

XI, 5

SMOKE SIGNALLING

SIGN LANGUAGE

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(Additional notes have been attached)

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SMOKE SIGNALLING

There were many methods of smoke signalling amongst the natives, by which news, important or otherwise, was conveyed to neighbouring tribes. Various accounts of intricate smoke signals have been rendered by writers on the subject, some asserting that the most elaborate signals will be understood by any tribe seeing them, but this is apparently not so amongst the Western tribes. There are simple and general smoke signals which every tribe may read, but amongst the more intricate smokes sent up, there must be a previous understanding between the parties who thus telegraph to each other, or, the tribes must be in such constant intercommunication that all their signals are known, otherwise the meaning of each signal will not be understood.

In the Southwest, when a very large fire was lighted by a coastal tribe, all the surrounding people, probably all of whom bore kinship, near or distant, with the signallers, knew that a whale had been stranded and that they might come to the feast. This fire would be kept lighted for some hours, until it was thought that all had observed it.

The system of smoke signalling does not appear to have been a very comprehensive one in the Southern districts, but possibly a more elaborate series of signals are in use in the inland and more arid areas. As regards the known portion of the West, smoke signalling is comparatively simple.

Curr stated that when the Eucla people desired peace with some tribe with whom they had been at variance, they lighted four fires in a line, the smokes from which conveyed their message.

This method is differently interpreted in many parts of the West. It is said by some natives to indicate the journey of a number of their people, the fires being lighted in the direction the party is going, or they will signal the return of a party, each of the fires being lighted in succession as they journey to and from the camp.

More than one fire might be lighted as an invitation to a whale feast. Giles on reaching Youldah (S.A.) during one of his exploring tours, endeavoured unsuccessfully to attract the attention of the natives by making black smoke. He stated

(Giles' Aust. Vol III, p, 319) that "the natives signal with different kinds of smoke by burning different woods or bark, and they know a strange smoke in an instant. Some smokes which they make go up like a white column, others are dark and tower like, while others again are broad and scattered. Hurried alarm and signal fires are made to throw up black and white smokes. Each smoke of different form has a different meaning."

Different tribes have different methods of smoke signalling and a native will also recognise the difference between the smoke from a strange tribe, although he may not know its meaning, and a smoke from a white man's camp.

The woods of the various areas send up different kinds of smoke and these may be used for a variety of signals by the natives of the districts. Some smokes go upwards in a straight column others are broad and scattered, this being accomplished with the same woods by the manipulation of boughs or bark held over the smoke, or placed on the fire itself.

If a party of natives are travelling in a certain direction say north, they will first put up a smoke from the camp they are leaving, and then another at a distance of fifty or sixty yards in the direction they are going.

When big game has been captured (emu, kangaroo, etc.) a moderately big smoke is sent up, when the members of the camp will either journey to the place from where the smoke rose, or they will prepare and "heat" an oven to cook the game, some one also going from the camp in the direction of the smoke either to welcome the hunters or to assist in carrying home the game.

When a friendly messenger is sent on a journey, he always announces his arrival half a day or so beforehand by making one or two small smokes in the direction of the camp towards which he is journeying. Three smokes are generally put up to inform the camp of the direction a party of young men are taking, a larger party may put up four smokes. When the Herdsman's Lake natives wished to tell their friends at some little distance

that there was a great number of fish in the lake, they sent up one little straight smoke.

Smoke signalling was called kee'era by the Nyeerrgoo (New Norcia) natives. Should some one in the camp wish to know where those members were who had gone out hunting, etc., a fire was made which gave out a rather big smoke. This was answered in a similar manner by the person or party who were away. If the immediate return of the hunting party was desired, a second fire was lighted and another big smoke made.

In the Gum Creek district (Murchison) three or four smokes lighted one after the other meant that the natives were shifting camp and one spiral smoke, caused through the manipulation of a bough or piece of bark meant a warning that there were strangers about somewhere and enjoining caution.

