbolic and practical characteristics that operated for the duration of its existence. We began to consider the historical development of GBFH, both in terms of its particular historical manifestations, and in the context of the genesis of this habitus out of the conditions of the feudal faecal habitus, and its mutation into the UFH. We now must specify the characteristics of the GBFH in diachronic terms; that is, we must now set out analytically the processes whereby the FFH went into decline, and the GBFH was erected. These analytic processes will then be used to guide analysis of empirical materials in the next Chapter.

As we define it, the GBFH was constituted of three main elements.

First, at the symbolic-classificatory level, the GBFH consisted of a set of symbols oriented around the theme that the bourgeois body does not have excretory capacities. In this sense, the bourgeois body was deemed to be morally cleanly. Such symbolism derives from a wider set of symbols located in the symbolic-classificatory system of the general bourgeois habitus (GBH), centred around the notion that every aspect of the bourgeois body is morally clean. Such symbolism was, in the period of the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system that begins in the later eighteenth century, a key source of bourgeois symbolic capital.

Second, and also at the symbolic classificatory level, there was a conceptualisation of excreta as morally dirty. That is, excreta offended against the sensibilities

produced by the GBFH. The conjunction of claims as to the bourgeois body lacking excretory capacities, together with the moral dirt of excreta, both elements constituting the symbolic-classificatory schema of the GBFH, produced the third element of this habitus: relatively high levels of regulation of excretory practices¹. Thus defecatory practices were highly regulated in terms of legitimate locales where they could occur; olfactory practices exhibited relatively low levels of tolerance of faecal odours; and verbal practices were relatively highly circumlocutory in referring to excretory phenomena.

Each of the three elements is dependent on both of the others. Practices can only be highly regulated on the basis of a symbolic-classificatory schema based upon both symbols of the non-excretory capacities of the body, and the evaluation of excreta as morally dirty. Conversely, if the claim that the bourgeois body lacks excretory practices is to be made plausible, within the context of a situation where excreta are filthy, then it is dependent upon excretory practices being relatively highly regulated, so as to guarantee that, if the bourgeois body must defecate (and if the bourgeoisie must perceive excreta and excretion and refer to them verbally), then such practices will be carried out in as cleanly a fashion as possible.

Thus if we are to inquire as to the nature of the generation of the GBFH, we must investigate how each of these three elements came to be produced. That is, we must analyse the *processes* which gave rise to each element. Thus we must account for: 1) the erection of the set of symbols based on the moral cleanliness of the body at the level of GBH, and thus on the denial of excretory capacities at the level of GBFH; 2) increasing levels of negative charging of excreta, such that excreta become evaluated as morally dirty; 3) increasing levels of regulation of excretory practices in the directions mentioned. In this last case, we shall comprehend the process of increasing levels of regulation of such practices in terms of progressively greater degrees of *repression* of practices that had been acceptable under the conditions of the FFH.

Just as the three elements of the GBFH are interdependent, so too are the processes which generate each of these elements. Thus practices can only become more

repressed over time if there are concurrent developments at the levels of the creation of cleanly corporeal representation and negative charging of excreta.

The nature of the first process – the erection of symbols of a cleanly bourgeois body – can be stated here briefly, for it is the least complex of the three processes. The general rationale we hold to is that “[i]mages of the body had to change before constraints could change ... conceptions of the body [had to alter for these] dictate ... its functioning and its capabilities” (Vigarello 1988: 3). That is to say, repressions over excretory practices were dependent upon alterations in the way that the human body in general terms, and thus in excretory terms, was perceived and represented. Repressions over practices were thus dependent upon a shift from the set of representations of the body’s excretory capacities that held under the conditions of the FFH, to those that informed the GBFH. How such a set of symbols was erected, at first the level of GBH and then GBFH, will be considered further below.

However, a more major burden of this Chapter is to delineate the nature of, and relationship between, increasing levels of negative charging on the one hand, and progressive levels of repression of excretory practices on the other. In this respect, we assume an important postulate that aids us in the comprehension of empirical data in relation to these processes. On our definition, practices are produced by the symbolic-classificatory schema of a habitus, and thus the evaluation of excreta in this sense generate characteristic excretory practices. As a consequence, increasing levels of negative charging (together with the symbolism of the cleanly body) generates progressively higher degrees of repression of previously-accepted practices. However, the implication of this position is that evidence which illustrates increasing levels of repression of practices also indicates, in an oblique way, increasing levels of negative charging. It is the dual nature of the relationship between these two processes which will play an important part in our analysis of the empirical material in the next Chapter.

In this Chapter, we will explicate the nature of the processes of negative charging and repression of practices in terms of a consideration of the work of Freud. We

firstly set out our conception of the process of negative charging, which draws upon Freud's position on how excreta are evaluated in the contemporary period. We then turn to consider how later Freudians and Marxian-Freudians attempted to utilise Freud's basic contentions as to the effects of modern evaluations of excreta in terms of *character types*. We shall reject such approaches for two reasons: they tell us little about the nature of excretory practices in the modern period, and they are based on the original Freudian notion of repressions effected over *anal-erotic energies*. Our aim is to take the formal aspects of Freud's account of repressions over excretory phenomena, and recast it as a consideration of the manner in which increasing levels of negative charging produce characteristic (i.e. relatively highly regulated) forms of excretory practices in the defecatory, olfactory and verbal realms. We may recast Freud's position in this way by drawing upon Elias's critique of Freud, which furnishes us with an account of increasing repressions over forms of bodily practice in general, and thus of excretory practices in particular, at the historical juncture we are concerned with – the period spanning later feudalism through to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

By recasting Freud in Eliasian terms, we are also furnished with an account of the social structural reasons for the generation of the three processes which gave rise to the GBFH. We shall analytically formulate these processes as resulting from the two forms of general habitus distinction systems in this period – in the first instance, the aristocratic / bourgeois system, and in the second instance, the bourgeois / proletarian system. We shall see how the characteristics of the GBH and GBFH were first produced by the former system (and the exogenous factors which shaped it) and were subsequently extended and reinforced as a result of the latter system, in which bodily cleanliness (in the moral sense) and thus excretory cleanliness, figured as important forms of bourgeois symbolic capital.

We turn first to examine the nature of Freud's basic postulates as regards the evaluations of excreta in the modern period.

FREUD AND THE EVALUATIONS OF EXCRETA

The various strands of Freud's approach to understanding contemporary evaluations of excreta can be reconstructed from a wide variety of his writings, for this topic was a recurring concern of his work². However, we shall primarily focus on his account of evaluations of excreta which derives from his views on the issue of the *repression of instinctual coprophilia* and the effects thereof. We shall therefore focus mainly on the claims made in *Civilisation and Its Discontents* (Freud 1957), but we will augment it with various other parts of the Freudian corpus.

The canvas of the psychoanalytic historiography contained in this work is a broad one, in that the concern is with the overall development of "Civilisation". Civilisation relies on a "renunciation of instinctual gratifications ... [and] powerful instinctual urgencies" (Freud 1957: 63). More specifically, contemporary Western civilisation is seen as a "high-water mark" of such strict regulation (Freud 1957: 74). The development of Civilisation is explicable "in terms of the modifications it effects on the known human instinctual dispositions" (Freud 1957: 62). That is to say, the development of Civilisation involves a process of *increasing levels of repression* over what Freud regards as *instinctual* (or "natural") human dispositions. These dispositions are, of course, understood to be primarily *erotic* in nature.

There are on Freud's account various types of such "modifications" (or repressions) of instincts. These each give rise to specific effects. Generally speaking, instincts are "repressed" by the dictates of Civilisation (or Culture), such that they are processed into socially valorised forms, rather than left in their raw ("uncivilised") state. Under this general rubric, some instincts are "absorbed" into other types of orientation: the most obvious example of this type of reorientation is the mutation of anal eroticism into the "anal character", which we will describe below. Other instincts are "sublimated" into alternate modes of gratification, thus making possible "the higher mental operations, scientific, artistic, [and] ideological activities" (Freud 1957: 63).

Modern evaluations of excreta are understood under this rubric. Such attitudes are a result of Civilisation repressing an *instinctual* excretory disposition and effecting

new forms in which this disposition may be legitimately expressed. This instinctual disposition is *coprophilia*, that is, a situation whereby the excreting person is positively oriented towards his own excreta, to the extent that he is content to touch or smell them. On this account, faeces were viewed before the encroachment of Civilisation without feelings of *disgust* (Freud 1962d: 337). Why then does disgust come to figure as the means through which Civilisation construes excreta? Freud offers two interrelated explanations.

The first concerns the *libidinal* nature of coprophilia. Freud is fond of invoking Augustine's dictum: *inter urinas et faeces nascimur* (we are born amid urine and faeces). This illustrates the intimate connection between human waste and sexual reproduction that lies at the base of Freud's perception of faeces. Freud's major claim is that coprophilia is explicable under the aegis of anal eroticism, that is, the libidinal pleasures gained from the act of defecating. In turn "anal eroticism is one of the components of the [sexual] instinct which, in the course of development and in accordance with the education demanded by our present civilisation, have become unserviceable for sexual aims" (Freud 1962a: 171). Thus Western Civilisation is said to have repressed coprophilia because of its anal erotic aspect, and represses this latter as it is pre-genitally erotic, and not the genital (i.e. reproductive) eroticism that Civilisation favours. As such, in the development of the contemporary infant, initial auto-erotic tendencies are displaced by oral-erotic tendencies (the "oral stage"); these in turn are replaced by anal-erotic tendencies (the "anal stage") and these are then usurped by genital eroticism, the form of eroticism which is favoured by Civilisation (Freud 1970a: 116-7; 1971b: 126-8). Hence anal erotic dispositions come to be regarded as disgusting; in this way, excreta (and excretory practices) become imbricated with feelings of disgust.

The second explanation that Freud offers as to the evaluation of excreta as disgusting is that such an evaluation should not be seen as deriving from "hygienic" (i.e. medico-scientific) factors. Freud holds that the initial and most important impulse in the evaluation of excreta as disgusting is the aspect produced by the socio-cultural imperatives of Civilisation. Freud characterises Civilisation in terms of its "orderliness", which is to say, in terms of its desire for moral "cleanliness",

and its antipathy towards moral "dirt" (Freud 1957: 55). Excreta and excretion are viewed by Civilisation as moral dirt, and, as such, they undergo various forms of repression so that the ordering imperatives of Civilisation can be met. In this sense coprophilia is repressed so as to meet the demands of (as Douglas would phrase it) the cosmology of Civilisation (Freud 1962a: 172-3).

It is not entirely clear how these two explanations fit together to provide a meta-explanatory framework of repression. However, this need not concern us, as one of the aims of this Chapter is to divest the account of repression of the burden of being rooted in accounts of libidinal drives. What is important is the characterisation that Freud gives of modern evaluations of excreta, which are held to result from the progressive encroachment of Civilisation.

According to Freud, this onward march of Civilisation has produced a contemporary Western society which has

"so far as possible den[ied] the very existence of this inconvenient 'trace of the earth', by concealing it ... and by withholding it from the attention and care which it might claim as an integrating component of [humanity's] essential being" (Freud 1962d: 335-6)

Such a situation, of course, closely corresponds both to Douglas's depiction of a society the cosmology of which operates upon the assertion that social intercourse occurs between "disembodied spirits"; and also to our characterisation of the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH. In the modern West, the importance of excretory phenomena rests in their symbolising of "everything that is to be repudiated and excluded from life" (Freud 1970a: note to 104). That is to say, excreta and related matters are *highly negatively evaluated* :

"... the repression of ...[coprophiliac] instincts, which is accelerated as much as possible by upbringing, [is such that] this substance falls into contempt and then serves conscious purposes as a means of expressing disdain and scorn" (Freud and Oppenheim 1966: 187)

The repression of coprophilia is viewed by Freud as operating at two levels. for "the human infant is obliged to recapitulate during the early part of his development the changes in the attitude of the human race towards excremental matters" (Freud 1962d: 336). Thus in like manner to the overall process of Civilisation, excreta undergo in the individual modern child a process of repression such that the child's initial narcissistic delight in his own faeces, marked by a distinct lack of disgust, transmutes into feelings of revulsion, shame and secretiveness (Freud 1957: 67; 1962d: 336; 1970b: 197). Freud claims that the child's lack of revulsion towards faeces is compelled to change through child-rearing customs - i.e. methods of toilet training - which aim to make excreta "worthless, disgusting, horrible, and despicable" (Freud 1957: 67). Thus we may here discern two sets of negative evaluations of excreta which are characteristic of Western modernity - one centred around feelings of *embarrassment* at their production by one's own body, and the other centred around feelings of *disgust* as to their qualities. Linking these to Freud's contentions as to Civilisation's antipathy to (moral) dirt, we may say that the equating of excreta with dirt involves the development of feelings of embarrassment and disgust vis-à-vis excreta and excretion.

Thus on Freud's view, in the modern West excreta are evaluated as morally dirty, as a source of both disgust and embarrassment; such evaluations are produced as a result of the repression of instinctual coprophilia. Such a position leads one to ask the questions: what are the *effects* of a) the repression of coprophilia and b) the negative evaluations of excreta held in the modern period? Our contention is that analysis should focus on the relationship between negative evaluations of excreta and their effects on excretory practices. However, before we can formulate this position, we must consider the neo-Freudian response to the inquiry as to what are the postulated effects of the repression of coprophilia. As we will now see, the neo-Freudian response has built upon Freud's original contentions as to the repression of coprophilia producing a certain "character type", the "anal character". We will now review such work and reject both the characterological approach, and the premise of repression of coprophilia on which it is based.

NEO-FREUDIAN ACCOUNTS OF THE EFFECTS OF REPRESSION OF COPROPHILIA

As a preliminary remark in reviewing neo-Freudian contentions as to the effects of repression of coprophilia, we may note that Freud does not hold that such repressions will be wholly successful in individual cases. The coprophiliac instincts may appear in various unexpected ways, thus effecting a "return of the repressed". In the Western adult "some part of the coprophilic [sic] inclinations continue to operate in later life and are expressed in the neuroses, perversions and bad habits of adults" (Freud 1962d: 337). Coprophiliac dispositions are erased, only to make their guilty reappearance in folklore, dreams and the obsessions of neurotics³. Despite this, repressions effected over coprophiliac instincts are held to be generally successful in the modern West.

The effects of repression which Freud himself identifies take various forms. Some are tangential to our interests and we mention them only in passing. For example, excreta are claimed to be intimately associated, at both the levels of individual and cultural psychology, with gold and money⁴. As such, initial infantile coprophiliac interest in faeces becomes replaced as the child develops, by an interest in money, which is thus a sublimated form of excreta⁵. However, such "insights" are not particularly germane to the argument pursued here. Instead, we will focus on the effects that repression of coprophilia is alleged to have at the level of the character dispositions of individuals.

The repression of infantile coprophilia is alleged by Freud to produce a certain form of "character type", that is, a set of characterological dispositions which exhibit specific uniform tendencies in all individuals of the same "type". This idea was posited in the 1908 article *Character and Anal Erotism* (Freud 1962a)⁶. The character type which derives from repression of coprophilia is described as having three main traits: orderliness, parsimony, and obstinacy. The first refers to "bodily cleanliness, ... conscientiousness in carrying out small duties, and trustworthiness".

The second refers to strict control over money, and, in an extreme form, avarice. The third, in its extreme form, comprises "defiance, to which rage and revengefulness are easily joined" (Freud 1962a: 169). Freud claims that people displaying such traits were in infancy both prone to anal incontinence, and disposed to hold back their stools due to the pleasure gained from this act⁷. Such tendencies, as well as a disposition to play with their faeces, continued into later childhood⁸.

The traits of this character type can be understood as the outcome of a twofold process - first that "such people are born with a sexual constitution in which the erotogenicity of the anal zone is exceptionally strong"; and, second, that the traits thus arose as the products of the repression of such persons' anal eroticism (Freud 1962a: 170)⁹.

Why should repression of coprophiliac behaviours give rise to such traits? Freud in this paper admits that the connection is not totally explained by his account, but he offers the proposition that such traits are a "reaction-formation against an interest in what is unclean and disturbing and should not be part of the body. ('Dirt is matter in the wrong place.')" (Freud 1962a: 172-3)¹⁰. That is to say, the forces of Civilisation demand repression of anal erotism, and, in the case of those with pronounced anal erotic tendencies, repression leads to the formation of this character type, which reproduces the orderliness of Civilisation in the psyche. Furthermore, as money is associated with excrement (see above), those whose psycho-sexual lives are oriented particularly towards the anus will have a special relationship towards money, i.e. parsimony¹¹. Similarly, obstinacy in the child is understood to be typically broken by violent beatings of the buttocks by the carer; the reaction to this in the anal erotic is an adult form of obstinacy (Freud 1962a: 173).

The position delineated here was one debated a great deal in the work of later Freudians. The issue inevitably raised in Freudian and neo-Freudian work on the basis of such statements by the Master was the status of toilet training in the repression of anal eroticism and coprophilia in the contemporary infant¹². The question is whether the libido develops itself "automatically" out of the anal phase (and thus out of coprophiliac dispositions), or whether environment, that is, adult

demands for cleanliness (and thus, by proxy, Civilisation's demands), is the motivating factor. As a combination of these two, it could be claimed that obsessive-compulsive behaviour, such as the typically "anal" characteristics, result from "excessively intense suppression" of the libido during the anal phase, leading to an imperfect forming of genital sexuality and a regression into anal obsessions. Western culture is seen as demanding toiletry "cleanliness" prematurely, i.e. before the libido is ready for such repression. Premature and excessive toilet training leads to the characteristics illustrated above, for the child does not willingly relinquish the faeces when bidden, and retains its narcissistic stubbornness¹³.

Such are the bare outlines of the Freudian account of the anal character. Given the apparent characteristics of this type of personality - "parsimony", "rigour", "discipline", etc. - it perhaps comes as no surprise that there have been numerous neo-Freudian attempts to relate this character type to the class of capitalist entrepreneurs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In effect, such work attempts to utilise the notion of repression of coprophilia as a tool for comprehending the contours of capitalist modernity, whereby this social formation is regarded as, in some senses, a product of repression of coprophilia.

In its barest form, such work centres around the contention that "the theory of the anal character is a theory of what Max Weber called the capitalist spirit, and not just of deviant exaggerations such as the miser" (Brown 1959: 235). The claim is that "avarice, pedantry and obstinacy" are entrepreneurial qualities, in that they are "necessary for the accumulation of wealth". The capitalist entrepreneur is thus explicable in terms of his anality, for he is "an individual whose libido has turned with an almost complete exclusiveness to the acquisition and possession of money for the mere pleasure of possession" (Coriat 1976: 93)¹⁴.

Such a theme can logically be pursued in two ways. The first involves an "orthodox" Freudian reading, which posits the development of *libido* as the primary factor in character formation. If the classical form of capitalism is explicable in terms of the character traits of the entrepreneur, and those traits are anal in aspect, then it follows that capitalism is a product of the repression of coprophilia, which thereby leads to

the formation of this character type. The absurdity of deriving the nature of a complex social system from a postulated set of libidinal factors, repressed in a certain way such that a certain character type is formed, is well documented¹⁵.

The second possible development of Freud's original position is to stress, instead of the libidinal aspects of the anal character, the *environmental aspects* which are held to give rise to it. Marxian-Freudian work stresses the priority of the *social context* which is held to produce, in some sense, such character traits. There are various versions of this general argument. For example, one variant of this position holds that if both the relative severity of toilet training and the age at which the child begins such training lead to the formation of varying forms of character type, then more severe and earlier training will lead to anal character tendencies. The psychology of the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie displays such characteristics. As such, the movement from feudalism to capitalist modernity is explicable in terms of a shift from less repressive forms of toilet training to more repressive forms. Whilst the indolent, non-changing culture of the feudal mode of production gives rise to toiletry behaviours and character traits characterised by the oral phase of libidinal development, the capitalist mode, with its emphasis on self-control and renunciation of gratifications, produces stricter forms of toilet training and thus the dispositions of the anal character (Borneman 1976: 5-7).

This position obviously is dependent upon a very crude association between the alleged "cultural" characteristics of a mode of production, and the dispositions supposedly wrought by varying levels of toilet training. A more sophisticated version of the Freudian-Marxian take on the anal character as manifest in capitalist modernity is supplied by Fromm in the 1932 essay *Psychoanalytic Characterology and its Relevance for Social Psychology* (Fromm 1971). The focus here is on forms of "social character" which are deemed to be "normal" under the conditions of a certain social configuration (Fromm 1971: 179, 181)¹⁶. The renunciative, self-denying aspect of early capitalism is thus explicable in terms of a social character which has the "anal" dispositions described by Freud. On this view, "anal traits have developed as an adaptation to the requirements of the capitalist economic structure" (Fromm 1971: 187). Thus the "needs" of the early capitalist system are met by the

repression of the anal erotic libido in such a way as to produce a class which is parsimonious and orderly, that is, one which denies itself immediate enjoyments and operates upon the basis of rational calculation of profit (Fromm 1971: 184-85).

A later development of this type of proposition is offered by Michael Schneider in his work *Neurosis and Civilisation* (Schneider 1975). Schneider attempts to deploy anal characterology as a means of diagnosing the social psychological dispositions of capitalist modernity. He does this by claiming that the anal character is highly suitable for the development and continued operation of the capitalist economy as it favours the curbing of instinctual dispositions towards immediate gratification in favour of the deferred gratifications brought by the reinvestment of capital (Schneider 1975: 135, 137). As such, coprophilia is transformed by the anal character into the social psychological conditions of rigorous, rationally-based profit-seeking. Such a characterological form is widespread first among the bourgeoisie, and thence, in the interests of the reproduction of the commodity economy, develops among the proletariat in the later nineteenth century (Schneider 1975: 140)¹⁷.

The great problem facing all such approaches to applying anal characterology to the analysis of capitalist modernity is that they are all doomed to founder upon either the Scylla of libidinal factors, or the Charybdis of environmental elements. In the first case, as is typical with non-Marxian neo-Freudianism, but also in the first form of Marxian analysis outlined above, if emphasis is put on anal libido and the repression thereof, then the social-psychological conditions of capitalism (or rather of the alleged dispositions of the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie at a certain historical juncture) are "read off" from this primary factor. This has the result of both deducing the nature of the entire capitalist order from the repression of libido, and understanding such repression in terms of relative levels of the severity of toilet training. This involves a *reductio ad absurdum* of the highest order.

In the second case, where the environmental factors of the capitalist mode of production are postulated as the primary factor, the characterological dispositions of the bourgeoisie are posited in the familiar Weberian manner. These are then

"interpreted" as being in some fashion "analogous" to the anal character. This leads to two problems. First, as environment and not libido is postulated as the key aspect in such accounts, then it is unclear exactly what role libido plays in the development of bourgeois character traits. It does not "produce" them, for it is the socio-economic structures of capitalism which do so, insofar as this system has certain characterological requirements (parsimony, etc.) which must be met. Second, and following from this, anal character traits, decoupled from libido, are merely a form of analytic description of alleged bourgeois traits. That is, because the analyst holds that there is such a thing as anal character, and because the bourgeois traits seem to be analogous to these, then the bourgeoisie must have an anal character¹⁸. This is a very poor form of argumentation, as it relies on holding an orthodox Freudian position that there truly is such a thing as an anal character, and that by identifying the traits of the classical capitalist as conforming to this type, we are thus explaining both the nature and historical genesis of this class and the system in which it is dominant. If one does not implicitly accept the initial Freudian premise of anal character, then the whole conceptual structure of this form of Freudian-Marxism must in turn be rejected.

In sum, one tradition of thought deriving from Freud holds that the repression of coprophilia leads to an anal character type. This character type, produced either by certain forms of toilet training, or by the social psychological imperatives of the capitalist system, is that which is typical of the classic form of bourgeois entrepreneur. In this way, the repression of coprophilia is important for the understanding of capitalist modernity in that it produces the dispositions usually known under the Weberian formulation of the Spirit of Capitalism. Quite apart from the internal problems that such a position (and its variants) gives rise to, it hardly tells us anything about the attitudes towards excreta or the forms of excretory practice current in capitalist modernity. The only "insight" this form of analysis produces is that such a society generates more severe forms of toilet training of infants, and at an earlier age, than was current in the feudal period. While this contention is perhaps in itself interesting, the overall form of argument based on the assertion of anal character yields very little in the way of understanding the repression of previously-accepted attitudes and practices.

In this sense, anal characterology as an extension of Freud's position on excreta and excretion, is something of a cul-de-sac. It yields very little in the way of understanding the nature of excretory practices in the modern period. Furthermore, anal characterological analysis reveals the unwieldiness of the orthodox Freudian notion of repressions of coprophilia. Analysis of any type deriving from this fundamental premise must perforce view the particular phenomena under scrutiny as resulting from allegedly fundamental erotic drives. However, our review of characterological analyses based on the premise of coprophiliac repression illustrates a problem faced by all accounts which derive from this primary postulate: that one must *either* assert the primacy of coprophilia as the factor at the root of all other excretory phenomena (and risk the various problems that derive therefrom), *or* one must reject the primacy of this factor, in favour of emphasising “environmental” factors. By taking the latter route, the status of coprophilia in the explanatory framework is made ambiguous – if it is not the factor which directly “produces” the phenomena under scrutiny, then its role vis-à-vis the surrounding “environmental” elements is rendered at best uncertain, and at worst, the postulate of coprophiliac repression becomes wholly redundant¹⁹. Thus for the purposes of this study, we not only reject characterological analysis as a tool whereby the nature of excreta and excretion in the modern period can be comprehended; in addition, we reject the basis of that form of analysis as well, which is Freud’s conceptualisation of repressions effected over instinctual libidinal coprophilia.

However, even though we reject this substantive aspect of Freud’s approach, we wish to retain the formal aspects of his account of the negative evaluation of excreta and repressions effected over excretory practices. To do this, we must recast Freud’s position into the paradigm developed by Elias.

RECASTING FREUD’S POSITION

In this section, we will reformulate Freud’s account of excreta and excretory practices into the terms of the model of repressions postulated by Elias. We will first

review Elias's general account, then we will draw out its implications for the issue of changing evaluations of excreta and repressions effected over excretory practices. We will then rework some of Freud's contentions into the terminology thus afforded us.

From Civilisation to the civilising process

In his 1939 master-work, *The Civilising Process* (Elias 1995), Elias formulates a reworked version of Freud's contentions in *Civilisation and Its Discontents*. Elias then deploys this revamped version of Freud to illustrate how the nature of human behaviours was altered in the early modern period. There are two key points in the reformulation of Freud's position effected by Elias which we will here emphasise. First, Elias alters the time-scale of his account from that of Freud's grand trajectory of the whole course of Civilisation, to the more delimited period of the transition from later feudalism to early modernity. Second, the nature of the conceptualisation of repression is reformulated such that the view that repression involves the progressive curbing of instinctual libidinal drives like coprophilia, is replaced by a conception of repression which sees such a process as involving increasing levels of regulation over forms of practice throughout this particular historical period. Such increasing levels of regulation are what Elias refers to as the "civilising process". We will now consider each of these points.

As regards the periodisation of the "civilising process", Elias agrees with Freud that Western Civilisation is characterised by an "especially intensive and stable regulation of drives and affects, of all the more elementary human impulses" (Elias 1995: 456). But, to Elias's view, Freud understands this situation with an abstract model of the human psyche, such that libidinal drives are understood ahistorically, outside of the social relations individuals find themselves in at particular historical periods. For Elias, libidinal drives are "always already socially processed" (Elias 1995: 487). Controls exerted over behaviours are not *external* to these drives but are part of their very constitution. This implies that "repressions" of one form or another are a constitutive part of any form of society. Hence viewing highly regulated excretory practices as the product of repressions effected over coprophiliac

dispositions is ruled out by Elias's position, for such a model of repression omits to account for the fact that such dispositions (if they exist at all) are always already socially-processed.

On the basis of these claims, Elias holds that the Freudian model of unconscious libidinal "id" confronted by a conscious, repressive, Civilised "superego" - the model that essentially underscores *Civilisation and Its Discontents* - is invalid as a general mode of analysis, applicable for all periods of Western history, for not all periods are characterisable in this fashion. But he does believe that the Freudian model does hold in a sense, as far as the period of modernity and its genesis is concerned. As the product of certain *socio-historical* developments, modern society is characterised by a "split between an intimate and public sphere ... [a] division of behaviour into what is and what is not publicly permitted" (Elias 1995: 156). Thus the analysis of a series of repressions of behaviours must be rooted not within the grand trajectory of Civilisation, but within a particular historical period - that is, the period of transition between feudalism and early modernity.

If the periodisation Elias favours differs from Freud's, so too does the form of analysis that the former posits. The focus for understanding alterations in forms of behaviour is not the set of imperatives of Civilisation that Freud holds, but rather the "civilising process". Elias describes such a process thus:

"over a long period and in conjunction with a specific change in human relationships ... the embarrassment threshold is raised" (Elias 1995: 94)

That is, from the later feudal period onwards, more and more aspects of human life, especially those involving the physiological body, are dealt with in increasingly regulated fashions, for they have become invested with feelings of embarrassment, and thus must be controlled so as to diminish their potential capacities for causing shame. This involves increasing levels of self-control by individuals over their actions. On this account, sexual and excretory practices are "progressively thrust behind the scenes of men's communal social life and invested with feelings of shame ... the regulation of the whole instinctual and affective life by steady self-control

becomes more and more stable, more even and more all-embracing" (Elias 1995: 443).

Thus Elias's focus is on increasing levels of regulation of practices²⁰ in the period of transition between feudalism and early modernity. Several aspects of his formulation must be noted.

First, Elias's formulation is such that the transition from the one to the other does not indicate a shift from a situation of complete behavioural licence, to one of complete behavioural restriction. Rather than a set of *absolute* shifts in forms of practice from utter freedom to total control, the civilising process involves a set of *relative* levels of repression of practices, from relatively low to relatively high levels (Elias 1995: 498). Second, Elias does not view the civilising process as an outcome of the imperatives of Civilisation over libidinal drives. Instead, Elias regards the increasing levels of regulation of practices as products of changes in what we have already dubbed "social relational density". His phrasing of this point is elegant in its brevity:

"... as the social fabric grows more intricate, the sociogenetic apparatus of individual self-control also becomes more differentiated, more all-round and more stable" (Elias 1995: 447)

That is, as levels of social relational density increase, there arise imperatives for the further regulation of practices. As classes, and thus the individuals within them, progressively come to live in closer social relational proximity to each other, previously accepted practices become unacceptable, and more highly regulated forms are developed. For example, the more physically violent conducts of the high medieval period are curbed in favour of more peaceful forms. From a situation where conducts deemed unacceptable are controlled by the individual in terms of the negative reactions and sanctions of the community, comes a historically later situation whereby self-control is oriented around beliefs that such conducts are *inherently* undesirable, whatever the sanctions enforced by the community at large (Elias 1995: 123). The means by which rising levels of social relational density are

expressed is, as we will see below, the distinction competition operative at this period between aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

As should be apparent from this brief summary of Elias's position, we are not here dealing with repressions effected over primarily libidinal drives, a process occurring over the entire duration of Civilisation. Rather, we are dealing with repressions effected over practices within the delimited period of the transition from later feudalism to early modernity. More specifically, we are here dealing with increasing levels of repression of excretory practices at this period. In this context “repression” means not a curbing of coprophiliac dispositions, but rather refers to progressively higher levels of regulation of such practices.

Elias's characterisation of the civilising process implies two further postulates. First, increasing levels of regulation of general forms of practice are held to derive from progressively greater levels of feelings of embarrassment being attached to such practices. Hence, it follows that progressively greater levels of regulation of excretory practices (i.e. the process of increasing repression of previously-accepted forms) derive from increases in levels of such feelings being attached to these practices. Second, the increasing levels of embarrassment attached to general forms of practice derive from alterations in levels of social relational density, as expressed in aristocratic / bourgeois symbolic struggle. Thus it follows that it is such structural factors which produce the rising levels of feelings of shame that become attached to excretory practices, and which lead to ever greater levels of repression of previously accepted forms, which increasingly become viewed as shameful.

We can now recast the formal aspects of Freud's account of repressions effected over excretory practices in light of these two postulates. The first postulate – as to rising levels of embarrassment and the effects thereof on excretory practices - may be elaborated in terms of the account of evaluations of excreta that we have already derived from Freud. It is to this issue we now turn. The second postulate – as to the social relational and distinction competition factors underpinning these processes – will be pursued in the next section.

The evaluation of excreta and the repression of practices

We have already seen that for Freud, the onset of Civilisation gives rise in the modern West to a situation where excreta symbolise "everything that is to be repudiated and excluded from life" (Freud 1970a: note to p. 104). That is to say, the tendency over time in the history of the modern West is for excreta to be increasingly negatively charged in the direction of these materials being viewed as (morally) dirty. They are increasingly viewed as sources of embarrassment, felt by the person who creates such products, and as disgusting, a sentiment shared both by the excreting person, and others who happen to view such wastes.

This position leads to two further postulates. First, the process which produces the characteristic evaluation of excreta in the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH is that of increasing levels of negative charging over time. The *telos* of this process is the full, unambiguous equation of excreta = (moral) dirt. The initial point of departure of this process is the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH, which holds an ambiguous evaluation of excreta, with both positive and negative aspects. That is, the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH is a system where excreta do *not* symbolise "everything that is to be repudiated and excluded from life". Instead they are subject to both derogation and, in some senses, praise (or, at least, apathy).

The second postulate is as follows. If the tendency over time is towards increasing negative evaluations of excreta, then excretory practices will alter in line with these changing evaluations. That is to say, the more excreta are associated with dirt (i.e. the more redolent they become with feelings of disgust and embarrassment), the more will excretory practices become repressed, in the direction of ever greater levels of regulation. Each of the three forms of excretory practice we have identified is dealt with by Freud in the context of repressions over coprophilia. We can now take Freud's position on the repression effected to each form of practice and cast it in light of the view that repression of practices is generated by increasing levels of negative charging of excreta.

How does Freud deal with the issue of trends in the direction of increasing repression of *defecatory practices*? We saw above that the means whereby the infant is compelled to relinquish its coprophilia is through sustained practices of "toilet training". In this way, the feelings of embarrassment and disgust as to excreta felt by Society are taken on by the child. Its defecatory practices are now informed by such feelings. Defecation will be carried out in light of these sentiments. As such, Freud may be read as offering the contention that the manner in which excreta are evaluated dictates the way in which defecation is carried out. If excreta are negatively evaluated, then defecation will be informed by feelings of disgust and embarrassment. As such, defecatory practices will be subjected to ever greater levels of regulation. Such regulation will not be formulated in terms of toilet training, as toilet training as a mode of analysis is dependent upon an account of repressions over coprophilia. Instead, increasing levels of control are carried out in terms of the *spatial locales* in which defecation may be legitimately carried out. As such, the trend towards the creation of the set of defecatory practices characteristic of the GBFH, is towards further regulation of the socially-legitimate spatial locales where defecation may occur.

How does Freud understand the second of our categories of excretory practices, those concerning *sensory dispositions*, in the particular form of *olfactory practices*? Unlike Douglas, who views dirt primarily as an aspect of cosmology, Freud holds that faecal dirt offends against the *sensory capacities* created by Civilisation:

"There is an unmistakable social factor at work in the impulse of civilisation towards cleanliness ... The impulse towards cleanliness originates in the striving to get rid of excretions which have become unpleasant to the sense-perceptions" (Freud 1957: 66-7)

Although there is some confusion here as to what came first - the imperative of orderly cleanliness or the sensory dispositions - we may read Freud as holding that an *outcome* of increasing repression of coprophilia is a set of changed sensory dispositions. If so, then it follows that alterations in the direction of increasing

negative charging of excreta in the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH, have as a corollary alterations in the realm of sensory practice in the direction of reducing levels of tolerance of excreta and excretion which were characteristic of the FFH. The visual aspect of these changes is already accounted for in our theorisation of increasing levels of regulation of defecation, with reduced levels of visual tolerance of excreta and excretion being indicated by a reduced set of legitimate spatial locales for defecatory practices. The olfactory aspect of these changes may be taken as increasing levels of negative charging varying directly with reducing levels of tolerance for faecal odours. Thus there is a shift from relatively high levels of tolerance of faecal odours under the conditions of the FFH, to the relatively low levels of tolerance under the conditions of the GBFH. At the point where the equation excreta = (moral) dirt is fully-formed, then we would expect very low levels of tolerance for such odours, relative to levels previously socially-accepted²¹.

The third form of excretory practice which concerns us is the set of ways in which excretory phenomena are *verbalised*. For Freud, coprophilia leads to not only a delight in touching excreta, but evokes pleasure in the "direct" naming of these also. For example, in the context of a claim that children at a certain period in development associate excreta with babies - for both are a form of bodily "birth" - Freud notes that such an association is not construed by the child as disgusting. This is because "a [bowel] motion was something which could be talked about in the nursery without shame. The child was still not so distant from his constitutional coprophilic [sic] inclinations" (Freud 1970b: 197). It is only when excreta themselves have been connoted negatively that the forms of verbal reference to them are also charged in like manner. Hence we may posit the rule that as negative charging of excreta increases, so too the verbalisation and referencing of these and related matters become charged with feelings of shame and embarrassment. As a result, increasing negative charging leads to reductions in levels of "direct" referencing of such phenomena, at least in terms of socially-acceptable ("polite") forms of speech (see Chapter 3 and Appendix). As levels of negative charging are lower under the conditions of the FFH, then we would expect that forms of verbal reference under the conditions of that habitus would be less circumlocutory and euphemistic. Conversely, when the excreta = (moral) dirt equation is fully-formed,

then we would expect to find (relatively) highly indirect forms of reference to such matters.

In summary, then, our translation of some of Freud's positions into the paradigm afforded by Elias (and the terminology provided by Bourdieu) leads to the following contentions. The process of negative charging is the means by which excreta became equated with (moral) dirt. Excreta were understood to be both disgusting and a source of embarrassment. On the basis of this process, repressions were effected over previously socially-acceptable excretory practices, and new practices, characterised by relatively increased levels of regulation, were generated. Excretory practices were increasingly oriented around a) defecation carried out in a small set of legitimate locales, b) low levels of tolerance of faecal odours, and c) high levels of verbal euphemisation of excretory phenomena. At the point when excreta were wholly associated with dirt - that is, when the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH was erected in its most developed form - these practical processes reached (relatively speaking) very high levels of regulation.

Now that we have posited *how* the characteristics of the GBFH were created, we must turn to consider *why* they were created in this fashion. The first postulate which we derived from Elias concerned increasing levels of negative evaluations of excreta leading to repression of excretory practices. The second postulate concerned the social structural reasons for trends in these directions. It is to this issue that we now turn.

DISTINCTION SYSTEMS AND THE GENERATION OF THE GBFH

Introduction

The three processes which we have defined as generating the characteristics of the GBFH are the erection of a novel form of bodily symbols oriented around notions of bodily (moral) cleanliness, increasing levels of negative charging of excreta, and progressive levels of repression of excretory practices in the direction of high levels of regulation (relative to the levels produced by the FFH). In this section we will

demonstrate how these three processes were products of the class distinction competitions (and the exogenous factors which shaped these) of the period from later feudalism to the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this regard, we will deploy an augmented version of Elias's account of distinction competitions.

Such competitions involved first, aristocracy (as dominant class) and bourgeoisie, and then at a later period, bourgeoisie (as dominant class) and proletariat. Such competitions took place at the level of the general habituses of each class. Changes to each habitus resulted from alterations that occurred over time in each system; the effects of such changes at the level of the dominant general habitus led to changes in the nature of the dominant faecal habitus. In more specific terms, this premise leads us to claim that changes effected at the level of general bourgeois habitus (GBH) in both forms of competition, in turn led to the generation of the GBFH through the means of the three processes above. That is, the changes effected at the level of GBH in terms of bodily symbolism, levels of feelings of embarrassment (especially as to the physiological capacities of the body), and forms of practice (especially bodily practices) produced by the two distinction competitions, led at the level of GBFH to the processes of the creation of bodily symbolism that denied the (bourgeois) body's excretory capacities, increasing levels of negative charging of excreta, and progressively greater degrees of repression over excretory practices.

In what follows, in the cases of both forms of competition between general habituses, we will examine: a) the exogenous factors that gave rise to the system and its particular contours; b) the dynamics of the system and the form of symbolic capital deployed; c) effects of these dynamics on the realms of bodily symbolism, feelings of embarrassment and forms of (bodily) practice at the level of general habitus (i.e. at the level of GBH); and d) effects of changes in these realms at the level of faecal habitus (i.e. at the level of GBFH, and the processes involved in its creation).

We turn first to the aristocratic / bourgeois competition which began in the later feudal period.

The aristocratic / bourgeois distinction competition

(a) Exogenous factors

The nature of this system, on Elias's account of it, was shaped by a key exogenous factor: increasing levels of social relational density.

