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How societies remember

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Bodily practices

1

We preserve versions of the past by representing it to ourselves in words and images. Commemorative ceremonies are pre-eminent instances of this. They keep the past in mind by a depictive representation of past events. They are re-enactments of the past, its return in a representational guise which normally includes a simulacrum of the scene or situation recaptured. Such re-enactments depend for much of their rhetorical persuasiveness, as we have seen, on prescribed bodily behaviour. But we can also preserve the past deliberately without explicitly re-presenting it in words and images. Our bodies, which in commemorations stylistically re-enact an image of the past, keep the past also in an entirely effective form in their continuing ability to perform certain skilled actions. We may not remember how or when we first learned to swim, but we can keep on swimming successfully – remembering how to do it – without any representational activity on our part at all; we consult a mental picture of what we should do when our capacity to execute spontaneously the bodily movements in question is defective. Many forms of habitual skilled remembering illustrate a keeping of the past in mind that, without ever adverting to its historical origin, nevertheless re-enacts the past in our present conduct. In habitual memory the past is, as it were, sedimented in the body.

In suggesting more particularly how memory is sedimented, or amassed, in the body, I want to distinguish between two fundamentally different types of social practice.

The first type of action I shall call an *incorporating* practice. Thus a smile or a handshake or words spoken in the presence of someone we address, are all messages that a sender or senders impart by means of their own current bodily activity, the transmission occurring only during the time that their bodies are present to sustain that particular activity. Whether the

information imparted by these actions is conveyed intentionally or unintentionally, and whether it is carried by an individual or a group, I shall speak of such actions as incorporated.

The second type of action I shall call an *inscribing* practice. Thus our modern devices for storing and retrieving information, print, encyclopedias, indexes, photographs, sound tapes, computers, all require that we do something that traps and holds information, long after the human organism has stopped informing. Occasionally this imparting may be unintentional, as when we have our telephone tapped, but mostly it is intentional. I shall speak of all such actions as inscribing.

The memorisation of culturally specific postures may be taken as an example of incorporating practices. In a culture where the characteristic postures of men and women are nearly identical, there may be very little teaching of posture and very little conscious learning of posture.[1] But whenever postural differences are introduced, for example, between the postures appropriate for ceremonial occasions and for everyday activities or between the modes of sitting appropriate for males and females, some awareness of postural appropriateness is involved. For instance, in one culture the correct seated posture for a woman may be with her legs drawn under her and to one side, and the correct seated posture for a man may be cross-legged. Little boys and girls will be corrected, verbally or by gesture, but most corrections will probably take the form of uttering phrases such as 'girls don't sit like that' or 'sit like a man'. The ability to disapprove must be among the first teaching abilities in the effort to establish a transmissible culture; and further refinements will come with the ability to name a culturally correct posture, with words for squat, kneel, bow, stand erect, and so on, combined with pointing to specific forms of correct and incorrect behaviour. Postural behaviour, then, may be very highly structured and completely predictable, even though it is neither verbalised nor consciously taught and may be so automatic that it is not even recognised as isolatable pieces of behaviour. The presence of living models, the presence, that is, of men and women actually sitting 'correctly', is essential to the communication in question.

The importance of postures for communal memory is evident. Power and rank are commonly expressed through certain postures relative to others; from the way in which people group themselves and from the disposition of their bodies relative to the bodies of others, we can deduce the degree of authority which each is thought to enjoy or to which they lay claim. We know what it means when one person sits in an elevated position when everyone around them stands; when one person stands and everyone else sits; when everyone in a room gets up as someone comes in; when someone bows, or curtseys, or, in extreme circumstances,

falls to their knees before another who remains standing. These are only some of the many configurations of communal activity. There will of course be disparities between cultures in the meanings ascribed to some postures, but, in all cultures, much of the choreography of authority is expressed through the body. Within this choreography, there is an identifiable range of repertoires through which many postural performances become meaningful by registering meaningful inflections of the upright posture.[2] Such inflections recall a pattern of authority to performers and observers, and they are in turn recalled to mind in many of our verbal conventions. This is evident in our common metaphors. When we speak of someone as being 'upright' we may use the expression descriptively and literally to mean that they are standing on their own feet, or we may use it evaluatively and metaphorically to express admiration and praise of someone whom we judge to be honest and just, to be loyal to friends in difficulties, to stand by their own convictions, and in general not to stoop to low or unworthy actions. When we refer to someone who enjoys a high social position, we say that they have 'status' or 'standing'. When we speak of misfortunes of all kinds we express the change of circumstances as a fall; we fall into the enemy's hands, we fall upon hard times, we fall from favour. Nor are such metaphoric turns of phrase ad hoc; they remind us of patterns of authority because they form not simply individual metaphoric turns of phrase but whole systems of metaphoric expression.[3] Our oppositional concepts 'up' and 'down' arise out of our bodily experience of verticality. Almost every bodily movement we make changes our up-down orientation, maintains it, or in some way takes it into account. The direction upwards, against gravity, establishes the postural base in our experience of lived space for the dichotomous sense to which we attach values, such as those expressed in the oppositions between high and low, rise and decline, climbing and falling, superior and inferior, looking up to and looking down upon. It is through the essentially embodied nature of our social existence, and through the incorporated practices based upon these embodyings, that these oppositional terms provide us with metaphors by which we think and live. Culturally specific postural performances provide us with a mnemonics of the body.

The alphabet may be cited, by contrast, as an example of an inscribing practice. It is a practice that exists by virtue of a systematic transfer from the temporal properties of the human voice to the spatial properties of the inscribed marks: that is, to replicable features of their form, position, actual distances, order and linear disposition.[4] Other writing systems – pictograms, hieroglyphics and ideograms – exhibit the same characteristic; but their methods of spatial encoding are radically incomplete because they are still dependent on a direct inscription of meanings. That is why

pictograms, for instance, are so deficient as mnemonic systems: a vast number of signs are needed to represent all the objects in the culture; the simplest sentence requires an elaborate series of signs; and only a limited number of things can be said. Limited writing systems of this kind, in which the sign directly represents the referent, are of course capable of semantic extension; the same sign can be made to stand also for a more general class of objects or for other referents connected with the original sign by association of meaning. Thus in Egyptian hieroglyphics the sign for a beetle was a code sign not only for that insect but also for a separate and more abstract referent 'because'. But since all such methods of inscriptional elaboration remain arbitrary, the interpretation of their signs is neither easy nor explicit. In Chinese writing a minimum of 3,000 characters has to be learned before one is reasonably literate, and there exists in all a repertoire of 50,000 characters to be mastered. The phonetic principle marks a decisive break with all such procedures. What distinguishes it from all other writing systems is the fact that the twenty-two components out of which the system is constructed have in themselves no intrinsic meaning. The names of the Greek letters, alpha, beta, gamma and so on, make up a nursery chant designed to imprint the sounds of the letters in a fixed series on the child's brain while firmly correlating the sounds with the child's vision of a fixed series of shapes which they look at when they produce the acoustic values. In their original Semitic form these names were names of common objects like 'house', 'camel', and so on; in Greek the names have become meaningless. When the component units of the system were in this way voided of any independent meaning, they were transformed into a mechanical mnemonic device. This device imposed a habit of recognition on the brain in the developmental phase before puberty while the oral language code was being acquired. The two codes needed for speaking and then for reading combine together at a time when mental resources are still extremely malleable, so that the acts of reading and writing become an unconscious reflex. The cultural break established by the phonetic principle thus has decisive ontogenetic significance.

The impact of writing on social memory is much written about and evidently vast.[5] The transition from an oral culture to a literate culture is a transition from incorporating practices to inscribing practices. The impact of writing depends upon the fact that any account which is transmitted by means of inscriptions is unalterably fixed, the process of its composition being definitively closed. The standard edition and the canonic work are the emblems of this condition. This fixity is the spring that releases innovation. When the memories of a culture begin to be transmitted mainly by the reproduction of their inscriptions rather than by 'live' tellings, improvisation becomes increasingly difficult and innovation is institutionalised.

Phonetic writing generates cultural innovation by promoting two processes: economisation and scepticism. Economisation: because the form of communal memory is freed from its dependence on rhythm.[6] Scepticism: because the content of communal memory is subjected to systematic criticism.[7] With regard to economisation, we may note that in oral cultures most of the formal recollection of happenings takes the form of performances repeatedly recited by the custodians of memory to those who hear of it. These large-scale performative utterances have to be cast in a standardised form if there is to be any chance of their being repeated by successive generations; and the rhythms of oral verse are the privileged mechanisms of recall because rhythm enlists the co-operation of a whole series of bodily motor reflexes in the work of remembrance. But rhythm sets drastic limits to the verbal arrangement of what might be said and thought. Phonetic writing breaks down these limitations. By substituting a visual record for an acoustic one, the alphabet frees a society from the constraints of a rhythmic mnemonics. Particular statements need no longer be memorised but can lie around as artefacts and be consulted as required. This economisation of memory releases extensive mental energies previously invested in the construction and preservation of mnemonic systems; hence it encourages the production of unfamiliar statements and the thinking of novel thoughts. With regard to scepticism, we may note that in oral cultures much of the informal recollection of happenings takes the form of face-to-face conversation. This necessarily impedes the articulation of a sense of inconsistency or even incoherence in the fabric of the cultural inheritance. It is true that oral societies often make a distinction between the folktale, the myth, and the historical legend. But even if inconsistency occurs between or within such genres, it is unlikely that the sense of inconsistency will generate a permanent cultural impact. Scepticism is particular, not culturally accumulative; it generates titular disputes, but not a deliberate reinterpretation of the cultural inheritance. The distinction between what was held to be mythical and what was considered to be historical came into being when it became possible to set one fixed account of the world beside another so that the contradictions within and between them could literally be seen. Through criticism as well as through economisation, the substance of communal memory is changed by the transformation in the technology of preserved communication.

