Prescriptions for Manners in English Courtesy Literature, 1690-1760, and their Social Implications

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Fenela Ann Childs

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ABSTRACT

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Fenela A. Childs, St John's College, Oxford.

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford, Trinity Term, 1984.

The thesis is an examination of the courtesy literature written and/or published in England between 1690 and 1760. Its purpose is to find out about theories of manners in this period and to explore their social implications. Chapter 1 establishes the context and parameters of the study; defines 'courtesy literature', and presents information about its degree of influence in eighteenth-century England. Chapter 2 surveys the distinguished historical tradition of writings on manners which preceded this period, and examines the influence of these earlier works on English theorists. Chapter 3 describes the eighteenth-century English concept of good breeding and reveals its close relationship to contemporary aesthetic ideals. Chapter 4 is a detailed examination of prescriptions of manners for the gentleman. It describes how the gentleman's manners were intended to operate as a major means of reinforcing his social rank. It explores the social implications of this ideal, and argues in particular that it acted to reinforce the cultural and social hegemony of the ruling elite. Chapter 5 outlines the prescriptions of manners for ladies in this period in terms of both their rank and their sex, and stresses that, of these two determinants, the latter was at least as important as the former. Chapter 6 looks at prescriptions for servants and apprentices in a continued exploration of these two themes of rank and sex. It discovers a significant extension downwards of the gentlemanly ideal to aspiring tradesmen. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis with an assessment of its major discoveries, and argues that the study of these cultural norms is a valuable means of gaining a better understanding of eighteenth-century people's perceptions of themselves and their society.

ABSTRACT

The thesis is a study of the prescriptions for manners expressed in English courtesy literature between 1690 and 1760. It was undertaken with the desire to discover, through the theory of manners, more about eighteenth-century beliefs regarding fundamental human qualities and relationships.

The subject of manners has received attention from many other disciplines, in particular that of anthropology, and these studies have revealed that manners can convey a great deal of information about cultural assumptions. Although courtesy literature discusses the theory rather than the practice of manners, it is nonetheless of considerable value in revealing such patterns of belief. Some limited attention has been paid to courtesy literature within the discipline of literary criticism, but it is only very recently indeed that this literature, and, indeed, the subject of manners itself, has been of interest to historians. There thus remains considerable potential for serious investigation in this field.

The term 'courtesy literature' itself is an inheritance from previous analysts of this body of works, and to date it has been very imprecisely defined. However, it is now so well established that it is very difficult to avoid, and, indeed, it serves a useful function in labelling an otherwise unnamed body of writing. It therefore seems best to retain it and attempt to give it a far more precise definition.

In eighteenth-century England, courtesy literature was above all concerned with the subject of manners. It included many works by important contemporary writers who are now considered to be part of separate literary, philosophical, and educational traditions. Courtesy literature was a substantial body of works, numbering about 250 separate titles in this period, many of which had repeat editions. Because of the power these numbers gave them to influence the reading public, and because of their authors, who included people like John Locke, Adam Smith, David Hume, and many of the foremost literary writers of the day, these works would appear to be worthy of serious attention.

There was, indeed, a very distinguished tradition of writing about manners which stretched back from the eighteenth century, through Renaissance writers such as Castiglione and Sir Thomas Elyot, back to classical authors such as Aristotle and Cicero. Eighteenth-century English theories of manners were founded upon this tradition, most particularly, upon Cicero's concept of decorum. This held that a person's behaviour should vary according to his or her sex, social rank, occupation, age, circumstances, and surroundings. A more recent, and equally powerful influence on the English tradition, however, was the theory of manners developed in seventeenth-century France. Particularly in the three decades before the beginning of the eighteenth century, English theorists drew very heavily indeed on French ideas of manners, especially concerning the arts of conversation and pleasing others.

English writers incorporated these various borrowed ideas into a coherent synthesis, and produced a far-reaching ideal of

good manners: the concept of good breeding. This had its fullest and clearest expression in John Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education of 1693. Locke produced an ideal of good manners which was an integral part of the gentleman's education. The detailed attention and considerable concern which Locke devoted to the inculcation of correct deportment and other forms of manners is a revelation of the seriousness with which the gentleman's possession of correct manners was viewed at this time. Locke's ideas were repeatedly reiterated by many subsequent courtesy writers. However, the term 'good breeding' itself fell into some disfavour in the 1730s, because it had become associated with fashionable superficiality, and it was increasingly replaced by the word 'politeness'. Nonetheless, many of the basic ideals of good manners continued unchanged. They bore a very close resemblance to aesthetic theories of this period, by virtue of their joint emphasis on decorum, artistic self-improvement, and taste. Such a similarity is a striking indication of the potential of manners to reflect wider cultural assumptions.

In accordance with the rule of decorum, courtesy writers divided their prescriptions according to two overwhelmingly predominant criteria: rank or occupation, and sex. The social group to which they devoted the bulk of their attention was that of gentlemen. In doing so, they rejected the model of the aristocratic courtier, to which continental writers had devoted the bulk of their attention. This choice of focus was an important transferral of the ideal of good manners a major step down the social scale, which made the ideal available to a wider social audience. Courtesy writers made little attempt to restrict their

gentlemanly ideal to the traditional hierarchy of social rank based on birth. At the same time, however, these writers were seriously concerned that traditional distinctions of rank - in particular the distinction between the gentleman and his inferiors - be strictly upheld. One long-standing means of accomplishing this was the wearing of sumptuous dress. Courtesy writers, however, rejected this method because they felt it was too easily imitable. Instead, they argued that a gentleman could manifest and maintain his rank by means of his manners. The key to a successful accomplishment of this purpose was an air of personal dignity. This was supported by a number of specific manners, most particularly, an air of assurance and ease, carefully-controlled and graceful deportment, the repression of emotional display, the practice of speech patterns clearly distinguishable from those of the gentleman's inferiors, and the treatment of others in distinctly different ways which varied according to their own rank and that of the gentleman. Courtesy writers argued that through these methods, the gentleman could clearly distinguish himself from his social inferiors and assert his social and political authority. Courtesy writers' unified exposition of a single gentlemanly ideal of behaviour had another consequence which tended to strengthen the solidarity of the gentlemanly ranks: this ideal operated as a force encouraging conformity in a crucially important area of cultural expression: the fashioning of the self. It is very possible that such a common bond could have strengthened the social hegemony of the traditional ruling elite. The gentleman's social inferiors were expressly excluded from this model of good breeding, and, indeed, were provided with no positive model for

their own manners. Courtesy writers characterised the manners of the socially-climbing citizen as impertinent affectations, and the manners of the common people as barbarous and brutish. In this respect, the stress placed on good manners does seem to have increased the ideological gap between patrician and plebeian cultures in eighteenth-century England.

Courtesy writers also prescribed manners for the lady. As the female counterpart of the gentleman, she was expected to display many of the same manners: an easy, well bred air, graceful deportment, the treatment of others according to their social rank, and personal accomplishments not hitherto mentioned for the gentleman such as cleanliness, correct table manners, and the art of pleasing in conversation. In these works for ladies, however, the theme of rank is overridden by that of sex. The primary consideration of courtesy writers was to prescribe works for women according to their sex rather than their rank. Their prescriptions for women's behaviour are concerned above all with the preservation of female chastity, with the express purpose of ensuring the continuation of a patriarchal system of bloodlines and property inheritance. This obsession with chastity - for the degree of this concern amounted to just that - was in considerable contrast with the courtesy literature for gentlemen, in which almost no connection was made between inner morals and outer manners. A woman, however, was expected to express and reinforce her chastity by the manifestation of a strict modesty and reserve in every area of her behaviour: her choice of company, her dress, her deportment, her expression, her speech, and her conversation. This prescription of modesty

was applied to women regardless of age, rank, or marital status. In comparison with the modesty prescribed for gentlemen, it was considerably more restrictive on freedom of movement. A growing sentimentalisation of women occurred between about 1720 and 1760, in which the generally low opinion of women inherited from seventeenth-century religious works was reversed into an idealisation of women as superior to men in virtue. However, this considerable shift in attitude had no effect whatsoever in reducing the insistence on female modesty and chastity.

The other major social group for which manners were prescribed in this period was that of servants and apprentices. These prescriptions largely occurred within the context of heavily religious and moral conduct books, which had the primary intention of benefiting society at large and the master in particular, rather than the reader himself. A link between inner morals and outer conduct is again visible here: servants were expected to possess inner feelings of humility and to express them by frequent displays of deference in their manners. As had been the case with the gentleman's manners, the major intention of this advice was to reinforce the hierarchy of authority. At the same time, however, servants were expected to conform to their master's standards of politeness, most particularly his practice of cleanliness and hospitality. These two demands of deference and conformity could at times place severely conflicting demands on the servant. Although most of the courtesy writers' attention is directed to men servants, women servants were also given some attention. The predominance of the theme of chastity and modesty in their advice reinforces the impression gained from works for

the lady that sex was as fundamental a social division as rank in the minds of courtesy writers. Apprentices were to some extent treated as servants, in that they were subordinate to a master. However, it was recognised by an influential group of writers for apprentices that, unlike the subordination of servants, that of apprentices was a temporary state of affairs. As a result, there developed towards the end of this period a significant extension down the social scale of the gentlemanly ideal to apprentices in relation to their future role as substantial men of business. This ideal was adapted to what were seen to be the tradesman's lesser amount of income and leisure time and formed a major intermediary step between the models of polite and plebeian behaviour. At the same time, this downward extension of the gentlemanly ideal may well have operated to inhibit the development of an independent middle-class self-identity, and hence the growth of a distinct class consciousness.

It is clear that eighteenth-century English courtesy writers credited manners with considerable power to express aesthetic values, uphold the social hierarchy, and reinforce moral conduct. This study has confirmed courtesy literature to be a valuable source material for the historical study of attitudes. It is hoped that it may also have contributed to a better understanding of eighteenth-century people's perceptions of themselves and their society.

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Abbreviations

Adventurer (Yale edn.): The Adventurer (1752-4), in The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, ii. The Idler and The Adventurer, ed. W.J. Bate, J.M. Bullitt, and L.F. Powell (New Haven & London, 1963).

Brauer, Education of the Gentleman: G.C. Brauer, The Education of the Gentleman: Theories of Gentlemanly Education in England, 1660-1775 (New York, 1959).

Chesterfield, Letters: The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope 4th Earl of Chesterfield, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (1932), 6 vols.

Connoisseur: The Connoisseur (1754-6), ed. A. Chalmers (1808), 3 vols.

Constable, Conversation: John Constable, The Conversation of Gentlemen Considered In most of the Ways, that make their mutual Company Agreeable, or Disagreeable (1738).

Darrell, Gentleman Instructed: William Darrell, The Gentleman Instructed, In the Conduct of a Virtuous and Happy Life (1704-12, 5th edn., 1713).

D.N.B.: Dictionary of National Biography, ed. L. Stephen and S. Lee (1908-11), 21 vols. and 2 supplements.

E.E.T.S.: Early English Text Society.

Female Spectator: The Female Spectator, ed. Eliza Haywood (1744-6, 5th edn., 1755), 4 vols.

Fielding, 'Conversation': Henry Fielding, 'An Essay on Conversation', (1743), in his Miscellanies Volume I, ed. H.K. Miller (The Weslayan Edition of the Works of Henry Fielding, Oxford, 1972).

Heltzel, Check List: V.B. Heltzel, A Check List of Courtesy Books in the Newberry Library (Chicago, 1942).

Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman': 'Chesterfield and the Tradition of the Ideal Gentleman', (University of Chicago Ph.D. thesis, 1925).

Idler: The Idler (1758-60), in The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, ii. The Idler and The Adventurer, ed. W.J. Bate, J.M. Bullitt, and L.F. Powell (New Haven & London, 1963).

Johnson, Dictionary: Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language (1755, 2nd edn., 1755).

Kelso, Doctrine of the Gentleman: R. Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, xiv, Urbana, Ill., 1929).

Locke, Education: John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education (1693), in The Educational Writings of John Locke, ed. James Axtell (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 109-325.

Magendie, La politesse mondaine: M. Magendie, La politesse mondaine et les théories de l'honnêteté en France au XVIIe siècle de 1600 à 1660 (Paris, 1925).

Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making: J.E. Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making: Studies in the History of English Courtesy Literature and Related Topics from 1531 to 1774 (Philadelphia, 1935).

New C.B.E.L.: The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, Vol. 2 1660-1800 (Cambridge, 1971), ed. G. Watson.

Noyes, Bibliography: G. Noyes, Bibliography of Courtesy and Conduct Books in 17th-Century England (New Haven, Conn., 1937).

O.E.D.: A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, ed. J.A.H. Murray, Henry Bradley, W.A. Craigie, and C.T. Onions (Oxford, 1884-1933), 25 vols. (including Supplement), 2nd Supplement (Oxford, 1972-82).

P.M.L.A.: Publications of the Modern Language Society of America.

Pollard & Redgrave: A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland And of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640 (vol. 1, 1950, vol. 2, 2nd edn. revised and enlarged by W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson, and K.F. Pantzer, 1976).

Rambler: The Rambler (1750-2), in The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, iii.-v., The Rambler, ed. W.J. Bate and A.B. Strauss (New Haven and London, 1969).

Richardson, Collection...Sentiments: Samuel Richardson, A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflexions, Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison. Digested under Proper Heads (1755).

Richardson, Familiar Letters: Samuel Richardson, Familiar Letters on Important Occasions (1741), ed. B.W. Downs (1928).

Smith, Moral Sentiments: Adam Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759), ed. D.D. Raphael and A.L. MacFie (The Glasgow Edition of the Works of Adam Smith, i., Oxford, 1976).

Spectator: The Spectator (1711-14), ed. D.F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), 5 vols.

Swift, Works: The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. H. Davis (Oxford, 1939-68), 14 vols.

Tatler: The Tatler (1709-11), ed. G.A. Aitken (1898), 4 vols.

Wing: Donald Wing, Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America And of English Books Printed in Other Countries 1641-1700 (New York, 1945, 2nd edn. revised and enlarged, New York, 1972), 3 vols., vol 1 only is in the 2nd edn.

World: The World (1753-6), repr. Harrison's British Classicks (1786).

Note on the Use and Citation of Sources

All quotations in the text appear in the original spelling and punctuation no matter how incorrect they appear to be. For reasons of space, shortened titles of some primary sources have been used in the footnotes; full details of such works may be found in the Bibliography. The place of publication is London, unless otherwise stated. All works are in the first edition, unless otherwise stated.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It has been suggested that "from the anthropologist's point of view, much of what historians call social change can be regarded as a process of mental reclassification, of re-drawing conceptual lines and boundaries".[1] Issues such as the abolition of slavery, the extension of the franchise, penal reform, the development of the welfare state, and women's rights all had as essential concomitants major shifts in public beliefs about the essence and capabilities of the individual. For the student of historical change, it is of crucial importance to fully understand how and why such alterations in attitude occurred. One approach to these questions is to begin by studying what people in the past thought about certain fundamental human qualities and relationships.

That is the subject of this thesis with regard to eighteenth-century England. The thesis consists of a detailed study of the theory of manners in England between 1690 and 1760, a consideration of the methods by which these ideas were promulgated, and an analysis of their wider ramifications and implications within the context of contemporary society. The primary source material is contemporary courtesy literature, a specific body of writing concerned with expounding certain ideals of human nature and society and promoting their expression in manners.

i. The study: definitions, concerns, parameters, and context

The prevailing and generally-accepted meaning of the word 'manners' is that it describes the externally-manifested *minutiae* of human behaviour in social intercourse.[2] Manners relate to two very specific

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1 Keith Thomas, 'An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vi (1975), 98.

2 *O.E.D.*, *s.v.* 'manner'.

areas of behaviour. First, they are particularly centred on the body: its functions (eating, drinking, elimination); its state of cleanliness; its deportment (posture while at rest, carriage while moving, gesture, mien, and facial expression); vocal expression (e.g. speech, laughter, singing, whistling); and dress. Second, manners are involved in the individual's personal relations with others. This includes such matters as forms of address, salutations, physical interactions (e.g. proximity, contact), and conversation. All these forms of behaviour are highly personal and might appear in any social situation.

The English language contains a great many words whose primary function is to describe manners. There are collective words which describe systems of manners: 'courtesy', 'civility', 'politeness', 'good breeding', 'etiquette', 'propriety'. Oppositions to these are established with words like 'rudeness' and 'vulgarity'. A different point of view appears in slang words like 'la-di-da' and 'hoity-toity'. Other categories emerge in words like 'feminine', 'ladylike', 'masculine', 'effeminate', 'childish', 'childlike'. There are descriptive adjectives which establish dualities: 'modest', 'immodest', 'proper', 'improper', 'deferential', 'condescending'.

None of these words is a recent invention, and most have been in use for hundreds of years.[1] What is common to all of them is that, in every case, there is a value judgement in operation: the manners being described are being assessed according to some prevailing standard. Moreover, there is also present an assumption that manners have, as well as their explicit functional meanings, important implicit ones. With all the words listed above, the implied judgements being made totally outweigh the superficial significance of any one individual action they might describe. A hand gesture, for example, might be

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1 O.E.D., s.v. each word.

described as 'childish' or 'effeminate' or 'rude'. The gesture itself is a simple motion in the air, but the connotations attached to it carry important implications about the gesturer's level of personal maturity, sexual propensity, standard of refinement, or degree of deference to a companion. This imbalance of importance between action and interpretation is one of the most striking characteristics of manners. It points the way from the study of minutiae onto the consideration of much broader subjects. What sort of standards are used in judging manners; what meanings are ascribed to particular actions; what assumptions are voiced? What are their implications? Do they change over time or place? To answer these types of questions, courtesy literature is an indispensable source. In propounding an ideal, it sets up a standard to be followed; in criticising actual behaviour, it establishes parameters of what is considered acceptable; in doing both, it makes explicit many assumptions about fundamental human characteristics and social divisions.

The dual concern shown in courtesy literature for the most general ideals on the one hand, and for their very detailed and specific manifestations in manners on the other, is the most crucial characteristic of the genre. In one of the most influential early eighteenth-century courtesy books, the leading character (and spokesman for the author) says to his companions: "The Question... is not what Men do, nor what Men will do, but what they should do."[1] The primary concern of courtesy writers was not to describe the manners actually practised by their contemporaries, but to establish standards of ideal behaviour for them to follow which accorded with certain basic beliefs about the human condition. Modern social scientists describe this type of ideal as "norms". Present in any human society, norms consist of widely-accepted rules and standards of what is considered to be expected and 'desirable'

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.67.

behaviour. Norms do not necessarily coincide with actual conduct, but often actively oppose it with negative sanctions designed to enforce conformity. What norms do focus and express are the cultural ideals, values, assumptions, and beliefs of a society.[1]

Courtesy writers discussed a very wide range of questions regarding the nature of human conduct and society, among them matters of ethics, morals, education, religion, aesthetics, and social structure. They singled out for special consideration those aspects of these subjects which found a direct expression in manners. For example, when courtesy writers discussed education, their primary concern was that a gentleman's upbringing ought to be clearly visible in his manners. It is this preoccupation with manners which distinguishes courtesy literature from other types of philosophical writings also concerned with establishing cultural norms.

While a concern for manners influenced the types of ideals discussed in courtesy literature, the reciprocal influence of ideals on the discussion of manners was of equal importance. This is because in the eighteenth century, courtesy literature had not yet evolved into the much more restricted and specialised etiquette books characteristic of the nineteenth century. The difference is crucial because this nineteenth-century legacy affects modern perspectives of courtesy literature as a genre. Etiquette books, especially from the early nineteenth century onwards, have as their main concern the prescription, particularly to social parvenus, of the codes of ceremony of polite society. This concern is in accordance with the specialised meaning of the word 'etiquette': the formalised details of diplomatic, court, and social ceremonial.[2] What etiquette books do not do is give much,

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1 R.M. Williams, 'The Concept of Norms', and J.P. Gibbs, 'The Study of Norms', International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, ed. David Sills (New York, 1968), xi. 204-13.

2 O.E.D., s.v. 'etiquette'.

or often any, justification of the value of the ceremony they prescribe, other than that it is accepted social custom in polite society.[1] They do not as a rule discuss the more general principles and assumptions underlying their prescription of manners, and their value as a reflection of cultural norms is correspondingly limited.[2]

This was not the case in the early and mid-eighteenth century. The term 'etiquette' did not enter the English language until the late 1760s.[3] The main descriptive terms for good manners in the first half of the eighteenth century were 'good breeding' and 'politeness', which had origins and emphases very different from those of 'etiquette', and which were discussed by eighteenth-century courtesy writers in a much wider context.[4] While etiquette books are intellectually a fairly isolated genre, one of the major strengths of eighteenth-century courtesy literature is its discussion of manners in relation to many different traditions of philosophical enquiry.

These several characteristics of courtesy literature establish the nature and parameters of a study which uses courtesy literature as a source. Courtesy literature is a record of the theory of manners, not of their actual practice. It indicates how courtesy writers thought

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1 E.g.: Anon., Hints on Etiquette and the Usages of Polite Society, with A Glance at bad Habits (2nd edn., 1836), espec. pp.11-12; Anon., Etiquette for the Ladies (4th edn., 1837), espec. pp.5-6; Anon., The Habits of Good Society (n.d. [c.1860]); Anon., Manners and Tone of Good Society (n.d.); Lady Troubridge, Etiquette and Entertaining (n.d.); W.S. Norman, Etiquette and Good Manners (1958, 3rd imp. 1972).

2 This distinction between the restricted, superficial scope of contemporary etiquette books and the broader, more fundamental ideals expressed in the preceding courtesy tradition was specifically drawn in 1892: A.S. Palmer, The Perfect Gentleman, His Character delineated in a series of extracts from writers ancient and modern (1892), pp. vii-viii.

3 The O.E.D. gives 1768 as the first English usage. None earlier has been found in the courtesy literature studied for this thesis. Chesterfield uses it in 1750 and 1763, but on both occasions as a foreign word describing the procedure of foreign courts: Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1515 (19 Mar. O.S. 1750), vi. 2508 (14 July 1763).

4 See below, ch. 3, pp. 102-130.

their contemporaries should behave and sometimes how they thought their contemporaries were behaving. It does not document the daily practice of manners in any given period, although it can shed light on it. This thesis, therefore, is not a study of the detailed forms of manners in actual practice in eighteenth-century England. That is a different subject of enquiry of immense scope which would involve painstaking reconstruction of a highly ephemeral subject from scattered sources such as diaries, letters, paintings, and costumes, and result in a study running into many volumes, such as Alfred Franklin's 27-volume history of French manners.[1] Such a study is not a sine qua non of the present enquiry. While the ideal would undoubtedly be elucidated by the practice, it is not dependent on the practice; as an indicator of attitudes and assumptions, the ideal stands in its own right. Neither can the thesis consider eighteenth-century social assumptions any further than the courtesy literature considered them. Thus, while a detailed study of, for example, the contemporary husband-wife relationship in all its economic, legal, social, theological, and moral aspects would be most interesting and useful, that, again, is a different subject outside the scope of this thesis. What this thesis does study are the norms established by courtesy writers for manners, and the assumptions they reveal about human nature and society.

Various considerations dictated the choice of time, place, and other limits of this study. While the manners of any society or historical period are of interest and significance, in terms of Western civilisation, it was the early modern period which saw particularly marked developments in theories of manners. At this time, moreover, there appear in these theories indications of growing national differences, which, to be studied adequately, require detailed treatment

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1 Alfred Franklin, La Vie privée d'autrefois (Paris, 1887-1902).

on an individual basis. England in the first half of the eighteenth century was considered especially worthy of investigation because previous researchers into the period have pointed to the existence of certain contemporary social trends, all of which could have influenced the way in which theories of manners were formed and disseminated. The increasing power of the moneyed men resulting from the financial revolution of the 1690s onwards,[1] or the growing degree of social acceptance accorded to merchants in the drama of the 1710s and 1720s,[2] or a growth of an urban 'middle-class' participation in leisure activities,[3] could all have affected associations made by courtesy writers between manners and social rank. The existence of highly-developed aesthetic theories could have influenced ideals of good manners.[4] The existence of a thriving publishing industry[5] and an expanding reading public[6] could well have improved the efficacy with which theories of manners were propagated. Although proof of such influences must wait upon consideration of the courtesy literature, their possibility is worthy of serious investigation.

Specific boundaries of place and time were somewhat arbitrarily set as necessary preconditions for a manageable study. There was not enough separate and distinct treatment in the courtesy literature of

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1 P.G.M. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit 1688-1756 (1967), espec. pp.3-17, 249-303.

2 J. Loftis, Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding (Stanford, Calif., 1959), pp. 35-59.

3 J.H. Plumb, The Commercialisation of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England (Reading, 1973).

4 See below, ch. 3, pp. 130-142.

5 M. Plant, The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books (1939, 3rd edn., 1974), pp.80-92.

6 I. Watt, The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding (1957, repr. 1963), pp. 35-59.

Scotland and Wales to warrant their inclusion; nor did courtesy writers make any viable English regional subdivisions in their prescriptions, so the place of study remained as England. The 1690s were chosen as a starting point largely because of the decade's especially prolific and varied output of courtesy literature. In view of the amount of surviving literature, a time period of more than seventy years would not have been feasible for study, while a much shorter span would not have allowed room for a meaningful analysis of historical developments given the slowness and subtlety of attitudinal change of this type. Therefore 1760 was chosen as a convenient end date of the study. Within this period, all the courtesy literature was studied: restriction by either of the two major criteria of the rank or sex of the intended readership seemed highly undesirable because their interrelation is one of the most crucial and hitherto unstudied aspects of the subject.

Since this type of study is fairly new as a historiographical endeavour, it might be useful to place it within a more general context. Similar themes have been an important focus of work in other disciplines. Anthropologists have shown the crucial role played by manners in many societies in regulating and strengthening group relationships and in expressing aesthetic and cultural values. Such attributes as gesture, posture, gait, facial expression, self-adornment, and dress can communicate detailed information about attitudes, emotions, self-perceptions, social rank and status, occupation, and gender roles.[1] As examples of specific studies within this tradition may be cited the classic study of Robert Hertz of the symbolism attached to the use

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1 See for a general introduction: Ted Polhemus, ed., Social Aspects of the Human Body (1978); J. Benthall and T. Polhemus, The Body as a Medium of Expression (1975). Fundamental studies include: Marcel Mauss, 'Les techniques du corps', Journal de psychologie normale et pathologique, xxxii (1935), 271-93, tr. by Ben Brewster as 'Techniques of the Body', Economy and Society, ii. (1973), 70-88; E.T. Hall, The Silent Language (Garden City, 1959); Ray Birdwhistell, Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body-Motion Communication (1971).

of the right (adroit, dextrous) and left (sinister, gauche, maladroit) hands in Western societies;[1] the striking similarities noted by Raymond Firth between the deferential postures of the Tikopia tribe of Melanesia and rituals of hierarchy directed towards the British monarchy;[2] and Roland Barthes' analysis of clothing as a coded language in which the choice of style, colour, and accessories conveys detailed shades of meaning.[3] Important sociological studies pertaining to manners include Erving Goffman's analysis of the techniques of self-presentation and role-playing in social interaction;[4] and the extensive work on deference done by Howard Newby.[5] Within the tradition of economic theory is found Thorstein Veblen's classic nineteenth-century outline of the mechanics of conspicuous consumption as a portrayer of social status.[6] In the field of linguistics, the ability of speech patterns to reveal class, regional, and educational environments has been extensively studied.[7]

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1 Robert Hertz, 'La prééminence de la main droite: étude sur la polarité religieuse', Revue philosophique lxviii (1909), 553-80, tr. by R. and C. Needham as 'The Preeminence of the Right Hand', in R. Hertz, Death and the Right Hand (Aberdeen, 1960), pp.87-113.

2 Raymond Firth, 'Postures and gestures of respect', in Echanges et communications: mélanges offerts à Claude Levi-Strauss à l'occasion de son 60ème anniversaire, ed. J. Pouillon and P. Maranda (The Hague, 1970), i. 188-209.

3 Roland Barthes, Système de la mode (Paris, 1967); cf. J.C. Flugel, The Psychology of Clothes (1930).

4 See espec. his The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Edinburgh, 1956, repr. London 1969), Encounters (Indianapolis, 1961, repr. London, 1972), and Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour (New York, 1967, repr. London, 1972).

5 Espec. in his 'The Deferential Dialectic', Comparative Studies in Society and History xvii (1975), 139-64, and his The Deferential Worker: A Study of Farm Workers in East Anglia (1977).

6 Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class (New York, 1899, repr. New York, 1953).

7 E.g.: K. Scherer and H. Giles, Social Markers in Speech, (Cambridge, 1979); P. Trudgill, Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society (1974, rev. 1983).

The study of specifically historical manners, in both their practice and theory, is itself of historiographical interest. French scholars have been in the vanguard of those giving the subject of manners serious consideration.[1] English interest in courtesy literature dates from the nineteenth-century reprinting by the Early English Text Society of a number of medieval treatises, its choice reflecting Victorian interest in the chivalric ideal.[2] The great flowering of interest in specifically English courtesy literature occurred in the United States in the inter-war period: between 1923 and 1932 there appeared four Ph.D. theses dealing with the courtesy literature of early modern England;[3] they were followed in 1937 and 1942 by two major bibliographies of English courtesy literature.[4] The next two major courtesy studies were in the mid-fifties, and were also American products.[5] The majority were written not by historians but by students

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1 E.g.: Franklin, La vie privée d'autrefois; Magendie, La politesse mondaine; Henri Brocher, A la cour de Louis XIV: le rang et l'étiquette sous l'ancien régime, (Paris, 1934).

2 Manners and Meals in Olden Time, ed. F.J. Furnivall, (E.E.T.S. Original Ser., xxxii, 1868); Caxton's Book of Curtesye, ed. F.J. Furnivall, (E.E.T.S. Extra Ser., iii, 1868); Treatises of Precedence and Courtesy: pt. 1 English, pt.2 Foreign, ed. F.J. Furnivall, (E.E.T.S. Extra Ser., viii, 1869). English studies following these in the early twentieth century include: J.W. Holme, 'Italian Courtesy-Books of the Sixteenth Century', Modern Language Review, v (1910), 145-66; J. Crosland, 'Italian Courtesy Books', Ibid., v (1910), 502-4; A Fifteenth-Century Courtesy Book and Two Franciscan Rules, ed. R.W. Chambers (E.E.T.S. Original Ser., cxlviii, 1914). For the Victorian interest in chivalry, see M. Girouard, The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman (New Haven, Conn., 1981).

3 R. Kelso, 'The Institution of the Gentleman in English Literature of the Sixteenth Century: A Study in Renaissance Ideals' (Univ. of Illinois Ph.D. thesis, 1923); Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman' (Univ. of Chicago Ph.D. thesis, 1925); Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making, p.viii, states his book originated as a Univ. of Philadelphia Ph.D. thesis, 1930); W.L. Ustick, 'The English Gentleman in the 16th and the Early 17th Century: Studies in the Literature of Courtesy and Conduct' (Harvard Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1932).

4 Noyes, Bibliography (New Haven, Conn., 1937); Heltzel, Check List (Chicago, 1942).

5 R. Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance (Urbana, Ill., 1956); Brauer, Education of the Gentleman (New York, 1959).

of either English literature or modern languages.[1] In more recent studies, this predominance of the literary critic has continued, and has usually involved the tracing of themes of manners in the works of major novelists.[2] The majority of all these studies of English courtesy literature have dealt with the concept of the gentleman.[3] A few good, short, historical studies have been made of early modern court protocol.[4] Otherwise, the subject of manners has only been briefly touched upon by a few historians within the context of broader issues.[5]

The sum of these varied efforts reveals that there is still a great deal of scope left for a study of manners in both theory and practice. Many of these previous studies share two characteristics which may limit their usefulness to historians. The repeated concentration on the gentleman has meant that ladies and people of

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1 Three of the authors have been traced: Heltzel, 'Chesterfield', appears under 'English Language and Literature' in Univ. of Chicago Abstracts of Theses, Humanistic Series, iv (1928), 325-8; Ustick, 'English Gentleman' appears under 'Modern Languages and Literature' in Harvard Univ. Summaries of Ph. D. Theses, 1932 (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), pp.289-92; Kelso, 'Institution of the Gentleman' is for a Ph.D. in English Literature: Univ. of Illinois, Abstract of Thesis (Urbana, Ill., 1923), title page.

2 Examples are listed below, Bibliography B2, s.v. Blanchard, Bloom, Flynn, Gilmour, Hemlow, Kaplan, Letwin, Rawson, Shinagel, Shroff, Utter, and Wolff.

3 E.g.: Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman'; Kelso, Doctrine of the English Gentleman; Ustick, 'The English Gentleman'; Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, and the works by Gilmour, Letwin, and Shroff listed below, Bibliography B2.

4 H. Murray-Baillie, 'Etiquette and the Planning of the State Apartments in Baroque Palaces', Archaeologia, ci (1967), 169-99; O. Ranum, 'Courtesy, Absolutism, and the Rise of the French State, 1630-1660', The Journal of Modern History, lii (1980), 426-51; W. Roosen, 'Early Modern Diplomatic Ceremonial: A Systems Approach', The Journal of Modern History, lii (1980), 452-76.

5 E.g.: L. Davidoff, The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette, and the Season (1973); J.E.C. Hill, 'Clarissa Harlowe and her Times', Essays in Criticism, v (1955), 315-40; K. Thomas, 'The Double Standard', Journal of the History of Ideas, xx (1959), 195-216; E.P. Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', Journal of Social History, vii (1974), 382-405.

lower social ranks have had little attention paid to them,[1] and has created a bias in the history of manners which may not be justified. Moreover, the treatment of these groups in isolation has prohibited any cross-comparison, which might have modified the ultimate conclusions drawn.

So far as the period 1690 to 1760 is concerned, there are only two general studies which cover any significant proportion of the courtesy literature. V.B. Heltzel's thesis on 'Chesterfield and the Tradition of the Ideal Gentleman'[2] considers very few courtesy writers besides Chesterfield who wrote after 1690, and though immensely well footnoted, offers few penetrating observations. George Brauer's The Education of the Gentleman,[3] like Heltzel's study, deals only with the gentleman. The work has an educational, not behavioural focus; its sources are largely restricted to courtesy works which make particular reference to education, and its conclusions are surprisingly static, considering they cover some 115 years.

Of central importance to the study of courtesy literature is the work of Norbert Elias. In his major study, Uber den Prozess der Zivilisation,[4] he uses an interdisciplinary sociological, historical and psychological approach to analyse theories of manners and their implications in Germany, France, and England from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. He argues with respect to manners that over this time span there occurred the gradual inculcation in the individual

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1 They have not been entirely neglected: e.g. Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance; J. J. Hecht, The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England (1956, repr. 1980).

2 See above, p. iv.

3 See above, p. iv.

4 (Basle, 1939) and tr. by Edmund Jephcott as The Civilizing Process: Volume I: The History of Manners (Oxford, 1978), Volume II: State Formation and Civilization (Oxford, 1982). See also his Die höfische Gesellschaft (Darmstadt, 1969), tr. by E. Jephcott as The Court Society (Oxford, 1983).

of a greatly increased degree of behavioural self-control, which was manifested by increasingly high internalised standards of shame and delicacy regarding bodily functions.[1]

Elias's theory of the alteration over time of the psychological make-up of the individual places manners in the mainstream of the study of mentalité. His suggestion that a gradual internalisation of standards of shame and delicacy about the bodily functions occurred during the medieval and early modern periods seems to be very plausible on the evidence of the courtesy literature. It raises important questions about the psychological effect on the individual of an internalisation of standards: themes like the socialisation process, self-control, restraint, the fear of ridicule, and the possibility of increasing social distance between individuals, generations, and social ranks. However, his study also leaves significant features of courtesy literature undiscussed. The majority of his examples pre-date 1700, and even before that date, he makes no attempt at a comprehensive treatment of courtesy literature per se. The manners he discusses are very largely restricted to those which involve the bodily functions. This emphasis might well indicate that these manners are the most fundamental to the individual, but it does leave largely unexplored other related subjects such as deportment, verbal expression, dress, salutations, and conversation.

Fundamental to Elias's argument is the belief that the ultimate source of manners is the royal court, and the prime cause of their change is social emulation from below. The suggestion is made that the increasing economic prosperity of those of a lower social rank enables them to imitate the manners of the court. This forces the court members continually to devise new modes of behaviour in order to retain

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1 Elias, The History of Manners, ch. 2, pp. 51-217.

their social exclusiveness. In this way, the civilising influence of manners is gradually disseminated down the social ladder.[1] This view of a downward flow of manners is a basic tenet of some major analysts of manners, such as Thorstein Veblen, with his theory of conspicuous consumption, and René König in his study of the fashion process.[2]

A major contender for the position of prime mover of manners has been proposed by other writers, among whom the literary critics predominate. They see the major agent of change in manners as the middle class, whose growing economic and social power, it is argued, allowed its fundamentally puritan moral outlook to have more and more of a civilising influence upon the dissolute manners of the court and aristocracy. This theory reverses the dissemination of manners so that it flows upwards. This argument has most commonly appeared as an axiomatic statement with no supporting references made to contemporary social conditions.[3] Both these two theories assert an extremely important role for their chosen social group, each apparently incompatible with the other. An assessment of their relative merits with respect to eighteenth-century English theories of manners must wait upon a detailed analysis of the relevant courtesy literature.

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1 Elias, The History of Manners, ch. 2, pp. 100-1.

2 Veblen, Theory of the Leisure Class; R. König, Macht und Reiz der Mode (Düsseldorf, 1971), tr. by T. Bradley as The Restless Image, a Sociology of Fashion (1973), p.142.

3 E.g.: Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, p.15 (of Darrell's Gentleman Instructed); W.L. Ustick, 'Changing Ideals of Aristocratic Character and Conduct in Seventeenth-Century England', Modern Philology, xxx (1932), 156 (of Richard Brathwaite's The English Gentleman (1630); J. Wildebloode and P. Brinson, The Polite World: A Guide to English Manners and Deportment from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth Century (1965), p.30, see also p.53 (of Erasmus's De civilitate (1530); K. Hornbeak, 'Richardson's Familiar Letters and the Domestic Conduct Books', Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, xix (1938), 26 (of Richardson's Collection of... Sentiments); R. Gilmour, The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel (1981), pp. 22-7 (of The Spectator).

ii. Definition of 'courtesy literature'

The first step in such a process is to establish a firm definition of the sources involved. In order to determine what constituted 'courtesy literature' in early modern England it is helpful to look briefly at the history and evolution of the term, to which can be attributed much of the current confusion as to its precise meaning. As far as can be ascertained, the expression 'courtesy book' seems to have been coined by F.J. Furnivall in his work for the Early English Text Society. In his 1868 edition of Caxton's Book of Curtesye, he states:

> I wanted Caxton's name to this Book of Curtesye, to distinguish it from what has long been to me THE Book of Courtesy, -- that from the Sloan MS. 1986.[1]

Furnivall's phrase "The Book of Courtesy", which stemmed from one specific book, was almost immediately adopted as a generic label for works on the same subject. The following year, the E.E.T.S. published two essays using the term 'courtesy books': one by W.M. Rossetti on 'Italian Courtesy-Books', ranging from 1265 to 1550, and including the influential Renaissance works of Castiglione's Courtier and della Casa's Galateo; the other by E. Oswald on 'Early German Courtesy-Books'.[2] Rossetti refers to the English, French, and Latin "Courtesy-Books" previously published by the E.E.T.S. - a reference which can only be to Furnivall's 1868 edition of various works under the title Manners and Meals in Olden Time (where he does not himself use the term) - and thereby firmly establishes 'courtesy books' as a generic label for English works as well.[3]

Subject matter would seem to have been the main criterion for the definition of a work as a 'courtesy book'. The two medieval 'Books

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1 Furnivall, Caxton's Book of Curtesye, p.vi. The Sloane manuscript was entitled The Boke of Curtasye, written c.1430 and edited by Furnivall the same year in his Manners and Meals in Olden Time, pp.297-327.

2 Treatises of Precedence and Courtesy (E.E.T.S. Extra Ser., viii, 1869) pt. II, pp. 1-148.

3 W.M. Rossetti, 'Italian Courtesy-Books', Ibid., p.7.

of Curtasye' share two predominant concerns, table manners and forms of salutation, as do the other works in Furnivall's Manners and Meals. They are also the topics singled out for special attention by Rossetti and Oswald, although many other types of manners are also discussed.[1]

The term 'courtesy book' remained a matter of ad hoc usage for some decades, gradually being expanded by the related phrases of 'courtesy writer' and 'courtesy literature'.[2] In the increased interest in the subject in the 1920s and 1930s, various efforts were made towards a more precise definition of 'courtesy literature' in general. None is wholly satisfactory. This is almost certainly because the term was at the same time greatly extended to cover markedly more heterogeneous writings on conduct in the later and much broader span of the early modern era. In this period, the concept of 'courtesy' was replaced by other terms for the ideal - first 'civility' and then 'good breeding' - with very different meanings. These words lack the etymological and conceptual associations of 'courtesy' with court life, and their rise in popularity indicates a replacement of the courtly ideal, first, by an urban ideal,[3] and, subsequently, by a gentlemanly one.[4] For neither of these is the term 'courtesy' a particularly apt description.

The currently prevailing concept of what constitutes 'courtesy literature' largely stems from this work done between 1923 and 1942

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1 E.g.: Furnivall, Manners and Meals, pt.1, pp.129-39, 265-86, 299-326; pt.2, pp.20-57; Furnivall, Caxton's Book of Curtesye, pp. 9, 13, 19-29; W.M. Rossetti, 'Italian Courtesy-Books', pp. 16-42; E. Oswald, 'Early German Courtesy-Books', pp.114-7, 143-7.

2 For uses of these three terms between 1870 and 1920, see above p. 10 n. 2 and F. Millet, 'English Courtesy Literature Before 1557', Bulletin of the Departments of History and Political and Economic Science in Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, xxx (1919), 1-24.

3 Elias, The History of Manners, p.102; A Renaissance Courtesy-Book: Galateo of Manners & Behaviours by Giovanni della Casa, ed. J.E. Spingarn (1914), pp. xviii-xix.

4 See below, ch. 3, pp. 102-3, ch. 4, pp. 143-6.

by five writers.[1] Their definitions shared three characteristics - general agreement with each other, a very broad scope, and rather imprecise, ad hoc boundaries. For varying reasons, no writer provided a complete bibliography of early modern courtesy English literature.[2] Their criteria for what constituted courtesy literature was a combination of subject matter and form. The central core of courtesy literature was agreed to consist of works dealing with manners, civility, etiquette, and practical daily conduct.[3] Two particular forms, the parental advice book and the late sixteenth/early seventeenth century 'institution' of the gentleman were included as courtesy literature.[4] Within these limits, only published works were included, although a few of these were not published until much later than their composition.[5] Translations of foreign works were also included.[6] The term 'courtesy literature' was not applied only to whole books; a number of works

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1 For their works, see above, p.10 n.3, 4 . They are cited as authorities in: Mason: Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, pp. 231-33; Wildebloode and Brinson, The Polite World, pp.49-50; C.J. Rawson, Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal under Stress (1972), p.34; J. Hodges, 'The Female Spectator, a Courtesy Periodical', in Studies in the Early English Periodical, ed. R.P. Bond (Chapel Hill, 1957), p.176 n.1; Fielding, Miscellanies, ed. H.K. Miller, i. xxxiii n.4; New C.B.E.L.. Kelso, Doctrine of the... Gentleman': Brauer, loc. cit.. Ustick, 'Changing Ideals of Aristocratic Character': Brauer, loc. cit.; Fielding, Miscellanies, op. cit., i. xxxiv n.2. Heltzel, 'Chesterfield': J. Hodges, loc. cit.; Heltzel, Check List: Brauer, loc. cit.; New C.B.E.L.. Noyes: Fielding, Miscellanies, op. cit., i. xxxiii n. 4; New C.B.E.L.; Brauer, loc. cit.

2 For the works by Heltzel, Kelso, Noyes, and Ustick, the exclusions by date, subject matter, or library of holding are clear in their titles: above, p.iv, p.10, n.3; Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making, is merely incompetent.

3 This focus is clear in Heltzel, Check List, p. viii; Noyes, Bibliography, pp. 7, 9; Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making, p.5, and as an overall impression from the works by Ustick and Kelso.

4 The former espec. by Ustick, 'Advice to a Son: A Type of Seventeenth-Century Courtesy Book', Studies in Philology, xxix (1932), 409-41, cited approvingly by Noyes, Bibliography, pp. 8-9; the latter by Noyes, Bibliography, p.9.

5 See Heltzel, Check List, and Noyes, Bibliography, throughout.

6 E.g. Heltzel, Check List, pp. 5, 61; Noyes, Bibliography, p.6.

were included in the bibliographies with the comment that only substantial or significant parts dealt with courtesy topics, though the actual excerpts were not specified.[1] Sermons and strictly devotional works were not included, although it was acknowledged that their subject matter overlapped with that of courtesy literature.[2] Fiction was excluded, as were eighteenth-century periodical essays.[3] Books for the conduct of servants and apprentices were not systematically included.[4] Works on the gentleman's professional and occupational conduct (such as the ministry, law, diplomacy, warfare, farming, or household or estate management) were included.[5] Finally, some books on the recreations and accomplishments of the gentleman and lady were included, particularly those of sports, dancing, music, the arts, letter-writing, and gardening.[6]

In this collective definition of 'courtesy literature' the central emphasis on the subject matter of manners is in keeping with the original medieval works, but the inclusion of the last two categories of occupations and recreations entails drawing very much broader boundaries. These works seem to have been selected simply on the basis of their connection with rank: anything was included which had any relevance whatsoever to the behaviour of the gentleman (or occasionally the gentlewoman) as dictated by the requirements of his (or her) social rank.

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1 Noyes, Bibliography, pp. 5, 8; Mason, Gentlefolk in the Making, p. 291.

2 E.g. by Noyes, Bibliography, p.8.

3 Heltzel, Check List, p. viii.

4 Heltzel, Check List, includes two important contemporary works for servants by Trenchfield and (Barnard), pp. 11, 124, but excludes at least two other equally important works by Eliza Haywood and Samuel Richardson: for these see Bibliography A1, s.v. Trenchfield; (Barnard); Haywood; Richardson, Apprentice's.

5 Heltzel, Check List, p. viii; Noyes, Bibliography, p.9.

6 Heltzel, Check List, p. viii; Noyes, Bibliography, pp. 9-12.

According to this definition of 'courtesy literature', any discussion of the prescribed manners of other social ranks would necessitate including works on the conduct, education, recreations, and professions of all of society - so much material as to render the term 'courtesy literature' all but meaningless. A much more limited definition must therefore be arrived at.

Despite all its drawbacks, the term 'courtesy literature' is too well established to be easily discarded, and too useful in labelling an otherwise unnamed type of writing to be readily relinquished. It is convenient for the purposes of the present study to create a distinction in terminology between the restricted term 'courtesy book' and the broader, encompassing label 'courtesy literature' (single: 'courtesy work'). The classic courtesy book in the period under study here is a didactic, published manual advice concerned above all else with prescribing the correct manners for its reader. It has a systematic approach; it relates its recommendations to a plan of the overall conduct of life, and its prescriptions are intended (usually by the author but occasionally by the editor or publisher) to be for people in general and not just for one specific individual. Such courtesy books comprise about two-thirds of the larger category of courtesy literature. The remaining third is made up of more peripheral works relating to manners' which possess some but not all of the preceding features.

For this central two-thirds of courtesy literature - the courtesy books - there can be absolutely no question but that they comprised an identifiable literary genre in the eighteenth century.[1] This is notwithstanding the fact that they were not actually labelled as such by contemporaries. These books shared a single, predominating subject

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1 O.E.D., Supplement (1972) defines 'genre' as "a type of literary work characterised by a particular form, style, or purpose".

matter, a common format, a remarkably similar purpose and point of view;[1] most importantly, they formed part of an unbroken tradition of writings on manners (directly traceable through the derivation of one work from preceding ones) stretching from the Renaissance to the twentieth century.[2] Examples of courtesy books from the period studied here are William Darrell's The Gentleman Instructed of 1704-12, Adam Petrie's Rules of Good Deportment of 1720, James Forrester's The Polite Philosopher of 1734, and The Polite Lady of 1760. These, and other works with similar aims, concerns, and format, are included in every previous courtesy bibliography of the eighteenth century.[3]

What to include as courtesy literature in the wider sense is a matter more open to debate. This is because discussions about manners appeared in the eighteenth century in the treatment of what nowadays are regarded as quite different and separate fields of enquiry. John Locke's Some Thoughts of Education is primarily an educational treatise; Shaftesbury's Characteristicks is considered a work of philosophy; Bishop Fleetwood's Relative Duties has a heavy moral and religious content and originated as a number of sermons; Samuel Richardson's A Collection of Moral and Instructive Sentiments is directly extracted from his novels; Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments is a treatise on ethics; Nathaniel Lancaster's An Essay on Delicacy is in the tradition of aesthetics. Yet each of these also contains detailed comments about manners which are too important to disregard. There are also a variety of literary forms to be considered. Besides the sermons and novels already mentioned, important discussions of manners

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1 Substantial evidence of these features appears throughout chapters 3 to 6, below.

2 For examples of such derivation of ideas, see below, pp.33-4, 112, 267-8.

3 Hetzel, Check List; New C.B.E.L., under the authors' surnames.

appear in periodical essays such as the Spectator, in poems such as Thomas Marriott's Female Conduct, and in private letters such as those by Lord Chesterfield to his son.

Given the vast literary output of the eighteenth century, and the present poor state of its bibliography, it is impossible to examine every book individually to judge whether it is an example of courtesy literature. The only feasible procedure is to begin with the established, easily-identifiable core of courtesy books proper, and broaden its boundaries in a logical and systematic way. In doing so, the most important criterion must be to maintain as high a degree of consistency as possible with the original works. Courtesy books are defined above all by their subject matter of manners. It therefore seems proper to include as courtesy literature other works which give significant attention to manners, despite the fact that they might lack one or more other characteristic features of courtesy books. What constitutes 'significance' is a matter for individual discretion. Here, a discussion of manners is considered significant if it forms a substantial proportion of the work in which it appears, or if it is conducted in such a way as to make clear that manners are a primary and not an incidental matter or focus of concern for the writer.

On the basis of this definition, there has been included here as courtesy literature a substantial number of individually selected works from many fields of enquiry and literary genres. This does not deny the continued membership of these works in such other categories of writing. Neither does it automatically set a precedent for including as courtesy literature all the myriad other works from these many categories. Rather, the boundaries of courtesy literature, based on the subject matter of manners, should be regarded as overlapping the boundaries of these other categories, whatever grounds of form or major content on which they are established.

The works included here as courtesy literature may be divided into five groups. The first consists of all those specified at the beginning of this discussion as being too important to exclude,[1] and a few others with very similar characteristics. Their discussion of manners is so crucial, that beside it, their variety of literary form is of little importance. The second group is the major periodical essays: those publications such as the Tatler and Spectator which were reprinted many times in the eighteenth century. These give detailed consideration to manners and tend to be drawn upon by later courtesy writers.[2] Due to constraints of time, it has not been possible to systematically search the numerous less influential contemporary periodicals; however, a few articles from them appear here via the Gentleman's Magazine. The third category includes certain important satirical works of social criticism dealing with manners. The fourth consists of some specialised works on dancing which also give detailed attention to deportment. The fifth contains guides for conduct for servants and apprentices. A few of these were included in previous bibliographies of courtesy literature; the additional ones are indistinguishable from them, and they all contain important discussions of manners. Most of the additional works in all these five categories do not appear in previous courtesy bibliographies.

After due consideration, it was decided that the definition of 'significance' given above[3] precluded the general inclusion as courtesy literature of four main types of writing which have either appeared in previous courtesy bibliographies, or which give some attention to the subject of manners. The first of these, which has appeared in earlier bibliographies, encompasses works on specific occupations,

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1 See above, p. 20.

2 This was especially the case with the Spectator and Tatler: for subsequent citations by courtesy writers from these works, see below, pp. 34 n.6, 127, 168, n.3.

3 p. 21.

recreations, and accomplishments. Investigation of important works of this type reveal no sustained focus on manners *per se*, with the exception of those works included in categories four and five above.[1] The second excluded category is that of imaginative literary works such as novels and plays. While they might well provide considerable insight into contemporary manners, they have a very different structure from that of courtesy books; they are not so openly didactic in purpose, and they involve obvious difficulties of interpretation which would make the extraction of any useful material a lengthy and controversial process. The third category which is excluded here as a general rule consists of sermons and conduct books concerned primarily with matters of a moral or religious nature. The line between this group of works and courtesy literature is a difficult one to draw precisely, because the two categories overlap in subject matter. Some very important courtesy books in this period, such as William Darrell's *The Gentleman Instructed*, also devote considerable attention to moral and religious prescriptions.[2] Conversely, the subject of manners could arise in the context of religious and moral discussions, because manners are a major means through which certain virtues or vices may be manifested. Lying, for instance, which is basically a moral matter, is principally manifested in conversation, as is swearing, an essentially religious issue. The moral vices of drunkenness and gluttony can appear in a person's deportment, state of cleanliness, or table manners. The sin of pride can appear in speech (*e.g.* boasting) or in dress; and keeping the Sabbath can involve dress and matters of deportment in church such as silence and deference.

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1 Previous paragraph. Typical works in this category considered for inclusion include: Edmund Hoyle, *A Short Treatise on the Game of Whist* (1743) (included as 'courtesy literature' by Heltzel, *Check List*, p.74); Sir William Hope, *The Compleat Fencing Master* (a 1691 reissue of *The Scots Fencing-Master* (Edinburgh, 1687), included as 'courtesy literature' by the *New C.B.E.L.*

2 See below, ch. 5, pp. 266-7, 281.

Despite this partial overlap, however, the two types of writing, in the period under study here, had noticeably different central concerns. Besides discussing such matters as those just specified, sermons and conduct books also considered many other questions of morals and religion which could not be so obviously manifested in manners, such as piety, atheism, immortality, charity, sinfulness, stealing, sloth, cheating, covetousness, and envy.[1] In such discussions, their primary overall concern appears to have been the individual's actual possession and practice of religious and moral virtues, and not the specific techniques of manners by which some of them could be manifested. Courtesy books, for their part, discussed many questions of manners in a non-religious or moral context, such as the art of pleasing in conversation. Where religious and moral norms were discussed, it was, as a general rule, not so much their inculcation, but rather their actual exhibition through the medium of manners which was the central focus of concern.[2]

Such a distinction is far more difficult to make for the courtesy literature of the seventeenth century, which has been described by its leading bibliographer as virtually indistinguishable from works of religious and moral conduct.[3] From the late seventeenth century onwards, however, the new courtesy books which appear show a rapid and marked shift away from considering general matters of religion and morals, and towards a more exclusive focus on manners. This change is not to the same degree in the courtesy books for all types of readers,

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1 E.g. see: J. Cooke, The Preacher's Assistant... A Series of the Texts of Sermons... By Divines of the Church of England, and by the Dissenting Clergy since the Restoration... (Oxford, 1783), ii.3-379, also i. throughout under 'Occasion of Subject'; I. Rivers, 'Dissenting and Methodist books of practical divinity', in Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England, ed. I. Rivers (Leicester, 1982), pp.127-64.

2 For courtesy discussions of religious and moral norms in which this primary focus on manners is evident, see below, ch. 4 (swearing), pp. 190-1, ch.5 (chastity), pp.275-80, ch. 6 (humility), pp. 298-301.

but as an overall trend it is considerable and unmistakeable.[1] In order to maintain the consistency of identity with this central core of courtesy books, it follows that a definition of courtesy literature must similarly reflect this shift away from a religious and moral context.

The fourth category consists of contemporary manuscript sources which may discuss manners but which were not published at the time. This distinction is also made on the basis of the need to maintain consistency with the central core of courtesy books. These were concerned above all with publicly prescribing manners for very broad categories of people and for a multiple readership. There is a fundamental qualitative difference of intention between such public, group prescriptions and the private advice to an individual which might appear in private letters or manuscripts: whether or not the advice is the same in each, the two are intended to be read in different contexts and by different readers. The fact of contemporary publication has thus been considered an extremely important criterion of a courtesy work, and has been disregarded for only a handful of works with exceptionally close links with the published tradition.

In drawing the boundaries of courtesy literature, considerable individual discretion is required, and a certain degree of arbitrariness is unavoidable. The degree of similarity of other works to courtesy books decreases gradually rather than sharply, and can only be followed to a certain point if the original category is to retain any meaning. Marginal works must be considered for inclusion on an individual basis. Certainly much of the material which has been excluded here could well contain much valuable information on manners. However, the necessity

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1 For detailed discussions of this development, see below, ch. 5, pp. 266-7, 281, ch. 6, p. 289.

to maintain a cohesive definition, and the real constraints of time and space, prohibit its present consideration. This, therefore, is not claimed to be the final word on courtesy literature; rather, it is a working definition for the purposes of this thesis.

iii. Major characteristics of English courtesy literature, 1690-1760: numbers, format, readership and writers

The source material for this thesis therefore consists of all known extant courtesy literature which was written and/or published in England between 1690 and 1760. The qualification "all known extant" needs to be explained. A basic list of courtesy works (as they have been defined above) has been compiled from a number of specialist bibliographies.[1] This has been augmented by a number of works found by personal search through relevant secondary studies, library catalogues, and publishers' lists.[2] In total, about 250 separate courtesy titles have been extracted for consideration. Four titles which appear likely to be courtesy works cannot be found under any possible combination of title, author, and subject in any of the major library catalogues.[3] It is possible that some of these titles were never actually published. This might have happened with The Apprentice's Faithful Monitor, which was advertised in the London Magazine in October, 1733, and for which 1,500 title sheets were printed in November, 1737,

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1 See below, Bibliography, B2, s.v. Eighteenth-Century; Hanson; Heltzel, Check List; Higgs; Noyes; Pargellis & Medley; Watson, G; Watt, R.

2 See below, loc. cit., s.v. Arber; Bodleian; British Library (two entries); New York; and all secondary studies listed.

3 These are Thomas Vaughan, Advice to young gentlemen concerning the conduct of life (1711); Counsells for a Young Lady of Quality, (tr. from French, 1737), and the two works discussed in the following two sentences. Besides the catalogues listed above, n. 2, the National Union Catalogue and Taylorian Library (Oxford) catalogue have been checked.

but of which no extant copy has been found.[1] Others could be mere title variants, either from the eighteenth century or from previous bibliographers. Such could be the case with The Gentleman's New-Year's Gift of 1731, which has not been located, although The Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift of 1729 has.[2] These problem works could yet turn up in smaller public or private libraries, as could further editions of courtesy works included here, or even a few new courtesy titles.

For those works included here, the stipulation "written and/or published" allows for five possible permutations. The vast majority (about 85%) of the courtesy literature studied was both written and published in England within the time limits specified. As far as can be determined, publication usually followed soon after the writing. Overall, there was a fairly even output of courtesy literature over the period. A few works were not published until some time after they were written. Books heavily derived from earlier works are still considered to have been written at the later date because they were all amended in some way. Both delay in publication and derivation from an earlier source are noted and taken into account when assessing a work's reflection of contemporary views and influence on its readership.

The second variation accounts for about 8% of the courtesy literature studied, that is, works which were written outside England either before 1690 or between 1690 and 1760, and published in England between those dates, occasionally in the original but more commonly in English translation. These obviously cannot be taken as a reflection of eighteenth-century English views in the same way as can works in

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1 A Ledger of Charles Ackers, Printer of The London Magazine, ed. D.F. McKenzie and J.C. Ross (Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications, new ser. xv, 1968), pp. 85, 234; see also S. Richardson, The Apprentice's Vade Mecum, ed. with intro. by A.D. McKillop (Augustan Repr. Soc. Nos. 169-70, Los Angeles, 1975), p.iv. Neither McKenzie and Ross nor McKillop has seen a copy.

2 The New C.B.E.L. lists the Gentleman's New-Year's Gift: or Serious advice to a Nephew (1731); the closest found is The Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift, or Advice to a nephew... By a gentleman of the Middle Temple (1729).

the preceding category. However, their publication indicates they were felt to have some contemporary relevance; many of them influenced contemporary English courtesy writers, and they all had the same potential to influence the opinions of their readers as any book written at the the time. These arguments also hold true for the third variation: works which were first written and published in England before 1690, and which appeared in subsequent editions between 1690 and 1760. These account for about five percent of the total works considered here.

The fourth variation, the last 2%, consists of works which were written between 1690 and 1760, but which were not published till much later, or were not published at all. It includes only a few works, such as the Earl of Chesterfield's letters to his son and godson, and Daniel Defoe's The Compleat Gentleman, which were very closely related to the published courtesy tradition, and which provide important insights into eighteenth-century theories of manners.[1] While these works may be included in discussing contemporary views, they must be largely excluded from any discussion of the social impact of courtesy literature.

There do not appear to be any works in the last possible category, that is, courtesy works written in England between 1690 and 1760, but published only abroad. The foreign editions of English courtesy literature have been noted in the bibliography when possible, but this thesis is concerned with the social implications of courtesy literature within England alone, and it has not been possible to consider the impact of English works abroad.

The dates given, "between 1690 and 1760", are inclusive. Occasionally they have been exceeded in tracing earlier or later editions of courtesy works, or in tracing important courtesy themes in order to illuminate their treatment between 1690 and 1760.

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1 See below, chs. 3 and 4. For edition dates, see below, Bibliography A1., s.v. Chesterfield, Defoe.

In trying to assess the influence of courtesy literature in the eighteenth century, it would be useful to find out more about its production, distribution, readership, and authorship.

In terms of format, the vast proportion of courtesy literature appeared as single books in octavo or duodecimo sizes. Besides these, there were a few quartos, the periodicals, which first appeared as single folio sheets, two broadsheets, and a few small works which appeared as part of a miscellany or an author's collected works.[1] There was a certain basic hierarchy of social rank inherent in this format: the bulk of the duodecimos discuss the behaviour of servants and apprentices; while the larger share of the octavos and all of the quartos were aimed at the gentlemanly rank.

For all courtesy works, it is of first importance to have some idea of the average press run, or number of copies produced in each edition. In his New Introduction to Bibliography, Philip Gaskell states:

> by the beginning of the sixteenth century books were normally printed in editions of 1,000 to 1,500 copies, a figure which did not change much for the generality of books until the later eighteenth century.[2]

Gaskell points out that there were powerful economic reasons mitigating against both smaller and larger editions. Primary among these were the facts that a smaller edition meant greatly increased unit costs per book, whereas editions over about 2,000 copies required a much greater capital investment by the printer.[3] Two more detailed studies

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1 See below, Bibliography A1:quartos: Castiglione (1727 trn.); Epictetus, Enchiridion (1758 trn.); Goslicius; Gracian, Héroe (1726 trn.); Scott, T.; Ward, N., Dancing School; broadsheets: Dykes; Gandy; miscellany works: e.g. Fielding, Swift.

2 P. Gaskell, A New Introduction to Bibliography (Oxford, 1972, repr. 1974), p.161.

3 Ibid., p.161; see further P. Hernlund, 'William Strahan's Ledgers: Standard Charges for Printing, 1738-1785', Studies in Bibliography, xx (1967), 105.

of the eighteenth-century printing trade suggest that the lower of Gaskell's two figures might be more representative than the higher. In the ledger of the printer Charles Ackers for the dates 1732 to 1748, edition sizes cluster around the 1,000 mark.[1] In the ledgers of the printer William Strahan from 1738 to 1785, edition sizes cluster around the 750 to 1,000 mark.[2]

Several figures of edition size are available for courtesy works from the 1690 to 1760 period. They cluster in two groups: between the 400 to 1,000 mark and between the 1,500 to 3,000 mark. The first group is composed of various works published by prior subscription. Editions of these works range from the "above four hundred subscribers" for Wetenhall Wilkes' Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice of 1740 to the 995 copies of Elizabeth Carter's 1758 translation of Epictetus's works.[3] The smallness of their edition size relative to the mean suggested by Gaskell may be partly a result of the fact that they tended to be scholarly works such as Carter's, long octavo or large quarto (and hence expensive) works such as Henry Fielding's three volume octavo

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1 A Ledger of Charles Ackers, Printer of The London Magazine, Appendix 2, pp. 305-16.

2 P. Hernlund, 'William Strahan's Ledgers', p.104; see also R.D. Harlan, 'Sales of and Profits on Some Early Editions of Sir William Blackstone's Commentaries', Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, lviii (1964), 156-63, and id., 'Some Additional Figures of Distribution of Eighteenth-century English Books', Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, lix (1965), 160-70.

3 W. Wilkes, A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady (1740), Preface to 4th edition, repr. in 8th edn. (1766), pp. A5-A5^{v} Some of these subscribers could well have ordered multiple copies, as was the case with the other subscriber editions listed in this footnote. The Spectator's collected octavo edition of 1712-13 had 402 subscribers: (Spectator, i. lxxxviii). Anne Thérese, marquise de Lambert, Letters to her Son and Daughter on True Education (tr. 1749), pp. a-c^{v} lists subscribers for 527 copies. Henry Fielding's three-volume Miscellanies (1743) had its first edition printed by subscription for 556 copies, but these were part of a larger press run: typographical analysis reveals the second edition to be composed from extra sheets of the first: Miscellanies, i. xlvii-xlviii. The first collected edition of the Tatler (4 vols. octavo) was subscribed for 717 copies (Tatler, 1710-11, i. A4^{v}-A8^{v}). Baldassare Castiglione's Il Cortegiano: or The Courtier (tr. 1727), pp. B2-B4, lists 743 subscription copies ordered. Epictetus, Enchiridion, in his Works (tr. 1758), quarto, pp. a4-c^{v} lists 995 copies.

Miscellanies, and A.P. Castiglione's quarto translation of Il Cortegiano, or deliberately expensively printed and bound works such as the subscriber editions of the Spectator and Tatler.[1]

The higher group contains three examples. The first is the 1,500 title pages printed for the elusive Apprentice's Faithful Monitor of 1737,[2] which indicates that a similar edition size of the text was at least contemplated, if not perhaps actually run off. The second is a collected edition of the Idler in the 1760s which reached at least 1,500 copies.[3] The third consists of the edition size of the Spectator. This is generally accepted to have been about 3,000 copies a day in 1711 and 1712, reduced by the Stamp Tax of August 1712 to about 1,700 a day. This, however, probably recovered to an extent subsequently, and certain numbers sold much higher, apparently reaching over 10,000 copies.[4]

If we weigh together these various figures, the factors influencing their size, and the evidence from studies of other press runs, and if we err on the parsimonious side of Gaskell's suggested average, it would not be unreasonable to think of 1,000 copies as the average edition size typical of most English courtesy literature in the first half of the eighteenth century.

At least half of these courtesy works appeared in more than one edition. The most typical number of multiple editions for courtesy works at this time was from two to four, but some very popular works could appear far more often. Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education, for example, was published in England at least fourteen times between 1693

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1 For details of these works see above, p.30, n.3; for details of their prices (where available) see below, pp.36; 37, n.3; 38, n.4.

2 Above, pp. 26-7.

3 This could have been either the 1761 or the 1767 edn., Idler, p. xxiii.

4 Spectator, i. xxv-xxvi.

and 1752. Some works had a very long lifespan, such as Richard Mayo's A Present for Servants, which reappeared regularly from its first edition of 1693 to its nineteenth of 1821. The most prolific and long-lasting of all courtesy works from this period was the Spectator, which appeared in at least 19 English editions from 1711 to 1756, and in at least five more Irish or Scottish ones, and, throughout the next hundred years, in at least 27 English editions and eleven more Irish and Scottish ones.[1] It also spawned numerous collections of mottoes, selections, and abridgements which appeared from as early as 1712 right through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[2] The influence of individual courtesy works could thus vary very widely depending on the number of repeat editions each had. Many editions close together in time would ensure a considerable immediate impact; whilst a long run of editions could prolong a work's influence far beyond its first date of publication. In these repeat editions, the original text appears most commonly to have been retained unaltered,[3] but there were a minority of cases of significant revision or expansion.[4]

In total, there were at least five hundred separate editions of courtesy works actually published in England between 1690 and 1760.[5] This is a minimum figure. It is the product of a systematic correlation of courtesy entries in the Bodleian and British Library catalogues, plus some taken from other bibliographies, but there must almost certainly exist copies of other editions elsewhere which are not included here. The total does not include at least 32 more editions printed

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1 Below, Bibliography A1 s.v. each author.

2 For examples see the British Library catalogue, s.v. 'Periodical Publications, London, Spectator'.

3 E.g.: R. Allestree, The Ladies Calling (1673): compare editions of 1673, 1693, and 1727.

4 E.g.: see below, Bibliography A1 s.v. Boyer; Darrell; Gentleman's Library; Locke.

5 Almost all published in London except for a few provincial ones late in this period: see below, Bibliography A1.

in Scotland and Ireland which could have found their way onto the English market,[1] especially the Dublin ones which were expressly produced for that purpose.[2] Nor does it include the numerous editions of contemporary newspapers and magazines which reprinted some courtesy material, and which themselves appeared in substantial press runs.[3]

Besides its individual reappearance in subsequent editions, a courtesy work could also reappear in the works of other writers or editors. This direct derivation of ideas is a very common feature of eighteenth-century English courtesy literature. It could involve either the paraphrasing of ideas or the verbatim reprinting of anything from one sentence to a whole work. The source was sometimes acknowledged, but usually not. Like repeat editions, subsequent derivations could either occur very close in time to their original, which would tend to increase its effect on contemporary readers, or they could be spread over a long time span, which acted to prolong an author's influence over subsequent generations of readers.

An instance of the former occurred with Samuel Johnson's Rambler papers. On their first appearance they only had a small press run, and their first collected book edition only sold 500 copies.[4] However, many of the individual numbers of the Rambler were almost immediately

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1 See below, Bibliography A1.

2 To avoid copyright laws: Plant, The English Book Trade, pp. 120-1.

3 10,000 copies a year by 1739 for The Gentleman's Magazine: A.S. Collins, Authorship in the Days of Johnson (1927), p.240; at least 1,000 copies per issue for most newspapers by 1750: R.M. Wiles, 'The Contemporary Distribution of Johnson's Rambler', Eighteenth-Century Studies, ii (1968), 170; also J.R. Sutherland, 'The Circulation of Newspapers and Literary Periodicals, 1700-1730', Library, 4th series xv (1934), 110-24.

4 Wiles, 'Contemporary Distribution of Johnson's Rambler', pp.156-7.

reprinted in other newspapers and magazines, both in London and all through the provinces.[1] By means of such reprinting, the Rambler reached a nation-wide readership between eight and twelve times as large as the purchasers of the original papers.[2] Many of Johnson's Idler essays were similarly reprinted, in a total of 14 London periodicals and four provincial ones.[3]

One example may be cited of the derivation of ideas over an extended period of time. Although the subsequent work makes no acknowledgement of its original source, the relationship may be established beyond question by means of detailed textual comparisons, tracing close similarities in subject matter, images, phrases, and sequence of ideas. Using this technique, one finds that approximately 95 percent of the advice in the anonymous A Present for an Apprentice of 1740 is actually taken directly from Caleb Trenchfield's A Cap of Gray Hairs for a Green Head of 1671.[4] There were many other examples of derivation in courtesy literature, ranging from a simple reference to a previous work,[5] to the use of long excerpts.[6] Since it was not a common practice to acknowledge sources, it is highly likely that there are more cases as yet untraced.

The number of editions and derivations of a work show how the ideas of any single writer could spread far beyond the original publication

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1 Including Bath, Bristol, Salisbury, Gloucester, Nottingham, Newcastle, and Leeds: Ibid., pp. 155, 160, 167.

2 Ibid., p. 155.

3 Idler, p. xxii, n.4.

4 E.g.: Compare C. Trenchfield, A Cap of Gray Hairs for a Green Head (5th edn., 1710), pp.1-2, 25, 46-9, 75, 82, 112, with A Present for an Apprentice (2nd edn., 1740), pp. 9, 21-5, 43, 51, 67-8.

5 E.g.: T. Marriott, Female Conduct (1759), pp. 78-9.

6 E.g.: Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed (1747), Publisher to Reader, p.xi; R.Steele, The Ladies Library (1714): see G.A. Aitken, 'Steele's "Ladies Library"', The Athenaeum, July 5, 1884, pp.16-7; The Gentleman's Library (1715, 3rd edn., 1734), p.A5^{v}; also Ibid., pp.9, 64, 68, 189, 204-6, 213-6, 247, 330 (citations from the Spectator), pp. 37, 185, 210 (citations from Locke), pp. 2, 63, 67, 187, 211, 307, 315 (citations from other works).

date of his or her book. The joint total of at least 500 courtesy editions at this time, multiplied by an average press run of 1,000 copies each, is evidence of a body of thought copious enough to have had a powerful influence on the reading public of eighteenth-century England.