In the high medieval period, the various classes and fractions thereof were not in close contact with each other, in the sense that the daily existences of each group, as well as their forms of socio-economic livelihood, did not depend on close interaction between in-group and out-group members. The knightly elite, for example, very rarely came into close contact with the peasantry. It was not dependent upon the peasantry in any *direct* fashion for its continued reproduction. Since the level of contact between groups allowed by social relational forms produces characteristic types of conduct between these groups, it followed that the knightly elite in its freedom of direct contact with the lower orders, was in turn free to act in an openly contemptuous fashion towards them (Elias 1995: 470). The relatively *loose* social relational situation between this warrior elite and the masses did not require the former to curb their behaviours; as such, any direct contact between these two strata was generally characterised by violent dominion over the subaltern group (Elias 1995: 319).

But this social relational (and thus, as a consequence, behavioural) situation, characteristic of high feudalism, undergoes drastic alterations in the later feudal period. At the social relational level, there was a significant decline in the levels of military and economic self-sufficiency of the warrior stratum. The nobility became more interdependent with subordinate groups, both at the socio-economic level, and at the level of mundane interaction. In particular, the nobility were forced into relations of interdependence with the emerging bourgeoisie (Elias 1995: 172). Thus the aristocratic orders were compelled to adapt to rising levels of social relational density. Particularly important in this respect was the tendency in the later feudal period towards monopoly control of delimited territories by singular state entities.

State forms arose as the power of the traditional aristocracy declined. With a single monarch at their head, the states of the Age of Absolutism exercised monopoly control over taxation and military forces, thus ensuring their control over the most important means of production, at first land, and thence money circulation (Elias 1995: 345-47, 391, 470-71).

Due to their declining power, the aristocracy who dwelled within a particular state's territory, were compelled to attend upon the monarch at court. It was particularly at the court that higher levels of social relational density characteristic of the period were expressed²². As such, the court became the primary locus of the distinction competition generated by the shifts described above.

(b) Dynamics of the system and forms of capital

It was in the courtly context that the dynamic of this distinction system was expressed – there was a trend towards ever-increasing levels of regulation over practices. This was so for two major reasons, one analytic, the other empirical.

First, as we have characterised it, any form of distinction system tends towards a certain internal dynamic. As a general rule, the historical development of a distinction competition is towards the progressive refinement of the phenomena understood by that system to be forms of symbolic capital. As lower strata seek to imitate the capital of the uppermost stratum so as to gain the distinction that comes from acquiring these, the uppermost stratum develops new, more refined and elaborate forms of this type of capital, which are distinct from the now-debased forms that were previously distinct. If forms of practice are deployed by the dominant group as symbolic capital – as they were in this particular system - then the dynamic will be towards ever more refined forms of practice. Such refinement involves increasing levels of repression over forms of practice that were previously socially-acceptable. Thus in the aristocratic / bourgeois system, practices figured as forms of aristocratic capital; as such, the dynamic of this system was to ever greater levels of refinement of these practices, that is, towards ever greater levels of repression of previously-accepted forms.

Elias's account demonstrates this tendency at the empirical level. The higher levels of social relational density expressed at the court led to forms of practice being utilised as forms of aristocratic capital, and, as such, the dynamic of the system was towards increasing levels of practical regulation. Even at the royal courts of the high feudal period, nobles were brought into forms of social relations that compelled them to constrain their behaviours to a greater degree than was expected in other arenas. At such courts, certain standards of decorum were expected, for example, knights were to act in courteous fashion to the ladies of the court (Elias 1995: 93, 323, 326). Such decorum was expected also, at a later date, at the court of the Absolutist monarch, but at much higher levels. The noble who attended court was expected to modify his behaviour in strict accordance with sets of norms appropriate to interaction with other people, all of whom were minutely ranked in a hierarchy of status. Conducts had to be modified dependent upon the level of status accorded to the others one acted towards (Elias 1995: 177). That is to say, the form of symbolic capital in this system was comprised of forms of "refined", "polite" "courtly" practices. The aim of the system, from the point of view of those engaged in it, was to secure monarchical favour, in terms of honours bestowed and economic bounties doled out from state coffers (Elias 1995: 394). Such desired entities could be won by adopting ever more elaborate forms of practice, these involving ever increasing levels of self-regulation of one's behaviour. Thus in the court context, the unrefined and often violent behaviours carried out by previous generations of aristocrats were relinquished in favour of the diplomatic strategies and self-regulating conducts of the noble courtier²³.

However, the trend towards progressive regulation of conducts was primarily due to the relationship between the aristocracy and the other competitors in the system: the upper ranks of the bourgeoisie. The very presence of this stratum in the court setting indicates the rising levels of interdependency between the bourgeoisie in general, and the aristocracy. The bourgeoisie at court played two important roles in the distinction system²⁴. First, since they also desired the prizes of regal preferment, the distinctiveness of aristocratic practices was generated in contradistinction to the non-distinguished nature of bourgeois forms of conduct. Second, the bourgeoisie,

wishing to be distinct themselves, aped such valorised conducts. This led to the generation of ever more refined forms of behaviour by the aristocracy who desired to retain distinction for themselves (Elias 1995: 124, 459, 469, 473).

Now that we have examined the form of capital and dynamic of this system, let us now consider the effects it had at the level of the GBH.

(c) Effects of the system on the general bourgeois habitus

The period of the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction system was also the period in which the GBH was erected. Indeed, our hypothesis is that the former is responsible for the generation of (the beginnings of) the latter. This was carried out at the three levels already delineated.

First, as a result of this system, forms of practice were pushed in the direction of ever greater levels of regulation (and hence repression of previously accepted practices). Individuals increasingly monitored their own behaviours, rather than being compelled to act in certain ways by an external source of authority (Elias 1995: 82). Such behaviours were first developed by the aristocracy and then taken over by the bourgeoisie. Over time, ever more highly regulated forms of practice were created by a distinction-pursuing aristocracy, and since the bourgeoisie sought to imitate such valorised forms of practice, these progressively more regulated forms were disseminated downwards, with even the lower rungs of the bourgeoisie eventually taking them on. As Elias makes clear, these more controlled forms of conduct involved *bodily* practices such as regulating forms of spitting, sneezing and copulation. Similarly, bodily dispositions altered in favour of more governed forms of posture (Vigarello 1989). Since the bourgeoisie took on these forms of bodily disposition and activity, then one of the characteristics of the general habitus of this class became relatively highly regulated forms of bodily practices.

At the second level with which we are concerned, and congruent with such developments at the practical level, a new set of bodily symbols was created. Such symbolism, located in the symbolic-classificatory schema of the general bourgeois

habitus, may be seen as generating such regulated forms of practice²⁵. Such symbolism too was an outcome of the dynamics of the distinction competition of the period. Elias notes that in the early modern period, the rising levels of social relational density, as expressed in the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction competition, erected an “emotional barrier ... between one body and another” (Elias 1995: 138). As we will see in the next Chapter, each body was now a “private” body, sealed off from the wider world and the bodies of others. This body was cleanly, in moral terms, for it was highly ordered and regimented. The sexual and excretory capacities of this body were denied, for such capacities, in the progressively more dense social relational context of early modernity, were now deemed embarrassing and shameful (Elias 1995: 114).

This point leads us on the third level we are concerned with. Sexual and excretory capacities – that is, capacities of the physiological body – were rendered as increasingly worthy of feelings of shame at this period. We saw above that for Elias the overall trend at this period was towards the raising of the threshold of embarrassment vis-a-vis various phenomena, and these capacities especially. Increasing levels of feelings of embarrassment being attached to such phenomena resulted in general from the increasingly social- relationally dense environment in which people had to dwell, and, more specifically, from previously accepted forms of sexual and defecatory practices being regarded as unrefined (i.e. as lacking distinction) and thus being rejected in favour of more regulated forms of practice (which could figure as symbolic capital).

As such, the results of the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction system at the level of the nascent GBH were the generation of ever more regulated forms of practice (especially bodily practices), the investment of previously accepted physiological capacities with feelings of embarrassment and shame (and thus the repression of old forms and the generation of novel, more regulated varieties) and a set of bodily symbols which denied such capacities in favour of the moral cleanliness of the body. All of these processes had ramifications at the subset faecal habitus level of the GBH.

(d) Effects on the GBFH

The effects of these developments at the level of the bourgeois master habitus in turn led to changes at the level of the faecal subset of that habitus. Such changes were precisely the processes that we have derived from our recasting of Freud. At the level of bodily symbolism, there was now in operation a view of the body that denied its excretory capacities in favour of a presentation of the (bourgeois) body as morally cleanly. Such capacities were now derogated (and the cleanly body could now be represented in antithesis to them) because of increasing levels of negative charging of excreta, in the direction of regarding these products as morally filthy; that is, the production of excreta was now understood as disgusting, and the visibility of acts of excretion was now perceived as embarrassing. This process was a result of increasing levels of association of the body's physiological capacities with feelings of shame at the level of general bourgeois habitus. Such progressively greater levels of negative charging were intimately related to the increasing levels of repression of previously acceptable forms of excretory practices, and the generation of ever more regulated forms. Such a trend at the practical level was a result of trends in the same direction, as regards bodily and other practices, at the level of GBH.

Taken together, these three processes, produced as a result of the exogenous factor of social relational density shaping a distinction system the dynamic of which created the beginnings of the general bourgeois habitus, generated the first phase of the construction of the GBFH²⁶. It is to the second phase of its construction that we now turn.

The bourgeois / proletarian distinction competition

The second phase of the generation of the GBFH through the three processes we have identified was due to the dynamics of the distinction competition which held between bourgeoisie and proletariat, where the former class was, of course, the dominant class in the system. The aristocratic / bourgeois system went into decline

from circa the middle of the eighteenth century, insofar as it was increasingly becoming less clear which class was symbolically dominant²⁷. The bourgeois / proletarian system replaced the earlier form around the later decades of the eighteenth century²⁸. How this form of competition came to replace the previous form, and how it came to have the particular characteristics it did, was due to various exogenous factors.

(a) Exogenous factors

There are two key exogenous factors which generated the particular contours of this distinction system.

First, following Elias, we may see that *levels of social relational density*, on the increase since the later feudal period, had, by the mid- to late-eighteenth century reached very high levels of development. At the level of behaviours, in place of regulation of conducts by individuals oriented towards avoiding causing offence to empirically-existing others (as was the case in the court locale), individuals now monitored their actions in line with the “impersonal compulsions of social interdependence, the division of labour, the market, and competition” (Elias 1995: 125). That is to say, regulation of behaviours was carried out in line with the very high levels of social relational density characteristic of this period of capitalist modernity²⁹. Such social relational density was at this period conjoined with rising levels of urban population density, a factor we will explicate in the next Chapter.

Consequently, the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system arose on the basis of the close interdependence between bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the working classes on the other, in the context of the emergence of a socio-economic system that was dependent upon relations of codependence between these classes. This point leads us to the second exogenous factor – alterations at the level of the *field of power*. Throughout the eighteenth century, the bourgeoisie increasingly became the dominant class both economically and politically. This class had collectively seized control of the State, through appropriating the state’s monopolies over taxation and military force, and the other monopolies based upon these two fundamental forms

(Elias 1995: 352). The same class had similarly effected a seizure of the means of production, such that they become the economically dominant class. This process had been afoot for a long period of time before the seizure of State power. Even at the period of Absolutism, when the aristocracy was dominant both symbolically and materially, the capitalist economy was rapidly developing within the womb of the socio-political relations of the later feudal order (Anderson 1974: 22-23, 39-41). Consequently, by at least the later eighteenth century, the bourgeoisie was unequivocally the dominant class in material terms.

On the basis of their becoming materially dominant, the bourgeoisie also became the symbolically dominant class (Nicolson 1958: 248). That is to say, they became the dominant group in any possible distinction system. As a result of the development of the capitalist economy there arose the class which was to labour in the service of capitalist profit – the proletariat. The realm of socio-economic production was henceforth divided around this fundamental class antagonism. This division was reproduced at the level of symbolic class struggle (Bourdieu 1992a: 48, 469), whereupon a new distinction system arose, operating on the basis of superordinate bourgeoisie and subordinate proletariat. These classes now entered into a distinction competition at the level of general habituses, the generic contours of which were described in the previous Chapter. But the version of this distinction system operative in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had certain particular characteristics which are not universal aspects of all versions of this system, and it is to these specific elements that we now turn.

(b) The form of symbolic capital

What forms of symbolic capital were highly valorised by the bourgeoisie at this period? Such capital derived from the nature of the bodily symbolism produced in the first phase of the generation of the GBH, that is, the symbolism which resulted from the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction system. This symbolism represented the body as free from the physiological aspects which had been represented in the feudal period. Such a body was “private”, cut off from other bodies and the world in

general. In this sense the body was *morally cleanly*, for it lacked those capacities (sexual and excretory) that were increasingly deemed as filthy.

The dynamic of the aristocratic / bourgeois system had the effects both of generating such forms of representation, and disseminating them downwards towards ever lower strata. In this fashion, the bourgeoisie had increasingly over the period of operation of that system taken on such a view of corporeality. By the period of the beginnings of bourgeois symbolic dominance, therefore, this form of representation was highly entrenched among the bourgeoisie. In this way, such a form of bodily depiction became part of the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBH. Furthermore, because this class was now symbolically dominant, such a form of bodily representation became a form of valorised self-representation, whereupon the bourgeoisie could represent its collective body as morally cleanly. Such moral cleanliness was erected against the moral filth of the corporeality of the other class involved in the emergent distinction competition of the period, the proletariat. Bodily cleanliness thus figured at this period as a key form of bourgeois symbolic capital³⁰. Such a form of capital is not endemic to the generic form of bourgeois / proletarian distinction system, but it was a key aspect of the version of this system that was in existence in the later eighteenth century and the first half of the following century. What dynamics did such a form of self-representation and symbolic capital produce in the distinction system of this period?

(c) Dynamics of the system

In general, this new form of distinction system reinforced and extended the dynamics produced under the previous system, for such a system was an expression of the ever increasing social relational densities of the period (Elias 1995: 125). As the bourgeoisie constantly sought to distinguish itself from the proletariat through generating ever more novel forms of behaviour, practices in general were pushed further in the direction of the repression of previously-accepted forms, and towards progressively increasing levels of regulation of novel forms³¹. This was especially so in terms of bodily practices, which were a key form of symbolic capital. Bodily practices previously unencumbered with feelings of shame were increasingly

associated with such emotive connotations, as these forms of practice were now regarded as lacking distinction, as being part of the filthy habitus of the proletariat. In consequence, bodily practices that had at earlier periods been carried out relatively without qualm were now great sources of bourgeois concern and unease, for such practices had, as it were, been thrust into the realm of proletarian lifestyles, which in turn were classified as debased and dirty³². In this way, the GBH as it was manifest at this period tended to generate ever more regulated forms of bodily practice. This situation was mirrored at the level of the faecal subset of this habitus, the GBFH.

(d) Effects on the GBFH

If trends towards the further regulation of bodily practices, and the rendering of prior forms as both embarrassing and part of the proletarian habitus, were operative at the level of the GBH, so too were they in operation at the level of the general bourgeois faecal habitus. That is, the distinction system based upon the distinctiveness of the cleanly bourgeois body and its expression through cleanly bodily capital, compelled further developments at the level of GBFH, in the direction of those already begun under the conditions of the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction system.

At the symbolic level, the view of the bourgeois body as lacking any excretory capacities was further reinforced, as this form of bodily representation was now an important source of symbolic capital. Such a view of the bourgeois body was premised on the basis that the proletarian body *did* have such capacities and, as a result, the proletariat were faecally filthy. Here again we see an archaic cultural form – the representation of the body's excretory capacities – increasingly become a source of embarrassment to the bourgeoisie. Such feelings were a product of the casting of such a form as being part of the habitus of the proletariat, for bourgeois distinction now operated on a converse form of corporeal representation. Furthermore, such feelings of shame which were attached to excretory capacities, compelled the bourgeoisie to deny to ever greater extents that its collective body was possessed of such shaming entities, and to further associate such capacities with the

proletariat. As a result, excretory cleanliness (in the moral sense) became an ever more important form of bourgeois symbolic capital at this time.

Coterminous with such developments at the level of bodily representation, excreta were progressively further charged with connotations of moral dirt. These materials became viewed as even more redolent of feelings of disgust and embarrassment than before. As a result, sensory tolerances of excreta and excretion, both visual and olfactory, dropped even further at this period. Concomitantly with these processes, and mirroring the increasing levels of regulation of bodily practices in general at this time, other excretory practices were further brought under the aegis of (relatively) high levels of control. The distinctiveness of the privatised, cleanly body demanded that defecation likewise be “private”, that is, occur outside of the gaze of others. Indeed, defecation *had* to occur privately, otherwise the excretory capacities of the bourgeois body, denied in the symbolism of that class, would have been contradicted at the practical level, thus robbing the bourgeoisie of an important element of symbolic capital. Verbal practices also became more circumlocutory in referring to excretory phenomena, a development in line with the rising levels of bourgeois denial of its collective body’s excretory capacities.

As these various processes developed as a result of the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system, they each served to reinforce the others. Thus further negative charging of excreta rendered the body which did not produce such materials as ever more cleanly, and thus a more powerful form of symbolic capital. Conversely, since such a body was a source of cleanly distinction, that which it did not produce – excreta – were rendered more filthy in comparison to this salubrious form. The greater the degree of negative charging of excreta and denial of the bourgeois body’s capacities to produce these, the greater were the degrees of regulation effected over excretory practices so that these could be rendered as cleanly as possible, thus being congruent with the nature of bourgeois bodily self-representation, and therefore capable of being deployed as symbolic capital against the proletariat.

Thus by the beginning of the nineteenth century, a faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie was in place which was premised on the denial of excretory capacities in that class’s

collective body, which viewed excreta as morally dirty (and thus as materials which provoked feelings of disgust and embarrassment), and which generated very highly circumscribed forms of excretory practices, in antithesis to the more relaxed forms of its feudal predecessor. These forms of practice, and the symbolic schema which had produced them, had been increasingly repressed over the early modern epoch as a result of the distinction competitions of the period, first between aristocracy and bourgeoisie, and thence between bourgeoisie and proletariat. We can set out the processes which led from the one dominant faecal habitus to the other diagrammatically thus.

Processes in the movement from FFH to GBFH

Symbolic-classificatory level

1. Repression of feudal corporeal symbolism. Erection of novel set of corporeal symbolism

End-point: denial of bourgeois body's excretory capacities

2. Repression of (ambiguous) feudal charging of excreta. Increasing levels of negative charging - charging of excreta with feelings of disgust, embarrassment.

End-point: excreta = (moral) dirt

Excretory practices level

Increasing repression of archaic practices (and eventual association of such with proletariat).

Increasing regulation of practices in directions of

-low level of potential legitimate locales for defecation (and low level of visual tolerance of excreta and excretion)

- low level of olfactory tolerance of faecal odours

- low level of direct verbal reference to excretory phenomena

End-point: very low levels of each of these factors (relative to corresponding forms in FFH)

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, we have delineated a model which allows us to comprehend the genesis of the general bourgeois faecal habitus out of the equivalent habitus of the feudal period. Three interrelated processes were involved in the generation of the former: the erection of a novel set of bodily symbols, increasing negative charging of excreta, and progressively higher degrees of repression effected over excretory practices. Such a model was partly adumbrated on the basis of a reading of the work of Freud which rejected his and later analysts' emphasis upon viewing the development of modern excretory mores in terms of repressions effected over alleged coprophiliac dispositions³³.

The three processes were produced by the two successive distinction competitions between general habituses of the period. The competition between aristocracy and bourgeoisie initially created novel forms of symbolism and practice at the level of GBH, and thence these forms were translated into corresponding forms at the GBFH level; the competition between bourgeoisie and proletariat, which utilised general and excretory bodily cleanliness as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital, thence reinforced and extended such forms at both levels in the directions they had already taken. It was in this way that the GBFH as it stood by around 1800 was created.

Now that we have analytically set out the characteristics of the GBFH as it was erected over the early modern period, and the means by which it was thus generated, we must now delineate the processes involved in this regard in empirical terms. It is to this task that we now turn.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GBFH II:

SOME EMPIRICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter we set out the three processes involved in the decline of the FFH and the erection of the GBFH: the creation of a new set of bodily symbolism, the charging of excreta as morally dirty, and repressions effected over defecatory practices. Such processes resulted from alterations at the level of general habituses produced by the two forms of distinction competition of the period from later feudalism to circa 1800. We will now depict these processes in terms of empirical historical evidence.

We will firstly examine the account that may be drawn from the work of Elias as to repressions effected over defecatory and verbal practices in the direction of increasing levels of regulation. In the case of verbal practices, as we have already seen, regulation involves a transition to a situation where excretory phenomena are progressively referred to less “directly” than in previous periods¹. In the case of defecatory practices, we noted above that increasing regulation involves the placing of defecation into an ever smaller set of legitimate locales. Here we shall follow Elias by illustrating how increasing regulation of defecation was carried out through the progressive location of defecation into “private” locales, areas where the excreting person was free from the gaze of others. As such, the process of regulating defecatory practices can be seen as a process which involves growing trends towards the *privatisation* of defecation over the period. Such a trend involves not only increasing levels of the private locating of defecation, but also illustrates growing levels of *visual intolerance* of both excreta and the acts which produce them. We understand this trend as involving shifts towards progressively greater demands for the *social invisibility* of these phenomena; such demands were formulated at the behest of the imperatives of the incipient GBFH.

We then turn to examine the process which is the corollary of changes at the level of practices: the heightening of negative evaluations of excreta in the direction of viewing these as morally dirty, that is, as sources of disgust and embarrassment. We will see here that the evaluations of excreta generated by the feudal faecal habitus were a mixture of positive and negative appreciations. The trend involved in the creation of the GBFH was towards emphasising the negative appreciations of the earlier epoch, and magnifying the intensity of the negativity of these evaluations.

We next examine the process whereby the bodily symbolism which was part of the symbolic-classificatory schema of the FFH, which in turn derived from more general forms of symbolism in the medieval period, was repressed in favour of the formation of a novel set of representations of the body (now in its specifically *bourgeois* guise). At the level of the general bourgeois habitus, the body was now depicted as morally cleanly, and bodily cleanliness was deployed as a means of symbolic capital. Similarly at the level of GBFH, the bourgeois body was now deemed as *faecally cleanly*, and such cleanliness was utilised in symbolic class struggle, for bourgeois self-representation denied that its collective class body had excretory capacities.

Once we have empirically set out these three processes which produced the GBFH, we then proceed to consider the means by which the moral conceptions of excretory dirt contained in the symbolic-classificatory schema of this habitus, were first yoked to medico-scientific conceptions of such dirt. Such a marriage of denunciations of faecal dirt was effected within the symbolic-classificatory system of the first *particular bourgeois faecal habitus*, the miasmatic PBFH. This habitus expressed the moral conception of faecal dirt in terms of the dominant medico-scientific terminology of the contemporary (later eighteenth century and early nineteenth century) period. The symbolic-classificatory system of this habitus condemned excreta as producing life-imperiling odours, as well as expressing the form of negative appraisal of faeces produced by the GBFH, namely that excreta were morally filthy, insofar as they were sources of feelings of both shame and revulsion.

It is at the period of operation of the miasmatic PBFH that olfactory tolerances of faecal odours, already reduced in tandem with the repressions effected over other excretory practices, were reduced more swiftly and more comprehensively than before. Such increased levels of reduction of tolerance were due both to the new formulation of excretory dirt, in both hygienic and moral terms, that this habitus operated with, and also due to the fact that olfaction was now a prime source of cleanly bodily capital for the bourgeoisie in the distinction system with the proletariat. Olfaction became a key source of symbolic capital at this time as a result of rising levels of social relational and urban population density. The trend in this system at this period, where smells were an important source of symbolic capital, was towards ever greater levels of reduction of tolerance of odours in general and, given the evaluation of excreta as filth in both senses, excretory odours in particular. The reduced levels of tolerance led to a situation whereby the urban areas in which the bourgeoisie were compelled to live increasingly posed various olfactory (and visual) affronts to the sensibilities produced by the GBFH. As we shall see, it was on the basis of such threats to bourgeois sensibilities that urban sanitary governance measures first began to be deployed by the bourgeois State.

Thus in this Chapter we will set out the history of the creation of the symbolic aspects of the GBFH and their expression in the miasmatic PBFH, and examine the changes in forms of practice thereby incurred.

CHANGES IN DEFECATORY AND VERBAL PRACTICES

In this section we will show how defecatory and verbal practices were subjected to increasing levels of repression in the period from later feudalism to early modernity. The direction of such trends was towards both the progressive restriction of defecation into *privatised* locales, and greater levels of *indirect* forms of verbal referencing of excretory matters. Both processes may be understood as involving decreasing degrees of the *social visibility* of excretory phenomena. From the situation under the conditions of the FFH where excretory matters could be unproblematically located within the purview of all social strata, there arose a series of changes such that the visibility, both actual and symbolic, of faecal phenomena became a great source of concern and anxiety. Here we will examine how such

feelings, traceable to the simultaneous processes in the realms of bodily symbols and evaluations of excreta already delineated, were manifest in the fashions in which defecatory and verbal practices were increasingly subject to strategies of control in the early modern period.

Under the conditions of the feudal faecal habitus, both forms of practice were relatively free of forms of regulation. As Elias notes apropos of the lower levels of social relational density of the feudal context, under the conditions of the FFH "interest in bodily secretions ... shows itself ... more clearly and openly" than in the conditions in which operated the GBFH. (Elias 1995: 122). We can see this in various ways. Under the terms of the FFH, excretion could legitimately occur in the midst of a social gathering in a public room (Palmer 1973: 20). Furthermore, the products of such acts were also highly "socially visible" at this period; for example, excreta were collected in dungheaps, which lay open to the gaze of people in all classes (Camporesi 1989: 151).

Following Elias's account, we can discern that from such relatively "open" conditions of defecatory practice and collection of excreta, the early modern period is witness to a set of more strict demarcations of where excretion could legitimately take place (and where excreta could be stored to await removal). From the situation characteristic of the FFH where a person could unproblematically excrete in the presence of other people, and could excrete in a very wide range of socially-legitimate locales, there were increasing limitations effected upon the set of locales where excretion could legitimately occur. That is to say, excretion was to be carried out only in locales deemed to be "private" spaces. Such spaces were separated from arenas dedicated to other forms of practice, such that the excreting person could not be subjected to the feelings of embarrassment which he would undergo if caught in the gaze of other people viewing him while in the act of excretion. Furthermore, any potential members of the audience viewing such acts and the products thereof would not be exposed to the feelings of disgust such acts would provoke. Thus the early modern period pays witness to increasing levels of *social invisibility* of defecatory acts, trends which occur through a spatial *privatisation* of such acts, compelling the individual to excrete alone, physically and symbolically separated from the outside world (Elias 1995: 105-117).

The trends towards making defecation a "socially invisible" act ran parallel with shifts towards rendering excretion and excreta "linguistically invisible". The feudal faecal habitus generated modes of verbally designating excreta, excretion and related phenomena that were relatively "open" in their verbalisation of such matters, and relatively "direct" in their naming of these phenomena. Conversely, the GBFH had relatively strictly demarcated forms of address, with certain words being deemed "polite" and others "impolite". "Polite" terms were those which met the imperatives of the habitus, whereas terms failing to meet such requirements were thus illegitimate and "impolite". The criterion of legitimacy was the "directness" of the term as regards its reference to the particular excretory phenomenon. Whilst the verbalisations of the feudal faecal habitus were those which "directly" named excretion and excreta, the verbalisations of the GBFH were circumlocutory in tone, avoiding direct reference to the phenomena and employing euphemistic phraseologies. As Elias puts it, the feelings of embarrassment and disgust that such topics engendered in the early modern speaker were "mastered by ... precisely regulated social ritual and by ... concealing formulae" (Elias 1995: 155-56). The trend over the early modern period was towards ever greater levels of indirect reference, and thus towards ever more stringent requirements as to what figured as legitimate forms of vocification of excretory matters. Since there was a simultaneous trend towards symbolically denying the excretory capacities of the body, we may surmise that the (theoretical) *telos* of the shifts in forms of verbalisation was in the direction of not referring to excretory phenomena in speech at all².

Let us now turn to the empirical evidence adduced by Elias as to these processes involving increasing regulation of practices. Elias produced the argument as to the development of the "civilising process" using evidence culled from contemporary manuals of polite (i.e. socially legitimate) behaviour, designed to instruct the noble reader with the rules of proper conduct. Increases in levels of social invisibility in both defecatory and verbal forms of practice are traced out through a chronological consideration of such manuals from the early sixteenth century onwards. On Elias's interpretation of these sources, equivalent works from earlier centuries seek to justify their behavioural and moral imperatives by reference to the effects actions

have on *other people*, whereas works from later periods stress the desirability of certain mores *themselves* as self-evident, and thus not requiring of justification³.

An example of the former situation, and one of the earliest works that Elias cites, is Erasmus's *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium* (On Civility in Boys) from 1530. This work, as befits its historical location, is concerned to set out reasons and justifications for appropriate action, rather than, as is the case later, imposing such forms of action as indubitably correct. Elias holds that early sixteenth century sources such as this are more "direct" in their phraseology than later manuals. Erasmus dwells on excretory processes in a relatively "straightforward" manner of expression, which names excretory acts and other bodily activities without great qualm. For example:

"It is impolite to greet someone who is urinating or defecating"⁴

In terms of Erasmus's attitudes towards the carrying out of excretory acts in public, whilst it is felt to be better to pass urine in secret if at all possible, still it is advisable to pass wind in company rather than risk illness from retaining it in the body. The noise of the wind may be disguised by coughing, but at this period the overriding factor is the benefit for the individual's health derived by emitting the wind publicly, rather than a concern to conceal the emission from the awareness of other people. Sources of this period *do* advise that defecation should occur when the individual is not in the presence of others, but the imperative to do this is not so strongly marked as in later sources (Elias 1995: 106).

Whilst Erasmus and his contemporaries talk of excretory relief in terms of the advantages to be derived from avoiding personal discomfort, and thus stress the benefits to be derived from excretion, sources of the later sixteenth century advise appropriate action in terms of not causing discomfort to other people. This means that at all costs wind must not be emitted in company. We find such injunctions legislating on the levels of visibility excreta may be legitimately accorded, because of their perceived disgusting characteristics:

"[It is not] proper to hold out the stinking thing for the other to smell, as some are wont, who even urge the other to do so, lifting the foul-smelling thing to his nostrils and saying "I should like to know how much that stinks," when it would be better to say "Because it stinks do not smell it.""⁵

Here we find the author of the manual reluctant to designate the object in a more "direct" fashion, as a writer of Erasmus's time would have been more likely to do. Rather we are given the circumlocutory term "foul-smelling thing", which also emphasises the disgusting aspect of the product, something repellent which should not be openly on display. In like manner, in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the manuals begin to stress the inappropriateness for the nobility to defecate in public, for that is understood to be an ignoble act, which brings shame upon he who carries it out in public. At this period, privatised defecation is beginning to figure as a form of symbolic capital which distinguishes those who are held to be refined in their conducts, in this case the nobility, from those in other classes, who are designated as coarse in their deportment. For example:

"One should not, like rustics who have not been to court or lived among refined and honourable people, relieve oneself without reserve in front of ladies, or before the doors or windows of court chambers or other rooms"⁶

Rather than the wide set of locales where defecation could occur legitimately under the conditions of the FFH, the set of potential locales for legitimate defecation are beginning to shrink:

"Let no one, whoever he may be, before, at, or after meals, foul the staircases, corridors, or closets with urine or other filth, but go to suitable, prescribed places for such relief"⁷

In later sources, "places for relief" become more strictly verbally defined, through such formulations as "unfrequented places" where it is held that no other person may view such activities. Underlying such formulations is the imperative that it "is proper ... to perform ... natural functions where you cannot be seen"⁸

Behind such injunctions lies a set of beliefs as to the embarrassing and disgusting nature of excreta and the acts that produce them. Consequently, if excretion has to take place, it must be within an arena hidden away from public scrutiny, with only the excreting person as witness to his dreadful deed and to the physiological body which prompts it. These sentiments as to the repellent aspect of the physiological body (in both its excretory and sexual capacities) are succinctly expressed in an early seventeenth century source:

"Let not thy privy members be
layd open to be view'd
it is most shameful and abhord
detestable and rude"⁹

The parts of the body that allow excreta to be produced are thus being constructed as corporeal elements that are beneath the dignity of the (noble) person. If they must be displayed, it should perforce be in "private" space. The designation of "privy" to describe these bodily parts forcefully illustrates the perceived necessity to reduce as much as possible the public visibility of this aspect of the body.

By the eighteenth century, the imperatives towards the social invisibility of excreta and excretion were thoroughly established. If defecation occurs not in a privatised, enclosed locale, which by this time is viewed as the only appropriate sphere for such acts, but in a public space, open to the view of others, then it is understood as wholly illegitimate. To defecate in the view of others will effect strenuous efforts on behalf of those others not to view this disgusting act. For example:

"If you pass a person who is relieving himself you should act as if you had not seen him ..."¹⁰

This social invisibility of defecatory practices carried out in what are deemed to be illicit locales, has a parallel in the realm of verbal practices, such that what are held to be "direct" references to excretory matters are subject to strong social sanctions. A contemporary manual offers an example of such verbal propriety:

"It is never proper to speak of parts of the body that should always be hidden, or of certain bodily necessities to which nature has subjected us, or even to mention them"¹¹

Thus whilst in the realm of verbal practices it is deemed illegitimate (i.e. "improper", "impolite") to speak of excreta and excretion without great circumlocutory effort, defecatory practices are placed into locales where they cannot be scrutinised by other persons. These are therefore locales which are, by definition, "private". We should note that, on the basis of Elias's account, these changes are made manifest slowly over the duration of several centuries and there is no question of an immediate and total adherence to such mores in the period of early modernity. To put this another way, the processes of making defecatory and verbal practices socially invisible occurs over a long time-scale, and thus the generation of the GBFH may be seen to take place over the duration of several centuries.

As a result of this, we should not view the mores of the GBFH as taking hold of bourgeois (or aristocratic) lifestyles immediately, or without resistance from the accumulated historical weight of previous attitudes and practices. For example, in the Paris of Louis XVI, visitors to the Louvre and Palais de Justice openly urinated within these buildings, receiving no opprobrium from public morality for their acts (Braudel 1973: 225, 438). However, if we follow Elias's periodisation, the *overall* trends in early modernity are clear. At both the levels of verbal and defecatory practices (and thus also at other levels of the GBFH), excretory phenomena had by the later eighteenth century been rendered socially invisible. For example, Goethe's horrified appreciation of the Italian habit of defecating and urinating in public locales suggests that the imperative of private defecation was well in place among (Northern European) elites by the 1780s¹².

Early modern society thus denied the presence of such "traces of the earth", by increasingly locating defecation in "private" spaces, and by referring to such places, to excreta and to the human body's excretory capacities, through complexes of circumlocutory verbalisations.

Now that we have examined two of the aspects of the more general process of the progressive repression of excretory practices in the direction of ever greater forms of regulation, let us turn to look at the concomitant process which also occurs over the early modern period in tandem with changes at the practical level. This is the process in the course of which excreta were increasingly subjected to negative forms of valuation.

THE PROCESS OF NEGATIVE CHARGING

Our essential claim here is that the ambiguous evaluations of excreta held by the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH, were slowly replaced by negative evaluations characteristic of the GBFH, with *wholly* negative evaluations of excreta being the end-point of this process. In this fashion, excreta became wholly discerned as morally filthy, as disgusting materials the production of which causes great embarrassment.

The evaluations of excreta and related matters held by the FFH were both positive and negative in aspect. To posit this claim involves assuming that all social strata existed within the same faecal habitus. That is, all classes and fractions thereof existed within the conditions produced by that habitus's set of bodily symbolism, perceptions of excreta, and forms of excretory practices generated thereby. We hold to this contention on the basis that, in the medieval period, "low" and "high" cultures ran into each other, interpenetrating each other to a degree that the two are analytically inseparable (Burke 1978: 58). The Italian cultural historian Piero Camporesi argues that at this period:

"The boundaries between the real and the unreal, possible and impossible, sacred and profane, abstract and concrete, holy and cursed, purity and filth, and indecency and sublimity ... [were] extremely fleeting and uncertain" (Camporesi 1989: 22-23).

If this is the case at the general cultural level, than in terms of excretory matters, it is arguable that there was no strict demarcation - as there was later - between classes in terms of their understandings of excreta and the practices generated thereby. As

such, our hypothesis is that all strata inhabited the general contours of the FFH. By assuming this, we may then investigate aspects of both "elite" and "demotic" cultures which, taken together, yield a total set of evaluations of excreta which contain both positive and negative understandings of these materials. In that sense therefore, we may say that the evaluative system of the FFH is ambiguous.

What were the *negative* aspects that are contained within the set of FFH evaluations of excreta? We may find negative evaluations deriving from fields that are locatable in (loosely speaking) both "low" and "high" cultures¹³.

Let us consider the case of the clerical elite. The ideologues of the Church drew upon imagery of the excretory body to express a cosmology that operated around the view that Fallen humanity was utterly debased in the face of the purity of God¹⁴. The things of the world were nothing, mere excretions, and to be rejected so as to win salvation. The early Fathers had it that "He is truly wise that counteth all earthly things as dung that he may win Christ"¹⁵. Later theologians elaborated further on such views. For Saint Bernard, the "human being is nothing but fetid sperm, a bag of manure" (Camporesi 1995: 106). The foul substance that was the human body was seen by medieval theologians as pouring out odious substances, including excreta, stinking and putrid (Camporesi 1995: 105; Camporesi 1988: 155).

Here we see that clerical culture - part of the overall culture of feudal elites - drew upon Christian symbolism of an ancient pedigree to illustrate the theological premise of the debased nature of humankind, such that the wretched human race was likened to a heap of excreta, and the human body itself was nothing but a corrupt husk which harboured such foul materials. The illustration of the foulness of humanity, and the earthly world in general, in the face of the grandeur of God, was made possible by likening these with excreta, where excreta were connoted negatively, as utterly debased and unworthy materials. Hence one of the impulses towards negative evaluation in the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH was the set of theological rationales of medieval Christianity which viewed the human body, and the human world in general, as ignoble. Excreta were both part of this world - and thus on this basis alone ignoble - but were also *particularly* debased

aspects of it. In this sense, they serve as ripe metaphorical material for theological damnations of the earthly realm¹⁶.

Just as official religion could depict excreta, and the human body's capacities to produce them, in negative terms, so too did popular religion, superstition and occult belief also have negative understandings of these phenomena, but held for different reasons. According to popular belief, the Devil was said to be the "king of filth", ruling over obscure places of putrefying matter such as dung-heaps. Abominable forces were "diabolic filth", spawned by the Evil One (Camporesi 1988: 98, 278). Witches wishing to tap into these foul forces would kiss the Devil's anus (Bourke 1968: 38, 133). The association with maleficence thus indicates a very negative set of evaluations of excreta in popular belief. We can see this in the fact that occult practitioners drew not only upon faecal symbolism, but also excreta themselves, to carry out their ministrations. Faeces, both human and animal, could be used as materials in the casting of spells; equally well they could be used by victims of witchcraft to detect hidden witches and to baffle the efficaciousness of curses (Bourke 1968: 374, 424).

Thus in both elite and demotic aspects of medieval cosmology, excreta were subject to negative evaluations. However, the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH was only partly constituted of such negative understandings. Let us now turn to the positive comprehensions of excreta contained therein.

If excreta were potentially maleficent if used by the witch, they were potentially beneficent if used by the physician and apothecary¹⁷. These trades operated in the ambiguous area between the "learned" culture of the elite and the "superstitious" culture of the masses (Camporesi 1989: 47). Excrement was used in the potions of the practitioners of "official" medicine, folk medicine and alchemy, with the latter believing that the philosopher's stone could be derived from the salts taken from human excreta and urine (Bourke 1968: 195)¹⁸,

The background to such medical forms of faecal utility is the worldview upon which medieval medicine was predicated (Rubin 1974). This worldview was particularly sensitive to the signs that could be discerned from smells. Whilst sweet smells

indicated health and life, what were felt to be foul odours indicated contagion and spontaneous reproduction within putrid matters, such as excreta (Camporesi 1989: 24)¹⁹. As corrupt poisons and health-denying effluvia were abroad in the air, the equilibrium of the body was constantly under threat from without, a "muddy, excretory, dungy world full of pungent smells, acrid odours and inescapable stench" (Camporesi 1988: 102).

This seems to suggest that excreta and related phenomena were regarded in the same negative light at this period by medical professionals as they were in subsequent epochs. But the understanding of specifically faecal stenches, and thus of the qualities inherent in excreta themselves, in this medieval worldview was different from modern perceptions in a crucial respect. It was held that bodily ailments caused by putrid smells were *curable* by remedies containing excretory ingredients (Camporesi 1988: 197). The knowledge of the apothecary was based around the view of *homo homini salus* - from man comes man's health. The human body was a "great distillery" of remedial materials (Camporesi 1988: 269). Not only human faeces and urine, but also blood, sweat, menses, fat and mucus were component parts of the range of beneficial products (Camporesi 1995: 30). Thus many medieval medical solutions were anthropophagous in aspect, for such cures involved not merely the medical utilisation of materials derived from corpses, but also perhaps the ingestion of such materials by the living patient. Such anthropophagy was treated by medieval people as unproblematic, at least in medical terms²⁰. For example, a common cure-all, *aqua divina*, was distilled from the remains of human corpses (Camporesi 1989: 46). Animal dungs and urine too were important aspects of medieval medicine, the roots of which can be located in the ancient world, in Egyptian and Roman pharmacologies²¹.