A hesitancy is bound to arise as soon as these distinctions have been made. For it is certainly the case that many practices of inscription contain an element of incorporation, and it may indeed be that no type of inscription is at all conceivable without such an irreducible incorporating aspect.

It is certainly true that writing, the most obvious example of inscription, has an irreducible bodily component. We tend to forget this; writing is a

habitual exercise of intelligence and volition which normally escapes the notice of the person exercising it because of this familiarity with the method of procedure. Everyone who can write proficiently knows how to form each letter so well and knows so well each word they are about to write that they have ceased to be conscious of this knowledge or to notice these particular acts of volition. Each of these acts, none the less, is accompanied by a corresponding muscular action.[8] The way in which we generally adhere to the same method of forming the same character in handwriting demonstrates that writing entails a minimal muscular skill; and if we begin to write in an unfamiliar way, as when printing our letters instead of writing them longhand, we will be alerted to the fact that every character we form entails a bodily action. None the less, there is a good reason for picking out the inscriptional element in writing as its predominant feature. For when we learn to write, the physical movements we make have no meaning of their own but are contingently required to form the shapes that are themselves merely arbitrarily related to meaning. This contingency of the hand movements involved is well displayed by the use of the typewriter, where the registration of the same signs requires different bodily movements.

We could of course consider a quite different case where the practice of good handwriting is conceived of as part of the training of a docile body. Here disciplinary control consists in imposing the best relation between a set of gestures and the overall position of the body, which is its condition of efficiency and speed. This is not a hypothetical but a historical example: in his inventory of surveillances Foucault cites the disciplinarian La Salle, who talks about a training in handwriting in which a disciplined body is the prerequisite of an efficient set of gestures. Pupils, he says, must always 'hold their bodies erect, somewhat turned and free on the left side, slightly inclined, so that, with the elbow placed on the table, the chin can be rested upon the hand unless this were to interfere with the view; the left leg must be somewhat more forward under the table than the right. A distance of two fingers must be left between the body and the table; for not only does one write with more alertness, but nothing is more harmful to the health than to acquire the habit of pressing one's stomach against the table; the part of the left arm from the elbow to the hand must be placed on the table. The right arm must be at a distance from the body of about three fingers and be about five fingers from the table, on which it must rest lightly. The teacher will place the pupils in the posture that they should maintain when writing, and will correct it either by sign or otherwise, when they change this position.'[9] La Salle is here proposing a training in rigorous docility, a kind of minuscule gymnastics. The essential point is that what is being prescribed and learnt is an incorporating practice. It also happens to be a

practice of inscription; but that is a contingent feature of the practice in question, for, fundamentally, what is being learned is an act of incorporation.

The same point applies less obviously but no less certainly to the institution of the cinema. To say that cinema is an inscribing practice is to single out that feature which marks it off from theatre.[10] In theatre, actors and spectators are present at the same time and in the same location; everything the audience see and hear is actively produced in their presence by human beings or props which are themselves present. In cinema, the actors were present when the spectators were absent (at the shooting) and the actors are absent when the spectators are present (at the projection). Not only am I at a distance from the object, as in theatre; what remains in that distance, in cinema, is no longer the object itself, which is inaccessible from the outset, but, as Metz puts it, a delegate it has sent me while itself withdrawing. What defines the rules of looking specific to cinema is the absence of the object seen. The absence of the object and the codes by which we make sense of that absence are produced by the process of technical inscription. The cinema inscribes; but it could not be a practice of inscription if it were not also, in a specific sense, an incorporating practice. What is incorporated is an ocular convention: the identification of the object with the camera. During the cinema performance spectators duplicate the action of the projector, their eyes behaving as it were like searchlights. Without this identification with the camera certain facts would remain unintelligible: for example, the fact that the spectators are not puzzled when the images on the screen 'rotate' in a panning movement, yet the spectators know that they have not turned their heads. The spectators do not need to turn their heads really; for they have turned their heads in so far as they have identified themselves as all-seeing subjects with the movement of the camera. If the eye which thus moves is no longer bound by the laws of matter, if the eye is in this sense no longer bound to the body but has become capable of multiple displacements, then the world, in cinema, will not only be constituted by the eye, in the sense in which the eye-subject formed the invisible basis of Quattrocento perspective, but the world will be constituted for the eye. This marks a turning point in the social formation of the eye. In cinema, I am simultaneously in this action and outside of it, in this space and outside of this space; having the power of ubiquity, I am everywhere and nowhere. The inscriptional practice of cinema makes possible, and is in turn made possible by, the incorporating practice of the cinema spectator.

Many practices of inscription contain an element of incorporation, and it may even be the case that no type of inscription at all is conceivable without such an irreducible component of incorporation. I take the distinction between incorporating and inscribing practices to serve the end of my argument, none the less, in so far as it is possible to distinguish between actions in which the one or the other aspect predominates. My classification is intended, in other words, as a heuristic device.

2

The incorporating practices I have in mind are generally characterised by a lesser degree of formality than that which is found in those highly invariant events, like certain religious liturgies, in which almost all of the performance is specified in advance and where the occasions for variation are few and closely defined. But within this range of activities there are different types of culturally specific bodily practices which will differ from one another in the degree of formality characteristic of them. There is of course some difficulty in distinguishing bodily practices in terms of the criterion of formality. Recurrent events cannot always be easily separated into those which are formal and those which are not. They occupy, rather, shifting areas along a continuum. There is a continuance of behavioural formality from the formal words and gestures that intersperse ordinary conversation and everyday events; through everyday formalities of greeting behaviour and formal expressions of deference and demeanour; through the fairly invariant procedures of, say, the courtroom within which the variable substance of litigation is contained by the means which subject it to ordered presentation; to, finally, such events as coronations, in which the invariant aspects of the event begin to predominate over its variable aspects. It is impossible, then, to distinguish unequivocally between qualitatively distinct kinds of formality. What I wish to suggest here are a set of merely heuristic distinctions: a distinction between ceremonies of the body, proprieties of the body, and techniques of the body.

As an example of *techniques* of the body we might consider the case of gesture. A particularly illuminating instance is provided by David Efron, who set out to examine whether there were any standardised and classifiable differences in gestural behaviour between groups.[11] He proposed this question with respect to two subgroups, 'traditional' East European Jews and Southern Italians living in New York; by 'traditional' he meant both foreign and American-born individuals who had retained the language and customs of their original group and who had remained entirely impervious to the influence of the American environment. As a method of investigation, he rejected laboratory controls in favour of natural settings; all his material was obtained in spontaneous situations in the everyday environment of the people concerned, who did not know that they were the subjects of his study. As an object of investigation, he ruled

out any consideration of facial expression, posture, gait, or eye movements; his focus was mainly on hand movements and to a lesser extent on head movements. This limited focus of attention was justified by the common-sense observation that both immigrant groups 'talked with their hands' in ways evidently not the case with the surrounding society; but it turned out upon scrutiny that this was so in strikingly different and definable senses with respect to the two groups in question.

From the data collected in the Italian quarter of New York Efron was able to build up a more or less exhaustive inventory of the 'bundle of pictures' that traditional Southern Italians carry in their hands. This amounted in effect to a lexicon, a gestural vocabulary comprising at least a hundred and fifty items. Some of these formalised movements can also be found in the repertoire of other groups; others are local, their meaning being clear only to a member of a traditional Southern Italian community or to someone who is familiar with its system of bodily signs. These movements are, as it were, manual 'words' designating more or less definite meaningful associations; they illustrate the very things referred to by the accompanying words. Southern Italian gestural behaviour is substantive in character, in the sense that it contains a large number of visuo-spatial replicas of the referents of thought. The production of such gestural 'slides' can, when pushed to the limit, concatenate into an entire 'slide-show' in which verbal accompaniment is dispensed with. Cardinal Manning had long before been amazed at the capacity of Sicilians to carry on a complete conversation without the aid of a single spoken word; and Efron too was struck by the appearance of long sequences of pantomimic gestures when several prominent Italian actors in New York evidently had not the least difficulty in enacting a series of 'dumb-shows' which were entirely meaningful to anyone acquainted with the system of gestural pictures and symbols employed by their group. More impressive even than the self-sufficiency of this lexical repertoire was its longevity. Over a century earlier, Andrea di Jorio had produced an exhaustive description of the gestural vocabulary of the traditional Neapolitan in his *La Mimica degli Antichi Investigata nel Gestire Napoletano*.[12] Many of the gestures described by di Jorio are still in use among contemporary Neapolitans in Italy as well as in the United States. And some can be traced as far back as ancient Greece and Rome, as can be seen by comparing Efron's gestural charts with the descriptions and pictorial reproductions of Greek and Roman gestures provided both by di Jorio and by Karl Sittl.[13] Several of the hand movements included in Efron's collection are recognisable in Quintilian's description of Roman oratorical gestures.

Whereas the traditional Southern Italians illustrate gesturally the 'objects' of their mental acts, the East European ghetto Jews characteristically produce a gestural notation for the 'process' of their mental activity. This is not a kind of visual representation but a kind of musical scoring. The traditional Jews studied by Efron very rarely employed their hands and arms in the form of a pencil or brush to depict the 'things' to which they referred. They used their hands and arms, rather, as a baton, to link one proposition to another, to trace the path of a logical journey, and to orchestrate the tempo of their mental movement. The gestures cannot be itemised as 'saying' something; they communicate only to someone who understands the accompanying words, particularly if they are familiar with the meanings of certain stereotyped intonational forms characteristic of Yiddish. Accordingly, when several prominent Jewish actors in New York assisted Efron in his investigations, they were not able, like their Italian counterparts, to create any significant pantomime based on 'Jewish' gestures. For what is produced by these gestural forms is not a pictorial representation of their discourse but an orchestration of it. Almost every gestural inflection corresponds to and acts out a change in logical emphasis, a shift in the direction, or an alteration in the tempo, of thought. These inflections are logical movements, charting the 'high' and 'low', the 'detours' and 'crossroads', of an ideational route. Pressed to its extreme, the logical character of this type of gesture – which cannot be observed in the behaviour of the traditional Southern Italian – becomes most evident at those moments when the movement assumes a quasi-syllogistic form, the bodily inflections corresponding to, embodying, the two premises and the conclusion of the thought pattern.