Discovering more about this reading public might provide a useful indication of the exact sphere of influence of courtesy prescriptions at this time. The standard discussion of the size of the eighteenth-century English reading public is by Ian Watt.[1] Using such information as exists concerning the sales figures of newspapers, books, and periodicals, he estimates that, in the first half of the eighteenth century, the total readership of newspapers and periodicals was about 250,000 people, that is, less than one in twenty of the total population; while the actual book-buying public was numbered only in tens of thousands. Some growth of the reading public did occur in the first half of the century, particularly with the establishment of circulating libraries, but it was not until after 1750 that a really marked acceleration occurred.[2] Thus, for most of the period under study here, the reading public was still a very small proportion of the population. It tended to consist of the higher social ranks, who possessed the three prerequisites of literacy, surplus income, and leisure. This group, Watt estimates to extend not much further down the social scale than shopkeepers and tradesmen.[3] The major exception was servants and apprentices, who had leisure, light to read in the evenings, and disposable ready money.[4] In the upper levels of the reading public, women became increasingly prominent over the course of the eighteenth century.[5]

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1 I. Watt, The Rise of the Novel (1957, repr. 1963), ch.2, pp.35-59.

2 Ibid., pp.36-7, 42-3; also A.S. Collins, Authorship in the Days of Johnson, p.245.

3 Watt, Rise of the Novel, pp. 37-43, 48.

4 Ibid., p.47.

5 Ibid., pp.43-5; also Collins, Authorship in the Days of Johnson, p.251.

The prices of courtesy works provide only limited indications of their possible readership. Only a very few courtesy works of this period actually have a price printed on the title page. It was not until the early eighteenth century that book prices were fixed enough to appear this way; before this time they varied according to the amount of carriage involved.[1] The prices which do survive for courtesy works cover a very wide range, from the one penny originally charged for individual numbers of the Spectator,[2] to the one guinea a volume asked from subscribers for the same work in a collected octavo edition, well bound and gilt.[3] Within this range, certain groupings are apparent. The periodicals, at one to two pence halfpenny for each number,[4] were individually the cheapest, but, with the whole series often numbering in the hundreds,[5] were collectively the most expensive. However, because they were freely available in the coffee houses, their price is not a direct indication of their readership: Watt estimates that every copy of the Spectator could have had at least ten readers.[6] Courtesy works aimed at a readership of servants and apprentices were at the bottom end of the price range, as might be expected, costing between threepence and 1s.6d.[7] These prices, however, should also not

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1 Gaskell, Introduction to Bibliography, p.179.

2 Spectator, i. xxiii-xxiv.

3 Ibid., i. lxxii.

4 1d.-2d.: Spectator, i. xxiii-xxiv; 2½d.: Idler, title page facsimile, facing p.4.

5 See below, Bibliography A1.

6 Watt, Rise of the Novel, p.36. Addison had estimated 20 readers per copy: for this and for the wide availability of the Spectator in coffee houses, see Spectator, i. lxxxiii-lxxxiv.

7 All prices appear on the work's title page unless otherwise stated. For 3 d.: T. Broughton, Serious Advice and Warning to Servants (1746), 12°, pp.48. For 6 d.: R. Dodsley, 'Servitude' (1729), 8°, pp.32. For 1 s.: A Present for an Apprentice (1740, 2nd ed. 1740), 8°, pp.76; E. Haywood, A Present for a Servant Maid (1743), 8°,pp. 76; R. Lucas, The Duty of Servants (1685, 3rd edn. 1710), 12°, pp. 133, bound; The Laws Relating to Masters and Servants (1755), 8°, pp.56. For 1 s. 6 d.: C. Trenchfield, A Cap of Gray Hairs for a Green Head (1671, 5th edn. 1710), small 8°, pp.159 (advertisement on end leaf of book); The Apprentice's Faithful Monitor is advertised at this price bound in 1733 (see above, pp. 26-7).

necessarily be taken as indicative of the purchasing power of their readers, because such works were often intended to be given as presents by a master or mistress,[1] who would almost certainly have had a higher income. Discussions of the manners of the gentleman and lady span the whole price range. At the lower end, they appeared in the periodicals; in a few pamphlets or poems costing between 3d. and 6d.; and in rather more one shilling essays of about fifty octavo pages.[2] Towards the higher end, between four shillings and one guinea a volume, are found the translations into English of a substantial size,[3] several subscriber editions (which, it has been previously argued, tended to be unusually expensive),[4] and one part-work, whose sections are individually cheap, but collectively expensive.[5] No prices have been

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1 See for details below, ch. 6, p. 293.

2 For 3 d.: The late King James his Advice to his Son (1703), 8°, pp.18. For 6 d.: G. Lyttleton, 'Advice to a Lady' (1731), folio, pp. 5; S. Jenyns, The Modern Fine Lady (1751), folio, pp.8. For 1 s.: An Essay on Modern Gallantry [1750], 8°, pp.51; T. Scott, A Father's Instructions to his Son, 4°, pp.27; Abbé D'Ancourt, The Lady's Preceptor (tr. 1743, 2nd edn. 1743), 8°, pp.72; J. Costeker, the Fine Gentleman (1732), 12°, pp.54; The Polite Student (1748), 4°, pp.51; E. Jones, Luxury Pride and Vanity the Bane of the British Nation [c.1735], 8°, pp.63; E. Jones, A Trip through London (1728), 8°, pp.53; The Connoisseur: A Satire on the Modern Man of Taste [1735], folio, pp.22; ('Clelia'), The Woman of Taste (1733), folio, pp. 24.

3 For 4 s.: F. Dedekind, Grobianus (tr. 1739), 8°, pp.276 + xxvii, bound; for 6 s.: B. Castiglione, The Courtier (tr. 1724), 8°, pp. 336 + xxi + index; for 10 s. 6 d.: B. Castiglione, Il Cortegiano (tr. 1727, 2nd edn. 1737), 4°, pp. 508 + lxiv.

4 See above, pp. 30-1 and for the Spectator, see also above, p. 36. The 1727 translation of Il Cortegiano (above, n. 3), also fits into this category.

5 The Whole Duty of a Woman (1737) is listed in R. M. Wiles, Serial Publication in England before 1750 (Cambridge, 1957), pp.310-11, as appearing in approximately 20 weekly numbers at 3 d. each. This is probably the 7th edn. of the 1696 Whole Duty of a Woman. Wiles lists only two other courtesy titles as appearing in serial form in this period: A New and Accurate Edition of the Works of the late Celebrated M. de Fenelon (1734), which probably contained Fénélon's Traité de l'éducation d'une fille, and Thomas Brown's Amusements Serious and Comical (1738): Wiles, Serial Publication, pp. 298, 312.

found in the editions consulted for this thesis[1] for the middle range of courtesy books most typically written for the gentleman and lady, that is, octavo or duodecimo books between two to four hundred pages in length. However, their price may be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy. In the eighteenth century, the fixed retail price of a book was primarily based on the number of whole sheets of paper it used (these being then folded once to produce folios, twice for quartos, and so on).[2] A retail book price common to a number of London publishers in the 1730s and 1740s was 2.4 pence a sheet, although this varied within a narrow range according to the quality of materials involved.[3] Applying this base price to five editions of important courtesy works for gentlemen published in these two decades, produces a theoretical price range stretching from 2s. 4d. to 7s.3d. for a one volume work, and reaching 15s.4d. for the three volume set of Fielding's Miscellanies.[4] It is clear from these prices that such works would have been accessible to a far more limited readership than was the case with the periodicals and cheap duodecimos. A London journeyman of the 1740s, for example, who wanted to acquire Fielding's advice on good manners, would have had to work more than 55 hours for the privilege.[5]

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1 For these, see Bibliography A1.

2 Gaskell, Introduction to Bibliography, p.179.

3 Such as the exact size of paper, quality of printing, and whether the work was sold bound or in paper wrappers: Gaskell, Introduction to Bibliography, pp.147, 175-82.

4 Prices have been rounded off to the nearest penny. The five editions used were: J. Constable, The Conversation of Gentlemen (1738), 12°, pp. viii, 272: 2s.4d.; Locke, Education (9th edn. 1732), 12°, pp. 331: 2s.9d.; The Gentleman's Library (4th edn. 1744), 12°, pp. 440: 3s.8d.; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed (11th edn., 1738), 8°, pp.584: 7s.3d.; Fielding, Miscellanies (2nd edn., 1743), 8°, i. pp.xxxvii + 354: 4s.10d.; ii. pp. 420: 5s.3d.; iii. pp. 421: 5s.3d.

5 The figure is based on an 11-hour day at a daily wage of 3 s. for a journeyman in the building trades: taken from E. Gilboy, Wages in Eighteenth-Century England (Harvard Economic Studies, xlv, Cambridge, 1934), pp.8-9. Watt, Rise of the Novel, pp.40-2, gives a more extended but not very satisfactory discussion of the relationship between contemporary book prices and wages. Fielding's advice is in his 'Conversation' in volume i of his Miscellanies, for whose estimated price see above, same paragraph.

There is a certain amount of information extant concerning the actual purchasers of courtesy literature. Certainly the fact of purchase does not necessarily prove that a book was actually read. However, it does provide evidence of the sort of people who had access to these works and who had at least some interest in their contents. By far the most detailed sources for purchasers of courtesy works are the lists of names in subscriber editions, of which we have seven, ranging from 1710 to 1758.[1] These each contain between 400 and 1,000 names, about half of which are accompanied by some description of rank or occupation. A broadly similar pattern is evident in all the lists, consisting of the names of peers, ladies, bishops, baronets, knights, gentlemen, esquires, military officers, government officials,members of colleges and inns of court, holders of degrees, clergymen, and a handful of medical men, merchants and tradesmen. Among the subscribers to all the works, there was a strong aristocratic and gentry presence which did not decrease over this time period. Twenty-two percent of the subscribers to the Tatler were of aristocratic families and among their number were nearly half the English peers of the day.[2] Ten percent of the subscribers to the Spectator were of aristocratic families.[3] Subscribers to Henry Fielding's Miscellanies of 1740 included the Prince of Wales and 71 men of aristocratic families, including one marquess, twelve dukes, and twenty earls. Subscribers to the 1758 translation of Epictetus's works included 110 men of aristocratic families, 53 women with the title of lady or superior rank, 28 bishops, 20 baronets, and 28 knights. As Donald Bond has pointed out, there was also a significant proportion of monied men and government officials among the subscribers to the Spectator. These included directors of the

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1 For these and for the page references of the subscription lists from which the subsequent figures are drawn, see above, p.30, n.3.

2 W.A. Speck, 'Politicians, peers, and publication by subscription 1700-50', in I. Rivers, ed., Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England (Leicester, 1982), p.65.

3 Spectator, i. lxxxviii.

Bank of England, the South Seas Company, and the East India Company, and government secretaries, commissioners, clerks, excise officials, paymasters, and bedchamber and privy council chamber officers. In addition, notable individual subscribers included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Walpole, Sir Isaac Newton, Sir Godfrey Kneller, and John Vanbrugh.[1] Later subscription works also number among their subscribers substantial minorities of men with academic or professional qualifications - each of a different type. For the 1727 translation of the Courtier it was holders of academic degrees, including 51 D.D.s, 10 LL.D.s, six M.D.s and 163 M.A.s; for Fielding's Miscellanies it was 75 members of the inns of court; and for the Works of Epictetus it was 165 clergymen (plus the 28 bishops and various holders of college headships). However, too much store should not be set on these variations. They could well be caused by the appeal of a work's non-courtesy features (for instance, the Miscellanies was primarily a literary production, and the translation of Epictetus was a very scholarly endeavour), or be a result of the author's connections with a certain profession: Henry Fielding and his brother John were both London magistrates,[2] which could explain the large representation of subscribers from the inns of court. The proportion of named other professional or trade occupations did not increase over this time period. The lists of subscribers contain a fairly even scattering of about two dozen military officers, and about four dozen (in total) men described as government officials, merchants, M.D.s, surgeons, attorneys, apothecaries, and booksellers, and (all for the Tatler) one dyer, goldsmith, druggist, watchmaker.

Because courtesy works were so varied in content, format and price, this data about their purchasers does not easily lend

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1 Spectator, i. lxxxviii-xciii.

2 'Henry Fielding' and 'John Fielding', D.N.B., vi. 1284-5, 1288.

itself to broad generalisations about the social composition of their readership. Because the subscription works were unusually expensive, and because the social and artistic elite of the period are so much better documented than their humbler contemporaries, the data presented above creates a collective picture biased towards the higher levels of society. There must undoubtedly have been many less wealthy people who read the cheaper courtesy books and certainly the periodicals. For this wider group of people, however, it is necessary to rely very largely on the numbers of repeat editions as evidence of a work's readership. Nonetheless, the data given above does underline the fact that, in contrast to nineteenth-century etiquette books, which as a genre tended to be written as guides for the social parvenu, prominent examples of eighteenth-century courtesy literature were owned by some of the most eminent people in the country.

The same point may be made about many writers of courtesy works in this period. Some major philosophers, including John Locke, David Hume, and Adam Smith, concerned themselves with the subject of manners.[1] So did important literary figures, such as Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson, and Samuel Johnson. The aristocracy is represented by the Earls of Warrington, Shaftesbury, and Chesterfield, Viscount Shannon, and Lord Lyttleton.[2] Clergymen were a prominent minority of courtesy writers, and included men holding a wide spectrum of beliefs, from the Jesuits William Darrell and John Constable to the Anglican bishop William Fleetwood to the non-jurors Robert Nelson and Henry Gandy.[3] People of lesser status also wrote about manners, including the publisher Robert Dodsley (formerly a footman), the notary public James Puckle,

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1 For the courtesy works by these and the following writers in this paragraph, see below, Bibliography A1, under each name.

2 And from an earlier period by the Marquis of Argyle and the Earl of Halifax.

3 See D.N.B., s.v. each name.

the medical practitioner Thomas Fuller, and the dancing masters John Essex and Stephen Philpot.[1] There were also some women courtesy writers such as Judith Drake and Eliza Haywood. Many courtesy works were published anonymously or were by otherwise unknown writers.

From this outline of the format, production, readership, and authors of courtesy literature, a picture emerges of a body of works of significant importance in the eighteenth-century English literary tradition. Courtesy literature appeared in a diversity of format and a size of production large enough to have the potential to influence a wide readership. Further, it possessed amongst its authors and purchasers some extremely important members of contemporary intellectual and social life. This connection promises the possibilities of, on the one hand, penetrating insights, and, on the other hand, ramifications reaching into high social levels. For these reasons, courtesy literature is worthy of serious consideration as source material for the historical study of attitudes about the manners of the individual.

iv. Treatment of sources

A few specific remarks should be made in conclusion about the treatment of the sources. In deciding which editions to consult, the basic bibliographical guidelines of copy-text used in preparing critical editions have been followed. In essence, these demand that the first edition of a work should be the chosen working text because it is the closest to the author's original intentions. An exception occurs when the author himself makes substantive alterations to later editions: in this case the chosen text is the last edition in which new alterations occur.[2] Such substantive alterations are rare in courtesy literature

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1 For the first three, see D.N.B. s.v. each name; for Essex, see his trn. of Rameau's Dancing-Master, full title (q.v. below, Bibliography A1); for Philpot, see An Essay on the Advantage of a Polite Education (1747), p. A4.

2 Sir Walter Greg, 'The Rationale of Copy-Text', Studies in Bibliography, iii (1950), 19-36, also Gaskell, Introduction to Bibliography, pp.338-43, 357-8; Fielding, Miscellanies, i. li-lii.

of this period, and when they do occur, they are almost invariably indicated on the title page by such words as 'enlarged', 'corrected', or 'improved'. Translations and works written before 1690 have been read in the first edition published after 1690, with comparisons made with the original for any significant alterations. Where modern critical editions of courtesy works exist, they have been the editions used here. There has, however, been no attempt to establish truly definitive critical editions of all the courtesy works consulted. Each of these would require such a thorough ascription of sources and collation of textual variants that it would be a book in itself. Moreover, such studies of textual derivations and variations as have been made in the course of this thesis raise strong doubts as to whether more detailed investigations would yield many conclusions of general significance.

The attention given to each courtesy work has varied according to its own importance in the tradition. Such importance has been judged by three main criteria: the status of the author in literary or social life, the degree of originality of thought, and the extent of the work's influence as revealed by the number of later editions and amount of incorporation into other authors' works, and its assessable popularity with the reading public.

The chapter divisions reflect the nature and concerns of the courtesy literature. Chapter 2 deals with the history of courtesy literature and the presence of foreign elements within the eighteenth-century English debate.[1] Chapter 3 extracts from the courtesy literature certain general principles concerning manners which provide an intellectual

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1 In this thesis, "eighteenth-century" is used as a term to denote the period 1690-1760 for the purposes of simplicity, unless otherwise clearly qualified as, e.g., "the whole of the eighteenth century".

framework for subsequent chapters. Chapters 4 to 6 deal with detailed prescriptions in the native English courtesy works for the behaviour of three specific social groups: gentlemen, ladies, and servants and apprentices. This categorisation reflects the broad divisions made by the courtesy writers themselves; other subtleties of social rank emerge within each chapter. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis with a summary and assessment of the study's major themes.

CHAPTER 2

INTELLECTUAL ANTECEDENTS AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

In order to place the content of eighteenth-century English courtesy literature in a proper perspective, it is necessary to discuss both its intellectual antecedents and the external influences which prevailed upon it. Although these two subjects at times overlap, they are essentially separate questions. Discussion of the former will sketch out the main lines of the courtesy tradition up to 1690 in order to establish both the general background of the eighteenth-century English debate and the specific patterns of thought which might have influenced the ideas of subsequent writers. It will involve four main bodies of courtesy writing: classical, medieval, Renaissance humanist, and seventeenth-century English to 1690. Discussion of the latter will cover all the courtesy works published in England between 1690 and 1760 which originated outside those limits of time or place, in order to determine the interplay of foreign influences within the totality of the eighteenth-century English context. It will involve four major categories of works: classical, Continental Renaissance, English to 1690, and French.

i. Antecedents

Western Europe has a tradition of writings on manners which can be traced back at least as far as the ancient Greeks, and which has continued to the present day. Aristotle is the first author of major significance in the tradition whose works have survived. His Nicomachean Ethics, besides discussing many moral and ethical questions, contains ideas which had important implications for theories of manners. The most important of these are the establishment of virtue as the primary end of human life, the equating of virtue with the doctrine of the mean, and the stress given to the concept of magnanamity.

By linking virtue with the mean, that is, the practice of moderation in conduct, Aristotle creates a moral imperative for the individual to follow moderation. The ideal means of behaviour given by Aristotle extend through all areas of human conduct, and most of them, such as temperance, liberality, friendliness, and wittiness in conversation, have ramifications for the manners of the individual. In particular, the ideas of magnificence and magnanimity also carry with them strong implications for the conduct and manners of a social elite.[1] Aristotle's doctrine of the mean was refined further by the Greek and Roman Stoic philosophers, and, as the ideal of self-restraint, became one of the foundation stones of ideas on both human conduct in general, and manners in particular.

The other concept fundamental to Western ideas of manners was that of decorum. Although it, too, was discussed by the Greeks, it was given its fullest and most influential expression by Cicero in his De Officiis.[2] Decorum, for Cicero, is the fitness of things, that which is peculiarly appropriate to each particular object or circumstance according to its characteristics as determined by nature. Because this state is inseparable from virtue, decorum,like Aristotle's mean, carries with it the same moral imperative demanding the individual's conformity. Decorum is present in every area of human conduct. In its most universal expression, it concerns that which is fitting to man as human, as distinct from animals. Since reason distinguishes man from beasts, decorum demands that men should use their reason and moderate their passions and appetites through the practice of temperance and self-control.[3] A more specific decorum governs individual people.

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1 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, tr. J.A.K.Thomson, (1953, repr. 1979), pp.100-2, 104, 149-58, and Books 1 and 2 in general.

2 Cicero, De Officiis, tr. W. Miller, (Loeb edn., 1913, repr. 1975), Book I, chapters 27-42, pp. 95-155.

3 Ibid., pp. 98-9.

Because they have different characters and attributes, decorum demands that they follow and maintain these differences in their life and actions.[1] Besides character, social position is another factor necessitating decorum: different levels of birth and wealth and different occupations all have different duties pertaining to them.[2] There is a decorum of age: certain forms of behaviour are appropriate to the old, and others to the young.[3] At its most specific, there is a decorum of the body, of speech, and of occasion. It is with these last three areas (and to an extent also with age and social position) that decorum enters the realm of manners. This outward, visible decorum, for Cicero, consists of three elements: beauty, tact, and taste, in which is included a concern for the good opinion of others.[4] These elements are made manifest by the concealment of bodily functions, dignity in gesture and deportment, moderation in cleanliness and dress, modulation of voice, considerateness and restraint in conversation, and attention to the seasonableness of occasion, that is, doing the right thing at the right time.[5] In all these, Cicero stresses the importance of paying attention to the most minute details of manners,[6] and creating as a final result an order and unity of impression in which "everything in the conduct of our life shall balance and harmonize, as in a finished speech".[7]

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1 De Officiis, tr. Miller, pp. 108-17.

2 Ibid., pp. 116-27.

3 Ibid., pp. 124-7.

4 The three elements are described in the original: "Sed quoniam decorum illud in omnibus factis, dictis, in corporis denique motu et statu cernitur idque positum est in tribus rebus, formositate, ordine, ornatu ad actionem apto..." (Ibid., pp.128-9). In 1680, Sir Roger L'Estrange translated the three elements as "Beauty, Order, and a kind of Air, or Agreement suitable to every thing we do": Tully's Offices (tr. 1680, 5th edn., 1699), p.61.

5 De Officiis, tr. Miller, pp. 128-47.

6 Ibid., pp. 148-9.

7 "Talis est igitur ordo actionum adhibendus, ut, quem ad modum in oratione constanti, sic in vita omnia sint apta inter se et convenientia", Ibid., pp. 146, 147.

These various ideas of the classical theorists have in common several implications of crucial importance to theories of manners. First and foremost is the broad context in which manners are situated. Far from being treated as an isolated or trivial subject, manners are regarded as one of the various aspects of human conduct which, governed by the same rule, together form a harmonious whole. Aristotle, the Stoics, and Cicero all emphasise the inseparability of the general and the specific; inner qualities and outer conduct; ethics, morals, and manners. This connection establishes a moral imperative as a force and justification behind 'correct' manners, which allows their practice to be encouraged and their opposite condemned. The theorists all focus their attention on defining some kind of ideal man, whether he be a nobleman, philosopher, or statesman. Although different in its objects, this common selectiveness shares the implication of an exclusiveness of ideal manners, a theme which is picked up and developed by later courtesy writers.

After the classical period, significant written discussions of the theory of manners do not reappear until the thirteenth century in Italy. These medieval treatises appear to have had a separate evolution unrelated to the classical tradition. They were generally produced within the cultural milieu of royal and noble households.[1] The central focus of their concern is the instruction of young boys in the details of manners suitable for both eating and serving at banquets.[2] Their discussions of manners are much more specific and restricted in theoretical scope compared with those of the classical

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1 E.g. John Russell, The Boke of Nurture, in Furnivall, Manners and Meals, pt. 1, p.115; Hugh Rhodes, The boke of Nurture, in Furnivall, op. cit., pt. 1, p.61; T. von Zirclaria, Der Walsche Gast, in Rossetti, 'Italian Courtesy-Books', pp.7, 32, and Oswald, 'Early German Courtesy-Books', p.92.

2 E.g. Hugh Rhodes, the boke of Nurture, in Furnivall, op. cit., pt.1, pp.61-114; The Babees Boke, in Furnivall, op. cit., pt.1, pp.1-9; Régime pour Tous Serviteurs, in Furnivall, op. cit., pt.2, pp. 20-5.

writers. The production of these treatises was at first largely restricted to Italy,[1] but by the fifteenth century, others were also being written in French, Latin, and English.[2] Most of these treatises, of course, existed only in manuscript; the first published courtesy book was The Boke of Curtesye, printed by Caxton about 1477.[3]

The medieval courtesy books share three general characteristics worthy of particular note. They provide evidence of a strong courtesy tradition indigenous to Western Europe before the Renaissance. This was not a body of writing dealing with abstract ideals, but rather, it was one closely linked with everyday situations in complementing educational practice[4] and in reflecting actual customs.[5] Far from being superseded by Renaissance ideas, the influence of the medieval treatises continued in England in the form of subsequent works and editions well into the sixteenth century.[6]

In the early sixteenth century, the discussion of courtesy matters in Western Europe was given new vitality by the writings of the Renaissance humanists. The Renaissance contribution to the courtesy tradition was crucially important in a number of ways. Renaissance writers revived and adopted many of the ideas of the classical theorists.

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1 Rossetti, 'Italian Courtesy-Books', pp. 7-8.

2 See Furnivall, Manners and Meals, throughout.

3 Furnivall, Caxton's Boke of Curtesye, p. xi.

4 For this education in general see Furnivall, Manners and Meals, forewords, pp. vi-xvii. For its emphasis on manners, see Chambers, A Fifteenth-Century Courtesy Book, p.6.

5 See e.g.: the directions for serving appended to the account of the feast for the inthronization of George Nevill as Archbishop of York, 1466, repr. in R.Warner, Antiquitates Culinariae; or Curious Tracts relating to the Culinary affairs of the Old English... (1791), pp.99-105; and A Book of Precedence, in Furnivall, Treatises of Precedence and Courtesy, pp.13-28.

6 E.g.: Wynkyn de Worde, The Boke of Keruynge (1513), in Furnivall, Manners and Meals, p.261; Hugh Rhodes, Boke of Nurture, published five times between c.1550 and c.1586: Furnivall, Manners and Meals, pp.lxxxvi-lxxxvii; F. Seager, The School of Vertue (1577), in Furnivall, Manners and Meals, p.333. These last two have very similar concerns to those in John Russell's fifteenth-century Boke of Nurture: compare Furnivall, Manners and Meals, pp.61-114, 115-200, 333-55.

In part because of this, they re-established the subject of manners within a wider theoretical context as an important matter for philosophical discussion. Because of the existence of printing, their ideas were disseminated on a much wider scale than had ever been possible before. As a result, there was created a body of thought which was extremely influential across the whole of Europe not only in its own day, but for generations afterwards.

Of the hundreds of Renaissance courtesy treatises, four may be singled out for particular notice because of their innovative ideas and their widespread popularity and influence. By describing these four treatises in some depth, it should be possible firmly to establish some guiding reference points to the complexity of Renaissance courtesy ideas.

Three of these four treatises were written in the early sixteenth century. The first and foremost is Baldassare Castiglione's Il Libro del Cortegiano (The Book of the Courtier). First published in Venice in 1528, the Cortegiano enjoyed a tremendous success, reappearing in over forty more Italian editions[1] and numerous other foreign translations[2] in the sixteenth century alone. The English translation by Sir Thomas Hoby appeared in several editions,[3] and influenced some important Elizabethan writers.[4]

Castiglione's courtier is the epitome of the ideal Renaissance man - a sophisticated, cultivated individual of many talents. Adept

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1 B. Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, tr. Sir Thomas Hoby (Everyman edn., 1948), introduction, p.x.

2 Including Latin, French, and English: Sir Walter Raleigh, Some Authors. A collection of literary essays, 1896-1916 (Oxford, 1923), pp. 59-60.

3 Pollard & Redgrave.

4 Including Roger Ascham, Ben Jonson, and Edmund Spenser: Raleigh, Some Authors, pp. 86, 110-112, and B. Castiglione, The Courtier, tr. with intro. by G. Bull (1967 repr. 1978), introduction, p. 13.

in warfare, learning, artistic pursuits, and social gatherings, he uses the arts of caution, prudence, and dissimulation for his own self-advancement.[1] In attaining such a goal, Castiglione stresses, the art of self-presentation is of crucial importance.[2] It is within this context that he gives considerable attention to the subject of manners.

Castiglione's discussion of manners is on a level of sophistication and refinement far superior to that of the medieval courtesy treatises. His single most important and influential contribution to the subject is the concept of sprezzatura. A universal rule applicable in any human action, sprezzatura involves the cultivation of an air of nonchalance, grace, and effortless ease, and the avoidance of any appearance of artifice or affectation. Castiglione gives examples of its use in dancing, speaking, deportment, dress, riding, conversation, and the display of ability in music, painting, and feats of arms. By creating in the onlooker a belief that the performer's skills are greater than they appear to be, a display of sprezzatura acts to increase the performer's prestige.[3] With this concept of sprezzatura, Castiglione places the specific detail of manners within a much broader context of both human conduct, and, by extension, aesthetic theory.[4]

The Cortegiano also had other important ramifications on the courtesy tradition. Castiglione incorporated in the work the major ideas on manners of Aristotle and Cicero on moderation and the mean,

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1 The Courtier, tr. Bull, Books 1 and 2, espec. pp. 61-3, 90, 94, 96, 114-6, 141, 151.

2 E.g. his advice on how to appear to best advantage in battle: Ibid., pp. 115-6.

3 Ibid., pp. 67-70.

4 For the influence of sprezzatura on later Renaissance aesthetic ideals, see Ibid., introduction, p.13.

magnanimity, and decorum.[1] By placing his ideal man within a court society and preferring him to be of noble birth,[2] Castiglione reinforces the medieval connection, inherent in the word's etymology itself, of courtesy with courts, thus strengthening the social rank aspect of theories of ideal manners. He also sets the pattern for a long-lasting tradition of subsequent manuals of advice written specifically for the courtier.[3] Castiglione's courtier is notable for his self-absorption, and this stress on self-perfection as an essential goal of the courtier is an approach very much followed by later French courtesy writers.[4] In the most general terms, the Cortegiano is one of the foremost examples of a decisive Italian influence on European manners in the Renaissance.

Two years after the publication of the Cortegiano, there appeared another treatise of equal importance to the courtesy tradition. This was Erasmus's De Civilitate Morum Puerilium (On Civility in Boys) of 1530. In style, content, and the audience it addresses, it is very different from Castiglione's work. Lacking the embellishing framework of a discussion group of courtiers, it is more openly prescriptive and didactic than is the Cortegiano. In contrast to Castiglione's sophistication and idealism, it deals with far more fundamental aspects of manners, such as cleanliness, control of bodily functions, table manners, facial expression and gesture, and it is concerned far more with the basic avoidance of offending others than

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1 For the Ethics, see Raleigh, Some Authors, pp. 99-100 and note, and J.R. Woodhouse, Baldesar Castiglione: A reassessment of 'The Courtier' (Edinburgh, 1978), pp.98, 139, 143, 153; for the De Officiis, see Woodhouse, op. cit., p.77. For Castiglione's stress on decorum, see The Courtier, tr. Bull, pp.96, 124; for magnanimity, Ibid., p.88; for the mean, Ibid., p.150.

2 The Courtier, tr. Bull, p.54.

3 E.g.: N. Faret, L'Honneste homme: ou l'art de plaire à la court (Antwerp? 1632?); E. du Réfuge, Traicté de la court (Paris?1615?); B. Gracián y Morales, Oráculo manual y Arte de Prudencia (Madrid? 1647).

4 See below, pp. 77-9.

with actively pleasing them. This different focus can largely be attributed to the differences in intended readership. While Castiglione is speaking of the behaviour of accomplished, adult, noble courtiers, Erasmus directly addresses children, and (though he dedicates the work to the son of a prince) gives no explicit limits of social rank.

Both in the youth of its intended readership, and in the types of manners with which it is concerned, the De Civilitate displays strong links of continuity with the medieval courtesy treatises. The work's contribution to the courtesy discussion lay not so much in what it said, but rather in the thoroughness with which what it did say was disseminated. It quickly appeared in numerous Latin editions and foreign translations[1] including three separate English ones,[2] and its popularity lasted into the eighteenth century, by which time it had appeared in over 130 editions and given rise to numerous imitations.[3]

The third of these important early Renaissance courtesy treatises is Sir Thomas Elyot's The Boke named the Gouernour, first published in 1531. It reached a wide audience in England, going through seven more editions in the next fifty years.[4] Of the three works, it owes

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1 Elias, History of Manners, pp. 54, 292-3, n.2.

2 In 1532, 1560 and 1656: E.J. Devereux, A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700 (Oxford Bibliographical Society, Bodleian Library, Occasional Publication iii, Oxford, 1968), pp. 10-11.

3 Elias, History of Manners, pp.54, 292-3, n.2. For a discussion of the importance of the De Civilitate see Elias, op. cit., pp. 53-9, 70-81, 134-5. In paying so much attention to Erasmus, and relegating Castiglione to two passing references, Elias does seem to give a slightly uneven presentation of the Renaissance courtesy tradition, for example, in not resolving the question of the great contrast between the levels of refinement of the two treatises.

4 Pollard & Redgrave. None after 1580 is noted in Pollard & Redgrave or Wing.

the most obvious debt to the classical authors, although this may be only because it is an acknowledged one. Prominent among the classical works used by Elyot were the Ethics and the De Officiis, which he recommends to his readers,[1] and from which he drew his ideas about the mean, magnanamity, and decorum,[2] as well as many other more general ideas of conduct.[3]

Like the Cortegiano, The Gouernour is concerned solely with the conduct of a social elite, but Elyot's elite differs from Castiglione's in two fundamental ways: it is composed not of nobles, but of gentlemen, and they are not courtiers, but governors of the people. The different social function of this elite calls for a different ideal: The Gouernour is not a panegyric of the ideal courtier, but is rather designed as a practical manual of education for the sons of gentlemen aimed at equipping them from an early age for their duties of government.[4] It lays much less emphasis than The Courtier on self-perfection as an end in itself, and considerably more on the moral and personal qualities essential in a governor.[5] It is within this context that Elyot discusses manners. He would have the gentleman take pains to give the appearance of "Maiestie" in his countenance, speech, gesture, and dress; with the express intention of setting him apart from the crowd and inspiring reverence and obedience in his inferiors.[6] At the same time, the gentleman

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1 T. Elyot, The Boke named the Gouernour, ed. H. Croft (1880), i. 91-3.

2 Ibid., i. 138, 267, ii. 112-3, 289.

3 Ibid., i. and ii. indexes, s.v. "Quotations".

4 E.g. Ibid., i. ch. 4, p.28.

5 E.g. Ibid., ii. chs. 8-20, pp. 262-327, discuss the qualities of prudence, moral virtue, justice, fortitude, patience, magnanamity and temperance.

6 Ibid., ii. 11-13, 17-26.

should cultivate affability in his speech and countenance so that men will be drawn to him by affection.[1]

Of the next generation of courtesy treatises which succeeded these three early Renaissance works, one stands out as the most important and influential of all. This is Archbishop Giovanni della Casa's Il Galateo, first published in Venice in 1558.[2] In the next 40 years, it appeared in 39 editions and five more languages across Europe.[3] It had a very strong influence on contemporary French ideas of manners,[4] which themselves later had an important impact on English theorists.[5] It was used as a textbook in schools across the Continent,[6] and was employed as a touchstone for manners by as high-ranking a person as the son of the Grande Condé.[7] In the sixteenth century, Gabriel Harvey noted that texts by Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas had been virtually abandoned at Cambridge, to be replaced by new French and Italian works, among them "the Italian Archebysshoppies brave Galatro, Castiglioes fine Cortegiano", and "Guatzoes newe Discourses of curteous behaviour".[8] Della Casa's book had a very long-lasting influence in England. Between 1576 and 1804 it appeared in English translation six times,[9] in Latin translation three times[10] and in

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1 The Boke named the Gouernour, ii. 40-3.

2 G. della Casa, Galateo, tr. R.S. Pine-Coffin (1958), p.14.

3 A. Santosuosso, The Bibliography of Giovanni della Casa: Books Readers and Critics 1537-1975 (Firenze, 1979), pp.6-7.

4 Santosuosso, op. cit., pp. 7, 11; Magendie, La politesse mondaine, i. 150-64, ii. 330 and note, 715-16; M. Richter, Giovanni della Casa in Francia nel secolo xiv, (Rome, 1966), pp. 53-85.

5 See below, pp.80-9.

6 Santosuosso, della Casa, p.6.

7 P. Ariès, Centuries of Childhood (1962), p.210.

8 Guazzo's work was another major Italian courtesy book, the Civile Converzatione (1581, tr. English, 1581). G. Harvey, Letter-Book of Gabriel Harvey, A.D.1573-1580, ed. E.J.L. Scott (Camden Society, cxxxix (1884)), 78-9; see also p.xiii.

9 In four separate translations: 1576 repr. 1578; 1701; 1703 repr. 1763; 1774: Santosuosso, della Casa, p.10.

10 1628, 1630, 1665: Santosuosso, della Casa, pp. 50-1, and Bodleian catalogue.

various English paraphrases at least 27 times.[1]

The Galateo is very important not only for its great influence, but also because of its content. In several important respects, della Casa's treatment of manners achieves a new balance between that of Castiglione and that of Erasmus. The intended readership of the Galateo is significantly broader than that of the other two works. The young man to whom the Galateo is addressed is of sufficiently high rank that his manners are contrasted with those suitable to a groom,[2] but otherwise della Casa makes no restriction of rank, age, or social milieu. The range of behaviour discussed in the Galateo is correspondingly of a more general applicability, and can be attained by far more people than can the model in the Cortegiano.[3] In moving away from a definition of manners as limited to those of court society, to a more general concept which can be shared by all cultivated people, the Galateo is symptomatic of an important contemporary trend of thought away from the idea of 'courtesy' towards a broader one of 'civility'.[4]

The framework of della Casa's discussion of manners was also a major contribution to the courtesy debate. He avoids Castiglione's ad hoc, scattered discussions of manners as an ill-defined and rather amorphous part of a larger totality. Instead, he treats manners as a definite self-contained subject with clear boundaries. In this way, he is similar to Erasmus, but he adds to Erasmus's bald presentation of precepts a more polished style, and a logical, systematic

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1 Some of these were translations of French or Spanish paraphrases. Santosuosso, della Casa, p. 11, lists 23, and there were at least four more: see below, Bibliography A1, s.v. Dare (3 edns.) and Chesterfield, Advice to his Son (1799). For the influence of the Galateo in England, see Santosuosso, op. cit., p.9, n.45, and M.P. Tilley, 'Della Casa's Galateo in Seventeenth-Century England', The Romanic Review ix (1918), 309-12.

2 della Casa, Galateo, tr. Pine-Coffin, p.96.

3 Ibid., pp.16-17.

4 A Renaissance Courtesy-Book: Galateo of Manners & Behaviours by Giovanni Della Casa, ed. with intro. by J.E. Spingarn (The Humanist's Library, viii 1914), pp.xvii-xix. But cf. Elias, History of Manners, pp.53-9, who predates this change to Erasmus.

theoretical analysis which is based on the mental assumptions dependent on manners. Della Casa, like Castiglione, felt that manners were an important method of advancement for the ambitious man. To win the good will and favour of others through the practice of good manners was a two-fold operation: the avoidance of giving offence and the active employment of arts designed to please.[1] These were in turn manifested in four areas of conduct. First was the concealment of physical acts, especially those of the bodily functions, which offended the senses of others.[2] Second was the avoidance of offending the personal pride of others by actions which could be interpreted as displaying indifference, dislike, disrespect, or contempt, such as yawning, fidgeting, or petulance.[3] Third was the art of conversation, regarding which della Casa gives detailed and extensive advice about how to avoid offending others, actively please them, and present a good self-image by means of such techniques as salutations, compliments, and wit.[4] Fourth was the avoidance of any actions or mannerisms (such as those of effeminacy, awkwardness, or non-conformity) which upset the minds of others by offending against standards of beauty, decorum, good taste, and convention.[5]

In its ideas and its influence, the Galateo is a prime example of the action of the Renaissance writers in providing a bridging link between past and future. Della Casa follows the Renaissance pattern in relying on classical sources (including Aristotle's Ethics, Theophrastus's Characters, and Cicero's De Officiis).[6] His synthesis

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1 Galateo, tr. Pine-Coffin, ch. 1, pp. 21-2.

2 Ibid., chs. 2-5, pp. 23-31.

3 Ibid., chs. 6-10, pp. 31-40.

4 Ibid., chs. 11-24, pp.40-85.

5 Ibid., chs. 26-30, pp.90-104. For conformity see also pp. 33, 51-54.

6 Galateo, ed. Spingarn, p.xvi. Woodhouse, Baldesar Castiglione, p.77 points out "Della Casa's almost literal translation" of Cicero's De Officiis 50, 35 (on the necessity of decorum) into the Galateo, chapters 28 and 30.

of these ideas into a theoretical framework based on the psychological associations attached to manners provided a model which was to be closely followed by other theorists for over two centuries.

The pattern set by the Cortegiano, the De Civilitate, the Gouernour, and the Galateo, was repeated with variations in hundreds of treatises across Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is possible to discern in these works the gradual emergence of differing national preoccupations and emphases. This was the case with the English courtesy literature of the time. Although the Italian influence on English theories of manners remained strong for most of the sixteenth century,[1] the native English courtesy works slowly took on a character of their own.[2]

One of the most striking features of the seventeenth-century English works was the grafting on to the Renaissance humanist tradition of a strong moral and religious bias. The Italian works discussed above largely lack this element. It is completely absent, for example, in della Casa's arguments against vice.[3] In the English courtesy literature, by contrast, less attention is given to the subject of outward manners and behaviour, and far more to the question of the inner virtues.[4] This strong moral and religious presence in English courtesy literature reached at its height between the 1630s and the 1680s.[5] For works produced during this period, it is particularly

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1 R. Kelso, Doctrine of the English Gentleman, pp. 11, 13, 39, 48, 50-1, 84-7, 119.

2 The English courtesy literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been given detailed consideration by other writers, and what follows here is intended to be no more than a very brief summary of their major conclusions. For more detailed information, see for the sixteenth century, Kelso, Doctrine of the English Gentleman, and id., Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance; for 1600 to 1640, see below, Bibliography B1, B2, s.v. Ustick, espec. his 'Changing Ideals of Aristocratic Character and Conduct'; for 1600 to c.1690, see Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman'.

3 Galateo, tr. Pine-Coffin, pp. 93-4.

4 Kelso, Doctrine of the English Gentleman, pp. 50, 81-5.

5 For the 1630s, see Ustick, 'Changing Ideals', pp.154-5; for the 1680s, see Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman', pp.67-70.

difficult to make distinctions between courtesy literature, moral conduct literature, and religious or devotional literature.[1] Thus, Francis Osborne's Advice to a Son of 1656-8, one of the more important courtesy works of the century, still devotes over one-fifth of its discussion to wholly religious matters, and many other contemporary courtesy works contain as much if not more.[2] In such discussions, moral and religious themes were unequivocally linked: the religious element consisting of exhortations to piety and devotional practices, and the moral element being comprised largely of the advocacy of the Christian virtues (especially humility and charity), and the condemnation of the vices (e.g. drunkenness, swearing, and debauchery) in terms of their Christian prohibitions and punishments.[3] In these discussions, manners are treated primarily in terms of their ability to reflect the inner virtues. Unlike the Renaissance courtesy treatises, these seventeenth-century English works present a set of ideals which are in strong opposition to those which were associated with contemporary court society. That this conflict of ideals was the result of a conscious policy on the part of the courtesy writers is made clear by their explicit criticisms of fashionable behaviour.[4] The result was that at this time, the ideal and the reality of the behaviour of the gentleman were particularly far apart.

Besides religious and moral ideas, another important element present in English courtesy literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth

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1 Noyes, Bibliography, p.8.

2 E.g. C. Ellis, The Gentile Sinner (1660); W. Ramesay, The Gentleman's Companion (1672); (R. Allestree) The Gentleman's Calling (1660); id., The Ladies Calling (1667); id., The Government of the Tongue (1674).

3 Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman', pp.24-34, 67-70; Ustick, 'Changing Ideals', pp. 154-60.

4 E.g. C. Ellis, The Gentile Sinner, (1679 edn.), pp. 9-47 for his criticism of the gallant, and R. Allestree, The Gentleman's Calling (1696 edn.), pp. 33, 75-6, 103, 132 for similar comments.

centuries was a serious debate over the nature and prerequisites of nobility and gentility. This lasted throughout the sixteenth century, and up until the mid-seventeenth. The debate was an attempt to define nobility and gentility in terms of their origins, necessity to society, prerequisites, membership, and exclusions. An argument repeatedly made was that the criteria of personal merit and inner moral qualities were equally important as that of birth.[1]

ii. Influences

It is clear that by the end of the seventeenth century, there already existed a formidable tradition of courtesy writing in Western Europe. As might be expected, this body of literature had a considerable influence on English theories of manners between 1690 and 1760. Besides providing a pattern for later writers to follow, many works had a more direct influence on eighteenth-century English ideas. Four types of direct external influences may be discerned: classical, Continental Renaissance, pre-1690 English, and French. Medieval courtesy works had no apparent direct influence on this period.

It has been shown how classical ideas on manners provided a foundation which was built upon by later theorists, particularly those of the Renaissance, who in turn influenced their successors. As well as this indirect influence, the ideas of classical writers also had a more direct, immediate presence in eighteenth-century England in the form of new editions of their works, both in the original and in translation. The classical influence on eighteenth-century English theories of manners was largely limited to works by four authors: Aristotle, Epictetus, Theophrastus, and Cicero.

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1 For the sixteenth century, see Kelso, Doctrine of the English Gentleman, pp.18-38, 146-7; for the seventeenth, see Ustick, 'Changing Ideals', pp. 159-163; Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman, pp. 2-12.

In considerable contrast to its great popularity and influence in the Renaissance, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics had a very muted presence in eighteenth-century England.[1] In the period under study here, it appeared in only two editions, a Greek and Latin one and an English translation of Book I only, a section which contains very few of Aristotle's ideas on manners.[2] Only two courtesy works from this period cite the Ethics directly.[3]

A form of philosophy with far more currency in eighteenth-century England was Stoicism. While always present to some degree, English interest in Stoic thought had been heightened in the seventeenth century by the translation of several French treatises on the subject.[4] The chief manual of Stoic thought of interest here is Epictetus's Enchiridion. Between 1690 and 1760, seven separate English translations of the Enchiridion were published in England.[5] Of these, three had an especially wide currency: Ellis Walker's verse paraphrase of 1692 with thirteen editions between 1692 and 1778, George Stanhope's 1694 translation interspersed with the sixteenth-century commentary of Simplicius of Cilicia, with five editions between 1694 and 1741, and Elizabeth Carter's All the Works of Epictetus (1758), which remained the standard translation well into the nineteenth century.[6]

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1 M.L. Clarke, Greek Studies in England 1700-1830 (Cambridge, 1945), pp. 112-121.

2 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Aristotle'.

3 J. Hartcliffe, A Treatise of Moral and Intellectual Virtues (1691), which is an attempt to Christianize Aristotle's concept of virtue, and Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.258 (the magnanimous man), and pp.270-1 (the mean).

4 R. Steele, The Christian Hero, ed. Rae Blanchard (Oxford, 1932), editor's introduction, p.xvii.

5 As well as several Greek and Latin editions: see below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Epictetus'.

6 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Epictetus'.

Stoic philosophy was relevant to discussions of manners because one of its major tenets, the cultivation of indifference to pleasure and pain, was displayed through the medium of manners. Epictetus was insistent that his ideal man should avoid any outward display of emotion. At public spectacles, he should "abstain entirely from Acclamations, and Derision, and violent Emotions", and when leaving, he should not talk a great deal about the entertainment, "For it would appear by such Discourse, that you were immoderately struck with the show".[1] Likewise, when going to visit a superior, he must prepare himself in advance for rejection. If this occurs, he must "bear what happens, and never say 'It was not worth so much'. For this is vulgar, and like a Man disconcerted by Externals".[2] This aloofness from emotional display had strong overtones of a social aloofness as well. The Stoic is told to "preserve your Gravity and Sedateness" and not to try to amuse his companions, which might lessen their esteem of him. He is further to avoid public entertainments if at all possible, but if attendance is necessary, he must be careful not "to slide into vulgar Manners", which are easily picked up from vulgar company.[3]

Several of Epictetus's translators agreed enough with the spirit of these remarks to enlarge upon them in their translated versions. Their added comments also criticise the display of emotion in actions like swearing, laughing, and complaining, and link even more explicitly this self-restraint to the preservation of a social aloofness.[4]

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1 Enchiridion, All the Works, tr. Carter, pp. 453-4.

2 Ibid., p. 454.

3 Ibid., pp. 454-5.

4 E.g. Epicteti Enchiridion made English, tr. E. Walker (1692), pp. 43-7 (against courtiers), 75 (against laughter), 91 (against swearing); Epictetus his morals, tr. G. Stanhope (1694), pp.420-1 (Simplicius's criticism of laughter); The Porch and Academy open'd or Epictetus's Manual Newly turn'd into English Verse, tr. J.W. (1707), pp.45 (on laughter), 50 (on complaining), 105-6 (on swearing). These comments do not appear in the English translation of the Loeb edn. of the Enchiridion, tr. W.A. Oldfather (1928, repr. 1952), pp.482-537. See further below, ch. 4, pp. 182, 184-5, 190-2.

Despite the popularity of the Enchiridion suggested by its numerous translations and editions, Stoic philosophical ideas were by no means unopposed at this time. A number of English writers spoke out against them.[1] Opposition largely focused on the conflict between Stoic ideals and the traditional Christian virtues of charity and humility. To a large extent, this criticism dealt with much broader issues than any Stoic relevance to manners, but a connection could at times be drawn. Thus George Stanhope argues that Christianity is needed to soften the Stoic command to appear unmoved at everything:

> It commands no Man to attend the Funeral Obsequies of his Friend or Dearest Relation, with a gay or perfectly composed Countenance, as knowing very well, that this Behaviour is Barbarous and Brutish; and that what some have called Philosophy and Constancy in such Cases, may seem rather the Effect of Stupidity, or Sullenness, or Pride....[2]

Nevertheless, Stanhope obviously felt that the Enchiridion was still worth his own attention and that of the public, as did other translators. In the introduction to her own translation in 1758, Elizabeth Carter said about the Stoics:

> Even now, their Compositions may be read with great Advantage, as containing excellent Rules of Self-government, and of social Behaviour.[3]

The influence on English ideas about manners of another Greek writer, Theophrastus, matched that of Epictetus, although in an entirely different and unrelated way. This was through his Characters, a collection of prose descriptions of 28 different personality types

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1 Including Richard Steele, Henry Fielding, and the Latitudinarian divines: Steele, The Christian Hero, ed. Blanchard, introduction, pp.xvii-xxix; H. Fielding, The Covent-Garden Journal, ed. G.E. Jensen (1915), No.29, i.306-7; M. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art (Connecticut, 1959), pp. 14-25, 66-8.

2 G. Stanhope, tr., Epictetus his Morals (1694), translator's preface, p.A7; see similarly Fielding, Covent-Garden Journal, No.29,i.306-7; Johnson, Rambler No.6, iii.30-1, No.32, iii. 174-5.

3 All the Works, p.xxvi.

and their social behaviour. The work had made a brief appearance in England in the early seventeenth century,[1] but it was not until later in that century that it really became popular. From its next appearance in a Greek and Latin version in 1670, to 1758, there were at least fifteen editions in Greek and/or Latin published in England.[2] There is evidence suggesting that the work was taught at Oxford in the eighteenth century.[3] A French translation of 1688 by La Bruyère enjoyed considerable success in France.[4] From the French, it was translated into English in 1698, and again directly from the Greek in 1714 and 1725, to achieve jointly a total of at least eleven editions by 1743.[5]

The Characters of Theophrastus was important to the English courtesy tradition for two reasons. The individual sketches contain much detailed discussion of manners: the portrait of the sloven, for instance, discusses personal cleanliness, that of the rustic, ill breeding, and those of the impertinent, the brazen-fac'd fellow, the busybody, and the troublesome fellow, conversation.[6] These were still felt to be relevant in the eighteenth century: writers argued that the Characters in general were natural representations of human follies and improprieties.[7] The Characters were also an important

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1 Pollard & Redgrave.

2 Three of each language separately and nine together (source: Bodleian and British Library catalogues).

3 See Richard Newton, Proposals for Printing by Subscription, 4000 Copies of the Characters of Theophrastus [in Greek and Latin with English notes]... For the Benefit of Hertford College (Oxford, 1752).

4 At least 20 more edns. by 1756: Bodleian and British Library catalogues.

5 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Theophrastus'.

6 The Moral Characters of Theophrastus... From the French of Monsieur De La Bruyère (tr.1698), pp.31-2, 6-8, 5-6, 19-21, 23-4, 33, respectively.

7 The Moral Characters of Theophrastus, tr. Eustace Budgell, (1714), Dedication, p.A3^{v}; R. Newton, Proposals for Printing... the Characters of Theophrastus, p.5. Several of Theophrastus's characters are included in The Polite Companion (1749), pp.321-49.

influence in establishing a genre of character writing, which became a major technique used by such courtesy writers as La Bruyère, Addison, and Chesterfield to express their own ideals of manners and behaviour.[1]

More influential, however, than either the Characters or the Enchiridion was Cicero's De Officiis. It had appeared in England in numerous Latin and English editions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,[2] and this popularity continued in the eighteenth century. Between 1690 and 1760 it appeared in England in three separate English translations in a joint total of 11 editions, and a further six Latin editions.[3] The De Officiis was not only published, it was also studied. In his 1680 translation of it, Sir Roger L'Estrange commented: "This Treatise of Offices, I find to be one of the Commonest School-Books we have...."[4] Thomas Cockman dedicated his 1699 translation to two pupils, saying "'Tis true you have read it in its Original Language".[5] Lectures on the DeOfficiis are recorded as having occurred in Cambridge in the eighteenth century.[6]

The three translators of the De Officiis in this period all stressed its considerable value as a conduct book for their own contemporaries. L'Estrange asserted that the work had always been esteemed as most exact, and argued that "It is a Manual of Precepts for the Government of our selves, in all the Offices, Actions, and Conditions of Human Life...."[7] Cockman felt it was an "excellent

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1 See La Bruyère, Caractères (Paris, 1698); Addison's portrait of Sir Roger de Coverley in the Spectator (see: i.xxxiv-xxxvi), and Chesterfield, Letters ii.460-1 (the awkward fellow).

2 Pollard & Redgrave and Wing list between them 35 edns. before 1690.

3 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Cicero'.

4 Tully's Offices, in Three Books, tr. R. L'Estrange (1680, 6th edn. 1720), "To the Reader", p.A6.

5 Tully's Three Books of Offices, tr. T. Cockman (1699), dedicatory epistle, p.A^{v}.

6 C. Wordsworth, Scholae Academicae: Some Account of the Studies at the English Universities in the Eighteenth Century (Cambridge, 1877), pp.13, 27, 116, 326n.

7 Tully's Offices, tr. L'Estrange, 6th edn., "To the Reader", pp.A5-A5^{v}.

Treatise", which "has always been look'd upon as... one of the noblest Systems of Moral Precepts, that have ever been left us by the ancient Heathens...."[1] William Guthrie stated that the De Officiis very early on became "the Standard of all the Moral Duties, and to this Day it continues to be appealed to and decisive".[2] Although it might be expected that translators would value works to which they chose to devote their time and energy, certainly, in the courtesy literature at least, it is rare to hear quite such glowing tributes.

The influence of the De Officiis is apparent in several eighteenth-century English courtesy works. It is cited in at least 14 different numbers of the Spectator papers.[3] It is praised by Chesterfield,[4] David Hume,[5] Samuel Johnson,[6] and in the anonymous 1748 work, The Polite Student.[7] In several of these instances, it was Cicero's concept of decorum which was singled out for special attention and close imitation.[8]

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the direct influence of the major Continental Renaissance courtesy writers on English ideas had become very muted. In England between 1690 and 1760, only nine courtesy books were republished which had been written on the Continent during the Renaissance or on the Continent with the exception of France by 1760. Six of these were from the sixteenth century - four Italian,

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1 Tully's Three Books of Offices, tr. Cockman, pp. A^{v}, A3.

2 Marcus Tullius Cicero his Offices... (1755), pp.1-2, note.

3 Spectator, No.104, i.433; and vol. v. 230, s.v. 'Cicero'.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 367-8, iv. 1381.

5 Cited below, ch. 3, p. 97.

6 The Rambler, No. 179, v.177.

7 The Polite Student (1748), pp.50-1.

8 Cicero, De Officiis, tr. Miller, Book I, chs. 27-42, pp.95-155, espec. paras. 94-99, pp.96-103. Steele incorporates this basic definition unchanged into Spectator, No.104, i.433; for briefer references see Chesterfield, above, n. 4; Spectator, No.259, ii.508, and Hume, below, ch. 3, p. 97.

one German, and one Polish - and three were by the same seventeenth-century Spanish author.

The four Italian works were Castiglione's Courtier, della Casa's Galateo, Stefano Guazzo's La Civile Converzatione of 1574, and an anonymous 1693 translation entitled The Ladies' Behaviour and described as being "Written, Originally in ITALIAN, ABOVE An Hundred and Fifty Years agoe".[1] After remaining unpublished in England for most of the seventeenth century,[2] the Courtier enjoyed a minor revival in the early decades of the eighteenth century, appearing in a Latin edition in 1713,[3] and in two new English translations in the 1720s which had a joint total of five editions.[4] The Galateo had a similar survival rate in this period, appearing five times in two translations and three paraphrases between 1694 and 1736.[5] It did, however, survive longer than the Courtier: whereas the last eighteenth-century English appearance of the Courtier was in 1742,[6] the Galateo reappeared four more times between 1760 and 1799.[7] Guazzo's La Civile Converzatione had enjoyed considerable success in sixteenth-century England,[8] and

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1 The Ladies Behaviour (1693), title page. This suggests a date c.1543, but the original has not been traced.

2 Pollard & Redgrave and Wing.

3 British Library catalogue. Probably the same as that of 1712 mentioned by R. Samber, tr., The Courtier (1724), dedication, p.vii, as being scarce.

4 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Castiglione'.

5 For the translations, see below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Casa'. The three paraphrases were the third (1698) edition of Josiah Dare's Councellor Manners his last legacy to his son (1673), and the 1694 (repr. 1736) translation by John Ozell of the French L'art de plaire dans la conversation. See further above, p.56, n.1.

6 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Castiglione'.

7 See below Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Casa', and above, p. 55, n.9, p. 56, n.1.

8 S. Guazzo, The Civile Conversation, parts 1-3, tr. G. Pettie (1581), part 4 tr. B. Young (1586). See above, p.55.

it reappeared in 1738 as The Art of Conversation.[1] In its content, the work strongly resembles the Courtier and the Galateo (both of which Guazzo praises),[2] and the same attention is paid to the fundamental principle of decorum,[3] a broad-scale treatment of manners,[4] and an extensive discussion of the art of conversation.[5] The Ladies' Behaviour is primarily a worldly conduct manual (giving extensive advice, for instance, on the choice of a lover),[6] although it also discusses subjects such as dress, cleanliness, gestures, and conversational techniques in terms broadly similar to those in the Galateo.[7]

Several comments survive assessing the continued relevance of two of these works, the Courtier and the Galateo, and there is evident within them an interesting historical progression towards higher standards of refinement. The 1673 translator of the Galateo, Josiah Dare, recommends the treatise unhesitatingly as providing the reader "with such Jewels as will set thee forth and gain thee honour and respect amongst all persons, with whom thou shalt converse".[8] In 1703, the Galateo's translator, Bernard Lintot, is still positive, but more hesitantly so, arguing:

> The worst parts of the Book, in my opinion, are near the Beginning and towards the latter End, where our Author seems to run too much upon the Sir-Courtly stroke, and may be thought to recommend a Character which considerate persons are wont to despise. But I think his greatest fault in this respect, is, That his Remarks are Mean, rather than Foppish: And yet take them

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1 A free translation of pts. 1-3 only, based on the 1581 translation: The Civile Conversation of M. Steeven Guazzo, ed. Sir Edward Sullivan (Tudor Translations 2nd series, vii, viii, 1925), introduction, i. xxxv.

2 The Art of Conversation (1738), pp.102-3, 277.

3 Ibid., title page and pp. 36-7, 90, 106, 130-1, 266.

4 Ibid., pp. 29, 35, 39-40, 122, 127-9, 144-5, 149-50, 266.

5 Ibid., pp. 40-1, 51-9, 65, 67, 70-8, 100-14, 117.

6 The Ladies Behaviour (1693), pp.116-154.

7 Ibid., pp. 50-1, 56-60, 79-89.

8 J. Dare, Councellor Manners his last Legacy (1673), preface, pp. A4-A4^{v}.

> altogether, it is a pretty satisfaction to observe, that the same things are counted indecent amongst us, which were so, near 150 Years ago, in the most polite Country in the World....[1]

The sections Lintot is unsure of discuss table manners and the concealment of bodily functions.[2] This connection suggests that standards for this type of manners have become outmoded more quickly than those for other forms of behaviour, such as ceremonies and conversation, the Galateo's rules on which Lintot goes on to recommend as particularly valuable to his readers.[3] The idea that rules for the art of conversation changed relatively little over this 150-year period is supported by a comment from the 1724 translator of the Courtier, Robert Samber. He felt that Castiglione's rules for the use of raillery in conversation remained valid as general principles to be followed advantageously by eighteenth-century readers, even though the specific jokes Castiglione used as examples had become outdated.[4] By the 1770s, however, both the Courtier and the Galateo were regarded as being significantly more outdated. Samuel Johnson told Boswell in 1773 that the Courtier was "The best book that ever was written upon good breeding", and recommended he should read it.[5] Nonetheless, Johnson wrote a few years later that although the Courtier and the Galateo had been extremely influential on the manners of their own age, "they are now less read... because they have effected that reformation which their authors intended, and their precepts now are no longer wanted".[6]

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1 Galateo of Manners, tr. B. Lintot (1703), preface, pp.A5^{v}-A6.

2 della Casa, Galateo, tr. R. Pine-Coffin, pp.24-32, 98-104.

3 Galateo of Manners, tr. B. Lintot, preface, pp. A6-A7.

4 The Courtier, tr. R. Samber (1724), dedication, pp. xiv-xv. The rules to which he refers are given by Bernardo Bibiena throughout book 2 of the Courtier.

5 Boswell's Life of Johnson, ed. G.B. Hill, revised and enlarged by L.F. Powell (Oxford, 1934-1950), v.276 (Saturday 2nd Oct. 1773).

6 S. Johnson, 'Life of Addison', in his Lives of the English Poets (1779-81), ed. G.B. Hill (Oxford, 1905), ii. 92-3.

The translator of the Galateo in 1774 was put very much on the defensive by this viewpoint, which he saw as widely prevailing and especially directed against the first part of the book (on bodily functions and table manners).[1] He himself expresses a very ambivalent view of the work. He presents it "as a literary curiosity",[2] whose prescriptions are laughable and deliberately satirical,[3] and in some places contain what "may be thought a grossness of expression".[4] He insists, nonetheless, that the work's prescriptions are still relevant to his contemporaries.[5] This relevance, however, is not as a complete programme of positive guidance, as it was for Dare in 1673. Rather, it is as a series of "hint[s]" and 'cautions" which might "from time to time, become necessary, to prevent us from relapsing again into unpoliteness and indelicacy".[6] While this example of the Galateo stretches beyond the time limits of this thesis, it is very illuminating in placing the 1690 to 1760 period in the middle of this major shift in attitude.

None of the remaining five foreign courtesy works published in this period is especially noteworthy. The German one was Friedrich Dedekind's Grobianus of 1549, published in England in the seventeenth century and again in a new English translation in 1739.[7] It is a

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1 Galateo, tr. R. Graves (1774), pp. ix-x. That by "the former part of the Treatise" is meant the discussion of table manners and bodily functions is clear because his later examples (pp. xii-xix) of 'modern' breaches of good manners all refer to these topics, and he uses these to try and refute the belief that the work is no longer needed.

2 Ibid., p. vii.

3 Ibid., pp. x-xi.

4 Ibid., p. xi.

5 Ibid., pp. xiii-xix.

6 Ibid., pp. xii, xxi-xxii.

7 Published in English in 1605 and in Latin in 1661 (Pollard & Redgrave and Wing), and in 1739 as Grobianus; or, the Compleat Booby..., tr. Roger Bull.

satirical verse work in 'praise' of bad manners, laying particular emphasis on graphic descriptions of lack of self-restraint in the bodily functions. It is uncouth even by sixteenth-century standards,[1] and is considerably more explicit than any other courtesy work published in England between 1690 and 1760. This anomalous quality may be partly explained by the attitude of its translator. He suggests first, that it may be used as an extraordinary measure to "shame" those who are so "degenerate" that no other method succeeds,[2] second, that he regards it as a "Joke",[3] and third, that his intended readership includes "unlearned" people in manual trades[4] - a readership much further down the social scale than the norm at this time. The Polish work was De Optimo Senatore of 1568 by Laurentius Grimaldus Goslicius, translated in 1733 as The Accomplished Senator.[5] It is very largely a treatise on the art of politics, and only deals in passing with manners - notably such typically Renaissance concerns as the display of magnificence, magnanimity,[6] and gravity[7] and the maintenance of due precedence.[8] Its translator explicitly dismisses many of of the remarks on these subjects as "Minutenesses and Points of lesser Consequence", unworthy of the attention of his readers.[9]

The three Spanish works are by Baltasar Gracián y Morales, and consist of El Héroe, El Discreto, and Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia.

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1 Compare with Erasmus, De Civilitate (1530).

2 Grobianus, tr. R. Bull (1739), Translator's Preface, pp.viii-ix.

3 Ibid., pp. v-vi.

4 Ibid., p. xii.

5 Tr. by W. Oldisworth, with anr. issue c. 1740. Translated earlier as The Counsellor (1598), and A Commonwealth of Good Counsaile (1607): W.J. Stankiewicz, The Accomplished Senator of Laurentius Goslicius (1946), p.11.

6 Goslicius, The Accomplished Senator (1739), pp.250-6, 268-70, 314.

7 Ibid., pp.247-8, 305-8.

8 Ibid., pp. 326-8.

9 Ibid., p. xxii.

They originally appeared between 1637 and 1647, and were published in English translation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[1] The Héroe describes the qualities of the ideal aristocrat and statesman,[2] and gives strong emphasis to themes of self-perfection, excellence, and the acquiring of the indefinable je ne sais quoi.[3] The Oráculo is a collection of three hundred maxims of worldly wisdom for the courtier,[4] and gives little explicit attention to manners. The Discreto is the most interesting of the three because of the remarks of its eighteenth-century translator, Thomas Salkeld. The work itself contains an ideal of self-perfection and superiority to the average man which is very similar to that in the aristocratic Héroe.[5] Salkeld praises this ideal and argues that his readers should take it as a model for their imitation.[6] But the readers to whom he explicitly directs the work are not only aristocrats and courtiers, but "Men of Parts in all Stations".[7] Salkeld's expansion of his readership is one concrete example of an aristocratic ideal of manners being held up as a model to social inferiors: in this specific case there was no 'middle-class' rejection of aristocratic values.

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1 The Héroe in 1661 and again in 1726, the Discreto in 1730, and the Oráculo in 1685 (repr. 1694), repr. revised 1702: see below Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Gracián', for full details.

2 Gracián, The Héro (tr. 1726), ch.1, p.23 and translator's preface, p.vi.

3 Ibid., chapters 6, 12, 13, 16. The 'je ne sais quoi' was termed 'el despejo' in Spanish. For a succinct discussion of it, see Gracián, Oráculo, tr. by R. Savage as The Art of Prudence (1702, 2nd edn. 1705), pp.128-31. For a suggestion that Gracián borrowed the concept from the French, see A. Coster, 'Baltasar Gracián', Revue Hispanique, xxix (1913), 461-5. Gracián's discussion of despejo is reprinted at length in The Polite Companion (Birmingham, 1749), i.152-4; other citations appear Ibid., i. pp.140, 151.

4 E.g. Gracián, Art of Prudence (1705 edn.), Maxims 3, 13, 26, 58, 83, 84, 88, 98, 111, 144, 181, 219, 222, 240.

5 Gracián, El Discreto, tr. by T. Salkeld as The Compleat Gentleman (1730), chapters 2, 4, 17, 24.

6 Ibid., translator's preface, p.A4.

7 Ibid., translator's preface, p.A4.

There are about two dozen English courtesy works from before 1690 which survived in subsequent editions into the 1690 to 1760 period: an 'overlap' which reflects the essential continuity of the genre. These works are a rather miscellaneous collection, but six main types may be discerned. The first type consists of conduct books with a heavy religious and moral emphasis, which give some attention to manners within this context. They specifically establish Christian ideals as the single primary touchstone of correct manners. In works aimed at the gentleman, of which there were two survivors,[1] the theme is the establishment of essential characteristics of gentility. Thus, Richard Allestree recommends that the gentleman should exhibit in his manners the Christian virtues of meekness, long-suffering, and forgiveness;[2] while Clement Ellis criticises the irreligious behaviour and manners of the fashionable gallant,[3] and concludes his portrait of the ideal gentleman by saying that, "in two words", the "true Gentleman... is a man and a Christian".[4] Another work of Allestree's, the Ladies Calling, was the only survivor after 1690 of similar manuals discussing the conduct of ladies. It did, however, have a considerably longer-lasting and more profound influence on the eighteenth-century English courtesy tradition than did either of the two works for gentlemen.[5] Allestree's discussion of manners in this work is almost solely concerned with the maintenance of female chastity through the exhibition by women of modesty in their

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1 R. Allestree, The Gentleman's Calling (1660, with post-1689 edns. of 1696 and 1705); C. Ellis, The Gentile Sinner (Oxford, 1660, with the only post-1689 edn. being the 7th of 1690).

2 R. Allestree, The Gentleman's Calling (1696 edn.), pp. 86, 98, 132.

3 C. Ellis, The Gentile Sinner (1679 edn.), pp. 9-47.

4 Ibid., pp. 177-8.

5 R. Allestree, The Ladies Calling (1667), with 7 post-1689 edns. from 1693 to 1727, compared with the joint total of three post-1689 edns. for the two works for gentlemen (above, previous note). It also had a great influence on English courtesy writers (see below, ch.5, pp. 267-8.

manners, and the maintenance of female submission to men through the display of meekness, both of which doctrines he supports by citing biblical authority.[1] A further work by Allestree, The Government of the Tongue, was aimed at a general readership, and discusses such conversational faults as boasting, detraction, and obscene speech within the (respective) moral and religious contexts of pride, evil-speaking, and blasphemy.[2] There were also two heavily religious moral conduct books for servants and apprentices which survived in editions after 1690: Nathaniel Crouch's The Apprentice's Companion (1681), and Richard Lucas's The Duty of Servants (1685).[3] Their discussion of manners is primarily concerned with the overt exhibition of deference by servants as a major means of preserving the social hierarchy ordained by God.[4]

The second type of work to survive in later editions after 1690 was the manual of advice, usually parental, on the general conduct of life. This is the largest category, containing eleven works ranging in time from Lord Burghley's Certaine Precepts or Directions (first published in 1617) to the Earl of Halifax's Advice to a Daughter of 1688.[5] Most of these had only a few eighteenth-century editions,

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1 Allestree, The Ladies Calling (1693 edn.), pp.1-31, 160-3, 170, 172-3 (modesty and chastity); pp.181-6, 191-2 (submission); pp.31-52 (meekness); biblical citations appear throughout, e.g. pp. 6, 9, 59.

2 R. Allestree, The Government of the Tongue (Oxford, 1674, 1693 edn.), pp.155-73, 39-61, 204-5, respectively.

3 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Crouch' and 'Lucas'.

4 For deference, see N. Crouch, The Apprentice's Companion (1693 edn.), pp. 6, 10, 13-14, 19-26, and R. Lucas, the Duty of Servants (1710 edn.), pp.6-7. For the God-ordained social hierarchy, see Crouch, Apprentice's Companion, pp. 2, 8, 165-6, and Lucas, Duty of Servants, pp. 47, 50.

5 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. Argyle; Britaine; Burghley; Compleat Servant Maid; Dare; Halifax; Monson; Osborne; Penton, Guardian's Instruction; Ralegh; Trenchfield. For a discussion of this type of writing as a genre, see W.L. Ustick, 'Advice to a Son: A type of Seventeenth-Century Conduct Book', Studies in Philology, xxix (1932), 409-41.

the major exception being Halifax's very popular and influential Advice.[1] They are very largely concerned with general rules of self-conduct in such matters as marriage, money and estate management, choice of friends, travel, and practice of the moral virtues, especially prudence.[2] For the most part, they deal only in passing with manners, the major exceptions being Caleb Trenchfield's A Cap of Gray Hairs for a Green Head (1671), which discusses some matters of dress, conversation, and courtship,[3] Josiah Dare's Councellor Manners (1673), whose discussion of manners is a condensation of della Casa's,[4] and Halifax's Advice, whose discussion of female manners follows Allestree's lead in focusing primarily on female modesty as a means of preserving chastity.[5]

The remaining four categories of works also deal with manners only on a limited scale, and thus may be dealt with very briefly. There were new editions of two treatises concerned with the education and upbringing of boys, which included short sections on such subjects as speech, dress, bashfulness, and the courtier's arts.[6] There were new editions of two short, cheaply-produced collections of prescriptions for manners,[7] with a style and content similar to those of Erasmus's

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1 For its editions, see below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Halifax'. For its influence, see e.g. its wholesale incorporation into Steele's Ladies Library (1714): G. Aitken, 'Steele's "Ladies Library"', The Athenaeum (5 July, 1884), pp.16-17; and references to it in the Spectator No.37, i.156, The Tatler, No.268, iv.363, and The Universal Spectator, March 8, 1740, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, x (1740), 115.