Thus the medieval attitude to the human body and its excretions as medicinally useful and potentially beneficent finds expression in the notion that excreta have therapeutic possibilities. Such a view of the medical possibilities of human effluvia was still in operation in the early modern period. For example, we find excreta-based remedies commonly recommended by the doctors of the Age of Absolutism. Human excrement was at this time "applied as a poultice for all inflammations and suppurations, carbuncles and pest buboes, administered for the cure of bites of

serpents, and all venomous animals. It ... [c]ould be taken raw, dried, or in drink" (Bourke 1968: 306). Among its other uses in the 16th and 17th centuries, excrement was part of the cures for consumption, gangrene, hysteria, angina, cancer, jaundice and the plague²².

Excreta still figured as medicinal ingredients up until the mid-eighteenth century (Bourke 1968: 313, 330). But the medical worldview on which such practices were based had been in decline from the later seventeenth century, part of more general processes of rejection of what was now dubbed "magical medicine" (Camporesi 1995: 50-51; Camporesi 1989: 49). The anthropophagous principles of medieval medicine were increasingly brought under condemnation and repression in early modernity. Bourke cites various examples of what may be modern "survivals" of past faecal-cannibalistic practices. For example, cakes baked for folk medicinal remedies in the nineteenth century were by that period based upon flour and water, but perhaps originally were made of human excrement and urine (Bourke 1968: 211, 217). The particular body blow to faecal medicine in the field of medical and scientific innovations was yielded by the development of bacteriology and pharmaceutical chemistry in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with notions of antiseptics denying the efficacy and beneficence of decaying matter, and new theories of fertilization of the ova negating the possibility of creation and generation *ex putri* (Camporesi 1988: 11-12, 280).

However, our concern at the moment is with the charging of excreta as *moral* dirt, a process that is achieved historically prior to such medical and scientific developments. The repressions effected over defecatory and verbal practices illustrated above show that from at least the sixteenth century onwards, excreta were being increasingly associated with feelings of disgust and embarrassment. Scientific and medical condemnations of excreta as dirt in the hygienic sense initially appear at a period significantly after the equation of excreta with moral dirt has been achieved. Furthermore, as we will see shortly, coterminous with such a charging of excreta and these repressions over practices, were new forms of representation of the (bourgeois) body. In these depictions, the body has no excretory capacities. With such a body being represented on the basis of a denial of its excreta-producing abilities, then the notion of *homo homini salus* could no longer apply to faecal

remedies. Excreta were claimed not to be (bourgeois) bodily products; given this, they could not be health-giving (if beneficent materials were still held to derive from the body itself). As such, the health-giving aspects of excreta were in decline for social reasons well before their condemnation by new developments in the field of medical and scientific innovations. Taken together, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, first the moral and thence the hygienic perception of excreta as dirt had created a situation whereby bodily health involved not the ingestion of faecal remedies, but rather the strict avoidance of such filthy materials.

In these ways, by the second half of the eighteenth century, faeces were imbued with entirely negative connotations, such that there was a direct equating in that system of excreta with moral dirt. There was thus a transition away from the combined positive and negative evaluations of excreta characteristic of the FFH towards the more monolithically negative evaluations characteristic of the GBFH.

Such a process was connected to a further set of trends involved in the erection of the GBFH. Such trends involved a process whereby forms of bodily representation altered in such a fashion that the body's excretory capacities, previously an accepted aspect of symbolisations of the human frame, were increasingly erased over time in favour of a set of symbolic dispositions which emphasised the body's lacking of such capacities. It is to this aspect of the transition from FFH to GBFH that we now turn.

CHANGES IN FORMS OF BODILY SYMBOLISM

The process which concerns us here is that which involves the repression of the set of symbols of the body which informed the FFH, and the subsequent erection of the set of such symbols at the level of GBH, which in turn informed the symbolism of the GBFH. That is to say, we must now investigate both the nature of the corporeal symbolism upon which the excretory symbols of the feudal faecal habitus drew upon, and also the symbolism of the general bourgeois habitus, which replaced the corporeal representations of the feudal period, and thus effected a shift in the nature of excretory symbolism in the early modern period.

Whereas the excretory symbolism of the feudal faecal habitus openly depicted the body's excretory capacities, its bourgeois counterpart denied the presence of such capacities in the bourgeois body. Such a presence was denied on the basis of the erection of a novel set of symbols as bourgeois self-representation at the level of GBH. Such symbolism presented bourgeois corporeality as morally cleanly, thus deploying bodily cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital against the proletariat in the distinction competition in which both classes were engaged from the later eighteenth century. Consequently, because excretory capacities were also denied to be part of the bourgeois physique, excretory cleanliness (in the moral sense) was also deployed from this period as a form of symbolic capital. Such capital drew its efficacy from the fact that such a dirty act as defecation, rendered thus by the process of increasing negative charging of excreta, was represented as not burdening the bourgeoisie. Conversely, the proletariat, lacking such capital, were understood by the dominant class to be wholly excretory in nature – their bodies were encumbered by precisely those capacities for creating faecal filth that the bourgeoisie were free from.

Our discussion of changing forms of bodily representation will draw upon the work of Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World* (Bakhtin 1984). But it will be necessary to decouple Bakhtin's characterisation of the sets of bodily symbols current in the feudal and early modern periods, from the more general – and unsatisfactory – account of the class contours of these periods, especially the former, that Bakhtin ties it to.

The aspect of *Rabelais and His World* we are primarily interested in is Bakhtin's account of the symbols through which the medieval "folk" represented themselves in terms of the characteristics of their bodies. According to Bakhtin, medieval bodily imagery was one part of an overall context of the popular carnival culture of the period²³. The bodily symbolism of carnival culture is a key aspect of feudal symbolisations of the nature of corporeality. Carnival culture is more than mere holiday or festivity, but, according to Bakhtin, a genuinely *demotic* culture, for carnivalesque cultural forms stood in opposition to the High Culture of Church and State. The medieval world was thus, as it were, split in two parts, between "official

[life] and carnival life ... [between t]wo aspects of the world, the serious and the laughing aspect" (Bakhtin 1984: 96). Such a conceptualisation of carnival culture allows Bakhtin to formulate the component aspects of this culture in a fashion that stresses their "counter-hegemonic" characteristics. Thus, for example, the forms of folk humour embedded in carnival culture are understood as a mode of popular challenge to the "serious" symbols that medieval elites utilised to legitimise their claims to power and status. For Bakhtin, the cultural expressions of the claims of royalty, nobility and clergy were "atemporal" in nature, for they failed to recognise a "principle of change" inherent in all forms of life. Consequently, since carnival culture recognises and embraces such historicity and change, the challenge it mounts to High Culture is based upon the "merry flux" of time expressed in carnivalesque symbolism (Bakhtin 1984: 49, 73).

The metaphysical overtones and class essentialism of Bakhtin's position are not germane to our argument²⁴. We wish to view all strata in medieval society as occupying the feudal faecal habitus. Thus we reject Bakhtin's strict division of the cultural contours of this society into High Culture and Demotic Culture, in favour of the principle that the two interpenetrated each other. Bakhtin's depiction of the corporeal symbolism of carnival culture will not be taken to be part of demotic self-representation alone, but rather as part of the understandings of the body held by all strata.

We may now read Bakhtin's description of carnivalesque symbolism in this light. Such symbolism involves images of the "grotesque body". Such a body is premised on a particular set of aesthetic evaluations concerning the nature of the body and its relationship to the wider (physical) world. The grotesque body is centred around the "material bodily stratum", the parts of the lower body, sexual and excretory, which, in Douglas's terms, transgress corporeal boundaries. Bakhtin holds that such a body is

"not separated from the rest of the world. It is not a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits. The stress is laid on those parts of the body which are open to the outside world, that is, the parts through which the world enters the body or emerges from it, or through which the body itself

goes out to meet the world. This means that the emphasis is on the apertures or the convexities, or on various ramifications and offshoots: the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus, the potbelly and the nose [and, we might add here, the anus]. The body discloses its essence as a principle of growth which exceeds its own limits only in copulation, pregnancy, childbirth, the throes of death, eating, drinking, or defecation. This is the ever unfinished, ever creating body... " (Bakhtin 1984: 26)

This set of symbols of the body, part of the general cultural context of the medieval period, were those which informed the more specific set of symbols of the excretory capacities of the body located in the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH. The key aspect of such symbolism concerns the *symbolic social visibility* of the excretory capacities of the body. Within this system of classifications, the excreta-producing abilities of the body were (relatively) highly socially visible. The social invisibility of such capacities in early modern (i.e. bourgeois) symbolism is notably absent under the conditions of the FFH.

Such a set of bodily depictions was congruent with the ambiguous charging of excreta by this schema, for the mixture of positive and negative evaluations of such materials and the acts which produced them, does not lead to a strong imperative to deny the excretory capacities of the body (whereas the wholly negative evaluation of excreta under the conditions of the GBFH does lead to such an imperative). Furthermore, the open depiction of such capacities is congruent with the high levels of social visibility of the excretory practices of the feudal faecal habitus. As we have seen above, defecatory practices were not yet constrained to occur in privatised locales, nor were verbalisations of excretory matters yet required to be "indirect" and euphemistic.

As open depiction of excretory processes was part of the symbolic-classificatory schema of the feudal faecal habitus, and since all social strata occupied this habitus, then we may claim that all strata deployed such symbolism. All social strata *openly* depicted such capacities in their corporeal symbolism. The differences between strata in this regard rests in the differing evaluations they held as to excretory capacities. Such evaluations in turn depended upon the specific evaluation of excreta

(within the overall parameters of the FFH's symbolic-classificatory system) that particular groups held. Thus the clerical elite would have had a negative evaluation of the symbolism of the excreting body, as excreta were in their view indicative of the Fallen nature of the human world. Conversely, apothecaries and other medical professionals would have had a more positive outlook on such symbolism. for they viewed excreta under the aegis of the dictum *homo homini salus*. If Bakhtin's account is to be given some credence, then the demotic orders positively reveled in symbols which illustrated the creation of excreta and other effluvia by the human body.

Thus, although the *evaluations* given to the excretory capacities of the body were both negative and positive, depending on which groups are being dealt with, in general terms all strata shared the same dispositions towards depicting the body in an open, direct, undisguised fashion. That is to say, although excreta and excretion were in part treated as negative phenomena, the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH yet represented the body's excretory capacities in a relatively highly socially visible fashion. In this sense, the symbolic-classificatory system of the FFH lacked the high levels of feelings of disgust and embarrassment towards excretory capacities which characterised the GBFH's symbolic-classificatory system, and which made the representation of the body's excretory capacities under the conditions of that habitus highly socially invisible.

The shift from the high levels of social visibility of the FFH's symbolism of excretory capacities to the GBFH's highly social invisible form of depiction arises as a result of the transition from the general forms of symbolism that informed the former faecal habitus, towards the corporeal classifications of the GBH, for these latter form the template for the depiction of excretory capacities formulated by the GBFH. We may turn again to Bakhtin's account of carnival culture, this time in terms of the decline thereof in early modernity, to see in what fashion the shift from one set of generic bodily symbols to the other occurred.

According to Bakhtin, carnival celebrations and all the attendant cultural forms that were attendant upon them, went into a steady decline in early modernity. Carnival and its various grotesque expressions were steadily eliminated from social life such

that the realms in which they had previously been manifest were progressively cleansed of their influence (Bakhtin 1984: 150)²⁵. This decline included the decline of typical medieval forms of corporeal symbolism. Whereas the symbolism of this period openly depicted the physiological processes of the body, the dominant corporeal symbols of the early modern world were predicated upon a denial of the "material bodily stratum". In place of such symbolism, the early modern corporeal imaginary is based upon a quite different aesthetic outlook. Such an outlook is explicable as the form of bourgeois corporeal self-representation to be found in the emergent GBH of the early modern period.

Increasingly over this period the characteristics of the capitalist entrepreneur have come to stand as the main trope for understanding human nature generally, and the human body more specifically. The severe, ascetic, renunciative figure of the capitalist comes to dominate the landscape of the bodily symbolic imaginary, in antithesis to the grotesque figures of medieval representations. Images of the body centred around the material bodily stratum are replaced by the image of *homo economicus*. The body of this figure was "strictly completed, finished, ... isolated, alone, fenced off from all other bodies" (Bakhtin 1984: 29). Thus in the early modern period the individual, isolated, self-sufficient body is postulated as the locus of legitimate bodily symbolisation. As Bakhtin puts it, what is now permissible in corporeal representation is the "private bodily life of man" (Bakhtin 1984: 291-2)²⁶.

We can read Bakhtin as offering a picture of the corporeal symbolism of the general bourgeois habitus. In like manner to Douglas, such a body is understood to be a frame in which lofty entities such as Mind or Spirit dwell. Social intercourse is understood as operating on a non-corporeal basis. In like manner to Bourdieu, Bakhtin's characterisation of the bourgeois self-representation of the collective body of this class is that what are deemed to be "bodily" processes are despised and rejected. If corporeality is admitted at all by this form of representation, it is on the grounds that the bourgeois body is cleanly (in the moral sense), free of the contaminating influences of the filthy aspects of corporeality. The key aspects of the representation of the collective class body of the bourgeoisie is thus that it is cleanly, such cleanliness deriving from the fact that it is free of those aspects of corporeality which are dirty. Once the bourgeoisie is engaged in the distinction competition with

the proletariat, bodily cleanliness in this sense will figure as a key form of bourgeois symbolic capital. The proletarian body will be defined as filthy, that is, as having exactly the filthy capacities to which the bourgeois body is not in thrall.

It is on the basis of such a general symbolic system that the bodily symbolism of the faecal subset of the GBH, that is, the GBFH, was erected. In contrast to the symbolism of the FFH which was characterised by high levels of social visibility of the excretory capacities of the body, the specifically bourgeois form of bodily representation is predicated upon a minimisation of such visibility. The symbolism of a body which produces effluvia that transgress its own boundaries, is superseded by an aesthetics which actively denies such transgressive potentials (Bakhtin 1984: 29, 255).

Such a set of forms of self-representation to be found in the symbolic-classificatory schema of the GBFH is congruent with the other symbolic and practical developments in the generation of this faecal habitus which we have already mentioned. Firstly, increasing levels of negative charging rendered excreta, and thus excretory capacities, as dirty. Such capacities would thus be denied in the context of a cleanly class body which displays its unsullied purity. Second, at the practical level, increasing levels of euphemistic verbal references to excreta, excretion and related matters obviously are analogous to the decreasing visibility of excretory capacities at the level of bodily symbolism. Furthermore, the increasing levels of "privatisation" of defecation in the period are coterminous with the symbolism of a "private" body, which is now a key aspect of bourgeois self-representation. Such forms of practice, which were understood as cleanly, thus, in the optimal case, allowed the cleanliness of the bourgeois body at the symbolic level to be expressed at the practical level. In light of the unavoidable physiological demand that the bourgeoisie must excrete, such practices at the least mitigated against the symbolic invisibility of excretory capacities being contradicted by the social visibility of excreta and related phenomena in the practical realm.

Given that the GBFH posited a body which was devoid of defecatory abilities, and since the practices of that habitus were such that these capacities were not made visible at the practical level, then the moral cleanliness of the bourgeois body at the

general level was mirrored in the faecal realm by excretory bodily cleanliness being deployed as a form of symbolic capital in the struggle for the reproduction of forms of distinction against the proletariat. The excretory filth of the proletariat, which becomes a key theme of bourgeois concern in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, is a product of the bourgeois representation of itself as non-excretory being erected against a proletarian body now deemed to be a ripe source of faecal dirt. This is so both symbolically – the proletariat are understood to be quintessentially excretory in nature – and practically, for this class does not defecate in private spaces, nor does it refer to excretory phenomena in circumlocutory fashions. As such, excretory bodily cleanliness as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital, as with bodily cleanliness more generally, guaranteed the symbolic dominance of that class through postulating the utter unwholesomeness of the proletarian physique and the practices produced by it.

In this manner, the sets of bourgeois bodily self-representations in the symbolic-classificatory systems of the GBH and GBFH were erected and then utilised as means of reproducing the subordinate status of the proletariat. By around 1800, the essential aspects of the GBFH were in place. These comprised, at the symbolic-classificatory level, a representation of the bourgeois body as morally cleanly, that is, as lacking excretory capacities; and an extremely negative evaluation of excreta, which viewed these products as morally dirty, as sources of shame and embarrassment. At the practical level, defecatory practices were rendered cleanly by being located in private spaces, and verbal practices were made salubrious by these only referring to such dirty matters in roundabout ways.

It was also within the context of the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system that two other key aspects of the history of the GBFH occurred. These are the conjoining of moral notions of excretory dirt with ideas as to the *hygienic* filth of excreta, and the (further) reduction of tolerances for faecal odours. As we will now see, both aspects are interrelated and both occurred at around the same period. It is to these issues that we now turn.

THE MIASMIC PBFH AND THE REDUCTION OF OLFACTORY TOLERANCES

By the period spanning the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century, the symbolic characteristics of the GBFH as we have defined them were essentially in place, and it was on this basis that the characteristic forms of excretory practice of the period were generated. Defecation was to occur in private locales and verbal references to excretory matters were to be indirect on the grounds that the bourgeois body was represented as being devoid of excretory capacities; such capacities were viewed as morally filthy, as being repulsive and as provoking feelings of shame as to their production by the body. It was at this period that ideas as to the moral dirt of excreta were first yoked to hygienic understandings of the dirty nature of these products. Such hygienic conceptions of faecal filth derived from the form of medico-scientific knowledge which had arisen from around the middle of the eighteenth century and had become increasingly the dominant mode of comprehending phenomena in medical and natural scientific terms. Such knowledge involved what we may term as *miasmatic science*.

Innovations in the field of medical and natural scientific knowledges in the second half of the eighteenth century had produced a set of representations of *miasmas*, exhalations from decomposing matter, which both corrupted the surrounding air, and were the root cause of various forms of disease. As a result of such a view of the nature of disease, various types of odour were increasingly deemed by medical and scientific professionals as being life-threatening (Corbin 1986: 11-14, 58). Particular attention was given to odours given off by the human body and its effluvial products. It was held that putrifying fleshly smells were hazardous not only for the continued survival of the individual whose body produced them, but also for the health of others, as such odours were ripe sources of disease (Corbin 1986: 21). The health of the human body thus could only be guaranteed if there was constant vigilance over “effluvia, breath and body odour” (Corbin 1986: 47).

Thus in the later eighteenth century, and on into the first half of the nineteenth century, faecal odours were condemned as they produced miasmatic threats to health.

Faecal odours were to be avoided as they could – quite literally - kill. A particular source of concern were locales where putrefying excreta were left to linger, such as cesspools and dungheaps (Corbin 1986: 28-9). This new conceptualisation of the odours of excreta as life-imperiling threat meant that a new set of understandings of the nature of excreta themselves arose. Not only were these products viewed as morally dirty – as disgusting and shameful – but they increasingly became explicable as harmful to the health of the excreting person and those in his vicinity. Excreta were condemned as sources of the diseases which plagued the populations of later eighteenth and early nineteenth century towns and cities. It was in their very nature to produce afflictions which threatened physical well-being. Thus we find a new form of condemnation of the qualities of excreta appearing at this period – not only was the moral filth of excreta a source of concern, but also now their hygienic dirt, as formulated by miasmatic science in terms of threats to human life itself, became a key aspect of the derogation of the nature of faeces.

We can see this new form of condemnation of excreta in two ways. At one level, it was at this period that the moral and hygienic conceptions of the dirt of excreta were conjoined. That is to say, excreta were now seen under the dual rubric of threats to propriety and threats to health. The denunciation of excreta and the body's capacities to produce them, were from this period onwards prompted by an evaluation centred around both varieties of the dirt of these materials. At a deeper level, however, we may view the habitus which produced the moral evaluation of dirt, the GBFH, as the master template into which “fitted” the miasmatic objections to excreta. The negative view of excreta as moral dirt, which was the product of a long process stretching from later feudalism, was now at this later period *expressed* in the scientific terminology of miasmas, a terminology which construed excreta as hygienically dirty.

This is not to suggest that the miasmatic terminology was merely a discursive elaboration of the moral evaluation: this could not be the case, as the evaluation of excreta produced by such terminology, of excreta as hygienically filthy, was a novel form of evaluation not already contained within the mode of evaluation of the GBFH. Rather, our claim is that the moral denunciation of the qualities of excreta – primarily the view of excreta as repulsive and disgusting – could now be *enunciated*

in terms of the health-endangering nature of these products. Excreta were certainly to be avoided because they produced odours that bred diseases; but such avoidance was also predicated on a view of faecal materials as disgusting, and that view had been produced for *socio-cultural* reasons over a lengthy period substantially prior to the appearance of the evaluation of excreta as filthy in the hygienic sense. As such, the conjoining of both forms of evaluation of excreta at this period led to a situation where the vocabulary of threats to health, while important in itself, was also the means by which the moral filth of excreta was voiced. Behind feelings of disgust as to faeces expressed in miasmatic terms lay a process of negative charging derived from the symbolic and practical changes that occurred over several centuries prior to the period of miasmatic expression, changes which in turn were produced by shifts in relations between classes over a long period of time.

In essence then, the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries paid witness to the conjoining of two forms of negative evaluation of excreta, that of moral dirt, and that of hygienic dirt, where the condemnation of the former was expressed in a terminology provided by the latter. The two together may be understood as the first particular manifestation of the general bourgeois faecal habitus, the miasmatic PBFH, that is, as the first historical manifestation of the GBFH expressed in medico-scientific terminology.

It was within the context of the operation of the miasmatic PBFH that the form of practices we have not yet commented upon, olfactory practices, was reformulated in a more radical fashion than had previously been the case. How were olfactory practices altered at this time?

We can elucidate the reasons for a shift in the nature of olfactory practices at this period in the direction of *lowered tolerances for faecal odours* in three main ways.

In the first instance, the rise of miasmatic science and its adoption by bourgeois professionals in the fields of scientific investigation, medicine and government, can be seen as generating lower levels of tolerance of odours in general. Alain Corbin's work on the history of the sense of smell is based upon the fundamental contention that from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, as a result of odours

becoming viewed as sources of disease, there was a progressive “lowering of the threshold of the tolerance for stench” (Corbin 1986: 85). From this period, odours of all varieties were “more keenly smelled”, and thus become ever more of a focus for both popular concerns and elite policy-making in the realm of urban sanitary governance (Corbin 1986: 56).

Thus tolerance of general forms of odour – such as stench emanating from prisons or graveyards – were reduced as a result of their being held to be threatening to health. If we regard miasmatic scientific conceptualisations of the dangerous, life-threatening filth of certain forms of smell being taken on by the bourgeoisie at this period, then we are entitled to regard such evaluations as being taken on as part of the symbolic-classificatory schema of the GBH. As a result, characteristic forms of olfactory practice were generated by this habitus – the direction of these practices over time being in the direction of ever lower levels of tolerance of odours previously inhaled relatively without qualm. If this was the case at the level of the general bourgeois habitus, then so too was it the case at the level of its faecal subset. The conjoining of miasmatic evaluations of excretory hygienic dirt with the already-existing moral evaluations led to ever greater levels of reduction of tolerance for faecal odours at the level of olfactory practices. Not only were faecal fumes regarded as unseemly, they were now regarded as sources of disease and death.

However, and to begin to explicate the second factor involved here, such a reduction in levels of tolerance was only an extension of trends that had been gestating since the later feudal period, with the erection of the GBFH. Levels of tolerance were reduced before the epoch of the miasmatic PBFH, in tandem with increasing levels of negative charging of excreta as morally dirty. If such products were progressively viewed as disgusting in terms of their social visibility, then so too would they be regarded as foul in olfactory terms. The reduction of tolerance for their odours occurred simultaneously with the repressions effected over the other forms of excretory practices. As these were rendered more cleanly by being progressively subjected to forms of regulation so as to guarantee the cleanliness of the immaculate bourgeois body in the practical realm, so too was olfaction changed in the direction of further regulation, that is, towards lowered levels of tolerance of odours previously accepted under the conditions of the feudal faecal habitus.

We would expect that, on the basis of the positive and negative evaluations of excreta in the symbolic-classificatory schema of the FFH, the olfactory practices deriving from that schema would be similarly ambiguous. That is to say, the sense of smell vis-à-vis faecal odours at this period would be characterised neither by a wholesale condemnation of such odours, nor by a total embracing of them. Rather, such a mixed form of evaluation of the qualities of excreta would produce a certain level of tolerance for these odours. Empirical evidence bears out the contention that faecal odours were never relished, even at the period of high feudalism. For example, an English royal decree of 1388 was concerned with air “greatly corrupt and infect” given off by middens and open cesspools, which gave rise to a situation whereupon “many Maladies and other intolerable Diseases do daily happen” (Palmer 1973: 16-19). However, given the mixed set of evaluations of excreta held at this period, we may hold that the relatively comprehensive condemnation of their odours appears, and grows in strength and in degree, only in the later feudal and early modern periods. All strata in medieval society were relatively indifferent to faecal odours, in comparison to the bourgeoisie (of early and high modernity) , especially the bourgeoisie of the period of the miasmatic PBFH and subsequently.

By the Age of Absolutism, when the trends towards the erection of the GBFH were already under way, levels of olfactory tolerance of the odours of excreta had become steadily lower. This issue has already been touched upon, when we saw above that one of the injunctions of the manuals of polite conduct of this period involved avoiding inhaling excretory fumes, or offering other people the opportunity to do so. Concerns as to the negative effects of such odours corrupting the air of the urban environment become more insistent at this period. For example, the 1567 statutes of the Italian city of Ferrara are typical of the growing condemnation of the rankness of excretory smells. Punishments of various forms awaited those who augmented the stench of the city streets by defecating nocturnally on walls and in doorways (Camporesi 1989: 98). We may surmise that evidence adduced as to declining levels of the social visibility of excreta from this period until the last decades of the eighteenth century, similarly (albeit indirectly) indicates declining levels of tolerance of the odourific aspects of excreta.

As such, the odours of excreta were already to a significant degree regarded as disgusting and foul-smelling (and as indications of the embarrassing production of faeces by the human body) by the middle of the eighteenth century. This phase is witness to a relatively *gradual* reduction in levels of tolerance. It is only when the miasmatic PBFH is operational that reduction in tolerance increases in both speed and intensity.

This leads us to the third factor involved in the history of successive reductions of tolerance for faecal odours. As we saw above, the miasmatic PBFH generated lower levels of tolerance on the basis that excreta were now viewed not only as morally filthy, but hygienically filthy also. Conversely, this habitus did not just view the hygienic dirt of excreta in olfactory terms; it also viewed the moral dirt of excreta in this light too. How was this so?

Odours, or rather the perception and evaluations of them formulated by a given society or class, can be deployed as potent sources of symbolic capital²⁷. In the later eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, odours were an important source of bourgeois symbolic capital, for they could be used to represent the bodily cleanliness of that class. That olfaction should be an important source of bourgeois symbolic capital was due to certain exogenous factors shaping the particular form that the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system took at this period.

The rapid urbanisation of Western countries at this period, and the emergent industrialisation of production, both effects of the capitalist seizure of the means of production, made odourific forms of distinction particularly acute at this time. The bourgeoisie increasingly found itself dwelling in urban environments which were swelling in geographical size and levels of population. The nature of the commodity economy dictated that the bourgeoisie were highly interdependent with the wage labourers upon whom production relied (Elias 1995: 125). In this way, the levels of social relational density between the classes was very high in comparison to even the first half of the eighteenth century. Moreover, because industrial production had to occur in urban environments, these latter swelled in terms of population density. The bourgeoisie was compelled to dwell in locales where bodies were increasingly

closely packed together. The intensity of population density had profound effects at the olfactory level: bourgeois individuals were forced into a situation characterised by a “new encounter with their own bodily smells” (Corbin 1986: 95).

It was within a context shaped by rising levels of social relational and population density that olfaction became an important aspect of bourgeois symbolic capital against the proletariat. The bourgeois body, at the level of GBH, could be represented as cleanly precisely because it did not smell, or, if it did smell, it emitted pleasant rather than pungent aromas, the latter being the prerogative of the proletarian body. At the level of the faecal subset of the GBH, which at this period was the miasmatic PBFH, the bourgeois body could be represented as lacking excretory capacities by portraying it as not smelling of faeces. By lacking such an odourific component, the bourgeois could not only represent himself as cleanly, in contradistinction to the olfactory filth of the labouring orders; he was also freed of embarrassing reminders as to the physiological inevitability of excretion, a capacity contrary to the representation he held of his own body and the collective body of his class.

We can see these developments illustrated in the forms of perfumery favoured by the bourgeoisie (and the declining aristocracy) of the period. Before the mid-eighteenth century, the pungent odours of civet and musk, products of animal excretions, were much in fashion among elites. But from mid-century onwards, these perfumes became increasingly subjected to disapprobation, for strong smells became construed as unpleasant and unsuitable for bodily augmentation (Corbin 1986: 86). In general terms, the bourgeoisie, at this period in the process of becoming the symbolically dominant class, was turning against perfume of any variety, as it smacked of decadent aristocratic narcissism. To the ascetic bourgeois mindset, perfume was a wasteful product, in antithesis to commodities that could be more usefully deployed (Corbin 1986: 69, 73, 81-2). The neutral or lightly and pleasantly scented body now became a source of bourgeois bodily distinction.

In the specific case of excremental odours such as civet and musk, the miasmatic terminology of the PBFH condemned these not only as unbecoming, but as wholly dirty. This was so in both hygienic terms, for excremental fumes were a source of

life-imperiling miasmas, and in moral terms, for such perfumery was viewed as antithetical to polite conducts and propriety forms of behaviour (Corbin 1986: 71). Consequently, not only were excretory odours dangerous to the health of the bourgeois body, they were also antithetical to its being presented as refined and distinguished (i.e. cleanly in the moral sense), and thus superior to the proletarian body which gave off such foul effusions. The non-odourific (and thus non-excretory) nature of the bourgeois body was turned against the unsavoury, reeking masses as a form of bodily symbolic capital.

What were the ramifications of this new form of symbolic capital in the bourgeois / proletarian distinction competition?

In the first place, tolerance of faecal odours was reduced more radically than before. The trend in any distinction system is towards further refinement of the phenomenon regarded as valorised capital. Thus, since the non-excretory capacities of the bourgeois body were expressed in terms of that body not producing faecal odours, the dynamic towards further asserting the cleanliness of the bourgeois physique involved the progressive denial of its capacity to produce faecal smells. As such odours were progressively less tolerated at the symbolic level, so too were they less tolerated at the practical level. Such a dynamic was also operative at the level of the GBH where the trend was towards ever lower levels of tolerance of previously-accepted odours in general.

Secondly, as levels of tolerance of faecal odours were reduced, the bourgeoisie increasingly held to a set of olfactory norms which could not be met by contemporary urban conditions. Rising population density in urban areas was one of the factors that led to the reduction of levels of bourgeois tolerance; now the densely populated towns and cities produced stench that the bourgeoisie increasingly could not bear. This was so in two ways. First, as bourgeois cleanliness was erected on the basis of proletarian filth, the proletarian areas of the cities, and the inhabitants therein, were a cause of great affront to bourgeois sensibilities. Second, the vastly increased numbers of the urban masses, living in closely crowded areas, produced far greater volumes of excreta than the mechanisms of urban governance, formulated at an earlier period, could deal with. A contemporary account of the Italian town of

Modena describes it in a manner that is perhaps indicative of bourgeois appreciations of urban environments of the period:

“Upon corner stones / and by gateways everywhere / untidy and scattered mounds of old manure / ... Odorous turds and heaps of chamber pots / upset and scattered about and lurid torrents / of urine and rank and foul-smelling broth / that you cannot walk without boots” (cited in Camporesi 1988: 86)

Such “odorous turds” of course were understood to give off dangerous miasmatic currents. As the towns and cities became increasingly filled, according to the bourgeois outlook of the day, with dangerous excreta which were both morally and hygienically filthy, a third ramification of lowered levels of tolerance of faecal odours was prompted.

Given that their economic livelihoods (and thus the reproduction of their dominance in the field of power) depended upon the bourgeoisie remaining in this filthy urban environment, the bourgeoisie was compelled to take collective action through the agency of the State. Such action was premised upon lower levels of tolerance of odours in general, and faecal odours in particular. The State’s medical and scientific professionals operated on the basis of belief in miasmatic theories. As such, the aim of State action was to ascertain the perils derived from the air that was positioned in the spaces between bodies in urban locales, and to formulate ways in which the bourgeois individual could be protected from miasmatic smells, especially those deriving from others’ (i.e. proletarian) bodies (Corbin 1986: 95-100)

The thrust of State-sponsored recastings of the urban environment at this period was towards purifying the air by neutralising the foul odours deemed to be at the root of miasmas (Corbin 1986: 61). Such stench was felt to emanate from a wide variety of sources, including human and animal corpses, rotting rubbish and the animal dungs which littered the streets. Bourgeois tolerance of the odours of such materials (and the very sight of them also) dropped at this period. But the reduction in levels of tolerance of the stench of human ordure is perhaps the most dramatic of this set of shifts. As excreta were a key source of miasmatic threats, then they in particular were subject to strategies of purification, especially as they offended the moral as well as

hygienic sensibilities of the bourgeoisie. As we will see in the next two Chapters, the aims of bourgeois specialists of the period were twofold: to seal off receptacles where excreta were collected, thus limiting the spread of miasmatic fumes, and to keep excreta in circulation, for if they were kept moving they could not stagnate and produce the miasmas so inimical to health (Corbin 1986: 91-92).

We may surmise that the deployment and (perceived) success of such strategies further provoked bourgeois desires for a deodoured urban environment. Such desires were both based on lowered levels of tolerance of excretory odours, and led to even greater levels of intolerance thereof. In this way, as we will see in the following Chapter, by around the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, olfactory excretory practices among the bourgeoisie were based upon very low levels of sufferance of the smells of faeces, and very high levels of feelings of disgust towards these odours, in comparison to the levels of these factors characteristic of the period prior to the operation of the miasmatic PBFH.

In sum, then, the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw a further development of trends operative from the very beginnings of the modern period, towards a reduction in levels of tolerance of faecal smells. By the middle of the nineteenth century, levels of tolerance of such odours were (relatively) very low indeed. The characteristic olfactory practices of the period were predicated upon the basis of the miasmatic PBFH's perception of faecal odours, and excreta per se, as redolent both of moral dirt (a view which had been generated in the prior creation of the GBFH), and of hygienic dirt, a view deriving from the terminology of the miasmatic science of the day. Levels of tolerance were thus reduced in the first instance by fears as to forms of disease deriving from rotting faeces. Levels of tolerance were also reduced by the use of olfaction as a form of cleanly bodily symbolic capital in the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system, whereupon the bourgeoisie sought distinction by formulating ever more refined forms of representing its collective class body as olfactorily cleanly.

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter we have considered the various processes which, taken together, led to the characteristics of the bourgeois faecal habitus as this existed in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Such processes were first begun in the later feudal period, leading to the demise of the feudal faecal habitus, and the trends that they produced were progressively augmented over the duration of early modernity and into the eighteenth century.

The three forms of excretory practice were increasingly repressed, as excreta were progressively negatively charged as moral dirt, and as a new set of forms of (bourgeois) bodily representation were created which were premised on the denial of that body's excretory capacities. From the later eighteenth century onwards, the moral dirt of excreta was coupled with, and was expressed through, conceptions of the hygienic dirt of excreta formulated by miasmatic scientific knowledge, thus creating the miasmatic PBFH. At this period, the sense of smell became a form of symbolic capital; as such, excretory odours (or rather, the lack thereof in the bourgeois body) became an important source of bourgeois distinction against the emergent proletariat. On the bases of both the hygienic dirt of excreta, and excretory odours being deployed as a form of symbolic capital, olfactory practices were further repressed at this period, in the direction of progressively lower levels of tolerance of the odours given off by excreta.

Thus by the first decades of the nineteenth century the GBFH had been erected and was manifest in the form of the miasmatic PBFH. Bourgeois self-representation, based upon a view of bodily cleanliness as symbolic capital, denied that its collective class body had excretory capacities. Such capacities were evaluated, on the basis of the contemporary understanding of excreta, as both hygienically and morally filthy. Excreta not only were sources of feelings of disgust and embarrassment, they also gave rise to disease-producing miasmas. The excretory practices of the bourgeoisie of the period were congruent with such a form of self-representation and such understandings of the nature of excreta. By this period, practices were oriented around imperatives for defecation to occur in private locales (for defecation was a deeply embarrassing act), the odours of excreta to be avoided (for excreta provoked

strong feelings of disgust, in terms of both hygienic and moral filth), and for faecal phenomena to be referred to only in indirect fashions (for such phenomena were both embarrassing and disgusting).

At this period the dispositions generated by the GBFH and its miasmatic manifestation began to come into conflict with the urban environment in which the bourgeoisie dwelled, for this environment failed to meet the standards set by the imperatives of the habitus. This contradiction between, on the one hand, bourgeois demands for excretory cleanliness, both hygienic and moral, and on the other hand, the nature of urban conditions at this time, led to a series of crises, the responses to which eventually led to the creation of the modern mode of excretion. It is to these issues that we now turn.

CHAPTER 4

THE GENESIS OF THE MODERN MODE OF EXCRETION I:

SEWERS AS THE GENERAL MEANS OF EXCRETORY DISPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

The genesis of the modern mode of excretion involves two main processes, each of which respectively leads to one of the two main components of that mode. On the one hand, there is the creation of the general bourgeois faecal habitus, and its particular historical manifestations. On the other hand, there is the creation of the set of general and intimate means of excretory disposal characteristic of this mode. We have already dealt at length with the generation (up until c. 1800) of the habitus aspect of this mode. We now turn our attention to the development of the means of excretory disposal operative within the modern mode of excretion. The form of general means of disposal characteristic of this mode is the large-scale, water-based sewer system¹. We will examine this form in the present Chapter. The creation of the corollary of this system at the level of intimate means of disposal, the water closet form, will be dealt with in the following Chapter.

The relationship between these processes is the same as that which pertains between their finished products, the GBFH (particularly in its specific guise as the bacteriological PBFH) and the nexus of water-based sewers and water closets. That is, the imperatives of the GBFH / PBFH “shape” the forms taken by these forms of disposal, whereas such forms are the material preconditions for the successful operation of the practical and symbolic components of these habituses. Over time, forms of disposal are created and recreated in line with the demands of the faecal habituses, while providing the conditions of possibility for the continued reproduction of these habituses. The interplay between these two sets of factors ultimately

produces the symbolic, practical and material formation that is the modern mode of excretion.

The aim of this Chapter is to investigate the development of the modern mode of excretion in terms of the changing nature of the relationship between GBFH / PBFH on one side, and water-based sewer systems on the other. The nature of the relationship changes in various ways over the duration of the nineteenth century.

The initial phase of the relationship between these two factors was characterised by sewers operating as the solution to various urban environmental crises faced by the bourgeoisie. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, various crises of the urban environment faced both the GBH and GBFH (first in the guise of the miasmatic PBFH, and thence in the form of its bacteriological successor). Such crises involved bourgeois concerns as to the moral and hygienic dirt of these locales, and the proletarians who dwelled within them. The urban crises which confronted the bourgeoisie at the level of GBH will be briefly remarked upon below. They involve the perceived filth of urban areas, and the unintended effects of the utilisation of bodily cleanliness as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital. The urban crises which faced the bourgeoisie at the level of GBFH / PBFH were sparked both by material crises in the realm of excretory disposal, and also by symbolic crises deriving from the consequences of the bourgeois deployment of faecal bodily cleanliness as a means of symbolic capital. The solution for resolving such excretory crises was a subset of the solutions proffered as to the more general urban crises of the period: collective action by the bourgeoisie, in the guise of the State, towards cleansing urban areas, in both moral and hygienic terms. The specifically *excretory* crises facing the bourgeoisie were resolved by erecting large-scale, water-based sewer systems. This was because sewer systems met the criteria of cleanliness in both senses posited by the GBFH and its miasmatic and bacteriological manifestations. The development of sewer systems throughout the latter half

of the nineteenth century was carried out through the shaping of their characteristics in light of the imperatives of the bacteriological PBFH.

Once the sewer systems had been constructed, a situation achieved in most large cities by the 1880's, the relationship between such systems and the GBFH / bacteriological PBFH altered once more. At the most basic level, the coming of sewer systems resolved the excretory crises of the early nineteenth century through rendering such areas, and thus to a degree their proletarian inhabitants, cleanly, both morally and hygienically. This situation had two ramifications.