Efron is thus able to distinguish two classes of gestures. In one type the meaning of the gesture is referential. These gestures may be referential in different ways. The movements of hand, arm and head may refer by means of a sign to a visually present object by actually pointing to it; the movement may depict the form of a visual object, a spatial relationship, or a bodily action; or again the movement may represent either a visual or a logical object by means of a pictorial or a non-pictorial form which has no morphological relationship to the thing represented. All these are varieties of a single basic type: referential gesture. They may be contrasted with a second type in which the meaning of the gesture is notational. These movements have meaning because of the structuring and emphasis they provide for the content of the verbal discourse that accompanies them; they enact bodily the pauses, intensities and inflections of the corresponding speech sequence; they trace in the air the directions taken by a flight of thought. This type of movement is a gestural portrayal, not of the 'thought' or 'object' of reference, but of the felt course of the ideational process.

Given this distinction, we may say that both the Southern Italian and the

East European Jew 'talk with their hands', but this is literally true of the former and metaphorically true of the latter. On the one hand, gestural onomatopoeia (depicting the form of an object, a spatial relationship, or a bodily action) and gestural emblems (representing a visual or logical object by a pictorial or non-pictorial movement which is not morphologically related to the referent) are frequently encountered in the behaviour of the Southern Italian and rarely met with in that of the Eastern Jew. On the other hand, notational gestures (delineating the course of a thought process), so typical of the Eastern Jew, are virtually unobservable in the Southern Italian. The availability of particular gestural repertoires in the hand movements of individuals of either group depends largely on their history, their cultural belongingness; and the appropriate performance of the movements drawn from the repertory both depends upon the habit memory of their members and tacitly recalls their memory of that communal allegiance.

As an example of *proprieties* of the body we might consider table manners. The topic is addressed in explicit detail in a famous treatise by Erasmus, his *De civilitate morum puerilium* of 1530.[14] This book specifies maxims of conduct with respect to what Erasmus calls 'outward bodily propriety'; such 'outward' proprieties, of bodily carriage, gesture, posture, facial expression and dress, being seen as the expression of the 'inner' person. The impact of the treatise was immediate, wide and lasting. In the first six years after its publication it was reprinted more than thirty times; it was rapidly translated into English, French and German; and in all there were more than 130 editions, thirteen of these as late as the eighteenth century. The questions addressed in this treatise, like those treated in Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* and Della Casa's *Galateo*, gave new precision and centrality to the concept of *civilitas*, variously rendered as the French *civilité*, the English *civility*, and the Italian *civiltà*. Since decorum and restraint were essential attributes of civility, it was natural that crucial importance should be assigned to the cultured control of appetite in the most literal sense, and hence to table manners.

Some people, says Erasmus, devour food rather than eat it. They behave as if they were thieves wolfing down their booty or as if they were about to be carried off to prison. They put their hands into the dishes when they are scarcely seated and push so much into their mouths at once that their cheeks bulge like bellows. They eat and drink without even pausing, not because they are hungry or thirsty, but because they can control their movements in no other way. They scratch their heads or play with a knife or are unable to refrain from coughing and snorting and spitting. All such signs of rustic embarrassment and coarseness must be avoided. You should not be the first to take food from a dish. You should not search the

whole dish with your hand or turn the dish around so that a better piece comes to you, but should simply take the first piece that presents itself. It is impolite to lick greasy fingers or to dip bread you have already bitten into the sauce. It is indecorous to offer someone else some of the meat you are eating and it shows a want of elegance to remove chewed food from the mouth and put it back on the plate. And it is good if conversation interrupts the meal from time to time.

In *The Civilizing Process* Norbert Elias fastens upon Erasmus' text, among others, in the course of demonstrating that nothing in modern Western table manners is self-evident or the expression of a 'natural' feeling of delicacy or simply 'reasonable'; if they have become all that, it is by virtue of being a set of particular practices built up slowly in a historical process of long duration.[15] The implements used at the Western table are not implements with obvious purposes and evident usages. Over the course of centuries, and particularly between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, their functions were gradually defined, their forms consolidated, and the values attached to those functions and forms slowly inculcated. The way in which knife, fork and spoon are held and moved was standardised step by step; the practice of using a fork was acquired slowly, as was the habit of taking liquid only with a spoon. By the end of the eighteenth century the French leisured upper class had fully elaborated the standard of table manners that came gradually to be seen as self-evident in Western civilised society as a whole. The shapes of eating utensils are from then on no more than variations on accomplished themes, and the method of handling them remains from that time on unchanged in its essential features. These are a set of historically specific proprieties of the body; they are technical skills imbued with moral values. They are 'forgotten' as maxims only when they have been well remembered as habits.

What is being remembered is a set of rules for defining 'proper' behaviour; the control of appetite in the most literal sense is part of a much wider process which will appear, depending upon our vantage point, either as a structure of feeling or as a pattern of institutional control. These vantage points are reciprocally enlightening since the whole process has to be understood as occurring at two interlocking levels. There is the formation of a type of person whose sensibility is attuned to the more exacting and meticulous promptings of decorum; and there is the formation of a type of society whose control over its members is more stratified and more centralised. At one level there is a particularly strong development of individual self-control. Rules of etiquette impose internalised restraints upon any indiscriminate display of feeling, and teach attentiveness to the finer nuances of propriety and to the distinctions between public and private life. At another level there is a particularly marked development of social

control. Rules of court society impose a well-regulated social distance between classes of people who are distinguishable by publicly observable standards of refined behaviour. The social control which is the prerogative of court society and the self-control which is the attainment of a 'civilised' person are mutually defining. It is the merit of Elias to have seized upon this concomitance, to have shown that what is analytically separable is historically inextricable.

The body is the point of linkage between these two levels. It is in bodily proprieties that the rules of etiquette and the rules of the court are reproduced and remembered. They are remembered as habit-memories, as habitually observed rules of decorum. Decorum enjoins that appetite must be satisfied in appropriate form, especially in the incorporating act par excellence, consumption. The precarious sway of culture over nature is celebrated by making the meal an occasion for the demonstration of taste. This, as Bourdieu reminds us, is a way of denying the primary function of consumption, which is to satisfy a common need, by making the meal an occasion for the celebration of artistic refinement and ethical value.[16] There is a studied commitment to stylisation: in the etiquette governing the use of utensils, the seating plan, the sequence of the meal, in the proprieties observed for serving others and oneself, waiting until the last person served has begun to eat, taking modest helpings, not appearing too eager, and in the tacit censorship of noise and haste which would make too crudely blatant the bodily manifestations of the pleasure in eating. This commitment to stylisation moves the focus of attention from substance and function to form and manner, and by doing so tends to deny the crudely material reality of the things consumed and the act of eating them. Just as the capitalist class were to veil the socially organised system of production which underlay and potentiated the circulation of commodities, so the leisured courtly class veiled the material reality of the act of consumption which underlay and potentiated the circulation of civilities. This masking required a mnemonics of the body.

As regards *ceremonies* of the body, we may consider those practices through which the French nobility of the seventeenth century displayed their privileged status. Systematically in the *Projets de Gouvernement du duc de Bourgogne* of 1714–15, and anecdotally in the *Mémoires*, the Comte de Saint-Simon gives us a picture of the French society of his time.[17] This was a society of strictly graded 'orders' or 'estates', a hierarchy of dignities and qualities marked out by the rigorous observance of titles, ranks and symbols. Saint-Simon gives long and minute prescriptions about ceremonial behaviour: about who must have 'the hand', that is to say the right, in certain situations, about the places of honour, the use of carriages, the bearing of arms, the wearing of costumes. These prescriptions serve a

polemic end. The goal of the *Projets* was avowedly reactionary. In the society of orders and estates, the greatest honour, until the sixteenth century, had been attributed to the profession of arms. But gradually, at least since the reign of Henry IV, the profession of magistrate had begun to receive as much honour as the bearing of arms; the robe became the social equal of the sword. And under Louis XIV many others were ennobled through the exercise of their profession: men of letters, painters, sculptors, architects, doctors, surgeons, chemists, botanists, even the dignity of commerce was acknowledged. Saint-Simon hated this 'reign of the vile bourgeoisie' and the process of 'mechanical ennoblement'. Ennoblement, he argued, should be allowed only for deeds of arms and long military service. The idea of honour as the principle of social classification should be reaffirmed, and this was to be done by re-establishing the essentially military character of the nobility.

