

intensities of it are expressed in the form of kneeling, bowing and curtsying. The key signal here is the lowering of the body in relation to the dominant individual. When threatening, we puff ourselves up to our greatest height, making our bodies as tall and as large as possible. Submissive behaviour must therefore take the opposite course and bring the body down as far as possible. Instead of doing this in a random way, we have stylised it at a number of characteristic, fixed stages, each with its own special signal meaning. The act of saluting is interesting in this context, because it shows how far from the original gesture formalisation can carry our cultural signs. At first sight a military salute looks like an aggressive movement. It is similar to the signal version of raising-an-arm-to-strike-a-blow. The vital difference is that the hand is not clenched and it points towards the cap or hat. It is, of course, a stylised modification of the act of removing the hat, which itself was originally part of the procedure of lowering the height of the body.

The distillation of the bowing movement from the original, crude, primate crouch is also interesting. The key feature here is the lowering of the eyes. A direct stare is typical of the most out-and-out aggression. It is part of the fiercest facial expressions and accompanies all the most belligerent gestures. (This is why the children's game of 'stare you out' is so difficult to perform and why the simple curiosity staring of a young child-'It's rude to stare'-is so condemned.) No matter how reduced in extent the bow becomes by social custom, it always retains the face-lowering element. Male members of a royal court, for example, who, through constant repetition, have modified their bowing reactions, still lower the face, but instead of bending from the waist they now bow stiffly from the neck, lowering only the head region.

On less formal occasions the anti-stare response is given by simple looking-away movements, or a 'shiftyeyed' expression. Only a truly aggressive individual can fix you in the eye for any length of time. During ordinary face-to-face conversations we typically look away from our companions when we are talking, then glance back at them at the end of each sentence, or