First, sewer systems, acting as material preconditions for the operation of the symbolism and practices produced by the bacteriological PBFH, further extended the logic of these forms, bringing them to a point where excreta were even more negatively evaluated than had been the case at the beginning of the century, and where excretory practices were regulated to an even higher degree than previously.

Second, by progressively rendering the urban environment and its proletarian inhabitants cleanly, such developments began a process the endpoint of which was that bodily cleanliness, in both general and excretory terms, could no longer function as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital. The eventual result of this process was that the faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie would no longer figure as a form of symbolic superiority for that class. Quite the opposite situation began to take shape: a cleanly proletariat took its first steps into entering the conditions of the bourgeois faecal habitus, a development which led by century's end to that habitus's mutation into a universal faecal habitus, the symbolic and practical component of the modern mode of excretion.

In the following, we will first examine the nature of the GBFH as it stood expressed (in miasmatic terms) at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the urban crises vis-à-vis excretory matters that faced it at this period². We

then turn to analyse the solutions to such crises proffered by State programmes of sewer construction, and how such systems met the set of imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus, in first its miasmatic and then bacteriological guises. Finally, we turn to the effects that the construction of these sewer systems had, at the levels of alterations in the contours of urban environments, of extensions of GBFH symbolism and practices, and of changes wrought to the form of symbolic capital deployed by the bourgeoisie.

THE BOURGEOIS FAECAL HABITUS AND THE CRISES OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

The excretory crises faced by the bourgeoisie in the later decades of the eighteenth century and in the first half of the nineteenth century are explicable in two main ways. First, such crises were a subset of the more general crises of the urban environment of the period which were faced by a class that inhabited a generic habitus oriented around notions of bodily cleanliness, and where such cleanliness operated as a form of symbolic capital against the proletariat. The urban crises of this time threatened this habitus in various ways which we will touch upon below. Second, and more crucial for our purposes, just as a wide-ranging set of urban environmental problems confronted the general habitus of the bourgeoisie, the specifically excretory subset of such crises threatened the bourgeoisie's faecal habitus, which at this time took the form of the miasmatic PBFH. As the faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie was oriented around notions of cleanliness – both moral and hygienic in aspect – the urban environment threatened to destroy such cleanliness.

At one level, the presence of excreta within the urban environment (materials which were negatively charged by the bourgeois faecal habitus itself) - and as such a presence was registered in the purview of the bourgeoisie - threatened

the form of self-representation of the bourgeois body as non-excretory. For the very ubiquity of excreta seemed to gainsay claims that the human body – at least in its middle class version – did not produce such filthy wastes. At another level, the visual presence in urban locales of excreta and the defecatory practices which produced them, phenomena deemed to be embarrassing and disgusting by the bourgeois faecal habitus, contravened the imperative of this habitus that excreta and defecatory practices be socially invisible. Furthermore, the olfactory presence of excreta contravened the low levels of tolerance for their odours produced by the bourgeois faecal habitus. Thus both symbolically and practically, the urban conditions of this period not only failed to meet the standards of the bourgeois faecal habitus but actually imperilled its effective operation. If such a habitus was to continue to function, then drastic measures to resolve the crises which threatened it were required.

We may divide the forms of crisis faced by the faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie at this period into two types: those involving threats deriving from hygienic aspects of excretory dirt, and those involving threats deriving from the moral aspects of such dirt. Both forms of dirt were of course products of the bourgeois faecal habitus itself, the moral aspects produced in the creation of the GBFH, and the hygienic aspects produced in the conjunction of this habitus with the terminology of miasmatic medicine and science. As such, since excreta being equated with dirt was an effect of the bourgeois faecal habitus, and since it was the dirt of excreta which threatened this habitus in the urban conditions of the period, then in this sense the excretory crises faced by the bourgeois faecal habitus were its own product. As it had charged excreta with associations of dirt, the presence of such dirty excreta and related phenomena in the urban environment threatened that habitus's very existence.

But excretory crises were not merely a result of internal contradictions within this habitus. For excreta to be threatening to this habitus, they had to be

physically present in the urban areas in which the bourgeoisie dwelt. As one author notes of the period:

“Among the many problems which urban densities exacerbated, none was greater than the accumulation of excrement, both human and animal, which was the unavoidable by-product of urban growth” (Wohl 1984: 92-93)³.

This physical presence was due to the material factors we outlined in the previous Chapter – the dynamics of the capitalist economy, the creation of a proletarian workforce, urbanisation, and the growth of population densities in the towns and cities. The effects of the physical presence of the excreta of densely-packed urban populations as these impacted upon the bourgeois faecal habitus were crises of both the moral dirt and hygienic dirt varieties. Although in any particular case, both types of dirt are indissociable, we may highlight specific aspects of the overall set of crises which tended to involve one or the other form of dirt as the major component.

Excretory crises: the hygienic dirt of excreta

Let us deal firstly with excretory crises mainly involving hygienic dirt. These can be divided into two sub-categories: crises of excretory disposal, and crises of health.

The *crises of excretory disposal* were part of the overall set of crises of urban governance of the period. As populations and population densities increased (Banks 1968), the older forms of urban sanitation such as street cleaning, drainage and detritus disposal did not keep apace with the new demands made upon them. The various forms of excretory disposal which had served the medieval and early modern town proved to be wholly inadequate in dealing with the much greater densities of excreta characteristic of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the case of sewers, the medieval and early modern practice of emptying pots filled with detritus into the gutters meant that the urban streets were themselves sewer channels (Braudel 1973: 225). Despite scattered attempts by town councils in the early modern period to regulate such practices, this form of disposal was still common well into the eighteenth century (Rawlinson 1958: 504-5).

In this sense, the medieval and early modern “sewer” was not a covered channel sluiced by water and designed to carry away waste materials; rather, it was understood more as a drain to rid the streets of rain water (Kitson-Clark 1962: 71). The typical eighteenth century sewer was constructed from brick, and had up-right walls and a flat or semicircular base. Contemporary specialist knowledge held that sewers had to be built in this way in order that they would be capacious enough to allow sewer cleaners access to occasionally clean the rotting interiors (Finer 1952: 219-20). In such sewers, wastes were not swept away by water but were left to languish *in situ*.

Such a situation, acceptable to bourgeois sensibilities in earlier years, was anathema to the sensibilities generated by the miasmatic PBFH. According to miasmatic theory, excreta, like other potentially harmful substances, would not putrefy, and thus cause dangerous odours, if they were kept in circulation, thus ensuring that the air surrounding them was kept clean (Corbin 1986: 91-92, 95-100). By the first decades of the nineteenth century, not only could such sewers not cope with the vastly increased levels of detritus produced by urban populations, it was also felt by the bourgeoisie of the period that the rotting masses of filth that they accumulated constituted a great hazard to health lurking under the city streets. It was for this reason that most houses of even the higher bourgeoisie prior to the 1840’s were not connected to sewers, because it was feared both that such sewers were ripe sources of contagion, and that detritus from additional dwellings connected to these sewers would overwhelm an already-overburdened system (Finer 1952: 219-20). It was the unsatisfactory nature of the eighteenth century sewer that prompted later

bourgeois reformers such as Sir John Simon to dub these as but “cesspools under another name” (Simon 1970: 210).

If sewers of this type were increasingly condemned for their inability to meet the requirements of the early nineteenth century bourgeoisie, so too were other traditional forms of disposal. The dungheap, for example, with its ostentatious display of excreta and their odours, was a ripe source of complaint, not only in terms of the hygienic dirt it seemed to harbour (in the form of miasma-producing putrefying faeces), but also in terms of the affront it presented to the visual and olfactory demands of faecal propriety (Wohl 1984: 89)⁴.

The sister form of disposal to the dungheap, the cesspool, had become the favoured means of removal of excreta in many areas in the later feudal and early modern periods, replacing the dumping of detritus from pots into the gutters of the city streets (Rosen 1958: 122-24). We may hypothesise that this shift in the form of general means of disposal was an effect of early developments in the creation of the GBFH. But the cesspool had become a major source of concern under the conditions of the miasmatic PBFH, that is, in the later eighteenth century. The source of such concerns was the fact that cesspools and the like concentrated excreta into one densely-packed locale whereupon they putrefied, causing foul odours and diseases (Corbin 1986: 59).

The problems posed by cesspools and like receptacles of excreta were dealt with in two major ways by State-employed officials of the period. First, such locales were increasingly subjected to strategies of sealing, such that foul odours were less likely to escape from them (Corbin 1986: 91). Second, the removal of excreta from these receptacles was progressively brought under the aegis of State regulation. From at least the later eighteenth century onwards, local government bodies were concerned to control the means whereby cesspools were emptied. Scavengers were contracted to remove the contents of cesspools, and to transport them to dumps outside the city

boundaries; such evacuation of wastes was carried out under the discreet blanket of darkness (Rosen 1958: 122-24).

Not only did the cesspool offend against olfactory imperatives of the GBFH, and thence the miasmatic PBFH, it also offended the visual imperative that excreta be made socially invisible. The very act of the hiring of specialists – scavengers – to do this work suggests an increasing division of labour vis-à-vis excretory disposal, with the excreting person increasingly likely to have little or no contact with his own excreta, for he no longer disposed of them himself (Reid 1991: 88; Finer 1952: 213-14, 219). Rather, disposal was progressively taken on by agents of the State. A key aspect of later eighteenth century urban sanitation policies was the regulation by local government organs of the trades that cleared cesspools and other such receptacles, for such regulation allowed stricter controls to be effected over the nature of excretory disposal itself (Corbin 1986: 93). The trends towards State regulation over the general means of disposal were thus already well developed by the period of water-based sewer construction in the mid-nineteenth century⁵.

But despite these trends towards governmental regulation of the cesspool and related means of disposal, the densities of excreta that had to be dealt with in the early nineteenth century urban context were seen by the contemporary bourgeoisie as overwhelming such forms of detritus removal. Greater quantities of excreta often led to the overflowing of cesspools, thus reinforcing their reputation as harbours of miasmatic threats (Wohl 1984: 89). Furthermore, the numbers of people employed in the scavenging trade and related occupations did not keep pace with the increases in levels of wastes to be disposed of (Lewis 1952: 49). As such, at the level of coping with these new faecal densities, as well as in terms of the visual and olfactory imperatives of the GBFH and miasmatic PBFH, the older forms of general means of excretory disposal were found wanting. They could not provide a cleanly urban context which would meet the demands of the contemporary bourgeoisie. Excreta were not made invisible, nor were they sufficiently

deodoured. They thus constituted a situation of excretory disposal crisis for the early nineteenth century middle classes.

Crises of excretory disposal were closely related to *crises of health* at this period, insofar as the former were partly held responsible for the health problems which were thought to derive from faecal dirt. Medical and scientific knowledges were very important in the movement towards State construction of water-based sewer systems (Reid 1991: 26), but as we argued above, it is the conjunction of the socially-produced evaluation of excreta as morally dirty within the schema of the GBFH, together with scientific-medical terminologies as manifest in specific PBFHs, which is the proper form of comprehending such processes. There were two such PBFHs involved in the contemporary understanding of excretory crises and their resolution.

The first, chronologically speaking, was the miasmatic PBFH. According to the miasmatic outlook, excreta were a ripe source of disease, insofar as they rotted and their fumes spread disease. We have seen that it was this view which condemned the eighteenth century sewer form as wholly inadequate for the needs of the nineteenth century city, for it allowed excreta to stagnate, the very condition that was most injurious to health (Corbin 1986: 91-92). As the urban environment was not, according to this view, adequately equipped with the means of excretory disposal which could cope with the vastly increased levels of excreta produced by the burgeoning population, sewer systems that allowed circulation of excreta would have to be erected⁶. Such sewers would mitigate against the harmful odours of excreta. This desire for sewers based around circulation of excreta was also held by those bourgeois professionals who inhabited the conditions of the later form, the bacteriological PBFH. But the manner in which this desire was expressed was different from that of the previous form.

Bacteriological medicine arose as a result of findings in the field of scientific and medical innovations in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Instead

of holding that the spontaneous generation of harmful elements from putrefying matters was at the root of disease, as miasmatic knowledge did. bacteriology understood disease as the outcome of contagion by germs. Contagion of diseases such as typhus and cholera, both of which had struck in the 1830's and 1840's, was believed to occur through the transmission of germs by water-based means. This position involved a new understanding of excreta, although one which still operated under the aegis of the negative construal produced by the GBFH⁷. Excreta were understood as prime sources of germs. Contagion could occur through the means of initially non-infected persons coming into contact with the excreta of infected persons⁸.

For both miasmatic and bacteriological PBFHs, which were operative together for a short period in the middle of the nineteenth century, the pressing need to avoid the spread of diseases was to remove excreta from the urban environment as much as was possible. Once the bacteriological outlook began to replace the miasmatic position generally, there was a transition from the dominance of the one PBFH to the other. This transition led to the furthering of trends towards the condemnation of previous forms of excretory disposal. The cesspool seemed to be a breeding ground of germs. The eighteenth century sewer similarly seemed to be a source of disease and death. As water-borne theories of contagion gained ground, so too did evacuation of detritus through flushing sewers seem to be a pressing necessity (Gauldie 1974: 78; Frazer 1950: 65-69). If germ-carrying excreta were placed into these sewers, and such excreta were the cause of infection, then sewers were no longer places of disease *generation*, but rather areas of disease *transmission*. If sewers could be flushed by water so as to bear excreta to places where they could be rendered harmless, then disease transmission could be brought under control (Brockington 1966: 41). Such sewers were increasingly viewed after mid-century as drastically reducing the probability of disease, and thus the death rate, in the areas where they operated (Smith 1979: 245-6; Guerrand 1990: 372). By the 1860's there were wide-spread beliefs amongst bourgeois opinion-making groups as to the benefits of water-based sewers, and their concomitant, water closets, in the

prevention of disease (Smith 1979: 245-6). It was in this decade, of course, that the great projects of sewer construction were begun by the bourgeois state.

The bacteriological PBFH of the mid- to late-nineteenth century may be viewed in various ways. Firstly, as a new terminological expression of the hygienic dirt of excreta, within the parameters set by the GBFH in the charging of excreta as moral dirt. Secondly, as posing the problem of excreta, and their presence in urban areas, in terms of germs rather than in terms of putrid odours. That is, the excretory crises faced by the bourgeoisie were recast into a new terminology. Thirdly, as furthering the trends towards condemnation of older means of disposal, and generating demands for new forms of sewer disposal, trends developed initially under the conditions of the miasmatic PBFH.

Taken together, the crises of excretory disposal and the crises of health are the components of the overall set of excretory crises faced by the contemporary bourgeoisie which mainly, though of course not exclusively, involved the hygienic dirt of excreta. We now turn to examine those aspects of these crises which involved mostly the moral dirt of both excreta and the people who produced them.

Excretory crises: the moral dirt of excreta

The excretory crises which involved the moral dirt of excreta as their key component were part of wider crises of cleanliness facing a bourgeoisie which inhabited a general habitus based around notions of bodily cleanliness.

The urban areas in which the proletariat dwelt were deemed to be filthy, not only in terms of the diseases which were felt to breed therein, but also in terms of the moral filth that was fostered in such places. As regards the slums and rookeries of the first decades of the nineteenth century, for the bourgeois observer it was "morality (or, more exactly, criminality) and disease that

were (both) causing concern. Overcrowding and congestion, poverty, crime, ill-health and heavy mortality were shown to be conditions commonly found together” (Ashworth 1954: 48). Such bourgeois apprehensions, as to the twin dilemmas of proletarian moral and hygienic filth, were commonplace in the later eighteenth century. What marked the early nineteenth century version of such fears was both the greater scale of the crises felt to be looming as a result of such conditions, and the extent to which the bourgeoisie collectively perceived impending disaster if remedial action was not taken (Ashworth 1954: 54, 65).

What form could such disastrous consequences take? In the first instance, the hygienic dirt produced in proletarian areas generated cholera, typhus and other contagious diseases which not only diminished the labour power of the workforce, but also threatened the health and well-being of the bourgeoisie itself. As Engels pithily noted, if left unchecked, hygienic dirt could result in a situation where “the angel of death rages in the ranks of the capitalists as ruthlessly as in the ranks of the workers” (Engels 1988: 337). Moreover, the moral filth bred in such locales was also felt to lead to disruptions in the status quo. Living conditions deemed by bourgeois observers as lacking in salubrity were understood to lead to feelings of discontent among the proletariat, and even to periodic outbursts of rebellion (Dyos 1967: 13).

The dirt, both moral and hygienic, of the proletariat was, of course, the precondition for bourgeois self-representation as cleanly. We have seen that cleanliness, especially in bodily terms, was a prime source of symbolic capital for the bourgeoisie in the distinction competition at the level of general habituses at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the next century. Our contention is that, by the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, such a form of distinction had become untenable. This may be seen in the following ways.

In the first place, dirt was the existential condition of the proletariat, according to the classification of the GBH. The proletariat was both morally

and hygienically filthy, as by extension, were the places where it dwelled. Proletarian bodies were filthy, in both moral and hygienic terms. As such, the bourgeoisie, its collective class body, and its dwelling spaces were salubrious in both of these senses. But the living conditions of the proletariat, and thus by extension the proletariat itself, had become *dysfunctionally* filthy, in both moral and hygienic terms, by the middle of the nineteenth century (Vigarello 1988: 194, 199-200). In the hygienic sense, the proletariat was a ripe source of, firstly, miasmas, and then later, germ-based contagions. In the moral sense, the proletariat was filthy in that it was disorderly, unruly, and failing to correspond to the condition of a disciplined workforce. Its unordered nature truly made it “matter out of place” to the outlook of the GBH.

The depiction of proletarians as filthy had placed them beyond the confines of bourgeois regulation, both morally and hygienically. In a sense, the distinction competition in terms of cleanliness had been won by the bourgeoisie to such a great degree that the victory had placed the bourgeoisie in a contradictory situation. Proletarian filth meant bourgeois symbolic superiority at the same time as it meant the proletariat escaped from the parameters of bourgeois symbolic regulation. The State’s recasting of urban environments such that they would be rendered both morally and hygienically clean thus may be seen as the bourgeoisie’s collective action to resolve this contradiction. There was a price to be paid for forming an urban environment that was devoid of threats from proletarian areas, and which met the requirements of the bourgeois taste for an environment devoid of visual and olfactory forms of filth. This price was the relinquishing of cleanliness as symbolic capital, in favour of a cleansing of the urban environment, and thus by a series of extensions, of proletarian areas and the bodies of the proletariat themselves (Vigarello 1988: 192-3, 196).

If cleanliness was relinquished at the level of the GBH, then so too was it dropped as a form of distinction at the level of that habitus’s faecal subset. The contradiction posed for the bourgeoisie at the level of the general habitus was reproduced at the level of faecal habitus. Proletarian faecal filth had,

from at least the end of the eighteenth century, both secured bourgeois faecal cleanliness, and had been part of a system the dynamic of which was towards ever greater levels of repression of excretory practices by that class. In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, as the urban crises facing the bourgeoisie steadily mounted, excretory cleanliness was still a means of bourgeois distinction. As one commentator puts it:

"The ruling classes were obsessed with excretion. Faecal matter was an irrefutable product of physiology that the bourgeois strove to deny. Its implacable recurrence haunted the imagination; it gainsaid attempts at decorporalization; it provided a link with organic life ... The bourgeois projected onto the poor what he was trying to repress in himself. His image of the masses was constructed in terms of filth. The fetid animal, crouched in dung in its den, formed the stereotype" (Corbin 1986: 144)

Thus bourgeois self-representation, which was based upon the denial of the bourgeois body's excretory capacities and the transposition of these capacities onto proletarian physiology, was an important aspect of the overall set of bourgeois distinction strategies of the time. The manner in which the bourgeoisie regarded the proletariat was shaped by this fundamental outlook. For example, the surveys of the dwellings of the (very) poor carried out by bourgeois observers from the 1830's onwards (e.g. Mayhew 1965 [1851-2]; Engels 1987 [1845]) were informed by the dispositions of the miasmatic PBFH, which stressed the noxiousness of faecal odours. The voices of the reforming bourgeoisie denounced the effects upon moral and hygienic well-being generated by the "odours of excrement and refuse" to be found in the slums (Corbin 1986: 151). The proletarian home stank, whereas the bourgeois home was odourifically neutral or sweet-smelling (Corbin 1986: 177). By extension, the proletarian bodies themselves that dwelled therein emitted foul stench, in contradistinction to the delicate aromas of bourgeois physiology (Corbin 1986: 143)

But, in the context of the mid-nineteenth century, with its vastly increased levels of both population density, and levels of excreta produced in urban areas, proletarian faecal filth no longer operated as a means of retaining bourgeois symbolic superiority. Rather, the excretory filth of the proletariat served instead to push that class outside the confines of bourgeois regulation. The excreting proletarian produced forms of hygienic dirt which produced miasmas (and later, germs), which in turn cut down the labouring capacities of his fellow proletarians, and threatened the health of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, with his excretory capacities, the proletarian created a morally filthy environment for himself and his cohorts, an environment that was under no form of discipline whatsoever. Thus the choice which faced the bourgeoisie more generally was posed at the level of faecal habitus: either cleanliness was retained as a form of symbolic capital, and the crises of the urban environment would continue and then worsen; or the proletariat would have to be rendered faecally cleanly, through the means of recasting the ways in which excreta were dealt with in urban locales.

In this context, as in the wider situation, the collective will of the bourgeoisie to resolve such crises of the mid-nineteenth century was expressed in a radical reformation by the State of the urban environment. In general terms, the bourgeois State took over responsibility for urban sanitary governance⁹. For example, the cornerstone of early State intervention in sanitary matters in Britain, Edwin Chadwick's Sanitary Report of 1842, explicitly holds that the State is required to act because of the great loss of labour power through disease and unsanitary conditions, coupled with the deleterious moral effects these conditions led to:

"... the annual loss of life from filth and bad ventilation is greater than the loss from death or wounds in any wars in which the country has been engaged in modern times ... these adverse circumstances tend to produce an adult population short-lived, improvident, reckless, and intemperate, and with habitual avidity for sensual gratifications ..." (cited in Frazer 1950: 18-19)¹⁰.

In the specific case of matters of excretory disposal, the State embarked upon grand projects of sewer construction. Such programmes had two ramifications. First, they resolved the crises faced by the bourgeoisie of the first half of the century by rendering the urban environment, proletarian areas, proletarian dwellings, and thus eventually the proletariat itself, both morally and hygienically cleanly. Second, and as a result of this, sewer construction was one of the major preconditions for the relinquishing of bodily cleanliness as a means of bourgeois symbolic capital, at both the levels of GBH and GBFH. It is to the history of State sewer-building that we now turn.

STATE SOLUTIONS TO URBAN CRISES

Although the bourgeois State did not begin the process of large-scale sewer building until the 1860's and after, we may yet trace a "pre-history" of trends towards bourgeois urban sanitary governance. Such trends, we hypothesise, are effects of increasing bourgeois dispositions, under the conditions of the miasmatic PBFH, towards casting urban space in a fashion that met the demands of this habitus, that is, that such space be cleanly in both miasmatic-hygienic and moral terms. The full-blown programme of sewer-building after mid-century is viewed as the bourgeois response to the various aspects of urban crises, material and symbolic, that we set out above. As such, increasing levels of sanitary governance in the later eighteenth century and in the early decades of the following century may be understood as early and limited moves towards the resolution of urban crises – and the relinquishing of cleanliness as symbolic capital – that occurred in the second half of the century. The discussion that follows will use England as an example of general Western European trends¹¹.

Limited "town improvements" had been carried out by local authorities in the later eighteenth century. These included provisions to renovate existing sewer systems, to build new sewers, to remove refuse and excreta from the

streets, to regulate the collection of dung by scavengers, and to ban privies located in "improper situations" (Keith-Lucas 1954: 291-4; Wright 1960: 91; Frazer 1950: 35-8; Ashworth 1954: 62-63). All these innovations may be understood as the beginnings of a bourgeois recasting of the urban environment into one in which this class could dwell without qualm. From the turn of the nineteenth century to mid-century, many local authorities were active in urban sanitary matters, and such activity illustrates the steady growth throughout the first half of the century of levels of local-level State responsibility for resolving urban crises. Local authority regulations included enforcing standards of drainage in their areas, compelling builders of new houses and owners of existing houses to provide privies and drains, and the building of public lavatories (Keith-Lucas 1954: 295).

Prior to mid-century, central State authority over such matters was minimal (Engels 1988: 361; Gauldie 1974: 113, 129; Finer 1952: 214-15). But the crisis tendencies of the swelling towns prompted an explosion of central State activity from the middle of the century. For example, Nuisances Removal Acts, that dealt with the disposal of unsightly and odourific detrituses, came into force from 1846 onwards (Ashworth 1954: 58; Smith 1979: 199). The 1848 Public Health Act was the first step towards concentrating control of urban sanitation in the hands of centralised bodies, for its stated intentions were to improve "the sanitary conditions of Towns and other populous places ... and it is expedient that the supply of Water to such Towns and Places, and the Sewerage, Drainage, Cleansing and Paving thereof be placed under one and the same Management and Control ..." (cited in Benevolo 1967: 94).

Local Boards of Health were set up to carry out centrally-formulated regulations. These Boards were to ensure that streets were cleaned and paved, and that new houses had to have adequate drainage and privy facilities. Sewers, still generally of the brick variety at this period, were to be regulated such that they "would not be a nuisance or injurious to health, ... [by being] cleared, cleansed and emptied" (Frazer 1950: 47).

Centralised legislation prior to the 1860's was oriented towards redressing what were understood to be the most problematic of contemporary urban problems, through measures such as bringing existing sewer systems under centralised State control. The older forms of governmental jurisdiction, which often involved multiple bodies with multiple areas of responsibility, were replaced by more strictly demarcated areas of jurisdiction for sanitary matters (Lewis 1952: 94-95; Gauldie 1974: 114-15; Frazer 1950: 110; Brockington 1966: 46-8). Central State bodies were increasingly empowered to compel local authorities to implement initiatives that brought their areas into line with nationwide standards, thus homogenising sanitary regulations throughout the State's territory (Frazer 1950: 129 *passim*). Local authorities were given increased powers of regulation, such as making non-connection of a house to mains sewers illegal, and enforcing certain levels of refuse collection and provision of privies (Frazer 1950: 110).

But the great innovation of the bourgeois State was not the augmentation of existing mechanisms of urban sanitation. The cornerstone of the bourgeois revolution in the recasting of the nature of the urban environment was the creation of the large-scale, water-based sewer systems. The coming of sewer systems was not instituted by the central State mechanisms alone, for local authorities operating around principles of "municipal socialism" were important in raising revenues for such projects and pushing for their realisation (Briggs 1968: 211-12, 217; Treble 1979: 179). Furthermore, water-based sewers were adopted by reforming fractions of the bourgeoisie as the means whereby the urban environment (and its proletarian inhabitants) could be rendered salubrious. An important aspect of sewer building in the period is the role played by progressive fractions of the bourgeoisie proselytising to their class as to the benefits of water-based sewerage. These groups saw to it that bourgeois demand went beyond the means of disposal "hitherto satisfying the public mind" (Simon 1970: 210)

Yet the main impetus lies with central State institutions, expressing the long-term interests of the capitalist order (Treble 1979: 178)¹². Such a pursuit of long term interests was often in direct contravention of particular, short-term interests of certain fractions of the bourgeoisie¹³.

The construction of large-scale, water-based sewer systems by the bourgeois State, in a relatively short period of time, is dramatic. London was given a system of 83 miles of sewers in 1865, which carried 420 million gallons of water a day. In a period of laissez-faire dogmas in other areas, this system cost the State over four million pounds (Wright 1960: 156)¹⁴. Other British towns were given similar systems soon after (Wohl 1984: 107-8). The central organ charged with regulating local authorities, the Local Government Board, noted in its 1875 Report that "(s)ewerage and drainage (are) either very defective or wanting altogether". But its 1886-7 Report had it that in "most populous places sewerage had been completed" (cited in Frazer 1950: 128, 131).

In Paris, the sewer system was enlarged from 87 miles in length in 1852, to 350 miles in less than twenty years (Guerrand 1990: 372). By 1911, there were 1,214 kilometres. of sewers beneath the city (Reid 1991: 35). Berlin and other major European cities received similar systems in the 1870's (Rosen 1958: 258). Both in Europe and in the United States, most large cities had extensive sewerage systems by the beginning of the twentieth century (Winkler and Moss 1984: 33).

The building of these large-scale systems required massive amounts of water to sluice through the pipes, water which had to be supplied by the State. Private water companies were eliminated in favour of State provision, usually in the guise of local authorities in the British context. Large reservoirs were built and put under municipal control such that there was enough water available to provide for increased demand generally, and the requirements of water-based sewerage systems in particular¹⁵. State control was prompted both by practical imperatives of providing enough water to

serve the sewer systems, and by the current bacteriological knowledge which dictated that diseases such as typhoid, which were borne by water, could be avoided by providing pure supplies to urban areas (Kennard 1958: 503: Frazer 1950: 147-52)¹⁶.

By the later decades of the nineteenth century, then, the State had established, and was in the process of operating, the sewerage systems which were the typical general means of excretory disposal of the modern mode of excretion. In this way, the State solved the excretory crises facing the bourgeoisie before and at mid-century. How was it that sewerage of this sort resolved the problems of urban environments facing the contemporary bourgeoisie? In general terms, sewerage rendered the urban environment cleanly. We now turn to examine the effects such sewer systems had on the urban environment and the people who lived within it.

EFFECTS OF STATE SEWER BUILDING

The State construction of sewer systems aimed at meeting the problems generated by the hygienic and moral crises of excretory dirt in the urban environment of the mid-nineteenth century¹⁷. We will review the effects of State sewer building programmes as, firstly, they resolved the crises of the hygienic dirt of excreta, secondly as they impacted upon the nature of the faecal habitus (especially its sensory dispositions) threatened by the crises of the period, and thirdly as they resolved the problems generated by the moral aspects of excretory dirt.

Dealing with hygienic dirt

We saw above that the two forms of crisis that fell under this heading and which faced the bourgeoisie of mid-century were crises of excretory disposal and health. As to the latter, water-based sewers were beginning to be seen by the first decades of the second half of the century, and increasingly so after

that, as radically reducing the levels of disease in areas where they were in place (Smith 1979: 245-6). Under the terms of the miasmatic PBFH, sewers were seen to have the great benefit of circulating excreta, thus preventing putrefaction (Corbin 1986: 118-19). Under the terms of the bacteriological PBFH, sewers were seen to cast germ-carrying excreta out of the urban environment, to be borne to locales where they could safely be processed by the State.

If sewers were a solution to health crises produced by the presence of excreta in urban locales, then so much more so were they regarded as the great panacea for the ills of excretory disposal per se. This was so in various ways. These new sewer systems were seen as efficiently and swiftly removing the detritus that had hitherto blocked up the city streets, causing great consternation to bourgeois eye and nose. The very word “sewage” itself became widespread in the English language from the 1830’s onwards; the word designated wastes that were to be processed, thus powerfully connoting a form of disposal that could “treat” excreta and render them “safe” (Smith 1979: 219).

Furthermore, the new technologies of sewerage developed in the middle of the nineteenth century were not merely ways of meeting the crisis of excretory removal which offended against the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus. They were, in a sense, products of that very habitus. That is to say, the demands of that habitus “shaped” the sewer technologies of the period. As can be seen from the perceived health-giving benefits of water-based sewers, sewers met the requirements first of the miasmatic PBFH that excreta not be left to stagnate, and thence the demands of the bacteriological PBFH that these germ-carrying products be taken to a point where they were processed and rendered “safe”. The very technologies of sewerage developed at this period were created to meet the requirements of these successive habituses.

In the 1840's, engineering orthodoxy still clung to beliefs in the efficacy of the eighteenth century brick-built sewer, which allowed the accumulation of faeces within (Gauldie 1974: 129; Finer 1952: 443-45; Lewis 1952: 90-93). But the demands of the miasmatic PBFH that such accumulations were unacceptable both medico-scientifically and in sensory (i.e. moral) terms meant that such a view went into rapid decline. This PBFH, and thence its bacteriological successor, may be seen as demanding an alternative form of sewer design, and this duly appeared. The innovation in question was a small-bore, oval-shaped, glazed earthenware form of piping. These allowed the flushing away of detritus with a high-velocity water supply, bearing the waste out of the urban environment into, for example, rivers (Finer 1952: 221-22; Reid 1991: 30, 35, 81; Kennard 1958: 498). Such innovative technological devices were provided, as it were, at the demands of the successive bourgeois faecal habituses by private capital rather than directly by the State. For example, such piping was first produced for the burgeoning local authority market by the firm of Henry Doulton in 1846 (Palmer 1973: 57).

If the dispositions of the PBFHs of the time were important in the very shaping of sewer forms, then equally well it was the case that such sewers were the material precondition for such habituses. In general terms, the crises which had threatened the very operation of these habituses had been averted by the building of sewer systems. But the relationship between habitus shaping of sewer systems, and these systems being the necessary condition for the continuance of such a habitus, goes deeper than this. For the relationship involves the interrelations between sewer system on the one side, and the sensory dispositions of the bourgeois faecal habitus on the other. It is to this issue we now turn.

Sewers and sensory dispositions

The moral and hygienic excretory crises of the first half of the nineteenth century *were* crises because the conditions which generated them were

antithetical to the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus. An important aspect of the imperatives thus violated were the sensory imperatives that excreta be socially invisible and that excretory odours were not to be tolerated. The physical presence of excreta in the urban context provoked not only fears as to diseases erupting from miasmas and germs; in addition, the presence of such disgusting materials was an affront to bourgeois sensibilities. The urban conditions of the period were thus both visually and olfactorily distressing for the bourgeoisie.

However, sewer systems resolved such crises for two reasons. First, because they allowed the urban environment to be recast in such a fashion as to allow it to meet these bourgeois imperatives. Second, because the nature of sewer systems *themselves* was deemed to be salubrious. We can see both such factors in the following account of the ramifications of sewer systems in the second half of the nineteenth century

The symbolic and practical (especially sensory) dispositions of the GBFH and its historical manifestations were “built into” the sewer systems; in turn, these systems provided the basis upon which such dispositions could be held and carried out by individuals living within that habitus. As only the early history of water-based sewerage is informed by the miasmatic PBFH, we shall here focus on the interrelations between GBFH and bacteriological PBFH on the one hand, and the nature of sewer systems on the other.

Water-based sewers may be seen as both premised on the view of excreta produced in the process of negative charging that occurred over a long period from later feudalism until the appearance of the bacteriological PBFH, and further extending this conceptualisation of excreta as wholly filthy.

According to Corbin's account, in the early decades of the nineteenth century (that is, under the conditions of the miasmatic PBFH), before the coming of water-based sewer systems and State regulation thereof, the prevailing utilitarian economic doctrines of the day were coupled with fears of odourific

threats. Dangers felt to derive from excreta were yoked together with fears of loss of profits. Excreta became calculable under the aegis of usefulness and recyclability. At this period, there was a rise (in France at any rate) in the use of human excreta as fertiliser (Corbin 1986: 118). The impetus behind the deodourising of urban spaces in the first half of the century "proceeded via the recovery, exploitation, and utilization of refuse" (Corbin 1986: 117). If Corbin is right, then the economic utility of excreta at this period clashed with the otherwise negative evaluations of excreta generated under the conditions of the GBFH and miasmatic PBFH. We may perhaps view this contradictory situation in terms of the economic utility of excreta being a survival of archaic notions of the positive aspects of excreta which occurred under the conditions of the FFH. This residual positive aspect involved the usefulness of excreta for primarily agricultural purposes.

But this residual positive element was eliminated under the conditions of the bacteriological PBFH. This was so in various ways. Bacteriological evaluations of excreta deemed these products to be carriers of germs. Consequently, human excreta were decreasingly used as agricultural fertiliser and for industrial purposes, for they were thought to be too dangerous for such purposes (Reid 1991: 81). As a result, chemical fertilisers came into widespread use to replace the reliance on human dung (Guerrand 1990: 372). A further nail in the coffin of agricultural uses of human excreta was an exogenous factor. From the late 1840's, cheap exports of bird guano from South America put paid to the European market in fertiliser derived from human excreta, with the prices of the latter collapsing such that there was no longer any profit to be derived from its sale (Smith 1979: 220; Wohl 1984: 100-1).

As such, far from being seen as potentially profitable material, in the second half of the nineteenth century excreta were designated as dangerous *waste* products, to be taken out of the urban environment, to be removed as far as possible from contact with the city dweller, and to be processed so as to be rendered harmless.

Sewer systems were both based on this view of excreta, and served to extend this evaluation. We can see this in the fact that, from circa the 1860's onwards, it was the State which operated sewer systems, taking responsibility for the removal of wastes from urban areas. Private capital, in the form of companies of scavengers and night-soil men were expropriated in favour of State-employed professionals. Private enterprises involved in excretory disposal became regulated to the point of extinction (Guerrand 1990: 371-2; Reid 1991: 54-57). By the turn of the twentieth century, the State had a monopoly on the means of removal of detritus from the built environment. Furthermore, the State had monopoly control over the means of processing sewerage, with a system of State-owned sewage farms having the task of dealing with the collected excretions of urban populations (Reid 1991: 60-69).

No longer a source of economic value, no longer hoarded so as to be sold off privately as manure, human excreta became (even more of) a form of waste material, something to be ejected, not just for hygienic or moral reasons, but for economic reasons too. With no profits to be derived from excremental removal, the State became the sole source of faecal management. With the State in charge of sewerage, excreta came to lack exchange value and were rendered literally use-less. By this period, in the economic realm, as had occurred over several centuries in other areas of human life, faeces were charged with wholly negative connotations; in this case, they became associated with meanings of economic inutility. Any positive evaluations of human wastes still operative in the first half of the nineteenth century were by this period eliminated. Excreta were to be rejected and handed over to the mechanisms of the State, for the State was the only organ that was seen to be capable of dealing with them, or which wished to have any contact with them. In this way, sewer systems were both based on a negative conceptualisation of excreta, and served to extend this conceptualisation to an even greater degree than before.

If water-based sewers were premised upon and extended the symbolic-classificatory outlook of the GBFH and its bacteriological manifestation, then so too did the same relationship between habitus and means of disposal apply at the practical level. The imperatives of the GBFH and of the bacteriological PBFH were oriented around the social invisibility of excreta, and avoidance of their odours. Water-based sewers allowed excretory practices to be carried out in these terms, and extended the grip of these forms of excretory practice, both in terms of the degree to which the bourgeoisie adhered to them, and in terms of ever wider social strata being brought into the ambit of such practices.

The sewer systems of the later nineteenth century met the imperatives of keeping excreta hidden from the gaze of the bourgeois who found such materials repulsive, for sewerage of this sort was a means of excretory disposal which occurred underground. The stated aim of bourgeois sanitary reformers, such as Sir John Simon, was to keep the urban environment “free from the excrements of the population” (cited in Wohl 1984: 94). This was achieved by the transmission of excreta first into subterranean spaces beneath the city streets, then bearing them off to distant locales to be processed. The sewer system, despite being huge in scale, did not threaten bourgeois sensibilities, insofar as it operated unseen. Briggs here captures the contrast between the bourgeois State’s management of wastes below ground, and the cityscape produced in an era of *laissez-faire* capitalism:

"Perhaps ... [the] outstanding feature [of the nineteenth century city] was hidden from public view - their hidden network of pipes and drains and sewers, one of the biggest technical and social achievements of the age, a sanitary 'system' more comprehensive than the transport system. Yet their surface world was fragmented, intricate, cluttered, eclectic and noisy, the unplanned product of a private enterprise economy developing within an older traditional society" (Briggs 1968: 16-17)

The sensibilities of the middle classes (and increasingly as the century drew to a close, the proletariat too) who lived on the surface were safeguarded by the vast excretory disposal network that quietly functioned beneath the streets and homes of those who operated the commodity economy. The functionaries of the bourgeois State which constructed and ran these vast systems of disposal were well aware that the benefits to be gained from underground water-based sewerage included the prevention of faeces being seen above ground. Baron Haussmann believed that the new sewers and the army of sewer men who laboured unseen within them, would allow the banishment of excreta from the streets of Paris, along with the "unsightly" cesspools and scavengers that had previously been the main means of collection (Reid 1991: 72-80). Only specially-trained cadres would now see massed accumulations of faeces on a daily basis, a sight previously open to public gaze. Such cadres would experience this horror not under the cover of darkness as had the scavengers and cesspool cleaners in the first phase of making such phenomena socially invisible, but under the clear light of scientific rationality, in the sewage processing plant (Wohl 1984: 110; Reid 1991: 60-9).

In this way, the citizen, both bourgeois and (increasingly over time) proletarian, was allowed to disassociate himself from his excreta as soon as he had defecated. Faeces no longer lingered within sight of the excreting person, but were quickly borne away into the sewers to be seen no more. Feelings of embarrassment and disgust provoked by excreta were thus mitigated against by denying the visibility of these materials above ground in the public sphere, and bringing them under the watchful scrutiny of State employees. The sewer-based mode of excretory disposal thus pushed to its apotheosis the imperative of excretory invisibility characteristic of the GBFH.