Social stratification by 'order', subdivided into 'estates', consisted of a hierarchy of degrees, each one distinct from the other, and organised according to the honour, the rank and esteem attributed to social functions that could have no connection with the production of material goods.[18] All writers agree that nobility is a quality inherent in the person, and seventeenth-century writers, in particular, insist on the quality of hereditary transmission. To be presented at court it was necessary, in principle, to belong to the ancient nobility. From 1732 it was necessary to prove three hundred years of military nobility without known beginning; a ruling of 1760 required that for such a privilege one should belong to a family traceable as noble back before 1400. Genealogies, which taught the true social position of people, the reasons for which they had allied or misallied themselves with this family or that, were highly prized. Saint-Simon, somewhat scornfully, wishing to show that Louis XIV betrayed an ignorance which 'sometimes made him fall, in public, into the most gross absurdities', gives of this ignorance two examples, which are that the king, not knowing either that Renel belonged to the family of Clermont-Gallerande or that Saint-Herem belonged to that of Montmorin, treated these two men as though they were of low extraction, and that, even when disabused of his error with respect to Saint-Herem, it still had to be explained to him 'what these houses were, for their names conveyed nothing to him'.[19] La Roque, more piously, said that 'every man who is the issue of great and illustrious persons senses always in the depths of his heart a certain impulse which urges him to imitate them: and their memory incites him to glory and fine deeds'.[20] La Bruyère, more wryly, said that a man about court, if he wished to sustain credulity in the rank he claimed for himself, 'must talk to all and sundry about my line, my branch, my name, my coat of arms'.[21] The genealogy might be fabricated; but noble

privileges were ceremonially referred to ancestors whose achievements and merits were held to have endured in the blood. Nothing demonstrates more evidently the extent to which it was necessary, in a society of estates, to claim honour, not by reference to the usefulness of functions performed, but by explicit reference to the memory, or at least the ostensible memory, of society.

My lineage, my branch, my name, my coat of arms: all these terms, while insistently referring to the qualities inherent in the possessor, express those qualities in an idealised form; they allude in a somewhat etherealised manner to something that is distinctly and directly corporeal: blood. The value of blood is that of a sign; one may say of one's ancestors that they have shed it in a certain way and of oneself that one is of the same blood. The differentiation into orders and estates, the system of marriage alliances, the value of a noble descent – all show that the blood relation is crucial in the mechanisms and ceremonies of power. Here, as Foucault says, power speaks *through* blood; it is a reality with a symbolic function.[22] The true nobility is a race. But if blood proves membership of an ancient group, that membership must also be visibly displayed. It is displayed through ceremonial privileges and through ceremonial avocations.

Life at the French court was built around ceremonies of privilege. Its daily routine followed a fixed public sequence.[23] This began with the royal *lever* during which the king said his prayers in public; he was dressed in public, he walked to Mass attended by courtiers, he dined in public, he admitted certain courtiers to his leisure activities at the hunt or visiting stables and gardens, he welcomed the whole court to more formal evening entertainments, he ended the day publicly with the royal *coucher*. This daily ceremonial sequence was set apart from the king's directly political work as a ruler, his attendance at council meetings and his discussion with individual ministers. The group of courtiers did not advise the king as ruler; the formal display of their presence at Court bore ceremonial witness to the order of a blood-tie which linked his right to rule and their right to rank. Their uniquely social pre-eminence was attested by numerous privileges. To be part of the daily routine of the king's *lever* and *coucher*, to wait on him at table, to play billiards with him, to accompany him hunting or during his walks in the grounds at Versailles, were highly valued honours. It was an honour too to attend the evening entertainments, the *appartements*, which took place several times a week, with music, dancing, card-playing and buffets. Greater honours still were reserved for a more restricted blood group at court, the *ducs et pairs*. They alone were allowed to enter the courts of the royal palaces on horseback or in carriages; they had precedence immediately after the princes of the blood at baptism, marriages, funerals, and royal banquets; in the marriage contracts of royal

children they signed after princes of the blood; they were addressed as 'cousin' by the king and had the right of the honourable epithets of 'Monseigneur' and 'Votre Grandeur'; they alone could wear the ducal crown and the ducal coat; they entered the *parlement* wearing swords, were seated in raised positions, were the first to be allowed to speak. These ceremonial privileges were a mnemonics of the body, a constant reminder of the order of estates.

Ceremonial avocations, no less than ceremonial privileges, display membership of an ancient group. These avocations represent an investment of time and skill in a particular type of symbolic capital: the objects endowed with the greatest symbolic power are those which display the quality inherent in the possessor by clearly demonstrating the quality required in their appropriation.[24] Objects of symbolic, as distinct from financial, capital are as it were locked into the whole life history, and therefore the memories, of those who possess them. For part of the point of what is possessed is precisely that it cannot be managed by leading a life independently of the specific demands of what is possessed. And part of the point of what is possessed is that it is not independent of the past context in which it was acquired. Objects attesting to nobility must be objects which cannot be acquired either by proxy or in haste. To own a chateau or manor house is not primarily to display disposal over money; one must appropriate also the skill of bottling and tasting fine wines, the secrets of fishing, the skills of gardening, the knowledge of the hunt. All these competences are ancient, they can be learned only slowly, they can be enjoyed only by those who take their time, they manifest a concern for things that last. These require that one occupy one's time not economically but ceremonially. Ceremonial avocations, less formally but no less evidently than ceremonial privileges, affirm the principle of hereditary transmission.

Ceremonies, proprieties and techniques of the body exist along a spectrum of possibilities extending from the more or less formal to the more or less informal. All in varying ways entail cognitive memory. Thus ceremonies of the body, such as are exemplified in court etiquette at Versailles, remind performers of a system of honour and hereditary transmission as the organising principle of social classification. Blood relations are signs cognitively known and recalled through the visibly elaborate display of privileges and avocations which make sense only by constant reference to that principle. The ceremonial display of presence at court here establishes a relationship between the organisation of courtly space and the stratification of social relations, behaviour in courtly space being both a form of cultural representation and a mnemonic system. Again, proprieties of the body, such as those illustrated in the development

of table manners in early modern Europe, remind performers of a set of rules for defining 'proper' behaviour and for the control of appetite, where the category of appetite is to be understood both literally and by metaphorical extension to a whole structure of individual sensibility and institutional control. Rules of stylisation deny the crudely material reality of the things consumed and the act of consuming them. These rules of proper style express through performance a socially and historically specific distinction between civilisation and nature. Finally, techniques of the body, such as those exemplified by the gestural behaviour of the traditional Southern Italian, would not be possible without the performers' cognitive memory of a communal lexicon. This gestural vocabulary, comprising at least a hundred and fifty items, is a referential system. The very things and notions referred to by the accompanying words are illustrated through a repertoire of movements automatically performed.

In each of these cases, performers are reminded of something with cognitive content. But in each case, too, it is through the act of performance that they are reminded of it. Bodily practices of a culturally specific kind entail a combination of cognitive and habit-memory. The appropriate performance of the movements contained in the repertoire of the group not only reminds the performers of systems of classification which the group holds to be important; it requires also the exercise of habit-memory. In the performances explicit classifications and maxims tend to be taken for granted to the extent that they have been remembered as habits. Indeed, it is precisely because what is performed is something to which the performers are habituated that the cognitive content of what the group remembers in common exercises such persuasive and persistent force.

3

It is not enough to chart the range and itemise the types of behaviour that fall under the category of incorporated practices; we need also to see precisely how these practices are incorporated, that is to say, we need to seize on their habitual quality.

Consider the behaviour of Proust's Saint-Loup, as observed by the narrator Marcel:

> On the other hand there were moments when my mind distinguished in Saint-Loup a personality more generalised than his own, that of the 'nobleman', which like an indwelling spirit moved his limbs, ordered his gestures and his actions; then, at such moments, although in his company, I was alone, as I should have been in front of a landscape the harmony of which I could understand. He was no more than an object the properties of which, in my musing, I sought to explore. The

> discovery in him of this pre-existent, this immemorial being, this aristocrat who was precisely what Robert aspired not to be, gave me intense joy, but a joy of the mind rather than the feelings. In the moral and physical agility which gave so much grace to his kindnesses, in the ease with which he offered my grandmother his carriage and helped her into it, in the alacrity with which he sprang from the box when he was afraid that I might be cold, to spread his own cloak over my shoulders, I sensed not only the inherited litheness of the mighty hunters who had been for generations the ancestors of this young man who had no pretensions except to intellectuality, their scorn of wealth which, subsisting in him side by side with his enjoyment of it simply because it enabled him to entertain his friends more lavishly, made him so carelessly shower his riches at their feet; I sensed in it above all the certainty or the illusion in the minds of those great lords of being 'better than other people', thanks to which they had not been able to hand down to Saint-Loup that anxiety to show that one is 'just as good as the next man', the dread of seeming too assiduous of which he was indeed wholly innocent and which mars with so much stiffness and awkwardness the most sincere plebeian civility.[25]

Even if we mentally subtract from this description the social snobbery animating it and the theory of inherited characteristics embedded within it, and by relegating these aspects of encomium and explanation consider the passage as far as possible strictly as description, the reader will surely feel that it contains an element that is both precise and just. The feature of the passage on which I wish to focus is the embodied character of the object described. Most of the items of behaviour and qualities of character singled out for praise are presented either directly in terms of particular forms of bodily movement and expression, or else in ways that would usually be at least partially identified by means of such bodily expressions. Thus something 'like an indwelling spirit moved his limbs', and 'ordered his gestures and his actions', showing itself in 'moral and physical agility', in kindness infused with 'grace', in help offered with 'ease' and 'alacrity'; and this entire accomplishment of 'ease' and 'litheness' prompts the spectator, Marcel, to contrast it with the 'stiffness' and 'awkwardness' which he observes in what he calls 'plebeian civility'. The accumulated words and phrases are drawn mainly from the impressions which Marcel forms of Saint-Loup in the context of his bodily presence.

