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A Cultural History Of Gesture

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Introduction

KEITH THOMAS

What is gesture? The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines it as 'a significant movement of limb or body' or 'use of such movements as expression of feeling or rhetorical device'. In this sense gesture includes any kind of bodily movement or posture (including facial expression) which transmits a message to the observer. The message can be deliberately intended and expressed in some accepted code, as when the sender winks, smiles, nods or points; it can also be inadvertent and expressed symptomatically, as when he or she blushes, grimaces with pain, or twitches with embarrassment. Some of these gestures are intended to accompany speech. Others, like the sign languages of the deaf and dumb or 'emblematic' gestures like thumbing one's nose, are substitutes for it.

The body can also transmit messages without any movement at all. To refrain from gesture, for example by stifling symptoms of grief, could be as demonstrative an act as bursting into tears. The body is not neutral until its owner makes an involuntary movement or decides to send out a signal – for faces, hands, and limbs can be as significant in repose as in motion. There is no attribute of the human body, whether size, shape, height or colour, which does not convey some social meaning to the observer. A few years ago a correspondent in *The Listener* claimed that, 'by the

time he is forty, I can . . . more often than not, read a man's class by the signature it has left in the lines and folds of his face.' The assertion was exaggerated, but we know what he meant, for differences of health, occupation, education, and sensibility usually leave their mark. As David Hume remarked in the eighteenth century, 'The skin, pores, muscles and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality . . . The different stations of life influence the whole fabric.') The human body, in short, is as much a historical document as a charter or a diary or a parish register (though unfortunately one which is a good deal harder to preserve) and it deserves to be studied accordingly.

The essays in this book are all concerned with the history of gesture in one form or another, but, in response to its open-ended nature, they interpret the topic loosely.⁴ Sometimes they are concerned with the physical expression of emotion or the mimicry of human activities. Sometimes they analyse the deliberate use of coded signals, like the 'manual rhetoric' of the classical Roman orator or the figure-language of sexual insult. At other times they discuss the whole carriage and deportment of the body. This was indeed the original meaning of the term, for when a fifteenth-century author described a knight as 'comely of gesture', he did not mean that he could wink or nod in a pleasing fashion. He meant that the knight moved and held himself in a graceful manner. 'Gesture' was the general carriage of the body. Only later did the term come to be exclusively used in the narrower sense indicated by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.⁵

There is nothing new about the study of gesture. Since the Renaissance there have been many physiognomists, like G. B. della Porta, Charles Le Brun, and J. C. Lavater, who have attempted to codify the facial expressions of emotion and character." In the seventeenth century Francis Bacon observed that gestures were 'as transitory hieroglyphics', 'a kind of emblems', and the investigations of Giovanni Bonifacio and John Bulwer were conducted on the assumption that there was a universal, natural language of gesture which was understood by all nations and could be used to facilitate the conduct of international trade between Europeans and native peoples.⁷ In the nineteenth century Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* gave new support to the view that physical expressions might be biologically inherited. Modern

ethologists stress the similarities between the bodily movements which humans and animals employ to express hostility, dominance, or territoriality; and they point to the near-universality of some facial expressions of emotion which, like laughing, weeping, yawning or blushing, seem to cross linguistic and national boundaries.

But most modern writing on the subject starts from the assumption that gesture is not a universal language, but is the product of social and cultural differences. There are many languages of gesture and many dialects. This was the belief of Andrea de Jorio, who in the early nineteenth century attempted to reconstruct the mimic code of classical antiquity on the basis of the Neapolitan gestures of its own day. It was given classic expression in 1935 by the anthropologist Marcel Mauss in his essay on 'The Techniques of the Body', in which he pointed out that the most elementary dimensions of physical behaviour – the way people stand, sit, walk, use their hands, eat or sleep – vary greatly from society to society. The British have only to watch a Japanese film to see that facial expressions are not always intelligible to those raised in another culture; and they need travel no further than Italy to discover that the local gesture indicating 'Come here quickly!' is their sign for 'Go away at once!' Mauss's observations have inspired some notable cross-cultural surveys of bodily expression and facial gesture, while the cultural variability of human gesture has nowhere been more effectively demonstrated than in David Efron's analysis of how immigrant Italians and Eastern European Jews changed their gestural habits as they became assimilated into the life of the United States.⁸

