

Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia

Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

Jack Goody between Social Anthropology and World History

Edited by Chris Hann and Han F. Vermeulen



LIT

Jack Goody between Social Anthropology and World History

Sir John Rankine Goody (1919-2015) was William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology in the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St John's College. During the sixty years of his scholarly career he published 46 books (including 14 edited volumes) and 370 articles (including 22 reviews). His contributions ranged from the ethnography, anthropology and history of Africa (especially Ghana) to comparative investigations of kinship, marriage and the domestic domain across the landmass of Eurasia. Among the subjects he addressed were property and inheritance, the consequences of literacy, representation, and the emergence of *haute cuisine* and differentiated consumption generally. Goody had a distinctive vision that connected these phenomena to each other in world history since the "urban revolution of the Bronze Age," as originally theorized by the prehistorian Gordon Childe.

Twelve lectures delivered at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale) between 2011 and 2022 illustrate the diversity of the topics addressed by Goody. In their individual ways, the lecturers (including some former colleagues and students of Goody) demonstrate the value of his work for a historical social science that transcends disciplinary boundaries and simplistic notions of modernity based on developments in northwest Europe in recent centuries. The subjects addressed range from food, inheritance and kinship to economic development, evolution (both cognitive and socio-cultural), renaissances and the 'theft of history' by generations of ethnocentric authors in the West. These twelve chapters demonstrate the vitality of contemporary scholarship in fields explored by Jack Goody, including several in which he was a true pioneer.

The opening chapter of the volume is an unpublished lecture by Goody himself, recorded in Halle in 2004, in which he combines personal reminiscences with a critique of Eurocentrism, in anthropology and more generally in the social sciences and the study of history.

The volume is rounded off with a memoir by Chris Hann (first published in *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy* in 2017) and an analytic evaluation of Goody's published work by Han F. Vermeulen. Vermeulen has also compiled a comprehensive bibliography of Jack Goody, which serves as the volume's concluding chapter.



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Jack Goody and Chris Hann in the Main Seminar Room of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 7 June 2004 (Photo: MPI for Social Anthropology).

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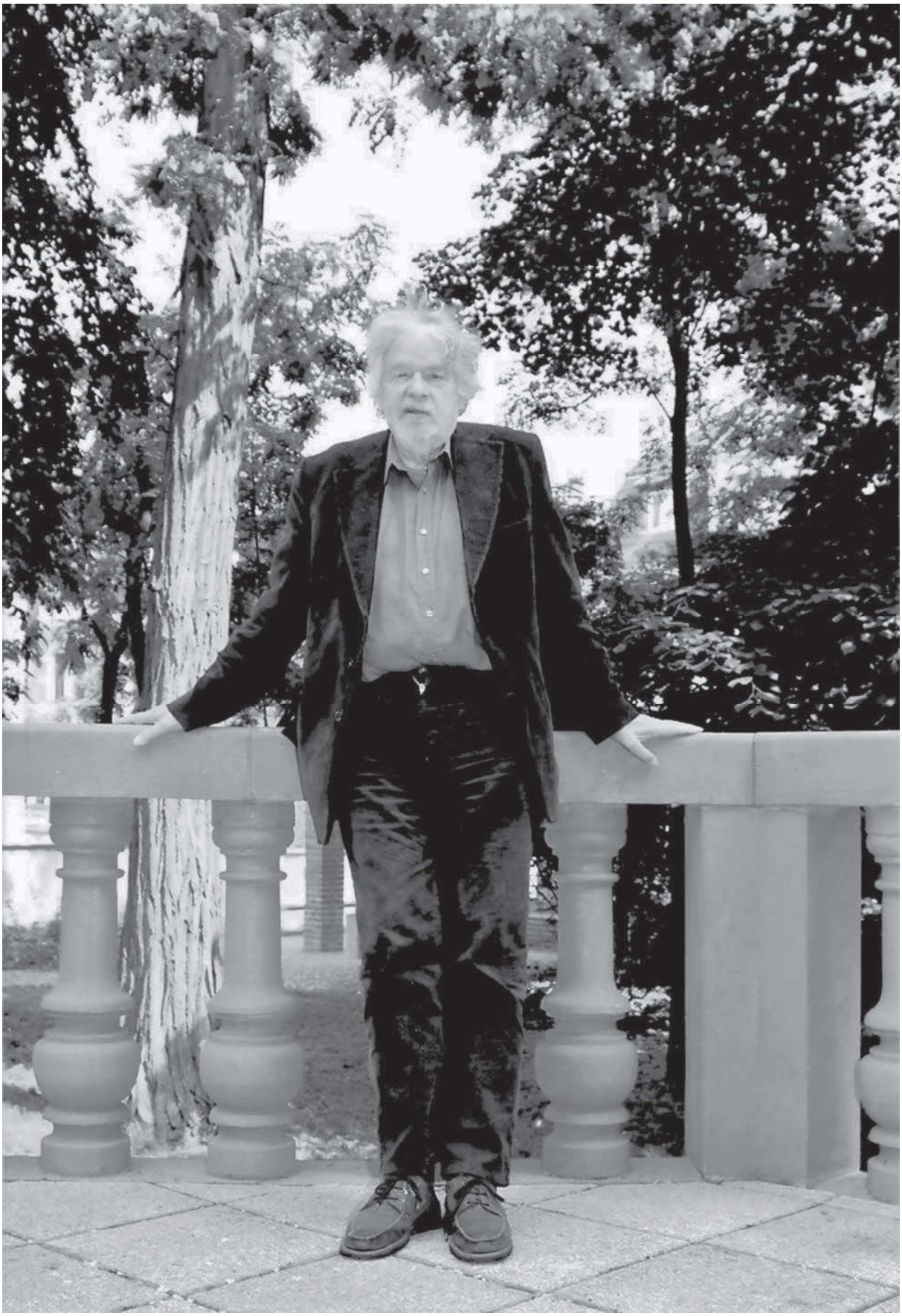
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Jack Goody on the terrace of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale), 2004. (Photo: MPI for Social Anthropology).

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Preface

The gestation and architecture of this volume are unusual. Chris Hann was supervised as a doctoral student in Cambridge by Jack Goody and remained in touch with him for decades after his retirement. When Goody died in 2015 at the age of 95, Hann was approached by the British Academy to write a "memoir." The result, published by the Academy in 2017, is republished as the opening chapter of Part III of the present volume. This is followed by an analysis of Goody's published work by Han F. Vermeulen, who specializes in the history and theory of anthropology and did not know Goody personally. Situating Goody's work in the social sciences and humanities, Vermeulen argues that his purview extended beyond the social sciences to include history and other academic fields of the humanities. Building on foundations laid by others over many years in Cambridge and elsewhere, he also provides a comprehensive Goody bibliography. Though neither of us has worked in the same regions or on the same themes as our subject, we aim to offer complementary evaluations of his long-term significance and standing, both inside anthropology and spilling over outside the discipline.

Following his retirement from the University of Cambridge in 1983, Goody accepted invitations from academic institutions all over the world. He used these visiting positions to continue writing and to publish prolifically. Occasionally he was asked to provide advice. His first involvement with the Max Planck Society concerned the future of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of the Scientific-Technical World, but this collapsed following the resignation of Jürgen Habermas. Goody's counsel bore fruit in the field of linguistic and cognitive anthropology when Stephen C. Levinson was appointed Director at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics (Nijmegen) in 1991 (see Levinson's own account in Chapter 11 of this volume). Shortly afterwards, Jack Goody played a significant consultant's role for the *Kommission* that drew up a proposal to create a new institute in the former eastern Germany. The Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology was founded in Halle (Saale) in 1999. In December 2001, Goody came to Halle to open the very first conference to be hosted in the institute's permanent buildings.[1]

A decade later, as a form of homage to Jack Goody, in light of his inspirational oeuvre and his concrete inputs to our institute in its formative phase, we initiated an annual lecture bearing his name. Part II of this volume consists of twelve lectures delivered at the Max Planck Institute for Social

[1] Goody, J. 2003. Sorcery and Socialism. In H. Grandits, and P. Heady (eds.), *Distinct Inheritances: Property, Family and Community in a Changing Europe*, pp. 391–408. Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Anthropology in Halle (Saale) between 2011 and 2022. Apart from the very last, which was presented by Chris Hann as his valedictory lecture in June 2022, these are reproduced from the texts formatted by Ralph Orlowski and published by the Institute in pamphlet form and online shortly after the lecture was given. The annual Goody Lecture quickly established itself as a highlight of the institute's calendar. As the reader will see, the speakers, some of whom were close to Goody personally, engage creatively with various aspects of his wide-ranging work. They add their own interpretations and evaluations of Goody's contributions to the social sciences and humanities in order to explore their relevance in the contemporary world. For Goody, anthropology had to be comparative in order to account for the similarities and differences in societies and cultures. It also had to be cumulative and interdisciplinary, reaching out to world history and historical sociology.

The volume opens with the voice of Jack Goody himself, recorded at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology during a short visit to Halle in June 2004. In large part autobiographical, this previously unpublished lecture offers insight into many of the topics addressed in his late publications, notably the need to challenge Eurocentrism in anthropology and in the social and historical sciences generally.

In an Appendix, Adam Crothers provides a short overview of the Goody papers held at St John's College Library in Cambridge. It was intended that Vermeulen would study these materials in the course of his research for this volume, but the Covid pandemic that erupted in Spring 2020 made this impossible.

The editors have not sought to impose uniformity in the extent or style of referencing by the authors of Part Two, who enjoyed complete freedom in writing up and illustrating their lectures. The texts retain their spontaneity and have not been updated (thus "now" or "this year" always refers to the year in which the lecture was delivered rather than the year of this publication). However, minor changes have been made to harmonize orthography and to supply the final detail for references indicated as "forthcoming" in the original publication.

We hope that the materials we have assembled will interest many readers and be useful to a future biographer. It remains for us to thank Juliet Mitchell and Mary Goody for biographical and bibliographical support, and Jennifer Cash, Berit Eckert, Marc-Dirk Harzendorf and Ralph Orlowski for their practical assistance in the production of this volume.

Chris Hann and Han F. Vermeulen,
Halle (Saale), June 2023

PART I

JACK GOODY IN HALLE, 2004

Chapter 1
Europe: the wider Eurasian picture[1]

Jack Goody

I

The title "Europe: the wider Eurasian picture" was invented for me but I am going to talk about Eurasia in relation to my own experience. I originally did fieldwork, of course, in Africa. But that wasn't my first aim when I became an anthropologist. During the Second World War, I spent six months as an escaped prisoner of war, particularly with shepherds in the Abruzzi area and in the plain around Rome.[2] It was when I went back to Cambridge after the war to finish, or more or less start my degree, first in literature, that I took up anthropology. The reasons for the change, along with many others of my contemporaries, were partly that I felt literature too restricted to the West, indeed to England, whereas I had now travelled more widely. Partly too I felt the study of literature alone was confined to the Ivory Tower, removed from what was happening in Europe and in the decolonizing world outside. The problem of whether one should become an intellectual (for which I had no great credentials) or enter 'practical' life (for which I had only the army) much pre-occupied me. Regarding anthropology and the social sciences, I would have liked to work in Europe, but at that time there were no grants for such research. Since there was no sociology at Cambridge, I studied

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[1] This is a transcription of Jack Goody's second lecture at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, which took place on 7 June 2004. (He had visited for the first time in December 2001, when he delivered the opening plenary at the first conference in the Institute's permanent buildings; see Goody 2003.) It was originally intended to publish this talk, delivered spontaneously without notes, as a Working Paper in the Institute's series. Had these plans come to fruition, Goody would undoubtedly have revised and polished our transcription, which was made by Tobias Köllner, Berit Eckert and Chris Hann. For this publication we have added references he supplied in the wake of the talk, and a few notes of our own; but we have refrained from editorial interventions in order to preserve the spontaneity of the original oral delivery. The themes addressed here are elaborated in various later publications, including Goody 2006 and 2009b.

[2] For Jack Goody's war memoir, see *Beyond the Walls* (Goody 1992; an Italian translation was published in 1997 and a French edition followed in 2004).

anthropology. I then moved into more practical affairs, education for those who had left school early, which I found very exciting at the time like many things in post-war Europe. I returned to study anthropology in Oxford, where again there was no sociology, although I met some students who had worked with Talcott Parsons in Social Relations at Harvard. I was already interested in the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, as the result of their work on returning prisoners of war.[3] In any case, I would not have been interested in a sociology that only – or even mainly – dealt with western societies; I was interested in a wider comparative sociology or comparative cultural studies rather than the impoverished varieties taught at contemporary universities. The anthropologists who taught me were very keen on working somewhere outside Europe to gain another perspective before you came back academically to Europe. So I went to Africa and didn't come back to Europe for a very long time.

During the war I had not only been in Italy but also the Middle East. I was in Cyprus, which is part of Europe but looking across to the shores of Turkey, Palestine and Egypt. I spent some time in Palestine, and was in a regiment trying to subdue both Arabs and Jews rebelling against British rule and immigration policies. I spent some time in Egypt and Libya, where I was captured. So the interrelationship of Europe and Africa and Asia were very much in my mind and crystallized for me later on by reading. In trying to make sense of my experience in the Middle East, about which I knew very little, I read a book by Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History?* (Childe 1964 [1942]). This prehistorian was analyzing what he called the urban revolution of the Bronze Age, looking at societies of the Yellow River in China, of the Mohenjodaru in India, of Mesopotamia and of Egypt and to a lesser extent of Greece and Rome, especially of Mycenaean Greece. These are all products of this phase of human history and Childe treated them as of equal standing. So it later became problematic for me to understand why it was that so many European historians, and sociologists, including Marx and Weber and most classical historians, decided that Antiquity in Europe was something quite different from Bronze Age civilizations.

I went to do fieldwork in Africa, and although I was working intensively in villages and elsewhere for five years or so, I was also interested in the paths that led outside the communities I worked with. First there was Islam, which obviously led across the Sahara to the Mediterranean. The first article I wrote about Ghana was to do with the advent of Islam in that area – which I thought had been given too little attention (Goody 1953). There was the well-known case of the French anthropologist Marcel Griaule

[3] Initiated in 1946, the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations was established in London in September 1947.

and his team working on the Dogon living on the Bandiagara escarpment in Mali. He argued that Dogon ideas about the cosmos, which included very precise notions about a zodiac calendar, showed that African concepts developed separately and were equivalent to Mediterranean ones (Griaule 1965). That was a very unlikely story because these are particular concepts related to various other signs of the Chaldean zodiac, adopted in the Mediterranean. They had, in fact, travelled across the Sahara recorded in books by Al-Buruni and others, and they were part of a written culture that came with Islam. That fact always impressed me, the need to bring in a certain measure of historical knowledge before making judgements about what A had contributed, and what B had not, to a certain situation.

The other aspect in which I was interested in West Africa had to do with writing. I was concerned at that time with the nature of oral and of literate societies, partly because I had a friend in Cambridge at the time who was working on the English literature of the eighteenth century and later wrote a book on the rise of the novel (Watt 1957). He had a number of ideas about the way the spread of literacy had affected the reading public for the novel, partly derived from Q.D. Leavis (1932), partly from reading the sociology of literature, partly Marxist writings. He was also interested in Greece and Rome, and the shift to alphabetic literacy. I was looking at a parallel problem in Africa because the first school was started in the village when I was there. So I asked myself how minimal literacy affected this population and that led me into a wider discussion of Eurasia. In looking at Greece and Rome we argued that much of the achievement of ancient Greece, and to some extent of Rome, could be linked to their development of an alphabetic script, which enabled literacy to expand and which made communication much easier than it had been with earlier forms of writing. I continue to think there is something in that argument, given the amount and range of written material that was produced at that time. But when I started looking at the situation in Greece and in Eurasia more generally, the problem was that a number of the features which we thought writing had facilitated, were clearly possible without literacy of this alphabetic kind, but were present with other forms. Later on, in various publications, I widened the perspective outside Europe to include a comparison with what had happened in China and elsewhere with those other forms, including logographic and syllabic literacy (Goody 1968, 1976, 1986, 1987, 1997, 2000).

The problem about alphabetic writing was that European scholars of that time, particularly classicists, had set it quite apart from other forms of writing: the alphabet was the important feature that distinguished Greece and therefore distinguished Europe, and it became part of Europe's long-term heritage. However, we knew from Herodotus that the Greeks themselves

obtained the basic (consonantal) alphabet from the Phoenicians. That is to say, they obtained one form of the alphabet which did not have signs for vowels, a point we made too much of in that original article (Goody and Watt 1963). On the other hand, there were various ways of indicating vowels.

So there was a tendency in classical studies, which to some extent we followed, of playing down the Asiatic contribution, that is, the contribution from Semitic Phoenicia to changes in the mode of communication. In the remarkable but sometimes difficult volumes published by Martin Bernal called *Black Athena*, he displayed much more interest in the influences of Asia and Africa on Europe, on Greece and Rome, which so many others had neglected (Bernal 1987). He argued that this neglect grew in the 1840s, partly through the concentration on the Aryan myth, the Aryan story, of which the Greeks were part, but that separated them off from Semites and speakers of Afro-Asiatic languages generally, since Semitic is one of a group which includes Coptic and Egyptian, found also in North Africa and right across the Sahara. Hausa in northern Nigeria belongs to his family. Bernal argued it was partly because of the growth of the Aryan story and partly the growth at the same time of anti-Semitism which had excluded a proper consideration of Phoenician and other contributions to the growth of literacy.

I myself think it was much more the fact that European scholars were often not so much anti-Semitic as anti-Asiatic and pro-European. They tried continually to emphasize what it was that Europe itself had contributed to the great developments in the world. When I recently went back to look at certain historical concepts involved in these developments, I was interested in how it was that people like Marx and Weber and many others set up Antiquity as a concept which put Greece and Rome together and cut off everyone else (Goody 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009a, 2012). It cut off the consideration, for example, of Carthage, the great rival of Greece and Rome in the Mediterranean, which was a Phoenician city, a Semitic-speaking city and, as a contemporary power in the Mediterranean, influenced by Egypt, by the Levant as well as by Greece. In the Carthaginian wars, Rome eventually won and eliminated Carthage – *Carthago del enda est* – Carthage is finished – destroying its libraries at the same time, so that although the Phoenicians invented the alphabet, there was very little written heritage, that is, unless you consider the Bible as part of that heritage, because that was, of course, written in a variety of Phoenician language and script. But for the rest, a great deal was deleted; in fact, one of the few bits of remaining Carthaginian literature is a treatise on agriculture that was translated in Rome. We only know it because of the Latin version.

That concentration on European Antiquity was also a defect in our understanding of literacy at that time because we too stressed the classical heritage and underestimated the importance of the Phoenician contribution. As we have seen, Bernal argues for the importance of Phoenicia and Egypt in contributing to the civilization of Greece. Now, most classicists will not hear of that. For example, Moses Finley would have nothing at all to do with Asia affecting Antiquity (Finley 1973). Everything had to come out of the crucible of Greece itself, and in that sense of Europe. Asia is something quite different: as the Greeks themselves declared, they alone developed democracy. According to the repeated assertions of Bush and Blair, democracy is a European invention.[4] That is a ridiculous proposition for two reasons. In the first place, in Africa Carthage had a system of electing consuls every year as did Tyre on the Asiatic mainland, the home city of the Carthaginians. The idea that Greece (and Europe) alone provides a model of democracy throughout the world is unsustainable. There were also republican tribal governments in Mesopotamia and in North India which could provide just such a model. Wherever there were tribal or so-called acephalous groups, whether they were hunting and gathering or whether they practised simple agriculture, they had some kind of representative government, something that you might call democracy, something which could have served as a model for democratic processes in more centralized systems. And that possibility existed throughout the world, being noted by many non-anthropological scholars such as Émile Durkheim among the Berbers, that is, the Kabyle of North Africa. In *The Division of Labour* he refers to these as segmentary (segmental in the translation – Durkheim 1897). Ibn Khaldun too discusses the problems when he talks about the *assibaya* among the Bedouins of North Africa; that is, a form of association which is rather similar to what Durkheim means by mechanical solidarity, a solidarity that did not derive from an authority system imposed on them from on high but involved some kind of consultation. The systems were not perfect democracies by contemporary Florida standards but at least they worked.

These matters were also taken up by philosophers such as the 'anarchist' Kropotkin who strongly influenced the British anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown, who was known at Trinity as 'Anarchy Brown' (Goody 1999-2000). It was perhaps Kropotkin who made him interested in so-called acephalous, segmentary (non-centralized, non-state) systems, which led to the work of Fortes and Evans-Pritchard on African political systems (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940).

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[4] This is a clear reference to the Iraq War, also known as the Second Gulf War (2003-2011), led by President George W. Bush and supported by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

It is not only democracy that has been claimed for Antiquity but the polity itself. Of course these claims are based upon special definitions in a desire to set Europe aside from the Bronze Age civilizations of Asia. From an anthropological point of view the proposition makes no sense at all since we assume that, for example, African societies had their own political systems which included some element of representation. A similar claim is made for the economy, although that was different; following Polanyi, Finley (1973) sees 'the economy' as only developing in modern Europe after Greece, which was characterized by simpler practices of exchange.

II

This was the first problematic which led me into a Eurasian perspective. The second was inheritance and the family, an interest that arose very much from my own fieldwork and from the work on my PhD (Goody 1962). I was first concerned with funerals and with the passage of property between the heirs. That was the beginning of this phase of my comparative work, using material from Europe and Asia. I was struck by the observation of an early eighteenth-century Dutch traveller to West Africa who noted that, contrary to European law where sons and daughters inherited from both parents, in Africa males inherited from males and females from females. For me, this was associated with marriage transactions. In Europe and Asia both parents endowed daughters at marriage (which I viewed as a kind of pre-mortem inheritance), whereas in Africa the bridewealth transactions flowed between men. In Eurasia women were considered part of the sibling group, the mixed or cross-sibling group – and they were entitled not necessarily to a full portion or to the same portion as a male but at least to part of the property belonging to the parents of a family. Very recently I read in an article that with their veto power over the disposal of the assets brought to the *oikos* and the right to exit with their dowry, Athenian women achieved a greater social and economic autonomy than their counterparts in, say, Victorian England.[5] Let me leave aside the comment on Victorian England; the position of women was then being renegotiated, partly as the result of the actions of first-wave feminists, and the result was some gain and some losses. For example, increased autonomy meant that husbands were no longer responsible for the debts of their wives so that women were more independent, but at the same time they no longer had the automatic support that dependence gave.

[5] The editors believe that Goody intended to reference Moroccan sociologist Fatema Mernissi at this point, but they have failed to identify the work in question.

I see this as part of what I have called the 'women's property complex' in Eurasia (Goody 1976, 1990); or you could speak of the real unity of the sibling group, whereas by this phrase Radcliffe-Brown (1952) usually referred to brothers alone, as in much of Africa. In the major societies of Eurasia women inherited or acquired family property alongside men and hence, I argued, were both more and less free, less free for example to marry as they might wish.

That led me to look at certain aspects of the family that seemed to stretch across Europe and Asia, which differed from Africa and from other places with the same kind of socio-economy. I looked into aspects of the marriage and the family very different from my colleagues in the Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and Social Structure, who were then very much concerned with defining the unique aspects of European demography such as the 'European marriage pattern.' I was looking at certain similarities in the major civilizations following the Bronze Age. They were looking for differences from Asia and differences from the rest of the world.

It was the case that there were some differences, just as there were with literacy and with other features, between the continents, between different groups and between different individuals. But my colleagues looked upon these in a very teleological way, that is to say, they looked back from the present achievements of the European economy, the socio-economy. Late marriage in Europe was seen to provide a number of benefits, freer choice of partner, less parental involvement, more responsible parents, but above all it meant sexual restraint before marriage and therefore greater control over the size of family. All that helped Europe achieve capitalism when societies that married earlier did not. That is not always explicit but implicit in some of their arguments and the difference encompassed not only Asia but Eastern Europe and Africa as well.

The differences they perceived followed a contention in the work of Thomas Malthus, who took China as the complete opposite from Europe, that China (and other non-Europeans) had early and universal marriage, often arranged, but that meant no restraint on fertility, leading to runaway childbirth. It was argued that the kind of demographic system which operated there did not allow for the operation of a strong capitalist or strong market system. Various recent works, and particularly the book of the Chinese-American scholar Lee titled *One Quarter of Humanity* (Lee and Wang 1999), show very definitely that China was not without restraints on its fertility. The Reverend Malthus put this in moral terms. The Europeans practised restraint. They could limit the size of their families, which was why they did so well in all the things we most admire, like providing ourselves with the material goods by which we are surrounded. The Chinese

could not do this, Malthus claimed, because they married young and practiced no restraint. Absolutely wrong, says Lee. Rates of growth were no different in China than in Europe. The Chinese restrained themselves within marriage, a fact that possibly argues for more self-control than Europeans, who did not. The Chinese married early but low marital fertility kept down the rate of growth. Malthus was quite wrong in trying to steal restraint from the East.

There are, of course, differences, important differences, but they are not ones which related to the kind of dependent variable in which Malthus was interested, and after him the great tradition of historical demography to which the Cambridge Group contributed so much. Nor was this just a historical problem since a great number of discussions of the United Nations and other agencies have been based on these notions of the lack of restraint in those cultures where marriage is early.

III

The third aspect I want to mention relates to modes of production. Part of the attempt to separate European Antiquity from the civilizations of the Bronze Age entailed seeing Greece and Rome as having different forms of social organization, including modes of production. In this, slavery was dominant. The problem of dominance in the mode of production is a difficult one. It is true that at certain times Greece probably became more heavily dependent on slavery than other contemporary societies. But the use of slaves was very widespread in the Near East and elsewhere. And it has always seemed to me peculiar that forward-thinking scholars should consider the slave mode as a progressive form of production. In any case, the ancient economy, like any Asiatic economy, depended not only on slavery but also employed a wide range of other forms of labour. There were a certain number of peasant cultivators as well as those with a serf-like status working on *latifundia*. In other words, there was a whole range of dependent statuses.

Let me now turn to the mode of production that followed Antiquity. Feudalism is another notion that European historians have gathered unto themselves. There have been long discussions about whether feudalism can be found elsewhere, including Africa. I myself have written on the problem of feudalism in that continent, for which I did not consider it a useful term. I argued that the mode of production in Africa, as Baumann and others emphasized (Baumann 1928), was one of hoe cultivation and consequently very different from the plough farming that came in with the Bronze Age. The latter set up different modalities of dependency. Feudalism has been seen by many Marxist scholars, including Anderson in his interesting book, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism (*Anderson 1974), as an essential

feature in the development of capitalism. If it was a necessary preliminary, then one did not find 'true' feudalism elsewhere, since capitalism was also seen as purely European. Of course, all social formations are different, all feudalisms as well. But it became important for many European scholars (contrary to the work of some, like Coulborn) to see feudalism as something that was entirely European. The only possible exception, significantly, was Japan.

And Japan, once again, was a teleological exception; because Japan had made the shift to capitalism, this meant that it was possible for Japan to have had feudalism. But that argument went out of the window a decade or two later because Hong Kong and other Chinese communities, and now China itself, developed a form of capitalism without apparently having had feudalism. So, the argument was mistaken precisely because it was teleological, that is to say, it started from the present situation and looked back at history, defining the past and the categories for analyzing it in that light, rather than looking at them as a *Ding an sich*, as themselves.

Once again, Europe needed to broaden its perspective to include Asian history, Asian sociology and Asian anthropology, and see itself in this wider context. We need to ask why, apart from the fact that we had an Industrial Revolution, we need to look back and say 'we had Antiquity, other people hadn't,' 'we had feudalism, other people hadn't.' There were even queries about the uniqueness of capitalism and industrialization, though I do not want to argue this too strongly.

In Bologna there is a model of a sixteenth-century machine for threading silk which worked by a water-wheel. That water-wheel was let down into the streams that flowed beneath the city and which drove a machine for reeling the silk thread. That mechanized the production not of weaving silk but of making the thread, which made Italy a huge exporter, to Poland, to France, to Britain, and elsewhere. Earlier on, that silk thread had come from Bursa, near Constantinople, which was the old Ottoman capital. The silk had often been acquired by Europeans in exchange for woolen cloth. Then Europe took to making its own thread, to weaving its own cloth; eventually it imported its own silkworms and mulberry trees and started its own silk-growing industry in the Po valley in Italy. The machinery in Lucca and Bologna represented a mechanization of production, and the social historian Carlo Poni describes an 'industrial district' in Bologna and compares it with the kind of areas that later on appeared in Lancashire and marked the Industrial Revolution in Britain. In other words, industrialization was not unique to Britain.

One of the aspects of the Industrial Revolution there was the strong objection of the silk merchants (in France and elsewhere) to the import of

Indian cotton, because it was spoiling their trade. It was a British silk-weaver, called Lombe, who sent his nephew to North Italy to acquire the secrets of these machines. In North Italy he is despised as an industrial spy but in Britain he is lauded as a heroic entrepreneur. In 1718 the family started the Great Mill of Derby, that is, before the industrialization of cotton, in order to produce silk thread adapting this process of mechanization (Poni 2001a, 2001b).

Of course, many inventions were made in Britain at that time, but others came in from outside and it is ethnocentric to think that industrial production itself developed only in that corner of Europe. Even this Italian machine for producing thread, which appeared in a simpler form in Lucca, a great centre for silk production, was similar to a Chinese machine developed a little earlier, which is illustrated in a book on the Chinese economy by Mark Elvin (1973). The machine shown there, he suggests, was a model for these production processes in Italy and therefore to some extent for Britain's Industrial Revolution. But according to the Sinologist Ledderose (2000), China also had other forms of industrial production. He calls them industrial because they displayed a complicated division of labour in, for example, the ceramic industry, where he writes of 'modular production' involving a mass market. This massive industry exported huge amounts to Europe and America, and production was copied in Holland (Delft ware) and in England (Wedgewood). We need to remember that until the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to Francesca Bray (2000) and others, the Chinese were exporting more commercial and industrial products than any other part of the world, that is, until mechanization took over in Europe.

IV

The other great area for both modernization and mechanization in China was in the production of paper. In our concentration on what Gutenberg did, we forget how important paper was long before that in terms of the difference it made in communication. The Chinese were producing paper as early as the second century of the Common Era. Production spread to Muslim countries in the ninth century and reached Italy in the thirteenth. In Britain production only developed after William Caxton adopted the printing press. At first he had to import paper from abroad, then by 1700 there were 300 mills. Paper was extremely important as a material for other reasons than communication. The Chinese invented the toilet roll in the sixth century at a time when Europeans were employing leaves for various cleansing purposes. So the idea of Elias that the civilizing process began in Europe at the time of the Renaissance (Elias 1994 [1939]) is without foundation. He takes the handkerchief as a significant product but it was in any case dependent on

cotton imported from India. However, the point I want to concentrate on is not the Rabelaisian aspect but rather the circulation of information.

I recently came across some figures about the number of books in libraries in Northern Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The largest library was in the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland and consisted of some 800 volumes. The largest libraries in the Islamic world were in Cairo, at Baghdad, no doubt now destroyed,[6] and in Cordoba in Andalusia in Spain. The Royal Library in Andalusia, available for consultation by scholars, is said to have had 400,000 books. It may have been that these 400,000 were partly made up of single pages. But the difference in scale is enormous and that reflects the amount of information that was circulating using paper made by semi-industrial processes in watermills, in Baghdad and throughout the Middle East; Islam had adopted the process from China where it was manufactured by industrial processes on an enormous scale. What a difference that invention made! If a European wanted to write a book at this time he had to kill a dozen sheep to make a piece of parchment (or import expensive papyrus). In the Arab world at that time, one took anything, the leaves of trees, old clothing, anything, to make paper. One could do it anywhere in any context.

One may be able to imagine life without printing, but it is difficult to imagine life without paper. But that is how it was. Paper and printing and indeed writing itself came from Asia. That is one reason why taking the Asian and the Eurasian perspective into consideration became important for me, especially in the idea that there was no sharp break between Bronze Age societies of which Gordon Childe wrote, which had their own trajectories of development, and the later Asiatic civilizations characterized by the so-called Asiatic mode of production and its political counterpart, Asiatic despotism. In particular there was the idea of the static character of those societies when compared to Europe. That view became all important for world history, sociology and even some anthropology because it was Europeans who were writing about these societies, and who were imposing their version of the social sciences. They always looked back in a teleological way from their position of industrial advantage in the nineteenth century to see what had happened, trying to account for their dominant situation. But that perspective was getting the past the wrong way around, and pressing our notions of history on the rest of the world. The return of Eurasia into the picture helps us avoid or minimize these problems.

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[6] Another reference to destruction caused by the Iraq War, a major issue in international relations when this lecture was delivered in 2004.

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PART II

THE GOODY LECTURES IN HALLE, 2011–2022

Chapter 2
Jack Goody's Vision of World History and African Development Today (2011)[1]

Keith Hart

Part One: Jack Goody's Vision

In a short preface to *Production and Reproduction,* the first in his series of comparisons between Africa and Eurasia, Jack Goody (1976: ix–x) tells us that ethnography, the aspiration to write about another culture studied intensively through fieldwork, never defined his intellectual horizons. His subject has always been historical comparison and beyond that "the development of human culture." He deliberately sets himself at odds with his greatest contemporary, Claude Lévi-Strauss, as being uninterested in binary opposition between the modern and the primitive. Rather he places himself as an actor in a historical period, coming of age in the Second World War, encountering the Eastern Mediterranean, escaping from a prison camp into the mountains of Abruzzo, entering Africa at the decisive moment of its anti-colonial revolution and in its epicentre, Ghana. With European empires collapsing everywhere, he rejects the eurocentric idea that the West is special, looking instead for forms of knowledge that are more truly universal, better suited to the new world society launched by the war.

As a former student of English literature, he knew something about medieval European society and culture. He wanted to connect a newly independent West Africa to the Islamic civilization he encountered briefly during the war. His subject is therefore the comparison of pre-industrial societies, past and present, an ethnographically informed juxtaposition of Africa, Europe and the Middle East. He stresses that this enquiry is an extension of his own personal experience, fuelled by social interaction and

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[1] I would like to thank Chris Hann for the chance to reflect here on the debt I owe to my teacher. I have covered some themes of this lecture more fully in Hart (2006a). The citations and footnotes provide a guide to my main sources for the intellectual history discussed in the first part, but they are less complete for my sketch of African development in the second. Padayachee (2010) is an up-to-date collection of essays on Africa's political economy.

political engagement. The ultimate historical question is where human civilization is going, but the key lies in the similarity and divergence of regions with an agrarian past or present. Only a series of books could begin to address this question and this was the first of them. It is worth recalling its full title, *Production and Reproduction: a comparative study of the domestic domain.* The focus is on how human beings produce their livelihood within families and how this influences attempts to secure their future. But *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962) remains his key work. The three themes of the title – how we seek to transcend death materially and spiritually – come together in Goody's preoccupation with writing itself, a project he launched with *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977).

The time from the Second World War until now has been extraordinary, a period when humanity formed world society as a single interactive network for the first time. This society is massively unequal and riddled with conflict, but now at last there is a universe of communications to give concrete expression to universal ideas. Future generations will want to study this emerging human society and they will look to us for antecedents; but they will be disappointed by the fragmented narrowness of our anthropological vision. For we have been slow to move beyond ethnography. Jack Goody, with Eric Wolf (1982) as his only serious contemporary rival, devised and carried out an anthropological project with a scale to match the world society being formed in his day. How does Goody's project of historical comparison illuminate the world society emerging in our time? What is his vision of the development of human culture, past, present and future? My own answers are shaped by his, since he was my teacher, but I depart from him in some respects. Reproduction was always so.

World society has not been formed completely in our time nor does it lack antecedents; but think what the human condition was like in 1945 and what it is now. Something tremendous has happened in between. Humanity has been brought closer together in dramatic ways. We have difficulty imagining the processes involved, not least because of national consciousness. Anthropologists, in sticking with their ethnographic method, have not risen to the challenge of documenting this huge shift in civilization. Jack Goody could not settle for just "getting to know another culture." In reaching for a more universal conception of human history, he knew that he was an active participant in the making of a new world. But, even as he inserted himself into contemporary society, he chose to step back from the modern age. By focusing on pre-industrial societies in Europe, Asia and Africa, he left out any direct consideration of two centuries of machine revolution, the capitalist world economy, the New World in its entirety. But his topic is nevertheless "the development of human culture" and, as I hope

to show today, his inquiries do reflect a consistent position on the social priorities of his own time.

A few years after his wartime sojourn in the Mediterranean, Jack Goody carried out research in West Africa, a region connected to the Mediterranean by Islamic civilization long before it was colonized by Europeans. On the basis of extensive fieldwork in Northwest Ghana during the decade before that country won independence from colonial rule, he soon established himself as a force in West African anthropology, first as an ethnographer and later as a historian (Hart 1985). Goody was impressed, however, by the similarities and differences between Africa, Europe and the Islamic world. It took him three decades to formalize the terms of comparison; but, when he did, it turned out as follows: Europe may be opposed to Asia as West to East, but the two should be seen as a single entity, Eurasia, opposed to Africa South of the Sahara. This model contrasts with the dominant imperialist stereotype which opposes the West to the Rest. Goody was anxious to avoid any hint of racial hierarchy. Yet he concluded that African societies were fundamentally different from the others in important ways and he wanted to explain why.

He started with kinship and marriage, the domestic relations though which people manage their own reproduction and participate in the wider society. In *Death, Property and the Ancestors*, he concluded that the key to variations in kinship organization lay in the transmission of property, the material link between generations constituted by patterns of inheritance and manifested in religious observances such as the ancestor cult. The book drew extensively on classical sources of British comparative jurisprudence; but Goody balked at making a systematic comparison of Africa and Europe then. In *Tradition, Technology and the State* (1971), he questioned the habit of transferring categories from European history to the study of pre-colonial states in Africa. Again his focus was on property forms. European feudalism was based on private property in land and this was absent from traditional West Africa. Why? Because land was scarce in Western Europe, but not in Africa, where the scarce factor was people; and control over them was exercised through monopolies of the "means of destruction" (horses, guns etc.), not the means of production. Africa's polities were both centralized and decentralized, the former acquiring manpower by force through carrying out slave raids on the latter (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940). Shifting hoe agriculture was the norm, with the bulk of manual labour being performed by women. In both types of society they were hoarded as wives by polygamous older men and their children were recruited to exclusive descent groups. The key to major differences in social organization between Africa

and Eurasia thus lay in the conditions of production and specifically in demography, in the ratio of people to the land.

Production and Reproduction takes off from this premise into a global survey of kinship, marriage and property transmission, using the data compiled by G.P. Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* (1962–1980). Kin groups in the major societies of Eurasia frequently pass on property through both sexes, a process of "diverging devolution" (including bilateral inheritance and women's dowry at marriage) that is virtually absent in Sub-Saharan Africa, where inheritance follows the line of one sex only.[2] Especially when women's property includes the means of production, in agricultural societies land, attempts will be made to control these heiresses, banning premarital sex and arranging marriages for them, often within the same group and with a strong preference for monogamy. Direct inheritance by women is also associated with the isolation of the nuclear family in kinship terminology, where a distinction is drawn between one's own parents and siblings and other relatives of the same generation, unlike in lineage systems. All of this reflects a class society. "Diverging devolution (especially dowry) [was] the main mechanism by which familial status was maintained in an economically differentiated society" (Goody 1976: 19). But:

> Why should the African and Eurasian patterns be so different? I suggest that the scarcer productive resources become and the more intensively they are used, then the greater the tendency for the retention of these resources within the basic productive and reproductive unit, which in the large majority of cases is the nuclear family… Advanced agriculture, whether by plough or irrigation, permits an individual to produce much more than he can consume….[T]he greater volume of production can maintain an elaborate division of labour and stratification based upon different styles of life. An important means of [this]... is marriage with persons of the same or higher qualifications…. Advanced agriculture [also] allows the expansion of population, another factor making for scarcity of land (Ibid: 20).

The agrarian economies of all the major Eurasian civilizations conformed to this pattern. They were organized through large states run by literate elites whose lifestyle embraced both the city and the countryside. This is Gordon Childe's "urban revolution" in Mesopotamia 5,000 years ago.[3] In these societies of the late Bronze Age:

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[2] See Hann (2008) for a fuller treatment of inheritance and property in Goody's work.

[3] Childe was a prehistorian of Europe who produced a Marxist synthesis of the stages theory of human social evolution marked by three revolutions in production, the 'neolithic', 'urban'

> (…) an elaborate bureaucracy, a complex division of labour [and] a stratified society based on ecclesiastical landlordism…[were] made possible by intensive agriculture and title to landed property was of supreme importance (Ibid: 24).

Africa South of the Sahara apparently missed out on these developments, even though North Africa was one of the first areas to adopt the new institutional package. Goody would never countenance the standard racist explanation for this, the cultural backwardness of black people. To low population density as one explanation he now adds the barrier posed to intensive agriculture by tropical soils. By starting from the relationship between types of property transmission and forms of kinship and marriage, he arrives at a new synthesis of the agricultural roots of civilization.

By the time Jack Goody became an anthropologist, colonial empire was rapidly being dismantled and racial discrimination of the sort practised in apartheid South Africa was becoming outlawed. Yet the intellectual legacy of imperialism still underpinned the anthropology of his day. So he chose to attack the lingering opposition of "modern" and "primitive" cultures by studying the chief activity of literate elites, of which he was himself a leading example – writing. Contrasted mentalities should be seen as an effect of different means of communication. The most important of these are speech and writing, orality and literacy. Most African cultures are predominantly oral, whereas the ruling classes of Eurasian civilization have relied from the beginning on literate records. The year after *Production and Reproduction*, Goody published his most general assault on the habit of opposing us and them, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*. This was a pointed repudiation of *La pensée sauvage* of Lévi-Strauss (1962), suggesting that the latter's lists linking 'hot' and 'cold' societies to other pairs, such as history and myth, science and magic, far from exemplifying universal reason, were a parochial by-product of mental habits induced by writing. This emerged in a specific time and place and became essential to the reproduction of Eurasian civilization, reducing the status of oral communication that still predominated in African cultures. Literacy is a key feature of the institutional complex that marked the urban revolution.

In *The East in the West* (1996) and numerous volumes since, Jack Goody sought to refute the claim, derived from the founders of modern social theory, that the West's economic ascendancy, driven by capitalism and its machine revolution, could be attributed to a unique type of rationality

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and 'industrial' (1942). See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V._Gordon_Childe. Goody has written of his debt to Childe in Goody 2006b.

missing from the less fortunate societies of Asia.[4] Goody shows first that Europe's distinctiveness is in most cases either non-existent or has been exaggerated; and second that the rate of adoption of western industrial techniques by Japan, China and India has been faster than it took for the innovations of the Italian Renaissance to diffuse to Northwest Europe. He concludes that eurocentrism obscures Asia's current economic performance and potential, while misrepresenting western history. It makes more sense to see Eurasia as a single entity, at least since the Bronze Age, where the advantage of particular regions has been highly unstable. Africa, whose exceptional character remains unchallenged throughout the series, tends to drop out of Goody's focus at this point.

Jack Goody drew on Gordon Childe's materialist synthesis of the great revolutions that marked the history of human production and society. Childe got the basic framework from L.H. Morgan's *Ancient Society* (1877) which some have seen as the origin of modern anthropology; this was made more widely accessible by Friedrich Engels as *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). But they got it in turn from Jean-Jacques Rousseau whose *Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality among Men* (1754) could be said to be the source for an "anthropology of unequal society" whose leading protagonist for half a century has been Jack Goody (Hart 2006a; Hann and Hart 2011: 10–12).

In the last two centuries, the human population has increased seven times and the rate of growth of energy production has been double that of the population. Many human beings work less hard, eat better and live longer today as a result. Whereas about 97% of the world's people lived in rural areas in 1800, today half of humanity lives in cities. This hectic disengagement from the soil as the chief object of work and source of life was made possible by harnessing inanimate energy sources to machines used as converters. Before 1800 almost all the energy at our disposal came from animals, plants and human beings themselves. The benefits of modern development have been distributed highly unequally, the prime beneficiaries being the pioneers of western imperialism. This made the world economy of a century ago uni-polar and highly divergent (that is, unequal); whereas today it is multi-polar and convergent as a result of the West's relative decline and the rise of 'emerging' economies like China, India and Brazil.

Despite a constant barrage of propaganda telling us that we now live in a modern age of science and democracy, our dominant institutions are still those of agrarian civilization – territorial states, embattled cities, landed property, warfare, racism, bureaucratic administration, literacy, impersonal

[4] *The Eurasian Miracle* (Goody 2010) sums up this thesis, but the most important text in my view is *The Theft of History* (2006a) reviewed in Hart (2007).

money, long-distance trade, work as a virtue, world religion and the family. This is because the rebellion of the middle classes against the old regime was co-opted by that synthesis of industrial capitalism and the nation-state that I call "national capitalism" and humanity's emancipation from unequal society has been prevented as a result (Hart 2009). Consider the shape of world society today. A remote elite of white, middle-aged, middle-class men, "the men in suits," rule masses who are predominantly poor, dark, female and young. The rich countries, which can no longer reproduce themselves, try to stem the inflow of migrants seeking economic improvement. Our world resembles nothing so much as the Old Regime in France before the revolution, when Rousseau wrote his Second Discourse.

Africa is the most poignant symbol of this unequal world. In 1950 Greater Europe (including Soviet Central Asia) had twice the numbers of Africa. Today Africa has a population double the size of Europe and Central Asia. By 2050 Africans will be a quarter of humanity and by the end of the century over a third.[5] Although Africa is still often represented as a land of starving peasants ravaged by war and AIDS, the new reality is burgeoning cities full of young people looking for something to do (Hart 2010). Africa largely missed out on the first and second stages of the machine revolution, but in places it is now ahead in some aspects of digitization.[6] Even so, development there today often consists of irrigation and ox-plough agriculture (Hart 1982). Africa has at last been going through Childe's urban revolution, erecting state bureaucracies and class society on the basis of surpluses extracted from the countryside. This is not without its contradictions.

Simply as a comparative history of pre-industrial civilizations, Jack Goody's contribution is enormous; but he has also been telling us something about the formation of contemporary world society. Like Bruno Latour (1993), he says that we have never been modern. Modern democracy is predicated on the abolition of the unequal society that ruled the Eurasian landmass for 5,000 years. Goody reminds us of the durable inequality of our world and suggests that its causes may be less tractable than we think. At the same time, the rise of China and India underlines his warning against European complacency. The world is now simultaneously more connected

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[5] According to the latest projections of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision*, http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm, Africa's population in 1950 was less than 0.25bn out of a world population of 2.5bn (under 10%); in 2000 it was 0.8bn (13% of 6.1bn); in 2050 it will be 2.2bn (24% of 9.3bn); and in 2100 3.6bn (35% of 10.1bn).

[6] Such as for example Kenya's pioneering experiment in mobile banking, the M-Pesa (Mas and Morawczynski 2009).

than ever and highly unequal. The reduction of national political controls over global markets in the last three decades has accelerated the gap between haves and have-nots everywhere, generating huge regional disparities in the process. Redress for this situation seems further away today that it did in 1945, when Jack Goody set out on his post-war journey.

Let me recap the core elements of Goody's framework. The key to understanding social forms lies in production and that means the uneven spread of machine production today. Civilization or human culture is largely a consequence of the means of communication – once writing, now an array of mechanized forms, but always interacting with oral and written media. The site of social struggles is property. Are nation-states still an effective instrument for enforcing global contracts? Goody's central focus on reproduction has never been more salient when the aging citizens of rich countries need to come to terms with the proliferating mass of young people out there. Kinship needs to be reinvented too. If human culture is to be rescued from the unequal society that results when agrarian civilization is strengthened by machines, Jack Goody's anthropological vision offers one indispensable means of contemplating how.

Part Two: Africa Today: the challenge of development[7]

I now turn to what has happened in Africa since Jack Goody first went there more than a half-century ago. He has never lost interest in the region of his original field research, but it has not figured prominently in his work since the early years of independence. The African continent is divided into three disparate regions – North, South and Middle (West, Central and East Africa); but a measure of convergence between them is now taking place. A preoccupation with Africa's post-colonial failure to 'develop' – or to 'take-off' – has obscured what really happened there in the twentieth century. The rise of cities has been accompanied by the formation of weak and venal states, locked into dependency on foreign powers and leaving the urban masses largely to their own devices. The latter have generated spontaneous markets to meet their own needs and these have come to be understood as an "informal economy" (Hart 2006b, 2010).[8]

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[7] Hart (2010) is a fuller version of the arguments summarized here. The general question of African development is discussed in chapter 6 of Hann and Hart (2011). Hart and Padayachee (2010) review Africa's development prospects from the perspective of the continent's most powerful economy, South Africa. A long-delayed book, *The African Century* (Polity, forthcoming), explains why I believe that Africa's economic future is brighter than many might imagine.

[8] Robert Neuwirth (2011) has published an engaging round-up of what he calls "the global rise of the informal economy." I have some sympathy with his preference for a less negative

In order to make sense of the extraordinary transformation of what is after all a highly diverse continent, I distinguish between three broad types of social formation: "egalitarian societies" based on kinship; "agrarian civilization" in which urban elites control the mass of rural labour by means of the state and class power (Hart 2006a); and "national capitalism," where markets and capital accumulation are regulated by central bureaucracies in the interest of citizens (Hart 2009). These oversimplified categories help me to indicate some broad historical trends. Africa south of the Sahara has a more complex history than is captured by this typology; but its dominant institutions before the modern period may be understood in terms of the classless type based on kinship institutions in the main. The second type, agrarian civilization, covered most of Europe, Asia and North Africa for the last few millennia. National capitalism has only taken root so far in South Africa, until recently for the benefit of whites only. Middle Africa has made a belated transition to the Old Regime of agrarian civilization in the course of the twentieth century, while Europe and North America, followed by Asia, embraced national capitalism. This brought North and Middle Africa closer together as pre-industrial class societies, while South Africa has drawn closer to the rest of Africa since the coming of majority rule.

Egypt and the Mediterranean littoral embraced agrarian civilization long ago. The rise of cities there was accompanied by the formation of states whose function was to supervise a new kind of class society, in which a narrow urban elite extracted agricultural surpluses from an increasingly servile rural labour force. Sub-Saharan Africa, according to Goody (1976), largely missed out on this urban revolution along with its agricultural technology, higher population density and unequal property relations. This is why traditional African forms of kinship and marriage are so distinctive and their societies were, relatively speaking, classless. Even where a measure of stratification existed, redistribution through kinship institutions prevented the emergence of classes with different styles of consumption.

As we have seen, the contrast between egalitarian societies built on kinship and unequal societies based on state power and class division goes back to L. H. Morgan (1964 [1877]) and before him to Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1984 [1754]). It cannot be applied unambiguously to Africa and Eurasia before the modern age, even if we try to isolate Black Africa from its Northern and Southern extremities. Africa's urban history is complex (Freund 2007). The Atlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades generated coastal urban enclaves in both West and East Africa. The medieval civilization of the West African Sahel was a significant part of the Islamic world. Of the

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term: he opts for "Système D," an expression found in the French Caribbean and West Africa, which expresses something of the entrepreneurial inventiveness of the informal economy.

Yoruba agro-cities, Ibadan's population had reached 200,000 by the onset of colonial rule. Even so, large swathes of Middle Africa entered the modern era with a minimal urban population and their dominant institutions owed a lot more to kinship than to class differences. Indigenous states were common in the early modern period, often emerging in response to European imperial expansion. The grip of agrarian civilization on modern world society is still strong, since national capitalism everywhere incorporated elements of the Old Regime.

Of course, inequality was not wholly absent from traditional African societies. Engels made much of the historical subordination of women, first in tribal societies of farmers and herders, later in pre-industrial states and finally in capitalist societies. Marxists and feminists (e.g. Meillassoux 1981) extended this analysis to the conflict between African males of different age, with polygamous elders commanding young men's labour through control of access to marriageable women who were in their turn condemned to do most of the work without effective political representation. Gender and generation differences are of immense importance in African societies.

In 1900, less than 2% of Africans lived in cities. By 2000, a population explosion saw the urban share rise to almost half, compressing into one century what took much longer elsewhere. Since Africa's population is still growing at 2.5% per annum, so too is its relative size in the world, if not yet its purchasing power (around 2% of the world economy according to the World Bank 2010). This urban revolution does not just consist in the unprecedented proliferation of cities, but also in the installation of the whole package of pre-industrial class society: states, new urban elites, intensification of agriculture and a political economy based on the extraction of rural surpluses. African development must build on independent nation-states whose economic base is pre-industrial agriculture (Hart 1982).

The anti-colonial revolution unleashed extravagant hopes for the transformation of an unequal world. These have not yet been realized for most Africans. But the model of development they were expected to adopt was "national capitalism." Development in this sense never had a chance to take root in Africa. For the first half of the twentieth century, African peoples were shackled by colonial empire and in the second, their new nations struggled to keep afloat in a world economy organized by and for the major powers, then engaged in the Cold War. Yet in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, two-thirds of the world's ten fastest-growing economies have been and are expected to be African.[9] Africa's new national

[9] According to *The Economist* (6th January 2011), Africa had six of the top ten fastest-growing economies in 2001-2010 and is expected to have seven in 2011–2015. The latter

leaders thought they were building modern economies, but in reality they were erecting fragile states whose economic base was the same backward agriculture as before (Hart 1982). This weakness inexorably led them to exchange the democratic legitimacy of the independence struggle for dependence on foreign powers. These ruling elites first relied on revenues from agricultural exports, then on loans contracted under dubious circumstances, finally on the financial monopoly that came from being licensed to supervise their country's relations with global capitalism. But this bonanza was switched off in the 1980s, when foreign capital felt that it could dispense with the mediation of local state powers and concentrated on collecting debts from them. Many governments were made bankrupt and some collapsed into civil war.

Concentration of political power at the centre led to the dominance of primate cities, as economic demand became synonymous with the expenditures of a presidential kleptocracy. The growth of cities should normally lead to enhanced rural-urban exchange, as farmers supply food to city-dwellers and in turn buy the latter's manufactures and services.[10] But this progressive division of labour was stifled at birth in post-colonial Africa by the dumping of cheap subsidized food from North America and Europe and of cheap manufactures from Asia. For "structural adjustment" meant that African national economies had no protection from the strong winds of world trade. A peasantry subjected to violence and political extraction was forced to choose between stagnation at home and migration to the main cities or abroad. Somehow the cities survived on the basis of markets that emerged spontaneously to recycle the money concentrated at the top and to meet the population's needs. These markets are the key to understanding the economic potential of Africa's urban revolution.

Africa's urban informal economy (Hart 2010) everywhere supplies food, housing and transport; education, health and other basic services; mining, manufactures and engineering; and trade at every level, including transnational commerce and foreign exchange. But its scope varies. In West/Central Africa, where white settlement was minimal, the cities were substantially an indigenous creation and their markets were always unregulated. Foreign middlemen like the Lebanese flourished outside colonial administrative controls. The great ports of the Atlantic seaboard enjoy a degree of mercantile freedom that underwrites their contribution to Africa's commercial growth. Today Angolan women jump on planes heading for London, Paris, Dubai and Rio, where they stock up on luxury

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consist of Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Congo, Ghana, Zambia and Nigeria in that order; the other three are China, India and Vietnam.

[10] Sir James Steuart (1767) makes this argument and I drew on it in Hart (1982: 160).

goods for resale in the streets of Luanda. In Southern Africa, cities were built by a white settler class who imposed strict controls on the movement of the indigenous population. South Africa's informal economy today is hedged in by rules designed to promote modern industry. Elsewhere, in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Kenya, the state has long played a more controlling role than would be considered normal today in Lagos or Dakar.

African nation-states have learned the hard way that they are not free to choose their own forms of political economy. When the world was divided by the Cold War, state ownership of production and control of distribution seemed to offer the best chance of defending the national interest against colonial and neo-colonial predators. From the 80s, the mania for privatization led to ownership being ceded to corporations. Structural adjustment forced governments to abandon public services, lay off many workers and allow the free circulation of money. In the Congo, Angola, Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone, failed states and civil wars encouraged informal mining and trade, concentrating wealth and power in the hands of warlords and their followers. The restoration of peace restored limited bureaucratic controls over distribution. The situation is highly dynamic and variable.

Tax collection in Africa never attained the regularity it has long achieved in Eurasia; governments still rely on whatever resources they can extract from mineral royalties and the import-export trade. The new urban classes control and live off these revenues, usually under a patrimonial regime propped up by foreign powers (Mbeki 2009). This constitutes an Old Regime ripe for liberal revolution and the Arab Spring that began earlier this year in North Africa carries great significance for the continent as a whole. The new states and class structures of Africa's urban revolution are entangled in kinship systems that remain indispensable to the informal economy as a means of social organization (Bayart 2009). The middle classes pass off exploitation of cheap domestic labour as an egalitarian model of African kinship; while "family business" has never lost favour and child labour is still acceptable. Formal bureaucracy, on the other hand, is hostile to kinship, where it is normally viewed as corruption. In the absence of a welfare state, Africans must rely on kinship to see them through the life cycle of birth, marriage, childrearing, old age and death; and this reinforces the power of rural elders in the face of emigration by the youth and women, since access to ancestral land remains for many the main source of their long-term security.

The prospect of rapid economic improvement soon in Africa seems counter-intuitive, especially given Africa's symbolic role as the negation of

"white" superiority.[11] Black people have played this role for centuries as the stigmatized underclass of an unequal world society organized along racial lines; and never more than now, when American and European dominance is being undermined by a shift in the balance of economic power to countries like China, India, Brazil, Russia and, within its own region, South Africa.[12] Rather than face up to a decline in their economic fortunes, the whites prefer to dwell on the misfortunes of black people and on Africa's apparently terminal exclusion from modern prosperity. Failed politicians and aging rock stars announce their mission to "save" Africa from its presumed ills. The Western media represent Africa as the benighted battleground of the four horsemen of the apocalypse: conquest, war, famine and death. It all goes to reassure a decadent West that at least some people are a lot worse off than themselves.

It is a curious fact that China occupied a similar slot in western consciousness not long ago. In the 1920s and 1930s, Americans and Europeans often spoke of the Chinese the way they do of Africa today. China was then crippled by the violence of warlords, its peasants mired in the worst poverty imaginable. Today the country is spoken of as the likely successor to the United States as world leader, while its manufactures make inroads into western dominance on a scale far greater than Japan's ever did. This profound shift in economic power from West to East does not guarantee Africa's escape from the shackles of world inequality, but it does mean that structures of Atlantic dominance which once seemed inevitable are perceptibly on the move; and that should make it easier to envisage change. We are entering a phase of new economic possibility, as well as altered patterns of power in world society. Africa's advantage in the current global economic crisis is its weak attachment to the status quo. Africans have less to lose; and the old Stalinist "law of unequal development" reminds us that, under such circumstances, winners and losers may easily change places.

The classical liberal revolutions were sustained by three ideas: that freedom and economic progress require increased movement of people, goods and money in the *market*; that the political framework most compatible with this is *democracy*, putting power in the hands of the people; and that social progress depends on *science*, the drive to know objectively

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[11] In the last couple of years there has been a spate of literature boosting Africa's economic prospects. This is built partly on the minerals boom, partly on population growth, partly on belated recognition that Africa has a growing share of world consumption. For an upbeat, even breezy, version of this story, see Severino and Ray (2011).

[12] Known as the BRICS, although the South African economy has nothing like the dynamism of China, India and Brazil; and, at around 50 million, its population is much smaller than the others. See Hart and Padayachee (2010) on the case for greater integration of South Africa into the African region.

how things work that leads to enlightenment.[13] For over a century now an anti-liberal tendency has disparaged this great movement of emancipation as a form of oppression and exploitation in disguise; and, in common with many social revolutions, this is partially true. Africa today must escape soon from forms of political economy that owe a lot to the legacy of slavery, colonialism and apartheid; but conditions there can no longer be attributed solely to these ancient causes. It is possible that the example of the classical liberal revolutions, reinforced by endogenous developments in economy, technology, religion and the arts, could offer fresh solutions for African underdevelopment. These would have to be built on the conditions and energies generated by the urban revolution of the twentieth century (Hart 2010).