Saint-Loup's behaviour impresses Marcel not only by virtue of the qualities rendered transparent through it; what brings Marcel to remark particularly on those qualities is the fact that Saint-Loup consciously wishes to disown certain characteristics of the aristocrat's life. Proust shows us that this conscious disowning is belied by the primary impression. The impressiveness of the effect created by Saint-Loup's behaviour resides at least in part in the contrast between a notion of behaviour ('the aristocrat who was precisely what Robert aspired not to be') and the

behaviour itself (where the 'nobleman' in Saint-Loup 'like an indwelling spirit moved his limbs, ordered his gestures and his actions'). This contrast between a notion and a practice of behaviour appears in the form of a contrast between an 'ease' that is 'natural' and an 'ease' that is 'forced'. The ease that is called natural is perceived as natural because of its spontaneous casualness of manner and its even flow of performance. The ease that is called forced is perceived as forced because of the evident presence in that behaviour which intends to display ease of 'false notes', mere signs of a manner of behaving: an anxious reference to what is considered a legitimate norm, an uneasiness about the correct manner to adopt, a respect for a cultural code that is recognised rather than known. The point of remarking upon the contrast between an ease of manner that is called natural and an ease of manner that is called forced is that this contrast cannot be appropriately expressed by saying that the two types of behaviour obey two different codes, or by saying that one type obeys an elaborated while the other obeys a restricted code of behaviour. Marcel's observation of Saint-Loup's behaviour shows us that no notion of a code of bodily performances, however elaborated that code is imagined to be, can comprehend the object described when the object described is a practice of bodily behaviour. For the essential distinction Proust is making here refers not to the range of possibilities made potentially available by the code in question, but rather to the quite different contrast between being able to *recognise* a code and being able to *incorporate* it.[26] Proust's description reminds us that we judge a code of bodily practice to be merely recognised, or alternatively to be incorporated, primarily from the impressions we form of people by virtue of their bodily presence and actions. The impressions created by physical conformation and bodily carriage are those manifestations of the person least susceptible to willed modification, and it is for this reason that they are held to signify the habitual 'nature' of the person.

Saint-Loup's ease arises from the assurance that he is able to embody the socially legitimate body and so is able to impose the norms by which his own body is perceived and accepted by others. It is the body of one who has the habit of ruling. That is why political disputes so frequently resort to visual caricature, in which the body-image of the rulers is physically distorted; caricature deforms in order to ridicule the imposition of an embodied authority. It is a version of such embodied authority which Saint-Loup incarnates, not by mechanically executing codes or punctiliously applying rules, which would have blemished the exemplary effect, but by the prestigious ease of his practised performance. The counter-pole to Saint-Loup's ease is petit-bourgeois embarrassment. This arises from the continual feeling of a gap between the socially legitimate body and the

body which one has and is. Unable to incarnate an acknowledged model, one tries vainly to compensate for this inability through the proliferation of the signs of bodily control. This is why the petit-bourgeois experience of the world is characterised by timidity and unease: the unease of those who feel that their bodies betray them and who regard their bodies, as it were, from the outside and through the appraising eyes of others, surveying and correcting their practices. This too is a habit of performance; but it is a habitual experience of the body as a condition of unease, as a perpetual source of awkwardness, as the all too tangible occasion for experiencing a fissure between the body one might wish to have and the body one sees in the mirror: a fissure of which one is being perpetually reminded both by the reactions of others and by the process of self-monitoring by which they notice and try to rectify the gap between the socially legitimate body and the body one has.

Consider now a passage in which the difficulties of someone at an early stage of learning to play jazz on the piano are described:

> The music was not mine. It was going on all around me. I was in the midst of the music like a lost newcomer who finds himself suddenly in the midst of a Mexico City traffic circle, but with no particular humor in the situation . . . I started going up with a fast, sputtering, and nervous scale course, and the next chord came up and I had to shoot back down to the middle of the keyboard, to get the thing I knew how to do well done for it, and then there was the next chord. My hand jumped around from place to place like Chaplin stabbing about with his wrenches . . . My looking was occasionally needed to keep the terrain under regard, to aid large leaps necessary to get from one part onto another, a looking that felt frantic, like searching for a parking place in a big hurry. The music was literally out of hand.[27]

This is one of many passages in which David Sudnow analyses his attempts over five years to play jazz, in the course of which he had many occasions to meditate on the failures in what he calls, in a fine phrase, the management of improvised conduct. By observing the minutiae of his body's movements he shows how a whole variety of expanding skills, co-ordinated ways of looking, moving, reaching, thinking, have to be developed if one is to be able to execute correct successions of chords. For imagine this single item in the repertoire: Here are chord A and chord B, separated by some distance along the keyboard. To play A you must have a tightly compressed hand; to play B you need an extended spread of the hand. To play A you must align your body with the keyboard in the way you come at a typewriter to establish contact with the home position. To play B you must adjust the axis of your hand relative to the keyboard, the little finger reaching further away from the body's centre than the thumb. The distance between A and B cannot just be crossed; it must be spon-

taneously traversed in a specific manner. If you are to go correctly from A to B, your hand, indeed your whole body, must be directed from the start not just toward where B is; your hand must be preparing along the course of your journey to land in the right productional shape as it arrives at B in correct tempo. As your hand moves from A toward B a smooth course of changing hand shape must be accomplished; all the necessary minute adjustments have to occur spontaneously and simultaneously in the appropriate reconfiguration of your hand and in a slight readjustment of your body.

Beginners get from A to B disjointedly. They play A, and set out for B without going for it in the right way from the outset, without moving to the whole of B and in correct tempo. Before they have become skilled in playing scales, beginners hunt and peck at the keyboard, their fingers hesitate and lose their place. They continually sense a separation between the 'it' of the piano and the 'me' of the pianist. A more advanced pianist, playing a rapid and intricately winding passage and its reiteration, will frequently come close but slightly miss the mark; will have a sense of 'struggling to make it happen' and will 'sound like someone trying hard to say something'. Sudnow suggests a number of analogies for this experience of disjointedness. Failed improvisations are undermined in the same way as when one first gets the knack of a complex skill, like riding a bicycle or skiing; the attempt to sustain an easy management of the skill breaks down and 'you struggle to stay balanced, keep falling, and then almost suddenly several revolutions of the pedals are sustained with the bicycle seeming to go off on its own, and you try to keep it up, and it disintegrates'. These attempted improvisations recall the confusions of Charlie Chaplin on the assembly line in *Modern Times*. The conveyor belt continuously carries a ceaseless collection of nuts and bolts to be tightened; Chaplin holds two wrenches in his hands, falls behind time, rushes to catch up, screws nuts and bolts faster still in an effort to keep ahead, misses one or two because he has become frantic, gets ejected through a corridor in a jerky dance. Or again, the difference between disjointedly trying to play jazz and catching on to what successful playing feels like, is similar to the difference between 'the aphasic's or stutterer's or brain-damaged speaker's or new foreigner's attempts' to construct a smooth sentence, and 'the competent three year-old's flowing utterance'.

What does it mean to achieve this flowing utterance? It means that the process of looking for notes, the explicit seeking and finding of recognisable and visually grasped places out there, has become redundant. It means that one has acquired, from a habitual position at the middle of the piano, an incorporated sense of places and distances and pressures. To be

able to sit at a piano and get an initial orientation by the slightest touch 'anywhere' on the keyboard; to bring your finger precisely to a spot 'two feet' to your left, where half an inch off or a different pressure on arrival would have been a mistake; to move another 'seventeen inches' and strike another note just as precisely; to move another 'twenty-three inches' just as accurately; to execute all these moves rapidly and spontaneously as when, if ordered to touch your ear or your knee, you move your hand to your ear or your knee by the shortest route and without having to think of the initial position of your hand, or that of your ear, or the path between them; to be as familiar with a terrain of hands and keyboard whose respective surfaces have become as intimately known as the respective surfaces of your tongue and teeth and palate: to do all this, which is to master a range of skills any competent jazz player has at his command, is to have a habitual knowledge – one might equally say a remembrance – in the hands; it is to have, as Sudnow puts it, 'an embodied way of accomplishing distances' which can be accomplished only through 'a long course of incorporation'.[28]

What we have learnt from the examples described by Proust and Sudnow may now be drawn together in certain general propositions about the nature of habit as it affects incorporated practice.

Habits are more than technical abilities. When we think of habitual behaviour in terms of walking and swimming, knitting and typewriting, we tend to think of habits as skills, technical abilities of varying degrees of complexity which are at our disposal but which exist apart from our likes and dislikes and lack any quality of urgency or impulsion or marked affective disposition. We think of them as skills waiting to be called into action on the appropriate occasion. Dewey suggests that if we wish to appreciate the peculiar place and force of habit in our activities we should consider the case of bad habits: an addiction to alcohol and drugs, gambling and idling. When we reflect on such habits we will be impressed by the role played by desire in habitual behaviour. For what we can observe clearly in the case of bad habits is the hold they exert over us, the way in which they impel us toward certain courses of action. These habits entail an inherent tendency to act in a certain way, an impulsion strong enough to lead us habitually to do things which we tell ourselves we would prefer not to do, and to act in ways that belie or override our conscious decisions and formal resolutions. Dewey's point is that this feature is not specific to a particular class of bad habits; these characteristics of bad habits are precisely the features which are most instructive about all habits.[29] They remind us, as Marcel Proust's and David Sudnow's reflections on habitual skills also lead us to see, that all habits are affective dispositions: that a

predisposition formed through the frequent repetition of a number of specific acts is an intimate and fundamental part of ourselves, that such habits have power because they are so intimately a part of ourselves.