2 See e.g. J. Dare, Councellor Manners (1673), pp.59-156, or the full titles of F. Osborne, Advice... and A. Campbell, Marquis of Argyle, Instructions.... listed below, Bibliography, A.1.

3 Trenfield, Cap of Gray Hairs (5th edn., 1710), pp.25, 115-7.

4 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Dare'.

5 G. Savile, Marquis of Halifax, Advice (1688), pp.26, 28-31, 96, 114.

6 Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster 91570), repr. as The Schoolmaster, (1711, revised 1743); Obadiah Walker, Of Education, Especially of Young Gentlemen (1673, corrected and enlarged 1699). For the sections on manners, see Ascham (1743), pp.23-4, 46-8, 70, and Walker, (1699), pp.49-62, 213-34, 247-61.

7 W. Winstanley, The New Help to Discourse (1669, 5th edn. 1702); (J. Garretson), The School of Manners, or Rules for Children's Behaviour (1685), 4th edn., 1701).

De Civilitate, that is, lists of short, admonitory rules largely concerned with very basic control of bodily functions,[1] table manners,[2] and deference to superiors.[3] There were new editions of two collections of essays concerned with general philosophical enquiries about human nature and conduct, which discussed such questions of manners as the control of anger, dissimulation, ceremonies, and conversation.[4] Finally, there were new editions of two short treatises satirising the manners of fashionable society, most notably the dress and deportment of the male fop.[5]

In comparison with the Italian Renaissance courtesy tradition, two features are noticeable about all these English works which were reissued after 1690. First, there is a lack of any comprehensive theoretical treatment of the subject of manners. Second, manners are usually allotted only a very subordinate position in the discussions, which are primarily concerned with religious and moral issues. This use of manners by the conduct books as a means of embodying religious and moral precepts was without doubt an important new development, and one which set a pattern followed to a degree in the eighteenth century.[6] However, apart from this theme, these works

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1 Winstanley, Discourse (1702 edn.), pp.210-12, 216; Garretson, School of Manners (1701 edn.), pp.38-9.

2 Winstanley, Discourse, pp.221-3; Garretson, School of Manners, pp.32-8.

3 Winstanley, Discourse, pp.213-20; Garretson, School of Manners, pp.28, 40-1, 43, 47, 50, 53, 58-9.

4 Sir Francis Bacon, The Essays, or Counsels Civil and Moral (1597, anr. edn. 1696): 'Of Anger', pp.150-2; 'Of Ceremonies and Respects', pp.138-40; 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation', pp.12-15; his remarks on boldness are cited in Tatler No.168, iii.285; Timothy Nourse, Discourse upon the Nature and Faculties of Man (1686, anr. edn. 1697): 'Of Anger and Mildness', pp.147-59; 'Of Conversation', pp.277-95.

5 (R. Ames), Sylvia's Revenge (1688, 2nd edn. 1697, anr. 1709), for fops see espec. 1697 edn. pp.19-21; A Discourse of Auxiliary Beauty or Artificial Handsomeness (1656, anr. edn. 1692).

6 See below, chs. 5, 6, pp. 265-8, 281, 289.

make no important theoretical contribution to the major European courtesy tradition. It is impossible here to say whether these works are representative of seventeenth-century English courtesy theory as a whole. What they do reveal is that, with the exception of the religious and moral theme, the legacy of seventeenth-century English courtesy literature to the eighteenth century was a very limited one.

Far more influential in eighteenth-century England was the courtesy tradition of seventeenth-century France. France shared with England the same Renaissance inheritance of the theory of manners,[1] but the particular circumstances of French noble society caused the introduction of certain distinctive elements. The crucial influence in the French situation was the conversational salons run by French noblewomen from the 1610s through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[2] The salons played a considerable role in refining the habits and tastes of French aristocratic society.[3] Among many topics which they discussed, that of the ideal aristocratic behaviour recurred frequently, and it was these repeated discussions which resulted, by about the 1660s, in the realisation of the major ideal of honnêteté.

The honnête homme - the living embodiment of honnêteté - was a work of nature and art requiring long and assiduous cultivation.[4] He was preferably of high birth, and he possessed all the virtues of honour, courage, generosity, compassion, and intelligence.[5] Religious and moral virtues, in contrast with the English ideal, were given little or no emphasis.[6] Perhaps because of the very social nature of the

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1 For the influence of Erasmus, della Casa, Guazzo, and Castiglione in France, see Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp.154-61, 308, 329, and A. Franklin, La Civilité, l'étiquette, la mode, le bon ton du XIIIe au XIXe siècle (Paris, 1908), i. xxii.

2 D. Maland, Culture and Society in Seventeenth Century France (1970), p.46; Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp.47, 136-7, 143.

3 Maland, Culture and Society, pp.45-50; Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp.45-61, 124, 143, 148.

4 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp. 467, 722.

5 Ibid., pp.722-4, 892-900.

6 Ibid., pp. 825, 892.

salons, one of the most important of the honnête homme's characteristics was a disposition towards sociability and a thorough knowledge of the art of pleasing others.[1] Great stress was laid on the graces of behaviour: self-confidence, ease of manner, personal refinement and delicacy. As might be expected from an environment whose raison d'être was conversation, it was considered vital for the honnête homme to possess this art to a high degree, and whole books were written on the subject,[2] criticising dullness and pedantry, and stressing the importance of wit and purity of language.[3] Considerable attention was given to the art of gallantry towards women, who presided over the majority of the salons.[4] Because of this leadership by women, the salon movement in general gave them an important social role as hostesses and arbiters of taste. The concept of honnêteté developed within this context, and it became a repeated theme of French courtesy literature that the society of women was essential to give the final polish to the aspiring honnête homme.[5]

Although the theorists could readily enumerate the many ingredients which together made up the honnête homme, it was their complementary existence as a totality which was crucial,[6] and what caused difficulty was that the whole was greater than the sum of the parts. Hence evolved

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1 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, p.778.

2 E.g. P. Ortigue, L'Art de plaire dans la conversation (Paris, 1688), and Abbé Bellegarde, Modèles de conversations pour les personnes polies (Paris, 1690).

3 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp.126, 131, 578, 592, 807-17.

4 Maland, Culture and Society, pp. 45-60.

5 E.g. by Mlle. de Scudéry and Jacques de Callières, for whom see Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp. 672, 725; also by Archbishop Fénélon, Traité de l'éducation des filles (Paris, 1687), tr. by G. Hickes as Instructions for the Education of a Daughter (1707), p.5, and the Chévalier de Méré, Conversations... (Paris, 1668), tr. as Conversations written in French... (1672), p.28.

6 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp. 467, 893.

the highest defining characteristic of the honnête homme: the je ne sais quoi. Described by Père Bouhours as "un charme & un air", "un agrément qui anime la beauté & les autres perfections naturelles...",[1] the je ne sais quoi was represented by Mlle. de Scudery as a key ingredient of the air galant essential to the honnête homme;

> ... ce tour galant & naturel, qui sçait mettre je ne sçay quoy qui plaist, aux choses les moins capables de plaire: & qui mesle dans les entretiens les plus communs, vn charme secret qui satisfait & qui diuertit: Enfin ce je ne sçay quoy galant, qui est respandu en toute la personne qui le possede, soit en son esprit, en ses paroles, en ses actions ou mesmes en ses habillemens, est ce qui acheue [achève] les honnestes gens, ce qui les rend aimables, & ce qui les fait aimer.[2]

There is a sense of superiority intrinsic in this ideal of personal perfection: it allows no room either for arguments of 'different but equal' or for any real gradation - one was either an honnête homme, or one was not. The concept of honnêteté was a very aristocratic one and contained a strong concern for the maintenance of sharp distinctions of social rank through manners.[3] Vulgarity and coarseness tended to be associated with people of a low social rank, and a particular disdain was repeatedly expressed for things seen as bourgeois.[4]

Because of the constant self-assessment needed to achieve honnêteté, the ideal itself had built into it a high degree of self-consciousness.[5]

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1 Père Dominique Bouhours, Les entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène (Paris, 1671, edn. Paris, 1748), pp.314-5 (on which pages the complete extended definition may be found); this is cited at length in English in The Polite Companion (Birmingham, 1749), i.152. See further for the je ne sais quoi, Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp. 673-4, 745, 770-1.

2 Mlle. de Scudéry, Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus (Paris, 1650-4), x.891-892.

3 Manifested espec. in the development of detailed rules of etiquette at the French court: H. Brocher, A la cour de Louis XIV: le rang et l'étiquette dans l'ancien régime (Paris, 1934), throughout but espec. ch.2, and A. Salomon, In Praise of Enlightenment: Essays in the History of Ideas (Cleveland, 1962), pp.71-8.

4 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp.147-8, 569; Fénélon, Education of a Daughter (tr. 1707), pp.193-5; Duc de la Rochefoucauld, Réflexions... (Paris, 1665), tr. as Moral Maxims and Reflections (1694), Maxim cccxciii, p.95.

5 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, p.760.

Taken to an extreme, this characteristic became a feature of préciosité, that is, the pursuit of eccentricity and ostentation for their own sake, and a resulting degeneration into affection and artificiality.[1] This mutation was important, not so much to the theory of honnêteté, as to the everyday practice of manners in France, and English attitudes towards that practice.

By the mid-seventeenth century all these various themes combined to make up the concept of honnêteté, but, more than any individual idea, it was the completeness and high degree of sophistication of the whole which were important. They meant that when English writers met with the concept, they were presented with a fully worked out ideal to or from which nothing could be added or subtracted.

The degree of influence of French courtesy ideas on the English tradition may be judged from the number of contemporary English translations of French works, the number of their subsequent editions, and the extent to which French ideas were incorporated into English courtesy works. While there were English translations of French courtesy works in the early seventeenth century,[2] there was a particularly strong influx of these works into England beginning in 1670 and continuing into the first decade of the eighteenth century. Between 1670 and 1710, 22 different French courtesy works were translated into English, with a joint total of 27 further editions within the same time span.[3]

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1 Magendie, La politesse mondaine, pp. 131, 569, 574.

2 Including of such important works as Nicholas Faret's L'Honneste homme (1632?), tr. as The Honest Man: or, the art to please in Court (1632); Eustache du Réfuge's Traicte de la court (1615?), tr. as A Treatise of the Court (1622), and J. Du Bosc, L'Honneste femme (Paris, 1632), tr. as The Compleat Woman (1639).

3 Fifteen of these works appear below, Bibliography A1, s.v.: Bellegarde (twice); Courtin; Fénélon; Goussault; La Bruyère; La Rochefoucauld; Le Noble de Tennelière; Méré; Ortigue; Polite Gentleman; Pringy; Reflections on our Common Failings; Rémond des Cours; Trotti de la Chetardie. The other seven appear below, Bibliography A2, s.v.: 'C., S.'; Callieres; La Barre; Moulin; Nicole; Scudery; Trotti de la Chetardie.

These numbers compare with an average output of English courtesy works of between 15 and 30 per decade. The French books in number alone thus made up a significant proportion of courtesy works available in English at this time. After 1710, the number of French translations and editions declined sharply, but some new translations continued to appear throughout the next half-century, and they tended to be important examples of the French tradition.[1] The French works which were translated into English brought to England all the major themes of honnêteté: the preference for high birth,[2] the stress on inner qualities[3] but a general lack of concern for religious and moral ones,[4] the stress on sociability and the art of pleasing,[5] especially in

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1 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v.: Ancourt; Bosc; Deslandes; Faret; Lambert; Nivelon; Pompadour; Rameau; Ramsay; Toussaint.

2 Faret, L'Honneste homme, tr. The Art of Pleasing at Court (Birmingham, 1754), pp.4-5; Abbé Bellegarde, Réflexions sur le ridicule (Paris, 1696), tr. as Reflexions upon Ridicule (1706), pp. 94, 108-9, 211-13.

3 Faret, Art of Pleasing, p.8; Anne Thérèse, Marquise de Lambert, Avis d'une mère à son fils, et à sa fille (Paris, 1728), tr. by Mr Rowell, The Marchioness de Lambert's Letters to her Son and Daughter... (1749), pp. 79-82, 91-3.

4 E.g. L'Abbé d'Ancourt, The Lady's Preceptor (tr. 1743, 3rd édn., 1745), contains hardly any discussion of these issues: see List of Contents, pp. A3-A4v; nor does P. Ortigue, The Art of Pleasing in Conversation (tr. 1691), throughout; compare also Lambert, Letters to her Son and Daughter... (1749), pp.106-13 (to her daughter on the importance of chastity), with the much greater stress on chastity in English works: see below, ch. 5, pp.270-4, a major exception, however, is F. Toussaint, Les Moeurs (Paris, 1748), tr. as Manners (1749), which is very largely a moral treatise with a strong religious element and only minor courtesy ones: (1749 edn.), index, pp. K 10v-L 2v.

5 Abbé Bellegarde, Réflexions sur la politeness des moeurs... (Paris, 1701), tr. as Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners... (1707), pp.10, 158-83; Lambert, Letters to her Son and Daughter (1749), pp. 70, 163-4.

conversation,[1] and especially to women,[2] the emphasis on self-confident ease[3] and personal refinement,[4] the necessity of female company to polish manners,[5] the *je ne sais quoi*,[6] the disdain for bourgeois behaviour,[7] the general stress on maintaining social rank,[8] and the extreme self-consciousness.[9]

French discussions of manners were not only current in England at this time in the form of translations; they were also known, praised and extensively copied by English courtesy writers. Such was the case with the Abbé Bellegarde's treatise of 1696, *Réflexions sur le ridicule et les moyens de l'éviter*. This had a very widespread presence both in France and England, appearing in ten French editions by 1712, and being translated into English in 1706, with five further

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1 Ortigue, *The Art of Pleasing in Conversation*, title and throughout, espec. pp.29-30, 33, 44, 191-266; Faret, *Art of Pleasing*, pp. 77, 91, 93, 97; Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, pp. 16, 21, 55-8, 88, 94, 121, 162, 195, 311-33; d'Ancourt, *Lady's Preceptor*, pp.10-22; A. Deslandes, *The Art of Being Easy at all Times* (tr. 1724), pp.111-2; *Reflections on our Common Failings* (tr. 1691), pp.19-29, 141-70, 250-5.

2 Faret, *Art of Pleasing*, pp.115-23; Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, pp. 69, 72-3.

3 Faret, *Art of Pleasing*, pp. 17-18.

4 Deslandes, *Art of Being Easy at all Times*, pp. 16-7; A.M. Ramsay, *A Plan of Education for a Young Prince* (tr. 1732), p.30.

5 Marquise de Lambert, *Avis d'une mère à son fils...* (Paris, 1728), tr. as *Advice from a Mother to her Son and Daughter* (1729), pp. 47-8; Fénélon, *Instructions for the Education of a Daughter*, p.5; Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon the Politeness of Manners*, p.3.

6 *E.g.* Père Bouhours, see above, p. 79, n.1.

7 *E.g.* the passages by Fénélon and La Rochefoucauld cited above, p. 79 n. 4; Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, pp.208-16; *Reflections on our Common Failings* (1691), pp.132-3.

8 Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, pp. 108, 157, 211-13, 247, 347; Ortigue, *Art of Pleasing in Conversation*, pp.21-3, 180-1, 186-8; *The True Conduct of Persons of Quality* (tr. 1692), p.124.

9 This was especially manifested in a fear of being ridiculed: see Bellegarde, *Réflexions sur le ridicule et les moyens de l'éviter* (1696), tr. as *Reflexions upon Ridicule; or, What it is that makes a Man ridiculous; and the Means to avoid it* (1706), titles, and La Rochefoucauld, *Moral Maxims and Reflections* (tr. 1694), maxims cxxxv, cccxi, cccxxvi, pp. 37, 80, 83.

complete editions and two separate sections of the work appearing in English by 1764.[1] Writing in The Covent-Garden Journal in 1752, Henry Fielding "earnestly" recommended Bellegarde's work to his readers[2] and approvingly cited Bellegarde's views on ill breeding.[3] Eliza Haywood quoted Bellegarde's discussion of raillery in conversation at length in The Female Spectator of 1745.[4] Thomas Brown referred to the Réflexions sur le ridicule in 1701, five years before the French text was translated into English.[5] One English reader of Bellegarde's book (although not a courtesy writer) was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who refers to it in a letter of 1710.[6] Another was the Scot Adam Petrie, who incorporated precepts by Bellegarde into his own Rules of Good Deportment of 1720.[7] For the same compilation, Petrie also copied extensively from another important French work, Antoine de Courtin's Nouveau traité de la civilité of 1670, translated into English in 1671.[8] Altogether, he adopts at least eighty separate passages of specific rules for manners from Courtin's work, over half of which are concerned with the display of social rank through

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1 For the French edns., see the Bodleian and British Library catalogues; for the English edns., see below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Bellegarde'.

2 Fielding, Covent-Garden Journal, No.56, ii.67.

3 Ibid., No.55, ii.62, No. 56, ii.65.

4 The Female Spectator, (1744-6, 5th edn., 1755), iv.138-41, other citations from Bellegarde appear Ibid., ii.276, iii.50.

5 Thomas Brown, Laconics: or, New Maxims of State and Conversation (1701), Preface, p. A4.

6 The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, ed. R. Halsband (Oxford, 1965), i.45 (20 July, 1710).

7 A. Petrie, Rules of Good Deportment, or of Good Breeding (Edinburgh, 1720), repr. in his works (Edinburgh, 1877), i., preface to the reader, no page, (an acknowledgement of Bellegarde's work), and i. 81 (a paraphrase of Bellegarde, Reflexions upon Ridicule (1706), p.30).

8 Courtin's work went through 15 further French edns. by 1704: see Bodleian and British Library catalogues); it was translated as The Rules of Civility (1671), see further below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Courtin'.

manners,[1] a concern which, it has been argued, was given particular emphasis in the French tradition.

Another French courtesy work drawn upon by English writers was Archbishop Fénélon's Traité de l'éducation des filles of 1687. It was popular in both France and England, having at least four further French editions to 1753;[2] while its English translation of 1707 by Dr. George Hickes had six subsequent editions to 1753.[3] In his 1714 courtesy compilation The Ladies Library, Richard Steele directly incorporates about one-third to one-half of Fénélon's treatise, that is, much of his advice about childhood upbringing, and most of the section on manners and behaviour.[4] Steele sufficiently agreed with Fénélon's ideas not only to include them in The Ladies Library, but also to expand upon them in the same vein with remarks of his own. One example of this development is Fénélon's insistence on the importance of maintaining distinctions of social rank in dress, an argument considerably enlarged by Steele.[5] With regard to the influence of French courtesy ideas in England, it is worth pointing out that The Ladies Library itself appeared in five further editions to 1751,[6] thus further disseminating Fénélon's ideas. Significant extracts from Fénélon's treatise also appear in The Young Ladies Conduct of

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1 For this argument, see above, p. 79. For the similarities between the two works and the emphasis on social rank, compare Petrie, Rules of Good Deportment (1877 edn.), i.7-12, 15-18, 20, 22, 26-28, 44, 55, 57-8, 65-8, 73-4, 82-7, 91, 93, 96, 128, with Courtin, The Rules of Civility (1678 edn.), pp.20-1, 23-9, 32-4, 36-9, 41-3, 48-52, 111, 114-5, 117, 119, 121-4, 126-30, 132-4, 136-44, 146, 148, 163, 165-6.

2 See the Bodleian and British Library catalogues.

3 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Fénélon'. The translation is recommended to readers in Spectator No.95, i.405.

4 Aitken, 'Steele's "Ladies Library"', pp.16-17.

5 Fénélon, Education of a Daughter, pp. 192-5, and Steele, Ladies Library, i. 69-73.

6 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Steele, Ladies Library'.

1722 by the English dancing master John Essex. Essex makes use of Fénélon's same discussion of social rank and dress, although he condenses it far more, arguing that

> ... these Follies [of dress and novelty] ruin all Distinction of Conditions or Rank, and break in upon the Rules of good Manners, which, by degrees, ruins Families, and makes some Ladies commit things very low and mean, to the loss of their Honour and Virtue.[1]

Essex is definitely using Fénélon rather than Steele as his source, because the first half of this passage occurs almost verbatim in Hickes' translation of 1707,[2] but is left out of the Ladies Library by Steele. Other themes borrowed by Essex from Fénélon include the extreme degree of modesty proper to young ladies, a criticism of the fashionable disdain for housekeeping, warnings against excessive delicacy, and advice on avoiding haughtiness to servants.[3]

Yet another French work to influence the English courtesy tradition was the Duc de la Rochefoucauld's Réflexions ou sentences et maxims morales of 1665, translated in 1694 as Moral Maxims and Reflections, again, a work with many editions in both French and English.[4] It was cited by Stephen Philpot,[5] praised for its perceptiveness by by Thomas Brown,[6] and cited in the Spectator.[7] La Rochefoucauld's presence in the English courtesy tradition is most evident in Abel Boyer's Characters of the Virtues and Vices of the Age of 1695. Boyer's work is a collection of maxims, numbering about 65 in this first

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1 J. Essex, The Young Ladies Conduct (1722), p.xii.

2 Fénélon, Education of a Daughter, pp. 192-5.

3 Compare Essex, Young Ladies Conduct, pp. xi, xv-xvi, xxxiv-xxxix with Fénélon, Education of a Daughter, pp.208-227. Fénélon's book is also recommended by Thomas Marriott, Female Conduct (1759), pp.78-9.

4 For the French edns., see Bodleian and British Library catalogues; for the English edns., see below, Bibliography A1, s.v.. 'La Rochefoucauld'.

5 S. Philpot, An Essay on the Advantage of a Polite Education (1747), p.69.

6 T. Brown, Laconics, p.A4-A4^{v}.

7 Spectator No.243, ii. 443-4, No.566, iv.534.

version of 1695. Fourteen of these are directly attributable to La Rochefoucauld.[1] One of these reappears almost word for word in a collection of precepts compiled by the Kent physician, Thomas Fuller.[2] Boyer's work is particularly interesting because of the strong French influence in it. In the 1695 Characters, he explicitly mentions using French authors, listing besides La Rochefoucauld, Montaigne, Pascal, St Evrèmont, Bouhours, and La Bruyère. He distinguishes between the maxims of French and English writers by asterisks. A rough calculation reveals that three-quarters of the book is French. The sections which are particularly French discuss conversation, society and civility; gesture and countenance; nobility and gentility; raillery and laughter; and silence, speaking and eloquence.[3] This bias clearly follows the themes of conversation, behaviour, and social rank which were so marked in the French theory of honnêteté. It is one concrete example of the degree of the debt owed by the English courtesy tradition to French theorists on these subjects.

One of the other French writers mentioned by Boyer, La Bruyère, was responsible for a very popular treatise. This was his Caractères de Théophraste, traduit du grec, avec les caractères ou les moeurs de ce siècle of 1688. The English translation of 1694 appeared in

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1 Compare La Rochefoucauld, Moral Maxims (1694) with Boyer, Characters (1695): La Rochefoucauld, part 1, maxims ccxli, cclvi, cclxi, cccxlii, pp.65, 68, 69, 86, appear respectively in Boyer pp.15, 86, 25, 156; part 2, maxim xcvi, p.124, appears in Boyer, p.161; part 3, maxims xxii, xxxii, lii, liii, lxviii, lxxii, pp.147, 151, 156 (two), 162, 163, appear in Boyer, pp.26-7, 57, 66, 127, 163 (two); part 4, maxims lxxxii, lxxxiv, lxxxv, pp.193-4, appear in Boyer, pp.163-4 (three).

2 La Rochefoucauld, Maxims, part 3, no.xxii, p.147; Boyer, Characters, pp.26-7; T. Fuller, Introductio ad Prudentiam (1725), part 2 (1727), no.2814, p.128.

3 Forty-three out of the total 50 maxims in these sections are French: Boyer, Characters, pp.25-9, 86-7, 163-5, 176-7, 191-3.

at least six editions by 1713.[1] La Bruyère's work appears in the Tatler and Spectator both in the form of direct references and quotations and also in paraphrases and imitations of style.[2] It is also cited by other courtesy writers[3] and appears in minor works which contain courtesy elements.[4] It is praised by Samuel Johnson as a worthy successor to della Casa's and Castiglione's treatises.[5]

Two very important English courtesy writers little mentioned so far both had a significant interest in French courtesy literature. John Locke owned upward of forty courtesy books, among them important examples from the classical, Renaissance, English and French traditions. Examples from the last category include the works already discussed by Bellegarde, Fénélon, La Bruyère, La Rochefoucauld, Ortigue, du Réfuge (all in French), and Courtin (in English).[6] The Earl of Chesterfield's letters to his son and godson reveal a thorough personal knowledge of French courtesy literature, and a belief that such works could be of positive benefit in learning the art of politeness. He refers in his letters to La Bruyère's Caractères,[7]

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1 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'La Bruyère'.

2 M. Turner, 'The influence of La Bruyère on the 'Tatler' and the 'Spectator'', Modern Language Review, xlviii (1953), 10-16.

3 Steele, Ladies Library, i.24; T. Brown, Laconics, p.A4.

4 E.g. Mrs. Crackenthorpe, The Female Tatler (1709), for which see P.B. Anderson, 'La Bruyère and Mrs. Crackenthorpe's Female Tatler', P.M.L.A., lii (1937), 100-3; The Polite Companion, pp.128-34, 139-40.

5 S. Johnson, 'Life of Addison', pp.92-3, also 95.

6 J. Harrison and P. Laslett, The Library of John Locke (Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications, New Series, xiii, Oxford 1965), pp.68-248.

7 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1207-8; iv.1743.

François Toussaint's work on mores, Les Moeurs,[1] and Père Bouhour's L'Art de bien penser.[2] On different occasions, he recommends that his son should read La Rochefoucauld's maxims,[3] the Marquise de Lambert's Avis d'une mère à son fils (inserting in his letter several quotations from the book),[4] and Ortigue's L'Art de plaire dans la conversation;[5] he further tells his godson to read the Abbé Trublet's treatise on the art of conversation.[6] Moreover, in discussing the art of politeness, he uses French terms such as honnêteté[7] and je ne sais quoi,[8] and insists on the absolute necessity of a Parisian sojourn to polish the manners.[9] This French bias in Chesterfield's views on manners could well have been a product of his own stay in Paris in 1714 at the age of nineteen.[10]

These examples give an indication of the considerable debt owed by English courtesy writers to their French predecessors. Steele, Essex, and Chesterfield in particular were central figures in the eighteenth-century English courtesy tradition. They borrowed both general assumptions and specific rules for manners, especially from those areas of paramount French concern, such as the display of social rank and the art of conversation. The cases which have been cited are only those in which the debt is unmistakeable, and there could well be many more instances of derivation which are less obviously apparent. The French influences which can be traced share two striking

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1212-3.

2 Ibid., iv. 1507.

3 Ibid., iv. 1207-8; iv. 1743.

4 Ibid., iv. 1743-6.

5 Ibid., iii. 775, 29 Sept. O.S. 1746 (though he mistakenly attributes it to Bellegarde).

6 Ibid., vi. 2896-7; vi. 2901; vi. 2903.

7 Ibid., ii. 363-4.

8 Ibid., ii. 599; iv. 1425.

9 Ibid., ii. 1061.

10 B. Dobrée, 'Chesterfield and France', English Miscellany (Rome), ii. (1951), 107.

characteristics. The first is that the French theories were accepted so completely and uncritically into English, whole sections of French books being copied almost verbatim. The second is the considerable length of time which the influence of the French works lasted. Fénélon's ideas were considered valid by Steele and Essex 27 and 35 years after they were first written, and the time lengths are of a similar order for Bellegarde, La Rochefoucauld, and La Bruyère. The time lag for Chesterfield's recommendations was even longer: he advised his son to read Ortigue's treatise 58 years after it was written.[1] Moreover, the influence of these French works was prolonged further once they had entered the English courtesy tradition through subsequent editions of and derivations from the English works. The publication of Chesterfield's letters in 1774, for instance, and their subsequent widespread dissemination, prolonged seventeenth-century French ideas on manners well into the nineteenth century.[2] As far as English courtesy writers were concerned, it would appear they believed that the French works contained truths general enough not to become outdated, and that English society continued to be in need of them.

In marked contrast to this large-scale adoption of French theories, however, English courtesy writers repeatedly criticised the actual practice of French manners by Englishmen. The belief that English fashionable dress for both men and women closely imitated French styles is expressed throughout this period both in the periodicals and by individual courtesy writers.[3] Fashionable English deportment was also

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1 Compare n.5, p.88 with below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Ortigue'.

2 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Chesterfield'; and British Library catalogue.

3 Spectator No.45, i.192, No.277, ii. 577-9; Guardian No.149, p.295; Connoisseur No.53, ii.37; World, No.75, p.271; D. Defoe, The Complete English Tradesman (1726), ii. part 2, p.154; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp. xi-xii, 424; Marriott, Female Conduct, p.117; J. Dennis, An Essay upon Publick Spirit (1711), in his Select Works (1718), i. 413-4, 421-2; (Dr John Harris), A Treatise upon the Modes (1715), pp. 48, 54; The Baboon A-la-Mode: A Satyr against the French (1704), p.4. See similarly: A. Buck, Dress in Eighteenth-Century England (1979), pp.33-6.

characterised as following French patterns, especially the gait, the shoulder shrug, and certain facial expressions.[1] Fashionable English speech was depicted as being heavily interlarded with French words and expressions.[2]

English courtesy writers satirised such imitations by their countrymen of the French as artificial affectations,[3] and closely associated them with the figure of the fashionable fop.[4] French vivacity in conversation was seen as excessive,[5] especially when adopted by English women because it gave them a forwardness incompatible with proper modesty.[6] The French method of compliment and salutation was strongly criticised as dissimulation and hypocrisy, which, imported, had replaced "The old English Plainness and Sincerity".[7] The author of The Baboon A-la-Mode asserted:

> 'Twas from the French we learnt that Noble Art,
> That makes the Tongue to contradict the Heart.
> One tells me, he's my Servant to Command,
> Who the same moment wishes I were hang'd:
> Another hopes to see me in my Grave,
> Yet swears he is my most Obedient Slave.[8]

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1 For manners in general, see Spectator, No.103, i.430-1, No.198, ii.276; World, No.75, p.271; Connoisseur, No.42, p.222; Marriott, Female Conduct, pp.116-8; for the gait, see S. Penton, New Instructions to the Guardian (1694), p.106; Harris, Treatise upon the Modes, p.11; for the shrug, see Baboon A-la-Mode, p.3; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.420; for the grimace, see Baboon A-la-Mode, p.3; for the general influence of French treatises on deportment in England, see below, ch.4, pp. 171-2.

2 Baboon A-la-Mode, p.10; World, No.18, p.45; Connoisseur, No.42, i. 222-3; J. Evelyn, The Fop-Dictionary (1690), throughout; T. Brown, Amusements Serious and Comical (1700), pp.122-3.

3 World, No. 18, p.45; Brown, Amusements, pp.122-3.

4 Connoisseur, No.42, i.222-3; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.420; Penton, New Instructions to the Guardian, p.106.

5 Constable, Conversation, pp. 89-90.

6 Spectator, No.45, i.193; No.435, iv.29; Connoisseur, No.4, i. 21-2; Marriott, Female Conduct, p.115.

7 Archbishop John Tillotson, 'On Sincerity towards God and Man' sermon preached 29 July, 1694, and printed as Sermon 1 in The Works of the Most Reverend Dr John Tillotson... (1712), i.5, and reprinted in Spectator, No.103, i.430-2.

8 Baboon A-la-Mode, p.11.

In addition to criticising the adoption of certain specific French behaviour patterns as contrary to English ideals of manners, courtesy writers also attacked the importation of French manners in general on nationalistic grounds, often in terms indicating strong outrage and resentment. Three arguments are recurrent: moral, economic, and political. Writers hearkened back to an ideal English past (situated by John Dennis at the beginning of the Tudor age)[1] when the English people were religious, virtuous, generous, temperate, hospitable, and contemptuous of luxury and effeminacy.[2] The importation of French fashions and manners, however, had nearly destroyed "all our noble ancient great way of Living",[3] bringing a decline in piety and virtue[4] and a rise in luxury and effeminacy.[5] The rapidly changing French fashions in dress ruined young men of property because of their expense,[6] and caused the flow out of England of "vast Sums of Money", which would be better spent to improve trade within England.[7] A patriotic political argument was made by several writers. In 1696, Viscount Shannon questioned the political sympathies of the followers of French fashion, warning that "forrein food" might "breed forrein blood in them".[8] In 1711, John Dennis singled out the imitation of French manners in England as indicating too great a deference and servility to the original than was consistent with an independent nation, arguing that:

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1 Dennis, Publick Spirit, p. 414.

2 Ibid., pp. 414-8, also Marriott, Female Conduct, pp.115-8.

3 Viscount Shannon, Discourses Useful for the Vain Modish Ladies and their Gallants (1696), p.143.

4 Ibid., p.145.

5 Dennis, Publick Spirit, pp. 419-22.

6 Shannon, Discourses, pp. 148-9.

7 Harris, Treatise upon the Modes, p.3.

8 Shannon, Discourses, p. 147. See also Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.424: "Who will not think...our Hearts are French, as well as our Cloaths?".

> Since...Publick Spirit flows from the Love of one's Country; and to love one's Country, is to love the Manners of it; it is manifest, that we can have very little Publick Spirit among us: for we have no Manners of our own to love....[1]

In 1759, John Brown argued that to adopt French manners was to lick the hand of the enemy and to set England on the path to ruin.[2] These statements were all made during periods of war with France, and, although the connection is not made explicit, it is highly probable that the hostilities were a strong motivation behind such nationalistic assertions.[3]

The attitude of the English courtesy writers towards French manners is characterised by a certain inconsistency. On the one hand, they adopt and propagate French theories of manners; praise France as the source of good breeding, recommend that their readers adopt fashionable dress,[4] and argue that a thorough mastery of the French language is essential to be considered well bred in England.[5] On

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1 Dennis, Publick Spirit, p.422.

2 John Brown, An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times (1759), pp.144-5.

3 The wars were credited by courtesy writers with the temporary lessening of French fashions, especially in dress, in England: Addison in Spectator No.45, i.192, Spectator No.277, ii.577, Harris, Treatise upon the Modes, pp.39-40. D.C. Coleman notes that between 1689 and 1713, the import of French goods was either prohibited or heavily taxed: D.C. Coleman, 'Politics and Economics in the Age of Anne: the Case of the Anglo-French Trade Treaty of 1713', in Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England: Essays presented to F.J. Fisher, ed. D.C. Coleman and A.H. John, (1976), pp.187-211. T.S. Ashton, An Economic History of England: The Eighteenth Century (1955), p.155 notes the existence of Anti-Gallican societies to discourage the wearing of French clothes and the drinking of claret.

4 See below, ch. 4, pp. 154-5.

5 Dr George Hickes as an added comment to his translation of Fénélon, Education of a Daughter (1707), p.243: this comment is not in the original, see the translation in H.C. Barnard, Fénélon on Education, (Cambridge, 1966), p.86; The Polite Lady (1760), p.27; Chesterfield, Letters vi.2430. Courtesy writers who actively advocated the learning of French by their readers included Daniel Defoe, An Essay Upon Projects (1697), p.292, John Costeker, The Fine Gentleman (1732), pp.18-9, and Chesterfield, who instructed both his son and godson in French: Letters, i.318-46; vi.2407.

continued...

the other hand they express dislike when these manners are displayed in everyday life. To a point, this inconsistency could be symptomatic of different strands of opinion within the courtesy tradition, but yet the two views are sometimes manifested by the same writer. Thus William Darrell attacks the following of French fashions in dress in England as dangerously unpatriotic, yet four pages later recommends that the young gentleman should visit Paris, asserting that "There is not, perchance, a City in the World better stock'd with Men of Parts and Polite Behaviour".[1] Richard Steele similarly incorporates the work of a number of French courtesy writers into his own writings,[2] yet can reprint in the Spectator an attack on the hypocrisy of French compliments, and assert: "I do not know that I ever read anything that pleased me more."[3] This ambivalence is neither confronted nor resolved in the courtesy literature.

In eighteenth-century England, a concept of manners which was essentially aristocratic in origin was adopted from the French tradition by English theorists on a large scale. This conclusion throws some doubt on two important contentions made by later writers on the subject. The first of these is the nineteenth-century belief that the concept of the gentleman was quintessentially English and intrinsically superior to the ideals of other nations. Thus Gerard Manley Hopkins could assert: "if the English race had done nothing else, yet if they left the world the notion of a gentleman, they would have done a great service to mankind."[4] Either this

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continued from p. 92

Another private example is that of William Pitt, Lord Chatham, who told his nephew that to speak and write French correctly was "a matter of the utmost and indispensable use to you, if you would make any figure in the great world": Correspondence of William Pitt, Lord Chatham (1838-40), i.84, 3 Feb. 1754.

1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp. 424, 428.

2 Above, pp. 84, 85, 87.

3 The reprint is from Archbishop Tillotson, see above, p. 90, n. 7

4 The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, ed. C.C. Abbott (1935), p.176 (3 Feb. 1883). Very similar views appear in A.S. Palmer, The Perfect Gentleman (1892) pp. iii-iv, 44-8, 51, 123-9, 307-8.

contention is substantially incorrect, or there occurred somewhere between the first half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth a naturalisation and transformation of these French ideas which was so complete as to render their origin unrecognisable. The second contention which is drawn into question is that repeatedly made by modern writers on English literature that the eighteenth-century ideal of the gentleman, particularly, though not exclusively, as it was expressed in the Spectator, was essentially the product of 'middle-class' thinking and was a weapon of the middle class in their struggle to establish their identity vis-à-vis the gentry and aristocracy.[1] This argument would not appear to be supported by the evidence of the French presence within the English courtesy tradition.

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1 See above, ch. 1, p. 14.

CHAPTER 3

THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH PERSPECTIVE: GENERAL THEORIES AND PRINCIPLES OF MANNERS

Such, then, were the varied, and occasionally conflicting patterns of thought concerning manners which were established by previous generations of writers and inherited by the eighteenth-century English courtesy theorists. As a result of this survey, there emerge two key questions. Did the English writers produce a coherent synthesis of these inherited views? What features, if any, did they add which were peculiar to their own time and place? The first step towards answering these questions is to look at the fundamental theories and principles of manners which were expressed in the English courtesy literature produced between 1690 and 1760.

i. Decorum

The foundation stone of eighteenth-century English courtesy theory was the ideal of decorum.[1] Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers adopted the concept straight from the classical philosophers, and it remained central to courtesy theories throughout the period studied here. Locke, Steele, Chesterfield, Richardson, Hume, and many lesser authors used decorum as a touchstone by which to assess and prescribe behaviour.[2]

One of the most fundamental tenets of the rule of decorum was that the behaviour of individuals should vary according to their place in human society. Samuel Richardson gives a clear explanation of this rule at work in the preface to his manual of the collected

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1 For a detailed discussion of this concept, see above, ch.2, pp. 46-7.

2 See above ch. 2, p.66, and below, pp. 95-7, 105-6, 112-3.

maxims and morals and manners from his three novels. He states:

> Plutarch... tells us, 'That Socrates, meeting one day with Menon, whom he considered as a man well exercised in all the varieties of conversation, as well as a great proficient in speculative wisdom, ask'd him, WHAT IS VIRTUE? And that Menon answer'd, There were proper virtues for Youth and Old-Age, for Man and Woman, for Magistrate and Private person, for Master and Servant. An answer, which (the writer says) excited the admiration and applause of Socrates.'
>
> But, what would this wise heathen have said, and how much greater would have been his transport, had his friend Menon, by way of answer, presented him with writings, in which he had entered minutely into the nature of the Virtues proper for such different Ages, Sexes, and Stations; had he described these social excellencies, so affectingly, as to command attention, so accurately, as to prevent mistake, and so invitingly, as to engage imitation!

Richardson adds further as an introduction to a panegyric of his own writings that revelation allows the moderns to do what the ancients could not, and delineate these virtues "with greater clearness and precision".[1]

In this passage Richardson is making three basic assumptions. The first is that there exist fundamental divisions in society along the lines of age, sex, and social rank or occupation. These are unchanged since classical times, and consist of opposing dualities largely dependent on each other for their definition. The second is that, by the very fact of their differences, the resulting categories have appropriate to them different forms of conduct, which Richardson implies are in their essence also unchanged from antiquity. The third is that the congruence between category and conduct is not only an ideal, but important enough in practice that people should be actively persuaded to conform to it.

In asserting the existence of an innate fitness of things, and the necessary of maintaining this fitness, the classical concept

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1 Richardson, Collection of... Sentiments, Preface, pp. iii-iv.

of decorum had stressed the aesthetic ideals of order, proportion, and harmony. Drawing his ideas about decorum directly from Cicero,[1] Richard Steele argues that decorum must be maintained in manners because of the importance of these very same aesthetic ideals:

> As Beauty of Body, with an agreeable Carriage, pleases the Eye, and that Pleasure consists in that we observe all the Parts with a certain Elegance are proportioned to each other; so does Decency of Behaviour which appears in our Lives obtain the Approbation of all with whom we converse, from the Order, Constancy, and Moderation of our Words and Actions. This flows from the Reverence we bear towards every good Man, and to the World in general; for to be negligent of what any one thinks of you, does not only shew you arrogant but abandoned.... As it is the Part of Justice never to do Violence, it is of Modesty never to commit Offence. In this last Particular lies the whole Force of what is called Decency.[2]

Steele asserts here, that, in addition to conforming to aesthetic values for their own sake, the individual's adherence to decorum is also demanded as an obligation to other people in their capacity as fellow members of human society. The argument that a breach of decorum was a major offence to others was further emphasised by David Hume:

> DECENCY, or a proper regard to age, sex, character, and station, in the world, may be ranked among the qualities which are immediately agreeable to others, and which, by that means, acquire praise and approbation. An effeminate behavior in a man, a rough manner in a woman; these are ugly, because unsuitable to each character, and different from the qualities which we expect in the sexes. It is as if a tragedy abounded in comic beauties, or a comedy in tragic. The disproportions hurt the eye, and convey a disagreeable sentiment to the spectators, the source of blame and disapprobation. This is that indecorum which is explained so much at large by Cicero in his Offices.[3]

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1 Above, ch. 2, pp. 66.

2 Spectator, No.104, i. 432-3.

3 D. Hume, 'Of Qualities Immediately Agreeable to Others', in his An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals (1751), in his Works (Edinburgh, 1854) iv. 333.

This assumption that people should behave in different ways according to their place in a limited number of predetermined social categories constituted the single most important guiding principle behind the courtesy literature certainly of the eighteenth century, and, it may be confidently asserted, of the Western tradition in general. It is manifested most evidently in the strict segregation of courtesy discussions according to their intended readership. Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers composed and propounded their ideas on manners in close accordance with the broad social categories specified by Menon, Richardson, and Hume. Of these various criteria (age, sex, character, station, occupation), those of sex and social rank or occupation were given by far the most emphasis in the courtesy literature. On the grounds of these criteria, courtesy writers divided their precepts according to three fundamental categories of intended readers: gentlemen, ladies, and servants and apprentices. Any single courtesy book of this time most commonly contains prescriptions for only one of these three groups, the particular one being clearly and unmistakeably specified in the title.[1] In a few cases, precepts for two of these groups appear in the same work, in which case there are usually internal divisions distinguishing the precepts for each group.[2] The only major exception is precepts for female behaviour, which tend to be presented in a manner overriding the criteria of rank, a phenomenon which will be discussed in detail subsequently.[3]

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1 E.g. The Gentleman's Library (1714); The Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift (1729); The Ladies Library (1714); J. Essex, The Young Ladies Conduct (1722); (S. Richardson), The Apprentice's Vade Mecum (1733); (Mr. Zinzano), The Servants Calling (1725). For others, see below, Bibliography 'A1'.

2 E.g. Darrell, The Gentleman Instructed, which contains a separate section entitled 'A Supplement to the Ladies', and W. Nicholls, The Duty of Inferiours towards their Superiours (1701), containing among other sections 'The Duty of Servants to their Masters', and 'The Duty of Wives to their Husbands'.

3 Below, chs. 5 and 6, pp. 264-87, 310-15.

In contrast to these three very fundamental divisions, other criteria were only very occasionally used by courtesy writers to classify their prescriptions. The most important of these was that of age. This was almost invariably applied in terms of a simple binary division between 'young' and 'old', more exact specifications not being given. As a genre, the courtesy books tended to be directed primarily towards the young.[1] The best indications of the age group this involved come from Locke and Chesterfield. The former began prescribing manners for children as soon as they could walk,[2] and his plan of education continued to the age of 21.[3] Chesterfield began writing advice on manners to his son when the boy was five,[4] and he extended the formative period of a man's life to the age of 25.[5] Outside this general bias towards youth, courtesy writers devote little attention to the question of age, emphasising only that the two age groups should be distinguished by different manners and dress, and that excessive gravity in the young or vivacity in the old were breaches of decorum.[6] Only two other social categories appear in the courtesy literature, both in a very minor way. The

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1 E.g. The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed (1747); Essex, The Young Ladies Conduct (1722); The Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift (1729); An Essay on Modern Gallantry (1750) containing pp.39-51 'A Seasonable Admonition to the Young Ladies of Great Britain'. See also James Burgh, The Dignity of Human Nature (1754), p.2.

2 See below, p. 106.

3 Locke, Education, p.324.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, i.162.

5 Ibid., iii. 1131.

6 W. Fleetwood, Relative Duties (1705), pp.241-3; Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp.202, 246; The Gentleman's Library (1715, 1734 edn.), pp.420-2; Daniel Defoe, Chickens Feed Capons: or, a Dissertation on the Pertness of our Youth... (1731), pp.17-8; World, No.120, p.272; Connoisseur, No.7, i.38; Rambler, No.24, iii, 135, No.50, iii. 272, No. 55, iii.299; The Female Spectator iii, 238-9 ('old' in this case being applied to women of 25 or 30), also Ibid., iii. 240-50; The Gentleman's Library, pp.412-31; The Gentleman's Magazine, viii (1738), pp.357-8. See further Keith Thomas, 'Age and Authority in Early Modern England', Proceedings of the British Academy, lxii (1976), 205-48.

first was based on the child-parent relationship, which was almost always discussed in terms of conduct (e.g. obedience in children) rather than manners.[1] The second was that of marital status, which was very largely applied only to women, and then usually also in terms of conduct rather than manners.[2]

The social structure implicitly presupposed by the three very general categories of gentlemen, ladies, and servants and apprentices is a crude one, reflecting not so much any kind of pyramid- or parallel tower-shaped society, as a society divided by two intersecting lines, one horizontal and one vertical. Inside these basic lines, however, courtesy writers did add some other subtleties of distinction, especially some dealing with social rank. The most important of these was a tri-partite gradation of society into the three groups of superiors, equals, and inferiors, and the prescription of different manners for each. These three categories were wholly relative, and could thus run throughout the social scale. This, and a few other distinctions mitigating the rigidity of these basic social boundaries, will be discussed subsequently, as each emerges from within its own general context. Nonetheless, overall, courtesy writers basically divided their prescriptions into the three major categories of gentlemen, ladies, and servants and apprentices. This division has three major implications which should be kept in mind during an analysis of their prescriptions. First, such a division reveals a very conservative, traditional view of society, which in essence does not differ from Menon's advice to Socrates.

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1 E.g. W. Nicholls, The Duty of Inferiours towards their Superiours (1701): 'The Duty of Children to their Parents', pp.27-53; The True Interest of Families (1690), part 2, 'Advice to Children', pp.103-51. W. Fleetwood, Relative Duties, 'The Duty of Children to Parents', pp.9-17, is the only courtesy writer systematically to argue that children's obedience should be manifested in deferential manners.

2 See below, ch. 5, pp. 252, 271-2, 280, 285.

It is thus unlikely that courtesy writers will emerge as constituting an especially radical or progressive force in society. Second, such basic divisions classify the individual reader in very simplistic terms and demand a high degree of uniformity within the group; a treatment which would tend to reinforce the pressure on the individual towards social conformity. Third, this strict segregation of readers means that, in theory, each body of prescriptions had a totally separate readership, with no possibility of confusion or misappropriation of precepts. Such segregation makes no allowance either for individual or group upward social mobility, or for the deliberate alteration of gender roles, whether by an individual or as a part of a broader historical process. It is a very static social model.

Although courtesy writers divided their readers and their prescriptions into three groups, they did not give equal attention to each group. Writing in the 1930s, a theorist of manners argued that "for four centuries theorists of the genteel have done their best to confuse the gentleman with the ideal man".[1] If instead of the words 'the ideal man', is substituted 'the ideal person', the primary object of courtesy writers' attention becomes clear. Gentlemen were the group to which courtesy writers devoted the bulk of their attention and the most refined and idealistic of their precepts. The ideal gentleman is not only given the attributes due to his sex or social rank; he is also quite clearly the core around which these writers build their ideal person in the wider sense. Both decorum and necessity therefore demand that primary consideration be given to the gentleman, and to the ideal of good manners which was constructed around him.

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1 A. Livingstone, 'Theory of the Gentleman', in Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, ed. E. Seligman (1930-5), vi. 616.

ii. Good breeding

The dominant concept of positive good manners in England in the latter part of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries was that of good breeding. In his Dictionary, Samuel Johnson gives three definitions of 'breeding': "education", "nurture", and "manners" or "knowledge of ceremony".[1] To eighteenth-century educational theorists and courtesy writers, these three meanings of 'breeding' were intimately connected. They used the terms 'good breeding' and 'well bred', with their opposites 'ill breeding' and 'ill bred' to describe the results of educational upbringing as revealed in personal behaviour, particularly manners.[2] Thus, speaking of "Manners" and "Civility", especially salutations and deportment, John Locke states: "the managing our selves well, in this part of our Behaviour, has the name of Good Breeding, as if peculiarly the effect of Education...."[3] Because of this intimate link with education, the concept of good breeding was a very broad one, linking manners with subjects of far wider reach.

In the eighteenth-century English discussion of good breeding, the single most important work was John Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education of 1693. The treatise established the ground rules of good breeding in considerable detail, and was a major influence on the ideas of subsequent courtesy writers.[4] The most effective way to pin down the concept of good breeding would therefore seem to be to examine its major themes as set out by Locke, and their implications, and then to consider the continuations and variations of subsequent writers.

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1 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. 'breeding'.

2 O.E.D., s.v. 'breeding', section 2.

3 Locke, Education, p. 250.

4 See below, p. 112.

Although Locke's work is first and foremost an educational treatise on the upbringing of young gentlemen, it deals with manners in such detail that it may also be considered one of the most important courtesy books of its time. The inculcation of good breeding in manners is one of the primary aims of Locke's system of education, the others being the attainment of virtue and intellectual knowledge.[1] The problem of how best to cultivate good breeding in manners was crucial in Locke's decisions about the nature and course of the gentleman's education. Thus, when he entered the contemporary debate over the relative merits of private and public schooling, good breeding was given equal place with virtue as the two decisive factors in favour of a private education.[2] Similarly, he warned against acquiring an excessive amount of learning, on the grounds that it might "thrust out" good breeding.[3] In the same vein, a further knowledge of good breeding was one of the assets Locke hoped would be acquired if a youth's education was completed by Continental travel.[4]

The great degree of importance given by Locke to the possession of good breeding is encapsulated in several remarks. He says that good breeding is "the best Portion" a man could leave his son,[5] and that it is the "one Accomplishment" which will more open his way to him, get him more Friends, and carry him farther in the World, than all the hard Words, or real Knowledge he has got from the Liberal Arts, or his Tutor's learned Encyclopaidia".[6] Locke argues that

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1 Locke, Education, pp. 167, 170, 255-310.

2 Ibid., pp. 166-71. For a detailed discussion of this contemporary debate, see Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, pp.195-230.

3 Locke, Education, p.192.

4 Ibid., pp.323-4, 384. For the importance of such travel in the gentleman's education, see Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, pp. 156-94.

5 Locke, Education, p. 171; also p.187.

6 Ibid., p. 192, and similarly pp. 197-9.

good breeding is essential to set off all a man's other virtues:

> Breeding is that, which sets a Gloss upon all his good qualities, and renders them useful to him, in procuring him the Esteem and Good Will of all that he comes near. Without good Breeding his other Accomplishments make him pass but for Proud, Conceited, Vain, or Foolish.
>
> Courage in an ill-bred Man, has the Air, and scapes not the Opinion of Brutality: Learning becomes Pedantry; Wit Buffoonry; Plainness Rusticity; Good Nature Fawning. And there cannot be a good quality in him which want of Breeding will not warp, and disfigure to his Disadvantage.[1]

This belief was not expressed only for a reading public; that Locke felt the same in his personal life is attested to by Lady Masham:

> If there was anything that Mr. Locke could not sort himself to, or be easy in conversation with, it was ill-breeding. He had a great disgust of this, where it appeared to proceed not from want of having been conversant in the world, but from pride, arrogance, ill-nature, or stupid incogitancy and want of reflection upon men's actions.... Civility yet he thought not only the great ornament of life, but that that gave lustre and gloss to all our actions, but looked upon it as a Christian duty that deserved to be more inculcated as such than it generally was.[2]

In defining 'good breeding', Locke reduces the concept to the possession of two inner mental qualities and the outer manners which reflect them. The two mental qualities, he covers with "this one Rule, Not to think meanly of our selves, and not to think meanly of others".[3] The first involves having a proper sense of self-assurance: not enough to override the interests of other people, but sufficient to act in any company "without discomposure, or disorder", or "a sheepish Bashfulness".[4] The second, he describes as an "internal Civility of the Mind". It consists of

> that general Good will and Regard for all People, which makes any one have a care not to shew, in his Carriage, any contempt, disrespect, or neglect of them; but to express, according to the Fashion and Way of that Country, a respect and value for them, according to their Rank and Condition. It is

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1 Locke, Education, p. 191.

2 Letter to Jean le Clerc, 12 Jan. 1704/5, repr. in H.R. Fox Bourne, The Life of John Locke (1876), ii.532-3.

3 Locke, Education, p.245.

4 Ibid., pp. 245-6.

> a disposition of the mind that shews it self in the carriage whereby a Man avoids making any one uneasie in Conversation.[1]

The "Language" of manners by which this inner attitude is expressed, Locke says is called being "Well-fashion'd". It consists of

> that decency and gracefulness of Looks, Voice, Words, Motions, Gestures, and of all the whole outward Demeanour, which takes in Company, and makes those with whom we may converse, easie and well pleased.[2]

The "Rules and Practice" of these manners are not universal, but vary according to the "Fashion and Custom of every Country".[3] Locke repeatedly stresses that, although both are important, inner "Civility" is more essential to good breeding than outer "Ceremonies".[4] He repeatedly says of ceremony: "young Children should not be much perplexed about it; I mean about putting off their Hats and making Legs modishly. Teach them Humility, and to be good-natur'd, if you can, and this sort of Manners will not be wanting...."[5]

For Locke, the concept of decorum is central to both these internal attitudes and their external manners. "[T]hat Gracefulness... which always pleases," he says, "arises from that Natural Coherence, which appears between the Thing done, and such a Temper of Mind, as cannot but be approved of, as suitable to the Occasion."[6] He describes the external language of good breeding in manners as "a due and free composure of Language, Looks, Motion, Posture, Place, &c. suited to Persons and Occasions".[7] The opposite of good breeding, affectation, displeases him "because there is always a Disagreement

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1 Locke, Education, pp. 246-7.

2 Ibid., p. 246.

3 Ibid., p. 246.

4 Ibid., pp. 250-1.

5 Ibid., p.250; similarly pp. 162, 191, 251.

6 Ibid., p. 160.

7 Ibid., p. 191, also p. 190.

between the outward Action, and the Mind within", whether through deliberate deceit or unintentional awkwardness.[1] This disagreement appeared in manners as "an awkard and forced Imitation, of what should be Genuine and Easie", and "is always Offensive: Because we naturally hate whatever is Counterfeit; and condemn those who have nothing better to recommend themselves by".[2]

For Locke, good breeding could only be acquired with the investment of a considerable amount of time, effort, and money. It was the product of a long educational process involving intensive and careful cultivation, which started with the young child and continued to adulthood.[3] It necessitated the expense of some years' duration of a private tutor, who "should himself be well bred",[4] a dancing master,[5] and a Continental tour.[6] The inculcation of both the inner attitudes and outer forms of good breeding was to be started at a very early age. Locke advises parents that they should take care to "plant" Civility early in their children's minds.[7] Concerning outer manners, he says that "those, who have the Judgment to do it" should

> gently fashion the Motions, and Carriage of Children, when they are very young. It would be of great Advantage, if they had People about them, from their first being able to go [i.e. walk], that had the Skill, and would take the right way to do it.[8]

To teach well bred manners was largely the job of a boy's tutor,[9] and Locke stresses that before the boy left his charge, this good breeding must be well-inculcated or it would be too late:

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1 Locke, Education, pp. 160-1.

2 Ibid., pp. 160-1.

3 See above, p. 99.

4 Locke, Education, p.190.

5 Ibid., p. 162.

6 Ibid., pp. 321-4.

7 Ibid., p. 162; also p.167.

8 Ibid., p.163.

9 Ibid., pp. 162, 191.

> ... it ought to be begun, and in a good measure learn'd by a young Gentleman whilst he is under a Tutor, before he comes into the World upon his own Legs: For then usually it is too late to hope to reform several habitual indecencies, which lie in little things.[1]

Locke describes good breeding in manners as "a great skill".[2] While reason and good sense can indicate it to a certain extent,[3] it "can be learn'd only by Habit and Use",[4] and "Nothing can give it but good Company, and Observation joyn'd together".[5] He repeatedly insists that good breeding cannot be learnt from precepts or books, but solely from good company,[6] telling parents: "Be as busie as you please with Discourses of Civility to your Son, such as is his Company, such will be his Manners".[7] Indeed, Locke argues that it was not only a child's manners, but also his morals and beliefs, which were acquired from his company.[8] He attributes such a formative influence to the power of example, asserting that "We are all a sort of Camelions, that still take a Tincture from things near us".[9] If children are bred in ill company, "all the Rules in the World, all the Correction imaginable, will not be able to polish them".[10] This was the reason why he was in favour of a boy's private education at home, where his parents could "keep him better from the taint of Servants, and the meaner sort of People, than is possible to be done Abroad".[11] For Locke, 'good company' consisted of people

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1 Locke, Education, p. 191, also p.192.

2. Ibid., p.250.

3 Ibid., p.250.

4 Ibid., p.191.

5 Ibid., p. 190.

6 Ibid., pp. 162, 165, 190.

7 Ibid., p.250, also pp. 163-4, 171.

8 Ibid., pp. 165-7.

9 Ibid., p.164.

10 Ibid., p.163, also p. 187.

11 Ibid., p.171.

of at least gentlemanly rank,[1] who themselves possessed well bred manners.[2]

Central to Locke's concept of good breeding is the belief that nature can and should be improved by the means of art. He characterises someone to whom the process of breeding had not been applied as being in a state of "Plain and rough Nature".[3] In a classic restatement of his general theories concerning human understanding, he says of his plan of education that it was "designed for a Gentleman's Son, who being then very little, I considered only as white Paper, or Wax, to be moulded and fashioned as one pleases".[4] At the same time, however, he does show a slight ambivalence about the unlimited power of education; elsewhere, he comes close to suggesting that inherent personal traits could be a factor:

> Every one's Natural Genius should be carried as far as it could, but to attempt the putting another upon him, will be but Labour in vain: And what is so Plaister'd on, will at best sit but untowardly, and have always hanging to it the Ungracefulness of Constraint and Affectation.[5]

Nonetheless, Locke believed that the inculcative process itself not only could, but should, be taken to the point where the art itself became wholly natural. Thus, recommending the use of repetition in children's education, he says

> ... by repeating the same Action, till it be grown habitual in them, the Performance will not depend on Memory or Reflection, the Concomitant of Prudence and Age, and not of Childhood; but will be natural in them. Thus bowing to a Gentleman when he salutes him, and looking in his Face, when he speaks to him, is by constant Use as natural to a well-bred Man, as breathing; it requires no Thought, no Reflection.[6]

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1 Locke, Education, p. 246; also p.171.

2 Ibid., p.246, also p. 171, n.1.

3 Ibid., p. 161.

4 Ibid., p.325.

5 Ibid., pp. 159-60.

6 Ibid., p.157.

Locke frequently uses the word 'natural' to describe the ideal of good breeding in manners. Elsewhere, he says: "The Carriage is not as it should be, till it is become Natural in every Part, falling, as Skilful Musicians' Fingers do, into Harmonious Order without Care and without Thought."[1] To achieve such a level of naturalness requires a very high degree of art. Nor was it enough to appear natural only on the surface. Rather, there should be such naturalness that there was a total concordance between outward expressions of civility and the inner self.

> This seems to me to be that Beauty, which shines through some Men's Actions, sets off all that they do, and takes all they come near; when by a constant Practice, they have fashion'd their Carriage, and made all those little Expressions of Civility and Respect, which Nature or Custom has established in Conversation so easy to themselves, that they seem not Artificial or Studied, but naturally to flow from a Sweetness of Mind, and a well turn'd Disposition.[2]

Just how personal, ingrained, and important a gentleman's possession of good breeding was seen to be at this time is revealed in Locke's remark that

> ... indeed, this is so nice a Point to be meddled with, that even those who are Friends, and wish it were mended, scarce ever dare mention it, and tell those they love, that they are Guilty in such or such Cases of ill Breeding.[3]

The concept of good breeding as outlined by Locke carries with it some very important implications. It may be seen that, far from being considered a trivial or unimportant subject, correct manners were a matter of foremost concern to the leading educational writer of the day. Locke does not regard manners as a mere superficial attribute, but as inseparable from inner mental attitudes and moral qualities. The quality of good breeding which results is portrayed as a very high ideal.

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1 Locke, Education, p. 191.

2 Ibid., p.160.

3 Ibid., pp. 191-2.

Locke discusses manners not as an isolated subject, but in the context of a whole educational process and its finished product. In this respect, the term 'good breeding' links manners with broader social attributes, as did 'courtesy' and 'civility' before it.[1] The firm connection established by Locke between the ideal of good manners on the one hand and a specific form of upbringing on the other has important implications for the question of the relationship between manners and social rank. The high amount of money and leisure required for this sort of education could not have been afforded by those much below the rank of gentleman. Moreover, since thorough good breeding had to be acquired as a child if it was to be attained successfully, the social parvenu who had made his own fortune in the world would be excluded from its ranks. Nor would those of lesser rank have had such easy access to the social company of their well bred superiors which was required to form good breeding. This requirement of good company acted to establish and perpetuate a common, shared, standard code of manners within the group designated as 'good company'. By contrast, in theory at least, such a code was closed to outsiders: a person could only learn good breeding from good company, but, to preserve their own good breeding, those of good company were advised not to associate with outsiders. The inculcation of good breeding was considered an aim important enough to restrict contact between social groups for no other reason.

This socially exclusive feature of good breeding was no distantly related ramification of the idea; rather, it was absolutely central to the concept's whole definition. Locke had argued that the opposite of good breeding was affectation.[2] Although affectation could result from lack of personal inclination,[3] or from a negligent tutor,[4] most

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1 See above, ch. 1, p. 16.

2 Above, pp. 106-7.

3 Above, p. 108.

4 Locke, Education, p. 160.

commonly it derived from a mistaken imitation of well bred manners without discerning their real nature or grace.[1] Such affectation, Locke argued, was largely peculiar to aspirants to fashion, "few being Guilty of it, but those who pretend to Breeding, and would not be thought ignorant of what is fashionable, and becoming in Conversation".[2] By drawing this close connection between affectation and the imitation of good breeding by those outside its system, Locke has established a situation in which the very attempt to imitate good breeding itself results in ill breeding: a very exclusive concept indeed.

This exclusiveness was a matter of deliberate choice by Locke. He did not intend his plan of education to be suitable for everyone, but argued rather that different forms of education were appropriate for different social ranks.[3] His own plan was specifically designed for a gentleman's son.[4] He refers to good breeding as a "good Quality belonging to a Gentleman",[5] and says that part of a "Gentleman's Calling" in life is to have "a Carriage suitable to his Rank".[6] Occasionally, he reveals a very open link between good breeding and the maintenance of social rank. Thus, the only reason he includes fencing and riding the great horse in his plan of education is because they "are so generally looked upon as necessary Qualifications in the breeding of a Gentleman, it will be hard wholly to deny any one of that rank these Marks of Distinction".[7]

In its social exclusiveness, the idea of good breeding resembles the sixteenth-century concept of the courtier, or the seventeenth-century French ideal of honnêteté, in contrast to the more socially

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1 Locke, Education, p. 161.

2 Ibid., p. 161.

3 Ibid., p.325.

4 Above, p. 108.

5 Locke, Education, p. 245.

6 Ibid., p.197.

7 Ibid., p.313.

open codes of manners prescribed by Erasmus and della Casa. But the eighteenth-century connection between manners and education was an even deeper bond. Manners were the most visible, day-to-day manifestation of the whole educational process undergone by the gentleman. The manners of a well bred man could therefore function as a form of self-display, a testimonial of a proper up-bringing, and, hence, of a proper social rank.

After the welcome clarity of Locke's exposition of good breeding, discussion of the subject by courtesy writers became more diverse and complex. Within the debate, two basic patterns may be traced: first, the underlying continuation of many of the ideas expressed by Locke, and, second, the addition of some important variations. It seems most appropriate to begin with the continuations.

Some of Locke's most important ideas on good breeding were directly borrowed by later writers. His argument that a private education is beneficial to good breeding recurs in the Spectator.[1] His criticism of affectation as antithetical to good breeding reappears in The Gentleman's Library and in John Constable's The Conversation of Gentlemen.[2] His insistence on the necessity of dancing lessons to the well bred gentleman is cited by several courtesy writers, among them the dancing masters John Weaver and Stephen Philpot; the latter also quotes Locke's remarks on the nature and importance of good breeding and assurance.[3]

The close link drawn by Locke between good breeding and adherence to decorum is reiterated by other writers. In the Spectator, Richard

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1 Spectator, No. 313, iii. 132-3; No. 337, iii. 250.

2 The Gentleman's Library, pp.156-62; Constable, Conversation, p.4.

3 The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed (1747), i.328 (compare Locke, Education, pp.310-11); John Weaver, An Essay Towards a History of Dancing (1712), pp.17-18, 22, 28; S. Philpot, An Essay on the Advantage of a Polite Education (1747), pp.9-10, 16, 34-5, 39-42, 56-7, 59-61, 70, 72, 115. See further below, ch. 4, pp. 170-1.

Steele argues that decorum is a fundamental rule of good breeding.[1] Nathaniel Lancaster, a chaplain to the Prince of Wales and an important writer on aesthetics,[2] similarly asserts that the essentials of good breeding conform to a man's "inbred feeling of DECORUM".[3] Chesterfield takes the term 'decorum' directly from Cicero's Offices, says it is "to do what is proper, and where it is proper",[4] and asserts that this propriety constitutes the essence of perfect good breeding.[5] Other courtesy writers also use the concept in their works.[6]

The link between outer manners and inner qualities which was so stressed by Locke is given further emphasis in the Spectator papers. The four qualities considered essential were good nature, virtue, reason, and good sense. Thus, Addison says that the "exterior Shows and Appearances" of good breeding,

> render a Man wonderfully popular and beloved, when they are founded upon a real Good-nature; but without it are like Hypocrisie in Religion, or a bare Form of Holiness, which, when it is discovered, makes a Man more detestable than professed Impiety.[7]

Steele argues that the prime prerequisite of good breeding is virtue,[8] and that the guiding principles of good breeding should be "the eternal Rules of Reason and good Sense".[9]

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1 Spectator, No. 104, i. 432-3.

2 D.N.B., s.v. 'Lancaster'.

3 N. Lancaster, The Plan of an Essay on Delicacy (1748), p.66.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 367-8, 24 July 1739; also iv. 1381; World, No. 189, p.422.

5 In The World, No. 148, pp. 328-9, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, xxv (1755), 492.

6 Constable, Conversation, pp.20-1; Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.18; Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp.260, 393; The Polite Student (1748), p.39; Fielding, 'Conversation', p.149.

7 Spectator, No. 169, ii. 165.

8 Ibid., No. 75, i. 325.

9 Ibid., No. 75, i. 323.

Another idea fundamental to Locke's concept of good breeding and stressed by many subsequent courtesy writers was an absolute insistence on the necessity of good company to inculcate good breeding. Like Locke, later writers assert that a person's company had a considerable formative effect on his manners;[1] that bad company conveys an "Infection"[2] and a "Poison",[3] which was easily caught but which "seldom wears off";[4] and that written precepts are useless to teach good manners without the additional benefit of good company.[5]

Locke's criterion for judging good and bad company had been a mixture of social rank and manners. This is carried on by later writers,[6] but the element of social rank is made more explicit and given greater prominence. Bad company is seen to consist of "mean and inferior company",[7] people "in low Life",[8] "people of very low condition",[9] "Peasants",[10] and (speaking to the gentleman) those "below your Station".[11] Good company, in contrast, is constituted

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1 Polite Student, pp.22-4; Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.10; Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1267, 1269; v. 1835.

2 Gentleman's Library, p.16, also pp.110-1; The late King James his Advice to his Son (1703), pp.9-10; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.16.

3 Constable, Conversation, p.11; also The late King James... pp.9-10.

4 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.16; similarly Robert Nelson, Instructions for the Conduct of Young Gentlemen... (written 1708), in Miscellaneous Tracts by the late William Bowyer... and several of his... Friends.... (1785), p.698; Gentleman's Library, p.77; Polite Student, pp. 28-9.

5 J. Forrester, The Polite Philosopher (1732), p.43; Constable, Conversation, pp.20-1.

6 For manners, see Polite Student, pp.24, 27 (bad company includes the obscene, ignorant, clownish, vulgar, and boorish), and Constable, Conversation, p.11 (it includes the ill bred and the rude).

7 Nelson, Instructions for the Conduct of Young Gentlemen, p.698.

8 Polite Student, pp.27-8.

9 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1240.

10 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.16.

11 Ibid., p.16.

by "your Superiors",[1] "People in the higher Stations of Life"[2] and "people of considerable birth, rank, and character",[3] who were "the fashionable and accredited company"[4] in courts and capitals.[5] Such a definition of 'good company' takes little account of larger questions of morals or manners.[6] This increased stress on rank as the major criterion of good company does seem to heighten further the socially exclusive aspect of good breeding.

The belief expressed by Locke that nature should be improved by art was common in eighteenth-century discussions of manners. Although not himself a courtesy writer, Henry Felton, chaplain to the Duke of Rutland and an important writer on aesthetics,[7] expresses this belief most clearly when he argues, referring to bodily deportment, that "An untaught Behaviour is like the People that use it, truly rustic, forced, and uncouth, and Art must be applied to make it Natural".[8] Words like 'improve', 'cultivate', 'refine', and 'polish' are often used by courtesy writers to describe the process of acquiring good breeding.[9] In describing the effect of good breeding in highlighting other attributes, Locke had used the metaphor

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1 Nelson, Instructions for the Conduct of Young Gentlemen, p.698.

2 'Of true Politeness', Grubstreet Journal, 11 Apr. 1734, No.224, repr. in the Gentleman's Magazine, iv (1734), 191.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1239.

4 Ibid., iv. 1240.

5 Ibid., iii. 1134, iv. 1374, iv. 1433.

6 For exceptions see: Nelson, Instructions for the Conduct of Young Gentlemen, p. 698; Constable, Conversation, pp. 11-12; Idler, No. 53, pp. 164-5.

7 D.N.B., s.v. 'Felton'.

8 H. Felton, A Dissertation on Reading the Classics and Forming a Just Style, (1713), p.11.

9 E.g. Spectator, No.215, ii. 338, 341, repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.9, also Spectator, No.164, ii. 143, No. 209, ii.319.

of a "rough Diamond" being "polish'd, and set",[1] and many later courtesy writers make use of the same image.[2] Chesterfield frequently resorts to such metaphors to describe the process of acquiring good breeding in manners, He describes his son's education both as a process of cultivation,[3] and as one of polishing, telling him in 1749:

> You will now, in the course of a few months, have been rubbed at three of the considerable Courts of Europe - Berlin, Dresden, and Vienna; so that I hope you will arrive at Turin tolerably smooth, and fit for the last polish.

Only Paris, however, could give, "at last, the true varnish".[4] The use of such metaphors to describe good breeding reinforces the view that, at this time, the arts of good breeding were regarded as improving natural endowments, and not concealing or destroying them with any kind of 'artificial' veneer.