The same is true in the case of the imperative of avoiding the foul odours of excreta. We have already seen how olfactory thresholds of tolerance were

lowered in the later eighteenth century, as a result of the increasing levels of negative charging under the conditions of the miasmatic PBFH. Such trends towards greater intolerance continued into the nineteenth century. For example, Queen Victoria is believed to have found the Palace of Holyrood unbearable to live in, because of its proximity to Edinburgh's meadows, where the city's detritus was dumped and left to fester. Previous monarchs had expressed no such qualms (Gauldie 1974: 75). This anecdote expresses the relatively high levels of olfactory intolerance for faeces felt by elites of the first half of the nineteenth century¹⁸. The building of sewer systems on water-based technologies was the State's response to bourgeois distaste for the odours of urban areas generally, and excretory odours in particular.

If the excrements of entire populations were to be cast into the sewer systems of the later nineteenth century, this rendered them potentially profoundly odourific sites, utterly antithetical to the lowered olfactory thresholds previously described. Indeed, we have seen that the horror felt for the brick sewers of the eighteenth century was due to the perception generated by both miasmatic and bacteriological PBFHs that such locales were prime sources of foul odours and disease. In order for excretory odours to be brought under control in these areas, strategies of deodourification were developed to allow the spaces under the cities to smell as anodyne as increasingly did the urban environment above ground (Reid 1991: 15, 17). The State was concerned to apply new scientific and technological developments in the neutralisation of faecal odours, both in the sewers and on the urban surface (Corbin 1986: 123; Reid 1991: 37-52). Sewage processing plants which could process faecal stench increasingly replaced rivers as the favoured points of outfall for sewers. Stenches emanating from major watercourses such as the Thames had caused great concern at mid-century, and the norms of the bacteriological PBFH increasingly denied the possibility of leaving untreated sewage in rivers, on both hygienic and sensory grounds (Wohl 1984: 233-256; Rawlinson 1958: 510). At the very least, effluents dumped in rivers had to be chemically treated before being deposited so as, among other things, to rob them of their smell (Frazer 1950: 225). Sewage processing plants allowed the

treatment of foul smells such that the vast amounts of excreta produced by urban populations, which had so offended bourgeois sensibilities before mid-century, were now rendered odourifically harmless (Rawlinson 1958: 518; Wohl 1984: 110; Reid 1991: 60-69).

Sewers provided a means whereby the excreting person did not have to experience the odours of the excreta of others, for they no longer accumulated on the surface world, but were taken away by watercourses, thence to be rendered free of unpleasant smell. Nor, as we will see more fully in the next Chapter, did the individual have to experience the odours of his own faeces, for these were deposited first into the water closet, and thence rapidly evacuated into the sewers. Thus not only was the odourific aspect of the excretory crises of mid-century solved by the construction of water-based sewerage mechanisms; it was also the case that sewers further extended intolerance of faecal odours. Not only did the bourgeois of the later nineteenth century loathe the smell of others' excreta; the technical means of disposal allowed and encouraged him to despise the stench of his own evacuations.

These reflections upon sewers as the basis for, and extension of, the symbolic and practical aspects of the GBFH, begin to lead us to consider how sewer systems solved not only the hygienic excretory crises of the first half of the nineteenth century, but also those crises involving the morally repugnant qualities of excreta. It is this issue that we now must consider.

Dealing with moral dirt

Let us recall that moral cleanliness is, following both Freud and Douglas, "orderliness", within the terms of the symbolic system that creates that orderliness. For the GBH, GBFH and bacteriological PBFH, bringing moral cleanliness to the city, and to the proletarians who dwelled therein (Vigarello 1988: 192-3, 230), involved an "orderly" recasting of urban space. Water-based sewerage was one device which transported the conceptions of cleanly

orderliness contained within the symbolic systems of bourgeois habituses, to a context which those habituses had previously construed as filthily disordered.

Such an urban context was morally filthy, for the reasons shown above. But, more specifically, its means of excretory disposal were as much morally dirty as hygienically so. The sewers of the early decades of the nineteenth century that allowed accumulation of faecal deposits were not merely a cause of concern for (miasmically- and bacteriologically-expressed) bourgeois sensibilities as regards the congestion of excreta. Rather, such sewers "called to mind the diverse threats ... social disorder presented to civilization [sic] ... Concerns about a disruptive world below helped give impetus to control and transform the subterranean" (Reid 1991: 3).

Let us take Paris as an example. From at least the Revolution onwards, the old system of sewers under the city were associated in the bourgeois mind with potential demotic unrest, for they were unsupervised and relatively unmapped, and a lascivious demi-monde was felt to lurk within them (Reid 1991: 23-4). State scrutiny, in the interests of rendering safe this putrid, tumultuous zone, was thus brought to bear on this underworld. Sewer mapping became the concern of successive bourgeois regimes (Reid 1991: 18-19). Similarly, in the British context, central legislation from mid-century onwards required that local authorities map out their existing sewer systems; the position of privies and cesspools had to be noted and approved by local authorities. Government officials were to "draw up plans, inspect, measure, level, supervise work in progress, examine the course of sewers and drains, [and] inspect or fix boundaries"¹⁹.

Mapping of existing sewer systems brought them, as it were, into the light of day, allowing the gaze of the bourgeois State to penetrate into their deepest recesses. The building of new sewer systems by the State from the 1860's onwards, according to geometrically composed plans, further facilitated these trends towards the surveillance of the territories below ground. In Paris, the

"cloaque" of the *ancien regime*, with its organic, intestinal associations, was replaced by the "égout" (sewer), which denoted a man-made construction, under human (i.e. bourgeois) guidance and control (Reid 1991: 36). The sewers of early nineteenth century Paris were understood by the contemporary bourgeoisie to be "feminine" in nature, for they were under the influence of Nature rather than Reason, and thus full of potentially subversive threats. Conversely, the sewers constructed by the State in the Haussmann period and after exhibited a "masculine" rationality, allowing a predicable uniformity where Nature was harnessed rather than in control (Reid 1991: 41). Nature was not only made controllable by being made visible, but the new system of sewers were also deodorised, just as the spaces above ground had been subjected to strategies of reducing smells unpleasant to the bourgeois nose. The sewer system was deemed to be highly salubrious for it kept faeces in circulation, just as Haussmann's boulevards kept the populace above ground in constant movement; such movement was felt to be healthy for it was akin to the circulatory system of the human body itself (Schivelbusch 1986: 195; Vigarello 1988: 216-7). Such processes of bringing previously uncontrolled areas under regulation and scrutiny was part of wider trends of bourgeois governance of surface urban areas, such as the policing of prostitution, in line with the dictates of bourgeois decorum (Bernheimer 1987; Corbin 1986: 145; Reid 1991: 41).

The transformation of Parisian sewers under Haussmann meant that far from being a site of threats from disease and (lumpen) proletarian agitation, they were by the second half of the century a "locus of health and public order" (Reid 1991: 36)²⁰. The equipping of all Parisian streets with sewers underneath was the corollary of the recasting of the streets themselves, in the form of long, straight boulevards along which barricades could but with difficulty be erected and defended. Such trends were exhibited in all the major urban areas of Western Europe in the period. As such, the bourgeois State recast the nature of the urban environment above and below, bringing control, order and moral cleanliness to both simultaneously (Benevolo 1967: 110, 135). Rather than harbouring dangers to the bourgeois order, the new

systems of sewers could now actually be utilised by the State to strike back at demotic rebellions. For example, the English sanitary reformer Edwin Chadwick viewed the mapped-out sewers as means whereby the police could travel to places unbeknownst to rampaging Chartists, and capture them from behind²¹.

The bringing of urban spaces, above ground and below, under the scrutiny of the mechanisms of the State, was mirrored in the strategies devised to regulate the behaviour of those proletarians employed in the removal of excreta. The scavengers and cesspool cleaners of the eighteenth century were often derogated by bourgeois observers for being noisy, unsightly and prone to leave traces of their unwholesome trade in the streets, offending bourgeois sensibilities, and seeming to provoke epidemics. Even as their trades went into decline, as the State progressively took over control of the means of excretory disposal, they were viewed as the lowliest and filthiest of the proletariat (Wohl 1984: 91; Roberts 1980: 21). Whilst their social usefulness was often acknowledged in the later eighteenth century, bourgeois opinion of the next century, coupled with developments towards State regulation of excretory disposal, tended to utterly condemn them, for they were deemed to be out of step with hygienic and technological Progress (Reid 1991: 88-95).

The role of “socially responsible proletarian” was passed to State-employed sewer men, who epitomised the characteristics of the new systems of sewers - regulated, orderly, clean. The professional corps of engineers and other bourgeois specialists who proselytised for the development of water-based sewer systems saw their workforce as a disciplined civil army, carrying out orders in the controlled environments beneath the city streets (Reid 1991: 110-20). Proletarians enlisted to deal with excreta were thus part of a regimented order which recast urban spaces in the interests of the evacuation of detritus from the point of excretion towards legitimate places of treatment. In this situation, excreta were placed within a system that subjected them to the controlling gaze of the bourgeois State, which shone upon them the penetrating lights of Science and Technology.

Here we see one aspect of the ways in which the moral cleansing of the proletariat was achieved by the coming of water-based sewers. If even those who worked within the sewers, those who were most exposed to excreta, were understood to be orderly and clean, then so much more so were those who lived above ground, and whose excretions were borne swiftly away to be dealt with by the State. In this fashion, as with the construction of sewer systems more generally, both the urban environment and its inhabitants were progressively rendered not only hygienically, but also morally, cleanly.

As a consequence, the State construction of water-based sewers may be viewed as beginning a process that ultimately led to the creation of the modern mode of excretion. Sewers and other forms of State governance of urban areas rendered the urban environment cleanly in both senses of the word. In this way, proletarian areas of towns and cities, and the dwellings therein, precisely those locales which were the source of so much bourgeois consternation in the first half of the century, were increasingly brought under the conditions of bourgeois notions of cleanliness. By extension, the inhabitants of these districts were also progressively brought under such conditions as the second half of the century wore on. As proletarian areas were sewered, and as the proletariat began to operate within the conditions of the sanitary governance of the bourgeois State, their bodies slowly began to be reshaped in bourgeois perception. The nature of proletarian corporeality was increasingly less thought of as unconditionally filthy, a source of both disease and disorder. In particular, the sewerage of proletarian areas removed the dungheaps and cesspools from the purview of bourgeois observation. As these areas were less associated with faecal filth, either in visual or olfactory terms, so too did the proletarian body cease to be an unqualified source of excretory filth. As proletarians began to defecate into water closets which bore their excreta into the sewers, there to be processed by the State, it became increasingly impossible to view the working class body as producing excretory horrors.

In this way, the laying of sewer systems by the State may be seen as beginning a process whereby general and excretory bodily cleanliness started to be relinquished by the bourgeoisie as forms of symbolic capital. The giving up of such capital by this class increasingly over the latter part of the nineteenth century figures as the precondition for the proletariat entering the conditions of the bourgeois faecal habitus, and thus transforming it into a habitus that was not a source of distinction for the dominant class.

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, we have reviewed the ways in which the foundations of the modern mode of excretion were laid. The crises of excretory dirt which faced the bourgeois faecal habitus in the first half of the nineteenth century, part of a wider set of urban crises which beset the bourgeoisie of this period, compelled the bourgeois State in the second half of the century to erect the large-scale, water-based sewer systems which form the general means of disposal component of the modern mode of excretion. Such sewers resolved those aspects of urban filth, both hygienic and moral, which had threatened to transgress the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus. Sewer systems met the demands of first the miasmatic, then bacteriological PBFHs, that the urban environment be rendered hygienically clean. Such systems also rendered this environment morally clean by recasting its subterranean and surface terrains in line with systems of State-regulated order. The nature of sewerage systems was both informed by the dictates of the bourgeois faecal habitus, and served to extend to even greater degrees than before the dispositions of this habitus. On the basis of the operation of such systems, excreta were symbolically rendered more filthy than had been the case at the beginning of the century, and the visual and olfactory presence of excreta became tolerated even less. In this way, sewer systems served to extend the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus towards ever greater levels of revulsion as to faeces, and towards the ever greater dominance of the excretory practices which were generated by this view of excreta.

The excretory crises of the early nineteenth century, and their resolution by the State in the later decades of the century, thus produced the general means of disposal characteristic of the modern mode of excretion. In addition, the resolution of these crises, whereby sewer systems recast the urban environment in line with the demands of the bourgeoisie, also led to a situation which was the precondition for the creation of the corresponding habitus form of this mode. By rendering urban environments cleanly, sewer systems cleansed not only bourgeois locales, but proletarian areas too. As a result, the proletariat began to be viewable not in terms of general bodily and excretory filth, but as having cleanly forms of corporeality. The coming of the sewers began a process the endpoint of which was the relinquishing by the bourgeoisie of bodily cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital. By progressively relinquishing excretory cleanliness as a form of capital over the second half of the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie set in motion a trend that would allow the proletariat to enter into the conditions of a faecal habitus which had previously operated as a form of distinction.

With the proletariat entering into the bourgeois faecal habitus, this latter was remoulded into the form of the universal faecal habitus, the symbolic and practical aspect of the modern mode of excretion. The proletariat's entry into this habitus was effected through the means of their adopting the bourgeois intimate means of excretory disposal, the water closet. It is to the bourgeois development of this form, and its subsequent utilisation by the proletariat, that we now turn.

CHAPTER 5

THE GENESIS OF THE MODERN MODE OF EXCRETION II:

WATER CLOSETS AS THE INTIMATE MEANS OF DISPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter, we examined the process of the creation of the general means of excretory disposal of the modern mode of excretion - water-based sewer systems. For these systems to collect and process faecal wastes, they had to be connected in some fashion to the buildings of the modern urban arena. Large-scale, water-based sewer systems were attached to domestic and workplace interiors through the means of the "water closet", a mechanism that allows excreta to be deposited in a receptacle which is flushed with water, such that the materials are borne into the sewers and thence to the point of treatment. The water closet is thus the other major factor of the means of excretory disposal characteristic of the modern mode of excretion.

The water closet is here understood to be the means through which the modern mode of excretion impinges upon everyday life. Sewers are relatively little confronted by the individual, whereas the water closet is visited several times a day. In general terms, by "intimate means of disposal" we refer to the aspect of a given means of disposal with which the excreting person has direct contact. The intimate means of disposal used by an individual will usually be located within, or at close quarters to, the domestic environment. The characteristics of the intimate means of disposal reflect the nature of the domestic environment. Following Bourdieu, we hold that the spatial contours of the typical domestic environments of a class are imbued with the attitudes and mores of the general habitus of that class (Bourdieu 1992a: 268-9; 1992b: 14). We would thus expect to find the characteristic attitudes and mores of the faecal habitus of a class also expressed in the domestic environment of that class. Three key aspects of the expression of a faecal habitus in the typical form of dwelling area of a class or class fraction are: a) why the faecal habitus prefers certain forms of intimate means of disposal over others; b) where

the favoured form is located within that arena, as a result of the imperatives of the faecal habitus; and c) how the favoured form develops over time, as a result of these same imperatives. That is to say, the type, location and technical development of the intimate means of disposal located within (or at close proximity to) the dwelling place are the three aspects of the *material expression* of the attitudes held as to excreta and the excreting body in the symbolic-classificatory schema of a faecal habitus. The excretory (especially defecatory and sensory) practices of that habitus are carried out within the context of these three aspects of the intimate means of disposal. Furthermore, the intimate means of disposal is the *material precondition* of such practices. Additionally, the practices themselves may be developed and extended as the particular form of the intimate means of disposal is developed, in terms of technical innovations or alterations in spatial location.

Given these general precepts, we may say that the water closet is the archetypal intimate means of disposal of the modern mode of excretion. The practices and attitudes associated with the water closet *are* the practices and attitudes of the modern mode. As that mode has as constituent elements the practices and attitudes that were originally produced within the context of the GBFH, then the water closet is the material expression of the dispositions of this habitus in terms of the intimate means of disposal. Furthermore, the water closet is the material precondition which allows the individual to defecate within the parameters of attitude and practice deemed to be “normal” (i.e. legitimate) by this habitus (or its chronologically later equivalent, the UFH). Without water closets, the defecatory practices of the modern mode could not be carried out. Nor could other imperatives of this mode, especially visual and olfactory, be upheld. Since the water closet intimate means of disposal allows the practical demands of the modern mode to be met, it also allows the symbolic-classificatory demands of that mode to be achieved. The ways in which the individual excretes in line with the expectations of the water closet means of disposal, illustrate the attitudes that modern individuals hold as to the nature both of excreta and their bodies' excretory capacities. As the modern mode is based, at the level of faecal habitus, upon the characteristics of (what was up until c. W.W.I.) the GBFH, which denied the body's excretory capacities, then it is the case that the water closet is an expression of the symbolic imperative of the modern period to repudiate the possibility that the human body defecates.

The argument that we will pursue within this examination of the development of the water closet intimate means of disposal (and thus of the modern mode of excretion more generally) is that the water closet and the practices and attitudes that go with it, were originally products of the symbolic and practical imperatives of the GBFH, primarily as this was manifested in the bacteriological PBFH in the second half of the nineteenth century. A water-based form of intimate means of disposal was shaped by the symbolic and practical demands of this bourgeois faecal habitus and the result was the "water closet". The locus for this process of imbuing a form of disposal technology with such symbolic and practical criteria was the bourgeois household after c. 1860 (i.e. in the period of large-scale operation of water-based sewer systems)¹.

In this sphere, the three general aspects of the development of the intimate means of disposal were worked out. First, the water closet was the favoured form of intimate means of disposal in this locale because it was deemed to be both hygienically and morally clean. It was clean hygienically because it seemed to satisfy bacteriologically-expressed criteria of salubrity. It was clean morally, as it reduced faecal odours lingering in the domestic environment to a minimum, and swiftly and efficiently expelled excreta from the domestic environment. Second, in terms of spatial location, the water closet allowed defecation to occur in private space. This privatisation of defecation was especially crucial in the bourgeois home, as the entire domestic environment was spatially oriented around notions of privacy. Defecation was made private by bringing the water closet into such an environment, and then further locating it within a delimited, private space within that environment. In addition, the apparatus of the water closet itself was then decorated in such fashions as to disguise its true function, thus further rendering, as these strategies of privatisation had also done, the act of defecation socially invisible. Third, the technical development of the water closet form over time was towards swifter and more efficient expulsion of excreta and reduction of lingering odours. Such innovations were a result of ever more strict demands arising from the PBFH as to what constituted cleanly forms of excretion and disposal. Further demands in this direction arose partly on the basis of initial demands being met by technical innovations in water closet design.

In addition, our argument is that such demands were generated by a distinction system that deployed water closets as forms of symbolic capital. Although this system had as its negative reference point the perceived filth of typically proletarian means of disposal, the major form of competition in this system was between fractions of the bourgeoisie, that is, between the generic fractions of upper and lower bourgeoisie. Symbolic competition between these strata, oriented around the desire to have the most cleanly form of intimate means of disposal in their domestic environments, generated the progressively greater demands for higher levels of evacuative capacity in water closet design characteristic of this period. Such demands were then met by designers working for private companies servicing the middle class market.

In this way, increasingly over the duration of the later nineteenth century, the affront to the sensibilities of the excreting person confronted by the sight and smell of his own excreta, and thus by his body's excretory capacities, was minimised. As such, the water closet form of intimate disposal was both informed by, and served to reproduce and extend still further, the attitudes towards excreta and the human body characteristic of the GBFH (as bacteriological PBFH), and the practices deriving thereof.

If the roots of the water closet intimate means of disposal are to be located in the nexus of the bacteriological PBFH of the later nineteenth century, as this operated and was further developed within the bourgeois domestic environment, how did the water closet become the intimate means of disposal for all classes in the fully-developed modern mode of excretion of the twentieth century? To ask this question is also to ask: which faecal habitus informs the twentieth century version of the modern mode? For if all classes operate within the parameters of the intimate means of disposal of the modern mode, then all classes inhabit the habitus that informs this intimate means of disposal. As such, the habitus of the modern mode of today cannot be a specifically *bourgeois* faecal habitus, but rather a habitus for all classes, a universal faecal habitus (UFH).

Our answers to these questions lies in an account of how the water closet intimate means of disposal, first produced in bourgeois domestic space, was transposed onto proletarian domestic space, thus recasting this latter in light of the bourgeois template. In the previous Chapter we saw how, as a result of the crises of the early- to mid-nineteenth century, the bourgeois began to relinquish bodily cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital generally, and faecal cleanliness more specifically, as means of class distinction. This was due to the State erecting sewer systems so as to render the urban environment cleanly, with the result that proletarian areas and the proletariat themselves were also rendered thus. The same process was extended and brought to full development in the later decades of the nineteenth century, not this time in terms of sewerage, but in terms of the water closet intimate means of disposal. Although this form was originally developed by the bacteriological PBFH - and thus originally was generated as a form of bourgeois distinction - the crises of the intimate means of disposal in proletarian areas in the later decades of the century compelled the bourgeoisie to further render the proletariat cleanly, this time through the recasting of proletarian domestic environments. Just as the collective interests of the bourgeoisie had been acted upon by the State in terms of sewerage, which reformed proletarian urban areas *externally*, so too bourgeois interests in resolving these crises involved the State recasting proletarian *internal* domestic space in line with the bourgeois paradigm of cleanliness. This was in part achieved by introducing to the proletarian home the most salubrious form of intimate means of disposal, the water closet.

The water closet was brought to the proletarian domestic sphere partly by a distinction system which deployed the water closet as symbolic capital, just as its technical form had been developed through such a system within the context of the bourgeois household. In the proletarian context, however, the water closet figured as a means of domestic “respectability”, with lower proletarian strata aping upper strata in the desire to depict the domestic environment as salubrious, both hygienically and, especially, morally. The water closet was an important component of such a domestic situation for large swathes of the proletariat from around 1890 onwards. The conditions of possibility of this system involved two factors, both of which allowed water closets to be a feasible form of intimate means of disposal among the working classes. The first factor was State legislation that from the middle of the

century had dictated that proletarian domestic space be recast in light of the bourgeois paradigm, and similar legislation of the later decades of the century and first decades of the next century, that demanded water closets be the usual intimate means of disposal in working class homes. The second factor was the reduction in price of water closets at the end of the century, a situation that allowed such forms to be economically available to ever greater proletarian strata. Both factors taken together allowed a distinction system to operate, the outcome of which were burgeoning proletarian desires for water closets to be installed in their homes. As a result both of State intervention and proletarian demands for water closets, there was a progressive infiltration of the water closet among all strata of the proletariat, the endpoint of this process being the utilisation by all ranks of the proletariat of this form of disposal.

This widespread use by the working classes of water closet forms of disposal had two effects. Firstly, excretory cleanliness was fully relinquished as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital. This was because the proletariat now defecated in the same cleanly fashion as the bourgeoisie, for both classes utilised the same form of intimate mean of disposal. Other forms of symbolic capital were now deployed by the bourgeoisie. Secondly, as the material precondition of bacteriological PBFH defecatory practices was now in place in proletarian homes, the proletariat began to defecate according to the norms of this habitus. Furthermore, on the basis of such defecatory acts, the proletariat took on both the other practices of the PBFH (and thus GBFH) and also its symbolic-classificatory system, for it was this system that generated understandings of both excreta and the body's excretory capacities. In this way, the proletariat took on the practical and symbolic aspects of the PBFH / GBFH, and excreted in terms of that habitus's intimate means of disposal (and thus also in terms of its indissociable component, the water-based sewer form of general means of disposal). But since both bourgeoisie and proletariat now held to the imperatives of this habitus, it became a *universal* faecal habitus; and since all strata now operated within the intimate and general means of disposal corresponding to this habitus, all strata now occupied the same mode of excretion. In this way the modern mode of excretion was created.

In order to consider the history of the water closet within these wider trajectories, we will divide this Chapter into three parts. In Part I, we shall analyse the nature of water closet technology and other intimate means of disposal prior to the second half of the nineteenth century. In Part II, we examine the development of the "water closet" in terms of its shaping by the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus within the bourgeois domestic environment of the second half of the nineteenth century. In Part III, we will examine the nature of the intimate means of disposal used by the proletariat at mid-century and the crises thereby engendered. We turn finally in this third section to the process whereby the water closet form was brought into proletarian homes, and the ramifications such developments had for the generation of the modern mode of excretion.

PART I: THE GENESIS OF THE WATER CLOSET

Introduction

Before we can consider the specific case of the water closet, we have to examine the typical forms of the intimate means of disposal which historically preceded it, both under the conditions of the feudal faecal habitus, and under the conditions of the GBFH prior to the bacteriological PBFH, this latter coinciding with the development and adoption of the water closet by the bourgeoisie *en masse*. The forms of intimate means of disposal will be seen as both the material expressions of the habitus (or sub-form thereof, in the case of the GBFH) of the period in which they were utilised and / or developed, and as the material preconditions for the practical and symbolic dispositions of such habituses to be made operative.

Intimate means of disposal before the water closet

We have previously characterised the feudal period as one which was explicable under the terms of the feudal faecal habitus (FFH). All strata of feudal society are understood to have had, *on the whole*, the same attitudes towards excreta and excretion, and thus all occupied the same faecal habitus which granted them a shared symbolic-classificatory schema. If the schema is shared by all strata, the

practices of excretion, including defecatory practices, will be shared. Thus the forms of the intimate means of disposal that were the material expressions of this habitus and the preconditions for corresponding defecatory practices, will also be common to all classes, with slight variations in emphasis between different strata.

Following Elias's remarks on the nature of excretory practices in the feudal period, we understand the feudal faecal habitus as displaying relatively low levels of regulations over defecatory practices. With such a habitus, we would expect to find less stress on imperatives to locate forms of the intimate means of disposal within "private" spaces, thus rendering defecation itself private. Certainly, among the feudal peasantry and urban plebs, we may surmise that most excretion took place outdoors, and that there was little, if any, opprobrium attached to this form of excretory visibility. Furthermore, the medieval town had very few latrines for public use, suggesting that the streets were the more likely locus for defecation (Palmer 1973: 16). As such "the burgesses ... [were] compelled to relieve themselves anywhere, to urinate inside towers and casemates, or in the porches of private houses in the less frequented streets"².

Given that the bourgeoisie equated privacy with domestic space, we would also expect less concern under the conditions of the FFH than under those of the GBFH, to locate the intimate means of disposal not only within the home, but also at certain specified points within it. Certainly, if the common practice of the lower orders was excretion out of doors, such concerns would not apply to these strata. Amongst the nobility and the clerical orders, we might expect to find slightly greater levels of regulation of defecatory acts, but yet still relatively low in comparison to the strong imperatives of faecal invisibility held by the GBFH. The slightly higher levels of regulation among upper strata can certainly be glimpsed at the period when the FFH was in decline, being replaced by the nascent GBFH. The manuals of courtly manners of the later feudal and absolutist periods show concern for the issue of courtiers relieving themselves in the corridors of the castle or palace, thus suggesting that such practices were the norm in earlier centuries (Elias 1995: 107).

However, even among the elites of high feudalism, there was not a total disregard for imperatives of social invisibility as regards defecation and the intimate means of

disposal³. We may see this in the creation of certain places and apparatuses for defecation in many castles of this period. "Garderobes" were stools attached to the building's foundations, which let faeces fall into shafts below. In certain castles, several of these were located in a group, "radiat[ing] round a central shaft, facing outward onto a circular passage; neighbours were sociably within hearing but ... out of sight" (Wright 1960: 47)⁴. Thus we may conclude that there was some restriction among elites as to the acceptability of the viewing of both the defecating person and the intimate means of disposal itself. But such restrictions are locatable within the general context of the feudal faecal habitus, and as such were much less elaborated, and less ascribed with social importance, at this period in comparison to the restrictions on visibility generated by the GBFH.

We may see how this is so in the case of a form of intimate means of disposal used in the dwellings of all classes. The pot into which the person defecated, especially at night, was a common utensil of the period (Bourke 1968: 133). In medieval times, it was probably displayed openly in the domestic sphere, and referred to without qualm, but in early modernity, with the erection of the GBFH, as we will see later, it was subjected to strategies of linguistic and decorative dissemblage (Wright 1960: 122-3). The trend away from direct verbal reference to the pot and its function preceded the supersession of pot-based disposal altogether. As we have already seen, in the feudal period and on into early modernity, the contents of the pot were manually emptied, by the householder himself (or, at a later date, by scavengers), into cesspools or onto dungheaps. As these means of disposal were condemned from the later eighteenth century, so too the pot went into decline, to be replaced eventually by the water closet from the mid-nineteenth century.

Traces of trends towards regulation by elites of pot-based disposal are to be found in the high feudal period. For example, the city authorities of Paris outlawed the dumping of detritus in the streets, part of which would have come from pots, in 1395 (Bourke 1968: 136). Thus we may discern that the FFH was not without negative evaluations of excreta, but the relative laxity of regulations over disposal at this period may, in part, be traced back to the ambiguous charging of excreta in the symbolic-classificatory system of this habitus⁵. Parisian authorities seem to have been particularly strenuous in promoting alternative forms of disposal, general and

intimate. Laws of 1513 bade that every house have a "privy" (see Appendix). Here we perhaps see the very beginnings of the effects of the nascent GBFH, in terms of demanding defecation occur in private locales. Many Parisian houses were still without such facilities in 1700, at which point the police had powers to imprison those who did not provide one in their houses (Winkler and Moss 1984: 35; Palmer 1973: 21, 122). Such regulations, which may be seen as the first glimmerings of State jurisdiction over the means of excretory disposal, became more commonplace from the age of Absolutism onwards, for it was at this time that the first phase of the erection of the GBFH had begun in earnest. Consequently, popular sentiment in the (later) eighteenth century dubbed Edinburgh as particularly olfactory and visually unwholesome, for the inhabitants were still following the now archaic and unacceptably filthy practice of depositing the contents of pots out of their windows and into the streets (Bourke 1968: 137). Such filthy practices were famously caricatured by Tobias Smollett in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*⁶.

A mutation of the technology of the pot that occurs under the conditions of later feudalism and Absolutism is the "close stool" or "night stool", which were in essence pots surrounded by wooden boxes on which the excreting person sat. The history of the generation of this form of intimate means of disposal straddles the period of the decline of the FFH and the first phase of the generation of the GBFH.

At the very beginning of the period in which such forms were created and utilised, such stools were implements of the aristocracy and royalty, for the boxes were highly decorated in order to signify grandeur and power. King James V of Scotland had his covered in green damask, while the English regent sat upon a seat of velvet (Wright 1960: 69-71; Pops 1982: 48). We may view such implements as the last flowerings of the feudal faecal habitus's relatively high levels of visibility of excreta and excretion. Under such conditions, a superior, such as the king, could receive underlings without shame or fear whilst he was "at stool". The stool was thus placed within the palace at sites where it could command the attention of social inferiors. Far from being hidden away, it was located at specific places as if it were a throne, so as to command awe and respect. Whilst such practices continued in certain areas, such as France, into the eighteenth century (Wright 1960: 101-2), such a mode of expressing sovereignty died out, not just in tandem with the decline of regal power,

but also as the imperatives of faecal invisibility of the GBFH were erected. The shame and embarrassment felt by feudal underlings at exposing their bodies before a superior became the generalised attitude towards the visibility of excretion in early modernity and subsequently (Elias 1995: 114).

Consequently, in the early modern period, under the conditions of the GBFH, such stools underwent changes in intention and design. They were increasingly decorated so as to disguise their function. Frequently they were made to look like furniture, such as cabinets or tables (Wright 1960: 102). The change in decorative strategy reflects the shift from one faecal habitus to another, and from one dominant class to another⁷. Whilst the grandly decorated stools of Absolutism were aristocratic tools located in palaces, the disguised stools of early modernity were part of the impedimenta of the more modest domestic environments of the bourgeoisie. As this class had taken on and further developed the mores first generated in aristocratic circles, and since such attitudes partly devolved upon the imperatives of faecal invisibility, it follows that this form of the intimate means of disposal should be rendered in a camouflaged form. These strategies of dissembling the purposes of the receptacles of excretion are the first expressions of trends that were consummated under later conditions of the GBFH, whereupon the water closet was brought into the bourgeois domestic sphere and disguised so as to hide its true purpose.

The camouflaging of such stools is due not just to the GBFH's practices, which derive from a symbolic denial of the excretory capacities of the bourgeois body. Such strategies are also a function of the importation of the intimate means of disposal into the domestic arena. As will become clear from our discussion of the water closet in the later nineteenth century bourgeois dwelling, the contradictory position vis-à-vis the intimate means of disposal is essentially the same for both early and later bourgeoisie, although the contradiction is posed in terms of different forms of intimate means of disposal. In both the cases of early modern stools and nineteenth century water closets, the form of intimate means of disposal is brought *inside* the bourgeois home, for the dictates of faecal invisibility hold that excretion cannot be carried out in the public arena, that is, within the sight of others. Rather, it is to be carried out in private, and the private world is constituted by the domestic sphere. But, since excretion and its products are highly distasteful in a variety of

ways, the inclusion of the intimate means of disposal in the domestic environment is highly problematic, for such a locale is understood to be cleanly. The presence of excreta and excretion within this environment seems to sully it. Consequently, the forms of the intimate means of disposal are disguised, so as to render them pleasing to the sensibilities of the GBFH, in order that the cleanly harmonies of the domestic world are not violated. In the case of the early bourgeoisie, the dissemblage is carried out in terms of hiding the purposes of excretory receptacles under forms of "normalising" decoration. For the later bourgeoisie, which utilises water-based means of disposal, and which has inherited lower levels of olfactory tolerance, dissemblage is based not only upon decoration of the means of disposal, but also upon technical developments in the direction of deodourising excreta, and expelling them as quickly as possible from the domestic environment.

As such, we can see that the early modern period produced forms of intimate means of disposal which illustrated the imperatives of the GBFH at that stage in its development. Let us now turn to consider how the GBFH, at a later stage in its development, generated a form of intimate means of disposal which met its more stringent requirements.

The beginnings of the water closet

As we will see below, the water closet becomes the dominant intimate means of disposal among the bourgeoisie, and thence among the proletariat, from the middle of the nineteenth century. At first glance, water closets seem merely to be both function and product of the development of large-scale, water-based sewerage as the general means of disposal in the middle of the nineteenth century. Certainly, the general dissemination of water closets among large swathes of the population is of course dependent upon water-based sewer systems. But the basic technology of water closetry had been developed over a period significantly prior to this time. We understand the first rudimentary water closets which appear initially (and very sporadically) in the Age of Absolutism, but mostly in the later eighteenth century, not as mere offshoots of large-scale, water-based sewerage systems - which occur at a later date - but as expressions of first, the emergent GBFH, and then its miasmatic expression.

Early water closets are explicable as both expression of the dispositions of the bourgeois faecal habitus, and as attempts to provide material means by which the symbolism and defecatory practices of that habitus could be made operational. As such, what were in one sense neutral technological devices, were imbued and constructed from the very beginning of their history with the dispositions of the faecal habitus occupied by the bourgeoisie. Their history is not one characterisable merely as a result of the Onward March of Technological Progress. Instead, water closets were always-already expressions of the symbolic and practical developments vis-à-vis excreta and excretion that occurred over a long period in the post-feudal age. And the technical development of these forms was stimulated by the progressive demands of this habitus and its particular historical manifestations.

Thus we view the water closet generally as a product of the dispositions of the GBFH, and particular instances of water closet design as expressions of the form of the GBFH that operated in the period in which they were constructed. Such a position helps to explain why the earliest examples of water closets, such as Sir John Harington's design for Queen Elizabeth I in 1596, did not become favoured means of intimate disposal at this period (Harington 1962; Scott-Warren 1996). This is not merely due to the fact that wide-spread water closetry was impossible at this time insofar as there was no sewerage system to facilitate such a development. It is also due to the fact that the audience to which such designs were presented had not yet undergone the shifts in visual and olfactory sensibilities that would have created elite demands for an intimate means of disposal that made defecation privatised and deodoured, and would have expelled excreta relatively rapidly from the domestic environment.

It is only when such elite demands exist that water closets are designed to meet such needs, and only when such designs are extant that water closets can become a widely-deployed form of intimate means of disposal. The first large-scale burst of activity in water closet design occurred in the last quarter of the eighteenth century⁸. This was the period of the miasmatic PBFH, when the levels of tolerance of faecal odours previously enjoyed by the bourgeoisie went into sharp decline. Hence, the decline in olfactory tolerances of the odours of excreta, coupled with the long-

standing trends towards making defecation private and excreta invisible, were expressed in both the heightened degree of technical innovation of the period, and in the forms of water closet such innovations produced. For example, a "valve closet" was patented by the London watchmaker Alexander Cummings in 1775, with further designs being put forward by other inventors some years after (Palmer 1973: 116-17; Quennell and Quennell 1967: 103-5). One such inventor, Joseph Bramah, whose design appeared in 1778, produced six thousand of such models in the next twenty years, thus indicating a growing desire among the upper bourgeoisie (and aristocracy) for such means of disposal (Kitson-Clark 1962: 81; Wright 1960: 105-7).

But, by the turn of the nineteenth century, although most houses of the middle and upper classes had some form of privy facilities, only a very small minority had water closets. That is to say, elites now were able to defecate in line with faecal habitus demands for private excretion, for the intimate means of disposal either was located within the home, or within a small outhouse located in the garden or courtyard; but they as yet had to defecate into technologies which did not diminish the levels of faecal odours lingering in the home, a key problem of both moral and hygienic dirt under the terms of the miasmatic PBFH. Given the nature of sewers at this period, such water closets as did exist in bourgeois and aristocratic homes expelled detritus not into large-scale, water based systems, but into cesspools, or onto the streets (Rawlinson 1958: 507-8; Finer 1952: 220). Although there are increasing references in English printed sources to water closets from around 1825, the water closet did not begin to oust other forms until mid-century (Lewis 1952: 49; Palmer 1973: 22). While the demand amongst elites for water closets was growing, the lack of sewer systems to provide water closets on a large-scale mitigated against their deployment within aristocratic and bourgeois homes in the first part of the century. Here we see the demands of the GBFH outstripping the material strategies of general means of disposal of which the bourgeoisie of the period were capable, both technologically and politically (see previous Chapter).

The second half of the nineteenth century is characterised by the predominance of water closets as the favoured intimate means of disposal among the bourgeoisie, whereas proletarian areas continued to generally have "dry conservancy" methods

until the end of the century (see below) (Wohl 1984: 108-9). The development of water closet forms of the intimate means of disposal in bourgeois homes was, by nature of the technologies deployed, thoroughly tied in with State construction and operation of water-based sewer systems and water supplies to sluice them. We have already traced out the relations between such State intervention and the demands of the contemporary manifestations of the GBFH. State regulation of sewerage necessarily impinged upon the provision of water closets. We saw above that various pieces of English public health legislation required the provision of, at the very least, privies in each house. It subsequently became compulsory for householders who had water closets to have these attached to mains sewers (Finer 1952: 220; Rawlinson 1958: 508-9).

The developments effected in water closet technology in the latter half of the nineteenth century were thus dependent upon State intervention in the sanitation of urban environs, insofar as the impetus for innovation could only fully come about once there was a sewer system that could provide water for flushing away detritus. But the State, although directly involved in the creation of sewer systems, was only indirectly involved both in the provision of water closets in bourgeois homes, and in the technical developments of water closet technology at this period. The relative expense of water closet techniques in comparison to other methods of disposal meant that initially only the upper middle class could afford such a luxury. Sewers were generally brought to middle class areas initially, thus stimulating water closet techniques in those areas first and in proletarian areas only later, when these locales too had water-based sewer systems. Moreover, bourgeois sensibilities probably only had full effect amongst the proletariat at century's end, and only then (in part) because, on our account, the State itself was legislating for the introduction of water closets into proletarian homes. Consequently, water closet innovations were worked out primarily in the context of the spatial contours of the bourgeois home⁹. We will see how such a context further effected the nature of this intimate means of disposal below.

Since the locus of water closet development was the bourgeois private domestic realm, it was not the State that directly guided invention and implementation in that locale. Rather, private capital was the source of ever new water closet designs,

which were then bought by bourgeois customers. The nature of such designs was shaped by the sensibilities of these very customers, as we will see shortly. Small businesses, often headed by entrepreneurial engineers, thus provided the burgeoning bourgeois market with various rival forms of water closet, each with competing claims to win over the bourgeois consumer (Palmer 1973: 46-66). From the rather crude metal and earthenware bowls of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries developed (what were thought to be) more elegant types made from glazed pottery, and thence from the 1870's, porcelain (Wright 1960: 105; Palmer: 33, 69-73).

Thus it was through the mechanisms of the capitalist economy, stimulated by bourgeois demand as informed by the GBFH of the period, that the water closet, in its various technical forms, made its way into the middle class home. By around 1860, bourgeois toiletry demands were such that only the water closet provided the levels of salubrity necessary for cleanly defecation. It is to the role of the water closet in providing such salubrity in the context of bourgeois domestic space, and the role of that locale in further shaping the nature of the water closet, that we now turn.