A habit is more than a disposition. Better than the term disposition, the word habit gives us a way of referring to that kind of activity in which a cluster of features are collected together to form a practice: an activity which is acquired in the sense that it is influenced by previous activity; which is ready for overt manifestation; and which remains operative in some subdued way even when it is not the obviously dominant activity. We might choose the word disposition to express all this, but it would be a little misleading. The term disposition suggests something latent or potential, something which requires a positive stimulus outside ourselves for it to become actively engaged. The term habit conveys the sense of operativeness, of a continuously practised activity. It conveys the fact of exercise, the reinforcing effect of repeated acts. This is the feature of habit that is brought into prominence by considering technical skills whose exercise diminishes the conscious attention with which our acts are performed. When we are learning to walk, to swim, to ride, to skate or to sing, we frequently interrupt ourselves by unnecessary movements and false notes. When we have become proficient the results follow with the minimum of muscular action to bring them about and they flow from a single cue. By exercise the body comes to co-ordinate an increasing range of muscular activities in an increasingly automatic way, until awareness retreats, the movement flows 'involuntarily', and there occurs a firm and practised sequence of acts which take their fluent course. The feats of acrobats and jugglers illustrate an extreme version of this, as also do the prestigious skills described by Proust and Sudnow. But automatic exercise can be banal as well as prestigious and, instead of being smooth and harmonious, it can be habitually clumsy and disharmonious. Patterns of body use become ingrained through our interactions with objects. There are the apparently automatic, long familiar movements of artisans, the way a carpenter wields a plane and the weaver uses a loom, so habitual that, if asked, they would say that they had a feeling of the proper management of the implement in their hands; there are the ways that working at a machine or at a desk imposes and reinforces a set of postural behaviours which we come to regard as 'belonging' to the factory worker or the sedentary white-collar worker. Postures and movements which are habit memories become sedimented into bodily conformation. Actors can mimic the impressions, doctors can examine the results.

Above all, therefore, habit is not just a sign. Embodied experience, of which habitual practices form a significant part, has recently been subjected to a cognitive imperialism and interpreted in terms of a linguistic

model of meaning. Society, made in the image and likeness of language, assumes the role of endowing with meaning the physical bodies and behaviours of individuals. The body, reduced to the status of a sign, signifies by virtue of being a highly adaptable vehicle for the expression of mental categories. And metaphors of bodily activity, like 'falling', are seen as expressing a concept in terms of a bodily image. This is to view understanding as a process in which a sense-datum is subsumed under an idea, and to view the body as an object arbitrarily carrying meanings. But, as Merleau-Ponty has rightly remarked, the phenomenon of habit should prompt us to revise our notion of 'understand' and our notion of the body.[30] To know how to type, for instance, is neither to know the place of each letter among the keys, nor is it to have acquired a conditioned reflex for each letter, which is set in motion by each letter as it comes before the eye. We know where the letters are on the typewriter as we know where one of our limbs is. We remember this through knowledge bred of familiarity in our lived space. The movement of the typist's fingers may be describable; yet it is not present to the typist as a trajectory through space that can be described, but as a certain adjustment of the typist's mobility. Here a meaningful practice does not coincide with a sign; meaning cannot be reduced to a sign which exists on a separate 'level' outside the immediate sphere of the body's acts. Habit is a knowledge and a remembering in the hands and in the body; and in the cultivation of habit it is our body which 'understands'.

4

It has long been acknowledged that both incorporating and inscribing practices may be the objects of our interpretive activity. This acknowledgement dates back at least to Schleiermacher's proposal of a general hermeneutics. Interpretation is now seen as the explicit, conscious understanding of meanings under conditions where an understanding of those meanings can no longer be presumed to be a self-evident process but is viewed instead as intrinsically problematic; it is here assumed that misunderstandings about what we seek to interpret will arise not occasionally but systematically. Nor is our interpretive activity tied to any particular subject-matter; the unity of hermeneutics resides in the unity of a procedure which is applicable to any object and any practice capable of bearing a meaning. Works of art, musical compositions, theatrical performances, ritual acts, coins, prehistoric monuments and implements, bodily expressions, gestures, postures and movements – Schleiermacher's move explicitly makes them all into possible objects of interpretive activity.[31]

Yet although incorporated practices are in principle included as possible

objects of hermeneutic inquiry, in practice hermeneutics has taken inscription as its privileged object. Hermeneutics arose out of philology; and throughout its history it has returned to philology, that is, to the kind of relationship with tradition which focusses on the transmission of what has been inscribed, on texts, or, at the very least, on the transmission of documents and monuments to which authority is ascribed because they are held to have a status comparable to texts, to be constituted in the image and likeness of a text. Thus Schleiermacher, who founded a general theory of interpretation, was the exegete of the New Testament and the translator of Plato. Thus Dilthey, who produced a critique of historical reason, located the specificity of interpretation (*Auslegung*) as contrasted with direct understanding (*Verstehen*) in the phenomenon of fixation by writing and, more generally, inscription. Thus Ricoeur, who insists on the centrality of hermeneutics for the human sciences as a whole, remarks also on the peculiar character of the work that is written, to which traditional hermeneutics ascribed the authority of model, as lying in its capacity to transcend the social conditions of its production and reception, and thus to open itself to a potentially unlimited series of socially situated readings.[32]

Inscriptions, and hence texts, were privileged objects of interpretation because the activity of interpretation itself became an object of reflection, rather than being simply practised, in a particular context. As a cumulative process, reflection on the practice of interpretation arose in modern European culture as a result of the attempt to understand what had been handed down within that culture from the past; only secondarily and subsequently did the activity of interpretation appear problematic in the form of attempts to understand geographically distant non-European cultures. An explicit awareness that we can hand on a tradition only if we can interpret a tradition took shape when the practice of handing on the traditional substance of European culture ceased to be self-evident and became an occasion of systematic misunderstanding. But that occurred because this substance had a certain form. What is handed down in the form of a text within a single culture is transmitted like nothing else that comes down to us from the past in that culture. Detached both from its producers and from any specific addressees, a text can lead a life of its own; it enjoys relative cultural autonomy. It is the ideality of the word that raises linguistic objects beyond the finiteness and transience of the remnants of past existence. What has been fixed in writing enters into a sphere of publicly accessible meanings in which everyone who can subsequently read that writing has potentially a share in its meanings.

This is preeminently the case with respect to two types of text in particular. Jurisprudence and theology are essentially hermeneutic procedures because both depend on the exegesis of written statements. Legal hermeneutics is concerned with interpreting principles of behaviour which have to be observed as criteria for evaluating social behaviour within the framework of a valid legal order. Theological hermeneutics is a form of interpretation whose principles and limits are prescribed by a holy written text and by the way in which the interpreter of that text is bound by the confession of a system of religious beliefs. In both cases, in legal as in theological interpretation, application is an integral element of understanding. In legal as in theological hermeneutics there is a tension between, on the one hand, the text that has been set down, whether legal statute or religious proclamation, and, on the other hand, the sense that is arrived at by applying that text in the particular present moment of interpretation, whether in legal judgement or in preaching and liturgy. Neither a legal system nor a religious proclamation can be understood purely as historical documents. A legal system has to be made concretely valid in the present by being interpreted. A religious proclamation in the very process of being proclaimed is held to exercise a saving effect. In both cases the act of interpretation is in principle normative; in both cases the process of understanding is an act of application.[33]

More specifically still, two texts have figured largely in the history of hermeneutics, Roman Law and Holy Scripture, and the changing fate of interpretation in both cases has been strikingly analogous. Roman Law as it was known from the Codification of Justinian had authority as a binding set of legal propositions for nearly a thousand years.[34] Particularly in the late Middle Ages, secular legal science was almost entirely focussed on the exegesis of Roman Law; at Bologna its components were collated and organised into a text that remained until the sixteenth century the standard edition of the *Corpus Juris*; and it was through the study of this text that Roman concepts were adapted to the needs of medieval Europe. But this process of assimilation depended on premises that were never systematically examined. It was assumed that the Roman Law of the later Empire was a perfect system, a self-contained and internally consistent whole, the rules of which were valid universally. And it was assumed that the Roman Law as it was taught to medieval jurists was identical with the law of Rome as it was understood by Justinian. These premises rested, in turn, on a certain idea of Rome. The glossators believed that the 'Imperium Romanum' of Justinian had never disappeared; his legislation was thought to have continued directly in existence in the Christian Empire and to be still valid. Because of the supposed metaphysical identity of the *Corpus Christianum* and the Roman Empire, it was thought that the world in which people lived was still legally the same as that of the ancient empire.

These assumptions were undermined by the work of the legal humanists.[35] Impressed by the authority of Roman Law, they wanted to recover

the exact original meaning of its legal texts. To do this, they set out to rediscover the precise meanings of all the technical and obscure words contained in the texts, by establishing the various meanings which these words possessed in ancient legal texts and in other works of antiquity. The original Justinian text, they discovered, was barnacled by accretions. It had become doubly defaced. It was distorted by the original Byzantine compilers, who had abridged the classical texts and altered them without acknowledgement. And it was distorted by subsequent scholastic commentators, who had further obscured the original structure of the corpus by their elaborate glosses. The effect of philological purification was to reverse the intention animating it. Meaning at the outset to improve Roman Law jurisprudence, the humanists ended by undermining the premises on which it had rested. This result had a negative and a positive aspect. Negatively, it led the legal humanists to the conclusion that the Codification of Justinian was neither perfect nor complete. They found, on the contrary, that much of Roman legal practice had been either omitted or imperfectly recorded in it; that what was included was frequently incoherent; and that many of these loosely assembled enactments referred to the specific requirements of ancient Rome and had little bearing on the different legal conditions of contemporary Europe. Positively, this led the legal humanists to reconstruct the civilisation of ancient Rome historically, as a culture wholly separate from their own. The system of Roman Law was sufficiently comprehensive to provide a detailed and systematic description of the main institutions and ideas of the society of which it formed so significant a part; it was not possible to translate the language of Roman Law back into its original meanings without also reconstructing a picture of Imperial Roman society as a whole. The closeness of philological attention which they brought to its texts increased their sense of historical distance from those texts.