Nowadays the study of gesture is primarily the business of anthropologists, linguists, and social psychologists. They are concerned with gesture as a form of non-verbal communication and they have a word, *kinesics*, for the study of communicative body movements. *Kinesics* is a highly developed subject with a variety of subdivisions, ranging from *proxemics* (the study of the distance which people keep from each other when talking), to *haptics* (the study of the way in which they touch each other during the conversation).⁹ Linguists have regarded gesture as a form of language, possibly even the predecessor of language. They have compiled guides to the sign languages of Cistercian monks,

Australian Aborigines, and the deaf, along with dictionaries of gestures in various contemporary contexts. The recent guide to French gesture, Calbris and Montredon's *Des gestes et des mots pour le dire*, is an entertaining example. The difficulty about such dictionaries, of course, is that gestures tend to be polysemous and their meaning can be determined only by the context. In an admirably lucid survey, Desmond Morris and his collaborators have described and mapped out the European distribution of twenty major symbolic gestures, with historical notes on their likely origins.¹⁰

More ambitious writers have not been content to record and classify these cultural differences. They have advanced large-scale theories as to why variations in bodily behaviour take the forms they do. Some fifty years ago the sociologist Norbert Elias argued that early modern Europe saw an increasing inhibition of bodily impulses, a growing sense of shame about physical functions, and an enhanced concern to restrain the expression of emotion. In his view these changes reflected changes in the structure of society, notably the imposition by the state of greater restraint and the lengthening of the chains of social interdependence. Belatedly translated from the German, his views have had great influence in recent decades, particularly in the Netherlands, where the conference from which the present volume originated was held. Also influential has been the theory advanced by the anthropologist Mary Douglas that the body is a symbol of social relations and that the control of bodily expression will be more or less strict according to the degree of group pressure upon the individual.

Such large-scale models have received relatively little serious historical scrutiny because it is much harder to study the history of gesture and bodily comportment than to observe their present-day manifestations. It is true that art historians have given much attention to the symbolic meaning of deportment and gesture in painting and sculpture, for they have to master the language before they can decode the picture.¹¹ Similarly, those who study sermons or plays have examined the oratorical gestures of preachers and actors.¹² Using the evidence of excavated skeletons, some archaeologists have even offered generalizations about the body habits of the past, for example by suggesting that medieval French peasants were more accustomed to squatting than sitting.¹³ Historians of the

ancient world have long been accustomed to studying the gestures of classical art and oratory." Innumerable literary critics have taken account of the physical expression of meanings and emotions as revealed in poetry, drama, and the novel. Yet most modern historians have shied away from what they regard as a highly elusive and intractable subject. The essays contained in this book are therefore to be warmly welcomed as pioneering ventures into what is still relatively uncharted territory. The contributors are of different nationalities and their subjects range from classical Greece to twentieth-century Andalusia. But though they differ in their preoccupations they are united in regarding the history of gesture as a topic which is both capable of serious study and non-trivial in its implications.

That it is capable of study can hardly be disputed. Historians cannot observe the bodies of the past in motion, but the sources from which inferences can be made are surprisingly rich. There are the published accounts of sign languages, the formal codes compiled for orators, actors, dancers, and monks. There are the incidental descriptions to be found in legal depositions and contemporary accounts of events. There is the huge volume of prescriptive writing on manners, telling children and adults how to control their bodily movements. Finally, there is the whole of European imaginative literature. For it is a feature of the history of gesture, as of so many of the most absorbing topics in modern social history, that there is no single cache of source material to be worked through; rather, the evidence lies scattered throughout the literary remains and material artifacts of the past.

Gesture, then, can be studied historically. But is it worth studying? Is it not too trivial in its implications to engage the attention of those who should be devoting themselves to understanding larger themes? Does it matter whether the Greeks and Romans thought it bad manners to pick their noses or just what James I's brother-in-law, the King of Denmark, did with his fingers when in 1606 he chose to insult the aged Earl of Nottingham, who had recently married a young wife?¹⁵

There are two reasons why the study of gesture is of more than purely antiquarian interest. The first is that gesture formed an indispensable element in the social interaction of the past. The second is that it can offer a key to some of the fundamental values

and assumptions underlying any particular society; as the French historians would say, it illuminates *mentalité*.