We all know that power is distributed very unequally in our world and any new liberal movement would soon run up against entrenched privilege. In fact, world society today resembles quite closely the Old Regime of agrarian civilization, as in eighteenth century England and France, with isolated elites enjoying a lifestyle wildly beyond the reach of masses who have almost nothing. It is not just in post-colonial Africa where the institutions of agrarian civilization rule today. Since the millennium, the United States (and not only the US), whose own liberal revolution once overcame the Old Regime of King George and the East India Company, has regressed to a form of rentier capitalism where income from politically secured property has replaced the profits of production as the main source of wealth.[14]

It has long been acknowledged that the rise of capitalism in Europe drew heavily on religion as one of its motors. Max Weber (1981 [1921]) insisted that an economic revolution of this scope could only take root on the back of a much broader cultural revolution. What might be the cultural grounds for Africa's informal economy to evolve into a more dynamic engine of urban commerce? Whatever happens next must build on what has already been put in place. The basis for Africa's future economic growth has to be the cultural production of its cities and not rural extraction or the

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[13] Goody's successor as head of Cambridge University's social anthropology department, Ernest Gellner, wrote *Plough, Sword and Book* (1988) in which the triad of market, democracy and science are inherently related as the modern replacements for the symbols of economic, political and intellectual technology of agrarian civilization that make up the title.

[14] "A type of capitalism where profit takes the form of *property income* (interest, intellectual property rights, rents, dividends, fees or capital gains) (…). The beneficiaries monopolize access to physical assets, financial assets and technologies (...) Often the term is used with the connotation of parasitism or a decadent form of capitalism" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rentier_capitalism).

reactionary hope of reproducing capitalism's industrial phase. This in turn rests on:

The energy of youth and women
The religious revival
The explosion of the modern arts
The digital revolution in communciations
The new African diaspora

What follows is a brief sketch of a book-length argument.

1. African societies, traditional and modern, have been dominated by older men. Women have benefited less from the opportunities men have had and are less tied to their burdens. In many cases they have been quicker to exploit the commercial freedoms of the neoliberal international economy. Even when men and boys have plunged whole countries into civil war, thereby removing state guarantees from economic life, an informal economy resting on women's trade has often kept open basic supply lines. The social reality of Africa's cities is a young population without enough to do and a growing generation gap. The energies of youth must be harnessed more effectively and the chances of doing so are greater if the focus of economic development is on something that interests them, like popular culture.

2. The religious revival in Africa, both Christian and Muslim, is a matter of immense significance for the forms of economic development. This is in many cases founded on young people's rejection of the social models and political options offered by their parents' generation. Fundamentalist and less extreme varieties of religion make a different kind of connection to world society than that offered by the nation-state, based on the assumption of American dominance or resistance to it. They help to fill the moral void of contemporary politics and often offer well-tried recipes for creative economic organization, e.g. the Mourides of Senegal (Cruise O'Brien 1971; Copans 1988). Christian churches are usually organized and supported by women, even if their leadership is often male.

3. In all the talk of poverty, war and AIDS, the Western media rarely report the extraordinary vitality of the modern arts in post-colonial Africa: novels, films, music, theatre, painting, sculpture, dance and their applications in commercial design. There has been an artistic explosion in the last half-century, drawing on traditional sources, but also responding to the complexity of the contemporary world. One example in the last decade is the 'Africa Remix' exhibition that toured Europe and Japan, a hundred installations from Johannesburg to Cairo, showing the modernity of contemporary African art (Elliot and Njami 2005). The African novel, along with comparable regions like India, leads the world (Irele 2009). I shall come back to the creativity of the film industry in a moment.

4. Africa largely missed the first two phases of the machine revolution, based on the steam engine and electricity; but the third phase, the digital revolution in communications whose most tangible product is the internet, the network of networks, offers Africans very different conditions of participation that they already show signs of taking up avidly. In origin a means of communication for scientists and the military, the internet is now primarily a global marketplace with very unusual characteristics. Like the informal economy, it goes largely unregulated; but this market freedom is harnessed to the most advanced technologies of our era. The internet has also generated new conditions for managing networks spanning home and abroad by radically shortening the time and space dimensions of communication and exchange at distance. The extraordinarily rapid adoption of mobile phones (Aker and Mbiti 2010) has made Africa a crucible for global innovations, such as the first multi-country network and use of phones for banking purposes in East Africa. Nor should we neglect the role of television as a transnational means of widening perceptions of community.

5. In the last half-century a new African diaspora has emerged, based unlike that formed by Atlantic slavery on economic migration to America, Europe and nowadays Asia. These migrants are usually known away from home by their national identity, but many of them by-pass the national level when maintaining close relationships with their specific region of origin. They are often highly educated, with experience of the corporate business world, while retaining links to relatives living and working in the informal economy at home. One consequence of neoliberal reforms has been that transnational exchange is now much easier than it was, drawing at once on indigenous knowledge of local conditions and the expertise acquired by migrants and their families in the West. Remittances from abroad are of immense importance everywhere, and they are bound to play a major role in Africa's economic future (Gupta et al. 2007).

To speak of economic growth in the future begs the question of what Africa's new urban populations could produce. So far, African countries have relied on exporting raw materials, when they could. Minerals clearly have a promising future owing to scarce supplies and rising demand; but the world market for food and other agricultural products is skewed. Conventionally, when seeking to diversify away from raw materials, African governments have aspired to develop manufacturing exports, but here they face intense competition from Asia. African countries must argue collectively in the councils of world trade for some protection from international dumping, so that their farmers and infant industries might at least get a chance to supply their own populations first. But the world market

for services is booming and perhaps greater opportunities for supplying national, regional and global markets exist there.

There was a time when most services were performed personally on the spot; but today, as a result of the digital revolution in communications, they increasingly link producers and consumers at distance. The fastest-growing sector of world trade is the production of culture: entertainment, education, media, software and a wide range of information services (Hart and Padayachee 2010). The future of the human economy (Hart, Laville and Cattani 2010), once certain material requirements are satisfied, lies in the infinite scope for us to do things for each other – like singing songs or telling stories – that need not take a tangible form. The largest global television audiences are for sporting events like the World Cup or the Olympic Games. The United States' three leading exports are now movies, music and software; this is why they have sponsored an intellectual property treaty (TRIPs) that seeks to shore up the profits of corporations whose products can be reproduced digitally at almost no cost. The central conflict in contemporary capitalism is between this attempt to privatize the cultural commons and widespread popular resistance to it (Hart 2005). Any move to enter this market will be confronted by transnational corporations and the governments which support them. Nevertheless, there is a lot more to play for here and the terrain is not as rigidly mapped out as in agriculture and manufactures. It is also one where Africans are exceptionally well-placed to compete because of the proven preference of global audiences for their music and plastic arts.

Did you know that the world's second largest producer of movies, after Hollywood and before Bollywood, is Lagos in Nigeria or 'Nollywood' (Hugo et al. 2009; Saul and Austen 2010)? Most of their movies cost no more than a few thousand dollars, a pattern reminiscent of Hollywood when W.G. Griffith was king. American popular culture is still that country's most successful export. There is no reason why it couldn't be for Africans too. The Mourides, a Sufist order founded almost a century ago, constitute an informal state within the state of Senegal. Their international trading operations are capable of influencing national economies, as when they recently shifted shoe supplies to the USA from Italy to China. Pioneering communications enterprises in Kenya and Ghana are beginning to be noticed for their exciting ability to tailor modern technologies to local demand. As I noted, mobile phone banking there now leads the world.

Conclusions

According to Jack Goody (most recently, 2010), the relative standing of Eurasia's regions has fluctuated over 5,000 years, with Western Europe (and its North American offshoots) enjoying some advantage since the Renaissance, especially since the industrial revolution. He utterly rejects any claim that Asia was ever structurally inferior. In most respects, Asian civilizations were well ahead of Europe for much of history. The speed with which they have adopted modern capitalism points to a fundamental similarity that helps us to understand the reversal in economic dominance that is underway now.

Goody set out to deconstruct the racist binaries that organize so much thinking about anthropology and world history. He thinks too much has been made of the industrial revolution as a decisive break in history; that modern capitalism may not be so radically different from its predecessors; and that attempts to associate recent history exclusively with the achievements of the West are deluded. This leads him to assert that many of the cultural features taken to be distinctive of particular regions (notably Europe) may be found elsewhere, often in quite well-developed forms. So, rather than classify whole societies according to the presumed presence and absence of cultural traits, it is better to consider how institutional patterns vary in emphasis and combination. Then the grounds for racial superiority are undermined and economic development is seen less readily as a series of radical breaks. He is right to insist that the legacy of agrarian civilization is still strong in our world and that older forms of capitalism (merchant and financial) have not been swept aside by factory production. But we must still try to understand the economic revolution we are living through, if only to head off global disaster. Marx (1970 [1867]) and Weber (1981 [1921]) have more uses in this respect than as mere cheerleaders for Western hegemony.

Jack Goody rarely makes it explicit that his whole approach is an attack on cultural anthropology. Like Morgan (1964 [1877]) and Childe (1942) before him, he explains cultural difference by technological change. The intensification of agriculture (the plough and irrigation) and new means of communication (writing) underpin the unequal class structure of agrarian civilization and explain the cultural differences between Eurasia and Africa. So Western supremacists are not only mistaken in assuming Europe's uniqueness, but they are idealists who fail to grasp the material conditions underlying the differences they celebrate. This leaves two gaping holes in Goody's understanding of modern world history. I have not been able here (but see Hart 2007) to engage with the first of these, his relative neglect of the machine revolution that has transformed the world in just two centuries. The other is the place of contemporary Africa in his scheme.

Jack Goody's time spent as an ethnographer in Northern Ghana provided the original ground for his extended foray into world-historical comparison. The problem is that "Africa" forms a binary contrast with Eurasia in his work and the lifestyle of the stateless hoe-farmers he knew stands as its symbol. If Asia is more complex than Western stereotypes allow, so too is Africa which has just been through a demographic explosion. "Africa" seems to have lately become for Goody a static abstraction used to support his assault on Western disparagement of Asia. This stands in contrast with his early recognition of and support for the anti-colonial revolution in Ghana. The United States and Europe could soon be replaced as the engines of world society by countries such as China, India and Brazil who were not long ago subject to cultural condescension, the premises of which Goody has undercut. Modern ethnographers too have criticized Western complacency, but their examples have generally been taken out of the context of world history. Jack Goody has excavated a new anthropological vision of our world that is bound to become even more salient as the present century unfolds. His anthropological legacy will last, even if the contemporary rise of Africa is not prefigured in his writing on the continent. I have tried to show today that Goody's extension of the tradition that I call "the anthropology of unequal society" is indispensable to understanding what really happened in Africa during the twentieth century and may happen there in the twenty-first.

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Chapter 3
A Case of Cultural Hybridity: the European Renaissance (2012)

Peter Burke

I

It is a pleasure and an honour to give the second lecture here in honour of Jack Goody, who is not only a friend and a neighbour in Cambridge – which is still a kind of village – but also a colleague, an anthropologist who has successfully re-invented himself as a historical sociologist or comparative historian (Pallares-Burke 2003: 7–30). Jack's work has been an inspiration to me, as to many others, over more than forty years.

To a historian of early modern Europe, the Renaissance seemed an obvious choice of theme. Jack has already examined *renaissances* in the plural in a comparative, sociological manner. In contrast, I shall focus here on what might be called the 'Big One,' the Western Renaissance, viewed here as a movement for the revival of antiquity rather than more vaguely as a period in European history (Burke 2009b; Goody 2009).

Given the importance of local variations, it might be prudent to think of even the European Renaissance in the plural, in other words as a family of linked movements that allow, indeed require approaches such as comparative history and its younger sibling, *histoire croisée* or 'connected history' (Subrahmanyam 1997; Werner and Zimmermann 2003). At least some of these movements drew ideas, forms or inspiration from cultures outside Europe, whether in Asia, Africa or the Americas, offering striking examples of cultural hybridity.

The current concern with hybridity should be no surprise in an age of particularly intense migration between countries and continents – Indians and West Indians in Britain, Arabs in France, Turks in Germany and so on; a migration not only of individuals and families but of things and ideas as well. Interest in this topic has become particularly intense in a cluster of disciplines, including anthropology and history, especially the discipline of historical anthropology or anthropological history, itself a hybrid, a form of historical analysis whose practitioners aspire like anthropologists to get

down from the veranda and study everyday life at ground level, at the grass-roots.

The idea that cultures are not pure but mixed is not a new one. It was the Belgian classicist Franz Cumont who launched the idea of syncretism in his book *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*. According to Cumont, the religion of Egypt "adapted itself with ease to diverse milieux." He wrote of "penetration," "infiltration" and the "mixture of races" (Cumont 1906: 2, 19, 82–83, 184–185). However, the systematic study of this domain goes back to scholars working on Afro-American cultures, especially in the Caribbean and Brazil, among them Gilberto Freyre (1933), Fernando Ortiz (1940), Alejo Carpentier (1946) and Édouard Glissant (1981). The idea of cultural hybridity or *métissage*, *mestizaje* or *mestiçagem* is one of the rare successes of what is sometimes called 'Southern Theory,' produced on the cultural periphery, in Havana, for instance, or Recife, and later adopted by the centre, in Paris and New York.

As has often happened in the history of historical thought and writing, new trends in the present have encouraged new questions about the past. In this respect, cultural historians owe a debt to the anthropologists who preceded them in the analysis of cultural encounters and their consequences. In return, historians do have, in my opinion, something important to contribute to this interdisciplinary field, focussing as they usually do on processes, especially long-term processes, including hybridization. I shall argue that the concept of hybridization helps us to understand cultural change in Europe as well as elsewhere. As the English historian Christopher Dawson pointed out eighty years ago, European culture itself emerged out of a process of fusion, the fusion of classical traditions, Christianity and what might be called the 'civilization of the barbarians,' such as the Franks, Goths or Saxons (Dawson 1932). To begin with, it may be useful to distinguish stages in the process of hybridization. Following the moment of cultural encounter comes the appropriation of fragments of another culture. These fragments are often juxtaposed to traditional elements rather than fusing with them (Rosenthal 1978). One might regard this first stage as the equivalent of what linguists call a pidgin, in the sense of a simplified language used as a *lingua franca* between two groups and drawing on the languages of both. The second stage in the process is one of crystallization, in the sense of the integration of the fragments into a new system. Linguists call this creolization, thinking especially of cases in which a former pidgin turns into a first language and so becomes more complex in both vocabulary and syntax. Anthropologists will note the parallel with the ideas of Marshall Sahlins (1981) on cultural change, in which a cultural order absorbs innovation until a tipping point is reached and the order itself is transformed.

Changing metaphors, this second stage might be described as that of the formation of local ecotypes or 'oikotypes,' a term I have borrowed from the Swedish folklorist Carl von Sydow (1948) who took it in his turn from botany. Metaphor seems unavoidable in this domain, whether the metaphor comes from botany ('hybridity' or 'ecotype'), metallurgy ('fusion' or 'amalgamation'), craftsmanship (*bricolage*) or language ('creolization' or 'cultural translation'). Metaphors are surely welcome in academic discourse as long as we are conscious of using them. As the anthropologist Ulf Hannerz puts it, "Whenever one takes an intellectual ride on a metaphor, it is essential that one knows where to get off" (Hannerz 1992: 264; cf. Burke 2009a; Chanson 2011). What follows is an exploration of the place of hybridity in what we call the culture of the Renaissance.

II

The fifteenth- and sixteenth-century movement that has become known as the Renaissance might be described as hybrid by definition in the sense of being an attempt within one culture, that of late medieval Europe, to revive another, the culture of classical antiquity, especially ancient Rome. In the course of the movement, some participants also drew ideas, forms or inspiration from cultures outside Europe, whether in Asia, Africa, or the Americas.

All the same, insufficient attention has been paid to this process of hybridization, which took place in a variety of different situations and locales, from Florence to Arequipa. The process needs to be studied at two levels, a macro-level that examines the movement as a whole but also a micro-level attentive to local and even individual variation.

At the macro-historical level, we see the contact, indeed the collision, between what might be described (in the structuralist language of the 1960s and 1970s), as two 'systems of signs,' in this case the Gothic and the classical. These systems penetrated many domains, media and materials: stone, wood, metal, glass, textiles, parchment and so on, decorating objects that ranged from large buildings to tiny jewels.

At the micro-historical level, it is possible to observe a variety of individual responses to this collision. I shall draw attention to three. The first took the form of what linguists call 'code-switching,' an idea that has its uses not only in linguistics but in other domains as well. Take the case of painting: the 15th-century Italian artist Pisanello, for instance, worked in two different styles, Gothic and classical. He did not replace one style by the other but practiced them simultaneously for different patrons (Woods-Marsden 1988).

A second reaction to the collision was self-conscious hybridization or syncretism, a practice that is often described today as 'cultural translation.' A book by the philosopher Marsilio Ficino, entitled *Platonic Theology*, makes an appropriate symbol of this kind of syncretism, christening Plato and classicizing Christianity. What allowed Ficino to take this bold step without falling into heresy was his belief that God had granted a special revelation to Plato, who knew about Christianity although he lived before Christ, participating in what Renaissance humanists called 'the ancient theology,' *prisca theologia* (Wind 1958; Walker 1972).

Another example comes from Africa. A few individuals with prominent roles in the Renaissance, from Albrecht Dürer to Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici, owned objects from Africa such as forks, spoons, salt-cellars and ivory horns made in what is now known as an 'Afro-Portuguese' style, the result of local artisans consciously adapting their tradition to what Europeans wanted, thus offering early examples of art made for export (Fagg 1959).

A third possibility, though not conscious this time, depends on what Pierre Bourdieu famously called the 'habitus,' in other words a set of dispositions (in both mind and body) that are internalized and cease to be conscious, but continue to generate cultural practices. The habitus is learned by imitation but becomes a kind of second nature, whether for boxers, sculptors or indeed for lecturers. Artisans who are asked to work in a new style may well assimilate it to their traditional habitus. Take the case of a scribe trying to imitate humanist cursive, a new form of handwriting developed in 15th-century Italy and based on ancient Roman models (more exactly, what were believed to be ancient Roman models). In the handwriting of some scribes the traditional gothic forms keep breaking through, in a sort of return of the repressed (Richardson 2009: 164). (An intellectual circular tour may be worth noting. Bourdieu borrowed the idea of *habitus* from a historian of art, Erwin Panofsky, more exactly from his famous essay on Gothic architecture and scholasticism. Bourdieu much admired this essay, translated it into French and wrote a *postface* for it (Panofsky 1967 [1951]). In my turn I am using Bourdieu to understand what used to be called the 'diffusion' or 'reception' of the Renaissance, including the obstacles to this reception.)

To assess the importance of hybridity in the Renaissance in a thorough manner it would of course be necessary to investigate a diverse range of cultural items – language, literature, painting, sculpture, and even law (the encounter between Roman law and local custom). Such an investigation would be difficult indeed to present in a single lecture. Hence in what follows I shall concentrate on a single art form, architecture.

Architecture is particularly likely to be hybrid for various reasons. In the first place, patrons played a greater role in commissioning buildings than in the case of paintings or statues. These patrons might have practical needs that conflicted with the architect's plans, so that hybridity was sometimes the outcome of a compromise. In the second place, building is a collective enterprise in which architects collaborate with masons (indeed, a distinction between the two roles was only beginning to emerge in the 15th century). Conflict and compromise can be found here too. In the third place, local conditions such as climate and materials are particularly important in the case of architecture.

Linguists have called attention to combinations of the vocabulary of one language with the syntax of another, as in the case of the so called 'mixed language' or *media lengua* of Ecuador, which is Spanish in its lexicon but follows Quechua rules of syntax. A similar phenomenon is apparent in the language of architecture (Summerson 1980 [1964]; Muysken 1997). The metaphor is actually an ancient one, since Doric and Ionic were the names of Greek dialects before the terms were applied to different forms of column and capital, while analogies between architecture and language were drawn during the Renaissance, in England and elsewhere (Anderson 2000).

I shall discuss Renaissance architecture in Italy, in the rest of Europe, and beyond Europe, especially in the Americas. I shall begin with the Americas on the grounds that the greater the distance between two cultures, the clearer the process of hybridization becomes.

III

The so-called expansion of Europe in the 16th century, the conquest of parts of Asia, Africa and on a grander scale the Americas, had important cultural consequences as well as economic, social and political ones. These cultural consequences included attempts to convert the local population to Catholicism and also to transport Renaissance and later, baroque art and architecture to the New World. The resulting hybrid style of painting in Mexico has been perceptively discussed by the French historian Serge Gruzinski (1999), inspired in part by an anthropologist of West Africa, Jean-Loup Amselle (1990).

In the case of architecture, the Spaniards made few concessions to local tradition. Indeed, it has been argued that the revived classical style both represented and reinforced the Spanish belief that their culture was superior to that of the Aztecs and Incas (Fraser 1986, 1990). All the same, some churches were built on the site of earlier temples and even used the same

stones, as in the case of the cathedral of Cusco, built from 1559 onwards on the ruins of the temple known as *Kiswarkancha.*

In both Mexico and Peru, the masons and sculptors were mainly indigenous. They probably had their own traditions, their own habitus (although we cannot be sure that they had worked as masons and sculptors before they were trained by the colonizers). As a result, the sculpture on church facades of the 16th and 17th centuries in the New World, especially Peru, may have been classical in its syntax but it was partly indigenous in its lexicon, in other words the converse of the *media lengua* of Ecuador.

In the sixteenth century the combination of local and imported motifs is already visible. However, it was in the seventeenth century that a distinctive Peruvian style or ecotype emerged, which some art historians have named the *estilo mestizo,*and others 'hybrid baroque' (Kubler 1944; Neumeyer 1948; Bailey 2010). This hybrid style includes local items such as pumas on church facades as well as a tendency to decorate surfaces more fully and in a flatter manner than in the European architecture of the time, as if the artisans had translated designs from indigenous textiles into stone. A famous example of the style is the Jesuit church in Arequipa, known as *La Compañía* (Plate 1).

The emergence of this *estilo mestizo* may have been encouraged by the Jesuits, whose missionary strategy in different parts of the world, from China to Peru, was that of 'accommodating' Christianity to local tradition. Hybridity is often the result of accommodation, a term that has recently come into use in linguistics, or more exactly come back into use, since ancient Roman rhetoricians already used the term (Mungello 1985; Giles, Coupland and Coupland 1991).

The hybrid style of Peru may also have been encouraged by the interpenetration of Christian and Muslim cultures in medieval Spain, divided as it was into Christian and Muslim kingdoms. In Spain during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, in Toledo, for instance, in Alcalà and elsewhere, some Christian churches were decorated by Arab artisans in the so-called *mudejar* style, with geometrical and calligraphic motifs of the kind to be found in mosques. It might therefore be suggested that Spanish colonial patrons of architecture were prepared by their experience in the peninsula to favour or at least to accept a mixture of European with indigenous artistic traditions (Toussaint 1946).

Traffic in the opposite direction was more limited, but it should not be forgotten. The best-known examples concern cultural borrowings from the Islamic world, notably in Italy in the late Middle Ages as well as the Renaissance. In Venice, for instance, the mosaics on the outside of the church of San Marco followed Islamic precedent. The ogee arches framing

the windows of late medieval Venetian palaces were an 'orientalizing' touch, while the design of the Doge's Palace (it has recently been argued) alluded to the architecture of Mamluk Cairo (Howard 2000; Dale 2010).

Again, Indian culture made an impact on Renaissance architecture in Portugal (the so-called 'Manueline style'), before the Jesuits and others brought Renaissance art in their baggage, as it were, to India (Dias 1988; Bailey 1998). Yet again, as European knowledge of the material culture of the New World grew, occasional American motifs can be found in Renaissance art and architecture, from Rome to Liège (Dacos 1969).

IV

References to the *mudejar* style has introduced the theme of Renaissance architecture in Europe. It is not difficult to find examples of Gothic structures combined with classical ornament and also the reverse, classical structures combined with Gothic ornament. We might speak of conflicting pressures, on one side the desire for the fashionably classical, and on the other the need to continue to build castles and churches, building types that had not existed in classical antiquity.

Chambord, for instance (Plate 2), is a hybrid castle-palace, built from 1519 onwards for François I from a design by the Italian Domenico da Cortona, largely medieval but with an Italianate roof. In similar fashion Hampton Court, in the South of England, built for Cardinal Wolsey but soon acquired by Henry VIII, combines a medieval gatehouse with Renaissance roundels made by the Italian Giovanni da Maiano and inspired by ancient Roman coins (Plate 3). A more unusual case is that of St Eustache in Paris, begun in 1532, a church that looks medieval from a distance, especially from outside, while classical details become apparent in close-up. The church has been described as a 'Gothic structure (…) clothed in Renaissance forms' (Blunt 1999 [1953]: 30). By contrast, hybridity is more obvious at St Etienne du Mont, another Paris church, rebuilt between the late fifteenth and the early seventeenth centuries (Plate 4).

Similar examples may be found elsewhere. Some Spanish architects and masons worked in both Gothic and classical styles. They have been described as 'bilingual' or 'bimodal' but they sometimes mix styles as well as switching between them (Marías 1989: 33; cf. Kavaler 2012: 17, 70–71, 265). In Prague, in the Vladislav Hall, around the year 1500, Benedikt Ried used both Gothic and Renaissance forms. The Renaissance motifs sometimes "seem to have been 'infected' by Gothic movement," as in the case of the famous twisted pilasters. In Regensburg, the design by Hans Hieber for the Schöne Maria church (1520) was in a 'mixed style' (Nussbaum 2000 [1994]: 220, 223).

The process of hybridization was encouraged by the manner in which the knowledge of the new style spread, often via treatises on the rules of classical architecture that were usually produced in Italy but translated, sometimes rapidly, into other languages (Guillaume 1988; Hart and Hicks 1998; Payne 1999). One imagines patrons with the new treatises in their hands, meeting masons with their local architectural culture, and there is some hard evidence of such encounters. As is often the case in history, misunderstanding probably played a role here, although historians are often reluctant to recognize its importance. In Germany, for instance, classical forms were employed 'tentatively' by architects who were concerned "how to get stonemasons trained in the Gothic style to carry them out adequately" (Nussbaum 2000 [1994]: 219).

The hybridization of architecture was also encouraged by what might be called cultural translation at second or third hand. Although the spread of the new style was assisted by a diaspora of Italian artists and artisans, there were not enough Italians to go round. Hence Italianate motifs were introduced into some places in Scotland by French masons and to Scandinavia (to Rosenborg Slot in Denmark, for instance), by craftsmen from the Netherlands (Campbell 1995).

An extreme case of cultural distance within Europe may be revealing: the case of a chapel at L'viv in the Ukraine, a city variously known as Lwów, Lvov, Lemberg or Leopolis, a multicultural or hybrid city where different ethnic groups had long coexisted and interacted. The Boimi chapel (1609–1615; Plate 5) was designed by a German from Silesia with the help of artisans from his own region but also Armenians from L'viv itself, where an Armenian community had been established by the late Middle Ages. North Italian artisans had been working not far away at Zamość in Poland. Interaction between these groups led to the development of a local style that has been described by a leading Polish art historian as 'a richly decorated Netherlandish Mannerism which blended with oriental Armenian motifs and with a Venetian version of the Tuscan and Doric orders' (Miłobędzki 1996: 835). What may have begun as a visual Babel was turning into a kind of polyphony.

Awareness of the need to adapt the classical or Italian style to local conditions, in Northern Europe in particular, was expressed at the time. In cold climates chimneys were needed and they were sometimes disguised as classical columns, as in the case of Ionic capitals on the chimneys of an Elizabethan country house such as Kirby Hall in Northamptonshire. Failure to adapt might be criticized, as in the case of loggias for English country houses (Henderson 1995). The Netherlander Vredeman de Vries, well-known for his pattern-books, openly declared that classical rules could be

broken so as to accommodate art to the situation and the needs of the country "accommoder l'art à la situation et necessité du pais" (quoted in Mercer 1962: 77). Using the term favoured by the Jesuit missionaries, Vredeman recommended what we now call 'cultural translation.'

V

It is time to turn to Italy itself, where the new style began, appropriately enough given the number of ancient Roman buildings that had survived there. Imitating these buildings was not as simple as it may seem in retrospect. As pioneers, the Italians reveal that although it was easy to appropriate classical ornaments, it took generations to understand the logic or grammar by which they had been combined in antiquity, for example the use of the 'orders,' with Doric capitals on the ground floor, Ionic on the next and Corinthian above.

In any case, borrowing from antiquity was not necessarily viewed as incompatible with a taste for Gothic. The Tuscan Bernardo Rossellino, designing a cathedral for pope Pius II in his native city (renamed Pienza in the pope's honour), drew on the traditions of Gothic hall churches (the plan and even gothic tracery in the windows) combining them with classical columns and round arches. From outside the cathedral looks Renaissance (Plate 6) while from inside (Plate 7) it looks Gothic (Mack 1987: 83, 93; Tönnesmann 1990: 40–45). What did the patron himself think? Luckily there is some concrete evidence for his tastes. Pius, otherwise known as Enea Silvio Piccolomini, was a humanist as well as a pope, devoted to the classical tradition, but he praised the Gothic churches of Germany, where he had lived as a diplomat, especially Strasbourg cathedral, the very building praised by Goethe in a text that encouraged the Gothic revival of the 19th century (Gragg and Gabel 1936–1957: 601–602). Today, we may see Gothic and classical as antithetical styles, but some contemporaries appear to have regarded them as equally attractive alternatives and even as allowing bricolage.

In short, the result of the collision between the revived classical style and various local styles was the production of new ecotypes in the Old World as well as the New. To make this statement is actually to enter a minefield, or at least a territory disputed between two groups or schools of art historians. On one side, the 'centripetal' scholars, as we might call them, emphasize the common features of Renaissance architecture, speaking of an international style that reached from Florence to Prague, Mexico or Arequipa (Kubler 1944; Kaufmann 1995, 1999). On the other side, the 'centrifugal' scholars place their emphasis on local variations, creative peripheries and hybrid styles (Neumeyer 1948; Białostocki 1976a, 1976b, 1986; Gruzinski

1999; Bailey 2010). An outsider to this debate may perhaps be permitted to remark that the differences between the two schools sometimes appear to be exaggerated. They are matters of degree, or emphasis, rather than differences of kind. Returning to the linguistic analogy that runs through the whole debate on cultural hybridity, a leading centripetal scholar, Thomas Kaufmann, speaks of "dialects of an international language." How far the dialects diverge from the standard languages is of course an empirical matter, allowing different answers in different cases. For example, the Hungarian ecotype of Renaissance architecture was closer than the Polish to the Florentine model, thanks to the immigration of Florentine artisans (Feuer-Tóth 1990).

It may be added that the term 'ecotype' seems particularly useful in this context because it offers a solution to the problem of original purity. As was noted earlier, the idea of cultural hybridity has often been criticized on the grounds that it falsely assumes the purity of cultures before a given encounter occurs. If every culture is hybrid, the concept loses its value. One possible reply to this criticism is to suggest that the process of hybridization is more intense or more rapid at some periods than others. In England, for example, the decades after 1066, with the Norman Conquest, and 1950, when large-scale immigration from the West Indies, India and Pakistan began, might be regarded as periods when this process was particularly important.

Another possible reply is to speak of purity or homogeneity as relative. The second phase of hybridization produces new ecotypes or creoles that remain relatively stable (or even 'pure') until the next cultural encounter occurs and the process begins all over again.

VI

This approach to the Renaissance in terms of cultural hybridity is not completely new. The life's work of the German scholar Aby Warburg, for instance, was a concern with the transformations of the classical tradition, especially during the Renaissance. Like his contemporary Franz Cumont, he emphasized the coexistence and the interaction of different world-views in the same milieu, such as fifteenth-century Florence, and even in the same individual, such as the merchant Francesco Sassetti (Warburg 1932: 213–246). Other students of the Italian Renaissance, particularly in Germany, followed his example (Schmarsow 1921; Weise 1952).

All the same, the place of hybridity in the Renaissance as well as in other cultural movements, surely deserves – and is now beginning to attract – further exploration (Chatenet 2011; Kavaler 2012: 242–257). This approach focuses attention on a range of artefacts that had fallen into neglect

precisely because they did not offer sufficiently clear, distinct or pure examples of the art of the period. However, these mixed productions have their place in history, and indeed their own beauty. We should not allow purist prejudices to prevent us from appreciating it.

The study of the Renaissance, or of other cultural movements, from this angle requires, appropriately enough, a combination of two approaches, a microhistory that resembles traditional anthropology and a macrohistory that is closer to sociology. It is surely unnecessary to remind you that Jack Goody is a master of both approaches. For this reason, among others, his work remains an inspiration for historians and anthropologists alike.

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Plate 1. Façade, church of La Compañía, Arequipa, Peru. (Photo: Brian Woychuk, http://www.flickr.com/photos/woychuk/3914054369/sizes/o/in/photostream/ [Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 2.0]).



Plate 2. Château of Chambord, France. (Photo: Patrick Giraud, http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/80/France_Loir-et-Cher_Chambord_Chateau_03.jpg [Creative Commons BY-SA 3.0]).

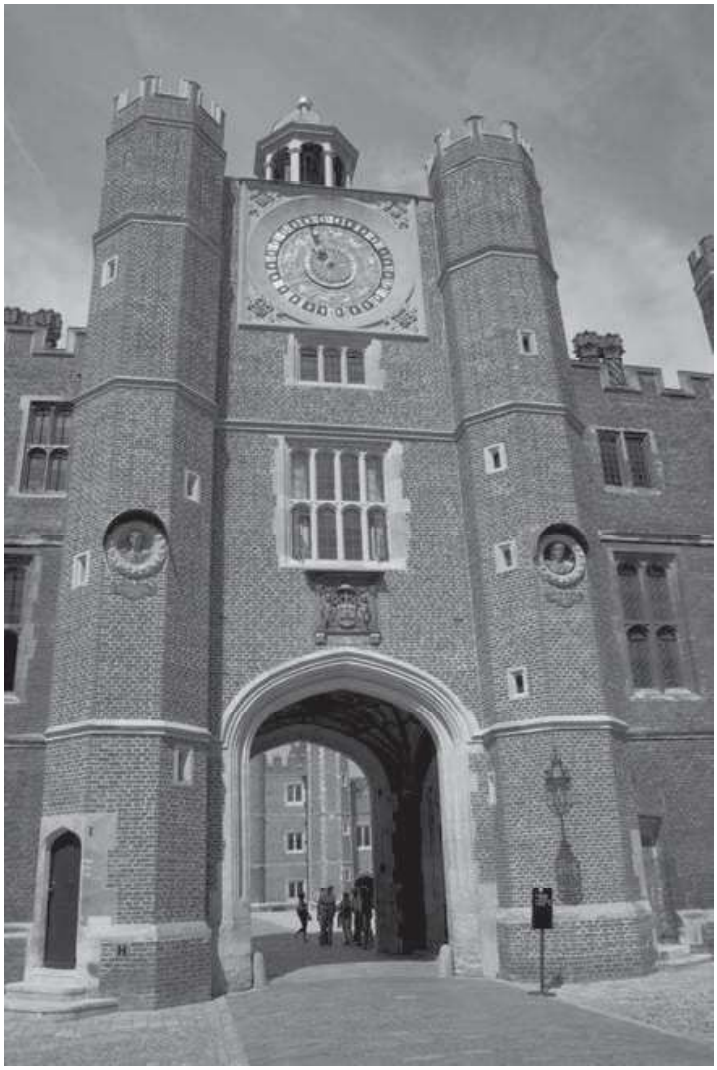


Plate 3. Gateway, palace of Hampton Court, Surrey, United Kingdom. (Photo: ashleyl23x, http://www.flickr.com/photos/ashleylaurenphotography/6030043412/sizes/l/in/photostream/ [Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 2.0]).

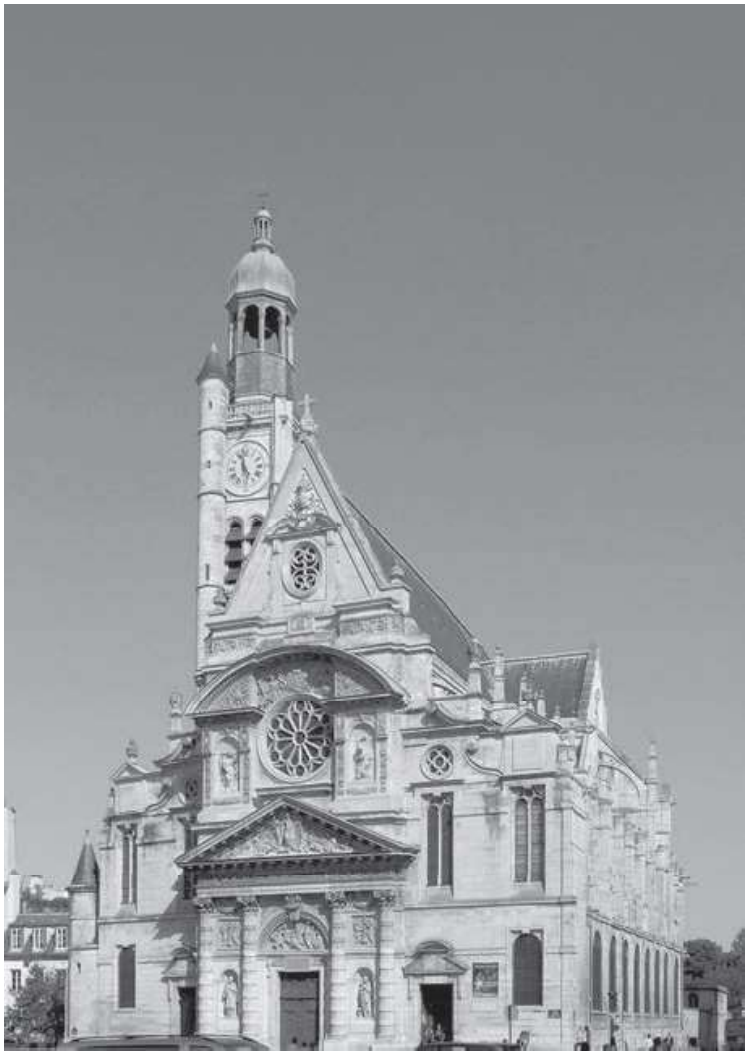


Plate 4. Church of St Etienne du Mont, Paris, France. (Photo: Mbzt, http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d1/P1020128_Paris_V_Eglise _Saint-Etienne-du-Mont_reductwk.JPG [Creative Commons BY 3.0]).



Plate 5. Boimi Chapel, L'viv, Ukraine. (Photo: Jennifer Boyer, http://www.flickr.com/photos/jenniferboyer/5894776062/sizes/o/in/photostream/ [Creative Commons BY 2.0]).



Plate 6. Cathedral, Pienza, Italy, exterior. (Photo: Helena, Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/photos/heleenmeijer/5214385752/sizes/o/in/photostream/ [Creative Commons BY 2.0]).



Plate 7. Cathedral, Pienza, Italy, interior. (Photo: Ho Visto Nina Volare, http://www.flickr.com/photos/41099823@N00/652916222/sizes/o/in/photostream/ – Creative Commons BY-SA 2.0).

Chapter 4

The Solace of the Past in the Unspeakable Present: the historical anthropology of the 'Near East' (2013)

Martha Mundy

Introduction

In this third lecture in the series honouring Jack Goody, it seemed appropriate to begin with one aspect of Goody's wide-reaching work to which I had responded in my own career. But on second thoughts, I found this approach ahistorically academic when writing of someone I have known for forty years, and who over all but the last five had to vouch for me professionally. For such a long 'supervision,' perhaps a more personal timeline may be allowed. So in the lecture which follows, I shall move between Goody's work and my own.

In 1973 Jack Goody agreed to tutor me in Cambridge, although, registered in what was then the Faculty of Oriental Studies, I was not a student of his department or college. At the time I had funding for 18 months' doctoral research in North Yemen (but was to stay for 48) and I felt that I needed training beyond my study of classics, Arabic and geography. Goody had a very sympathetic curiosity about Arab societies; it was in Libya that he had begun his military service in World War II and was first taken prisoner, an experience of violence and forced sociality that marked him for life (Goody 1995: 120). It was probably the fact that my destination was Yemen that led Jack Goody to agree to set essays on kinship and lineage for a rank beginner. In his rooms at St John's College hung a large portrait of William Robertson Smith in Arab robes whose 1885 *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* was to form part of my readings, along with the work of Africanists such as Fortes, Evans Pritchard and others.[1] I was also

[1] Robertson Smith had reached the vicinity of Mecca but not Yemen. After he was stripped of his Chair in Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis at the Free Church College in Aberdeen following objections to his historical biblical scholarship, he gave himself to learning Arabic and travelling widely in North Africa and North Arabia. I am not quite sure what I made of *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, an extraordinary text structured about the evolutionary theses of McLennan, yet learned and critical on the Arabic genealogists in a

introduced to the European family history of the Cambridge group for the History of Population and Social Structure: Peter Laslett's *Household and Family in Past Time* had just appeared. And of course I read Goody's own work – *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups* (1958), *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962), *Succession to High Office* (1966), *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa* (1971), and (freshly published, with Tambiah) *Bridewealth and Dowry* (1973). It was a very productive period of Goody's life, and before I had finished my doctorate, by then under his formal supervision, *Production and Reproduction* (1976) and *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977) had both appeared, and *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (1983) was well underway.

So after two terms' tutorials I went off to Yemen determined to study rural family and economy with the same methods as were then deployed in European family history. Critique of orientalism was in the air: Anouar Abdel-Malik's 'Orientalism in crisis' had appeared in 1963 and Talal Asad's collection *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* in 1973, while Edward Said's *Orientalism* would appear in 1978 soon after I had returned from Yemen to write my dissertation.

North Yemen and Social Anthropology

By documenting the basic units of production and reproduction in the valley near Sanaa where I did fieldwork, I came to understand Northern Yemeni 'tribes' (*qaba'il*) as self-organizing, geographically-grounded communities built from houses able to contract politically with one another. Yemeni tower houses are rightly celebrated as architecture.[2] Yet their primacy in social organization had not been analytically foregrounded. The tax-paying, arms-bearing heads of houses could agree to binding norms and to jural co-responsibility; they did this in negotiation with overarching state authority. Inside and outside the state, the categories of Islamic jurisprudence were both honoured and vernacularly familiar; Islamic literati penned local laws. My sociological characterization of North Yemeni rural society was very far from Robertson Smith's judgement that "The key to all divisions and aggregations of Arab groups lies in the action and reaction of two principles: that the only effective bond is a bond of blood, and that the purpose of

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spirit that would have echoed what the late Mahmud al-Ghul had taught me in New York two years before about the deployment of genealogy in al-Baladhuri as an organizing model in the Arab armies of the conquest.

[2] At the time I wrote a short introduction to the work of an architect friend; see Varanda 1981: 2–4.

society is to unite men for offence and defence" (Robertson Smith 1905 [1885]: 69).[3]

My analysis met a critical response from several anthropological peers; it went against their interpretations of 'the tribe' as an expression of genealogical ideology, as an organization so bound up with values about masculine honour as to be fundamentally everywhere the same, in other words, as first and foremost a political and discursive phenomenon. By contrast, I sought to develop a sociological analysis of a particular 'tribe' as built from the combination of houses and quarters. I described the internal governing of the houses, their combining in the community (tribe) and their relation, in geographical space and social imagination, with other such units and with state government. I argued that one pillar of the state's legitimacy derived from its vouchsafing the right-ordering of relations between men and women inside the house where shaykhly rule could not enter. Although I had privileged access to women in my fieldwork and could therefore give proper place to women's role in 'tower-house' society, the tribal view of Yemeni society reflected in turn the view of male anthropologists participating only in men's sociality.

My work was not conducted as historical anthropology. But the region was changing so rapidly consequent to the boom in oil revenue in Saudi Arabia that even by the time I came to rework my doctoral material a decade later as *Domestic Government: kinship, community and polity in North Yemen* (1995), it was striking how 'tribe and shaykh' (conceptually outside the state hitherto) were being adopted as a model of state governance itself. My field research had coincided with the presidencies of Qadi 'Abdul-Rahman al-Iryani and Lieutenant-Colonel Ibrahim al-Hamdi. From 1974, with a vision of rural social organization as local associations capable of cooperative development initiatives, al-Hamdi had moved against leading shaykhs affiliated to Saudi Arabia. In 1977 he was assassinated, the night before he was to go to Aden for what would have been a very different kind of unification of the Northern Yemen Arab Republic with the Southern People's Democratic Republic of Yemen from that wrought in 1990 and 1994. His lasting successor, Lieutenant 'Ali 'Abdullah Salih was to build a military state in alliance with Saudi-backed tribal elites. In this 'the tribe' (in the sense of my anthropological critics) did indeed become a nativist idiom of politics in the military state. And at the level of production, the bases of the older territorial tribes were becoming radically eroded: mining of sub-soil water and abandonment of the locally-crafted infrastructure sustaining rain-fed food-production was to continue unabated in the years of Salih's

[3] And Robertson Smith (1905 [1885]: 62) "(…) the Arabs were incapable of conceiving of any absolute social obligation or social unity which was not based on kinship (…)."

presidency under the watchful eye of international development agencies and NGOs guiding economic policy and social provision (Mundy et al. 2014).

Domestic Government was written as ethnography but reads today as a study in history. The changes so evident in Yemen in recent years pose two problems for analysis: the character of emerging political and class relations, and the socio-political consequences of economic subjection to outside forces. In both respects, Yemen enjoys little autonomy from the wider world (Hill et al. 2013).

Goody and History: African foundations

Imperialism and the state were not privileged themes of Jack Goody. Yet it is not that he never touched upon them: in a moment I shall turn to his 1971 essay *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa*, a text exceptional in his work for placing the state at the centre of its analysis. Goody's generous and ludic anthropology, forged by his study of groups that anthropology termed acephalous, i.e. without a sovereign head, the LoDagaa and LoWilli, sees men and women in society as productive through cooperation, communication and exchange. His concern with the complex permutations of human kin relations and their building through production and reproduction was central in his writing: from *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962) to *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive: systems of marriage and the family in the pre-industrial societies of Eurasia* (1990), right through to *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: an essay on the origins of the modern world* (2012). The resulting historical vision is far from that of the slaughterhouse of history, as if wilfully avoiding the tragic.

Goody wrote of the formation of his generation:

> We had grown up between the two wars, with an interval of only twenty-one years from one terrifying destruction to the next, and lived our adolescence under the shadow of continental Fascism in its devastating oppression and annihilation of man by man, in practice and in ideology. This period began with the murderous Japanese attacks on China, the archaic colonial conquests of Italy, the devastating civil war in Spain and the inexorable expansion of Germany, against the background of the widespread suppression and maltreatment that was going on in those countries. That period was followed by six-and-a-half years of life under arms, during which time all one could look forward to was post-war reconstruction, through the national government and through the United Nations.
>
> That reconstruction obviously involved the dissolution of earlier empires, the whole process of decolonisation that began with India in 1947 and that was envisaged, at least under Labour rule and to

> some extent by Conservative politicians as well, as gradually extending to the rest of the colonial territories. In a sense the deconstruction of the empire was part and parcel of the reconstruction of Britain. …it was a heady prospect, indeed heady in actuality too, for the major part of the process was complete within some ten years, by 1960, the Year of Africa (Goody 1995: 120).

Goody traces his own engagement with the study of history to the "new Africa" which "demanded an account of its own past and present" (Goody 1995: 121).

In terms of intellectual inspiration Goody writes that he, like other students in the 1930s, had to "make some kind of resolution of their interests in two major figures, Marx and Freud," noting that his contact with Marxism had been longstanding but through social anthropology he also encountered Durkheim and Weber (ibid.). In his work of the 1960s and 1970s, Weber appears far more present than Marx. That said, Goody had sympathy with Marxist anthropologists – he urged me to read Claude Meillassoux's *Femmes, Greniers, Capitaux* in 1975 – and with historian colleagues who had been hounded under McCarthy, such as Moses Finley and Owen Lattimore, the latter a model scholar for Goody's Eurasia.

But let us return to the state. Goody's 1971 essay had four parts: 'Feudalism in Africa?,' 'Polity and the means of production,' 'Polity and the means of destruction,' and 'Polity and ritual: the opposition of horse and earth.' In the first, he made an argument that was to become rather shrill in later life with regard to capitalism, but which was surely apt for feudalism:

> Of course, certain general trends of development in political, legal, and economic institutions are rightly accepted by most students of society and the study of these trends has often gained much from the approach associated with the names of Marx and Engels.[4] What blocks advance, here as in other fields of comparative studies, is a rigid attachment to particular European-based schema, whether this be derived from an explicit ideological commitment or from an inability to see beyond our own cultural tradition (Goody 1971: 13–14).

Goody then argued that "(…) we need to take a closer look at the means and organization of production in Africa and Europe instead of tacitly assuming identity in these important respects" (Goody 1971: 14). And here Goody states that the fundamental difference between the two was not in exchange and markets or military organization (ownership of the means of destruction) but in the system of production (especially ownership of the means of

[4] Goody's footnote is to the archaeologist V. Gordon Childe.

production) (Goody 1971: 22). He stresses the historical plurality of paths to statehood, but overall he views the ruling class as predatory: "Booty was indeed part of the productive system of the ruling class" (Goody 1971: 36). And again:

> In one sense, a superior military technology was the productive system of the ruling strata, since it led to the acquisition of slaves, other booty, and taxes on trade. But productivity in the military field clearly differed from productivity in the agricultural and industrial sphere, since such activity necessarily resulted in the impoverishment of others (Goody 1971: 43).[5]

The notion of 'the productive system of a ruling class' is an odd one, perhaps we would say 'the mechanism productive of a ruling class,' but the primacy Goody accorded to basic production and his understanding of a ruling class and militarism as predatory does echo Marx. While Goody would continue to celebrate humankind's ability to make things, his early understanding of militarism and the ruling class faded in his later writings on capitalism. As with feudalism, Goody rejects a reading of world history as fundamentally made in Europe. Europe's specific contribution to capitalism, he notes, is historically restricted to financial capitalism, but he did not engage with the destructive quality of the alliance of finance capital and militarism.

The Shift to Eurasia

From the 1970s Goody was to turn away from ethnographic work (although his work on the oral tradition of the Bagre was to last many years) to more comparative historical work, focused not on sub-Saharan Africa but on Eurasia. In several books he took pleasure in describing cultural and communicative commonalities of class societies across Eurasia: *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* (1982), *The Culture of Flowers* (1993) and *Food and Love: a cultural history of East and West* (1998). From the 1990s he also gave such *longue-durée* historical description a more critical edge, attacking claims for a Western (and within that for a 'little England' or Anglo-Saxon) exceptionalism or unparalleled originality: *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive* (1990), *The East in the West* (1996), *Capitalism and Modernity* (2004), *The Theft of History* (2006), *Renaissances: the one or the many?* (2009), *The Eurasian Miracle* (2010), and *Metals, Culture and Capitalism* (2012).

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[5] Compare also Goody (1966: 44): "The nature of this domination exercised by the ruling dynasty varies with the nature of the resources controlled, and hence with the productive (economic) and destructive (military) systems." And "It is important to stress not only the nature of the 'class' (or rather 'estate') interests involved, but also the nature of the resources under dynastic control."

One might have thought that, however dependent on secondary literature and at times rapidly written to reach a wider audience, the volume of Goody's criticism of a 'Great Divide' would have silenced the opposition. But of late once again the historiography of 'great divergence' is paid honour. Major European Union funding is given to a project on 'Divergent Paths? The Shape of Power and Institutions in Mediaeval Islam and Christendom.'[6] The leading institution in the project describes its agenda as:

> This project starts from the following proposition: that the clearest trait that distinguishes society in East and West in the Middle Ages is the very formal aspect that European institutions acquired and that was missing from their Islamic counterparts. This divergence may, in turn, have had very significant consequences, notably for the nature and continuity of practices and power in the political, religious, social, economic, and other fields. Such divergence and its consequences were of significance beyond the Middle Ages and continue to have an effect in the present day.[7]

So too, in America 'new institutional economics' (itself no longer new, moreover incapable of analyzing norm or institution) is deployed in the demonstration of epochal difference. Thus, Timur Kuran's *The Long Divergence: how Islamic law held back the Middle East* (2010) is seen to merit professional study in an international seminar organized in 2011 by the economist Daron Acemoğlu, the political scientist James Robinson[8], and the historian Roger Owen. As we shall see below, the issue has never been the denial of all historical institutional difference, neither for Goody nor for other notable scholars such as the medievalist Michael Chamberlain (1994:

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[6] In the statement on the website the project notes that Byzantium represents a middle term. See http://www.pimic-itn.eu/research-areas: "The project covers three main research areas: **Medieval Studies** – i.e. history of European societies in the Middle Ages; **Arab Studies** – i.e. history of Middle Eastern and North African (plus Sicilian and Andalusian) societies – and **Byzantine Studies**. Despite sharing a common chronological framework for the Medieval period, it has been very rare the collaboration among specialists in these areas. PIMIC-ITN is an interdisciplinary project that aims at setting a common research agenda and a common ground for the understanding of historical processes from a global perspective. The study of institutional diversity is an excellent opportunity for such endeavour, as it fosters a research agenda based on the study of how was structured law, authority, religion, knowledge or social order in different Eastern or Western milieus. The inclusion of the Byzantine Empire is crucial as the project attempts to avoid the simple comparison of Islam vs. Christendom, a comparison in danger of invoking assumptions of essentialist differences between civilizations." While the last phrase suggests some hesitation, the binary East and West remain. The collaborating institutions are in Spain, Italy, France, the United Kingdom and Israel; there are a dozen doctoral and post-doctoral fellows.

[7] http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/diverging_paths/

[8] Acemoğlu and Robinson co-authored (2012) *Why Nations Fail: the origins of power, prosperity, and poverty.*

ch. 1) who sees the institutions of late medieval Damascus as quite as distinct from the Ottoman as from those of late medieval Western Europe.

A Region Too Close?

But lest this lecture descend to treating seriously arguments Goody so long fought to banish, let us recognize the sticky problem of the physical location of difference. It is a matter of history (not nature) that the division between 'the East'/Asia and 'the West'/Europe lies in the Mediterranean, that most ancient basin of exchange and promiscuous proximity. The division is an ideological problem – Istanbulis can rest assured that they can continue to cross the divide twice daily on their ferries, may now travel under the Bosphorus by metro, and can look forward to a further traffic jam over the great divergence on Prime Minister Erdoğan's third grim bridge.

What did Goody do with institutional differences about the Mediterranean? As we have seen, most of his work was to take a wider canvass, but in a 1983 essay, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, Goody explored points of divergence in the legal traditions of Catholicism from Islam (and from Judaism and Orthodox Christianity). In this he argued that in societies where the transmission of class status rests on property devolution, in-group marriage (and in particular to close kin and affines) was generally privileged (Goody 1983: 82). So too it was in Europe as elsewhere around the Mediterranean, save for the regulations of the Catholic Church elaborated in the interest of its corporate property acquisition, a point not to escape dissidents and reformers long before Martin Luther and his followers (Goody 1983: 157–182). Alongside the marriage bans (Goody 1983: 134–146) came rules enjoining monogamy (even in the absence of an heir), clerical celibacy and measures against family control of property endowed to the church, such as remained possible through 'family *waqf*' under Islamic jurisprudence until governments did away with that in the 19th century (Goody 1983: 113; Mundy 1988: 10–11). Goody's elegant argument viewed marital and family relations as forged both by commonalities of class societies and by divergent institutional histories.

Islamic tradition is by definition central in Goody's Eurasia. Yet, as Aziz al-Azmeh remarks in his essay on 'Jack Goody and the Location of Islam,' the amount of material Goody actually cites on Islamic cultures (Arabic, Turkic, Kurdish and Persian combined) remains slender compared to that on China and India (Al-Azmeh 2009: 77). Al-Azmeh speculates that the reason for this could be the aptness for the construction of a comparative field of Eurasia of remoter regions, as against those nearer and more directly

enmeshed in European history.[9] Goody's only book specifically addressing Islam is an essay on the modern politics of *Islam in Europe* (2004). But this, as al-Azmeh notes, builds its arguments from the primacy of religion in today's multiculturalist politics rather than from an analysis of Islamic elements through "a sociological grid laying out the possible variations of what is being compared" (Al-Azmeh 2009: 81, citing Goody 2006: 304). And even when writing of Arab kinship, Goody's customarily voracious reading resulted in few citations. Thus other factors may also be relevant: the limited number of anthropological or historical sociological classics in European languages concerning the Arab lands, Turkey, Iran, or Afghanistan; the textual and often normative character of the scholarship of *Islamwissenschaft*; and the difficulty of access to the un-translated work of native intellectuals who wrote in Arabic, Turkish or Persian. The corpus of knowledge facing Goody was indeed dense but rarely comparative or sociological.

The character of the corpus (and the political battles behind it) played its part in my own choices after I left Goody's supervision. At a practical level, I sought employment where I would have to teach in Arabic (that is to use the language with intellectual peers and students, not only with friends or the subjects of my research). And at a conceptual level, I tackled the corpus of *Islamwissenschaft* on a major theme of Goody's work – inheritance. This resulted in a long essay luxuriating in citation (the antithesis of today's disciplined peer-reviewed journal article) in which I explored three aspects of the sociology of the Islamic laws of inheritance: the archaeology of European (and their occasional intersection with Arabic) readings of the 'meaning' of the law; the sources and sociological interpretation concerning the formation of the law; and a sketch for a comparative sociology of law-in-practice in different agrarian systems.

Thus the first section on 'the modern interpretations of the Islamic laws of inheritance' analyzed the standard account (Coulson 1964, 1972) of the character of the law as the result of a sedimentation of earlier European readings concerning the relation of law to society: '1750–1810 Through Islamic law one can understand the society of Muslims;' '1810–1870 Islamic law is of religious inspiration; adherence to its provisions – regardless of practicality – springs therefore, from Muslim religiosity;' '1870–1930 Islamic law represents the law of a people, the Arabs, at a time of transformation – from a nomadic tribal society to a settled society based

[9] Al-Azmeh (2009: 77) notes that "This might well reflect the particular aptness for his purposes of remoter regions in preference to others more proximate to Europe, and more directly and continuously involved with her history, a proximity and an involvement – indeed, an imbrication – which he treats separately and at some length (Goody 2004: ch. 1)."

upon the extended patriarchal family.' It was here that the standard account stopped. In the 20th century the 'superimposition' thesis no longer followed Robertson Smith's patriarchy overlying Bachofen's and McLennan's matriarchy, rather it cast Islamic norms as tempering agnatic bonds without entirely sweeping them away. But on the arcane topic of inheritance, it was only from the 1970s that more historicist readings, which I followed in the essay, regained ground (Powers 1979, 1986; Juda 1983). So my account of modern interpretations of the law closed with what was then the present: '1930–1980s: through the societies of Muslims one can understand Islamic law.' Lest this phrase be read as a mere inversion of the late 18th-century legal idealism with which my characterization of European readings had begun, let me quote from the end of that section where it is apparent that what was at stake was how the lived form of the text changes over history, not some kind of sociological reduction of legal text:

> Equally telling of the new economic order is the manner in which legal discourse governing domestic relations is pressed into new service. Whereas in the pre-capitalist Middle East the laws governing domestic relations – the law of legitimate alliance and of succession to property – lay at the heart of the structures of society and of the interaction of social classes, today the shrinking of the domestic economy finds its expression in the transformation of Islamic law from a series of formal contracts between parties to an iconic statement about social statuses. Two elements in the older legal tradition have proved useful here. First, Islamic law governing domestic relations was built by a series of extensions outwards from the marriage contract, i.e. the contractual relations between man and wife and through them the two family groups so allied. Second, the marriage contract was distinguished from other contracts by the distinct and unequal status of the parties, an inequality of legal capacity without parallel in the law, except in the distinction of the legal capacity of the slave from the free man. But slavery, along with patronage, has been legally abolished and no one proposes the revival of such institutions today. Thus, in a sense, the unequal capacity of man and woman to contract in the law of legitimate sexual alliance remains today the only divinely sanctioned form of social inequality in the legal tradition.
>
> But today the legal tradition appears not in the meticulous definitions of jural relations to which so many generations of scholars have contributed, but in short digests of legal tradition providing accessible catechisms of the Holy Family: *The Family in Islam*, *The Muslim Woman*. The image assembled therein is one of

> great beauty. To the dispossessed it promises a return to a world of human scale, a world where, as in the homely tales of the *hadith*, families make history. To the bourgeois it proposes a private vision of social order for a class unable to provide a public model of social order. And to those who rule and must guide popular resentment, it provides a discourse that both promises the people limits to the tyranny of the state – in the figure of the autonomy of the domestic – and yet that, through its constant allusions to the disorder of women's sexuality if unleashed, invites the state to drive the law through the sinews of men who long to be so irresponsible. The natural primacy of the family is enshrined in holy tradition; it is not simply a transitory social contract devised by men – as, for example, the notional rights of the citizen in the modern codes of secular law (Mundy 1988: 23).

