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MANNERS

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Erasmus, the Dutch humanist, advised his readers in the sixteenth century not to spit on or over the table but underneath it. After that spitting became ever more restricted, until it was banned altogether. In the 1960s most British buses still had "No Spitting" signs. In the West even the very urge to spit has generally disappeared.

Medieval people blew their noses with their fingers. In 1885 Christoph Höflinger, the author of a German manners book, warned his readers not to clean their nose with anything but a handkerchief. Evidently this had not yet become a general habit, for he acknowledges the "courage and mastery over oneself" required to maintain a "decent demeanor."

These examples show some of the changes that have come about in Western manners -- changes in behavior as well as in the sensibilities and norms regulating what range of behavior is allowed, what is prescribed, and what is forbidden. Some changes in this range have become formalized as good manners, others as laws. The code of manners and the judicial code supplement and reinforce each other; both provide motives and criteria for punishment and reward. Transgressions against the code of manners are punished in a variety of ways, ranging from assigning blame by means of gossip to excommunication, all involving a loss of face, respect, or status. Manners provide important criteria for social ranking.

The Functions of Manners

Any code of manners functions as a regime, that is, as a form of social control demanding the exercise of self-control. A regime of manners corresponds to a particular network of interdependencies, to a certain range of socially accepted behavioral and emotional alternatives as well as to a particular level of mutually expected self-controls. Within the relationships in which they grow up, all individuals are confronted with demands on self-regulation according to the code of manners prevalent in their particular group and society. Thus the history of manners offers empirical evidence for both social and psychic processes; that is, for developments between individuals and groups (social classes, sexes, and generations) as well as in individuals' patterns of self-regulation and personality structure.

As a rule, manners among the upper classes serve to maintain a social distance between those classes and those trying to enter their circles. Manners are instruments of exclusion or rejection and of inclusion and group charisma: individuals and groups with the necessary qualifications are let in while the "rude" -- that is, all others lower down the social ladder -- are kept out. The dual function of manners is evident in a comment such as 'They are not nice people': manners are a weapon of attack as well as a weapon of defense. Any code of manners

contains a standard of sensitivity and composure, functioning to preserve the sense of purity, integrity and identity of the group. Incentives to develop “good taste” and polished social conduct further arise from the pressures of competition for status. In this competition manners and sensibilities function as power resources, deployed by upper classes to outplay and dominate lower classes.

From the Renaissance onward European societies tended to become somewhat more open and socially more competitive. As a result the sensibilities and manners cherished by the established functioned as a model for people from other social groups aspiring to respectability and social ascent. Good manners usually trickled down the social ladder. Only at times of large-scale social mobility, when whole groups gained access to the centers of established power, did their manners to some extent trickle up with them. In contrast to individual social ascent, the ascent of an entire social group involves some mixing of the codes and ideals of the ascendant group with those of the previously superior groups. The history of manners thus reflects the social ascent of increasingly wider social groups in European societies since the Renaissance.

Some changes in manners are symptomatic of changing power balances between states. As France became the most dominant power in Europe, French court manners increasingly took over the model function previously fulfilled by Italian court manners. In the nineteenth century, with the rising power of England, the manners of English “good society” came to serve as a major example in many other countries. After World War II, when the United States became a dominant superpower, American manners served more easily as a model.

The Study of Manners

Interest in the history of manners, a fairly young and as yet understudied discipline, has grown together with interest in the history of emotions, mentalities, and everyday life, all of which became more serious topics of research after the 1960s. Among the studies that prepared the way was the work of the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, particularly his *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, originally published in 1919. This book had an unusual focus on manners, emotions, mentalities, and everyday-life in the fifteenth century; it presented a lively sketch of the wide range of behaviors, the intensities of joy and sorrow, the public nature of life. Throughout the 1920s this work remained exceptional. In the 1930s the historians Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, and others associated with the French *Annales* school again took up an interest in mentalities, lifestyles, and daily life.