One method of making smoke is as follows :-

A large fire is kindled and when it has burned for some little time, boughs or branches thickly leaved are thrown upon it. These make a fierce blaze and while they are blazing a great heap of grass or rushes is put upon the flames, which are thoroughly covered. One little vent hole is left open at the top and a thin volume of smoke escapes through it. This is covered up after a few seconds and another vent hole is made close to the ground. The top vent is again opened and at once there issues a dense black volume of smoke. When a very big smoke, such as that summoning to a whale feast is desired, the operator will get a goodly sized bough and waving this in a circle above the top vent, a wide volume of smoke is the result. The waving is made horizontally and by a peculiar twist of the wrist while manipulating the bough, the smoke will ascend spirally to quite a considerable height. It is estimated that in level country these signals can be observed at a distance of twenty miles. During my journey from Broome along the Ninety Mile Beach, I noticed that a large smoke went up about fifteen miles to the eastward every day about noon, the smoke being always slightly in advance of our party. The smokes continued to be put up daily and were almost exactly similar to each other, until Wallal the Southern point of the Ninety Mile Beach was reached.

When at Wallal the natives told me they knew of the arrival of our party four days before we arrived, the signal having been seen by some members of the tribe who were out hunting. This showed that the tribes along the whole of the Ninety Mile Beach were on friendly terms with each other. South of Wallal our journey was only occasionally signalled to tribes Southeast of us.

Dr. Wilson (Wilson's Voyages, p. 282) stated that each day at noon - which they seemed to know with great exactness - the King George's Sound natives, wherever they might be, kindled a fire, and by this means obtained a knowledge of each others' situations. Wabbinyet called the smoke signalling at Albany koon'gool'jee, but he stated there was very little signalling beyond ascertaining each other's whereabouts, inviting to whale feast, etc.

In the Kimberley district a big smoke announced the arrival of a large party and when a little smoke was sent up only two or three people were expected. When the party whom the nilan (messenger) was sent to bring to a balgai, etc., arrived within half a day's journey of their destination they sent up three smokes to announce their arrival at a certain spot, and if the preparations to receive them had not been completed a messenger was sent in the direction of the smoke to request them to remain where they were for one or more days as the case might be.

If some big game is caught, dugong, turtle, etc., either a smoke will be made or a messenger will be sent to bring in some special tribes. Tohowilawillee - going for the invited guests, gannowra geeree - bring them in, are the Broome expressions used.

Large smokes seen in the pindan (inland) are always marrja (bush fires) as the pindana womba unless they are coming to a balgai or other ceremony by invitation, will not signal their arrival, for they are probably on an avenging mission and in this case signalling would merely disclose their whereabouts.

SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign language is instinctive in the human race, and there are some gestures which are universal. Some also are national, as for instance, the natural gestures of the French, which are different from those of the English people, and so on.

As with nations, so with various native tribes, the code of signals in one tribe may be only understood amongst the members of that tribe; and again, one tribe may have an extensive sign language while another may have no more than a few gestures universally known and this paucity or profusion of signs does not confine itself to any particular locality but is to be found scattered promiscuously throughout the West.

Natives inhabiting the plains have a much more extensive sign language than those living in broken, undulating or hilly country, the reason being undoubtedly the greater ease with which the plains people can communicate with each other while still beyond speaking distance, whereas hill people cannot be observed until they are so close to the camp that one of the older members can go forward and interrogate them. The sign language of the Southwestern people who occupied the hills and rivers was comparatively scanty, owing to this circumstance, most of their signals being common to all peoples, but the gesture language of those living in open country was both varied and extensive. The gestures attendant upon the announcement of a death have already been dealt with, also those dealing with the welcome of a tribe or person after a prolonged absence. These methods may be said to be common to all tribes, as are also the following gestures :-

Holding out both hands and opening and shutting them several times, stroking an imaginary beard to denote the man, and touching the breast to signify the women. This denotes that a great number of men and women are coming.

Putting the lips slightly and nodding the head almost imperceptibly means "yes."

Catching hold of lower lip and letting it fall back into place means "no."

A wave of the hand in a forward direction means, "Go before."

A backward wave of the hand, "Go behind."

A sharp downward movement of the hand, "Sit down."

Stretching the arms out to the fullest extent, "Big, great."

Making a half sweep of the right arm before stretching it in a certain direction, "Gone, or going, far away."

Opening and shutting the hand and drawing it towards the body, "Give."

Extending the arms and indicating the nature of the weapon by imitating the manner of throwing, "a bundle of weapons."

Opening the hand palm downwards and closing it sharply, "Go away."

Lifting spear quietly in direction of victim, "Kill secretly" (each tribe has however its own sign for secret killing.)

Pressing the abdomen, "hungry."