Many of Chesterfield's ideas on good breeding are particularly close to Locke's. Indeed, some of them could have been directly derived from Locke's treatise, which Chesterfield sent to his son, particularly recommending the discussions on good breeding.[5] Besides the similarities already mentioned on decorum, good company, and art,[6] several others are worth briefly mentioning. Chesterfield similarly characterises good breeding as "absolutely necessary to adorn... all other good qualities or talents";[7] as a very high

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1 Locke, Education, p.191.

2 D. Defoe, The Compleat English Gentleman (written c.1729), ed. K. Bulbring (1890), pp.55, 105; J. Costeker, The Fine Gentleman, (1732), p.28; H. Felton, Dissertation upon Reading the Classics, p.8; The Polite Student, pp.23-4; Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1174-5, iv. 1367.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1130; also iv. 1446.

4 Ibid., iii. 1061.

5 Ibid., iv. 1260.

6 Above, pp. 113-6.

7 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1030.

ideal: "I hardly know anything so difficult to attain, or so necessary, to possess, as perfect good-breeding",[1] and as something which "must be acquired when young, or it is never quite easy: and if acquired young, will always last and be habitual".[2] Chesterfield reveals the same ambivalence as Locke as to whether or not good breeding may be achieved by anyone. At first, writing to his son, he was insistent that, given "proper culture, care, attention, and labour", anyone could attain such perfection.[3] However, as his awkward son's unresponsiveness to such exhortations became clear, Chesterfield admitted that "in many respects, our nature was not to be changed", but that it could still "by care be very much altered and improved", especially in such exterior accomplishments as manners.[4] When he was not directly concerned to encourage his son, however, he attributed far more influence to nature. In a key passage written to a French acquaintance, he asserts:

> Il est bien sûr que les Grâces sont un don de la nature, qu'on ne peut pas acquérir; l'art en peut relever l'éclat, mais il faut que la nature ait donné le fond.[5]

Whatever the difficulties of acquiring it, for Chesterfield, even more than for Locke, good breeding was a mark of social distinction: he tells his son that he sent him into the world "to put you in the way, and the only way of acquiring those manners, that address, and those graces, which exclusively distinguish people of fashion".[6]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 524.

2 Ibid., ii. 479, also v. 1834.

3 Ibid., iii. 782, also iv. 1730, v. 1834, ii. 472.

4 Ibid., v. 1896.

5 Ibid., ii. 531-2. See similarly Constable, Conversation, p.3: "... most certainly, some thing there is in every one... which will never yield some certain Products. All we can do, is to make the best of what Nature has given."

6 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1885.

This very close resemblance between Chesterfield and Locke is not at all surprising, despite the fact that they were writing half a century apart. In his thesis on 'Chesterfield and the Tradition of the Ideal Gentleman', V.B. Heltzel has shown in painstakingly thorough detail that Chesterfield's views on good breeding most closely resemble those expressed by courtesy writers between 1680 and 1710, rather than subsequent writers in the intervening period before he himself started writing to his son in 1739.[1] Moreover, his views remain very constant throughout this 34-year period he is writing, and do not reflect certain important changes in perspective common to other courtesy theorists over this time span.[2] This is only to be expected: born in 1694, Chesterfield's formative years for his own good breeding, according to all of Locke's and his own theories, would have been largely over by the mid-point of the 1710's decade. It could be presumed that this would have been the most likely time during which his own views on good breeding would have been influenced by those current around him. Chesterfield is thus interesting as a notable example of a 'generation gap' at work in the courtesy theory. That is, because courtesy writers were generally adults, they might be expected to prescribe to young readers standards of behaviour which they themselves learned in their own youth. The consequence of this generation gap of Chesterfield's, given the subsequent popularity of his published letters, was to prolong the influence of certain ideas on good breeding beyond what might otherwise have been their natural lifespan.

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1 Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and... the Ideal Gentleman', throughout, but espec. p. 468, pp.122-40, 352-80, 420-70.

2 Compare espec. his stress on good breeding with the increasing contemporary stress on politeness, below pp. 128-30, his continued emphasis on the Court, below ch. 4, pp. 145-6. and his attention given to table manners and the bodily functions, below, ch. 4, pp. 205-6, 208-10.

Many of the fundamental ideas expressed by Locke, then, continued to be re-asserted throughout the period under study here. At the same time, certain variations were added which significantly altered the concept of good breeding, either by an extension of the ideas expressed by Locke, or by a modification of them.

One attitude towards good breeding seems rather to continue further in the pattern established by Locke, than to go against it. Several writers make a specific connection between the historical development of good breeding and the progressive evolution of society. The historical element in such a process is clearly brought out by Addison, who asserts concerning good breeding:

> Several obliging Deferencies, Condescensions and Submissions, with many outward Forms and Ceremonies that accompany them, were first of all brought up among the politer Part of Mankind who lived in Courts and Cities, and distinguished themselves from the Rustick part of the Species (who on all Occasions acted bluntly and naturally) by such a mutual Complaisance and Intercourse of Civilities.[1]

Jonathan Swift specifies that the establishment of codes of good manners was a product of those nations of the world which were civilised:

> I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners: but because the former is a gift which very few among mankind are possessed of, therefore all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules for common behaviour, best suited to their general customs, or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense to supply the defects of reason.[2]

Chesterfield discusses this same point in some detail, and his argument reveals clearly that when he refers to the 'civilised' nations of the world, he is primarily thinking of Europe. He contrasts

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1 Spectator, No. 119, i. 486-7; see similarly Chesterfield, Letters, v. 2061.

2 J. Swift, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', Works, iv. 214.

the natural good manners of a "good-natured American savage" with the cultivated good breeding common to European society. The latter was introduced for reasons of utility and involved the reciprocal sacrifice of personal conveniences for mutual long-term benefit.[1] Drawing a parallel with Locke's theory of kingship, Chesterfield says that this type of good breeding is essential to civilised society:

> Good manners are, to particular societies, what good morals are to society in general; their cement and their security. And as laws are enacted to enforce good morals, or at least to prevent the ill effects of bad ones, so there are certain rules of civility, universally implied and received, to enforce good manners, and punish bad ones.... Mutual complaisances, attentions, and sacrifices of little conveniences, are as natural an implied compact between civilized people, as protection and obedience are between kings and subjects; whoever in either case violates that compact, justly forfeits all advantages arising from it.[2]

English courtesy writers further make it unmistakably clear that the forms of good manners and mutual civilities which they associate with civilised human society are those which they themselves recommend and see in practice about them. Defining complaisance in manners as the endeavour to please one's companions in accordance with the hierarchy of social rank - a major rule in courtesy prescriptions of the day[3] - Addison asserts that such complaisance

> produces good-nature and mutual benevolence, encourages the timorous, soothes the turbulent, humanises the fierce, and distinguishes a society of civilized persons from a confusion of savages.[4]

Similarly, speaking of the importance of particular civilities in conversation, John Constable argues that

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1433.

2 Ibid., iv. 1428-9.

3 Below, ch. 4, pp. 193-201.

4 Guardian, No. 162, pp. 322-3.

> Without a due Regard to such Rules, as are commonly established among polite Persons, the World will soon become savage.[1]

Jonathan Swift, also referring to the arts of conversation, felt similarly that the "Decorum and Politeness" in England was purely learnt by art, and could thus easily "lapse into barbarity".[2] Adam Smith contrasts the frank, open sincerity of "polished nations" with the dissimulation and impenetrability of "savage nations, whether in Asia, Africa, or America", and compares the total repression of emotional display among "The savages of North America" with the more open behaviour in "civilized societies", most notably the French and Italians, but also the English.[3] The connection between the evolution of manners and that of society is epitomised by the contemporary usage of the word 'civility' to denote both manners and the social state of being civilised, in opposition to savagery or barbarity. Johnson in his Dictionary preserves this use of 'civility' as late as 1755, although by that time it was becoming outdated in comparison with the new word 'civilisation'.[4] This evolutionary link between manners and society in the minds of contemporaries gave a crucial added weight to the social importance of good breeding: its possession was vital not only for the benefit of the individual, as Locke had pointed out, but it was also an important factor in value judgements about the state of civilisation of any particular society.

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1 Constable, Conversation, p.190.

2 J. Swift, 'Hints towards an Essay on Conversation', Works, iv. 92.

3 Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp. 205-8.

4 Johnson, Dictionary, 'civility'. For examples of the use by courtesy writers of 'civility' with this meaning, see Johnson, Idler, No. 66, p.205; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.235, 241; Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.205. As late as the 4th edn. of his Dictionary in 1772, Johnson would not admit the word 'civilisation': R. Williams, Keywords (1976), pp.48-50.

Besides this extension of Locke's ideas, there were also certain modifications made, and in these may be seen, albeit with some inevitable overlapping, a definite historical progression. After Locke, the concept of good breeding seems to have been less closely associated with the whole educational upbringing of the gentleman. Instead, there was a general attempt to reduce Locke's required lengthy inculcative process to a method simplified to its bare essentials. This development is revealed in the repeated tendency of eighteenth-century courtesy writers to invoke the 'rules' or 'laws' of good breeding or manners. Although Locke had done this to a small extent,[1] it was carried much further by subsequent writers. Thus, one finds repeated references by various writers to "the Laws of Breeding and Civility",[2] the "Rules of Decency, Honour, and good Breeding",[3] "Rules of Precedence" in seating at dinner,[4] "Rules of... Demeanour",[5] and "the rules of good manners or politeness".[6] The proliferation of courtesy books in the eighteenth century was itself a product - and evidence - of this desire to methodise the attainment of good breeding. Courtesy writers make it clear that these rules of good breeding which they use as a standard are the very same ones which they themselves prescribe for their readers. Henry Fielding gives the clearest example of this in practice in his 'Essay on Conversation' of 1743. He says

> It would be tedious and perhaps impossible, to specify every Instance, or to lay down exact Rules for our Conduct in every minute Particular. However, I shall mention some of the chief which most ordinarily occur....[7]

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1 Above, p. 104.

2 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.131-2, also pp.x-xi, xv, 394; Defoe, Compleat English Gentleman, p.43.

3 Spectator, No.290, iii. 33; also No. 75, i. 325; No. 373, iii. 404-5; No. 557, iv. 503.

4 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.128.

5 Ibid., p.132.

6 D. Hume, Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 327.

7 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.127.

He continues on with detailed "Rules for Good Breeding"[1] which include many of the standard courtesy prescriptions repeated (at least in kind) since the Renaissance or earlier, such as the proper way to receive a guest, seating precedence at dinner, and the deportment and salutations suitable for a guest on arrival, during his stay, and on departure.[2]

Two points are worthy of particular note regarding these various rules of good breeding. The first is the high value which is apparently accorded to them by courtesy writers. Most commonly referred to in the plural, they seem to be regarded as a collective, unified entity which is invoked as a touchstone, external to the judgement of the individual, by which the propriety of specific actions may be judged. The second is that there appears to be a belief that these rules together constitute a correct guide to good breeding, which, if followed properly, will automatically ensure success. So Eustace Budgell states: "a moderate Knowledge in the little Rules of good-breeding, gives a man some assurance, and makes him easy in all Companies...."[3] What for Locke took years of leisure and education to attain appears from such statements as this to be learnable within a relatively short space of time.

Along with this reduction of good breeding to a method, there occurred a concurrent development which could possibly be a related effect. This was a restriction of the term good breeding in common usage to describe external manners in isolation from inner qualities. As a result, the term 'good breeding' became associated by a number

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1 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.128.

2 Ibid., pp. 128-30; for other examples of specific 'rules', see Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp. 131-2, 194, 394.

3 Spectator, No. 67, i. 287.

of courtesy writers with a certain degree of superficiality and affectation.

For Jonathan Swift, the term 'good breeding' had become distinctly debased. In his two short sketches, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding' and 'Hints on Good Manners' (the former written between 1712 and his death in 1745, and the latter probably written after the former),[1] he chooses in preference to 'good-breeding', the term 'good-manners' to describe his ideal. He establishes his ideal in very simple terms:

> Good-Manners is the Art of making these people easy with whom we converse.
> Whoever makes the fewest people uneasy is the best bred in the company.[2]

In comparison, he speaks of good breeding itself in a distinctly ironic manner:

> ... good-breeding is of a much larger extent; for besides an uncommon degree of literature sufficient to qualify a gentleman for reading a play, or a political pamphlet, it takes in a great compass of knowledge; no less than that of dancing, fighting, gameing making the circle of Italy, riding the great horse, and speaking French; not to mention some other secondary, or subaltern accomplishments, which are more easily acquired: so that the difference between good-breeding, and good-manners, lies in this; that the former cannot be attained to by the best understandings, without study and labour: whereas a tolerable degree of reason will instruct us in every part of good-manners, without other assistance.[3]

In this discussion, Swift sets up his concept of good manners not only in opposition, but almost in reaction to the lengthy inculcative process required by Locke. He is very insistent that good manners are a fundamental and easily-acquired quality, to which the cultivated mannerisms of good breeding are unnecessary: "A courtly bow, or gait,

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1 Swift, Works, iv. xxxvi-xxxvii.

2 J. Swift, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', Works, iv.213.

3 Ibid., p. 217.

or dress, are no part of good manners. And therefore every man of good understanding is capable of being well-bred upon any occasion."[1] Swift argues that people of "weak understandings" have "corrupted" the concept of good breeding in common usage by associating it with excessive ceremony taken to the degree of ill manners:

> ... these people have fallen into a needless and endless way of multiplying ceremonies, which have been extremely troublesom to those who practise them; and insupportable to every body else: insomuch that wise men are often more uneasy at the over civility of these refiners, than they could possibly be in the conversations, of peasants or mechanicks.[2]

While Locke had also derided affectation and excessive ceremony in manners,[3] Swift's close association of them with good breeding is one example of the term having fallen into some disrepute.

Swift's dislike of the term 'good breeding' is reiterated by Henry Fielding in his 'Essay on Conversation', published in 1743, and probably written between December 1741 and 1743.[4] In a long passage, Fielding first describes the depths to which he feels the term 'good breeding' has sunk; attributes this to its having acquired an association exclusively with the externals of deportment and dress, and tries to resurrect the term by linking it back to Locke's (and Swift's) fundamental definition of the ideal in manners. Speaking of the "Art of Pleasing", he says:

> ... we can fail in attaining this truly desirable End from Ignorance only in the Means; and how general this Ignorance is, may be, with some Probability, inferred from our want of even a Word to express this Art by: that which comes the nearest to it, and by which, perhaps, we would sometimes intend it, being so horribly and barbarously corrupted, that it contains at present scarce a simple Ingredient of what it seems originally to have been designed to express.

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1 J. Swift, 'Hints on Good-Manners', Works, iv. 221; also his 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', works, iv. 213, 218.

2 Swift, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', Works, iv. 214-5.

3 Above, pp. 105-6, 110-11.

4 H. Fielding, Miscellanies, ed. H.K. Miller (1972), i. xlv.

> The Word I mean is Good Breeding; a Word, I apprehend, not at first confined to Externals, much less to any particular Dress or Attitude of the Body: nor were the Qualifications expressed by it to be furnished by a Milliner, a Taylor, or a Perriwig-maker; no, nor even by a Dancing-Master himself. According to the Idea I myself conceive from this Word, I should not have scrupled to call Socrates a well-bred Man, though I believe he was very little instructed by any of the Persons I have above enumerated. In short, by Good Breeding (notwithstanding the corrupt Use of the Word in a very different Sense) I mean the Art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the Ease and Happiness of those with whom you converse.[1]

Fielding tries to reconnect the term 'good breeding' with the inner qualities governing manners. Thus, he asserts (in a passage which is very probably a reference to a remark in the Spectator 169)[2] that good nature is "the very Habit of Mind most essential to furnish us with true Good Breeding, the latter so nearly resembling the former, that it hath been called, and with the Appearance at least of Propriety, artificial Good Nature".[3] Fielding goes so far in his efforts to rehabilitate the concept of good breeding that he totally divorces it from the attributes of both high social rank and external accomplishments in manners. He concludes his essay with two observations:

> First, That every Person who indulges his Ill-nature or Vanity, at the Expence of others; and in introducing Uneasiness, Vexation, and Confusion into Society, however exalted or high-titled he may be, is thoroughly ill-bred.
>
> Secondly, That whoever, from the Goodness of his Disposition or Understanding, endeavours to his utmost to cultivate the Good-humour and Happiness of others, and to contribute to the Ease and Comfort of all his Acquaintance, however low in Rank Fortune may have placed him, or however clumsy he may be in his Figure or Demeanour, hath, in the truest Sense of the Word, a Claim to Good-Breeding.[4]

Such assertions are contrary to some of Locke's most basic tenets. Not only are a high social rank and exterior accomplishments unnecessary, but there is no mention of any long educative process being required;

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1 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.123.

2 Spectator, No. 169, ii.165.

3 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp.124-5.

4 Ibid., p.152.

instead, Fielding is one of the major advocates of learning good breeding by the 'Rules'. Fielding has ended up not by reviving Locke's concept of good breeding, but by describing, under another name, Swift's concept of good manners, attainable by all.

These comments by Fielding in the early 1740s do seem to mark the nadir of the term 'good breeding', because other courtesy writers make very similar criticisms at much the same time. The modern concept of good breeding is attacked as being a misunderstanding of the original concept, characterised by excessive ceremony, affectation, and hypocritical dissimulation;[1] it is depicted as being "destructive to Good Manners"[2] because it stresses the acquiring of fashionable airs and knowledge of the world to the neglect of everything else,[3] and it is characterised as being a veneer which was merely the product of education, in comparison with the real substance of true good manners which was a natural inner disposition towards pleasing others.[4] The term 'good breeding' continues in use after the 1740s, but this is largely only as a survival from an older tradition, in, for instance, Chesterfield's letters or his contributions to The World,[5] or in copyings of earlier works, such as the wholesale incorporation of the Spectator's discussions of good breeding into the Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed of 1747.[6]

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1 'Of Good-Breeding', Universal Spectator, Feb. 9, 1734, No. 279, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1934), 76; 'The bad Tendency of modern Good-Breeding', Universal Spectator, 21 February 1741, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, xi. (1741), 81-2, p.81.

2 'Modern Good Breeding destructive to Good Manners', Universal Spectator, 8 Mar. 1740, No. 596, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, x (1740), p.115.

3 Ibid., p.116.

4 The Female Spectator, iv. 270-4; for other later criticisms of good breeding, see Connoisseur, No.4, p.21; World, No.42, pp. 98-9.

5 Espec. World, No.148, pp.328-9, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, xxv (1755), pp. 492-3.

6 Compare Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed, i.313-29, with Spectator, Nos.67, i. 287; 75, i. 323-5; 104, i.432-3; 119, i.468-8.

iii. Politeness

In its place, a new term for the ideal in manners seems to have gradually gained the ascendance: that of 'politeness'. Before the eighteenth century, 'politeness' and its descriptive words 'polite' and 'politely' were more commonly associated with other meanings: either in the literal senses of 'smooth', 'polished', or 'clean', or in the more figurative sense describing polish, refinement, and elegance, especially in the arts.[1] These meanings continued through the eighteenth century until the late 1700s and early 1780s, and there remained a degree of overlap in terminology between these areas and manners.[2] The word 'politeness' had been specifically applied to manners since at least the beginning of the eighteenth century, for example appearing briefly in this context in the Spectator in 1711.[3] However, from the 1730s onwards, 'politeness' and its associated words figure more and more prominently in the courtesy literature, a development which was particularly noticeable in the titles of courtesy works. Thus, in 1734, appeared James Forrester's The Polite Philosopher, in 1738, James Miller's Of Politeness, in 1740, An Essay on Polite Behaviour and in 1743, the Abbé d'Ancourt's the Lady's Preceptor, Or a Letter to a Young Lady of Distinction upon Politeness. Similar titles appeared regularly at least up to 1760.[4]

In contrast to Locke's original broad conception of manners and the man, the mid-eighteenth-century idea of politeness seems to have focused far more on external manners alone. This different emphasis

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1 O.E.D., s.v. 'polite/ly/ness'.

2 S. Tucker, Protean Shape: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Vocabulary and Usage (1967), p.110; R. Williams, Keywords, p.50; e.g. Forrester, The Polite Philosopher, p.44: "Politeness... will... give a Polish to every Thing we do".

3 Spectator, No. 213, ii. 400.

4 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. Ancourt; Essay on Polite Behaviour; Forrester; Miller; Philpot (1747); Polite Companion (1748); Polite Lady (1760); Polite Student (1748); The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed... (full title) (1747).

is suggested by several definitions of the term. In 1734, James Forrester defined politeness solely in terms of small, externally-manifested attentions aimed at pleasing others:

> ... a Thousand little Civilities, Complacencies, and Endeavours to give others Pleasure, are requisite to keep up the Relish of Life, and procure us that Affection and Esteem, which every Man, who has a Sense of it, must desire. And in the right Timing, and discreet Management of these Punctilios, consists the Essence of, what we call, Politeness.[1]

Samuel Johnson spoke of politeness in almost identical terms in 1751, describing it as "those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which... contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourse between one man and another".[2] In a private letter to his nephew, William Pitt gave a very similar definition of "true politeness" as consisting of a "benevolence in trifles, or the preference of others to ourselves in little daily, hourly occurrences in the commerce of life"; examples were the concession of "A better place, a more commodious seat, [or] priority, in being helped at table".[3] In 1754, Horace Walpole described politeness not only as a surface quality, but as a superficial one:

> It is not virtue that constitutes the politeness of a nation, but the art of reducing vice to a system that does not shock society. Politeness (as I understand the word) is a universal desire of pleasing others, that are not too much below one, in trifles, for a little time; and of making one's intercourse with them agreeable to both parties, by civility without ceremony, by ease without brutality, by acquiescence without sincerity.[4]

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1 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.12.

2 Rambler, No. 98, iv. 160-1.

3 Pitt, Correspondence, i. 79 (24 Jan. 1754).

4 World, No. 103, p.231 (attribution to Walpole made on p.489 of Harrison's edn.); similarly Gentleman's Library, p.82; 'Of true Politeness', Grubstreet Journal, Apr. 11, 1734, No.224, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 191.

In these definitions, although the basic aim of politeness, pleasing others in conversation, had also been an essential aspect of Locke's concept of good breeding, the high level of inner commitment and character training demanded by Locke is wholly absent. Notwithstanding the strong criticism of good breeding in the 1730s and 1740s for precisely this same superficiality, these later writers do not restore to manners that depth originally given to them by Locke.

iv. Aesthetics

The English ideal of manners between 1690 and 1760 was thus not a wholly homogeneous one, and it does seem to have undergone a degree of metamorphosis towards a greater emphasis on external details alone. At the same time, however, many of its fundamental themes maintained a basic constancy and unity. This unity of identity was not restricted to manners alone. The ideal of manners at this time bears a resemblance, too close to be coincidental, to contemporary neoclassical aesthetic theories in the arts.

The relationship between manners and the arts was manifested in three ways: shared ideals, shared vocabulary, and the drawing of direct parallels. The most basic of the shared ideals was an emphasis on the fundamental importance of decorum. In a standard work on eighteenth-century aesthetics, W.J. Bate asserts that "the primary rule" of eighteenth-century art was decorum.[1] In architecture, decorum was used as a touchstone of a building's quality. The major ideals associated with decorum, order and harmony,[2] were to be maintained not only in the appropriateness of a building's general design to its function and surroundings, but also in the symmetry, unity,

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1 W.J. Bate, From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p.14; also Pat Rogers, The Augustan Vision (1974), p.50.

2 Bate, From Classic to Romantic, p.8; M. Battestin, The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts (Oxford, 1974), p.3.

and proportion of its specific parts.[1] The Palladian architecture of the eighteenth-century English country house was a mirror of all these ideals.[2] The same concepts of harmony, proportion, and order were fundamental considerations in the composition of contemporary music.[3] In literature, writers believed that adherence to decorum was a precondition of their own success.[4] In poetry, this entailed the use of a standardised form of language and imagery considered to be appropriate to the subject matter. One of the major manifestations of decorum in drama bears a particularly close resemblance to courtesy arguments on the same subject. This was the insistence on the maintenance of the decorum or consistency of a dramatic character in relation to the behaviour proper to his social station, especially his rank. In this way (to take a slightly early but still representative example), John Dryden states:

> ... the manners [of characters] must be suitable, or agreeing to the persons; that is, to the age, sex, dignity, and the other general heads of manners: thus, when a poet has given the dignity of a king to one of his persons, in all his actions and speeches, that person must discover majesty, magnanimity, and jealousy of power, because these are suitable to the general manners of a king.[5]

Another theme recurrent in neoclassical aesthetics was the belief that, to reach its full perfection, nature must be improved by art. Contemporary aesthetic theorists believed that nature in its highest form did not exist in reality. This meant that art could only hope

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1 B.S. Allen, Tides in English Taste 1619-1800 (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), i. 23-4, 29-35, 79-80, 89-90.

2 See e.g. the house plans from Colin Campbell's Vitruvius Britannicus (1717-25), repro. in Allen, Tides in English Taste, between pp. 64-73.

3 Battestin, The Providence of Wit..., ch. 1, espec. pp. 1-33, 49-57.

4 Rogers, Augustan Vision, p.50.

5 Troilus and Cressida, Preface containing the grounds of criticism in tragedy (1679), in Essays of John Dryden, ed. W.P. Ker (New York, 1961), i. 214.

to imitate ideal nature by improving upon actual nature. Thus, Henry Felton asserts: "Nature herself must be civilized, or she will look savage",[1] and the portrait painter and art critic Jonathan Richardson states:

> So That is said to be done by the Life which is done the thing intended to be represented being set before us, tho' we neither follow it Intirely, nor intend so to do, but Add, or Retrench by the help of preconceiv'd Ideas of a Beauty, and Perfection we imagine Nature is capable of, tho' 'tis Rarely, or Never found.[2]

In the viewpoint expressed here by Richardson, art is regarded as a wholly positive force; the later Romantic dichotomy between nature and artifice is not apparent. Richardson's contemporaries required that art should conceal its own artifice. Thus the art critic George Turnbull argues that a prerequisite of perfection in painting was "an appearance of Freedom and Ease [which] consists in hiding Art by Art; or in giving an agreeable Semblance of unlaboured and natural to a Work".[3] The eighteenth-century landscape garden is the most striking example of this philosophy in practice. One major reason why art was regarded as improving nature was that through art could be achieved the ideals of decorum, that is, order and harmony. Thus, the playwright and literary critic Charles Gildon was of the opinion that:

> ...Art entirely includes Nature, that being no more, than Nature reduc'd to Form....without Art, there can be no Order, and without Order, Harmony is sought in vain, where nothing but shocking Confusion can be found.[4]

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1 Felton, Dissertation on Reading the Classics, p.9.

2 J. Richardson, 'An Essay On the whole Art of Criticism as it relates to Painting', in his Two Discourses (1719), i.152. See similarly, Battestin, Providence of Wit, p.52; T.P. Foley, 'The Concept of Taste in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory' (Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1980), pp. 300-4; L. Bredvold, 'The Tendency toward Platonism in Neo-Classical Esthetics', Journal of English Literary History, i. (1934), 91-119.

3 G. Turnbull, A Treatise on Ancient Painting (1740), p.86.

4 C. Gildon, The Complete Art of Poetry (1718), i. 94-5.

Such a recurrent stress on harmony and order closely mirrors the "just Proportion" characterising James Forrester's concept of politeness,[1] and the "harmonious Order... of Good-Breeding" apparent in every action of John Constable's ideal gentleman, Timander.[2]

In his discussion of decorum, W.J. Bate states: "the very nature of unity or order presupposes for its delineation an ordered approach, an approach, in fact, which necessitates rule."[3] It was a very frequent contention in the first half of the eighteenth century that the aesthetic ideals of decorum and art could be known and achieved through the correct use of method and rules.[4] This dependence on rules had been adopted by the English from the sixteenth-century Italian and seventeenth-century French neoclassicists, although it never reached quite the extreme in England that it did in France.[5] Even in England, however, contemporary fondness for methodising tended towards a pedantic obsession with the strict application of rules in every field.[6] There were handbooks of rules for the composition of poetry, such as Edward Bysshe's Art of English Poetry (1702) or Charles Gildon's Laws of Poetry (1721).[7] Both in poetry and drama, Aristotle's rule of the three units of action, place, and time was prescribed.[8] Rules were applied to painting: in 1719 Jonathan Richardson suggested "a System of Rules" by which a picture's quality might be judged.[9] Palladian architecture was proportioned according

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1 See below, p. 139.

2 Constable, Conversation, p.24.

3 Bate, From Classic to Romantic, p.16.

4 Ibid., p.27.

5 Ibid., pp. 27, 34.

6 Ibid., pp. 25-6.

7 Ibid., pp. 34-5.

8 Gildon, Complete Art of Poetry, i. 140.

9 Richardson, 'On the whole Art of Criticism', i. 26.

to strict classical rules of geometry.[1] In his 'Essay on Conversation', which itself applies the use of rules closely to good breeding, Henry Fielding asserts: "there is scarce a Profession or Handicraft in Life, however mean and contemptible, which is not abundantly furnished with proper Rules to the attaining its Perfection."[2]

Fielding's use of the word 'perfection' here is not coincidental: contemporaries believed that the rules provided a guide which, if followed correctly, automatically led to perfection. Thus, in his extended discussion "Of the Use and Necessity of Rules in Poetry", Charles Gildon says that the "Rules" "point out the way that you must walk in",[3] and he who follows them properly "must produce a perfect Poem, that must force it self, with a resistless Pleasure on all that hear it".[4] For Gildon, the rules were a fundamental necessity in all the arts:

> ... as in Architecture, Painting, and Musick, no Man did give us any thing great and complete, without knowing, and long Practice of the Rules of those Arts; so in Poetry, nothing truly excellent was ever yet seen, without a Mastery in the Poetic Principles.[5]

The rules were not only a guide, but a touchstone. Gildon associates them with "Order, Harmony and Design",[6] and says they act in "setting up a true Standard" by which to judge poetry.[7] For Gildon, the rules had an existence and an intrinsic importance in their own right. Derived unchanged from the ancients, they were permanent and immutable, reflecting the laws of nature. While remaining external to the judgement

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1 Bredvold, 'The Tendency toward Platonism...', pp. 91-2.

2 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.121. For his use of 'rules', see above, pp. 122-3.

3 Gildon, Complete Art of Poetry, i. 136.

4 Ibid., i. 96.

5 Ibid., i. 97.

6 Ibid., i. 140.

7 Ibid., i. 95.

of the individual, they could be discovered by the universal human qualities of reason and good sense. Thus, Gildon says:

> For good Sense, and right Reason, is of all Countries and Places; the same Subjects, which caus'd so many Tears to be shed in the Roman Theatre, produce the same Effect on ours; and those Things, that then gave Distaste do the same now. From whence I am convinc'd, that never any Laws had such Force and Authority. Humane Laws expire, or change very often after the Death of those, who enacted them, because Circumstances change, and the Interests of whom they are made to serve are different; but these still gain new Vigour, because they are the Laws of Nature, which always acts with Uniformity, renews them incessantly, and gives them a perpetuate Existence.[1]

The laws described by Gildon here bear marked resemblance to the "eternal Rules of Reason and good Sense" which for Steele are behind every action of good breeding.[2]

To many eighteenth-century theorists, however, the rules by themselves were not sufficient. Gildon suggests that two things are necessary for success: both "knowing and long Practice of the Rules".[3] The word coined in the eighteenth century to describe the combined effect of both these factors was that of 'taste'. Taste was an internal faculty in the individual which could recognise truth and beauty. Thus, the writer of 'An Essay on Taste in General' published in 1731 defined taste as "a peculiar relish for an agreeable object, by judiciously distinguishing its beauties...."[4] The beauty which was recognisable by taste itself coincided closely with the ideals of decorum and art described above.[5] Thus, Nathaniel Lancaster links 'delicacy' or the sense of taste to "an inviolable attachment to decorum",[6] and the Scottish philosopher Francis Hutcheson asserts in his treatise

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1 Gildon, Complete Art of Poetry, i. 135.

2 Spectator, No. 75, i. 323, also 325.

3 Above, p. 134.

4 'An Essay on Taste in General', Weekly Register, 14 Feb., 1731, No. 43, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, i (1731), 55.

5 Above, pp. 130-3.

6 Lancaster, Essay on Delicacy, p. 55, also 66, 68.

'Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design' that the beauty in works of art "we should constantly find... to be some kind of Uniformity, or Unity of Proportion among the Parts, and of each Part to the Whole".[1]

Although it remained the case that the rules supplied the basic guidelines of taste, only their long practice could ensure a proper level of judiciousness. Thus, in contrast to the egalitarian nature of the "Rules", taste was a very exclusive concept. The same writer in the Weekly Register of 1731 wrote of taste that it "is acquired by toil and study, which is the reason so few are possest of it. Nothing is so common as the affectation of, nor any thing so seldom found as Taste".[2] The possession of good taste by the individual required careful cultivation by means of a proper education, good company, leisure, and wealth.[3] The concept of good breeding, as set out by Locke and Chesterfield, of a high ideal requiring lengthy inculcation is a very close parallel of this view of taste. Indeed, the two were so close that their end result, the gentleman, was the same: the same writer in the Weekly Register remarks,

> no-one can properly be stil'd a gentleman, who takes not every opportunity to enrich his own capacity, and settle the elements of Taste....[4]

In a neatly circular argument such educated, cultured individuals living in "polite nations",[5] in the company of "men of rank and polite acquirements",[6] and refraining from manual labour,[7] were as a group

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1 F. Hutcheson, An Inquiry into The Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725, 2nd edn., 1726), part 1, p.38, also 39. For these ideas as fundamental to taste, see Foley, The Concept of Taste, espec. pp. 42-3, 47, 121, 213, 287, 295-6, 300-4, 315-7, 322.

2 'An Essay on Taste in General', p.55.

3 Ibid., p.55; Foley, 'The Concept of Taste', pp.17-8, 100-117.

4 'An Essay on Taste in General', p.55.

5 Henry Home, Lord Kames, 'Standard of Taste', in his Elements of Criticism (1762, 1788 edn.), ii. 498.

6 Lancaster, Essay on Delicacy, pp. xviii-xix.

7 Kames, 'Standard of Taste', p.499.

themselves the sole determinant - by their common opinion - of the standard of correct taste.[1] The standard of taste thus both was defined by and itself defined the membership of a cultured social elite.

This dichotomy between rules open to all, and taste attainable by few, helps to explain, though not perhaps resolve, certain parallel apparent contradictions in eighteenth-century views on good manners and good breeding. While the fundamental rules of good manners as explained by Steele, Swift, and Fielding, were open to all, the practice required to follow them to perfection, as demanded by Locke and Chesterfield, was only attainable after a long process of good breeding, restricted for financial and social reasons to a minority.

Besides these common aesthetic ideals, certain words were also used interchangeably between the fields of manners and art. The words 'polite' and 'politeness' were a preeminent example of this interchangeable vocabulary. It has been stated above[2] that while these words were applied to manners from at least the beginning of the eighteenth century, their alternative meaning of refinement and elegance especially in the arts continued in widespread use till the 1780s. Thus, the Spectator refers to "polite Learning",[3] "the most polite Authors",[4] and "polite Writing",[5] and, in 1734, Addison was posthumously praised for his talent "of writing the best Language in Prose in the chastest, purest, genteelest, and politest Style of any Author...."[6]

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1 Kames, 'Standard of Taste', pp. 498-502; Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, Lecture 2, 'Taste' (1783), i. 32-3; Lancaster, Essay on Delicacy, pp. xviii-xix.

2 Above, p. 128.

3 Spectator, No. 291, iii. 37.

4 Ibid., No. 160, ii. 127.

5 Ibid., No. 58, i. 245.

6 (Anon.), The Manual of Epictetus, (1734), Dedication by William Bond, p. xiii.

The words 'polite' and 'politeness' were used to describe not only the arts in particular, but the general level of cultural refinement of a society. Thus, Addison could refer to "the Polite Nations of the World";[1] Charles Gildon to "All the Civility and Politeness of Europe, deriving it self from the Romans and the Greeks",[2] and Henry Felton to "those Countries, which we call Barbarous, where Art and Politeness are not understood...."[3] This use of 'polite' and 'politeness' approaches very closely to what is now described by the word 'civilisation', that is, the progressive evolution of society from barbarism to refinement. We have seen[4] that good breeding was associated with this social evolution and that as a result the possession of good breeding gained in social importance. This seems to have been the case even more with politeness than with good breeding, because of the closer link in terminology of 'politeness' with both manners and the arts. The social significance of this connection is given another dimension by yet another use of the word 'politeness', this time in association with social rank. Thus, in one of his criticisms of Italian opera, Addison says its acceptance in England is "the more astonishing" because "it is not the Taste of the Rabble, but of Persons of the greatest Politeness, which has establish'd it".[5] In the context of this connection of politeness with rank, it is not the manners of a society in general which have a vital function in reflecting its degree of civilisation, but, rather, the manners of its social elite.

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1 Spectator, No. 39, i. 164.

2 Gildon, Complete Art of Poetry, i. 49.

3 Felton, Dissertation on Reading the Classics, pp. 9-10; similarly Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.205.

4 Above, pp. 119-121.

5 Spectator, No. 68, i. 290.

Besides shared ideals and vocabulary, direct parallels were also drawn between manners and the arts. Thus, James Forrester wrote in a courtesy book of 1734:

> BEHAVIOUR is like Architecture, the Symmetry of the whole pleases us so much, that we examine not into its Parts, which if we did, we should find much Nicety required in forming such a Structure; tho, to Persons of no Taste, the Rules of either Art would seem to have little Connection with their Effects.
>
> That true Politeness we can only call
> Which looks like *Jones's Fabrick at Whitehall:
> Where just Proportion we, with Pleasure, see,
> Tho built by Rule, yet from all Stiffness free.
> Tho grand, yet plain, magnificent, not fine,
> The Ornaments adorning the Design.
> It fills our Minds with rational Delight,
> And pleases on Reflection, as at Sight.
>
> * Banqueting-house [1]

Forrester's reference to Inigo Jones is not an anachronism: Jones's style was one of the most important influences on English Palladian taste in architecture between 1710 and 1750.[2] In this passage, linked equally to the "Art[s]" of manners and architecture, are all the major themes of eighteenth-century aesthetics: rules, art, taste, reason, proportion, symmetry. Other writers, of both courtesy and aesthetics, make very similar comparisons. The writer of 'An Essay on Taste in General' asserts:

> a good Taste is not confined only to writings, but extends to painting and sculpture; comprehends the whole circle of civility and good manners, and regulates life and conduct, as well as theory and speculation....[3]

Nathaniel Lancaster applies the rules of decorum and taste to both good breeding in manners and "the imitative arts",[4] and argues that the result in both is "an elegance of manners [and a] warm sensibility

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1 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.25.

2 John Summerson, Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830 (1953, rev. 1977), ch. 20, espec. pp. 318-27.

3 'An Essay on Taste in General', p. 55; similarly The Polite Companion (1749), i. 112-3; see further Foley, 'The Concept of Taste', pp. 19-25.

4 Lancaster, Essay on Delicacy, pp. 52-4, 68.

of whatever is pure, regular, and polite; and... an abhorrence of whatever is gross, rustic, or impure...."[1] James Miller compares politeness with the proportion and harmony of the sound of a well-tuned lute.[2] In The Guardian, it is argued that both dress and a poem should be governed by the same rules of decorum and harmony.[3] John Constable asserts that there can be an excess of care and exactness in manners as in painting, and to support his point gives an extended quotation from Sir Henry Wotton on beauty in statuary and art.[4] The World comments on "the affinity which the more liberal arts and sciences have to manners and behaviour", and gives as an example the education of a painter and a young lady, who both require long study and the imitation of others without the affectation of unsuitable qualities.[5] Chesterfield similarly likens the acquiring of good breeding in manners to the process of creating other art forms.[6] Shaftesbury comments that to be considered a good author, a writer must display good breeding in his work,[7] and draws a detailed analogy between the necessity of lessons in deportment in order to be a true gentleman, and the necessity of similar instruction in philosophy in order to be a good author.[8] He also states, referring to "a beauty in inward sentiments and principles", that:

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1 Lancaster, Essay on Delicacy, p. 55.

2 J. Miller, 'Of Politeness', (1738), p.20.

3 Guardian, No. 149, pp. 295-6.

4 Constable, Conversation, pp. 25-6; see similarly pp. 268-9.

5 World, No. 78, pp. 176-7.

6 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1434, 1439-40; v. 1994.

7 Shaftesbury, 'Soliloquy, or, Advice to an Author', Characteristicks, i. 150.

8 Ibid., i. 171-2.

> Whoever has any impression of what we call gentility or politeness is already so acquainted with the Decorum and Grace of things, that he will readily confess a pleasure and enjoyment in the very survey and contemplation of this kind.[1]

He concludes:

> To philosophize, in a just signification, is but to carry good-breeding a step higher. For the accomplishment of breeding is, to learn whatever is decent in company, or beautiful in Arts; and the sum of philosophy is, to learn what is just in society, and beautiful in Nature and the order of the world... [Both the well-bred man and the philosopher] aim at what is excellent, aspire to a just taste, and carry in view the model of what is beautiful and becoming. Accordingly, the respective conduct and distinct manners of each party are regulated: the one according to the perfectest ease, and good entertainment of company; the other according to the strictest interest of mankind and society: the one according to a man's rank and quality in his private nation, the other according to his rank and dignity in nature.[2]

This intimate connection between manners and aesthetics in the first half of the eighteenth century has several important implications. The first is that, in so closely reflecting contemporary aesthetic ideals, manners may be seen unquestionably to have a very important function as an indicator of the cultural values of a society. The second is that, because good breeding was so inseparably connected with ideas of good taste, just as by definition there was no positive alternative to good taste, so there could exist no alternative to good breeding but ill breeding. This point is made very clearly by Lord Shaftesbury. Speaking of "the notion of a Beauty in outward manners and deportment", he argues:

> That there is really a standard of manners and behaviour will immediately, and on the first view, be acknowledged. The contest is only, "Which is right: - which the un-affected carriage and just demeanour: And which the affected and false.[3]

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1 Shaftesbury, 'Miscellaneous Reflections', in his Characteristicks, iii. 161.

2 Ibid., iii. 111-2, repr. in The Polite Companion, i. 100.

3 Shaftesbury, 'Miscellaneous Reflections', iii. 160-1.

In creating such rigid standards rather than graduated boundaries, a situation is created in which, for anyone who believes in the worth of the standards, anything they exclude is automatically seen to be of low value. In such a polar concept, there was no viable middle ground to be possessed by the parvenu or social aspirant. The third and final important implication of the correspondence between good breeding and taste is that manners were not merely the reflection of eighteenth-century aesthetic ideals, they were their literal embodiment. In 1749, it was stated in the Polite Companion that in "WELL-BRED ladies", "The study of a good Taste... appears with a delicate lustre, not only in their air, conversation, and epistolary correspondence, but in the lowest articles of economy and dress".[1] Manners operated as a vehicle through which the pretensions of their owners to conformity with the aesthetic ideal might be displayed. Good manners were a personal, visible, portable, and inalienable microcosm of taste.

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1 The Polite Companion, i. 116.

CHAPTER 4

PRESCRIPTIONS OF MANNERS FOR THE GENTLEMAN

Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers gave by far the largest proportion of their attention to prescribing the ideal manners of the gentleman. Roughly two thirds of the total courtesy literature produced between 1690 and 1760 concerns the gentleman, rather than the other two major groups of ladies or servants and apprentices.[1] Moreover, within the discussion of the gentleman's manners, there is a far wider range of themes considered than is the case for either of the other two groups.

i. Noblemen and courtiers

In contrast with the Continental Renaissance and the seventeenth-century French tradition, English courtesy writers after 1690 paid very little specific attention indeed to either the nobleman or the courtier. In choosing to focus on the gentleman in preference to the nobleman, they continued a tendency characteristic of the native English courtesy tradition, which stretched back through seventeenth-century works such as Allestree's Gentleman's Calling and Richard Brathwaite's The English Gentleman of 1630, to Elyot's Gouernour in the sixteenth century.[2] Noblemen are given almost no specific attention by English courtesy writers between 1690 and 1760. The only two exceptions of any noteworthy size are one or two advice books by noblemen to their sons, which are largely concentrated at the beginning of this period, and which are largely general conduct books containing little advice on manners,[3] and a few translations

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1 For a rough indication see below, Bibliography A1, titles.

2 See also Kelso, Doctrine of the Gentleman, pp. 19-20.

3 E.g. Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyle, Instructions to a Son (1661), revised as Advice to a young lord (1691); Henry Booth, 1st Earl of Warrington, Advice to his Children (1694).

of French treatises to do with the education of a prince or nobleman.[1] The only major courtesy example of this period of aristocratic advice on manners, the Earl of Chesterfield's letters to his son, was itself directed only to a gentleman, the boy being illegitimate.

Several important courtesy writers included the nobleman within their concept of the gentleman. William Darrell's The Gentleman Instructed was "Written for the Instruction of a Young Nobleman" and is specifically directed by Darrell to both the gentry and nobility.[2] John Costeker's The Fine Gentleman is similarly subtitled "The Compleat Education of a Young Nobleman".[3] In his Essay of particular Advice to the Young Gentry (1711), John Graile offers his thoughts for the consideration of both "our Nobility and Gentry".[4] This subsuming of the nobleman within the encompassing category of the gentleman is highly significant. In what we have seen was a polar model of good and ill breeding,[5] the crucial line of social distinction is placed, not dividing the nobility and gentry, but rather demarcating them as a single group from those below the gentleman in the traditional social hierarchy. Three consequences follow. First, the traditional ruling elite is provided with a fundamental unity of identity in the very important form of cultural expression constituted by manners. Second, the great gulf between good and ill breeding is placed below the gentleman. Given the importance placed on good breeding as a social attribute, this divide forms one barrier to the upward mobility of the gentleman's inferiors. The third result is only a possibility.

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1 E.g. Marquise de Lambert, Advice... to her son and daughter (tr. 1729, 1749); Chévalier Ramsay, A Plan of Education for a Young Prince (tr. 1732).

2 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, title, p.97, and 'Supplement to the Ladies', p.iv.

3 J. Costeker, The Fine Gentleman (1732), title.

4 J. Graile, An Essay of particular Advice to the Young Gentry (1711), p.184.

5 Above, ch. 3, pp. 141-2.

In contrast to the aristocratic French and Italian courtesy traditions,[1] English writers have translated the ideal of good manners a major step down the social scale. This does seem to provide a potential situation in which the ideal could be subsequently attainable by more people than is possible with an aristocratic model. Assessment of this potential, however, must wait upon further analysis of more detailed evidence.

The lack of attention given to courtiers is equally in contrast with Continental precedent. There had been a tendency among courtesy writers from Castiglione onwards to give advice on the conduct of a courtier to his prince, especially on the arts of dissimulation and flattery. This was carried on in seventeenth-century England, both in translations from the French, and in native English works.[2] By the very end of the seventeenth century, however, these concerns are extremely rare in the courtesy literature. The major exception is Chesterfield, who is repeatedly insistent that royal courts are the only true source and standard of good breeding.[3] It has already been suggested that Chesterfield represented older views than those current when he was writing, and certainly at least part of his concern for his son's knowledge of court circles stemmed from the boy's planned diplomatic career. Besides Chesterfield's comments, only two unqualified endorsements of the court as the source and standard of good breeding appear in the courtesy literature, and both in passing only.[4] Such a lack of interest in the court would certainly appear

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1 Above, ch. 2, pp. 20-2, 77-9.

2 E.g. du Réfuge, Treatise of the Court (tr. 1622); A. Courtin, The Rules of Civility (tr. 1671); J. de Callières, The Courtier's Calling (tr. 1675); Francis Osborne, Advice to a Son (1656-8), ed. E.A. Parry (1896), pp. 88-95.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1134, 1145-6; iv. 1383; and in The World, No. 148, pp. 328-9.

4 In a letter to the Spectator, No. 566, iv. 534, and in 'On Ridicule', Weekly Register, 16 Jan. 1731, repr. in The Gentleman's Magazine, i. (1731), 12-3.

to conflict with the suggestion made by Norbert Elias (largely on the basis of Continental evidence) that the ultimate source of manners was the royal court, from which fashion changes moved down the social scale.[1] Rather, it seems to indicate that English courtesy writers in this period were moving away from a view of the court as the arbiter of good breeding. Whether this was indicative of a more general social development is difficult to determine without substantial further research.[2]

ii. Gentlemen

In their discussions of the manners of the gentleman, courtesy writers make very little attempt to define his status in terms of traditional legal distinctions of social rank. In the traditional hierarchy, below the five orders of nobility there followed the gentry, of which there were four levels: baronets, knights, esquires, and, finally, gentlemen.[3] In legal terms, the possession of a family coat of arms was both a sole prerogative of and the final proof of membership in these levels of gentry and nobility.[4] Official controls over the appellation of gentleman, however, were in serious decline by the end of the seventeenth century, with the lapsing of heraldic visitations in the 1680s and a breaking down of heraldic authority for the next hundred years.[5]

Courtesy writers between 1690 and 1760 use the term 'gentleman' very imprecisely. Only a handful of writers give it any definition

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1 Above, ch. 1, pp. 13-14.

2 But cf. on this point the rise of Beau Nash at Bath: O. Goldsmith, The Life of Richard Nash (1762), repr. The Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, ed. A. Friedman (Oxford, 1966), iii. 299-321, and the general social drabness of the royal court under George I: J.M. Beattie, The English Court in the Reign of George I (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 258-78.

3 G.E. Mingay, The Gentry (1976), p.3.

4 A. Wagner, English Genealogy, (Oxford, 1960), p. 108.

5 Ibid., pp. 109-10, 117, see also G.D. Squibb, The High Court of Chivalry (Oxford, 1959), pp. 171-5.

at all in terms of the social hierarchy, and those who do are not only imprecise but also to a point contradictory. One of the earliest definitions in this period, that of Isaac Barrow in 1693, uses the word in a very restricted sense. Barrow refers to "Gentlemen; or persons of eminent rank in the World, well allied, graced with honour, and furnished with wealth".[1] However, a courtesy writer of 1717 gives the term a relatively broad definition, arguing:

> I shall divide Gentility into three Branches, (viz.) the Gentleman by Birth, by Acquisition of Fortune, and by Education,

asserting further that these constituted "the common Acceptation of the Word Gentleman".[2] In contrast, Daniel Defoe, writing in 1729, asserted that it was still commonly believed that gentlemanly ancestry was a prerequisite for being a gentleman.[3] Defoe himself is highly critical of this narrow definition,[4] and sets forward his alternative ideal of the gentleman by education. Close examination of this ideal, however, reveals that it does not encompass substantially more people. Defoe admits to the ranks of the gentry only the children,[5] but preferably the grandchildren,[6] of the newly-monied and very wealthy group of financiers and stock-brokers which emerged at the end of the seventeenth century,[7] in total only a very small group in society.[8]

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1 I. Barrow, 'Of Industry in our Particular Calling as Gentlemen', in his Of Industry (1693), p. 128.

2 Essays on the Conduct of Life (1717), p.79.

3 Defoe, Compleat English Gentleman, p.13, also pp. 15-16, 257.

4 Ibid., pp. 4-5, 13.

5 Ibid., p. 4.

6 Ibid., p. 268; id., The Complete English Tradesman (1726), p.376.

7 Ibid., pp. 257, also 268.

8 For a discussion of their origins, composition, and numbers, see P.G.M. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit 1688-1756 (1967), pp.3-35; R. Grassby, 'English Merchant Capitalism in the Late Seventeenth Century', Past and Present, xlvi (1970), 87-107; G. Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (1967), pp. 152-7.

Defoe does not allow these monied men themselves to qualify as gentlemen,[1] and only permits their offspring to claim the title if they have natural abilities, a liberal education, polite bearing, and a distinguished public career.[2] Subsequent discussions in the courtesy literature of the social rank of the gentleman are very sparse indeed, but they all display a continued belief in gentlemanly birth as an important foundation of gentlemanly status. Thus John Constable refers in 1738 to a man having "the Birth of a Gentleman";[3] in the Connoisseur it is argued that the title of gentleman given of military officers is only one of courtesy,[4] and in the Adventurer Samuel Johnson uses the word 'gentleman' in opposition to "upstarts" of "defective ancestry".[5] There is, however, one concrete example of the term 'gentleman' being used by a courtesy writer to apply to the professional and merchant groups in society. This is The Young Gentleman's New Years Gift of 1729, written by "a Gentleman of the Middle Temple",[6] who had practised law for "some Years".[7] He lists several possible professions for the young gentleman to enter, consisting of soldiering, divinity, law, physic, or being a merchant.[8]

Courtesy writers did make the concerted argument at this time that gentlemanly ancestry alone was not sufficient in their eyes to qualify a man for the title of gentleman. In these assertions, they reveal very clearly their appropriation of a term denoting a

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1 Defoe, Compleat English Gentleman, pp. 267-8.

2 Ibid., p. 4.

3 Constable, Conversation, p. 200.

4 Connoisseur, No. 70, ii. 127-8.

5 Adventurer, No. 74, (Yale edn.), p. 398.

6 The Young Gentleman's New Years Gift (1729), title page.

7 Ibid., p.45.

8 Ibid., pp. 37-59, also 30, 33.

specific social rank to apply instead to their concept of the ideal man. Their view that birth by itself was insufficient to qualify as a gentleman was part of a long courtesy tradition which argued that merit and virtue should be of equal importance with birth as criteria for the gentleman.[1] This view was repeatedly reiterated in the eighteenth century. It was argued that while a noble or generous birth was of value, a truly noble man also possessed personal virtue and merits,[2] without which he "degrades and disenobles his rank".[3] Just how completely the term 'gentleman' could be appropriated in this way is shown in an assertion by Steele - only one of several made by different writers - that "The appellation of gentleman is never to be affixed to a man's circumstances, but to his behaviour in them", and that on those grounds, an upright tradesman had more right to the name than did a false courtier.[4]

iii. Social rank

Nonetheless, despite both this appropriation of the term 'gentleman' to describe their own ideal, and their lack of precision in defining it in terms of social rank, courtesy writers from this period display over and over again a concern to maintain the traditional social hierarchy, arguing that it was essential for the preservation of civilised society. So Bishop Fleetwood wrote:

> ... distinction of quality and condition is absolutely necessary to the keeping up Quiet and Order in the World; it is impossible for Mankind to live in peace, without a due Subordination of one condition to another.[5]

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1 See above, ch. 2, pp. 59-60; Heltzel, 'Chesterfield and ... the Ideal Gentleman', pp.1-21; Defoe, Compleat English Gentleman, editor's introduction, pp. xxxii-xlv.

2 Graile, Letter of Particular Advice, p.137; Polite Companion, pp. 220-222.

3 Addison in Guardian, No. 137, p. 275.

4 Tatler, No. 207, iv. 72; similarly Guardian, No. 130, pp. 261-2; Essays on the Conduct of Life, p. 82.

5 Fleetwood, Relative Duties (1705), p.125; similarly N. Rowe, Of the Manner of Living with Great Men (1713), p.1.

Samuel Johnson agreed with him, basing the distinctions of rank on either birth or office:

> ... Were all distinctions abolished, the strongest would not long acquiesce, but would endeavour to gain a superiority by their bodily strength. But, Sir, as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilized nations, have settled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or his being appointed to particular offices, gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness.[1]

This concern to maintain traditional distinctions of social rank is one of the most prominent themes running through all of eighteenth-century English courtesy literature. While it would be difficult to find a contemporary courtesy work which was completely free from such an interest, the concern for rank is particularly heavily concentrated in the works which discuss the manners of gentlemen. Courtesy writers believed that manners were a crucial means of maintaining distinctions of rank, and, through them, the order of society. Thus, Isaac Barrow states that "External respect, and semblance of honour" are due to the possessors of rank or title "for the sake of publick order",[2] and other writers similarly assert that deference must be paid to those of birth and ancestry, "for if all distinction and degree be dissolved, government can never long exist".[3] For William Darrell, a crucial factor in eliciting such deference from inferiors was the display of good breeding by the gentleman:

> To begin the Part of a Gentleman, perswade your self, it's your Duty and Interest to act it well....so many [gentlemen] in Conversation fall below their Station; they fansie a Title supported with Means, places 'em in a Region above the Niceties of Breeding; that a Sir

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1 Boswell, Life of Johnson, i. 442 (20 July, 1763).

2 Barrow, Of Industry, pp. 144-5.

3 'The Advantages of Ancestry demonstrated', The Gentleman's Magazine, xxvi (1756), 81; also Addison in Spectator, No. 219, ii. 354; Graile, Letter of... Advice, p. 137; J. Collier, Essays upon several Moral Subjects (1694-5, 2nd edn. 1697), pp. 14-15.

> gilds the most unbeseeming Behaviour, and a Coronet dignifies Rusticity; but this is a mistake... For Actions are not rated by Men, but Men by Actions; and if these smell of the Clown, or sute with the Peasant, Right Worshipful must be content with those Titles; for the Mob knows well enough, that Gentlemen can claim no Respect from Nature: they are all of the same Matter, and the Soul of a Lazarus is of as refined a Metal as that of Dives; and therefore, if they see no advantage on Quality's side, but a Coach and Six; they will be apt to think themselves as Good Men as their Masters, though not so Rich; and that they are beholden more to Chance or Injustice for their Fortune, than to Merit.[1]

To discover exactly how good breeding could operate to support the gentleman's rank, it is necessary to give detailed consideration to prescriptions for his manners.

iv. Dress

One of the most traditional and long-standing means of visibly distinguishing different social ranks was dress. Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers agreed that this was one of the most important functions of human apparel. Three reasons were given why a man's dress should be appropriate to his social rank. First, it conformed to the rule of decorum; second, it helped to maintain order and prevent confusion in society; and, third, it ensured the payment of respect to those of superior rank. Bishop Fleetwood puts forward all these arguments:

> We may reasonably presume that the Apostles intended to forbid, all such costliness of Apparel as exceeds the Quality and Ability of the Wearer. First, because this is an offence against Decency, that natural and becoming order, which both the wisdom and custom of all times and places have agreed upon, as most convenient to discriminate and difference People one from another, and, in the matter of Quality, to prevent all Disrespect, Disorder and Confusion.[2]

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 8.

2 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp. 231-2. The argument concerning disorder also appears in Collier, Essays, p.89; that concerning respect in Spectator, No.478, iv. 193. For the same general argument for a correlation between dress and rank, see Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.21; Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 698.

In addition to distinguishing rank, it was believed that dress should be used to set apart those in authority or public office from their inferiors. Thus, in the Gentleman's Library, it is stated:

> It seems to me plain, that a distinguishing Bravery of Habit is only proper to mark out the Patrician, or add exterior Authority to those who are possessed of publick Charges in a Government. For as People generally take their Measures more from the Appearance, than Reason of Things, their Apprehensions are so disposed, that they think nothing Great but what is Pompous, and glitters upon the Senses. And if their Governours had not some Advantage of them in Figure, they would be apt to overlook their Character, and forget their Distance. Here is only an innocent Stratagem, to deceive the Vulgar into Duty, and to awe them into a just Sense of Obedience.[1]

In this passage, terms of social rank (the "Patrician" and the "Vulgar") are intermingled with references to the governors and the governed. Such a correspondence reflects the realities of eighteenth-century English social life, in which noblemen and gentlemen served as officials in central and local government (for example, as members of Parliament, Lord Lieutenants, county sheriffs, and justices of the peace). In the practice of many of these occupations, there was not always a clear-cut distinction between private and official life, between times on and off duty. Hence, a deliberate assumption of impressive dress to reinforce its wearer's authority of office would also tend to reinforce his superiority of social rank.[2]

As a portrayer of its wearer's social status, dress had a number of advantages. It was attached to the person, portable, highly visible in any social situation, and gave an instantaneous impression without the need for words. It could thereby serve as a form of

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1 Gentleman's Library, pp. 55-6, also p.365. The bulk of the passage cited from pp. 55-6 is a close paraphrase of Collier, Essays, pp. 90-1, however, the cited passage adds some important words such as "Patrician" which heighten the element of rank.

2 For the argument that impressive dress reinforces authority in the law courts, see Steele, Ladies Library (1714), i.109; G. Savile, Marquis of Halifax, Life and Letters, ed. H.C. Foxcroft (1898), ii. 484; D. Hay,'Property, Authority and the Criminal Law', in Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England, ed. D. Hay et al. (1975), pp.17-63.

credentials for its wearer in situations where he was personally unknown. The early periodical writers repeatedly made this point. The Guardian observes that

> Dress is grown of universal use in the conduct of life. Civilities and respect are only paid to appearance. It is a varnish that gives a lustre to every action, 'a passe par Tout', that introduces us into all polite assemblies.[1]

Richard Steele makes a similar remark in the Spectator:

> It is an assertion which admits of much proof, that a Stranger of tolerable Sense, dress'd like a Gentleman, will be much better receiv'd by those of Quality above him, than one of much better Parts, whose Dress is regulated by the rigid Notions of Frugality.[2]

This direct association between quality of dress and the social status accorded to its wearer by spectators is repeatedly made by courtesy writers. Samuel Johnson remarks on "the splendour of dress, which every man has observed to enforce respect, and facilitate reception",[3] and Eustace Budgell comments about himself that "my Banker... writes me Mr. or Esq; accordingly as he sees me dress'd".[4] Bernard Mandeville felt that this widespread association of dress with social rank made its exploitation particularly effective in the anonymity of an urban environment:

> ... whatever Reflexions may be made on this head, the World has long since decided the Matter; handsome Apparel is a main Point, fine Feathers make fine Birds, and People, where they are not known, are generally honour'd according to their Clothes and other Accoutrements they have about them; from the richness of them we judge of their Wealth, and by their ordering of them we guess at their Understanding. It is this which encourages every Body, who is conscious of his little Merit, if he is any ways able, to wear Clothes above his Rank, especially in large and populous Cities, where obscure Men may hourly meet with fifty Strangers

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1 Guardian, No.149, p.295, repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.47, and paraphrased in Polite Student, pp. 49-50.

2 Spectator, No. 360, iii. 347.

3 Idler, No. 62, p. 194.

4 Spectator, No. 150, ii. 92.

> to one Acquaintance, and consequently have the Pleasure of being esteem'd by a vast Majority, not as what they are, but what they appear to be.[1]

Considerable credence was thus given to dress as an indication of its wearer's status and the respect due to him. A gentleman's dress was judged on four main grounds: its cleanliness, state of repair, conformity to fashion, and richness of quality. He was commonly advised to maintain the mean between extravagant, highly fashionable foppery on the one hand, and unfashionable, slovenly dress on the other.[2] Courtesy writers laid considerable emphasis on the importance of an individual's conformity in dress to the prevailing social custom. Chesterfield states:

> ... dress is a very foolish thing; and yet it is a very foolish thing for a man not to be well dressed, according to his rank and way of life.[3]

Negligence of dress, he adds, "is an impertinent insult upon custom and fashion".[4] Bishop Fleetwood agreed: "to think it sinful, to follow a Fashion because new, and conform to Custom in these cases, is, to set up our own imaginations against the whole Worlds...."[5] Even William Darrell, otherwise censorious of fashionable frivolity, tempered his criticism by adding: "Allowance must be given to Custom, and Opinion".[6] While the gentleman should follow the general fashion trend, however, he was not to comply with its every whim, for that revealed weakness of character.[7] The fop, who affected every fashion

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1 B. Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees..., ed. F.B. Kaye (Oxford, 1924), i. 127. For other comments on the importance of dress to one's reception, see Gentleman's Library, p.49; Spectator, No. 478, iv. 193, No. 150, ii. 90 (repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.69) and No. 302, iii. 82-3.

2 Spectator, No.150, ii.91, repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.68; also Chesterfield, Letters, v.1403; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.21; Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, pp.18-9.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 698.

4 Ibid., iii. 1170.

5 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, p.211.

6 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.21.

7 Gentleman's Library, p.50.

change and was interested in his clothes to the exclusion of most other concerns, was a major butt of eighteenth-century satire, in which courtesy writers fully participated.[1] The correct path for the gentleman to follow was rather to be neither the first nor the last to adopt a new fashion,[2] and, although complying with the requirements of dress, to maintain a sense of perspective about their essential unimportance.[3]

A gentleman's neglect of dress was as strongly condemned as foppery. Neglected dress could involve unfashionableness, 'rusticity', or uncleanliness. Thus the author of The Gentleman's Library states: "'tis as great a Weakness to be out of Fashion, as to effect to be in it",[4] adding further:

> I would not have my Son practise Rusticity in his Apparel, or be careless therein to a Pitch of Nastiness.[5]

William Darrell felt likewise: "A Gentleman must not be so unpretending in Appearance, as to affect Slovenliness; this is to sacrifice one Vice to another, to atone for Vanity with Nastiness".[6]

It was because of the credence given to dress as an indicator of social status that courtesy writers strongly criticised gentlemen who dressed below their rank: they believed the result would be a lack of respect from others. William Darrell argued that "a Gentleman should not clatter in Sabots, nor trudge about in Linsy-Woolsy. Quality under such a Disguise would make a slovenly Figure".[7] The

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1 E.g. Spectator, No.275, ii.570-3; No.504, iv. 289; J. Drake, Essay in Defence of the Female Sex (1696), p.71; Costeker, Fine Gentleman, p.15; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.21, 24; Constable, Conversation, p.97; Penton, New Instructions to the Guardian, p.106; Gentleman's Library, p.48.

2 Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.19; J. Miller, 'Of Politeness' (1738), p.19.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 698-9.

4 Gentleman's Library, p.58.

5 Ibid., p.50.

6 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 21; also Polite Student, p.50.

7 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 21.

Gentleman's Library contains a strong condemnation of the "contemptible and blame-worthy" "Singularity" of wealthy men who "draw upon themselves the Ridicule of the World" by choosing, whether from avarice or "mere habitual Nastiness", to dress meanly:

> Nothing is more obvious, than to see Men of known Wealth and Ability shrunk out of their proper Character, and shuffling about the Town with a Weather-beaten Wig, a Thread-bare Coat, darn'd Stockings, and a dirty Shirt: They are so much out of their Element, when dressed up, that they only then seem to think themselves in Disguise; and yet expect People should see their Quality and Circumstances through their rusty Outside, and pay a Deference to their Wealth, though cloak'd in Beggary.[1]

The problem about using dress as a status symbol was that it required wealth, whereas the prevailing status system was still based to a large extent on birth. The two criteria, therefore, did not always coincide in the same people. As Darrell put it: "Nobility alone (as the World goes) is a slender Inheritance. Good Blood must have good Coin to appear significant, and make a figure."[2] The courtesy writers instructed gentlemen to maintain their social position by means of fashionable dress, while at the same time telling them that they must live within their income[3] and on no account go into debt.[4] Impoverished gentry families might well have found it difficult to reconcile these conflicting demands.[5]

From the opposite perspective, a lack of congruity between wealth and birth enabled some people to wear clothes which were considered

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1 Gentleman's Library, p.68. For a description of this resulting lack of deference in actual life, see C. de Saussure, A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I and George II (1902), pp. 113-6.

2 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.364.

3 E.g. Ibid., pp. 17, 373, 408; Spectator, No. 114, i. 467-9.

4 Especially to tradesmen: Gentleman's Library, pp.54-5; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.370-1; Spectator, No. 258, ii. 505; J. Bramston, The Man of Taste (1733), p.15.

5 On the impoverishment of the country gentry and their difficulties in living up to rising standards of conspicuous consumption, c.1690-1714, see Holmes, British Politics, pp. 157-62.

to be above their social rank. This practice received even stronger denunciations from the courtesy writers than did dressing below one's station in life. The Gentleman's Library contains a discussion on "Decorum in Point of Habit" to this effect:

> 'tis an Observation, that Ordinary People, when they happen to abound in Money and Vanity, have their Houses and Persons as richly furnished, as those who are much their Superiors in Quality.
>
> But how great is the Madness of some private Men, who, being possess'd of large Estates, which their Fathers got for them by Trade and Industry, form their Wardrobe and Equipage from the Manner of the Nobility; and by excessive Expence, and ridiculous Stateliness, provoke the Laughter of the whole Town; which they a while fancy is dazzled by their Lustre, till they ruin themselves in the End with labouring to make themselves ridiculous! The Foolishness of some Pretenders in the City, in their wretched Imitation of Court Accomplishments, is more offensive than the Ill-Breeding of ordinary Men, and the Rusticity of Villagers.[1]

What is striking about this passage is the virulence of the writer's tone. The use of words like "ridiculous", "offensive" and "Madness" suggests the presence of strong, and perhaps even threatened feelings on the subject. One concrete threat suggested by the same writer was that, given the credence accorded to dress as a means of identification, a man could pass himself off as a gentleman to "unsuspecting Strangers" with the deliberate aim of deceiving or defrauding them.[2] To Jeremy Collier, the threat was to the very social order itself. Singling out "those below the Gentry", "who make their Cloaths much better than their Condition", he argued:

> In them it looks like a Levelling Principle; like an illegal Aspiring into a forbidden Station. It looks as if they had a mind to destroy the Order of Government, and to confound the Distinctions of Merit and Degree.[3]

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1 Gentleman's Library, pp. 61-2. See further on socially-aspiring dress below, pp. 260, 294-8.

2 Gentleman's Library, pp. 53-4.

3 Collier, Essays, pp. 101-2.

Faced with what appeared to be such a strong danger, courtesy writers reacted in three ways. Common to a number of writers was the expression of a desire for the return of effective sumptuary laws to link dress and social rank.[1] At the same time, however, such statements often contain a tacit recognition that such an eventuality was unlikely.[2] Instead, there was, on the part of at least some writers, a deliberate rejection of sumptuous dress as a valid status indicator. Some of the clearest statements to this effect are made by Jeremy Collier. He rejects "Richness of Habit" on two grounds: because the lack of sumptuary laws makes it an "insufficient" method of keeping up rank distinctions,[3] and because its use by inferiors has debased its worth. Referring to the use of gold and scarlet on coaches and servants' liveries, he argues:

> This Prostitution of Finery is enough to make it nauseous, and to ruin its Reputation to all Intents and Purposes.[4]

Collier therefore deliberately sets out to invert the traditional association of sumptuous dress with high rank. He denigrates such

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1 Gentleman's Library, pp. 53-4; Defoe, English Tradesman, ii. part 3, p.2; Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp. 231-2; Weekly Miscellany, Jan. 5, 1734, No. 56, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), p.13. Cf. Steele, Ladies Library, i. 69-73: such laws infringe on personal liberty. A code of such law had not existed in England since I James 1, c.25 (1604), which repealed all previous sumptuary legislation. Various unsuccessful attempts at reintroduction were made up to the Restoration. Sumptuary laws after 1660 were intended to protect English trade rather than the social hierarchy: see F.E. Baldwin, Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England (Baltimore, Maryland, 1926), espec. pp. 249-63, also J.R. Kent, 'Attitudes of Members of the House of Commons to the Regulation of 'Personal Conduct' in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xlvi (1973), pp. 44, 50-1, 54-7.

2 E.g. the use of conditional or hopeful expressions such as "I could wish" for such laws (Gentleman's Library, pp. 53-4), or statements describing the lack of such laws as definite fact and making no suggestion of possible alteration (Collier, Essays, p.93).

3 Collier, Essays, p.93.

4 Ibid., p. 94.

dress as "a needless Ostentation of Wealth",[1] "Pompous",[2] "vain-glorious",[3] a "Sign of Pride" which only indicates an inner knowledge by its wearer of his little worth,[4] and "a little Glitter, and Pageantry" aimed at drawing the admiration of "the gazing, unthinking Mobile" and winning "the Ceremony of the Ignorant" in place of "the Esteem of the Judicious".[5] The assumption of such dress, he argues, is unnecessary to support a high rank.[6] In contrast, Collier characterises the dress of the gentry by its superior taste:

> None but Persons of Condition can hit this Point, Indeed they have a great Delicacy and Exactness in their Fancy: They pitch upon nothing that is Tawdry and Mechanick, Staring, or ill Matched. One may know a Gentlewoman almost as well by seeing her chuse a Mantua, or a Ribon, as by going to Garter, or Clarencieux.[7]

In this passage Collier makes it clear that, in his opinion, taste in dress is a far more difficult quality than costliness for those of non-gentry rank to display. It is precisely because of this greater difficulty that he regards such taste as a far truer indicator of rank.

Collier's criticisms of sumptuous dress are paraphrased and reprinted in the Gentleman's Library of 1715,[8] along with newly-added comments to the same effect: "fine Cloaths" "are but Signs of Wealth

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1 Collier, Essays, p. 91.

2 Ibid., p. 92.

3 Ibid., p. 92.

4 Ibid., p. 98.

5 Ibid., p. 98.

6 Ibid., p. 93; also p. 91.

7 Ibid., p. 97.

8 Gentleman's Library, pp. 56-7.

at best", and are only "Counterfeit Signs of Worth";[1] in contrast, "A Simplicity of outward Appearance, is the ornamental Habit of those who desire to be taken notice of for more than their Dress".[2] These assertions, made around the turn of the eighteenth century, foreshadow certain major fashion trends which followed in the rest of the century in the clothing of the gentry and nobility. Basically, these consisted of a move away from wealthy ostentation in fabric and trimmings, and, in men's dress, the gradual reduction of colour, so that, by the end of the century, distinctions of rank in clothing came to focus on more subtle questions of cut and quality.[3] While it would be impossible to prove that fashion change responded to the expression of such ideas, it certainly reflected them.