The first systematic study of the history of manners, *The Civilizing Process* by Norbert Elias, appeared in German in 1939. This book provided a broad perspective on changes in European societies; pivotal to Elias’s work was an analysis of the extensive European literature on manners from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The book thus enlarged the empirical basis of cultural history as it had been written thus far. Elias focused particularly on manners regarding the most basic human functions such as eating, drinking, sleeping, defecating, and blowing one’s nose. Because these manners are universal in the sense that humans cannot

biologically avoid these activities, no matter what society or age they live in, they are highly suitable for historical and international comparison. Elias presented a large number of excerpts from manners books in chronological order, thus revealing an overall directional trend in codes of behavior and feeling. By studying these sources, Elias uncovered evidence of long-term changes in these codes as well as in people's psychic makeup. Elias made connections between the changes in personality structure and changes in the social structure of France and other European societies and offered explanations for why this happened. According to his theory, the main driving force of the directional process is the dynamic of social relations, that is, changes in the ways in which people are bonded to each other. Changes in these networks of interdependency are also changes in status competition; they are changes in sources of power and identity, in the ways people demand and show respect as well as in their fear of losing the respect of others and their own self-respect.

On the European map the study of the history of manners has many blank spots. Manners as a serious object of study has faced a major obstacle in the strong social pressures of status competition. No matter what social definition of "good manners" may prevail, if these "good manners" do not come "naturally", that is, more or less automatically, the effect is ruined. Only manners springing from the inner sensitivity of "second nature" may impress as "natural." Otherwise, the taint of longings for status and the fear of losing status attach to an individual, provoking embarrassment and repulsion. Thus, status competition and inherent status fears have exerted pressure to associate the entire topic of manners with lower classes and with lower instincts. That is, as good manners themselves were taken for granted, the subject of manners was limited to spheres in which good ones were taken to be absent. Throughout the period from the 1920s to the 1960s, manners were discussed mainly in the context of the behavioral "problems" of lower classes, of children having to learn such things as table manners, as well as of social climbers and *nouveaux riches* who were usually seen as being too loud and too conspicuous. Status fears have thus functioned as a barrier to developing the level of reflexivity needed for serious interest in the history of manners. These fears have impeded the development of an historical perspective by making people less inclined to perceive their own manners as the outcome of social and psychic processes.

The social ascent of certain groups -- the working classes, women, youth, homosexuals, and blacks -- spurred the development of the level of detachment and reflection needed for studies in the social history of manners and mentalities. In the 1960s and 1970s these groups were emancipated and further integrated within nation-states. They succeeded in being treated with more respect. An avalanche of protest against all relationships and manners perceived as authoritarian coincided with the widening of circles of identification. As processes of decolonization took hold, whole populations were emancipated and integrated, however poorly, within a global network of states. Greater interest in the daily lives of "ordinary" people ensued. With increased mobility and more frequent contact between different kinds of people came the pressure to look at oneself and others with greater detachment, to ask questions about manners that previous generations took for granted: why is this forbidden and that permitted? These

processes have been the driving forces behind the rising popularity of the study of manners and mentalities.

Existing studies of manners concentrate on changes in upper- and middle-class manners. They highlight the ways manners were used to differentiate groups by class, but they do not deal directly with lower-class manners. In particular, the codes of manners prevalent in lower classes before they experienced a certain degree of integration into their societies is left unstudied. It is the task of social history to examine how long these distinct lower-class codes of conduct persisted; to what extent they were integrated into the dominant code; to what extent people from lower classes did imitate their “betters”; and when and how these mixing processes occurred to form uniform national codes of manners.

The following sketch of changes in European regimes of manners owes a debt to Norbert Elias’s *The Civilizing Process* in two ways. First, it uses his theoretical perspective on manners as a model; second, to illustrate changes up to the nineteenth century, it relies on empirical data extracted from his research, and on their presentation by Stephen Mennell (1989). For the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this article draws on studies by Michael Curtin (1987), Leonore Davidoff (1973), Horst-Volker Krumrey (1984), and several by Cas Wouters. The following discussion is a general one; only a few remarks indicate variations in the development of manners within western Europe; differences between western and eastern Europe are neglected altogether. In general, specific national regimes of manners have developed from different national class structures. In each country a national regime of manners emerged out of changes in the relative power of the rising and falling strata, out of their specific forms and levels of competition and cooperation. The ways in which the ranks of falling strata were opened up by and to rising strata appear to have been decisive in the development of distinctive regimes of manners and to have determined variations in the general pattern set out here.