In the first place, gesture is an inseparable accompaniment of any spoken language. The difference between a face-to-face encounter and a telephone conversation is a reminder of the extent to which facial expression and bodily movements can amplify, modify, confirm, or subvert verbal utterance. Sorrow or happiness, deference or insult, are conveyed as effectively by gesture as by word. Non-verbal 'leakage' – a shifty look or a momentary hesitation – will undermine the whole effect of an overtly honest declaration. Different languages involve different facial movements and have different bodily connotations. As they said of Mayor La Guardia of New York, one could switch the sound off the television and still know from his gestures whether he was speaking English, Italian, or Yiddish. We all recall the story of the Italian who had to remain silent because it was too cold to take his hands out of his pockets. In many formal contexts, liturgical, legal, or ceremonial, the speaker's posture and bodily movement may be more important than the words uttered. 'Some foolishly imagine that praier is made either better or worse by the jesture of our bodies,' remarks a sixteenth-century Protestant commentator.¹⁶

The historian who wants to study the past until he can hear the people talking must therefore also be able to visualize them as they conversed. This involves establishing not just the performative gestures of stylized ceremonial or worship, but also the non-verbal language of daily conversation. That was a language no less complex than the literary language of the time, but there are no grammars or dictionaries setting it out, for one of the defining features of informal gesture is that no one ever teaches it (save those parts which fall under the rules of courtesy and politeness). Anthropologically-minded historians have to establish this grammar of gesture for themselves. The work is part of that larger, inescapable task of reconstructing all the codes and conventions which create the context for meaningful behaviour in the society under study. For all the efforts of the art historians, a recent student of medieval misericords has remarked ruefully that 'the iconography of historical gesture is still in its infancy'.¹⁷ The same could be said of the study of that rich repertoire of non-verbal insult and mockery which no period of history has been without.

The second reason for studying gesture historically is that it has always been an important ingredient in social differentiation. Like all other languages, the language of gesture can separate as well as unite. Aspiring groups have long used distinctive modes of bodily comportment as a means of setting themselves apart from their inferiors. In the first essay in this volume Jan Bremmer shows how in the fourth century BC the Greek upper classes cultivated an upright posture and an unhurried gait; the strict control of emotion and the maintenance of dignity became essential to their authority. Similarly, Maria Bogucka suggests in another chapter that in early modern Poland the nobility marked themselves out by carefully learned posture and bodily comportment; for the Poles, differences in gesture became the outward expression of social hierarchy. The same we know to have been true of early modern England. One Tudor author remarks that a person who came into the company of two people, one brought up in the countryside, the other at Court or in London, could at once tell which was which, partly by their speech, but also by their 'gesture and behaviour'.¹⁸ In the eighteenth century it was accepted that one of the attributes which distinguished ladies and gentlemen was their way of moving.¹⁹ 'You may read their birth on their faces,' wrote William Darrell in the early eighteenth century (anticipating our correspondent to *The Listener*), 'their gait and mien tell their quality.'²⁰ Adam Smith wrote of the young nobleman that

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 pre-eminence, are, upon ordinary occasions, sufficient to govern the world."

Conversely, the lower classes were normally perceived as rough and ungainly. Adam Smith contrasted 'the most polite persons', who 'preserve the same composure' throughout a public entertainment, with 'the rabble', who 'express all the various passions by their gesture and behaviour'." 'English boys,' according to one

early twentieth-century Oxford don, 'regard displays of anger and passion as characteristics of the socially inferior.'²³ No student of social differentiation can afford to neglect the part played by differences in physical comportment in separating social groups from each other and arousing feelings of mutual hostility. For if the superior classes have tended to regard their inferiors as coarse and heavy-handed, the lower classes have frequently responded by despising their superiors as pretentious and affected. In his chapter Robert Muchembled describes the early modern period as one of 'cultural bipolarization'; and it seems probable that it was a time when such social differences in physical comportment became more marked, even if their many nuances and gradations make it hard to squeeze them into a simple polar model.

Gesture reflected differences of gender as well as of class. At all periods of history the prescriptions for the physical behaviour of women have been different from those of men. Characteristically, women have been encouraged to look modestly downwards, to walk with small steps, to eat smaller portions of food and, when handkerchiefs arrived, to blow their noses in smaller ones. An eighteenth-century aesthetic theorist commented on 'the painful sentiments we feel when female features assume the expression of man or those of men assume that of woman'.²⁴ Any gesture implying female assertiveness was forbidden; in her chapter on 'The Renaissance Elbow' Joaneath Spicer comments on how inappropriate it was thought for ordinary women of that period to stand with arms akimbo, an aggressive posture fitting only for males or Amazonian women rulers. Conversely Henk Driessen shows how in rural Andalusia today masculine domination is upheld by the contentious gesticulation which plays a central role in what he calls the 'choreography of male sociability'.