Opening and shutting mouth, or making motion with the scooped

Notebook 11e, P. 6a

Billinge

Pointing to or rubbing their nose downward, means a white man.

Stroking an imaginary beard is "somba", pointing to the breast means a woman, rubbing nose downwards and also pointing to the

breast is a white woman.

(Gocnbiddee an Ashburton Banaka was also dumb.)

(Wandarung a Mundabullangana Paljeri was also dumb.)

Other signs are: direction of gaze, the special bird, animal or large fish seen. The arm bent above the head signals an enemy; scratching the breast a female kangaroo; scratching the side a "bosca" or hole kangaroo, and so on.

Different signs are used by the different tribes when concerting to kill a stranger or a visiting native who is suspected of bringing evil magic to the camp, which may enter anybody.

A wave of the hand in a forward direction means, "Go before."

A backward wave of the hand, "Go behind."

A sharp downward movement of the hand, "Sit down."

Stretching the arms out to the fullest extent, "Big, great."

Making a half sweep of the right arm before stretching it in a certain direction, "Come, or going, far away."

Opening and shutting the hand and drawing it towards the body, "Give."

Extending the arms and indicating the nature of the weapon by imitating the manner of throwing, "a bundle of weapons."

Opening the hand palm downwards and closing it sharply, "Go away."

Lifting spear quietly in direction of victim, "Kill secretly" (each tribe has however its own sign for secret killing.)

Pressing the abdomen, "hungry."

Opening and shutting mouth, or making motion with the scooped palm as though conveying water to the mouth, "thirsty."

Dropping the head downwards and closing eyes, "sleep." (This will be used when it is intended to kill a man while he sleeps.)

Emu, kangaroo and other bush animals and turtles, dugong and other large fish have also their special signs.

When an elderly or old man is indicated the hand of the signaller strokes a long beard. If a white man is signalled the forefinger is drawn down the bridge of the nose, the hand catching the beard; if a white woman is denoted, the nose is also stroked and the breasts touched.

Other signs are : direction of game, the special bird, animal or large fish seen. The arm bent above the head signals an emu; scratching the breast a female kangaroo; scratching the sides a "boomar" or male kangaroo, and so on.

Different signs are used by the different tribes when concerting to kill a stranger or a visiting native who is suspected of bringing evil magic to the camp, which may enter anybody.

Gestures between a man and his woman may only be known to themselves.

A young couple about to elope will also understand each other's gestures regarding time and place of meeting but I have seen as many and various signs in a Trapist monastery as I have observed amongst the natives.

The Southern natives generally calculated their days as "beejar gen" (sleep one), their months as "meeka gen" (moon one) and their "year" as "beeruk gen" or "mogur gen" (one summer, one winter, etc.)

Their seasons were generally four, although in some parts of the Southwest they added another when some special fruit or root ripened. Joobaitch defined the Swan district seasons as follows :-

Jilwa	Spring, about August
Beeruk	Summer
Dwelbar	First rain, nearly autumn
Boornor	Autumn, nearly winter
Mogur, moggarr, mokur	Winter

The various portions of the day were divided by Joobaitch as follows :-

Be'nungan	Morning or daylight
Beeraitch	Noon
Kale'rak	Afternoon or evening
Murrerduk	Dark, night

Great heat, great sunlight was called moonok by the Swan district people, moonlight was "meekong burding", starlight "ngangar burdong ye'ya" - stars bright now.

A contributor to the "Perth Gazette", Aug. 16, 1834, writes thus, relative to the retentiveness of memory of a native who accompanied him on an excursion to the interior of King George's Sound :-

"Man'yat . . . received and duly appreciated the mental treat of travelling over unknown and far distant ground, seeing, touching and even collecting and preserving portions of trees which he had hitherto known to exist only in name. His vanity revelled in the idea that he had penetrated farther from King George's Sound than Nakina, or any of his acquaintances, and he treasured up in his memory a detailed recollection of the various incidents and scenery, arranged in the form of a Diary, where each day was designated by some leading distinctive mark in the place of numerals, as the killing of a kangaroo (1st day), shoot white cockatoo (2nd day), "cow meal" (see a bullock) (3rd day) and such like."