The Period of Courts and Courtesy

The manners books studied by Elias included prominent ones that were translated, imitated, and reprinted again and again. These books were directed primarily at the secular upper classes, particularly people living in courtly circles around great lords. Early modern terms for good manners such as “courtesy” derive from the word “court.” With few exceptions, these books address adults and present adult standards. They deal openly with many questions that later became embarrassing and even repugnant, such as when and how to fart, burp, or spit. In the sequence of excerpts Elias presents, changes in feelings of shame and delicacy become vividly apparent. The series on table manners, for example, shows that people at feudal courts ate with their fingers, using only their own general-purpose knife or dagger. The main restriction on using the knife was not to clean one’s teeth with it. Everyone ate from a common dish, using a common spoon to put some of the food on a slice of bread. One was advised to refrain from falling on the dish like a pig, from dipping food one has already taken bites from into the communal sauce, and from presenting a tasty bit from one’s mouth to a companion’s. People were not to snort while eating nor blow their noses on the tablecloth (for this was used for

wiping greasy fingers) or into their fingers.

Throughout the Middle Ages this kind of advice was repeated. Then, from at least the sixteenth century onward, manners were in continuous flux. The codes became more differentiated and more demanding. In the sixteenth century the fork is mentioned, although only for lifting food from the common dish, and handkerchiefs and napkins appear, both still optional rather than necessary: if you had one, you were to use it rather than your fingers. Only by the mid-eighteenth century did plates, knives, forks, spoons, and napkins for each guest, and also handkerchiefs, become more or less indispensable utensils in the courtly class. In this and other aspects, the code of these upper classes was then beginning to resemble the general usage of later centuries.

Erasmus wrote that it was impolite to speak to someone who was urinating or defecating; he discussed these acts quite openly. In his conduct manual, *Il Galateo ovvero De' Costumi* (1558), Giovanni della Casa wrote that "it is not a refined habit, when coming across something disgusting in the sheet, as sometimes happens, to turn at once to one's companion and point it out to him" (Elias, 2000, p. 111). This warning is in line with other evidence from early manners books, which indicate that urinating and defecating were not yet punctiliously restricted to their socially designated proper places. Often enough, needs were satisfied when and where they happened to be felt. These bodily functions increasingly came to be invested with feelings of shame and repugnance, until eventually they were performed only in strict privacy and not spoken of without embarrassment. Certain parts of the body increasingly became "private parts" or, as most European languages phrase it, "shame parts" ("pudenda," deriving from the Latin word meaning to be ashamed).

The same trend is apparent in behavior in the bedroom. As the advice cited above indicates, it was quite normal to receive visitors in rooms with beds, as it was very common to spend the night with many in one room. Sleeping was not yet set apart from the rest of social life. Usually people slept naked. Special nightclothes slowly came into use at about the same time as the fork and the handkerchief. Manners books specified how to behave when sharing a bed with a person of the same sex. For instance, a manners book from 1729, as quoted by Elias, warns that "it is not proper to lie so near him that you disturb or even touch him; and it is still less decent to put your legs between those of the other." From the 1774 edition of the same book, an advance in the thresholds of shame and repugnance can be deduced, for this pointed instruction was removed and the tone of advice became more indirect and more moral: "you should maintain a strict and vigilant modesty." The new edition also noted that to be forced to share a bed "seldom happens" (Elias, 2000, p. 137). Gradually, to share a bed with strangers, with people outside the family, became embarrassing. As with other bodily functions, sleeping slowly became more intimate and private, until it was performed only behind the scenes of social life.

In directing these changes in manners, considerations of health and hygiene were not important. They were used mainly to back up -- sometimes also to cover up -- motivations of status and respect. In all cases, restraints on manners appeared first, and only later were reasons

of health given as justifications. Nor did changes in poverty or wealth influence the development of manners prior to the mid-nineteenth century, after which their importance did increase.

In general, as Elias's examples showed, what was first allowed later became restricted or forbidden. Heightened sensitivity with regard to several activities, especially those related to the "animalic" or "first nature" of human beings, coincided with increasing segregation of these activities from the rest of social life: they became private. Again and again, what was once seen as good manners later became rude or, at the other extreme, so ingrained in behavior as to be completely taken for granted. Social superiors made subordinates feel inferior if they did not meet their standard of manners. Increasingly, fear of social superiors and, more generally, the fear of transgression of social prohibitions took on the character of an inner fear, shame.