Even with this new stress on taste, however, it is clear that dress presented considerable problems to courtesy writers as a reliable indicator of status. They therefore proposed in its place a complete alternative, in which manners played a key role. So Collier asserted:

> A Gentleman's Mien and Behaviour is sufficient to discover him, without any great dependence upon Shops and Taylors. After all, the best way of distinguishing, is by the Qualities of the mind: Let Persons of Condition strive rather to be richer in their Disposition than the Vulgar: Let them put on a better Humour, wear a finer Understanding, and shew a more shining Fortitude: Let them appear remarkably Just, Inoffensive, and Obliging. This is the way to be nobly Popular, and gives them the Hearts, as well as the Ceremony, of their Inferiors.[4]

William Darrell chose a very similar combination in preference to dress:

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1 Gentleman's Library, p.52.

2 Ibid., p.62.

3 Buck, Dress in Eighteenth-Century England, pp. 28-9, 92, 195; C.W. and P. Cunnington, A Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century (1957, rev. edn. 1972), p.16.

4 Collier, Essays, pp. 92-3, repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.51.

> ... though fine Feathers make fine Birds, yet surely gawdy Trappings can't make fine Gentlemen; for the Embellishments of Quality are Wit, Judgement and Behaviour; an Air that's noble without Haughtiness, and condescending without Meanness. Now these Qualifications lodge in the Soul, they lie in the Head, not on the Back.[1]

v. Dignity, mien, assurance, ease

What were the manners of the eighteenth-century gentleman which could reveal and reinforce his position in society without any other support? They may be summed up in one word: dignity. The word's connotations of a nobility of appearance and a becoming stateliness aptly describe the total effect intended by courtesy writers. Chesterfield felt that "There is a certain dignity of manners absolutely necessary, to make even the most valuable character either respected or respectable",[2] and he argued further that it was good breeding which conferred this dignity:

> A man's own good-breeding is his best security against other people's ill-manners.
>
> Good-breeding carries along with it a dignity, that is respected by the most petulant. Ill-breeding invites and authorises the familiarity of the most timid. No man ever said a pert thing to the Duke of Marlborough.[3]

The dignity of the eighteenth-century gentleman was manifested in all areas of his comportment; his air, deportment, facial expressions, speech, treatment of others, and general handling of all social situations. These in turn may be characterised by two words: self-possession, and self-control.

One of the most important concepts in the eighteenth-century English courtesy literature for gentlemen is that of mien (sometimes spelt 'mein'). Unfortunately, it is also the most difficult to define.[4]

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 21.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1379.

3 Ibid., v. 2002-3 (15 Jan. 1753).

4 The O.E.D. defines 'mien' as "The air, bearing, or manner of a person, as expressing character or mood".

Its indefinability was no coincidence for it prevented imitation: it was above all the gentleman's mien which revealed his good breeding and set him apart from his inferiors.

The best short definition of mien is by Richard Steele, who describes "A good Mein" as "a becoming Motion, Gesture, and Aspect".[1] Courtesy writers often drew on the French concept of the je ne sais quoi to describe mien.[2] That quality, we have seen,[3] was an all-encompassing harmonious and pleasing air, and the very same connotations were attached to mien. Steele argues that without a good mien,

> the best Limb'd and finest Complection'd Person may be very Disagreeable; and with it, a very Homely and Plain one cannot be so; for a good Air supplies the Imperfection of Feature and Shape, by throwing an Harmony on the whole, which drowns the Incapacities of the Parts....[4]

A proper mien could result either from noble or gentlemanly birth alone,[5] or from the process of good breeding.[6] However it was achieved, the crucial features of this mien, singled out repeatedly by courtesy writers, were that it was peculiarly appropriate to the rank of a gentleman, and that, as such, it was sufficient in itself to reveal the gentleman instantly and from under any disguise. William Darrell conveys these qualities most succinctly:

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1 Spectator, No. 334, iii. 235.

2 E.g. Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.7; Collier, Essays, p.51.

3 Above, ch. 2, p. 79.

4 R. Steele, The Christian Hero (1701), ed. R. Blanchard (Oxford, 1932), p.52: this citation is taken from the first edn.; in later edns. it varies slightly. Other references by Steele to mien occur in Spectator, No.264, ii. 528; Tatler, No. 30, i. 249; for its use by other writers see Constable, Conversation, pp. 191-2; Sir Richard Bulstrode, 'Of Company and Conversation', in his Miscellaneous Essays (1715), p.10.

5 For noble birth, see Collier, Essays, p.51, repr. in Bulstrode, Essays, p.231; for gentlemanly birth see Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.7 (below, this page); both Darrell (p.7) and Collier (pp. 52-3) explicitly deny that such birth always produced a correct mien.

6 Philpot, Polite Education, p.xii; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 7.

> Some Gentlemen keep up to their Character without the advantageous Helps of Precepts, or Education; you may read their Birth on their Faces; their Gate and Mein tell their Quality; they both Charm and Awe, and at the same time flash Love and Reverence; their Extraction glitters under all Disguises; it sparkles in Sackcloth, and breaks through all the Clouds of Poverty and Misfortune; there is a je ne scay quoy in their whole Demeanour, that tears off the Vizor, and discovers Nobility though it sculks incognito....[1]

In conveying nobility and inspiring awe and reverence, such a demeanour may be very aptly described as an air of dignity.

A key factor in the gentleman's mien which made him appear dignified yet still agreeable was an appearance of self-assurance. We have seen that Locke reduced good breeding to "this one Rule, not to think meanly of ourselves, and not to think meanly of others", and that the quality which he stated was essential to the first half of this rule was a proper sense of self-assurance.[2] Assurance was manifested in manners by apparent composure and ease. Thus, Locke says of assurance:

> ... we ought to think so well of our selves, as to perform those Actions which are incumbent on, and expected of us, without discomposure, or disorder; in whose presence soever we are....[3]

In discussing his ideal gentleman, John Constable similarly focuses on self-composure as a key ingredient of assurance:

> A noble generous Assurance bears him up in the best Company; never losing himself in any sort of an aukward Confusion, but proceeding in all Occurrences without any Discomposure or Disorder.[4]

Eustace Budgell centres his attention more on the quality of ease, defining assurance as "The Faculty of possessing a Man's self, or of saying and doing indifferent things without any Uneasiness or

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 7; for this ability of mien to reveal rank, see Collier, Essays, pp. 51, 92-3, and Philpot, p. xii.

2 Above, ch. 3, p. 104.

3 Locke, Education, p. 246.

4 Constable, Conversation, p. 27.

Emotion in the Mind".[1] Although a gentleman should be easy in all companies,[2] a very important test of his assurance was to display it in the company of his social superiors. Chesterfield tells his son that "a real well-bred man would speak to all the Kings in the world with as little concern and as much ease as he would speak to you".[3]

A proper assurance was the mean between bashfulness and shamefacedness on the one hand, and impudence on the other.[4] Impudence, or "a bold Confidence",[5] was a grave fault: Steele asserts that "I take an impudent Fellow to be a sort of Outlaw in Good-Breeding".[6] It was widely agreed that a gentleman's behaviour should be tempered with modesty. This term was defined in reference to the gentleman in various ways. Hume describes it as "a diffidence of our own judgement, and a due attention and regard for others", which decently disguises but does not impinge upon "a generous spirit and self-value".[7] Locke felt it consisted in accepting what was due to one's rank and merit without conceit or arrogance.[8] In the Spectator papers, it is described in terms of the capacity to feel shame upon committing a censurable action.[9]

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1 Spectator, No. 373, iii. 404-5; also Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.16.

2 Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p. 221; Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.16.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 447; also Constable, Conversation, p. 88.

4 Budgell in Spectator, No. 373, iii. 405; Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 447; Constable, Conversation, p. 89.

5 Constable, Conversation, p. 88.

6 Spectator, No. 20, i. 87; but cf. Gentleman's Magazine, viii (1738), 358-9, on the relative usefulness of bashfulness and impudence in real life.

7 Hume, 'Of Qualities Immediately Agreeable to Others', in An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 329-32; but cf. iv. 497-8 on the liability of this modesty in a career.

8 Locke, Education, p. 246; also Constable, Conversation, p.27.

9 Spectator, No. 458, iv. 115 (repr. in Gentleman's Library, p.238); No.373, iii. 404-5. For other writers on the importance of modesty in good breeding, see Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p.221; Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.248.

Whatever its precise connotations, courtesy writers argued both strongly and unanimously that modesty should not be carried to the extent of (in Locke's words) "a sheepish Bashfulness", or "clownish shamfac'dness",[1] which were felt to be signs of ill breeding[2] and "Rusticity".[3] Chesterfield describes this trait as mauvaise honte, arguing that it

> is the distinguishing character of an English booby, who is frightened out of his wits when people of fashion speak to him; and, when he is to answer them, blushes, stammers, can hardly get out what he would say, and becomes really ridiculous from a groundless fear of being laughed at....[4]

Such bashfulness caused people to adopt in their manners "a thousand tricks to keep themselves in countenance" which then become "disagreeable habits": "Some put their fingers in their nose, others scratch their head, others twirl their hats", others have the "silly trick of laughing whenever they speak".[5] Samuel Johnson felt that such bashfulness created the appearance of stupidity,[6], describing it as "this frigorifick power" by which knowledge and virtue are "congealed".[7]

It was not enough for a gentleman to be at his ease in company; it was also very important that he should indicate this to others. One of the main ways he could do this was by an air of negligence in his manners. Very probably a derivation of the Italian ideal of sprezzatura,[8] this negligence consisted of a (deliberately-cultivated)[9] apparent lack of study, care, constraint, or concern

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1 Locke, Education, pp. 245-6.

2 Ibid., p.245.

3 Constable, Conversation, p.88.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 447; also iv. 1343, v. 1965.

5 Ibid., iii. 1116; similarly Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 28-9.

6 Rambler, No. 157, v. 74-5.

7 Ibid., No. 159, v.82.

8 For which, see ch. 2 above, p.51, and compare the close similarity of ideas and terms in the five quotations following with Castiglione, Il Cortegiano (tr. A.P. Castiglione, 1727), pp.45-6.

9 E.g. see Tatler, No.14, i. 128; No.21, i. 176-7, Spectator, No.75, i. 324-5.

about one's manners. Thus, Addison comments:

> At present... an unconstrained Carriage, and a certain Openness of Behaviour are the height of Good Breeding. The Fashionable World is grown free and easie; our Manners, sit more loose upon us: Nothing is so modish as an agreeable Negligence. In a word, Good Breeding shows it self most, where to an ordinary Eye it appears the least.[1]

John Constable describes this type of air in practice in the character of his ideal gentleman, who "charmed immediately in the politest Company, without any thing of that Care, or that solicitous Watchfulness about every Part of Behaviour, which only serves to make it constrained, and consequently ungraceful".[2] This air of ease was particularly associated by courtesy writers with the gentleman: Steele praises "a graceful Unconcern, and Gentleman-like Ease"[3] and Chesterfield tells his son that "the perfection of good-breeding is, to be civil with ease, and in a gentlemanlike manner".[4] The psychological impression created by this air of negligence was of a man superior to such trifling matters, while at the same time naturally their master. So Richard Steele describes his ideal gentleman:

> ... that certain Inattention which makes Mens Actions look easie, appears in him with greater Beauty: By a thorough Contempt of little Excellencies, he is perfectly Master of them.[5]

This self-assurance so vital to the gentleman could only be acquired by gaining what was called a "Knowledge of the World".[6] In part, this involved associating with people of good company, so as to learn their manners and feel at ease with them.[7] More

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1 Spectator, No. 119, i. 486-7; also Tatler, No. 12, i. 108-9.

2 Constable, Conversation, p.24, also 26-7.

3 Spectator, No. 75, i. 325.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 447.

5 Spectator, No. 75, i. 324-5.

6 Constable, Conversation, p.13.

7 Locke, Education, p. 246, see further above, ch. 3. pp. 107-8, 114-5.

importantly, it involved experiencing a wide variety of companies and social situations, so as to acquire an understanding of human nature and the ways of society, and thereby the ability to deal adroitly with other people.[1] Several writers make it clear that only such experience could give the gentleman the proper degree of self-assurance.[2] Knowledge of the world further allowed its possessor the benefit of having deference paid to his opinion in conversation,[3] and provided him with valuable self-protection, allowing him to avoid making "ridiculous, and prejudicial Mistakes". This was in contrast with

> The unexperienced, and those who have seldom been conversant with various Company, [who] are very liable to be cheated with a mere Outsideworth, with the Shew and deceitful Protestations of Candor.[4]

Such worldly experience, James Forrester felt, was "a necessary Qualification" in every gentleman.[5]

vi. Deportment

Steele had included in his definition of 'mien', the possession of "a becoming Motion [and] Gesture".[6] A gentleman's deportment was a very important part and indicator of his good breeding. Locke includes as part of "a Gentleman's Calling" in life, the possession of "a Carriage suitable to his Rank".[7] The two key qualities of this carriage were the avoidance of all awkwardness, and the cultivation of an apparently natural grace.

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1847, 1850.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 91-2, 524; Budgell in Spectator, No. 373, iii. 404-5; Constable, Conversation, p.13. For a discussion of knowledge of the world in terms of the gentleman's education, see Brauer, Education of the Gentleman, pp. 114-133, 160.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 2110.

4 Constable, Conversation, p.16.

5 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.43.

6 Above, p. 162.

7 Locke, Education, p. 197.

Writing to his son, Chesterfield repeatedly stresses that "Awkwardness of carriage is very alienating" to other people,[1] and invites their ridicule. As an illustration, he gives his well-known portrait of the awkward fellow, who trips over his sword upon entering a room, stands at the wrong end of the room, drops his hat and cane repeatedly, never knows where to put his hands, and generally acts in a way "highly disagreeable and ridiculous in company".[2] In the Spectator, Budgell suggests that such a disagreeable first impression was prejudicial to a man's self-interest:

> We generally form such Ideas of People at first Sight, as we are hardly ever persuaded to lay aside afterwards: For this Reason a Man would wish to have nothing disagreeable or uncomely in his Approaches, and to be able to enter a Room with a good Grace.[3]

In his treatise on education, Locke places considerable emphasis on the importance of graceful deportment, arguing that the gentleman should possess "an habitual Gracefulness, and Politeness in all his Carriage".[4] This gracefulness consisted of an harmonious composure of the limbs, which appeared to be wholly natural and unstudied:

> the Carriage is not as it should be, till it is become Natural in every Part; falling, as Skilful Musicians' Fingers do, into Harmonious Order without Care and without Thought. If in Conversation a Man's Mind be taken up with a sollicitous watchfulness about any part of his Behaviour; instead of being mended by it, it will be constrain'd, uneasie and ungraceful.[5]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1170; also iv. 1439.

2 Ibid., ii. 460-1 (25 July O.S. 1741).

3 Spectator, No. 67, i. 287, repr. in Philpot, Polite Education, p.71, and in The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed, i. 327-9 along with most of Budgell's subsequent comments on deportment in the same paper. See similarly Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1168-9; Johnson, Rambler, No. 166, v. 117. On the importance of entering a room gracefully see Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 69-70; Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.123; Johnson, Rambler, No. 157, v. 72-3; Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1403.

4 Locke, Education, p. 192.

5 Ibid., p. 191, repr. in Philpot, Polite Education, p.60; similarly Spectator, No. 38, i. 161; Penton, New Instructions to the Guardian, p.91.

In his discussion of the gentleman's deportment, Steele focused on the same qualities, arguing that "the reaching out of the Arm, and the most ordinary Motion, discovers whether a Man ever learnt to know what is the true Harmony and Composure of his Limbs and Countenance",[1] The author of the Polite Student shared these ideals:

> a Man who has learned the genteel Carriage of his Body, will shew he understands what Numbers, Order, Harmony of Limbs, Gracefulness of Gesture are, by the slightest Motion, when he himself does not so much think of it.[2]

This stress on proportion, regularity, and harmony in gentlemanly deportment is another instance of the reflection in manners of contemporary aesthetic ideals, in this case that of harmony. The connection is explicitly drawn by Shaftesbury, who praises the "harmony", "order and proportion" exhibited in the "compos'd and orderly motion" of the body, compared with the "discord" of "that which is ungovern'd and accidental", and finds the same ideals in regularity of architectural design.[3]

Most of the discussion of deportment in the courtesy literature occurs within the context of recommendations of dancing lessons. Courtesy writers insisted strongly and repeatedly on the necessity for a gentleman (and lady) to learn the ways of deportment from a dancing master. Their discussions of dancing provide a fascinating insight into the extent to which eighteenth-century good breeding was a studied and conscious self-presentation to others. The 'naturalness' of the gentleman's deportment was in fact precisely delineated, carefully inculcated, and designed to create the best possible impression on an audience.

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1 Spectator, No. 334, iii. 236, repr. Philpot, Polite Education, p.69; similarly Joseph Spence, Crito: or, a Dialogue on Beauty (2nd edn. 1752), p.12.

2 Polite Student, p.8.

3 Shaftesbury, 'The Moralists', in his Characteristicks, ii. 86.

Recommendations of dancing lessons as indispensable to graceful deportment abound in the courtesy literature. Locke stresses repeatedly that such lessons can teach children "what is graceful and becoming, and what gives a freedom and easiness to all the Motions of the Body".[1] Dancing, he says, "cannot be learn'd too early, after they are once of an Age and Strength capable of it".[2] Chesterfield had sent his son a dancing master by the time he was five.[3] In the Spectator, Budgell asserts that "So much of Dancing at least as belongs to the Behaviour and an handsom Carriage of the Body, is extreamly useful, if not absolutely necessary".[4] Other writers recommend dancing lessons as preventing "antick and misbecoming Gestures";[5] banishing "Rusticity";[6] bestowing "a graceful Motion, a becoming Air, and a Gentleman-like Behaviour and Address",[7] and conducing to "the Improvement of the Behaviour and a graceful Carriage amongst Strangers".[8]

As well as remarking on the necessity of graceful deportment in general, courtesy writers also stressed the importance of many specific details. Those mentioned so far in this discussion consist of the gentleman's bearing, "slightest Motion," gait, arm movements, entering a room and approaching the company in it, and management of the sword, hat, and cane. Other details specifically linked by courtesy writers to the instruction of a dancing master were "the little Rules of Good-

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1 Locke, Education, p. 310; also pp. 250-1, 345, 359.

2 Ibid., p.310, also 162; also Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p.123.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, i. 162; ii. 328 (22 July, 1738).

4 Spectator, No.67, i. 287; the passage recurs almost identically in Essex, Young Ladies Conduct, pp. 82-3; Henry Fielding refers to Essex's opinion in terms of general agreement in Amelia, ed. M. Battestin (Oxford, 1983), p. 199 and n.2.

5 Penton, New Instructions to the Guardian, p.91.

6 J. Weaver, An Essay on the History of Dancing (1712), p.6.

7 The Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift (1729), p.26; also Sir William Keith, An Essay on the Education of a Young British Nobleman (1730), repr. in his A Collection of Papers and Other Tracts... (1740), p.145.

8 Universal Spectator, March 6, 1736, No.387, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, vi (1736), p.132.

breeding" such as how to salute a lady, whether to stand or sit while being toasted,[1] and the payment to others of due respect and addresses.[2] Writers include still more details of deportment in the proper teachings of a dancing master. Locke mentions the salutations of the hat and the bow.[3] Stephen Philpot argues that dancing lessons could teach a graceful walk, a smooth step, the graceful offering of the hands, and the correct posture of the head, body and feet.[4] Writing to his son, Chesterfield specifies as the most essential part of the dancing lesson, posture in sitting, standing, and walking, gestures of the arm and hand, and the salutation of the hat:

> Remember, that the graceful motion of the arms, the giving your hand, and the putting-on and pulling-off your hat genteely, are the material parts of a gentleman's dancing. But the greatest advantage of dancing well is, that it necessarily teaches you to present yourself, to sit, stand, and walk genteely; all which are of real importance to a man of fashion.[5]

For John Costeker, there were specific "genteel" "Attitudes" best suited to the gentleman's every motion, which were to be learned from a dancing master, and without which, "no Person can be said to be well-bred".[6]

The sheer weight of detail which the pupil was expected to master for his everyday bearing is revealed by contemporary manuals of instruction on dancing and deportment. These often had a French origin

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1 Budgell in Spectator, No. 67, i. 287.

2 F. Brokesby, Of Education (1701), p. 110.

3 Locke, Education, p. 162, also 310.

4 Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 27-8, 55, 69, 72-3.

5 Chesterfield, iv. 1234-5; also ii. 599; iii. 698; iv. 1295, 1403; vi. 2431, 2434. (The word 'genteel' as used here by Chesterfield and by other courtesy writers throughout this period was one of approbation, meaning well bred or suitable to a gentleman, and had none of the negative connotations later associated with it.)

6 Costeker, Fine Gentleman, pp. 42-3.

or influence. Two important contemporary examples were John Essex's 1728 translation The Dancing-Master: or, The Art of Dancing Explained... Done from the French of Monsieur Rameau, and F. Nivelon's The Rudiments of Genteel Behavior of 1737, also from the French. These works take the reader through the recommended general posture of every part of the body, beginning with an erect carriage of the head (considered essential in governing the posture as a whole),[1] passing via the squared shoulders, curved arms and hands, and straight back,[2] and ending at the feet, which were to be turned outwards[3] in one of five positions[4] (still the standard ones in classical ballet today). The reader was then instructed in every position of the eyes, head, arms, hands, body, legs, and feet involved in such motions as standing, walking, entering a room and saluting the company, removing and replacing the hat,[5] the bow "en passant",[6] the more formal bow forwards, the more difficult "Complement Retiring"[7] or "Honours backwards"[8] (all with a greater or lesser inclination of the body according to the rank of the person saluted),[9] the correct gestures when giving or receiving something,[10] and, finally, the proper salutations before and after commencing a dance.[11] For all these instructions, the precision of movement (and hence practice necessary to master them) was considerable.

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1 F. Nivelon, The Rudiments of Genteel Behavior (1737), p. B. P. Rameau, Le maître à danser (Paris, 1725), tr. J. Essex, The Dancing-Master (1728), p.23.

2 Nivelon, Rudiments, p. B.

3 Ibid., p. B.

4 Rameau, Dancing-Master, Table of Contents, p. xxviii.

5 Ibid., p. xxviii (in brief), and pp. 1-34 (in detail).

6 Ibid., pp. 26-7. Chesterfield asked his godson if he had learnt this bow from his dancing master: Letters, vi. 2455.

7 Nivelon, Rudiments, pp. L-L2.

8 Rameau, Dancing-Master, p. xxviii.

9 Ibid., p. 21.

10 Nivelon, Rudiments, pp. M-M2.

11 Rameau, Dancing-Master, p. xxviii.

Notwithstanding the existence of these treatises on deportment, the services of a good dancing master were still necessary to teach these various steps. This was not only because of their complexity, but also because their details were subject to changes of fashion over time. Courtesy literature is not a very good indicator of these fashion changes; the courtesy books themselves treat deportment in too general a manner, and the treatises on dancing are concerned to encapsulate the fashion of the moment rather than its changes. A different source which does give some indication of such change is contemporary portraiture, and its subsequent study by art historians. The fashionable postures recommended by Nivelon in 1737 were closely mirrored in the work of the contemporary English provincial portrait painter Arthur Devis.[1] Devis continued to incorporate these postures unchanged in his portraits from the 1730s to 1780.[2] However, from the early 1760s onwards, such postures in general, and Devis's portraits specifically, were strongly attacked as unfashionable.[3] Criticism was made both on aesthetic grounds: the postures were seen as stiff and unnatural compared with new canons of taste; and on social grounds, because they were becoming associated more with social aspirants rather than with fashionable society.[4]

A mastery of intricate and fashionable deportment was thus an extremely important feature of the gentleman's self-presentation to others. The benefit of such a mastery, courtesy writers asserted,

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1 S. Sartin, 'Arthur Devis: His Life and Art', in Polite Society by Arthur Devis 1712-1787: Portraits of the English Country Gentleman and his Family... (Preston, 1983), p. 23; also E. D'Oench, The Conversation Piece: Arthur Devis & his Contemporaries (New Haven, Conn., 1980), figures 11-12 facing p.4, and pp. 13-16.

2 D'Oench, The Conversation Piece, p.17.

3 Ibid., pp. 29-31.

4 Ibid., pp. 30-1.

was clearly evident in that very same air of self-assurance so crucial in his mien. Richard Steele was of the opinion that "A Man who has not had the Regard of his Gesture in any part of his Education, will find himself unable to act with Freedom before new Company as a Child that is but now learning would be to read without Hesitation".[1] Locke spoke for several writers in arguing:

> nothing appears to me to give Children so much becoming Confidence and Behaviour, and so to raise them to the conversation of those above their Age, as dancing.[2]

Correct deportment was also a very visible, portable sign of good breeding, and hence of social status. Thus, John Weaver argues that:

> It is the graceful Motion of the Body in Walking, reaching out the Hand, Bowing, or performing the other common Actions of Life, in a free, easy, and genteel Manner, that distinguishes the well-bred Person from a Clown.[3]

John Costeker states quite categorically that the deportment learnt from dancing lessons is an accomplishment which "vastly distinguishes Good-Breeding, and a genteel Man from a Boor".[4]

Compared with this attention to deportment, the art of dancing itself was usually seen as a matter of indifference by courtesy writers, Locke arguing that "as for the jigging part, and the Figures of Dances, I count that little, or nothing, farther, than as it it tends to perfect graceful Carriage."[5] Gentleman were told to learn to dance well enough to be sociable in company[6] and to avoid appearing either singular[7] or ridiculous[8]. However, they were also given strict warnings

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1 Spectator, No. 334, iii. 236.

2 Locke, Education, p.162, also p.310; also Budgell, Spectator 67, i. 287; Philpot, Polite Education, p. 55; Brokesby, Of Education, p.105; Weaver, History of Dancing, pp. 17-18, 20-5.

3 Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 68-9; also Weaver, History of Dancing, p.65.

4 Costeker, Fine Gentleman, p. 43.

5 Locke, Education, p. 310-1.

6 Costeker, Fine Gentleman, p.43; also Universal Spectator, 6 Mar. 1736, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, vi. (1736), pp.131-2.

7 Costeker, Fine Gentleman, p.43.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 783; also Brown, Laconics, p.19.

not to appear too expert in dancing, for that would reveal excessive study and therefore a lack of gentlemanly negligence.[1] Eustace Budgell felt that while dancing lessons were useful to teach proper deportment, "all beyond is superfluous, if not worse", arguing further that

> I take it to be a just Observation, that unless you add something of your own to what these fine Gentlemen teach you, and which they are totally ignorant of themselves, you will much sooner get the Character of an Affected Fop, than of a Well-bred Man.[2]

This disparagement of dancing masters as not being well bred themselves, and its attempt to distinguish gentlemen from them, is symptomatic of a fundamental ambivalence in eighteenth-century attitudes towards the whole process of acquiring good breeding. In order for the gentleman to acquire the very quality which ideally should be his by right of birth, and which was a major means of distinguishing him from his social inferiors, it was necessary to rely on the expertise of a social inferior. C.J. Rawson attributes to this "painful obligation" of the gentleman to his dancing master "the obsessional frequency with which writers of the period keep mentioning dancing-masters, often with edgily ambiguous or over-aggressive contempt".[3]

This attitude is very evident among courtesy writers. The dancing master is characterised as "a certain Wipper-Snapper" by one writer,[4] as having "apish Cringes" by another,[5] and, by a third, as a pedant who overrates the importance of an essentially trivial subject.[6] Courtesy writers rejected any pretensions of dancing masters to good

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1 Universal Spectator, 6 Mar. 1736, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, vi. (1736), 131-2; also Weaver, History of Dancing, p.65; Bulstrode, 'Of Company and Conversation', p.11.

2 Spectator, No.67, i. 287.

3 C.J. Rawson, Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal under Stress (1972), ch. 1, pp. 27-8.

4 T. Brown, An Essay on Women, in his Works, iv. 39.

5 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, 'To the Ladies', p.cix.

6 Swift, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', p.215.

breeding on the grounds of that very expertise which taught the rules of good breeding in the first place. They argued that the dancing master's pains in his own carriage contravened the necessity for the appearance of negligence in the gentleman. Thus, it was asserted, "They say that Dancing Masters never make a handsome Bow, because they take too much Pains".[1] The familiar argument of the necessity of good company for good breeding was brought in so as to assert the superiority of the gentleman's deportment over that of his teacher. Politeness, it was argued, could not be bought from a dancing master, but could only be acquired from good company.[2] Only such models bestowed "a graceful and easy Carriage, not to be learn'd by Rules of Art.... 'Tis this Gracefulness which distinguishes the Air of a Gentleman from that of a Dancing-Master".[3]

vii. Equanimity

Closely related to an air of negligence and ease in the gentleman's mien was the appearance of equanimity. Regarding control of the self and of the temper, Richard Steele states:

> I take [it] to be the greatest of human perfections [and] the most amiable quality in the sight of others. It is a winning deference to mankind.... I do not know how to express this habit of mind, except you will let me call it equanimity. It is a virtue, which is necessary at every hour, in every place, and in all conversations....[4]

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1 (Anon.), An Essay on Wit... (1748, repr. Augustan Reprint Society, Series 1 no. 2, 1946), p.17.

2 The Art of Conversation, or the Polite Entertainer... (1757), pp. 197, 204.

3 'Of true Politeness', Grubstreet Journal, 11 Apr. 1734, No. 224, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 191; similarly Tatler, No. 165, iii. 272; H. Felton, Dissertation on reading the Classics, p.79; The Polite Lady (1760), p.282.

4 Tatler, No. 176, iii. 321-2.

Steele gives two major reasons for his praise of equanimity. The first is that it displays consideration for others, the giving way to one's natural propensity being "so unjust and improper a licence".[1] The second is that it operates to maintain personal dignity:

> The fortitude of a man who brings his will to the obedience of his reason is conspicuous, and carries with it a dignity in the lowest state imaginable... the empire over ourselves is, methinks, no less laudable in common life, where the whole tenor of a man's carriage is in subservience to his own reason.....[2]

English courtesy writers advised their readers to develop strong self-control over the emotions and their visible manifestations in the face, gestures, gait, and general comportment. The gentleman was expected to reveal few or no signs of anger, fear, grief, pain, impatience, haste, disappointment, joy, or curiosity, and only mild indications of amusement. Chesterfield summed up this doctrine when he instructed his son:

> Make yourself absolute master... of your temper and your countenance - so far, at least, as that no visible change do appear in either, whatever you may feel inwardly.[3]

In making these recommendations, courtesy writers had as a major aim the maintenance of the gentleman's personal dignity, and, through that, the maintenance of his position in society.

This stress is especially prominent in discussions of the display of anger. Anger, states William Darrell, drowns reason, throws a gentleman off guard, and places him "below his dignity".[4] Darrell attacks the indulgence in angry and noisy argument in terms directly linked to considerations

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1 Tatler, No. 176, iii. 321-2.

2 Ibid., No. 176, iii. 324.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1351.

4 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 381.

of social rank:

> altho it may become the Shippers of Wapping or the Oyster-Women at Billingsgate, yet it suits not well the Breeding of Gentlemen.[1]

Other writers also focus on this question of dignity, arguing that to reveal anger is "a Sign of Weakness"[2] which derived from a "Meanness of Soul",[3] and that it "makes us contemptible to others".[4] Anger, argues Samuel Johnson, is resorted to by weak men in an attempt to gain respect and dignity,[5] but it only reveals that a man is "mean enough" to be influenced by every petty incident.[6]

Johnson also criticises the display of anger for disturbing the quiet and ease of others.[7] Adam Smith makes the most detailed explanation of such reasoning. He argues that because impartial bystanders cannot wholly share in another person's feelings, they find it inconsiderate and offensive when such feelings are fully expressed.[8] This is particularly the case with anger, which, unrestrained, has an "insolence and brutality" and "is, of all objects, the most detestable".[9] For this reason, respect and politeness for others require anger to be concealed.[10]

Even this argument about pleasing others, however, is directly linked by Smith back to the maintenance of dignity and rank. Because anger is such a strong emotion, its repression out of consideration for others necessitates a very high degree of self-command.[11]

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp. 128-9.

2 Constable, Conversation, p. 223; also Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1995-6.

3 Universal Spectator, 9 Sept. 1732, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, ii. (1732), p. 949.

4 Ibid., p. 949; also Chesterfield, Letters, vi. 2519.

5 Rambler, No. 11, iii. 59; also Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, 'To the Ladies', p. cviii.

6 Rambler, No. 11, iii. 59.

7 Ibid., No. 11, iii. 58.

8 Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp. 16, 22, 24, 27.

9 Ibid., p. 24; also pp. 34-35, 243.

10 Ibid., p. 35.

11 Ibid., pp. 237-8; also pp. 24, 34.

Such a high level of self-control, Smith terms "magnanimity",[1] describing it as an admirable, exalted,[2] "generous and noble" quality[3] not to be found among the common run of mankind.[4] Rather, it "rises far above what is vulgar and ordinary", and "astonishes by its amazing superiority over the most ungovernable passions of human nature".[5] To fulfil its proper role in maintaining social rank, however, such self-command must not disguise anger and resentment completely. Tamely to submit to insults or to concede unjustified precedence to others would be interpreted as meanspiritedness and make a man contemptible.[6] In order, therefore, "to maintain our own rank and dignity in society",[7] it is necessary to display a proper resentment, making it clear "from our whole manner" that we resent "with reluctance, from necessity", and more "from a sense that mankind expect and require it of us, than because we feel in ourselves the furies of that disagreeable passion".[8]

In addition to controlling his anger, a gentleman was not expected to display any signs of fear, grief, or pain. Darrell describes fear as "a clownish Vice; a female Weakness", which sits "ungenteely on Quality".[9] Adam Smith asserts that "No character is more contemptible than that of a coward",[10] and that "There is always something dignified in the command of fear".[11] He finds the same dignity in the command

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1 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p. 238.

2 Ibid., pp. 24-5, 34.

3 Ibid., p. 240; also 241.

4 Ibid., p. 25.

5 Ibid., p. 25; also pp. 26, 241, 247.

6 Ibid., pp. 34-5, 240, 244, 246.

7 Ibid., p. 38; also p. 244.

8 Ibid., p. 38.

9 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.68.

10 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p. 244.

11 Ibid., p. 240.

of grief:

> We are disgusted with that clamorous grief, which, without any delicacy, calls upon our compassion with sighs and tears and importunate lamentations. But we reverence that reserved, that silent and majestic sorrow, which discovers itself only in the swelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the distant, but affecting, coldness of the whole behaviour.[1]

Self-control while in pain was similarly admirable:

> We esteem the man who supports pain and even torture with manhood and firmness; and we can have little regard for him who sinks under them, and abandons himself to useless outcries and womanish lamentations.[2]

Smith makes this argument repeatedly: "to cry out with bodily pain, how intolerable soever, appears always unmanly and unbecoming".[3] In these condemnations of the display of fear, grief, and pain, while the theme of maintaining dignity and rank is present, there is also another prominent theme which was not present in discussions of anger. This is a contrast of gender: between the "manhood and firmness" of stoicism and the "unmanly", "womanish", "female Weakness" of emotional display. Darrell reiterates this theme in his discussion of tears: they become women and children well enough, "But they argue an unpardonable Weakness in a Man".[4]

Such effeminacy in men was a major transgression against the rule of decorum, which, in a long tradition going back to the ancient Greeks, demanded that the behaviour of the two sexes must be clearly differentiated so as to reflect the distinctions given by nature.[5] The rule was applied not only to emotional display, but also to dress

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1 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p. 24; also pp. 16, 27.

2 Ibid., p. 244.

3 Ibid., p. 29; also pp. 30, 238.

4 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 118.

5 E.g. Epictetus, Discourses, in his Works (tr. Carter, 1758), pp. 222-31; Guazzo, The Art of Conversation (tr. 1738), p.247; Steele, Spectator, No. 104, i. 432-5; Hume (cited above, ch. 3, p. 97.

and other forms of manners. The male fop was heavily criticised by courtesy writers for displaying effeminacy in too great a concern for his dress,[1] in a tripping or lolloping walk,[2] in his use of facial paint,[3] and in his delicate body, smooth skin, soft voice,[4] and habit of peering through his eyelashes.[5] To transgress this gender division from either direction was regarded as equally monstrous in aesthetic terms. Thus, the author of The Polite Student referred to the "grotesque and monstrous... Figure" caused if a lady were depicted

> with an Amazonian and Masculine Air, where all ought to be Grace and Softness; or the Portrait of a Man effeminate and nice, whom nothing becomes but Majesty, Boldness, and a manly Relish.[6]

Effeminacy in men, however, was further closely linked with decadence and a resulting decline of civilised society. In his 1757 Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times, John Brown argued that contemporary manners were characterised by "a vain, luxurious, and selfish EFFEMINACY", adding that "the Manners... of those who govern... will ever determine the Strength or Weakness, and therefore the Continuance or Dissolution, of a State".[7]

Besides the expression of such strong emotions, the display of more minor feelings also had to be restrained for reasons of good

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1 Costeker, Fine Gentleman, p.9; J. Bramston, The Man of Taste (1733), p.16; The Connoisseur, or, a Satire on the Man of Taste (1735), p.10; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 351.

2 World, No. 58, p. 135; also Brokesby, Of Education, p. 105.

3 Connoisseur, No. 65, ii. 96, 99.

4 N. Lancaster, The Pretty Gentleman (1747), pp. 27-8, 33; for the soft voice, see also World, No. 58, p. 135.

5 World, No. 58, p. 135.

6 Polite Student, p. 35.

7 Brown, Estimate, pp. 25, 67, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, xxvii (1757), pp. 166-7.

breeding and dignity. The gentleman was not to reveal impatience: patience was "a Virtue, that enables a Man to suffer Contrarieties with Calmness, and Equality of Temper", whereas the impatient man was "a meer Weather-Cock, that looks East and West in a Moment".[1] Nor should he display haste; being always in a hurry was an impertinent affectation which conflicted with the air of negligence suitable for a gentleman.[2] He should not reveal disappointment, losing money while gaming, for instance, with serenity.[3] Such equanimity was evidence of good breeding:

> Men of the most ordinary good-breeding dissemble the pain which any little incident may give them, and those who are more thoroughly formed to society, turn, of their own accord, all such incidents into raillery.[4]

This good breeding of gentlemen constrasted with the manners of their social inferiors; thus a translator of Epictetus's Enchiridion adds a comment on the passage on visiting superiors and complaining of rebuffs: "For this is rude, and what Plebeians use,/Who foolishly exterior things traduce."[5] Nor should the gentleman display curiosity, for instance looking into other people's doors and windows in passing. Such

> staring and glancing of the Eyes to and fro, implies such a Levity of Mind, and so great a Defect in good Manners, as must needs render the Practice in itself very clownish and contemptible.[6]

One type of emotional display to receive repeated criticism from courtesy writers was that of laughter. There existed a long tradition

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1 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, 'To the Ladies', p. cviii.

2 Steele, Spectator, No. 284, iii. pp. 6-7.

3 Guardian, No. 174, p. 346.

4 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p. 42.

5 Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. J.W. (1707), p. 50.

6 Gentleman's Library, p. 338.

of writings criticising laughter which stretched back through the Renaissance to the ancient Greeks.[1] Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers believed that indulgence in laughter was undignified and ill bred. Chesterfield's remarks on the subject are probably the most well-known today. He tells his son that: "In my mind, there is nothing so illiberal, and so ill-bred, as audible laughter," warning him that "I could heartily wish that you may often be seen to smile, but never heard to laugh while you live." He gives as an example his own conduct, asserting that "since I have had the full use of my reason, nobody has ever heard me laugh".[2] Other contemporary comments echo this view. In The Guardian, it is asserted that the beau smiles more than laughs, and "always takes care to confine his mouth within the rules of good-breeding".[3] Nathaniel Lancaster comments similarly that among such people,

> Bursts of Mirth are looked upon as the Marks of savage Manners. A governed Smile, or so - they judge to be not at all ungraceful. Nay, a Half-Laugh upon a very extraordinary Occasion, is not esteemed a Departure from Decorum. But then, the utmost Caution imaginable is taken, that it proceed no farther....[4]

Such views were confined neither to beaus nor to courtesy writers - William Pitt recommended very similar conduct to his nephew in a private letter of 1754.[5]

Laughter was criticised on several specific grounds. It was believed to be disfiguring to the countenance; Chesterfield criticised the resulting "shocking distortion of the face".[6] A smile, in contrast,

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1 E.g. Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker (1692), p.75; Erasmus, De Civilitate (1540 English trn.), p.A6; the Renaissance writer Simplicius, in Epictetus his Enchiridion with Simplicius his Comment, tr. Stanhope (1694), pp.420-1; Gracián, The Compleat Gentleman (tr. 1730), pp.74-5; Halifax, Advice, p.88.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1115-6 (9 Mar. O.S. 1748); also iv. 1250, vi. 2425.

3 Guardian, No.29, p.62.

4 Lancaster, The Pretty Gentleman, p.19.

5 Pitt, Correspondence (1838), i.79 (24 Jan., 1754).

6 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1116; also Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker, p.75.

"doth not too much disorder the features".[1] This concern to maintain what Chesterfield termed a "serenity of countenance"[2] was applied not only to laughter but also to other emotions such as sorrow, anger, and joy.[3] It closely mirrored contemporary aesthetic ideals of serenity and repose in the arts. Aesthetic theorists such as Joseph Spence and William Hogarth explicitly extended these ideals to the countenance, arguing that strong emotional display was ugly and disagreeable.[4] Their arguments are another reminder of the very close conformity which existed between the ideals of good breeding and contemporary canons of taste.

In addition to the distortion of the countenance, the noise and frequency of laughter were also causes of complaint. Loud laughter was regarded as being a "disagreeable noise",[5] and a sign of rusticity.[6] Frequent and immoderate laughter was characterised as being ungraceful[7] and the sign of a fool.[8]

Laughter was disliked at least as much for reasons which were social rather than aesthetic. Laughter was closely associated with the behaviour of the common people. Chesterfield said of frequent and loud laughter that "it is the manner in which the mob express their silly joy at silly things; and they call it being merry".[9]

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1 Guardian, No. 29, p.62.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1349-50.

3 For sorrow, see above, p.180 ; for anger and joy, see Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1349-50.

4 J. Spence, Crito: or a Dialogue on Beauty (1752), p.23; W.Hogarth, The Analysis of Beauty (1753), ch. xv, p.130.

5 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1116; also Constable, Conversation, p. 261.

6 Guardian, No. 29, p.63; Tatler, No. 252, iv. 280-1; Spectator, No. 429, iv. 9.

7 Constable, Conversation, p. 101.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1116; Constable, Conversation, p.106; Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker, added comment, p.75; Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. J.W., added comment, p. 45; Addison, Spectator, No.35, i. 147.

9 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1115.

Shaftesbury observed that "the hearty laugh" was much commoner among "porters, carmen, clowns" than among "[t]he well-bred people, those of finer make, better taste, and raised above the vulgar".[1] Ellis Walker similarly attacked

> ...causeless laughter at each thing you see:
> That grinning of the thoughtless Mobile;
> That senseless gaping mirth, that is exprest
> Without the provocation of a Jest.[2]

Such laughter was associated not only with the manners of the common people, but also with their unrefined sense of humour, from which Chesterfield felt the well bred person should carefully dissociate himself.[3] Chesterfield specifically linked the avoidance of laughter and low humour with the maintenance of dignity in manners, and, through such dignity, the maintenance of social distance, and the gentleman's position in the social hierarchy. Thus, he argued:

> There is a certain dignity of manners absolutely necessary, to make even the most valuable character either respected or respectable.
>
> Horse-play, romping, frequent and loud fits of laughter, jokes, waggery, and indiscriminate familiarity, will sink both merit and knowledge into a degree of contempt. They compose at most a merry fellow; and a merry fellow was never yet a respectable man. Indiscriminate familiarity either offends your superiors, or else dubs you their dependant, and led captain. It gives your inferiors just, but troublesome and improper claims of equality.[4]

Even such strongly held views, however, were subject in the long term to changes of fashion: when Chesterfield's letters were published in 1774, critics singled out for attack his proscriptions of laughter.[5]

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1 Shaftesbury, Regimen, in his Life,Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen, ed. B. Rand (1900), p.225; see also pp. 226-8.

2 Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker, added comment, p.75.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1115-6; see also K.V. Thomas, 'The Place of Laughter in Tudor and Stuart England', Times Literary Supplement, 21 Jan., 1977, p. 80.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1379; similarly Constable, Conversation, pp. 181-2.

5 B.S. Allen, 'Chesterfield's Objection to Laughter', Modern Language Notes, xxxviii (1923), 281-3; S.M. Tave, The Amiable Humorist (Chicago, 1960), pp. 43-4, 82-4.

viii. Speech

Another important means through which the gentleman was instructed to maintain his social position was his speech. The discussion of speech by courtesy writers may be divided into two main areas: that concerning the voice (including such features as intonation, enunciation, pronunciation, and accent), and that concerning the diction, or the actual words and phrases used and their grammatical construction. Chesterfield's letters are a major source of information on both these concerns. He tells his son that "to have a graceful manner of speaking" is of "infinite consequence" to a man[1] in making himself both agreeable and considerable.[2] With regard to the qualities of the voice, he argues that "an ungraceful manner of speaking, whether stuttering, muttering, monotony, or drawling", creates "a disagreeable impression" on strangers, whereas "an harmonious voice" prepossesses them in one's favour.[3] Besides these faults, he also criticises speaking too quickly, too loudly or too softly as "awkward and disagreeable" habits "to be avoided by attention",[4] and further tells his son to "let no jarring, dissonant accents ever fall" from his tongue.[5]

A major motivation behind this advice of Chesterfield's was the desire for his son to distinguish himself from people of a lower social rank. He argues that the faults he mentions "are the distinguishing marks of the ordinary people, who have had no care taken of their education".[6] These ordinary people "murder" English words, "and though

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1169.

2 Ibid., ii. 334.

3 Ibid., iii. 1114-5 (9 Mar. O.S. 1748).

4 Ibid., ii. 464-5; also iii. 1131, 1168-70.

5 Ibid., iv. 1465; for very similar recommendations to these various ones by Chesterfield, see John Mason, An Essay on Elocution, or Pronunciation (1748), pp.6-20; Constable, Conversation, pp. 100, 148-9, 174, 253-4.

6 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 465.

they make themselves understood, they do it so disagreeably, that what they say seldom makes amends for their manner of saying it".[1] In this comment, Chesterfield appears to be referring in particular to matters of pronunciation, and in further remarks he makes his aversion to popular pronunciation more explicit. He says that having "bad pronunciation" is a proof of "having kept bad and low company",[2] and gives as an example the speech of the vulgar man:

> Even his pronunciation of proper words carries the mark of the beast along with it. He calls the earth, yearth, he is obleiged, not obliged, to you. He goes to wards, and not towards, such a place.[3]

In condemning bad pronunciation, Chesterfield focused on a personal characteristic which was of growing importance as a status indicator. In 1762, the elocutionist Thomas Sheridan wrote that the only pronunciation accepted as polite and fashionable was that which was prevalent at court.

> All other dialects, are sure marks, either of a provincial, rustic, pedantic, or mechanic education; and therefore have some degree of disgrace annexed to them. And as the court pronunciation is no where methodically taught, and can be acquired only by conversing with people in polite life, it is a sort of proof that a person has kept good company, and on that account is sought after by all, who wish to be considered as fashionable people, or members of the beau monde.[4]

Pronunciation was potentially a very telling indicator of social origin because, as Sheridan and his fellow elocutionists pointed out, it was learned at an early age from one's social companions;[5]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 507.

2 Ibid., ii. 461.

3 Ibid., iv. 1407 (27 Sept. O.S.1749). Thomas Dyche, A Guide to the English Tongue (12th edn., 1727), p.84 argues that 'oblige' should be pronunced with a long 'i' sound as in 'machine'. G. McKnight, Modern English in the Making (New York, 1928), p.445 argues that Chesterfield's published letters had a marked influence on fashionable pronunciation of 'oblige' in the 1770s and 1780s; she also states that 'earth' was pronounced by polite speakers with a short 'e' as in 'bet' (Ibid., p.445).

4 T. Sheridan, A Course of Lectures on Elocution (1762), pp.29-30.

5 Ibid., pp.29-30; J. Buchanan, Linguae Britannicae Vera Pronunciatio (1757), (Scholar Press facs. Menston, 1969), p. xii note.

it was very difficult to reproduce in any written, and hence publishable, system of rules;[1] it was very difficult to correct, even with personal attention, bad pronunciation once learned;[2] and a person's pronunciation was in very public and frequent use.[3]

Most of the information concerning the function of accent as a social distinguisher between 1690 and 1760 comes from non-courtesy sources. Provincial pronunciation had been condemned as early as Tudor times as comic[4] and barbarous.[5] Concern for the social function of accent received wider publication with the growth of the British elocutionary movement from the 1740s.[6] This was particularly true among the Scottish and Irish elocutionists such as James Buchanan, who argued in the 1750s that regional, especially Scottish, accents were a bar to social and career advancement,[7] and Thomas Sheridan, who felt that provincial speech patterns were undesirable as "evident marks of rusticity".[8]

With the exception of Chesterfield, however, English courtesy writers between 1690 and 1760 all but ignore the subject of accent. Those comments which do appear are critical of a provincial accent, but not wholly condemnatory. The Spectator papers cite Dryden's portrait of the rustic with "his Clown-Accent, and his Country-Tone"[9]

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1 John Lawson, Lectures concerning Oratory (Dublin, 1758, Scholar Press facs. Menston, 1969), pp. 424-5.

2 Sheridan, Lectures, pp. 32-3; Buchanan, Linguae, p. xii note.

3 Buchanan, Linguae, p. vii.

4 K.V. Thomas, 'The Place of Laughter', p.77.

5 E.g., Edmund Coote, The English Schoole-Master (1597, 1627 edn.), p.27.

6 W.S. Howell, Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric (Princeton, New Jersey, 1971), pp. 156-9.

7 Buchanan, Linguae, p. xv note.

8 Sheridan, Lectures, p.33.

9 Spectator, No. 71, i. 305 (from Cymon and Iphigenia).

and contain a spoof on Welsh pronunciation and spelling.[1] Swift asserts in his Polite Conversation that he has introduced the "rude Dialect" of a character from Derbyshire "for no other Reason than to teach my Scholars how to avoid it".[2] Yet in 1738, John Constable's epitome of good breeding, Timander, had "a Northern Roughness upon his Accent in Speaking" - which remark, taken in its general context, indicates an imperfection, but certainly not a stigma.[3] It is difficult to say whether these views or Chesterfield's remarks should be taken as more representative of contemporary opinion. Certainly, however, Chesterfield's repeated concern for his son's elocution was at least partly motivated by the boy's poor response to such admonitions:[4] a lack of eloquence all the more disastrous in view of his father's intentions to make him a diplomat.

Besides a pleasing voice, the gentleman was expected to possess correct grammar and elegant diction. Locke prescribed the former largely for reasons of social distinction. He felt that a gentleman must be able to speak his own language:

> ... without shocking the ears of those it is addressed to with solecisms and offensive irregularities. And to this purpose Grammar is necessary. But it is the Grammar only of their proper Tongues, and to those only who would take pains in cultivating their Language, and in perfecting their stiles. Whether all Gentlemen should not do this I leave to be Considered, since the want of Propriety, and Grammatical Exactness, is thought very misbecoming in one of that Rank, and usually draws on one guilty of such Faults, the censure of having had a Lower Breeding and worse Company, than suits with his quality.[5]

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1 Spectator, No. 227, ii. 384-5.

2 J. Swift, Polite Conversation (1738), ed. E. Partridge (1963), p. 36.

3 Constable, Conversation, p.28.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1131, 1168-70.

5 Locke, Education, p. 278.

Chesterfield was similarly insistent on the necessity for his son to speak grammatically,[1] in contrast to "the ordinary people... [who] speak in open defiance of all grammar".[2]

Considerations of rank were also of major importance in discussions of the gentleman's choice of diction. He was instructed to avoid using words which referred explicitly to the bodily functions because of their indelicacy; the Spectator gives as examples the phrases "all over in a Sweat", her "Stomach aked", and food "stuck in her teeth".[3] Steele utterly condemns licentious or lewd words as indicative of ill breeding,[4] arguing that "Licentious Language has something brutal in it, which disgraces Humanity, and leaves us in the Condition of the Savages in the field".[5] Courtesy writers unanimously condemned swearing, which they believed was a common fashionable practice in the first half of the eighteenth century.[6] In attacking swearing, courtesy writers did use the religious argument that it was a sin and a blasphemy, but this was mostly made only in passing[7] and there was a certain acknowledgement that it was an out-of-date argument.[8] It was also argued that swearing in conversation

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 461; v. 1800.

2 Ibid., ii. 507.

3 Spectator, No. 217, iii. 346-7.

4 Ibid., No. 533, iv. 402-3.

5 Ibid., No. 400, iii. 498, also No. 75, i. 324; Fielding, 'Conversation' p. 148.

6 For its fashionableness, see Defoe, Compleat Gentleman, p.38, Defoe, The Great Law of Subordination considered (1724), p.22; Nelson, Instructions for the Conduct of a Young Gentleman, p. 701; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.10; Gentleman's Library, p.83; Swift, Polite Conversation, pp. 30-1; Gentleman's Magazine, i (1731), 415, vi (1736), 384-6.

7 Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. J.W., added comment, p.45; Gentleman's Library, p.83; Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift, p.17; Gentleman's Magazine, i. (1731), p.415.

8 R. Dodsley, 'Advice', in his A Muse in Livery (1732), pp.121-2; Gentleman's Magazine, x (1740), 167.

devalued the worth of a legal oath and thereby encouraged perjury.[1] Also common, however, was the assertion that, in swearing, a gentleman displayed ill breeding and acted beneath his social rank. William Darrell wrote a three-page tirade to this effect, asserting that swearing was an "ungenteel" "Breach of Civility" which contradicted "the Rules of Breeding", was "below a Gentleman" and resembled "the Dialect of a Billingsgate and the Bear-Garden".[2]

The belief that language took on associations from its users prompted repeated efforts to persuade the gentleman not to use vulgar words or sayings, in order that he might not be associated with his social inferiors. Addison believed that phrases "used in ordinary Conversation, become too familiar to the Ear, and contract a kind of Meanness by passing through the Mouths of the Vulgar".[3] Samuel Johnson saw a definite process of fashion at work which altered the social associations of words:

> Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths....[4]

These views were reiterated by several other major writers on literary taste.[5] In practice, they prompted the condemnation by courtesy writers of a number of specific words and phrases as indicative of low education or company.[6] Chesterfield was especially insistent

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1 Nelson, Conduct of a Young Gentleman, p.709; Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. J.W., added comment, p.45; Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p.75, The Craftsman, 21 June, 1746, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, xvi (1746), 313; but cf. Gentleman's Magazine, vi (1736), 384-6, that too many legal and state oaths devalued oaths.

2 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.10-12, repr. in T. Foxton, Serino (1721), p.58. See also Darrell, op. cit., pp.382-5; Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker, added comment, p.91; Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. J.W., added comment, pp. 105-6; T. Seaton, The Conduct of Servants in Great Families (1720), p.239.

3 Spectator, No. 285, iii. 10.

4 Rambler, No. 168, v. 127.

5 Alexander Gerard, Essay on Taste (1759), p.30; John Ward, System of Oratory (1759), i. 309-10; Joseph Spence, An Essay on Pope's Odyssey (1726), ii. 9.

6 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.350; Johnson, Dictionary, Preface, p. C^{v}.

on the importance in the gentleman's speech of correctness, "propriety and elegancy of diction"[1] arguing that they "distinguish people of fashion and education from the illiterate vulgar",[2] whereas vulgar expressions, "old sayings and common proverbs"[3] "vilify, as they imply either a very low turn of mind, or low education and low company".[4] It should be emphasised, however, that the desire to maintain distinctions of rank was not the only cause of this insistence on the correct language of the gentleman. There was a general concern with language at this time due to the efforts of eighteenth-century linguists and grammarians to define and 'purify' the English language along the lines of the French Académie.[5] Moreover, there was a strong contemporary interest in the arts of oratory and public speaking, mastery of which was very necessary in the gentry's and nobility's traditional roles as members of Parliament, state officials, diplomats, justices, and in the professions of the Church and the law.[6]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 2081-2; also iv. 1454-6, v. 2078, 2091.

2 Ibid., ii. 534; also vi. 2414.

3 Ibid., ii. 461.

4 Ibid., iv. 1380. He gives as an example "one man's meat is another man's poison" (Letters, ii. 461). Interestingly, he himself was prone to this fault, often using phrases such as "home, be it never so homely" (Ibid., v. 2214) and "buckle to it" (Ibid., v. 2245); see also iii. 1048; v. 1858, 1976, 1997, 2206; vi. 2394, 2407. See similarly, Tucker, Protean Shape, pp. 57-8, 106, 176.

5 (Although this itself had strong associations of social rank as the ideal was based on polite speech.) See for this general development J. Barrell, English Literature in History 1730-1780: An Equal, Wide Survey (1983), ch.2, pp.110-75; S.A. Leonard, The Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage, 1700-1800 (Wisconsin, 1929, repr. New York, 1962), throughout.

6 E.g. in his Lectures Concerning Oratory, pp. xi, 5, 8-9, John Lawson argues that "the useful Art of just, distinct Pronunciation" is an aid in the better communication of truth and the persuasion of men to do good deeds. See for these concerns in general, W.S. Howell, 'Sources of the Elocutionary Movement in England 1700-48', Quarterly Journal of Speech, xlv (1959), pp. 1-18, and his Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric, pp. 111-12.

ix. Treatment of others

In addition to such means as dress, deportment, equanimity and speech, an equally important form of manners by which the gentleman could maintain his rank was in his bearing and carriage towards other people. His treatment of other people, indeed, served a dual purpose, because by indicating and upholding his own place in the social hierarchy relative to others, he also indicated and reinforced theirs. Courtesy writers divided the social hierarchy into three relative categories: superiors, equals, and inferiors.[1] The gentleman was supposed to treat each of these groups in a markedly different manner, displaying deference to superiors, complaisance to equals, and condescension to inferiors. Each of these attitudes had to be precisely calculated in order to maintain an exact balance of dignity and rank between the gentleman and those with whom he was dealing.

With respect to his superiors, the gentleman had to avoid paying both too little deference, which was characterised by an undue familiarity, and too much deference, which appeared as a fawning servility. It was only by paying just the right amount of deference due to another's rank that a gentleman could maintain both the other's dignity and his own. Henry Fielding gives the clearest explanation of this policy in practice:

> In our Behaviour to our Superiours, two Extremes are to be avoided, namely, an abject and base Servility, and an impudent and encroaching Freedom. When the well-born Hyperdulus approaches a Nobleman in any public Place, you would be persuaded he was one of the meanest of his Domestics: his Cringes fall little short of

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1 J. Hartcliffe, A Treatise of Moral and Intellectual Virtues (1691), pp.162-3; Polite Student, p.30; Swift, 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', p.213; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.14; Fielding, 'Conversation', p.132; Bulstrode, Essays, p.51; Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 380; v. 1940; 'Of true Politeness', in Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 191; Philpot, Polite Education, p.43; also Pitt, Correspondence, i. 80-1.

> Prostration; and his whole Behaviour is so mean and servile, that an Eastern Monarch would not require more Humiliation from His Vassals. On the other Side; Anaschyntus, whom fortunate Accidents, without any Pretensions from his Birth, have rasied to associate with his Betters, shakes my Lord Duke by the Hand, with a Familiarity savouring not only of the most perfect Intimacy, but the closest Alliance. The former Behaviour properly raises our Contempt, the latter our Disgust. Hyperdulus seems worthy of wearing his Lordship's Livery; Anaschyntus deserves to be turned out of his Service for his Impudence. Between these two is that golden Mean, which declares a Man ready to acquiesce in allowing the Respect due to a Title by the Laws and Customs of his Country, but impatient of any Insult, and disdaining to purchase the Intimacy with, and Favour of a Superior, at the Expence of Conscience or Honour.[1]

One specific means by which respect could be shown was by "the most exact Compliance" with the use of correct titles and forms of address, which Fielding argued was "a Fundamental in Good-Breeding" to avoid displeasing the person addressed.[2] Steele, however, warned that to use such titles to excess was practised by "the vulgar" such as Billingsgate fishwives, and was not to be endured in people of rank.[3] He makes it clear that only achieving the proper degree of deference served to maintain a man's own dignity:

> The highest point of good-breeding, if any one can hit it, is to show a very nice regard to your own dignity, and with that in your heart express your value for the man above you.[4]

Towards his equals, a gentleman was expected to show complaisance and affability.[5] Hobbes defined complaisance as "that every man strive to accommodate himself to the rest",[6] and courtesy writers

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1 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.132; also Constable, Conversation, p.28; Hartcliffe, Moral and Intellectual Virtues, p.162; Polite Student, p.30; Tatler, No.180, iii. 347; Bulstrode, Essays, p.51; Chesterfield, Letters, iv, 1379; v. 1908; also Pitt, Correspondance, i. 80-1.

2 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 141, 128.

3 Tatler, No. 204, iv. 55; but cf. Fielding, 'Conversation', pp.126-7.

4 Tatler, No. 204, iv. 56.

5 E.g. see Polite Student, p.30; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.14.

6 T. Hobbes, Leviathan (1651), in his Works ed. W. Molesworth, 1839-45), iii. 138 (Pt. 1, ch. 15).

associated the term with ideas of politeness,[1] agreeableness,[2] good humour,[3] and friendliness.[4] Henry Fielding sets out the gentleman's major social obligations to his equals by describing their opposites: "most of the common Enormities committed in publick Assemblies, to our Equals".[5] He gives most of his attention to two character types. The first is the man who shows no consideration for his equals, being "so absolutely abandoned to his own Humour, that he never gives it up on any Occasion", and will not dance or play cards even if he thereby prevents others from so doing .[6] This contrasts with a man who will always comply with such requests even if they do not suit him.[7] The second type is the proud man, who shows no respect for his equals, being arrogant and insolent either out of deliberate ill nature to shame them or out of a desire to convince people of his superiority. He either ignores people, derides them, or gives them a "supercilious Look" and other "ill Words, Actions, and Gestures".[8] Fielding criticises such displays of contempt as "detestable"[9] and argues that to show "Insolence or Haughtiness" to others is a form of "Disrespect, or Affront to their Persons" which constituted "the severest Attack that can be made on the Pride of Man",[10] because it created a sense of shame in the recipient.[11] He describes in graphic

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1 Polite Student, p. 30.

2 Ibid., p. 30; Philpot, Polite Education, p.43; Guardian, No.162, pp. 322-3.

3 Tatler, No. 2, i. 23.

4 Guardian, No. 162, pp. 322-3.

5 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 140.

6 Ibid., pp. 133-4; also Locke, Education, p. 318; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.18.

7 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 133-4.

8 Ibid., p.136; also pp. 134, 137.

9 Ibid., p. 134.

10 Ibid., p. 125.

11 Ibid., p. 137.

detail how pride was displayed in manners. It

> inflates the Cheeks, erects the Head, and stiffens the Gaite.... [It] constitutes the supercilious Eye, the reserved Look, the distant Bowe, the scornful Leer, the affected Astonishment, the loud Whisper, ending in a Laugh directed full in the Teeth of another.[1]

Fielding, along with many other contemporary courtesy writers, strongly condemns such displays of pride as offensive and ill bred.[2]

Towards his inferiors, the gentleman was expected to display condescension. This quality in the eighteenth century had none of its modern connotations of a patronising manner. It was rather used, with complete approbation, to denote an affability to inferiors which contrasted with pride or arrogance, but which preserved the dignity of rank by stopping short of familiarity. Dr. Johnson defines the verb 'to condescend' as "To depart from the privileges of superiority by a voluntary submission; to sink willingly to equal terms with inferiors".[3] Fielding argues that in "our Behaviour to our Inferiors", "Condescension can never be too strongly recommended".[4] For the ideal example of this condescension, he refers his reader to the Earl of Chesterfield:

> See the Earl of C-- noble in his Birth, splendid in his Fortune, and embellished with every Endowment of Mind; how affable, how condescending! himself the only one who seems ignorant that he is every Way the greatest Person in the Room.[5]

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1 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 125-6.

2 Ibid., pp. 125-6; also Hartcliffe, Moral and Intellectual Virtues, p.163; Guardian, No. 153, iii. 262; Gentleman's Library, pp. 348, 355; Johnson, Adventurer No.81 (Yale edn.), p.401; Rambler, No.56, iii. 302; Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.246; Polite Companion, p.127; Hume, 'Of Qualities Immediately Agreeable to Others', iv. 332; see also Fielding, 'Conversation', ed. H.K. Miller, p. 135, n.1.

3 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. 'condescend'.

4 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.141; also Polite Student, p.30; Keith, Education of a Young Nobleman, p.147.

5 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.126; for the attribution to Chesterfield see Ibid., p. 126, note 1.

Chesterfield himself describes his art of condescension in some detail. He tells his godson that:

> The lowest and the poorest people in the world, expect good breeding from a gentleman, and they have a right to it; for they are by nature your equals, and are no otherwise your inferiors than by their education and their fortune.[1]

In his own dealings with his inferiors, he aimed to place as little emphasis on this difference of fortune as possible:

> For my own part, I am more upon my guard as to my behaviour to my servants, and others who are called my inferiors, than I am towards my equals; for fear of being suspected of that mean and ungenerous sentiment, of desiring to make others feel that difference which fortune has, and perhaps, too, undeservedly made between us.[2]

However, the forms of good breeding owed to inferiors were distinctly different from those paid to equals of superiors:

> il y a ... une certaine politesse que vous devez à vos inférieurs.... On ne fait pas des compliments à des gens au-dessous de soi, et on ne leur parle pas de l'honneur qu'ils vous font; mais en même temps il faut les traiter avec bonté, et avec douceur.... Il faut donc agir avec douceur et bonté envers tous ceux qui sont au-dessous de vous, et ne pas leur parler d'un ton brusque, ni leur dire des duretés, comme si ils étaient d'une differente espèce.[3]

Fielding had characterised such behaviour by Chesterfield as affability, and other writers also frequently use this word to describe the gentleman's condescension.[4] They give specific examples of such conduct: being apparently unconscious of any personal superiority,[5] being "of easy Access" to inferiors, using "obliging Language and kind Usage" to them,[6] and returning the salutation of a bow, even if it came

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, vi. 2411 (1762).

2 Ibid., v. 1964 (11 Nov. 1752), to his son; also v. 1908.

3 Ibid., ii. 380 (1739).

4 Constable, Conversation, pp. 191-2; Keith, Education of a... Nobleman, p.147; Philpot, Polite Education, p.32; Locke, Education, pp. 227-8; also Pitt, Correspondence, i. 80-1.

5 Steele, Spectator, No. 340, iii. 262.

6 Graile, Particular Advice to the Gentry, p. 139.

from a very poor person.[1]

Such condescension did not cause any loss of rank or authority: Locke states that if the children of gentleman display a "courteous, affable Carriage" to their inferiors, "No part of their Superiority will be hereby lost; but the Distinction increased, and their Authority strengthened".[2] This was because the gentleman was strictly enjoined not to be affable with inferiors to the point of familiarity.[3] Chesterfield argues that "indiscriminate familiarity... gives your inferiors just, but troublesome and improper claims of equality".[4] Such a belief encouraged them to treat the gentleman in return with a familiarity or even a contempt which was unbecoming his rank. Thus, William Darrell asserts:

> Clowns are a sort of encroaching Animals: give an Inch, they'll take an Ell, and repay your Familiarity with Contempt and Outrage: If you intend to oblige 'em to a Distance, stoop not below your Station, nor set them on equal Ground; if once you make 'em Companions, they'll usurp the Authority of Masters; for they want Prudence to manage a Familiarity, but not Impudence to abuse it.[5]

The gentleman was particularly warned against familiarity with his servants, because such behaviour would encourage them to be saucy and despise him, and make him lose his authority not only as a social superior, but also as a master.[6] Indeed, the warning that 'familiarity breeds contempt', was repeatedly given to masters.[7]

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1 Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 31-2.

2 Locke, Education, pp. 227-8; also J. Mason, Self-Knowledge (1745), pp. 182-3; also Pitt, Correspondence, i. 80-1.

3 Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p. 17.

4 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1379.

5 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.16; also Constable, Conversation, p.192.

6 Warrington, Advice to his Children, p.26.

7 Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift, p.121; Defoe, Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business (1725), pp.21-3 (he gives as an example flirting with servant maids); id., Great Law of Subordination Considered, pp. 258, 261, 266.

The opposite extreme of familiarity, pride or contempt directed towards inferiors, was very strongly criticised. Courtesy writers depict it as a commonly-practised fault. Locke comments that "It is not unusual to observe the Children in Gentlemen's Families, treat the Servants of the House with Domineering Words, Names of Contempt, and an imperious Carriage; as if they were of another Race, and Species beneath them".[1] Fielding asserts similarly regarding social inferiors in general:

> that the fortuitous Accident of Birth, the Acquisition of Wealth, with some outward Ornaments of Dress, should inspire Men with an Insolence capable of treating the rest of Mankind with Disdain, is so preposterous, that nothing less than daily Experience could give it Credit.[2]

The display of pride towards servants was singled out for special criticism for three reasons: "The condition of Servitude is of it self grievous enough";[3] the dependent status of servants made them vulnerable to mistreatment[4] and the result was anger and resentment in the servant, which made it harder for him to submit to deserved rebukes.[5]

Arrogance and disdainfulness towards inferiors in general were condemned in similar terms[6] as being a proclamation of superiority unnecessary in the truly noble man,[7] which was insulting and mortifying to inferiors.[8] Henry Fielding was one of the most vociferous critics

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1 Locke, Education, p.227.

2 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 140.

3 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, p.407.

4 Locke, Education, p.228.

5 D. Defoe, introduction to R. Dodsley, 'Servitude' (?1729), p.12.

6 Brokesby, Of Education, p. 186; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.7; Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.248.

7 Gentleman's Library, p.365.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1179.

of such arrogance, attacking pride towards inferiors even more severely than he did its display towards equals. He attacks the fashionable beau and fine lady for being especially prone to a "contemptuous Carriage", and uses the most strongly-worded criticism in his entire essay to criticise their disdain.[1] Their attitude went beyond the insolence given to a social equal, to the point of treating inferiors as "Slaves" or "Animals of an inferior Order", who were "unworthy to breathe even the same Air" and with whom any contact was "an Indignity and Disgrace". This, he says,

> is considering the Difference not in the Individual, but in the very Species; a Height of Insolence impious in a Christian Society, and most absurd and ridiculous in a trading Nation.[2]

In such vehemence we see particularly clearly the role of the courtesy writer as social critic. However, care should be taken not to interpret this criticism of pride as any kind of egalitarian philosophy. Fielding, we have seen, was a stout maintainer of according all due deference to rank.[3] Locke's fundamental component of good breeding, not to think meanly of others, is qualified with the phrase "according to their Rank and Condition".[4] Addison argues that complaisance bound people together into a state of human equality "so far as it is consistent with the order and oeconomy of the world".[5] Stephen Philpot insists that inferiors "have a right by the Laws of good Breeding" to be used with civility after they have paid their respect to their superiors.[6] And Sir William Temple asserts bluntly:

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1 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 141.

2 Ibid., pp. 140-1.

3 Above, pp. 193-5.

4 Above, ch. 3, p. 104.

5 Guardian, No. 162, pp. 322-3.

6 Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 33-4 (emphasis added).

> Nothing is so nauseous as undistinguish'd Civility; 'tis like a Whore, or an Hostess, who looks kindly upon every Body that comes in.[1]

The display of civility towards other people was thus clearly conceived of by courtesy writers as existing within the framework of a strict social hierarchy. Nonetheless, within these limitations, the demonstration of positive good will was seen to be a very important feature of the gentleman's good breeding. Courtesy writers set out two basic means of displaying such good will: not offending, and positively pleasing others. To an extent, all the gentleman's manners operated to display these attitudes. So Chesterfield argued that air, dress, graceful motion, a "look, a gesture, an attitude, a tone of voice, all bear their parts in the great work of pleasing".[2] However, two areas of the gentleman's manners were singled out as particularly apt means of conveying these attitudes. Courtesy discussions on not offending others largely centre on the gentleman's bodily cleanliness and other personal habits; discussions on actively pleasing focus primarily on the art of conversation.

x. Cleanliness

In the courtesy tradition leading up to the eighteenth century, advice on the avoidance of giving offence had centred primarily on concealment of the bodily functions, especially in the areas of eating, evacuation, and physical cleanliness. Within this tradition may be cited in particular Theophrastus's character of the sloven, medieval treatises on table manners such as S'ensuivent les Contenances de la Table, and Erasmus's De Civilitate.[3] As Norbert Elias has

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1 Sir William Temple, 'Heads, designed for an Essay on Conversation', in his Works (1720), i. 312.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1345-6, and v. 1986.