Maigo, the Swan district native who accompanied Stokes on his northern expedition furnished the same example of a retentive memory and great observation during the return voyage to Perth. Not one inlet, projection, peninsula or island which had been seen by him on the outward voyage but was remembered by him. He came to know the contour of the coast without compass or reckoning as accurately as the best master mariner amongst the ship's company and oftentimes when Stokes endeavoured to confuse him as to locality, Maigo was firm in his own belief and no argument could cause him to mistake his bearings, once he had seen the coast line.

SIGN LANGUAGE

(Nunginija, Moondoordoo, etc.)

- Kangaroo - index finger crossed over second finger
Turkey - finger pointed upwards and moved to and fro
Carpet snake - index finger moved from side to side
Kallaia - finger pointed and moved over head to and fro
Eaglehawk - short flapping of hands

Cornally, informant
Gascoyne district

SIGNALLING

Notebook 3b, P. 96

When the natives were leaving camp they usually placed the impress of their feet in the ashes and another thing they did is to break the tops off little shrubs in stony country, the broken tops pointing in the direction they were going. A native never travels straight, as he must follow the waterholes wherever he goes, and he must always hunt when he is out. He also almost always carries a firestick with him in the cold weather and his wife carries one too. In hot weather the woman carries the firestick.

According to Cornally, they have no special smoke signalling. They simply put up smokes when they are travelling and coming home.

Questions asked of Jubyche, and his answers.

107. Did the natives use signs instead of words?
State particulars.

Raising the right hand means, "What is it"?

To attract attention they raise their hand and shake it with the palm outward from right to left.

To signal that plenty black men and women are coming they point in their direction, open and close their hand many times, point to their beards to show there are men, and to their breasts that women are coming also. Many of their gestures are familiar to Europeans, such as that imposing silence, etc.

P. 56

235. Will Jubyche describe their many methods of smoke signalling?
Did they send smoke through a piped tree? P. 25

One little smoke is sent straight up, when the natives wish to tell their friends there's a lot of fish in the lake.

They didn't send the smoke through a piped tree. P. 72

236. Suppose Jubyche wished to tell the tribe in which direction he was going, how would he fix his camp fire? Would he leave some token? P. 25

In their journeys whether long or short, their stopping places are always springs. When Jubyche went a long journey he placed some long rushes in the direction he was going. These were followed until the next spring in that direction was reached. Again they found a long rush and followed. If there was only a short distance to be traversed, a short rush was pointed in the direction. Fires were not usually lighted on long journeys, but as soon as the destination was reached, a big smoke was sent up to say they had arrived at the end of the journey. They have names for every spring. P. 72

237. Did Jubyche's tribe use much gesture language?

Not very much.

238. How would they ask strangers by gesture who they were, where they came from, and what was their errand? How would those strangers be warned not to approach? P. 25

Jubyche caught hold of his beard to intimate the father, then he pointed to the stranger, and pointed also in the direction from which the stranger came. The stranger nodded and

intimated that his father lived in the direction Jubyche had pointed. When he asked the stranger his errand he pointed to his lips and the stranger replied, or gesticulated his errand. Then if Jubyche did not wish him to approach his camp, he pointed to the stranger, to himself, the ground, and then made a backward motion with his hand to tell the stranger he was not to approach the camp.

P. 72

240. Will Jubyche give the signs used for the following :-
 all, all gone, anger, all right, above, attention, bad, before, behind, be quiet, be quick, big, bring here, bring together, camp, child, come here, danger, dead, death, boylya, distance, drink, eat, enemy, emu, enough, fight, glad, sorry, good, go away, stop, hear, hungry, kill man, mother, no, yes, peace, war, salt water, fresh water, silence, sit down, djanga, thirsty, to run, what is it? where? where are you going? who are you? what do you want?

P. 25

All = waving the hand all round

All gone = raise the open hand, with the fingers pointed towards the ground until the palm is shown, then a quick forward movement of the half open hand.

Anger = only expressed by a cross look.

All right = merely by expression

Attention = again by expression of the eyes

Bad = expression of the features

Before = pointing same as Europeans

Behind " " " "

Be quiet = either by looks or Wanga burt (talk not), weeng, stop. Tat-in-yeenda, sit down and don't talk

Be quick = beckoning same as Europeans. "Kaij yual, kata coorl = bring spears here quickly."

Almost all the gestures for these things are similar to

European signals - "big" = stretching the arms, etc.

P. 73

From XI. 5. EARLY MSS.