In the next major section of the essay, in the historicist mode, I turned to examine what was known of the formation of the law. That was of necessity a textual exercise, entailing internal comparison within a single text (the various and at points contradictory principles in the Quranic verses concerning heirs, shares, testation and gift), identifying the comparative grid of contemporaneous legal provisions (Roman, Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian), charting the internal debates over the formative centuries of the law, and comparing differences in the resultant doctrines, the Imami Shiite proving as different from the Sunni as either one from the legal forms of other faiths of the time. As to the 'location of Islam,' this section demonstrated that its legal doctrines concerning inheritance were forged in the context of the existing range of legal practices and doctrines.

As for 'the sociology of origins,' two kinds of tension or transition were evident in the textual material surveyed:[10]

> This is not to deny that the centuries in which Islamic legal traditions developed and were refined saw an evolution of a kind. But this was, in the East as in the West, an evolution of an historical nature. It has been argued for the Western Roman Empire that during the long centuries of late Antiquity and the early Middle ages, the legal formulation of domestic relations underwent a change: from a principle of the paternalist administration of dependents and property to a unified model of a family corporation, regulated by religion and state, in which each member has his place and share. This shift in the formulation of domestic relations itself registers a gradual transition from the incommensurable and asymmetric

[10] In the citation below as in that before I have omitted the footnotes and Arabic diacritical marks of the original and added in square brackets translations of some of the Arabic terms.

> households of Antiquity, where great slave-owning households stood alongside tiny units of family production, to a world of commensurable households, in an economy where small units of family or peasant farming dominated production.
>
> If evolution there is, it is evolution of this kind that may be captured in the Islamic texts. It is inviting to consider in this light the shift in terms from the Quranic *wilayah* [patronage/tutorage] and *mawali* [freedmen] to the legal *mawarith* and *wuratha'* [parts of inheritance and heirs]. Equally noteworthy is the displacement of the topic of slaves as property from the centre of discussion of inheritance to distinct and increasingly secondary rubrics. Whereas in the early texts rights over slaves and the transfer of property to and from freedmen lie at the heart of legal treatment of inheritance, in the course of the development of *fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence] such questions come to occupy distinct rubrics, and far from providing models for the devolution of domestic property in general, they come to represent marginal and increasingly archaic issues preserved in the wider body of *fiqh*. If property in slaves no longer occupies a central place in *fara'id* law, the conception of property (*mulk*) in *fara'id* [inheritance] law remains relatively simple and individual. At no point do the early scholars of the law point to systems of overlapping hierarchical rights in property. Other domains of law were to prove more fertile ground for the elaboration of hierarchical rights to real property – the law of *waqf* [endowments] and the law of revenue administration (Mundy 1988: 48).

The essay closes with a long third section criticizing received wisdom on the relation of the law to practice (and the practicality of the law) in terms that bear the influence, among other authors, of Goody's writings on the relation of writing to orality.[11] After setting out a conceptual methodology for a comparative grid, I then went on to compare in broad outline three systems of devolution of land in family-farming systems ('impartible inheritance/landlord management; diverging devolution/household management; partible inheritance/community management'). Two of the sketches derived from my earlier field work in Yemen but the third drew on published (and, in retrospect, not unproblematic) material concerning the historical systems in Greater Syria on which I was just beginning to work.

The Syrian work began as an attempt to document family and farming history in one village of the Hauran plain, in the spirit of Tom Kessinger, *Vilayatpur, 1848–1968: economic and social change in a North India*

[11] For sustained discussion of Goody's work on the interface and the oral by a fellow anthropologist, see Messick 1993.

village, but ended many years later in a book spanning a wider compass, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: law, administration and production in Ottoman Syria*.[12]

In this Richard Saumarez Smith and I tackled three problems. First, unlike the scholarship of British India where agrarian relations and the nature of property transformation had long been central – indeed my co-author had himself written a large tome on the topic (Saumarez Smith 1996) – this was far less true of Ottoman history. Thus, when I started to read the major legal reform texts, notably the 1858 Land code, it became apparent that there was little beyond polemic to explain either internally within the legal tradition or comparatively what kind of a reform this had been. Rather, it was the Ottoman Turkish legal commentaries on the Land Code that helped in understanding the terms of the laws and in raising questions concerning earlier movements in the legal doctrines governing property relations in land. Hence I went deeper to an attempt to chart the genealogy: to the 16th century background and the 17th- and 18th-century writings of Ottoman and, particularly, Syrian jurists. The locus of debate was Islamic (Hanefite) jurisprudence, itself historically mobile, institutionally inflected, legally abstract, and engaged with administrative law (*kanun*). The survey revealed change by the mid-18th century, that ended what had always been, compared to Russia, a shaky doctrinal base for tying cultivators to the land ('serfdom') and opened the way to the 19th-century reforms. The empire belonged to world economic history but expressed its reconfigurations in the terms of its own intellectual and institutional traditions.

The second set of problems was as much analytical as substantive: how to relate what occurred in a couple of villages to change in the empire as a whole and how to understand the practical effects of the Ottoman registration of rights to land. An answer to the latter question required work on the registers kept at the level of a district (*kaza*) wherein the holders and objects of rights in land were inscribed. Analysis of the sociological character of the mediating administration and political economy of the district allowed us both to place individual villages and sub-systems within the regional political economy and to grasp the particular 'reform settlement' resultant from negotiation between administrative officers and regional elites.

The last and overarching problem concerned how to analyze the third moment in the making of property, in land itself. Property relations are forged at the intersection of three moments – law, administration and production. Each of these moments has effect. In order to explore how

[12] *Governing Property* came out in 2007 with I.B. Tauris London, appeared in Turkish 2013 with Tarih Vakfı Istanbul, and is being translated into Arabic for Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid Beirut.

claims were generated in the process of production, we needed not only longitudinal evidence but also comparison within the district wherein we could, so to speak, hold constant both law and administration. Hence the one village became four belonging to two quite different systems of agricultural production, one in the hills and the other in the plains. In each we attempted to analyze production both synchronically across all households at two points of time, reform (*tapu*) 1876/1884 and cadastral 1933/1939 registration, and diachronically between the two same points in time, for all land transactions and, in much greater detail, for particular households and families. In this we sought to understand the formation of local social groups as arising from subjects combining in the work of making persons and agricultural wealth. And we demonstrated important variations both in patterns of household and marriage between the two productive systems (and, to a lesser extent, in each across time) and in the nature of property in land, the object land only fully coming into being as an object of right through the processes of production.

Conclusion

It is thus not impossible to work in the 'Near East' on the themes that preoccupied Goody: the relation between family forms and systems of production, particularly farming, and the role of institutions of rule, both religious and state, in the secondary historical differentiation of family forms. Others too have contributed important work on rural history (see, for example, Cuno 1993; Doumani 1995; Hanna 2002; Sa'id 2003; Afifi et al. 2005 for something of an overview of recent work). Yet, while possible, such painstaking work remains rare in scholarship on the region and difficult to consolidate institutionally. One should ask why.

Quite simply because of what one can only describe as a devastation of society and production (including both rural and research production) in the Arab Near East. If Goody wrote of the centrality of decolonization for his generation and for the reconstruction of a different post-war Britain, the Arab lands saw decolonization only late and incompletely. The year 1967, when I first went to the region as a student of Arabic, was when, under fire, the last British official left Aden, but beyond that it was a year of Arab defeat, when Israel conquered the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. And since the end of the umbrella of protection afforded by the USSR, the interlocked tripartite mechanisms of the apartheid systems of oil production of the major companies, finance capital expressed in the dollar, and US-led (and Israeli-French-British seconded) militarism seem set to continue social and economic destruction on a scale that renders historical anthropology an irrelevant solace in the rubble of the day. Over the almost

half century from 1967 the Near East has seen by far the greatest frequency of international war of any region of the world.[13] Today's 'New Middle East' stands far from Goody's 1960 hope for a 'New Africa' that beckoned for its history to be written.[14] (It is of course for others to judge the aptness of Goody's optimism from within today's Africa, not least its resource-rich central lands.)

The modern history of the Arab lands forms an uncomfortable object of contemplation by comparison to China and even to India.[15] This promises to remain so. In the absence of a major change in the structure of international capital and ruling-class alliances, there seems little chance that we close neighbours, in a 'divergence' ever recreated between Europe and the (Near) East, will be able to share our extravagant human and social wealth and to tell the lords of the earth, imperial corporations and merchant rulers, to lay off their hands.

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[13] 1973 Egyptian/Syrian/Israel war, 1978 Israeli occupation of South Lebanon from which Israel was to withdraw only in 2000, 1980–1988 Iraq-Iran in the longest international war of the 20th century, 1982 Israeli occupation of Beirut, 1991 Iraq-Kuwait and international war, 1994 North Yemeni conquest of South Yemen, 2003 US/UK and allied attack and occupation of Iraq, 2006 Israeli attack on Lebanon, and since 2011 international engagement in support of anti-government forces in Libya and Syria; all this without mention of international engagement in civil conflicts over the years from Sudan to Iraq.

[14] Timothy Mitchell (2012: 253): "Understanding the contemporary politics of oil involves the difficult task of bringing together the violence that has been repeatedly deployed to secure arrangements for the production of oil and the forms of spectacle and representation that seem somehow an equally indispensable aspect of the undemocratic politics of oil – not least the representation of the most recent rounds of US militarism as a project to bring democracy to the Middle East."

[15] At the level of economic imperialism, the Arab region as a whole rather stands out for very poor per-capita economic development over the last forty years. Ali Kadri (2012: 121) notes: "Since the start of piecemeal neoliberalism in the early 1980s, Arab economies have experienced lethargic growth. Calculated over 30 years, the real GDP per capita growth average in the Arab world is around one percent."

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Chapter 5
Rice as Self: food, history and nation-building in Japan and Malaysia (2014)

Francesca Bray

Introduction

It is a commonplace around the world, expressed pithily in everyday proverbs and more pretentiously in academic treatises, that we are what we eat – or perhaps what we grow or raise or fish out of the sea. The Inuit identify with seal blood (Borré 1991), the highlanders of Northeast Thailand with sticky rice (Moerman 1968) and Americans with apple-pie (Levenstein 2003) – why, and what does this tell us? Nutritionists, psychologists, economists, theologians, lawyers, folklorists and poets all have explanations to propose for such attachments to food. In their interpretations of food as self, anthropologists and historians seek to knit together these separate strands of meaning, emphasizing that the selves thus nourished are compounded of biological tissues and souls, tastes and landscapes, social hierarchies, consumer desires, fears, nostalgia or ambition. Today studying society through food seems an obvious strategy for getting to the heart of things, for exploring the constitution of identities that are at once biological, historical, political and social. If it now seems so natural to social scientists to use food as an organizing device for social enquiry, a large part of the credit must go to Jack Goody.

Food has played a star role in Jack Goody's oeuvre. In his adventures in comparative sociology, in his probings of the deep histories of Africa and Eurasia and the emergence of global capitalism, a focus on food has served Goody as a powerful lens to investigate the articulations of production and reproduction, of culture and materiality, politics, power and taste. This year saw the publication of *Food Consumption in Global Perspective* (Klein and Murcott 2014), a collection honouring the thirtieth anniversary of one of Jack Goody's most influential works, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* (Goody 1982), and re-affirming his role as a scholar whose critical insights shaped and continue to inspire the best scholarship in the burgeoning field of Food

Studies.[1] It thus seems intellectually fitting that the 2014 Goody Lecture should celebrate the place of food in Goody's work by taking food and identity as its theme.

There is another, more personal reason for my choice. Jack Goody has been my friend and mentor for over forty years. As always with Jack, the warmth and closeness of our scholarly relationship has been nourished by the sharing of food and drink, a conviviality both intellectual and material. Over the years, debating a spectrum of topics from the East in the West to the circulation of silver in Ming China to plum-brandy distillation in the Cantal, I have never met Jack over a desk in an office but always in some untidy room scattered with heaps of papers, dog-eared books, half-empty glasses of rough red wine and the promise of a delicious meal to come. Jack is inexhaustibly hospitable, in his own kitchen and in nearby restaurants. Jack's delight in food – growing in the field or orchard, prepared in the dairy, displayed in a market or shop, served on white napery or on faded oilcloth – is of course gastronomic, but above all it is *social*. The flavour of any mouthful is always spiced with the personalities, practices and histories behind it. This relish for looking at lives through food and food through lives is equally manifest in Jack's work.

I have also chosen food as today's theme, then, because sharing food and ideas about food with Jack has played such an important part in shaping my own intellectual trajectory (as well as my ideals of hospitality). When I first met Jack he had just published *Technology, Tradition and the State* (Goody 1971). I was embarking on a study of agriculture and history in pre-modern China (Bray 1984), and the model offered in *Technology, Tradition and the State* for integrating techniques of food production into political and social history was a powerful inspiration. Having begun my career focusing on farming and the production of food, I then began to think seriously about how its distribution and consumption played into shaping social organization and structures of power, both locally and globally. Here again, Jack had

[1] From modest beginnings in the 1980s, when a group of historians, anthropologists and sociologists launched what then seemed a rather recondite journal, *Food and Foodways*, Food Studies has ballooned into a wildly popular academic field with apparently boundless potential for expansion. As an indication, in the last few years the *Annual Review of Anthropology* has commissioned no less than four surveys on the cultural and social anthropology of food: on food and eating (Mintz and Dubois 2002), food and memory (Holtzman 2006), food and globalization (Phillips 2006) and food and the senses (Sutton 2010). In May 2014 the Food Studies Centre at SOAS celebrated the recent or imminent publication of no less than nine books by its members and associates, of which Klein and Murcott's collection was one.

pioneered the field with *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* (Goody 1982).[2] By the turn of the century I, like all my colleagues, had become fascinated by food's role in the constitution of identity. Jack, it turned out, had a book in the press: *Food and Love: a cultural history of East and West* (Goody 1998).

Goody's characteristic and persuasive interweaving of modes of production and of consumption, of communication and of representation, has inspired much of my own work on the history and politics of food and farming. As a historian of agriculture in China who did anthropological fieldwork on the Green Revolution in Malaysia, rice – and the part it plays in defining the lives, identities and histories of individuals, communities and nations – has been one of my abiding interests. Almost everywhere that rice is the traditional staple, people assume that eating rice, or growing rice, makes them who they are. The belief that their physical constitutions, mental aptitudes, social institutions or political formations are profoundly shaped by their dependence upon rice is sometimes expressed in everyday maxims and vernacular habits, sometimes formally elaborated by politicians, historians or scientists into theories of identity. Since rice is nowadays the main staple in large zones of Asia, Asia is a good place to look for different expressions of the self-identification that the anthropologist of Japan, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, calls "rice as self."[3] Of course such self-images, or images of the other, are by no means confined to Asian cases, as we see from the debates raging around "Black Rice" and its place in the history of Atlantic slavery (Bray 2015).

My own research has always focused on rice in Asian contexts (Bray 1986, 2007), but four years ago I began a collaboration which looked at rice around the world, exploring its rise as a global commodity and its place in the history of modern capitalism (Bray et al. 2015). My encounter with rice-histories from Africa and the Americas opened my eyes to a whole new range of expressions of rice as self, some manifested in the society's own (emic) discourses about why and how "rice is us," others in external (etic) interpretations of "rice is them," including academic theories about the place of rice in a particular society's or region's history. Not surprisingly, external representations of how and why rice counts in a specific case do not always match the internal understandings or beliefs (Bray 2015).

This lecture compares two Asian cases of "rice as self," in Japan and in Malaysia. At first glance the common features of the two cases are

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[2] *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* was one of a trinity of paradigm-setting works on modes or regimes of consumption, published three years after *La distinction* (Bourdieu 1979) and three years before *Sweetness and Power* (Mintz 1985).

[3] Ohnuki-Tierney 1993; for an Asia-wide perspective, focusing on rice in religion and ritual, see Hamilton 2004.

striking. Yet if we trace the historical trajectories by which each nation came to its current expressions and discourses of "rice as self" we perceive that superficial similarities mask some profound differences. I argue then, in the spirit of Goody's work, that there are no simple equations to be made between rice-eating or rice-growing and identity: the interest of each claim that "rice is us" or that "rice is them" lies in its historical specificity, inseparable in every instance from the broad global economic, political, scientific and economic *conjoncture* to which it responds.

Japan's Ideology of Rice

Japan is the classic case of "rice as self" (Ohnuki-Tierney 1993), where self-identification as rice-producers and rice-consumers has a particularly venerable and richly elaborated history. The supposedly unique qualities of Japanese rice as food and crop have been woven into essentialist 'theories of Japaneseness' (*nihonjinron*) which assert variously that rice has been the staple food of all Japanese since time immemorial, that the nation's cities would disappear under flood-water if not protected by irrigated rice-fields upstream (Ozawa 1993), that the skills of rice-farming moulded the Japanese path to capitalism, or that Japanese athletes can only reach their full physical and psychological potential if they eat home-grown rice (Bray 1986: 210–217; Ohnuki-Tierney 1993; Verschuer 2003; Cwiertka 2006).

While the Japanese concept of "rice as self" has roots that are indeed ancient, over the last 150 years it has been radically re-tooled for modern needs. Today's *nihonjinron* and discourses of Japanese rice essentialism claim an immemorial heritage stretching back to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, who built and tended the sacred rice-fields that fed the first Japanese. In temples or tiny wayside shrines, in villages or city centres, the shrines to Inari, the fox deity who protects the rice-crop, are still kept freshly supplied with offerings of rice. The sandals and ropes for festival processions must be plaited from rice-straw, and a bowl of rice is offered daily in every house that still maintains a family altar. As the direct descendant of the Sun Goddess, each spring the Emperor ploughs a small plot of rice-land on behalf of his nation and every autumn he harvests some symbolic sheaves of rice. This is not, however, an immemorial ritual. The ceremony was formalized during the Meiji period (1868–1912) as a potent tool in the government's agenda of building a modern imperial nation, powered by solid agrarian values, in which productive rice-farming would provide the capital and labour for rapid industrialization and militarization.

Japanese rice-identity, in theory and in practice, was a long-evolving construct (Verschuer 2003). In Japan's earliest texts, dating back to the seventh or eighth century, rice figured as the grain used for rituals and

ceremonials, a sacred and prestigious food for the gods and for the elite. Peasants grew the rice but ate coarse grains themselves. In addition to its ritual and status functions, rice in medieval Japan also served as tax, rent and currency, a form of capital. From the early Tokugawa era (1600–1868), pressure from rulers and encouragement from expanding urban markets led to signal improvements in rice-farming methods, productivity and output, sustaining the rapid growth of commerce and urbanization. Under centralized Meiji rule, government investment in modern inputs like mechanical pumps and chemical fertilizers brought additional gains in productivity. The annexation of Taiwan (1895) and Korea (1910) as Japanese colonies further increased national rice output. While rice had long been the typical urban fare, the rural poor typically ate more bean-and-barley porridge than rice. But by the 1890s military and industrial canteens could provide their soldiers and workers daily with rice and pickles – this, many felt, was really going up in the world! By the turn of the twentieth century rice had become the staple that the whole Japanese population expected to eat at least twice daily (Cwiertka 2006). Rather than a marker of elite status it now formed a bond between rich and poor, nourishing national solidarity.

New expressions of rice-identity, in recipe books and school books, folklore studies, nutritional research, domestic science and imperial ritual, flourished in consequence. The Meiji government formulated an ideology of 'agrarian fundamentalism,' *nōhon shugi*, identifying traditional small-scale rice-farming and the associated communal values of cooperation and discipline as a key source of national identity and civic virtue (Bray 1986: 215). But the accelerating demands of national development and increasingly harsh levels of extraction placed a heavy strain on rice-farmers. Landlordism increased and rural living conditions deteriorated, plummeting still further after the Great Crash of 1929. By the 1930s many small farmers were destitute, and the war effort brought the countryside to ruin and starvation.

So far from being discredited, however, under the US Occupation in 1945 the 'fundamentalist' agrarian idyll of myriad tiny rice-farms supporting national growth was revived. Now, however, landlordism was eradicated under an American-guided land-reform policy of 'land to the tiller': fields were distributed among former tenants, and selling and renting of farm-land became subject to very strict control. The American intention was to cut off support for Japan's militaristic elite, eliminate any threats of communism and foster grass-roots democracy. By the 1960s the economy was sufficiently recovered for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to dispense generous subsidies to the millions of small rice-farmers who became, and

have remained, its most faithful supporters. It is largely thanks to the rural vote that the LDP has remained in power almost continuously since 1955.

Farm support policies and subsidies initially benefited all Japanese society. Farmers were provided with capital to modernize their methods and increase their output and incomes, and their purchases of farm machinery, domestic appliances and consumer goods supported the expansion of an internal market for Japan's manufacturing and service industries.[4] Independent smallholder farming was soon firmly established as the basis of a solid rural economy, and farm household incomes began to equal those of urban families, discouraging the rural exodus typical of most other post-war nations.

Thanks to heavy investments and strict discipline, agriculture recovered rapidly post-war. Japan was self-sufficient in rice by the mid-1960s. But with national development came problems. People began to eat less rice as their incomes increased, but rice output continued to rise with the successful application of new technologies. In 1971 the government introduced generous set-aside payments (*gentan*) in an effort to reduce rice surpluses to manageable proportions. Though mechanization reduced the time needed to grow rice, opening the way in principle for larger, more cost-effective farms, rice-land could not easily be bought or sold and there was no scope (or appetite) for consolidating holdings. In the long-term the Japanese government has underwritten a perpetuation of peasant agriculture, albeit with a prosperous, middle-class peasantry. Today there are over two million small farms in Japan, of which at least one and a half million produce rice; the average rice-farm is under half a hectare in size. The tiny rice-holdings are by no means 'traditional': they are highly capitalized and technically advanced, making the labour quite light. Typically the older household members tend the farm while the others work in nearby towns. Japanese is probably unique in the world today in that – thanks to agricultural subsidies and ample opportunities for off-farm employment – the average income of its farming households has for decades been consistently higher than that of urban families (Kim and Lee 2005: 131–133). Rice-production has essentially become a costly, over-equipped sideline, sometimes described as a hobby for pensioners.[5]

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[4] By the mid-1970s almost all rice-farmers owned a full range of expensive mini-machinery, and the average chemical use for rice rose to over 1 tonne per hectare, about ten times the US average (Tweeten et al. 1993).

[5] "Subsidies for growers and import tariffs of 778 percent sustain 1.2 million rice farms whose typical owner is a 70-year-old man living off pension payments, part-time work and sales of the grain" (Takada and Mogi 2013). For years the government has pressed rice-farmers to pool their land to make bigger and more cost-effective farms – but in vain.

Today it costs twice as much to grow a kilo of rice in Japan as it would to import it from Australia (Takada and Mogi 2013). Ever since the 1980s Japanese agricultural methods and policies have been widely criticized for their inefficiency, and for their unfairness to foreign rice-producers in a world of free-market competition. There is no doubt that by standard economic criteria the production of Japanese rice is extremely inefficient, in terms of production costs, labour productivity, over-use of chemicals, over-investment in machinery, and consumer prices. To this one could also add pollution of the rural environment. However in political and cultural terms the smallholder technology of Japanese rice farming has been extremely efficient.

The rice-farmers and their families, the LDP, and the manufacturing and service sectors have all benefited directly from the government's investments in rice production over the last seven decades. The benefits to the public at large are less obvious to outside eyes, but are nevertheless sufficiently appreciated within Japan for the rice-protection lobby to be able to mobilize considerable popular support. National food security remains a sensitive issue: the terrible shortages and starvation of the war years are still not forgotten, and fears of the effect of climate change on world food supplies were heightened by a severe global food crisis in 2007. Furthermore, the rice that Japanese like to eat is the slightly sticky, round-grained Japonica, which grows well only in a few regions: Japan itself, Korea and California.[6] Most rices available on world markets are long-grained Indica varieties unsuitable for Japanese cuisine.

For all these reasons the Japanese public are willing to pay the price for subsidizing home-grown rice. The high cost of ordinary rice represents a very small part of today's household budgets, and there is ample demand for luxury rices too. In autumn, fine-food shops display stands of beautifully packaged, freshly harvested rices from prefectures famous for particularly tasty varieties. These seasonal treats command prices closer to French wine or Brazilian coffee than to a daily staple, and are a favoured gift. At a more mundane level, whenever the government cedes to pressure and opens the door a crack to rice imports, cheap street-stalls play up to rice chauvinism by festooning themselves in banners proclaiming that all their dishes use "100 percent Japanese rice."

With the average rice-farmer now in his or her seventies, it does seem that the post-war rice regime is now on the brink. Yet this year's proposals by the Prime Minister Yoshio Abe to cut financial support to rice-farmers

[6] Most of Japan's (limited) rice imports come from California, which grows Japanese rice varieties specifically for the Japanese market (in particular for saké-brewing) and for the US sushi industry.

and open the doors to rice imports are not so much a response to pressures within Japan, or to budgetary shortages.[7] Rather, they are diplomatic concessions to the free-trade demands of such regional and international consortia as TPP (Trans-Pacific Trade Agreement).[8] Even the TPP negotiators, however, have agreed that rice has "special status" in Japan and should therefore be treated as an exception in free-trade negotiations (Takada and Mogi 2013).

In sum, when a modern Japanese family sit round the supper table eating their bowls of Japanese-grown rice, they are not simply indulging a gastronomic preference for short-grained and slightly sticky Japonica rice over long-grained Indica rice from Thailand. They are eating and absorbing a food redolent of national essence, of tradition - in the sense of an invented and re-invented past. The enduring idyll of peasant rice-farming in Japan, the deep attachment of politicians and hydrologists as well as the general public to the rice-farming landscape, and the multi-layered expressions and experiences of rice-as-self, are the outcome of a highly successful political strategy of traditionalizing, of building modern national solidarity around an imagined past. The representation of Japan as a nation tied to its legendary roots by the labours of simple, thrifty and patriotic rice-farmers is one that has served Japanese nationalist causes well since before the turn of the century and still has immense popular appeal.

How Malaysia Became a Rice-Farming Nation

The similarities between the current situation in Malaysia and Japan are at first glance so striking that we might suppose that rice played an identical role in both nations in shaping history, economy, policy and national identity. In Malaysia as in Japan, the post-war government has invested lavishly over decades in developing national rice production, preserving small-scale farms as the core of the rice industry despite economists' critiques. In both Malaysia and Japan, the current cost of growing a ton of rice at home is double the price of importing it. Malaysia like Japan has been severely criticized abroad for the inefficiencies of its rice sector and the unfairness of its subsidies, yet has succeeded in having its home-grown rice classified as a crop of high cultural significance, excluded on those grounds from the free-trade agreements that regulate normal commodities. In stark

[7] In late 2013 the first significant cut to subsidies for rice production (in this case, set-aside payments, *gentan*) was announced in response to pressure from the international financial and trade communities. The Ministry of Agriculture claims that the *gentan* programme will be completely phased out by 2018 (Economist 2013).

[8] No doubt the growing tensions between China and Japan are also a factor in the timing of Japan's concession.

contrast to the Japanese case, however, Malaysia's small rice-farmers have remained poor. Forty years after first adopting the technologies of the Green Revolution they still represent troubling "pockets of poverty" in a prosperous, middle-income society (*9th Malaysia Plan* 2006: 89; Hill 2013 [1982]: 251).

In fact the paths by which Malaysia came to adopt its pro-farmer policies, as well as the economic status of rice-farmers and the meanings of rice as food in Malaysia, differ significantly from Japan. The complicating factor in Malaysia has been race. The commitment of the post-independence Malaysian state to maintaining a rice-growing peasantry has to be understood in the context of Malaysia's complex and tense history of ethnic distinctions and strife, and of the determination of the post-Independence government to build a durable basis for 'national unity.'

I spent 1976-77 studying the introduction of Green Revolution technologies in Bunut Susu, a rice-farming village in the East Coast state of Kelantan. By then Malaysia was justifiably confident of a bright future as an economically successful nation, and it could well afford to invest large sums in a Green Revolution. Rice development packages were carefully matched to the needs of peasant farmers (see below), but it seemed that a radical transformation of rural society was looming in lines with broader transformations through the Malaysian economy (Bray and Robertson 1980; Fujimoto 1991). Through the period of the *2nd Malaysia Plan* (1971–1975)[9], despite a hiccup during the oil crisis of 1973–1974, Malaysia maintained an enviable average growth rate of 5.9% p.a. which showed no signs of flagging. The expansion of the Malaysian economy was prudently balanced across a wide range of activities, comprising urban-based sectors like the electronics assembly industry, construction, and a new and ambitious finance sector, as well as natural resource extraction and plantation agriculture. Natural resources included tin-mining, timber, and the oil and gas industry, much of which had been reorganized into a national company, Petronas, in 1974. Estate-grown export crops like rubber and oil-palm also added considerably to local employment and to the national coffers. By 1976 Malaysia had indisputably entered the club of modern nations.

The previous years, however, had not gone so smoothly: ethnic and geopolitical tensions threatened the new nation's survival for over a decade.

[9] The British began the system of national plans. The *1st* and *2nd Malayan Five-Year Plans* (1956–1960, 1961–1965), spanning the transition to independence, aimed primarily to build infrastructure and develop export agriculture. The *1st Malaysia Plan* (1966–1970) attempted to address economic imbalance between ethnic groups, but was widely perceived as having failed.

At Independence in 1957 Malays numbered about 55% of the population, Chinese 35% and Indians 10%. Occupational segregation was marked, with most businesses, large and small, owned by Chinese and almost all land and senior government and military posts in Malay hands. Most capital was still controlled by foreign companies but the Chinese share, at around 35%, was much greater than the 2% in Malay hands, though poverty was widespread among urban working-class Chinese and rural Malay farmers alike. Tensions between the two communities over political control and perceived inequalities in wealth and opportunity ran high, and events kept fanning the flames.

The first Prime Minister of independent Malaya, Tungku Abdul Rahman, coined the term *bumiputra*, 'sons of the soil,' to distinguish ethnic Malays and other indigenous groups from 'recent immigrants,' that is to say, Chinese and Indians.[10] With the 1st Malaysia Plan (1966–1970) the government began a programme of affirmative action to improve the economic position of the *bumiputra* – in effect, Malays. Though much resented by non-Malays, most Malays thought the programme ineffectual. In 1963 Malaya expanded to become Malaysia, incorporating the sparsely-populated but resource-rich Borneo territories of Sabah and Sarawak, and the densely-populated island-city of Singapore. Malay fears of the political impact of largely Chinese Singapore joining the nation led to race riots in 1964 and to the expulsion (some say secession) of Singapore in 1965. In the elections of May 1969 the opposition polled more votes than the Malay-majority coalition. This led to further traumatic race riots and the declaration of a state of emergency. A new coalition government under Tun Abdul Razak devised a detailed national framework, the New Economic Policy (NEP), to promote national unity:

> The NEP had two prongs, namely 'poverty eradication regardless of race' and 'restructuring society to eliminate the identification of race with economic function.' The NEP was supposed to create the conditions for national unity by reducing interethnic resentment due to socioeconomic disparities (Jomo 2004: ii).

[10] Malay kingdoms on the Peninsula are recorded in early Chinese sources. Over the centuries and up to the period of *Konfrontasi* or stand-off with Indonesia (1962-66) there was a continual influx of Malay-speaking migrants from the Indonesian islands. One of Malaya's most productive rice-regions, Negri Sembilan, was opened up by Minangkabau settlers from Sumatra starting in the mid-nineteenth century. The British did not distinguish ethnically between immigrant and long-established Malay groups, and on independence they were all included, along with the tiny groups of indigenous peoples who had long since retreated up into the mountains, under the embracing category of *bumiputra*, 'sons of the soil.' Thus a Mingangkabau whose parents had migrated from Sumatra in the 1940s was a *bumiputra*, while a Chinese whose ancestors had arrived to work in the tin-mines in the 1840s was not.

Among the primary targets of the NEP were rice-farmers. Over 90% of rice-farmers were Malay, and 88% were classified as poor (Fujimoto 1991: 436).[11]

Since Independence the rice-farming sector had become a key focus of government policy and investment, initially with the goal of raising output to make the nation self-sufficient in this staple food. This quest reflected prevailing geopolitical tensions, and in formalizing the identification of rice-farmers as Malays it institutionalized the ethnic divisions which 'National Unity' policies were ostensibly intended to dissolve.

The glorious mission of feeding the nation is not a burden that Malay rice-farmers always had to shoulder, although *de facto* it was always Malays and other indigenous peoples who were the typical rice growers.[12] In colonial Malaya most wealth was generated by the tin-mining industry and by agricultural plantations growing coir, rubber, tobacco and other export crops. The mines were originally financed and owned by Chinese companies and worked by immigrants from China's Southern provinces; from the 1850s, as one Malay kingdom after another accepted British protection, the mines were bought up or displaced by British companies, but the labour force remained Chinese. The agricultural plantations began later; they were largely owned by British companies and run with immigrant labour from India (Hirschman 1986; Ramasamy 1992). Though some Malay immigrants from Indonesia were sailors or merchants by profession, most small trade and business in Malaya was in the hands of Chinese or Indians. Most ordinary, 'native' Malays disdained the idea of working for foreigners in mines or on plantations. They chose to live in small villages (*kampung*) scattered through the countryside, growing rice and supplementing their incomes with crafts or small-holding production of cash-crops.[13] The rice they grew barely sufficed to feed themselves and their local Malay rulers; very little entered the market. The towns, mines and plantations of colonial Malaya therefore depended upon imported rice, mostly from British Burma.

Under British rule food self-sufficiency was debated but dismissed: it was cheaper and easier to import Burmese rice to feed the mining and plantation workers who powered the economy. Ways to increase local rice production were often discussed. But Malay rulers and British administrators alike doubted that rural Malays would willingly sacrifice time and income to

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[11] This compared to about 50% for the population at large. See Jomo 2004 on the definitions and statistical assessments of poverty in the Malaysia Plans.

[12] Hill 2012. See Hill 2013 [1982]: 264 on how post-Independence policies to intensify rice-production have persistently discriminated against non-Malay indigenous rice-farmers.

[13] Malay small-holding production of crops like rubber in fact proved quite competitive against the plantation-scale production of British colonial companies (Lim 1977).

grow more rice. Schemes to modernize production with irrigation and mechanization were too costly to develop far, and attempts to coax Chinese entrepreneurs into setting up as commercial rice-farmers failed. Overall it made sense for British Malaya to import the bulk of its rice supplies (Kratoska 1982; Hill 2012).

Rice-farming in the Malay States remained essentially a subsistence activity, contributing little to the national economy or to urban food supplies. Yet it was the foundation for the livelihood of millions of rural Malays, and steps were taken to support and protect a social group viewed as both vulnerable and entitled. In 1913 the *Malay Reservation Enactment* came into force: designed to protect Malays against dispossession by (mostly Chinese) money-lenders, it prohibited the transfer to non-Malays of Malay Reserve Land, which included most farm-land. Meanwhile the *Rice Lands Enactment* of 1917 prohibited, in principle if not always in practice, any alienation to other crops or uses of land suitable for rice-farming (Kratoska 1982).[14] Rice-farming and Malay identity thus became inseparably entwined.

By Independence the calculus of how best to secure the national food supply had changed. Prospects for reliable rice imports looked grim. Burma was no longer a sister state within the British Empire, indeed after the 1962 coup it disappeared from the map of international trade. 1962–1966 saw an undeclared war (*Konfrontasi*) with Indonesia, which objected to the Borneo territories of Sabah and Sarawak joining Malaysia. Indochina was plunged in war, and Asian as well as Western leaders feared that Thailand and Indonesia would soon succumb to the Communist menace. It was clear that the new nation must try to feed itself. The government declared a goal of 100% self-sufficiency in rice, and went all-out for a programme to boost production through irrigation, extension of the rice-area and investment in fertilizers. A Guaranteed Minimum Price (GMP) policy had already been introduced in 1949, but the GMP was raised to encourage farmers to put more rice on the market (Fujimoto 1991: 431–432). In 1960 the nation produced 54% of its rice needs; by 1970 this had risen to 80% self-sufficiency level. Total output, cultivated area and average yield all increased by about half during this decade, yet rural poverty actually increased, although 40% of all the considerable sums invested in national development were spent on agriculture (Peacock 1981: 641; Siwar 2013: 713).

Rice-farming was by now identified in the national mind as a quintessentially Malay occupation. In the Peninsular States the proportion of

[14] Both laws are still in force today (Mohd. Ariffin 2013).

Malay farmers was (and remains) over 90% (Alam et al. 2010: 252).[15] Furthermore, "with independence and democracy came the realization that the rice-growing peasantry represented a substantial power bloc for whom it was both politically and economically desirable to do something" (Hill 2013 [1982]: 111). At that point two-thirds of votes were generated in the rural sector, and rice-farmers were a fifth of the national labour force (Peacock 1981: 641, 643). As Fujimoto notes, the New Economic Policy, initiated in 1970, marked a significant shift in state policy, from increasing rice production to increasing the income of rice-farmers (1991: 432). The NEP aimed to eradicate poverty and to promote national unity and strength. How better to do this than by raising the incomes of impoverished Malay rice-farmers, supporting and feeding them in return for the onerous responsibility of growing rice to feed the nation?

Reciprocity or mutual assistance is famously a key organizing principle, ethical and practical, of 'traditional' Malay *kampung* life. The idea that many hands make light work, or that a trouble shared is a trouble halved, is encapsulated in the term *gotong-royong*, 'mutual assistance,' frequently invoked by national and local government in Malaysia as a principle for promoting collective projects for the public good.[16] It was the Indonesian government, immediately after Independence in 1947, which first mobilized *gotong-royong* as both a social ideal and a concrete practice for building social solidarity and for bridging contending ethnic or class interests in an ethnically heterogeneous and culturally fissile nation (Bowen 1986). Faced with similar challenges of muting racial antagonisms, the Malaysian and Singaporean states quickly seized upon *gotong-royong* or '*kampung* spirit' as a morally powerful organizing tactic, redolent of an innocent and caring village tradition.

In actual *kampung* practice, the most spectacular form of mutual assistance was *usung rumah*, 'lifting the house.'[17] But mutual assistance also figured prominently in everyday arrangements for the production, circulation and consumption of rice. In her study of Malay housekeeping, conducted in a fishing village on the Kelantan coast during 1939–1940 and 1963, Rosemary Firth notes that the value set on rice far surpassed its importance

[15] In Sabah and Sarawak upland rice is widely grown by other indigenous groups who, like Malays, qualify as *bumiputra*. But overall output is small and mostly consumed locally. Official policies have supported wet-rice farming (as practised by Malays) while often actively discouraging dry-rice or swidden farming (as practised by non-Malay groups such as the Dayak); see Hill 2013 [1982]: 264.

[16] *Gotong-royong* is actually Indonesian Malay; Malaysian Malay equivalents include *tolong-menolong*, *berderau*, etc.

[17] This involves either taking a house to pieces and re-erecting it elsewhere, or simply lifting the entire house by its posts and carrying it to the new site (Firth 1966: 23; Carsten 1997: 40).

as the indispensable daily staple: exchanges of rice circulated like blood through the body, not only between close kin but also between neighbours and more distant relatives, nourishing and fortifying as they flowed (Firth 1966: 58–71).[18] In her study of food, substance and the processual nature of kinship in Langkawi, an island off the West Coast of Malaysia, Carsten shows that for village Malays feeding (understood as both the giving and taking of food or nourishment) was a "vital component in the long process of becoming a person and participating fully in social relations" (1995: 223). "Food," Carsten continues, "creates both persons in a physical sense and the substance, blood, by which they are related." Children are nourished in the womb by their mother's blood, and after birth by the milk from her breast, formed from her blood. Blood is created in the body from food, and the primary food, the substance of any real meal, is cooked rice, *nasi*. "*Darah, daging mari pada nasi*, 'Blood, flesh come from cooked rice,' people say" (ibid.: 228), and the sharing of meals of rice builds relatedness between all those living around one hearth, just as drinking milk from the same woman's breast makes infants, whether her own offspring or adopted, into siblings.

In Bunut Susu, the *kampung* where I conducted my own field-work in the late 1970s, in the first years of the Green Revolution rice still pulsed through village life, nourishing social bonds and a sense of community. Sometimes the rice was cooked (*nasi*), equally often it was still in the husk (*padi*), or milled but raw (*beras*). Guests at weddings or circumcisions brought *beras* for their hosts to cook and serve as *nasi* at the communal feast. Friends who helped with tasks like re-building a house were given *rice* or *beras*; giving cash would have denied the closeness and permanence of the relationship. Transplanting and harvesting, when extra hands were needed, involved two forms of exchange: *berderau*, where groups of families exchanged equal quantities of work on each other's fields, and *pinjaman*, where the farmer provided a midday meal of *nasi* and curry to kin or neighbours who turned out to help. Although most seasonal labour needs were met through exchange, there were also opportunities for the landless, who could turn up to help at harvest and were paid one bundle of *padi* for every twenty they reaped.

One could think of these *kampung* transfers of rice as at once as a form of currency for payment, a celebration of people working together and a nourishing of long-term relations, a mutual feeding that built solidarities and redistributed resources. The redistributive element was especially clear in the arrangements for access to rice-land. Rice tenancies were all share-cropping agreements: the rent was transferred at harvest-time, dividing up

[18] This was not a metaphor Firth used herself: her style, even for the time, was notably dry.

the bundles of rice between landlord and tenant in a ratio agreed upon at the beginning of the contract. It might seem that the scarcity of rice-land would always advantage owners, but because it was rented only between households within the village and the terms were common knowledge, generosity largely prevailed. Frail elders got a bigger share from their tenants, couples with small children were charged less. Sharecropping redistributed the scarce resources of land and labour and shared the risks and benefits of unpredictable yields (Bray and Robertson 1980). The ethos was so marked that some researchers spoke of "income-sharing" as the basic principle of economic life in the *kampung* (Fujimoto 1983).

Rice, then, knit the *kampung* community together, not least because no household could manage transplanting and harvesting without help. Through food-sharing, labour-exchange and sharecropping contracts, land, labour and raw or cooked rice were exchanged in ways that helped all families to eat, to work and to survive. Translated into the symbolic logic of the *kampung*, if all Malaysian citizens, whatever their ethnicity, partook of the *nasi* provided by *bumiputra* farmers, this sharing of nourishment, and the exchange of resources that its production entails, would build visceral solidarities between individuals and groups whose interests and identities would naturally differ, diverge or even conflict.

Under the New Economic Policy (NEP) initiated in 1970, these rice-reciprocities were enacted on national scale. In the name of social solidarity, national unity and producing *nasi* to feed the nation, rice-farmers contributed their land and labour, the state (on behalf of the nation) contributed massive investment in infrastructure, credit, subsidies and technical know-how, in an exchange intended to assure not simply the well-being but the very survival, as modernization progressed, of an economically marginal yet symbolically potent group. The poor Malay rice-farmers, voters all, were constituted as the quintessential subjects of the NEP *bumiputra* policy of redistributing wealth and capital assets to Malays from the wealthy, largely non-Malay, business and industrial sectors. This transfer was to be effected by the government, in the name of securing supplies of the food that all Malaysians, Indians, Chinese and Malays alike, shared as their staple.

Let me now briefly explain the nature of Malaysia's rice policies and their impact on farmers. Under the NEP the government launched its Green Revolution. It established agricultural development authorities in the main rice-growing regions, which built large-scale irrigation systems. No longer dependent on monsoon rains, farmers could now grow two crops of rice a year. This involved planting new varieties of high-yielding and quick-ripening rice and using chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides to keep the fields clean. The government subsidized inputs, farm-gate prices and

prices for urban consumers, and provided low-cost loans without collateral. Operation costs were kept very low so small-holdings remained viable and poorer farmers were not driven off the land, as they were in many other nations which adopted Green Revolution technologies. The number (around 1.3 million) and size (average 0.7 ha) of rice-farms has remained constant for over forty years.

Rice yields and output rose dramatically, as did incomes, in the first years of the Green Revolution, but then they flattened out. Between the late 1970s and the present, the rice industry has faced a series of crises: unfarmed land due to labour shortages in the 1980s; stagnation of yields and incomes through the 1990s and into the mid-2000s; a global food crisis in 2007, and now pressures to respond to climate change. Rejecting arguments for dismantling uneconomic peasant rice-farming and instead approving large-scale commercial rice-farms, or buying cheaper rice on the open market, the Malaysian government has responded to each crisis with micro-solutions designed to maintain the viability of small-holder rice-farmers, rather than the radical reorganization that would promote increased output and returns to capital investment (Bray 2014).

Meanwhile, one significant impact of the Green Revolution was to heighten Malay farmers' dependence on rice, whereas previously most of them had lived from mixed farming combined with off-farm work. In imposing monoculture and diminishing opportunities for off-farm work, the introduction of rice double-cropping to Malaysia's rice regions recast the mutual assistance of *kampung* life as peasant dependency on the state. The Green Revolution technologies eliminated reciprocity within *kampung* rice-production: farmers who double-cropped had no time to help neighbours, and with commercialization, fixed cash rents soon replaced sharecropping (Bray and Robertson 1980; Fujimoto 1991). Government subsidies displaced other forms of mutual aid: soon, without state support rice-farmers simply could not survive. Input costs in 1996 would have come to about 90% of the sale price without subsidies, while in 2009 it was estimated that 74% of rice-farmers' income came from government support measures (Man and Sadiya 2009: 142).

The small Malay rice-farm has thus been preserved, but at what cost or benefit to the Malay farmers? Undoubtedly most are materially better off now than before the NEP and Green Revolution, when 88% of them were reckoned poor and many suffered from seasonal hunger or malnutrition. Over the last forty years most Malaysian padi-farmers have been raised from absolute to relative poverty; their houses now have concrete foundations and tiled rooms, electric light, running water and TVs. More crucial still, their children are properly nourished, go to school, and often get good jobs.

However, most villages are poorly served by transport facilities, and as local jobs are scarce it is difficult to generate much off-farm income (Rabu and Mohd. Shah 2013). This is one important factor in explaining why Malaysia's rice-farmers still earn less than a quarter of the average urban income. Their essential role as the feeders of the nation is acknowledged by the public and rewarded by the state, yet in stark contrast to their Japanese counterparts Malay rice-farmers remain among the poorest of the nation's poor.

Why Are Japan's Rice-Farmers Rich?

The relative poverty of Malaysian peasant rice-farmers is neither unusual nor surprising. In a modern capitalist economy all small producers of low-value raw materials are disadvantaged, especially when they rely on industrial inputs to produce.[19] It is the prosperity of the Japanese rice-farmers that requires explanation.

So far I have discussed how discourses of "rice is us" form within a society, weaving and re-weaving threads of history and experience in response to prevailing social agendas or geopolitical context. I alluded earlier to the fact that the self-images or social dynamics elaborated in emic discourses of "rice is us" do not always coincide with etic models of "rice is them." Japan is a case in point.

Here let me introduce a famous and highly influential 'etic' model of the historical dynamics of Asian rice societies, namely the concept of "agricultural involution" developed by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Geertz's book of that title, published in 1963, is a study of the social and ecological impact of the colonial 'Cultivation System' (*Cultuur Stelsel*) in Java. Geertz proposed that there is something technically special about wet rice as a staple. In Java the capitalist dynamism of the colonial sugar-plantation sector offered a dramatic contrast with the peasant rice farming which fed its labourers. Geertz argued that the technical characteristics of irrigated rice farming in Java permitted infinite small-scale increments in output, but these were achieved largely through the intensification of labour

[19] A comprehensive report on trends in farm-incomes in OECD nations between 1980 and 2003 shows, not surprisingly, that since the typical forms of support and subsidy are proportional to inputs and/or output, large farms benefit much more from these subsidies than small farmers. Most small farms fall into the low-income bracket on the national scale, except in those rare cases where direct payments are given to small farmers operating in less-favoured areas. The Swiss government, for instance, has reduced disparities in income between lowland and mountain farms by this policy, which amounts effectively to paying farmers a fixed salary regardless of the scale, nature or success of their operation (OECD 2003).

inputs. The dynamic of intensification was not the development of the means of production, but the reinforcement, or involution, of the traditional, non-capitalist social institutions within which rice farming was embedded. Involution occurred in Java, Geertz argued, because there was no industrial or urban sector to absorb surplus population.

Geertz' interpretation of the Javanese rural economy "has been praised and imitated by many scholars who worked on areas other than Java, and vilified by most Java scholars" (Boomgaard and Kroonenberg 2015). Certainly it has been extremely influential in interpretations of East Asia. Many prominent economic historians of China, notably Mark Elvin (1973), have argued that the very success of China's early modern dynasties in developing intensive and productive rice-based economies fostered involution, stifled mechanical creativity and precluded true development.[20] The great exception to rice-based involution, first proposed by Geertz and accepted by Elvin and other involution-enthusiasts, was Japan.

In an earlier section I outline the rapid and radical modernization and industrialization policies of the Meiji government (1868–1912), and the role that intensified rice production played in financing and provisioning these transformations. Geertz's position is that the intensification of rice production did not lead to involution in Meiji Japan for two reasons: first, a growing industrial sector was attracting peasants off the land, and secondly, new labour-saving technologies were becoming available to Japanese farmers. In other words Geertz presents Japanese rice-farming as reactive, not formative: the exogenous impact of urban industrialization (catalysed by the adoption of Western technology) saved it from its intrinsic propensities to involute, but beyond supplying food and labour the rice-sector had no role, according to this model, in shaping Japan's modern sector.

This, one might say, rather accurately describes what has been happening in Malaysia since 1970. The peasant sector has indeed been reactive to, rather than fully integrated into, broader national development. The model of 'agricultural involution,' with its counter-examples where agriculture is 'rescued' from involution exogenously by a dynamic industrial sector, is not, however, one that Japanese historians and social scientists think of as accurately reflecting the historical realities of Japan, or indeed of other rice-based societies. Focusing on the positive potential of social cohesion and the importance of skills, they propose quite different interpretations of what different types of rice-farming contribute to broader social institutions.

[20] For a more detailed account of involutionary models and their critics see Bray 2013: 23–28.

I first became aware of the Japanese categorizations of rice societies, and their images of "rice is us" and "rice is them," when I was surveying the literature on development in Southeast Asia during the 1970s. There I encountered the contrasts that Japanese economists and social scientists drew between the development prospects of "tightly structured" and "loosely structured" rice-growing communities (Ishii 1978). According to this theory, drawn from historical analyses of village life and livelihood in Japan, the demands of organizing intensive forms of irrigation created a high degree of social and technical cohesion that promoted smooth adaptation and active contributions to development. Japan was a typical case of a "tightly structured" rice-society; China's Yangzi Delta, Bali and Java also belonged to the "tightly structured" club. Elsewhere, however, and particularly in those mainland Southeast Asian nations where Japan was investing heavily in development aid, programmes needed to be tailored to the realities of "loosely structured" rice communities, lacking in social cohesion and discipline. The virtues of *gotong-royong* did not apparently appeal to Japanese development experts as a substitute for tight structure.

In addition to the concept of "tight structure," which supposes that the skills and discipline needed for intensive rice-farming promoted nimble and effective adaptation to new challenges, another notable element of Japanese social and historical analysis was also constructed around the demands and characteristics of intensive rice-farming as experienced in medieval and early modern Japan, namely the concept of "industrious revolution" (Hayami 1992; Sugihara 2003). In Japanese models of *longue durée* history and paths to modernity, "industrious revolution" denotes an economic transformation based on the complex of managerial, technical and financial skills associated with the complex of small-scale rice-farms, crafts and manufactures that clustered in the early modern Japanese countryside. Starting in the seventeenth century these characteristic resources led Japan, it is argued, on a rurally-rooted, rice-based path to a form of industrialization quite different from the classic cases of Britain or the Eastern United States. In Japan the rural economy was not reactive to, but constitutive of, development trajectories. Furthermore, rural skills and creativity were not marginalized or displaced by Western-inspired technical expertise, but mobilized and developed in the service of a characteristically Japanese repertory of modernizing techniques (Morris-Suzuki 1994). There is a broad consensus among Japanese historians and social scientists that these deep-rooted resources and dynamics continue to shape the organization of the economy and of production in Japan today (Francks 2015).

Japan is perhaps the most conspicuous example of a successful modern 'rice economy.' Francks details the policies and institutions through

which the Meiji and subsequent Japanese governments up to the present have mobilized multifunctional rural households to build a modern, competitive industrial economy. This modern economy is, still today and to a visible extent, shaped by and organized around the needs and affordances of small-scale rice-farming and the cluster of manufactures and other enterprises in which rice-farming, in Japan, is routinely embedded.

Generous as the subsidies are that the LDP lavishes on small rice-farmers to bring in the rural vote, subsidies alone could not have kept them afloat. It is policies of decentralized industrialization and balanced rural-urban development, including the provision of good transport facilities and rural infrastructure, that have ensured access to skilled, well-paid jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for farming families, enabling them to prosper. Today about 90% of the income of rice-farming households comes from off-farm work (Kim and Lee 2005).

In Conclusion

As Francks remarks, if rice today is still the symbol of an authentic Japanese life, this reflects how tightly rice-farming has been integrated into Japan's industrial formation, economic institutions and consumer practices. This is not true of Malaysia which, like Japan, has chosen to defend its peasant rice-farmers against all the odds, or – some would say – against all reason. The arguments for 'rice as self' are similar in Malaysia and Japan, but not identical. In both cases arguments are made that rice is bound up with national, personal and ethnic identity. Yet while there are clear parallels between Japanese claims about rice as the maker of Japanese bodies and persons, and Malay *kampung* understandings of rice as corporeal, social and moral substance, in the Japanese case such claims affirm an unquestioned ethnic unity. In the case of post-Independence Malaysia, with its simmering ethnic tensions, no such intrinsic unity could be assumed. The national policy of developing, protecting and supporting peasant rice-farms was not simply a pragmatic move to protect marginal Malays while securing supplies of basic food – at a more ambitious level it was a project of biological nation-building. In gaining long-term public commitment to the costly enterprise, we may say that in this the Malaysian government has been successful.

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Chapter 6
Cities before the State in Early Eurasia (2015)[1]

David Wengrow

Introduction

Of Jack Goody's many books and articles, perhaps one of the less well known is his short contribution to a landmark conference on *The Evolution of Social Systems*, published in 1977 (Goody 1977a). It comes in that section of the book devoted to questions of 'demography, trade and technology,' and has the title: "Population and Polity in the Voltaic Region." Characteristically, Goody began his discussion of this theme on a much broader canvas, asking: "What is the nature of the relationship between states and population, between the centralisation of the polity and the density of the inhabitants?"

In *African Political Systems*, Meyer Fortes and Edward E. Evans-Pritchard (1940: 7) had accepted the basic proposition that there is probably "a limit to the size of population that can hold together without some kind of centralized government." They went on, however, to distinguish between size and density of population – raw numbers as against the physical distribution of people within a given macro-region. When the focus shifts from size to density, they suggested, a comparison of pre-colonial societies across central and southern Africa revealed an inverse relationship between demography and political centralization. Permanent institutions of government, specialized bureaucracies and judiciaries, as well as sharp differences of rank and wealth, were in fact most strongly developed in areas with low demographic densities, such as the Zulu and Bemba polities, while

[1] For the honour of delivering the Goody Lecture, I am deeply grateful to the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. My choice of topic was in response to a provocation from David Graeber, who asked me whether human prehistory furnishes examples of egalitarian experiments on an urban scale. I hope this goes a little way to providing an answer. For their observations on earlier drafts I am grateful to Maurice Bloch, Ewa Domaradzka, and Alpa Shah. My thanks also to John Chapman who has been a generous advisor on the Ukrainian material.

the more populous agricultural settlements – such as those of the Tallensi in Northern Ghana – often lacked these features.

By the 1960s these earlier findings were being rejected by development theorists, and by the emerging school of cultural ecology, most closely associated with the work of Marvin Harris at Columbia. A pointed attack was launched by R. F. Stevenson in his *Population and Political Systems in Tropical Africa* (1965), which argued that the patterns observed by Evans-Pritchard and Fortes were little more than a temporary anomaly; the historical outcome of (mainly British) military and commercial incursions into the African continent during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, Harris took Stevenson's "brilliant defence of the population density–state formation hypothesis" to exemplify the methodological bankruptcy of British structural-functionalism, reasserting the apparently obvious fact that – when viewed over the long-term – societies on every continent exhibit "a close correspondence between state systems and high population density" (1969: 537), and Africa is no exception.

Flying in the face of academic trends, Goody's 1977 essay mounted a counter-attack. It was based not on the virtues of synchronic comparison but on the 'virginal innocence' of his North American colleagues in matters of African history. He began by citing a range of late 19th century travellers' accounts that substantiate the arguments of *African Political Systems* with first-hand observations, for example on the anarchic character of the Tallensi and their independence from the neighbouring Mamprusi kingdom. But he also highlighted a more basic shortcoming of the population density-state formation hypothesis: its failure to consider the different technological setting of African and Eurasian state formation, and its impact on the relationship between population size and polity.

Goody pointed out how inventions which had fostered demographic growth in Eurasia since the Bronze Age – the plough, the wheel, and irrigation – hardly penetrated south of the Sahara in pre-colonial times; a point developed in two earlier books: *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa* (1971), and *Production and Reproduction* (1976). Population levels in sub-Saharan Africa therefore remained relatively low and, while cultivable land was plentiful, its productivity was limited by the prevailing mode of shifting agriculture. The immediate hinterlands of the savannah states were not richly cultivated field systems, as in the great river valley civilizations of Eurasia. Instead they were areas of extended wilderness: sparsely populated frontiers, ideally suited to the inculcation of martial values, and to predation with imported horse and gun.

On the cusp of the frontier, stateless peoples often clustered in large agricultural settlements. These offered refuge from enslavement, as well as access to fertile land. Aggregations of otherwise unrelated descent groups posed a challenge to established systems of political organization. The frontier was therefore a locus of political innovation. In areas such as the Cameroon Grassfields this resulted in emergence of new chiefdoms or kingdoms, which in turn produced new frontier zones, and so on, in a sort of 'domino effect.' But in other cases 'tribes without rulers' managed to achieve a considerable degree of demographic centralization without introducing state-like structures of governance into their own affairs. The result, in areas such as Northern Ghana, was a political landscape of 'big tribes' and 'little kingdoms.'

While echoed in the work of other Africanists, such as Robin Horton (1971) and Igor Kopytoff (1987), Goody's essay on population and polity has been overlooked in more general studies of long-term settlement growth (e.g. Fletcher 1995). And the search for systemic relations between ecology, scale, and social inequality in pre-industrial cities has continued, taking new theoretical support from fields such as management studies and evolutionary psychology. One recent proposal is that pristine urban forms in tropical or semi-tropical zones tended to be of the sprawling, low-density kind – as exemplified by the earliest large-scale settlements in Amazonia, the Maya Lowlands, the Middle Niger, and South-East Asia (Fletcher 2009). These are to be contrasted with compressed high-density urbanism, thought to have typically emerged in semi-arid regions – for example along the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Huang He.

Whether such a broad contrast in urban form can be supported on purely ecological grounds is debatable – the more arid zones are not without their garden suburbs (e.g. Kemp 2012). More obviously problematic is the attempt to find broad alignments between types of ecology, urbanization, and political structure. A recent comparative study argues that pre-modern cities in the semi-tropics were 'pre-adapted' to heterarchical systems of government, while those of the semi-arid regions were contrastingly predisposed to stratified states (Scarborough and Lucero 2010). But there is no clear evidence for rigid social stratification in the Bronze Age cities of the Indus Valley or, indeed, for the first half a millennium or so of Mesopotamian urbanism; while the tropics, by contrast, produced both the Khmer Empire and Classic Maya kingship.