3 Theophrastus, Characters... From the French (tr. 1698), pp. 31-2; S'ensuivent les Contenances de la Table, in Furnivall, Manners and Meals, pt. 2, pp. 8-14; Erasmus, De Civilitate (see above, ch. 2, pp. 52-3.

demonstrated, discussions of the bodily functions in the courtesy treatises became progressively shorter and less explicit from the fourteenth through to the nineteenth centuries.[1] Eighteenth-century English courtesy books conform to this trend, and their remarks on such topics are very subdued indeed compared with the explicitness, say, of Erasmus, on such subjects as how not to blow the nose or how to disguise with a cough the breaking of wind.[2]

That such increased reticence was the result of a heightened sense of refinement and delicacy about such matters is testified to by Budgell. Introducing his 1714 translation of Theophrastus's Characters, which is no more explicit in its detail than Erasmus's treatise, he writes:

> I shall say nothing more about the present Translation, but that I was particularly forced to vary from my Author in the 19th Chapter, entitled, A Sloven. The truth of it is, the Original was so very course (sic), that the Politeness of the present Age would never have endured it; and yet the French Translation is not at all more Delicate. I shall make no Apology for this, and only wish that Chapter, as much as I have soften'd it, may pass uncensured among my Well-bred Readers.[3]

To compare the development of this attitude over a century: the 1616 English translation of Theophrastus's work describes the sloven as having "long and lothsome nailes"; Budgell's 1714 sloven has "a sett of long Nails"; the 1616 sloven has "blacke and worm-eaten teeth" and "foule breath"; Budgell says merely that "His Teeth and Breath are perfectly well suited to one another"; the 1616 sloven wipes his nose at the table, talks with his mouth full, and belches while drinking; Budgell translates the same passage as:

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1 Elias, History of Manners, ch. 2, pp. 53-217.

2 Erasmus, De Civilitate, tr. R. Whytington (1540 edn.), pp. A4-A4^{v}, B-B^{v}.

3 Theophrastus, Characters, tr. E. Budgell (1714), preface pp.a4^{v}-a5.

> He lays about him at Table after a very extraordinary manner, and takes in a Meal at a Mouthful; which he seldom disposes of without offending the Company. In Drinking he generally makes more haste than good speed.[1]

These are considerable modifications, and yet Budgell still fears that they may not be sufficient for his well bred readers.[2]

Courtesy writers argued that cleanliness was of fundamental importance in avoiding giving offence to others. Thomas Tickell asserted that cleanliness "is a Mark of Politeness. It is universally agreed upon, that no one unadorned with this Virtue can go into Company without giving a manifest Offence".[3] Tickell argued further that "this Duty" to practise cleanliness increased proportionally as a person's fortune became "easier or higher".[4] Other, more personal attitudes were also connected with cleanliness. Shaftesbury associated cleanliness not only with the rank of a gentleman and the courtesy due to others, but also with the self-respect due in a human being:

> Shou'd one, who had the countenance of a gentleman, ask me "Why I wou'd avoid being "nasty, when no-body was present?" In the first place I shou'd be fully satisfy'd that he himself was a very nasty gentleman, who cou'd ask this question; and that it wou'd be a hard matter for me to make him ever conceive what true Cleanliness was. However, I might, notwithstanding this, be contented to give him a slight answer, and say,"'Twas because I had a "nose." Shou'd he trouble me further, and ask again, "What if I had a cold? Or what if "naturally I had no such

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1 Theophrastus his Characters, tr. J. Healey (1616), pp. 68-70, repr. unchanged 1636 edn., pp. 68-70; Theophrastus, Characters, tr. Budgell, pp. 56-7.

2 The 1616 translation closely matches the Loeb translation: Theophrastus, Characters, tr. J.M. Edmonds (1929), pp.87-8. La Bruyère's French translation, of whose indelicacy Budgell complains, is nearly as graphic as the 1616 version: see the 1698 English trn., pp. 31-2. As one of the Spectator's arbiters on manners, Budgell's opinion may be credited with some authority, but it was not unquestioned: cf. Theophrastus, Characters, tr. H. Gally (1725), pp. xvii-xix, 243-6n.

3 Spectator, No. 631, v.157; also Gentleman's Library, pp. 66-7; Polite Student, pp. 49-50; Hume, 'Qualities...Agreeable to Others', iv. 333.

4 Spectator, No. 631, v. 157.

> nice smell?" I might answer perhaps, "That I car'd as little to see my-self nasty, as that others shou'd see me in that condition." But what if it were in the dark? Why even then, tho I had neither nose, nor eyes, my Sense of the matter wou'd still be the same; my nature wou'd rise at the thought of what was sordid; or if it did not, I shou'd have a wretched nature indeed, and hate my-self for a beast. Honour my-self I never cou'd; whilst I had no better a sense of what, in reality, I ow'd my-self, and what became me, as a human Creature.[1]

The belief that cleanliness distinguishes men from beasts was not new, having been set forth at least as early as Epictetus.[2] However, one idea that does seem to have been new to this period was an association of increasing standards of cleanliness with the progress of civilisation. Thus, Tickell was of the opinion that:

> The different Nations of the World are as much distinguished by their Cleanliness, as by their Arts and Sciences. The more any Country is civilized, the more they consult this part of Politeness. We need but compare our Ideas of a Female Hottentot and an English Beauty, to be satisfied of the Truth of what hath been advanced.[3]

Such an assertion forms an integral part of the same general views regarding good breeding and politeness which were discussed earlier,[4] and is a particularly clear expression of a belief in the superiority of European, especially English, manners over those of more 'primitive' societies.

The courtesy literature contains very few specific instructions on cleanliness apart from the assertion that the gentleman was to avoid being a sloven in his dress.[5] We know from other sources that the most important articles in this respect were his shirts and neck-linen.[6] One contemporary custom which courtesy writers did strongly

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1 Shaftesbury, 'An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour', Characteristicks, i. 112; Chesterfield cites this passage approvingly, Letters, iv. 1428.

2 In his Discourses, Works, ed. Carter (1758), pp.418-24.

3 Spectator, No. 631, v. 157.

4 Above, ch. 3, pp. 119-21, 138.

5 Above, pp. 154-6.

6 Cunnington, Eighteenth-Century... Costume, p.219; Buck, Dress in Eighteenth-Century England, p. 138.

condemn for its uncleanliness was snuff-taking. In The Connoisseur, it is described as "a filthy practice" and "offensive to good manners".[1] It involved people "smearing their noses with a dirty powder" and then "snuffling, sneezing, hawking and grunting like a drove of hogs", while at the same time the snuff made bystanders sneeze, gave off an offensive smell, and passed from the snuff-takers' hands to the food and drink they gave others.[2]

For matters of basic bodily cleanliness, Chesterfield is by far the most useful courtesy source. It could be that he was more explicit because his letters were not intended for publication, although even he argues that matters of cleanliness "speak best for themselves", and that therefore he has deliberately avoided writing of them to his son "since you have had the use of your reason".[3] While insisting that the whole body should be clean, Chesterfield pays particular attention to the mouth and the hands:

> A thorough cleanliness in your person is as necessary for your own health, as it is not to be offensive to other people. Washing yourself, and rubbing your body and limbs frequently with a flesh-brush, will conduce as much to health as to cleanliness. A particular attention to the cleanliness of your mouth, teeth, hands, and nails, is but common decency, in order not to offend people's eyes and noses.[4]

He repeatedly insists that his son clean his teeth daily, and rinse his mouth after each meal.[5] While he insists on clean hands and well-kept nails in order not to cause offence, there is also a theme of

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1 Connoisseur, No. 32, i. 167-8.

2 Ibid., No. 32, 168-70, see also The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany, ed. Lady Llanover, (1st ser., 1861) i. 34: her husband "took a vast quantity of snuff, which gave him a dirty look"; also below, ch. 6, p. 303.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1428.

4 Ibid., iv. 1367, 6 July O.S. 1749; for general references to cleanliness see Ibid., iii. 1077, iv. 1613.

5 Ibid., iii. 973-4, 1058, 1180; iv. 1613; v. 2086.

social rank distinction apparent in his discussion. Thus he says:

> Nothing looks more ordinary, vulgar, and illiberal, than dirty hands, and ugly, uneven and ragged nails. I do not suspect you of that shocking, awkward trick of biting yours; but that is not enough, you must keep the ends of them smooth and clean, not tipped with black as the ordinary people's always are.[1]

Two personal habits associated with cleanliness and the bodily functions which Chesterfield warns against are putting fingers into the nose or ears, which he terms as being "the most shocking, nasty, vulgar rudeness that can be offered to company; it disgusts one, it turns one's stomach...",[2] and looking into the handkerchief after blowing the nose, which he says is acting "so as to make the company sick".[3]

Two of the most basic bodily functions, those of urination and defecation, receive no mention at all in any of the standard courtesy treatises of the day. This is in contrast to some earlier treatises, especially prior to the seventeenth century, in which they are prominent subjects.[4] One eighteenth-century English work which does discuss them is Benjamin Buckler's A Philosophical Dialogue concerning Decency of 1751. The work should be treated with caution as to its representativeness because of a basic conflict in tone and choice of subject. On the one hand Buckler openly discusses, with apparent candour and equanimity, a subject unmentioned in any contemporary courtesy work, and on the other, he concludes, in a marked shift of tone, that the realisation we produce "such monstrous filth and nastiness" should make us (especially women) humble our pride in our physical refinement:[5] a tone of horrified fascination which itself suggests he is conscious of breaking some internalised taboos on the subject. Nonetheless,

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1613, 12 Nov. O.S. 1750.

2 Ibid., iv. 1613, 12 Nov. O.S. 1750; also vi. 2413.

3 Ibid., ii. 460-1; also iv. 1614.

4 Elias, History of Manners, pp. 129-43.

5 B. Buckler, Dialogue Concerning Decency (1751), pp. 46-7.

the treatise contains some interesting discussions on attitudes to these two functions. Buckler argues that a certain degree of shame about the performance of these functions in public is natural because man is by nature a proud animal and cannot bear anything which detracts from the dignity of his nature,[1] but that most of the shame attached to these functions is inculcated in the individual by "confirmed custom",[2] which varies over both time[3] and place.[4] He asserts that in England women are more ashamed of such functions than men, being ashamed of even being seen going to the necessary house,[5] a situation which he explains by the fact that women are by nature prouder than men.[6] Buckler's arguments are interesting on several grounds. His view of an internalisation over time of a standard of shame closely matches Elias's theory of such a historical process.[7] His realisation that customs on such matters vary between countries shows a consciousness of the function of fashion even in such basic habits. His depiction of the different standards of the two sexes raises the interesting question of gender role differences and the socialisation process.[8] The information he gives on contemporary attitudes suggests a high degree of constraint, at least among women, about such functions, which is in line with feelings of delicacy expressed by courtesy writers about cleanliness and other bodily functions. Finally,

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1 Buckler, Dialogue Concerning Decency (1751), p. 12.

2 Ibid., p. 13.

3 Ibid., pp. 9-10.

4 Ibid., pp. 10, 15-17.

5 Ibid., p.10.

6 Ibid., p. 13.

7 Above, ch. 1, pp. 12-13.

8 This subject will be discussed in detail below, ch. 5.

in asserting, as he does, the intrinsic cultural superiority of shame concerning such functions, he reaffirms yet again the contemporary belief in the superiority of European civilisation. Thus, on this last issue, he argues that nations who have effaced modesty and shame "have been always esteem'd brutal and savage by others, who were more civiliz'd",[1] and that

> nature dictates the decency we have been speaking of, [of?] all the polite and well-bred people in the world. On the other side are some barbarous, rude nations, or some contemptible, impudent, unmannerly philosophers.[2]

The only other bodily function discussed in the courtesy literature is that of eating, within the context of communal dining. Like any social occasion, eighteenth-century dining was governed by rules of general consideration for others (Chesterfield specifies, for example, having an air of good humour and complaisance,[3] and offering the food to others before oneself),[4] and rules demarcating social rank such as precedence in entering the dining room and seating at table,[5] or the elaborate custom of drinking healths which was in vogue in England from the 1660s to the 1770s.[6] However, a very large proportion of the rules for table manners given in the eighteenth century involved reducing the visible physical aspects of eating to a minimum. One of the motives behind such a move was again a feeling of delicacy;

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1 Buckler, Decency, p.17.

2 Ibid., p. 21.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 524.

4 Ibid., ii. 446.

5 See for limited information on these points: Ibid., ii. 446, ii. 524; Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 128-9.

6 Pepys comments on the custom as a new French fashion in his Diary, ed. R.C. Latham & W. Matthews (1970-83) iv. 189 (19 June, 1663); Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, pp. 59-61 says the custom began at the Restoration court; J. Trusler, Principles of Politeness (1775), p.65, comments: "Drinking of healths is now growing out of fashion, and is very unpolite in good company." For specific rules of toasting, see Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 524; v. 1939, vi. 2458; H. Misson de Valbourg, Memoirs and Observations in his Travels over England, tr. Mr Ozell (1719), pp.69-71.

thus Lord Kames argues that corporeal pleasure is low and mean, and "Persons therefore of any delicacy, dissemble the pleasure they have in eating and drinking".[1] Another major argument was that certain methods of eating were offensive to other people watching. Chesterfield is again the major source of detailed prescriptions on this subject. His most graphic description of such "disagreeable"[2] table manners forms part of his picture of the awkward fellow:

> If he drinks tea or coffee, he certainly scalds his mouth, and lets either the cup or the saucer fall, and spills the tea or coffee in his breeches. At dinner, his awkwardness distinguishes itself particularly, as he has more to do: there he holds his knife, fork, and spoon differently from other people; eats with his knife to the great danger of his mouth, picks his teeth with his fork, and puts his spoon, which has been in his throat twenty times, into the dishes again. If he is to carve, he can never hit the joint; but, in his vain efforts to cut through the bone, scatters the sauce in everybody's face. He generally daubs himself with soup and grease, though his napkin is commonly stuck through a button-hole, and tickles his chin. When he drinks, he infallibly coughs in his glass, and besprinkles the company.[3]

Some of these habits mentioned by Chesterfield, such as the need to carve well, were long-standing concerns of courtesy writers; others, such as the use of the fork,had only arisen in England in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[4] What is most notable - and most distinctive compared with earlier courtesy literature - about Chesterfield's attitude (writing in the late 1740s) is his tone of

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1 Elements of Criticism, ii. ch. xi., p. 32; also Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.27.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 461.

3 Ibid., ii. 460, 25 July N.S. 1741. For other specific details of incorrect manners in eating, see Ibid., ii. 524, iv. 1402, vi. 2457-8; Spectator, No. 7, i. 32-3; for carving as a social accomplishment see Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1224, 1614.

4 Elias, History of Manners, pp. 91-2.

of horror at these transgressions. This is most clearly expressed in another letter:

> if at table you throw down your knife, plate, bread, etc., and hack the wing of a chicken for half an hour, without being able to cut off it, and your sleeve all the time in another dish, I must rise from table to escape the fever you would certainly give me.[1]

xi. Conversation

Apart from these discussions of cleanliness and table manners, there is very little in the courtesy literature written between 1690 and 1760 on the avoidance of offence. Instead, far more attention is given to the methods of positively pleasing others. This bias is evident even in general discussions of politeness and good breeding. Thus, Fielding says that the whole business of polite conduct

> is no more than to convey to others an Idea of your Esteem of them, which is indeed the Substance of all the Compliments, Ceremonies, Presents, and whatever passes between well-bred People.[2]

James Forrester includes in his definition of politeness the necessity of practising "a Thousand little Civilities, Complacencies, and Endeavours to give others Pleasure",[3] and Hume asserts similarly that "An attention even to trivial matters, in order to please, is... expected and demanded by society".[4] Chesterfield emphatically and repeatedly insists on the need to positively please others, asserting that:

> By manières, I do not mean bare common civility; everybody must have that, who would not be kicked out of company; but I mean engaging, insinuating, shining manners; a distinguished politeness, an almost irresistible address; a superior gracefulness in all you say and do.[5]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1402 (22 Sept. O.S. 1749).

2 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 127.

3 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.12.

4 Hume, 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', p. 332.

5 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1331; also ii. 524-5; iv. 1437.

By far the greatest consideration of the art of pleasing occurs within the context of discussions on conversation. The word 'conversation' in the eighteenth century meant both shared verbal discourse and social intercourse or association in general,[1] and this association of ideas is vital to understanding the great emphasis placed on conversational techniques at this time. Courtesy writers generally shared the belief expressed by Locke that man was by nature a sociable animal,[2] and they asserted that the mutual attraction of men for each other's company was the foundation stone of human society, welfare, and happiness.[3] They felt further that conversation, in the sense of shared verbal discourse, was a major expression and crucial reinforcement of man's social bonds. Henry Fielding argued that verbal conversation was a key feature of human society and distinguished humans from animals.[4] This verbal conversation is the "grand Business of our Lives, the Foundation of every Thing, either useful or pleasant... the noblest Privilege of human Nature, and productive of all rational Happiness".[5] By definition, being social involves being inoffensive to others, but:

> if Men were merely inoffensive to each other, it seems as if Society and Conversation would be meerly indifferent, and that in order to make it desirable by a sensible Being, it is necessary we should go farther, and propose some positive Good to ourselves from it... some Pleasure or Advantage... something which we could not find in an unsocial and solitary State.... The Art of pleasing or doing Good to one another is therefore the Art of Conversation. It is this Habit which gives it all its Value.[6]

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1 Locke, Education, p. 164 and note.

2 Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690), ed. P. Nidditch, (Oxford, 1975), p. 402 (iii. i. 1); Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 119.

3 Guazzo, Art of Conversation (tr. 1738), translator's preface, p. A2; Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 122; Gentleman's Library, p.72.

4 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.120; also Gentleman's Library, pp. 71-2; Guardian, No.24, pp.52-3; Swift, 'Hints towards an Essay on Conversation', Works iv. 94; William Cowper in The Connoisseur, No.138, iii. 230 (attribution to Cowper is Ibid., iii. viii).

5 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 121.

6 Ibid., pp. 122-3.

Other writers similarly asserted that ill-considered conversation turned society into an uncivilised wilderness,[1] and that rules for conversation were so important because it "takes up a great Part, and influences almost every Part of Life",[2] and because very few people knew how to converse politely and without giving offence[3] - an art which, Fielding argued, could not be self-instructed.[4]

To correct this deficiency, courtesy writers provided exhaustively detailed and specific rules of polite conversational techniques, by means of which the gentleman was to maintain a "constant Guard" on his conversation, even with close friends.[5] As general instructions, the gentleman was told to follow the golden rule if he wished to please others,[6] to display good nature,[7] to match his mood to that of his companions ("an attention due from every individual to the majority"[8]) and to appear in general in a good humour.[9] He should not be over-silent (a sign he was either unconfident,[10] ill-natured[11] or spying on his companions[12]), or excessively talkative. This

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1 Gentleman's Library, p. 76.

2 Constable, Conversation, preface, p. iii.

3 Ibid., p. 2; Steele in Spectator, No. 358, iii. 340; Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 121; B. Stillingfleet, An Essay on Conversation (1737), p.1.

4 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 121.

5 Constable, Conversation, p. 266.

6 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 124; Covent-Garden Journal, Nos. 55, 56, ed. G.E. Jensen (1964), ii. 63, 64; Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1035; iv. 1428; vi. 2409.

7 Gentleman's Library, p. 219; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.9; Dodsley, 'Advice', p. 125; Locke, Education, p.162; Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 124-5; Stillingfleet, Conversation, p.7; Tatler, No.242, iv. 234-8; Miller, 'Politeness', p.4.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1036; also v. 1874.

9 Spectator, No. 100, i. 420; No. 143, ii. 65; Bulstrode, Essays, p. 57; Rambler, No. 72, iv. 13; T. Scott, A Father's Instructions (1748), p.24; Constable, Conversation, pp. 186, 196, 261-2; Locke, Education, p. 248.

10 Constable, Conversation, p. 90.

11 Gentleman's Library, pp. 326-7.

12 Ibid., pp. 326-7; Constable, Conversation, p.90; Burgh, Dignity of Human Nature, p. 22.

was a worse defect:[1] to monopolise the conversation was a sign of pride[2] and was "impertinent and unreasonable";[3] everyone had a share in the conversation, and he "who attempts to engross it, trespasses upon the Rights of his Companions".[4] The gentleman was strictly enjoined rarely[5] or never[6] to talk about himself or his affairs, and especially not to complain of his misfortunes[7] or to boast of his accomplishments,[8] faults which were "tedious and impertinent" to others.[9] Stories should be told very seldom,[10] and only if they were short, apt,[11] and rarely or never repeated.[12] The storyteller should not interpose interjections such as "do you mind me, Sir", and never laugh at his own jokes.[13] To whisper was ill bred, "conversation-stock being a joint and common property".[14]

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1 Constable, Conversation, p. 91.

2 Gentleman's Library, p.343.

3 Spectator, No. 428, iv. 4.

4 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p. 33; also Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 145; Hume, 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', p.329.

5 Gentleman's Library, p.226; Guardian, No.24, pp.52-3; Burgh, Human Nature, pp. 12, 22.

6 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1036, iv. 1248; Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p.222; Polite Companion, p.135; Stillingfleet, Conversation, p.12.

7 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.145; Constable, Conversation, p.170.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iv.1247-8; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, pp.35-6; Hume, 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', iv. 330-1; Bulstrode, Essays, p.52; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.9-10.

9 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1039; also Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.33.

10 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1245; Hume 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', iv. 329; Swift, Polite Conversation, p.36; Swift, 'Hints towards an Essay on Conversation', pp.88, 93; Stillingfleet, Conversation, p.9; S. Richardson, Familiar Letters, No.8, pp.15-16.

11 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1245; iii. 1036; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.42; Constable, Conversation, p.48; Tatler, No. 268, iv. 362; Guardian, No. 42, pp. 89-90.

12 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1036-7; iv. 1252; also Constable, Conversation, p.225.

13 Constable, Conversation, p.177, 203; Spectator, No. 371, iii.398.

14 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1245.

In his choice of a conversational subject, the gentleman was most particularly warned to suit his discourse to the interests, abilities, and humour of his company.[1] Chesterfield felt that the very first principle of good breeding in conversation was "never to say anything that you think can be disagreeable to anybody in company", and rather to say what will be positively agreeable.[2] On these grounds were excluded "all general Reflections on Countries, Religions, and Professions",[3] all irreverence of religion including professions of atheism,[4] all compliments on qualities which another person present might lack,[5] all expression of opinions with which the majority of people present would disagree,[6] and any expression of political or religious zeal or doctrine.[7] Safe, neutral subjects of conversation were such topics as food or wine.[8]

Chesterfield felt that a good general knowledge was essential to shine in conversation;[9] however, he also insisted most emphatically: "Never seem wiser nor more learned that people you are with."[10] The display of pedantry in conversation was the great fear and abhorrence of eighteenth-century courtesy writers, and they devoted more frequent and more prolonged consideration to this subject than to any other

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1249; Fielding, 'Conversation', p.149; Constable, Conversation, p.213; Connoisseur, No.138, iii. 228; Bulstrode, Essays, p.22.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 525; Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners, p. 221.

3 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 147-8.

4 Ibid., pp. 147-8.

5 Constable, Conversation, p. 214.

6 Ibid., pp. 215-7.

7 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.22; Burgh, Human Nature, p.7.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1940-1.

9 Ibid., v. 1871.

10 Ibid., iii. 1108; Gentleman's Library, p. 225.

single theme of conversation.[1] Mutual ease, argued Fielding, could best be achieved if the company was on as near a level as possible, and this could only be accomplished by lowering the abilities of the higher to those of the lower.[2] To introduce learned subjects into common conversation was nothing less than "an Insult on the Company, over whom he thus affects a Superiority, and whose Time he sacrifices to his Vanity".[3] The company was made to feel uneasy at their own lack of knowledge and bored at listening to incomprehensibles.[4] The well bred man was never to discuss professional matters such as law when there were non-lawyers present;[5] never to mention the classics before the ladies, rather choosing to discourse on fashion;[6] in general company, he should never expound on points of grammar or antiquity;[7] never make Greek or Latin quotations[8] (although it was allowable to quote modern French and English authors),[9] while "Even History, which otherwise is extremely delightful, grows insipid, when

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1 For general criticisms of pedantry as ill breeding, see: Tatler, No. 244, iv. 246-7; Guardian, No.24, pp.51-2; Shaftesbury, 'Wit and Humour', Characteristicks, i.109-10; Chesterfield, Letters, v.2137, iv.1229-30; Gentleman's Library, pp.32-3, 79-80; Constable, Conversation, pp.38-9, 43, 45-6, 50-1, 92-3, 95, 149-50, 231-2, 239; Johnson, Adventurer (Yale edn.), No.85, pp. 413-4; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.15-16; 'Rules for a Man of Wit and Learning to make himself a disagreeable Companion', Gentleman's Magazine, xxi (1751), p.410.

2 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp.142-3; Tatler, No.225, iv.157; Rambler, No.188, v.221.

3 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.143.

4 Ibid., p.144.

5 Ibid., pp. 144-5.

6 Ibid., pp. 144-5; also Philpot, pp. 37-8.

7 Constable, Conversation, p.95.

8 Ibid., pp. 42, 233-4; Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1838; Connoisseur, No. 138, iii.228.

9 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1838.

drag'd in upon every, or no Occasion...."[1] Scholars in general were regarded as lacking the graces of good breeding because of their reclusiveness; thus Steele described a scholar frequenting polite company to "wear off the Rust" he had acquired,[2] Darrell criticised those bred in the university as "a pack of awkard Animals",[3] and Defoe characterised the "meer schollar" as a "book-case... a creature buryed aliv in heaps of antients and moderns... all learning and no manners".[4]

When other people spoke, good breeding obliged the gentleman to pay them "the keenest Attention";[5] Chesterfield felt that "nothing is so offensively ill-bred" as to fidget or let one's eyes wander while being spoken to by others,[6] "for that convinces them that you despise them, and do not think it worth your while to hear or answer what they say",[7] and there is nothing people can bear more impatiently, or forgive less, than contempt.[8] The same reasoning applied to interruptions, Locke arguing that "There cannot be a greater Rudeness" than such conduct, because it was a declaration of weariness and dis-steem of the speaker, which "shews a very great Disrepect, and cannot but be offensive".[9] In contrast, "to appear well pleased with those you are engaged with, and... to seem well entertained" was one of the best ways of being agreeable in conversation.[10] It was ill-mannered to correct someone or to contradict him because it revealed self-conceit

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1 Constable, Conversation, pp. 43-4.

2 Spectator, No. 362, iii. 356; Connoisseur, No.10, i. 54.

3 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.2; also Polite Companion, p. 73; Tatler, No. 203, iv. 49; Rambler, No.14, iii. 79.

4 Defoe, English Gentleman, p.203; Constable, Conversation, pp. 81, 235; Guardian, No.94, p. 198; World, No.148, p.328; Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 53-4.

5 Spectator, No.521, iv. 354, Hume 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', iv. 327.

6 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1873.

7 Ibid., ii. 446-7.

8 Ibid., iii. 784.

9 Locke, Education, p.251, repr. Constable, Conversation, p.34; also Hume, 'Qualities... Agreeable to Others', p.327; Swift, 'Hints towards an Essay on Conversation', p. 92.

10 Spectator, No.386, iii. 449-50; Polite Companion, pp. 133-4; Rambler, No.72, iv. 13.

and censoriousness; one should not interpose one's opinions unless asked, and then not in any positive or magisterial manner.[1] Disputes were to be avoided if at all possible.[2] While "Different Opinions, and a reasonable Liberty of declaring them, is necessary to enliven Conversation, and to improve by it",[3]

> All opposition to what another Man has said is so apt to be suspected of Censoriousness, and is so seldom received without some sort of humiliation that it ought to be made in the gentlest manner, and softest words can be found; and such as with the whole Deportment may express no forwardness to contradict. All marks of respect and good will ought to accompany it, that whilst we gain the argument we may not lose the esteem of those that hear us.[4]

All censorious airs, raising of the voice, slighting gestures, pitying shakes of the head, and shrugs of the shoulders, were intolerable.[5] Such vehemence was "exceedingly shocking to others",[6] as implying pride and a desire for victory.[7] The gentleman should give his opinion "modestly and coolly",[8] and upon gaining the advantage, he should "seem to take little notice of it".[9] If his opponent remained unconvinced or if the debate grew warm, "endeavour to put an end to it by some genteel levity or joke".[10]

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1 Locke, Education, pp. 248, 251-2; cf. Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 525, and Constable, Conversation, pp. 29, 250-1, who allow some contradictions if softened by polite words.

2 Spectator, No. 197, ii. 274; Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1245; Swift, Polite Conversation, p.36; Connoisseur, No. 82, ii. 188; Polite Companion, p.73; Burgh, Human Nature, p.27; cf. Fielding, 'Conversation', p.146, on scholarly disputes.

3 Constable, Conversation, p.34.

4 Locke, Education, p.249; also Tatler, No.244, iv. 244-5.

5 Constable, Conversation, pp. 34-5.

6 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.31.

7 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 146.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1036; also Spectator, No.197, ii. 274-5; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.31; Polite Student, p.29; Burgh, Human Nature, p.7.

9 Constable, Conversation, pp. 252-3; also Stillingfleet, Conversation, p.14.

10 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1246; also iii. 1036.

Courtesy writers especially warned against attempts to use wit in conversation. We have seen that buffoonery was rejected as part of a distaste for laughter; more subtle verbal humour was usually rejected on the grounds that it was either boring or offensive. Thus Constable criticised the use of epigrams, anecdotes, and puns taken from printed collections of jests as being usually dull, often smutty, and sometimes "low and mean".[1] Chesterfield denounced as contemptuous "common-place, insipid jokes" made upon topics such as religion and matrimony.[2] Raillery, or wit directed at someone present, was seen to be an especially dangerous practice because if taken too far it would offend or expose its object to the contempt of others.[3] It thus required considerable finesse of judgement in both wit and in the mood of those present.[4] Henry Fielding felt that

> The Raillery which is consistent with Good-Breeding, is a gentle Animadversion on some Foible; which while it raises a Laugh in the rest of the Company, doth not put the Person rallied out of Countenance, or expose him to Shame and Contempt. On the contrary, the Jest should be delicate, that the Object of it should be capable of joining in the Mirth it occasions.[5]

Suitable subjects for raillery were minor peccadillos which were not really faults, or virtues which were humorously represented as vices;[6] unsuitable topics were "All great Vices... Misfortunes, and notorious Blemishes of Mind or Body".[7] A pastime closely related to raillery,

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1 Constable, Conversation, p.68; also pp. 53-6, 63-8, 98-9, 227; and also Brown, Laconics, preface, p.A4.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1146-7; also for religion, Gentleman's Library, p.221.

3 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp.150-1; Stillingfleet, Conversation, p.11; Richardson, Familiar Letters, No.49, pp.55-7; Burgh, Human Nature, p.8; Shaftesbury, 'Wit and Humour', Characteristicks, i. 54, 58.

4 Constable, Conversation, p.29.

5 Fielding, 'Conversation, p.150; similarly Constable, Conversation, pp. 28-9; Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p.222; Locke, Education, p.248; Gentleman's Library, pp.222-3; cf. Swift, 'Hints towards an Essay on Conversation', p.91.

6 Fielding, 'Conversation', p.152.

7 Ibid., p.151, also pp. 148-9; Bulstrode, Essays, pp.64-6; Constable, Conversation, pp.101-2; also W. Hay, Deformity: An Essay (1754), p.34.

although not humorous, was detraction, or slander of those absent. This was condemned as being malicious and injurious,[1] and too mean and ungenerous "for Men of Honour and Principles" to practise.[2]

Flattery, especially of superiors, was criticised equally strongly as making the gentleman contemptible by making him appear servile,[3] and ill-mannered because it was false,[4] hypocritical, dishonest, and excessively complaisant.[5] This view contrasted with that commonly expressed by writers of the previous two centuries, who had recommended flattery as one of the basic necessary arts of the courtier.[6] This dislike of flattery in the eighteenth century, however, was only if the object of attention was another man; in contrast, courtesy writers insisted on the gentleman's obligation to flatter ladies. Chesterfield's cynical view of women's susceptibility to flattery, especially on their beauty,[7] is well known. Even William Darrell, otherwise critical of much worldly conduct, felt similarly that considerable exaggeration of fact was permissible in complimenting the ladies.[8] In such demonstrations of gallantry, the author of the Gentleman's Library pointed out critically, the main object was complaisance,

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1 Constable, Conversation, p.109; Fielding, 'Conversation', p.147; Bulstrode, Essays, pp.40-4; Burgh, Human Nature, pp. 5-6.

2 Gentleman's Library, p.314; also p.306.

3 Dodsley, 'Advice', p.126.

4 Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p.221.

5 Gentleman's Library, p. 106.

6 See above, ch. 2, pp. 51-2, 72.

7 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1038 (16 Oct. O.S. 1747); also iv. 1208-9, 1470.

8 Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp. 12-3.

not sincerity.[1] There were, of course, entire books written on the art of complimenting, which appeared repeatedly throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[2]

Verbal flattery of women was part of a wider obligation for the gentleman to pay them a greater degree of civility than would ordinarily be required by the dictates of social rank alone. Chesterfield argued that "Civility is particularly due to all women.... It is due to their sex, and is the only protection they have against the superior strength of ours".[3] Rank still played an important role, however, and the civility due to a maid was significantly less than that due to her mistress.[4] Women of the same rank as the gentleman were to be accorded the same kind of courtesies normally given to superiors.[5] Gentlemen were advised to be especially pleasant and attentive to ladies[6] to pay them trifling attentions calculated to convey regard,[7] such as to offer them a chair, pick up a dropped fan or glove,[8] or yield the point of an argument,[9] and to be especially restrained in their language, raillery, and disputes in the presence of ladies.[10] English courtesy writers asserted, like the French,

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1 Gentleman's Library, p.115; also pp. 116-123.

2 Most notably The academy of complements of 1640, which reappeared with slightly revised titles and contents through to at least the 1770s. See Bodleian and British Library catalogues, s.v. 'Academy'; also below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Amorous Gallant', 'Compleat Academy', 'New Academy'.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, ii. 525.

4 The Auditor, 10 Apr. 1733 No. 27, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, iii. (1733), pp. 178-9.

5 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 151.

6 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.28.

7 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 785, 1179; iv. 1430.

8 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 139-40.

9 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, pp. 49-51; Burgh, Human Nature, p.27.

10 Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 146, 148, 151; Swift, Polite Conversation, p. 29.

a belief that the company of women was essential to polish a gentleman's good breeding.[1] On the whole, however, in contrast to the French courtesy tradition, English courtesy writers give little specific attention to the gentleman's behaviour towards women.

Two general comments may be made about these rules for the art of conversation. The first is that many of them bear a very close resemblance to those given by Renaissance courtesy writers, most notably Castiglione, della Casa, and Guazzo.[2] This likeness was perceived in the eighteenth century: translators of both the Galateo and the Courtier singled out their sections on conversation as especially valuable for English readers, the translator of the Courtier pointing to a number of rules against offending others, twins of which may be found in the eighteenth-century literature.[3] Such similarities strongly suggest that pleasing in conversation was an area of manners whose ideal changed very little over time. This may be compared with the significantly faster rate of change evident in ideas of deportment in the eighteenth century.[4] The major exception to this rate of change in conversational ideals was that of jests, whose content was seen by eighteenth-century courtesy writers as extremely susceptible to fashion changes.[5]

The second comment is that the number and detail of these rules are so staggering that John Constable's comment that the gentleman had to maintain a constant guard on his speech[6] is only too apt a

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1 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.51; Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 1077, 1081; iv. 1404; Steele in his Ladies Library, i. 24 and in Tatler, No.10, i. 90; Addison in Spectator, No. 433, iv. 21; Swift, Polite Conversation, p. 28. Forrester gives as his reason the "natural Complaisance" felt by men for women which inclined and habituated men to employing the arts of pleasing, op. cit. pp. 48-9.

2 See above, ch. 2, pp. 51, 57, 67-8.

3 See above, ch. 2, p. 69.

4 Above, p. 173.

5 See above, ch. 2, p. 69 and Brown, Laconics, p.36.

6 Above, p. 212.

description. One result of this, unintended by courtesy writers, but remarked upon by them, was an insipidity in well bred conversation. This opinion was expressed throughout the period. Steele spoke for several writers when he argued in 1701:

> by, I know not what Pedantry of good Breeding, Conversation is confin'd to Indifferent, Low, or perhaps Vitious Subjects; and all that is Serious, Good or Great, almost Banished the World.[1]

Samuel Johnson argued that the fear of being thought a pedant made scholars sink into an "insipidity" of conversation, especially in female company;[2] the World asserted that this fear restrained any man from speaking on any subject of which he had a particular knowledge;[3] the Connoisseur noted that good breeding "produces that delightful insipidity so remarkable in persons of quality, whose conversation flows with an even tenor undisturbed by sentiment, and unruffled by passion".[4] In his Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times, John Brown saw some serious implications of this well bred "Insipidity of Conversation".[5] He asserted that the well bred men of fashion were also the leaders of the country; that their choice of trivial conversational topics was a barrier to their acquisition of knowledge, and that thereby their potential as political and military leaders was adversely affected.[6] Notwithstanding their criticism of the fashionable world, however, courtesy writers must take at least partial responsibility for this well bred dullness by themselves prescribing rules conducive to such a result.

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1 Steele, Christian Hero, preface, p.8; also Constable, Conversation, pp.95, 237; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p.14.

2 Rambler, No. 173, v. 151-3.

3 World, No. 93, pp. 209-10; also No. 94, p.213.

4 Connoisseur, No.4, i.21; also Edmund Burke, 'The Character of a Fine Gentleman' (written c. 1750-6), in his Note-Book, ed. H.V.F. Somerset (Cambridge, 1957), p.106.

5 Brown, Estimate, p.38.

6 Ibid., pp. 74-82.

xii. Singularity and ridicule

To a degree, their advocacy of insipidity was a conscious policy. Courtesy writers strongly and repeatedly expressed a concern that the gentleman must not display any personal idiosyncracy or singularity in his manners, whether in dress, deportment, conversation, or any other form of behaviour.[1] There were three primary motives behind this concern: a belief that to be singular displayed arrogance and was thus displeasing to others; a desire that the gentleman's behaviour should conform to contemporary canons of taste (in this case those of symmetry and repose), and a concern to protect the gentleman from making himself the possible object of any ridicule which would undermine his dignity.

The first of these motives is explained by several writers, among them Chesterfield. He condemned any "affectation of singularity" in opinion, conduct, or manners, because it was viewed by others as "a tacit reproach" upon their own:

> Whoever differs from any general custom, is supposed both to think, and proclaim himself wiser than the rest of the world; which the rest of the world cannot bear.[2]

Agreeing with this argument,[3] John Constable therefore deliberately advised the gentleman wishing to please in society "to keep rather undistinguished from others".[4]

The second of these motives, that concerning taste, was also expressed in the courtesy literature. Modern analysts of the eighteenth-

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1 For dress, see Gentleman's Library, pp.60, 365; Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1822; Burgh, Human Nature, p.18; for deportment, see below, pp.224, 226; for opinions, see Chesterfield, v. 1822, 2047; for general advice on conformity, see Fielding, 'Conversation, p.127; Chesterfield, Letters, v. 1822, 2047. The one exception was religious or moral qualities (Gentleman's Library, p.240), yet even these were to be regulated in their external appearance by prevailing taste: Johnson, Adventurer No.137, (Yale edn.), p.486.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, v. 2047 (3 Oct. 1753); also Gentleman's Library, p.57; Johnson, Adventurer No. 131 (Yale edn.), pp. 484-7; Burgh, Human Nature, pp. 18-9.

3 Constable, Conversation, p.230.

4 Ibid., p. 238.

century neoclassical concept of taste have pointed out that one of its major premises was a stress on uniformity: a belief that there existed one universal ideal form and that personal deviations from it were imperfections and errors.[1] This belief underlay an antipathy towards individual originality and a preference for the appearance of regularity and simplicity, as opposed to complexity and intricacy, in the arts.[2] It was also the reason why personal deviations from the accepted canons of taste "were mercilessly attacked".[3] This attitude that there was a universal ideal of beauty, and that deviations from it were to be considered deformities is clearly expressed by such courtesy writers as Samuel Johnson and Adam Smith.[4] Its direct application to manners was made by John Constable. Comparing the facade of St Peter's in Rome to a man's behaviour in company, he praised the uniform proportions of the former, which were not immediately striking but pleased ever more by the minute. He argued that the same was true in men, and that a "regular Frame and Method of Conversation" was thereby superior to odd humours and whimsies.[5]

The third reason why courtesy writers criticised singularity in the gentleman's manners was that such behaviour laid him open to ridicule from others. Chesterfield thus advised his son to "Take great care always to be dressed like the reasonable people of your own age, in the place where you are", "in order to avoid singularity, and consequently ridicule".[6] Steele commented similarly that "It is to avoid

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1 A.O. Lovejoy, 'The Parallel of Deism and Classicism', Modern Philology, xxix (1932), 282-3; W.J. Bate, From Classic to Romantic, pp. 10-11.

2 Lovejoy, 'Deism and Classicism', pp. 286, 297.

3 Foley, 'The Concept of Taste', pp. 11-12.

4 Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp. 198-9; Johnson, Idler, n .82, p.258 (in concurrence with Sir Joshua Reynolds: see Ibid., pp.254 n. 1, 258 n.8).

5 Constable, Conversation, pp. 268-9; also Burke,'Fine Gentleman', pp.104-8.

6 Chesterfield, Letters, iii. 783; also iii. 774.

being sneered at for his singularity... that a wise, experienced, and polite man, complies with the dress commonly received".[1] In early modern society, ridicule was a powerful weapon. Used against equals and inferiors, it operated as an instrument of social control to enforce traditional values upon the unconforming. Directed against superiors, it had the additional power to undermine authority and thereby the social order.[2] Both of these functions of ridicule were clearly seen by courtesy writers to react against displays of singularity by the gentleman. Samuel Johnson argued that the gentleman who was deliberately singular in the face of general opinion

> ought not to be angry if his arrogance is punished with ridicule; if those, whose example he superciliously overlooks, point him out to derision, and hoot him back again into the common road.[3]

In the Gentleman's Library, moderation and decorum in dress were recommended so that "we shall... neither become the Objects of Disrespect nor Ridicule".[4]

Courtesy writers in this period were highly sensitive to the caustic power and subversive potential of ridicule. Writing in 1688, the Marquis of Halifax expressed this fear most succinctly when he stated "There is scarce a punishment which can be heavier than that of being laughed at".[5] This fear prompted courtesy writers to warn the gentleman against not only singularity, but also any impropriety at all in his manners. This position was put very clearly by Chesterfield, who at the same time underlined the demeaning power of ridicule:

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1 Tatler, No. 29, i. 238-9.

2 See N.Z. Davis, 'The Reasons of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth-century France', Past and Present, i. (1971), 41-75; E.P. Thompson, '"Rough Music": Le Charivari anglais', Annales économies societés culturelles, xxvii (1972), 285-310; Thomas, 'The Place of Laughter', p.79.

3 Adventurer, No. 137 (Yale edn.), pp. 485-6.

4 Gentleman's Library, p.70, also p.68.

5 Halifax, Education of a Daughter (1688), p.135.

> There is nothing that a young fellow, at his first appearance in the world, has more reason to dread, and, consequently, should take more pains to avoid, than having any ridicule fixed upon him. It degrades him with the most reasonable part of mankind, but it ruins him with the rest; and I have known many a man undone by acquiring a ridiculous nick-name.... The little defects in manners, elocution, address, and air (and even of figure, though very unjustly), are the objects of ridicule, and the causes of nick-names.[1]

Many of Chesterfield's recommendations of particular manners were specifically justified by the argument that non-compliance would invite ridicule. We have seen that the awkward or bashful fellow made himself "ridiculous in company", and that a man must dance well not to appear ridiculous;[2] Chesterfield further mentioned that a man should be able to carve gracefully to avoid ridicule[3] and write and spell correctly for the same reason.[4] John Constable similarly gave avoidance of ridicule as the main reason why a gentleman should have knowledge of the world.[5] Adam Smith outlined the psychological reasons why such lapses evoked ridicule, giving the specific example of the gentleman's dress:

> It is often more mortifying to appear in public under small disasters, than under great misfortunes. The first excite no sympathy; but the second, though they may excite none that approaches to the anguish of the sufferer, call forth, however, a very lively compassion. The sentiments of the spectators are, in this last case, less wide of those of the sufferer, and their imperfect fellow-feeling lends him some assistance in supporting his misery. Before a gay assembly, a gentleman would be more mortified to appear covered with filth and rags than with blood and wounds. This last situation would interest their pity; the other would provoke their laughter.[6]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1448 (26 Nov. O.S. 1749).

2 Above, pp. 168, 174.

3 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1224-5.

4 Ibid., ii. 535.

5 Above, p. 167.

6 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.60.

A writer in The Craftsman directly linked ridicule with contempt, arguing that "a Man... cannot be very ridiculous, without being contemptible".[1] Johnson strongly recommended conformity to established manners and ceremonies precisely to avoid this type of contempt, arguing that because mankind can more easly detect small failings than distinguish great virtues, "contempt is often incurred by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness cannot counterbalance".[2] Such an underlying apprehension of ridicule and contempt is a telling revelation of a certain brittleness about the gentleman's much-vaunted dignity and ease. They were, in fact not self-sufficient, and in their need for ratification from other members of society both they, and the social order of which they were the visible manifestation, were open to subversion.

xiii. Conclusions

What general judgements may be made about the gentlemanly ideal presented by eighteenth-century English courtesy writers: in terms of its nature, its effectiveness in upholding the gentleman's rank, and its ramifications for society at large?

Of its quintessential nature, it may be stated that, from all the evidence presented in this and the preceding chapter, it was quite clearly a very carefully constructed and self-conscious ideal. The gentleman's manners were to be precisely calculated and exhaustively cultivated. In many aspects, they were created specifically for an audience, and were to be performed with that audience constantly in mind. For these facts of their creation, and for their very close ties with contemporary canons of taste, it is not unjustified to consider the gentleman's manners - at least through eighteenth-century eyes -

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1 The Craftsman, 15 Dec. 1733 No. 388, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, iii. (1733), 641.

2 Adventurer No. 131, (Yale edn.), p. 483.

as being in themselves an art form. Nowhere is this identity more clearly revealed than in the gentleman's deportment: in its conscious creation for spectators, in its conformity to ideals of beauty and grace, and in its joint possession, with classical ballet, of the same historical origins.

Concerning the effectiveness of this ideal in exhibiting and reinforcing the gentleman's rank in society, several comments may be made. We have seen that many prescribed manners for the gentleman were expressly intended by courtesy writers to complement, reinforce, and express the gentleman's rank. These included prescriptions for dress suitable to his rank, deportment which exhibited his upbringing, good breeding, and knowledge of the correct forms of polite society, speech patterns elevated above those of the vulgar, and in his treatment of others the careful preservation of his own status. Very closely associated with this concern for rank were prescriptions intended to create an air of dignity in the gentleman. These included controlled, graceful deportment, an air of self-assurance, the maintenance of equanimity and poise, the avoidance of servility to his superiors or familiarity with his inferiors, and the careful avoidance of any behaviour which might cause ridicule.

In making these prescriptions, courtesy writers expressly argued that these forms of manners created in spectators certain psychological effects which acted to reinforce a gentleman's dignity, establish a degree of social distance, and convey an immediate and accurate picture of his rank. The most notable of these were that a correct mien in a gentleman gives him an air of nobility and inspires awe;[1] that proper dress and a good first appearance stemming from correct deportment

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1 Above, pp. 160-3.

create feelings of respect in others;[1] that an air of ease and assurance is interpreted as expressing self-confidence and mastery of the situation, whereas signs of unease and constraint indicate a lack of confidence;[2] that anger is a sign of weakness whereas equanimity conveys self-possession and control;[3] that low speech is associated with low social origins or company;[4] that excessive friendliness to inferiors will be interpreted by them as grounds for familiarity;[5] that singularity or lapses in manners inspire attitudes of ridicule and contempt.[6]

It is impossible to state whether the populace at large actually experienced these psychological responses to the gentleman's manners. It can only be stated that courtesy writers believed they did, and that these people were not only courtesy writers, but were also participating members of contemporary society, who possessed between them experience of varied occupations and social ranks.[7] It was their concerted opinion, first, that the correct manners of the gentleman unequivocably distinguished him from his inferiors, and, second, that they could substantially reinforce his political and social authority. The first point is stated most clearly by Chesterfield:

> observe a little those [manners] of the vulgar, in order to avoid them: for though the things which they say or do may be the same, the manner is always totally different; and in that, and nothing else, consists the characteristic of a man of fashion. The lowest peasant speaks, moves, dresses, eats, and drinks, as much as a man of the first fashion, but does them all quite differently....[8]

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1 Above, pp. 151-6, 168.

2 Above, pp. 163-6.

3 Above, pp. 176-9.

4 Above, pp. 186-92.

5 Above, p. 198.

6 Above, pp. 224-7.

7 Above, ch. 1, pp. 41-2.

8 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1612 (12 Nov. O.S. 1750).

The second point is summed up by Adam Smith. He argues that "the young nobleman" or "The man of rank and distinction" is "instructed to support the dignity of his rank" not by virtue or knowledge, but rather by "the propriety of his ordinary behaviour":

> As all his words, as all his motions are attended to, he learns an habitual regard to every circumstance of ordinary behaviour, and studies to perform all those small duties with the most exact propriety. As he is conscious how much he is observed, and how much mankind are disposed to favour all his inclinations, he acts, upon the most indifferent occasions, with that freedom and elevation which the thought of this naturally inspires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority, which those who are born to inferior stations can hardly ever arrive at. These are the arts by which he proposes to make mankind more easily submit to his authority, and to govern their inclinations according to his own pleasure: and in this he is seldom disappointed. These arts, supported by rank and preheminence, are, upon ordinary occasions, sufficient to govern the world.[1]

The repeated stress placed in the courtesy literature on the maintenance of the gentleman's dignity and rank supports both this observation by Smith, and a very similar argument made by the historian E.P. Thompson. The latter asserts that the manners of the eighteenth-century gentleman were deliberately assumed as part of a "studied technique of rule". Thompson argues that "the rehearsed patrician gestures and the hauteur of bearing and expression", were consciously "designed to exhibit authority to the plebs and to exact from them deference".[2] The gentleman's manners were a literal embodiment of his social and political authority. In a society such as eighteenth-century England, in which the symbols of public authority were not so institutionalised as they have since become, such personal, portable, and constantly-manifested indications of status could be very useful credentials indeed.

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1 Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp. 53, 54.

2 E.P. Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', Journal of Social History, vii (1974), 382-405, espec. pp. 387, 389, 397.

Care, however, should be taken not to give Thompson's interpretation sole place of honour. In prescribing the gentleman's manners, courtesy writers were also inspired by other very important and far less calculating ideals. Behind much of the advice on self-presentation, decorum, ease, grace, and self-restraint, there appear motives other than that of preserving rank or authority. Primary among these were the desire to conform to contemporary aesthetic ideals, the concern to promote general philosophical ideals of human conduct such as self-control, a desire to strengthen the cohesion and harmony of human society, and a genuine wish that feelings of good nature towards others should be cultivated and expressed. It does, therefore, seem to be a limiting distortion of the ideal to characterise the gentleman's manners as being motivated solely by the desire to inspire awe in the plebeii.

This ideal of the gentleman's manners had several very important ramifications both for the gentleman and for his social inferiors. In remarkable unison, courtesy writers presented a single, cohesive ideal of manners appropriate to a specific social rank. They heavily criticised the gentleman who did not live up to these ideals, be it the fop, the sloven, the rustic country gentleman,[1] the awkward fellow, or the anti-social conversationalist. In expressing such a single ideal of the gentleman, and in propagating it by means of publication, courtesy literature operated as a force encouraging conformity and unity among gentlemanly ranks in a crucially important area of cultural

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1 Courtesy writers frequently attack the rustic country gentleman, in terms very familiar from the fiction and drama of the period, as boorish, dirty, awkward, unfashionable, ill-mannered, unlearned and loud: Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, pp.14-15, 363; Constable, Conversation, pp.14-15, 233; Tatler, No.19, i. 162; No. 37, i. 301-2; Spectator, No. 322, iii. 179; No. 529, iv. 387; Drake, Defence of the Female Sex, p.35; Defoe, English Gentleman, p.39. Provincial manners in general were characterised as outdated, unfashionable, awkward, and excessively ceremonious: Constable, Conversation, p.24; Spectator, No.118, i.487-8; Gentleman's Magazine, vii (1737), 432-3; Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1374; Swift, 'Hints on Good Manners', p.221; id., 'On Good-Manners and Good-Breeding', p. 215.

expression: the fashioning of the self. It has been suggested before by historical analysts that the cultural unity of a ruling group can play a vital role in creating a common outlook, strengthening feelings of group identity and loyalty, maintaining its cohesion, and thereby reinforcing its social and political authority.[1] Such a unifying power had been ascribed specifically to manners by no less a political theorist than Cicero. In the late seventeenth-century translation of his Offices by Sir Roger L'Estrange, it is stated:

> ... of all Associations, there is none so Firm, none so Noble, as when Virtuous Men are link'd together by a Correspondency of Manners; and a Freedom of Conversation....there is nothing more Lovely, or more Engaging, than a Conformity, and Agreement of Good Manners. For where there are the same Inclinations, the same Desires, and the same Will, the one cannot chuse but be delighted with the other, as with his proper self: and it effects that which Pythagoras requires in Friendship: the making one, of many....[2]

To promote this 'correspondency' of good manners and freedom of conversation, was precisely the purpose of the courtesy literature for gentlemen at this time.

Courtesy writers made it quite clear that they did not want their ideal of gentlemanly manners to be appropriated by the gentleman's social inferiors. We have seen their strong criticisms of social climbers who adopted gentlemanly dress,[3] and they expressed the same hostility towards imitators of the gentleman's manners. One of the most vehement critics in this respect is Daniel Defoe. Although he

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1 See e.g. G.E. Mingay, English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century (1963), pp. 131, 263; D. Baugh 'The Social Basis of Stability' in Aristocratic Government and Society in Eighteenth-Century England, ed. D. Baugh (New York, 1975), p.25; F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century (1963), pp. 15-16; R.H. Wilkinson, 'The Gentlemanly Ideal and the Maintenance of a Political Elite: Two Case Studies', in Sociology, History and Education, ed. P.W. Musgrave, (1970), pp.126-42.

2 Tully's Offices (tr. 1680, 6th rev. edn. 1720), p.33.

3 Above, pp. 156-8.

had made some limited concessions of gentlemanly status to the monied men,[1] he shows extreme hostility towards the social-climbing tradesman. He defines 'tradesmen' as being below the social rank of a merchant and including "all sorts of warehousekeepers, shopkeepers, whether wholesale dealers, or retailers of goods" "who do not actually work upon,make, or manufacture the goods they sell".[2] He says that the "Purse-proud Tradesman", who tries to use his acquired wealth to leave the sphere "in which Nature circumscrib'd him", and "calls himself a Gentleman" is a "conceited", "clownish Impertinent" who tries in vain to put "Manners upon his Behaviour".[3] In a further passage, Defoe stresses both the impossibility of this attempt and its offensive incongruity:

> ... the sordid, teizing Mechanick, trusted by Heaven with a little more Money than his Neighbours, borrows the Feathers of the Gay, the Polite, the Manly, and the Mannerly; and in spite of Nature, and his Want of Brains, claims not to pass for what he is, but for what he neither is, or is capable to be.... What is an impertinent Purse-proud Shop-Keeper among a Society of Gentlemen, but linking the Inns of Court and the Bear-Garden, and condemning the Well-Bred, the Polite, the Wise, and the Sensible, to be baited at a Stake, not by Dogs, but much worse, by the Man-Brute....[4]

There is no sense of irony in this passage, and it occurs in a work designed for a readership of tradesmen,[5] and in which also occur criticisms of the tradesman keeping company, dressing, and practising recreations above his station in life.[6] It is difficult, therefore, to consider it as anything but a genuinely-held belief intended to counteract a perceived social malpractice.[7] At the same time, the

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1 Above, pp. 147-8.

2 Defoe, Complete Tradesman, i. 2-3.

3 Ibid., ii. 228, 246-7.

4 Ibid., ii. 248-9.

5 Ibid., i. 1.

6 Ibid., i. 143-5.

7 For other similar criticisms, see below, pp. 245,294,322-4; Smith, Moral Sentiments, pp. 54-5.

strength of hostility expressed here suggests that such imitation of the gentleman was perceived as some kind of threat.

Courtesy writers, however, repeatedly denied the existence of any such threat, and repeatedly insisted that there was a vital difference between the case of the tradesman's dress, and that of his manners. They argued that, although the tradesman might adopt gentlemanly dress, he could not so successfully imitate his superiors' manners; his would always be distinguishable as an inferior copy. Defoe had said that the purse-proud tradesman was trying to pass for what he was not capable of being, and other writers agreed. In the Idler, Johnson satirises the conduct of "a fop, whom pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman". For all his extravagant dress, and genteel attempts at conversation and recreations,

> ... he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in publick places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dress, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery.[1]

Speaking of what the French called les manières nobles, Chesterfield argues that: "They are the distinguishing characteristic of men of fashion; people of low education never wear them so close but that some part or other of the original vulgarism appears."[2] As examples, he singles out two features of the manners of "Low people in good circumstances": insolent contempt for those less wealthy than themselves, and low envy, jealousy, and suspicion of being slighted. Both of these, he says, are the complete antithesis of les manières nobles.[3] Another

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1 Idler, No. 96, pp. 294-5.

2 Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1254-5.

3 Ibid., iv. 1254-5.

writer argued similarly that "the rich Trading Person, or Gentleman by Acquisition of Fortune" "is uncouth in ev'ry Thing, and Genteel in nothing".[1] Yet another stated firmly that politeness could not be bought from a dancing master, but could only come from having been "bred among the Polite from Infancy".[2]

Such assertions recall the great stress laid by courtesy writers on both good company and training from infancy as necessary prerequisites for the acquisition of good breeding.[3] When, to these stated prerequisites, is added the great detail of manners which we have seen was included in the concept of good breeding, it would appear that the newly-rich adult, or the child whose parents could not afford the intensive and lengthy education required, would have found it very difficult to imitate successfully the intricacy, yet apparent ease, of the gentleman's manners. To this extent, the gentlemanly ethic does seem to have provided a barrier against a ready assimilation of aspiring social inferiors. As with the eliciting of deference, however, care should be taken not to see the erecting of this barrier to social mobility as the prime goal and *raison d'être* of the gentleman's manners. The fear of ridicule expressed in the courtesy literature indicates clearly that the code of gentlemanly manners was far more than a mere tool to keep outsiders away. It was also an ideal standard not fully in the gentleman's control, demanding his own conformity, and punishing his failure.

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1 *Essays on the Conduct of Life* (1717), pp. 80-1; also Miller, 'Of Politeness', p.15.

2 *The Art of Conversation* (1760), pp. 197, 204.

3 Above, ch. 3, pp. 106-8, 114-5.

Although the gentlemanly ideal may have acted in the short term as a check to upward mobility, paradoxically, in the longer term the reverse seems to have been the case. Courtesy writers' insistence that manners could not be bought from a dancing master recalls the uneasiness they felt about such professional teachers of politeness,[1] and leads on to larger questions about the social function of courtesy literature itself. Although courtesy writers explicitly restrict their ideal to gentlemen, and are openly hostile to perceived usurpers, nonetheless, the fact remains that in publishing their prescriptions they were providing a detailed guide to gentlemanly manners which was freely available to anyone who could afford the purchase price. From the strength of feeling expressed in their restrictions of the ideal to the gentleman by rank, it does appear that this inconsistency was unintentional; there is no evidence that this literature for the gentleman was designed for the social <u>parvenu</u>. Nonetheless, the published courtesy literature did provide an opportunity for the <u>parvenu</u> to instruct himself in at least the forms, though perhaps not the essence, of gentlemanly manners. Courtesy writers, moreover, provided two strong incentives for the <u>parvenu</u> to follow their prescriptions of gentlemanly conduct. By confusing the ideal gentleman with the ideal man, appropriating the word 'gentleman' to describe this ideal, and making few explicit connections between the word 'gentleman' and its specific place in the traditional social hierarchy, courtesy writers themselves weakened the link of the gentleman with its traditional definition, and instead made manners one of the highest defining criteria of the gentleman. Moreover, in lavishing all their attention and creativity on this ideal man-gentleman, they failed to provide any alternative positive ideal of manners which could be adopted by the

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1 Above, pp. 175-6.

gentleman's inferiors. As was the case with the honnête homme, there was no middle ground; if one was not polite, then one was by definition impolite.

In becoming one of the major ingredients of the gentleman, manners themselves became in the longer term a means of social advancement for the gentleman's inferiors. Such a potential was recognised by one of those same professional purveyors of manners, the dancing masters. Thus, asserted Stephen Philpot, a polite education in all the rules of manners and deportment was all but essential in placing children "above the Vulgar" and was the best "Foundation for their Advancement" in life.[1] Daniel Defoe makes it clear that to him, the manners of the parvenu were a crucial factor in a decision whether or not to grant him gentlemanly status. Of the tradesman's "politer son", he says:

> Call him what you please on account of his blood, and be the race modern and mean as you will, yet if he was sent early to school, has good parts, and has improv'd them by learning, travel, conversation, and reading, and abov all with a modest courteous gentleman-like behaviour: despise him as you will, he will be gentleman in spite of all the distinccions we can make.[2]

That such an opportunity was not only perceived, but acted upon, is made clear by Jedediah Strutt. In 1774, he sent his son a copy of the newly-issued first edition of Chesterfield's Letters to his Son[3] for him to read, telling the boy that though he was only to be a tradesman, it was still vitally necessary "in all & every transaction of your future life" that he should possess "the Manners, the Air, the genteel address, & polite behaviour of a gentleman", and that Strutt

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1 Philpot, Polite Education, pp. ix-x.

2 Defoe, Compleat... Gentleman, p.258.

3 See below, Bibliography A1, s.v. 'Chesterfield'.

himself regarded it "as a real misfortune" that he personally had never learnt such accomplishments.[1]

Strutt's comments lead on to one final point regarding the adoption of the gentleman's manners by his social inferiors. It has been argued by several historians that one means through which the English gentry and aristocracy preserved their power in society was the establishment of a cultural hegemony, which had no self-conscious bourgeois counter-culture opposing it, but which instead inculcated in individual bourgeois aspirants the ideals and values of the elite.[2] In the courtesy literature, the equation of the terms 'gentleman' and 'politeness', and the lack of any viable bourgeois alternative of good manners, do seem to contribute to just such a cultural hegemony.

One final ramification of the concept of gentlemanly manners - indeed, the whole concept of good breeding itself - on the gentleman's social inferiors concerns not those who aspired to imitate the gentleman, but rather those who did not. It has been argued before that both politeness and good breeding were associated with civilised society, in contrast with societies of barbarians and savages who had less 'refined' manners.[3] This same perspective existed within English society itself, except that it was extended one step further: to the characterisation of people lacking polite manners as brutes. It has been argued that intertwined with the ideal of gentlemanly conduct was an ideal of human conduct in a broader sense. This connection is made

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1 J. Strutt, letter to his son William, London, Aug. 17, 1774, repr. in R.S. Fitton, The Strutts and the Arkwrights, 1758-1830, a Study of the Early Factory System (Manchester, 1958), pp.144-5; see also 146-8, 150-1.

2 Baugh, 'The Social Basis of Stability', p.9; L. Stone, 'Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700', Past and Present, xxxiii (1966), p.47; J.H. Hexter, 'The Myth of the Middle Class in Tudor England' in his Reappraisals in History (1961), p.95.

3 Above, ch. 3, pp. 119-21, 138.

more explicit by writers like James Burgh, who prescribes in his The Dignity of Human Nature rules for the gentleman identical to those in other courtesy works,[1] or James Forrester, who felt that there would be fewer brutes in the world if people could be prevailed upon to read his Polite Philosopher.[2] It also occurs with reference to specific forms of good breeding: Shaftesbury argues that cleanliness is due to a gentleman as a human creature;[3] the Polite Companion states that civility is one of the distinguishers of man from brute;[4] Thomas Marriott asserts that without the grace and ease in manners cultivated by art, "Prone we should grovel, like the Brutes, on Earth";[5] James Burgh argues in support of lessons in deportment that young gentlemen should learn the ways of "coming into a room like a human creature";[6] Ellis Walker insists that the facial distortion from laughter is so unsuited to humanity that "It makes you but a different sort of Brute",[7] and Fielding asserts that the mere ability to converse, in people uninstructed in the rules of conversation, "is of so mean Use, that it raises them very little above those Animals who are void of it".[8]

Courtesy writers discuss the manners of the common people only very rarely, but when they do, it is to characterise them as being very different, and almost always inferior, to those of the gentleman.

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1 See above, e.g. pp. 154, 164, 168, 170, 212, 214, 217-9.

2 Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.10.

3 Above, ch. 4, pp. 203-4; also Polite Student, p.50.

4 Polite Companion, p.115; similarly Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1437.

5 Marriott, Female Conduct, pp. 52-3.

6 Burgh, Human Nature, p. 123.

7 Epictetus, Enchiridion, tr. Walker, added comment, p.75.

8 Fielding, 'Conversation', p. 121.

Thus Shaftesbury observes the "great difference" between the graceful deportment of the polite and the untaught carriage of artisans and people of lower rank;[1] the Tatler criticises the "rabble of mankind" in the public streets and places who do not have conversation but only discourse,[2] and Defoe attacks the insolence of hackney coachmen and watermen.[3] Several writers specifically characterise the ill manners of the common people as being brutish. In Eliza Haywood's periodical The Tea-Table, a lady of "Politeness"attacks the "loathsome and offensive" "Impertinence, unpolish'd Mirth, and brutal Behaviour" of "The Rabble and Mob of People" at public masquerades.[4] Chesterfield argues that the manners of the "petit peuple" are "toujours grossier [et] brutal";[5] and Thomas Brown asserts that the behaviour of women "of the meanest Rank... for the most part, is insupportable, and often more like Brutes, than rational Creatures".[6] One of the most bitter criticisms is made by Henry Fielding, who, describing the jeers of sailors and watermen at his own crippled appearance, attacks "the inhumanity of those, who, while they boast of being made after God's own image, seem to bear in their minds a resemblance of the vilest species of brutes", and suggests further that such behaviour "never shews itself in men who are polish'd and refin'd...."[7] It has been pointed out that there was a great anxiety in this period to differentiate between humans and animals, and that therefore to charge a man with brutish behaviour was a very serious insult.[8] In creating

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1 Shaftesbury,'Advice to an Author', Characteristicks, i. 171.

2 Tatler, No. 153, iii. 209.

3 Defoe, 'Great Law of Subordination', pp. 124-136.

4 E. Haywood, The Tea-Table, (1724), No. 4, p.xii.

5 Chesterfield, Letters, vi. 2448.

6 Brown, Essay on Women, iv. 36.

7 H. Fielding, The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon, (1755, ed. A. Dobson, 1892), pp. 46-7.

8 K. V. Thomas, Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 (1983), p. 38.

an ideal of politeness, in crediting it with such vital importance, and in using it as a touchstone for human behaviour in general, courtesy writers do seem to have helped widen the gap between polite and plebeian cultures in eighteenth-century England.[1]

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1 For the argument that a wide gap existed between the two cultures, see Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', p. 393.

CHAPTER 5

PRESCRIPTIONS OF MANNERS FOR LADIES

In addition to writing for the gentleman, courtesy writers also directed their attention to the manners of the lady. Works thus appeared with such titles as The Ladies Library, The Ladies Conduct, 'A Supplement to the Ladies', The Modern Fine Lady, The Polite Lady, and The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed.[1] As in the last-mentioned title of this list, courtesy writers frequently used the term 'lady' to denote the female counterpart of the gentleman.[2] This usage is also made clear by the contents of these and similar courtesy works for ladies. In these, many of the prescriptions for gentlemanly manners which were explicitly restricted by courtesy writers to men of gentlemanly rank are carried over unchanged to apply to ladies, and supported by the same arguments concerning the necessity of maintaining rank distinctions.[3]

i. Ladies

We have seen that, despite their repeated concern to maintain traditional distinctions of social rank, courtesy writers themselves used the word 'gentleman' in a generalised sense unrelated by them to its traditional heraldic definition.[4] This was even more the case with the term 'lady'. Samuel Johnson preserves the traditional definition of the word in his Dictionary of 1755:

> the title of lady properly belongs to the wives of knights, of all degrees above them, and to the daughters of earls, and of all higher ranks.[5]

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1 See Bibliography A1 under (respectively) Steele, Essex, Darrell, Jenyns, Polite Lady, Young Gentleman and Lady....

2 Darrell's 'A Supplement to the Ladies' appears in his Gentleman Instructed; Jenyns also wrote The Modern Fine Gentleman; R. Allestree wrote both The Gentleman's Calling and The Ladies Calling: for these see below, Bibliography A1.

3 Below, pp. 243-63.

4 Above, ch. 4, pp. 146-8.

5 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. 'lady'.

However, he also adds three more definitions: "A woman of high rank", "An illustrious or eminent woman", and, in the most general sense, "A word of complaisance used of women".[1] Other courtesy writers depict the broadening of the word 'lady' into this last definition as a widespread contemporary phenomenon. Addison noted in 1713 that "the word Woman has been discarded for Lady", and that all women are now called "The Ladies" down to the company of the "meanest artificers".[2] In 1754, The Connoisseur also commented that "whenever there is occasion to speak of the female world, honourable mention, is always made of them by the respectful appellation of the Ladies".[3]

This expansion of the term 'ladies' to mean women in general is mirrored in the repeated tendency of contemporary courtesy writers to address their readers not only as ladies, but also very frequently in more general terms such as 'women', 'females', 'wives', 'widows', and 'virgins', which had no connection with any specific social rank, being either purely sex-determined or reliant on some other criteria not dependent on rank. As will be demonstrated at length subsequently, this very general terminology reflects a fundamental tendency among courtesy writers for ladies to use sex, not rank, as the overriding determinant of their prescriptions.

The theme of rank, nonetheless, is still strong enough in the courtesy literature for ladies to make it clear that writers were concerned in the first instance with the manners of the female counterpart of the gentleman. This was, indeed, the correct contemporary order of definition: a woman's social rank was not as a rule one in its own right, but instead was very largely dependent on that of her father or husband.[4] The hierarchy of social rank in general in

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1 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. 'lady'.

2 Guardian, No. 26, p.56.

3 Connoisseur, No. 44, i. 231.

4 G.D. Squibb, Precedence in England and Wales (Oxford, 1981), pp.63-4; for the exception of noblewomen in their own right, see Burgh, Aristocratic Government and Society, p.51.

this period was based primarily on the birth or occupation of men, as the table of Gregory King, for example, makes abundantly clear.[1]

Defoe is the only courtesy writer specifically to equate the lady and the gentleman and assign them a particular social rank. He includes in the category of "Lady" wives and daughters of the gentry and nobility, but not the wives of tradesmen and "Mechanicks" (or artisans), and specifically states that a lady by either birth or a previous marriage loses her status as a gentlewoman if she marries a tradesman.[2] Such a definition accords closely with that given by Defoe of the gentleman,[3] which included the gentry and above but excluded tradesmen, and it contains the same lack of precision (here, lack of mention) of the grey status area of merchants and moneyed men and their families.

Other courtesy writers make their equating of the lady and the gentleman clear only by implication, in that many of the rank-specific prescriptions for the gentleman's manners are also made for the lady's. Courtesy literature for ladies contain the same fundamental arguments that different ranks had different forms of behaviour appropriate to them,[4] that high birth by itself was a groundless reason for pride or pretension,[5] but that those of a superior rank had also to possess and display correspondingly superior virtues and merits.[6]

One of these was dress: like gentlemen, ladies were told that they should dress in a manner appropriate to their rank in order to keep the respect of their inferiors,[7] although they should on no

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1 Reprinted in R. Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century (1982), pp. 386-7.

2 Defoe, English Tradesman, i. 363-5.

3 Above, ch. 4, pp. 247-8.

4 Defoe, English Tradesman, i. 363-4; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, 'To the Ladies', pp. xv, xxix, xxxii-xxxiii, lxiv-lxv.

5 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lv.