Behind the long history of pedagogic instruction in gesture and deportment lay not just a concern to reinforce the differences of gender and rank. There was also an aesthetic-cum-moral conviction that external bodily behaviour manifested the inner life of the soul. Bodily control exemplified internal harmony and the superiority of the mind to the body. Physiognomy betrayed the character. This was one of the reasons why so little tolerance was normally displayed to those who employed a different gestural language. Inappropriate or excessive gesture was either condemned as a

clumsy lack of co-ordination or disparaged as 'gesticulation'. Jean-Claude Schmitt has shown that the distinction between virtuous *gestus* and unpleasant *gesticulatio* was a medieval one.²⁶ One of the themes running through this volume is that of the distaste of northern Europeans for the gesticulating southerners, particularly the French and Italians. '[Do not] shrug or wrygg thy shoulders as we see in many Italians,' runs an injunction in the first English translation of Erasmus's *De civilitate morum puerilium*.²⁶

The origins of this difference between north and south remain obscure, though it is worth recalling that De Jorio interpreted South Italian gesture as a cultural legacy of the Romans. In the early modern period it was very conspicuous. Peter Burke notes that the Italians perceived the Spaniards as gesturing too little, whereas the English and Germans perceived the southerners as gesturing too much. Herman Roodenburg tells us that the Dutch *Groot ceremonie-boeck der beschaafde zeeden* condemned the Italians as uncivil because they 'speak with their head, arms, feet and the whole body'. A few years later Adam Smith commented that 'Foreigners observe that there is no nation in the world which use[s] so little gesticulation in their conversation as the English. A Frenchman, in telling a story that is not of the least consequence to him or to anyone else, will use a thousand gestures and contortions of his face, whereas a wellbred Englishman will tell you one wherein his life and fortune are concerned without altering a muscle.'²⁷ That quintessential Englishman, Dr Samuel Johnson, was so hostile to gesticulation that 'when another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered, by expressive movements of his hands, Johnson fairly seized them and held them down'.²⁸ As one late Victorian writer proudly declared, 'We English . . . use gesture-language less than almost any nation upon earth.'²⁹

Only in the later twentieth century has the British self-definition of themselves as a non-gesticulating people begun to dwindle. Those who attend academic seminars or watch discussion programmes on television will have noticed a growing tendency for earnest intellectual discourse to be accompanied by much waving and flailing of hands. As for the idea of southern Europeans as inveterate gesticulators, there are clearly regional and social distinctions to be drawn. Fritz Graf reminds us that among the

ancient Romans gesticulation was thought to be more characteristic of slaves than freemen, while a recent account of gesture in France states that its use as an accompaniment of conversation is much more extensive among the working classes than among the bourgeoisie.³⁰

Those who study the past usually find themselves arriving at two contradictory conclusions. The first is that the past was very different from the present. The second is that it was very much the same. These essays on the history of gesture produce this same ambivalent effect. For on the one hand it seems that the meaning of many gestures and postures has remained constant. To walk with head erect still signifies authority, dignity, and detachment. To cower and cringe indicates abasement. Gravity and impassivity are evidence of self-control, usually associated with rule and superiority (though not always, if we think of the guardsman on parade or the butler standing behind the host at the dinner-table). To lower one's eyes remains a gesture of modesty and submission. Obtrusive elbows are as much an assertion of territoriality and self-regard today as they were for Joaneath Spicer's Renaissance painters or for the medieval Bakers' Company of London when it fined one of its members 'for lying on his elboe when the Master and some of the ancients were in the room'.³¹

Yet on the other hand it is clear that the meaning of gesture has changed over time and place. We no longer speak the body language of the past and much of it has to be painstakingly reconstructed. We cannot intuitively know that when Charlemagne pulled his beard he was expressing grief or that for Quintilian the slapping of the thigh meant not exhilaration but anger. In their excavations of the gestural language of the past the contributors to this volume advance our understanding of bygone patterns of communication. They also reveal that changing gestural codes offer a key to changing social relationships. The emergence of the handshake as the normal symbol of greeting is shown by Herman Roodenburg to have been part of the move to a more egalitarian, less deferential, ethic, for the handshake superseded the habit of bowing, kneeling, or curtsying. Perhaps that is why in modern France colleagues will shake hands daily, whereas in Japan the survival of hierarchical attitudes has held back the handshake, just

as it has in the more conservative segments of modern Britain. De Tocqueville explained the reserved attitude of the British to the body in terms of the ambiguities of their social structure: 'everybody lives in constant dread lest advantage should be taken of his familiarity. Unable to judge at once of the social position of those he meets, an Englishman prudently avoids all contact with them.'³²