All new prescriptions and prohibitions were used as a means of social distinction until they lost their distinctive potential. Gradually, ever-broader strata were willing and anxious to adopt the models developed above them, compelling those above to develop other means of distinction. For instance, it became a breach of good manners to appear naked or incompletely dressed or to perform natural functions before those of higher or equal rank; doing so before inferiors could be taken as a sign of benevolence. Later, nakedness and excretion not conducted in private became general offenses invested with shame and embarrassment. Gradually, the social commands controlling these actions came to operate with regard to everyone and were imprinted as such on children. Thus all references to social control, including shame, became embedded as assumptions and as such receded from consciousness. Adults came to experience social prohibitions as "natural," coming from their own inner selves rather than from the outer realm of "good manners." As these social constraints took on the form of more or less total and automatically functioning self-restraints, this standard behavior had become "second nature." Accordingly, manners books no longer dealt with these matters or did so far less extensively. Social constraints pressed toward stronger and more automatic self-supervision, the subordination of short-term impulses to the commandment of a habitual longer-term perspective, and the cultivation of a more stable, constant, and differentiated self-regulation. This is, as Elias called it, a civilizing process.

In his explanation, Elias emphasized the importance of processes of state formation, in which taxation and the use of physical violence and its instruments came into fewer and fewer hands until they were centralized and monopolized. Medieval societies lacked any central power strong enough to compel people to restrain their impulses to use violence. In the course of the sixteenth century, families of the old warrior nobility and some families of bourgeois origin were transformed into a new upper class of courtiers, a tamed nobility with more muted affects. Thus the territories of great lords were increasingly pacified, and at their courts, encouraged especially by the presence of a lady, more peaceful forms of conduct became obligatory. Such conduct was a basic part of the regime of courtly manners, and its development, including ways of speaking, dressing, and holding and moving the body, went hand in hand with the rise of courtly regimes.

Within the pacified territories of strong lords, the permanent danger and fear of violent

attack diminished. This relative physical safety facilitated the growth of towns, burgher groups, commerce, wealth, and, as a result, taxation. Taxes financed larger armies and administrative bodies, thus helping the central rulers of the court societies to expand their power and their territory at the expense of others. The dynamic of the competition for land and money went in the direction of expanding the webs of interdependence, bonding together the people of different territories. Political integration and economic integration intertwined and reinforced each other, culminating in the absolute monarchies of the later seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

The inhabitants of these states were increasingly constrained to settle conflicts in nonviolent ways, thus pressuring each other to tame their impulses toward aggressiveness and cruelty. Moreover, families of bourgeois origin had risen in power, enough to compete with the nobility and forcefully to demand more respect. Their former social superiors were obliged to develop the habit of permanently restraining their more extreme expressions of superiority, particularly violent ones. Such displays were successfully branded as degrading. As they came to provoke shame and repulsion, impulses in that direction and the corresponding feelings of superiority (and inferiority) came to be more or less automatically repressed and rejected. Thus, in a widening circle of mutual respect and identification, the more extreme displays of superiority and inferiority were excluded from the prevailing regime of manners.

In the early modern period, the general level of mutual identification was such that, for example, displays of physical punishment and executions were common public spectacles. Moreover, these were still considered necessary to bolster central authority and to seal the transfer of vengeance from private persons to the central ruler. From the early seventeenth century onward, the more extreme, mutilating punishments were mitigated or abolished. During the nineteenth century most corporal punishments were abandoned or, like executions, removed to within prison walls. And in the twentieth century, in most western European countries executions were abolished altogether. The taming of aggressiveness coincided with an increase in sensibility toward suffering, that is, in the scope of mutual identification. Growing sensitivity to violence, suffering, and blood can be deduced also from changes in manners such as increasing restrictions on the use of the knife as an instrument and symbol of danger. For instance, it was frowned upon to eat fish or cut potatoes with a knife, or to bring the knife to one's mouth. In a related trend, the slaughtering of animals and carving of their meat were removed from the public scene into slaughterhouses. The carving of large cuts of meat was also increasingly removed from the dinner table to the kitchen.