6 Ibid., p. lv, and Essex, Young Ladies Conduct, p. xl.

7 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxv.

account exceed what was appropriate,[1] that they should not be singular or affected in their dress,[2] and that they should not be the first or last to adopt new fashions. Two specifically female fashions were directly connected by courtesy writers with the maintenance of social rank. One was the hoop petticoat, which was praised for giving its wearer a "Majestick" appearance.[4] The other was the low neckline. Besides being widely criticised as immodest,[5] it was also viewed as inviting disrespect. Thus it was asserted in The Guardian:

> I am in pain for a woman of rank, when I see her thus exposing herself to the regard of every impudent staring fellow. How can she expect that her quality can defend her, when she gives such provocation?[6]

As was the case with gentlemen, social emulation from below (in this case, tradesmen's wives) was seen to be erasing visible distinctions of dress,[7] and the fashion process in general was considered to be ruining "all Distinction of Conditions or Rank".[8] There was the same feeling expressed for ladies as for gentlemen that ostentatious dress was too easily imitable by inferiors to function as a sufficient distinguisher of social rank: thus John Breval argued in 1717 that ladies should lay aside their jewels, because

> ... what Value adds the shining Store,
> When many a form Cit perhaps has more? [9]

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1 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. xv; R. Steele, The Ladies Library (1714), i.70; A. Behn, The Lady's Looking-Glass (1697), p.16.

2 T. Marriott, Female Conduct (1759), p.61; T. Rogers, The Character of a Good Woman (1697), p.14; Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p.16; The Polite Lady (1760), p.106.

3 Polite Lady, p.106; Marriott, Female Conduct, p.61.

4 J. Breval, The Art of Dress (1717), p.17.

5 See below, p.278.

6 Guardian, No. 100, p.210.

7 Defoe, English Tradesman, i. 145; Steele, Ladies Library, i. 70.

8 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. xii.

9 Breval, Art of Dress, p. 20.

Courtesy writers prescribed many of the same manners for the lady which they had done for the gentleman. The lady was similarly to cultivate a genteel and well bred mien,[1] which displayed dignity, ease, grace, and lack of affectation.[2] The quality of ease or negligence of manner was given as much stress for the lady as it had been for the gentleman, because it was opposed to an ungraceful stiffness, constraint, or formality,[3] because it made manners appear natural not cultivated by art,[4] and because an apparent unconcern for good manners made them appear instinctive not the result of conscious calculation.[5]

Graceful deportment was stressed as much in ladies as in gentlemen, and it was equally the product of intensive cultivation by dancing lessons. Of all the courtesy books for ladies, John Essex's The Young Ladies Conduct is the most insistent on this theme, which is not surprising since he was a dancing-master himself. He recommends dancing lessons to fashion "the whole Body to a graceful and becoming Carriage",[6] and considers the proper deportment of the lady in as exhaustive detail as other writers considered that of the gentleman, telling her how to enter and leave a room, stand, walk, sit, and dance with the correct posture of the head, neck, hands, body, and feet.[7] The close parallel with gentlemanly ideals is emphasised by Essex's borrowing of key passages on deportment from the gentlemanly tradition.[8] Other writers

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1 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. xxvii, 47-8.

2 Marriott, Female Conduct, pp. 119-201, also 22-3, 53, 58; also Polite Lady, p.240 (grace); W. Wilkes, A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady (1740), p.120 (ease and lack of affectation).

3 Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p.16.

4 Ibid., p.16; G. Lyttleton, 'Advice to a Lady' (1731, repr. in his Poetical Works, 1807), p.42.

5 Spectator, No. 41, i. 176; No. 79, i. 339.

6 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.82.

7 Ibid., pp. 48, 81.

8 Ibid., p. 80, reprints Budgell on entering a room with grace (above, ch. 4, p. 168), and Essex, op. cit., pp.82-3 reprints

continued...

echoed Essex's recommendations,[1] at the same time reaffirming the argument made to gentlemen that actually to dance too well was to be avoided as a mistake.[2] That such ideals of deportment were not just favoured by dancing-masters is apparent from a comment by John Evelyn that his daughter Mary possessed, as a result of dancing lessons from the famous French master Isaac, a graceful, unaffected, and easy carriage.[3]

At the same time, however, there is significantly more criticism in the courtesy literature for ladies than for gentlemen that fashionable deportment caused distortion and constraint. Distortion was not, as it was for gentlemen, found only in the limited instance of fops taking ordinary deportment to exaggerated lengths, but rather it was seen to be a general rule. Richard Steele was a major critic, arguing in the Spectator that a young lady is commonly taught

> a fantastical Gravity of Behavior, and forced to a particular Way of holding her Head, heaving her Breast, and moving with her whole Body; and all this under Pain of never having an Husband, if she steps, looks, or moves awry.[4]

The implication here that women adopt such "Distortions"[5] primarily as an attempt to please men is reiterated by Steele in The Ladies Library,[6] and made explicit by Eliza Haywood in her Female Spectator.

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continued from p.246

Budgell on the necessity of dancing to the handsome carriage of the body (above, ch. 4, p. 170).

1 Especially dancing-masters such as Philpot, Polite Education, pp. 61-9; Weaver, History of Dancing, p.29; Rameau, Dancing-Master, pp.22-6; Nivelon, Genteel Behavior, pp. C-F2; also Polite Lady, pp.16-17; Marriott, Female Conduct, pp.200-1; Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p.15; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.120.

2 Steele, Ladies Library, i.63.

3 J. Evelyn, Diary, ed. E.S. De Beer (Oxford, 1955), iv. 423 (14 Mar. 1685).

4 Spectator, No. 66, i. 283.

5 Ibid., No. 36, i. 149-50.

6 Steele, Ladies Library, i. 197-8.

She asserts that, in order to please men, women affect "the studied leer, the forced languor of the eye... the screwed-up mouth... [and a] thousand other unnatural modes and gestures of the body".[1] This emphasis on the use of special gestures and deportment in the courtship ritual to attract the other sex does not appear in the courtesy literature for men, a fact which suggests that such behaviour might have been considered more necessary in women than in men.

William Darrell argued that the grimaces, constricted feet, and tight-laced body demanded in fashionable women's deportment were constraints severe enough to constitute a "Martyrdom".[2] Such criticisms of female deportment as particularly restrictive and artificial may have had some basis in fact: there was no common male equivalent of the female tight lacing in practice for much of the eighteenth century, and the hoops worn by women were unwieldy and bulky, requiring a special technique of walking to appear graceful,[3] and, in the case of the formal side hoops, severely restricting their wearer's arm movements above the elbow.[4]

Compared with the courtesy literature for gentlemen, there was very little emphasis given in the courtesy literature for ladies to the display of equanimity, no specific criticism being made of the display of fear, grief, pain, joy, disappointment, or impatience. Loud laughter was criticised as being immodest in a woman,[5] but it was not specifically condemned on grounds of taste or social rank. These latter criticisms were made within the English courtesy tradition

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1 Female Spectator, iii. 238.

2 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', pp. xxxiv-xxxv; also Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p.5.

3 Guardian, No. 115, pp. 233-4.

4 Cunnington, English Costume, pp. 146-8.

5 Female Spectator, iii. 245-6.

for women, though not between 1690 and 1760; in 1688 the Earl of Halifax argued that loud laughter was ill-mannered and degraded a lady from her rank, and further, with reference to women alone, that it was against proper modesty and was offensively mannish.[1] The only emotion whose display by ladies was systematically criticised in the courtesy works between 1690 and 1760 was anger, and even this was not nearly so frequently attacked as it had been in gentlemen. Some of the same arguments of dignity and rank recurred. Steele insisted that it was "below a gentlewoman" to dispute angrily.[2] The author of The Polite Lady argued that displaying anger revealed that a lady was at the mercy of others;[3] it was "shocking and ridiculous",[4] indecent, unbecoming, "utterly inconsistent with all the rules of politeness and good-breeding", and "absolutely intolerable" in "a lady of genteel education".[5] One argument used for ladies, but not for gentlemen, was that anger would make them ugly, and the resulting ruffled hair, red-spotted cheeks, and clamorous tongue would frighten suitors.[6] The display of pride was also criticised in ladies, though not in gentlemen, for the same reason: it would "damn" them to remain old maids.[7]

In the same way as gentlemen, ladies are instructed to follow "the several Degrees of Civility"[8] and be deferential to superiors, complaisant to equals, and condescending to inferiors.[9] The same emphases are placed on paying superiors respect,[10] on using complaisance,

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1 Halifax, Advice to a Daughter, pp. 107-8.

2 Tatler, No. 23, i. 192.

3 Polite Lady, p. 251.

4 Ibid., p. 254.

5 Ibid., p. 253.

6 Marriott, Female Conduct, pp.55-6; also Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. 12; Spectator, No. 57, i, 243.

7 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.57.

8 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.49.

9 Ibid., p. 91; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.110.

10 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.91; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.110.

or a desire to please others,[1] as a "Means of making us easy in the World among our Equals",[2] and on paying a "condescending courteousness" to inferiors[3] which avoided pride[4] yet stopped short of the familiarity which would demean the lady's rank and cause her to lose respect.[5] The author of The Polite Lady makes an interesting distinction in the course of such arguments between dignity and pride, which illustrates how the former comportment acted, subtly but effectively, to maintain distinctions of rank:

> Dignity of character will never allow us to do any thing unworthy of ourselves; pride is always prompting us to do every thing that may remind others of their inferiority.[6]

Servants are singled out among inferiors as objects of condescension but not "base Familiarities".[7] Such treatment was advised not only out of good manners, but also because it ensured servants' willingness and efficiency in their duties.[8] As was the case with gentlemen, there is very little advice on positively pleasing inferiors. The lady is told to behave "inoffensively" to them,[9] and if they come to petition a favour to "receive them chearfully, and dismiss them speedily",[10] but nowhere to welcome them with complaisance, instructions on the practice of which are restricted to equals and superiors.[11]

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1 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 18-19.

2 Ibid., p. 49, also p. 18.

3 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p. 110.

4 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 19, 49, 91; Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. xxxii; Polite Lady, pp. 232-49.

5 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', pp. xxxii-xxxiii; Wilkes, Genteel... Advice, pp. 110-11.

6 Polite Lady, p. 244.

7 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. xxxvii-xxxix, also p. 26; Polite Lady, p. 244.

8 Richardson, Familiar Letters, No. 167, p.234; Steele, Ladies Library, ii. 386.

9 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.19.

10 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p. 110.

11 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 18-19, 49.

That maintenance of rank distinctions was to be the primary object in ladies' treatment of inferiors is clear in a passage in The Polite Lady. The reader is told never to assert her superior rank,

> except when they seem to forget their proper distance, and even then you may do it in so soft and gentle a manner, as to shew you act not from pride, but from a regard to decency and decorum.[1]

The only differences in these instructions from those for gentlemen are perhaps a slightly greater emphasis on the art of managing servants en masse because it was felt to form part of the lady's household duties,[2] and a significant tempering of the rule of complaisance to equals by the restrictions enjoined by female modesty, a point which will be discussed in detail below.[3]

The question of not offending others by uncleanliness or bad table manners seems to have been regarded as equally important in ladies as in gentlemen, but there is an equal paucity of detailed information on the subject in the courtesy literature. The only writer for ladies to discuss table manners is John Essex, who gives certain specific instructions about deference and restraint, such as to wait to be seated, to sit upright, not to look greedily at the food, offer the plate eagerly or eat too hastily, and how to toast and be toasted.[4] Cleanliness was recommended in very general terms as being important,[5] and as something what "ought to be always cultivated among the women".[6] Most significantly, in terms of social rank, it was argued that the opposite of cleanliness, "nastiness", would deprive a lady of "polite and genteel company".[7] A similar

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1 Polite Lady, p. 244.

2 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. xxxvii-xxxix, Steele, Ladies Library, ii. 385-7.

3 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, pp. 110-12, makes this specific connection. For modesty, see below, pp. 257-87.

4 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 92-3.

5 Polite Lady, p. 35; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p. 113.

6 Connoisseur, No. 32, i. 170.

7 Polite Lady, p. 35.

argument recurs in reference to ladies in The Young Lady and Gentleman Instructed, with the additional assertion that the duty to cleanliness increased with rank:

> Cleanliness is a mark of politeness: and it is universally agreed upon, that no one, unadorned with this virtue, can go into company without being offensive. Besides, the easier or higher any one's fortune is, this duty rises in proportion.[1]

The most extensive specific discussion of cleanliness is by John Breval, who argues that the teeth should always be well polished,[2] and that the dress should always be "thoroughly clean", including the smock, although it was unseen by others.[3] Precisely what this means is unclear; the only hint appears in Breval's comment that in the times of James I and Charles I, Scottish ladies changed their shifts

> ...hardly once a Week,
> For Cleanliness, alas! to them was Greek![4]

Specific comments on cleanliness by other writers include the comment that snuff-taking was "more abominable" in women than in men, because no female could appear "tolerably clean" who indulged in it;[5] a criticism of bad breath in women, attributing it to the custom of wearing tight stays,[6] and a warning to wives to be especially clean at all times so as not to offend their husbands:[7] an argument for which there is no equivalent in the courtesy literature for gentlemen.

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1 Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed, ii. 162.

2 Breval, Art of Dress, p.19.

3 Ibid., p. 23.

4 Ibid., p. 12.

5 Connoisseur, No. 32, i.170.

6 Gentleman's Magazine, xiii (1743), pp. 430-2.

7 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 98-101; Young Lady and Gentleman Instructed, ii. 161-2; J. Swift, 'A Letter to a Young Lady on her Marriage', (1723), Works, ix. 87.

In courtesy writers' discussions of conversation, a notable difference between the sexes is apparent. Ladies were expected to take pains at pleasing others which were even greater than those demanded from gentlemen. This was because, as Eliza Haywood suggested, women were supposed to be especially soft and affable; any contrasting "sourness of humour" therefore appeared more unbecoming in women than in men.[1] Indeed, it was argued that women had a natural desire to please; John Essex spoke for several writers when he asserted that "Young Ladies" have

> in Nature, an inborn strong Desire of Pleasing; hence comes their sweet and affable Way of Talking; hence they study Grace and Beauty, and endeavour to Charm Men by their Conversation.[2]

Essex's male-orientated view of female conversation was reiterated by another dancing master, John Weaver. He argued that dancing lessons gave women a polish and an assurance,

> "by which, they are qualified to Converse with Advantage with Man, for whom they were design'd; and enabled to answer, confute or allow his Addresses, his Arguments, or his Pretensions.[3]

Within the general context of this greater stress on pleasing others, much of the specific instruction given to ladies is the same as that for gentlemen. The lady is told that knowledge of the rules of conversation is very important because "So much of our time is spent in conversation, that she who is either ignorant or negligent of these rules, must make a very awkward and ridiculous figure in company".[4] The lady should not be indiscriminately civil, but vary her conduct according to the age, status, and mood of her companions.[5] She should base her conduct above all on good sense and good nature.[6]

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1 Female Spectator, i. 275-6.

2 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. xi; also Tatler, No. 121, iii. 42; Forrester, Polite Philosopher, p.50; Bulstrode, Essays, p.290.

3 Weaver, History of Dancing, p.29.

4 Polite Lady, p.80.

5 Ibid., p.282, also Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.91 (mood).

6 Polite Lady, p.282, also Female Spectator,i. 314-7 (good nature).

She is told not to be too silent or too talkative,[1] not to monopolise the conversation,[2] but to listen "with good liking" to others,[3] not to indulge in long story-telling,[4] or to boast of her accomplishments,[5] or to speak of her own concerns such as her family,[6] or to ridicule religion [7] or the weaknesses or deformities of others,[8] or to interrupt, contradict, or dispute with others,[9] or to use raillery because it could well cause offence,[10] or to speak of religion or politics for the same reason,[11] or, finally, ever to use "obscene Discourse"[12] or to swear.[13] While swearing is condemned in ladies, it is not given nearly the same degree of attention as it had been for gentlemen, and nowhere is there the suggestion that swearing was a common fashion among ladies as it was among gentlemen. As had been the case with gentlemen, there was a certain feeling that the end result of all these rules was a degree of insipidity and hypocrisy: the lady had to practise an "unmeaning uniformity of face" and mould her expression to suit any occasion, not according to her own feelings, "but by the forms of civility and good-manners".[14]

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1 Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p.17.

2 Polite Lady, p. 86; Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxi.

3 Steele, Ladies Library, i. 181; also Polite Lady, p.94.

4 Polite Lady, p.88.

5 Rogers, Good Woman, p.32.

6 (J.Drake), An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex (1696), p.38.

7 Rogers, Good Woman, pp. 31-2.

8 Ibid., p. 32; Behn, Lady's Looking-Glass, p. 17.

9 Polite Lady, pp. 84-5, 89; Rogers, Good Woman, pp. 32-3.

10 Female Spectator, iv. 136-47; also Polite Lady, p.90.

11 Drake, Defence of the Female Sex, p. 38.

12 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. 91.

13 'Clelia', The Woman of Taste (1733), p.12.

14 Polite Lady, pp. 219-20.

One theme of conversation very largely restricted to the courtesy literature for ladies is the custom of paying visits, especially those revolving around the tea-table.[1] The custom of visiting is nearly always spoken of as being practised only by women,[2] and very often in a negative way. Such visits were criticised on three grounds. First, they drew women away from their homes.[3] Second, they lasted too long and degenerated into "meer Chat or Impertinences. For women have seldom materials to furnish a Long Discourse".[4] Third, they were regarded as being particularly characterised by the vices of detraction and scandal.[5] As we have seen, these qualities were criticised in men; however, they were viewed as being above all a female vice. In the Gentleman's Library, they are described as being "too mean" and dishonourable for men of principles "to even think of, much more to practise... 'Tis the Charter of the Female Sex to calumniate: Scandal is the Privilege of the Tea-Table and Drawing-Room".[6]

The charge that women spoke only of trivialities is a useful introduction to a very interesting debate over the display of knowledge and wit in conversation. The discussion's central theme is markedly different for ladies than it had been for gentlemen. A very inconsistent attitude is apparent: although on the one hand women are criticised for conversing only of trivialities, gossip, and detraction,

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1 For the punctilios of paying visits, see Universal Spectator, 10 July, 1736, No. 395, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, vi (1736), 390; Burgh, Human Nature, p.15; Marriott, Female Conduct, p. 115 and note.

2 E.g. Gentleman's Library, p. 314; Tatler, No.210, iv. 83; World, No. 62, p.142; Rambler, No.42, iii. 227-8.

3 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.115.

4 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxvii. Also T. Brown, Amusements Serious and Comical (1700), pp.132-3.

5 Rogers, Good Woman, p.30; Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 91-2; Tatler, No. 210, iv. 83; Essays on the Conduct of Life, p.35.

6 Gentleman's Library, p.314; also Polite Lady, p.91; Guardian, No. 85, p.180-1; Tatler, No.102, ii.357; Rambler, No.46, iii. 250; Swift, 'Letter to a Young Lady', ix. 88.

on the other hand, they are strongly attacked if they display either learning or wit in conversation. The reasons given in this latter attack are quite different for women from those given to men. Gentlemen had been warned against the display of excessive learning because it was boring and rude to others, and against the display of sharp wit because it could be hurtful to others. Ladies were warned against the display of any learning or wit in conversation because it was a breach of proper female modesty; it posed a possible threat to female chastity, and it appeared mannish and ridiculous. Whereas infrequent talking had been regarded as a considerable fault in the young gentleman, it was positively prescribed for young ladies. Talkativeness was regarded as a worse fault in women than in men.[1] The young lady was told that silence is better than frivolous talk,[2] and that she should speak little "In publick Company".[3] Loud talking in public was characterised as being more unbecoming in women than in men because it was incompatible with female softness and delicacy[4] and because it was "very inconsistent with Modesty and Discretion", which were the ornaments of the "Fair Sex" and the primary defences of female chastity.[5] John Essex strongly criticised as "ridiculous" any attempt by a young lady at being witty, even among other women, asserting that "this will but render her Contemptible to her own Sex, and a Prey to the Men".[6] Thomas Brown made the same point: "Wit often exposes a Woman to Danger, as Mettle does a Blind Horse."[7] The tone of these remarks is one of definite hostility, an attitude

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1 Burgh, Human Nature, p.76.

2 Darrell, 'To the Ladies, p. lxvii.

3 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. 13, also. p.xv.

4 Polite Lady, p. 214; also Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxii; Rogers, Good Woman, p. 32.

5 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.4; also Richardson, Familiar Letters, No. 90, p.114.

6 Ibid., pp. xv-xvi, also p. 80.

7 Brown, Laconics, No. cxxxvii, p. 57.

which could be related to the long-standing traditional dislike of the verbal powers of the female scold, manifested in popular customs like the ducking stool.

Courtesy writers similarly attacked the display of learning by women. William Darrell argued that the display of any theological, scientific, or philosophical learning in conversation by women was conceited, impertinent, the assumption of a masculine prerogative, foolish, and ridiculous, because the speaker did not really understand what she was talking about, but was nothing but "a well taught Parrot".[1] This deliberate belittlement of the learned lady was a common tactic. Swift felt it was a commonly held view that such women made themselves ridiculous by mispronouncing and misusing hard words,[2] and personally decried their "impertinent talkativeness".[3] In William Walsh's A Dialogue concerning Women, the character of Misogynes makes explicit the accusation of mannishness, asking: "Do you not think Learning and Politics become a Woman as ill as riding astride?".[4] The indecorousness of learning in women was the reason why they were advised to conceal their knowledge in conversation. Thus, one writer felt that the woman of a superior understanding and knowledge

> conceals the Superiority she has with as much care as others take to display the Superiority they have not.... Tho' she thinks and speaks as a Man would do, still it is as a woman ought to do; she effeminates (if I may use the Expression) whatever she says, and gives all the Graces of her own Sex to the Strength of ours.[5]

Courtesy writers were not alone in their opinion. Myra Reynolds has detailed the presence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

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1 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxi, also p. lxvii.

2 J. Swift, 'Of the Education of Ladies', Works, iv. 227.

3 J. Swift, 'Letter to a Young Lady', ix. 92.

4 W. Walsh, A Dialogue concerning Women (1691), p.31; similarly 'On Affectation in Women', Common Sense, 10 Sept. 1737, No.32, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, vii (1737), 553.

5 'On Affectation in Women', p.555.

of a very powerful and deep-rooted tradition of active hostility to the display of learning by women, which was expressed in contemporary plays, novels, polemical tracts, and private letters.[1]

The belief that women would appear mannish if they displayed learning in conversation formed part of a larger concern to maintain distinct gender differences in manners. The same rule of decorum which proscribed effeminacy in men was also applied to women.[2] It was argued that distinctions of gender roles were based directly on the different physical traits of the sexes. Thus, an anonymous male writer argued with respect to women:

> The Delicacy of their Texture, and the Strength of ours; the Beauty of their Form, and the Coarseness of ours, sufficiently indicate the respective Vocations.... Women are not form'd for great Cares themselves, but to sooth and soften ours. They are confined within the narrow Limits of Domestick Offices, and when they stray beyond them, they move eccentrically, and consequently without Grace.[3]

The assumption by women of a masculine style of dress was heavily criticised by courtesy writers as unacceptably mannish, because it contravened the belief that one of the major functions of dress was to distinguish the sexes.[4] The article of female dress to receive particular criticism in this way was the riding-habit, attacks on which occurred from 1711 through to 1760. The most common argument was that it made women and men indistinguishable when riding, and gave women, as Samuel Richardson put it, a "Hermaphrodite appearance".[5] Steele felt such habits gave their wearers an air of immodest boldness.[6]

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1 M. Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England 1650-1760 (Boston, 1920), espec. pp. 102, 132-5, 151-4, 175, 300-3, 310-5, 338-41, 372-419.

2 Above, ch. 3, p. 97; ch. 4, p. 180.

3 'On Affectation in Women', p. 553.

4 Polite Lady, pp. 103-4.

5 Richardson, Familiar Letters, No. 90, pp. 113-4; also Spectator, No. 104, i. 434-5 (29 June, 1711); Steele, Ladies Library, i. 69; Polite Lady, pp. 103-4 (1760).

6 Spectator, No. 104, i. 434-5.

The author of The Polite Lady argued that the "smart and masculine airs" of such riding habits were "inconsistent with that delicacy and softness which is one of the greatest beauties and ornaments of the female sex".[1] Boldness of air and deportment was particularly criticised as constituting mannish behaviouir in women. So a writer in The World argued that: "The assured look, the exalted voice, and theatrical step of our modern Females, pretty sufficiently convince us that there is something Manly still left amongst us."[2] In criticising the affectation of such "manly airs" by young ladies, Samuel Richardson clearly sets out the contrasting roles considered suitable for the two sexes:

> remember... that as sure as any thing intrepid, free, and in a prudent degree bold, becomes a man; so whatever is soft, tender, and modest, renders your sex amiable....the less you resemble us, the more you are sure to charm.[3]

The Universal Spectator of 1732 contains an extended satire of mannishness in women which includes accusations of them wearing breeches, riding astride, standing with the hands behind the body, whistling, pacing out the room, turning on the heel, shaking hands, carrying pistols, and taking the initiative in love affairs.[4] Whilst such accusations seem too exaggerated to take literally, their extreme nature and rather hysterical tone suggest that any apparent trend towards a confusion or reversal of sex roles in manners caused a considerable degree of anxiety at this time.

As had been the case in the courtesy literature for gentlemen, the concern to maintain distinctions of rank through manners was

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1 Polite Lady, p.105.

2 World, No.58, p.136. For a strutting walk in women as mannish, see E. Moore, Fables for the Female Sex (1744), p.63; for boldness in women as mannish, see Brown, Estimate, p.51. See also Mrs. Delany, Autobiography, 1st ser., i. 15: her father "loved gentleness and reserve in the behaviour of women, and could not bear anything that had the appearance of being too free and masculine".

3 Richardson, Familiar Letters, No. 90, p.114.

4 Universal Spectator, 15 July 1732, No.197, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, ii. (1732), 850-1.

strongly manifested in attacks on the imitation of the lady's manners by her social inferiors. The hostility felt by courtesy writers to this practice is evident in their choice of phrases. William Darrell argues that

> Ladies of Quality... are aped by the Sex of a lower Rate. Their Fashions, Mien, Gesture, and Carriage are copied by Citizens Wives and Daughters....[1]

Eliza Haywood asserts that the ambition of a citizen's wife to imitate the court is "despicable".[2] In a rather salacious satire, Ned Ward describes social-climbing city wives taking their daughters to dancing lessons to give them "as good Breeding as any Body" and "learn their Haviours, and not be Bred up Clowns".[3] To an extent, courtesy writers saw the emulation of fashionable manners as being practised by women more than men. Thus, Defoe argues that the adoption of social-aspiring dress is practised more by tradesmen's wives than their husbands,[4] and Adam Smith implies the same situation when he describes precedence as "that great object which divides the wives of aldermen", but makes no reference to aldermen themselves having the same interest.[5] That such a female bias in the social emulation of manners might be a deliberate policy is suggested in an interesting passage in The Connoisseur. The writer asserts that shopkeepers and mechanics "have wisely provided, that their gentility shall be preserved in the female part of the family", and therefore send their daughters to boarding schools to learn proper manners.[6] Whether the wiseness of such a

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1 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. liii.

2 Female Spectator, iii. 189, also 191.

3 E. Ward, the Dancing School [?1700], p.6.

4 Defoe, English Tradesman, i. 145.

5 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.57. Steele extends this concern to womankind in general: Tatler, No. 102, ii. 353.

6 Connoisseur, No. 44, i. 233-4.

strategy was because it freed the sons to pursue a more profitable career, or because it enabled the daughters to marry well, or for some other reason entirely, is not specified.

The same argument appears, however, as it did with tradesmen, that such emulation of manners was ultimately unsuccessful. Such women are "Pretenders to Politeness".[1] The mechanic's town-bred daughter "strives in vain to imitate/Th' Acquirements which alone become the Great", and

> ...aims at Arts, she wants a Power to learn;
> Would Counterfeit (if Nature could agree)
> With base Plebean Mold true quality;
> Fruitness th' Attempt, and Foolish the Design....[2]

Such a woman only succeeded in affecting manners which were the opposite of all the canons of good breeding, such as despising or esteeming others to excess, being overdressed, "over-free" in dancing, loud when offended, peevish with servants, scornful to inferiors, and slighting to her equals.[3] Other writers similarly condemn social-climbing women as displaying an excessive concern for rights of precedence and place,[4] and, in "People of a lower Class" and servants who imitate their mistresses, a "formal simpering Look, and mimick Gesture" which is "not to be pardon'd" in ladies of fashion.[5] The courtesy writers' final defence against such emulation in manners was the 'Catch-22' argument equating affectation (described by Locke as the opposite of good breeding) with any breach of the decorum of social rank. Thus, Eliza Haywood argues, in the context of criticising such emulation by citizens,

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1 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. liii.

2 The City Madam, p.3.

3 Ibid., pp. 1-4.

4 Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.57.

5 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.25; also The Art of Conversation (1757), p.205.

> ...whenever people behave in a fashion unbecoming of their rank, and what is expected from them by the world, assuming characters not their own, whether they attempt to exalt or demean themselves, it is equally the same, - a ridiculous affectation....[1]

The very attempt to imitate the good breeding of social superiors was defined as constituting in itself an act of ill breeding.

We have seen so far that the ideal gentleman and lady shared many of the same general ideals of good breeding and their specific manifestations in the maintenance of rank and the pleasing of others. At the same time, some important differences based on the criterion of sex have already emerged. These seem to fall into two categories: those relating to rank, and those relating to sex. Overall, there appears to be less emphasis placed on the maintenance of distinctions of rank by ladies than by gentlemen. Certainly advice on the treatment of superiors, equals, and inferiors - one very important means of maintaining rank - is identical for both sexes. However, in the works for ladies, significantly less attention is paid to the manifestation of personal dignity. This is apparent in the absence of many general prescriptions of such dignity, and in the lack of stress given to the display of equanimity or superior speech patterns. which we have seen were very important facets of the gentleman's dignity.[2] This difference between the sexes could be an indication that the burden of maintaining distinctions of rank in manners fell somewhat more heavily on men than on women. Such a situation may have been necessitated by the contemporary hierarchy of social rank, with its strong male bias, and by the dual function of the gentleman's dignity in upholding his governing authority as well as his rank.[3] Several important differences to do with sex have also emerged so far. We

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1 Female Spectator, iii. 190, also iii. 189, 191.

2 Above, ch. 4, pp. 176-92.

3 See above, pp. 152, 243-4.

find great concern expressed that the two sexes be distinctly demarcated by different social roles, which, as Richardson's comment makes clear,[1] are polar opposites. The female role is distinctly the more passive of the two, an assumption revealed in the strong dislike of women's boldness, talkativeness, display of learning and wit, and initiative in love affairs. There is also a tendency among courtesy writers to view women's social role as a male-orientated one, for example, in the suggestion that female deportment is calculated to attract men, or in the stress given to women's affability towards men. These themes to do with sex will be discussed in further detail shortly.

The most striking difference of all between the two types of courtesy literature is that all the themes common to the ideal gentleman and lady are given far less attention in the courtesy works for ladies. In the works for gentlemen, they totally dominate in terms of both the space they take up and the emphasis with which they are prescribed. In the works for ladies, they are discussed with a far lower degree of both length and insistence. The easiest way to gain a general impression of this marked difference is to compare the amount of supporting references in the preceding 20 pages with the far greater amount accompanying the same themes discussed in Chapter 4. Whereas the literature for gentlemen contains hundreds of references to, for example, the techniques of conversation, that for ladies has only tens - yet both were equally throughly investigated. Even taking into account the fact that there were approximately twice as many courtesy works for men in this period as there were for women, the discrepancy in treatment is still considerable. With what else, then, were the courtesy writers for ladies concerned?

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1 See above, p. 259.

ii. Women

The overwhelmingly dominant theme in the courtesy literature for ladies is that of sex: the femaleness of the reader. It is hard even from a late twentieth-century perspective to regard this attitude as anything out of the ordinary. It can only be pointed out that this concern for the physical sex of the reader was in striking contrast with eighteenth-century courtesy literature for the gentleman. In that literature, the reader's maleness is given no overt mention at all in connection with his manners except in the very restricted discussion of effeminacy. In contrast, in the literature for ladies, the reader's sex is given as the immediate reason behind prescriptions for her behaviour in almost every form of manners. This theme of sex far outweighs the theme of rank in both the attention and concern devoted to it by courtesy writers for ladies. It has been mentioned earlier that the more general term 'woman' appears at least as much as the more rank-specific 'lady' in this literature.[1] It is particularly in these discussions of sex-determined behaviour that the more general term occurs, and it indicates a broader prescription of manners for women in general largely irrespective of rank. One of the more extreme examples of this practice, The Whole Duty of a Woman contains the explicit declaration that it consists of "Directions How Women of all Qualities and Conditions, ought to behave themselves",[2] and the use by other courtesy writers of sex as the determining factor of manners contains by definition the same implicit assumption.

What were courtesy writers' general views on women's nature and place in society? At the beginning of this period, between about 1690 and about 1715, the most prominent mode of thought among courtesy writers for women was that women were the inferior sex, both qualitatively in terms of human nature, and hierarchically in terms of

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1 Above, p. 243.

2 The Whole Duty of a Woman (1696), titlepage.

their social position. This view is most evident in works containing a strong Christian element. Bishop Fleetwood presented the argument in the most detail. Writing in 1705, he asserted that men were superior to women in both body and mind;[1] that men's superiority over women in the social hierarchy was established by God and acknowledged by accepted custom;[2] that female subjection was part of the curse of Eve for having been the first transgressor;[3] that therefore women were not to usurp men's authority by teaching in public or speaking in church,[4] and that, as wives, women had to subject themselves to their husbands, living in "chast Conversation coupled with Fear".[5] Taking his model of a good woman from the Bible,[6] Timothy Rogers argued in 1697 that woman was subject to man by the order of her creation.[7] William Nicholls, himself a doctor of divinity, had similar views, arguing in 1701 that God had decreed men should rule over women;[8] that women, especially wives, should be submissive to men;[9] and that, because women were naturally more timorous than men, and women's bodies were more subject to natural infirmities than men's, man himself stood in

> a higher state of natural Perfection and Dignity, and thereupon puts in a just Claim of superiority.[10]

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1 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp. 168-9.

2 Ibid., pp. 168-9.

3 Ibid., pp. 171, 173.

4 Ibid., p. 171, citing St Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 11-12.

5 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, p.165, citing Pet. iii. 1-2. Fleetwood's views on woman's place are repr. in Steele, Ladies Library, ii. 58-85.

6 Rogers, The Character of a Good Woman... In a Funeral Discourse on Prov. 31.10...., title and throughout.

7 Ibid., p.17.

8 W. Nicholls, 'The Duty of Wives to their Husbands', in his The Duty of Inferiours towards their Superiours (1701), pp.90-1.

9 Ibid., pp. 95-6.

10 Ibid., pp. 87-8.

Nicholls appears to be referring here to the humoral theory of the physical body. Such a reference was explicitly made by another courtesy writer in 1717, who compared "The Weakness of Womens Natures, attended with over-much Heat and Humidity" to "Men, the Nobler and more substantial Part of the Creation", and argued that women were therefore "more inclinable to Vice" than men, and also possessed less "strength of Reason".[1] The survival of this humoral theory here as late as 1717, when it had been substantially declining in other types of literature from the later seventeenth century,[2] would seem to indicate the existence in such courtesy works of a fundamentally conservative view of women's nature.

The heavily religious influence on courtesy literature for women at the turn of the eighteenth century coincided, not surprisingly, with the same type of influence on the contemporary courtesy literature for men.[3] However, a major difference between the two groups of works emerged after about 1715. From that point onwards, the religious influence in the literature for gentlemen declined markedly, and by 1730 had all but disappeared.[4] In the literature for ladies, the overt religious presence in the form of exhortations to piety, discussions of religion, and citations from the Bible also decreased notably. However, traditional Christian arguments about

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1 Essays on the Conduct of Life, pp. 34, 35.

2 S.W. Jackson, 'Melancholia and the Waning of the Humoral Theory', Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Science, xxxiii (1978), 367-76; see also I. Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Women (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 32-5, 89.

3 See e.g. Hartcliffe, Moral and Intellectual Virtues (1691); Barrow, Of Industry (1693); Steele, Christian Hero (1701); Fleetwood, Relative Duties (1705); Darrell, Gentleman Instructed (1704-12), espec. pt. 2, 'A gentleman instructed in the true principles of religion' (1709).

4 See e.g. Gentleman's Library (1715, 1734 edn.), which contains only one limited section on religion two-thirds of the way through the book (pp. 274-305); Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift (1729), which has only a small section on religion (pp.7-18); The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed (one chapter out of 25 on religion, i. 1-102); Scott, A Father's Instructions (1748): pp. 12-16

continued...

the nature and position of women continued to be propounded as fundamental axioms right through until 1760. In 1722, John Essex cited the biblical argument that women were "the weaker Vessels"[1] and asserted that man's social superiority over women was a result of Eve's sin.[2] This same argument, that "subjection is the portion of the daughters of Eve",[3] recurs in other courtesy works for ladies written in 1753 and 1759.[4] As late as 1754, James Burgh argued that "If we appeal either to reason, scripture, or universal consent, we shall find a degree of submission to the male sex to be an indispensable part of the female character", and that for women to attempt to be equal to men "is opposing nature".[5]

These very traditional views on the nature and position of women were a direct inheritance from the heavily religious and moral conduct literature of the seventeenth century. The influence of one of the most popular of these seventeenth-century works, Richard Allestree's The Ladies Calling (1667), can be directly traced in eight subsequent courtesy works for ladies dating from 1694 to 1753.[6] In two of these,

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only are on religion. Otherwise the courtesy works after the mid-1720s contain little or nothing on religion; this includes important works by Defoe, Costeker, Forrester, Constable and Chesterfield: q.v. below, Bibliography A1. One exception is T. Foxton, Serino (1721), which is heavily religious throughout.

1 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.71. The reference is from 1.Pet.iii.7.

2 Ibid., p.107.

3 W. Kenrick, The Whole Duty of Woman (1753), p.75.

4 Kenrick, Whole Duty of Woman (1753), p.75; Marriott, Female Conduct (1759), p.18.

5 Burgh, Human Nature (1754), p.76.

6 Compare with R. Allestree, Ladies Calling (1693 edn.): 'N.H.' The Ladies Dictionary (1694), pp.327-35: Allestree, pp. 32-50; The Whole Duty of a Woman (1696), pp.1-95: Allestree, throughout; Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, 'To the Ladies', pp. lix-lxii: Allestree, pp.5-8, 16-20; Steele, Ladies Library (1714), i. 179-212, 240-58: Allestree, pp.5-52; Steele, ii. 38-57, 87-106, 184-205, 347-85: Allestree, pp.156-258; Steele, iii. 22-53, 292-303, 332-42: Allestree, pp.86-152; Essex, Ladies Conduct (1722), p.49: Allestree, p.74; Essex, pp.103-9: Allestree, pp.180-93; J. Bland, An Essay in Praise of Women (1733), p.135: Allestree, p. 53; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice (1740), pp.104-5; Allestree,

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those by John Essex and William Kenrick, the argument that female submission results from Eve's sin is taken directly from Allestree's book.[1] This connection is important because The Ladies Calling itself is very strongly insistent indeed on woman's subjection to man in the social hierarchy[2] and on her personal inferiority to man in terms of both her reason and understanding,[3] and her ability to control her passions such as love, anger, and pride, which Allestree characterises as woman's "natural infirmities".[4] The extended influence of this work well into the eighteenth century is on a scale unmatched in the literature for gentlemen, and indicates that a strong traditionalism and conservatism underlay eighteenth-century English courtesy writers' views on the nature and role of women.

Courtesy writers at this time also depicted women as more influenced by their emotions than men. A male writer in 1729 argued that women's passions "are keener, more eager, and more ungovernable than ours".[5] The characteristically female emotions were pride, pity, love, and fear. William Darrell argued that women had an "innate Propension" towards pride, having inherited it as a "common Infection... from their first Parent".[6] Richard Steele felt that women

> are by Nature form'd to Pity, Love, and Fear, and we with an Impulse to Ambition, Danger and Adventure

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pp. 33, 40, 46; Wilkes, pp. 116-7: Allestree, p.16; Wilkes, p. 119; Allestree, pp. 6-7; Wilkes, pp.184-5; Allestree, ppp.158-62; Kenrick, Whole Duty of Woman (1753), p.75: Allestree, pp.191-2; Kenrick, p.84: Allestree, p.231.

1 Compare Allestree, Ladies Calling, p.191-2 with Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp.107-8, and Kenrick, Duty of Woman, p.75.

2 Allestree, Ladies Calling, pp.9, 44.

3 Ibid., pp. b2^{v}-b3 (preface), 40.

4 Ibid., p.89; also pp. 40, 53, 205, 262.

5 Young Gentleman's New Year's Gift (1729), p.107.

6 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. liv.

and other writers reiterated similar views.[1] Steele's comment clearly expresses the view, which we have seen earlier to have been a fundamental tenet of decorum,[2] that the two sexes were a natural duality possessing different but complementary qualities. John Essex also makes this point in his Young Ladies Conduct, arguing that

> Nature has given to different Sexes, different Qualifications, that so by mutual Society and Friendship, the Defects of each other may be the better supply'd.[3]

Essex does not specify what characteristics constitute the male half of this mutual compact, but he does continue on to assert that, for their part, ladies "are generally endow'd with a great deal of Patience, Constancy, and Fortitude".[4]

The mutual compact of the sexes, however, was in the courtesy literature definitely not a balanced contract, but was heavily weighted towards the male side. We have seen earlier that in the courtesy literature for gentlemen very little attention indeed was paid to men's behaviour towards women.[5] The same lack of concern with the other sex does not occur in the literature for ladies. In considerable contrast, courtesy writers expressly state that they discuss the manners of ladies almost wholly in terms of their relationship with men. Thus, the author of The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed introduced his work by saying:

> I have treated on matters which relate to females, as they are concerned to approach or fly from the other sex: Or, as they are tied to them by blood, interest, or affection....[6]

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1 Steele, The Christian Hero, p.28; also Essays on the Conduct of Life (1717), p.34 (pride); Smith, Moral Sentiments, p.37 (fear); J. Bland, An Essay in Praise of Women (1733), p.135 (pity) (derived from Allestree, Ladies Calling, p.53).

2 Above, ch. 3, p. 97.

3 Essex, Ladies Conduct (1722), p.70.

4 Ibid., p. 70.

5 Above, ch. 4, p. 221.

6 Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed (1747), Publisher to the Reader, p.vii.

Courtesy writers argued that such a bias reflected the realities of social life. James Burgh asserted in 1754 that: "To a woman's conduct with regard to the other sex, is owing, more than to all other things, the happiness or misery of her existence in this world".[1] Richard Steele believed that a woman's entire role in life was related to the needs of her male relations:

> the utmost of a Woman's Character is contained in Domestick Life; She is Blameable or Praiseworthy according as her carriage affects the House of her Father or her Husband. All she has to do in this World, is contained within the Duties of a Daughter, a Sister, a Wife, and a Mother... when they consider themselves, as they ought, no other than an additional Part of the Species (for their own Happiness and Comfort, as well as that of those for whom they were born) their Ambition to excell will be directed accordingly; and they will in no Part of their Lives want Opportunities for being shining Ornaments to their Fathers, Husbands, Brothers, or Children.[2]

It was against the background of this very male-centred view of women's social role, and with a fundamentally traditional concept of women's human nature, that these courtesy writers laid out behaviour patterns for their female readers to follow.

In prescribing the manners to be practised by women, courtesy writers were overwhelmingly concerned with the preservation of female chastity. This theme dominates every major courtesy work for women throughout this period. Such a degree of concern was not new to the eighteenth century: it is equally strong in such influential seventeenth-century works as Allestree's Ladies Calling and Lord Halifax's Advice to a Daughter.[3] This insistence in the courtesy

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1 Burgh, Human Nature, p.76.

2 Spectator, No. 342, iii. 271-2 (2 Apr. 1712).

3 Allestree, Ladies Calling, pp. 15-31, 161-2, 190-1. Halifax Advice, pp. 96-106, 109-114. For this insistence in 16th century courtesy literature, see Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance, pp. 24-5, 41-4, 53-4, 97-100.

literature on the maintenance of chastity is almost entirely applied only to women. The only two courtesy writers in this period to protest against the existence of a double standard of chastity for the two sexes were Jeremy Collier and Richard Steele. Collier felt that men were under the same religious and moral obligations to maintain their chastity,[1] and Steele likewise insisted that chastity was "as much to be valued in men as in women".[2] However, Steele conceded that he was arguing against contemporary opinion, admitting "I know not how it is, but our sex has usurped a certain authority to exclude chastity out of the catalogue of masculine virtues".[3]

Most courtesy writers also recognised the existence of a double standard of chastity, but rather than condemning it, they actively supported and promoted it. The reason they repeatedly gave for their conduct was that the maintenance of strict female chastity was essential to the preservation of pure bloodlines in a male system of property inheritance. Samuel Johnson believed that upon the chastity of women, "all property depends", and that infidelity in a wife was much worse than in a husband because he could not give her bastards, but she could give them to him.[4] The same argument was made by Samuel Richardson: a husband could not produce bastards to succeed to the estate,

> Whereas a naughty wife often makes the children of another man heirs of her husband's estate and fortune, in injury of his own children or family.[5]

This central focus on the man's property and its inheritance by his children recurs in other works: bastards are "palmed upon the Husband", and inherit "his Estate";[6] adultery is "the greatest Injury of all"

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1 Collier, 'Of Whoredom', in his Essays (1705), pt. 3, p.121.

2 Tatler, No.58, ii. 62, also Guardian, No.45, p.95 (attributed to Steele by Rae Blanchard, 'Richard Steele and the Status of Women', Studies in Philology, xxvi (1929), p.349).

3 Guardian, No.45, p.95, also Steele in Tatler, No.33, i. 271.

4 Boswell, Life of Johnson, ii.457 (22 Mar. 1776), iii.406 (10 Oct. 1779).

5 Richardson, Familiar Letters,No.55, p.63.

6 Gentleman's Library. p.249.

because it "debases a Man's Family" by "obtruding a spurious Issue upon him for the legitimate Heirs of his Estate".[1] This predominant concern with a male pattern of inheritance extended not only to the father but also to the children: wives are told to be chaste lest they "defraud the true Heir of the Family of his Right".[2] Although more concerned with ensuring the father's love and thus care of his children than with the direct question of inheritance, David Hume also argued that "the interest of civil society" meant that women had a stronger moral obligation to chastity than did men.[3] In the creation of children, "an error" could be made on the woman's part but not the man's, and "From this trivial and anatomical observation is derived that vast difference betwixt the education and duties of the two sexes".[4]

Chastity was thus recommended as "the greatest glory and ornament" of the female sex,[5] without which, "beauty is unlovely, wit is mean and wanton; quality contemptible, and good-breeding worthless".[6] Chastity was "the great point of female honour",[7] which, it was repeatedly insisted, if once tarnished or lost, "is never to be recovered".[8] This irredeemable quality of female honour was expressly contrasted by courtesy writers with male honour, which could be redeemed. Thus, Hume insisted:

> If a man behave with cowardice on one occasion, a contrary conduct reinstates him in his character.

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1 An Essay on Modern Gallantry [1750], pp.14-15, also pp.50-1.

2 Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, p.108.

3 Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', in his Treatise of Human Nature, Works, ii. 352.

4 Ibid., p. 349.

5 Polite Lady (1760), p.193.

6 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice (1740), p.114.

7 Ibid., pp. 114-5.

8 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.114; Moore, Fables, pp. 116-20.

> But by what action can a woman, whose behavior has once been dissolute, be able to assure us that she has formed better resolutions, and has self-command enough to carry them into execution?[1]

Because of this primary focus on chastity, the whole concept of female honour was far more restricted and narrow than was that of male honour. Hume argued that "The greatest regard which can be acquired" by women was derived from their sexual fidelity,[2] and Johnson insisted that "every notion of female honour and virtue...are all included in chastity".[3] Honour in men, in contrast, was described by contemporary courtesy writers as including such qualities as courage, virtue, truthfulness, justice, superior refinement, and a host of other noble ideals.[4]

The primary concern by courtesy writers to preserve male property rights within the family might be grounds for supposing that an insistence on chastity was restricted to married women of child-bearing age whose husbands possessed property worth inheriting. Such was not the case. Women were instructed to pay a strict regard to chastity throughout their lives, refraining from sexual relations before and after marriage, and being faithful to their husbands during marriage.[5] Hume felt that the lack of exemption for women past child-bearing age stemmed from a natural human tendency to extrapolate from a specific instance into a general rule of conduct in such cases as this in which the boundaries marking female ages were not so distinct as those demarcating one sex from another.[6] Young unmarried women had more reason to practise chastity, because it was described as the one quality, more than any other, which "effectually recommends"

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1 Hume, An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 303; also Polite Lady, p.200.

2 Hume, Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 303.

3 Boswell, Life of Johnson, ii. 56 (Spring, 1768).

4 See espec. Gentleman's Library, pp.130, 134-8; also Chesterfield, Letters, vi. 2512.

5 Essays on the Conduct of Life (1717), p.39.

6 Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', Works, ii. 351.

women "to the love and esteem" of men.[1] In such a society as eighteenth-century England, in which marriage was the major career open to women, non-virgin spinsters have been cynically but aptly described as "flawed goods" in a commercial environment.[2]

Leading up to the eighteenth century, there had been a long tradition of writing which portrayed women as being by nature lascivious and lustful.[3] This view received very little expression indeed in the courtesy literature after 1690, although it was not entirely absent.[4] Very largely, however, courtesy writers portrayed the chief threat to a woman's chastity as stemming not from her own lust or inclinations, but from the flattery and deception of men.[5] Yet (with the exception of Steele and Collier) they directed all their persuasive efforts regarding the preservation of female chastity to women, not men.[6]

Courtesy writers used three major tactics in their efforts to ensure women maintained their chastity. The first was to emphasise and reinforce the social sanctions applied to the loss of chastity. Hume argued that "In order... to impose a due restraint on the female sex, we must attach a peculiar degree of shame to their infidelity". This consisted in "the punishment of bad fame or reputation", since punishment by legal trial required too great an amount of positive proof to be an effective restraint.[7] Writers stressed that the loss

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1 Polite Lady, pp. 193-4.

2 J.E.C. Hill, 'Clarissa Harlow and her Times', Essays in Criticism, v (1955), 332.

3 E.g. R. Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy (1621, Everyman edn., 1932, repr. 1949), iii. 55; see also F.L. Utley, The Crooked Rib (Columbus, Ohio, 1944), pp.49-50, 163-4, 183, 255-6.

4 E.g. Essays on the Conduct of Life (1717), p.34; Brown, Laconics (1701), p.46.

5 See below, pp. 276-7.

6 Apart from Steele and Collier (above, p. 271), and certain writers for apprentices (see below, ch. 6, p. 310), only three courtesy writers explicitly condemn unchastity in men: Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp.318-22; Nelson, Instructions... for Young Gentlemen (written 1708), pp.699-700; Dodsley, 'Advice', p.118.

7 Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', ii. 349-50.

of chastity would result in "Infamy and Shame",[1] scorn and ridicule,[2] the loss of "Honor, Fame, and Innocence"[3] and bring ruin, the sorrow of parents and relations,[4] and the abandoning of a woman by her friends and family;[5] moreover, (in the only direct reference to rank) an unchaste woman "becomes cheap and vulgar, loses her rank, and is exposed to every insult".[6] The second strategy was to inculcate in women from an early age an internal "conscious Sense of Shame"[7] about immoral acts, "some preceding backwardness or dread, which may prevent their first approaches, and may give the female sex a repugnance to all expressions, and postures, and liberties, that have immediate relation to that enjoyment".[8] Wetenhall Wilkes argued in 1740 that chastity"is a kind of quick and delicate feeling in the soul, which makes her shrink, and withdraw herself, from every thing that is wanton, or has danger in it", and he told his female readers that it was so effective a check on loose thoughts, that "I prescribe to you the practice of it in your greatest solitudes".[9] The third means of preserving female chastity, to which the courtesy writers devoted their major attention, was the inculcation of modesty in every facet of a woman's manners.

Courtesy writers argued that modesty should be the most fundamental governing principle of a woman's whole behaviour. This was because they believed that an air of modesty in a woman was both the outward indication of her chastity, and its chief defender against

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1 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp. 178-9.

2 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p. 114, and Polite Lady, p.195.

3 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.38.

4 Essay on Modern Gallantry, p.20.

5 Polite Lady, p.195; also Essay on Modern Gallantry, p.39.

6 Hume, Principles of Morals, Works, iv.303.

7 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.98.

8 Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', ii. 350; for its inculcation from an early age, see Ibid., ii. 351.

9 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, pp. 114-5.

its threat by men. There was a very strong feeling that a woman's outer manners were an accurate indication of her inner moral character. Thus, the author of The Polite Lady asserted that "Modesty... is the outward expression of a pure and chaste mind",[1] and William Fleetwood insisted similarly that for a woman to maintain "a chast Conversation"

> requires not only the purity and cleanness of the Heart, but such an outward, innocent and decent carriage, as may denote that purity....[2]

The opposite of such conduct, "a light and idle, wanton and suspicious carriage", Fleetwood believed, both offended "sober, virtuous People", and gave "great encouragement to vicious impudent Attempters".[3]

Courtesy writers prescribed female modesty as a counterbalance to male flattery and deception, placing onto women the entire responsibility of maintaining a safe social distance between the two sexes. So the author of The Virgin's Nosegay wrote that the life of a Christian virgin "is a continual Warfare" against the artful lover:[4] if he is in the slightest degree familiar, she ought "immediately to double her Caution, call to her Aid Reservedness of Speech, and Awfulness of Countenance".[5] John Essex focused on the same interaction of male deception and female reserve, defining flattery as

> A base, pernicious, and deluding Vice in Men, who seldom Praise immoderately without Design: Young Ladies therefore ought to... make use of the surest Antidote against this Poison, I mean a strict Reserve, so far as it is consistent with Decency and good Manners....[6]

The same argument repeatedly occurs among other writers: it is because men have designs on women's chastity that women must guard themselves

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1 Polite Lady, p.213.

2 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp.178-9, also pp. 180-1; similarly, Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lix.

3 Fleetwood, Relative Duties, p.188.

4 ('F.L.'), The Virgin's Nosegay (1744), p.25.

5 Ibid., p.62.

6 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.5.

with reserve and distance in their manners.[1] An image repeatedly used in this context is that of a seige, in which a woman's modesty and reserve are the "Out-works that guard her Virtue" and "keep at a Distance the Attempts of the most impudent Assailant".[2] Such modesty, it is repeatedly argued, is the "fountain head"[3] and "surest" protection of her chastity.[4]

Modesty, according to William Darrell, could be defined as "a Mixture of Gravity and Sweetness" which "plants Vertue upon the Fore-head": it was an air of reserve, yet not one which was sour or starched;[5] it avoided coquetry without becoming prudery.[6] Reserve was seen as a key feature of female modesty by many other courtesy writers.[7] It was portrayed as giving a woman a "dignity and majesty"[8] and as having an authority which raised respect and esteem in men and discouraged impure love.[9] Such modesty was to appear in every area of a woman's behaviour and manners: "it reaches every Part of the Exteriour, and guides our whole Comportment Abroad and at Home, in our Closet, and in Conversation."[10] A woman was to be "very cautious" in associating with men, "and of granting the least Civilities" which could be "mistaken for an Invitation".[11] To avoid

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1 Richardson, Collection of...Sentiments, p.3; Polite Lady, p.224-5; Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.111; Bulstrode, Miscellaneous Essays (1715), pp.82-3; cf. Hume, Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 303, who recommends modesty and reserve in women because they have so many opportunities of secretly indulging in unchastity.

2 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', pp. lix-lx. The image itself is borrowed from Allestree, Ladies Calling, p.17, repr. in Steele, Ladies Library, i. 193, and it recurs in Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.4; see also Polite Lady, p.224, and Female Spectator, i. 245 for modesty as a 'guard' to chastity.

3 Female Spectator, i. 245.

4 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.4.

5 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lx.

6 Polite Lady, pp. 227-8.

7 Above, pp. 276, 277 and note 1; also Hume, Principles of Morals, Works, iv. 303.

8 Polite Lady, p. 225.

9 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', pp. lix-lx.

10 Ibid., p. lx.

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such misapprehensions, she should "observe a constant and inviolable Reservedness, tho' a polite one", towards all men with whom she conversed.[1] To maintain this reserve involved a curtailment of her social movements: she was warned that to attend a public masquerade would be interpreted by men as setting herself up for sale.[2] William Darrell was very restrictive of a woman's movements out of concern for her chastity, advising her seldom to attend balls, and only sometimes the theatre, to be careful choosing both male and female friends and to walk abroad only with a companion.[3]

A woman was instructed to maintain modesty in her dress because indecent dress was associated with the allurements of prostitutes.[4] In 1740, Wetenhall Wilkes stated categorically:

> That girl, who endeavours, by the artifice of dress, to attract the admiration, to stir up languishing desires, and to provoke the wanton wishes of her gay beholders, is as guilty of breaking the seventh commandment, as the woman in the Gospel, that was taken in the fact.[5]

Throughout this period female fashions, particularly but not exclusively low necklines, were criticised by courtesy writers as immodest and indecent, and "Invitations" to men.[6]

A woman was also advised to practise modesty in her deportment and conversation. Timothy Rogers stated that there should be an air

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1 Virgin's Nosegay, p.64; also Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lxxvi.

2 Female Spectator, i. 244.

3 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', pp. xlviii, lxxiv-lxxvi; on the last point, see similarly Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.81.

4 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.62.

5 Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p.118.

6 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.74, includes as such invitations the low neckline, lowered stays, display of the shoulders, wide hoop, gold and silver stockings and diamond garter buckles. For the display of neck, bosom, ankles, and shoulders as indecent, see Connoisseur, No. 36, i. 189; for low necklines see Guardian, Nos. 100, 109, 116, 118, 121, 134, 140, 145, pp. 210-1, 224, 236, 238, 244, 270, 280-1, 290; Tatler, No.215, iv. 109; see also A. Eden, A Vindication of the Reformation, On Foot, among the Ladies, to Abolish Modesty and Chastity, and Restore the Native Simplicity of Going Naked... (1755).

of modesty "in every of her Actions".[1] The author of The Polite Lady asserted that "Modesty... as it relates to gesture, is of a very extensive nature".[2] Modesty was to appear in a woman's restrained walk,[3] in her avoidance while dancing of "the wanton Turn of the Head... and the disagreeable Motion of the Hips",[4] in the reserved expression of her eyes,[5] in her display of "a chastised mien",[6] and in her reserved "Countenance and Air".[7] We have seen that modesty prohibited a woman from exhibiting loud laughter, a loud voice, talkativeness, or wit in conversation.[8] It also prohibited her from speaking any indecent words,[9] or from hearing any: she was variously advised to express her disapproval at such language either verbally, or by leaving the room,[10] or by simply not appearing to understand it.[11] Finally, modesty prohibited a woman from either speaking of love herself[12] or listening to men's flattery - the latter being a tacit capitulation to their advances.[13]

These prescriptions of modesty were explicitly aimed at women regardless of their rank: Samuel Richardson advised that modesty should appear in young women "of whatever degree".[14] Although the

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1 Rogers, Good Woman, p.31.

2 Polite Lady, p.215.

3 Female Spectator, i. 245-6.

4 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.47.

5 Ibid., p. 47; also Rogers, Good Woman, p.31; Polite Lady, p.217.

6 Polite Lady, p. 217.

7 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lx.

8 Above, pp. 248, 256.

9 Rogers, Good Woman, p.31.

10 Ibid., pp. 207, 225; Virgin's Nosegay, p.54; Polite Lady, p.207.

11 Polite Lady, p. 207; also Essex, Ladies Conduct, p.42.

12 Darrell, 'To the Ladies", p. lxii.

13 Ibid., p. lx.

14 Richardson, Collection of...Sentiments, p. 3; similarly, Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, p. 111.

courtesy treatises were most commonly directed towards the young, and thus many of these prescriptions use the term 'young woman', modesty was demanded from women of every age. Hume felt that the general male expectation of finding modesty in women

> carries us beyond the original principle, and makes us extend the notions of modesty over the whole sex, from their earliest infancy to their extremest old age and infirmity.[1]

Courtesy writers acknowledged that once a woman was married, custom allowed her to be somewhat less restrained in her manners; however, they were by no means wholly in favour of this. In his 'Letter to a Young Lady on her Marriage', Swift tells her to

> be very slow in changing the modest Behaviour of a Virgin: It is usual in young Wives... to assume a bold, forward Look and Manner of Talking; as if they intended to signify in all Companies, that they were no longer Girls, and consequently that their whole Demeanor, before they got a Husband, was all but a Countenance and Constraint upon their Nature: Whereas, I suppose, if the Votes of wise Men were gathered, a very great Majority would be in favour of those Ladies, who after they were entered into that State, rather chose to double their Portion of Modesty and Reservedness.[2]

John Essex was of a similar opinion, arguing that the modesty of "the bashful Virgin", "should not altogether be defaced, or laid aside in the Marriage State, but rather strengthen'd and improv'd by a more solid Conduct and Management, to make it appear Awful and Becoming".[3] William Darrell insisted that modesty was so essential in women as a sex that:

> it's no more esteem'd a bare Ornament but a Propriety of the Sex. So that a Woman discarded of Modesty, ought to be gaz'd upon as a Monster.[4]

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1 Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', Works, ii. 351.

2 Swift, 'Letter to a Young Lady', Works, ix. 86; see similarly Connoisseur, No. 4, i. 20.

3 Essex, Ladies Conduct, p. 103; also Virgin's Nosegay, pp. 129-30.

4 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lix; also Wilkes, Genteel...Advice, pp. 116-7. (Both probably derived from Allestree, Ladies Calling, p.16.)

Three points may be made about this prescription of modesty for women as a sex. First, in demanding modesty as the manifestation and reinforcement of chastity, courtesy writers link together the morals and manners of women to a far greater extent than they do those of men. There was some discussion of morals in the courtesy literature for gentlemen, most notably by Locke, who saw the inculcation of virtue as a primary goal of the gentleman's education,[1] and by the religious writers at the beginning of the eighteenth century, who were concerned to promote the practice of the traditional Christian moral virtues.[2] However, such moral concerns in the courtesy literature declined markedly after about 1715, concurrently with the decline in religious influence.[3] What remains is either a praise of virtue in very non-specific terms as a guiding ideal of the gentleman's conduct,[4] or an all but complete silence on the subject.[5] In none of these various discussions of virtue was the gentleman expected to overtly display his morals in every move he made.

Second, we have seen that modesty was prescribed in a limited way for gentlemen.[6] The definitions given of gentlemanly modesty, however, are completely different from that given to female modesty. They bear no relationship whatever to chastity, have attached to them no specific manners, and are in no way described as indispensable qualities.[7] The term 'modesty' thus had wholly different meaning, scope, and implications depending on whether it was applied to a woman or a man. Courtesy writers explicitly recognised and supported

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1 Locke, Education, p. 170, also 241.

2 E.g. humility: Hartcliffe, Moral and Intellectual Virtues, p.118; temperance: Barrow, Of Industry, p. 133; industry: Nelson, 'Letters to his young Cousins', p. 696; charity: Darrell, Gentleman Instructed, p. 88.

3 See above, p. 266.

4 Defoe, Compleat...Gentleman, p.234; Costeker, Fine Gentleman, Dedication, pp. iv-v.

5 E.g. by Chesterfield.

6 Above, ch. 4, p. 164.

7 Above, ch. 4. p. 164.

this distinction. Thus Steele argued that modesty was very different in the two sexes because of their different ways of life:

> The woman's province is to be careful in her economy, and chaste in her affection: the man's to be active in the improvement of his fortune, and ready to undertake whatever is consistent with his reputation for that end. Modesty therefore in a woman has a certain agreeable fear in all she enters upon; and in men it is composed of a right judgement of what is proper for them to attempt.

Steele goes on to add that modesty is "the only recommendation" in women, but that it was to be condemned as a weakness in a man if it hid his talents from the world.[1]

Steele's contrasting of the social roles of male and female modesty leads to the third point to be made: of the two types of modesty, that of women was far more restrictive on its possessor's other actions. The concept of male modesty was explicitly restricted so that it did not impinge on a man's self-assurance (which we have seen was a key quality in the gentleman) or on his freedom of movement which enabled him to gain the knowledge of the world so crucial to his self-assurance.[2] By contrast, assurance in a woman was expressly seen as a breach of her modesty. William Darrell felt that in gaining assurance, a woman "mortgages Modesty for Behaviour".[3] Samuel Richardson asserted similarly:

> I am no enemy to a proper presence of mind in company; but would never have you appear bold, talkative, or assured. Modesty in the outward behaviour, is a strong prepossession in a lady's favour.[4]

As we have seen, courtesy writers also restricted a woman's social life because of the demands of modesty.[5] She was thus barred from

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1 Tatler, No. 52, ii. 23-4; see also Hume, 'Of Chastity and Modesty', pp.348-51, and his 'Of Impudence and Modesty', pp.497-8; also Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. lix.

2 See above, ch. 4, pp. 166-7, espec. Spectator, No.373, iii. 404-5.

3 Darrell, 'To the Ladies', p. xxxv; also Fielding, Covent-Garden Journal, No. 56, ii. 67.

4 Richardson, Familiar Letters, No. 90, p.114.

5 Above, pp.277-8.

gaining the self-assurance and knowledge of the world which, courtesy writers argued, could only come from experiencing a wide variety of companies and situations.[1] The stress given to modesty placed conflicting demands on women even in their prescribed social role. Courtesy writers emphasised women's 'natural' desire to please men,[2] and also stressed that such efforts as "softest Smiles" and an agreeable nature were necessary to acquire a suitable husband.[3] Yet modesty demanded restraint and reserve. These conflicting expectations of a woman were recognised by Thomas Brown:

> 'tis necessary that she be Vertuous, Simple, and a Coquet all at once. Simplicity Invites us, Coquetry Amuses, and Vertue retains us.[4]

Above all, what is so strikingly apparent from these discussions of modesty is the extensiveness of the concept in its application to women regardless of rank, age, or marital status; in its restriction of so many areas of their conduct and manners: where they went, with whom they associated, and how they dressed, moved, spoke, and looked; and, finally, in the adamant and insistent finality with which it was prescribed. There is not one other single prescription of manners in the courtesy literature for women, or, indeed, for gentlemen, which receives anywhere near the same amount of attention or concern. Nor is there another which governs so many different types of manners. Such was the degree of importance placed by courtesy writers on the encouragement of female modesty.

So far, a very uniform picture has been presented of courtesy writers' prescriptions for women during this 70-year period. There was, however, one noticeable development over time: the growth of a new sentimentality of attitude towards women, characterised by an exaltation of feminine virtues and an idealisation of womanhood in general.

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1 Above, ch. 4, pp. 166-7.
2 Above, p. 253.
3 Marriott, Female Conduct, pp. 22, 26.
4 Brown, Amusements Serious and Comical, pp. 62-3.

This idealisation of women has generally been seen by scholars to have reached its fullest development in the nineteenth century, and considerable attention has been devoted to it as a characteristically Victorian phenomenon.[1] This feminine ideal was one of child-like sexual innocence, physical delicacy, and a moral superiority over men, attributes which enabled a woman to act as a guardian of virtue in society and at home: in Coventry Patmore's well known phrase, the 'angel in the house'.[2] The antecedents of this ideal have been traced back into the eighteenth century by literary critics for some time, and have been traditionally dated back to the influence of Samuel Richardson's novel Pamela, published in 1740.[3] Recent scholars have continued to stress the importance of this altered view of women as an indication of changing beliefs about female conduct.[4]

Eighteenth-century English courtesy writers participated fully in this change of consciousness. It is apparent in the courtesy literature from about 1710 onwards, and consists of an increasing idealisation of women, exhibited in alterations of content and tone. In contrast to the heavily religious courtesy works of the beginning of the eighteenth century, with their view of women's innate inferiority, and their strict, didactic admonitions, there appear

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1 E.g. by G. Rattray Taylor, The Angel Makers: A Study in the Psychological Origins of Historical Change 1750-1850 (1958); Suffer and be Still: Women in the Victorian Age, ed. M. Vicinus (Indiana, 1972, repr. London, 1980), (espec. the introduction by Vicinus and the articles by Conway, Cominos, and Millet); C. Christi, 'Victorian Masculinity and the Angel in the House', in A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women, ed. M. Vicinus (Indiana, 1977, repr. London, 1980), pp.146-62; H. Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880 (1969), p.159; J. Burstyn, Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood (1980), pp. 30-47.

2 See espec. Rattray Taylor, Angel Makers, pp.117-25; Christi, 'Victorian Masculinity', pp. 146-62; also the other works listed above, previous note.

3 Espec. by R.P. Utter and G.B. Needham, Pamela's Daughters (1937).

4 See espec. P.M. Spacks, 'Ev'ry Woman is at Heart a Rake', Eighteenth Century Studies, viii (1974-5), 27-46; M. LeGates, 'The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought', Eighteenth Century Studies, x (1976-7), 21-39.

sweetly-worded, persuasive phrases, which stress woman's natural superiority to men, in beauty, delicacy, innocence, and purity. In 1711, Richard Steele eulogised his ideal woman in such terms as the embodiment of beauty, goodness, softness, and tenderness.[1] In 1722, John Essex asserted that men esteemed and paid homage to women on account of their virtue, modesty, and obedience.[2] In 1731, George Lyttleton praised women's beauty, delicacy, and tenderness, emphasising that they should confine their attentions to the domestic sphere and leave the rougher outside world to more stalwart men.[3] In 1733, James Bland exalted woman as "so sublime a Creature" that he could compare her to "nothing on this Side Heaven", and argued that women surpassed men in their piety, mercy, temperance, refinement, and chastity.[4] With Thomas Marriott's Female Conduct of 1759, the ideal is fully realised. Marriott stresses the beauty of feminine charm, innocence, simplicity, and child-like airs.[5] He praises woman's crucial role as a mother and home-maker in terms that conjure up nineteenth-century ideals remarkably prematurely, describing the man's house as "a Sanctuary" "Where a Fond Wife receives him, with a Smile,/And with officious Solace, soothes his Toil", and "well-taught Babes" are at his knee.[6] He asserts that women's virtue is essential for the preservation of the state and the continuation of the noble British race, and he argues that women, because of their virtue, have the power and the obligation to reform the morals of society.[7]

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1 Spectator, No. 144, ii. 70.

2 Essex, Ladies Conduct, pp. 46, 71.

3 Lyttleton, 'Advice to the Fair', pp. 42-3.

4 Bland, Essay in Praise of Women, preface: pp.iv, viii; also pp. ii, 19, 94.

5 Marriott, Female Conduct, pp. xix, 46, 59-60, 215-7.

6 Ibid., pp. 254-5, also 266-8.

7 Ibid., pp. xxvii-xxviii, 207, 271.

The considerable swing in courtesy writers' attitude over this period is best demonstrated by comparing statements on the same subject by two writers: William Darrell, a strong representative of the traditional religious view of women, and James Bland, whose views are typical of the newer attitude. Darrell, we have seen, believed that an unchaste woman ought to be regarded as a monster.[1] Bland takes the polar opposite of Darrell's negative approach, instead idealising the chaste woman as "this almost Divine Creature".[2] It will be noticed, however, that they are interested in a common subject matter: female chastity. Despite this dramatic shift in attitude, courtesy writers throughout this period continue to prescribe exactly the same manners for women: their insistence on chastity and modesty remains adamant and absolute. We have seen that Essex was a primary advocate of female chastity and modesty.[3] Writers such as Steele, Bland and Marriott, who were in the forefront of the sentimentalising of women, laid just as much stress on those two qualities in women, as did their contemporary courtesy writers.[4] The underlying assumptions about what constitutes desirable female conduct have not changed at all. This continuity is emphasised by recalling that three of these new advocates of sentimentality, Steele, Essex, and Bland, are the same authors who incorporated into their own works ideas from Allestree's Ladies Calling: a work which expressed a very low opinion of women.[5] In fact, the end result of this swing in attitude towards women appears to have made the arguments for female chastity and modesty more subtle and persuasive than they had been before.

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1 Above, p. 280 and n.4.

2 Bland, Essay in Praise of Women, p.90.

3 Above, pp. 256, 276-80.

4 Steele, Tatler, No. 194, iv. 10; Bland, Praise of Women, pp.70-90; Marriott, Female Conduct, pp. 20-2, 199-200; Female Spectator (1744-6), i. 245; An Essay on Modern Gallantry (1750), pp. 28-9, 39-42. For Wilkes, Genteel...Advice (1740), and Polite Lady (1760), see above, pp. 272, 274-80.

5 See above, p. 268.

Instead of being demanded of women against their inclination, these behaviour patterns are now assumed to be natural female qualities. So Eliza Haywood asserts that women are born with a natural modesty and timidity,[1] and Marriott that a sense of shame about unchastity is infused in women by heaven.[2] With this new praise of female virtue, potential rebels become not merely disobedient, but unnatural.