PART II: WATER CLOSETS AND THE BOURGEOIS HOME

Introduction

In this section, we will consider the development of water closet technologies within the spatial contours of the later nineteenth century bourgeois household, and the attitudes and practices which informed contemporary innovations in water closet design.

As noted above, water closetry from mid-century onwards began to take root in the houses of the upper bourgeoisie. What are the characteristics of the domestic environment of this class fraction at this period? We shall take the case of the English upper bourgeoisie as an example. The key to understanding this context is that, according to the viewpoint of the contemporary version of the GBFH, the bacteriological PBFH, water closets were the only form of the intimate means of disposal which allowed cleanly defecatory practices, in both the hygienic and moral

senses of cleanliness. Water closets, as the concomitant of water-based sewer systems, were viewed as meeting the hygienic criteria of bacteriological science (Smith 1979: 245-6; Guerrand 1990: 372). In terms of the moral dirt of excreta, water closetry was felt to diminish the visibility of excreta and excretion by a) allowing defecatory practices to occur in private spaces; b) reducing the possibility of faecal odours remaining in the domestic environment; and c) expelling excreta from that environment. The trends over the period of the later nineteenth century bacteriological PBFH were towards the design of water closet forms that allowed ever greater levels of privacy, deodourification and expulsion.

We will turn first to examine the aspect of privacy in the context of water closet-based defecation. Such developments involve the spatial layout of the later nineteenth century (upper) bourgeois domicile. We then turn to examine how, and for what reasons, the PBFH imperatives of deodourification and rapid expulsion of excreta were developed in this domestic context.

The bourgeois dwelling and privatised defecation

From at least the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, the English upper bourgeoisie deserted the urban centres, construed from the point of view of their general habitus to be hotbeds of noise, criminality, and (still at this point, despite the imminence of the State's recasting of urban areas) proletarian filth. From the disordered, turbulent urban centres, the middle classes fled to the peaceful, salubrious orderliness of the suburbs. From the more densely-populated town centres, where the housing stock reflected the closely-packed nature of the general environment, the upper bourgeoisie moved to detached or semi-detached properties that did not, unlike many city dwellings, share any facilities with neighbouring houses (Ashworth: 18, 148; Daunton 1983: 13).

The prime trope of this mode of suburban dwelling was "privacy":

"For the Victorian middle classes the separation of home from work, of business and professional life from the domestic life of family and friends, meant that privacy became an outstanding requirement of their homes..." (Burnett 1986: 110).

The bourgeois family unit, living within a strictly "private" environment, was protected from the outside influences of the "public" world. It was into this private sphere that the water closet penetrated from the 1860's, although a full transition from back garden or basement privy to internal water closet was not completed in the majority of bourgeois houses until the last decades of the century (Briggs 1988: 252).

Such a movement was partly due to a material development: new forms of plumbing that facilitated inter-domiciliary excretory disposal (Burnett 1986: 206, 214). We may surmise that such technologies were stimulated by bourgeois demands stemming from PBFH imperatives of privatised defecation. If defecation was to be a "private" act, then defecatory practices had to be brought into the bosom of the private sphere - that is, into the familial home, away from the gaze of non-familial others. If defecation was to be brought into the domestic sphere, then so too had the intimate means of disposal.

By bringing water closets into their houses, the bourgeoisie of the mid- to late-nineteenth century expressed in a new form - water closetry - the trends towards the privatisation of defecatory practices that had been fermenting since the later feudal period. The innovation of the middle classes of this age was to yoke such trends to a) water-based means of general and intimate disposal; and b) notions of the sacrosanct family in immaculate domestic space.

Through introducing the water closet into its domestic arenas, the bourgeoisie could represent itself as faecally cleanly for it excreted in private space, whereas the filthy proletariat were understood to excrete openly and unabashedly in the public arena (Corbin 1986: 162). Such visible practices of excretion were excoriated by bourgeois observers (Wohl 1984: 93-94). As such, as we will consider further below, privatised defecation, and the water closet form of intimate means of disposal that made such defecation possible, were prime sources of bourgeois symbolic capital.

But it was not sufficient for the purposes of making defecatory practices private, and thus cleanly, merely to bring the intimate means of disposal within the confines of the home. Within this arena itself, the water closet itself had to be rendered "private". It had to be located in its own enclosed space, such that the person using it could not be viewed even by family members, for to be viewed defecating by any other individual, regardless of other forms of intimacy between oneself and them, led to the deepest feelings of embarrassment (Corbin 1986: 101). The term "water closet" is itself revealing in this context. The aquatic nature of the means of disposal is named, with its connotations of salubrity and swiftness, while the restricted spatial dimensions of the private area legitimate for defecatory practices to occur in is also designated - excretion takes place in a "closet". Such an enclosed space mitigates against feelings of embarrassment felt by the excreting person, and against the feelings of disgust felt by others who might otherwise happen to view him in this state. This term, and associated words such as "toilet", will be examined in the Appendix.

The privatisation of defecation in the locale of the water closet was not only worked out in visual terms, but in olfactory ways too. The (upper) bourgeois home in the second half of the nineteenth century was a highly segregated area, split into various finely defined locales. The interior of the house was demarcated into certain segments - those that guests could enter, and those that only family members had access to, areas demarcated for the use of males and for females, adults and children, masters and servants (Burnett 1986: 110-11)¹⁰. The bourgeois domestic environment was thus very different from the dwellings of earlier centuries. Before circa 1600, there had been a promiscuous use of different areas within houses, such that activities like cooking, eating, washing and sleeping were carried out in the same, or adjacent, areas. But from about the seventeenth century, bourgeois houses underwent spatial changes in the direction of allocating particular activities to separate rooms (Braudel 1973: 139, 224). One may understand such developments in terms of privatising imperatives in relation to the department of "private" bourgeois bodies contained within the emergent GBH.

The privatisation of areas within the domestic sphere impacted upon the sense of smell. Given the lower tolerance for stench in the nineteenth century as compared

to earlier periods, for the contemporary bourgeois, a "confusion of smells had become obscene", for such a confusion of odours was characteristic of the proletarian slum areas, against which the proprietary bourgeois dwelling was defined (Corbin 1986: 169). Thus segregation of spaces and activities became based on olfactory imperatives of non-promiscuity. Rooms felt to emit foul odours were separated from the rest of the dwelling space. Kitchens were therefore placed far from living areas (Guerrand 1990: 370). In this domestic context, the area reserved for defecation had to be as self-enclosed as possible. As we will see later, it was exactly such promiscuity, actual and perceived, in terms of household space generally, and in the use of the intimate means of excretory disposal more specifically, that lay at the root of bourgeois State interventions to recast proletarian dwelling areas in the last decades of the century.

The water closet was a necessary evil in the later-nineteenth century bourgeois home, for it allowed the least unpleasant way of carrying out a loathsome activity. It could not just be placed anywhere in the house. An American source of 1852 complains of the current fashion amongst some architects for "thrusting these noisome things into the midst of sleeping chambers and living rooms ... surcharging the house ... with their offensive odour ..." (Winkler and Moss 1984: 35). To avoid such offences, the water closet had to be placed within its own enclosed space, so as to not offend the bourgeois nose by emitting odours, or allowing these to mix with the pleasant scents of the dwelling area. In this way, the regulation of faecal smells was both produced by, and also further extended, processes of spatial compartmentalisation that had occurred in bourgeois homes since the early modern period.

Within its delimited locale, which amounted to a disguising of the intimate means of disposal, the water closet itself was subjected to further strategies of dissemblage. As the bourgeoisie denied that its collective body had excretory capacities, and yet the need to excrete still presented itself as a problem to be negotiated, the water closet was a necessary but unwelcome intrusion into bourgeois domestic space. Thus even though it was hidden away in the bowels of the house, sealed off from other areas, its true purpose still had to be disguised. For the excreting individual had no desire to be confronted with an implement which, by its very nature, denied

the claims of his collective class body that excretion did not occur. To mitigate against the unpleasant ramifications of this periodic crisis in self-representation, the bourgeoisie decorated the intimate means of disposal so as to deny its real purpose (Palmer 1973: 82).

The later nineteenth century water closet was inscribed with symbols that were, in effect, non-verbal euphemisms (Allan and Burridge 1991: 223). These strove to represent the apparatus as having as little as possible to do with excretory disposal, but rather as being expressive of matters that commanded veneration and respect. As mentioned above, this situation had occurred in the eighteenth century with the decoration by the bourgeoisie of a common form of intimate means of disposal of the period, namely pots that collected excreta (Wright 1960: 122-3). Now it was the water closet, as the dominant intimate means of disposal among the bourgeoisie in the later nineteenth century, that was the focus of strategies of euphemising decoration

Earlier water closet designs had wooden casings around the bowls, which lent themselves easily to being covered with decor, or to being fashioned as chairs and cabinets (Palmer 1973: 34; Wright 1960: 202). In later models, the bowls, pedestals and other components were decorated and embossed, in various different colours and with pictorial motifs such as birds, gardens, fruit and flowers (Palmer 1973: 80). Seats could be made of expensive woods like mahogany. Various parts of the mechanism would be embellished by using materials like china and metal (Briggs 1988: 252). The purpose of this type of decoration was, of course, in stark contrast to the embellished "stools" of the age of Absolutism. These latter were forms of symbolic capital deployed by the aristocracy to symbolically reproduce the splendid power of the monarch or nobleman; they appeared on the stool to emphasise the grandeur of a person who publicly excreted upon it. The water closets of the later nineteenth century were forms of symbolic capital which similarly used ostentatious decoration, but in order to assert the cleanliness of the body which sat upon them, for this body perched upon something that (symbolically, if not practically) had nothing to do with the debased act of excretion. Whereas the stools of Absolutism declared aristocratic symbolic power through drawing attention to the excreting nobleman, the water closets of this later period asserted bourgeois symbolic power

through drawing attention away from the excreting bourgeois, and thus denying that his class were possessed of bodies that were similar to those of the despised and excretory lower orders

As we shall see is the case with the development of water closet technologies, the dynamic underlying ever more novel attempts to deny the true purposes of the water closet through decoration were based upon a) the development of the PBFH of the period moving towards further refinements of imperatives requiring norms of invisibility; and b) private enterprise feeding (and further stimulating) such demands. Manufacturers sought to sell their wares to a public eager for ostentatious forms of disguise by giving their water closet models grand and exotic appellations derived from places in Britain ('Oxford', 'Windsor') and the Empire ('Hindoostan', 'Native'); or from watery associations ('Aquarius', 'Ripple'); or again from associations with national and municipal pride ('Metropole', 'Shakespeare') (Palmer 1973: 85-87). The purpose of this intimate means of disposal was thus dissembled, such that intimations of spirituality rather than gross corporeal materiality were brought to mind when water closets were thought about or spoken of. Toiletry sundries that we utilise today, such as pastel shaded toilet paper, undoubtedly derive from that nexus of grandiloquent euphemism and commercial hawking that first occurs among the middle classes in the later nineteenth century. For instance, the toiletry manufacturers Doulton and Co. offered in 1899 a siphonic closet that came in such delicate shades as 'Blue Magnolia' and 'Wild Rose', shades only too familiar to the toilet paper purchaser of the present day (Palmer 1973: 57).

The ideas associated with such embellishments of the water closet were a mingling of desires to hide the purpose of the apparatus, with ostentatious and gaudy presentations of the non-excretory cleanliness of that apparatus and the persons who used it. As Hobsbawm argues, at this period beauty was equivalent to decoration, as the bald construction of bourgeois houses and the objects within them were "seldom sufficiently grandiose to offer spiritual and moral sustenance" in themselves (Hobsbawm 1995: 231-32). As a consequence, the bourgeoisie applied surface beauty to a utilitarian implement, rendering a means of disposing of excreta into the empyrean of respectable water closetry, which allowed excreta to be immediately evacuated, and the bourgeois to deny and forget his excretory capacities.

As with the capacities of water closets to evacuate excreta rapidly from the realm of an individual's sight and smell (see below), water closet decoration allowed the bourgeoisie to minimise the practical contact they had with excreta, for the implements upon which they defecated were associated with lofty matters. If even practices of defecation and the means whereby they were carried out were freed from the burdensome constraints of the physical presence of excreta, then so much more so were the bourgeoisie freed from this burden at the symbolic level. At this period, toiletry decoration, a gilding of despised matters, figures as a major material precondition of the successful living of a form of life premised upon a rejection of the physiologically inevitable. This situation continues in the present day. Though the mores of decoration may change, from elaborate water closet designs to the familiar white or pastel-shaded varieties of today, the desire to minimise the confrontation between a despised physiological act on the one hand, and a sense of self based upon the denial of one's body's capacities for such acts on the other, continues unabated.

In sum, then, the water closet was brought into the "private" domestic realm. It was then itself made to conform to imperatives of privacy, in both visual and olfactory terms, by being located in a delimited area, and excluded from the other parts of the dwelling space. Within this area set aside for excretion, the water closet was rendered into any form but that which might indicate it was a receptacle for excreta. In this sense, the history of the water closet in the later nineteenth century bourgeois home, is akin to something repulsive being placed inside a series of Chinese boxes, for the means whereby that class excreted was placed into ever more obscure locales, in order that it remain a well-guarded secret, that could not irrupt against the dispositions which had created it¹¹.

It was not only the spatial location and form of decoration characteristic of the water closet that the bourgeoisie of the later nineteenth century were concerned with. The very technologies deployed within this intimate means of disposal itself were sources of great concern. We turn first to innovations in diminishing faecal odours, then to developments in the expulsion of excreta from the domestic environment.

The water closet and faecal smells

By bringing the water closet into the house for the purposes of private, cleanly defecation, the bourgeois householder also brought the general means of water-based disposal into his home. Whether this was a move which brought security and salubrity, or danger and filth, was dependent upon the state of the sewer system to which the water closet was connected.

In the earlier years of large-scale sewerage, this was a system beyond the householder's control practically and symbolically, for it was a locale where disgusting smells, lethal gases and deadly germs could lurk. In the early days of widespread bourgeois water closetry, which is roughly the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the water closet was as much a site of potential threats as of safety and cleanliness. Fears as to foul matter escaping into the house from closet facilities did not first appear with the coming of water-based sewers. The few water closets in use in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also were subjects of suspicion, for they were thought, in the terms of the PBFH of the period, to release miasmatic gases from the middens and cesspools into which they ejected excreta. "Traps" in pipes were invented to prevent such leakages, and the valves of the early "valve closets" mentioned above were designed to prevent escapes from the places into which the closets deposited excreta (Rawlinson 1958: 507-8; Finer 1952: 220). But it was the large-scale sewer system that was the precondition for the bourgeois adoption *en masse* of indoor water closets, and it was these systems of sewers feeding noxious substances into the domestic realm through water closets, that were the cause of great concern for the bourgeoisie of the second half of the nineteenth century. For example, a common belief of that period was that detritus from water closets would overburden the sewers, creating a vast and unregulated faecal swamp beneath the urban environment (Wohl 1984: 101-2, 104)

Stevens Hellyer, the most lauded English sanitary engineer of his day (and thus a member of a bourgeois fraction at the forefront of technical innovations as dictated by faecal habitus imperatives), proclaimed in the 1870's:

"There are a "thousand gates to death"! Fewer are wider, or open more readily, than those in our own homes, when unlocked by noxious gases or bad air from drains" (cited in Palmer 1973: 47)

Thus Hellyer succinctly, if rather melodramatically, expressed the fears of the contemporary bourgeoisie, fearful of the filthy sully of his cleanly private world. Several solutions were offered to such problems. The most simple was for the householder or the servants to be ever alert to the threats. For example, the domestic manual entitled *Cassell's Book of the Household*, as relatively late as 1890, enjoined the reader to give the water closet "constant attention", recommending that in the cause of dispelling foul accumulations "two or three pailfuls of water should be thrown down the pan every day to clean the pipes" (Briggs 1988: 252).

Vigilance like this, and the anxieties on which it was based, stemmed from the lower levels of tolerance of stench that we saw as first appearing at the period of the miasmatic PBFH in the later eighteenth century. Olfactory sensibilities thus led to bourgeois fears, which in turn stimulated the ingenuity of designers employed by private capital to meet the demands of the middle class market. One of the main problems of toilet design at the second half of the nineteenth century was the creation of a trap that would allow water in and out of the closet's bowl, but yet would prevent emanations from the drains (Daunton 1983: 258).

Such a form of water closet was generally felt to have been achieved in the later decades of the century, for two reasons. First, as a result of constant innovations in closet design, the later nineteenth century home was safe from faecal odours infiltrating it from the lower depths. This was not just due to developments in water closet design. By these later decades, as we have seen, the sewers had been "tamed", brought under the rational control of Science in the service of the State. They no longer emitted malodorous gases, for they had been turned from disease-ridden threat into locus of hygienic and moral cleanliness. Sewers were also cleanly in that they figured as the means whereby the State took faeces away from the private sphere, and rendered them harmless through processing.

Second, the corollary of improved designs in keeping faecal odours out of the home was that such closets also were effective in expelling excreta from that environment; as such, they were highly effective in meeting (and furthering) bourgeois demands that faecal odours not be left to linger in the locale where they had been produced. If such odours *had* lingered, the feelings of disgust they provoked would have been magnified by the fact that they were sullyng pristine domestic space. In this case, the enclosed nature of the space in which water closets were located may have prevented such smells from escaping into other areas of the home, but the further consequence of the closet-like nature of this space would have been to concentrate these odours to overpowering effect. Given this, it was a pressing imperative of water closet design in the period that such odours be expelled as much as possible from the bourgeois home. It is to water closet designs which expelled not only odours, but the excreta which produced them, that we now turn.

The water closet and the expulsion of excreta

If the intimate means of excretory disposal among the middle classes of the first few decades of the second half of the nineteenth century was partly characterised by foul escapes from the sewers via the water closet, problems lay also in the opposite direction of faecal flow. One of the major preoccupations of water closet design of the time was the problem of faeces remaining in the closet, or in the pipes that connected it to the sewers. To a mind informed by the imperatives of the bourgeois faecal habitus, it was horrific that instead of safely going into the sewers to be processed by the State, excreta should remain to pollute the household sphere, either by their smell lingering, or by their being left visible to the excreting person or to others for longer than was absolutely necessary¹².

It was a particularly loathsome thought that faeces should be retained by a system specifically designed to swiftly and efficiently expel them. The expectation of the water closet was that it would void excreta totally and quickly. A French source of the 1880's illustrates that water flushing was expected to protect the excreting person from the noxious entity his own body had produced, and thus to deny as far as possible that it had ever existed:

"City dwellers must be carefully protected from their excretions from the moment they are produced. The waste outlet, normally kept sealed, should be opened briefly, and waste should be forcefully expelled from the residence by a powerful stream of water" (cited in Guerrand 1990: 372)

Various designs were put forward by manufacturers to satisfy the bourgeois desire to be protected from the waste materials of their own bodies. The "pan closet" was popular around mid-century. This had a shallow copper pan which tipped the excreta into a container connected to the drains (Palmer 1973: 33). This design was relinquished as the century progressed, for it was thought to retain unacceptably large amounts of excreta. Hellyer fulminated against it in 1884, when higher standards of expulsion than this design could meet had become the norm:

"It has always been a puzzle to me to understand how such a water-closet ... should become so great a favourite with architects, plumbers and the public. The only "bliss" the public can have about so foul a thing is "ignorance" of its nature" (cited in Rubinstein 1974: 90)

In place of the pan closet, Hellyer proselytises for a model more attune with the demands of the faecal habitus of the day:

"No water-closet is perfect which does not get rid of every vestige of excrement after usage but with one pull of the closet handle, i.e., a water-closet which is not completely cleansed together with its trap and soil-pipe by a fair flush of water - say three gallons - is not a perfect closet" (cited in Rubinstein 1974: 89-90)

Technical innovations continued apace in the third quarter of the century, through producers of toiletry wares meeting in the marketplace the ever more stringent demands of bourgeois customers, in the direction of reducing the odourific and visual presence of excreta in the household. Various forms of technical innovation were developed to meet these demands. Forms of valve closet in circulation from the 1860's were vaunted as allowing a strong flush of water whilst also closing the trap that led to the sewers, thus preventing odourific escapes (Palmer 1973: 34, 39,

48). The appropriately named Thomas Crapper was widely praised by bourgeois public opinion for developing a valve-less model which allowed a strong flush of water with minimum effort on the part of he who pulled the chain (Reyburn 1989). Thomas Twyford's "washout closet" of 1870 similarly attempted to extend flushing capacity by doing away with valves in the design altogether (Palmer 1973: 106, 39-41). The design of oval bowls made from ceramic, and siphonic action closets that did not require overhead tanks, were also instigated by bourgeois demands that excreta be flushed as thoroughly as possible out of the domestic environment (Winkler and Moss 1984: 35). The major final flowering of later nineteenth century designs was the "washdown closet", which again was vaunted as having a stronger flushing action than previous types (Wright 1960: 205)¹³. It is this form that the later nineteenth century bourgeoisie has bequeathed to contemporary toiletry experience.

By demanding the development of the capacities of the water closet in expelling excreta from the domestic sphere, the later nineteenth century bourgeoisie managed to have (within the confines of the technologies available) as little *practical contact* with its dejecta as was possible. Excreta were subjected to a form of intimate means of disposal designed to void them as quickly and as thoroughly as possible from the presence of the individual who defecated. This practical reduction of contact allowed a concomitant reduction in *symbolic contact*. Ejection of faeces into sewers where the State managed them allowed the consummation of processes of rejection of the excretory capacities of the bourgeois body located in the symbolic-classificatory system of the GBFH, and which had been developing since the later feudal period. The water closet was both outcome of such dispositions and the material precondition for their final consummation. As excreta no longer confronted the bourgeoisie as a practical affront to its imperatives of cleanliness, visual and olfactory, the symbolic imperatives of that class, especially its understanding of its collective class body, could operate – for the most part - unopposed by the demands of physiology. With excreta no longer a troublesome presence, trends towards symbolic denial of these "traces of the earth" could be rendered complete.

Water closets as symbolic capital

Why was it the case that the trend in water closet designs in the second half of the nineteenth century was in the direction of forms that progressively allowed ever greater levels of elimination of excreta and their odours from the domestic environment?

At the most basic level, the construction of water-based sewer systems underneath bourgeois urban areas was the precondition for any form of widespread water closet usage amongst this class. As sewer systems were refined in terms of their evacuative capacities, so too did their intimate corollary, water closets, follow in this direction. But the shifts in the nature of water closet technologies are not merely the result of developments in sewer systems. At another level, burgeoning bourgeois demand for such forms was the factor which drove manufacturers to design new models that came closer to the evacuative ideal. In turn, the presence of such models in their homes – or at least the potential availability of such models – further stimulated bourgeois demand in the direction of ever greater evacuative capacities. But what factors underpinned the development of bourgeois demand in this fashion in the first place?

Our hypothesis is that, under the conditions of the bacteriological PBFH of the later nineteenth century, water closets functioned as a form of bourgeois symbolic capital in the general distinction system in which the proletariat was the negative reference point. In the suburban dwelling, with its own system of water closets, the bourgeois family excreted in a clean and decent fashion, unlike, to the bourgeois mind, the dirty proletariat in the urban centres who excreted in filthy fashions (Corbin 1986: 162). The filth of proletarian excretory practices was, at least in part, understood in terms of their homes lacking water closet provision. This was so in terms of the desideratum that defecation occur in privatised locales¹⁴.

Furthermore, contrary to the bourgeois situation, excreta and their odours were felt to lurk in proletarian domestic space, thence to cause all manner of unsavoury consequences. Water closets were thus cleanly symbolic capital for the bourgeoisie

of this period, for they allowed defecatory practices to be carried out in such a fashion as to render them as salubrious as was possible.

The trend in all distinction systems is towards the ever greater elaboration of the phenomenon deployed as symbolic capital by the dominant group. Thus the trend in this distinction system was towards ever greater water closet cleanliness. As water closets were already, by definition, privatised forms of intimate means of disposal, the generation of ever greater levels of cleanliness involved progressively greater evacuative capacities. The exogenous factor which shapes the conditions of possibility of such a system operating is the State's building of water-based sewer systems from mid-century onwards, for without this intervention, water closets would not have been a practicable form of intimate means of disposal.

However, there are various peculiarities about this distinction system which require us to posit two caveats to this model.

First, in general terms, the dynamic of a distinction system is generated by lower strata aping higher strata, compelling the upper stratum to produce new forms of valorised capital. Although the proletariat figures as the subordinate group in this system whereby water closets were deployed as symbolic capital, it did not ape the water closet practices of the bourgeoisie, at least not in the same terms as that deployed by the bourgeoisie. In the period when water closets figured as bourgeois cleanly capital, the proletariat had no access to water closets as a form of intimate means of disposal. This was due to two facts: a) sewer systems of the water-based variety did not generally appear in proletarian areas until a significant period *after* they had been brought to bourgeois areas; b) proletarians of the period could not economically afford such a form, for the prices of water closets reflected the situation that manufacturers aimed their models at a middle class market. As we will see below, water closet designs that matched (upper) proletarian capacities of expenditure did not appear until around the last decade of the century.

Hence, the period when water closets were deployed as bourgeois symbolic capital can be dated from the beginning of mass bourgeois utilisation – circa the 1860's – to the appearance of water closet models that were aimed by private capital at the

upper end of the proletarian market – circa 1890. Thus for a period of around thirty years, water closets were a form of bourgeois symbolic capital. It was in this period, and as a result of this form of capital being deployed in the bourgeois / proletarian distinction system, that evacuative capacities were constantly refined. In this sense, water closets figured as a form of capital in a sub-system of the overall distinction system. We will refer to this sub-system as the *bourgeois water closet distinction system*.

The dynamic of the system was produced in two ways. In the first place, although proletarians could literally not afford to play the game in terms of water closet capital, it is possible to discern proletarian aping of bourgeois, water closet-based mores in the form of intimate means of disposal available to them. This form was the “dry conservancy” type of disposal, which we will examine more fully below. Proletarian aping of bourgeois water closetry in terms of the dry conservancy form had two effects. First, it produced a dynamic towards the creation of new models of dry conservancy that minimised faecal odours (see below), a trend that was a corollary of the movement towards similar minimisation of odours in water closet designs. Second, such aping placed the proletariat within the bourgeois water closet distinction system, insofar as they copied the characteristics of the valorised bourgeois form, but in terms of the intimate means of disposal open to them. As dry conservancy was deemed by the bourgeoisie to be inferior to water closet disposal, the proletariat were thus positioned at the bottom end of the bourgeois system. Thus the proletariat was included within the water closet distinction system as the negative reference point of that system. The cleanliness of ever more evacuatively powerful forms of (bourgeois) water closet was erected against the perceived uncleanness of (proletarian) dry conservancy.

As such, the proletariat was both located inside this system, and yet outside of it, to the degree that they were not playing with the same capital – water closets – as the bourgeoisie. This leads us to posit the claim that the dynamic of the water closet distinction system, although based upon the proletarian / dry conservancy negative reference point, was a product more of the *upper section* of the system. That is, the dynamic producing ever greater cleanly forms of water closet was primarily a result of inter-bourgeois competition. The dynamic of this section of the system was

between the upper bourgeoisie, with highly valorised forms of water closet (i.e. the most evacuatively effective), and the lower bourgeoisie, who desired such capital, and in gaining it over time, produced upper bourgeois desires for even greater evacuative effectiveness, which were then met by private manufacturers catering to middle class demands. It was in this way that the dynamic of the system was primarily produced. The relationship in this context between bourgeoisie as a whole and proletariat was (aside from proletarian aping in dry conservancy terms) characterised by the lower bourgeoisie defining their intimate means of disposal – less evacuatively effective water closets – as more cleanly than proletarian dry conservancy forms, thus stimulating lower bourgeois desires to upgrade to the forms enjoyed by the upper bourgeoisie.

Thus the first caveat we must put forward as to the water closet distinction system of the period is that the proletariat, although the negative reference point in the system, had access only to a different form of intimate means of disposal capital. The dynamic in the development of that form of capital was towards recasting it in the light of the characteristics of water closet forms utilised by the whole bourgeoisie. But since the proletariat were only players in this game in a limited sense, the primary thrust towards producing trends towards ever more evacuatively proficient water closet forms must derive from competition between higher and lower strata within the bourgeoisie itself.

The second caveat is that the period when water closets operated as a form of cleanly symbolic capital for the bourgeoisie coincided with developments which meant that the bourgeoisie would eventually give up bodily cleanliness, both in general and in excretory terms, as a form of capital. As we saw in the previous Chapter, State construction of sewer systems was a means of solving the excretory crises of mid-century, for sewerage hygienically and morally cleansed proletarian areas, and thus, in effect, the proletariat themselves. As such, the coming of the water-based sewer systems meant two things. First, sewer systems were both the material precondition for large-scale use of water closets by the bourgeoisie, and also the exogenous factor which figures as the condition of possibility of a distinction system with water closets as symbolic capital. Second, and conversely, sewer systems were one of the factors responsible for the bourgeoisie eventually

relinquishing bodily cleanliness as a form of capital. Hence, the water closet distinction system, based on this intimate means of disposal as cleanly capital, occurs as the wider context alters such cleanly bodily capital, in general and in excretory terms, is given up by the bourgeoisie. This distinction system is therefore the final flowering of excretory phenomena being used as symbolic capital by the bourgeoisie.

Conclusion to water closets in the bourgeois context

In our analysis of the situation of the water closet in the bourgeois domestic environment, we have seen that there are two great trajectories of the development of this form in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the first place, the water closet was created as a privatised means of intimate disposal, first by being located inside the home, then within a delimited space within that environment, and once inside that space, it was decorated so as to disguise its true function. Secondly, the technological capacities of the water closet were developed in the direction of greater evacuative power through the dynamics engendered by a distinction system premised upon bourgeois / proletarian competition, but more directly produced by inter-bourgeois competition. We now turn to view both these trajectories – spatial placement and technical development of water closetry – as these occurred in the context of the proletarian domestic environment of the same period. It is in this environment that the trends towards bourgeois relinquishing of cleanly bodily capital were finally consummated, thus leading to the end of the GBFH and its transformation into the universal faecal habitus of the modern mode of excretion.

PART III: INTIMATE MEANS OF DISPOSAL AND THE WORKING CLASS HOME

Introduction

Thus far we have viewed the nature of the elaboration of the characteristic intimate means of disposal of the modern mode of excretion in terms of the bourgeois domestic environment of the later nineteenth century. In this part, we will claim that

the manner in which the proletariat was brought into the modern mode of excretion, in terms of both the means of disposal (intimate and general) and the faecal habitus of this mode, was achieved through two sets of factors.

In the first instance, the State set up the conditions of possibility for such a shift in proletarian faecal dispositions. It did so by legislating that proletarian domestic space be recast in emulation of the characteristic, privatised spatial demarcations of the bourgeois home in general, and the location of the intimate means of disposal in private space in that environment in particular. Furthermore, State legislation was enacted such that the particular form of intimate means of disposal to be located in that private space was the water closet. Such legislative strategies to recast domestic space were designed to overcome the crises of the intimate means of disposal that were felt to occur in the proletarian domestic environment of the mid-nineteenth century. Water closets solved such crises because they were deemed by bourgeois perception as cleanly in both hygienic and moral terms.

This leads us to the second set of factors involved in the entry of the proletariat into the conditions of the modern mode of excretion. In the fashion just described, the State set up the conditions of possibility for a distinction system among proletarian strata that deployed water closets as symbolic capital. We have already argued that the proletariat was engaged in a distinction system with the bourgeoisie in the period circa 1860-1890, with the proletariat aping the characteristics of the bourgeoisie's valorised water closet form in terms of dry conservancy forms. After c. 1890, however, once bourgeois homes were for the most part serviced by water closets, (and, as a consequence, the various bourgeois fractions had relinquished this form of capital in the inter-bourgeois distinction system), there arose a new version of the distinction system which involved water closets as symbolic capital. This system is inter-proletarian, with lower strata aping higher strata. The aim of this system was the achievement of domiciliary "respectability", an important part of which was the provision of the water closet in the home. By this period, the prices of water closets had dropped to the extent that proletarians had economic access to such a means of disposal. The dynamic of this system, with the upper stratum of the proletariat generating ever more novel forms of respectability capital, was the progressive infiltration of the water closet intimate means of disposal into the domestic

environments of ever lower proletarian strata. The full utilisation of water closet facilities among the working classes was, as a result of this dynamic, achieved in the inter-War period.

Thus the adoption of water closets by the proletariat was the outcome of a context, produced both by State legislation and by the lowering of water closet prices, in which an inter-proletarian distinction system operated. The adoption by proletarians of water closet means of disposal completed the process whereby matters excretory, and bodily cleanliness generally, were relinquished by the bourgeoisie as forms of symbolic capital. As a result, the bourgeoisie now sought out other forms of symbolic capital. Furthermore, proletarian use of water closets meant that this class now carried out defecatory practices in line with the dictates of the GBFH (in its bacteriological form). As such, they now also entered the realm of this habitus's excretory practices more generally. As these practices derived from the symbolic-classificatory schema of this habitus, then the proletariat also entered into its conditions. As such, by the two or three decades after W.W.I., all social strata occupied the (bacteriological PBFH version of the) GBFH. The consequence of this was that the GBFH was transformed into the universal faecal habitus, the habitus component of the modern mode of excretion.

We turn first to examine the crises in proletarian intimate means of disposal at mid-century, which prompted State action to reform these conditions. We then turn to examine the State's creation of the preconditions for an inter-proletarian distinction system through legislation that demanded both the recasting of proletarian domestic space, and that water closets be located therein. We then examine the prehistory of this system, in the case of proletarian dry conservancy capital in the water closet distinction system of c.1860-90, before turning to the proletarian system operative after 1890, the effect of which brought the water closet into the houses of all proletarian strata. We conclude by considering the effects of this transition for the production of the modern mode of excretion.

Crises of proletarian intimate means of disposal

The urban crises of the first half of the nineteenth century were manifest in the case of provision of the intimate means of excretory disposal as much as in the general means of disposal, sewerage. Just as in the crises concerning the latter, the key components of the crises of the intimate means of disposal at this period were twofold. The first aspect producing concern among those inhabiting the GBFH (and first its miasmatic, and thence its bacteriological manifestations) involved, firstly, the hygienic dirt of these means of disposal, and, secondly, the moral dirt produced by these forms.

In terms of concerns as to hygienic dirt, the central concern was the inadequacy of the current means of collecting the excreta of the proletarian population. Here again we witness a process whereby there was an outstripping of the means of disposal, this time intimate, of the eighteenth century, by the demands put upon them by vastly expanded urban populations, and their production of greatly increased quantities of excreta. The amount of privy provision in proletarian areas was vastly inadequate (in the perception of contemporary bourgeois observers) in relation to the huge numbers of workers concentrated in the cities. For example, Dr. Kay's report of conditions pertaining in Manchester in 1832 found that, out of 6,951 houses surveyed, 2,221 were without privies (cited in Engels 1987: 101).

Such provision was also inadequate from the point of view of the moral dirt thus produced. The GBFH dictated that excretion take place in enclosed, private spaces, rather than openly in the streets, whereas the lack of privies actively encouraged public defecation (Smith 1979: 197-8; Wohl 1984: 93-94). Also breaching the standards of this habitus was the foul-smelling and visually unpleasant nature of such privies as existed, and the collection of detritus in piles and foetid pools. The horror felt by the contemporary bourgeoisie is well expressed in Engels' reportage of the conditions of Manchester and other cities in 1844. In these locales, especially in the slums, bourgeois eye and nose were assailed by situations such as the dumping of excreta from privies straight into rivers (Engels 1987: 90), dungheaps piled up in yards (Engels 1987: 80), and small numbers of privies for large amounts of people.

with one particular court's single privy serving one hundred and twenty people (Engels 1987: 98).

Even in the more affluent proletarian areas, there was much to offend the sensibilities of a bourgeoisie that held to the norms of faecal invisibility and avoidance of faecal odours. In the first half of the century, the bourgeois flight to the suburbs was predicated upon what was deemed to be the unacceptable living environment of the urban centres. By contrast, as we saw above, in the suburban home, cleanliness was guaranteed, and the immaculate nature of that locale was defined in contrast to the filth in which the proletariat wallowed. But such a stratagem was contradictory in its implications, for by viewing the proletariat as utterly filthy, the workforce was symbolically located outside the realm of bourgeois authority. The cleanliness of bourgeois bodily self-representation, especially in excretory terms, was bought at the price of a symbolic representation of a disordered, unruly proletariat.

Thus from mid-century onwards, we witness the manifestation of the collective will of the bourgeoisie, the State, beginning to rectify the hygienic and moral filth of the proletariat. This was done through legislative strategies aimed at reforming proletarian domestic space, so as to recast it in light of the cleanly spatial contours of the bourgeois home. An integral part of that environment was the water closet¹⁵. Let us now examine how the spatial contours of proletarian domestic environments were altered by the State in the second half of the nineteenth century so as to mirror the salubrious homes of the bourgeoisie.

Reforming the proletarian domestic environment

The filthy inadequacy of the intimate means of disposal in proletarian areas was one of the factors which provoked the State into reforming action. From the viewpoint of the bourgeois faecal habitus, a key problem of these means of disposal concerned the locales in which they were positioned. In proletarian housing of all varieties, the sharing of privies and general washing facilities between members of different households and / or families was the norm. The sharing of such facilities was, by the standards of privacy held by the bourgeoisie, inimical to cleanliness, in terms both

of hygienic standards, and of moral rectitude (Wohl 1984: 87). The social reformer John Glyde expressed well the dispositions of the contemporary bourgeois faecal habitus:

"The demoralizing practice of providing but one convenience for several houses is ... seen in full force ... The deficiency of private receptacles for refuse must tend greatly to deteriorate the moral habits of the community ... Are not these circumstances sufficient to destroy all modesty, to blight the beauty of the female character, and to banish all feelings of self-respect from the human mind: and do they not militate most powerfully against the comfort, decency and morality of the labouring population of the town? ... Is it not hopeless to expect moral improvement of the working classes until the means of preventing such evils are provided"¹⁶

The ambiguous aspect of these facilities, not quite "public" and not quite "private", was at the root of such concerns, for such ambiguity was laden with associations of filth, in contradistinction to the cleanly environment of the "private" household that was the customary bourgeois mode of dwelling, where one family unit dwelled within one household unit. The promiscuous sharing of the same apparatus of the intimate means of disposal between various households was felt not only to violate the cleanly privatisation of the bourgeois home, which protected the household unit from *external* threats; such promiscuity also violated the norms of the *internal* compartmentalisation of areas within the bourgeois home (see above).

The ambiguous nature of these means of disposal reflected the ambiguous spatial layout of the proletarian dwelling in general. Certain parts of the home, such as courtyards, were shared among various households. The dwelling of one family imperceptibly shaded into the dwellings of others. The household area often spilled out into streets and courtyards, which were locales both partially public and partially private. The bourgeoisie, of course, had shed any such ambiguities of spatial layout at an earlier period, creating a distinct private sphere, and then strictly compartmentalising its interior. State policies from mid-century onwards were oriented around dismantling the ambiguous nature of proletarian dwelling spaces, and recasting them in line with this bourgeois model. As a result of State policies, the individual dwelling became self-contained and "private", the facilities of which

were open to members of the household (usually the family unit) only. Space outside this enclosed area became purely "public" in nature, thus making it easier for police forces to keep under surveillance, just as the areas under the streets had been recast so as to be open to State scrutiny and regulation. The boundary between "public" and "private" space was at this period made impermeable (Daunton 1983: 12, 36).

Consequent upon these wider changes, the spatial contours surrounding the intimate means of disposal within the proletarian home were reoriented in imitation of the bourgeois model. One of the key contemporary definitions by the bourgeoisie of a "private" dwelling was that it had its own privy facilities. Within the now-privatised realm of the proletarian dwelling, the privy increasingly was located in its own self-enclosed space, thus reproducing the bourgeois trend towards isolating its presence from the rest of the lived environment, for the sake both of private defecation and of deodourification of the domestic environment. Thus by bringing defecatory practices into a newly-created private sphere, and further locating them inside an enclosed area within that, the visibility of the intimate means of disposal was greatly diminished in comparison to earlier periods. Furthermore, the commingling of smells felt by the bourgeoisie to be the epitome of proletarian odourific filth, was now eradicated. Just as in the bourgeois dwelling, faecal odours were contained within a delimited area; this area was occupied by only one individual at a time, and was only to be used by those in the same household unit. In this way the mixing of the faecal odours of different household groups was brought to an end (Corbin 1986: 158-9).

We may see such trends in various forms of working class housing in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the case of tenement buildings, privy facilities were generally shared by all inhabitants in the first half of the century, and thus were the targets of bourgeois fears as to overcrowding and promiscuity (Burnett 1986: 66-8; Daunton 1983: 170). Although such a situation continued in isolated cases into the latter decades of the century (Kaufman 1975: 13), on the whole tenements were divided into separate flats each with their own privies (as in Scotland), or went into decline and were replaced by individual houses with private toilet facilities (as in the English situation) (Daunton 1983: 38, 54-56).