From Courtesy to Etiquette

In absolute monarchies all groups, estates, or classes, despite their differences, became dependent on each other, thus increasing the dependence of each of the major interest groups on the central coordinating monopoly power. Administration and control over the state, its centralized and monopolized resources, first expanded and spread into the hands of growing numbers of individuals. Then, with the rise of bourgeois groups no longer dependent on privileges derived from the Crown, in an increasingly complex process royal or "private" state monopolies turned into societal or "public" ones. With the exception of the Netherlands, where monopoly administration

had already in 1581 been taken over by merchant patricians, this shift from private to public occurred in the late eighteenth century, first in France and later in many other European countries. This process accelerated in the nineteenth century, with the rising power and status of wealthy middle classes and the declining importance of courts, formerly the aristocratic centers of power.

The transition from the eighteenth-century courtesy genre of manners books to the nineteenth-century etiquette genre expresses this change. The etiquette genre presented a blend of aristocratic and bourgeois manners. The aristocratic tradition continued, for example, in the importance of being self-confident and at ease. Even the slightest suggestion of effort or forethought was itself bad manners. Whereas courtesy books typically advocated ideals of character, temperament, accomplishments, habits, morals, and manners for aristocratic life, etiquette books focused more narrowly on the sociability of particular social situations -- dinners, balls, receptions, presentations at court, calls, introductions, salutations. Etiquette books were directed at sociability in “society” or “good society,” terms referring to the wider social groups, segments of the middle and upper classes, that possessed the strength of a social establishment. Especially in “society”, manners were decisive in making acquaintances and friends, and, through manners one could gain influence and recognition. Manners also functioned as a means of winning a desirable spouse. In comparison to court circles, the circles of “good society” were larger, and sociability in them was more “private.” In many of those circles the private sphere was more sharply distinguished from the public and occupational sphere.

The life and career of the bourgeois classes both in business and the professions depended heavily on the rather punctual and minute regulation of social traffic and behavior. Accordingly, nineteenth-century manners books placed great emphasis on acquiring the self-discipline necessary for living a “rational life”; they emphasized time-keeping and ordering activities routinely in a fixed sequence and at a set pace. The entrepreneurial bourgeoisie needed to arrange contracts, for which a reputation of being financially solvent and morally solid was crucial. To a large extent this reputation was formed in the gossip channels of “good society” (or its functional equivalent among other social strata).

The reputation of moral solidity referred to the self-discipline of orderliness, thrift, and responsibility, qualities needed for a firm grip on the proceedings of business transactions. Moral solidity also included the sexual sphere. It was inconceivable that any working bourgeois man could create the solid impression of living up to the terms of his contracts if he could not even control his wife or keep his family in order. Therefore, bourgeois means of controlling potentially dangerous social and sexual competition to a substantial degree depended on the support of wives for their husbands. At the same time, these pressures offered specific opportunities to women. Whereas men dominated the courtesy genre of manners books, in the etiquette genre women gained a prominent position, both as authors and as readers. As the social weight of the bourgeoisie increased, middle-class women enjoyed a widening sphere of opportunities. Although confined to the domain of their home and “good society”, in the nineteenth century upper- and middle-class women more or less came to run and organize the social sphere. The workings of “good society” in large parts took place in women’s private drawing rooms. To some extent, women came to function as the

gatekeepers of this social formation, as arbiters of social acceptance or rejection.

The Expansion of “Good Society”

As circles of “good society” were larger, more open and more competitive than court circles, the people in them developed increasingly detailed and formal manners for social circulation. Particularly in Britain but also in other countries, a highly elaborate and increasingly formalized regime of manners developed. It consisted of a complicated system of introductions, invitations, leaving cards, calls, “at homes” (specified times when guests were received), receptions, dinners, and so on. The regime regulated sociability and functioned as a relatively refined system of inclusion and exclusion, as an instrument to screen newcomers into social circles, to ensure that the newly introduced would assimilate to the prevailing regime of manners, and to identify and exclude undesirables. A basic rule of manners among those acknowledged as belonging to the circle was to treat each other on the basis of equality. Quite often this was expressed in what became known as the Golden Rule of manners: do to others as you would have them do to you. Others were treated with reserve and thus kept at a social distance. In short, members treated everyone either as an equal or as a stranger; in this way more extreme displays of superiority and inferiority were avoided.

Entrance into “good society” was impossible without an introduction, and any introduction required the previous permission of both parties. After an introduction a variety of relationships could develop, from merely a “bowing acquaintanceship” to one with the “right of recognition,” as the English called it. As a rule these differentiations in social distance among those included in “society” ran parallel with differentiations in social status. Thus, even within the ranks of “good society” the practice of reserve functioned to keep people considered not equal enough at a social distance and thus to prevent (other) displays of superiority and inferiority. Procedures of precedence, salutation, body carriage, facial expression, and so on, all according to rank, age, and gender, functioned to regulate and cover status competition within the ranks of “good society”.