This idealisation of women over the course of the first half of the eighteenth century was nothing new: one need only look to the medieval courtly love tradition for a very similar precedent. Indeed, the alternation between highly positive and highly negative views of women seems part of a more encompassing historical conflict between Mary-Magdalen images of women. What is clear for the eighteenth century is that, although the balance between these two images may have shifted markedly, what remained constant - the fulcrum of the seesaw - was that both operated to prescribe to women the same essential, and restrictive, modes of conduct.

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1 Female Spectator, i. 245, 267; iv. 254.

2 Marriott, Female Conduct, p.98.

CHAPTER 6

PRESCRIPTIONS OF MANNERS FOR SERVANTS AND APPRENTICES

Apart from gentlemen and ladies, the only other social group to receive systematic attention in eighteenth-century English courtesy literature is that of servants and apprentices. Although some important differences do emerge between the advice given to servants and that to apprentices, there remained strong similarities, and certain important courtesy writers treated the two occupations together.[1] It therefore seems appropriate to begin that way here. Courtesy works for this group are demarcated distinctly and unmistakably from those intended for higher social ranks by the almost invariable presence of one or both of the words 'servant' or 'apprentice' in the title. The majority were directed towards an actual readership of servants and apprentices, although a few seem to be aimed more at employers.[2]

i. The context: definition of terms; advice on religious and moral conduct

The intended objects of these prescriptions are somewhat easier to define than was the case for either gentlemen or ladies. The term 'apprentice' had been traditionally used to describe all those legally bound by indentures to a master for a fixed period of years in order to learn a trade.[3] Despite the decline of such formal contractual relationships in the eighteenth century, the term remained closely associated with those people committed to learning a particular trade from a master over a period of years.[4] That courtesy writers themselves retained the traditional concept of an apprentice may be seen from the

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1 Espec. J. Gother, Instructions for Apprentices and Servants (1699); ('Mr Zinzano'), The Servants Calling; With Some Advice to the Apprentice... (1725).

2 E.g. D. Defoe, The Great Law of Subordination consider'd (1724); id., Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business (1725); J. Swift, Directions to Servants (1745).

3 O.J. Dunlop and R.D. Denman, English Apprenticeship and Child Labour: A History (1912), pp.29-30.

4 Ibid., pp.223-39; also O.E.D., s.v. 'apprentice'.

frequent references to indentures in their works.[1] The term 'servants' was used in a wider sense to refer to those people who attended a master and acted at his command, especially in return for wages.[2] Within such a group Daniel Defoe specifically includes apprentices, attorney's clerks, living-in servants, and "the labouring poor" of outdoor servants.[3] From the content of their prescriptions, however, it is clear that most courtesy writers for servants were primarily concerned with those in domestic service,[4] with the offices of footman and maid being referred to most frequently.[5]

These courtesy works for servants and apprentices have a much stronger religious and moral content than do either of the other two groups of works considered earlier. This is so much the case that it would be fairer to characterise most of these works as conduct books containing courtesy elements rather than as true courtesy books in their own right. This religious and moral presence remained very strong throughout the period studied here, with the exception of the works written for apprentices in the later part of this period, in which little emphasis is laid on such concerns.[6]

In general, however, servant/apprentice courtesy works have a very strong religious character. Many of the authors of these works were religious ministers,[7] and two of their works have connections

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1 See below, p. 291.

2 Johnson, Dictionary, and O.E.D., s.v. 'apprentice'.

3 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, pp.8-9.

4 See e.g. Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.7; also below, pp. 296, 302-5.

5 See below, pp. 295, 300, 302-3, 312-4.

6 See espec. A Present for an Apprentice (1740, 2nd edn., 1740), and R. Campbell, The London Tradesman (1747). The probable explanation for this anomaly appears below, pp. 315-24.

7 See D.N.B. s.v.: Thomas Broughton, William Fleetwood, Henry Gandy, John Gother, Richard Mayo, William Nicholls, Thomas Seaton, Jonathan Swift. For their works, see below, this chapter, or Bibliography A1.

with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.[1] The Christian religion is repeatedly used as a major source, justification, and enforcing agent of recommended prescriptions of conduct. The virtues it encouraged were seen to be particularly suitable to the condition of servitude.[2] By far the major form of religious expression consists of quotations from scripture which are then expounded. The most frequently referred-to passages are the writings of Paul on the master-servant relationship, which exhort servants to willing obedience, fidelity, honesty, contentment in their station, and honour for their masters, serving them in fear and trembling and not answering again.[3] In every case these directions were accepted without reservation by the courtesy writers who cited them, and they served as the essential blueprints of their conception of the ideal master-servant relationship.

As may be gathered from these scriptural passages, a primary concern in these works was the inculcation of a number of strict moral virtues to govern the reader's behaviour. Most of these were expected equally from both servants and apprentices: the practice of virtues such as obedience to the master's lawful commands, fidelity, industry, honesty, and discretion,[4] and the avoidance of such vices as swearing, drinking

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1 See titlepages of R. Mayo, A Present for Servants (1699, 8th edn., 1768), and T. Broughton, Serious Advice and Warning to Servants (1746). Broughton was Secretary of the S.P.C.K. from 1743 to 1777: D.N.B., s.v. Broughton.

2 W. Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, p.78.

3 Five passages are given particular attention: Colloss. iii. 22-3, Ephes. vi. 5-8, Tit. ii. 9-10, 1 Tim. vi. 1, 1 Cor. vii. 24. See: Gother, Instructions for Apprentices, pp. 5, 7, 11, 20; Mayo, Present for Servants, titlepage and pp. 27, 29-30, 34, 36; Henry Gandy, The Duty of Servants (1704), p.A; Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, pp. 54, 62, 68, 70, 73; Fleetwood, Relative Duties, pp. 339-82; T. Seaton, The Conduct of Servants in Great Families (1720), pp. 40, 72, 81, 183, 197, 204, 211; Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 8-9, 47-9; The Covenants of an Indenture of Apprenticeship, Familiarly explained and enforced by Scripture... (1736), pp. 3-4, 7; Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 8-9, 31-3.

4 The Apprentice's faithful Monitor (c.1700), pp.1-3; Mayo, Present for Servants, pp. 16, 29-30, 34; Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, pp. 55, 65, 68; Gandy, Duty of Servants, p.A; Fleetwood, Relative

continued...

and gaming.[1] There were two major differences between the conduct prescribed for servants and that for apprentices. There was noticeably more emphasis given to the necessity of humility in a servant than in an apprentice.[2] The writer who gives most attention to humility is one 'Mr. Zinzano', in his The Servants Calling (1725). He spends 14 pages discussing humility, arguing that it is a prerequisite for servants' obedience,[3] because it enables them to bear subjection[4] and prevents pride and obstinacy, which would overturn the social order.[5] The comparative infrequency of such prescriptions for apprentices is indicative of an important distinction in courtesy writers' perceptions of the two occupations' social ranks,which will be fully discussed shortly.[6]

The other difference in prescriptions for the two groups arises from the existence of articles of indenture for apprentices, which were used by several courtesy writers as a basis for their prescriptions.[7] In addition to binding the apprentice to serve his master for seven years, the typical indenture of this period contains a number of legally binding prescriptions for his moral conduct. Most of these are the

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continued from p. 290

Duties, pp. 341-5, 372-82; Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 13-4, 17, 28, 32-40, 46-7, 58-60, 68; R. Dodsley, 'Servitude' (1729), pp. 17-20, 24-6; (S. Richardson), The Apprentice's Vade Mecum (1733, repr. Augustan Reprint Society, Nos. 169-70, Los Angeles, 1975),ed. A.D. McKillop, pp. 25-7, 45; Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 8-9; Present for an Apprentice, pp. 3-5, 12, 18-20.

1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.68; Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp. 5, 7-9, 31-3; Present for an Apprentice, pp.5-8, 35-6.

2 It has not been entirely neglected in the latter: see Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.68; Richardson, Vade Mecum, p.48.

3 Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 12, 24.

4 Ibid., pp. 12-13.

5 Ibid., pp. 16-17; see also Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p.17; for similar discussions of humility, see Gandy, p.A; Mayo, Present for Servants, p. 22; Dodsley, 'Servitude', pp. 20-1.

6 Below, pp. 315-6.

7 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.70; Covenants of an Indenture..., throughout; Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp. 2-20.

same as those for servants, but there are four main additions: the apprentice must not traffic for himself, he must not absent himself without leave, he must not haunt playhouses, and he must not commit fornication or contract matrimony while indentured.[1]

This use of courtesy prescriptions to reinforce the articles of apprenticeship indenture is one indication that a major purpose behind these servant/apprentice works was that of social regulation. This aim is manifested in a number of ways. The attempt to reinforce apprentices' indentures was made against a group of people who had long been viewed as a disorderly element in society.[2] Moreover, in the early eighteenth century, when these books were written, the guilds were finding the enforcement of such indentures increasingly difficult. Apprenticeship as a system was being seriously weakened by new economic attitudes, new industrial organisation, and the increasing custom of outdoor apprenticeship, which meant that apprentices no longer lived under their master's personal supervision.[3] Writers for apprentices saw their task as one of social reform; Richardson, for example, expressly states that his book is designed to improve the depravity current among "the YOUTH of this Kingdom".[4] The same regulatory purpose is evident in works for servants. Several writers explicitly assert

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1 Taken from the indenture reprinted in Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp. 2-20 (in italics). For its typicality, compare it with that reprinted in Covenants of an Indenture, p.2, and that in Joseph Chittie, A Practical Treatise on the Law relative to Apprentices (1812), pp.145-6, and see M.D. George, London Life in the XVIIIth Century (1925), pp.280.

2 S.R. Smith, 'The London Apprentices as Seventeenth-Century Adolescents', Past and Present, lxi (1973), 153; K. Thomas, 'Age and Authority in Early Modern England', p.17; George, London Life, pp. 279-80.

3 Dunlop and Denman, English Apprenticeship, pp. 107-32, 223-39.

4 Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp. iv, v; see also p.36.

that their primary purpose in writing is to reform servants' morals for the benefit of their masters.[1] Many of these advice books were deliberately intended to be given to servants by their masters: a purpose evident from their titles,[2] and from advertisements,[3] and from their bulk discount prices "to those who give them away".[4] Nowhere is this intention of social regulation clearer than in Zinzano's Servants Calling. Zinzano dedicates his work "To the Trustees for managing the Charity-Schools", and explicitly directs his advice to the products of such schools.[5] Many of the moral reforming aims and persuasive methods of these courtesy works closely resemble those used in contemporary charity schools.[6]

The essential nature of these works for servants and apprentices was thus both conservative and rigid. Characteristically, they contained prescriptions for moral conduct at the most personal level, presented in a didactic manner and enforced by a strong Christian element. Their primary purpose was one of promoting the welfare of society and the master rather than the good of the reader. Within

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1 E. Haywood, A Present for a Servant-Maid (1743), titlepage and preface; Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.5; Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. iii-v; also Mayo, Present for Servants, p.A2; see also Zinzano, op. cit., pp. 20, 42, 55-7; Broughton, op. cit., pp. 23-5.

2 Mayo, Present for Servants; Haywood, Servant-Maid; Present for an Apprentice: full titles.

3 Haywood, Servant-Maid, p.202; Gandy, Duty of Servants, p.A (picture).

4 Haywood, Servant-Maid, titlepage; also N. Crouch, The Apprentice's Companion (1681, repr. 1693), titlepage; R. Lucas, The Duty of Servants (1685, repr. 1710), last page of book; Broughton, Serious Advice, titlepage.

5 Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 3-5.

6 Espec. the emphasis on general social good, the use of Christianity to justify moral precepts, the mass distribution of books, and the concern for humility: see M.G. Jones, The Charity School Movement: A Study of Eighteenth-Century Puritanism in Action (Cambridge, 1938), espec. pp. 19, 36, 73-84.

this context, and governed by it, were situated prescriptions for the manners of servants and apprentices.

In the attempts by courtesy writers to regulate the manners of servants and apprentices, two major aims are apparent. The first is to use manners as a means of reinforcing the authority of the master and the subordination of the servant, and thereby to reinforce the more general social hierarchy. The second is to make the manners of the servant conform in certain important ways to the code of manners practised by the master, for various reasons less immediately related to the question of social rank. These two aims will initially be analysed separately, and then their interrelation will be discussed.

ii. Reinforcing the hierarchy: distinctions of dress; display of deference

We have seen in previous chapters that courtesy writers believed dress could play an important role in reinforcing distinctions of rank, but that they were also very concerned this function was being seriously undermined by social emulation.[1] The same belief and anxiety were manifested in discussions of servants' and apprentices' dress. In his Apprentice's Vade Mecum, Samuel Richardson states of "Pride in Dress": "It is an Evil big with terrible Consequences.... This Vice has inverted all Order, and destroy'd Distinction...."[2] To a point, servants were expected to dress well as a form of deference to their masters and as a reflection of their masters' status. Thus, Robert Dodsley argues "'tis fit,/That those, whom Time and Business will permit,/Appear before their Masters always clean and neat".[3] It is difficult to establish any exact point at which courtesy writers felt such deference

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1 Above, ch. 4, pp. 156-60, ch. 5, p.245.

2 Richardson, Vade Mecum, p.33.

3 Dodsley, 'Servitude', p.21.

in dress ended and pride began, but from the few specific comments made, plainness would seem to be a key element. Thomas Seaton asserts that "rich and showish Cloaths, or vain and gawdy Ornaments" are "unsuitable, and above the Rank of a Servant in their Character to be cloath'd, or to be set off with",[1] and Eliza Haywood tells the maid:

> ... nothing looks so handsome in a Servant as a decent Plainness. Ribbands, Ruffles, Necklaces, Fans, Hoop-Petticoats, and all those Superfluities in Dress, give you but a tawdry Air....[2]

In attacking excessive finery in dress, considerably more attention is given to the fault in women rather than men servants, the women being singled out in this respect even by courtesy writers who are otherwise largely concerned with men servants.[3] A probable reason for this choice of focus is that many male servants of well-to-do employers tended to wear livery[4] and would hence not have the same opportunities to imitate their masters. The male servants whose imitative dress was singled out for attack were valets, who did not normally wear livery.[5]

An accusation which was repeated often enough at this time to attain the status of a cliché was that the maid was dressed as fine or finer than her mistress, which resulted in their identities being frequently confused by strangers.[6] Comments by foreign visitors certainly support the view that this mistake was possible,[7] but, unfamiliar with English customs, they would be the most likely to be so mistaken. This impression,

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1 Seaton, Conduct of Servants, pp. 159-60.

2 Haywood, Servant-Maid, p. 22.

3 Defoe, Every-Body's Business, pp. 2-3, 15, 17-19; id., Great Law of Subordination, p.15; Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.21; Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 22-3; Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 21-2.

4 J.J. Hecht, The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England, (1956, repr. 1980), p.51.

5 Ibid., p. 51; see also 'A Coachman', A Treatise on the Use and Abuse of the Second, Commonly call'd, the Steward's Table... (1758), pp. 17-18.

6 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p.15; id., Every-Body's Business, pp. 2-3, 15, 17-19; Soame Jenyns in The World, No. 157, p. 353 (attribution is Ibid., p. 489).

7 de Saussure, Foreign View of England [in 1727], p.204; M. Grosley, A Tour to London [in 1765] (1772), i. 75.

given by contemporary commentators both English and foreign, has been largely perpetuated by modern secondary works, the most frequently cited comments being those by Defoe in his The Great Law of Subordination Considered, and Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business.[1] What has not apparently been so far pointed out, is that in the postscript to Dodsley's poem 'Servitude', which has been long attributed to Defoe,[2] and certainly is much in his style, these assertions of mistaken identity are satirised as simplistic and ludicrous.[3] A resolution to the dispute is provided by another writer. Commenting on the gentlemanly dress adopted by valets, he asserts:

> I have seen many a Gentleman, who had Occasion to apply to Noblemen on Business, to whose Persons they went intire Strangers, blush, when they found they had given the Title due to the Lord to his Valet, who has had Impudence enough not to undeceive them, in Hopes to be acquainted with what they came about; 'till he was obliged to give some Answer; and when he began to speak, a Person of small Penetration might easily find his Error....[4]

The immediate visual impact of dress is thus acknowledged to have a powerful effect on an audience, but its easily imitable nature causes it to be rejected as a reliable indicator of its wearer's status, to be replaced by speech. Such a change of focus closely mirrors developments in the courtesy literature for gentlemen.[5]

Courtesy writers nonetheless remained very concerned about servants' dress, for a reason which has not been previously discussed. They believed that dress had a psychological effect on its wearer's

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1 For these, see above, n.6; cited in Hecht, Domestic Servant, pp. 119, 209-10; Buck, Dress in Eighteenth-Century England, pp. 109-11.

2 D.N.B., s.v. Dodsley; also Foxon, English Verse, i. 192.

3 Dodsley, 'Servitude', pp. 28-9.

4 'Coachman', Steward's Table, pp. 17-18; see similarly, Spectator, No. 88, i. 374.

5 Above, ch. 4, pp. 156-60, 186-92.

self-image, and thereby could alter his or her comportment. Two contrasting points are made: first, that the adoption of dress resembling that of one's social superiors causes self-pride and an attempt to imitate their manners, and, second, that wearing dress which is both different from and plainer than that of a social superior helps to inculcate a sense of humility and increases the overt payment of deference. The most detailed exploration of these ideas is by Zinzano. He argues that when women servants wear dress "above their Degree",

> the immediate Effect... is, that their Heads are turned with Self-Admiration, and fill'd with Notions of their Advancement. For being cloathed above their Equals, they think themselves equal to their Superiors, and begin to act accordingly; that is, to do as they please, and to bear no Contradiction. To prevent which Vanity, so inconsistent with their Station, and so ridiculous in itself, they should strictly confine themselves to the Habit of their Degree, and avoid all Ostentation of Apparel; for while they appear to be what they really are, they must know themselves the better, know their Duty and their Distance, and act the Part that belongs to them.[1]

The same arguments recur in the works of several other writers applied to both sexes of servants and also to apprentices: wearing superior dress causes pride in apprentices,[2] and makes male servants imagine they are as good as their master;[3] whereas for male servants to wear livery is a "Badge of Servitude" which checks their words and actions,[4] and for female servants to wear dress suitable to their station teaches them humility and reminds them of their duty.[5] In trying to combat such imitation in dress, courtesy writers employed four major tactics: warnings of its expense,[6] and of the possible displeasure of the employer,[7] an argument that wearing dress above one's station

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1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p. 21; see also p. 22.

2 Richardson, Vade Mecum, p. 33.

3 'Coachman', Steward's Table, pp. 18-19; also Spectator, No.107, i. 444.

4 'Coachman', Steward's Table, pp. 18-19.

5 Defoe, Every-Body's Business, p.18; see also id., Great Law of Subordination, p.15.

6 Seaton, Conduct of Servants, p. 159.

7 Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 22-3.

both indicated and led to moral degeneracy and vice,[1] and the extensive use of ridicule in an attempt to undermine the prospective wearer's self-image.[2]

The overt display of a servant's inferior status was expected in his comportment as well as his dress. We have seen that humility was an important requirement demanded by courtesy writers of servants and to a lesser degree of apprentices. This humility was not merely expected as a mental attitude; it was to be manifested in frequent and repeated signs of deference in manners. Citing Romans xiii.7 (Render... to all their dues... honour to whom honour....), John Gother says:

> There is an Honour due to all, who have any Superiority of Authority over us: And Masters being in this degree, according to the order of God, there is an Honor or Respect due to them from Servants....this Respect [is] to be shewn... In Behavior, in Words and Actions: Servants are not to say or do any thing, but all ought to be temper'd with such a Respect, as may be a perpetual Acknowledgement of the Superiority Masters have over them.[3]

Respect for the master was to be exhibited by the servant in three major areas of behaviour: general demeanour, speech, and physical deportment. In general demeanour, servants should behave "lowly and reverently to all their Betters",[4] with "reverend subjection of mind, and respectful honour".[5] A servant should not have "a sawcy Carriage" in his master's presence,[6] but rather comport himself with shamefacedness and modesty.[7] His deportment should be modest and obliging:

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1 Richardson, Vade Mecum, p. 34; Broughton, Serious Advice, p.36; 'Coachman', Steward's Table, p.18.

2 See espec. Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp.34-5, repr in Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 13-14; also Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.22; Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 21-2; Seaton, Conduct of Servants, pp. 159-60.

3 Gother, Instructions, p.4.

4 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.12.

5 Mayo, Present for Servants, p.27.

6 Ibid., p. 29.

7 Gandy, Duty of Servants, p.A.

"Be clothed with Humility. Affect nothing above your rank either in Dress, Speech or Behaviour...."[1]

A servant's respect for his master was to be shown in his speech in a number of ways. Stress was laid on the importance of using titles of respect. Thus, Zinzano says a servant should speak "as becomes him, that is, with Modesty and Regard to the relation he stands in, expressing all due Respect, and giving all proper Titles to his Master and Mistress",[2] and William Nicholls asserts similarly that "Servants are obliged to shew all the Respect to their Masters, which the Rules of Decency, and the Post they are in requires; by giving them Honourable Compellations whenever they address themselves to them...."[3] Respect in servants is closely associated with their silence: the servant should be silent while his master is speaking;[4] he should not reply when the master criticises him,[5] he should not give the master "Surly or Disrespectful Answers"[6] or contradict him or use unmannerly words;[7] he "must forbear giving Advice unask'd, or interposing when he is not spoken to; his Speech must not be noisy or tedious, bold or familiar",[8] and he must not express contempt or disrespect of his master "by any Words, Signs, or Gestures" in his absence.[9]

Besides his speech and general demeanour, a servant was also to show his respect for his master in his physical deportment. William

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1 Broughton, Serious Advice, p.36; also Covenants, pp. 3-7.

2 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.54.

3 Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, p.70.

4 Ibid., p.71.

5 Gother, Instructions, p.6.

6 Ibid., p.6; also Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.53.

7 Mayo, Present for Servants, p.36.

8 Zinzano, Duty of Servants, p.54.

9 Gother, Instructions, p.6; also Mayo, Present for Servants, p.29.

Nicholls felt servants should stand before their masters, and adds two other specific prescriptions and a general one: servants should show respect to their masters "...by rising up to them..., bowing to them, standing before them,... and doing them all other acts of Reverence, which by the Custom of the Place are due from Inferiours to their Betters".[1] Daniel Defoe argued that footmen "ought not to come into the Master's Presence, but with Hat in Hand, bare-headed, and with all the Tokens of an entire Submission".[2] In his satirical Directions to Servants, Jonathan Swift gives the footman advice on how to avoid being deferential, such as to walk level with his employers and not behind them, or to remove his hat only partially,[3] and how to be actively insolent, such as slamming the door when told to shut it, muttering loudly after being criticised for a fault, breathing full into the mistress's face when delivering a message, or standing fiddling with the door lock when being instructed.[4] One final insolent mannerism is described by Zinzano:

> There is a Language in Looks, as well as Words, and as well understood, so that Servants ought no more to insult their Betters with sour Looks than rude Language.[5]

The intended psychological effect of these various prescriptions of comportment on the servant was explicitly expressed by Nicholls:

> These outward Marks of Esteem do very much conduce to keep up in Servants a sense of their Duty, which will be apt to flag when too great a Familiarity makes them forget their Distance.[6]

Zinzano, in turn, reveals the importance which he attaches to the servants' following of these prescriptions by predicting the social

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1 Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, pp. 70-1.

2 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p.191.

3 Swift, Directions to Servants, p.59.

4 Ibid., pp. 6-14.

5 Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp.61-2. On the importance of cheerful obedience, see Gandy, Duty of Servants, p.A; Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, pp. 55, 66; Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 61-2.

6 Nicholls, Duty of Inferiours, p. 71.

consequences of non-compliance. Referring particularly to his instructions on servants' speech, he says that these must be obeyed:

> ... for otherwise the Character of a Superior cannot be preserved, and due Discipline kept up. St Paul exhorts Servants to be obedient to their Masters with Fear and Trembling. But how inconsistent with Fear and Trembling is that Liberty of Speech which levels each Condition, confounding the highest with the lowest? A Liberty of Behaviour will soon follow such Licence of the Tongue. [And he argues further that] such Freedoms of Speech... confound Order and destroy Authority.[1]

It is clear from these statements and prescriptions that courtesy writers believed that the exhibition of deference in a servant's manners could function as an important means of reinforcing the hierarchy of authority. Indeed, the argument, made explicit by Zinzano but also implied by the comments of other courtesy writers, that such deference was a necessity reveals a strong belief that in order to be effective, authority had to be visibly and repeatedly displayed. Such a view mirrors those discussed previously regarding the dress and demeanour of men in public office.[2] In the case of servants, this strong emphasis on deference suggests that courtesy writers still conceived of the master-servant bond as being very much a relationship of status rather than as any simple exchange of labour for wages, to which no other obligations were attached.

iii. Conforming to the master: cleanliness; vails; the master's children

In addition to demanding deference, courtesy writers also desired that the manners of the servant conformed to certain standards practised by his master. One of the most important matters in which this practice is evident is that of cleanliness. This advice was very largely directed towards servants, with only Samuel Richardson making passing remarks on the subject to apprentices. The reasons for insisting on cleanliness

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1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 53-4.

2 Above, ch. 4, p. 152.

in servants are most fully discussed by Zinzano. He includes cleanliness as one of the servant's duties,

> ... as 'tis a Branch of Decency, and a Piece of Respect paid to the Family in which he lives....
>
> An unclean Object must be offensive to any one: and as those that attend upon others must be always in their View, the Figure of them should be as agreeable as may be. And as Neatness is an Ornament to every thing, and shews it to Advantage, it should never be wanting to the Clothes, and Countenance of a Servant; otherwise he defiles every thing he touches, and scares every one that looks upon him; dishonouring not only the Master he serves, but bringing himself into Contempt. For Nastiness implies Laziness or Sottishness, and always gives Deformity.[1]

Four separate attitudes emerge from this passage: a servant's conformity to his master's own standards of cleanliness is regarded as a necessary act of deference; these standards are such that the mere sight of uncleanliness is considered to be offensive; a servant's personal cleanliness is seen to reflect on the credit of his master, and uncleanliness is believed to indicate inner moral failings. Although the degree of cleanliness required is not specified in concrete terms, what is very clear is that the general ideal of cleanliness was given considerable stress, and was invested with deeper layers of meaning reflecting very fundamental beliefs.

Some more detailed discussions do exist of the cleanliness expected of a servant at this time. With regard to his clothes, Samuel Richardson's apprentice is warned not to succumb to slovenliness,[2] and Thomas Broughton tells his female readers to "Appear always as neat and clean as possible".[3] Dodsley advises his footmen readers that "powder'd Wiggs, clean Shirts" "are necessary", and that they should "Be decent, clean, and handsome, but not nice".[4]

Three writers comment on the importance of a servant's cleanliness in carrying out his or her duties, and here it is quite clear that only

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1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.62.
2 Richardson, Vade Mecum, p.35.
3 Broughton, Serious Advice, p.22.
4 Dodsley, 'Servitude', pp. 21-2.

domestic staff are meant. Zinzano says that all the servants' actions should be clean, for instance in keeping the furniture clean, or in dressing food.[1] Eliza Haywood gives considerable emphasis to the importance of cleanliness around food:

> To see any thing nasty about what is to go into the Mouth, creates a Loathing, even in those who are the least nice in other Particulars.

The servant should therefore keep her utensils clean and free from rust, and is also told to keep "your Hands very well wash'd, and your Nails close pared", and to avoid taking snuff, which soils clothes, skin and food[2] - a comment similar to those made to gentleman.[3]

The writer who gives by far the most attention to the question of servants' cleanliness in their duties is Swift, in his Directions for Servants. In his satirical descriptions of the duties of the butler, cook, footman, chambermaid, and housemaid, his major concerns are the cleanliness of the house, particularly with regard to the management of candles, chamber pots, ashes, and dirty washing water, and the cleanliness of the food and drink of the master, particularly with regard to its contact with the servants' spittle, sweat, hair, and excrement.[4] His extensive enumeration of servants' offences in these matters conveys a very low impression indeed of servants' general standards of cleanliness, but, as with all satiric writers, it is very difficult to judge how much is deliberate exaggeration for effect.

Several comments may be made concerning this treatment of servants' cleanliness by courtesy writers. It is clear from these more detailed discussions that concern for cleanliness focused primarily on domestic servants, whose occupations directly affected - indeed, were often designed to ensure - the master's own level of cleanliness. Courtesy

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1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, pp. 62-3.

2 Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 7-8.

3 Above, ch. 4, p. 205.

4 Swift, Directions to Servants, pp. 9-89.

writers were concerned to inculcate cleanliness in servants not particularly as a personal ideal for servants themselves, but rather as a necessary extension of their employers' standards. Their comments show the dependence of the master on his servants to maintain his own personal cleanliness. They further reveal the considerable extent to which masters were prepared to govern their servants' manners in order to ensure their own standards. Finally, these remarks provide somewhat more of an insight into exactly what those standards of cleanliness were at this time.

A further example of the considerable desire and capability of employers to impose their own standards of manners on their servants was the abolishment of vails-giving in the 1760s. It was a widespread custom in England and Scotland before that time for guests to give vails, or tips, upon their departure to their host's servants. The servants lined up inside the front door in ordered ranks, through which the departing guest had to pass. Each servant was tipped individually, the expected amount increasing with the servant's own rank and the rank of the master: the guest's rank was irrelevant. The income gained by servants this way could be substantial, some managing to double their wages.[1]

In the first half of the eighteenth century, there was a growing feeling among employers that the custom of vails-giving conflicted with an important ideal of their own politeness: that of hospitality towards guests.[2] Courtesy writers attacked the practice on these grounds. Thomas Seaton in 1720 condemned as parasitical servants who lined up for vails on a guests's departure, arguing that they thereby disgraced their employer by calling into question either his circumstances or his generosity.[3] In 1725, Zinzano wrote:

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1 Hecht, Domestic Servant, pp.159-60. For descriptions of this custom, see de Saussure, A Foreign View of England[in 1727], p.194; Connoisseur, No.70, ii. 124; World, No. 60, p.138.

2 For this, see Fielding, 'Conversation', pp. 128-30.

3 Seaton, Conduct of Servants, pp. 92-4.

> We have learned many Parts of good Manners from a neighbouring Country, and in Time may learn this; viz. To think it dishonourable to the Master, to reward his Servants for him.[1]

Swift satirised the practice of servants standing by the door for vails in the early 1730s.[2] A writer in 1734 explicitly attacked this practice as expensive for the guest, contrary to the host's politeness, and "a National Reproach":

> If Gentleman must run into the Polite Elegance of keeping a Number of useless Servants, I hope they will not think it consistent with that Politeness, for every Visitant to contribute to the Support of them.[3]

In 1754, The World also focused on this conflict of vails with standards of politeness in attacking the "ridiculous" figure made by the master of a house upon his guests' departure:

> He attends you to the door with great ceremony; but is so conscious of the awkward appearance he must make as a witness to the expences of his guests, that you can observe him placing himself in a position, that he would have it supposed conceals him from the inhospitable transactions that are going on under his roof.[4]

In 1760, the philanthropist Jonas Hanway opposed vails-giving on similar grounds, arguing that it interrupted hospitality, was a tax on the domestic intercourse of friends, was a mean and ungenerous act to demand payment from a guest, and asserted further that it encouraged insubordination by giving servants some financial independence.[5]

Dislike of vails-giving reached a height in the late 1750s. Collective agreements among employers to ban the giving or receiving of vails occurred in Scotland in 1759 and 1760, and had spread south to London in force by 1764. Despite some vigorous opposition from

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1 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.42. The country is almost certainly France: The World, No.69, p.158 notes that vails-giving "is not practised there".

2 Swift, Directions for Servants, p.14.

3 Gentleman's Magazine, iv. (1734), 131.

4 World, No. 60, pp. 138-9; see Ibid., p.139 on the treatment of the guest who does not pay vails; see also Ibid., No.103, p.231.

5 J. Hanway, The Sentiments and Advice of Thomas Trueman... Setting forth the Custom of Vails-Giving... (1760), pp. 4, 16-17, 35-6.

servants, the practice of vails-giving had declined markedly by the 1770s.[1] Although it could not be argued that courtesy writers played much of an active role in the abolishing of vails, their criticism of vails certainly closely reflected contemporary opinion among employers, and the publication of their views could well have contributed to focus and disseminate employers' dislike of vails.

A major reason why employers were concerned to inculcate proper morals and manners in their servants was because servants were believed to have considerable power to influence the behaviour of the employer's children. We have seen the great stress laid on the essential role of good company in forming patterns of good breeding, and the corresponding emphasis placed on the avoidance of the contagion of low and ill bred company.[2] The employment of servants, particularly domestic ones, led to a degree of unavoidable contact with people who were not classified as well bred. The possible taint which might result of servants' manners on impressionable children was a fear repeatedly expressed by courtesy writers. Locke makes this point very forcefully, focusing especially upon the "ill Examples" which the children meet with "amongst the meaner Servants". He states:

> They are wholly, if possible, to be kept from such Conversation [i.e. 'company']: For the contagion of these ill precedents, both in Civility and Vertue, horribly infects Children, as often as they come within reach of it. They frequently learn from unbred or debauched Servants such Language, untowardly Tricks and Vices, as otherwise they possibly would be ignorant of all their Lives.
> 'Tis a hard matter wholly to prevent this Mischief.[3]

Other writers expressed very similar fears.[4] The extent to which this concern could be taken is revealed by Chesterfield, who in December,

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1 Hecht, Domestic Servant, pp. 158-68.

2 Above, ch. 3, pp. 107-8, 114-5.

3 Locke, Education, p. 164; also pp. 165, 171, 176, 187.

4 Grubstreet Journal, 27 Feb. 1735, repr. in Gentleman's Magazine, v. (1735), 93; Spectator, No.294, iii. 49. For a non-courtesy example, see also John Evelyn, Memoires for my Grand-son, ed. G.L. Keynes (Oxford, 1926), [written 1704-5], p. 11.

1762, deliberately chose not to invite his godson to stay with him over the holiday, because his servants would not provide the boy with good examples for his manners.[1] This fear of the corrupting influence of servants' manners on children reveals that servants played a very ambivalent role indeed in relation to the gentleman's politeness. They made possible some standards of politeness, such as cleanliness, infringed on others, for instance by demanding vails, and, in being capable of influencing children's manners, had the power to seriously undermine the whole foundation of gentlemanly good breeding. This fear of servants' corrupting power is an ironic indication that the desire, attributed to the gentry by E.P. Thompson,[2] for social insulation from their inferiors by means of such physical barriers as parks and fences, did not (in courtesy writers' eyes) afford them protection in their own houses.

These two major demands by courtesy writers from servants - on the one hand to reinforce the social hierarchy by distinctive dress and overt deference, and on the other to conform in important ways to the master's own standards of manners - were to some extent contradictory. Servants were told that their own behaviour in both morals and manners reflected on the credit of their master.[3] To acquire such good manners, it was explicitly expected that servants should imitate their masters. So Thomas Seaton argued that a display of incivility or rudeness was:

> altogether unbecoming the Families that are suppos'd to be exactly civiliz'd, and whose Servants might well be expected to have learnt a courteous Deportment from those daily Examples of Condescension and good Manners which they have very frequently in their View.[4]

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1 Chesterfield, Letters, vi. 2459 (13 Dec. 1762).

2 Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', p. 389.

3 For morals, see above, p.293. For manners, see following quotation this page.

4 Seaton, Conduct of Servants, p. 29, also Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p. 170.

Yet, at the same time as they advocated such imitation, courtesy writers were strongly concerned to discourage servants from copying their masters' behaviour in other areas, notably those of dress and assurance of manner.[1] Servants thus had to walk a narrow tightrope between too little conformity to their employer's behaviour, and too much. These unreasonably inconsistent and opposing expectations are not resolved in the courtesy tradition. They may well be a symptom of a more widely-held ambivalence in the attitude of social superiors to their inferiors, demanding their conformity, yet rejecting their imitation.

iv. The gender difference

In the servant/apprentice courtesy literature, there is even less specific attention given to women than was the case in discussions of the gentry's manners. Only one such work written between 1690 and 1760, Eliza Haywood's A Present for a Servant-Maid of 1743, is exclusively directed towards women, and only a handful of others include any prescriptions specifically directed to female readers.[2] In the other servant/apprentice works, the primary assumption of a male reader is made clear in both direct statements[3] and by advice on such subjects as the choice of a wife[4] and the avoidance of maidservants' advances by apprentices.[5] A certain degree of unstated inclusion of women should probably be taken for granted, though this in itself also only treats them as of secondary importance. One possible explanation of the relative

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1 Above, pp. 295-7.

2 Defoe's Great Law of Subordination and his Every-Body's Business contain comments on female dress: see above, p. 295; Swift, Directions to Servants discusses cleanliness of women servants: see above, p. 303 ; Broughton, Serious Advice, contains out of 47 pages in total, three directed towards women (pp. 20-3 (top)); Richardson, Collection of... Sentiments, throughout.

3 E.g. Broughton, Serious Advice, p.20.

4 Present for an Apprentice, pp. 62-9.

5 Below, p. 310.

lack of attention given to female servants is suggested by D.M. Marshall. She points out that contemporary complaints about the insolence and insubordination of servants focused on footmen, who played a prominent part in daily public life, attending the master at table, in the streets, and to the playhouse, where they could congregate in large numbers:

> The result was that the servant problem of the century was in many ways masculine rather than feminine.... The maid may have been a domestic trouble, but she was never the public nuisance which the footmen became.... It was this power, which their numbers gave them, of making themselves objectionable, that focussed public opinion on them....[1]

In the advice which does exist for female servants, many of the prescriptions directed towards their male counterparts recur. There appears some religious devotional advice,[2] and most of the same moral prescriptions concerning the importance of industry, honesty, fidelity, temperance, and restrictions on recreations abroad.[3] In the servants' manners, the importance of cheerfulness is stressed as a very practical means of pleasing the mistress, Eliza Haywood arguing that "it is your Interest to study by what sort of Behaviour you can most ingratiate yourself".[4] She also lays considerable stress on the importance of deferential comportment, telling her reader that it is "very becoming in you to be modest and humble in your Deportment"; she must never answer back even if being wronged, not give pert or saucy answers, and not proffer her opinion on subjects:

> To give your Opinion either of Persons or Affairs unasked, is saucy if directed to your Superiors, and impertinent if to your Equals: I would therefore have you refrain it to both; and even if desired, nay press'd to it, to be very cautious how you speak.[5]

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1 D.M. Marshall, 'The Domestic Servants of the Eighteenth Century', Economica ix (1929), p.17. For footmen as a public nuisance, see Steele in Spectator, No. 88, iii. 374.

2 Broughton, Serious Advice, p.21.

3 Haywood, Servant-Maid, titlepage, pp. 5-6, 11-16, 20, 23, 31, 37-41.

4 Ibid., p. 4.

5 Ibid., p. 42; also titlepage, p.21.

This deference to one's master and mistress should continue even out of their presence; the maid is "never to mention their Names in a familiar Manner".[1]

The major difference in content between the courtesy prescriptions directed primarily towards male servants and apprentices and those aimed exclusively at women servants is the considerable attention paid in the latter to the maintenance of the reader's chastity. This forms the predominating theme in the three pages out of the 47 in his treatise which Thomas Broughton devotes to women, and the exclusive theme of eight of Haywood's fifty pages not given to recipes.[2] There was some limited attention given to male chastity, but it was usually on practical rather than moral grounds, with the major concern being the avoidance of matrimony by the apprentice, because he would thereby forfeit his indentures and ruin his career prospects.[3] As had been the case for ladies, the maintenance of female chastity was to be effected through the servant's close restraint of her conduct and comportment.

Several features of the employment circumstances of women servants might lead one to expect that contemporary insistence on the maintenance of chastity would be stronger for them than for other types of women. The demands of employers and the general late age of marriage at this time meant that very great numbers of single young women were employed as live-in servants.[4] The cramped living and working arrangements for domestic servants inevitably involved a very close degree of contact

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1 Haywood, Servant-Maid, p. 31.

2 Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 20-3 (top); Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 35-6, 43-9.

3 Zinzano, Servants Calling, p.70; Richardson, Vade Mecum, pp.3-4; Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 35-6; Present for an Apprentice, pp. 30-1. For chastity in men servants, see Broughton, Serious Advice, p.14; Gandy, Duty of Servants, p.A, but cf. Dodsley, 'Servitude', preface, p. $A2^{V}$ (? by Defoe ?).

4 Hecht, Domestic Servant, pp. 33-4; R.W. Malcolmson, 'Infanticide in the Eighteenth Century', in Crime in England 1550-1800, ed. J.S. Cockburn (1977), p. 202.

between men and women.[1] Domestic servants ate together, and usually slept on the same floor of the house - either attic or basement - although the sexes were not mixed within the individual rooms. Where further segregation of servants did occur in the larger houses, it was by rank not sex, the upper servants eating and sleeping separately from the lower.[2] The social consequences of being discovered to be pregnant whilst unmarried were generally speaking greater for a servant than for a lady: while both would lose reputation and all chance of marriage prospects, the former would lose in addition her means of livelihood, and, without a character reference for another job in service, have the dubious alternative careers of laundering, dressmaking, prostitution, or crime.[3] That the chastity of servant women was in a 'high-risk' category is partly suggested by the results. In his study of eighteenth-century infanticide, R.W. Malcolmson points out that the women who usually committed infanticide were almost always the mothers of the victims, and that, "of the suspected and convicted women whose occupations can be determined, the majority were servant maids or had just retired from being servants".[4]

The discussions of chastity by Broughton and Haywood bear out the suggestion that the conditions of service of women servants put them at greater risk than women of a higher social rank. To Broughton, the threat comes mainly from male servants. He warns his female readers that

> for as, whilst they are in Service, they cannot avoid conversing with the Men Servants, and too frequently with such as are lewd and debauched; they ought to look upon themselves as greatly exposed to temptations to immodesty, and therefore should think it their duty to guard against such dangerous snares.
>
> Let me then earnestly beg of you to think no pains and care too much to preserve your modesty and virtue,

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1 R.W. Malcolmson, 'Infanticide in the Eighteenth Century', in Crime in England 1550-1800, ed. J.S. Cockburn (1977), p. 202.

2 Hecht, Domestic Servant, pp. 102-9.

3 Malcolmson, 'Infanticide', pp. 192-3, 203-4.

4 Ibid., p. 192.

> which are the chief honour of a Woman. In order to this, do not trust in your own strength, but beg of God to bestow on you the gift of chastity.[1]

As a supplement to divine assistance, Broughton's female reader is instructed to restrict her behaviour in both general and specific ways. With men, she is not to show herself over-fond of their company, but always behave with "a proper reserve", never listen to their flattering speeches, be cautious in accepting presents, "lest in return they should expect you to indulge them in greater freedoms, and such liberties, which, tho' they call them innocent, may in the end lead to the overthrow of your Virtue", and, above all, never be deceived by promises of marriage, "few Men choosing afterwards to make Wives of such who have before wedlock suffered themselves to be debauched by them".[2] She is to avoid excessive drinking because it robbed her of shame and reason, and thus threatened her chastity.[3] She must avoid "excessive amd immoderate mirth" because it may well lead to some indecency, and she must for the same reason "Never use an immodest word, or any that will bear a double meaning". Finally, she must be modest in her dress:

> avoid the use of gawdy or fantastical ornaments; or putting on your clothes, which are made for a decent covering, in such a manner as to expose your person; for this will be wearing the attire of an Harlot, and all sober people will suppose you do it with a design to allure and entrap the men.[4]

While Broughton concentrates primarily on the threat from fellow servants, Haywood gives equal attention both to them and to men who are placed in a position of authority over the maidservant. She gives six types of men whose advances the servant maid must resist, each in a different manner: fellow servants, apprentices, a single master, a married one, the master's son, gentleman lodgers. Those treated first and given the most emphasis are fellow servants. Just like the lady, the servant maid must learn to tread the narrow line between

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1 Broughton, Serious Advice, pp. 20-1.

2 Ibid., pp. 22-3.

3 Ibid., p. 21.

4 Ibid., p. 22.

complaisance and prudery, and the onus is totally on her, rather than the men servants, to resist intimacy:

> As these Fellows live high, and have little to do, they are for the most Part very pert and saucy where they dare, and apt to take Liberties on the least Encouragement; you ought therefore to carry yourself at a Distance towards them; I do not mean with a proud or prudish Air: You are neither to look as if you thought yourself above them, or to seem as if you imagined every Word they spoke to you had a Design upon you; No, the one would make them hate and affront you, and the other would be turned into Ridicule: On the contrary, you must behave with an extreme Civility mixt with Seriousness, but never be too free. To suffer them to toy or romp with you, will embolden them, perhaps, to Actions unbecoming Modesty to bear, and the least Rebuff provoke them to use you ill; whereas a cold Reserve at first will prevent both the one and the other. You must also observe an exact Equality in your Deportment; for if you shew the least Distinction in favour of any one, you will not only make him too presuming, but also draw the Resentment of all the others upon you, who will be continually twitting you concerning him, and it may be construe every Thing you do into Meanings very foreign from the Truth.[1]

With apprentices, the maidservant must be even more reserved, largely because if a romantic involvement ended in marriage it would break the apprentice's indentures and hence ruin both of them.[2]

Haywood gives very specific advice to her reader on how to reject propositions from her master, his son, or male lodgers. So as not to offend and thus be dismissed, the prudent maid must be very careful how she rejects such proposals. To the master who is single "and is consequently under less Restraint", she must remonstrate the sin and shame involved, speaking with sedateness and no wanton or coquet airs, so that "all your Looks and Gestures correspond with what you say". She must be prepared to leave his service if it is necessary so as to avoid his advances. If he is married, she has the extra difficulty of avoiding him as much as possible without his wife realising why, which would offend her, and, again, the maid must be prepared to leave

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1 Haywood, Servant-Maid, p.35.

2 Ibid., pp. 35-6.

her job. With the master's son, she must remember that even were he to marry her, the disparity in their birth and circumstances would make a lasting harmony impossible. Gentlemen lodgers are the easiest of this group to deal with: if they persist, she is to tell her mistress.[1]

These directions of Haywood's to her readers create an impression of the maidservant's need to be constantly on the defensive from propositions, and, that with men in a position of superior authority, restrictions of her own conduct in the ways suggested by Haywood and Broughton with fellow servants are not a sufficient defence. Unlike the lady, the maidservant is seen to have less physical space insulation from her importuners, with whom she must maintain daily contact because of her job; she has no supporting relatives around, no-one in a position of authority to turn to but her master or mistress, who may very well be interested parties, and in the last resort she must be prepared to give up her means of livelihood in order to protect her chastity.

Given these circumstances, it is all the more remarkable that a comparison of prescriptions of chastity for servant women with those for ladies reveals no perceptible difference in the amount of emphasis on the actual importance of possessing and preserving chastity. The same moral injunctions, the same warnings of social ruin, the same highly anxious tone, and the same emphasis on defensive modesty of manners are apparent in both. To counterbalance the anxiety caused by the greater vulnerability of servant women, there remained the overriding concern, of especial relevance to women of rank, to preserve male bloodlines and property inheritance.[2] The similarity of stress on chastity for the two social groups is epitomised in Richardson's collection of moral maxims from his novels: 23 of his 28 precepts for the manners of young women "of whatever degree" concern the preservation of their chastity, as do 8 of his 9 maxims for female servants,

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1 Haywood, Servant-Maid, p. 47-9.

2 Above, ch. 5, pp. 271-2.

and his advice is remarkably similar for both.[1] His novel from which many of these are drawn, Pamela, explicitly holds up the modesty and chastity of a servant girl for the "Imitation of all the fashionable young Ladies of Great Britain".[2] This single, unified perspective on female chastity and modesty confirms beyond question the suggestion made in chapter 5 that a reader's sex was at least as important a factor as his or her rank in determining the manners prescribed by courtesy writers. In the single area of female manners given most importance by every courtesy writer for women in this period, social rank played no part.

v. Upward mobility: the 'gentlemanly' apprentice

In the earlier discussion of moral prescriptions, it was stated that, overall, when compared with servants, apprentices received far fewer prescriptions of humility.[3] Apprentices as a group were similarly the target of far fewer recommendations of deferential comportment. This difference of emphasis is explained by courtesy writers' differing perceptions of the two occupations' social rank.

The picture presented in the courtesy literature of the master-servant relationship is a static and simplistic model, unchanging over this period and making no allowances for differences in the master's rank or the servant's own duties and position in the household hierarchy. A significantly more complicated and variable status model was applied by courtesy writers to apprentices. Courtesy works written between 1690 and 1760 which discuss the conduct of apprentices fall into two distinct groups. Four works, published between 1699 and 1736, either make no significant distinction between servants and apprentices in their prescriptions,[4] or they distinguish the apprentice only because of

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1 Richardson, Collection of...Sentiments, pp. 3-6, 8-9.

2 S. Richardson, Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded (1740, repr. Shakespeare Head edn., Oxford 1929), i. ix (preface).

3 Above, p. 291.

4 Gother, Instructions (1699), and Zinzano, Servants Calling (1725).

his indentures, which they use as a foundation solely for moral prescriptions.[1] In six other works, published between 1725 and 1747, a major distinction is drawn between the servant and the apprentice, and significantly different manners are prescribed for the latter.[2] Although there is some overlap, the second group of works is noticeably later in date than the first set. Such differences in date and content between the two groups suggest that the 1720s to 1740s might have seen a significant shift of attitude towards apprentices among courtesy writers.

In this later group of works, a fundamental distinction is made between the fixed master-servant relationship, and the subordination of the apprentice to his master, which was seen to be a temporary state of affairs. So Daniel Defoe stresses to masters the "moveable station" of their apprentices, asserting "they are with you but seven years, and ... then they act or move in a sphere or station of their own".[3] Other courtesy writers recognised that the apprentice could potentially attain the same social rank as his master, a capability they did not credit to servants. This difference was explicitly given as the reason why the two groups should be treated differently. Writing in 1743, Eliza Haywood specifically tells servant maids that they should be more civil and respectful to apprentices than to servants, because the former "are Servants only to become Masters".[4] Similarly, in the Present for an Apprentice of 1740, the master is told that the virtuous, diligent apprentice should be treated "more like a Son than a Servant. Remember he is descended from your Equal, and that he will, one Day, be the same himself".[5]

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1 Apprentice's faithful Monitor (1700), and Covenants (1736).

2 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination (1725); id., Complete English Tradesman (1726); Richardson, Vade Mecum (1733); A Present for an Apprentice (1740); Haywood, Servant-Maid (1743); R. Campbell, The London Tradesman (1747).

3 Defoe, Complete Tradesman, i. 181.

4 Haywood, Servant-Maid, pp. 35-6.

5 Present for an Apprentice, p.62.

Such assertions were not new to the eighteenth century, appearing, for example, in very similar terms in Caleb Trenchfield's advice to apprentices of 1671.[1] Nonetheless, it remains a fact that these assertions made after 1724 were in total contrast to attitudes expressed in courtesy works written in the preceding 35 years. Other circumstances strongly suggest that this renewed desire to distinguish the apprentice from the servant was not merely a temporal fluctuation, but was part of a larger change in attitude more specific to the 1720 to 1740 period.

Besides recognising a difference in the status of an individual apprentice relative to his master as his apprenticeship progressed, it was also perceived that there were very different types of apprentices. The great variety of trades and professions which accepted apprentices meant that both the social origins and future social status of apprentices covered a very wide spectrum, from parish apprentices on the one hand to those of overseas merchants on the other. We have seen that in the early eighteenth century, the system of apprenticeship was breaking down.[2] This was especially in trades such as the woollen and framework-knitting industries: the trades which took poorer apprentices, especially those from the parish.[3] A very different situation prevailed among the more skilled trades. Here, the early decades of the eighteenth century saw a trend towards the payment of significantly higher apprenticeship premiums, especially for apprentices based in London.[4] In the mid-1720s, Defoe suggested that this payment of increased premiums in the skilled trades led directly to the accordance, to these specific apprentices only, of a higher social status than before:

> it may be alleg'd, that upon their Masters demanding such great Sums of Money with their Apprentices, they have reason to treat them as Gentlemen, and not as Servants....[5]

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1 Trenchfield, A Cap of Gray Hairs... (1673, 1710 edn.), pp.99-100.

2 Above, p. 292.

3 Dunlop and Denman, English Apprenticeship, pp. 225-9.

4 Ibid., pp. 225, 231-2.

5 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, pp.10-11; also id., Complete Tradesman, i. 185, 194.

Because of these increased premiums, he adds, apprenticeship "is not a state of servitude now and hardly of subjection; and their [i.e. apprentices'] behaviour is accordingly, more like gentlemen than tradesmen; more like companions to their masters, than like servants".[1] Defoe gives two concrete indications of this higher status: a decline in the master's influence over his apprentices' moral and religious conduct[2] and a decrease in the subordination and humility of apprentices.[3] He argues that this higher status had always been accorded to a degree to merchants' apprentices and lawyers' clerks because of their higher family background and higher premiums, but that by the 1720s it had descended as far as the apprentices of meaner tradesmen, not, however, reaching down to apprentices of artificers and craftsmen.[4] The (unnamed) editor of the 1745 edition of Defoe's Complete Tradesman adds to Defoe's comments his own remarks, arguing that the situation described by Defoe was a direct result of a deliberate desire of the parents of such an apprentice to improve his social status: they paid a higher premium in order that the apprentice should be exempted from "servile offices", should be given privileges such as eating at the same table as his master and mistress, and, "should the first day commence a sort of gentleman".[5] As will be seen, in the courtesy literature written for apprentices in the 1730s and 1740s, there is a substantial extension down the social scale to apprentices of significant features of the gentlemanly ideal. It is hard not to at least seriously entertain a hypothesis that both this development, and the renewed desire to distinguish apprentices from servants, were a reflection of, and perhaps even a response to, the payment of these higher apprenticeship premiums.

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1 Defoe, Complete Tradesman, i. 20.

2 Ibid., i. 185-94.

3 Ibid., p. 185; id., Great Law of Subordination, pp. 10-11.

4 Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p. 12.

5 Defoe, Complete Tradesman (1745 edn., facs. 1889, repr. New York, 1970), pp. 113-5.

Detailed evidence of this extension downwards of the gentlemanly ideal comes from three works. The first is Samuel Richardson's Apprentice's Vade Mecum of 1733. In it, the two treatments of apprentices - one emphasising a servant-like humility, and the other not - are found together. Of the three sections of the book, the first is a very conventional explication of the covenants of indenture, and the third, apparently added as an afterthought by Richardson, a wholly traditional and derivative discourse on religion. The second part consists of advice on the apprentice's conduct, and originated in an earlier, private letter of advice Richardson had written to his own nephew, newly apprenticed to Richardson's printing business.[1] Very likely because of this family connection, the tone of this section is more informal and friendly than those of his other two sections, which are much closer to those of most servant/apprentice courtesy literature. With the exception of Richardson's criticism of pride in dress, there is a marked lack of any significant emphasis on deference. Otherwise, this second part is a fairly standard treatment of such conduct topics as diligence, pride in dress, eye service, and talkativeness. At one point, however, Richardson does give an indication that the behaviour of his apprentice should resemble more that of a gentleman than that of a servant. He warns against excessive self-interestedness in running one's own business to the point of excluding a generous action. Avoiding this fault will gain the man of business many friends, and,

> You will also hereby gain the name of a generous and Gentleman-like Man, Epithets in no sort incompatible with Trade and Business, and wipe away those little Aspersions which the low and sordid Selfishness of some narrow Minds have put into the Mouths of Gentlemen, and others, who are not Tradesmen, against Men of Business....[2]

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1 Richardson, Vade Mecum, editor's introduction, p. i.

2 Ibid., p. 40.

The second work is the anonymous A Present for an Apprentice of 1740. It has been stated earlier that approximately 95% of this work is derived from Caleb Trenchfield's A Cap of Gray Hairs of 1671.[1] The other 5% is new, and contains some very significant changes. We have seen that Trenchfield emphasised the moveable social position of the apprentice.[2] He reinforces such a view both directly by advising the apprentice how to manage his own future business and servants,[3] and indirectly by placing little stress on humility and deferential deportment. Otherwise, however, the book contains no indications that the apprentice is expected to reach a particularly high or wealthy social position. In contrast, almost all the alterations and additions to Trenchfield's basic work which appear in the 1740 Present for an Apprentice can be related to a significantly higher perception of the apprentice's future position in society.[4] The book's unusualness in this respect, compared with the generality of works for apprentices, was recognised when it first appeared. In The Champion, Henry Fielding states that he first overlooked the book because its title showed it to be "Seemingly calculated for low and unexperienc'd Life". It was "with not a little Surprize", that he found it to consist of "such a System of Morality and Oeconomy as Persons of all Ranks might improve by".[5]

Besides the few unimportant exceptions noted above,[6] the sections of Trenchfield's book which are discarded in 1740 are all those which most type Trenchfield's reader as either being in a low social position or working for a living. These consist of precepts advising the payment

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1 Above, ch. 1, p. 34.

2 Above, p. 317.

3 Trenchfield, Cap of Gray Hairs (5th edn., 1710), pp. 88-101.

4 The exceptions are general stylistic alterations and the excision of discussions regarding marriage, housekeeping, education, religion, conversation, and funerals: compare Trenchfield with Present for an Apprentice, throughout.

5 Present for an Apprentice (4th edn., 1745?), titlepage; attribution to Fielding by A.D. McKillop, in his introduction to Richardson's Vade Mecum, p.v.

6 note 4.

of deference to the master and his family,[1] and detailed advice on trading practices, business finance, and basic housekeeping skills.[2] In contrast with such advice, which seems geared to the apprentice turned small tradesman, are added several remarks associating a significantly higher social status with the apprentice reader. The apprentice is advised to keep company with persons "carefully educated... Such as have Property to preserve, and Characters to endanger: Such as are known, and esteem'd...."[3] It is further asserted, regarding such company, that:

> Prudence, Address, Decorum, Correctness of Speech, Elevation of Mind, and Delicacy of Manners are learn'd in this noble School; and, without affecting the Vanity of the Name, you imperceptibly become a finish'd Gentleman. Whereas, low, sordid, ignorant, vulgar Spirits, would debase you to their own Level, would unlearn you all the Decencies of Life, and make you abhor the good Qualities you could not attain.[4]

Such an emphasis on gentlemanly comportment is totally new to the servant/apprentice courtesy tradition in this period. It is taken further in another added passage which praises the company of women:

> More Humanity, more Address, more Politeness, and Ingenuity would be learn'd in an Hour by the Influence of their Beauty, and the Force of their Example, than for Years in the blunt and cynical Dogmas of the Schools: which was, undoubtedly, what the Philosopher, of old, meant, when he advis'd an unpolish'd Fellow to sacrifice to the Graces.[5]

Such advice to the apprentice exactly mirrors that of the Earl of Chesterfield to his son.

Despite such stress on the acquirement of polite manners, however, the apprentice is carefully warned against imitating the gentleman in other areas of his conduct, notably in his dress and recreations, and in the education of his children. The reasons given are two-fold:

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1 Trenchfield, pp. 40-5.

2 Compare Trenchfield, pp. 84-95, 127-32, with Present for an Apprentice, pp. 53-7.

3 Present, pp. 21-4; cf. the absence of this remark in Trenchfield, pp. 46-9.

4 Present, p.26.

5 Ibid., p. 37; cf. Trenchfield, pp. 115-7.

one economic, that extravagance leads to financial ruin, and the other social, that such imitation is an unwarranted presumption. Thus the reader is told that the imitation of fashionable dress is an "Affectation... never to be pardon'd" in a citizen because it leads to extravagance and ruin;[1] that music should not be studied because it causes "loss of Time, and Increase of Expence";[2] that fencing and dancing "are very impertinent Ingredients in the Character of a Man of Business" and that wearing a sword (a long-standing sign of the gentleman) is "a ridiculous Piece of Foppery";[3] that (in a very exaggerated scenario, showing marked anxiety) the expenses of riding lead to debauchery and ruin;[4] and that lavish entertaining is excessively costly and causes "Indignation in your Superiors" by its profuseness.[5] Although the tradesman is advised to educate his children as scholars and gentlemen he is told they must also be made men of business, so that they do not end up "living idly, and prodigally" and, knowing only polite life, become ashamed of their origins.[6]

In this work of 1740, one can see that in the writer's perceptions of his reader, the stress has shifted very much from the servant-like apprentice to the future independent man of business of substantial income. The recommendations of conduct given to the reader have correspondingly moved a long way from servant-like humility and deference to something approaching the gentlemen in education and manners. At the same time, the tradesman is clearly distinguished from the gentleman

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1 Present, p.8.

2 Ibid., pp. 33-4.

3 Ibid., p.33. For the sword as a sign of the gentleman, see: M. Davenport, The Book of Costume (New York, 1948), p. 654; Defoe, Great Law of Subordination, p.33; Chesterfield, Letters, iv. 1220.

4 Present, p. 40.

5 Ibid., pp. 73-4.

6 Ibid., p. 74.

by different personal accomplishments and spending patterns. Here, the theme of deference seems to re-emerge, particularly with dress, fencing and dancing. This is not the overt deference found in servant comportment, but a more indirect kind involving following decorum and not exhibiting qualities considered above one's social rank. The Present for an Apprentice is important because, arising naturally out of the courtesy tradition, it establishes a new model of conduct and comportment which bridges the gap between that of servants on the one hand, and gentlemen on the other. The very success of the book (five editions in the 1740s and at least three more in the 1750s, with a total of 13 between 1740 and 1790)[1] compared with the signal lack of impact made by Richardson's far more traditional treatment seven years earlier is an indication that it hit upon a new market, or, at least, one which Richardson had failed to tap.

The stress on gentlemanly manners is taken one step further in R. Campbell's London Tradesman of 1747, designed to advise would-be apprentices on future careers. Campbell does consider dancing to be a suitable accomplishment for a man of business. Discussing the ideal education for officers on merchant ships, he advises music, languages, mathematics, drawing, and:

> If I were not afraid of being laughed at, I should recommend three or four Months Attendance at the Dancing School: Why a Gentleman who is intrusted with a Cargo worth the Purchase of a Barony in the Country should have a less genteel Education, than the Squire with his round unthinking Face, is a Mystery to me....[2]

The main distinction Campbell draws between the behaviour of people of quality and that of the man of business is not for the latter himself, but for his wife. Thus, he says, that the mercer's wife "ought not to be ashamed of her Compter, nor affect the Airs, Dress and Equipage

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1 See below, Bibliography A1 s.v. 'Present'.

2 R. Campbell, The London Tradesman (1747), p. 325.

of a Lady of Quality...."[1] This focus on the behaviour of the tradesman's wife reiterates the suggestion made earlier that social emulation was particularly marked, or at least more singled out for criticism, in women rather than men.[2]

These advice books for apprentices in the 1730s and 1740s provide a major example of a flow down the social scale of the gentlemanly ideal of manners. The gentleman's standards of politeness in manners are accepted without question as being a valid model for the conduct of his social inferiors. This acceptance is not surprising in view of the argument asserted previously[3] that the polar model of good and ill breeding meant that in the courtesy theory there was no viable positive alternative to gentlemanly manners. In adopting these standards, tradesmen were not merely being imitative in a passive sense: Campbell's comment about dancing reveals a strong assertiveness that tradesmen had a <u>right</u> to practise gentlemanly manners. This view is a major breach of traditional associations between the ideal and a specific social rank. At the same time, however, other remarks show this imitation of the gentleman to be a selective one. The criticism of the tradesman who adopted gentlemanly recreations and accomplishments reveals an ideal which is carefully assessed and scaled-down to suit the tradesman's more limited financial resources and leisure time. The apprentice tradesman emerges from these works with a social status and an ideal of manners far removed from those of the servant, and approaching those of the gentlemen. We see here the development of an important gradation in the theory of manners, which is an intermediate stage situated between the two extremes labelled as 'patrician' and 'plebeian'.

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1 R. Campbell, <u>The London Tradesman</u> (1747), p. 198.

2 Above, p. 260.

3 Above, pp. 141-2.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

From this examination of English courtesy literature between 1690 and 1760, a number of important issues have emerged. The first is the confirmation of courtesy literature as a valuable historical source material. These works possessed a distinguished intellectual heritage, which stretched back through the Renaissance to classical times. In eighteenth-century England, they constituted an important body of thought: their numbers gave them the potential to influence a wide readership; their authors included some of the foremost thinkers and writers of the day; and their contents include a consideration of many broad issues of aesthetics, social structure, and human conduct.

This mention of content leads on to a second major point to emerge from this study: the value of manners themselves as an indication of cultural attitudes and norms. Courtesy writers directly and insistently linked the subject of manners to these wider cultural and social issues. The intimate connection between the eighteenth-century concept of good breeding and the aesthetic ideals of the period is a particularly clear example of the way in which a society's culture can be manifested in the most minute details of a single individual's manners.

Without a comparative study, it is difficult to assess the extent to which these courtesy ideals were a peculiarly English phenomenon. Much of the neoclassical framework of the concept of good breeding was an inheritance common to Western Europe. English ideas at the beginning of this period were heavily derived from French theorists. Yet, in their hostility towards the practice of French manners, in their response to changing conditions of apprenticeship, and, most of all, in their rejection of the Continental noble courtier and their focus on the gentleman and his educative process, courtesy writers do seem to be responding to a specifically English social environment.

In the discussions by courtesy writers of the manners of specific social groups, two themes are overwhelmingly predominant: rank and sex. A number of very important social implications stem from these two concerns. With reference to rank, the detail of attention given to the gentleman's dignity, especially his air, deportment, speech, emotional self-control, and conduct to others, reveals very clearly the power credited to manners as a vital means of expressing and upholding the social hierarchy. Although in itself, any single aspect of these manners was minute, together, because of their inalienable connection to the person, because of their total portability, and because they could be manifested in one form or other in almost every minute of the day, they could act as a constant indication of their bearer's social rank.

In discussing rank, courtesy writers expressed a very conservative, simplistic, and static view of the social hierarchy. This model was considerably removed from the far more complex layering of occupation, rank, and status which actually prevailed in eighteenth-century England.[1] This discrepancy would seem to indicate, in this case at least, a major inability of generalised norms of conduct to correspond to their specific social environment. To a point, the very expectation of a congruity between ideal and reality is an unfairly contradictory demand. Their conflict, however, has one very important social implication. Given the vehemence with which these ideals of conduct were stressed, it could well have been difficult for an individual to reconcile the opposing demands of both the ideal and the actual for his social conformity.

At the beginning of this study,[2] two major models concerning manners were outlined. One portrayed manners as originating in the royal court

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1 For discussions of this issue, see above, pp. 100-1, 146-8, 242-3, 315.

2 Above, ch. 1, pp. 13-4.

and disseminating down the social ladder; the other presented a view of puritan, bourgeois values spreading upwards; neither was based on much concrete evidence from the English situation. The evidence of the eighteenth-century English courtesy literature gives little support to either hypothesis. It is true that seventeenth-century French courtly ideals had a considerable influence on English theorists; however, once this theory had arrived in England, it was rapidly absorbed into the gentlemanly ideal, which had almost no connection with the court. There is even less evidence that the ideal of good manners at this time was in any way a bourgeois one. On the contrary, it was focused wholly on the gentleman's process of good breeding. There is evident a remarkable degree of unanimity between the publicly-expressed ideal of good manners in the courtesy books, and the private advice given by the Earl of Chesterfield to his son and godson - an agreement taken to the extent that Henry Fielding upholds Chesterfield as a model for his own readers' manners.[1] It could of course be argued that Chesterfield himself was a practitioner of bourgeois manners, but it is hard to imagine Chesterfield welcoming such a description. Imitation of this gentlemanly ideal by citizens is generally severely criticised.[2] It is only in the few works for apprentices at the end of this period that anything emerges which might be called a self-conscious bourgeois ideal of manners. Even this is only a scaled-down version of the gentleman, rather than any kind of opposing model. The model of manners which was formulated and disseminated in this period was not the court's nor the bourgeoisie's, but rather, one associated with the gentry. Attached to this imitation of the gentleman's manners by his social inferiors is a very important implication indeed.

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1 Above, ch. 4, p. 196.

2 Above, pp. 157, 232-5, 260-1.

It has been a long-standing argument of analysts of class conflict that one precondition of such a situation is the possession of a collective, unified feeling of self-identity which is different from and opposing to that of another class.[1] The theory of manners at this time was concerned at a very fundamental level with the fashioning of the self. Bourgeois imitation of the gentlemanly ideal in manners could well have significantly retarded the development of an independent middle-class identity, and thereby the development of a distinct class-consciousness. The contribution of such a situation to maintaining the continuing social and political dominance of the traditional elite could have been very considerable indeed.

The other theme dominating the courtesy literature is that of sex. The prescription of modesty to women of every social rank for the same reason and to the same extent shows that in these ideals of human conduct, sex was as marked a dividing line as any of social rank. Indeed, of the two dividing lines, that of sex was more rigidly adhered to. Courtesy writers did strongly criticise emulation by the gentleman's inferiors. However, in appropriating the term 'gentleman' to describe their own ideal, in so vaguely associating it with its traditional social rank, and in extending some of its elements both to the monied men and to aspiring apprentices-turned-tradesmen, courtesy writers built into the gentlemanly ideal a certain flexibility and open-endedness. No such room to manoeuvre is evident in their prescriptions for female modesty. It has been argued that such theoretical models of conduct bore little relationship to the far more responsible and varied social role actually played by women in the past.[2] This may well have been true, but if so, it was in spite of

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1 See R.J. Morris, Class and Class Consciousness in the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850 (1979), pp. 29-30, 37, 62; and R.S. Neale, Class in English History 1680-1850 (Oxford, 1981), pp. 23, 71-2, 182, 106-10.

2 N. Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven, 1977), pp. 63-100.

such expectations, not because of them. One can only wonder what could have been the result if those restrictive demands had not existed.

The benefit to the individual of this polar model of the two sexes' conduct must be seriously questioned. Courtesy writers intended the opposing ideals of male assurance and female modesty to be complementary. In a balanced symbiotic relationship, this division of behaviour patterns may have been perfectly satisfactory. But it made no allowances for the single or widowed person for whom independent survival was a necessity. The restrictive concept of modesty seems particularly ill-suited to such an eventuality. As a legacy to future generations, this polar model has one further implication. Two opposing and mutually exclusive concepts such as the eighteenth century's categories of masculine and feminine were, like good and evil, dependent on each other for their very definition. In a changing social environment, any attempt to redefine one might well meet with far more difficulties than strictly necessary, because it of necessity threatens the definition and self-perception of the other.

As a historical source material, courtesy literature has its failings. It does not indicate the reality of social relationships; it is only a reaction to them and the presentation of an ideal. Yet both of these can convey important information. The hostility and anxiety expressed about emulative citizens, immodest women, and unruly servants strongly suggest that such people did indeed exist in this period. That is the subject of another study. The purpose of this one has been to examine the ideal, to investigate the assumptions it reveals about cultural values, and to suggest their possible social implications. Within these bounds, courtesy literature has proved to be an invaluable means of gaining a better understanding of eighteenth-century people's perceptions of themselves and their society.

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Conventions

Anonymous works are listed under the first word of the title, excluding 'The', 'A', 'An', or their foreign equivalents. French authors with a surname beginning 'Le' or 'La' are listed under those letters, but French authors with a surname prefixed 'de' or 'd'' are listed under the first letter of the next word. Titled authors are listed according to the name by which they are most commonly known, with a cross-reference given from the alternate (e.g. Stanhope: see Chesterfield). The place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

The bibliography has two main sections:

A. Primary Sources:

A1. Courtesy literature written and/or published in England between 1690 and 1760 (inclusive) (including earlier or later edns. of works published between these dates).

A2. Other courtesy literature.

A3. Other primary sources.

B. Secondary Sources:

B1. Unpublished theses.

B2. Articles and books.

Special Conventions for Bibliography A1:

Works: This section includes all courtesy literature from this period as defined in chapter 1 above, pp. 19-26. Works dating from before 1690 but reissued between 1690 and 1760 are included.

Authors: Anonymous works with attributed authors: where the attribution is from a reliable source such as the D.N.B. or the British Library catalogue, the work is listed under the author's bracketed surname, e.g. 'Jones, Erasmus), The Man of Manners...'. Where an attribution by previous analysts has been found to be erroneous, the work is listed under its title; however, a cross-reference is included from the previously-attributed author, e.g. '(Wicksteed, Edmund), see The Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed'.

Titles: The full title of the work is given in all but a handful of cases in which the title runs to half a page or more: in these cases a shortened title appears. Words wholly capitalised in the title have been either capitalised in the first letter only or underlined as seemed appropriate.

Editions: After each title follows the date of the first edition if known, the number of subsequent editions in the 1690-1760 period, and the date of the last pre-1760 edition. These are culled from Wing, the New C.B.E.L., the Bodleian and British Library catalogues, Foxon, English Verse, and a few editions individually found elsewhere. This is not intended as a definitive list of editions, but rather to provide an indication of a work's subsequent popularity and period of

influence. Issues and impressions are considered as editions. The date of the edition used for the thesis is underlined; other editions have occasionally also been consulted, but this is made clear in the footnotes. Translations are indicated in the margin by an asterisk.

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