

Meeting & Greeting Patterns among People in Different Ages

It used to be that interaction among people was within the frame of mutual face-to-face relationships. New Year greetings were also done by making courtesy call visits to other people's homes. But that style was replaced by New Year Greeting Cards, which were said to be widely used at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). Because they were unable to directly visit other people's homes due to the difficult time of war, the postal services developed. After new year greeting cards were used for a century or so, new year greeting by e-mail has become common too. Some criticize e-mail greetings as impolite, but even in the old days some criticized that sending new year greeting card was impolite compared to the greeting in person. In this way, history repeats itself.



By the way, as personal computers and smart phones have spread, you can now connect with people whom you were unable to connect with before, and you realize that these devices are convenient. As it is called SNS (social networking service), people are ever eager to meet once new SNS partners. When one meets a new partner, it is just a gathering, but it is called "off-meeting". Since an online meeting is considered a presupposition, a meeting not online is called off-meeting. Then, direct gatherings have been restricted due to the spread of COVID-19, resulting in working from home, quarantines, and the like. Here, too, online meetings have become common, and online drinking parties have become fashionable too. In any case, these different types of communication are available thanks to the remarkable advance of information and communication technology. Society is moving from one form of meeting to another. Someday, will online meeting become unsatisfactory, and will we revert back to direct social relationships, or will new forms of interaction remain with us?

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Editor's Note

The Ethics of Inaction

“The darkest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis. For Langdon, the meaning of these words had never felt so clear. In dangerous times, there is no sin greater than inaction.” This is the recollection of Dr. Langdon in the novel entitled “Inferno” (published in 2013), written by Dan Brown. (The Plot: In an imminent crisis of extinction of human beings because of population explosion, a geneticist diffuses a virus, which causes sterility in one third of humans as a resort to force against the people in society who have no sense of the impending crisis.).

To be sure, the explosion of population on earth and global warming are serious problems. But there are differences in the sense of crisis. I remember giving a wry smile despite myself, thinking that I looked on them without taking any action while considering the problems as serious – and I would go to hell.

However, crises have struck twice this year!

One, during the terrible disaster of COVID-19, concerned the amendment of the Public Prosecutors Office Law, which was deemed to enlarge the cabinet's influence on prosecutorial services. In response to this problem, the many tweets of people with an acute sense of smell rapidly multiplied, and former prosecutors, including a former Prosecutor General and a former Justice of the Supreme Court, protested against the proposed amendment, and ultimately the issue ended with the detection of a scandal involving a Superintending Prosecutor. This is still fresh in your mind, isn't it?

The other problem concerned a tweet by President Trump about the death of a black man (George Floyd) at the hands of white police officers in Minneapolis. The disposition of the twitter company which warned against urging violent acts was “active” behavior during an imminent crisis of ethics. On the other hand, people continue to mount criticisms against Mark Zuckerberg, one of the founders of Facebook, who did nothing by declaring that his company's standing is “neutral”. We need to focus on future trends.

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