The history of theological interpretation executed a parallel trajectory. Here too a canonic text enjoyed authority over a long period.[36] Jerome's Latin translation of Scripture, dating from about 400, was the authoritative Bible of the Western church throughout the Middle Ages. Nearly all biblical commentaries were based on this Latin text without regard to the wording in the original languages, and whenever a translation into the vernacular was made this text served as the original. The longevity of the authority rested on the premise that it was a faithful, final and sacred reproduction of Holy Writ that must not be changed. This official version of the Bible was esteemed in the knowledge that fathers and forefathers had read and spoken the same words as did subsequent generations. Living languages might change, but the stability of religious belief demanded that the wording of Holy Writ be permanent. The archaic

language might cause single words or even complete passages to be no longer fully understood, but reassurance stemmed from the thought that life was lived, as it were, in quotation. The resultant hostility to any attempt to change the text of the Vulgate received reinforcement from the way in which medieval interpretation was assimilated into the study of the text. Great exegetic edifices brought all the sayings of the Bible and all the different interpretations of the Fathers of the Church into agreement. The commentated Latin Bible published in Basle in 1498 and republished in 1502 illustrates the procedure. Even the layout of its pages reveals the operative principle. In the middle of each page there is the text of the Bible in large letters. Between the lines the interlinear gloss is printed in small letters. The commentaries, frequently occupying more space than the passages they interpret, are printed in closest proximity to the biblical text. The text is meant to be read in accordance with the tradition of exegesis which encloses the official Latin version of the Bible.

This premise was undermined by the philology of the humanists, who aimed to recover the exact historical context for the biblical texts and produced new and more precise translations of the ancient Greek and Hebrew writings.[37] Valla announced that philologists could pronounce on doctrinal matters, since no one was entitled to interpret the Bible unless they could read it in the original Hebrew or Greek. Reuchlin discussed the words of Scripture as a grammarian, proposing a method of reading which traced the meaning of every word in the original Hebrew. Erasmus produced a version of the Bible in which the Greek text was printed side by side with his new translation, and in which he explained in annotations at the end precisely where and why his version rejected the text of the Vulgate. The more detailed knowledge of the New Testament that emerged from all this activity undermined the authority of the Vulgate and questioned the role of the Church. The Vulgate was undermined since many previous assumptions about the history of scriptural documents, for example, about their authorship, were shown to be inventions, and since the philologists could demonstrate the inaccuracy of the text on which medieval commentaries had relied. The Church was questioned because the biblical view of the world came to be seen as very different from the world of those who commented on it; and because the contemporary organisation and claims of the Papacy came to be seen as seriously at odds with the original institutions and ideals of the early Church.

Two homologous processes occurred in the study of Roman Law and the Bible. These processes arose from a similar intention and arrived at a comparable result. Medieval and humanist interpreters were alike in accepting antiquity as a model and a norm, in accepting its teachings and canons as authoritative. Where they differed was in the methods chosen to

understand antiquity. Medieval interpreters adopted a method of assimilation, synthesis and allegory. They felt no need to distinguish text and commentary, to investigate the way in which the life of the past differed from that of the present, or to establish a systematic method which would enable them to do so. Instead, they adopted what Panofsky has called 'a principle of disjunction': a disjunction between the employment of classical forms and the insistence that these forms carried messages of contemporary significance.[38] This led to an imaginative conflation between the life of antiquity and the life of the contemporary world. The humanist interpreters called for a return to the pure text. This led them to confront a series of problems never considered before in a systematic way. Questions arose concerning the tests of documentary authenticity; the relative authority of different types of texts; the indications of an author's bias; and the logical basis of our beliefs about the past. In dealing with these problems there emerged a method for establishing the authenticity of documents; a definition of the range of sources and a discrimination between original and secondary; criteria for deciding upon the bias of a source; and a formulation of the logical basis of historical belief. Cumulatively, these questions were related together, and led to the formation of a method and theory of historical criticism: an act of critical reading.[39]

This result was paradoxical. The highest aim of the humanists was not originally to 'understand' their models, but to imitate them. For them the word 'classical' expressed a consciousness of something enduring, a sense that the duration of the power of a text to speak directly to subsequent generations was unlimited; and for us too the word 'classical' contains a residue of that meaning. The humanists studied the texts of the ancient world, then, because that world represented for them a norm, something to be copied and imitated. Yet the more accurately and the more thoroughly they pursued their textual studies, the more evident it became that copying and imitation were impossible. The ancient texts, if understood literally, 'as they really were', must be seen as belonging to an ancient world, as bound up with a whole context of meanings that could not be directly assimilated into contemporary culture. Reversing their original intention, the humanists ended by questioning the normative status of their privileged objects. We can express the same process the other way round. What impelled them to establish the foundations of historical discipline – the sense that special techniques were required to investigate the past viewed as an independent field of study without normative claims on the investigator – was the belief that a certain past was normative. This was the dialectic of historical enlightenment: an ironic reversal grounded in the possibilities inherent in inscription.

Inscribing practices have always formed the privileged story, incor-

porating practices the neglected story, in the history of hermeneutics. The ground was prepared for this backgrounding of bodily practices by modern natural science. The mechanisation of physical reality in the exact natural sciences meant that the body was conceptualised as one object among others in an object-domain made up of moving bodies which obey lawful processes. The body was regarded as a material thing: it was materialised. Bodily practices as such are here lost from view. The response to the mechanisation of physical reality, first in the *Geisteswissenschaften* and later in the 'linguistic turn', reinforced this effect rather than counteracting it. A newly constituted object-domain, the communication of meanings according to rules, could in principle include the body in its domain but did so in practice only peripherally. The object-domain of hermeneutics was defined in terms of what was taken to be the distinctive feature of the human species, first consciousness and later language. When the defining feature was taken to be consciousness, it was acknowledged that the expression of meanings was coupled with human organisms, but in such a coupling nothing more is seen than an empirical fact; the primary objects are canonic texts, and the life of human beings, as a historical life, is understood as a life reported on and narrated, not life as a physical existence. When the defining feature of the human species was seen as language, the body was 'readable' as a text or code, but the body is regarded as the arbitrary bearer of meanings; bodily practices are acknowledged, but in an etherealised form.[40]

There is a good reason why this should have happened. The fact that incorporating practices have for long been backgrounded as objects of explicit interpretive attention is due not so much to a peculiarity of hermeneutics as rather to a defining feature of incorporating practices themselves. For these practices, as we have noted, cannot be well accomplished without a diminution of the conscious attention that is paid to them. The study of habit teaches us this. Any bodily practice, swimming or typing or dancing, requires for its proper execution a whole chain of interconnected acts, and in the early performances of the action the conscious will has to choose each of the successive events that make up the action from a number of wrong alternatives; but habit eventually brings it about that each event precipitates an appropriate successor without an alternative appearing to offer itself and without reference to the conscious will. When we first learn to swim or type or dance we interrupt ourselves at every step by unnecessary movements; when we have become proficient, the results flow with the minimum of muscular action needed to bring them about. Even if the ideational centres are still involved when we successfully perform the chain of acts which together make up the practice, they are involved minimally, as is evident from the fact that our attention may be

partly or almost wholly directed elsewhere while accomplishing the practice. The bodily movements are accompanied by sensations, but sensations to which we are normally inattentive; our attention is attracted when they go wrong.

Incorporating practices therefore provide a particularly effective system of mnemonics. In this there is an element of paradox. For it is true that whatever is written, and more generally whatever is inscribed, demonstrates, by the fact of being inscribed, a will to be remembered and reaches as it were its fulfilment in the formation of a canon. It is equally true that incorporating practices, by contrast, are largely traceless and that, as such, they are incapable of providing a means by which any evidence of a will to be remembered can be 'left behind'. In consequence, we commonly consider inscription to be the privileged form for the transmission of a society's memories, and we see the diffusion and elaboration of a society's systems of inscription as making possible an exponential development of its capacity to remember.

Yet it would be misleading, on this account, to underestimate the mnemonic importance and persistence of what is incorporated. Incorporating practices depend for their particular mnemonic effect on two distinctive features: their mode of existence and their mode of acquisition. They do not exist 'objectively', independently of their being performed. And they are acquired in such a way as not to require explicit reflection on their performance. It is important to notice that the relatively informal sets of actions I have referred to as culturally specific bodily practices enjoy significant features in common with the relatively more formal sets of actions I have called commemorative ceremonies. For commemorative ceremonies also are preserved only through their performance; and, because of their performativity and their formalisation, they too are not easily susceptible to critical scrutiny and evaluation by those habituated to their performance. Both commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices therefore contain a measure of insurance against the process of cumulative questioning entailed in all discursive practices. This is the source of their importance and persistence as mnemonic systems. Every group, then, will entrust to bodily automatisms the values and categories which they are most anxious to conserve. They will know how well the past can be kept in mind by a habitual memory sedimented in the body.

There is, then, an inertia in social structures that is not adequately explained by any of the current orthodoxies of what a social structure is. This has implications for social anthropologists, for historians, and for sociologists and social theorists generally.

It has implications for social anthropologists. Not only have I been suggesting that memory, or tradition, gets passed on in non-textual and

non-cognitive ways. I am also suggesting that those who have seen the importance of performance, which is (mostly) to say social anthropologists, have emphasised their importance for 'making explicit' the existing social structure; not for emphasising, marking, defining a continuity from the past. Social anthropologists since Malinowski and symbolic anthropologists since Durkheim – witness Lévi-Strauss, in whom the disposition has been reinforced by his addiction to timeless cognitions – have been disinclined to diachrony. Durkheim himself does indeed have a non-cognitive, performative account, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, of how societies worship themselves, that is, of how they celebrate symbols of themselves in rituals the power of which comes from the emotional effects of social interaction; and this can also serve as an account of what is going on in more distinctively commemorative rituals. This is one instance, one of many, of the fact that some anthropologists have been driving in the same direction as that aimed at in my account; but they have not made the point about commemorations because they have not been interested in the diachronic component of collective identity.