My aim in this lecture is to suggest that some aspects of Goody's counter-case – as well as his later writings on literacy, urbanization, and bureaucracy – are worth revisiting, partly as an alternative to this new wave

of uniformitarian theorizing on population and political structure. I will develop Goody's argument in two directions, suggesting that:

> a) there is no logical or necessary connection between population density and the emergence of centralized managerial or political structures; and,
>
> b) that population centres may develop and sustain themselves over long time periods through entirely different – and more egalitarian – modes of integration, even without the stimulus of predatory interventions by nearby states.

But I will also depart from Goody and more recent studies, arguing in the second part of my talk that the early appearance of 'cities without the state' is distinctive neither to sub-Saharan Africa nor to semi-tropical zones more generally. Instead I will suggest that cities organized 'from the bottom up' and on relatively egalitarian principles can be found at the very basis of urban civilization in Eurasia itself.

I will make this case by reinterpreting what Goody himself considered the pivotal process of later human prehistory: the Urban Revolution of the fourth millennium BC. More specifically, I will argue that this process should no longer be defined around a single core area of Mesopotamia, but as a process with two primary foci: one in the latter region, and the other in the steppe-forest zone to the north of the Black Sea, in what is now Ukraine and Moldova. Around 6000 years ago these two regions witnessed the independent growth of settlements in the order of hundreds of hectares, implying social organization on a scale unprecedented in human history. But these parallel developments have never been accorded equal status in the long-term history of Eurasian societies.

The emergence of cities in Mesopotamia has long been viewed as marking a threshold in social evolution – the 'emergence of complex society' – associated with the development of commerce, literacy, and the state. For reasons touched on later, their Ukrainian counterparts are often denied urban status altogether, being relegated – by implication – to the status of an evolutionary backwater. I will argue here that the latter's exclusion from conventional schemes of social evolution masks the true diversity of urban form at the dawn of the Eurasian Bronze Age. That diversity may be better understood through a direct comparison of the two cases, focussing on specific divergences in strategies of large-scale social organization. This Goody Lecture will attempt to lay foundations for such a comparison.

The Original Disconnection between Bureaucracy and Scale

Before approaching these wider comparative themes it is important to consider, in a little more detail, Jack Goody's own understanding of the Urban Revolution as a distinct 'civilizational package.' In his many writings, Goody has returned time and again to Mesopotamia – and to the origins there of urban life – as a key turning point in the history of Old World civilizations. His own understanding of that process is taken more or less wholesale from the early to mid-20th century writings of prehistorian V. Gordon Childe (e.g. Childe 1936). But Goody views Childe's work through the lens of an ethnographer and an Africanist, concerned with problems of development and inequality in the modern world. Arguably it is this particular combination of anthropological and archaeological perspective that gives unity and dynamism to the main body of his work over the decades.

As I noted earlier, Goody was struck by how many features of the Urban Revolution – part of the fabric of Eurasian societies for some six millennia – had remained alien to sub-Saharan Africa until quite recent times. The absence of innovations such as the plough and the wheel was not to be understood in a narrow technological sense, however. Technologies matter, for Goody, because of their social "adhesions," a term that he took from Edward B. Tylor to describe the connections between social and technological systems. Such connections always imply constraints as well as possibilities. Hence the absence or refusal of a given technology, such as mechanized agriculture, was important as much for what it enabled in terms of African social development, as for what is excluded.

Technological systems have properties of transmission that differ from one innovation to the next, and cannot be equated in any simple way with institutional change. Adopting the wheel is a different sort of process from adopting a system of writing, which is different again from adopting bilateral systems of property inheritance or forms of *haute cuisine*. As Goody repeatedly showed, consistent relationships have existed between these various kinds of processes, and they are important for understanding the development of Old World civilizations. But they are also complex and indirect. For that reason, civilizations are always messy and interesting things, best understood in historical as well as theoretical terms.

Elsewhere Goody extended these insights from technologies of the material world to technologies of the intellect. In *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977b) he reconsidered the distinction between oral and literate cultures in light of the first known writing systems, and also his own fieldwork on the uptake of literacy in contemporary West Africa. The cuneiform script of early Mesopotamia, as he recognized, was not initially

designed to represent natural speech (and see Houston 2004). It answered to the more limited requirements of urban corporations – first temples and later palaces – breaking down the flow of agrarian goods and services into standard bits of information that could be quantified, stored, ordered into hierarchies, and otherwise manipulated in a bureaucratic manner.

But literate administration too had its 'adhesions.' As an ordered domain of knowledge, it came in time to encompass everything from cooking recipes and magical spells to native stories about the origins of urban life. Writing also became the medium of its own reinvention, as in the mythical tale of *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, which misrepresents script genesis as rooted in oral communication, set against a wider backdrop of aristocratic rivalry and the quest for distant raw materials (as opposed to the internal bookkeeping systems of urban corporations). Literacy thus became both a defining characteristic of urban elites and a prime instrument for their socialization into particular institutions and habits of thought.

The point I wish to emphasize here is that, for Goody, there was no universal or law-like connection between urban life, state sovereignty, and bureaucracy. These are instead parts of a distinct 'package' of developments that coalesced under a particular set of historical circumstances. This happened first in those densely populated parts of the Old World where the Neolithic domestication of plants and animals was supplemented by mechanized farming, and where authority became linked to private land-ownership and the maintenance of a full-time managerial class. There was no necessary causal relationship among these various things, but rather a series of 'adhesions' that, once set in place, became highly transmissible within a broader Eurasian context.

Goody's case could, in fact, be strengthened by an even deeper time-perspective, taking into account the prehistoric roots of specialized administration in the Middle East. One of the most intriguing aspects of that process is its commencement in Late Neolithic villages, beginning around 6000 BC. Archaeologists debate the details of this process, but what they agree on is that – some millennia prior to the invention of writing – early farming communities throughout the Middle East already shared a common system of accounting, property management, and information storage (Oates 1996). Evidence of such systems is found over a very large area, from the Syrian Euphrates (Akkermans and Verhoeven 1995) to the highlands of western Iran (Alizadeh 2006), in the form of product sealings and numerical tokens that were sometimes assembled in central archives. In origin, then, specialized administration is a village not an urban phenomenon (see also Wengrow 1998).

This poses some obvious problems for recent theorizing on group size in fields such as evolutionary psychology (e.g. Dunbar et al. 2010; and see also Johnson 1982; Feinman 2010). It is often argued for example that human groups of up to 150 individuals – that is, roughly the size of a Neolithic village – should have no need for administrative systems to control transactions. Human social cognition should be adequate to maintain group cohesion through face-to-face interaction, moral pressure, and natural recall of debts and obligations. The existence of village-scale administration in deep prehistory casts doubt on the whole idea of bureaucracy as a functional response to 'scalar stress.' No less problematic, for the same kind of models, is the phenomenon of settlements that are undeniably urban in scale, but lack such expected features as administrative hierarchies or managerial elites. It is to some examples of these that I now turn.

The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian "Mega-Sites"

In the 1970s Ukrainian archaeologists began a series of intensive surveys approximately 120 km south of Kiev, in the fertile lands between the Southern Bug and Dnieper Rivers. Using an innovative combination of aerial photography and geomagnetic prospection, they uncovered plans of the prehistoric settlements that have since come to be referred to as 'mega-sites.' Tens of such sites, each covering an area of over 100 hectares, have since been documented in Ukraine and neighbouring Moldova, where they date between 4000 and 3200 BC. Some, such as Maidanets'ke and Dobrovody, reached sizes of around 250 hectares, comparable with the largest Mesopotamian cities of the time. While Talljanky – the most gigantic of all the Ukrainian sites – is thought to have extended over roughly 400 hectares (Videiko 1996; Menotti and Korvin-Piotrovskiy 2012).

The populations of these mega-sites are estimated in the many thousands. Smaller towns and villages – some comprising little more than a few farmsteads – surrounded them, often forming tiered settlement patterns. The mega-sites themselves lie within surprisingly easy reach of one another, at a distance of 10 to 15 km on the open grasslands. If contemporaneously occupied, they would therefore have drawn resources from a common hinterland. Their foundation represents the culmination of a long process, which saw the movement of Neolithic farming communities from the lower Danube through the high passes of the Carpathians, onto the rich soils of the steppe-forest zone north of the Black Sea (Anthony 2007). There they continued to base their livelihoods on cereal cultivation and herding, following patterns of resource allocation established over centuries of shared experience.

The shifting frontier of this mixed farming economy is archaeologically traceable through an associated – and remarkably stable – repertory of house-forms and domestic craft products: the Cucuteni-Tripol'ye culture. It was on the black loess-lands of the Bug-Dnieper interfluve that these communities coalesced into settlements of enormous size (Figure 1). Each such settlement comprised upwards of a thousand households and their attached gardens, forming concentric rings divided by streets and ditches. Many hundreds of households have been excavated. The great majority were constructed to a similar scale and layout, which remains constant across both large and small sites. Bigger-than-average structures have occasionally been found, but no clear distinction can be made between monumental and residential buildings (Chapman 2010).

The large open spaces at the heart of the mega-sites are mostly devoid of burials or architectural traces. Their elliptical plans give a first impression of rigid uniformity in the placing of household plots: a kind of closed circuit of social interaction, each domestic unit forming a reliable link in the chain. But recent fieldwork indicates a surprising degree of flexibility and deviation from this ideal scheme. Households could opt to cluster close together with common walls, or could find themselves relatively isolated. Clusters varied in size from single dwellings to groups of over twenty, and were sometimes separated by ditches or pits. Occasionally a particular corporate group attempted to violate the constraints of the overall settlement pattern – breaking the circuit, as it were – by establishing a non-linear cluster, or leaving open spaces where it might pool resources to build a 'big house' (Chapman et al. 2014). But centralizing tendencies were muted, and never produced a clear distinction between private and public, or household and temple, spheres.

Egalitarian Cities?

The Ukrainian mega-sites were, in their day, the largest contiguous settlements in the world, rivalled only by the cities of the Mesopotamian floodplain. Yet ever since their discovery, the urban status of these sites has been called into question, and is often explicitly denied by archaeologists. Philip Kohl (2002) rejects the term 'cities' or even 'proto-urban formations,' referring to them simply as "giant sites" or "gigantic settlements;" others have characterized them as 'overgrown villages;' the reason being that none of the 'mega-sites' has yet produced compelling evidence either for 'specialization' or 'internal social differentiation.' Elite neighbourhoods and grand burials are nowhere to be found. Central storage facilities are lacking, as is evidence of specialized administration or other systems of recording.

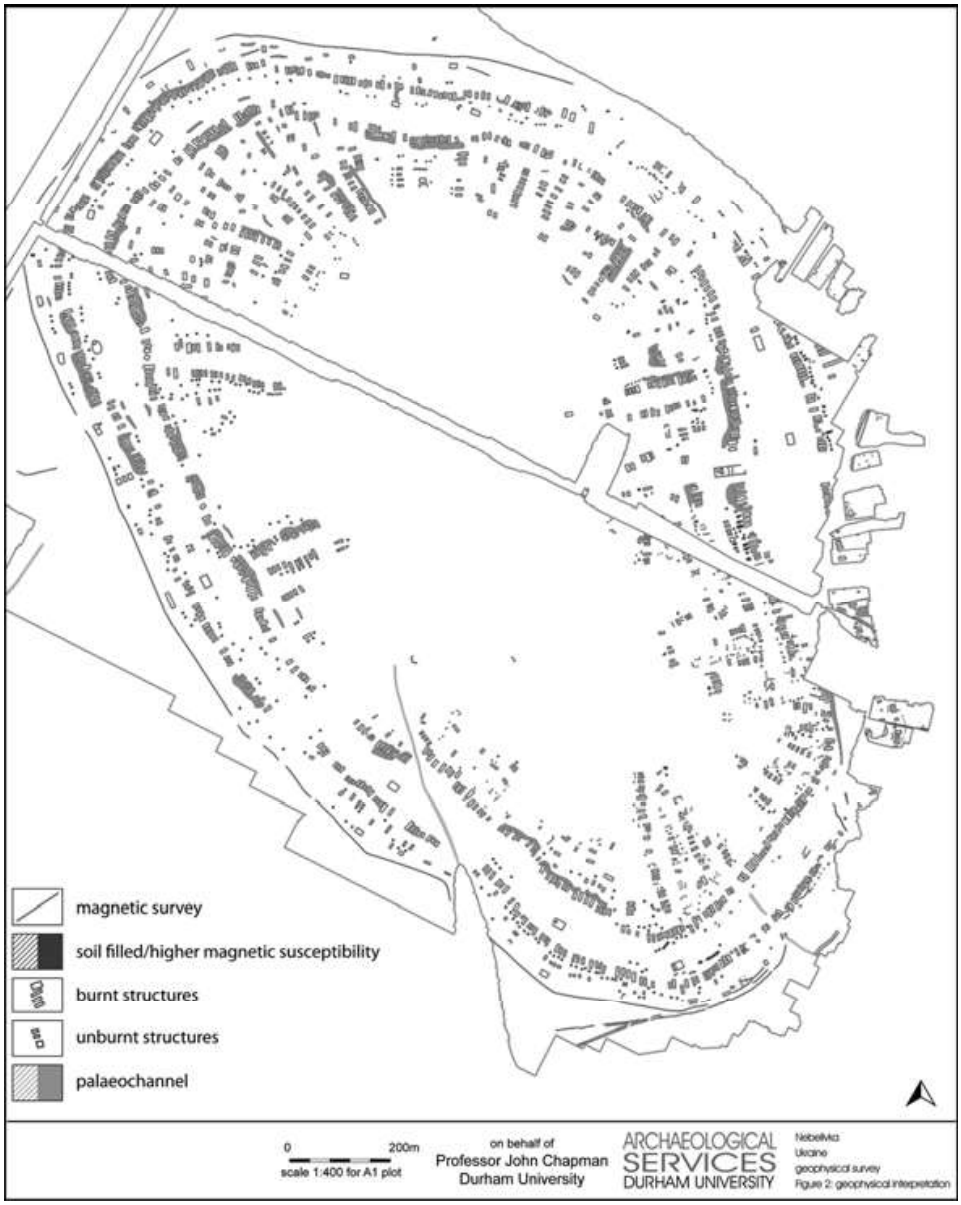


Figure 1. Geophysical survey of the prehistoric megasite at Nebelivka, Ukraine. (Courtesy of Professor John Chapman and Durham University Archaeological Services).

Something should be said at this point about resource allocation. No doubt the provisioning of such immense populations and their herds would have transformed the landscape of the forest-steppe zone. Agriculture was most likely plough-assisted, extensive grazing lands were required, as was forest clearance for fuel and construction. Salt arrived in bulk from springs in the eastern Carpathians or the Black Sea coast (Chapman and Gaydarska 2003). Some tonnes of flint for tool manufacture were obtained annually from the Dniestr valley. An intensive potting industry was sustained (Ellis 1984). And copper was brought in from sources in the Balkans (Manzura 2005). The

logistical challenges were daunting. But clearly they were met with considerable success for well over half a millennium, before the mega-site settlement system eventually broke down and its populations fragmented into smaller and more mobile communities, akin to those of the adjoining steppe.

As David Graeber reminds me, large-scale resource management from the 'bottom up' – that is, based on voluntary associations that operate by consensus – is well within the capacity of densely populated societies. An excellent example is provided in Stephen Lansing's (1991) account of traditional rice farming systems in Bali. Resource allocation was normally managed there through a network of 'water temples,' outside the jurisdiction of the state. When problems arose, delegates were elected to represent the interests of some thousands of farmers at temple meetings, after which they returned to their ordinary roles in society. Some archaeologists doubt whether the Tripol'ye communities could ever have managed their affairs on similar principles, without ceding control to some permanent central authority. John Chapman (2010: 86), for example, writes:

> With regard to the Tripol'ye megasites, it is impossible to talk of 250- or 450-hectare settlements without invoking the extreme social inequalities that would seem to be required to control effectively the communications and logistics of such centres. It is equally difficult to accept that such inequalities were not materialized through craft and/or ritual specialization.

Yet nothing in the surviving material culture or spatial organization of the mega-site points in this direction. It seems necessary, then, to return to first principles.

Cities before the State: framing a comparison

In an influential study, Roland Fletcher (1995: 198) cites the Tripol'ye mega-sites as the only known exception to an otherwise universal law of human settlement growth. Based on a global sample of pre-industrial cities he argues that there is a 100 hectare threshold above which dense and permanently inhabited settlements can expand, only if they first undergo certain basic organizational and/or technological changes. As in Chapman's analysis the expectations are set by normative theories of optimal group size and 'scalar stress,' which originate outside archaeology in fields such as evolutionary psychology and management studies. They include the establishment of a complex internal division of labour within settlements, and dedicated systems of information storage to assist the management of resources on an urban scale.

Neither expectation is met in the Ukrainian case, and Fletcher (1995: 198) is candid about the wider implications:

> Until we have further information the sites remain a fascinating enigma. Given that most of the previously well-known large compact 'non-urban' sites such as Poverty Point do not much exceed 100 ha and are the scale equivalent of T'ang Ch'ang-an at about 90–100 sq km, the discovery of these Late Tripol'ye sites is like finding several new, non-industrial, urban settlements which are perhaps compact and two to four times larger than Ch'ang-an! Plainly this would not be regarded as a trivial issue in the study of agrarian urban communities.

He further suggests that in classifying the Tripol'ye mega-sites as 'overgrown villages,' rather than self-conscious experiments in urban life, archaeologists have systematically avoided a major threat to established theories of social evolution. But are the mega-sites really such 'severe anomalies' as they first seem?

A sustained comparison between the Tripol'ye mega-sites and contemporary urban settlements in Mesopotamia has never been undertaken. Various commentators point to contrasts in their respective levels of economic and political centralization. But these are easily overdrawn. Take, for example, the assumption that Tripol'ye mega-sites could not have managed their agrarian hinterlands without permanent administrative hierarchies and systematic structures of coercion to enforce decisions. Similar ideas were once common in Near Eastern archaeology. But the earliest administrative texts from Uruk make no reference to field- or water systems. And archaeological survey suggests that the earliest Mesopotamian cities were still mainly supported by simple, gravity-fed irrigation systems that could be managed at a local scale, without centralized bureaucratic control (Adams 1981).

Very little is in fact known about the political organization of the earliest Mesopotamian cities, those of the fourth millennium BC or 'Uruk Period.' Written sources of that time derive overwhelmingly from the site of Uruk, in southern Iraq, and are largely confined to bookkeeping documents and commodity receipts (Nissen et al. 1993). These relate to the internal economic organization of temple complexes that occupied the central precinct of the city. Outside such grand institutions, smaller households and kin groups retained significant autonomy in agrarian and craft production (Pollock et al. 1996). There is no evidence at this point to suggest that literate administration was directly involved in the political life of the urban community. Pictorial art of the later fourth millennium includes a standard male figure with attributes of leadership (Schmandt-Besserat 1993); but we

cannot know whether his office was permanent and hereditary, or granted on a temporary basis by popular consent.

Clear evidence for dynastic elites appears only later in Mesopotamian history, in the third millennium BC or 'Early Dynastic Period,' many centuries after the initial appearance of cities. Only then do privately owned estates, inter-city warfare, and royal decrees appear in the written record; only then do we find monumental representations of kings and their organized militias, claiming sanction from the city-gods; and only then do royal and elite tombs make their first appearance in the archaeological record (Pollock 1999). In this and most later periods of Mesopotamian history, autocratic institutions existed alongside civic assemblies, tribal councils, and other decision-making bodies whose influence was based on consensus and popular representation, rather than coercion or top-down control (Van de Mieroop 1999). Later Sumerian epic, such as the tale of Gilgamesh and Agga, accords such popular assemblies a central role in urban government, perhaps even superordinate to the authority of kings (see also Barjamovic 2004, with further references).

Returning to the fourth millennium BC, and if we confine our comparison to the earliest phases of urban life in each region, then both Mesopotamia and Ukraine may be considered examples of 'cities before the state,' as indeed can the third millennium urban centres of the Indus Valley (Possehl 2003). What then were the salient differences between them? Here we might usefully adapt Goody's method, focussing on the comparison of everyday social practices, rather than broad institutional contrasts. In *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class* (1982) he highlighted the early linkage of food, hierarchy, and specialized commerce as a distinctive feature of Eurasian societies, beginning with the centralized production of graded comestibles in Mesopotamian temples (and see Damerow 1998). In drawing this discussion to a close I will suggest that, here again, the Ukrainian case departs from his expected Eurasian pattern, in ways that are nevertheless instructive.

Divergent Evolution in Early Eurasia: predatory and insular forms of urbanization

Current reconstructions of the earliest large-scale urban institutions in Mesopotamia suggest that these were temple complexes, combining ritual and economic functions, but with no clearly defined political role (e.g. Ur 2014). They were built at the heart of the city, replicating on a monumental scale the format of ordinary dwellings, and housing a dependent staff of administrators, priests, farmers, and artisans, as well as attached storage areas, kitchens, and workshops. Temples also held executive ritual duties

that could not be replicated in ordinary households. They represented the city to its divine patrons on behalf of the wider population: a role symbolized by their scale, magnificent appearance, and above all by their custodianship of cult statues – crafted in exotic materials – that received a regular regime of food offerings.

Like the prehistoric 'cottage industries' that came before them, these 'Houses of the Gods' promoted the manufacturing sector as an integral part of household economy, and with additional divine sanction. They were centres of knowledge and industry – the ancient seedbeds of our modern factories, accounting procedures, and methods of timekeeping – where goods and labour were quantified to fixed standards and measures. Production was based on a maximizing principal, transforming the vast agrarian surpluses of the Mesopotamian floodplain into stockpiles of easily marketable products such as wool textiles, leather goods, and processed comestibles – including varying grades of dairy- and cereal-based products – centrally packaged and sealed to ensure integrity as they passed between unknown parties (Englund 1998; Wengrow 2008).

But the most highly valued materials employed by urban artisans could not be locally obtained. Timber, fine stone, and metals – including silver used as currency – all had to be procured through trade with outsiders, beyond the floodplain. As has been evident now for some decades, the initial growth of urban settlement in southern Mesopotamia was thus linked to the establishment of trading colonies and outposts along the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates, disseminating lowland manufactures to key supply zones in the neighbouring highlands. Conducted in the absence of standing armies or other obvious means of coercion, this 'Uruk Expansion' – as it has come to be known – was the world's first great commercial expansion, linking the local allocation of agrarian resources to market forces operating at an interregional scale (Algaze 1993; Wengrow 2010).

By contrast, the growth of 'mega-sites' between the Bug and Dnieper has been generally viewed as an insular process, with only limited interaction across well-defined cultural frontiers, separating Tripol'ye populations from their neighbours on the Pontic steppe. One view, long established in continental European archaeology, holds that the mega-sites were refuge towns – not unlike those of the Tallensi, described by Goody – populated by farmers fleeing the predatory incursions of mounted steppe warriors. This interpretation is now considered implausible (see Kohl 2002; Anthony 2007). But it captures something of the inward orientation of Tripol'ye economy and society. Goods traded into the Tripol'ye sphere included Balkan metals and Mediterranean shells; but there is little to suggest that local production was strongly geared to the procurement of such

long-range imports, or that they had crucial social and ritual functions in Tripol'ye settlements.

Insofar as it can be reconstructed, the ritual life of the Tripol'ye mega-sites seems to have been tightly focused on, and contained within, the domestic realm. Its main material components could be procured from within the regional economy of the steppe-forest zone, such as the clay and pigment used to make figurines (Bailey 2010) and ritual food vessels (Lazarovici 2010). The latter show no signs of the standardization and graded uniformity so evident in Mesopotamian domestic assemblages. Instead each vessel was individually decorated with polychrome designs of often mesmerizing intensity. Tripol'ye pottery also exhibits a dazzling variety of forms, suggesting constant innovation and playfulness in the rules of commensality: each household to some extent inventing its own cuisine. Anthropomorphic figurines, found in most Tripol'ye dwellings, represent the self-contained social world of the household, replete with miniature representations of furniture and feasting equipment in harmoniously ordered sets.

Conclusion: another homage to Catalonia

To summarize: in Western Eurasia, the emergence of the world's first urban settlements had, not one, but two primary foci. The first – best known, and much discussed by Jack Goody – lay along the fertile alluvial soils of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, in what is now Iraq and part of Syria (ancient Mesopotamia). The second, and less well known, lay on the steppe-forest margins of the Dniester River. In the fourth millennium BC, these two areas both witnessed the growth of nucleated settlements on a scale unprecedented in human history. Earlier (Neolithic) farming communities had often reached sizes in the order of tens of hectares. But the urban agglomerations of the fourth millennium regularly extended over hundreds, and their populations numbered in the many thousands. A major threshold was crossed in scales of social organization, and in that sense the term 'Urban Revolution' remains appropriate.

But more striking still are the divergent pathways to urbanization followed in the Mesopotamian and Ukrainian cases. The former, Mesopotamian pathway was based on the centralization of commercial, bureaucratic and ritual functions within large-scale institutions – Households of the Gods – which competed in a predatory fashion for access to interregional trade routes and exotic materials. The latter, Ukrainian pathway was based on a regionally contained system of procurement and exchange, that seems to have operated effectively for many centuries with little centralized management or accumulation of resources above the level of the

individual household or small neighbourhood. Until now these two cases of pristine urbanization have not been explicitly compared, and only the former – Mesopotamian – model is considered an exemplary stage in the evolution of 'complex society' or 'early civilization.'

This may be partly understood as a result of recent geopolitics, which for decades rendered the Ukrainian findings inaccessible to western scholars. But today, I suggest, it is only theoretical blinkers that prevent us from fully incorporating the early cities of the steppe-forest zone into our wider understandings of social evolution. They stand as an enduring challenge to managerial and commercial models of pre-industrial settlement growth, and as a reminder of possibilities for which many of Jack Goody's generation gave their lives, in pre-Francoist Spain and elsewhere: possibilities of egalitarian organization on an urban scale. To conclude, the first Ukrainian cities – together with their Mesopotamian counterparts – represent founding strands of a complex web, in which the history of Eurasian societies remains entangled. Insofar as the concept of an 'Urban Revolution' is to be retained, it should include them.

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Chapter 7
On *Papies* and *Mammies*: the invention of a new relative in contemporary European kinship (2016)

Martine Segalen

When my illustrious predecessors delivered the Jack Goody lecture here in Halle, the man himself was still alive. Such was also the case when Chris Hann invited me to do so in March 2015. Since then, Jack Goody passed away, and this talk is a sort of posthumous present to someone who has had so much influence on my field of expertise, as an anthropologist/sociologist working on European systems of inheritance and contemporary family changes. It is also a testimony to the influence he has had on many French scholars, some working on literacy, some on medieval history, some on religion, some on images, and so forth.

I first met Jack through his writings about the European family. His chapter of the book edited by Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, in which his contribution was a veritable 'bomb' in that he took a position contrary to that of the demographers analysing households and insisted instead that figures are insufficient to grasp family changes: "The kind of information to answer this question [about change] cannot be derived from census data" (Goody 1972b: 119). Instead one has to look at the importance of kinship ties between households, which cannot be represented in numbers, and this resonates with my topic to-day.

I then met him personally during a conference organized by Hans Medick and David Sabean at the beginning of the 1980s where he delivered a first draft of his ideas on the European family that were to be published in *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (1983). He invited me very generously to Cambridge where I could enjoy his company and discuss with him the problems raised by the egalitarian system I was studying in Brittany. Over the years we maintained a solid companionship, even though I remained stuck with the European family and he went on to develop his well-known grand schemes concerning the relationships between the West and the Rest and the necessity to abandon our ethnocentrism.

Jack Goody's work has been most influential in France and he is the British anthropologist most translated into French. First came his book on *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (translated under the strange title *La raison graphique*) which is now a standard for all those interested in literacy. He agreed to write a preface for the second volume of the *Histoire de la famille* which I co-edited with André Burguière, Christiane Klapisch-Zuber and Françoise Zonabend (Burguière et al. 1986). Following the success of this book, I had no difficulty in persuading the publisher Armand Colin to translate *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* which appeared only two years after the English version. This book was widely read by medieval historians, who were dumbfounded to discover somebody entering their field of expertise and putting forward an argument bearing upon a very long historical period to understand the influence of Christianity on European kinship rules and family systems.

This was followed by translations of other major comparative works: *Cooking, Cuisine and Class, Flowers*, and *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*. His exploration of family systems across Eurasia, in which he started to challenge the supposed specificity and superiority of Europe, titled in English *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive* was translated as *Famille et Mariage en Eurasie*. His *The East in the West* was published as *L'Orient en Occident*. And so forth. Altogether I have counted 15 books translated into French, up to and including *The Theft of History* (see the Appendix for a full list). In view of the weak state of social science publishing in France, this is remarkable. This highlights the formidable influence and impact Jack Goody has had in so many fields. When I suggested that the University of Nanterre award him the degree of Honoris Causa in 2006, professors of history, law, literature and art joined the anthropologists in support.

We know that *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* was, as Chris Hann has written in his obituary (Hann 2016) "an answer to the ahistorical structuralist binaries of Claude Lévi-Strauss between cold and hot societies." His position in the domain of family and kinship parallels the one that he held on literacy, since here too his approach was totally different from that of the *Structures élémentaires*. With his so-called 'materialist' approach and his wide comparative scope, I can say that Jack Goody liberated us from the Levi-Straussian grip and saved a whole generation, including myself, from searching only for marriage regularities and rules. It was so obviously different to tackle kinship questions through the lens of the domestic group and its developmental cycle, in continuation of the work of Meyer Fortes. Particularly pertinent to my subject today is the emphasis Goody puts on the close relationships created through acts of feeding and caring, considering

kinship from the aspect of intimate daily relations and emotions (Fortes 1958).

Thanks to Jack Goody, we have learned to locate our researches on Europe within a contrast that sets Eurasia, with its diverging devolution of property, against Africa, with its unilineal devolution. His work encouraged us to navigate, as he did, between history and anthropology when engaged in the comparative analysis of diverse peasant systems of devolution in Europe.

In the domain of kinship studies, as in others, Jack Goody's work is overwhelming and unique, bridging past and present, East and West, never losing sight of the material conditions that produce kinship. He was unmoved by criticism. A good example of his response is given in the new French edition of *L'évolution de la famille*, where he replies to critics who accuse him of being a materialist when he associates the change in kinship rules by the Catholic Church with enrichment. He writes that

> Some have seen this as a 'materialist' interpretation of the 'spiritual.' I would reply that all charity necessarily has an economic aspect (it is frequently but not always about money) and we cannot profitably separate the two aspects. Written religions became 'great organizations,' as Oppenheim called them, especially when they were also involved in teaching literacy to read the Holy text. Education was expensive and involved taking teachers, often priests, as well as pupils, out of everyday pursuits and supporting them while they were involved, in their primary and 'grammar' schools and, for teachers, in further education in College, University or madrasa. If asking questions about the livelihood of teachers and pupils is 'materialist,' so be it, but this is an essential dimension of such an enquiry and remains so today (Goody 2013: 37).

In this lecture I will offer ethnographic illustrations of Jack Goody's position concerning changes in the contemporary family, a subject he tackled briefly (*The European Family*, 2000). Jack noted here that the "pattern [of intergenerational contacts] is often marked by less tense relationships between the generations than in the past, when more was at stake; it is often distant in a physical and social sense, but closer in other ways" (Goody 2000: 154). I will explore the increased relevance of grandparenthood in Europe, due partly to increased longevity and decreasing fertility rates, which allow more grandparents to concentrate on a smaller number of grandchildren. I shall demonstrate this importance through the examination of naming patterns, a minute, mundane topic that says much about social relationships. In this endeavour I have been inspired by a little-known but intriguing paper of Jack Goody's "On nannas and nannies" published in *Man* in 1962.

Discovering Grandparenting

Unless you deal with new reproductive technologies, fertilization in vitro, surrogate motherhood or gay parenthood, kinship studies seem to be *out*, a non-subject nowadays. Yet many topics remain worthy of attention and of great social importance: contemporary societies all over the world are witnessing a lengthening of the life-span and inventing a new character in the genealogical chain, that of the young old, i.e. persons in good physical condition who enjoy secure retirement pensions and who leave to their own parents the roles of the disabled elderly.

The emergence of this social character reassembles marriage and filiation and offers an illustration of Jack Goody's plea not to separate the analysis of the couple from kinship (Goody 1986). This divide, which reflects the division between the disciplines of sociology and anthropology, has severely blurred the analysis of the contemporary family, he wrote then. The reunion that he proposed was just as influential as his grand scheme dividing Eurasia from Africa in relation to inheritance and transmission practices. Freed from the structuralist jail, anthropologists researching contemporary European kinship could progress in dialogue not only with historians but also with like-minded sociologists.

Like Claude Lévi-Strauss, who witnessed in amazement the development of a new ritual, that of the Père Noël, in France after the Second World war (1952), we have been amazed to observe, over the past 25 years, the emergence of a new kin person, long overlooked by sociologists. In a survey on old age carried out in 1998, under the sponsorship of the United Nations (Hagestad 2000), the question of grandparenting was not even posed. My colleague Claudine Attias-Donfut and I called grandparents the "grandforgotten" (Attias-Donfut and Segalen 2014).

Contrary to Marshall Sahlins asking *What Kinship Is – And Is Not* (2013), we could, under the materialist umbrella of Jack, ask what kinship *does*. More than ever before, grandparents are present on the social scene to support their own children, through the care of grandchildren, be this on a regular basis, during vacations or on special occasions. This phenomenon has recently been acknowledged and studied all over Europe (Thelen and Leutloff-Grandits 2010; Attias-Donfut and Segalen 2014). Grandparenting has also been rediscovered and analyzed in other cultural contexts. In China, for instance, the growing increasing importance of grandparents, especially in relation with increased female employment is well attested, with implications for the striking of a new balance between the patri- and matri-lines (Stafford 2000).

To understand these changes properly, one has to investigate the various intergenerational contexts. Care by grandparents is related to socio-

political conditions such as the existence of welfare policies and the possibility of enjoying retirement pensions, as well as better physical conditions in old age. It is closely associated with changes in the status of women since the Second World War. Nowadays women are better educated and have entered the labour market, thus having to reconcile work with care of their children. Grandparenting is closely associated with public policies to develop childcare facilities, reflecting different cultural values (some countries tend to the view that there is no better care for the child than that of the mother, whereas others insist that collective care is the best way to promote the child's development). Thus, on the collective level the grandparental relation needs to be investigated in very different socio-cultural contexts. On a personal level, it can be felt to be either a blessed joy or a burden.

As a matter of fact, grandparenting is an invention of the second half of the 20th century. Until the 1960s, grandparents were either dead, or they were considered as distant old relatives to be visited in tedious excursions. In the lower classes, if the younger generation had moved to find work in cities, then grandchildren and grandparents had few opportunities to encounter one another on a regular basis. Today proximity, frequent visits and caring relations characterize the situation. In dire times, such as the period of crisis that Spain has experienced recently, the grandparental role is crucial.

In the rest of this lecture I shall explore the French situation, with a focus on how creativity in naming reflects transformed social relations.

Naming and Addressing

The naming practices which have been scrutinized in relation with identity concern mainly the first name or the last name, but rarely those new names that approximate to nicknames. Claude Lévi-Strauss (1962) writes that names serve to classify and what we have to look for is who is named and by whom he/she is named. The naming process helps organize the world. This structural position does not encompass all the facets and contents of naming processes, which also have historical and sociological dimensions. For his part, when discussing the question of roles in the domestic group, Jack Goody notes that

> (...) the cultural recognition of these roles leads directly to the problem of kinship terminology. Kin terms are names for the social roles (...). This terminology is thus a system of classifying kinsmen, a set of labels which can be used to elicit and designate behavior of various kinds: sexual avoidance, respect, joking, supportive, financial, etc. (Goody 1972a: 23).

Early in his career Jack Goody was struck by the name 'nanna,' inquiring into its origins and its absence from the dictionaries. I myself was impelled to a similar investigation on becoming a grandmother and discussing terms with my fellow grandparents. Since Goody's article there has been to my knowledge no systematic work on this topic, not even in a book as comprehensive as that of Stephen Wilson (1998).

The necessity for each grandparent to invent a name for himself/herself tells us something about the new intergenerational relationships and the values and roles attached to them. In his *Vocabulaire des institutions européennes*, Émile Benveniste notes that "lorsqu'une culture se transforme, elle emploie des termes nouveaux pour suppléer les termes traditionnels quand ceux-ci se trouvent chargés de valeurs spécifiques" (1969: 221). The traditional terms to name grandparents were laden with the idea of old age and frailty. They referred to dependent elders, often close to death, as Victor Hugo writes in his poem *L'art d'être grand-père*[1]: "Moi dont le destin pâle et froid se décolore, J'ai l'attendrissement de dire Ils sont l'aurore."

In traditional societies, whether European, African or Asian, the idea of alternate relationships was strongly marked in names, as in the German association *Enkel/Ahn*, terms which cannot exist independently. In old French, the grandson was named 'avelet,' sort of 'little grandfather.' In South Italy, and also in rural Romania, peasants would address their grandchildren with an inverted vocative: "Nonno, viene qua!" (Braun 1988). The inversion of address terms between seniors and juniors has been attested in a variety of languages. As in Africa and Asia, this inverted system refers to the idea of the reincarnation or continuation of the older person in the younger one. In European peasant society, this system was accompanied by the custom of making the grandfather the godfather of his grandson and thus giving him his name. The family was circularly perpetuating itself through alternative generations.

According to Benveniste (1969), one common Indo-European term to designate the grand-father is the latin 'avus,' from which is derived 'aïeul' or 'abuelo' in Spanish, Italian 'aviolo' and Portuguese 'avo.' Then we have constructions with suffixes, such as the British 'grand' or German 'gross,' a way to signify distance. Other languages insist on the aspect of old age, e.g.

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[1] See Adès 2002. After the accidental death of their parents, Victor Hugo became the guardian of his grand-children, Georges and Jeanne Hugo. The poems describe the feelings of a grandfather entrusted with innocent young children. Love and tenderness (*attendrissement*) are celebrated, discipline is discounted; the freshness and laughter of the young (*l'aurore* = dawn) soften the potential bleakness of old age (*destin pâle et froid se décolore* =pale and cold destiny is fading away), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%27Art_d%27être_grand-père. Many thanks to Sylvie Muller who has helped me with the translation of this poem.

'tad koz' and 'mam koz' in Breton. In French rural society, as in the working classes, the grandparents were often called 'pépère,' 'mémère' or 'pépé,' 'mémée,' diminutives of 'papa' and 'maman.' The more bourgeois would classically use 'grand-père' and 'grand-mère.' Terms of appellation and sometimes of address, all these variants relegate the grandparents to the category of old age. Some others refer to a nourishing relationship. The Finnish 'mummo,' a diminutive of grandmother, also means old person. The Icelandic 'langamma' means 'she who gives her milk.' This nourishing function was underlined by Jack Goody when he was investigating the origin of 'nanna.' As a term of address, the etymology points to the Greek and Latin 'nonna,' the feminine form of 'nonnus' a monk. Both terms were used to designate old people. This is the origin of the Italian 'nonna,' meaning 'nurse' (she who breastfeeds). Today, neither 'pépère/mémère,' nor 'grand-père/grand-mère' are adequate descriptors for grandparents who are still young and strong.

The Process of Naming

Formerly, when a child was born in a family the great grandparent was already deceased and thus the new grandparent could assume the appellation term of the same-sex parent. But when four generations routinely co-exist there can be no robbing the new great grandparent of (so to speak) his/her title. Thus, the new grandparent has to invent something – and we shall see under what conditions. This is a rather unprecedented situation. One has to assume a new name at the age of 50, one that will express one's new position in the family line and provide the person with a new identity that nowadays lasts longer than that of parent.

Various naming mechanisms have been identified in recent surveys.[2] The future grandparents or the child who produces the first grandchild may choose the name, usually after some consultation. Some grandparents pretend, in an enchanted tone, that it is the baby who named them.[3] These mechanisms can harmonize. The new name emerges from a familial consensus, especially when there are four grandparents (more in the case of recomposed families). The idea that the grandchild should name the

[2] Conducted by my students at the University of Nanterre as an exercise for their *mémoire de maîtrise* in 1996. I draw also on materials published in a journal aimed at old people *Pleine vie*, whose readers were invited to explain how exactly they had been named as grandparents (issue of May 1999). I constantly update my information which is gathered among numerous co-grandparents I meet when taking my grandchildren to their tennis lessons in the Parisian area.

[3] This mechanism is attested (alongside others) on the website of the American Grandparents Association (AGA).

grandfather/mother is consistent with the "unique ability of human infants to synthesize the distinction of self and other in interactively created common projects that involve shared interests, perspectives and goals" (Sahlins 2013: 37). Sahlins adds that "even before they demonstrate linguistic competence, infants of twelve to fourteen months engage in communicative interactions." Psychologists and psychobiologists document the earliest stages of mother-child mutualism (but also potentially grandmother-child mutualism when she is very present) and speak of a "'protoconversational' activity present from birth" (Sahlins 2013: 39). A child who has already been long accustomed to the face, body and presence of the grandmother is very likely to send her back, in its prattle, a name derived from the form she offers. It is as though the chosen denomination was the result of a transaction between the adult and the baby. But of course, it is the adult who is manoeuvering. This is a manifestation of the intersubjectivity of being kin.

It is also a total reversal of the usual situation in which the flow of names used to run downwards. The new mutualism testifies to the importance of the child in our contemporary societies. The child is suddenly the equal of the adult, a unique, precious person appropriately called by Viviane Zelizer (1985) "priceless." In former times, children belonged to their line and were more or less agential participants in practices of exchanging and fostering children, inside and outside kindreds. Their identity was embedded in that of the collective group. Nowadays, even as babies, they are full individuals and the line is at their service. Generally, once the name has been chosen, all later-born grandchildren adopt it.

Refusing the Name

The naming process depends significantly on the age at which the grandparent reaches this position in the family line. Françoise, divorced with three children and still working, says she is not very attracted by new babies and does not want to be called Mémé or Mamie. She is addressed instead by her first name, but she remarks that children sometimes have difficulties situating her in the family; one of her grandsons had asked her if she had children!

Men are more likely than women to object to a new name, especially if the grandchild's birth coincides with retirement. This is always a step in the life cycle that brings you closer to old age, says Michel, who refuses any special name and offers his first name instead. The use of the first name is specific to a new generation and to the upper middle classes. I am reminded of the note by Jack Goody, referring to a Mrs King, aged 65, of Cambridge, who says:

> All my thirteen grandchildren call me 'nanna.' I don't like this 'granma' at all. Yes, comes from the tele. One of my grandchildren called me Kate, the other day. Said his mum did so. I told him off proper. And her too. What if he called you that in the street (Goody 1962: 181).

Nowadays the first name is often used by the second wife of a divorced man, generally younger than her husband, who does not want to be the grandmother of grandchildren to whom she is not related biologically, in a move that would age her prematurely. In their study of English families in London, Raymond Firth and his colleagues (1969) relate the case of a woman who had herself called Auntie (a French equivalent would be *tantine*), which is a good solution for this dilemma. On the one hand, the woman is spared the term Grandma, which would be unsuited to a young woman. On the other, she is inserted into the family through a term that allows for both respect and affection. Divorces and remarriages multiply the number of grandparents, who have to invent new names to differentiate themselves. The biological grandmother of a grandchild whose parents are divorced does not want to be robbed of her name and says "I am the real and unique Grandma."

The first name was not introduced into these intimate kin relations until the 1960s. First it was the collaterals who lost their titles. My mother's brother was uncle Raymond, and I addressed him by the familiar *Tonton* Raymond. Calling an elder member of the family by his/her first name does away with the barriers of distance, respect and formality. However, use of the first name has not become very widespread because the symbolic attachment to the line, through the new name, remains of importance. The position of grandparent is generally highly valued among these young olds. Affection can flow up and down the line all the more easily since nowadays the material stakes are significantly reduced, as Jack Goody stressed.

Linguistic Creations

The customization of appellation terms signifies new social relations within the family, not only between children and grandchildren but affecting the entire family line. The invented terms are imbued with familiarity and embody the personality of the new grandparent. They are like indigenous idioms opening a universe of possibilities, instead of the trap of a pre-given term constraining the sphere of relationships.

A Geneviève of Mercuès writes:

> I had a little problem a few years ago when my first granddaughter arrived. All the more so as she arrived in a family where the other grandparents had separated and remarried. I thought

> that through the multiple use of 'papy, mamie,' she would be totally confused. I tried to make a difference and offered 'Mounette.'
>
> Geneviève then comments:
>
> It does not sound old, and everyone tells me it is very original. Later, I heard that one of my friends, whose name is Nicole, had had herself called Ménie, a composite form of Mémé and Nicole. Had I known that earlier, I would have had myself called Mage (Mamie and Geneviève).

Although these new names seem to come from nowhere and be spontaneous, their creation is characterized by a few simple rules: they have to be inspired by the first name of grandparents, or an object, or a specific hobby, in order to underline their individuality; and they must carry something reminiscent of the filiation tie; the names are generally constructed with the couple in mind. Jean-Paul Sartre's youth provides a good example. As he explained in *Les Mots*, after his father's death he was brought up by his mother and maternal grandparents:

> It had been suggested that I should call her Mamie, and the head of the household by his Alsatian first name, Karl. 'Karl et Mamie' sounded better than Romeo and Juliet or Philemon and Baucis. My mother would say to me a hundred times a day, not without intent: 'Karlémami are waiting; Karlémami will be pleased; Karlémami ...,' suggesting by the intimacy of these four syllables complete harmony between the persons (Sartre 1964: 24–5).

Here are a few more examples of such creative nomenclature. Danièle has chosen to be called Dany and her husband will become Daddy. Bernard and Martine are respectively Pabé and Matie. Jean-Louis and Christine are Papilouis and Mamitine. These linguistic creations parallel the assonance of Grandpa and Grandma, or the older Pepé/Méme. In the simpler cases there is an incorporation of the first name: thus Yvonne becomes Maryvonne and Corinne is Macoco. But the scope of invention is endless, from Mamilune (a reference to a grandmother's half moon spectacles) to Mamilaine (she who knits), Papivelo (he who rides a bike) and Papirouge et Papibleu (distinguishing two grandfathers by the colour of their cars). Thus, the most common form of name construction associates a prefix that is evocative of a kinsperson with a specific trait that singularizes the grandparent. Again in an enchanted tone, a Béatrice who had planned to be called Grannie (with Grapy for the grandfather) "which," she says, "quite fitted their personalities" marvels at the fact that her grandson calls her Magrannie.

Yet the nourishing connotation of the term, as underscored by Goody in his etymological quest for "nanna," is still prominent among the invented

terms. 'Manou' is the name of a Breton grandmother aware that it is "half mother and half nounou," quite fitting in view of the number of bottles and meals she prepares. Edith says she is called Nanou and her husband is Papounet; she attributes this name to the mispronunciation of her grandson, and is particularly happy with it. Once the name is accepted, it is donned like a garment that suits you well and its use sometimes bursts out of the familial sphere altogether. My father Paul was a jolly sort of man; he was called Popaul by his grandchildren, then became Popaul for the grandchildren's friends and eventually for his own friends and acquaintances too.

Enhancing the idea of affection, proximity and familiarity, some men opt for a diminutive form of their first name: Georges becomes Jojo, Pierre, Pierrot. Jean-Pierre Vernant, the great specialist in Greek mythology, mentions that his grandson used to summon him every evening when going to bed with a "Jipé, l'histoire, l'histoire" (1999: 7). An identical phenomenon has been observed in Anglo-Saxon countries (Firth et al. 1969: 326). Besides, plenty of vernacular terms are still in use in 21st century France: Papounet/Mamounette (Centre West), Papapa/Mamama (Alsace), Papet/Mamet (Occitanie). In the Basque country one finds Atachy/Amatchy, derived from 'aïta' (father) and 'ama' (little mother), which become Tagni and Magni in everyday speech.

But things are not always easy as a name often has unwelcome connotations referring to the past. For instance, in a bourgeois context, a young new grandfather cannot expect to be called 'bon-papa,' a term associated with an ancestral figure whom he has no wish to resemble.

As Firth and his co-authors wrote, "terminology is a matter of adjustment and even of dispute" (1969: 338). When relationships with the in-laws are tense, use of the new name of the grandmother by the daughter-in-law can be a way to ease them. By calling her mother-in-law by the term used by her children, the daughter-in-law places her immediately in the position of the older generation. This appeases the tension by substituting the parental relation with a grandparental relation. At the same time, it is hinted to the new grandparents that they should not intervene in their children's lives, since the latter have become full adults. Each territory is clearly marked.

Equivalent English linguistic inventions mainly address the grandfather: "Pops, Dandy, Buma, Pepe, Guido, Uncle Joe, Idle Jack" (Firth et al. 1969: 325). The question has become a staple of our modern societies. The website of the Grandboomers (the grandparents of the baby boom) opens with the question: "What do your grandchildren call you?" A litany of examples follows:

> Bampie, Big Mama, Bizi, Chief, Fea, Gaby, GaGa, G-Bob, GiGi, Gram, Grammie, Gran, Grand Di, Grandmary, Grandmutter, Granna, Gree, Jamma, Lola, Luna, Maagah, MaiMai, Mam, Mamma, Mars, Meme, Mémère, Mim, Mima, Mimi, Monga, Nan, Nana, Nanny, Neeny, Nemo, Nona, Nonna, Nonnie, Nonno, Oma, Opa, Pa, Papa, Pappa, Pappy, PawPaw, Pippe, Pop, PopPop, Poppa, Poppy, Spice, Sugar, Supergran, Sweetie, Tata.

The American melting pot offers a rich databank of suggestions for inventing a name.[4]

Social Parameters

Jack Goody explained the absence of information on "nanna" in the English dictionaries by the fact that their authors belonged to the "genteel" upper class and had neglected popular vernacular expressions. They listed only "nurse," which is the paid labour substitute for children's care in the higher or middle classes ("these child-caring functions the upper classes would delegate to their nannies"). He adds: "but the less affluent also have their proxy mothers, their nannas, although recruited by ties of kinship rather than on the labour market" (1962: 182).

To be sure, names are also social classifiers. In the letter she sent to the magazine *Pleine vie* (see note 2), Léontine, 70 years old at the time, born in Algiers narrates how she observed the irruption of 'Mamie' into her (non-élite) social circle. She had called her grandparents Pépère/Memère, but when she in turn became a grandmother she was called Mamie and her husband Papi:

> Papi and Mamie, it came as a fashion; Mémé, my children thought it was not pleasant, not distinguished enough, whereas Papi/Mamie was much better, it was more chic. I did not want to be called Mémé, which was the name of my mother who was living with us. Mémé sounds old-fashioned, Mamie, more modern.

Today Pépé/Mémé or Pépère/Mémère have both plebian and stuffy connotations. In the 1960s, Papy and Mamy seemed to be 'modern,' but they are nowadays challenged in turn by the new linguistic inventions. In the upper classes, 'Grand-papa/Grand-maman,' and 'Bon papa/Bonne maman,' where '*bon*' suggests a distance, like '*step*,' '*petit*' or '*grand*,' or '*bel*' are making a comeback (recall the expressions used in the Comtesse de Ségur books for instance *Bible d'une Grand-mère*, 1869). Here respect is at stake. A grandfather belonging to a Protestant family of lawyers and engineers, and even including an academician wrote *tout court*: "in our family, no

[4] http://www.grandboomers.com/

nicknames." Another respondent wrote: "why not simply use Grand-père/Grand-mère? Our son-in-law finds that these terms are noble; when people hear our grandson calling us thus, they are surprised, puzzled; people have lost the habit of using these terms and we are proud to return to an old practice." By contrast, Maurice J., who has managed a café-hotel for most of his life wrote: "I don't like Papy, it sounds foreign, Grand-père sounds too imposing, it separates, whereas Pepère is more intimate."

English words are adopted to add a touch of foreign elegance. The woman who married a divorced father with a large brood of grandchildren has imposed 'Dad,' which she believes is even more chic than 'Daddy,' and she herself plans to be called 'Granny.' For the French this carries a taste of exoticism (even though there is a very popular fruit bar sold under that name). In comparing English and French terms, which have so many parallel connotations, we observe a relation of homology between Nanna and Grandma/Mémère and Mamie: the first term in each pair used to be widespread in the lower classes and was identified as such by the middle classes, whereas the second term was used in more affluent groups and sounded affected to popular classes. We observe the same freedom in the invention of first names for babies as in the creation of terms that tend to emphasize grandparents' individualities. This confirms the analysis of Janet Finch that "the way in which names and naming are used within the family context sheds light upon contemporary kinship, with its enduring and variable dimensions" (2008).

I must draw attention to a difficulty concerning French-English linguistic exchanges (cf. Walter 2001). As Goody explains, Nanna has long been a standard term to name caring persons (including the dog in Peter Pan called Nanna), generally grandmothers, ignored by dictionaries, while the word nanny came much later to describe the person who takes care of the child in return for wages. The word nurse, which means 'she who breastfeeds,' is the elegant version of nanny for those who can afford to delegate the care of their children, whether to a wet- or to a dry-nurse. In the course of the 19th century, French bourgeois families recruited such women from the countryside, the Morvan being especially famous for supplying '*nourrices sur lieu*' (at the parent's home). Under English influence, the person who took the upper-class baby out for a stroll in an English pram was designated "nurse" in French, because it sounded more elegant than '*nourrice.*' Of course, the cream of society had to have an English nurse. This nurse was not the loving proxy of a mother, however, but somebody who taught the child manners. Nowadays 'nounou' is the official word for the child minder who looks after the children of working mothers at her own home for remuneration.

Similarly to the second, opposite meaning in English of 'Nanna' (a whore) 'Nana' with only one 'n' in French is a well-known word for 'mistress.' It is almost anachronistic nowadays, but incarnated in the eponymous novel by Émile Zola. It derives from 'Anna.' Today it is a very popular term among young people notably to designate the female of an informal couple (as in 'un Jules et sa nana').[5]

The Historical and Socio-Political Background of European Grandparenting

Behind the question of the mode of addressing grandparents, we touch upon central problems of contemporary families, a domestic domain directly related to the wider structures of political, economic and juridical institutions. The new naming patterns only make sense in the context of health conditions, women's work, public policies and the means of communication. In the 19th century, only bourgeois families could enjoy the pleasures of grandparents whose wisdom was respected; rural and working-class families generally lacked resources to take care of elders and grandparenting hardly existed. Closer to our own times, if we briefly consider the conditions of grandparenting two generations ago, the tie was certainly not as strong as it is today. Age at death was much lower until the 1960s, retirement pensions were rather meagre, and technologies of communication were limited. When couples had fled to the cities to find work, either they would leave their children behind (especially if the mother was employed in industry or commerce) to be brought up by their own parents, or (more commonly, in the era before women entered the labour market in large numbers) relations were very limited. In short, grandparents were either dead, too old to help, too far away, or too poor to exercise any significant influence over their grandchildren.

The generation of the baby boomers, the 'papyboomers,' enjoys a totally reversed social situation: long life, better health and retirement pensions. Taking care of the grandchildren is part and parcel of a continuous flow of exchanges (of gifts, services, money) between the grandparents and their children. Women's work has increased the demand for childcare, even in countries like in France, where public policies go quite a long way to help women reconcile work and care.

In view of the importance of this new kin figure, one wonders why it has taken so long for the sociology and anthropology of contemporary

[5] The term is also used to designate a beautiful woman: *The Nana* is a slow erotic song performed by Léo Ferré, a popular libertarian singer of the seventies and eighties.

Europe to acknowledge it. First, it seems that the sociology of old age tended to concentrate on the maintenance costs of the old people; generally, sociologists were not motivated to study a topic that did not seem to portend conflicts and social difficulties; they preferred to concentrate on 'social problems,' for instance the consequences of divorce for single mothers. Only when they realized the contribution of the grandparents' generation to the redistribution processes did they start investigating the new topic. Second, choked under the concept of 'modernization' of the family, the importance of the intergenerational link was long overlooked; from Talcott Parsons onwards, ideas concerning the 'nuclearization' of the family dominated the literature. Among historians, Philippe Ariès' work on the emergence of private life as a sign of modernity also contributed to the obliteration of grandparenting. More recently, a plethora of scholars have insisted on the importance of self recognition within the family and explored the making of the self in modern couples (Segalen and Martial 2013).

The nicknames that I have described above tell us another story about family and social changes. Besides grandparenting, they point to the emergence of a new child, seen as an individual, with the power to create the family, since marriage is nowadays an optional institution. In contemporary France, nearly 60% of children are born out of wedlock. It is the birth of the child that establishes the filiation link, turning four unrelated individuals into grandparents attached to the new born through rights and duties. At the same time, average age at first birth has increased significantly to around 30 years. As a consequence, relationships between the generation of parents and grandparents are ambiguous (Segalen 2010). On the one hand, parents appreciate the possibility of having grandparents not far away. But on the other, this baby that comes at a very late age, whose birth has been programmed, is theirs, and they do not want too much interference in the trio, especially at the beginning. Studies have shown that, upon becoming parents, couples develop residential strategies in order to live not too close, but also not too far away from their parents' residence (Segalen and Martial 2013). If this is not possible, fast trains, cheap air tickets and the internet all help to maintain intensive links. But the traditional pattern of the flow of authority from top to bottom does not work any more. Indeed, educational values between parents and grandparents are much closer to-day, than they were in previous generations. Contemporary grandparents belong to the 1968 generation, which rebelled against authority and offered new freedoms, especially to women. However, given the fact that a child belongs first and foremost to the parents (and very quickly to him/herself), grandparents have to abide by parents' ways and be wise enough not to provide unsolicited

advice. Their rightful place in all matters of nurture is behind that of the parents.

Grandparenting is now acknowledged and studied at the European level.[6] Although omnipresent, there is much diversity between the various countries of Europe, partly as the result of differing child care policies. Mediterranean grandparents spend more time providing child care. Many parameters affect these patterns, including the participation of young grandmothers in the labour force. The importance of political organization comes out very clearly when one examines the drastic changes that occurred after the demise of socialism. With the reunification of the two Germanies, the eastern part of the country had to conform to a West German system in which women's employed work was not seen favorably ('raven mother') and collective childcare was poorly developed. Tatjana Thelen (2005) has described the contrasting experiences of two generations of East German grandparents. For Germans born at the end of the Second World war, grandparenting was hardly experienced, since they were raised in collective structures so as to enable their mothers to work. After the *Wende*, when it was their turn to be grandparents, they were surprised to discover that they had to take care of their grandchildren, since their daughters were employed. The collapse of the old socialist economy hit men hard, obliging many to retire early at the age of 55. These grandfathers are more often drawn into taking care of their grandchildren than their wives, who still have jobs. Not all men enjoy their new tasks. The changes are evidently embedded in the wider problems of demographic decline in Germany.

Urban Croatia offers another variation of this pattern. Because they have been brought up by their own grandparents on a farm, first generation urban grandparents expect to be called upon by young parents. Here residential propinquity is a strategy to protect the independence of the young couple while enabling grandparents to take care of children, especially in view of the lack of collective facilities (Leutloff-Grandits 2012).

In China a longitudinal study shows not only that the grandparenting model is quite different from what it is in Europe, but also that it has changed over the years. In ancient and even in Maoist times, mothering was 'multiple' in the sense that grandmothers' help with the children enabled young mothers to carry on their work in the fields. Since the 1980s, as Santos (2017) observes, because of labour migration by the young generation, children are left in the villages in the care of grandparents. Thanks to improved medical care and rising life expectancy, "having both paternal and maternal grandparents alive and available to offer full-time

[6] For instance in surveys such as SHARE (Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe) and ELSA (the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing); see Glaser et al. 2013.

childcare support has become a critical resource" (Santos 2017: 100). No child care facilities are available to migrant workers in town, and so they have to rely on grandparents. The mothering is still multiple, but it has different forms nowadays: parents work hard as 'breadwinners' to provide money for food, clothes, education, while grandparents are the 'everyday caregivers,' renewing with the new generation traditional gendered roles. The aging grandparents, who are often illiterate, may find childcare very burdensome and complain they don't receive enough money from the parents to provide for their kids.

Similar models where parents leave their children behind in order to earn their living elsewhere are found increasingly throughout Europe in the context of migration processes that supply care to those in richer countries able to pay for it, e.g. the Romanian or Ecuadorian *badanti* in Italy (Ghezzi 2010).