As large middle-class groups became socially strong enough to compete in the struggle for power and status, they also demanded to be treated according to the Golden Rule. As “good society” expanded in the nineteenth century, circles of identification widened and spread, becoming increasingly multilayered. As ever larger groups ascended into these ranks, status competition intensified, pressuring all toward greater awareness and sharper observation of each other and of themselves. Sensitivities were heightened, particularly to expressions of status difference. As standards of sensibility and delicacy were rising, the manners of getting acquainted and keeping a distance became more important as well as more detailed.

To keep a distance from strangers was of great concern. Especially in cities, the prototypical stranger was someone who might have the manners of the respectable but not the morals. Strangers personified bad company. Their immoral motives and behavior would put the respectable in situations that endangered their self-control, prompting loss of composure in response to repulsive behavior or, worse, the succumbing to temptation. Their repeated warnings against strangers expressed a strong moral appeal, revealing a fear of the slippery slope toward giving in to immoral

pleasures.

These warnings were directed at young men in particular. Playing a single game of cards with strangers, for example, would “always end in trouble, often in despair, and sometimes in suicide,” an early-nineteenth century advice book warned. By its nature, any careless indulgence in pleasure would lead to “a lethal fall” (Tilburg, 1998, pp. 66, 67). This strong moral advice was intended to teach young men the responsibilities needed not only for a successful career but also, as marriages were no longer arranged by parents, for choosing a marriage partner. Advice betrayed the fear that such choices would be determined mainly by sexual attraction. Social censorship verged on psychic censorship: warnings expanded to the “treacherous effects” of fantasy. This kind of high-pitched moral pressure stimulated the development of rather rigid ways of avoiding anything defined as dangerous or unacceptable via the formation of a rigorous conscience. Thus the successive ascent of large middle-class groups and their increasing status and power relative to other groups were reflected in the regimes of manners and of self-regulation.

The Formalizing Process

Developments from the Renaissance to the end of the nineteenth century can be described as a long-term process of formalizing and disciplining: more and more aspects of behavior were subjected to increasingly strict and detailed regulations that were partly formalized as laws and partly as manners. The regime of manners expanded to include restrictions on behavior defined as arrogant and humiliating, as wild, violent, dirty, indecent, or lecherous. As this kind of unacceptable behavior was sanctioned by increasingly vigorous practices of social shaming, emotions or impulses leading to that behavior came to be avoided and repressed via the counter-impulses of individual shame. Thus, via an expanding regime of manners, a widening range of behavior and feelings disappeared from the social scene and the minds of individuals. In the nineteenth century, among upper and middle-class people this resulted in the formation of a type of personality characterized by an “inner compass” of reflexes and rather fixed habits, increasingly compelling regimes of manners and self-regulation. Impulses and emotions came to be controlled increasingly via the more or less automatically functioning counter-impulses of an authoritative conscience, with a strong penchant for order and regularity, cleanliness and neatness. Negligence in these matters indicated an inclination toward dissoluteness. Such inclinations were to be nipped in the bud, particularly in children. Without rigorous control, “first nature” might run wild. This old conviction expresses a fear that is typical of rather authoritarian relationships and social controls as well as a relatively authoritative conscience. The long-term trend of formalization reached its peak in the Victorian era, from the mid-nineteenth century to its last decade; the metaphor of the stiff upper lip indicated ritualistic manners and a kind of ritualistic self-control, heavily based on an authoritative conscience and functioning more or less automatically as a “second nature.”

The Twentieth Century: A Long-Term Process of Informalization

Around 1900 large groups with “new money” were expanding and rising, creating strong pressures on “old-money” establishments to open up. Whole groups and classes were still outspokenly

deemed unacceptable as people to associate with, but as emancipation processes accelerated, the old avoidance behavior of keeping a distance became more difficult. People from different social classes had become interdependent to the point where they could no longer avoid immediate contact with each other. Especially in expanding cities, at work and on the streets, in public conveyances and entertainment facilities, people who once used to avoid each other were now forced either to try to maintain or recover social distance under conditions of rising proximity, or to accommodate and become accustomed to more social mixing. At the same time people were warned against the dangers of familiarity, of being too open and becoming too close. From another direction came attacks on traditional ways of keeping a distance as an expression of superiority. As some social mixing became less avoidable, more extreme ways of keeping a distance and showing superiority were banned. Manners became less hierarchical and less formal and rigid.