There are implications for those who are pre-eminently concerned with diachrony, that is to say for historians. Historians customarily now insist upon the invention of traditions, and so on the extent to which rituals should be seen as intentional responses to particular and variable social and political contexts. But however invigorating this new historical theme, it cannot be extended indefinitely and without question to explain what is going on in all commemorations. Certainly it is possible to imagine a future in which ceremonies at the Cenotaph no longer take place because there is no generation still alive who can pass on the living memory it recalls; we can envisage a day when such commemorations will have become as meaningless as it already now is for us to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo. But the way in which memory might work in communal celebration is not exhausted by extrapolating from this type of example. The Passover and the Last Supper have for long been remembered without there being any living generation who can, in the above implied sense, remember their originating historical context. The one-sidedness of the approach which insists upon the invention of traditions results from an inability to see the performativity of ritual. The effect is to obscure the distinction between the question of the invention of rituals and the question of their persistence. The historicist demand that we fully review the intentions of the *creators* of a ritual, a demand which in some cases is borrowed explicitly from recent practitioners in the history of ideas, is not only not sufficient but is often not even a necessary condition for understanding ritual. For I would argue that the notion of 'reading' a ritual is here being taken too literally; as a result, the identifying and partially

constitutive features of ritual – such as formality and performativity – tend to be largely ignored in the attempt to approximate as closely as possible the interpretation of ritual to that of, say, a literary political tract.

There are implications also for sociologists and social theorists generally. For the dominant mode of self-understanding represented by contemporary conventionalism has, at least until recently, entailed a tendency among social theorists to lose sight of the human body as an object domain. Thus in the case of certain recent conceptions of social theory the object domain for social theory has been defined in terms of what is taken to be the distinctive feature of the human species, language: language itself being conceptualised by the Wittgensteinian, structuralist and poststructuralist schools as a set of social rules, or a system of signs, or a powerful discourse. The human body can be included in an object domain thus defined only as the carrier of linguistic meanings or of meanings structured like a language. It can be included, in other words, only in an etherealised form.

It is true that the body has recently received attention as a bearer of social and political meanings. But even that acknowledgement is cast in an etherealised form. The point is commonly, if not always, made with a markedly cognitive tilt. Frequently what is being talked about is the symbolism of the body or attitudes towards the body or discourses about the body; not so much how bodies are variously constituted and variously behave. It is asserted that the body is socially constituted; but the ambiguity in the term constitution tends to go unexamined. That is to say, the body is seen to be socially constituted in the sense that it is constructed as an object of knowledge or discourse; but the body is not seen equally clearly to be socially constituted in the sense that it is culturally shaped in its actual practices and behaviour. Practices and behaviour are constantly being assimilated to a cognitive model. The ambiguity of meaning in the words constitution and construction tends to be glided over, one of the meanings being privileged at the expense of the other. But the body is socially constituted in a double sense. To argue for the importance of performances, and in particular habitual performances, in conveying and sustaining memory, is, among other things, to insist on that ambiguity and on the significance of the second term of its meaning.

Notes

Introduction

1 Especially in the work of Maurice Halbwachs. See M. Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris, 1925); *La mémoire collective* (Paris, 1950); *La topographie légendaire des Evangiles en Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1941); 'La mémoire collective chez les musiciens', *Revue Philosophique*, 127 (1939), pp. 136–65. A number of more recent studies should be mentioned in this connection: E. Shils, *Tradition* (London, 1981); Z. Bauman, *Memories of Class* (London, 1982); E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983); P. Nora, *Les lieux de la mémoire* (Paris, 1984); R. Boyers, *Atrocity and Amnesia. The Political Novel since 1945* (Oxford, 1985); B. A. Smith, *Politics and Remembrance* (Princeton, 1985); P. Wright, *On Living in an Old Country* (London, 1985); D. Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, 1985); F. Haug, *Female Sexualization: a Collective Work of Memory* (tr. E. Carter, London, 1987).
2 A valuable corrective to politically sanitizing talk of post-industrialism may be found, for example, in H. Schiller, *Mass Media and American Empire* (New York, 1969); *The Mind Managers* (Boston, 1973); *Communication and Cultural Domination* (New York, 1977); *Information and the Crisis Economy* (Oxford, 1986); but see also A. Mattelart, *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture* (tr. M. Chanan, Brighton, 1979).
3 See F. Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, 1981).
4 M. Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past* (tr. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and T. Kilmartin, London, 1981), vol. I, p. 20.
5 M. Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*, vol. III, pp. 1007–9.

1 Social memory

1 The terms of this transformation are set out in R. Koselleck, 'Der neuzeitliche Revolutionsbegriff als geschichtliche Kategorie', *Studium Generale*, 22 (1969), pp. 825–38.
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S. J. Tambiah, 'A Performative Approach to Ritual', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 65 (1979), pp. 113–69.

25 See G. van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (tr. J. E. Turner, Gloucester, Mass., 1967), especially pp. 405–11.

26 Some comments on bodily performatives are made by M. Bloch and R. A. Rappaport.

27 R. Jakobson, 'Grammatical Parallelism and its Russian Facet', *Language*, 42 (1966), p. 399.

28 On canonical parallelism see particularly J. J. Fox, 'On Binary Categories and Primary Symbols', in R. Willis (ed.), *The Interpretation of Symbolism* (London, 1975), pp. 99–132; Fox, 'Roman Jakobson and the Comparative Study of Parallelism', in D. Armstrong and C. H. van Schooneveld (eds.), *Roman Jakobson. Echoes of his Scholarship* (Lisse, 1977), pp. 59–90; see also L. I. Newman and W. Popper, *Studies in Biblical Parallelism* (California, 1918–23); S. Gevirtz, *Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel* (Chicago, 1963); G. A. Reichard, *Prayer: The Compulsive Word* (Seattle, 1944); W. Steinitz, *Der Parallelismus in der finnisch=karelischen Volksdichtung* (Helsinki, 1934).

29 M. Bloomfield, *Rig-Veda Repetitions* (Cambridge, Mass., 1916), p. 5.

30 For a discussion of this aspect of ritual see especially M. Bloch, 'Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 15 (1974), pp. 55–81.

31 P. de Man, 'Literary History and Literary Modernity', *Daedalus*, 99 (1970), pp. 384–404.

32 Ibid., pp. 388–9.

33 See H. Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World* (tr. S. Rabinovitch, London, 1971). For a discussion of postmodernism and attitudes to history see F. Jameson, 'The Cultural Logic of Capital', *New Left Review*, 146 (1984), pp. 53–93.

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35 See S. Zukin, 'Ten Years of the New Urban Sociology', *Theory and Society*, 9 (1980), pp. 575–601.

36 For an investigation of the experience of modernity which brings out these features see M. Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air* (New York, 1982), and the discussion of this book in P. Anderson, 'Modernity and Revolution', *New Left Review*, 144 (1984), pp. 96–113.

37 On calendrical repetition see H. Hubert and M. Mauss, 'La représentation du temps dans la religion et la magie', *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions* (Paris, 1909), pp. 189–229; M. Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Return* (New York, 1954); Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York, 1959); Eliade, *Myth and Reality* (New York, 1963); R. Caillois, *L'Homme et le sacré* (Paris, 1950); G. Dumézil, 'Temps et mythes', *Recherches Philosophiques*, 5 (1935–6), pp. 235–51; R. Marchal, 'Le retour éternal', *Archives Philosophiques*, 3 (1925), pp. 55–91.

38 A. J. Wensinck, 'The Semitic New Year and the Origin of Eschatology', *Acta Orientalia*, I (Lund, 1923), pp. 158–99.

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40 See S. J. Tambiah, 'The Magical Power of Words', *Man*, 3 (1968), pp. 175–208.

41 M. Bloch, 'Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 15 (1974), pp. 77–8.

42 R. Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games* (tr. M. Barash, London, 1962), pp. 108–9.

43 D. Forde, *The Ethnography of the Yuma Indians* (Berkeley, 1931).

44 See E. Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (tr. C. Stewart, London, 1962), pp. 313–14.

45 L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitives and the Supernatural* (tr. L. A. Clare, New York, 1973), pp. 123–4.

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3 *Bodily practices*

1 See M. Mead, *Continuities in Cultural Evolution* (New Haven, 1964), esp. pp. 45–6.

2 On the upright posture see E. Straus, *Essays in Phenomenological Psychology* (London, 1966), pp. 137–65.

3 See G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (New York, 1980), esp. pp. 15–20 and 56–7.

4 See P. Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, 1976), pp. 42 ff.

5 For the impact of writing on social memory see especially J. Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge, 1977); J. Goody and I. P. Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy', *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 5 (1963), pp. 304–45; J. Goody, 'Literacy and the Non-Literate', in R. Disch (ed.), *The Future of Literacy* (Englewood Cliffs, 1973); J. Goody, 'Mémoire et apprentissage dans les sociétés avec et sans écriture: la transmission du Bagre', *L'Homme*, 17 (1977), pp. 29–52; but see also E. L. Eisenstein, 'Some Conjectures about the Impact of Printing on Western Society and Thought', *Journal of Modern History*, 40 (1968), pp. 1–56; I. J. Gelb, *A Study of Writing* (Chicago, 1952); E. A. Havelock, *Origins of Western Literacy* (Toronto, 1976); Havelock, 'The Preliteracy of the Greeks', *New Literary History*, 8 (1977), pp. 369–92; Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences* (Princeton, 1982).

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7 On literary and cultural scepticism see J. Goody and I. P. Watt, 'The

Consequences of Literacy', *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 5 (1963), pp. 304–45.

8 On writing and habit memory see S. Butler, *Life and Habit* (London, 1878), pp. 6–7.

9 M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison* (tr. A. Sheridan, London, 1977), p. 152.

10 On the cinematic institution see particularly C. Metz, *Le Signifiant imaginaire* (Paris, 1977).

11 D. Efron, *Gesture and Environment* (New York, 1941).

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13 K. Sittl, *Die Gebärden der Griechen und Römer* (Leipzig, 1890).

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