Conclusion

For all their variety, the new terms of address generally underline proximity and affection. Grandparents are not those who raise grandchildren, they are those who provide love and care, sometimes they are even overindulgent to the point that they spoil the child. (In Brazil, of a scamp, of a man incapable to take his life in his hands, they say '*filho de vo*,' a 'grandfather's child.') In France, as in England, survey evidence reveals the vast flexibility of these terms and the ways in which they can be manipulated in relation to the nature of the social relations and family ties. They are not stereotyped labels; rather, they express the dynamics of relationships and attitudes. The wide range of terms corresponds to the diversity of family situations and the specific characteristics of individuals.

In no way does this exercise in names belong to the "bastard algebra of kinship" (Malinowski 1930: 19). Rather, it is directly related to the consideration of kinship as a "domestic domain," following Fortes and Goody. These names reveal the intimate aspects of the relationship, the regular (sometimes daily) part that grandparents play in children's care, installing a nurturing relationship, feeding them, taking them to school, but also, since they enjoy their retirement pensions, taking them skiing, fishing or scuba diving. 'Caring' is being rediscovered as one of the stakes of kinship, far from constructionist definitions, from endless debates between nature and culture, or biology and society. The use of such and such a term underlines the variety in the grandparental relation. Studying the processes of naming within everyday interactions involving grandparents and grandchildren exemplifies what Carsten calls the "processual aspects of

relatedness" (Carsten 2000: 15). In my eyes, this amounts to a continuation of the Fortesian and Goody positions concerning the domestic domain.

In this lecture, I have tried to provide an illustration of the goal set by Goody in the book which he edited to honour Meyer Fortes on the occasion of his retirement. Goody wrote:

> (...) in reviewing the recent work on kinship I was struck by its rather narrow focus, its neglect of many problems. So within that field I asked for essays dealing with more general themes rather than ethnographic conundrums or descriptive minutiae, in the hope that we would get some reconsideration of certain central problem areas (Goody 1973: ix).

Papyvelo and Mamita tell us about liberal economy, women's work, individualism, demographic problems and public policy debates in France today.

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Chapter 8
On Cultural Revolutions: observations on myth and history in Turkey (2017)

Nur Yalman

It is a special pleasure for me to be speaking at the Max Planck Institute here in Halle. My first visit to Germany was in 1950 on my way to Cambridge. I had always spoken German as a child in Istanbul. I was stunned by the destruction of the war that I witnessed at the time. Since then I have had only rare occasions to return. The experience of a united and free Germany, and the rekindled vitality of German humanism as well as science, despite many challenges, are matters of profound personal satisfaction.

Jack Goody and I go back a long time. I arrived in Cambridge as an undergraduate fresh from Istanbul in September 1950. Istanbul had been lovely in the late summer. I had just graduated from a superb school, Robert College, and was full of curiosity to study anthropology, in order to understand mankind. Little did I know what a heady adventure this would turn out to be. Jack had just returned from fieldwork in Ghana. He was working on his PhD with Meyer Fortes, newly appointed as William Wyse Professor of Anthropology. We also had Kathleen Gough, who had returned from South India, full of the most exotic information on marriage systems among the Nayar and the Nambudiri Brahman castes. Jack Goody and Kathleen Gough were among my early supervisors at Cambridge.[1] I eventually went on to follow their lead and do two years of very intensive field work in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Since those early experiences I have maintained a deep interest in the enticing civilization of greater India.

Two things impressed me about Jack Goody. He was greatly interested in myth, and also in African history. He had been working on the LoDagaa myths in Northern Ghana. He was also very open to other cultures,

[1] Others I recall well from my years in Cambridge include Derrick Stenning (Fulani), Raymond Smith (Caribbean), Derek Freeman (Borneo), all back from field work, and younger research students, Jean La Fontaine, Fredrik Barth, Anthony Forge, Ralph Bulmer, Malcolm Ruel, John Blacking, Martin Southwold, Maurice Bloch, Marilyn Strathern and Andrew Strathern, all of whom went on to distinguished careers.

with a genuine sense of empathy – the essential trait of an anthropologist. I was able to talk to him extensively about my home country, Turkey. Turkey had undergone an extraordinary cultural revolution in the years when I was growing up. Its full significance as a historical phenomenon had not dawned on me at the time. I first discussed matters of culture change with Jack at a time when Western post-colonial attitudes towards other cultures, including India, China, Africa, and their uneven interaction throughout history, were already beginning to engage him (Goody 1996, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2010).

Cambridge was a stable and charmed oasis with traditions reaching back into the Middle Ages. Istanbul, where I had come from, was seething with momentous ideas – as it still is. The ancient Ottoman Empire had been destroyed in the great bonfire of empires in 1918. A new dynamic republic was established, and a single party regime gave way to open democratic elections in 1950. A new party, the Democratic Party, was in power. The future was full of hope. Turkey had taken her place among the progressive countries of Western Europe. Nothing could stop ambitious young Turks now that democracy and freedom were in place. My heady Cambridge adventure had begun. I would stay at Cambridge for the next ten years in various capacities.

Appiah and the Case of Turkey

The changing relations between East and West that so engaged Goody in his later years were recently the subject of brilliant Reith Lectures by Kwame Anthony Appiah on the BBC. It is surely fitting that an intellectual from the Royal House of Ashanti in Ghana, so close to the regions where Jack Goody worked, now a distinguished professor at New York University, should contribute searching ideas to the subject of relations between cultures (Appiah 2016). Appiah has highly original, very anthropological, views on the perennial subjects of mistaken identities: creed, country, colour, and culture. *The Guardian* announced his series with some flourish under the headline: "There is no such thing as Western Civilization." You may think that this is rather simple and unsurprising coming from an African likely to have very ambivalent feelings towards the long centuries of European oppression in Africa. But you would be mistaken. Appiah approaches the subject of Western Civilization with engaging subtlety. He traces the origin of the concept of the West, that hardly made any sense until recent times. One could not speak of the high ideals of human rights, democracy, liberty, and the rule of law in a Western Civilization in which European powers were slaughtering each other with incalculable savagery, during the many wars on the continent. So, when does it make sense to speak of Western Civilization at all? It could be argued that it only makes sense in very recent times, with

the establishment of the European Union and the great hopes raised for human rights, for personal freedom of expression and association, and for the European Court of Justice.

Appiah's conclusion is that these lofty ideas are hopes shared by many persons from utterly different backgrounds. They do not simply belong to the West. For Appiah, these traditions of the West are only ours if we care about them: "A culture of liberty, tolerance and rational inquiry: that would be a good idea. But these values represent choices to make, not tracks laid down by a western destiny." My own experience, both European and Asian, bears out Appiah. The desire for open political systems is a very potent current that is being challenged and hampered by well entrenched conservative ideologies. The political struggle for rights is familiar all around the world.

These political yearnings resonate very powerfully with the recent experience of explosive cultural discord in Turkey. There is a huge desire for personal democratic liberties, just as Appiah describes them. These are frustrated by an increasingly intolerant authoritarian regime with very ambivalent attitudes towards the West. This great frustration has now found its most precise public expression in the recent referendum for a new constitution in Turkey. Participation was 86% and the President only just achieved a majority (disputed by some opponents). This referendum was an expression of deep polarization around the question of cultural identity: is Turkey the secular, democratic, liberal, western oriented powerful Republic that the founders, Atatürk and Inönü, had in mind? Or was that only a brief – 80 year – interlude, to be followed by a bittersweet nostalgic return to the Imperial traditions of the 700 Ottoman years? Should Turkey, a member of the Council of Europe and of NATO, continue its quest for membership of the European Union, or are there beguiling alternative destinies, such as Turan, the family of Turkic speaking peoples all the way to China, or the *Lebensraum* of the Ottoman Empire, including Syria and Iraq, and perhaps others? The Balkans? North Africa?[2]

Myth, Culture and Revolution

From the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 until recently, the country operated with a self-conscious Western vocation. The roots of this vocation had been laid down in the 19th century with the great Tanzimat Reforms, undertaken by brilliant Ottoman statesmen immediately after the French revolution. The changes in the direction of Western institutions were

[2] Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt were all part of the Ottoman Empire until the 19th century.

constant, extensive and deliberate (Mardin 1962; Lewis 1968; Berkes 1998; Meeker 2002; Hanioğlu 2008).

At this point we encounter the problems of myth and history. History provides us with a series of incidents and their dates. These only become intelligible when they are "totalized" into convincing narratives, that is, different interpretations of events which have all the makings of myth (Lévi-Strauss 1962). Is there a tide of historical inevitability that leads countries to progress in the direction of democratic open societies, as Francis Fukuyama seemed to argue (Fukuyama 1992)? Or are we in the realm of various myths, flights of imagination in the form of beguiling narratives that draw both individuals and entire societies towards very different destinies? Much turns around the persuasive effectiveness of small cadres and leaders.

For the traditionalists on the Ottoman side there exists the myth of a Platonic just Empire in which every social element has its appropriate place under the watch of a benevolent ruler. This Platonic myth has been discussed among Islamic thinkers ever since the earliest translations of texts from ancient Greek (or Syriac?) into Arabic became available in the Abbasid period. There was a search for rational legitimacy early in Islamic intellectual history. One important source was Farabi (d. 950), who commented on the virtuous city (*Medine-ul fazila*). In the 1200s – the Seljuk period – a tomb was attributed to "Eflatun" (i.e. Plato) in Konya, the city of the legendary Sufi mystic Rumi. Later, the empire of the Ottomans was thought of as the contemporary representation of this ancient model of the "ideal" state. It was referred to as *Devlet-i Ali* ("the Sublime State" as it was referred to in western accounts) (Gibb and Bowen 1957).[3]

The alternative myth is that of a "modern" country that has shed these outdated "Sultanic" encumbrances, and embraced a vision that allows the nation to "progress" in the direction of a prosperous, egalitarian, free, democratic and just, Western society. This hope was inspired by Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and his law of the three stages of intellectual history: from fetishism to religion, on to rationality. Comte's formula "*ordre et progrès*" became the doctrine for a clandestine political party. They succeeded in dethroning the Sultan in 1908, and thereby changed the course of history for many nations. They too had been hoping to rid themselves from the "fetters" of religious obscurantism just like their French predecessors.

The concept of "culture" as a coherent whole was the working assumption at the heart of anthropology from the very beginning. But in cultural revolution, culture becomes a field of battle for political domination.

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[3] See also Finley (1972); his Chapter 6, titled "Plato and practical politics" discusses Plato's disastrous career in Sicily.

This is felicitously expressed by the German term *Kulturkampf*. In every *Kulturkampf*, myths are propagated by ambitious leaders seeking political power. Cultural revolutions, as we know from France, from Russia, China, and elsewhere, are therefore deadly serious matters (Luttwak 2014).[4] Countries that have never experienced such disruptions can hardly imagine the drama, the personal hardships, the suspicions created, the paranoia about being "progressive" or being "backward" that such conditions engender. Turkey had been living through a *Kulturkampf* of this kind since the early 19th century. It had much to do with the push and pull of joining the major European powers at the head table of diplomacy. It can be said without exaggeration that Westernization was considered a matter of survival for the Ottoman Empire by her "enlightened" elites, while recalcitrant conservatives were resolutely opposed to this "enlightenment" project.

Cultural revolutions are about the replacement of certain ideas about cultural forms and personal identity with others. I have described them previously as almost a kind of conversion (Yalman 1973, 1991, 2007). In the 19th century, the immense power and prestige of the West – seen primarily as comprising England, France and Germany – encouraged many countries, from Russia and Turkey to Iran and China, feeling that they were "backward" in comparison, to attempt vast changes as a kind of cultural housecleaning: in short, to become progressive.

Times have changed. Now in the year 2017 it is perfectly obvious that the ancient civilizations of the world can no longer be dismissed cavalierly in terms of "inferiority." They will have to come to terms with each other, just as Jack Goody predicted. As anthropology has always maintained, understanding and respect for the "other" has now become an absolute necessity. However, even if that is the case, we may still wish to ask ourselves where and when do those ideas that Appiah considers "universal" become relevant. Under what conditions can we expect those great civilizations to turn towards "culture(s) of liberty, tolerance and rational inquiry" that appear superficially to be external to their own traditions?

Catching up with the West

The sense of inferiority towards Europe was contagious in the rest of the world, at least until the World Wars of the 20th century. Those few countries which were not thoroughly colonized, such as Japan and Turkey, made every effort to emulate the powerful countries of the West. One only has to observe the costumes of the high officials of the two states: the dominance of Western fashion is striking. For all their immense differences, the

[4] Cf. Luttwak (2014), writing on the role of Napoleon in Europe, on tradition and rationality.

modernization of Japan and Turkey suggests intriguing comparisons. Japan was able in the long run to shake off the sense of inferiority by her extraordinary transformation into a military-industrial-cultural powerhouse – and this in spite of her very dark experiences and major wars in the 20th century. In the 1930s there were even attempts to emulate Atatürk's revolution in Turkey and Westernize in similar radical terms. Ideas were floated to change written Japanese into the Latin script, but these were short lived.

In Turkey the enterprise of "catching up with the West" (*Batılılaşma*) was taken up with enormous enthusiasm. Matters came to a head with the defeat of the Empire in 1918. The modernist party that held the reins of power, and aligned the empire with Germany in the First World War was called *Ittihat ve Terakki* (Union and Progress). This derived from the formula of Auguste Comte mentioned above, which had deeply influenced the radical *jeunes turcs* in Paris escaping from the oppression of the Sultan in Constantinople. Comte's theories of positivism were appealing. In a letter addressed to the Ottoman Grand Vizier he wrote that, since Ottoman society and Islam were essentially more "rational" than France, they would progress in the direction of positivism faster than other European countries. Comte's universal formula of "*Ordre et progrès*" still flutters on the Brazilian flag as "*Ordem e Progresso*."

"*Ordre et progrès*:" a rational and modernist future. This greatly appealed to the radical young Ottomans as a way forward for the empire. Their party, initially clandestine, but in power from 1908, entered the war in 1914 led by a colourful and very ambitious young officer, Enver Pasha, who had become the son-in-law of the Sultan. Trains carrying military supplies from Germany to the eastern front were marked not "Osmanisches Reich" but "Enverland." German officers were deeply engaged with the Ottoman military in the battles of the First World War. German soldiers fought and perished during the great Gallipoli campaign, a battle that figures prominently in the nationalist mythology created around Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk).[5]

This Western orientation survived the bitter experiences of the final disintegration of the Ottoman Empire at the hands of the victorious allies, mainly the French and the British. Right wing Islamist ultra nationalist groups have never quite forgotten this aspect of the formation of the new Republic. The Enver Pasha myth lives on among right wing nationalists to this day. His tomb in Central Asia, where he died fighting against Red Russian forces, was ceremoniously transferred back to Turkey quite recently.

[5] Ayhan Aktar, *Taraf* (March 18, 2014). Available at: hertaraf@taraf.com.

It is very striking that the leaders of the new Republic, Atatürk and Inönü, patriots though they were, never turned their backs on their "Western" orientation during the years in which they held power (1923–1950). They were firm about the need to close the book on the long experience of the Ottomans. Their moves in the direction of western values were simply stunning: the legal systems of Turkey were brought into line with Europe; German commercial codes, the French civil code and the Italian penal codes all added up to a decisive break with Islamic tradition. But the most significant of the changes undertaken was that of the script. The ancient Arabic script (referred to as *eski Türkçe* – Old Turkish) had been in use ever since the establishment of the Seljuk Empire in Iran and Anatolia around the year 1000 CE. For the educated elite of the late Ottoman Empire, the change was an extraordinary experience. Imagine being told by Angela Merkel that from next week on all written materials in Germany will be in the beautiful *devanagari* script of India. I still recall my dear grandmother, a well educated and very literate woman, struggling desperately to read the new newspapers in the modern script.

Building on the great efforts of the 19th century, followed by the modernism of the Kemalist revolution, the synthesis of Western liberal ideals and a moderate Islamic culture has proceeded very far in Turkey. Modern Turkish literature from Nazim Hikmet to Orhan Pamuk, from Halide Edib to Yaşar Kemal, and more recently with Elif Shafak and Ayşe Kulin, is witness to that amazing process. This elaborate synthesis is now also fully in evidence in all aspects of modern Turkish life, in popular TV programs, brilliant films, theatre, painting, music, opera, fashion, architecture, education and social experience as a whole.

Under Atatürk and Inönü forceful attempts were made to change popular culture at its roots. Classical Turkish music was discouraged. Béla Bartok and Paul Hindemith were invited to introduce the masses to modern European music. President Inönü was a constant presence in the Bauhaus style Concert Hall in Ankara.[6] Against all the odds, and despite the continuing interest in elegant Ottoman Court music, interest in classical European music still remains very strong, as attested by the immense popularity of superb symphony orchestras and many brilliant musical prodigies.

As is well known, a very large contingent of German and Austrian academics, writers, and architects took up residence in Turkey in the 1930s. Erich Auerbach was teaching at the University of Istanbul as he was writing

[6] Personal communication with İdil Biret (Sabancı Üniversitesi Mezuniyet Töreni Konuşması) on 20 June 2014, speaking on the subject of music and modernity.

Mimesis, against the background of these astonishing westernizing changes (Konuk 2010).

To this day, the top universities in Turkey are all Western oriented. Most respected scholars have degrees from the best western universities. Koç University, with brilliant academics, is sometimes classified alongside institutions such as Caltech and the École normale supérieure.[7] Many of these universities have been resisting the recent heavy-handed populist authoritarian actions of the Erdoğan administration. The dismissal of 330 professors was a heavy blow against the principle of freedom of thought, which led to major demonstrations, notably in the elite universities of Istanbul and Ankara. Freedom of thought has also been critically threatened in the field of journalism. Young cadres of journalists have long been in the forefront of liberal western ideals. Some have laid down their lives for these ideals. Many are still in jail on trumped-up political charges, and the struggle goes on. All of this became evident for all to see during the Gezi demonstrations in 2013.

If the literate and informed classes of Turkey were and are overwhelmingly beholden to a Western lifestyle and the values of secularism, democracy, equality, and liberty, then how and why is it possible that the country finds itself in weird contortions with an imagined mythological "Ottoman" style straitjacket being imposed on her from Ankara?

There are two aspects that need to be considered: one has to do with the internal dynamics of political mobilization and the other concerns external circumstances, the role of the EU and that of the US. I shall consider each in turn.

The Reina Night Club attack and the *Diyanet*

The murderous incident at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul (New Year's Eve, 2016–2017) is like a beacon which illuminates the dimensions of the current Turkish *Kulturkampf*. The Directorate for Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) is a bureaucratic arm of the Turkish government. It is an enormous institution with a huge budget. It employs vast numbers of functionaries at mosques all over Turkey and abroad. It is supposed to provide "true" reliable instruction on religious subjects for the entire country, transcending all diversity.[8] In fact, many other organizations in Turkey provide a more intimate sense of religious community (*cemaat*) to ordinary citizens. Their leaders are often

[7] Times Higher Education World University Rankings: World's Best Small Universities. *The Times* (March 7, 2017). Koç University is number 11.

[8] For analysis of how this Islamic truth is established, see Ahmed (2016).

called *sheyhs*, and they would consider themselves more authentic representatives of the community than the *Diyanet* state bureaucrats. Large numbers of followers of Alevi *sheyhs* refuse the authority of the Directorate entirely (Yalman 1969).

The AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) government has found it very convenient to support the *Diyanet* type organization as an effective way to reach pious mosque communities all over Turkey. Politically infused sermons are disseminated straight from the Directorate, which has served many previous administrations as a kind of propaganda arm.[9] A few days before the horrendous attack on the Reina night club, the *Diyanet* sent out a public message stating that celebrating New Year and Father Christmas was not an integral part of Turkish traditions. These holidays were an "aping of Western ways," and a waste of precious resources. The message was clearly intended to appeal to the most conservative supporters of the AKP. After the horrendous attack, in which 39 lives were lost, and under heavy criticism, the Directorate changed its tune. This time they released a declaration that the many varieties of cultural experience in Turkey should be a matter of pride for the country. This was desperate damage control after the gruesome incident.

The perpetrator of the Reina night club attack, Abdulgadir Masharipov, a young recent immigrant of Central Asian origin, was apprehended after days of anxious searches in a safe home where he had been hiding. A well indoctrinated member of the ISIS group in Syria, his public statements to the press are noteworthy. He was widely reported as saying that he felt no remorse for his murders. On the contrary, he was looking forward to being executed. He wanted his four-year-old son to continue the struggle of "vengeance" as a suicide bomber. His murders were, he claimed, an act of vengeance against Christians who had destroyed Islam. He had not intended to act against Turkey in particular, but had been told by his ISIS minders that "Christians were celebrating New Year's Eve" (actually, many Muslims from India, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere were among the dead). His orders came from his ISIS handlers in Syria.

It is important to note the vehemence of the sense of vengeance in this dreadful instance. It derives from the long and bitter experiences, not so much of Turkey, but of a deplorably long list of Islamic "peoples" including Russia (e.g. Circassians), Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Tunisia, Algeria, Lebanon, Sudan, Somalia, and Bosnia, at the hand of Christians. Even the miserable history of Palestine can be traced back to the pogroms suffered in Christian Europe. The makings of a "war of civilizations" are not far to seek.

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[9] We may note that *Diyanet* activities among the Turkish diaspora in Germany have recently led to disputes with German authorities on this sensitive subject.

This is fertile material for the propagandists of ISIS, who have convinced Masharipov and many thousands of other unhappy gullible young men and women of the justice of their cause. It also provides a background for the unfortunate directives of the Directorate.[10]

In 2017 we have also witnessed bomb attacks against Coptic churches in Egypt, for which ISIS claimed responsibility. An attack on St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai in Egypt had identical motivations (April 19, 2017). From Central Asia to Morocco, there are abundant indications of a massive movement among poor and disenfranchised populations brimming with bitterly negative sentiments towards the hostile policies of the imagined Western powers and Israel. Members and sympathizers with this movement clearly regard the "War on Terror" as a "War on Islam."[11]

It is instructive to look a little more closely at the Directorate, which under the AKP government been enlarged into a monster organization with officials whose reach extends into small villages all over the country. Its loudspeakers were effectively used to mobilize the AKP cadres and other followers against the failed *coup d'état* of the Gülen organization on July 15, 2016. Gönül Saray, a female former Member of Parliament published an open letter to the Director of the *Diyanet* in which she described her experiences with an institution that, in earlier years, had been in the forefront of the quest for modern liberal ideas in Islam.[12] These included the equality of women, their access to public prayers in mosques, attention to the progressive education of girls, and attempts to move away from a "primitive" patriarchal understanding of Islam in the direction of a more open minded spiritual community. What had changed? Why had there been a backsliding in the modernist interpretation of official Islam? The implied answer was that it served the short-term purposes of the party in power to envenom relations with liberal, secularist, western oriented sections of the population, in order to close the ranks of AKP supporters in the vicious struggle for power.

These retrograde changes in public life in Turkey follow long years of a more open interpretation of Islamic experience. In this connection, I wish to pay tribute to the memory of a most exceptional German academic, Professor Annemarie Schimmel (1922–2003), who was a dear friend and close colleague at Harvard for many years. She was a great expert on the

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[10] The US commandos have killed Abdurakhmon Uzbeki, who, they claimed, was responsible for ordering the Reina attack. He too was believed to be from Uzbekistan and a close associate of the IS leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (BBC, April 22, 2017; www.bbc.co.uk).

[11] Why China's Uighurs are joining jihadists in Afghanistan (*Deutsche Welle*, December 18, 2016; www.dw.com).

[12] Reported by Zeynep Oral (*Cumhuriyet*, January 8, 2017).

history of Sufi thought from 12th century onwards, especially on Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi and Yunus Emre. All the greatest poets and writers in the Sufi tradition represented the open, inviting and liberal religious spirit. The names of Rumi, Yunus, Hafez, Saadi, Omar Khayyam are legendary. They represent a fulsome humanist understanding of spiritual yearning.

Annemarie Schimmel spent several years (1954–1959) as Professor of Religion at the Faculty of Divinity in the University of Ankara. The contrast between her open-minded teachings and the intolerant narrow mindedness of new movements in public religious experience encouraged by the AKP is evidently part of a shrewd political strategy. We can but hope that the honoured memory of Professor Schimmel will continue to inspire generations of young people in the direction of an open, humane, progressive, sophisticated and enriching spiritual experience.[13]

Fake News and Western Myopia

I may now return to the major question: how do these complex internal and external conditions affect political life? Why is it that Turkey finds herself in such a reactionary mode? How has she moved from Comtean "positivism" to Ottoman inspired religious revivalism?

It is true that the general social upheaval of recent years has been momentous: the vast Anatolian countryside has been transformed by fast roads, airports, local universities, hospitals and other new developments. Young people have moved to the cities in ever greater numbers, so that the population has become predominantly urban and industrial in the last 20 years. This has been a period of widespread prosperity, despite the challenge of an irredentist Kurdish movement known as the PKK (*Parti Kommunist Kurd*). But these internal dynamics are only part of the picture. In order to answer the critical question we have to look abroad, beyond the internal struggles of political culture in Turkey.

There are two powerful external forces, one emanating from the EU and the other from the US. The EU has seriously mishandled its relations with Turkey. Its constant reservations have diminished the attraction of the vital common enterprise. At the same time the US has greatly underestimated the cultural poison that has been seeping out from the great American "crusade" of the "War on Terror" in all Islamic countries.

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[13] I am aware that criticism has been leveled at Schimmel in Germany for not speaking out concerning political abuses in Pakistan and elsewhere in the Muslim world. I believe that she was concerned about being misunderstood on both sides, and this is why she preferred to steer away from the politics of the day.

Ever since the Khomeini revolution in Iran (1979), the fall of the Shah and the ensuing hostage crisis, the tide of sentiment in the US, followed especially in France, has been running in the direction of a serious anxiety regarding a malevolent Islamic enemy. The character of the perceived enemy changed from time to time, but the stereotype obscured the facts that, first, no "unified" Islam existed across the Muslim world, and, second, that most Islamic States – and there are many of them – were actually friendly or indeed already formal allies. These facts, however, could not prevent the media frenzy of a perceived enemy totalized as Islam.[14] In one notorious French case of what we now call "fake news," rumours concerning a child murderer were eventually shown to be baseless, the product of a collective phobia.[15]

The general mood of suspicion in the US was succinctly expressed in a popular study entitled *The Clash of Civilizations*, by my colleague Samuel Huntington at Harvard. At the time, I and many other observers of the Middle East thought that the alleged clash was highly exaggerated. The Islam Huntington imagined was a caricature. We observed that there was no unity among Islamic countries. Each one was opposed to its neighbours. We also thought that liberal Islamic traditions were too strong to support such a nihilistic thesis as the "clash of civilizations" (see Mottahedeh 1996; Yalman 1997).

Turkey in particular did not wish to be seen in those terms. On a critical occasion when Samuel Huntington spoke in Istanbul, his idea that Turkey should drop its "constitutional secularism" and lead the Islamic world as in the past Ottoman days, was met with hostility. The secular

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[14] The exasperated chief of intelligence of Saudi Arabia, Prince Abdul Aziz is reported to have exclaimed, "Some days you say you want to attack Iraq, some days Somalia, some days Lebanon, some days Syria (…). Whom do you want to attack? All the Arab world? And you want us to support that? It's impossible. It's impossible" (reported in *The New York Times*, January 27, 2002).

[15] In 1992 a story swept the town of Calais that a dark-skinned stranger, had been kidnapping, raping, torturing and killing children from one of the local schools for some infernal purpose. As the rumour spread, anxious parents converged on the school to save their children. The principal was called out to meet the parents. He denied that any such incident had taken place at his school. No one believed him and the story was taken up by nationwide TV. A swarthy, ex-drug addict, partly Algerian, whose French mother lived in Calais, was "discovered." He was accused of committing the heinous crimes. He barely escaped with his life. After considerable commotion, it was clearly established that no child was missing, no murder had taken place, and that there was no basis at all for the panic. The "Algerian" could not be accused of any tangible misdeed. Residents remained unsure: some dark act had to have taken place, which was being covered up by the authorities as usual. Eventually, the "Algerian" escaped to the safety of Paris. Calais calmed down. By way of explanation, *The New York Times* (October 30, 1992) suggested that unemployment and frustration with the economic situation were particularly high in this neglected northeastern corner of France.

audience did not wish to see Turkey as a pawn in the "clash of civilizations" game. Many commentators were extremely skeptical of the suggestion that a "soft Islamic Green belt" should be created, under US auspices, to confront the evident rise of increasingly "radical" Islamic movements elsewhere (see Filkins 2016).[16]

Francis Fukuyama drew attention to an even more invidious aspect of Huntington's thesis. This was the extraordinary admission that the US, as a profoundly diversified country harboring many contradictory elements, actually needed external enemies as a threat to accomplish a semblance of political cohesion within its own borders. The subtext was: Islamophobia would prove useful for "white" elements to maintain political order in the diversity of American society (Yalman 2009). Fukuyama, very presciently, critiqued this implication:

> The Declaration of Independence stated not that Westerners are created equal but that all men are created equal, and that this is a 'self-evident' truth rather than a prejudice of Anglo-Saxon culture (...). If we take Mr. Huntington too seriously, the clash of civilizations may start at home (Fukuyama 1996).

Today some of these subterranean themes are being openly expressed in the rhetoric of Donald Trump and his supporters. White supremacist talk is now commonplace. It seems that Huntington may have been right all along (see Bannon 2017).

For quite a long time Turkey, as an aspiring member of the European Union, tried to resist the tide of Islamophobia, rising strongly both in Europe and in the US. An effort was made with Spain to develop a Dialogue of Civilizations. But these well-intentioned efforts ran into heavy headwinds. The US instigated ill-judged military engagements both in Afghanistan and in Iraq in a period when the political atmosphere was still seething with anger towards the culprits of 9/11. The wounds of the Iran hostage crisis had still not healed. What made matters even worse for Turkey were the increasingly hostile attitudes taken in the EU. Giscard d'Estaing, former President of France, declared categorically that Turkey did not belong in Europe. When the British Prime Minister David Cameron, in desperation during heated debates concerning the Brexit referendum, claimed that Turkey would not become a member of the EU "in a hundred years" (!), he was simply voicing similar sentiments.

On the other hand, sane voices such as that of William Hague, former foreign minister of the UK, expressed a far more pragmatic view:

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[16] This soft Islamic Green Belt from Turkey, through Azerbaijan and Central Asia to Afghanistan, was evidently a favorite project for the US.

> A Europe that could have held on to Britain and accommodated Turkey in its ranks would have contained crucial gateways to both the transatlantic world of the West and the Muslim and Asian worlds of the East. Indeed, the great vision of a fully democratic Muslim nation becoming permanently anchored in Europe was what motivated British politicians to support EU membership for Turkey. This was a great strategic prize – the answer to any 'clash of civilizations,' the proof that Islam and Christian democracies could join together, and a way of forcing the EU to be broad and decentralised at the same time (Hague 2017).

The mysterious Gülen affair, culminating in the attempted *coup d'état* of July 15, 2016, fits into this very dark picture. It seems more or less clear that the creation of a "Green and soft Islamic belt" – just like the notorious Gülen movement itself – was an integral part of strategic planning in security and defense circles in the US, and perhaps also in Britain. The Gülen organizations with their international outreach of some 3000 schools were evidently attractive as a propaganda arm. They were also a useful vehicle in enabling the rise of the "soft Islamist" AKP. However, once challenged, the AKP turned against its midwife. The present debates about governance can be compared with the great debates around the Constitution of 1960, or even with those of 1924 or 1876. What is in play here, however, is not some innocuous change in local civic culture. The unintended consequences of the failed *coup d'état* of July 15 could result in severely undermining relations with NATO and even the dismantling of the elaborate edifice of international arrangements around Turkey so carefully nurtured by far sighted statesmen since World War II.

Anthropology and Freedom

What has all this turmoil in Turkey to do with anthropology? Anthropology has had much to say about culture, myth, and history. When we turn our attention from small communities to the larger questions of culture and of civilization, can we avert our eyes from the burning issues of our day in connection with freedom? When Edmund Leach and I were working in the small villages of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), we were so taken with the fascination of the culture at the local level that we were entirely unprepared for the tidal wave of political change that overwhelmed that country. Now, after many brilliant interventions by the likes of S. J. Tambiah, G. Obeyesekere and H. L. Seneviratne, we have a much more balanced view of how political freedom has fared in Sri Lanka. We are also much chastened regarding the challenges of the Buddhist monks to the political process in other Theravada Buddhist countries.

James Laidlaw has recently written about the need for anthropologists to engage with moral philosophy concerning the idea of freedom. He writes:

> There cannot be a developed and sustained anthropology of ethics without there being also an ethnographic and theoretical interest – hitherto largely absent from anthropology – in freedom. A possible way of studying ethics and freedom comparatively and ethnographically is suggested, and illustrated using some brief comments on Jainism (Laidlaw 2002).

However Laidlaw, writing about "freedom" in connection with the Jains is mainly concerned with the moral judgments of the individual person in relation to the demands of the great religious tradition within which he or she exists. There are references to "tyranny" and the "proletariat" but the central issues of political freedom in India at this time are not engaged (see Anderson 2013).

This points to a very important difference between the Jain and Buddhist traditions of freedom and Islam. It is clear from Laidlaw's extensive writings that freedom for the Jain (and this certainly true for the Buddhist person as well) is concerned with the noble quest of meditation and nirvana (Laidlaw 1995). In other words, the search for freedom is an individual effort for enlightenment. It entails emancipation from spiritual bonds (Laidlaw 2005). This involves turning away from ordinary life as well as the intimate ties of the family, just like the powerful metaphor of Prince Siddhartha abandoning his wife Suddhodana and son Rahula, as well as his beloved horse Chantaka, at the very beginning of his legendary quest. In the Buddhist case this central interest in the individual quest for nirvana does not necessarily deny the public role of the Sangha in relation to the state. Quite the contrary, the Sangha becomes an important pillar of the royal order or the state in the Theravada traditions (Tambiah 1976, 1986, 1992; Seneviratne 1999).

These searching traditions of consciousness do not engage the problem of political freedom that is the order of the day in much of the world. Nor does Laidlaw in his brilliant article about the moral dimensions of Jain consciousness. He is mostly concerned with "the attainment of spiritual perfection." He does return to the question of freedom in a recent wide-ranging work (Laidlaw 2014). The philosophical engagement is important, especially when Laidlaw draws attention to the influential views of Isaiah Berlin. At one point he draws attention to the Soviet context as described by Caroline Humphrey (Humphrey 2005). She reports a pervasive sense of fear as an aspect of the social unity that is created by the Soviet State in its handling of its citizens. We know this well. This comes closer to an engagement with the role of the state, but Laidlaw is more concerned with

philosophical explanations of personal states, with freedom as it emanates from individual experience (as in the Jain case) rather than the problems of power and domination.

These problems are by no means absent from Buddhist societies. We still need to pay critical attention to the political activities of Buddhist monks, as indicated by Tambiah and Seneviratne. That problem is posed in unmistakable fashion by the unfolding tragedy of Myanmar, where the Buddhist Sangha has apparently been in the forefront of the attacks on a vulnerable minority.

The problem of political freedom in the form of different individual interpretations of how to live a virtuous life has always been at the heart of the creed of Islam. Lévi-Strauss has observed, with his usual perspicacity, that Islam has developed an extraordinary system of control whereby the individual is fully embraced by revered traditions tying him/her into a communal group exhibiting great solidarity. The regular daily, weekly and annual communal prayers, particularly for men, powerfully emphasize the unity of the self with the community (Lévi-Strauss 1952: 27). In fully functioning *sunni* and *shi'a* systems, supported by the state apparatus, the pressure to conform becomes overwhelming. This is somewhat similar to the Soviet situation as discussed by Laidlaw and Humphrey. We may see in this instance the workings of Durkheim's *conscience collective* that leaves no breathing space for dissidents (Mardin 1989).[17] On the other hand, because Islam has no priesthood of comparable stature to the Buddhist Sangha, the quest for escape from the oppression of the group can take many ingenious forms, such as the famous Tarikats of the Sufi tradition, small intimate communities that encourage the great traditions of individual mysticism. I have written elsewhere that the quest for the mystics of Islam from time immemorial has been the exploration of thought beyond the communally expected forms of worship. It is expressed as a love for God, but it also underlines the nobility of the individual and the quest for personal illumination. As such it has always been regarded by Islamic states as a dangerous form of irredentism and a threat to public order. Individual mystics have all too often been treated as dangerous dissidents and dealt with severely. Suhrawardy (Ziai 1992), al Hallaj (Massignon 1982) and a myriad others come to mind. In other words, Islam is open to individual interpretation and individual consciousness. Hence the long tradition of mystical poetry – from Omar Khayyam to this day (Attar 1966). This should be the starting point for a consideration of the role of the state regarding the individual, and therefore of freedom in Islam (Ahmed 2016).

[17] Şerif Mardin has also written about this communal pressure as "*mahalle baskısı*."

Condorcet

The issues raised by Kwame Anthony Nkrumah Appiah about freedom are not only European or Western matters. They may flourish most prominently in particular Western countries at this time, but the issues are unavoidable for anthropologists dealing with many other cultures.

Turkey could have escaped this poisonous conundrum. It is to be regretted that it has instead been thrown into the irresistible vortex of this vast international "clash of civilizations." The cultural revolution has now tilted against the secularist liberal elements in favour of the reactionaries. It behooves us to turn back this tide. Now that the US under Trump has taken a clearly anti-Muslim attitude that feeds heavily into mutual suspicions, Europe, and especially Germany, must become aware of the dangers ahead. An effort must be made to counter the drift towards alienation and further violence in the disastrous mismanagement of public attitudes on both sides.

Germany, with her dark previous history that she has so resolutely and impressively surmounted, has much to teach anthropologists. Her vivid example of accepting one million or more refugees from Syria is a public admonishment to all those nervous countries who pay only lip service to human values. Germany's long familiarity with the key Islamic countries in the Middle East, which I have noted tonight, provides her with a more hopeful perspective to build a more peaceful future for all concerned.

I began with the effects of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire. I shall end with the ideas of Marquis de Condorcet. Condorcet was condemned to death during the great terror of Thermidor. While hiding from Robespierre in a garret in Paris, he was hastily trying to complete his masterpiece on *The Progress of Human Reason* before being arrested. It has been said that Condorcet was only whistling in the dark under the shadow of the guillotine.

But this is what he wrote:

> The moment will come, then, when the sun will shine only on free men on this earth, on men who will recognize no master but their reason; when tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments will exist only in history or on the stage; when men will study the efforts and sufferings that characterized the past only to guard vigilantly against any recurrence of superstition and tyranny and stifle them under the weight of reason should they ever dare to reappear.
>
> Moral, political, and above all social science will progress and point the way to happiness: the colonies will be freed, the slaves will

> be emancipated, women will at last become the equals of men, barbarous nations will civilize themselves.[18]

Those are hopes for a more humane future that Jack Goody might well have fervently supported.

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[18] Condorcet. *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*. In *Oeuvres* IV: 244 (cited by Gay 1977: 120).

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Chapter 9
Accumulating Family Values (2018)

Sylvia Yanagisako

Preface

I want first to thank Chris Hann and his colleagues here at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology for inviting me to present this lecture and giving me the opportunity to honour Jack Goody. I am sure all of you are familiar with Jack Goody's prolific record of publications on an amazing array of topics – from literature and technology to food and flowers. Yet his core contribution to social anthropology, at least from the perspective of the generation of anthropologists trained in the 1970s and 1980s, lies in his analysis of kinship's crucial role in shaping economy and polity – from the dynamics of marriage and family to the accumulation of property by the Christian church.

My lecture today is an attempt to extend this analytic project, which Goody vigorously pursued over several decades, to a case on which he did not focus. At the same time, my lecture carries forward his commitment to comparative sociology – which he viewed as central to the academic mission of anthropology. Jack Goody's comparative sociology was both wide-ranging and ambitious. Mine today is, by comparison, a rather puny, limited foray into comparative analysis. Rather than attempt a sweeping comparison of the domestic domain in African and Eurasian societies and a bold argument about the social consequences of homogeneous inheritance as opposed to diverging devolution (Goody 1976), my comparative project aims mainly to provoke a critical analysis of the interplay between kinship, economy, and politics in one society. I must, therefore, apologize in advance for the provincialism of my argument today. I am afraid that the only excuse I can offer for this narrow exercise lies in the provincial character of the society that is the primary focus of my lecture: namely, the United States of America.

Introduction

I begin with Thomas Piketty's widely-read book *Capital in the twenty-first century*, published in 2014, which offers considerable insight into one of Jack Goody's primary concerns: the interrelation of kinship and economy. Most commentaries on Piketty's book have tended to focus on his findings about the extent of wealth inequality in what he calls the "leading developed" capitalist countries – France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan and the US There are indeed striking revelations about wealth inequality in the book, including for example that in the US the top decile now own 72 percent of the nation's wealth, while the bottom half own just 2 percent (Piketty 2014: 257). More important for those of us interested in the relationship between kinship and economy, however, is Piketty's analysis of the "structure of inequality," which relies on differentiating the unequal distribution of income from labor from the unequal distribution of inherited wealth. Teasing apart these two modes of wealth accumulation leads Piketty to conclude that in these nations inheritance has been a key driver of wealth concentration in the top 10 percent of the population. This is the segment of the population that owns more than 60 percent and often as much as 90 percent of the total national wealth (ibid.: 336). There is some variation, of course, in the structure of inequality in these societies. For example, in the US and Great Britain the extraordinarily high pay that the top managers of large firms have been granting themselves since the 1980s plays a greater role in wealth inequality than it does in countries such as France and Germany (ibid.: 332–333).

Yet even in the US, inequality of income from capital is greater than inequality of income from labor, as it has been in all countries, in all periods for which data are available (ibid.: 244). Inheritance, moreover, has grown increasingly important in the last three decades. The very high concentration of capital ownership in this period cannot be explained by savings over the course of individuals' lives. It can, however, be explained by the inheritance of wealth and its cumulative effects (ibid.: 246).

Piketty's analysis of the structure of inequality in the 20th and 21st centuries has powerful implications for theories of kinship, capitalism, and class. Above all, it provides overwhelming evidence of the crucial role inheritance has played, and is once again playing, in the wealthiest capitalist societies. These findings should drive a gigantic nail into the coffin of theories that posit the decline of kinship's significance in 'modern' (read *capitalist*) society. Yet like so many ideological models dressed in empirical clothing, this myth of modernity appears to have zombie-like powers of regeneration.

For more than 150 years social theorists have argued that in modern capitalist societies kinship has lost the economic and political functions it once had in 'traditional,' pre-modern societies, and instead has become restricted to the 'domestic domain' of childrearing and homemaking. From the nineteenth century social evolutionary theories of Maine and Morgan, to Durkheim's theory of the differentiation of institutions in modern society, dominant theories of capitalist modernity have posited the formation of a secular, rational public domain governed by economic and political institutions, in contrast to an affectively ordered domain of family. In the 1950s, Talcott Parsons (1949) took this even further by claiming that in modern society occupation depends on individual merit rather than on family membership. He thereby separated kinship from class and reduced the family's function to the nurturance of children and the production of adult personalities. Piketty's findings about the history and structure of wealth inequality in the US and other leading capitalist societies not only challenges Parsons' conclusion by providing overwhelming evidence of the continuing importance of kinship; they also offer a valuable clue for understanding why so little attention has been paid to inheritance in theories of modernity and kinship. As the economic sociologist Jens Beckert (2008) notes, although inheritance is known to be a central cause of the intergenerational reproduction of social inequality, it has received little attention in recent sociological scholarship. Studies in social stratification focus on the unequal distribution of income but largely ignore wealth and the bequest of property. Why has this been the case? The answer is embedded in Piketty's findings about the only period in the history of modern capitalism in which wealth inequality actually declined in the US and Western Europe.

Piketty's analysis reveals that the lopsided distribution of income and wealth in leading capitalist nations has held relatively steady from the nineteenth century to the present, with one exception: the period between World War I and 1970. In these interwar and postwar years, wealth inequality actually declined for the first time since the 19th century. The flow of inheritance, which had accounted for between 15 and 25 percent of national income in France, Germany and Britain at the beginning of the 20th century, decreased spectacularly between 1910 and 1950 (Piketty 2014: 425), and the wealth share of the upper one percent fell from upwards of 50 percent in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century to 20–30 percent in the postwar era (ibid.: 346). It was in this period, moreover, that for the first time, the group standing between the top 10 percent and bottom 50 percent in the ladder of wealth distribution became relatively wealthier, pulling away from the bottom 50 percent as it came to control a more substantial portion of the national wealth (ibid.: 336–337). The emergence of this "patrimonial

middle class," as Piketty calls it, was the most important long-term structural transformation of wealth distribution in the history of these countries.

What caused this remarkable decline in the flow of inheritances and the fall in wealth inequality from World War I to the 1970s? According to Piketty, it was a unique constellation of historical factors, including wartime destruction, progressive tax policies, and exceptional growth in the three decades after World War II in which the return on capital was lower than the rate of growth of national economies (ibid.: 356). Whether or not one finds Piketty's explanation of the narrowing wealth gap in this period convincing, what is striking is that this exceptional period of declining inequality was also an exceptionally formative period for social science scholarship. Indeed, it would not be far-fetched to argue that the still reigning model of modern capitalist society – the functionalist sociological model articulated by Talcott Parsons (1949) – congealed and attained near unquestioned hegemony in this period. The emergence of a "patrimonial middle-class" in both Western Europe and the US convinced many scholars (most of whom were members of this class) that western capitalist society was moving decisively towards a meritocratic, occupationally-based class system in which inherited wealth played an insignificant role (ibid.: 384). The unprecedented reduction in flow of inheritance in the first half of the 20th century led scholars to include that inheritance was no longer significant and that capital was now wealth that individuals had accumulated by hard work and saving during their lifetimes.

Although this 'new normal' of declining wealth inequality was short-lived, it shaped the views of social class among the scholars of that era as well as the baby boomers who later came of age in it (ibid.: 381). Indeed, it came to be viewed by functionalist sociologists as the natural evolutionary path of modern capitalist society. Maintaining this vision of narrowing wealth inequality as a natural outcome of capitalist society, however, required overlooking the enormous impact of two world wars and the public policies enacted in response to the Great Depression – from rent control and nationalization to highly progressive taxes on income and inheritances (Piketty 2014: 275). Far from resulting from Durkheimian, equilibrium-seeking mechanisms of modern capitalist society, this 'new normal' was forged through intense political conflict.

It is important to keep in mind, moreover, that even during this period of decreasing wealth inequality in the US, the top decile's share of total wealth dropped only from 80 to 70 percent. In Europe it dropped from 90 to 60 percent (ibid.: 349). In addition, the end of this exceptional period of declining inequality was not long in the offing. It was followed by a steady

rebound in inequality starting in the 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s to the present (ibid.: 294, 349).

How did this occur? After 1980, there was an explosion of income inequality in all the leading capitalist societies. In the US, increasing inequality was largely the result of an unprecedented increase in wage inequality, in particular among an exorbitantly paid class of 'supermanagers.'[1] But this does not mean that income from capital played an insignificant role. The growing inequality of income from capital since 1980 accounts for about one-third of the increase in income inequality in the U.S, and as in Europe, income from capital becomes more important the higher one goes up the income ladder (ibid.: 300). In addition, the two types of income inequality (income from labor and income from capital) are not necessarily mutually exclusive; indeed they often complement each other insofar as top managers' earnings comprise both salaries and capital gains. (For example, a CEO's total compensation package generally combines a generous base salary with stock options). This may well explain why the concentration of wealth in the US is currently higher than in Europe (ibid.: 265).

The ownership of capital in the US and Europe, moreover, is becoming more concentrated once again as economic growth slows, increasing the likelihood of a rising wealth gap. If the next century turns out to be characterized by both low demographic and economic growth, as Piketty projects, it is very likely that inheritance will once again be as important as it was in the nineteenth century. In France, for example, if today's upward trends persist, inherited wealth will exceed 70 percent of total private capital by 2020 and account for nearly 80 percent in the 2030s (Piketty 2014: 403).[2]

The historical evolution of inheritance in the US is more difficult to assess and the future more difficult to predict because of the unreliability of US sources, which is itself a consequence of a history of more lax tax policies than in France and other European countries. Indeed, the data are so unreliable that it is debatable whether inherited wealth accounts for 20–30

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[1] See Ho (2009) for an illuminating ethnography of how Wall Street investment bankers' experience and ideology produces an ethos that justifies their 'super-salaries.'

[2] For those interested in wealth inequality in Germany, it should be noted that Piketty is much more constrained in his discussion of wealth inequality in Germany because there are significant gaps in German tax records, mostly as a result of 20th century political upheavals (Piketty 2014: 325). Yet his estimates – based on the imperfect data available after 1870 – show some significant parallels with France (ibid.: 140). As in France, inheritance flows contracted substantially after the two world wars, from roughly 16 percent of national income in 1910 to two percent in 1960. Inheritances rebounded dramatically thereafter, reaching 10–11 percent of national income in the first decade of the 21st century (ibid.: 425).

percent of total US capital or 70–80 percent. This debate aside, while the baby boomers and their adjacent cohorts grew up in a period in which pre-mortem gifts and bequests accounted for just a small part of national income, people born after 1970 have already experienced the crucial role that intergenerational transfers of wealth play in their lives (ibid.: 406). They recognize more than their parents that in both the short and the long run, both over the course of their lives and in the history of capitalism, kinship is still at the core of wealth inequality and is the major determinant of social class. It is also a major determinant of political power and, as some political scientists have concluded, of the polarization of politics in the US Studies by my Stanford colleague Andrew B. Hall show that it is not that the general public has become more ideologically polarized but rather that the increasing influence of wealthy donors on elections has led to the selection of political candidates with more extreme views on both ends of the political spectrum (Hall 2015; Hall and Thompson 2018).

While Piketty shows us that intergenerational transmission of wealth is integral to the structure of inequality in the US and other leading capitalist nations, he does not delve into the intimate, affective and gendered processes through which wealth is converted into inheritance. He thus misses an opportunity to understand how kinship and capital work in tandem to reproduce inequality. In this lecture today, I treat inheritance as a culturally valorized and legally-sanctioned conversion process through which intimate bonds and sentiments of family naturalize capital accumulation. Since an analysis of the kinship and political economy of inheritance even in just the US is too ambitious to attempt in a 45-minute lecture, in what follows, I will focus on one key element in this assemblage: the estate tax.

On Inheritance and the Estate Tax

In December 2017, President Trump signed into law the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) that had been passed by the Republican-controlled Congress. Among the taxes targeted for reductions in the bill was the federal estate tax – the tax on transfers of wealth at the time of a person's death.[3] Although Trump and the Republican legislators had considered abolishing the estate tax entirely, the TCJA instead doubled the estate tax exemption threshold to around $11.2 million for individuals and $22.4 million for couples.[4] With

[3] Unless another act is passed in the US, after 2025 the estate tax which is now set at the rate of 40 percent will revert back to pre-2018 rates.

[4] The doubling of the 'generation skipping' and 'gift' tax exemption rates of the TCJA add another significant dimension to the transfer of wealth in the US These changes allowed individuals to transfer $11.2 million to their adult children and $11.2 million to their grandchildren tax-free over the course of their lifetime.

this increased threshold, the number of estates throughout the country estimated to be affected by the estate tax was reduced from 5,000 to 2,000 (Ebeling 2017). In comparison, before the Bush administration's 2001 tax cut bill, the estate tax exemption threshold of $675,000 per individual affected around 52,000 American estates (Ebeling 2017).[5]

The debates occasioned by both the TCJA and other recent legislative attempts to repeal the estate tax (such as the Republican-sponsored bill that was vetoed by President Clinton in 2000) revisit long-standing legal, political and cultural disagreements about the role of inheritance in American society. At the core of these debates is a basic ambivalence: on the one hand, we are strongly committed to the ideals of a meritocracy, in which achievement is based on an individual's own abilities and efforts, rather than on inherited wealth or social status. On the other hand, we believe in an individual's right to dispose of his or her property as he or she chooses.

Until very recently, a civil or positivist view of inheritance appeared to dominate legal and political thought in the US The idea that the transmission of property at death is a creation of civil society which is rightfully subject to regulation by the state had obvious appeal to the leaders of the American revolution, including Thomas Jefferson, who were determined to dismantle the hereditary privileges on which the British monarchy and British aristocracy relied. Subsequent generations of US legal and political leaders affirmed this view of inheritance. Supreme Court decisions from the mid-nineteenth century distinguished the civil institution of inheritance from property itself, and taxes on inheritance were construed not as direct taxes on people's property, but indirect duties on the process of transferring that property from the dead to the living. This view of inheritance was further reinforced in the late 19th century as the popularity of limiting inheritance through taxation increased in response to growing economic inequality.

The competing view of inheritance as a natural right, however, never disappeared. Rather, it has resurfaced repeatedly in US legal and political thought, most recently in the arguments made by those advocating the repeal of the estate tax in both the Bush tax cut of 2001 and the Trump tax cut of 2017. Those who advocated the reduction or outright repeal of the estate tax pointed to two ways in which the tax goes 'against nature.' The first is that it

[5] Under the previous Republican administration, President G.W. Bush had signed into law the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, more widely known as the Bush tax cut bill. Title V of the Act focused on the federal estate tax, phasing it out over the following nine years. With the passage of the Act, the estate tax exemption, which had been $675,000 per individual in 2001, was increased to $1 million in 2002 and increased gradually to $3.5 million by 2009. The estate tax, along with the other tax cuts were scheduled to expire in 2010, so the estate tax would go back to the way it was before the legislation was enacted.

turns a natural event (death) into a taxable event (hence its labeling as a 'death tax'). The second is that it intervenes in the affairs of the family at a time when the family is already burdened by grief and loss – adding, as it were, government insult to family injury. According to sponsors of the repeal of the estate tax, one of the most powerful motives behind hard work is to make life better for one's children and loved ones. This makes the estate tax the most unnatural of all taxes as it seeks to repeal human nature.

Proponents of the estate tax, on the other hand, frame the debate in terms of meritocratic and democratic values. They ask how much intergenerational transfer of wealth is optimal for promoting a just society. In arguing that the estate tax helps reduce concentrations of power and promote equality of economic opportunity, its current defenders echo the majority view of Congress in 1916, when the estate tax was first adopted. As Bill Gates senior (father of the better-known billionaire Bill Gates) explained, the estate tax "is the purest example of progressive taxation" and helps to level the playing field (Johnston 2001). Perhaps the senior Mr. Gates also had in mind the admonitions of one of the most vociferous supporters of the federal estate tax, Andrew Carnegie, who over a century ago opined that "the parent who leaves his son enormous wealth generally deadens the talents and energies of the son, and leads him to lead a less useful and less worthy life than he otherwise would" (Carnegie 2006 [1889]: 36).

As it has been articulated in arguments for and against the repeal of the estate tax, the politics of inheritance seem to center on reconciling the purported natural right of the family to transmit its legacy to subsequent generations with the right of individuals to equal opportunity for advancement in a meritocratic society. Once again, it would appear that the conservative political agenda has been successful in casting itself as the advocate of 'family values,' leaving progressives to argue for the rights of individuals and making them once again vulnerable to the all-too-familiar accusation of undermining the family.

Closer scrutiny of both the rhetoric and the reality of the estate tax, however, raises some intriguing questions about precisely what kinds of family values are being pursued. It also reveals that the terms in which the debate has been cast have obscured some other important aspects of the politics of inheritance. In what follows, I will focus on two aspects that have, for the most part, been overlooked in debates over the estate tax: the disinheritance of children and the gender politics of the family, both of which are reflected in and shaped by US inheritance laws. I will then turn to discuss their implications for family values in the US.

One of the key contributions of feminist scholarship on the family over the past quarter century has been a critique of the 'natural family' as an ideological construct (Collier, Rosaldo and Yanagisako 1981). The natural right view of inheritance rests on just such an idea of the family as a universal institution, given in nature or given by God, and existing prior to and apart from culture. Like most appeals to the natural, it functions to justify the status quo and, along with it, gender hierarchy and inequality. Considering the topic from an anthropological perspective, I ask what kinds of family sentiments, parental commitments, conjugal relations, class inequalities and configurations of power are reflected in and promoted by the laws and policies governing inheritance in the US. In short, what kind of family values do these inheritance laws transmit?

To answer these questions, I am going to take a brief side-trip to northern Italy, where I have conducted research on families, specifically family firms in the silk industry of Como, since the mid-1980s and where I came to view inheritance in the US with fresh eyes. Here I want to interject a short aside about the special relevance of Italy for this lecture today, because it was in northern Italy after a conference on kinship and gender at the Bellagio center on the shores of Lake Como that I had the good fortune to sit next to Jack Goody on a train ride to Milan. It was on this occasion that I had the pleasure of hearing the amazing story of his experience in Italy during World War II, including his capture as a prisoner of war, his escapes and his hiding out on the grounds of a large estate.

Italian Inheritance Law and Family Dynamics

To understand what I learned about inheritance and the gender balance of power in Italian families in the 1980s and 1990s, you need a little background on Italian inheritance before 1975. When Italy emerged as a unified nation-state in the mid-nineteenth century, its Civil Code was modeled upon the Napoleonic Code, which had been fashioned as an attack on the concentration of aristocratic wealth and power. Rather than accomplishing this through a civil, positivist approach to inheritance, however, the Napoleonic Code treated inheritance as a natural right. Reconciling a commitment to family legacies with the egalitarian goals of the French revolution yielded a different strategy for breaking up estates – namely, requiring equal division of the patrimony among all children irrespective of gender.

The Italian Civil Code not only dictates that sons and daughters receive equal portions of their parents' property, it also guarantees inheritance by family members, granting their inheritance rights absolute priority over the testamentary right of individuals. In other words, in Italy, as

in Germany, inheritance represents an 'overriding duty' to family members that cannot be set aside by individual testators. At least half the estate of individuals who have a surviving spouse or a child is reserved for these family members; in addition, which family members receive an inheritance and the proportions they receive are all codified and set forth according to the configuration of the family at the time of an individual's death. Testamentary inheritance – that portion of the estate which an individual can give away according to his or her own wishes – applies only to what is left after the distribution of what is called the *legitim* – the portion reserved for family members.[6] This latter portion ranges from one-third (in the case of an individual who dies leaving neither spouse nor children) to three-fourths of the estate (when an individual dies leaving a spouse and two or more children). If an individual dies intestate, i.e. leaving no will, a complex set of rules governs the proportion received by various kin under different scenarios.

Law, of course, does not entirely dictate custom and daughters certainly have not received the same shares as sons since the formation of the Italian nation-state. Until recently, fathers and sons in propertied families employed a variety of strategies to retain control over more of the patrimony than was their legal due. In northern Italy, for example, a common practice was for fathers to give daughters a share of the inheritance in the form of a dowry or other pre-mortem payments, including real estate (Yanagisako 2002). These pre-mortem payments were usually of much less value than what was legally due to these daughters. But daughters hardly had the resources to demand their legal rights. For one, they had an interest in the undivided strength of their family's estate, because fathers and brothers were their only refuge from a failed marriage. The continuing success and wealth of a woman's family of origin was also a source of cultural capital that enhanced her position in relation to her husband and in the community at

[6] The testator's will is restricted by a number of provisions, among them that the inheritor must be 18 and mentally competent (Lessico Universale 1979: 199) and that illegitimate children may not, if there are legitimate children, receive more than would be their share if legal inheritance were followed (ibid.: 181). Legal inheritance takes effect when there is no will and applies to the part not distributed by *legitim*. There is a complex set of rules governing the proportion received by various kin under different scenarios (summarized in Davis 1973: 181). In general, as Davis (ibid.: 180) notes, legal inheritance "places much more emphasis on the nuclear family than does the law of *legitim*, which, by excluding siblings and other collateral kin, emphasizes the direct line of descent and ascent. Even in legal inheritance, however, priority is given to the descendants and then to ascendant over spouse and siblings." If there are no surviving kin, the legal inheritance and the *legitim* go to the state (Mengoni 1961: 5).

large. Second, daughters could not count on the support of their mothers to help them obtain their legal share of the patrimony.

They could not count on their mothers because, until 1975, wives had weaker *legitim* rights than children. Not only was a wife guaranteed less than a child, but her *legitim* rights were limited to usufruct alone, not to actual ownership. This meant that upon her husband's death, a wife had the right to be supported by a stipend and to manage the patrimony until her children came of age, but she could neither sell the patrimony nor transmit it to anyone. After her children reached maturity, she was dependent upon them, usually her sons, to manage the patrimony and provide her with a stipend. As a consequence, widows shared their sons' interest in keeping the patrimony intact, rendering them unlikely supporters of their daughters' inheritance claims.

