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Sommario/riassunto	The culture of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Britain is rarely credited with tolerance of diversity; this period saw a rising pride in national identity, the expansion of colonialism, and glorification of the Anglo-Saxon roots of the country. Yet at the same time, Wolfram Schmidgen observes, the concept of mixture became a critical element of Britons' belief in their own superiority. While the scientific, political, and religious establishment of the early 1600's could not imagine that anything truly formed, virtuous, or durable could be produced by mixing unlike kinds or merging absolute forms, intellectuals at the end of the century asserted that mixture could produce superior languages, new species, flawless ideas, and resilient civil societies. Exquisite Mixture examines the writing of Robert Boyle, John Locke, Daniel Defoe, and others who challenged the primacy of the one over the many, the whole over the parts, and form over matter. Schmidgen

traces the emergence of the valuation of mixture to the political and scientific revolutions of the seventeenth century. The recurrent threat of absolutism in this period helped foster alliances within a broad range of writers and fields of inquiry, from geography, embryology, and chemistry to political science and philosophy. By retrieving early modern arguments for the civilizing effects of mixture, Schmidgen invites us to rethink the stories we tell about the development of modern society. Not merely the fruit of postmodernism, the theorization and valuation of hybridity have their roots in centuries past.

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