Several of the contributors recognize in the early modern period that suppression of gesture and growth of bodily control which Norbert Elias saw as part of the civilizing process. But though they confirm his view that this was a key period in the definition of civility as involving a strict curb upon physical impulses, they also demonstrate that he gave a misleadingly unilinear character to what was not a single, unfolding development but one which expanded and contracted with changes in ideology and social context. Jan Bremmer reveals the presence in fourth-century BC Athens of most of the ideals of bodily restraint which Elias associated with a much later period. It was the humanist rediscovery of classical ideals of deportment, transmitted via Cicero and St Ambrose, which underpinned the manuals of civility in the early modern era. Indeed an attempt to reintroduce the refinement and urbanity of the ancient senatorial aristocracy had already been made in the imperial courts of the early middle ages.³³

Conversely, the late twentieth century displays a gradual rejection of some of these classical restraints. The middle-class youth of western Europe and America have no apparent inhibition about eating in the street, exposing their bodies, gesticulating, shouting, or expressing their emotions in a physical form. The casual kiss on meeting, which Erasmus noted in 1499 to have been a normal English practice, is, as Willem Frijhoff observes, now returning to northern Europe after centuries of repression. The decline of external forms of deference, like the growing cult of informality and 'friendliness', suggests that we are moving into a new era of gestural history, and one appropriate to a more democratic era. Contemporary experience thus confirms the moral which is to be drawn from these studies of the past: namely, that behind the apparently most trivial differences of gesture and comportment there lie fundamental differences of social relationship and attitude. To interpret and account for a gesture is to unlock the whole social and cultural system of which it is a part.

NOTES

- 1 For an excellent brief survey of the problems of defining gesture, see Adam Kendon, 'Introduction' to Adam Kendon (ed.), *Nonverbal Communication: Interaction and Gesture* (The Hague, 1981), pp. 28–40.
- 2 Timothy Poston in *The Listener*, 98 (1 September 1977), p. 276.
- 3 David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (Everyman's Library; 2 vols, London, 1911), vol. 1, pp. 115–16 (Bk 2, pt 3, sect. 1).
- 4 Though not in as indiscriminate a fashion as is suggested by the diverse contributions to Michael Fcher (ed.), *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (3 vols, New York, 1989), where the subject is vaguely defined as 'the area where life and thought intersect'.
- 5 See *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'gesture: 1a'.
- 6 For these authors and those cited below see the Bibliography appended by the editors to this volume. Another bibliographical survey, with a helpfully analytic commentary, is Jean-Claude Schmitt, 'Introduction and general bibliography', *History and Anthropology*, 1 (1984), pp. 1–28.
- 7 J. Spedding, R. L. Ellis and D. D. Heath (eds), *The Works of Francis Bacon* (14 vols, London, 1857–74), vol. 3, p. 400; vol. 4, p. 440; John Bulwer, *Chirologia: or the Naturall Language of the Hand . . . Whereunto is added Chironomia: or the Art of Manuall Rhetoricke* (2 vols, London, 1644); idem, *Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd: or the Artificial Changeling* (London, 1653); Giovanni Bonifacio, *L'arte de' cenni* (Vicenza, 1616); James Knowlson, *Universal Language Schemes in England and France, 1600–1800* (Toronto, 1975), appendix A; Dilwyn Knox, 'Ideas on gesture and universal language, c.1550–1650', in John Henry and Sara Hutton (eds), *New Perspectives on Renaissance Thought* (London, 1990), pp. 101–36.
- 8 David Efron, *Gesture, Race and Culture* (The Hague, 1972; 1st published, New York, 1941). Cf. Weston La Barre, 'The cultural basis of emotions and gestures', *Journal of Personality*, 16 (1947–8), pp. 49–68, and Gordon W. Hewes, 'World distribution of certain postural habits', *American Anthropologist*, 57 (1955), pp. 231–44.
- 9 Ray L. Birdwhistell, *Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body-Motion Communication* (Philadelphia, 1970); Michael Watson, *Proxemic Behaviour* (The Hague, 1970).
- 10 Desmond Morris, Peter Collett, Peter Marsh and Marie O'Shaughnessy, *Gestures: Their Origins and Distribution* (London, 1979).
- 11 For example, Moshe Barasch, *Giotto and the Language of Gesture*