By the late 1960s, the Italian women's movement was openly challenging gender inequality and the state policies that codified it (Birnbaum 1986; Bono and Kemp 1991, 1993). The revisions in family law that accompanied the legalization of divorce in 1975 both reflected and facilitated changes in family and gender norms and practices in Italy. These revisions of the Civil Code significantly strengthened the rights of spouses and children born out of wedlock. Although the Civil Code of 1975 is most well-known for legalizing divorce, the establishment of spousal community property (that is, property acquired by the spouses after their marriage, whether individually or together) for the first time was of equal or greater importance. Supporters of the reform argued that if divorce were to become possible, women would need financial resources and, therefore, rights to family property. Their arguments prevailed and with the passage of the Civil Code, wives were granted their share of community property. In accordance with these new rights, widows were granted actual ownership rights to their husband's estate, rather than mere usufruct rights. A widow with two or more children became entitled to at least one-third of the patrimony if her husband died intestate. If he died leaving a will that gave someone else the portion of his property that he could freely assign to whomever he wished, she would still be entitled to at least one-fourth of his property. This portion is considered her *legittima*. As her children are also entitled to their *legitim*, a woman and her two children have a combined entitlement to three-fourths of her husband's estate.

Although these legal reforms were intended primarily to provide financial support for divorced women, among the bourgeois families I studied their more significant consequence was to strengthen mothers' and daughters' inheritance claims and their ability to get fathers and brothers to honour them (Yanagisako 2002). As women became more aware of their

community property rights, the gender balance of power in families shifted. Once mothers had been endowed with legally enforceable claims of actual ownership of family property, they became more than a moral force in the family; they became political and economic actors with considerable financial leverage over their husbands and children. Furthermore, once they were no longer financially dependent on their sons to provide them with a stipend after the death of their husbands, women became stronger advocates of their daughters' inheritance rights, calling for equal shares for sons and daughters. Although many propertied fathers' desire to endow their sons with sufficient assets to ensure their livelihood and the continuity of the family continued to take priority over goals of gender equity, they now had to contend with wives and daughters whose stronger legal claims to the family's wealth emboldened them to champion a different vision of family continuity – one that included adult daughters and their spouses and children as well as adult sons and theirs.

Italian inheritance law provides a useful comparative perspective on US inheritance law – a vantage point from which to raise critical questions about inheritance in the US. When I describe Italian inheritance law to people in the US they are usually quite surprised to hear about the limits it places on an individual's testamentary freedom. When I describe US inheritance law to Italians, conversely, they are shocked to hear of the wide latitude Americans have to decide how much, if any, of their property to leave to their children.

As we head back to the US from Italy, one of the first things we might notice is that the impetus for legal reform generated by the second wave of the feminist movement in the US also resulted in the strengthening of spousal inheritance rights in a number of states. Spouses have been increasingly protected against disinheritance through near universal passage of some form of 'elective' or forced share. These legal reforms still leave much to be desired, especially in common law states, almost all of which give the spouse election rights of no more than one-third of the testator's estate. This small spousal share is disadvantageous to women because in general much of the property acquired during marriage falls into the husband's estate.

When it comes to the inheritance rights of children, the US is something of an oddity, if not an outright aberration. Most countries today protect the inheritance of children through a forced share system, along the lines of Italy. These include, among others, Greece, France, Germany, Japan, Puerto Rico, Spain, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. On the other hand, the commonwealth countries of England, Australia, Ireland and a number of

Canadian provinces have adopted a family maintenance system in which a discretionary judicial process can override a parent's will after a showing of just cause in order to provide for the needs of a child. In the US, by contrast, a parent can disinherit a child without giving any reason. In some states, moreover, a child support obligation ends upon the death of the parent, regardless of the parent's wealth, or the age or economic circumstances of the child (Oldham 1999: 266).[7]

The apparent indifference in the US to children's inheritance rights has been attributed to the extreme individualism of Americans. Evidence of this can be found in statements such as the one made by a Louisiana legislator, who exclaimed during a debate in the 1980s over limiting the inheritance rights of children, "This is my money, I made it and I can do what I want with it" (quoted in Oldham 1999: 273). In an historical irony, this passionate commitment to the testamentary freedom of individuals appears to initially have been incited by the anti-aristocratic views of the founding fathers of the US, who were critical of the British inheritance laws that kept large estates intact. It was also fueled by the increasing value placed on economic independence that accompanied the transformation of the US from an agrarian society to an industrial-capitalist one. At the same time, testamentary freedom would seem to be at odds with widely held commitments to the family. As David Schneider (1968) concluded in his anthropological study of American kinship, at the core of American ideas about the family is the concept of blood as a symbol of diffuse, enduring solidarity. For most Americans, the bonds of the family are rooted in nature and, therefore, are unbreakable and enduring. The unrestricted testamentary freedom of individuals flies in the face of this concept of the family. It appears to imply that the family as a collective unit of mutual responsibility and commitment ends when children reach the age of maturity. Certainly, from an Italian perspective, the enduring solidarity of family members in the US seems both fragile and conditional.

For several decades, legal scholars have made compelling arguments for legislative reforms that would protect the inheritance rights of children in the US (Haskell 1964; Batts 1990; Chester 1998; Shapo 1998). They note the

[7] Note that some states allow child support orders (for non-intact families) to continue beyond the date of the obligor's death, if the obligor can afford it and the child needs the support. Also a few states have adopted statutes providing that, if a testator leaves a child surviving who would qualify for public benefits, the testator's estate must reimburse the state for those benefits if there are sufficient assets (Oldham 1999: 268). No state has adopted legislation to protect the inheritance rights of children in intact families; to the contrary, in 1989, Louisiana, which had been the only state that followed the Napoleonic Code, adopted legislation to limit the protection of children's inheritance rights to children under the age of 24 and in cases of disability/inability to generate income.

illogic of giving testamentary freedom priority over the needs of children when testamentary freedom is already overridden by creditor's rights, property and income taxes, and spousal inheritance rights. In addition, the need to protect the inheritance rights of children has become increasingly acute given the high frequency of divorce. Half of the marriages in the US now end in divorce and more than 75 percent of divorced women and 80 percent of divorced men eventually remarry. In many of these remarriages, people have additional children. The consequent increase in the number of step-families, of children being raised by one parent, and of fathers and mothers who have commitments to two families has amplified the need to protect children's inheritance rights. Some of these legal scholars (Batts 1990) have proposed enacting a form of 'protected inheritance' along the lines of the *legitim* in civil code countries like Italy. Others, such as the 1965 report by the Bennett Commission of the New York State Legislature (Oldham 1999: 267) have argued for the adoption of a commonwealth system of family maintenance in which the testator's freedom would be secondary to the enforcement of a moral obligation to provide adequately for his or her family. In these discussions, the gender implications of testamentary freedom and the proposed alternatives remain somewhat hazily in the background – behind the gender-neutral references to 'parental responsibility' rather than paternal or maternal responsibility. Yet there are clear gender implications of testamentary freedom and significant gender consequences to protecting children's inheritance rights.

Some of the gender implications would appear quite obvious. The first pertains to the issue of whose individualism is being protected by testamentary freedom. As feminist scholars have argued, the construct of the individual as an independent agent freely fashioning his destiny has enabled the freedom of men more than women. This concept of individualism is certainly at odds with what our society has long expected and still continues to expect of women as wives and mothers. Indeed, most women continue to place less priority than men on achieving an individuality that overrides their commitments to their families.

A second rather obvious gender implication of testamentary freedom follows from the fact that men in the US own and control considerably more wealth than do women. While their testamentary freedom as husbands is constrained by provisions for community property and spousal election, as fathers, American men have greater testamentary freedom than do fathers in almost all other capitalist, democratic nations. As a consequence, the men who control the most wealth in the world bear comparatively less paternal responsibility for their children than those in other countries. Rather than speculating about how this has affected men's behavior as fathers, I want to

consider the potential gender implications of guaranteeing the inheritance rights of children.

I suggest that we think back to the shift in the balance of power in Italian families that followed the establishment of wives' inheritance rights with the 1975 revision of the Civil Code. In the US case, I suggest that a shift in the gender balance of power in marriage would be the outcome of the establishment of children's inheritance rights. This may seem counter-intuitive, so let me explain. As I mentioned before, while women are in a better position in the US today as a result of their improved inheritance rights as wives, there is still much more to be done. Focusing exclusively on the inheritance rights of wives artificially separates women's experience as wives from their experience as mothers. For those who are both, the separation is merely academic. Once we consider both aspects together, it becomes apparent that the decline in women's financial resources after separation or divorce is compounded by the children's inability to make legal claims on their father's assets once they reach the age of majority. Given that the majority of children in the US these days are still pursuing their education after the age of 18, and given the ever-increasing cost of education, it is obvious that current laws governing parental responsibility fall far short of what is needed. In addition, the weak legal rights of children to parental support render mothers more dependent on husbands than vice-versa and thus more vulnerable to their husbands' withdrawal of support. Divorced fathers are not only free to start new families without meeting their obligations to children from a previous marriage, but they are free to distribute their assets disproportionately among their children, leaving some nothing at all.[8]

Guaranteeing children's inheritance rights and requiring equal division among them would both affirm and legally sanction parents' enduring commitment to their children while promoting a more balanced distribution of power in the family. Fathers, as well as mothers, would be constrained from taking on new commitments by the knowledge that all their children would share equally in their estate, and second spouses would think carefully about the liability of marriage partners whose estates are already substantially earmarked for children from previous marriages.

Protecting the inheritance of children could, of course, lead to a decrease in the portion reserved for spouses and, therefore, could be viewed

[8] The absence of protection for children whose parents have written wills seems to contradict the norms and sentiments written into the laws of intestacy, which dictate how a person's assets are to be distributed in the absence of a will. These laws, like the intestacy laws of the civil code, specify how the deceased's property is to be distributed among family members – first among the surviving spouse and children and then among other relatives.

as working against women's interests as wives. There are, however, ways in which the needs of surviving spouses could be balanced against the needs of children. More importantly, I suggest that protecting children's inheritance rights would force us to move beyond a conjugal-centered model of entitlement and power in the family and toward a more inclusive model of the family as an enduring collectivity.

Conclusion

My intention in exploring these gender implications of testamentary freedom and of children's inheritance rights is not to argue for adopting the Napoleonic Code or for making US families more Italian, or more German for that matter. Culture and society are far too complex and historically contingent to make this a viable option. There are, moreover, a plethora of changes taking place in the US that are already reshaping families – all of which are relevant to inheritance and which I have not been able to consider fully here. In addition to the increasing cost of education and the lengthening of the period in which children are dependent on parents, there is increased longevity, the long-term care needs of the elderly, and the legalization of gay marriage. The changing ethnic and racial composition of the US has undoubtedly increased the diversity of ideas and practices of inheritance. All of these would have to be taken into account in a comprehensive attempt to reform US inheritance laws. My foray into this issue tonight is not such an attempt. Rather it is an attempt to understand how economic and political inequality, as well as gender inequality, are shaped by inheritance laws and practices.

This lecture is also an attempt to call into question the 'family values' embedded in the calls to repeal or decrease the estate tax. For all the rhetorical appeal to the protection of family legacies and the allusions to the natural bonds between parents and children made by those arguing for its repeal, there are no legal guarantees that the 'family estate' will be inherited by children. Instead, the emphasis on a parent's *right* to transmit wealth to children and grandchildren obscures the absence of attention to a parent's *responsibility* to do so. A genuine commitment to strengthening families through the intergenerational transfer of wealth would entail a corresponding protection of children's inheritance rights. Yet, not a word has been said about this in the debates over the US estate tax. For all the accusations of parental irresponsibility that have appeared in recent American debates about child support, dead-beat dads, teenage pregnancy and welfare mothers, there is a peculiar silence about parental responsibility in debates surrounding inheritance. This calls into question the 'family values' being transmitted in

the US by the testamentary freedom of those who have benefited financially from the decrease in the estate tax.

My lecture today has taken us a long way from Jack Goody's detailed field study of the modes of property transmission of property at death in rural communities in northern Ghana and their effects on kinship and affinity. These early ethnographic studies were formative in the development of Goody's theory of inheritance as a key variable in explaining the differences between African and Eurasian constructions of the domestic domain and its relations to economy. Whether or not one agrees with his argument that African hoe culture versus Eurasian plough farming was the key variable shaping strategies of heirship and forms of marriage and adoption in these two regions, one can hardly argue with his conclusion that "the link between stratification and the economy is by means of the system of inheritance, which organizes the transmission of property from generation to generation (…)" (Goody 1976: 65). My lecture today has demonstrated that what was true of those two adjacent villages in northern Ghana in the 1950s is as true today of the wealthy capitalist countries on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Chapter 10

Class and Power in a Stateless Society: revisiting Jack Goody's ethnography of the LoDagaa (Ghana) (2019)

Carola Lentz

Jack Goody was born in July 1919, almost exactly one hundred years ago, and I feel privileged to have been invited to deliver the ninth Goody lecture. The invitation has given me an opportunity to reread Goody's ethnography of the people he referred to as the LoDagaa. With his portrayals of the LoDagaa, based on fieldwork in the 1950s in the Lawra District in what is today Ghana's Upper West Region, Goody made a lasting contribution to anthropology. He modelled them as a classical example of an acephalous society, marked by the absence of ethnic boundaries, political power and social class. I read Goody's ethnography at the beginning of my fieldwork in the late 1980s, but subsequently concentrated on my own research. It has been fascinating to revisit his writings after having worked in and published on Northern Ghana myself for over thirty years. Unlike Goody, I have not become a sociologist engaged in global comparison nor a historian of the world. Despite strong interest in comparative analysis, I have remained an Africanist.[1] I have continued to do fieldwork in West Africa, and particularly Lawra District, in recent decades, and this fact perhaps accounts for some of the differences between my perspectives on the LoDagaa or Dagara, as they usually call themselves, and those of Goody.

Goody was a towering figure in my early fieldwork among the Dagara and their neighbours. Before I went to Northern Ghana for the first time in 1987, I had done several years of research in Ecuador and could boast a PhD as well as a short list of publications. This helped me not to feel too intimidated. But Goody certainly was a presence in my new field, despite the fact that three decades had passed since his fieldwork. Many people in Lawra District – not only secondary school and university graduates but also illiterate elderly villagers – had heard about him, even if they had not known

[1] Whether Goody can be classified as an 'Africanist' is moot: see below and, for example, Goody 1991: 45; Hart 2011: 23; Lobnibe 2018: 19.

him personally. To a significant extent, he had shaped the image of the European anthropologist with which I had to come to terms.

Most of my educated interlocutors had not actually read his ethnographies. They had at most browsed through short excerpts. However, they often held strong opinions about Goody's work, on the basis of what others said he had supposedly written. The Dagara are an outspoken people, reluctant to acknowledge any authority – a legacy of their tradition of statelessness. They had no qualms about attacking squarely what they felt was a misrepresentation of their society. Goody's account of their ethnic names and lack of ethnic unity attracted particularly sharp criticism, as did, at least in some quarters, his insistence on the absence of pre-colonial chiefly or other political office. On the other hand, there was widespread admiration for his detailed account of the kinship system, funerary practices, inheritance rules and local beliefs. Tales circulated about his impressive linguistic skills.[2] He was commonly thought to have been initiated into the Bagre, the most important local secret society on which he published extensively, often in collaboration with his Dagara friend S.W.D.K. (Kum) Gandah. As a matter of fact, Goody was not initiated and stated so clearly in his writings.[3] Nonetheless local belief to the contrary was tenacious. More generally, I noted that for many Dagara intellectuals as well as ordinary villagers Goody served as a point of reference – no matter whether positive or negative.

When Goody undertook his fieldwork among the LoDagaa in the early 1950s, Ghana's Northwest was still part of the colonial protectorate of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. There were no institutions of secondary education in the region. The local elite consisted of middle-school graduates employed as teachers or administrative clerks. It was very small. It was only after Ghana achieved independence in 1957 that senior high school and tertiary education became more accessible for Northerners. The number of graduates from Ghanaian or European and North American universities, for which some Dagara students gained scholarships, rose steadily. Scholars were also trained at the Catholic seminary in Tamale. The Northwest had been missionized by the White Fathers since 1929. From the mid-1930s onwards the Catholic church operated a number of primary, middle and later also senior high schools parallel to the schools established by the colonial

[2] Confirmation of Goody's command of the Dagara language was provided by Isidore Lobnibe, himself a Dagara and an anthropologist, who interviewed Goody in 2006 (Lobnibe 2018: 4).

[3] Goody's explanation of his research methodology in the introduction to *The myth of the Bagre* (1972) leaves no doubt that he relied on accounts of initiates who were willing to talk; later he used texts recorded on a tape-recorder that his friend Kum had smuggled into the Bagre room; see Goody and Gandah 2002: xiii–xiv.

and later the independent government. School enrolment thus increased considerably. Dagara university graduates and Catholic seminarians started conducting research on their own culture and society in the mid-1970s. They produced an impressive number of Bachelor, Master and PhD theses on the local language, settlement history, kinship systems, political organization, traditional religion, Christianization, and Dagara worldviews.[4] By the 1980s, therefore, European scholars were increasingly challenged by local intellectuals. The former were obliged to conduct research 'with' rather than merely 'on' the Dagara. They had to submit their findings to local scrutiny – an experience that Goody did not make, but which has been part and parcel of my own work.

I believe I was the first European to undertake in-depth and long-term fieldwork in this particular corner of West Africa 'after Goody.'[5] That I came to do research among the Dagara and continued to do so for over three decades was more or less an accident. Despite holding a PhD in sociology and having worked on South America, I was offered a lectureship in social anthropology at the Free University of Berlin in 1987 and charged to organize student fieldwork projects in Africa. I decided to go to Ghana. Searching for contacts with Ghanaian scholars for my first reconnaissance trip, a colleague put me in touch with Sebastian Bemile, a linguist then teaching at the University of Ghana, who happened to be a Dagara. In the summer of 1987, I travelled through the entire country and visited Sebastian's parents in Hamile. The week that I spent in Sebastian's home village ended with my adoption into his extended family and my decision to do fieldwork among the Dagara.[6]

Before going to Hamile, I had not heard about the Dagara or read Goody's ethnographies. Of course, when I went back to Germany and then travelled to Ghana many times afterwards, I read Goody's two major

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[4] Examples of Anglophone PhD theses are Kuuire 1972; Der 1983; Yelpaala 1983; Bemile 1985; Angsotinge 1986; Naameh 1986; Dery 1987; Bekye 1991; Kpiebaya 1991 and Tengan 2000 – to quote just a few. Francophone scholarship from Dagara scholars of Burkina Faso is equally proliferous. If one adds pre-doctoral dissertations, as well as occasional papers and articles published by secondary school teachers, the amount of literature produced by Dagara on Dagara culture and society is impressive. For an analysis of an inner-Dagara debate on chieftaincy versus acephalousness, see Lentz 2003; for a critical assessment of Dagara scholars' 'rewriting the past,' see Hawkins 2002: esp. 107–162.

[5] The Italian anthropologist Fabrizio Sabelli did a stint of research in the small border town of Hamile in the early 1970s and wrote a rather romantic book on the Dagara as a prime example of an anti-capitalist community (Sabelli 1986). However, perhaps due to the fact that this work was published in French, nobody ever mentioned its author during my first visits to Hamile in the 1980s, whereas Goody was a well-known figure.

[6] For narratives of members of the extended Bemile family about my 'adoption,' see Bemile 2019; Lobnibe 2019 and Meda 2019.

ethnographies on the LoDagaa (Goody 1956, 1962) and most of his articles on the area. However, I had no intention of revisiting his fieldwork. Rather, my aim was to conduct a study of labour migration to the yam plantations and gold mines of Southern Ghana and on changes this was bringing about in Dagara families. This soon expanded into an interest in exploring the intricate historical processes of creating ethnic identities, in both urban and rural locations, and studying the role of educated elites in new constructions of Dagara culture. Later themes included the history of chieftaincy, land rights and settlement narratives, cultural festivals, the emergence of an educated middle class, and a good deal more besides.

In this lecture I shall discuss how my research among the Dagara has developed and the perspectives this may offer – retrospectively – on Goody's ethnography. However, I shall begin by exploring an irritation that has never quite left me with respect to Goody's work. It concerns his peculiar lack of interest in the local history and contemporary politics of the LoDagaa. This flies in the face of his later explorations of the history of the Gonja of Northern Ghana and his attraction to sweeping historical (and sociological) comparison worldwide, between Europe and Asia, and between Eurasia and Africa. After discussing Goody's 'presentist' account of the LoDagaa, I shall elaborate on how his work has provided inspiration, but also provoked dissent, in three fields of my own enquiries – the history of chieftaincy, the emergence of a middle class, and the creation of ethnicity and ethnic boundaries. To a certain extent, the differences between my ethnography and that of Goody reflect the deep social and political transformations of Dagara society that took place in the decades between the end of his fieldwork and the beginning of my own. However, I shall suggest in the conclusion that the differences also arise out of distinct ways of conducting fieldwork and different theoretical interests.

Ethnography and History

Many of Goody's texts, particularly *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962), have been inspiring for my own work. I am sympathetic to his materialist perspective and agree with the importance he attaches to property relations and the intergenerational transmission of rights. His finely-grained analyses of the Dagara kinship system and marriage payments, with their redistributive effects, are as authoritative as his explorations of Dagara funerary customs and ritual practice more generally. His work on the oral transmission of knowledge and the Bagre narrative (Goody 1978) and his reflections on the 'interface between the written and the oral' (Goody 1987) have been highly relevant to my research into the oral history of the Dagara and neighbouring groups.

At the same time, I remain irritated by the young ethnographer's apparent lack of scholarly interest in the radical social and political transformations of the society he studied – both fundamental transformations since 1900 in the wake of the LoDagaa's incorporation into the colonial polity and more recent upheavals in the wake of decolonization that happened right under his eyes. Goody conducted altogether twenty months of fieldwork among the Dagara, mainly in three villages: among the 'LoWiili' in Birifu, a village near Lawra (Goody 1956), and among the 'LoDagaba' in Tom and Ko, two adjacent settlements in the paramount chiefdom of Nandom (Goody 1962). Birifu was the seat of a head chief into whose house the anthropologist was incorporated. In the early 1950s, the village lived through a period of acute conflict with the paramount chief of Lawra. Tom and Ko had been more thoroughly Christianized but their literate elites were just as deeply involved in party-political struggles as the residents of Birifu.[7]

In the first chapter of his monograph on Birifu, Goody indeed acknowledges that a "series of fundamental changes spring from the initial fact of European rule," but then promptly asserts that "these have only begun to impinge upon the social life of the inhabitants" (1956: 14). He maintains that widespread labour migration "had comparatively little effect as yet on the organized social life of the community" (1956: 10). He concedes that the British had imposed "a hierarchy of chiefs (…) upon the previous system" since the beginning of the century – a "factor militating against a strictly synchronic study." Even so, Goody claims, it "is still possible to disentangle the one from the other," that is: the indigenous political organization from the colonial institutions. Hence his deliberate choice "to consider the political organization as it existed at the beginning of the century" (1956: iv).

Such statements – and the abstention from history that they justify – are not surprising. Goody's work of that period is consistent with the structuralist-functionalist school of the day. His resolutely presentist or even timeless ethnographic writing was the standard procedure of the anthropological scholar (Hart 1985: 244–248). I still wonder why Goody hardly mentioned the political disruptions and social change taking place during the very years of his fieldwork. It would be fascinating to consult his field diaries and find out whether they contain notes on, for instance, party politics and chieftaincy affairs that his educated interlocutors, as well as labour migrants and others, must have been discussing at the time. Goody himself later mentions that national politics did penetrate the social fabric of the villages. He himself joined Nkrumah's Convention People's Party

[7] On Goody's interlocutors, see also his explanations in an interview with Isidore Lobnibe (Lobnibe 2018: 7–11).

(Goody 1982: 17−18), observed the emergence of a new literate elite (Goody 1987: 139−147) and witnessed the increasing pressure which the chiefs felt when a new local constitution featuring elected councils was introduced (Goody 1975: 98−99). However, in the 1950s his principal goal was to carry out research about the social organization of a traditionally stateless society and to disentangle the complex regulations of inheritance. With hindsight, it is intriguing to think how much 'abstraction' from some of his interlocutors' ongoing concerns the anthropologist's scholarly focus must have required.

Goody wrote his first report on the Northwest, *The Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast* (1954), published by the Colonial Office, in his capacity as a sociological research officer of the Gold Coast government. The report includes a brief, but rather conjectural history of population movements before the onset of colonial rule. These passages provide an uncritical summary of what some district commissioners and earlier government anthropologists had already written up. In any case, these historical reconstructions had no consequences for Goody's account of the synchronic functioning of local society. Similarly, his observations on the absence of clear-cut ethnic boundaries and his discussion of local self-designations (Goody 1954: 23−25; Goody 1956: 16−26) – which I will turn to in more detail below – largely follow the arguments of colonial officials, who had been frustrated by the absence of orderly 'tribes' in the Northwest.

Goody's celebrated monograph on LoDagaa funerals and property relations, based mainly on fieldwork in Birifu, but also Tom and Ko, greatly widened the scope of sociological comparison, while remaining basically disinterested in questions of historical change (Goody 1962). In the introduction, Goody states that although "evidence concerning changes in the past is not lacking (indeed the process of change still goes on)," he does "not intend to present such material here," not least because "the social systems" have to be "analysed beforehand" (Goody 1962: 9). That is: before discussing history, an ideal-typical model of a particular cultural institution needs to be established. Goody never mentions that by the time of his research the majority of the population of Tom, Ko and Nandom had become Catholic.[8] Yet this development certainly had a significant impact on marriage practices, property relations and funerals (Hawkins 2002: 227−276; Lentz 2006: 166−171).

Goody later wrote some rather self-critical articles about the structural-functionalist "'If the Government Agents hadn't been there' approach to the present" (Goody 1990: 1). In a memoir of his own

[8] Goody did eventually write an insightful article on the question of Christian 'conversion' among the LoDagaa and others (Goody 1975). But he did not consider the influence that this might have had on marriage, inheritance and funerals.

intellectual development (Goody 1991; more or less reprinted in Goody 1995: 118−143), he claims that when he conducted fieldwork in the context of decolonization, he was aware that the "new Africa was also demanding a history" (Goody 1991: 46). He notes that:

> earlier anthropologists had often steered away from historical considerations, partly because of the rash speculations of their predecessors about the past, partly because of an alternative methodological approach associated with fieldwork, and partly for the practical reason that archives and records were officially closed for a 50-year period (ibid.: 46–47).

He notes that "the situation had changed in many respects" in the 1950s and particularly the 1960s (ibid.: 47). This implies that he sees himself as belonging to a new generation of fieldworkers, which was more interested than predecessors had been in history and contemporary politics. However, this is somewhat misleading. Goody did write a few papers on Ghanaian politics and contemporary conflict in Northern Ghana (1968, 1980, and 1982), including a perceptive analysis of how national party-political competition interlocked with local lines of conflict (1982: 14−21). He also published a number of short papers on the pre-colonial history of Northern Ghana (1977, 1990, and 1998). However, these articles focus on the Tallensi in Ghana's Northeast, following up on Meyer Fortes' study, and only briefly touch on the Northwest.[9]

After studying the LoDagaa, Goody turned his interest to the Gonja where he conducted fieldwork in the 1960s, together with his wife Esther Newcomb Goody. This research is much more attentive to historical questions, perhaps due to a shift in his own interest, notably to the question as to why social stratification worked out so differently in Africa when compared with Europe. Perhaps, however, his Gonja interlocutors' interest in history was so imperative that he could not ignore it. He became interested particularly in conflicts about succession to high office and the role of literacy in remembering the kingdom's history. In an insightful article on oral tradition and mnemonic devices among the LoDagaa and the Gonja,

[9] These historical articles take the form of occasional papers which present interesting ideas, but are careless in referencing the colonial documents that were consulted (the archives and document signatures are not properly quoted). There are also some factual mistakes which show that Goody may not have been entirely familiar with the colonial history of Ghana's Northwest. These writings ignore – or at least never quote – the historical studies of his own students, as well as work by myself and other scholars which had been published by then. Goody's article on the Tallensi (1990), for instance, largely follows Keith Hart's study of Tallensi social history (1978), but does not acknowledge this. My impression is that he piled up copies of articles and colonial documents in his office in Cambridge, but never got around to an adequate classification.

he states that among the first, "knowledge of their past, actual or imaginary, was very limited" (Goody 1978: 288) while among the latter "the history of the kingdom was a perpetual topic of conversation" (ibid.: 291).

Goody never applied his newly awakened historical interest to his former field site in Lawra District. He continued believing that the introduction of chieftaincy, the Catholic mission with its phenomenally high conversion rates, and rampant labour migration had not produced any significant changes in the fabric of local relations at the time of his fieldwork. When I met him personally for the first time in 1990, as well as during later encounters, he did not seem overly interested in hearing about my discoveries concerning local history, nor did he enjoy conversing about what it was like to do fieldwork in the 1950s. His memoir appeared a year after our first meeting (Goody 1991). This included reminiscences of his work among the LoDagaa. Perhaps he felt he had said all he wanted to say. This was, of course, perfectly legitimate for a scholar in his seventies who had gone on to explore many new themes. Still, it was somewhat frustrating for me, then a thirty-six-year-old researcher with high hopes of gaining further insight from the pioneer ethnographer, beyond what he had published.

If Goody was not an aficionado of micro-history, at least not in his old fieldwork site among the LoDagaa, it is worth considering the implications of this limitation for his later contributions to macro-history. He challenged the conventional distinctions between Europe and Asia, with Africa providing the big 'Other,' a social system without classes, surplus production, dowry and so forth, in short: a type of society which differed fundamentally from Europe and Asia. Goody never abandoned his basic distinction between Eurasia and Africa, based on economy and technology (Hann 2017: 474). He remained disinterested in the "messy business of politics," as Chris Hann put it (ibid.: 473). As Keith Hart (2011: 23) concluded, Africa for Goody became "a static abstraction," symbolized by "the lifestyle of the stateless hoe-farmers he knew" – an abstraction which he used "to support his assault on Western disparagement of Asia."

The History of Chieftaincy

My fieldwork among the Dagara in the Nandom paramount chiefdom to which Ko and Tom belonged began in conflict-ridden times. In the late 1980s there were massive struggles over chieftaincy succession in Nandom and ethnic tensions vis-à-vis the neighbouring Sisala of Lambussie. These chieftaincy conflicts and ethnic troubles were intimately connected with Ghana's national politics of decentralization and the delimitation of new administrative districts. After the re-legalization of political parties in 1992,

these conflicts also connected again with party-political competition, fuelling fault lines that dated back to the 1950s. Since claims were always legitimated by invocations of history, the ethnographer hardly had an alternative but to attend to the various competing histories which the political protagonists mobilized.

In accordance with my plan to investigate labour migration to the gold mines, I carried out research in the mines as well as the home villages of many miners. But I also studied the regional and local history much more intensely than I had intended. I explored the origins of colonial chieftaincy and ethnic categories, the dynamics of decolonization and many related aspects of the local social, economic and political history, taking the story up to the ethno-political mobilization of the 1980s and 1990s (Lentz 1998, 2006). I participated in many meetings of Youth and Development Associations and interviewed members of the local political elite. I also spent many months in the colonial archives, in Tamale, Accra, London and Oxford as well as in Ouagadougou, Aix-en-Provence and the missionary archives of the White Fathers in Rome.

In the late 1990s, I began a new large teamwork project focussed on settlement histories and land rights (Lentz 2013). Our aim was to trace the Black Volta region's pre-colonial history as well as colonial and post-colonial transformations of property rights, ritual territories, and the role of ethnic and local belonging. In the course of dozens of interviews and conversations that I conducted with village elders, I learned about the role of the shrine custodians in land conflicts and embittered struggles over land resources in the late nineteenth century. This led me to revise some of Goody's claims about earth shrines and the alleged abundance of land. The evidence that I collected contradicted the model of an originally egalitarian society. I found that the colonial institution of chieftaincy was grafted on to pre-colonial power hierarchies and strategies of primitive accumulation which then deepened under colonial rule.

Goody's early analysis of the pre-colonial political order of the Dagara centred on the claim that "there was a relative absence of formal leadership" and an "evident lack of delegated or imposed authority" (Goody 1956: 113). The only office holders, Goody argued, were the custodians of the earth shrine. These shrines are sanctuaries that consist of a stone or earthenware pot. They were usually established by the first-comers to an area. The shrine custodians had to carry out regular sacrifices in order to pacify the earth deities believed to be the original spiritual owners of the land. According to Goody, the office they held was spiritual in nature. At the same time, however, he describes the area under the influence of a particular earth shrine as a territorial unit whose inhabitants constituted the basic

political unit of the LoDagaa. "Within its confines homicide necessitates the performance of expiatory sacrifices (…). Outside its boundaries, armed self-help constitutes the main procedure for the settlement of disputes among clans" (Goody 1956: 111). Along the lines established by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their *African Political Systems* (1940), Goody examines how even a stateless society can contain violence. This interest in 'conflict studies,' Goody later commented, was motivated not least by his personal experience of war and by having spent several years in a prisoner-of-war camp (Goody 1991: 48). In his 1956 monograph on the LoWiili, but more explicitly in an article published a year later (Goody 1957), Goody shows how the obligations associated with membership in supra-local patriclans and the taboos of blood-shedding in the local earth-shrine parishes worked together to curb the recourse to violence. He concludes: "Despite the lack of constituted authority before the arrival of the Europeans, the society was so organized as to make possible the peaceful co-operation which agriculture demands" (Goody 1956: 114).[10]

In one of his later articles on the political system of the Tallensi, Goody adds a revealing footnote in which he concedes that there may have been more violence in pre-colonial times than he has claimed in his ethnography. Evidence of freebooters, slave-raiders and feuds found in early colonial reports "qualifies the overly peaceful view of the equilibrium of pre-colonial life which some of us found in the later period" (Goody 1990: 25, fn. 36). Goody does not take this any further, but this observation confirms what I have learned from both the archives and interviews with village elders. In an insightful article on 'self-help,' feud and negotiation in African stateless societies during the colonial period, Gerd Spittler (1980) has convincingly argued that the "shadow of the Leviathan," that is: the presence of the colonial state, albeit distant, had an important impact on the contours of local conflict. Occasional punitive expeditions and the knowledge that contestants could turn to, or be summoned by, the colonial officers promoted peaceful means of negotiating conflict. Spittler's argument implies that, in the complete absence of such state structures, local mechanisms for curbing violence might have been much less effective. The colonial archives are indeed full of reports of violent conflicts before or shortly after the arrival of British and French officers – conflicts within lineages, patriclans and villages as well as between neighbouring villages, but also across ethnic and linguistic boundaries (for examples, see Lentz 2013, esp. chap. 1). The latter conflicts, particularly those between Dagara and Sisala frontiersmen,

[10] His findings concur with Evans-Pritchard's analysis of 'ordered anarchy' and 'segmentary opposition' among the Nuer, although for some reason Goody never quotes this earlier ethnography.

hardened boundaries and created a sense of ethnic difference even in pre-colonial times.

'Strong men,' as my interlocutors often called them, and freebooters undoubtedly existed in a number of villages. Some of these powerful war leaders or influential traders owned slaves and played a role in the late nineteenth-century slave trade. However, they did not (yet) create a political office that could be compared to institutionalized chieftaincy. I fully concur with Goody concerning the pre-colonial absence of chiefs, in the strict sense of the term, among the Dagara and to a lesser degree among the Sisala. I found that the Dagara themselves, however, were, and continue to be, somewhat divided concerning their society's pre-colonial political order. Quite a few of my interlocutors insisted that their people had already developed a complex system of chieftaincy, with various hierarchical layers, before the onset of colonial rule. The interests at stake were obvious: paramount chiefs and their followers wanted to boost their legitimacy by invoking the pre-colonial origins of their office. In addition, Dagara not immediately connected to chiefly families sought to counter the implicit stigmatization of being a stateless and hence, in the eyes of most Ghanaians, uncivilized society. Others, however, insisted that chieftaincy was a 'White man's affair' and were proud of the original democratic traditions of the Dagara (Lentz 2003).

In any case, by the time Goody conducted his research in the 1950s colonial chieftaincy had become a deeply entrenched reality. Chieftaincy was established through a long process of trial and error and productive misunderstandings between colonial and African actors. It was built on pre-colonial power inequalities. In some places, the colonial officers ratified the influence of 'strong men' by appointing them as chiefs. Elsewhere, the earth-priestly family delegated a village spokesperson, who then became chief. From the 1930s the new institution was further formalized by establishing a hierarchy of paramount and divisional chiefs and village headmen (Lentz 2006, 2018). Chieftaincy certainly contributed to the control of local violence. It affected daily life and even settlement patterns, because 'exit' strategies (migrating to villages or bush settlements outside the reach of a particular chief) were always an option to avoid overly exploitative office holders. There were limits to chiefly despotism, not only because people threatened to move away, but also because they could refuse to obey the chiefs' demands for 'free' labour (for examples, see Goody 1956: 14; Lentz 2006: 41–43, 55–56, 157–159). If chiefs were notoriously unable to recruit such labour for maintaining roads and other duties, their lack of authority became obvious to the British, and led to their replacement by other aspirants to chiefly office.

Despite many incidences of resistance, chieftaincy became an important avenue for primitive accumulation through the extraction of tribute, as Goody notes (1956: 110), quoting a colonial officer's report on the Lawra District. This report formed part of an intense debate in the 1930s among the British administrators about the future of the indigenous political order in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Most colonial officials wanted to stabilize the institution of chieftaincy, but some proposed a return to the original political constitution and wanted to make the earth-shrine custodians the cornerstone of a reformed colonial order (Lentz 1999). In the end, the supporters of chieftaincy prevailed. By the 1950s, abolition of this institution no longer seemed an option. Even in the wake of decolonization and after independence, the local population agreed that 'chieftaincy has come to stay.' It offered a measure of representation within the new state structures, and it put the stateless Dagara finally on a par with the traditional kingdoms, which had always looked down on their stateless neighbours' supposed anarchy.

After the death of the influential and wealthy Birifu Naa in 1950 (whose family had been Goody's hosts), that community entered a period of intense conflict over chiefly succession. There was also an embittered struggle over whether the Birifu sub-divisional chiefdom should continue as a subordinate component of the paramount chiefdom of neighbouring Lawra or become independent (Lentz 2006: 185−187). These conflicts became quickly entwined with national and regional party politics. One of Goody's local friends was Abeyifaa Karbo, a member of the powerful chiefly family of Lawra, a middle-school teacher, astute politician, and later influential paramount chief himself.[11] Karbo was a clear example of how chiefly power and modern education were fused in order to build new political and economic careers (Lentz 2006: 200−209). Kumbonoh Gandah, who was later to become Goody's collaborator in the collection of material on the Bagre cult, was another example of such careers that merged resources connected to chieftaincy, school education and engagement in the new political parties. Kumbonoh was a member of the wealthy Birifu chiefly family. He used some of his inheritance to build up a profitable trading and transport enterprise. At the same time, he was highly literate and deployed these skills as the secretary of a party leader (Gandah 2004). Unlike the majority of the Birifu Naa's family members, who sided with Kwame Nkrumah's

[11] In his interview with Isidore Lobnibe (2018: 8–9), Goody speaks about his relations with one Kunyamwinibini, but this must have been precisely the man who later came to be known as Abeyifaa Karbo.

Convention People's Party, however, Kumbonoh belonged to the same oppositional party as Abeyifaa Karbo.[12]

Through his friendships with Karbo, Gandah and other educated Dagara (Lobnibe 2018: 8−11), Goody must have been fully aware of ongoing local political struggles and their entanglement with regional and national politics. However, he does not seem to have reflected on how these contemporary conflicts might have coloured people's reports about their traditional political system. Only after engaging with the Gonja, where his interlocutors' interest in chieftaincy was inescapable, did he venture some brief remarks on chieftaincy in Lawra District in the 1950s. He notes that the new local constitution established by the colonial government in 1950, which introduced elected councils, put some pressure on chiefs and headmen. They were afraid that their former subjects, once elected as councilors, would take vengeance for the chiefs' past 'sins' of seizing cattle and appropriating unpaid labour. In response to their fears, the chiefs took recourse to a new cult, the Na-angminle ('the little god'), which placed a ban on theft but also offered protection against such criticism and attack (Goody 1975: 98−99). Goody's short description of this cult makes one curious what hidden treasures his field diaries on Lawra, Birifu and Tom may still contain. They might well offer invaluable insights into the politics of chieftaincy during the 1950s, an indispensable element in writing a local history of decolonization.

The Emergence of a Middle Class

As a result of my intense interaction not only with villagers but also educated 'elites' – as the older generation of upwardly mobile men liked to call themselves (Lentz 1994; Behrends and Lentz 2012) – I came to address the emergence of a middle class among the Dagara. I have been particularly interested in the biographies of senior high school and university educated Dagara men, tracing their changing life trajectories over several generations. I have also looked at how such social mobility results in the creation of what I call 'multi-class' extended families.[13] More generally, I explore the consolidation of social stratification among people who used to constitute a quite different, more egalitarian society.

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[12] Goody edited and published Kumbonoh Gandah's autobiography (Gandah 2004; see also Lentz 2008), but was not quite as interested in editing Gandah's manuscript on his chiefly father and the history of chieftaincy in Birifu; this was a task that I eventually undertook myself (Lentz 2009a, 2012).

[13] On the particular challenges of middle-class research in Africa in general, see Lentz 2015 (on multi-class families ibid.: 43–44).

As Keith Hart has pointed out, Jack Goody has been, for almost half a century, "the leading protagonist" of "an 'anthropology of unequal society'" (Hart 2011: 9). His analyses of the connections between productive systems, the intergenerational transmission of property and the emergence of class inequality have been most inspiring for my own work. Goody's interest in these themes, however, was mainly directed at world-wide comparisons in a very *longue durée* focused "on pre-industrial societies in Europe, Asia and Africa" (Hart 2011: 5). He was less interested in analyzing the micro-dynamics of inequality in contemporary Africa. For Goody, Africa – the LoDagaa writ large – became the prime instance of classless societies. He located the reasons for the continent's fundamental difference from stratified Eurasian societies primarily in distinct demographic conditions, the technologies and conditions of agricultural production – the hoe versus the plough, land abundance versus land scarcity, subsistence farming versus creation of a surplus – and the associated property and kinship regimes (Goody 1971). In Keith Hart's words:

> Sub-Saharan Africa (…) largely missed out on this urban revolution [in the Mediterranean and Asia, C.L.] along with its agricultural technology, higher population density and unequal property relations. This is why traditional African forms of kinship and marriage are so distinctive and their societies were, relatively speaking, classless. Even where a measure of stratification existed, redistribution through kinship institutions prevented the emergence of classes with different styles of consumption (Hart 2011: 12).

Goody's observations on the absence of social stratification and institutionalized political power among the pre-colonial LoDagaa resonate with my findings, at least in part, as I have discussed above. His emphasis on the means of destruction (rather than production) for grasping the development of political power and social stratification in precolonial West African kingdoms is also pertinent.[14] During the colonial and post-colonial period, education became the most important means of social differentiation, eventually leading to the emergence of social classes. Education allowed access to employment, usually in the public sector. Interestingly, when compared with pre-colonial kingdoms, formerly stateless societies often had a head start in careers based on formal education. In the former, the ruling

[14] Some historians have, however, insisted that the exploitation of labour, through the institution of slavery, played an equally important role. The distinctiveness of African political formations and the question of Africa's supposed classlessness was discussed at length in the late 1960s and 1970s, with some overspill into the 1980s; see Coquery-Vidrovitch (1977) and Terray (1979) for contrasting positions; see also Kopytoff 1989. On the debate as to whether the concept of class is useful for analyzing African history, see Lentz 2015: 11–14; also Neubert 2019: 85–128.

houses were usually closely associated with Muslim scholars. They resisted Christian missions and were slower to accept formal, Western-style education than their acephalous neighbours.

Among the Dagara the Catholic mission proselytized successfully from 1929. The newly converted Catholics soon sent their children to the mission-established schools. In the Lawra District, by the 1950s there were two substantial cohorts of educated men (and a few women) that partly competed and partly cooperated with each other. The smaller group consisted of graduates from the government schools that the British had established, mainly in order to educate future chiefs (who were reluctant to send their children to Christian schools). The more numerous group comprised alumni of the mission-run schools who usually recruited their students among the 'commoners,' that is, families not connected with chieftaincy (Lentz 2006: 133−137, 171−174, 201−203; see also Goody 1987: 142).

After the Second World War, graduates of middle schools in Lawra District were increasingly able to attend senior high school in Tamale. Until well into the 1960s, even a middle-school leaving certificate guaranteed relatively well-paid white-collar employment. Employment outside the home region became more widespread as Dagara high school graduates began to attend university, from the 1960s onwards. At the same time, the window of opportunity that the Africanization of the civil service had opened after independence now closed. Although even university graduates began to face stiff competition on the job market, educated Dagara urbanites invested in the education of their children, seeking to perpetuate the elite or middle-class status that they had gained by sending their offspring to the best public or private schools. As Goody notes in a perceptive chapter on the impact of European schooling, "the system of education, earlier an open channel to social mobility, now becomes an instrument of status preservation" (Goody 1987: 140; cf. Miller 1974; Foster 1980).

Highly educated men and women from Lawra District rarely invested in business or entrepreneurship. Some tried their luck with commercial agriculture, but not very successfully (see e.g. Goody 1980: 145). Investment in urban property and real estate was more common. This continues to be an important strategy today: professionally successful and well-to-do Dagara couples typically buy or construct a house in Ghana's capital (or any other large city where they work) with the intention of renting it out after their retirement; they acquire another house in the regional capital Wa in order to settle there as pensioners; finally they build a house in their original village as a material statement that expresses membership in an extended kin group and local community. As these middle-class nuclear families accumulate

more assets, including cars, expensive furniture and a range of electric appliances, the intergenerational transfer of property becomes ever more conflict-laden. The families I met from the 1980s onwards, both educated and illiterate, had shifted from matrilineal towards a strictly patrilineal inheritance of moveable goods – a significant change, supported by the Catholic church, from what Goody had found in the 1950s. However, adherence to norms of patrilineal inheritance of both moveable and immoveable property does not prevent bitter struggles over the division of property objects between the wife and direct sons and daughters vis-à-vis the deceased person's brothers.

In addition to the shift towards patrilineal inheritance and the attempt, at least among middle-class families, to restrict heirs to one's immediate offspring, marriage patterns have also changed. The trend is towards class-endogamous marriage (even though the taboo against marriage within the same patriclan continues to be observed). The institution of bridewealth, about which Goody has written so much, is still vital. However, in some ways it is becoming an instrument for accentuating class boundaries rather than redistributing wealth among extended kin groups and levelling social inequality, as Goody's classical model proposed. Many not so prosperous youth and their parents consider bridewealth payments to be prohibitively high, and postpone the traditional marriage ceremonies (church marriage is not an alternative because Catholic clergy demand that traditional obligations be fulfilled before the sacrament). Even when bridewealth is paid, the fact that middle-class families tend to intermarry, and the increasing tendency for both men and women to marry outside their ethnic group, limit the redistributive impact of this form of marriage payment.

The upwardly mobile consider it of great symbolic and social importance to maintain good relations with their extended families, including family members who are considered 'less fortunate.' This implies lending at least some support to non-middle-class relations (Lentz 1994). Funerals continue to constitute the major arena at which social relations and status among the Dagara are performed, negotiated and (re)produced. But just like marriages, funerals, too, have become instruments for establishing and exhibiting class boundaries (Lentz 2009b; Lobnibe 2017).

My conclusion here is that, with regard to social stratification among the Dagara, and Africans more generally, the continent can no longer serve as a neat contrast to Eurasia. If Goody's comparative analysis of classless Africa was pertinent for the pre-colonial period, it certainly does not hold for colonial and post-colonial times. Comparison of the underlying structural causes and development paths of social inequality has to cut across continental boundaries, and attend to the many regional and even local

variations of the contours of class formation. Here too, as with political authority, it will be interesting to continue the debate on the legacy of pre-colonial (and colonial) institutions for contemporary African societies.

The Creation of Ethnicity

Goody's discussion in his monographs on the LoDagaa of how to delimit the ethnic group under study can be read as a prelude to the constructivist understanding of ethnicity that became mainstream in social anthropology somewhat later (Barth 1969). Already in the mid-1950s, scholars of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (e.g. Mitchell 1956) showed that ethnic boundaries could be (re)drawn situationally, and that labour migrants would create new ethnic groups in urban settings. In later articles the Manchester school made its critique of conventional ideas of static rural 'tribes' and new theoretical concepts such as that of 'situational ethnicity' more explicit (Mitchell 1970; Southall 1970; for an overview, see Lentz 1995). Goody was certainly a pioneer in challenging conventional notions of clearly bounded tribes. He argued convincingly against the simplistic, essentialist notions of ethnic belonging that many colonial officers, but also anthropologists of the time cherished.

It is no coincidence that Goody developed this critique of tribes in his research among the LoDagaa in the Black Volta region. From the early 1900s onwards, colonial officers had voiced doubts as to the definition of ethnic boundaries among the 'Lobi' and 'Dagarti.' They did not question the idea of tribes as such. They were convinced that every African, also in the Black Volta region, belonged to one, and only one tribe. However, they soon discovered that cultural and linguistic differences did not correspond neatly with tribal identities, but rather created a complex matrix of differences and similarities. Ethnic groups existed but were difficult to fix on the map, various district commissioners argued, because villages were 'intermixed' and compounds 'scattered' (see Lentz 2006: 72–93). In the 1920s, when the officers had become more familiar with the local populations, their ethnic categorizations became more nuanced than the earlier simple distinctions between Lobi, Dagarti and Sisala. For the 1921 population census District Commissioner Duncan-Johnstone, for instance, drew up a detailed table with sub-categories such as the 'Lobi Burifo, Lobi Dagarti, Lobi Wili, Dagarti and Issalla Grunshi' (quoted in Lentz 2006: 84). The French administrator-anthropologist Henri Labouret (1931: 215ff.) refined this scheme further, but also noted that the acephalous groups lacked a sense of tribeship – an idea also advanced by Madeline Manoukian (1951).

Goody's earliest overview (1954: 23–25) of the ethnic composition of the population in the Black Volta region largely followed Duncan-

Johnstone's and Labouret's schemes. Later, he developed them further and introduced his own system of ethnic names (Goody 1956: 16–26). Goody observed that the local actors' self-designations and the names they gave to neighbouring groups were to a certain extent directional and flexible, depending on which cultural traits they wanted to highlight. Searching for the underlying cultural logic of these changeable situational designations, Goody found that the local population connoted the term 'Lo' with matrilinear inheritance, the importance of matriclans and a particular type of xylophone while 'Dagaa' was associated with patrilinearity and further cultural traits that distinguished them from the 'Lo.' Any group, Goody writes, "unable to visualize its unity from within, defines itself in opposition to the surrounding peoples, who are considered in relation to the two cultural poles, *Lo* and *Dagaa*" (ibid.: 24). Goody's mapping of local designations of 'others' on to a directional grid of different cultural practices is intriguing, but it over-systematizes. The geographical directions of East and West probably never corresponded as neatly with the actors' cultural stereotypes of the 'Dagaa' and the 'Lo' as Goody suggests. More importantly, his classification underestimates the impact of the value-laden judgements of outsiders. British and French district commissioners, but also neighbouring Ghanaians and Ivorians all regarded the Lobi as particularly primitive, while the Dagaba were held to be somewhat more civilized – an ethnic stigmatization to which people on the ground responded by changing their self-declared identification. As early as the 1910s and 1920s, Dagara soldiers or labour migrants preferred to have the tribal label 'Dagarti' put in their documents rather than 'Lobi.' By 1960, the census, partly based on self-classification, recorded fewer than five per cent Lobi as against over eighty per cent Dagaba (Lentz 2006: 84−86).

Ultimately, Goody was interested in mapping cultural differences for comparative purposes, not in exploring the politics of the actors' self-designations. Paradoxically, however, Goody's invented terms LoDagaa, LoWiili and others became, over the years, a foil against which local intellectuals could propose their own supposedly 'true' ethnic nomenclature. Local cultural entrepreneurs saw in the anthropologist an external, and ultimately colonial, observer who did not understand Dagara society, or at least not its ethnic categories. However, as I could observe in many discussions among Dagara intellectuals, but also among villagers, people continue to disagree as to the 'correct' ethnic names (Lentz 2006: 259−263). Ironically, the fact that they tend to unite by virtue of the dynamics of segmentary opposition against external names, be it the Ghanaian label of Dagarti or Goody's artificial terms, confirms precisely the latter's

observation concerning the absence of an established, consensual set of group names.

What about the relevance of ethnic identifications and solidarity for people's activities beyond the contested issue of nomenclature? Goody's claim was that in the 1950s, and certainly not before, ethnicity did not play a role. People identified with their locality or with supra-local patriclans, but not with ethnic groups. However, my research into the history of settlement and migration has shown that signs of ethnic consciousness can already be found in the late nineteenth century, when Dagara groups opposed Muslim traders and slave raiders, but also the Sisala. Particularly on the settlement frontier, numerous clashes between Dagara and Sisala speaking groups can be connected to resource competition. To which extent ethnic solidarity in border zones also promoted a sense of community in the 'hinterland' is an open question. There, communal conflict did indeed follow the fault lines of patriclan and locality. Of course, there are methodological difficulties in reconstructing how people defined themselves in past generations. It is possible that my interlocutors projected contemporary ethnic categories into the past. However, the colonial records of the early years of colonial rule confirm the oral traditions that I collected in suggesting that some sense of ethnic commonality beyond kinship and locality was socially significant, even if it did not create bounded groups with a political constitution, as the British usage of 'tribe' would suggest (Lentz 2013: 167−184).

By the time of Goody's research in the 1950s, concepts of belonging to a tribe had long since taken hold among the population. All the factors that work by Terence Ranger (1983) and others on the 'invention of ethnicity' have highlighted were in place. Labour migrants were familiar with the colonial officers' discourse on tribes, organized solidarity along ethnic lines in the places of work, and selected the 'tribal headmen' that the British demanded (Lentz 2006: 146−152). These ideas fed back into local discourses in the North. Moreover, the Catholic Church proselytized along ethnic-linguistic boundaries and created ideas of commonality along these lines. And thirdly, chiefs and their elders had an interest in enlarging their spheres of influence by appealing to a putatively larger ethnic community which they claimed to represent. Precisely in Birifu, when Goody lived there, the Birifu Naa argued against the Lawra paramount chief to whom he was officially subservient that he and his people belonged to a completely different 'tribe' than Lawra, and should therefore have his own paramount chiefdom and his own local council (Lentz 2006: 185−187).

In the late 1980s, when I started my research, ethnic conflict was rife, particularly between the Dagara of Nandom and the Sisala of Lambussie. Disputes over land and district boundaries were strongly ethnicized. Many

local actors explained the ongoing clashes in terms of opposing ethnic personalities and group characteristics. The Youth and Development Associations, established in the 1970s ostensibly without reference to ethnicity, were in fact ethnically defined and excluded local residents who did not belong to the relevant 'autochthonous' ethnic group (Lentz 2006: 234−237). In short, for an ethnographer at the time it was nearly impossible to avoid ethnicity. In consequence, I devoted much time to tracing the historical roots and exploring the contemporary relevance of this social membership category.

Conclusion

I hope that this lecture has shown how much inspiration I have found in Goody's ethnographic writings on the LoDagaa, as well as in his comparative studies of property and social stratification and his work on communication, memory and literacy. This said, I believe that his ethnography of the LoDagaa needs to be complemented, both with regard to the historical contextualization of his findings from the 1950s and, of course, with respect to the developments of Dagara society since Goody left the field. These developments, in turn, may also throw a new light on some of Goody's earlier observations.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight three aspects in which Goody's fieldwork among the Dagara differs from my own. First and most obvious, we conducted fieldwork at different historical moments. I worked in Ghana's Upper West Region from the late 1980s, in conditions of intense political and ethnic conflict, when land rights, ethnic boundaries and chieftaincy succession were all hotly contested. Goody worked in the early 1950s, during the period of decolonization. Actually, this too was a time of intense political rivalry and chieftaincy disputes, but Goody was not interested in these issues; admittedly, they may not have cut into the local fabric of kinship and ritual as deeply as the conflicts I observed some thirty-five years later.

Secondly, we conducted fieldwork in different ways. Goody followed a classical anthropological pattern, living in a single village in 1950−1951 for some twelve months and spending another nine months in 1952 in a neighbouring community. All subsequent visits to the Dagara were very brief; he conducted more substantive research further south, among the Gonja, together with his wife Esther. I started with a rather short visit to Nandom and Hamile in 1987, then carried out several months of fieldwork among Dagara migrants in the gold mines in Southern Ghana, and then, in 1989−1990, a further half a year of fieldwork in the Nandom area (not in one village, but rather a range of villages under the Nandom paramount chief).

Since then I have visited the area – not only Dagara, but also Sisala settlements in Ghana and neighbouring regions in Burkina Faso – on more than twenty occasions, adding up to about three years. I have become very closely attached to one extended family, on whose changing politics of memory I am currently writing a book with Isidore Lobnibe, a member of that family and professor of social anthropology in the US. Interview work has led me to dozens of other villages, in some of which I have combined survey-type work with in-depth studies and repeated visits. While I have stayed faithful to the area and people, my research themes have changed, from labour migration to the social and political history of the area, land rights and settlement history, discourses on ethnicity and autochthony, cultural festivals, and the emergence of a middle class, to name but the most important ones.

Furthermore, I worked like a historian, spending many months in the colonial (and post-colonial) archives and taking the methodology of source criticism seriously, endlessly comparing documents and trying to document authors' perspectives and what could be classified as 'facts.' With regard to oral traditions, too, I have worked with hundreds of interviews, comparing multiple versions and trying to make sense of my interlocutors' often competing claims. Working in a period when a number of Dagara intellectuals had developed their own accounts of their culture, and when paramount and divisional chiefs were usually literate and insisted on reading what the anthropologist wrote about them, constituted a further challenge. The 'natives' were definitely 'gazing and talking back' (Jacobs-Huey 2002) in a much more self-asserted way than during Goody's times.

Thirdly, Goody and I had different theoretical interests. He saw in the LoDagaa a prime example of a society without writing, without a state, based on intricate networks of kinship, and so forth. He was interested in comparative sociology, first in the analysis of the micro-dynamics of patrilinearity and matrilinearity in terms of bridewealth, property regimes and inheritance, later in a macro-level study of world history, opposing classless Africa and stratified Eurasia. I was and continue to be more interested in local power dynamics, and the micro-level investigation of how people draw, contest and revise group boundaries. I look at the interplay of local cultural forms and regional as well as national and global regimes and practices. I share Goody's enthusiasm for comparative perspectives, but the range and scale of comparison are different. I use my ethnographic and historical data as case-study materials to challenge conventional wisdom and grand-scheme concepts (such as colonial rule, chieftaincy, the middle class, or neopatrimonialism). I engage in comparison with similar cases in order to tease out the decisive factors that have shaped my specific case. Unlike

Goody, I am not interested in developing a large typology or a world-encompassing dichotomy of Eurasia versus Africa. But like him, I am convinced that some of the more recent political and cultural developments among the Dagara and their neighbours continue to be at least partly shaped by their political and cultural past as a stateless society with a particular social organization. And like Jack Goody, I believe that it is productive to ground cultural analysis in a sound understanding of a society's political economy.

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Chapter 11
On 'Technologies of the Intellect' (2020)

Stephen C. Levinson

Preamble
This lecture was written in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic of 2020, and thus with the likelihood it would never actually be delivered! This virus is just one of the pestilences that has swept over Eurasia from the east in the last two millennia, retracing the networks that have linked the continents over the vast temporal and geographic scales that interested Jack Goody. Thanks to the internet, the lecture originally scheduled for May was delivered on 6th October 2020. I was pleased to expunge at least partially the debt to one of my intellectual ancestors. Goody himself would surely have been fascinated by the effects of a new medium of communication, in the age of Zoom.

