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Republican civility and Democratic Manners in Tocqueville

The kind of civility appropriate to the new republican regime in France became a controversial topic among French liberals. Against Guizot's defense of a "natural aristocracy" that should replace titled aristocracy, Alexis de Tocqueville introduced the following dilemma: Politics should be conducted by experts who represent and somehow contain the people and its unruly passion or should instead enlarge the people in order to become a middle class involved in the production of wealth, virtually extending to the totality of the body politic and subject to moral and intellectual improvement? In the former case a new supposedly meritocratic, "natural" aristocracy emerges; its manners resemble to a watered-down, informal, version of old aristocratic manners; in the latter case the manners of an ever-extending and potentially all-inclusive middle class remain a riddle; Tocqueville's depiction of democratic manners moves in this direction and distinguishes between vulgarity that goes in pair with significant class inequalities and informal, mildly coarse manners, the fluidity and stylishness of which should not overshadow the erosion of traditional authority in commercial modernity.