- (Cambridge, 1987); Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1988), pp. 56–81; François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age. Signification et Symbolique* (2 vols, Paris, 1982–9); E. H. Gombrich, 'Ritualized gesture and expression in art', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, Series B*, 251 (1966), pp. 393–401, repr. in Gombrich, *The Image and the Eye* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 63–77.
- 12 For example, B. L. Joseph, *Elizabethan Acting* (London, 1951); David Bevington, *Action is Eloquence: Shakespeare's Language of Gesture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984); Alastair Smart, 'Dramatic gesture and expression in the age of Hogarth and Reynolds', *Apollo*, 82 (1965), pp. 90–7.
 - 13 Françoise Piponnier and Richard Bucaille, 'La belle ou la bête? Remarques sur l'apparence corporelle de la paysannerie médiévale', *Ethnologie Française*, 6 (1976), pp. 227–32, esp. p. 229.
 - 14 Andrea de Jorio, *La mimica degli antichi investigata nel gestire Napoletano* (Napoli, 1832); Carl Sittl, *Die Gebarden der Griechen und Römer* (Leipzig, 1890); Richard Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (New Haven, 1963); Gerhard Neumann, *Gesten und Gebärden in der griechischen Kunst* (Berlin, 1965); Elizabeth C. Evans, 'Physiognomics in the Ancient World', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, 59, pt 5 (Philadelphia, 1969), pp. 3–101; Graf, chapter 2 of this volume.
 - 15 William Harris, *An Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of James the First* (London, 1753), pp. 67n–68n.
 - 16 John Marbeck, *A Book of Notes and Common Places* (London, 1581), p. 852.
 - 17 Malcolm Jones, 'Folklore motifs in late medieval art, I', *Folklore*, 100 (1989), pp. 201–17, esp. p. 206.
 - 18 *Cyville and Uncyville Life* (London, 1579), sig. Miii^v.
 - 19 [James Burnett, Lord Monboddo], *Of the Origin and Progress of Language* (6 vols, Edinburgh, 1773–92), vol. 4, p. 295.
 - 20 William Darrell, *The Gentleman Instructed in the Conduct of a Virtuous and Happy Life*, 9th edn (Dublin, 1727), p. 7.
 - 21 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, eds D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Oxford, 1976), p. 54.
 - 22 Adam Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, ed. J. C. Bryce (Oxford, 1983), p. 198.
 - 23 G. B. Grundy, *Fifty-Five Years at Oxford* (London, 1945), p. 44. He adds, 'That is why the French teachers of a former age were most of them such hopeless disciplinary failures in English schools.'

- 24 Archibald Alison, *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*, 4th edn (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1815), vol. 2, p. 292.
- 25 Schmitt, 'Introduction and general bibliography'.
- 26 Des. Erasmus, *De civilitate morum puerilium*, transl. Robert Whittington (London, 1540) sig. C7^v. The reference to 'Italians' is the translator's; Erasmus had written '*quod in nonnullis videmus*'.
- 27 Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, pp. 191–2. (*I am grateful to Mr J. B. Bamborough, who many years ago pointed out to me the interest of this subject and gave me some valuable references.*)
- 28 *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill, revd L. F. Powell (6 vols, Oxford, 1934–50), vol. 4, pp. 322–3.
- 29 J. G. Wood, *Man and Beast Here and Hereafter*, 3rd edn (London, 1876), p. 112. David Efron (*Gesture, Race and Culture*, pp. 53, 59) has suggested that French gesticulation was the result of late sixteenth-century Italian influence and that at least some eighteenth-century English people were less restrained than Johnson and Smith would have liked.
- 30 Graf, chapter 2 in this volume; Laurence Wylie, *Beaux Gestes. A Guide to French Body Talk* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. viii–ix.
- 31 Sylvia Thrupp, *A Short History of the Worshipful Company of Bakers of London* (London, n.d.), pp. 87–8.
- 32 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, transl. Henry Reeve, revd Francis Bowen, ed. Phillips Bradley (2 vols, New York, 1945), vol. 2, p. 179.
- 33 C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210* (Philadelphia, 1985).

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