Introduction

Jack Goody's work has a stupendous range, covering subjects from kinship to folklore, and flowers to metals; geographical foci from West Africa to Eurasia; and perspectives from the local to the global, and from the contemporary to the historical and archaeological. He has made important contributions in all these domains, as earlier Goody lectures have attested. It's an honour to be given the opportunity to pick up a thread in his work that has been relatively neglected, at least recently and within anthropology.

If I might be forgiven a personal note, I knew Jack Goody from the time I was a Cambridge undergraduate who suffered his lectures. They were as disorganized and as scruffy as his attire (as I later got to know, he was engaged in more serious stuff than undergraduate lectures). After I had become a Cambridge don myself, he was very influential in organizing my own later career! The story in brief is that he was a member of the Max Planck committee that founded a project group on Cognitive Anthropology, for which through his good offices I was selected as a founder. I remember vividly the meetings in Schloss Ringberg, the Max Planck kitsch castle in

Bavaria, where he urged me to live dangerously and leave my tenured Cambridge post for an uncertain future. Having decided reluctantly that I should perhaps take the opportunity seriously after all, I thought I had better hurriedly compose a lecture for the occasion, instead of joining him rowing on the lake below. His response was "You swot Levinson!" I am glad I bothered with the lecture, though for complex reasons the project group didn't last long. I ended up in another Max Planck Institute which gave me plenty of opportunities for extensive cross-cultural work that otherwise would never have come my way.

The thread of Goody's work I want to pursue tonight is his concern with literacy, or as he usually put it, with modes of communication. In the *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977; see also Goody and Watt 1963; Goody 1968a; Goody 1987), Goody pursues the old but recurrent anthropological contrast between 'modern' and 'primitive' (or 'savage') thought, an idea also implicit in much historical research, in studies of classical Greece and Rome, in folklore studies and beyond. It is explicit, of course, in Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl, and Lévi-Strauss, but also in the Soviet psychologists Luria and Vygotsky. While Goody rejects simple dichotomies of this kind, he has in mind longstanding contrasts of his own: East versus West within Eurasia, and at a different level the whole of Eurasia versus sub-Saharan Africa. These differences have much to do with the nature of capital and the kinship that channels it. But they must also be investigated via another causal chain, namely the slow historical transition to literacy, and then, initially exclusively in the West, to alphabetic writing, opening up the possibility of universal literacy. The contrasts between West (alphabet) and East (phonosemantic and complex syllabic scripts) nest within the grander contrast between Eurasia (ancient literacy) and Africa (ancient illiteracy).

A Revolutionary Technology: Goody's Thesis

Goody held that writing was a revolutionary technology that has transformed both society and the human psyche. "The notion of representing a sound by a graphic symbol is itself so stupefying a leap of the imagination that what is remarkable is not so much that it happened relatively late in human history, but that it happened at all" (Goody and Watt 1963: 315). As far as we know it has been invented independently only four times, in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and Mesoamerica (and perhaps the first sparked the second and third).[1]

[1] A number of still enigmatic scripts may or may not be indigenous orthographies, (as opposed to systems of mnemonics), e.g. the Rongorongo script of Easter Island. Most such

Some of that sense of wonder can perhaps be regained by considering the impact of the first decipherment of the Gilgamesh tablet in the British Museum in 1872. The autodidact Akkadian scholar George Smith was so overwhelmed when he discovered the Biblical flood story lock stock and barrel that he took off all his clothes in the Museum and ran around naked![2] Royalty flocked to hear him explain this communication, which after 2600 years came across miraculously clear.

There's little doubt that Goody was drawn to the subject as a potential explanation of the 'great divide' between traditional and modern societies, and more specifically between East and West, and (especially) Africa and Eurasia. But in later works he was properly cautious about the revolutionary repercussions of writing. Literacy was not like gunpowder, an instant revolutionary technology. Crucially, he made the distinction between the technology of a writing system and the uses to which it is actually put (what he called the 'means' [or 'technology of the intellect'] as distinct from the 'mode' of communication; see Goody 1987: 59). He was interested in restricted literacies of different kinds, as where the orthographies were so complex that they were only mastered by elite bureaucrats or priests. Both Egyptian and Mayan hieroglyphic scripts numbered a thousand or more intricate glyphs, combining pictographic, semantic and phonetic information, supplemented with determinatives (which had no role in the spoken language) pointing to the intended semantic category. Early Mesopotamian scripts were restricted to scribes, and Linear B to bureaucrats. Sometimes literacy has been restricted for religious reasons, as in the Brahmanical monopoly over Vedic learning or Arabic mastery in traditional West Africa (see Goody 1968b: 11ff.). In medieval western Christianity it was restricted to the church (where it offered a route to social mobility) and later to the nobility, in part because Latin was the medium, until the rise of the mercantile classes in the last centuries before the invention of printing. In early modern England, female literacy remained negligible. It only reached 30% by 1750. World literacy levels as a whole only reached 50% with the dissolution of colonial rule around 1950.[3] It has always been in the interests of the ruling classes to restrict this radical agent of social mobility. Goody made the point that the potentially revolutionary effects of writing can be held at bay for centuries; but once the tiger is released, social and cultural change is massively accelerated. Even if he was wrongly interpreted as

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cases, like the Cherokee syllabary, have been inspired by acquaintance with descendants of one of the four independent sources (see Harris 1986).

[2] See https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/magazine/2018/01-02/history-gilgamesh-epic-discovery/

[3] https://ourworldindata.org/literacy#historical-change-in-literacy

simply replacing one dichotomy (e.g. primitive vs. modern) with another, his focus on literacy was never purely descriptive, because it had an important causal component.

As always, Goody researched the issues deeply. He updated and softened his account of the revolutionary nature of the alphabet in *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (1987). Here he also drew attention to the deep relationship of writing to visual art, for example in ancient Egyptian art, although he didn't dwell much on the special ontology of writing. A picture is (often) a representation of something; but a written word is a representation of sounds (at least on the standard alphabetic account) that in turn are a representation of something – that is, it is a representation of a representation. Although this curious ontology seems to open a gulf between writing and representational art, it is actually more of a gradation. Consider for example a road sign depicting falling rocks. This is also a representation of a representation ('beware possible rockfalls'; see Harris 1986). Road signs are intended to bypass language and have universal interpretability. In this respect they belong with musical and mathematical notation, which are forms of writing that have no dependency on any particular spoken language. Notice that Chinese, with very different phoneme inventories in its ten major dialects, has a writing system partly independent of the sounds of the languages thanks to a core set of symbols that are meaning based. The wider accessibility of Chinese writing systems (both the traditional and the simplified) comes at the cost of having to learn at least 3000 basic symbols. In many periods of history, we have been willing to give up the correspondence with spoken language in order to retain greater universality, as when a written archaic language is used as the medium (Latin in pre-modern Europe and Aramaic in the Assyrian empire). The virtues of the alphabet, with its ideal of a close correspondence with the phonemes of a specific language, can be overdone: there are costs as well as benefits of the close isomorphism of an orthography with a spoken language.

Goody explores the implications of literacy and the long causal chains it triggers off. As he puts it (1987: 53f.), the effects exist "at three related levels, storage (intergenerational transmission), communication (intra-generational) and internal 'cognitive' effects." The storage function enables records that in turn enable book-keeping, systematic inventories and taxation. More fundamentally, it enables the vast accumulation of knowledge and expertise on which modern polities are based, opening up the possibility of systematic science and history. Many observations and scientific theories rely on the accumulation of data over greater timescales than a single human's working life. Thus, it was the availability of astronomical records

dating back hundreds of years that allowed Halley in 1705 to predict the 75-year periodicity of the comet that bears his name.

Literacy also fundamentally extends the nature of human communication, both over space and over time. The spatial dimensions contribute to the formation of large centralized polities and empires, while the temporal dimensions make possible a completely different order of cultural accumulation – an ability to engage with our long dead ancestors. But in addition, and this is crucial for my lecture tonight, literacy changes the nature of mental life, because it makes visible and recurrently inspectable what is otherwise a transient speech signal that rapidly fades from recall. Goody illustrates with lists, which seem to be the earliest uses to which literacy is put, and also with tabular representations, which in the early stages of literacy often have a magical function. Some forms of early writing are almost cryptographic, such as the twig runes deciphered by counting places in five segments of the alphabet (Findell 2014: 62ff.). In the more rational direction, written speech can be inspected for its logic and contradictions. This naturally gives rise to metalinguistic deliberation, without which dictionaries, the study of rhetoric and logic cannot easily arise. And clearly writing offers an extraordinary prosthetic to our poor memories.

Each of these causal chains could engender a dozen PhDs and a score of monographs. Take for example the relation of literacy to state formation. Large states have come into being without literacy. It is common to cite the Inca, whose *quipu* technology, however, performed some of the same functions as writing. Different kinds of information could be encoded by knots on different colours of string, but aside from precise coding of numbers the interpretations may have relied on verbal messages accompanying the strings. The main driver of state formation may often be military rivalry (Turchin et al. 2013), but literacy is a closely linked concomitant, a facilitator of the efficient bureaucracy that enhances state formation. Ancient Rome employed the same number of bureaucrats as the European Commission (Crooks and Parsons 2016). When empires fail, literacy erodes, as both the Mayan states and the Roman empire demonstrate. It may be in the self-interest of bureaucracies to restrict literacy to a specialist class, caste or cadre, as with imperial Chinese bureaucrats or the ancient Egyptian or Mayan priesthoods, where the formidable complexity of the writing systems helped to maintain monopolies of power. Goody (1968b) suggested that restricted literacy was part of what marked off the East from the West. Compared to China, alphabetic urban literacy was higher in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period in the West. Unrestricted literacy was perhaps a key factor in the characteristically Western rational scepticism that

underlay the growth of science and technology (a more nuanced view can be found in Goody 1987).

But these are not directions I shall follow tonight. I am particularly interested in changes in the mode of communication that radically affect our very mentation. Reducing – traducing perhaps – Goody's discursive thesis into a nutshell of propositions, his claims amount to something like this:

1. Literacy changes our modes of communication by adding a channel that allows communication over time and space. The spatial extension allows integration of larger communities and polities, and unrestricted literacy affords democratization and the spread of radical doctrines, as it did in the Reformation or the rise of socialism. The temporal extension allows us to commune with our ancestors, thereby enabling an unprecedented accumulation of knowledge, opinion and regulation. The existence of a literary channel may also affect the oral mode of communication, as when oratory becomes informed by rhetoric (Goody 1977: 159). These are, as it were, the overt material and social affordances.
2. Literacy changes our inner life, our mentation and cognition. It does so by externalizing thought and language, which then become recurrently inspectable. This rumination or metacognition is transformatory, making possible the checking of deductions, the induction of generalizations, the addition of long lists of numbers or more complex calculations, even the exact scanning of poetry. "The written is externalised thought which is in turn reflexively interiorised by the reader and indeed by the writer" (Goody 2002: 26). By externalizing the thought or the language, patterns become visible, as in anagrams, in the diagonals of matrices, the realization of gaps in tables (still informing the discovery of new elements in the Periodic Table) or the emergence of the whole field of geometry, cartography and the related skills of navigation (Goody 1977: ch. 4). The externalization of thought then becomes internalized – our thoughts are channeled by the re-ingestion of externalized thoughts, and by the mental disciplines instilled by externalization. A simple example is the acronym or abbreviation, which by reducing the mental 'chunks' makes mental computation much more efficient (Miller 1956). In addition to the computational advantages, literacy offers a fundamental shift in our memory capacities, as reflected in the prevalence of lists in the early cultural stages of literacy (Goody 1977: ch. 5).
3. The changes in our mental life have potentially profound social consequences. Externalization of thought not only makes it available

> over time and space but it also grounds the critical inspection of others' messages, so engendering the kind of reciprocal scepticism that informs science and social and cultural change. The cognitive gulf between literate and illiterate peoples is indeed profound (as the Soviet psychologists Vygotsky and Luria had showed), but this does not support simple cultural dichotomies of the kind that Lévy-Bruhl or Lévi-Strauss imagined. This is because of the varieties in the technology itself (e.g. alphabetic, syllabic or phono-semantic), its social distribution (restricted versus universal) and the cultural uses to which it is put (religious, bureaucratic, literary or scientific).

In the rest of this lecture I shall concentrate on the second of these propositions, which never ceased to intrigue Goody even though he was no specialist in the cognitive sciences. I shall not dwell on the way he mocked structuralist analyses (1977: 62ff.), or rebuked folklorists for mistaking artful variations on a theme for formulaic speech (1977: ch. 6). I am more interested in the central thesis itself. Let me quote from *The Domestication of the Savage Mind:*

> [List-making] it seems to me is an example of the kind of decontextualization that writing promotes, and one that gives the mind a special kind of lever on 'reality.' I mean by this that it is not simply a matter of an added 'skill,' as is assumed to be the case with mnemonics, but of a change in 'capacity' (…) my intended meaning seems similar to George Miller's when he writes 'the kind of linguistic recoding that people do seems (…) to be the very life-blood of the thought processes (1956: 95). Writing, list making, involve linguistic recoding' (Goody 1977: 109).

He goes on to quote Bruner to the effect that

> cognitive growth (…) occurs as much from the outside in as the inside out. Much of it consists in a human being's becoming linked with culturally transmitted "amplifiers" of motoric, sensory and reflective capacities (Bruner 1966: 1–2).

Goody argues that

> (…) the graphic representation of speech (…) is a tool, an amplifier, a facilitating device, of extreme importance. It encourages reflection upon and the organization of information, quite apart from mnemotechnic functions (…). The existence of the alphabet therefore changes the type of data an individual is dealing with, and it changes the repertoire of programmes he has available for treating this data. Whether or not it changes the hardware, the organization of the central nervous system, (…) is another matter, but on the analogy of language the possibility is there (1977: 109–110).

At the time Goody was first entertaining these ideas in the 1960s, similar notions were already in the air. Marshall McLuhan, famous for his dictum 'the medium is the message,' was exploring how changes in the modes of communication had changed the cultural world. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) he argued that the alphabet and subsequently moveable type had profound mental and social consequences through the dispersion of ideas.[4] Walter J. Ong, McLuhan's student and another literary and communication theorist, argued (1967, 1982) that there was a continuum from orality to literacy, from the early stages of scribal literacy through to the stage of residual orality. He associated orality with circular patterning and reasoning, and literacy with linear development and reasoning. From the viewpoint of the student of literature and the classics (whence Goody came), one could observe the colonization of the interior landscape by self-conscious deliberation. The emergence of articulated individuality was a consequence of literacy.[5] Closer to anthropological *terra firma*, the field-working psychologists Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole were by the 1970s empirically investigating the transformatory role of literacy on cognition among the Vai in Liberia (Scribner and Cole 1981). Their finding that an indigenous script did not in itself cause radical transformations of memory, classification or inference tempered Goody's later work (Goody 1987: ch. 9). But literacy did have far-reaching effects when embedded in Western schooling, in line with Goody's insistence that it is the historical variety of the social institutions that inculcate, enhance and exploit the full potential of literacy. Michael Cole inspired an interesting but short-lived movement, variously known as Situated Cognition, Distributed Cognition, or Ecological Cognition, which combined insights from Vygotskyan psychology (as then becoming available in English) and sociocultural anthropology.[6] The movement emphasized the role of situated social interaction involving cognitive artefacts – that is, things which aid memory and computation. The

[4] Although McLuhan studied in the English Faculty in Cambridge in between 1936 and the early 1940s, where Goody might well have met him, Goody never refers to him. References to Ong are, however, copious.

[5] "The fact that we do not commonly feel the influence of writing on our thoughts shows that we have interiorized the technology of writing so deeply that without tremendous effort we cannot separate it from ourselves or even recognize its presence and influence" (Ong 1986: 19).

[6] Another important antecedent was the Cambridge maverick, Gregory Bateson (see Bateson 1972). See Overmann and Malafouris (2018) for an overview of this movement, which continues to flourish in cognitive archaeology (Overmann 2017).

insight, attributed to Vygotsky, was that external procedures can become internalized so that they come to be part of our mental architecture.[7]

More recent work has proven that literacy radically restructures the seat of cognition, the brain. Brain imaging of matched literates versus illiterates (e.g. nuns and their illiterate sisters, or schooled soldiers vs. unschooled guerillas) shows that reading exploits brain plasticity to build greatly enhanced connections (white matter tracts) between the hemispheres (the corpus callosum), and enlarged areas of grey matter in crucial locations (Castro-Caldas et al. 1998; Carreiras et al. 2009; Dehaene 2009; Paz-Alonso et al. 2019). The differences are substantial enough to form an anatomical signature of literacy. A particular visual area becomes a specialized grapheme detector (dubbed the visual word form area) at the expense of the neighboring area involved in face discrimination (the fusiform gyrus). These adaptations greatly facilitate and speed up the reading process. Just as the use of muscles changes underlying bone structure and density, so culturally specialized uses of the brain enhance its capacities in relevant areas. Indeed, it is well known that literacy, by virtue of exercising neural tissue, helps to protect against dementia and declining mental powers (Manly et al. 2003). Dehaene and Cohen (2007) describe this as the 'cultural recycling of neuronal circuitry,' the cultural exploitation of pre-existing machinery (evolved in this case for fine line discrimination). The consequence is that orthographies tend to utilize the same recurrent sorts of lines, curves and angles. It's a mutual re-adaptation of culture and brain around a technology that enhances mental processing in one domain, at some cost to others (face recognition areas in this case).

[7] Vygotsky's 1934 book *Thought and Language* was not translated into English until 1962. A better version was published by MIT Press in 1986. His views probably had little influence on Goody's early work but are clearly evident in Goody 1977.



Plate 1. A young man records who gave which valuable to whom at a mortuary ceremony on Rossel Island, Papuan New Guinea. (Photo: Stephen C. Levinson)

Goody's suggestion that changes in the modes of communication may have potentially deep mental impact was thus prescient. His characterization of the early stages of the impact of literacy also strikes a chord in myriad ethnographic observations. Let me illustrate here from my own work on Rossel Island, the 'ultima Thule' in the long line of islands trailing out to the east from Papua New Guinea. First contacted by Western sailors in the 1840s, but not effectively missionized until 1953, and neglected by governments and traders by virtue of its distance and isolation, this is a society where literacy has few functions. Thanks to mission schooling, most adults nowadays are capable of reading and writing in English, although in the absence of shops, state institutions or much reading matter, there is little use for these skills. There's a local bible translation, but because the indigenous language has 90 phonemes and the writing system involves complex diacritics, few master it. So what are the few examples of writing used for? As Goody predicts, primarily for lists, tables and religious

purposes (for Christianity, of course, is a religion of the book).[8] At the major *rites de passage*, marriages and funerals in particular, spectacular exchanges of valuables (shell 'money,' shell necklaces, stone axes) take place (Armstrong 1928; Liep 2009). A young man is pressed into service to note who donated which axe, or which high-ranking shell coin, and to whom it was entrusted for safe keeping – for within a generation or two it will flow back to the donors or their descendants (Plate 1). An elaborate table is constructed accordingly (see Plate 2). Although this allows public inspection of the records at the time (and the frantic nature of the transactions makes that invaluable), it does not serve as an effective long-term record – paper-devouring cockroaches or one of the frequent cyclones are likely to destroy it in a few years.

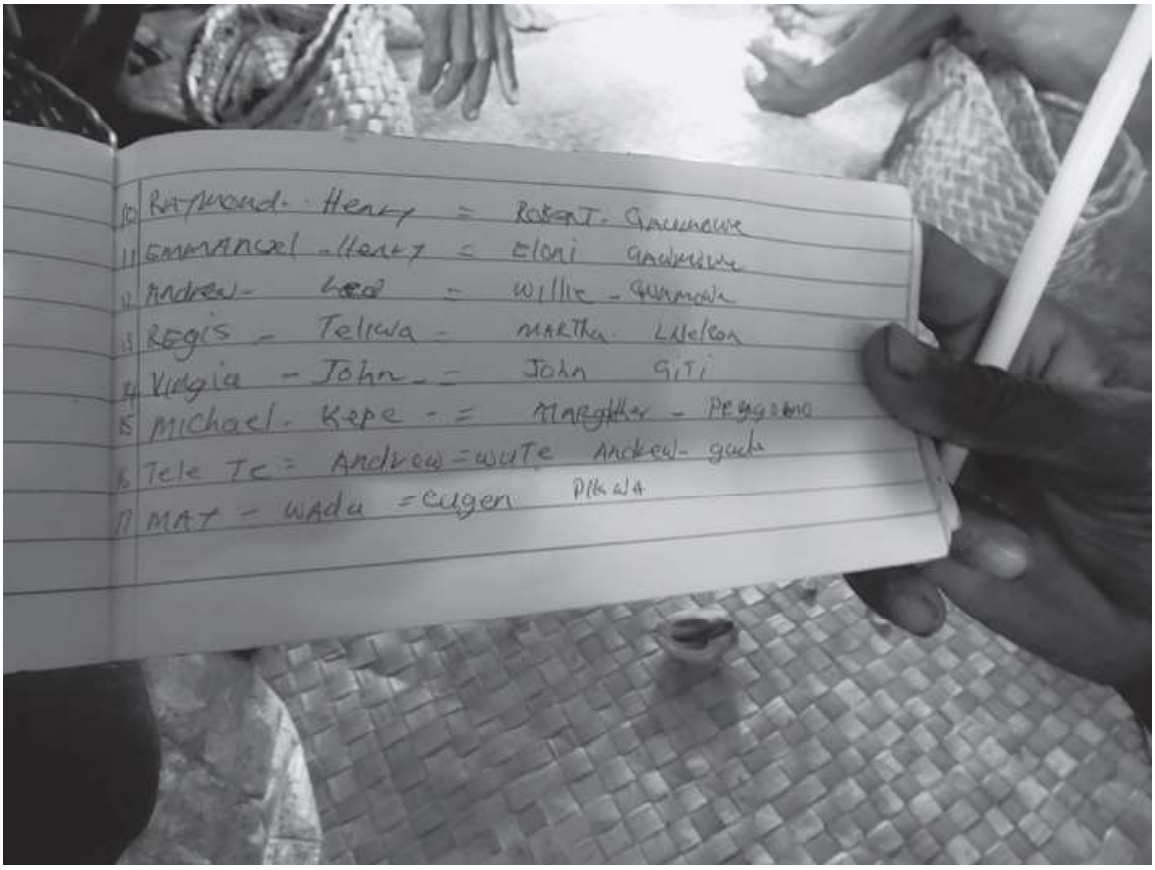


Plate 2. A typical written record of axe givers and receivers at a mortuary ceremony on Rossel Island (August 2016). It records for example that axe number 10 was given by Raymond Henry to Robert Guamowe (English names in the spelling used). (Photo: Stephen C. Levinson)

[8] The esoteric value of literacy is shown by the Rossel cultural origin myth in which the culture hero produces a little black book along with the first shell money – a book since lost but whose reinvocation figured in a recent cargo cult on the island.

Collective memory remains the critical instrument. I have noted in the field that Rossel people demonstrate spectacular memories, learning for example one of the local genre of light operettas which run all night and consist of up to 50,000 words in just 10 rehearsals. Participants (male, aged from 7 to 80) must learn all the words, since all may be picked on to sing solo at random intervals. Goody (1987: ch. 8) suggests that, at least in traditional West Africa, *verbatim* learning was not the aim. This he held is a preoccupation of literate cultures. The Rossel song performances, of similar length to the Bagre myths transcribed by Goody, show that exact repetition can in fact also be a characteristic of non-literate verbal performance.[9] As in many simple societies, Rossel children are given long verbal messages to deliver verbatim to another distant household. We have examined also Rossel peoples' knowledge of the vast kinship network that ultimately unites all 6000 of them (Casillas and Levinson, in preparation). We have found that children on Rossel Island are precocious, knowing and reasoning about relationships in a way that Piaget would have predicted was impossible at a young age. Kids of six or seven can recite their ancestors up to 11 generations back. Literacy trains short-term or working memory (the brief 20 second buffer with which we do immediate computations) and therefore confers some immunity to the inevitable erosion of working memory with age (Kosmidis et al. 2011). But on the other hand, it may well erode our rote-learning skills, our long-term memory. The inverse relationship between advanced literacy and trained long-term memory seems intuitively clear (most field workers have been subjected to the local astonishment at the ethnographer's abject failure to remember all the words or facts given to him or her), although I know of no science on the subject. Socrates relates in the Phaedrus (Fowler 1914: 274f.) how the Egyptian god Thoth[10] presented the Pharaoh with writing as his greatest invention, but Pharaoh responded,

> this invention will induce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practice their memory (...). You have invented an elixir not of memory but of reminding; and you offer your students the appearance of wisdom, not true wisdom.[11]

Indeed literacy has costs, as the Pharaoh saw, for those of us lost in the labyrinths of bookish learning.

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[9] "By and large in the simpler societies exact repetition of standardized verbal forms (…) is rare" (Goody 1987: 177).

[10] Thoth was also appropriately patron of all areas of knowledge and 'lord of time' and 'reckoner of years' (Wilkinson 2005: 216).

[11] I owe the citation to R. Harris (1986: 19). The Sumerians too had a myth about the origin of writing, which in their case was the invention of a king (Yushu 2010).

Generalizing the Notion of a 'Technology of the Intellect'

Let us now return to the central idea, the concept of a technology of the intellect, where externalization of a mental process has both social and mental consequences. One reason perhaps that current anthropology hasn't pursued the concept of the technology of the intellect is the woeful neglect of material culture – there is extraordinarily little work on the daily life of things.[12] Let me give a very simple example of a thing that serves a practical and mental function: the Mayan planting stick or dibber. Every Tzeltal man was traditionally armed with a planting stick, roughly standardized to about a meter long. It serves to prick the earth for inserting seed corn, 3 per dib. But it also serves to mark the distances between plants, and thus between rows of corn. In so doing, it enables a measure of the day's work, and the expected crop, and even the size of a field for land transactions. The farmer can think 'I've planted twenty rows of twenty dibs, so I've made 400 holes, with 3 seeds each, and thus I can expect 1200 plants each with 2 ears of corn, so 2400 cobs, or a quarter of a year's supply. So, this field is worth a quarter of my family's capital.' A hired planter can likewise be paid in tortillas according to the rows planted. In this way a simple tool can facilitate complex computations, and the same goes for all the traditional measuring baskets for grain (like the bushel) or other produce. English traditional measures of length and volume come from semi-standardized things or processes, from furlongs (the length an ox could plough without rest) to acres (the area ploughed by an ox in a day), from chains (100 links in a measuring chain) to perches (the measuring rod). These examples should open our eyes to the huge range of artefacts that have played an important role in our mental processes, long before the mobile phone or the GPS machine.

Mayan peasant cultures have had market economies, where measures flourish, for millennia. It is interesting to contrast Rossel Island, which has no market economy (Liep 2009: ch.5). Rossel families and villages are highly self-sufficient, but as is common throughout Melanesia they freely exchange goods in the expectation of future reciprocity. They use no standard measures. When they build a canoe or house, young men are sent to the bush and return with the longest poles they can carry. Constructions are judged optically, and the extra lengths are simply cut off and thrown away. Both labour and raw materials are not in short supply – why measure?

[12] An exception is the work in ethnoarchaeology (e.g. Malafouris 2013), and the exceptional work of e.g. Hutchins (1995), Suchman (2007) in the Situated Cognition tradition. See also Jeanne E. Arnold et al. 2012. *Life at home*. Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, UCLA.

Dwelling on simple measures like the Mayan dibber may seem incongruous in our modern world, suffused by information technology. But their very simplicity offers our best bet for understanding the fundamental workings of 'technologies of the intellect.' Let us call such objects 'cognitive artefacts:' what we have in mind are external aids to solving internal cognitive problems, themselves mostly of course sparked by external problems of some kind. We shall return later to give a more precise characterization. Let us now traverse a series of domains, focusing on relatively simple cognitive artefacts and the principles that underlie their cognitive efficacy.

Consider first the technologies for measuring time, which came to play such an important role in Western social life, from regulating religious observances to coordinating work and warfare (not to mention finding longitude in eighteenth century navigation). We have, of course, an inner sense of time, based on internal cycles from the brain, the pulse, the breathing cycle, circadian rhythms, menstrual cycles, associative learning (as in Pavlov's dogs) and other sources, but this sense is notoriously contextually variable. These internal rhythms take their cue from external sources like the diurnal, lunar and seasonal cycles. Precision only comes from controlling this external reference, for example by reference to the fruiting of trees or movements of celestial bodies. I know I was startled to be told by Mayan hosts to get up when the moon had just arrived at an indicated point in the sky, since I don't keep track of the advancing movements of the moon, and indeed find its movements mysterious. Upper Paleolithic hunters seem to have kept track of the movements of the moon with the aid of notched calendars (Marshak 1972). Similarly, I've noted Rossel Islanders point to spots in the night sky and arrange a meeting when the sun will be just there at the indicated spot (Levinson and Majid 2013; see also Floyd 2016). Although we know something about ancient time measurement in the Americas and elsewhere (Aveni 1989), there is a relative dearth of ethnographic observation (but see e.g. Evans-Pritchard 1940 on the temporal organization of Nuer life).

For the coordination of complex societies and markets, a tool is needed to divide the day objectively. Sundials (with 12-hour divisions) go back to ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (see Aveni 1989). At root, they are simple things. When running memory experiments with Aboriginal people in Cape York I used photos, and was startled to find people using the inadvertent shadows in the photos to estimate the time and direction of the shoot. So, one's own shadow gives a measure of time. But as greater accuracy was sought, it was found that the gnomon (shadow-casting structure) should be aligned with the celestial poles, and allowances had to

be made for the oscillations of the earth's axis with regards to the sun's ecliptic. A great deal of careful observation and understanding of celestial motion goes into the construction of an accurate sundial (Rohr 1996). Water clocks (based on controlling drip or submersion) were used by the Greeks and Romans to allocate times to plaintiff and defendant in court. They also featured in traditional Persian irrigation, apportioning water shares by time.[13] Precise diurnal time measurement played an important role in ancient marketing, as it still does in international stock markets. Medieval mechanical clocks ushered in the search for ever more precise diurnal units, with the increasing interest in the measurement of the working day, the management of shifts, and in general the control of productive labour. A great deal of astronomical knowledge goes into calendrical time (Goody [1987: 213] is surely right that this presupposes literacy) and its externalization as cognitive artefacts like astronomical alignments and clocks, calendars and tables (see Aveni 1989).[14] What I want to stress, following Goody, is the intimate connection between the cognitive technology of time and socio-economic complexity and political organization.

Another domain where technologies of the intellect are obvious is the realm of number systems and mathematics. Our native grasp of number (as shown in infancy) is identical to that of most other mammals: we have an innate ability to subitize (assess numbers of items at a glance) up to about 4 items (compare your visual assessment of 000 versus 0000000). Beyond that we have only a sense of approximate number or mass (as when we choose the larger pile of chocolates). To bridge the two systems and make the approximate one precise, we need a number system (Dehaene 1996). Peoples like the Pirahã have no number system and cannot make this bridge (Gordon 2004; Frank et al. 2008), thus demonstrating the cultural nature of number. The first step is to make a 1:1 correspondence between the items of interest and some external counters. This is the basis of tally systems, which seem to have already been in use in the upper Paleolithic (as with the Ishango bone, made 20,000 years ago). Tallies also seem to be the ultimate origin of our writing systems, since Sumerian writing seems to have developed as a way

[13] Leach (1961:160ff.) describes how water rights are distributed in Pul Eliya, not in this case by time, but by gaps in miniature weirs that divide water by proportion of the flow. This is another kind of cognitive artefact where complex fractions of water flow are assigned by so many inches of weir after weir.

[14] Remarkable is the ancient Greek Antikythera mechanism, a gear-driven calendrical computer that predicted eclipses, lunar movements, and probably planetary motions (Marchant 2008). Perhaps in this account I have overemphasized the practical side of our computational interests, and underestimated the role of the pleasure we get from just understanding the workings of the natural world.

of notating on the outside of a clay envelope the kinds of tallies within (Schmandt-Besserat 1996). Indeed, the earliest orthographies are almost certainly numeral systems. Tally marks could be made on a stick, and then split to create an unalterable record for both parties to a transaction. Such a system remained at the heart of the British Exchequer (named after the checker board used as a primitive abacus) until 1826.

Tallies come in many different forms. Rossel Island is famous in economic anthropology for its shell money system (Armstrong 1928; Liep 2009). In one of the few linguistic loans from surrounding Austronesian peoples, Rossel Island people use a decimal number system, with names for large numbers. One type of shell is a pierced polished roundel of Chama, a clam bivalve. These are kept strung on tough stick-like coconut thongs, ten shell 'coins' per string. When it comes time to pay brideprice, the groom travels around the island collecting contributions from all his kin, which will have to be repaid in due course. At the ceremony, the shell 'coins' themselves are taken off the thongs, and restrung on a long thread which is displayed at the marriage ceremony and judged by its rough length, as a celebratory show of the girl's worth, and the groom's kin support. How do they keep count of the over one thousand such shells typically given as bridewealth at a marriage, especially given the chaotic hubbub of the event? By unstringing the coins, the old thongs can be collected in the hand: counting them as the 'coins' are unstrung will give an immediate indication of the number of groups of ten. Thus, aided by the decimal system, the officiating men can announce the triumphal total number in real time. The thongs act as tallies.

Given 1:1 correspondences, the next step in building a number system is to construct an ascending series. Here again, an external device is handy – and the hands indeed provide a ready beginning. Although the digits offer us both a ready-made decimal and vintegesimal system, many cultures have used other body parts as well, resulting in a huge diversity of body-counting systems (Bender and Beller 2012). Once we have names or graphemes for each place in the series, together with the idea of 1:1 correspondence, we have a number system (Ifrah 1998). For larger numbers, counters can be used, and many cultures have discovered that complex calculations can be carried out much more easily with an abacus made of counters and tablets, compartments or rods (Ifrah 1998: 125ff.). The Chinese abacus and its relatives are still in use today, greatly facilitating routine calculations. It has been shown that routine use of the external device soon gives rise to the ability to work with a virtual, mental abacus. Western children trained in this method are fast mental calculators (Barner et al. 2016), using visual imagery specific to the machine (Frank and Barner 2012). This re-internalization of

an external aid parallels what Goody thought occurred with literacy, and is an important part of the efficacy of technologies of the intellect. As with literacy, changes in the neural anatomy reflect this re-wiring of the mind (Wang 2020).[15]

Another domain where cognitive artefacts have played a crucial role is navigation. First, there are directional aids, from the simple mast pennant indicating prevailing wind direction to the compass. Second there are the devices that have helped navigators to get a 'fix' – from the medieval cross-staff, to the celestial astrolabe or sextant, and the chronometer which made possible the Age of Discovery and Western colonization. The use of radar beacons by aviation and shipping has allowed for precise homing with limited visibility since the Second World War, while the development of GPS in the 1990s revolutionized navigation on land, at sea and in the air. Charts and maps (or their modern equivalent the GPS-enabled chart plotter) have played a critical part in the development of world commerce. All of these complex artefacts allow us to externalize computations, which can then be married with other calculations and observations to yield a probable location and heading. This has been much studied in the history of science. By the time anthropologists investigated indigenous navigation techniques, most of the extensive knowledge had already been lost, but what we have shows how rich the lore was. Polynesian navigators (Gladwin 1970; Lewis 1972; Feinberg 1988) used celestial maps to help memorize star rising and setting points. As stars rise four minutes earlier each night, a great sequence of guiding stars must be remembered for each island destination (Lewis 1972: 45), and instructors lay out star rising and setting points with shells in the sand (Gladwin 1970: 129). Such navigation techniques allowed Austronesian languages and cultures to straddle the world from Madagascar to Hawai'i, just as the compass and astrolabe and paper charts facilitated Western colonization, the slave trade and globalization more than a millennium later.

Traditional Western navigation externalizes the process, plotting progress on charts as calculated from compass, ship's log (speed through the water), and astronomical observation (see Hutchins 1995). Traditional Polynesian techniques relied on internalization of star charts, or charts showing wave interference patterns around islands, wind compasses, knowledge of the signs of land over the horizon (orographic cloud, behaviour of sea birds, etc.). Both systems depended on formal instruction with graphical explanations, but the Polynesian navigator relied on observation, practice and memory rather than cognitive artefacts. As with

[15] Frank and Barner (2012) show that mental arithmetic involves fundamental visual processing in mental abacus users.

literacy and the abacus, navigational cognitive artefacts can be internalized, i.e. used virtually in our mental lives. Although American interpretations of Vygotsky have come in for criticism of late (Miller 2011), his theories that instruction and practice lead to internalization of cultural solutions, opening up to fundamental reconceptualizations and new ways of processing data, seem a valuable underpinning of Goody's thesis.

Studies of indigenous wayfinding have revealed striking contrasts with Western everyday practice: while we find our way using instructions of the kind 'go left then right, then straight ahead,' many indigenous cultures prefer 'go north, then south, then east' adding the actual direction of the overall trajectory (Levinson 2003a). The ability to do so relies, of course, on a constant sense of direction, a mental compass as it were. Working with an Australian Aboriginal group (the Guugu Yimithirr) in Cape York (Levinson 1997), I found the accuracy of the mental compass and the calculations using it quite extraordinary. Checks on bush walks showed an unerring precision, and formal experiments confirmed that bodily left and right played no role in participants' spatial memory. A gesture about where to buy fish-bait in a store which I took to mean 'on the left-hand side' meant 'in the freezer on the northern side.' Dreams were reported as oriented, photos inspected for shadows to help locate them, bible stories fixed in orientation: even the direction of heaven had to be ascertained! Asked how they manage to drive on the left, they gave me the simple algorithm: the driver keeps his body in the middle of the road. My efforts to disturb their extraordinary sense of direction, for example, by driving them down a winding road in the night with the cabin lights on, failed completely. The question is: where does this impressive mental compass come from?

I believe the system is inculcated in childhood by language, gesture and example. Children would hear 'Move a bit east,' 'Watch out for that deaf adder under the leaf just south of your foot,' 'Go and get the fishing line I left west of the mango tree' and so forth, accompanied mostly by gesture which gives more precise indication of angle. Haviland (personal communication) has calculated that about one word in ten in Guugu Yimithirr is a cardinal direction term, so this is a system that is massively overlearned in childhood. Unfortunately, language transmission has been partially interrupted, and it wasn't easy to study the ongoing acquisition of the Guugu Yimithirr system by children (but see de Leon 1995). But in Tenejapa, a Mayan community in which Penelope Brown and I have worked (Levinson and Brown 1994), a similar reliance on internalized cardinal directions offered us the chance to study how children acquire this system. Both the Aboriginal and Mayan groups have labels for cardinal directions, and Mayan kids learn remarkably early the same non-egocentric mode of

spatial calculation: kids are told to go and get the bush knife put aside north of the campfire, or at the southern boundary of the field, and so internalize a mental compass, without which the simplest of conversations is hard to understand (Brown and Levinson 2000). Alternative accounts of how children learn such a radically different solution to spatial conceptualization might emphasize things other than communication. Clearly ecology matters: we live in rabbit warrens with limited visual access to landmarks or celestial bodies, they live in the big outdoors; we follow meandering roads, they 'bush whack' innovating new paths. But ecology merely provides the functional challenges that culture must answer to, and individuals must learn to master. From the perspective of the Tzeltal child the linguistic input is crucial – it provides recurrent insistent training on the mental compass. Language and associated gesture become crucial tools for solving spatial problems, and what has been learned externally through communication comes to play a dominant role in internal mental life (as mentioned, Guugu Yimithirr speakers see orientation in photos through the shadows, and they even claim to dream in an oriented dreamscape).

Language as a Technology of the Intellect

This brings us to the central realization that language itself is a cognitive technology. This obvious implication has been resisted in the language sciences due to the Chomskyan emphasis on the innate and arbitrary character of language, with nooks and crannies of anti-functionality. That emphasis is thankfully fading (Evans and Levinson 2009), and in any case it is both self-evident and an established fact that languages, in the way that they frame concepts, can aid computation. Take for example number words. People who speak languages without number words, or with only limited ones, have restricted mathematical abilities: the previously mentioned Pirahã are a famous case in point. With only words that at first sight mean 'one,' 'two,' or 'many,' without recursive uses, they apparently have a hard time doing simple matching of N objects in a row (where N was greater than 2 or 3; see Gordon 2004). A later restudy showed that the three number words don't have precise cardinality, and while showing that the Pirahã could match visible arrays if aligned, they could not match those that needed to be held in memory (Frank et al. 2008). Number words provide a crucial kind of cognitive technology for mathematics. The Pirahã are unusual in having no true number words, but there are many languages with very restricted number words. Some languages use the names of body parts (and a procedure of traversing the body) to yield a total of, say, 31 numbers. Thereafter large numbers are cumbersome at best, making the notion of an infinite series obscure (Mimica 1988). Having a decimal system in language

(rather than e.g. a system to base six like Ndom) makes it much easier to compute relatively large numbers, whereas old imperial feet, inches, chains and perches are downright cumbersome.

More generally, language plays a critical role in providing us with ready-made complex constructs packed up as single words. Concepts like *cousin, concerto, logarithm, architrave,* or *sonnet*, pack a vast compendium of specialized knowledge and experience. The critical role that these bundles or chunks play in our thinking was explained by Miller (1956) in a landmark paper (quoted by Goody): our short-term memory – the store we hold in mind when we compute – can only hold between 4–7 chunks of information. So we condense complex information into holistic chunks. That's why we commonly break down telephone numbers into chunks of four or five to remember them, and why acronyms and other abbreviations help us reason. So, a crucial part of the cumulative nature of culture is simply the great inventory of complex concepts that comes embedded in our lexica, our mental dictionaries (Levinson 2003b).

Chomsky has argued influentially that the essence of language is its internal syntactic structure, playing down what he calls 'externalization.' I argue, on the contrary, that it is because language is externalized, part of a shared code used in social interaction, that it is so fundamentally culturally shaped, and through eons of cultural evolution as a set of cognitive tools, can play the transformative role it does in our mental life.

This raises the question of language difference and its significance. At one point, Goody (1977: 161) considers the "exciting attempt of Benjamin Lee Whorf to specify the implications of different languages for cognitive patterns and social systems," the thesis widely known as 'linguistic relativism.' Goody was no relativist, yet he held that "the problems of human thought cannot be treated in terms of universals alone." Although he valued Whorf's thesis for emphasizing difference he thought it overplayed the role of specific languages and underplayed the role of social change – above all the role of literacy in forming the distinctive character of what Whorf called 'Standard Average European.' Here we can usefully turn to another Goody essay, 'The Anthropology of the Senses and Sensations' (2002). Again he steers a path between relativism and universalism by showing that the overall scheme of five traditional senses in the Western tradition can also be found in the Indian and Chinese traditions, but not in the West African traditions that he was familiar with, suggesting that sensory perception is also connected to literacy. Among the LoDagaa the verb for hearing and smelling is the same. He notes also that the traditional hierarchy of the senses, with vision in prime place, may owe something to the visual access of literacy, and that cultural preoccupations such as elaborate cuisines

may influence the categorization and awareness of taste and smell. Although there may be little underlying physiological difference in sense perception (as the 1898 Torres Straits expedition already seemed to establish), "the senses are differently conceived and emphasized in different cultures, with the conceptual inter-relationships being especially elaborated in written ones" (Goody 2002: 27).

My colleagues and I (Majid et al. 2018a) recently undertook a wide comparative study of perception vocabulary in 20 languages, of which 15 were unrelated. We experimentally tested in the field how the consultants described visual arrays (colour, shape), samples of odorants, five basic tastes, tactile surfaces and recorded sounds (pitch, loudness, tempo). A leading question was whether the Aristotelian hierarchy of the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste) held up cross-culturally. We measured the extent to which communities had consistent nomenclatures in these perceptual fields, taking that as an index of the importance and salience of the terms. There was no support for a single hierarchy – taste was at least as dominant as colour and more dominant than shape across cultures, with no clear order between shape, sound and touch. Although smell was usually ranked low by the criterion of community consensus on terminology, it was the most codable of perceptual domains tested among the Umpila, a Cape York aboriginal group. Malay uniquely had shape as the most codable domain. Taste was dominant in Farsi, Lao, the Balinese sign language Kata Kalok, Zapotec and six other languages, half the sample. The Dogul Dom of Mali and the Siwu of Ghana both had touch as the most codable perceptual domain. In short, the Aristotelian hierarchy collapses in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspective. We also tested for correlations with other cultural features. Codability as a whole correlated with population size (the larger the population, the greater the consistent use of vocabulary), and yes, with formal schooling and thus with literacy, as Goody would predict. But literacy did not account for the different hierarchies of the senses in different cultures: for example, while vision was the most precisely coded domain in English, it was taste in literate Cantonese, Farsi, Turkish and Lao populations. Although precise shape coding went along with formal schooling, it was also associated with house shape and decorated pottery. Sound coding associated strongly with specialist musicians, and smell coding with hunter-gatherer subsistence style.

Following up on one hunter-gatherer group who showed high codability of smell, the Jahai of Malaysia, Majid et al. (2018b) found that they were much quicker and more consistent in their use of terms for odorants compared to a Dutch control group. Moreover, the Jahai terms were all abstract, that is more like 'yellow' than like 'banana coloured,' whereas

the Dutch terms were nearly all object based ('smells like lemon'). The conclusion seems inescapable – the Jahai have a dedicated smell vocabulary which they use faster and more accurately than anything we have available. The language and the way of life that motivates it have made them odour experts: language sharpens perception.

Thus languages, closely reflecting cultural preoccupations, provide their speakers with ready-made cognitive chunks, namely lexical items that are good to think with – and in so doing distinct languages introduce differences in cognitive functioning, making some degree of cognitive relativism undeniable.

Technologies of the Intellect: Firming up the Concept

Earlier I characterized cognitive artefacts as external aids that help to solve internal cognitive problems. By introducing language as a technology of the intellect I may seem to have muddied the waters, but language is also a public externalized 'tool,' whether spoken or written. Are there general laws or principles governing cognitive artefacts? We need a clearer understanding of what cognitive artefacts are and how they work. Here is an attempt at a more precise characterization.

A cognitive artefact has the following properties:

1. It is designed to provide solutions to a particular type of cognitive problem (e.g. the problem of obtaining a memorizable and precise dimension)
2. The artefact is externalized in a publicly accessible medium (e.g. a tape measure)
3. The artefact has been honed by cultural selection over alternative designs (e.g. the tape measure has standardized units, and is made of durable flexible material)
4. There's a specific procedure for using the artefact (e.g. one end of the measure is placed at one end of the measured object, and the value read off the other end)
5. The process is effective and economical (the cognitive and practical advantages outweigh the costs of obtaining and using the artefact)
6. The output of the procedure must be easily assimilated and re-internalizable (e.g. the output is the dimensional length in an easily memorable set of units, like centimetres)

More abstractly we could think of a cognitive artefact as designed to solve a cognitive problem, like finding the value of the function, f(x) = ?. The tool should yield the value, e.g. f(x) = y, and y should provide a useful solution to the cognitive problem and the practical problem that sparked it. Thus, a clock can tell us where we are in the working day, a calculating machine like

an abacus can tell us the sum of two large numbers, a map may tell us where we are in space, and so on.

This characterization helps us distinguish what is and is not a cognitive artefact. A measuring stick is a cognitive artefact, but a crow bar is not; a compass is a cognitive artefact, but the boat it helps to direct is not; a dictionary is a cognitive artefact, but a blank notebook is not. Some cases are less clear. Consider guide-dogs for the blind: they supply an auxiliary sense to their users, they have been bred and trained for the job, and help solve problems such as when to cross the road. If they are putative cognitive artefacts, sheep dogs are probably not – they are merely auxiliary legs, as it were, efficient tools but not solutions to cognitive problems. More far-reaching is the question of whether a human team can be a kind of cognitive artefact. Ed Hutchins (1995) has argued that a (pre-GPS) naval navigation team, each using different instruments and reporting values up the chain, is a kind of personified computer (see also Enfield and Kockelman 2017). If so, it would contrast with a soccer team, or an assembly line, which are teams that solve non-cognitive tasks.

So far, I have circumvented the fact that some cognitive artefacts, and some uses of many others, involve not a new solution for a new problem, but the retrieval of an old solution. This is Goody's 'storage' use of literacy. We also noted the two uses of lists: the forward looking (as in a shopping list) and the backward looking (as in a record of what was bought).[16] For the storage use we need a slightly different definition, now of a mnemonic cognitive artefact. Some of the examples I have given have mnemonic usage, that is, the ability to recall information from storage. Tallies would be an example: you can use a series of notches to count the mounting incremental cost, or refer back to a tally to see how much total debt has been accrued. Similarly, you can refresh your memory with a map ('what was that road number?'), or check the mark you put on the tape measure. But there are also objects, like the knot in the handkerchief, that have no other function. The knot in the handkerchief performs a private function, but if I leave an arrow formed of sticks on the path to show you which route I took, that serves the purpose of retrieval by another. As a simple ethnographic example, Rossel Islanders have coconut plantations where people can freely forage for fallen coconuts unless there is a *cha vyi* or taboo sign put up. This consists of a partially husked coconut on a stick, and signals that the owner intends to collect the coconuts for exporting as dried copra.

[16] Searle (1979: 3) describes this as 'direction of fit,' world to words, or words to world. Following Anscombe, he notes that a man with a shopping list followed by a detective noting down his shopping would have the same list but with different functions.

The most elaborate of the non-linguistic mnemonic systems appear to be the *quipu* knotted records of ancient Peru. Although all the functions of these records are disputed, as is the degree to which they relied on verbal exegesis, it is uncontroversial that they record large numbers, their sums and other calculations, probably largely amounts of tribute in goods or *corvée* labour (they were used as recently as the last century as tallies by Peruvian shepherds to keep track of their flock). Using a positional system, and strings attached to strings, knots of different types could record massive numbers (Ifrah 1998: 68ff.; Urton 2003; https://khipukamayuq.fas.harvard.edu/).

Here is an attempt to characterize the storage function of cognitive artefacts:

Mnemonic cognitive artefacts have the following properties:

1. They perform the function of encoding a thought A at time *t*, in such a way that A can easily be retrieved at a later point t_{+n} – the solution to the problem of recalling A
2. There must be some external marker of A, call it ȧ, which can be encountered and bring the thought A to mind at t_{+n}
3. For ȧ to be recoverable by random others, there must be a public convention that ȧ stands for A
4. The procedure for encoding ȧ is effective and simple enough to be economical
5. The encoded thought A must be recoverable, easily assimilated and useful at $t_{+n.}$

Obviously, writing performs this storage function *par excellence* (as well as being a computational mode for working out our thoughts). What is less obvious, perhaps, is that writing is in some respects more like a knot in a handkerchief than a tape recording of speech, in that it requires imaginative reconstruction of prosody, intonation, seriousness or jokiness, surprise or politeness. Moreover, speech itself is only a cloudy sketch of the underlying thought and intent (Levinson 2000).

Again, there may be grey areas about what should count. My mementos may be meaningless to you, and only some of the public may correctly 'read' the reminder (e.g. only church goers may know that the bell is a warning of an imminent church service). Can reminders hold indefinitely into the future?[17] Tzeltal peasants plant a *tim* tree at the borders of their land, which should last for generations. This is intended to be understood as a reminder of a boundary claim, unlike the planting of, say, a mango tree. But what about the little metal Eiffel tower I brought back from Paris: is this souvenir a mnemonic artefact, intended to remind whoever sees it of Paris,

[17] Dutch speed limit road signs other than the initial one carry the inscription *herhaling* 'reminder,' although legally they are re-commands, not reminders.

or a mere association we cannot easily avoid? The anthropology of power, prestige, empire and exchange abounds with fabled objects and talismans like the Koh-i-Noor diamond in the British crown, the Benin bronzes or the top Trobriand *mwali*. Take the apical Rossel Island shell 'coin,' named Anêw:ee. Like the Koh-i-Noor it is too valuable to exchange, rarely displayed and attached to a lineage. It carries with it the myth of its origin – it has only a prestige function coupled to its mythic mnemonic power. It is unclear whether we would want to call these cognitive artefacts; but I don't think that boundary problems like these should disconcert us.

Now it's well known that memory feats are possible without external prompts. But that is because the things to be remembered have been associated with imagined *external* objects. The classical art of memory worked in this way. In order to deliver your speech without missing any points or departing from the correct order, you may associate the sequence of points to things in a familiar room – then you can travel through the imagined room recovering every point faultlessly (Yates 1966). The technique trades on the primacy and robustness of the two systems of spatial cognition: the 'what' system dedicated to things (indexing your talking points), and the 'where' system dedicated to their location (organizing the order; see Ungerleider and Mishkin 1982).

These, then, are the two functions of cognitive artefacts, forward-looking computation and backward-looking recall. One and the same artefact, like a tally, an agenda or a list, can have both functions, but some such artefacts are specialized to one function or the other, the computational (like the compass, the clock or the abacus) or the mnemonic (like the egg timer, the receipt or the souvenir).

How Cognitive Artefacts Work

Why exactly does externalization of a cognitive problem have the cognitive efficacy it evidently has? One can think of various answers, some specific to particular types and uses of cognitive artefacts and some general in nature. Most generally, the thoughts in question get two representations: the internal one, and the external one. The duality already offers substantial benefits, as shown for example by the gestures accompanying speech. If you give directions of the sort "First go left, then take the next right," you hand will most likely precede the affiliated words by around 200 milliseconds (McNeill 1992). You literally feel out the correct response. Children can also be shown to gesture correctly in response to a novel problem, even though they can only correctly describe it later in development (Goldin-Meadow 2015).

Another general feature of cognitive artefacts is that the mental representation is *transduced* to another medium, e.g. from thought to speech, or speech to writing, or music to notation. The transducer operation changes the representation. Take mental arithmetic in decimal systems: this can be represented on an abacus, but now in terms of 5s and 1s. So the matched representations, internal and external, are never exactly isomorphic (true, of course, even for speech and writing). The transformation, yielding two 'handles' as it were, appears to give one a better 'grasp' of the concept or the problem. Sometimes the external medium offers advantageous properties lacking in the internal (or other external) representation. Thus while speech and music are transient ephemeral signals, writing and musical notation are time-independent and static, and can be repeatedly examined. Here written notation contrasts with e.g. tape-recording, which also allows retrospection, but not the freezing of time. Hence the special value of lists, that so intrigued Goody. Moreover, what was linear in character now becomes two dimensional, as when a partitur offers visual representation of the different parts of a musical score and their alignment. Indeed, additional dimensionality is often a feature of the 'added value' of the external representation, as when time is represented on a sundial or a clockface. Likewise, the two dimensionality of tables and matrices endows them with their special computational possibilities. Transduction is most often from an abstract medium to a concrete one (e.g. number to tactile abacus), as if the concrete is easier than the abstract. This is consistent with Piaget's analysis of conceptual development in children, which proceeds from the concrete to abstract thought and reasoning. Transduction to a visual medium seems to be particularly helpful, like using Venn diagrams to solve logical puzzles, perhaps because (as I noted already in connection with the art of mnemonics) our visual and spatial cognition is so strong. But tactile media also have a special role and it is worth bearing in mind the special role that the hand has played in human evolution. The opposable thumb and the extra innervation of the human hand have made us uniquely capable tool users, both of physical and cognitive tools. Practitioners of the art of mental abacus often gesture as if using the physical apparatus. Finally, there is the added benefit that derives from cultural routines for the use of cognitive artefacts (like rules for using the abacus), giving us ready-made procedures for yielding desired and precise results.

Another important feature of cognitive artefacts is the recursive system of externalization and re-internalization. Since the result of the external computation or assessment must be re-internalizable, it must be in a format we can readily digest (we don't design computers to talk to us in machine code). Constant use of the external device means that our own

thoughts will be increasingly constituted by whatever formats the device delivers. This is Goody's story about literacy – oral performance in a literate society won't be the same thing as oral performance in an oral society. Much of the folklore and epic literature that we celebrate as fundamentally oral, such as that of Homer, in fact bears the imprint of literate minds (Goody 1987: 98). We can compose written works in our heads, or write music without sound as when the deaf Beethoven wrote the Ninth Symphony. When the external device is itself re-internalized or ingested we observe some of the most powerful effects of cognitive artefacts: mental arithmetic by mental abacus, directional estimates by mental compass, memory feats by imagined spatial mnemonics.

Externalization into a public medium has made it possible for cultural selection to work its magic on the design of our cognitive tools. Like writing, with its 5000 years of cultural development and enhancements, most other cognitive artefacts have long histories. The abacus likely goes back 4000 years to ancient Sumer. Sundials and astronomical alignments are prehistoric in origin. Babylonians were making maps of the world nearly 3000 years ago (qv. the Imago Mundi tablet in the British Museum), while compasses have been used for navigation for at least a thousand years. Standardized weights and measures can be traced to ancient Sumer and Egypt. The long prehistory has allowed cognitive technologies to be constantly improved by cultural evolution, each step providing the basis for further more rapid steps. Cognitive technology has increased exponentially. As Ray Kurzweil (2001) put it, "We won't experience 100 years of progress in the 21st century – it will be more like 20,000 years of progress (at today's rate)." The early stages of accelerating growth may not appear to be exponential, (as we learnt in this pandemic year) but in the case of technology (as with the pandemic) they were.

All this raises interesting questions about the ontology of cognition. Is it my belief or the calculator's that the square root of 2 is 1.41421356237? Is it my belief or my diary's that I have a meeting on November 23rd? Do I or my GPS machine know how to get from here to Gretna Green? Some philosophers bite the bullet and accept a theory of 'extended mind' (Clark and Chalmers 1998). Humans and things in their environment, namely cognitive artefacts, can form coupled computational systems, just like we form coupled ecological systems with the environment. There's no mind in the machine, but mind plus machine can form a radically enhanced mind.

Conclusions

In this lecture I have enlarged upon a theme that Goody held dear, the idea of technologies of the intellect, but that other anthropologists with less

interest in language have let languish. I have suggested that literacy is part of a much larger field of 'technologies of the intellect' which would surely repay much deeper scrutiny. Goody's emphasis on the mental amplification afforded by writing helps anthropology connect to the cognitive sciences. As he himself put it, writing "(…) encourages special forms of linguistic activity associated with developments in particular kinds of problem-raising and problem-solving, in which the list, the formula and the table played a special part" (1977: 162). He was what we now would call a 'situated-cognition' or 'extended mind' theorist *avant la lettre*: "When a map or a book intervene between the object and the subject, we are dealing with 'mind' out there as well as with mind inside" (1987: 255).

One consequence of this view is that languages and cultures afford different cognitive tools. Goody was content to allow a large gap between the pre-literate and the literate mind, but he viewed literacy as potentially a universal leveler, a domesticator of the savage mind. He resisted the relativism implied by his key idea. However, once we consider the much broader field of technologies of the intellect it becomes obvious that numerous cognitive artefacts and technological traditions undermine the idea of a single divide: instead of a single ravine, we are looking at the surface of a glacier. The developed lexica of the world's 7000 or more languages constitute tool chests with quite different inventories. Add to that all the different technologies of the intellect, the calculating traditions, the navigational and measurement traditions, and we have a very varied landscape of post-savage minds. Even in a globalizing world, it may take generations for imported mental traditions to take root.[18] Goody strongly resisted relativism because he was committed to a broad historical comparative sociology; he was no friend of Geertz or the American cultural anthropology of the time.[19] But I think it is clear that 'technologies of the intellect' are inconsistent with the strong strand of thinking in sociology and anthropology encapsulated in Bastian's phrase 'the psychic unity of mankind.'[20]

Goody's idea has tremendous resonance in a world given over to computational devices, where economies are transformed by artificial intelligence, where we hold powerful cognitive artefacts in our hands every

[18] Consider, for example, why semi-conductor manufacturing plants are only to be found in Asia and the developed West (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_semiconductor_fabrication_plants) where there have been generations of highly disciplined and skilled factory workers.

[19] See Hann 2017: 477.

[20] This does not mean there is no shared cognitive bedrock as it were – see also Levinson 2019.

day and rely on them for finding our way, maintaining our social networks and transacting business. Wars will be won and lost, nations will succumb to or survive pandemics, political and economic systems will thrive or perish, according to the power of rival cognitive artefacts and their artful use. It may seem perverse in this age of information technology to have spent most of this lecture tonight considering very simple technologies of the intellect, but my hope is that by focusing on the simple cases we can come to understand better the processes, both social and cognitive, that underlie the remarkable way in which the species has perfected the use of cognitive prostheses. It is time anthropology put such artefacts center stage and investigated their cultural evolution.