SMOKE SIGNALLING

A rough collection of notes

Smoke signalling was a method in use amongst the natives. By this means news was conveyed to the most distant portion of the tribes in a very short time. Where the country was level the signals might be observed at a distance of more than twenty miles, the nearest tribes that perceived the signal instantly repeating it, the message or summons being thus conveyed to the outlying tribes.

The natives have many kinds of smoke signals. Curr states that when they desire to signalise to a neighbouring tribe their wish for peace, they light four fires in a line, the smokes from which convey their message; this custom is followed by the Eucla tribe. The customary way of sending out invitations for a "whale" feast was to kindle large fires which in a very short time bring in natives from all quarters.

Giles (Australia, II, 319) on reaching Youldah during one of his exploring tours, endeavoured unsuccessfully to attract the attention of the natives by making some black smoke. He states that the natives signal with different kinds of smoke by burning different woods or bark, and that they know a strange smoke in an instant. Some smokes which they make go up like a thin white column, others are dark and "tower like", while others again are broad and scattered. (?) Hurried alarm and signal fires are made to throw up black and white smokes. Each smoke of different form has a separate meaning.

(The following paragraph is marked incorrect.)

Many travellers passing over unfrequented parts of the bush have noticed smoke signals which were always slightly in advance of their party and which doubtless notified to the tribes that strangers were passing through their territory. Attempts were often made by the parties travelling to "catch up" with the natives who were thus signalling, but these attempts were rarely, if ever, successful. One large party coming down from Broome along the Ninety Mile Beach, had their progress signalled regularly at noon every day, the smoke being about twelve or more miles distant from the travellers.

Smoke SignallingNgalyart, informant

They always signalled when approaching a camp putting up three or four fires. Three smokes were put up to tell which direction the nyungar were taking.

Smoke signalling they call koongooljee. The signalling, however, is not very elaborate.

The Rev. Dr. Fraser gives a lengthy description of the smoke signals. "A fire is kindled; bunches of leaves and branches are thrown on; these soon make a fierce blaze; then heaps of grass and reeds are put on the flame; these so effectually smother it that the smoke escapes only through an opening on the top of the pile. This also is covered up for a few minutes and a draught hole is made down below, near the ground; the vent is now opened, and a dense black volume of smoke rushes out. The black man now proceeds to raise what he calls "one big fellow smoke". This process, although it appears easy, requires considerable dexterity; it is effected by waving a long leafy branch in a circle just above the vent, the motion being horizontal, a slight twist of the hand gives to the ascending mass a spiral form, which it maintains to a great height. Thus the natives inform their friends at a distance that the message which has been sent in the morning, in this instance by three smoke fires, may have been received."

According to G.S. Woodley (Murchison), three or four smokes lighted one after another mean that the natives are "shifting camp" and one spiral smoke means a warning that there are strangers about somewhere and enjoining caution.

The New Norcia natives called smoke signalling "kee-era". Should someone in the camp wish to know where some members of the family who had gone out hunting etc. were located, a fire was made which gave out a "big smoke". This was answered by the person or party who were away. If the immediate return of the absent members is desired, a second fire is lighted and another big smoke made.

When the Herdsmen's Lake natives wished to tell their friends at some little distance that there was a great number of fish in the lake, they sent up one little straight smoke.

R.J. Carlyon stated that the Yuin natives merely make fires in the distance, to let their friends know they are coming. Strangers do not give signals.

The only smoke signalling in use amongst the Fusselton natives was merely a signification of their whereabouts to their friends.

S. Hadley states that amongst the Sunday Island natives smoke signalling is only understood by preconcerted arrangement.

Different tribes have different methods of smoke signalling, and a native will recognise the difference between smoke from a strange tribe, although he may not know its meaning, and a smoke from a white man's camp.

The woods of the various areas send up different kinds of smokes, and these are used for various signals, by the natives of the districts.

Some smokes go upwards in a straight column, others are broad and scattered, this being accomplished by the manipulation of boughs or bark either over the smoke or placed on the fire itself. If a party of natives are travelling in a certain direction, say north, they will first put up a smoke from the camp they are leaving, and put up another at a distance of 50 or 60 yards in the direction they are going.

When big game has been captured, emu, kangaroo, etc., a big smoke is sent up when the members of the camp will either journey to the place where the smoke came from, or will prepare and heat an "oven", to cook the game, someone also going in the direction of the smoke to welcome the hunters or perhaps help to carry home the game.