The same trend is apparent in manners regulating the relationship between the sexes. From the end of the nineteenth century onward, women gradually escaped from the confines of the home and “good society” (or its functional equivalent among other social strata). Chaperonage declined, and upper- and middle-class women expanded their sources of power and identity by joining the suffragette movement, attending university, engaging in social work, or playing sports. Women, especially young women, wanted to go out, raising the question of whether they were allowed to pay for themselves. The respectability of meeting places and conditions of meeting became more flexible, as young people began to exert control over the dynamics of their own relationships, whether romantic or not.

In the 1920s many newly wealthy families were jostling for a place within the ranks of “good society”. The rise of whole social groups triggered a formidable push toward informalization, and rules for getting acquainted and keeping a distance declined. The expansion of business and industry, together with an expansion of means of transportation and communication, gave rise to a multitude of new types of relationships for which the old formality was too troublesome. New meeting places for the sexes such as dance halls, cinemas, and ice-skating rinks were debated for the freedom they offered. As women entered the wider society by going to work in offices, libraries, and other places, office manners became a topic. The whole trend implied rising demands on the social navigational abilities of the individual, a greater capacity to negotiate the possibilities and limitations of relationships easily without tension.

Until the 1960s some manners books still contained separate sections on behavior toward social superiors and inferiors. Later these sections disappeared. Ideals for good manners became dissociated from superior and inferior social position or rank. The trend was to draw social dividing lines less on the basis of people’s belonging to certain groups--class, race, age, sex, or ethnicity--and more on the basis of individual behavior. The avoidance behavior once prescribed toward people not deemed socially acceptable was increasingly discouraged. No longer could certain groups be legitimately targeted; rather, certain behavior and feelings--including humiliating displays of superiority and inferiority--were considered inappropriate and could be shunned as such. Avoidance behavior, no longer explicitly set out as rules, thus tended to become internalized; tensions between people became tensions within them. Accordingly, traditional ways of keeping a distance and being

reserved when confronted with those outside one's social circles were transformed into the "right of privacy", a concept which lacked a specific class component. The perception was that each individual should have the right to be left alone, to maintain a personal or social space undisturbed by unwanted intrusions.

Restrictions on ways and places of meeting sharply diminished from the 1960s onward. Mary Bolton, in *The New Etiquette Book*, observed (as though with a sigh): "Boy meets girl and girl meets boy in so many different ways that it would be quite impossible to enumerate them" (London, 1961, p. 15). This change in the conditions of "respectable" meeting is in keeping with a general shift in the balance between external and internal social controls. Respect and respectable behavior became more dependent upon self-regulation, and self-controls increasingly became both the focus and the locus of external social controls.

In the 1960s and 1970s, with entire groups rising socially, practically all relationships became less hierarchical and formal. The emancipation and integration of large social groups within welfare states coincided with informalization: the regime of manners rapidly lost rigidity and hierarchical aloofness. Many modes of conduct that formerly had been forbidden came to be allowed. Sexuality, the written and spoken language, clothing, music, dancing, and hairstyles--all expressions exhibited the trend toward informality. On the one hand, the spectrum of accepted behavioral and emotional alternatives expanded (with the important exception of displays and feelings of superiority and inferiority). On the other hand, an acceptable and respectable usage of these alternatives implied a continued increase of the demands made on self-regulation.

In increasingly dense networks of interdependency, more subtle, informal ways of obliging and being obliged demanded greater flexibility and sensitivity to shades and nuances in manners of dealing with others and oneself. The rise of mutually expected self-restraints allowed for what might be called a controlled decontrolling. Emotions that previously had been repressed and denied, especially those concerning sex and violence, were again "discovered" as part of a collective emotional makeup: in the emancipation of emotions many re-entered both consciousness and public discussion. From a set of rules manners turned into guidelines, differentiated according to the demands of the situation and relationship. This was accompanied by a strong decline in social as well as psychic censorship. Both the fear and awe of fantasy or dissident imagination diminished together with the fear and awe of the authorities of state and conscience. On the level of the personality, an authoritarian conscience made way for a conscience attuned to more equal and flexible relationships. As a psychic authority, conscience lost much of its more or less automatic ascendancy, a change that can be described in shorthand as a transition from conscience to consciousness.