Back-to-back housing, common in the early decades of the nineteenth century because of its relatively inexpensive construction costs, was so called because back walls were shared between houses (Ashworth 1954: 20-21)¹⁷. Privies and water supply pipes were shared by the inhabitants of various houses, and were situated in common courtyards (Burnett 1986: 70-72). These courts were of the semi-private nature described above, and certain English local authorities were concerned from mid-century onwards to abolish these areas, and the back-to-back form generally. Even in places such as Leeds, where the back-to-back continued as a common type of housing well into the twentieth century, shared courts were slowly banished, with each house having its own privy facilities, generally located within basements (Daunton 1983: 25-27). Terraced housing, with each house having its own back yard with a privy in it, ousted the back-to-back as the major mode of English proletarian housing in the second half of the nineteenth century (Daunton 1983: 281)

The changes in the spatial outlines of proletarian housing were mostly achieved by the effects of State legislation, as we will see below. But private capital also in a limited way fostered the recasting of proletarian domestic environments in imitation of bourgeois forms. Benevolent capitalist employers were providing housing for employees, based on the model of household self-containment and private privies, as relatively early as the 1830's (Burnett 1986: 82-4; Daunton 1983: 189). Most employer-provided housing of the more elaborate sort in the latter half of the century was based on such principles (Burnett 1986: 181-2). Philanthropic individuals and bodies also built working class housing around such principles from mid-century onwards, such that by the 1850's and 1860's, the provision of private privies for each house was beginning to be regarded (by the bourgeoisie if not by the upper proletariat also) as a necessity, not a luxury (Palmer 1973: 119-120; Daunton 1983: 192-3; Burnett 1986: 84-6). Utopian programmes for proletarian housing at this period generally regarded bourgeois practices as the ideal to be aspired to, these including private privies, if not water closets (Benevolo 1967: 65-67, 129; Rubinstein 1974: 267; Burnett 1986: 177-79; Ashworth 1954: 136).

Yet it was the bourgeois State that was primarily responsible for effecting the transplantation of the template of bourgeois domestic space onto proletarian

dwellings. The precondition for bringing the water closet and its concomitant forms of practice and attitude to proletarian areas was, of course, the construction of water-based sewer systems by the State and the extension of these into working class districts. A further precondition was the decline of the relative power of landlords as a bourgeois fraction in the face of the legislating will of the State, the expression of the collective and long-term interests of that class (Brockington 1966: 83). By treating housing not as a commodity, but as a factor in its dealings with the proletariat, especially in the recasting of proletarian habits in line with bourgeois norms, the State secured the undisrupted continuation of the capitalist system in the face of crises threatening it (Daunton 1983: 37).

We can trace out these processes in terms of progressive State legislation towards requiring first (dry conservancy) privy, than water closet, forms of the intimate means of disposal in proletarian dwellings. There was some (English) local authority activity before the coming of water-based sewers as to regulating that each house have its own back yard and privy (Burnett 1986: 93-94, 157). The development of large-scale sewer systems was concurrent with central State legislation on housing. Various policies of the third quarter of the century were designed to regulate dwelling space generally, for example in terms of levels of ventilation, and the intimate means of disposal specifically. An example of such regulations of the period is that the contents of privies were to be removed without the transporting of them through the house (Burnett 1986: 158-9). Local authorities were given powers under bye-law regulations to enforce minimum standards of drainage, ventilation and yard space. Usually houses built under such rules each had a yard with its own privy (Swenarton 1981: 19).

By World War I, housing built under bye-law provisions often had a water closet rather than a privy, and that inside the house (Burnett 1986: 161). State regulation of housing built by private capital had thus recast proletarian dwellings and their intimate means of disposal in the manner adopted by the bourgeoisie around the third quarter of the century. Legislation of the period immediate to the Great War was explicitly designed to ensure that the facilities enjoyed by middle class householders be installed in working class homes (Ashworth 1954: 187).

When the State, in the guise of local authorities, tentatively began to *directly* provide housing for the working classes from the 1890's onwards, this proved to be a further mechanism of reworking proletarian space in the ways described above (Kaufman 1975: 36; Burnett 1986: 183-4; Daunton 1983: 194). In the crisis period after World War I, State provision of housing was regarded by political elites as a method of dampening feelings of discontent. By providing the working classes with the amenities that the middle classes were accustomed to, the State attempted to prove the irrelevance of revolution. One of the major amenities thus provided was a water closet located inside the house (Swenarton 1981: 87). Subsequent council housing provided such a facility as standard equipment, thus demonstrating that the process of State policies over the course of the latter half of the previous century had succeeded in thoroughly transporting the water closet form into proletarian domestic space (Swenarton 1981: 296-300).

The actions of the State thus produced fundamental transformations in the nature of proletarian domestic space, creating private spheres, each with their own private toiletry facilities, with such facilities increasingly likely to be of the water closet variety. However, despite *direct* State action in bringing water closets to proletarian dwellings through the means of council housing, such strategies do not fully explain the transition towards wholesale proletarian utilisation of water closets. Indeed, by the period of large-scale council house building programmes – that is, in the inter-War period – most proletarian homes already had such provision. These homes were erected by private capital, constructing dwellings in light of government legislation. In this sense, the State was *indirectly* responsible for the spread of water closet provision. But the spread of the water closet is not merely explicable in terms of private capital erecting houses according to the State's imperatives. Throughout the last decade of the nineteenth century, and until at least the Great War, there was a proletarian *demand* for water closets as the intimate means of disposal. Such demand was the result of an inter-proletarian distinction system. The State provided the conditions of possibility for such a system, by legislating such that proletarian domestic space was recast in emulation of the bourgeois model, and that privies, and later water closets, should be the intimate means of disposal contained therein. But the State only set the context for the diffusion of water closets; such a process was

also a result of a distinction system which held that water closets were forms of symbolic capital. We now turn to examine the prehistory of this system.

The water closet distinction system: dry conservancy

We argued above that the distinction system which resulted in the development of ever greater evacuative capacities of water closet designs deployed in the bourgeois home in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, was one which was based on the deployment by the bourgeoisie of water closets as cleanly symbolic capital. The cleanliness of water closet disposal was created in antithesis to the typical proletarian form throughout the nineteenth century, dry conservancy. Conversely, the dynamic of this system was towards proletarian aping of the characteristics of bourgeois water closet forms within the terms of the dry conservancy forms economically available to them.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, different urban areas had varying proportions of dry conservancy and water closet forms of disposal, with the former still being the most common form in the proletarian districts of some cities, such as Manchester, on the eve of W.W.I. (Wohl 1984: 97-8, 108). The trend was, of course, given the efforts of the State described above, to the replacement of dry conservancy means by water closets, this being achieved almost fully in the inter-War period. But yet dry conservancy was the most important aspect of proletarian toiletry experience for the most substantial part of the nineteenth century.

Dry conservancy techniques took a variety of forms. Excreta could be collected in small middens or receptacles constructed under individual privies and which were filled with ash or soil. The privies themselves were small huts that allowed space for one excreting person, who sat on a toilet seat. These were generally located in a garden or backyard, rather than inside the house. The "night-soil" collected therein would then be borne away by scavengers. Such tradesmen could also collect detritus that lay in pails, which were placed below seats, which were again located within individual privy buildings (Wohl 1984: 101; Frazer 1950: 108-10). In the physical construction of these little buildings reserved for the activities of one excreting

person, we see that the various forms of dry conservancy means of disposal as they occurred in the latter half of the nineteenth century were influenced by the visual imperatives of the GBFH, as defecation was carried out in "private" space, away from the gaze of onlookers. The technology developed in an earlier period, which basically constituted a version of the pot-and-stool method, was imbued with the dispositions of the GBFH, for defecation now had to be socially invisible. The pot which had previously stood openly in the domestic environment was placed in its own designated space, out of view. Furthermore, it was located outside the domestic environment, thus conforming to the lowered levels of olfactory tolerance of excreta characteristic of the bourgeois practices of the time.

We may see this transformation of dry conservancy means of disposal, first utilised in the feudal period, into forms that have certain "bourgeois" characteristics, in terms of the titles that such forms bore in the later nineteenth century. "Ash closets" and "soil closets" denote that excretion takes place in an enclosed space. Perhaps more strikingly, "privy midden" illustrates the imbuing of an older means of disposal (the midden) with notions that the defecatory practices that create midden material must now take place in private space; indeed, that the midden itself is for private use only, not to be shared amongst all and sundry.

These means of disposal, although located in private spaces, were yet located outside the domestic environment. As we have seen, the commingling of excretion, especially its olfactory aspects, with other household activities was outlawed in the bourgeois home as from mid-century. We may surmise that, in addition to the bulky and unwieldy nature of such technologies mitigating against the placing of such means of disposal within the domestic environment per se, such attitudes were important in the placing of dry conservancy modes outside the parameters of the proletarian domestic realm. The bourgeoisie could safely have the water closet in the home, for it whisked faeces away out of that sphere, not allowing these products or their odours to linger, thus corrupting the environment. From the viewpoint of imperatives of swift expulsion of excreta from the point of defecation, the threat from dry conservancy methods was that the faeces lingered in a receptacle, and that receptacle was located relatively adjacent to the domestic sphere. In addition to fears deriving from a bacteriologically-expressed symbolic-classificatory schema as to

germs deriving from these middens in miniature, they also potentially offended eye and nose. Faeces remained relatively within sight, for they were not expunged into the sewers; nor did the purifying flush of water dispose of their odourific capacities. Rather than be immediately expelled, faeces languished in their receptacles for relatively long periods. Thus by the first decades of the second half of the century, it was impossible to have such means of disposal located inside a bourgeois house. Indeed, it was these characteristics of dry conservancy, so lacking in comparison to the criteria that were met by water closets, that were the basis of bourgeois denigration of these forms as filthy. This was especially the case as dry conservancy forms had been utilised to a large degree by the bourgeoisie in the first half of the century, but with the coming of water-based disposal, such forms had been transcended and seemed to be reminiscent of a more filthy past.

But as the second half of the century progressed, the filth of dry conservancy forms was not just a conception held by the bourgeoisie. Because the proletariat and their dry conservancy means of disposal were the negative reference point in the distinction system primarily operative between lower and upper bourgeois fractions, the working classes too were brought into this system *to some degree*. The dynamic of this system was to produce ever more cleanly forms of water closet. As with any such system, the valorised forms of capital, while held by upper strata, become desired by lower strata. Primarily at this period, water closets were desired by the lower bourgeoisie. If this group were the focus of upper proletarian aspirations, then it follows that water closets began to take on the guise of symbolic capital for the proletariat (or at least its upper reaches). The corollary of cleanly water closets was the dirt of dry conservancy forms. As such, by beginning to desire water closet disposal, the proletariat began to turn against dry conservancy. But because such forms were the only type of disposal the proletariat had economic access to in the period until c. 1890, their growing distrust of it was manifested in a direction other than full rejection. Instead, desires grew as to recasting dry conservancy forms in the manner of the valorised water closet, which allowed privatised and deodoured defecatory practices. Such desires were met by private manufacturers seeking to exploit a nascent (upper) proletarian market.

Let us see how this was so. Dry conservancy forms were located within the confines of the domestic realm, insofar they were located in the yard or garden, but outside the home proper. This solved the problem of faecal visibility to an extent, but it did not prevent the potential for foul odours to emanate from such places. The dry conservancy means of disposal which were located in these locales were thus subjected to ever increasing strategies of deodourification over this period. From the very start, the appeal of ash- and soil-closets was that they reduced faecal odours by mixing excreta with odourifically neutral materials. As the century progressed, dry conservancy forms were reconstructed by bourgeois designers to provide more protection from what were felt to be unseemly smells (Daunton 1983: 248-9; Wohl 1984: 95).

However, proletarian desires for more “bourgeois” forms of disposal were neither at this period particularly strong – for the proletariat was within the water closet distinction system primarily as negative reference point – nor could they be expressed within the context of relatively low degrees of proletarian spending power. Furthermore, the situation of many proletarians of the period was characterised by dwelling within rented accommodation whereby they had very little say in the matter of what forms of intimate disposal were provided. The recasting of dry conservancy means of disposal into forms more approximate to characteristics of the water closet was equally well a product of action and legislation by the State.

For example, the receptacles into which excreta were deposited partly became smaller as a result of legislation. The State began to regulate on the legitimate size of receptacles, for size dictated how much excreta could be retained, and thus how frequently the receptacle had to be emptied. An example of this is the privy midden (more capacious than the other dry conservancy forms), which increasingly became less common over time. By the end of the century, the British State was legislating for receptacles to hold not more than a week's worth of detritus (Daunton 1983: 248-9). Receptacles became more air- and water-tight, being made of materials like brick or metal, for such impermeability allowed less leakage of odours, gases and liquids, all deemed unpleasant and / or dangerous by the contemporary PBFH, into the surrounding environment (Wohl 1984: 95-96). Just as larger middens and cesspools had been subjected to strategies of impermeability in the later eighteenth and early

nineteenth centuries, such strategies were re-enacted at the domestic level in the second half of the nineteenth century (Corbin 1986: 91). In addition to regulations as to receptacles of excreta, the State legislated on the means whereby these were emptied. From around the fourth decade of the century, local authorities, began to take control of the removal of excreta from dry conservancy receptacles, by bringing scavenging under municipal control (Wohl 1984: 97-98).

The demise of dry conservancy forms may be understood as a conjunction of State intervention in this area, coupled with burgeoning proletarian demand, not for more refined dry conservancy methods, but for water closets per se. By the very end of the century, water closets were deemed, by State officials in particular, to be more hygienically sound than privy middens and such like (Roberts 1984: 133). The hygienic and moral cleanliness brought by the water closet was thought by this fraction to be of far greater merit than that generated by dry conservancy forms, which were now seen as so wholly inferior to water closets that it was better to abolish them entirely. Apart from lacking the evacuative capacities of water closets, dry conservancy methods were viewed by officials as involving disruptions of the privacy of the "respectable" proletarian household by scavengers come to remove excreta. It was preferable if the water closet did this task automatically, as it did in the bourgeois home (Daunton 1983: 256-8).

But by this period, it was not only government officials who conceived of the superiority of the water closet in this way. For the water closet now figured as a potent form of symbolic capital in an inter-proletarian distinction system. It is to this that we now turn

Water closets as symbolic capital amongst the proletariat

Dry conservancy means of disposal were more prevalent among the proletariat than water-based means in the second half of the nineteenth century. Water closets were still rare in proletarian areas in the 1880's, with this form of intimate means of disposal having infiltrated only the more "respectable" areas (Gauldie 1974: 79-81; Smith 1979: 221-22). However, the trend in the final decades of the nineteenth century and first decade of the twentieth century is clear to discern: towards the

provision of water closets in proletarian housing (Burnett 1986: 77-8, 161). As sewer systems were extended under the working class areas of cities, conversion to water-based disposal became possible and, over time, more likely. Certain local authorities, such as Liverpool as early as 1863, stipulated that all houses within its jurisdiction had to be converted to water-based disposal (Wohl 1984: 102). Such policies were the norm by the last decade of the century (Daunton 1983: 249-51, 254; Smith 1979: 228). By World War I the process of conversion to water closets in the houses of all social strata was virtually complete (Daunton 1983: 258).

What were the reasons for such a trend? We saw above that the increasing recasting of dry conservancy forms of disposal in light of water closet characteristics was due to a mixture of, firstly, (relatively weak) proletarian desires for this latter form (deriving from the proletariat's place in a primarily inter-bourgeois distinction system whereby the water closet figured as symbolic capital), and secondly, State legislation and intervention in this domain. This process took place at the same period as did the inter-bourgeois competition, that is, roughly between 1860 and 1890. After 1890, however, most bourgeois dwellings had water closets. The water closet thus ceased to be a form of symbolic capital in terms of inter-bourgeois competition. Moreover, from the 1860's onwards, with the cleansing of urban areas (and thus of the proletariat itself, in some senses), the bourgeoisie had been moving towards a relinquishing of bodily cleanliness in general as a form of symbolic capital.

The final phase of the relinquishing of such capital by the bourgeoisie was effected by the extension of a logic that had been in place since mid-century. Bodily cleanliness as symbolic capital contravened wider bourgeois interests. The interest of having a healthy workforce was contravened if that workforce was now placed under conditions of (un)hygienic filth. The interest in having a disciplined workforce was transgressed by symbolising the working classes as filthily disordered. The collective interests of the bourgeoisie, as pursued by the State, were that proletarian bodies be rendered cleanly in both senses. This process had begun with the sewerage of the cities, and was extended by State housing legislation that recast proletarian space. By the turn of the century, cleanliness of both varieties could (indeed, *had to*) be wholly yielded if the proletariat both *lived* in the domestic manner of the

bourgeoisie, and *desired* to live thus (Daunton 1983: 37). The State's legislation dictating that water closets be the intimate means of disposal in proletarian housing satisfied the first criterion. By stipulating that water closets be the typical proletarian, as well as bourgeois, intimate means of disposal, the bourgeoisie released its grip on faecal cleanliness as a form of symbolic capital. This mirrored the relinquishing of general forms of bodily cleanliness as symbolic capital in favour of having the proletariat live in a hygienic and morally cleanly fashion.

The second criterion - that proletarians desire to live in a "bourgeois" manner - dictated that there be a situation whereby proletarians wished to have water closets. This was already the case, in a weak form, from circa 1860. The desire for water closets could only be fully nurtured amongst the proletariat if water closets could fully function as a form of symbolic capital amongst them. The context of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries furnished the conditions of possibility of such a distinction system. This was so in two ways: the State decreed that proletarians have access to water closets, and the prices of water closets fell in the period.

The first factor has already been set out at length. State legislation had the aim of bringing water closets to proletarian homes, rendering these and those who dwelled within them cleanly. As such, the State's policies of the period were the first precondition for an inter-proletarian distinction system with water closets as symbolic capital. But because it was not until *after* W.W.I. that the State *directly* provided water closet provision *en masse* through the means of council housing, it was this distinction system which was to a very great degree responsible for bringing water closets into proletarian homes, a situation achieved to a significant extent by the period circa the Great War.

The other precondition of this system was that proletarians had economic access to water closet technologies. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century, when water closets were a form of bourgeois capital, water closet technology was expensive in comparison to other means of disposal such as dry conservancy forms. Landlords and builders were reluctant to provide the relative luxury of a water closet, for proletarians were thought to be either indifferent to these or would be sure to wreck

them with careless behaviour (Wohl 1984: 93). It was thus not within the economic capacities of the vast bulk of proletarians before the very end of the nineteenth century to *fully* engage in a distinction system whereby bourgeois water closetry was pursued as a form of symbolic capital.

However, the prices of water closet technology began to fall in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. This development may be seen as the conjunction of two key factors. The first factor is that at this period the (upper reaches) of the proletariat had greater spending power than previously¹⁸. The second factor was that private manufacturers wished to enter a burgeoning market for their wares, for demand now arose from two sources: the working classes themselves, and State bodies which purchased water closets so as to convert proletarian domiciles to this form of disposal. Private capital was to a degree compelled to enter this new market, because most bourgeois homes already had water closets, and the market for such wares contracted correspondingly. Working class desires for the water closets they were increasingly offered by private capital (or directly given by the State in the guise of local authorities) were initially the result of proletarians growing increasingly dissatisfied with dry conservancy forms in the period up until circa 1890. The further development of such desires was due to a specifically inter-proletarian form of the water closet distinction system that had operated up until that time.

Water closet technology was reduced in economic value at this period as a corollary of its decline as bourgeois symbolic capital. As it ceased to be a form of bourgeois distinction, the economic value dropped accordingly. Conversely, and simultaneously, because water closets now became a form of inter-proletarian capital, their economic price dropped, both because such capital is less distinctive than bourgeois capital (and thus less economically worthy), and also because their role as proletarian capital meant that they had to be economically affordable to proletarians.

The main result of the drop in prices of water closets was that the inter-proletarian version of the water closet distinction system now could feasibly occur. That is, a situation was now in place whereby the proletariat both had *access* to such a form of disposal, and actively *desired* such a form of disposal in their homes. The proletariat

now had access to water closets in two ways. First, water closets were now cheap enough for State institutions – primarily local authorities – to purchase such forms of intimate disposal and directly provide them *en masse* in proletarian domestic environments. Such direct provision begins, in the British context, in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In addition, water closets were now cheap enough for the State to feasibly demand that private builders and landlords provide these forms of disposal as standard in the proletarian homes they constructed and managed. Thus by this period, proletarians living in State-provided housing, or in private housing regulated by the State, generally had access to water closets.

The second way in which the proletariat could have access to such intimate means of disposal primarily concerns those fractions of the proletariat living within self-owned properties. The drop in prices meant that such proletarians could now afford to purchase water closets if they so wished, in place of the dry conservancy forms they would hitherto have used. The drop in prices did not only bring access to water closets *per se*; it also meant that proletarians were able to afford the same *type* of water closet technologies as the (lower) bourgeoisie used (and the lower strata of the bourgeoisie could increasingly afford models enjoyed by higher strata).

The relatively few water closets used in proletarian areas in the early decades of the second half of the nineteenth century included the "trough closet", which was not connected to the mains but emptied by scavengers. The idea behind this design was that workers employed by local authorities had to remove the collected excreta, for proletarians could not be trusted to dispose of it themselves (Palmer 1973: 63). Servants of this period who lived in the homes of their masters would excrete in the cheaper water closet models located in the servants' quarters, while the bourgeoisie excreted in more luxurious (i.e. more evacuatively efficient) designs (Palmer 1973: 39). Until the 1880's, the water closets that did exist in proletarian homes were generally the cheaper models (i.e. those available to the lower bourgeoisie) which consequently had less efficient flushing mechanisms (Smith 1979: 222-23). However, by the end of the century, the commodity economy was producing cheap, standardised models which had more efficient evacuative mechanisms. These were basically the same as the designs utilised in contemporaneous bourgeois homes (Daunton 1983: 256-8). Thus, by the period between the turn of the century and

W.W.I., we find a convergence between the classes not only in patterns of privatised domestic space, but in terms of the water closet technologies located therein.

Thus both the State and private capital provided the preconditions for a situation whereby it was possible for the proletariat to *desire* water closets as their intimate means of disposal, and where it was feasible for such desires to be met. What form did these desires take? In one way, the recasting of proletarian domestic space and the provision of demarcated locales for excretion were often considered as a great benefit by working class people. For example, the privacy of the privy or water closet could be experienced as a haven from the dense and often overcrowded atmosphere of the working class home (Roberts 1980: 165)¹⁹. But the utilisation of water closets by the proletariat was not merely a matter of perceived *practical* benefits to the domestic environment. Instead, in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, the water closet became a form of symbolic capital to be deployed in the pursuit of inter-proletarian "respectability". That is to say, the water closet distinction system now operated within the ranks of the proletariat, in terms of symbolic competition between fractions of this class.

The emulation of a higher group such as the bourgeoisie by a lower group - the upper proletariat - must also involve the derogation of a group or groups lower in the distinction system. The aim of the new system of distinctions was, for the key group within it, the upper, "respectable" proletariat, to have a dwelling which conformed to the style of, and thus to live in the fashion of, the (lower) middle classes, the next class fraction up in the overall hierarchy of symbolic class struggle. The aim of the lower proletariat, the subordinate group in the system, was to achieve the same domestic aspects, but as these were manifested by upper proletarian practices. Styles of household dwelling therefore figured as a key form of symbolic capital in strategies of proletarian self-betterment, for the domicile and the facilities therein could be deployed to present oneself as distinguished (Hobsbawm 1995: 224-5, 233-4)²⁰. For example, domestic interiors and exteriors were constantly scrubbed by the proletarian housewife so as to present an image of hygienic and (especially) moral cleanliness to the world (Roberts 1980: 37).

Within such a system, water closets figured as a means of "respectable" capital whereby the upper fractions of the proletariat could ape middle class practices, distinguishing themselves from lower fractions, and the lower proletariat could ape the practices of the "respectable" working class. As proletarians in both generic fractions desired to present cleanly domestic fronts in line with the manner of bourgeois domiciles, and since a private water closet was a constituent element of such dwellings, then we may surmise that there existed strong desires amongst proletarians by this period to have within their homes the technologies previously available only to the middle classes (Daunton 1983: 277, 287).

Certainly, by the turn of the twentieth century, working class householders in general were expressing a preference for houses with private facilities that did not require sharing with neighbours (Daunton 1983: 30). Within this context, the upper proletariat sought to distinguish itself by purchasing implements that copied the artefacts of the bourgeois water closet and bathroom (Roberts 1980: 36). As we saw above, manufacturers produced cheap versions of water closets used by the bourgeoisie, not only in line with proletarian incomes but also in line with (upper) proletarian tastes, which in essence were now those of the bourgeoisie (or at least, its lower strata). We may see this in a small example. At this time, the firm of Dent and Hellyer's aimed a model dubbed the 'Artisan' at the working class market, but its prosaic associations made it highly unpopular, and so the title was rapidly substituted by the more distinguished 'Citizen' (Palmer 1973: 62). Here we can see (upper) proletarian consumers demanding not only the technology used by the bourgeoisie, but also the symbolism of the water closet developed by that class.

By the eve of World War I and thereafter, expectations as to facilities within housing had risen to the extent that privatised water closets and other facilities were almost taken for granted amongst most if not all proletarian strata (Swenarton 1981: 95; Burnett 1986: 230-7). This is due to, first, State legislative regulation of private housing, and increasing levels of direct State housing provision. This situation is also a result of the fact that the inter-proletarian water closet distinction competition, like every other, generated trends towards the further diffusion, through ever broader social strata, of the phenomenon valorised as distinct symbolic capital. In this case, due to lower proletarian aping of upper proletarian aping of the bourgeois situation,

the water closet spread increasingly throughout the proletariat, encroaching upon the dwellings of ever more lowly fractions. The end-point of this process was the point at which all strata had water closets, or at least *expected* to have such facilities, and such a situation was achieved in the British context by around the 1930's at the latest²¹.

As a result, all strata of the proletariat were brought into a situation whereby they shared the same intimate, and thus general, means of excretory disposal as the bourgeoisie. Such a situation was achieved in part by direct State intervention, and in part by an inter-proletarian distinction system made possible both by the actions of the State, and through the provisions by which private capital reacted to changes in the nature of toiletry practices by lowering the cost of water closets. What wider ramifications did the transition towards proletarian utilisation of water closet forms have at this time?

Effects of the proletarian use of water closets

The transition towards wholesale proletarian utilisation of water closets had several main effects, all of which lead to the same conclusion.

Firstly, the use of water closets by the proletariat created a situation whereby this form of intimate means of disposal could no longer be utilised as a form of symbolic capital by the bourgeoisie. As the proletariat now used this form, it was no longer distinctive.

Second, the relinquishing of water closet capital by the bourgeoisie ran parallel to the giving up of bodily cleanliness in general, and excretory cleanliness in particular, as a form of symbolic capital by this class. Such a process had been in operation since the 1860's, with the recasting of urban environments, and thus the reformation of proletarian living conditions. Such a process had increasingly yielded a hygienically and morally cleanly proletariat. This process was consummated by proletarian use of water closets, for now both proletarian households and those who dwelled within defecated in cleanly fashions. Thus, through first sewerage, and then the transposition of water closets from bourgeois to proletarian domestic

environments, the bourgeoisie progressively yielded up forms of cleanly capital - first general bodily, then excretory - such that proletarians could be rendered salubrious. Having given up these forms of cleanliness as a form of capital in symbolic class struggle, the bourgeoisie now turned to other phenomena which could be rendered as means of distinction. In place of bodily and faecal filth, one of the new forms of derogation of the proletariat became the alleged polluting capacities of mass culture²².

Third, in faecal terms, the proletariat was rendered cleanly by entering the conditions of the bourgeois faecal habitus (or rather, its bacteriological manifestation). They could do so because faecal cleanliness was no longer a bourgeois prerogative: such capital had been relinquished by the bourgeoisie in pursuit of longer term interests. By what means did the proletariat enter this habitus?

Fourth, we have argued that the various component parts of a faecal habitus are inseparable, such that the practical and symbolic aspects of a habitus are mutually informing. The water closet is both expression of, and material precondition for, defecatory practices of the bacteriological PBFH. Thus by taking on water closet forms of disposal, the proletariat also adopted the defecatory practices of that habitus. The practices of that habitus are indissociable from its sensory and verbal practices. As a consequence, the proletariat adopted these forms of practice. The whole set of excretory practices of a habitus is generated by a particular symbolic-classificatory system. By taking on the practical aspects of the bacteriological PBFH, the proletariat took on its symbolic component too. That is to say, excreta were viewed as bacteriologically filthy.

By taking on this particular habitus, the proletariat thus also entered into the conditions of its master habitus, the GBFH. At the symbolic level, the proletariat now held to the view that excreta are dirty, a view which, to our analysis, is comprised of both hygienic and moral components. Further, the symbolic system of the GBFH holds both that defecatory practices are filthy, and that, since the *bourgeois* body is cleanly, it does not have the capacities to carry out such practices. We have seen that when defecation does occur, it is managed in such ways as to minimise the threat it poses to self-representation (defecatory practices being located

in private space, etc.). By entering into this habitus, both the proletariat and bourgeoisie now held that defecatory practices are filthy, and since the *human* body is cleanly, it does not have the capacities to carry out such practices. As such, both bourgeoisie and proletariat now lived under conditions whereby excretion is managed so as to minimise its threat to such a form of understanding of the nature of human corporeality. Defecation was located in private locales, where the embarrassment attendant upon such acts could be minimised. The feelings of disgust provoked by excreta could be ameliorated by excreta being evacuated into water closets which dispose of them swiftly, transporting them out of the domestic environment and away from the presence of the excreting person. Such feelings of disgust are provoked by a conceptualisation of excreta informed by very low levels of olfactory tolerance for their odours, and strong demands that excreta, one's own and those of other people, be made as invisible as possible.

As the proletariat entered the practical and symbolic conditions of the GBFH, it was transformed into a faecal habitus in which all social strata dwelled. It thus became a *universal faecal habitus*. All strata not only treated faecal matters in the same fashion, they all utilised the same general and intimate means of disposal, that is, water-based sewer systems and water closets. Such means of disposal became the material preconditions for the operation of this habitus. Taken together, the universal faecal habitus and these means of disposal constituted the modern mode of excretion, the characteristic material, practical and symbolic form in which excretion was socially-managed in the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, we have seen that the water closet is not only a constituent element of the modern mode of excretion, but also played a major role in the creation of that mode. The history of the water closet is both the history of the development of the characteristic means of intimate disposal of the modern mode of excretion, and also the history of the ways in which the universal faecal habitus, the habitus form of this mode, was generated.

We have reviewed the ways in which the forms of intimate means of disposal prior to the water closet were expressive of the faecal habituses of the periods in which they were utilised. We saw that such a relation also held between the GBFH, primarily in its guise as bacteriological PBFH, and the water closet form. The water closet was expressive of this habitus, in terms of it allowing both defecation to occur in private locales, and excreta and their odours to be evacuated from the (initially bourgeois) domestic context. The further development of the evacuative capacities of the water closet, to the situation that those inhabiting the modern mode of excretion are familiar with, was carried out in the context of the water closet's deployment in bourgeois domestic space. The dynamic towards progressive development of such capacities was stimulated by a situation whereby water closets figured as a form of symbolic capital in the competition between upper and lower bourgeois fractions. As such, the water closet was developed in such a way as to facilitate cleanly defecatory practices, and to allow the bourgeoisie to represent its collective body as lacking excretory capacities, for the water closet rendered excreta to a very great degree invisible and non-odourific.

The water closet as it was developed in this bourgeois context was transposed to the proletarian domestic environment in the later decades of the nineteenth century, and the first decades of the twentieth century. In this way, the crises of the intimate means of disposal current in proletarian areas in the middle of the nineteenth century were resolved. Proletarian domestic environments were recast in line with the bourgeois paradigm, and water closets located therein, thus rendering such environments cleanly both morally and hygienically. This transposition of the water closet was due both to State legislation in this direction, and (partly as a result of falling water closet prices in the last decade of the century) also through an inter-proletarian distinction competition, whereby water closets were a form of symbolic capital deployed in the pursuit of "respectability". As a consequence of these processes, water closets, hitherto shaped by the dictates of the bourgeois faecal habitus, entered into working class life by around the First World War.

One of the results of this shift in utilisation of water closets was that general bodily and excretory cleanliness, which had been in decline as forms of bourgeois symbolic capital since the beginning of the period of large-scale, water-based sewer systems.

were now wholly relinquished by the bourgeoisie, for sewers and water closets together rendered the proletariat cleanly. As a result, the faecal habitus of the bourgeoisie, the practices and symbols of which the working classes now shared, no longer operated as a means of distinction. The coming of the water closet into the proletarian home was the precondition for the proletariat entering the conditions of this faecal habitus.

Such a habitus was transformed into the universal faecal habitus, the corresponding means of disposal of which were water-based sewers and water closets, means of disposal which all social strata now utilised. As a result, in terms both of habitus and means of disposal, all strata now operated within the conditions of the modern mode of excretion. The bodily symbolism, the view of excreta, and the characteristic practices of the bourgeois faecal habitus, as these had been developed under the conditions of the bacteriological PBFH, were now the ways in which both dominant and dominated understood and carried out excretory matters. The development of the modern mode of excretion thus involved a great process of convergence between the classes in terms of how the human body was perceived and how bodily practices were oriented. In the twentieth century, the derogation of the subordinate by the superordinate would have to take other forms than those centred around notions of the general and excretory cleanliness of the body.

CONCLUSION

In the course of this work, we have traversed a great deal of terrain, theoretical and empirical, conceptual and historical. Our journey has taken us from the abstract, ethereal heights of theoretical postulates to the murky underworld of the sewer and the cesspool. What results have our travails yielded?

The position that we have reached at the end of this faecal odyssey is one which can be stated in three parts. These parts mirror the structure into which we have shaped our material. They respectively concern the tools of a sociology of excreta and excretion; the creation of the general bourgeois faecal habitus and related phenomena; and the generation of the modern mode of excretion.

In the first instance, we have been concerned to illustrate the conceptual work that must be carried out to make possible a sociological appreciation of excretory matters. In our expedition through both the empyrean of Theory and the mire of the Actual, our silver-tongued Virgils have been the motley band of Douglas, Bourdieu, Freud and Elias, each of whose guidance has been sought, and in some ways eagerly taken up, and in other fashions discarded. From this eclectic gathering we have garnered the conceptual means whereby one may contend that the nature of excretory dirt in the modern West derives from both hygienic and socio-cultural sources; that the view of excreta contained within the faecal subset of a generic class habitus generates characteristic forms of excretory practice; that such views and practices were, in the case of the habitus of the bourgeoisie, generated over a long period of time as a result of distinction competitions between classes; and that such systems were themselves underpinned by developments in terms of changing configurations of material power on the one hand, and social-relational and population densities on the other. The latter factors indicate that the invisible hands which render the various forms of advice from our guides together into a congruent whole are those of Marx and Durkheim, figures from a greater pantheon than that occupied by the figures above.

In the second instance, that which concerns the account we proffer as to the generation of the faecal habitus characteristic of bourgeois styles of life for some several centuries, we have seen that various processes, resulting from distinction competitions over the duration of early modernity, were responsible for shaping forms of attitude and practice characterised by revulsion towards excreta and the excreta-producing characteristics of the human body. As excreta were progressively charged with connotations of (moral) filth, such that their production was associated with feelings of disgust and embarrassment, so too did the bourgeoisie deny that its collective class body could produce such detrituses. On the basis of these developments, defecatory practices of the feudal faecal habitus were increasingly repressed in favour of the more regulated forms typical of the bourgeoisie in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Defecation increasingly could only legitimately occur in private locales, thus indicating declining levels of visual tolerance for both excreta and the act of their production. In a similar vein, verbal references to excretory phenomena became ever more regulated, in the direction of a situation whereby "polite" talk was oriented around circumlocutory and euphemistic forms of reference to such matters. There was also a concomitant decline in the level of tolerance for the odours of faeces, a process accentuated and accelerated in the later eighteenth century, primarily as a result of the conjunction of already-existing denunciations of the moral dirt of excreta with a new rhetoric of condemnation. This latter derived from the appreciation made by miasmatic medico-scientific knowledge of excreta as disease-producing materials. The conjunction of both sets of denunciation of the qualities of excreta produced the first particular historical manifestation of the general bourgeois faecal habitus, the miasmatic PBFH. This habitus would be usurped in the second half of the nineteenth century by a subset of the GBFH which expressed its appreciation of excreta in the terms of bacteriological science.

The transition from the one PBFH to the other is a crucial aspect of the set of developments that comprise the third major element of our scheme: the creation of the modern mode of excretion. The development and operation of the bacteriological PBFH was fundamentally involved in the process of the creation of both the general and intimate means of disposal characteristic of the modern mode of excretion. The dispositions of this habitus were expressed in, and were reinforced

by, the large-scale, water-based sewer systems of the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and their corollary, the water closet means of disposal. Such forms of disposal were developed by the bourgeoisie as responses to the crises of the urban environment that confronted the GBFH and its particular manifestations in the first half of the century. The systems of sewers constructed by the State were designed to allow defecation to occur in such fashions as to render the urban environment cleanly, in line with the imperatives of the GBH and its faecal subset. Water closets were developed within the context of the bourgeois domestic arena as a result of ever more demanding bourgeois imperatives for private defecation into evacuatively-efficient receptacles. As a result of a distinction competition operative between fractions of that class, water closets were increasingly rendered as an intimate means of disposal that not only allowed defecation to be carried out in morally and hygienically cleanly fashions, but also facilitated the bourgeois espousal of the collective body of that class as lacking faecal capacities.

Both sewer systems and water closets were crucial elements in the process of the bourgeoisie relinquishing bodily cleanliness in general, and excretory cleanliness in particular, as means of symbolic capital. Sewer systems allowed the cleansing of proletarian urban areas, and by extension, the proletarian bodies that dwelled therein. Water closets, once taken on by the proletariat as a result of direct State intervention and a distinction competition oriented around notions of domiciliary “respectability”, led to a situation whereby the process of relinquishing such forms of capital was consummated. By taking on the water closet as the primary means of intimate disposal, the proletariat not only defecated upon the basis of water-based disposal mechanisms, but also entered into the practical and symbolic realm of the GBFH in its bacteriological form. As such, the GBFH was transformed into the universal faecal habitus, with all strata now occupying the same set of excretory dispositions. In this fashion, the specifically modern mode of excretion was created.

The above précis of our argument illustrates the framework we provide as to the questions posed at the beginning of this work. The mores of modern excretion - privatised defecation, water-borne disposal, revulsion as to the sight and smell of faeces, euphemistic forms of verbalisation, and so on - are explicable in terms of a sociological historiography which yields several counter-intuitive claims. First, the

development of these mores is not merely due to the spread of medico-scientific innovations through public health measures and the like. Rather, such forms of attitude and practice are products of a complex interplay between medico-scientific factors and other, “socially-produced” elements. Second, the nature of these latter elements is explicable as involving the production of three key processes. Each process led respectively to the three main component parts of the GBFH. These were: forms of understanding and representation of the human body which denied its excretory capacities; attitudes towards excreta which construed these as wholly negative (as “dirty”, as sources of feelings of embarrassment and disgust); and excretory practices based around the locating of defecation in private locales, intolerance for the odours of excreta, and circumlocutory forms of reference to excretory phenomena. Third (and more counter-intuitively), these processes were generated by the nature of changing forms of material and symbolic class struggles in the post-feudal period.

Due to alterations in the situations of political and economic power on the one hand, and to changes in levels of social relational and population density on the other, two great systems of class distinction were formed, first between dominant aristocracy and subordinate bourgeoisie, and thence between dominant bourgeoisie and subordinate proletariat. As a result of the symbolic competitions for status that these classes engaged in, there was engendered the set of processes described above. Thus as a result of material and symbolic class struggles over the duration of the period from later feudalism to the beginning of the twentieth century, there arose a series of trends towards the derogation of excreta and excretory capacities, and the increasing regulation of forms of excretory practices. These trends were particularly developed and accentuated at the period when the bourgeoisie, as symbolically and materially dominant class, deployed bodily cleanliness in general, and excretory cleanliness in particular, as means of distinction. Thus we may hold that the toiletry mores of the present day are to a very great degree resultant from the status-seeking strategies of the bourgeoisie in the post-feudal period up until circa 1914.

Such strategies were of course part of a more general set of tendencies in this period as regards the interrelations between symbolic forms of class struggle and matters excretory. If the endpoint of the history we have traced is the entry of the proletariat

into the conditions of the GBFH, then the beginnings of such a history can be located in the changes towards more regulated forms of bodily (and other) practices which first occurred in the later feudal period. Such transformations in the means of bodily representation and deportment were originally innovations (at the behest of shifts in levels of social relational density) of the aristocracy, innovations taken on by the bourgeoisie and thence subsequently augmented and extended within the context of that class's symbolic struggles with the proletariat. In this sense, the genesis of contemporary mores of excretion is explicable as deriving from a process whereby first the (later feudal and early modern) upper classes, thence the (early modern and nineteenth century) middle classes, and then finally the (twentieth century) lower orders take on forms of attitude and practice characterised by negative evaluations of excreta and relatively highly regulated forms of excretory practices. Although such a formulation of our position is crude in the extreme, it does give a sense of the logic of the narrative we have unfolded.