When a friendly messenger is travelling he always announces his arrival half a day or so beforehand by making one or two small smokes in the direction of the camp towards which he is journeying.

The Turkey Creek natives when going on a journey, place a long stick in the ground, slanting it in the direction they have taken. The Kurnai tribe have a similar method of conveying the direction in which they are travelling from the camp.

SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign language is instinctive in the human race and there are some gestures which are universal. Some also are national, as for instance, the natural gestures of the French, which are different from those of the English peoples. As with nations, so with various native tribes, the code of signals in use in one tribe may be only understood amongst the members of that tribe, and also one tribe may have an extensive sign language while another may have a few gestures universally known, and this paucity or profusion does not confine itself to any particular locality, but is to be found throughout the West.

The natives inhabiting the plains have certainly a more extensive sign language than those living in broken undulating or hilly country, the reason of this being probably the ease with which the plains people can communicate with each other while still beyond earshot whereas hill people cannot be observed until they are close to the camp that one of the older men can advance and interrogate them.

The sign language of the Southwestern hill and river people was comparatively scanty, owing to this circumstance, most of their signals being common to all peoples, but the gesture language of those living in open country was both varied and extensive.

The gestures attendant upon the communication of a death have already been dealt with, also those

- | | |
|---|---|
| Give | Opening and shutting the hand and drawing it towards the body. |
| A bundle of weapons, | extending the arms, and indicating the nature of the weapon by imitating the manner of throwing. |
| Go away | Opening the hand palm downwards, and closing it sharply. |
| Kill | Lift spear quietly in direction of victim (each tribe has however its own sign for secret killing.) |
| Hungry | press the abdomen. |
| Thirsty | Open and shut mouth or make motion with hand as though conveying water to mouth. |
| Sleep | Drop head downwards and close eyes. |
| Emu, kangaroo and other bush animals and turtle, dugong and large fish, | have also their special signs, which are pretty general throughout. |

Sign language or gesture language, like smoke signalling, is generally local in its distribution. Certain gestures or signs however are common to all tribes as for instance when an elderly or old man is indicated, the hand of the signaller strokes an imaginary beard; when a woman, the breasts; when a white man, the forefinger is drawn down the bridge of the nose and the hand catches the beard; when a white woman, the nose is also stroked and the breasts touched. Other signs are : direction of game, the bird or animal seen (holding the bent arm above the head for the emu, scratching the breast for a doe kangaroo, the right side for a buck, and so on, all being intelligible. Different signs are used by different tribes, When concerting to kill a stranger or visiting native who is suspected of bringing evil magic. Gestures between a man and his woman are known only to themselves and a young couple about to elope will also understand each other's gestures regarding time and place of meeting. But I have seen in a Trappist monastery quite as abundant signs as I have witnessed in native camps.

Gregory stated that during his explorations he received a masonic sign from a native, which, being acknowledged, he and his gin exhibited every confidence and camped alongside.

(J.M. Thompson, Science of Man, Feb. '02)

Sturt also mentions having received a masonic sign from some natives in the centre of Australia and other travellers have recorded similar experiences. Yet it is possible that out of the many signs with which the aborigines hold intercourse with distant yet friendly tribes with whose dialect they are not familiar, some masonic symbol will be unconsciously made at some time or other, holding some definite meaning.

Old men have certain signs wherein they communicate to each other the whereabouts of certain forbidden implements, the custodians of such, etc. etc., and amongst these signs, all treating of sacred subjects, it is not improbable that a few masonic "passes" will be unconsciously reproduced.

Dealing with the greeting of a member of the tribe after a prolonged absence. This method of communicating death and of greeting the newly arrived member is common to all tribes as are also the following gestures.

A great many men and women coming - Holding out both hands and opening and shutting them several times, stroking an imaginary beard to denote men and touching the breasts for the women.

Yes	Pouting the lips and slightly nodding the head.
No	Catching hold of lower lip and letting it fall back in place.
Go before	A wave of the open hand forward.
Go behind	A backward wave of the hand.
Sit down	A sharp downward movement of the hand.
Big, great	Stretching the arms out to the fullest extent.
Gone, or going, far away	Making a half sweep of right arm before stretching it in the direction,
N.S.E.W.	

(see P. 17)

Sit down and wait = pointing hand downward

(Central areas)