Within families, commanding children and presenting them with established decisions came to be seen as dangerous. Acceptance of peremptory authority--do it because I said so--was seen as a symptom of blind submissiveness, estranging children from their own feelings. Parents more intensely invested in their children's affective lives, and family ties gained in confidentiality and intimacy. Pedagogical regimes stressed mutual respect and affection, and parents and teachers sought to direct children to obey their own conscience and reflections rather than simply the

external constraints of adults.

In the 1980s the collective emancipation that had flourished in the 1960s and 1970s disappeared and a market ideology spread. This reflected a change in west European power structures: politicians and governments came to side less with unions and social movements, and more with commercial and managerial establishments. From the 1980s onward the prevailing power structures allowed only for individual emancipation. Individuals aspiring respectability and social ascent came to feel strongly dependent again on the established elites and they adjusted their manners accordingly. Thus the sensibilities and manners of the established again functioned more unequivocally as a model. This shift was reinforced in the 1990s. The events that followed the collapse of the Iron Curtain--breaking out into violence in some cases, such as in the former Yugoslavia-- intensified feelings of fear, insecurity and powerlessness. Increased awareness of European nation-states' lack of control over global processes stimulated a tendency to identify with the established order and to focus with great concern on anything perceived as a threat to it--criminality and bad manners in particular. Accordingly, the whole regime of manners became somewhat more compelling. To a large extent, informal behaviors that had become socially acceptable in the 1960s and 1970s remained so, through their endorsement by and integration into the standard, dominant code of manners.

Conclusion

In the twentieth century a dominant process of informalization followed the long-term trend of formalization: manners became increasingly relaxed, subtle, and varied. As more and more groups of people came to be represented in the various centers of power that functioned as models for manners, the more did extreme differences between all social groups in terms of power, ranking, behavior, and management of emotion diminish. More and more social groups directed themselves to uniform national codes of behavior and feeling. Thus, as power inequalities lessened, the Golden Rule and the principle of mutual consent became expected standards of conduct among individuals and groups.

The turn of the twentieth century, the Roaring Twenties, and the permissive decades of the 1960s and 1970s were periods in which power differences sharply decreased. They were also periods with strong spurts of informalization. As power and status competition intensified, and sensitivities over social inequality increased, demonstrations of an individual's distinctiveness became more indirect, subtle, and hidden. References to hierarchical group differences, particularly to "better" and "inferior" kinds of people, were increasingly taboo; social superiors were less automatically taken to be better people. Yet it was not until the 1960s that the once automatic equation of superior in power and superior as a human being declined to the point of embarrassment.

As bonds of cooperation and competition blended, the people involved came to experience more ambivalence in their relationships. At the same time, many people increasingly felt compelled to identify with other people, as was expressed and reinforced by welfare state institutions. Widening circles of identification implied less rigid boundaries of nation, class, age,

gender, religion, and ethnicity and provided a basis for a rising societal level of mutual trust. Expanding and intensified cooperation and competition prompted people to observe and take the measure of themselves and of each other more carefully, and to show flexibility and a greater willingness to compromise. Social success came to depend more strongly on a reflexive and flexible self-regulation, the ability to combine firmness and flexibility, directness and tactfulness. As manners and relationships between social groups became less rigid and hierarchical, so too did the relationships between psychic functions such as impulses, conscience, and consciousness. A larger and more differentiated spectrum of alternatives opened up, with more flowing and flexible connections between social groups and psychic functions.

Introducing the term “third nature” as a sensitizing concept can illuminate these changes. The term “second nature” refers to a self-regulating conscience that to a great extent functions automatically. The term “third nature” refers to the development of a more reflexive and flexible self-regulation. Ideally, for someone operating on the basis of third nature it becomes “natural” to attune oneself to the pulls and pushes of both first and second nature as well as the dangers and chances, short-term and long-term, of any particular situation or relationship. As national, continental, and global integration processes exert pressure toward increasingly differentiated regimes of manners, they also exert pressure toward increasingly reflexive and flexible regimes of self-regulation.

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