Thus the fundamental claim of this work is that if we are to understand the reasons for the way we understand excreta and deal with excretory matters today, we must examine the nature of developments in class power at various levels over the duration of some several centuries from the late medieval period up until around the period of the First World War. In this light, we have told a "just so" story, the point of which was to illustrate what we take to be a plausible hypothesis as to the generation of modern faecal manners. No doubt some will regard with scepticism our model on various grounds, not least its basis in the historiography of social class. As a response to such critics we can but point to a dictum of Adorno's: just as the concept of capitalist society is not a *flatus vocis*, we trust that both our conceptual framework and our substantive analysis of flatus and sundry matters do not lead to a situation where *veritas odium parit*.

APPENDIX

SOME TERMS REFERRING TO THE INTIMATE MEANS OF DISPOSAL

As we have argued in the above, the verbal-practical aspect of the generation of the characteristics of the GBFH and its historical manifestations, involved the repression of “direct” forms of reference to excretory phenomena, and increasing levels of “indirect” forms of reference to such phenomena. Just as excreta and defecation were made progressively socially invisible in both symbolic and practical terms, so too were they increasingly rendered invisible in verbal terms. Under the conditions of the fully-formed GBFH, and its particular manifestations, and thence under the conditions of the UFH, only (relatively) highly circumlocutory and euphemistic forms of designating such matters were deemed as legitimate (i.e. “polite”). Just as legitimate forms of defecatory practice were generated by the bourgeois faecal habitus (or its subsequent variations), so too were legitimate forms of verbal practice derived from this source. Once the GBFH had mutated into the UFH, only forms of reference to excretory phenomena derived from this habitus – i.e. highly indirect and euphemistic forms – were deemed legitimate by society at large.

Here we will see how terms referring to the intimate means of disposal at the periods of both the GBFH and UFH conformed to the dictates these habituses set out as to acceptable and unacceptable forms of verbal practice vis-à-vis excretory matters more generally. We will set out some of the ways in which these habituses created legitimate terms for referring to the intimate means of disposal in terms of three main themes: privacy, the use of water, and easement¹.

Privacy

We have already dealt at length with the issue of the "privacy" of excretion, which we take to mean the locating of defecation in an enclosed space, where the individual excretes alone, unseen by others, for excretion is an act imbued with feelings of shame and mortification. Following Elias, we would expect notions of privacy, and corresponding terms, to increasingly infiltrate aristocratic and bourgeois parlance from the early modern period onwards.

An obvious mode of designating privacy, at the level of practice as well as the symbolic level, is through designating spaces where only one gender may excrete, through terms such as "ladies" and "gentlemen". However, here we will focus on the issue of the spaces reserved for the individual, of whatever gender, to "privately" excrete within.

Privy was a standard form of designating the place and apparatus of excretion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As excretion became less socially visible, it was relegated into an enclosed, that is to say, "privy", space. The term derives from the Latin "privatus" and the French "prive", both of which correspond to associations provoked by the modern English term "private" (not general, unavailable, enclosed, individual, etc.) (Partridge 1961a: 527). The meaning of "privy" in English, referring to something "private" dates from around the thirteenth century. This could be an object, place or activity; one such designation was of the sexual organs, referred to from this period as the "privy parts". The baring of these parts in a "private" place has obvious connections with the baring of the body for the purposes of excretion (OED Vol. XII: 524).

Given these archaic roots, "privy" is one of the earliest excretory euphemisms in the English language, the particular meaning as to intimate means of disposal being used from at least the fifteenth century (Partridge 1961a: 527). The association between "privy" and an enclosed area for the purposes of defecation was due to the fact that the term seemed to "len(d)

itself ... to the description of a solitary place, one where people performed lavatorial functions" (Balado-Lopez 1993: 7-8). Thus the adjective "privy" came to refer to the place of defecatory privacy. "Privy house" (or "privehouse") was common usage from the fifteenth century onwards. "Privy" was also imported, in the form of "privy stool", to refer to the apparatus of the intimate means of disposal, being another term for "close stool" (OED Vol. XII: 524).

The term "privy" is explicable as one of the main linguistic manifestations of the trends in early modernity towards physically privatising defecation and simultaneously verbally referring to such practices, the locales in which they occurred, and the intimate means of disposal therein, as "private". From this period onwards, "privy" was an acceptable mode of speech, for it lent itself to the euphemisation of the intimate means of disposal. In this way, bourgeois defecatory practices were rendered cleanly for they too, by occurring in such "private" locales, were conceptualised as being "private". As such, the feelings of embarrassment provoked by defecation were minimised, by locating such practices in a delimited space, and then verbally referring to that space in such a way as to minimise the social visibility of defecatory practices.

In the same fashion as "privy", *closet* originally referred to a private place in general terms, and then came to designate a private place for the purposes of defecation (Balado-Lopez 1993: 8). From the Latin "clausum" comes the medieval French "clos", the diminutive of which is "closet". Fourteenth century English used this word to refer to a small, private room, and this meaning continued into the eighteenth century. From the seventeenth century derives the meaning of "closet" as a small, private cabinet or side-chamber for storing items, perhaps valuables. From this period on, the original connotations of privacy and intimacy were inflected with meanings of secrecy and seclusion. Thus the "closet" came to refer to the place and apparatus of the intimate means of disposal; for example, "privies" were also

called "closets of ease", thus linking notions of seclusion with comfort and easement (OED Vol. III: 349-50).

Thus by early modernity, bourgeois terminology had firmly established the place and technology of defecation as "private" in nature. Given that defecation was increasingly being ascribed as a shameful act, talk about it was made acceptable by the strategy of euphemistically referring to it in terms of "privacy", which in turn reflected the new spatial locales into which such acts were now being slotted. The development of intimations of excretory privacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries laid the groundwork for the later nineteenth century versions of verbal reference to the water closet intimate means of disposal, which conjoined notions of "privacy" with ideas as to aquatic salubrity. It is to this issue that we now turn.

The Provision of Water

Once water-based sewer systems and water closet intimate means of disposal were in place from the 1860's onwards, there was a shift away from terms merely describing the privacy of the intimate means of disposal, towards terms describing privacy coupled with the aquatic cleanliness of both the apparatuses of disposal, and the locales in which they were to be found.

At one level, verbal practices merely mirrored the shift towards wide-spread bourgeois adoption of such water-based means of disposal. But water also signified the moral and hygienic cleanliness of this particular form of intimate means of disposal. Terms based around ideas of water were (and continue to be) a powerful way of signifying the salubrity of those who employ water-based technologies, for such technologies are felt to be "clean". By euphemising the place and apparatus of excretion in terms of water, the function of these factors was obfuscated; from being the locale and receptacle of base acts and their products, these became a locus of "health", "cleanliness" and "sanitation"².

From the latter part of the eighteenth century especially, water signified purity in terms of the circulation of excreta, in contradistinction to the stagnation and putridity of excreta left to fester (Corbin 1986: 118-19). Under the terms of the bacteriological PBFH, water was viewed as the means whereby germ-ridden faeces could be borne away from the excreting person, thus freeing him from any harm he may have encountered as a result of contact with his own bodily products. Such hygienic considerations merged with the moral dirt conceptions of the GBFH – that excreta were disgusting in that they were both unsightly and foul-smelling, and that the best way to deal with them was by water-based means of disposal.

Reference to the salubrious aquatic aspects of the intimate means of disposal meant that the bourgeois could have such a form inside his home without qualm, for to refer to such a place and apparatus in aquatic terms was to assure that these factors did not disrupt the cleanly harmonies of the home environment. Water as metaphor dissipated symbolic faecal threat, just as the physical application of water in disposing of faeces prevented any more practical problems. Furthermore, given that bourgeois domestic cleanliness was initially erected on the basis of proletarian domestic filth, in the period of the (primarily inter-bourgeois) distinction system whereby water closets were deployed as symbolic capital, the aquatic aspect of such technologies was a potent reminder of the superior cleanliness of the class (especially its upper fractions) that used these means of disposal.

Let us examine some of the words which involved referring to the intimate means of disposal in aquatic terms.

Toilet, originally derived from the Latin word “tela” (a piece of woven material), and the medieval French “teile” (a cloth). The diminutive of “teile” is “toilette”, which, in early modern French meant either a cloth for keeping grooming accessories clean, or the table in which these were stored (Partridge 1961a: 699). In French and English of the seventeenth century,

“toilette” referred to the acts of washing, grooming and dressing (Balado-Lopez 1993: 9). The eighteenth century meaning in both languages was the putting on of clothes or adornments (Partridge 1961a: 699). By the early nineteenth century, “toilet” in English referred to a room where a bath was kept; the meaning then mutated to mean a “lavatory”, in the sense of that word as a place reserved for defecation. It also came to designate the apparatus of excretion (OED Vol. XVIII: 194)

Lavatory, as a term denoting the place or apparatus of the intimate means of disposal, first appears at the start of the twentieth century (Balado-Lopez 1993: 9). From originally designating a place for washing, it came first to refer to the place of defecation, and then finally to the apparatus of disposal (Wright 1960: 118). But even though this term originates at a time when the modern mode of excretion is beginning to operate, it yet derives from earlier connotations of cleanliness. The term derives from the Latin “lavare” (to wash), the Late Latin “lauatorium” and the medieval Latin “lavatorium” (both of the latter meaning wash-basin). In fourteenth century English, the latter referred to a vessel or place for washing. The medieval Latin “lavatrina” mutated into “latrina”, which could also refer to a wash-basin. In the medieval French form “latrine”, the meaning altered to designate a place of excretion (Partridge 1961a: 340-1).

In the case of both “toilet” and “lavatory”, associations between water, washing and cleanliness, were transposed onto, first, the place reserved for excretion, and then the technology of disposal itself. Thus a combination of archaic and novel connotations were utilised in the defining of bourgeois places and apparatuses of the intimate means of disposal as loci of salubrity.

Given that water closets were the intimate means of disposal installed by the bourgeoisie of the later nineteenth century, and were thus at the heart of the creation of the modern mode of excretion, it is not surprising that *water closet* is perhaps the most indicative verbal expression of the mores of

excretion under the conditions first of the bacteriological PBFH, and thence the UFH.

We have here a term which yokes together notions of water-based salubrity and excretory privacy. We have already seen how the water closet solved various faecal problems in the bourgeois home. It expelled excreta as quickly as possible from the domestic environment, thus dispelling their odours and diminishing their visibility. The water closet cast excreta into the sewers, there to be rendered safe by the agencies of the State. Equally, the epithet "water closet" solved symbolic problems posed by the presence of faeces in the bourgeois home. By the mid-nineteenth century, norms of excretory privacy forced excretion into the domestic realm, out of public view. If faeces were wholly negative in quality (in both moral and hygienic terms), then the presence of a means of disposal of such materials within the domestic environment was potentially threatening, for it reminded the bourgeois, keen to repudiate the excretory capabilities of his body, that defecation still had to be carried out. If the place and apparatus of defecatory disposal had been "directly" named, the problem of having the intimate means of disposal in the home would have been made more acute, for direct reference would have disrupted still further bourgeois self-representations based around corporeal and domestic cleanliness. The name given to the intimate means of disposal thus had to euphemise the function of these technologies.

Through the term "water closet", the symbolic crisis produced by the presence of excreta in the homes of the later nineteenth century bourgeoisie was averted. "Closet" implied that excretion would take place in "privacy", out of sight. Faecal odours deriving from the excretory body would be contained within a delimited space such that others would not smell them or even guess at the bourgeois body's capacities for making them. The designation of water-borne disposal further symbolised the neutralisation of such odours, and their swift expulsion from the home. Put together, "water" and "closet" denied the presence of excretory acts in the home - denied the

existence of excretory acts in the corporeal existence of the bourgeoisie per se - by euphemising the intimate means of disposal into terms that suggested a cleanly locale, an enclosed space to which only the individual himself or herself had access. By these means, the water closet could safely be brought into the home at the symbolic level.

The intimations of aquatic salubrity and individualised privacy allowed the intimate means of disposal to be freely talked of, in a bourgeois society oriented towards a rejection of directly mentioning excreta and related matters. Whilst the individual bourgeois could refer to the water closet, without provoking the feelings of disgust and embarrassment that faeces were charged with, State officials could utter publicly and without qualm their project of changing proletarian excretory practices, by providing the working class with water closets. By the 1870's, the term "water-closeted" was being widely used in the British context to describe the situation of an individual dwelling, or an entire town or city, being in possession of water closet technologies - that is to say, exhibiting practices of sound hygiene and moral propriety (OED Vol. XIX: 991).

Thus at both the level of individual bourgeois practice, and also at the level of State policy, the associations surrounding the term "water closet" allowed a symbolisation and public verbalisation of a means of disposal which collected materials otherwise wholly unmentionable within the terms of legitimate forms of speech. Once the GBFH had mutated into the UFH, the term "water closet", as with the terms "toilet" and "lavatory", allowed all strata to speak of the means of disposal without directly referring to the materials collected by these technologies, thus avoiding the feelings of unease provoked in the speaker by direct reference to such phenomena. By referring to the locale of disposal as private, and to the technology of disposal in terms of aquatic salubrity, the means by which one excreted were rendered symbolically cleanly, thus avoiding contradicting the representation of the human body as incapable of producing such filthy products as excreta.

Easement

A significant group of contemporary words which refer to the intimate means of disposal - such as “facilities”, “restroom”, the American epithet “comfort station” - imply a situation of ease and rest afforded to those who partake of them. The rest and easement thus allowed are not specified, thus euphemising away the function of these places and technologies in the easing of pressure on the bowels from waste materials.

The term *convenience* is a case in point. This term originally derived from the Latin “convenientia”, which meant agreement, harmony and accord. With this general set of meanings, it appears in medieval French and English. From the seventeenth century, the term takes on the aspect of describing any situation or appliance conducive to aiding activity. Mid-nineteenth century usage adopted the word to describe a “privy”, usually one for public use (OED Vol. III: 860). Thus the term refers to the place or apparatus of excretion as a “convenient” utility for personal use, without making specific what that use is.

Certain terms deployed over the duration of the GBFH connoted aspects of the easement to be gained from their use, coupled with notions as to the means of disposal being merely a form of furniture, rather than an excreta-collecting device. In the early modern period we find the terms “close-stool” (or “close-chair”) and “commode”. Both of these apparatuses took their euphemistic epithets from the furniture in which they were encased. The fact that the terms referred to the similarity of the posture of the excreting person to someone sitting on a chair meant that a trace of their function was connoted along with intimations of comfort (Balado-Lopez 1993: 8).

“Stools” and “chairs” had various further synonyms attached to them. At the eighteenth century French court, they were known as “chaises percees”, “chaises d”affaires”, “chaires pertuisees”, “chayeres de retrait”, and “chaises

necessaires” (Wright 1960: 100-1). Terms such as “stool” and “bench” were common English usage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the former noun mutating into the verb “to stool”, meaning to defecate (Allen and Burridge 1991: 78). In the case of “commode”, Chippendale and his contemporaries knew by this term any piece of decorated furniture with drawers. The first examples of bedside tables with pots inside into which one could defecate, were called “night commodes”. The term “commode” then came to refer only to this type (Wright 1960: 118).

At a later period, that is under the conditions first of the bacteriological PBFH and thence the UFH, both operative at periods of developed consumer capitalism, we find forms of reference to the intimate means of disposal based around notions of "comfort" appearing particularly in arenas oriented around notions of "customer service", such as department stores and large hotels. For example, the toilets for women at the Harrods store just prior to WWI were called the "ladies retiring room" (Palmer 1973: 124)

These examples allow us to see how, by the importation of connotations of "ease" and "comfort", the intimate means of disposal could be verbally broached and signalled, without having directly to address the fact that it *was* the means of excretory disposal, a situation felt to be unmentionable in terms of polite forms of speech under the conditions of both the GBFH and UFH.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. One of the aphorisms to be found in *The Twilight of the Idols*. Vide Nietzsche 1990: 48.
2. There are scattered references to various aspects of these issues, but to our knowledge there exists no systematic account from within the fields of social sciences and humanities, as to the social and historical aspects of excreta and excretion in the modern West. The main references are Douglas 1966 and 1970, both of which we deal with extensively in this Chapter. Elias 1995, dealt with in Chapters 2 and 3, Moore 1984. Of great utility to the analyst is Bourke 1968, but this is primarily concerned with pre-modern treatments of excretory phenomena. The Freudian strand on such issues is dealt with in Chapter 2. Some work has been done on specific topics within the overall field, but from differing disciplinary perspectives e.g. Edwards and Mckie 1996, Lawton 1998, Pops 1982, Seymour 1998, Van Der Geest 1998. For water closets, the main sources are Wright 1960 and Palmer 1973.
3. The present study is not concerned with cross-cultural comparisons. Rather it centres on the genesis of mores of excretion in Western Europe. However, a form of cross-cultural comparison is involved, as the development of these mores is traced against the backdrop of the social and cultural shifts from Western feudalism to modernity.
4. Loosely following the terminology of Marx 1977 [1859].
5. Vide also Vigarello 1988: 3, 20
6. For a similar view expressed by Freud, vide Freud 1957: 55
7. The *locus classicus* of such a position is Durkheim 1976 [1912]
8. Vide also Kristeva 1982. For Kristeva's dismissive appreciation of Douglas, vide esp. 1982: 66
9. Vide also Douglas 1970: 139
10. That is, on a Marxian view, as lacking an adequate formulation of the relation of social structures to economic and political relations.
11. By "bodily practices" we refer to forms of bodily dispositions and the characteristic types of action deriving therefrom. This is a formulation derived from Bourdieu, and will be discussed at length below.
12. Vide also Bourdieu 1992a: 437; 1992b: 52-65.
13. That is, the symbolism of the generic body of that class. For example, the "purity" of the collective body of a priestly caste.
14. Vide Allen and Burrige 1991
15. For a similar argument, vide Vigarello 1988: 140, 223

16. Our assumption in this study is that habitus analysis is applicable for understanding both early and later versions of capitalist modernity. For a discussion of the question of habitus analysis and the socio-historical specificities of the contexts it can be deployed to comprehend, vide Calhoun 1993.

17. This postulation somewhat departs from Bourdieu's standard position that a habitus can only ever be understood as "belonging to" one class or class fraction, rather than all strata in a given society.

18. We are here using a terminology deriving from Marx 1977 [1859] and Marx 1988 [1867]. For discussion, vide Cohen 1991.

19. Vide Introduction to Bourdieu 1993. Our use of this term is perforce less specified than Bourdieu's; in this regard vide Jenkins 1992: 86 and following.

20. This is a somewhat Durkheimian notion and is part of the family of concepts related to Douglas's "grid" and "group" analysis, although with competition between groups emphasised. Thus we do not wholly relinquish the Durkheimian thrust of Douglas's position in our translation of her position into Bourdieusian terms. This is hardly surprising, given Bourdieu's mating of Durkheimian structuralism and social classification with a Marxian focus on class struggle.

21. The classical formulation of the State as collective expression of the will of the dominant class is in Marx 1998 [1848].

22. Loosely following the terminology of Marx 1981 [1844].

23. Loosely following the terminology of Marx 1977 [1859].

24. Partially following Kristeva 1982.

25. Vide also 1986: 3.

26. For an analogous argument as regards dirt in general, vide Vigarello 1988: 3, 20.

27. Vide Vigarello 1988: 60, 229.

28. As we will see in Chapter 5, State interventions in the realm of urban sanitary governance also created the conditions for a distinction system that operated amongst the proletariat, whereby water closets were deployed as capital in a competition aimed at the display of domestic "respectability".

CHAPTER 2

1. Relatively highly regulated in relation to the relatively unregulated forms of the feudal faecal habitus.

2. We shall concentrate on various strands. Certain elements have not been mentioned as they are not directly germane to our concerns here. For Freud on scatological humour, vide Freud and

- Oppenheim 1966: 187; for obscene humour in general, vide Freud 1916: for his account of the social-psychological significance of urination, vide Freud 1971a.
3. For folklore and dreams, vide Freud and Oppenheim 1966; for neurotic obsessions, vide Freud 1962b.
 4. Vide Freud 1962a: 174; Freud and Oppenheim 1966: 187, 194-5.
 5. For Freud's comments on this area, vide 1962a: 175; 1962b: 72; 1962c: 131; Freud and Oppenheim 1966: 273. For the development of such contentions by a disciple, vide Ferenczi 1980a and 1980b.
 6. This original position was reworked later to fit with the account of the castration complex. Vide 1962c [1917].
 7. Vide Freud 1970a: 103, 117; 1971b: 128; Borneman 1976: 21.
 8. For alleged anal traits in a postulated German national character type, vide Dundes 1984: 76 and following. Vide especially 1984: 80, 84 for this author's reflections on why the Germanic Freud so insistently focused upon issues of excreta and excretion. For a bibliography of German language material on scatological issues, vide 1984: 79-80.
 9. There is a very large amount of neo-Freudian literature in this area. Vide e.g. Abraham 1927; Jones 1938.
 10. For a very unsympathetic analysis of Freud's attempts to link repression of coprophilia with character traits, vide Scharnberg (1993)
 11. Vide e.g. Freud 1962c: 131
 12. For a critique of toilet training as a conceptual category, vide Brown 1959: 288.
 13. Freud 1962b: 81. Vide also Freud 1962c: 130; Borneman 1976: 4, 23; Whiting and Child 1953.
 14. Vide also Taylor 1958: Chapter 8, "The Puritan Personality".
 15. Vide e.g. Brown 1959: 303; Borneman 1976: 70.
 16. For Fromm on "social character", vide Appendix to Fromm 1960: 239 and following. For the "Marxian" rejection of anal characterology, vide Fromm 1960: 248-9. For a critique of Fromm's position, vide Brown 1959: 204-5
 17. A similar contention, in terms of alleged effects on proletarians of defecation in line with the dictates of water-sluiced sewer disposal, is made by Schoenwald 1973.
 18. These are the kinds of difficulties that Fromm himself was aware of, as a chronological consideration of his work illustrates. He replaced the original (1932) contentions as to anal characterology with an account of various types of character endemic to the capitalist mode: receptive orientation, exploitative orientation, hoarding orientation, marketing orientation (vide 1949: 62-67). However, Fromm did not relinquish the position of the 1932 article completely. In a new (1970) footnote to this piece, he claims that the "hoarding" character is analogous to the traits described under the rubric of bourgeois-anality in 1932. However, the later position holds

that such dispositions are not rooted in libidinal energies but are explicable in terms of "attitudes" towards the world and other people. Character is thus explicable in terms of ... character. Fromm also adds that the hoarding mentality can express itself in terms of faecal symbols, but faeces themselves (and thus coprophilia) are not the "cause" of the syndrome (vide Fromm 1971: note to 187).

19. See prior footnote: Fromm's privileging of environmental factors rendered the residual coprophiliac aspect of his model wholly superfluous.

20. This is not the term used by Elias; however we are reading *The Civilising Process* in terms of a Bourdieusian terminology.

21. Our position here follows one aspect of Freud's account. However, it contradicts other strands to be found in his work. This is due to the conflicting positions to be located in different areas of the overall corpus. For example, we are told that it is *particularly* Western culture which represses coprophilia (e.g. Freud 1962d: 337). As such, we would expect sensory dispositions in the modern West to be especially infused with the feelings of disgust and embarrassment inculcated by the evaluation of excreta produced by the onset of Civilisation. Conversely, *all* cultures are attributed with at least some elements of coprophiliac repression, for this is held to be a (very) general trend rooted in the transition of *homo sapiens* to the state of walking upright. This transition is understood to have the outcome that all societies possess a sense of revulsion for faecal odours (Freud 1957: note to 66-7). Furthermore, disgust felt by an individual for the odours of other people's excreta, rather than his/her own, is intimated to be a cultural universal (Freud 1957: 67, 1962d: 336). We here choose to ignore Freud's inconsistency in favour of focusing upon the delimited transition from feudalism, with relatively high levels of tolerance of faecal odours, to modernity, which has the converse approach.

22. Elias's account is based primarily on the French experience. The various forms of State in Western European countries differed widely in their characteristics (vide Anderson 1974 for a historical review; Mann 1987 for a sociological interpretation of the genesis of State Absolutism). Hence we must treat Elias's account as an ideal type of the aristocratic / bourgeois competition of the period. Although the English example differs in significant ways from the French context of State formation, we may still adhere to the general thrust of Elias's argument – that there was such a competition, and the direction it took over time was towards ever greater levels of regulation of practices. This involves adhering to the general postulates of Elias's position – which ultimately involve a Durkheimian account of increasing levels of social relational density and the effects thereof on practices – rather than the specifics of the account, which involve viewing such density as expressed in the French version of the Absolutist state.

23. Vide Anderson 1974: 48.

24. The places where the aristocracy and bourgeoisie would have come into contact, and thus have engaged *directly* in competition, would vary from country to country. The Houses of

Parliament in the English context strikes me as a particularly likely locale in the 17th century and later.

25. For, as we have defined a habitus, it is the schema which always generates practices characteristic of it. This is an analytic point and should not be dealt with at the same level as our claim that the particular practices here being analysed were results of the dynamics of the aristocratic / bourgeois distinction competition.

26. Elias's position on defecatory practices is more simplistic or (straightforward) than ours (depending on the taste of the reader), for he holds to a *direct* relationship between rising levels of social relational density and increasing regulation of practices. He writes of the feudal period: "[the] kind of integration and interdependence in which these people lived did not compel them to restrain their bodily functions before each other ... to the same extent as in the following [early modern] phase" (Elias 1995: 176)

Our model posits a more *indirect* relationship, with the nascent GBH and GBFH coming at an intermediate level between social relational density and forms of excretory practices of all three types.

27. For example, it was at this period that notions of general bodily cleanliness, previously dictated by the aristocracy, began to be formulated by the bourgeoisie itself as a form of symbolic capital, a form of capital, furthermore, which implied aristocratic corporeal decadence in antithesis to bourgeois bodily vigour. Vide Vigarello 1988: 133-6

28. Following the periodisation of Vigarello 1988: 146

29. Elias's formulation of increasing levels of regulation of behaviours effected in the period between early and later capitalist modernity is based on claims as to the existence of imperatives deriving from the capitalist economy as to restraining the "drives necessary for work" (Elias 1995: 125). Here we see a remnant of neo-Freudian argumentation in Elias's account.

30. A morally cleanly body was only one aspect of a burgeoning division between distinguished bourgeoisie and non-distinguished proletariat at this period. Whereas, as we saw above, all strata in the feudal period shared the same cultural forms to some degree, it was the case by the eighteenth century that elites (the bourgeoisie in particular, as this was the new dominant class) "had abandoned popular culture to the lower classes, from whom they were now separated, as never before, by profound differences in worldview" (Burke 1978: 270).

31. The locale in which the distinguished practices of the bourgeoisie were generated at this period was the private, domestic sphere. We hold to this view on the basis of the empirical evidence adduced in Chapter 4 and Bakhtin's contention that progressively through early modernity archaic popular cultural forms were "tamed" by being rendered as "part of the [bourgeois] family's private life" (Bakhtin 1984: 33).

32. For example, it is at this period that bathing in water reappears after a hiatus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although originally generated within the conditions of the aristocratic

/ bourgeois competition, it was rapidly assimilated – in theory if not in practice - by the later eighteenth century bourgeoisie as a form of cleanly capital. The *lack* of bathing in this way, previously not a source of bourgeois concern, was now rendered as part of the habitus of the proletariat, further evidence of the monstrous filth of the masses. Vide Vigarello 1988: 94, 97-8, 104.

33. Of course, a Foucauldian might object that even if repression-based analysis is divested of its basis in the postulation of erotic energies, it is still invalid on *a priori* grounds. Such a view of the inappropriate nature of repression-based analysis per se, and its specific deployment in the comprehension of faecal matters, derives from the position set out by Foucault in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1981). There Foucault posits that analysis based on the notion of a biologically-determined “sex”, and repression thereof in the nineteenth century, is erroneous for there are only “discourses” of sex, i.e. constellations of power and knowledge which create various forms of “sexuality” (Foucault 1981: 34, 155). As a result, far from paying witness to repressions over “sex”, the nineteenth century is the site of the production of multiple forms of “sexuality” (the hysterical woman, the masturbating child, etc.). A possible Foucauldian claim then is that such a methodological position must also be applied to the analysis of excreta and excretion in the period, for Foucault’s critique of repression-based analysis in the sexual realm perforce indicates the inadequacy of such a form of analysis in other areas also. There are four main ways in which we can respond to such charges. First, a Foucauldian would have to show in detail how Foucault’s critique of repression-based analysis qua sexuality was reproducible within the context of analysis of a different field, i.e. that of excreta and excretion. Second, the empirical evidence as to changing excretory mores and practices in the post-feudal period adduced by Elias and other authors certainly seems to point towards a form of analysis that utilises some notion of “repression”. Third, by divesting repression-based analysis of its Freudian basis in erotic energies, and by recasting it in light of Elias’s formulation of repression of *practices*, a Foucauldian critique of the Freudian notion of repression is not immediately applicable to our position which differs to a great extent from this latter. A Foucauldian would have to show that our *particular* position on repression was still invalid, rather than merely denying its utility on the basis that it is in some senses similar to the orthodox Freudian approach. Fourthly, and finally, our form of repression-based analysis involves reference to the relationships between repressions effected over practices on the one hand, and on the other hand, class habituses, class struggles at the material and symbolic levels, and the mode of excretion. In this sense, we have not posited a simple repression model, but have put forward repressions over practices as part of a more encompassing model of social change in modernity. The onus on the Foucauldian would be to demonstrate the inappropriateness of this overall model, as well as the repression-based component which is but one aspect of it.

CHAPTER 3

1. There is of course no absolute scale of “direct” and “indirect” forms of reference, for what may figure as direct reference in one context may operate as indirect reference in another context. We will follow Elias’s lead in viewing such matters in terms of a relative scale of directness of reference, from relatively direct forms of reference under the conditions of the FFH, to relatively indirect forms of reference under the conditions of the GBFH, with the fully-formed GBFH characterisable as demanding relatively high levels of indirect reference.
2. Of course such a *telos* could ever be practically reached, as the fact that defecation continued to occur despite all the cultural trends premised to the contrary, meant that excretory matters still had to be verbally dealt with; the bourgeois strategy of verbally referring to such unpleasant matters was to refer to them in as “indirect” fashions as was possible.
3. According to Elias’s account, this development is a reflection of alterations at the social structural level in the direction of rising levels of social relational density. Practices of later periods in the duration of the “civilising process” were not regulated with reference to empirically-existing others (as in the court locale) but were carried out, as it were, “automatically”, i.e. in light of the internalisation of norms of conduct such that individuals believed these norms to be irrefutably correct.
4. Cited in Elias 1995: 106
5. Cited in Elias 1995: 107 [the original text dates from 1558].
6. Cited in Elias 1995: 107 [orig. 1570].
7. Cited in Elias 1995: 107 [orig. 1589].
8. Cited in Elias 1995: 108 [orig. 1729].
9. Cited in Elias 1995: 108 [orig. 1619]. For “privy”, vide Appendix.
10. Cited in Elias 1995: 109 [orig. 1731].
11. Cited in Elias 1995: 109 [orig. 1774].
12. Such comments are to be found in Goethe’s Italian Journey, his account of travels in that country in 1786. Vide Goethe 1970: 62, 64
13. For discussion of “low” and “high” cultures at this period, and how the analyst may define them, vide Burke 1978: 28 and following.
14. For an account of attitudes to the body in Christian doctrine generally, and medieval versions more specifically, vide Bottomley 1979.
15. Matthew xvii.23, cited in Bourke 1968: 271.
16. As a perusal of the works of Martin Luther reveals.

17. This may be an instance of Douglas's claims reproduced in Chapter 1 as to faeces being positively evaluated if deployed by key members of a society, such as physicians, but regarded as negative entities if deployed by those with outsider statuses, such as witches. Whereas the physician used excreta to heal, the witch was felt to use such materials to harm. For the uses of faeces in witchcraft in various cultures, vide Bourke 1968: 373-404.
18. Vide also Bourke 1968: 333 and following.
19. Vide also Camporesi 1988: 209-10, 274.
20. However there were limits to such tolerance, at least among elites. For example, the eating of animal dung by the poor in times of extreme shortage was regarded with horror. Vide Camporesi 1989: 87
21. Vide Camporesi 1988: 154, 267; Bourke 1968: 295.
22. Vide Bourke 1968: 298-99, 301-3, 331; Camporesi 1988: 147.
23. Vide Burke 1978: 178-204.
24. Vide Stallybrass and White 1986: 16-17 for a critique of Bakhtin in this regard.
25. For a review of the decline of medieval popular cultural forms, vide Burke 1978: 207-243.
26. Vide also Bakhtin 1984: 19.
27. Vide Synnott 1993: 194; Classen et al. 1994.

CHAPTER 4

1. Large-scale sewer systems of course existed in ancient Rome. But their characteristics necessarily differ from the characteristics of the systems of sewers corresponding to the historical manifestation of the GBFH, the bacteriological PBFH. Furthermore, Roman sewers were not connected to water closets. In this regard, vide Carcopino 1991: 51-2; Shelton 1998: 67
2. We shall primarily focus on English experience of these matters, with some reference to equivalent developments in Paris
3. Vide also Wohl 1984: 109-10; Smith 1979: 228
4. Dungheaps continued to be used in certain proletarian areas of English cities until the 1870's. at which point the affronts both moral and hygienic they presented were too great to allow them to continue to exist. Vide Smith 1979: 198
5. For the beginnings of French "public hygiene" measures in the later eighteenth century. vide Vigarello 1988: 143
6. Such ideas were prefigured by later 18th century plans (in the French context) to sluice the urban streets with water, in order to reduce the presence of harmful odours. Vide Vigarello 1988: 151-3

7. For new notions of bodily cleanliness produced by bacteriological science, vide Vigarello 1988: 202-5, 209, 211
8. Vide Wohl 1984: 89; Gauldie 1974: 112; Frazer 1950: 69-70, 148-9; Brockington 1966: 40; Smith and Young 1993: 9
9. Not just in terms of sewers, but also in terms of the paving and cleaning of streets and other sundry measures.
10. Vide Chadwick 1965 [1842]. For a general account of this Report and its ramifications, vide Finer 1952: 212 *passim*.
11. For France, Vigarello 1988: 168 and following.
12. For a general account, vide Rosen 1958: 201-6.
13. Opposition to British State interventions in this field came from, among other groups, ultra-liberal and aristocratic fractions opposed in principle to central State control in any area (Roberts 1969: 70), capitalist entrepreneurs opposed to such interventions on the basis of the rises in taxation that these would lead to (Lewis 1952: 121; Ashworth 1954: 67), landlords and property owners who were opposed to housing reform (Lewis 1952: 102) and private firms previously responsible for detritus removal, such as companies of cesspool cleaners (Reid 1991: 82-3).
14. The three largest components of British local government debt in the 1890's were water supply, sewerage and sanitary improvements, Vide Smith 1979: 229
15. Vide Rosen 1958: 153-9; Smith 1979: 215-16; Kitson-Clark 1962: 80-81; Kennard 1958: 490, 499-502; Wohl 1984: 111, 113, 115; Ashworth 1954: 75
16. For changing attitudes as to the cleansing powers of water, in the eighteenth century vide Vigarello 1988: 112, in the 1830's (especially as regards the outbreak of epidemics) 1988: 178-80, and the 1870's (in the context of the rise of bacteriological science) 1988: 202-5
17. In addition to meeting other aspects of the more general dirt crises of the period
18. For the bourgeois flight from urban locales because of such factors, vide Ashworth 1954: 148 and following.
19. Provisions of the 1848 Health Act, cited in Benevolo 1967: 95-97; also vide Ashworth 1954: 25-6.
20. Vide also Reid 1991: 30, 35, 48; Hobsbawm 1995: 211; Benevolo 1967: 100-4; Engels 1988: 367-8
21. Lewis 1952: note to 89-90

CHAPTER 5

1. We will primarily use England as an exemplar of trends in water closet utilisation among both bourgeoisie and proletariat. The periodisations offered here derive from an analysis of the English context.
2. Leguay 1984: 58, cited in Vigarello 1988: 57. Vide also the episode set in Naples in the Decameron where the horse-dealer, Andreuccio, falls into a ditch where excreta are collected, from walking onto the planks overhanging it; such planks were suspended between two houses, thus creating a primitive form of latrine seat. Vide Boccaccio 1995: 103. Also cited in Vigarello 1988: 56-7.
3. For verbal circumlocutions as to means of excretory disposal among medieval elites, vide Allen and Burridge 1991: 25.
4. Vide also Quennell and Quennell 1967: 96; Palmer 1973: 20
5. Such legislation may also be traced back to the medieval conception of what was involved in the cleaning of streets and other locales. Cleaning meant carrying away rubbish from the place where it had been piled up; cleaning did not mean sluicing the streets with water. Vide Vigarello 1988: 56
6. Vide Smollett 1966 [1771]: 218; also Smollett 1992 [1766]: 33
7. The shift also reflects differing notions of corporeal cleanliness held by aristocracy and bourgeoisie, from a form centred around presenting cleanliness visibly as a display of manners, to a more invisible form of cleanliness, centred around notions of bodily cleanliness underneath the surface (of clothing, etc.). In this regard, vide Vigarello 1988: 3, 136, 229.
8. For the beginnings of utilisation of bidets at a slightly earlier period (c. 1740), which signify changing attitudes towards the cleansing by water of private bodily parts, vide Vigarello 1988: 105-7, 162
9. For similar trends in the dwellings of the French aristocracy at this period, vide Vigarello 1988: 108-10.
10. For the situation among the bourgeoisie in France, vide Vigarello 1988: 162, 187
11. For the irruption of despised, filthy materials against the cleanly cosmology which deems them thus, vide Douglas 1970: 101
12. The practice in certain European countries of having a shelf in the bowl of the water closet where the excretion may be viewed in one sense contradicts the imperative that excreta be expelled from the purview of the excreting person as quickly as possible. However, such a shelf exists within a form of disposal the general aim of which is rapid and thorough expulsion. It thus may be viewed as a particular variant of a form of disposal the overall aim of which is efficient expulsion. For the use of the shelf model of water closet in Germany, vide Dundes 1984.

13. Vide also Daunton 1983: unnumbered illustrated pages between pp. 88-9.
14. This imperative of course held among the bourgeoisie of the period. It was also increasingly held by the upper proletariat:
"[O]ne of the great divisions between the respectable and unrespectable was where and how one relieved oneself, and whether parents taught their children to relieve themselves in the house or yard in a closet or pot, or simply sent them outside to the nearest lane or field" (Smith 1979: 197-8)
15. The same form of argument, in the context of sexual mores first being developed in the bourgeois context and thence being transposed to the proletarian realm, is made by Foucault 1981.
16. John Glyde, 'The Moral, Social and religious Condition of Ipswich in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century' (1850) cited in Rubinstein 1974: 113-4. Vide also Times (London) leader, 2 March 1861 : "Such aggregations cannot be favourable either to public or to private morality. They must tend, not only to harbour, but to generate, dangerous classes" (cited in Rubinstein 1974: 147)
17. For a diagram, vide Engels 1987: 95
18. For rising levels of U.K. aggregate income between 1880 and 1900, vide Thomson 1973: 196
19. For an analysis of levels of social relational density in terms of the privacy afforded by water closets, vide Bernstein 1976: 142-5
20. Vide also Martin 1984: 58, 68-9
21. Non-water closet forms of the intimate means of disposal were still in use in a proportion of working class homes at this period, especially those of lower strata. But because all proletarian strata desired such a form of disposal, and since increasing numbers of lower proletarians were in possession of such a form, it is reasonable to claim that the proletariat as a whole had entered the conditions of the GBFH / UFH symbolically, if not wholly in the practical sense
22. There is a great deal of literature on mass culture as a form of bourgeois derogation of proletarian lifestyles. A somewhat spurious (although still perhaps rather telling) thesis could be drawn between the withdrawal of cleanly bodily capital as means of bourgeois distinction in the symbolic competition between bourgeois and proletariat, and the further and more emphatic deployment at roughly the same period of High Culture as a form of derogation of the working classes. In this sense, the writings of Leavis and Eliot are symptomatic of the reorientation of bourgeois symbolic capital in the first decades of the twentieth century, a reorientation provoked by the loss of bodily cleanliness in general and excretory cleanliness in particular as forms of bourgeois capital. Certainly an interpretation of the oeuvres of these figures as being provoked by proletarian use of the water closet is a novel one.

APPENDIX

1. For illegitimate and impolite terms, vide Grose 1963 and 1968, Hotten 1864, MacDonald 1988, Partridge 1967a and 1967b.
2. For a history of changing conceptions of water in the post-feudal period, vide Vigarello 1988 *passim*, especially Chapter 13.

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