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Chapter 12

The Treadmill Paradox in the Anthropocene: unintentional consequences of competition under runaway globalization (2021)

Thomas Hylland Eriksen

> 'Well, in OUR country,' said Alice, still panting a little, 'you'd generally get to somewhere else – if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing.'
> 'A slow sort of country!' said the Queen. 'Now, HERE, you see, it takes all the running YOU can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!' 'I'd rather not try, please!' said Alice.
> — *Lewis Carroll: Through the Looking-Glass*

> If a man has good corn or wood, or boards, or pigs, to sell, or can make better chairs or knives, crucibles or church organs, than anybody else, you will find a broad hard-beaten road to his house, though it be in the woods.
> — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Introduction

To be invited to deliver the 2021 Goody lecture is a great honour, and before I start, I must thank the Institute for having given me this opportunity.[1] I never met Jack Goody, although we corresponded briefly in the early 1990s, but his work on kinship, political organization, and especially literacy was a major influence on my own development as an anthropologist. *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* was a favourite nearly four decades ago. It showed the potential of an anthropology that dares to ask big questions

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about human society and the relationship between cognition, technology, and social organization by drawing on ethnographic, historical, and comparative materials. I would later follow Goody's intellectual itinerary with great interest, seeing how his work gradually formed a major œuvre departing from anthropology narrowly conceived and venturing into archaeology and global history, without lapsing into monocausality or otherwise reductionist explanatory models. This lecture takes the form of a dialogue with Goody's work, delving into a theme with which he did not himself engage, and showing how his kind of comparative cultural history may still have something to offer, although modernity has recently taken a direction that he did not anticipate.

Much can be said about Jack Goody's intellectual orientation and legacy, but a methodological individualist he was not. Trained as a social anthropologist, with a marked emphasis on *social*, at the height of British structural-functionalism in the decade after the Second World War, he had been taught mainly to study how societies functioned, not what it was that made people do whatever it was that they did. His early work in Ghana showed how kinship is a powerful principle of social integration but also a source of contestation; he also indicated, through holistic analysis, how property and inheritance, myth and ritual, production and reciprocity were connected, if loosely, to form a social whole.

The relationship of cognition to social organization remained a central concern in Goody's work throughout the subsequent decades, and his work on literacy and its implications for cognition, scale, and social complexity continues to inspire new work in the field, as indicated in last year's Goody lecture by Stephen Levinson (this volume, chapter 11). However, the contrast between Eurasian and sub-Saharan societies, explored already in *Bridewealth and Dowry* (Goody and Tambiah 1973) and *From Production to Reproduction* (Goody 1976), became a main concern in his thinking. Whereas the African component would later fade somewhat from view, his arguments against Eurocentrism, based on the conviction that the Eurasian continent should be seen as a whole from the Bronze Age onwards, was central to most of his later publications, which took on food, flowers, metals, script, inheritance, and other dimensions of Eurasian societies, tracing their origins, dissemination, and societal impact.

A key question concerns the relative dominance of European and Asian societies as regards social complexity, technological innovation, and cultural achievements. Beginning with the early states of the Bronze Age in Mesopotamia and the Fertile Crescent, Goody (e.g. 2006) argues that there has been alternation rather than unilinear development towards European hegemony, and that European dominance began in earnest with the Industrial

Revolution from the end of the eighteenth century, fuelled by easily accessible coal and the technology to use it for industrial and military purposes (see also Pomeranz 2000). The flows of knowledge, techniques, goods, and artefacts travelled in both directions, and the East Asian influence on Western societies was significant for many centuries. The contemporary story is nevertheless not just one of mutual exchange and development, but of severe unintended side effects resulting from the growth of complexity and differentiation. The competitive relationships which are usually only hinted at in Goody's books create peculiar treadmill effects and spiralling runaway processes of change which he did not consider. There is an irony in the fact that it is precisely the alternation and mutual exchanges between Asia and Europe, increasingly linked with growth imperatives and the logic of capitalism, which have produced innovation and prosperity but are now becoming a recipe for disaster. In other words, the same forces of history that created the modern world as we know it currently threaten to undermine modernity and challenge what may be its most cherished idea: the belief in science, technology, and progress.

In the last few decades, an unusually hectic period for humanity, we have witnessed several changes with consequences not only for our understanding of the present, but also of the past. Allow me briefly to mention three:

- First, digitalization and the rise of so-called artificial intelligence has changed and continues to change our modes of communication in fundamental ways. This development can easily be appended to Goody's theoretical framework; after all, to many, he is best known as a social theorist of literacy or what Stephen Levinson describes as the technologies of the intellect.
- Secondly, the rise of China as an emerging hegemonic power, certainly in the economic realm, and eventually possibly in the military and diplomatic spheres as well, is redrawing the world map in a way that is not only compatible with, but confirms Goody's idea about alternation.
- The third change concerns Anthropocene causes and effects; in brief, this refers to a historical situation in which humanity is changing the biosphere irreversibly and at an accelerating speed, in which the ecological footprint of our species can be observed everywhere on the planet, even where no human has set foot. The dilemmas arising from massive environmental destruction, a kind of collateral damage resulting from a competition-driven quest for glory, power, and wealth, are difficult to reconcile with most accounts of the advent of modernity, since the destructive effects of

> contemporary capitalism are the trueborn children of the logic of modernity itself.

Are we entering a new phase – are we in the middle of a new great historical divide of comparable magnitude to writing, metallurgy, the plough, and the steam engine – and if the answer is yes, what are the theoretical tools required to explain this unprecedented situation in which modernity seems to be eating itself from the inside?

While arguments about alternation and a shifting power relationship between the East and the West are worth revisiting in this particular historical moment, there is a jigsaw piece which is usually missing from structural analyses of this relationship – namely, competition and its significance, both at the level of the enterprising individual and of the society collectively trying to improve its position vis-à-vis others. Exchange is crucial, and numerous authors dealing with this aspect of cultural history have indicated how innovation and increased social, cultural, and not least occupational complexity have resulted from imports and adaptations of foreign techniques and technologies, the spread of luxury products, and the rise of the merchant class. This is how the modern world as we have known it came about. Yet modernity is now at a crossroads. It has delivered beyond anyone's expectations, and a consequence of its success is that we are fast approaching the limits of planetary resources and sustainability.

In order to understand how this could happen, the missing piece has to be inserted. Competition, a recipe for success but also for our own collective undoing, has to be scaled down to the level of the individual lifetime for its side effects to be fully understood. This is because the short term and the small scale that characterize most human enterprises, be it in the realm of culture, technology, or politics, produce counterfinality – a term coined by Sartre in *Critique de la raison dialectique* (Sartre 1960) – on the large scale and in the long term. A typical counterfinal effect arises when a group decides to denude a hillside to cultivate rice, resulting in erosion as well as an increased risk of landslides and flooding. Projected onto the global canvas, it is easy to see that the unprecedented growth in world population, energy use, prosperity, and consumption witnessed over the last two centuries has comparable unintended effects, but at a much larger scale. Since individuals, firms, and states act in their own perceived interests and within a limited temporal frame, the cumulative outcome of their efforts is an overheated world of accelerated growth, the ultimate outcome of which is likely to be global ecological disaster. Since there is no thermostat regulating this spiralling, runaway, accelerated growth and its cumulative effects, the outcome is a tragedy of the global commons – a tragedy of the global commons in an overheated world (Eriksen 2016, 2018).

The canaries in the coalmine are beginning to expire. Only 4 per cent of the mammalian biomass on Earth now consists of wild animals. 36 per cent are humans, while 60 per cent are our domesticated animals, mainly cattle and pigs. 70 per cent of the birds alive – most of them chickens – are owned by humans. 35 per cent of the world's wetlands, unloved by humans, but ecologically essential biotopes, have been drained and appropriated by humans since 1970. Economic growth continues. Just between 2002 and 2015, worldwide coal exports doubled. This is excellent news for mining corporations and for governments collecting revenue, and it keeps houses heated or cooled and factories running, but it goes without saying that this development has its cost – for people living in affected areas, e.g. in Indonesia, for the global environment and climate. From 2004 to 2019, the number of flight tickets sold worldwide more than doubled, from two billion to nearly four and a half billion. Earth Overshoot Day, the date on which humanity has used up the annual resources at its disposal, was, in 2019, on 29 July (for obvious reasons, in 2020 it came only in late August). This means that we would need about 1.6 planets to remain sustainable, and that presupposes no future growth in resource use, emissions, and pollution.

The Significance of Competition

Although competition is not analyzed as a driving force in Goody's cultural history, it is not absent. He writes about the quest for luxuries and conspicuous consumption and its spiralling results resembling the potlatch described by Boas and analyzed by Mauss a century ago; and in his book about food and social hierarchy (Goody 1982), he notes that the fact that the powerful King Shaka had to eat the same beef as his soldiers indicated a relative lack of social differentiation. While exploring the growth of metallurgy, the eventual replacement of bronze with iron and the dissemination of both metals throughout most of Eurasia (Goody 2012), Goody does to some extent describe *who* ensured the spread of the new technologies, but not *why*. Obviously, if your neighbour has a metal plough, you follow suit; if an enemy obtains iron swords, you will do your best to get the same or, if possible, superior ones. Individual agents, be they entrepreneurs, inventors, political leaders, or military strategists, are absent from his account, as are the frustratingly long periods of trial and error preceding a breakthrough, whether in technology or institutional arrangements.

Though keenly aware of the expansion of markets and the ways in which production, distribution, and consumption were connected, Goody rarely ventures to consider individual motivations and the microsociology of innovation which have been fundamental for the changes – revolutionary or

incremental, as the case might be – that are equally important for an understanding of contemporary global modernity as for the current impasse in which we find ourselves, because they lie at the origin of the counterfinalities which are now bouncing back, boomerang-like, to modern men and women, until recently complacent and pleased with their achievements. The most influential analysis of this aspect of economics was probably Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942), which placed entrepreneurship, individualism, and innovation at the core of the capitalist enterprise. But of course Weber had said this already, with Calvinism's doctrine of predestination as the historical subject.

The significance of entrepreneurship in economic history can easily be revealed by asking simple, naïve questions, such as what it was that motivated fifteenth-century Portuguese sailors to explore the West African coast, or West Africans to develop metallurgy, or European craftsmen to imitate Chinese porcelain, Arabian glass, and Indian fabrics – glory, wealth, power, women, or just an innate desire to perform better than others.

These competitive processes, driven by personal ambition or fear, have a ring of symmetrical schismogenesis, Bateson's (1972 [1935]) term for escalating processes in which each protagonist tries to outperform the other. A more general theoretical model, derived from evolutionary biology, is that of treadmill competition.

Treadmills in Evolution and Society

It is not in *Alice in Wonderland*, but in the follow-up *Through the Looking-Glass*, that Alice encounters the Red Queen in the guise of a chess piece of human size (Carroll 2003 [1872]). In the first book, the Queen of Hearts made her appearance as a despotic playing card ("Off with his head!"). The ability of the Red Queen to run incredibly fast from one square to another on the chessboard shocks Alice, but in fact, she just behaves the way a chess queen should.

Alice discovers that no matter how fast she runs, she remains in the same place. She expresses her astonishment to the queen, explaining that in her country you would normally get to another place if you ran really fast. The queen is unimpressed. She says that all the speed you can muster is necessary just to remain in the same place. If you want to go somewhere else, you have to run at least twice as fast, she adds, helpfully.

The analogy to chess is pertinent. A chess player cannot implement their strategy independently of that of the opponent, and if the two players are roughly at the same level of skill and move their pieces accordingly, a game of chess may take many hours and risks ending in a frustrating stalemate, like a fistfight between equal opponents where both end lying in

the dust, gasping, exhausted, with bloody noses and missing teeth, without either having succeeded.

The art of moving at great speed without getting anywhere is also familiar outside the fairy tale, the game of chess, and the fistfight. It is a familiar phenomenon in evolutionary biology, where 'arms races' are common both between and within species, and Carroll, who was passionate about science, was clearly influenced by his older contemporary Darwin. *Through the Looking-Glass* does introduces not just the Red Queen, but also the bread-and-butter fly, an insect whose wings are made of gossamer slices of toast, while its head is a lump of sugar. Its only source of nourishment is lukewarm, thin tea. Accordingly, the head dissolves during its first meal, but in theory, the species can survive perfectly well provided it reproduces before it has to eat.

Treadmill competition applies both between and within species. The fastest hares outrun the foxes, while the slowest are eaten. Some of you likely know the story about the two hikers in the savannah who spot a lion approaching them from a distance. One of them bends down and ties on his running shoes. The other shrugs and says, look, do you really think you can outrun a lion? No, his friend responds, but I think I can outrun you.

Through a ruthless and efficient process of natural selection, the hares slowly become faster, as a result of which the foxes need to develop their speed and cunning. This explains why the spruces in the forest near my home in Oslo have to reach twenty metres or more, while it would seem reasonable that four or five metres would do. The explanation is simple: they have to spend huge resources growing to this height because the neighbouring trees do. Similarly, audiences at rock concerts have to stand up, even if they would have preferred to stay in their seats, because those in front of them have stood up.

This simple principle describes quite accurately not only evolution, but also many aspects of cultural and social dynamics. The circuit connecting products and markets, especially but not exclusively in affluent societies, follows the same principle, and whereas product developers run frantically on their treadmills in order to keep up with the competition, the so-called market – you and me – is assumed to profit from the competition-driven improvement of products. This particular treadmill mechanism is a descendant of libertarianism in its nineteenth-century version, which itself was almost a mirror image of Darwinian natural selection, where competition was assumed to be healthy for the economy because it was a mechanism ensuring that only the most efficient and profitable activities could endure. (More recently, a similar way of thinking, New Public Management, has entered into public administration and universities in many

countries.) The tendency for larger entities to crush the smaller ones is a direct result of this logic, but unexpected innovations may also destroy giants, as the recent history of Kodak reminds us or, a century earlier, the sailing ship industry faced with competition from steam ships that it failed to own up to until it was too late.

In evolutionary biology, the treadmill principle or Red Queen Effect thus refers to a particular aspect of competition (van Valen 1973) or an outcome of natural selection. As in the episode with Alice and the Red Queen, an organism or species is forced to evolve continuously merely to survive, since its competitors, prey, or predators evolve. As rabbits become faster, foxes have to follow suit in the *longue durée* of evolution. An organism has to evolve merely to retain its niche, simply because its prey, predators, or competitors evolve. In Matt Ridley's (1993) account, the emphasis is on intraspecies competition and sexual selection. There is no immediate evolutionary or individual advantage in the competitive race involving the conifers, which is why it can be called a treadmill syndrome.

Technological innovations modify the conditions for competition, and when someone innovates, others are forced to follow. A typical argument against divestment from fossil fuels is that a single country cannot make a difference, and as long as others use and produce fossil fuels, it would be foolish – a self-imposed handicap – not to do it oneself. The typical argument in favour of frequent flying is that the plane takes off anyway, so my input makes little difference. This kind of argument shows how neoliberal thinking has become second nature: Societies do not exist, changes can only be made to happen through consumer choices, and the only relevant scale is that of individual action and its immediate results. There seems to be no instance at a higher scale which can regulate, slow down, and scale down the subsystems of globalization in order to make them more sustainable and to prevent a catastrophic tragedy of the commons. In the world of competitive elite sports, we find social treadmills of a pure kind. In this realm, ecological sustainability is barely on the agenda, and technical innovations, specialization, and intensified competition, as witnessed in ever more frequent international tournaments, is consistent with the treadmill principle, where the spiralling growth is assumed to lead to progress (but which may *de facto* lead to everybody standing still at full speed) and requires increased consumption, infrastructural developments, incessant travel (with a growing support system in tow) and sometimes environmental destruction, as when those – admittedly unnecessarily tall – spruce trees in the hills above Oslo are unceremoniously removed to make space for wide ski tracks enabling easy monitoring and filming for the benefit of TV viewers, whose habits have changed, in the space of just a few years of

intensive competition for their attention, such that live sporting events, including war reporting from the frontline, are about the only forms of programming that make sense as linear television (see Eriksen 2021 for a full analysis).

Although it may look like an accelerated standstill, treadmill competition drives evolution, forcing species and individuals to improve their achievements relative to others over the generations. The 'competitive edge' often invoked in technology and business refers to a quality enabling a company, product, or activity to 'edge' ahead of the others, who will in turn have to follow suit. There is a resemblance, in other words, between the cheetah evolving greater speed to catch gazelles who are nimbler and faster than their ancestors, and mobile phone developers looking to eclipse their competitors with a sleeker design, better camera, or larger screen.

There is widespread wariness about applying evolutionary models in the social sciences, often with good reason. Yet, treadmill phenomena are so easily identifiable in social life – in sports, fashion, technology, academic publishing, just to mention a few examples – that the pattern resemblance to events on the savannah, or in the forest, is nothing less than striking (Hessen and Eriksen 2012 is a book-length exploration of this phenomenon in Norwegian, by an anthropologist and a biologist). A main difference between cultural and evolutionary treadmills is the fact that humans can decide to do things differently if the spirals of the treadmill threaten to become destructive. One characteristic of the globalized resource economy is nevertheless the lack of an instance, a governor or thermostat which could regulate growth and slow change down when necessary. Like industrialists or investors, the decision-makers in the world of competitive sports have no choice but to play according to the rules, trying to gain those extra inches enabling them to catch more sunlight, as it were, than their close neighbours. While this form of competition is integral to capitalist growth and what is known as progress, it is also, as a guiding principle for life and economic activity, a recipe for ecological disaster. It encapsulates, in a nutshell, the double bind of contemporary industrial capitalism, suspended in mid-air between growth imperatives and a desire for sustainability.

The evolutionary scientist and sociologist David Sloan Wilson sums up his view of competition versus cooperation like this: "Selfishness beats altruism within groups. Altruistic groups beat selfish groups. Everything else is commentary (Wilson 2015: 61)." Echoing the segmentary model in political anthropology proposed by Evans-Pritchard (1940), Wilson's principle nevertheless lacks the inherent flexibility of the segmentary principle, and a main problem accordingly concerns how to delineate the group whose members compete internally and shift to a higher level

externally. Is the relevant unit a neighbourhood, a city, a state, or a supra-national entity such as the European Union? Does it matter whether it is China, Mauritius or India? The tension between competition and cooperation that is foundational to social theory needs to be scaled properly. The formula, interestingly, opens for a compromise between Darwin and his contemporary Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-discoverer of the principle of natural selection. Darwin saw competition everywhere in nature, while Wallace, a socialist from a less wealthy family, argued that cooperation was imperative for peoples living in the "state of nature" to survive. The scaling of competition and cooperation suggested by Wilson nevertheless does not accord with anthropological studies of reciprocity (e.g. Sahlins 1972), which indicate an inverse dichotomy, namely that solidarity is a prerequisite in close, familiar relations, whereas the market principle tends to predominate in anonymous relationships beyond the moral community held together by literal or metaphoric kinship and place.

However, the dichotomy is unsatisfactory, since competition is also familiar from close, multiplex relations. In his analysis of the Trobriand economy, Malinowski describes how he was struck by the sight of pyramids of yams on display outside many homes in the harvesting season. Most of the tubers would eventually spoil and would never be eaten. Trobriand men, who grew yams for their sister's husband and not for themselves, gained prestige by showing off a large surplus, which indicated that one had many dependents and was well connected socially. A relative of the potlatch, the conspicuous display of yams and the demarcation of social rank it enacts suggest the theoretical possibility of a spiralling growth, but local constraints prevented a regular growth in production. These limitations are not felt in today's globalized economy.

In the social sciences, the treadmill syndrome was analyzed and satirized almost *avant la lettre* by Thorstein Veblen in *The Rise of the Leisure Class* (Veblen 1953 [1899]). Conspicuous consumption, easy to identify in the competitive individualist American society of his time, has become, at a time when consumerism is a global affliction, ubiquitous. Societies have become increasingly differentiated since Veblen wrote, and people may achieve recognition and admiration from others through consumption in a variety of ways depending on their position in society. In a consumerist society, the majority engage in this kind of treadmill competition, trying to outperform their neighbour or significant others. Treadmill competition in the intertwined realms of production and consumption drives innovation and invention, but it also currently drives species to extinction and the planet to the brink of catastrophe.

The Needham Question

I now return to the relationship between East Asia and the North Atlantic region regarding innovation, economy, and global dominance, but this time, I will view it through the double lens of the Red Queen or treadmill paradox and the looming threat of disastrous Anthropocene effects.

Let me begin with the Needham question: Why did Europe overtake China in science and technology, given the superiority of Chinese society in so many domains until the European Renaissance? Several answers have been proposed, arguing among other things that it is due to the significance of private property, feudal power, and surplus accumulation. Wittfogel's notion of centralized power through "hydraulic despotism" and Marx's analysis of the "Asian mode of production" have also informed responses to this question.

Others emphasize the emergence of capitalism in Europe and the resulting intensified competition as a major factor contributing to a widening gulf between Europe and China following the Renaissance. It may be the case that the question is wrongly stated. According to Francesca Bray (2000), China was overtaken by Europe in terms of production and consumption only by the time of the Industrial Revolution. Kenneth Pomeranz (2000) has similarly argued that the core areas of China and Europe were comparable in terms of complexity and economic output until around 1800. This research, although disputed, lends credibility to the view that there was no hydraulic despotism preventing innovation and competition in imperial China in the centuries leading up to the European Industrial Revolution, and that the easy availability of affordable, movable energy in the form of coal could have been a major factor. While China continued to rely on muscle power, Europe entered the machine age with several "energy slaves" (Illich 1973) per capita, leading to that enormous growth in productivity which has occupied economists and economic historians ever since. At the same time, coal was also easily available in China, and it could not have led to an industrial revolution without an appropriate technological, institutional, and cultural infrastructure.

Two hundred years later, China is the world's largest coal producer, with an output of more than four times that of the second largest producer, which is another Asian country, namely India. In spite of mining about half the world's coal, China is also the largest importer of coal. This change is thought-provoking in two ways: it indicates the rise of China as a major industrial country; and the shift from Western Europe to China as the global epicentre of coal production is suggestive of other changes of the last two centuries. Coal was the future in 1821; by 2021, it is the past, or about to become the past, at least if we are to believe the implications of international

agreements to which China and the EU countries are signatories and recent reports from the International Energy Agency (IEA).

I will not speculate on ultimate causes of the recent Chinese economic miracle, but the rapid industrialization of much of the country is a fact and indicates that notwithstanding important cultural and historical differences between East Asia and Western Europe, they now are competing on the same treadmills framed by global capitalism.

Differences in the scale and interrelationships of the political entities may nevertheless be significant. At the onset of the modern era, China had been an established empire, albeit with shifting cores and borders, for two thousand years. Europe was a hodgepodge of city-states, poorly integrated imperial systems, territorial states, and loose federations. The Hanseatic League, never a territorial political entity, exercised considerable power from the Baltic Sea to Norfolk – an early instance of a transnational corporation with economic muscle and de facto political power that could surpass that of the states in which it operated.

In the Late Middle Ages, Genoa competed with Venice for trade connections; England competed with France for territorial and military power; Protestants competed with Catholics for souls. When glasses were invented, possibly in Pisa in the late thirteenth century, no central imperial power could prevent them from spreading. Which they did, not just in an unchanged, timeless form, but with gradual improvements unimpeded by imperial decree or religious prohibitions. Interestingly, both convex and concave eyeglasses were in widespread use long before the science explaining their efficacy was developed, by Johannes Kepler, in the early seventeenth century. However, spectacles would soon spread to China and Japan, although only in their concave form, meaning that convex glasses correcting shortsightedness – a form more demanding to produce – were not developed. A possible result of this, according to Macfarlane and Martin (2002), who also point out that myopia seems to be more common in East Asia than in Europe, is an 'involution' in the arts and a preference for the minute detail, given that the horizon blurs in the absence of sight-enhancing implements. This may not have made much of a difference internally. In the land of the blind, the one-eyed is king, but the moment they begin to compete with seeing neighbours, their relative disadvantage becomes visible.

At a crucial point in history, China abandoned one of the largest competitive arenas, namely that of large-scale international trade. Successive sea bans in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries effectively prevented Chinese economic expansion overseas for centuries. European expansion overseas began with the founding of the first European settlement in the tropics – Cidade Velha in Santiago, Cape Verde Islands, in 1462 – and

subsequent conquests were soon to come. However, although it cannot be denied that the modern world is to a non-negligible extent the product of European conquest, slavery, the Columbian exchange, and plantation economies, it should also be kept in mind that China was and is a huge country with great internal diversity and plenty of opportunities to establish its own treadmills or competitive arenas.

The deregulation of the Chinese economy – heralded years before it happened in Deng Xiaoping's famous speech in 1978, when he said that it didn't matter whether the cat was black or white as long as it caught mice – is important. So is containerization of sea transport, which has rendered Chinese industry globally competitive by reducing transport costs by more than 90 per cent since the 1970s. Other contextual factors may also contribute to an explanation. The point here is that China's meteoric rise as an economic superpower does not represent something completely new in world history, but rather confirms the view that hegemony, or dominance, alternates between different core areas in Eurasia. In 1800, the largest cities in the world were in China and Japan, and urban life is a recipe for differentiation and hierarchy anywhere and anytime. As late as 1907, Qing China contained 24 per cent of the world's population and the British Empire just 22 per cent. By 1939, the British Empire had increased its share to 24 per cent, while China's percentage was now just 11.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, European countries avoided falling into Malthusian traps (of relative overpopulation) through technological advances, while China and India, lacking these means, tried to increase food production through increased labour input. They lost – a catastrophic famine happened in West Bengal in 1943, and during the Great Leap Forward from 1958 to 1962, perhaps twenty million Chinese starved to death. In other words, the balance of economic muscle was by no means uncertain in the twentieth century, until it began to shift from the Atlantic to the Pacific Rim just before the new millennium.

During the period of Japanese ascendancy in the latter half of the twentieth century, it was often alleged by critics from the North Atlantic region, that the Japanese were efficient producers and skilled copycats, but lacked creativity. This stereotype seems to have become less common, but instead similar comments are made about the Chinese. Owing to the pressure to improve, grow, and defend one's place at the cutting edge, not only is this kind of stereotyping common in the West, but there is also a mounting concern about alleged industrial espionage and theft of intellectual property rights by the Chinese.

Guarding one's property is not new, and the fact that much of this property is now immaterial only illustrates Castells's (1996) main point

about the information age – namely, that it is not defined by the omnipresence of information (in that respect, every human society is an information society), but refers to a society where information is simultaneously a product, a means of production, and a means of distribution. In the sixth century, physical objects may have had a higher relative value than knowledge or mere information. Under Emperor Justinian, silkworms were smuggled out of China by Orthodox monks hiding the eggs in their staffs, thereby breaking the Chinese monopoly on silk production. A thousand years later, sweet potatoes, originally from South America but grown in the Spanish colony of the Philippines, were similarly smuggled into China, eventually saving millions of peasants from starvation (Mann 2012). As the Red Queen explains to Alice, if you want to keep your place in the hierarchy, you have to run as fast as you can while trying to prevent your special diet or training regime from being transmitted to your competitors.

The Chinese economic take-off in the last decades may be described as a short-term miracle or as a long-term catastrophe, depending on the perspective, and both dimensions deserve a place in the analysis. It creates affluence for some, material security for many, and has severe ecological implications for everybody. As a boy in the 1970s, I was fascinated by press photos of busy Chinese crossroads depicting vast armies of workers on bicycles, uniformly dressed in Mao suits, waiting for a signal from a uniformed human. The 2020s equivalent would show hundreds of cars, most of them new and shiny, now waiting at traffic lights (tellingly known as robots in South Africa), driven by people wearing all kinds of clothes, with the odd motorcyclist meandering their way between the cars. A list of the ten busiest containership ports in the world today reveals nine of them to be in East Asia, with seven in China itself. This growth in economic power and prosperity is miraculous, judged according to the standard criteria of modernity. Yet China's great rivers are now often clogged, the fertile loess soil on the productive agricultural plains contaminated, the hills plagued by erosion and landslides owing to logging, the urban skies grey with coal smoke and emissions from industry – ominous signs of overstretching, like so many canaries in the global coalmine.

It is debatable how dominant the Chinese economy has become or is about to become. Much is made of China's GDP growth, but at the moment, China is only the 78th-richest country in the world in terms of nominal GDP per capita, and inequality is high, especially along the urban/rural dimension. Yet the growth has been nothing short of spectacular. In just a generation, from 1990 to 2019, GDP per capita grew almost 2,000 per cent, from US$ 971 to US$ 16,651 (IMF figures). It is unlikely that this growth rate can

continue for long. The so-called Lewisian turning point, named after the St. Lucian economist and Nobel laureate W. Arthur Lewis, occurs when the supply of mainly non-monetized people, often subsistence farmers, dries up and the cost of labour in the modern or capitalist sector rises (Lewis 1954). More than a decade ago, the business magazine *Bloomberg* asserted that China had reached this turning point (*Bloomberg* 2010), but in the subsequent decade, Chinese GDP per capita nearly doubled.

Treadmill competition fuels contemporary Chinese society in many ways and across domains. At the domestic scale, conspicuous consumption is evident in the growing demand for luxury goods – what used to be luxury goods have become consumer goods for the masses – but also in the phenomenal growth of Chinese overseas tourism in the present century. At the transnational scale, Chinese companies cut costs, increase volumes, and search for – or, rather, create – market niches in order to keep abreast with competitors from other countries. The Belt and Road project, aiming to link China with most of the 'Old World' through an ambitious network of transport infrastructure, attempts to eclipse old transport routes and hubs centred on Europe, many with a colonial legacy. The dominance of Chinese trade in container transport indicates that this ambition is on its way to being fulfilled.

Not all forms of competition-driven growth can usefully be interpreted as treadmill phenomena, but the further economic activities depart from satisfying basic material needs for food, shelter, and so on, the more visible the treadmill becomes. This implies that unequal societies are more prone to treadmill consumption. Treadmills are also highly visible in international competition for market shares. At both of these scales, China has excelled spectacularly in this century, and notwithstanding its official socialist ideology, the authorities are no strangers to competition when it can boost national pride and flatter the state. When, in 2012, Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature, it transpired that the Chinese literary sphere had worked for years for a Chinese author to win a Nobel Prize. When the prize was awarded, the *People's Daily* wrote: "Congratulations to Mo Yan for winning the Nobel Prize in Literature! It is the first time for a writer of Chinese nationality to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Today is the day that Chinese writers have awaited for too long and that Chinese people have awaited for too long." The determination to succeed internationally in competitive sports, also evident in twenty-first-century China, is suggestive of a comparable treadmill.

Global hegemony may be about to shift from the North Atlantic region to the Middle Kingdom, mainly in the world economy, but also in other domains. However, whether or not China is about to become the new

global hegemon is not the main point – rather, it is that the current Chinese economic system, including investments overseas in mines, infrastructure, and so on, is a major contributor to growth and prosperity within the country and ecological disaster for the planet. This simple, familiar fact is a major difference between the British and the Chinese industrial revolutions, separated by two centuries. The ecological conditions for human civilization have changed since the time when resources seemed inexhaustible, people were few, and there was always a new frontier on the horizon. I shall therefore return to Anthropocene effects and predicaments by suggesting that its implications are likely to inspire a new approach to modern complexity, forcing us not only to rethink the present and the near future, but also to see the Eurasian past in a new light.

Treadmill Competition and the Overheated Anthropocene

Coal mining may have started in China as early as 3,500 BCE, long before Europe or the Levant. Coal was used in smelting furnaces from the eleventh century, owing to the destruction of forests, similar to what happened later in Europe. Coal consumption in China was nevertheless negligible until the early 1990s, since which time it has risen meteorically, closely paralleling the phenomenal growth in GDP. It is worth pondering the fact that until the late eighteenth century, nearly all energy input into production was mammalian (Smil 2017). A horsepower was simply the power of a horse, but manpower represented the greater proportion, not least thanks to chattel slavery in the New World plantation economies. For many centuries, the technologies used in transport, but also in production, tended to change slowly and incrementally in Europe just as in China. The concept of punctuated equilibrium from evolutionary theory comes to mind (Eldredge and Gould 1972). The normal situation in evolutionary processes consists in stability. Most of the time, there is very little evolutionary change. These long periods of stable reproduction are punctuated by brief flashes of frantic genetic activity, rapid change, extinctions, and viable mutations, generally responses to changes in other parts of the biosphere, as a kind of chain reaction. Similarly, improvements in transportation technologies, both in the East and the West, were slow and incremental from antiquity until the beginning of the steam age. This does not imply that treadmill competition did not take place, and it could be complementary as well as symmetrical. If the Vikings improved their shipbuilding skills and upgraded their weaponry, coastal communities further south had to improve their defence systems. The gradual development of high-quality steel, which took place independently in China and Europe, surely had a competitive aspect, and unfolded for centuries after the smelting of iron was invented. With the marriage of the

steam engine and coal, global changes, the grave unintended consequences of which we are now experiencing, began to accelerate.

In *The Great Acceleration*, McNeill and Engelke argue that the Anthropocene will last much longer than acceleration, which cannot logically last for very long: "Indeed, even if every human immigrated to another planet tomorrow, our impacts of the past few generations will linger for millennia in the Earth's crust, in the fossil record, and in climate" (McNeill and Engelke 2016: 208). Exponential growth curves always flatten out or crash.

What we are currently witnessing are runaway growth processes that reinforce one another. For example: air traffic boosts economic growth, which entails increased production, which in turn increases air traffic and consumption, creating digital markets and dedicated apps making purchases of anything from plane tickets to sunglasses more frictionless than ever before. Similarly, economic growth in China increases the demand for beef, leading to deforestation in Brazil, erosion and eventual desertification, stimulating migration into cities lacking the infrastructure necessary to deal with explosive population growth, with ensuing problems of waste and pollution. The treadmill in these examples results from a desire to keep up with others in an integrated system with shared criteria and rules, and its fallout can be enforced migration, increasing inequality, path dependencies, and environmental destruction.

The question is not whether treadmill competition is bad for the environment, which it clearly is, but what it tells us about current and hegemonic views of progress. It is as if modernity has shifted into a higher gear since the onset of global neoliberalism, flourishing after the end of the Cold War around 1990. There has been an acceleration of acceleration. Ours is a world of high-speed global modernity where the fact that things change no longer needs to be explained by social scientists; what comes across as extraordinary or puzzling are instead the patches of continuity we occasionally discover. Modernity in itself entails change, but for decades change was synonymous with progress, and the standard narrative about the recent past was one of improvement and development. Things seemed to be getting better, and history had a direction.

In the last few decades, the confidence of the believers in unilinear progress has been dampened. Modernity and enlightenment did not eradicate atavistic ideologies, sectarian violence, and fanaticism. Wars continued to break out. Inequality and poverty did not go away. Recurrent crises with global repercussions forced economists to concede, reluctantly, at least when caught with their pants down (e.g. during the 2007–2008 financial crisis), that theirs was not a precise science after all. Although many countries were

democratic in name, a growing number of people felt that highly consequential changes were taking place in their lives and immediate surroundings without them having been consulted beforehand. And, most significantly, as I have argued in this lecture, the forces of progress turned out to be a double-edged sword. What had been our salvation for 200 years, namely inexpensive and accessible energy, was about to become our damnation due to environmental destruction and climate change.

Some forms of treadmill competition have led to genuine progress and better lives, many of which can be classified as the 'better mousetrap' kind. One might think of the evolution of ordinary things, for example, such as the fork, the watch, or the paper clip (Petroski 1992), or the trials and errors that eventually produced the lightbulb, the chronometer, and the transatlantic telegraph cable. It is unlikely that these achievements would have been reached by way of centralized state planning. Other forms of treadmill competition are ecologically destructive, increase social inequality and have few net positive effects for humanity and the biosphere, such as the mammoth infrastructural project of building extraordinarily spectacular football stadiums in the hot desert country of Qatar in an attempt to outperform previous World Cup hosts. Yet others are physically debilitating to individual competitors, and this is the case with various sports, whether they may lead to brain damage, anorexia, or chronic pain. Athletes may, in a different argument, be likened to Roman gladiators, sacrificed by the mediatized, jaded, and often nationalist public sphere, not to the gods or the Emperor, but to the spirit of modernity, losing their youth to unhealthy, monotonous, and ultimately futile exertion.

The simplest treadmill category is that in which two or several actors compete to take the lead relative to the others, typically when competing for a specific resource or niche, and where the costs and benefits are generally relevant only for those directly involved. Competition for a common but renewable resource may fit here, and certain aspects of competition within and between sports fall into this category; audiences are renewable resources. However, in most cases, a third party will be affected, positively or negatively: The upgrading of football stadiums in the UK from the 1980s onwards reduced hooliganism, but tickets became too expensive for fans on modest salaries. The scramble for minerals, including hydrocarbons, has led to a stunning economic growth rate worldwide since the 1980s, at the expense of undermining the conditions for the civilization created on the back of hydrocarbons. An initially positive outcome of a competitive race, such as cheaper commodities and services, may eventually lead to a reduction in diversity (standardization, economies of scale) and quality. An effect of cheap food is intensified exploitation of food producers, as is the

increased use of antibiotics, pesticides, and chemical preservatives enabling the food to keep longer. A similar argument is often made about garments. Treadmill competition, while increasing production and consumption, can thus turn into a race to the bottom.

Now recall that the trees in the hills surrounding Oslo need to grow to twenty meters in order to reproduce, although the energy needed to achieve that height is largely wasted. One could by rights ask why on earth those trees cannot just get together and decide that as from next year, no tree is allowed to reach more than five meters. Those who violate the principle will be executed by chainsaw and exported as Christmas trees to Trafalgar Square or another remote area.

The short response to this proposition is that as far as we know, trees are incapable of making this kind of collective decision; but we human beings are. That is why this era is usually called the Anthropocene and not the Dendrocene. So, why do we humans continue to grow to twenty or thirty meters when we are perfectly aware that four or five would have been adequate?

Phrased differently, we humans have a choice, and here lies our privilege and our damnation, since self-consciousness and morality make us responsible for our actions. Perhaps, considering that treadmill competition will be with us forever, alternative niches for competing could be created or strengthened, ones which leave no ecological footprint and enable us to cool down, scale down, and slow down.

By now, the Eurasian miracle seems to have exhausted its potential and turned from a dream to a nightmare. Some would blame the predicament on the current culture of individualism, greed, and myopic profit-seeking that goes under the blanket term neoliberalism. And it is true that deregulation, market reforms, and technological innovations – from the containerization of shipping to the smartphone – that have produced an overheated world without a thermostat, have coincided with the global dominance of neoliberalist ideology and practice. On the other hand, growth imperatives, ecological indifference, and a lack of foresight have characterized industrial society from the outset. This may change.

Some date the onset of the Anthropocene to the Industrial Revolution, some to the first nuclear weapons test in 1945. I have myself suggested 1991 as the year in which the Anthropocene was a reality and not just a prediction (Eriksen 2018), while – to take another extreme – Ian Morris (2010), while not using the term itself, argues that the cognitive, technological, and social take-off for *Homo sapiens* began after the last Ice Age. Although periodization does matter, it is not relevant for the present argument, which has shown the counterproductive, counterfinal, and ultimately destructive

effects of the Eurasian Miracle. In most accounts of the emergence of modernity, energy is fundamental, sometimes specified as EROI (Energy Return on Investment). And, whereas population has grown by a factor of eight since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, energy consumption has increased thirty times, mainly because of fossil fuels, which are an exhaustible resource with very serious side effects.

In this lecture, I have indicated the relevance of an alternative, increasingly common interpretation of modernity, seen through the lens not of its successes but of its unintended consequences resulting from the kind of competition which historically has led to progress. In a world of limited good (Hornborg 2019), continued growth is a recipe for disaster. Thus, the alternation of dominance between East and West, fuelled by mutual exchanges, internal and external competition, and a determination to defend one's turf in a changing ecology of power, has reached a point where a serious reevaluation is required. Will modernity be able to resolve this contradiction by its own means, or is a different approach to life on the planet necessary? Beyond the slogans of cooling down, scaling down, and slowing down, the solution to the Anthropocene dilemma may be found in a social ontology different from that of merchants, investor bankers, inventors, and politicians driven by personal ambition. The Polanyian "double movement" between the values of the market and the values of society (Polanyi 1957 [1944]) may serve as a starting point. For this approach to economy and society to remain relevant, it nevertheless needs revision for reasons mentioned. The values of society must be integrated with the values of the biosphere, and thus the double movement of this century takes place not merely between the opposing poles of market and society, but between a view of humanity as being embedded in the environment and a view reducing nature to mere resources for the benefit of humanity or part of it. We are now slowly beginning to see not only the present, but also the past, in a new light. This will not per se require a major revision of large-scale accounts of cultural history, but a new great divide may be appearing before our eyes, following on the heels of the Industrial Revolution, yet a trueborn child of the Bronze Age. And, as a matter of fact, even trees need to cooperate for their survival since they share microorganisms, nutrients, undergrowth, and water resources. So, there is hope for humanity as well.

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Chapter 13
Colonial Encounters: from Caliban and Owain Glyndŵr to Ilham Tohti and Petra Köpping (2022)[1]

Chris Hann

Twenty-two years in the same job in the same city is a long time. Retirement brings intimations of mortality. I have been thinking lately of John Maynard Keynes's great insight, that in the long run we are all dead. And of the late Marshall Sahlins's commentary:

> At least as far as anthropology goes, two things are certain in the long run: one is that we'll all be dead; but another is that we'll all be wrong. Clearly, a good scholarly career is where the first comes before the second (Sahlins 1993: 5).

In that spirit, let's get down to business one last time.

The postponement of my retirement rituals on account of the Covid-19 pandemic (which continues to cast shadows and limit physical presence here this evening) allows me to begin by noting that social anthropology this year celebrates the centenary of perhaps its most famous monograph. Bronislaw Malinowski self-consciously presented his *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* as a work that would bring about a paradigm shift in the discipline through its rigorous application of the ethnographic method: henceforth the ethnographer would pitch a tent among the people, rather than summon informants to the District Commissioner's veranda. It is indisputable that Malinowski's seminar at the London School of Economics was the most creative and productive in Britain during the inter-war decades of the last century. The man himself became increasingly attracted to 'applied anthropology,' but this was in the spirit of liberal reform rather than any

[1] This text was conceived as a Goody Lecture, but it was not in fact given as such. It was delivered on 23 June 2022 at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology as a highly personal *Abschiedsvorlesung* (valedictory lecture) in the presence of prehistorian François Bertemes, Dean of Philosophy Faculty I of the Martin Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg, and an audience of alumni and guests. It is published here in a form only lightly revised from the rite de passage version. The oral style has been retained, references added, and some detail specific to Halle expunged.

radical critique of colonialism. Among the notable studies of the emerging 'British school' in the last decades of the empire, many were works by scholars whose personal roots were in the colonies and dominions, or outside the empire altogether. Of course, Malinowski himself was raised as a subject of the Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria. He seems to have transferred his loyalties effortlessly from one imperial formation to another.

Fifty years after the publication of *Argonauts*, a 1972 seminar at the University of Hull gave rise to another landmark publication the following year. Talal Asad's edited collection *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* was symptomatic of another paradigm shift. In a culmination of critical voices that had been gaining strength in the previous decade, contributors to this volume scrutinized the political and epistemological conditions that had enabled the achievements of their predecessors, with particular reference to the British Empire. Accusations of complicity and Eurocentrism were levelled, though some voices in the volume urged caution. Asad himself stopped short of a total condemnation of the discipline in which he had been trained. It was *not* to be viewed as a simple reflection or 'handmaiden' of imperialism. Around this time, Malinowski's most loyal disciple Raymond Firth objected mildly (in the course of a lecture commemorating Radcliffe-Brown and devoted to criticism of emerging Marxist influence on the discipline) that the social anthropology he practised was "not the bastard of colonialism but the legitimate offspring of the Enlightenment" (Firth 1972: 200). This metaphor does not allow it to be both. In any case, Firth's commitment to the European Enlightenment has not won general acceptance. Five decades have generated a vast multidisciplinary corpus in postcolonial studies, but anthropology is still riven with acrimonious debate about the need to decolonize itself.

I obviously came too late to participate in the heroic age. Very little of my fieldwork has involved living in a tent! I have largely resisted the temptation to link work on socialist and postsocialist societies in Eurasia to discourses focused on European colonialism. In fact, I have not published on colonialism at all. I am abandoning that caution tonight, though still in a quite limited way. I shall touch upon colonial relations in the heart of Eurasia, as well as on the intellectual and practical implications of currently fashionable perspectives on the history and purpose of our discipline. While ostensibly aimed at its decolonization, I shall suggest that some trends are more likely to jeopardize its future as a social science.

Background, Early Encounters

Some personal background is permitted on this ritual occasion. One of the ways in which social anthropology has changed in the last century (and for

the better) is that the fieldworker is actively encouraged to reflect on her positionality, including background, expectations, and the nature of her interaction during fieldwork. The reader, one assumes, is still more interested in the people studied, and perhaps in the theory and methods employed, than in the *persona* of the anthropologist; but some information about the author can help in realizing the main goals. In the case of Malinowski, we are better able to appreciate his work nowadays in the light not only of his fieldwork diary but of the scholarship of Grażyna Kubica and her colleagues in Cracow, who have delved into his formative years in that city (Ellen et al. 1988). In the decades when Malinowski's social and intellectual background were almost entirely unknown to his peers in London, this ignorance facilitated myth-making on his part. Without wishing to make immodest comparisons, let me divulge a few autobiographical details and leave it to you to decide whether or not they are of any relevance to my published work, and what I am arguing tonight about colonialism.

When Asad's volume was published in 1973, I was an undergraduate at the University of Oxford studying Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. I was matriculated at Jesus College, where I was a Welsh Foundation Scholar. Having been born in Cardiff and spent my entire childhood in South East Wales, I was eligible for this status, despite being unable to speak a word of Welsh. The history curriculum at my grammar school included a little engagement with Wales at O-level, but this was limited to the nineteenth century, presented as the age of industrialization, Chartist protests, and national revival. We learned nothing about Owain Glyndŵr, nowadays generally recognized by Welsh patriots as a great prince who at the turn of the fifteenth century came close to unifying the country and expelling the English conquerors, before his eventual military defeat. Glyndŵr appears in Shakespeare's Henry IV, Part I, as Owen Glendower. For obvious reasons, it has been convenient for me in many different contexts over the years to distance myself from imperialist England or Britain. This Welsh identity is not entirely feigned: in a number of fields, particularly sport, and particularly when England is the opponent, my Welshness has emotional substance. But only quite recently have I begun to reflect seriously on the case of Wales as one of the very first *colonies* of the empire built up over centuries by London.

If I recall my years at Croesyceiliog Grammar School, two other details spring to mind with regard to colonialism. Both pertain to literature. For my A-level examination in French we studied Camus's *L'étranger*. With Algerian independence still quite fresh, I absorbed commentaries on the novel that emphasized the relevance of the author's personal background in that country to his narrative of the absurd act by which the French 'hero'

kills a nameless Arab. Over the years, I have also come across erudite analyses of the relationship between Prospero and Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which I had studied some years earlier in O-level English Literature. However, aged fourteen, the profundity of this colonial encounter, as depicted in one of the last plays of England's outstanding writer, escaped me altogether. I was not yet aware of the expression 'Third World,' and could not possibly have appreciated that Caliban represented the burden of what we now call the postcolonial Global South.

Nothing in my university studies at Oxford and then later Cambridge led me to connect these early influences to the work on which I embarked in Hungary, Poland, and Turkey. At the Department of Social Anthropology in Cambridge, I was the first to undertake fieldwork in each one of these countries (always seeking out remote rural locations, in ways that now seem extremely old-fashioned). Perhaps because the countries in which I worked had never been colonies in the strict sense, I never felt impelled to dwell on the implications of the Asad critique. From the perspective of today, I recognize that all three countries can lay claim to long histories of sovereign statehood that had been undermined by colonial relations. By the time I carried out field research in the last decades of the Cold War, it would not have been unreasonable to classify each one of them as a 'crypto-colony' (in the sense of Michael Herzfeld 2002) – of the Soviet Union in the cases of Hungary and Poland, and of the United States in the case of Turkey. Some intellectuals in those countries did level such allegations, but I did not follow them. These critical intellectuals on the periphery of Europe did not make connections between their own country and the traditional focus of social anthropologists on the European colonial empires, where they dealt with non-literate, non-historical, 'primitive' peoples (as they were still conventionally termed by Evans-Pritchard in the 1950s). I recall the occasion on which the distinguished Hungarian sociologist Elemér Hankiss, a forthright critic of the socialist government, visited Britain to give lectures about the latest developments in his country in the magical year of 1989. Hankiss probably viewed the Hungarian-Soviet relationship as imperialist or even colonial; but he did not appreciate being introduced to a Cambridge audience by a social anthropologist, because for him this sent out the wrong signals concerning a proud European nation.

Empires and Civilizations in Eurasia

My Cambridge supervisor (from 1975) was Jack Goody, who had begun his career with field research in a remote corner of what was then still a British colony known as the Gold Coast. His early work was a pioneering investigation of the transmission of property, and he continued to do field

research, to work on LoDagaa myths, and to support indigenous Ghanaian scholars throughout the 1960s. In his account of the contributions made by British social anthropologists (himself included) to the study of Africa in the twentieth century, he is highly critical of the intellectual history presented by Henrika Kuklick in *The Savage Within* (Kuklick 1991; Goody 1995: Appendix 2). In Goody's opinion, the variety in individual anthropologists' backgrounds and approaches to the African societies they studied was enough to invalidate the attempt of an intellectual historian to reduce their contributions to a common denominator in the 'folk' political theory of the colonial power.

The critique of Kuklick with reference to individual variation is curious because in other contexts Jack was very much a 'lumper' rather than a 'splitter.' In later decades, he contrasted sub-Saharan Africa with the landmass of Eurasia, and then East versus West within this landmass. Throughout his long career he paid scant attention to fashion. In the 1960s and 1970s he argued in print against both Lévi-Straussian structuralism and Althusserian Marxism, which were the dominant trends of the time. In the 1980s and the 1990s, he evidently did not consider postcolonial and postmodern 'theories' worth bothering with; he did not see any point in engaging with the 'interpretive' cultural anthropology of Clifford Geertz. Perhaps he was content to leave this task to his successor William Wyse Professor and Head of Department in Cambridge, Ernest Gellner. Ernest spent a great deal of polemical energy deploring the impact of Geertz, and later of the 'writing culture' debates, and all forms of postmodernism. He perceived postmodernism to be an intellectually inferior derivation of the philosophical relativism he had opposed throughout his career. I appreciated Gellner's combination of polemical wit with elegant structural models and an original philosophy of history that drew more on Weber than on Marx, but remained fundamentally materialist. His philosophical brilliance was combined with strong support for field research, even work such as my own, which produced some results that were out of line with his own values and political preferences. Whereas Goody knew very little about Eastern Europe (apart from a couple of brief visits to Prague), Gellner had grown up in the capital of Czechoslovakia. Understandably, he was deeply unsympathetic to the communists who seized control of his country in 1948. My reports from Hungary about a version of socialism that was enjoying a lot of success in satisfying consumer aspirations and gradually expanding personal and collective freedoms were never fully accepted by Ernest Gellner; but this did not impede collegiality, indeed friendship.

I left Cambridge in 1992 to become a professor at the University of Kent in Canterbury. During these post-Oxbridge years, I was exposed to

several corrective influences. I recall in particular C. W. (Bill) Watson, a specialist in Southeast Asia, expounding the latest contributions to subaltern studies and attempting to persuade colleagues that Edward Said had the better of his fierce jousting with Gellner on the subject of Orientalism in the pages of *The Times Literary Supplement* during the early 1990s. But neither in Kent nor later after moving to Halle to the newly founded Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology did it occur to me to theorize socialist and postsocialist societies with the conceptual apparatus now routinely applied to the Global South. Rather than examine relations between Russians and the other nationalities of the USSR as colonial, or relations between Moscow and its Warsaw Pact allies as imperialist, it seemed to me more productive to recognize the similarities that existed from the 1940s for almost half a century across most of the Eurasian landmass. I therefore coined the notion of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist socialism (MLM for short). I find it useful to theorize MLM socialism as a civilization in the world-historical sense of sociologist Johann Arnason (2003).

Ukraine Excursus

In the wake of the dissolution of the USSR, and in particular the tragedy that has unfolded since February 2022 in Ukraine, it is tempting to revisit the more familiar lens of empire. Russia's aggression can then be analyzed in the comparative framework laid out over twenty years ago by Andre Gingrich (2002), who investigated the nationalisms and *ressentiments* that accompanied the disintegration of the Habsburg and Ottoman empires. One can adapt this schema to argue that MLM socialism delayed the consequences of the disintegration of Tsarist Russia for a century. What we observe in Ukraine this year is ultimately the predictable neo-imperialist response of a 'dethroned' dominant people.

While Gingrich's comparative framework is brilliant and offers some purchase on moods and attitudes among Russians, to my mind it is not very helpful in grasping the case of Ukraine. The USSR was a highly unusual imperial power. Although Russians were obviously the hegemonic people at the centre, investments and the living standards of the population were higher in various peripheral regions, from the Baltic states to many parts of Siberia, than in much of European Russia. The channels of mobility that assured many non-Russians, particularly Ukrainians, easy access to the most powerful positions in the polity, are also something of a puzzle comparatively. I find it disconcerting that some anthropologists, in their reactions to the ghastly violence we observe this year, are forgetting what we have taught our students for many years about the contingencies and plasticity of ethnic and national identifications. This is not to excuse

preposterous claims by the Russian president. I merely ask whether our discipline can do more than simply join the chorus of international lawyers and political scientists who invoke 'sovereignty' and the sanctity of state boundaries, no matter how arbitrarily defined (see Hann 2023). The modernist (and self-proclaimed 'Enlightenment fundamentalist') Ernest Gellner once confided to me that, in his view, the boundary between Slovaks and Hungarians, hastily constructed at the end of the First World War, was obviously unjust from the point of view of the Hungarians, since it did not follow the actual boundary of language and ethnicity on the ground. Frontiers that are patently unfair need to be renegotiated peacefully if they are not to incubate revanchist and separatist aspirations. It is not hard to extrapolate from this how Gellner would have argued concerning both Donbas and Crimea.

I don't think it can be our mission to subscribe to the Western policies of unconditional support for savvy nationalists who do not, in fact, have an electoral mandate for what they are doing, and whose essentialist assumptions and intolerance of minorities go largely unreported. It has become harder since the Maidan uprising in 2013–14 to live and flourish as an ethnic Hungarian in Ukraine, let alone an ethnic Russian. Ultimately, it is not our business to evaluate the poison of neo-imperialism against the poison of nationalism (it might ultimately be the very same poison). Rather, we should be contributing as best we can (including if possible ethnographic methods, 'on the ground') to the documentation, understanding, and explanation of what is going on, in a historically informed comparative way, with appropriate attention to international relations and to the forces of capitalist political economy.

Settler Colonialism in Inner Asia

It is important to re-open comparative agendas across Eurasia. Whereas the overseas empires of North-West European states have dominated the anthropological literature, Dittmar Schorkowitz spent most of his time as a member of my department investigating what he called the 'continental colonialisms' of the landmass, and more generally the circumstances in which contiguous expansion by conquest generates new patterns of internal colonialism (Schorkowitz, Chávez and Schroeder 2019). A further key criterion in constructing ideal types, long entrenched among historians, is the degree to which we may recognize settler colonialism, as distinct from 'franchise' models of indirect rule, epitomized by the British Raj. With these distinctions in mind, it is instructive to look at the Russian and the Chinese cases in the light of recent historical developments. Tsarist Russia consolidated its expansion into Inner Asia in the nineteenth century. The

conquest of the Ferghana Valley differed from expansion across Siberia in that the peoples now subjected to foreign domination had long histories of literacy and affiliation to a 'world religion.' A comparable process unfolded in the same period as the Qing expanded the Manchu Empire westward. In the generations preceding the First World War, the so-called Great Game involved a third imperial power, namely Great Britain to the south. So here you had an unusual (and much mythologized) interaction between continental and overseas imperial formations. In the case of the Raj, indigenous populations were not significantly displaced by settler colonists. The numbers of Russian settlers in western Turkestan were similarly modest, and so were the Han Chinese numbers in eastern Turkestan, known to them as Xinjiang. Eric Schluessel has, however, described how the Xiang Army (also known as the Hunan Army) implemented a distinctive Confucianist 'civilizing project' in the oasis of Turfan in the later nineteenth century, when the Qing state reasserted its political control in the wake of revolts led by Muslim *begs* (Schluessel 2020).

The major divergence to which I wish to draw attention takes place under MLM socialism. Lenin lived just long enough to ensure that the Soviet Union was constructed federally, but Mao Zedong and Chou Enlai preferred to uphold the unitary model of the Qing. Their justification was that, whereas Russia might indeed be perceived as a colonial power in Inner Asia, in their view China had always been greater China; it had never been imperialist. In the absence of any colonial encounter, China could not be expected to classify territories such as Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia as autonomous federal units (Jacobs 2017). The Maoist years witnessed a massive immigration of Mandarin speakers into the region that was known from 1955 as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The Uyghurs became a minority within their homeland (Bellér-Hann and Hann 2020).

Following the collapse of the USSR, most ethnic Russians departed from the newly independent republics previously dominated by Moscow. In the same decades, Beijing has renewed incentives to Han settlers in Xinjiang. The ensuing conflicts – with Uyghurs accused of religious fundamentalism and nationalist secession, and Han powerholders of mass surveillance, repression, and assimilation – can no longer be investigated by ethnographers. Our longstanding links with scholars in Beijing and Ürümchi have not sufficed to secure access since short visits in 2009 and 2013. Our academic partners in Xinjiang itself are either in prison or in the so-called re-education camps. Darren Byler has titled his recent book about these developments, based on fieldwork in very difficult conditions in Ürümchi, *Terror Capitalism* (Byler 2022). It is a sophisticated exposition of what

settler colonialism can lead to in the context of a repressive state determined to suppress civilizational differences.

In this context I would like to introduce the name of Ilham Tohti, an Uyghur public intellectual educated outside his home region, an economist who has risked his life to draw attention to the injustices of Han domination in the conditions of the socialist market economy. Life imprisonment is the price Tohti is paying for daring to remind powerholders of the rights China's minorities should enjoy according to the constitutional principles of the state. If Owain Glyndŵr exemplifies the early spontaneous reaction of a people subjected to colonial conquest by a neighbour, Tohti is an exemplar of protest in the later phase of the colonial encounter, when the dominant power has long instigated mass settlement, but the indigenous people still struggle to maintain a voice. In Xinjiang as in Wales there is a principle of dogged resistance: in the words of the contemporary Welsh folk singer Dafydd Iwan, '*Er gwaetha pawb a phopeth, ry'n ni yma o hyd*,' 'Despite everyone and everything, we are still here.'

East German Excursus

If Xinjiang represents a clear-cut case of settler colonialism and linguistic and cultural assimilation unfolding at this historical moment (albeit shrouded in secrecy in remote Inner Asia), let me now turn briefly to another colonial encounter that has been played out very differently. This is delicate ground and I need to tread carefully. When I moved with my family to Berlin in 1997, the labels *Ossi* and *Wessi* were still popular currency, but often used playfully and generally downplayed by educated citizens on both sides who felt confident that the teething troubles of German unification would soon be overcome. I recall similar optimism in some of my earliest conversations in Halle, in which it was explained that, following rigorous evaluations, the university faculties with which I could expect to cooperate had been completely transformed. Most of the new professors, at least in the humanities and social sciences, were not resident in Halle, but that pattern would surely change in the new century. Two decades later, I am not sure that it has changed very much, though we must by now be in the third or fourth generation of a postsocialist professoriate. In other sectors, notably the judiciary, but also in senior echelons of the civil service and business, it is still very much the exception to find *Ossis* in the top positions. Of course, talented East Germans have found success elsewhere in Germany. But most mobility has involved involuntary decisions by workers in the lower segments of the labour market, who commute to jobs in the west of Germany in order to maintain their families in the east.

These migration trends resemble the predicament of many other postsocialist citizens, for example in remote rural regions of Hungary and Poland that I know personally. Outside the former GDR, however, professors of anthropology (or most other disciplines) did not lose their jobs in the wake of the transformation. No other socialist society was incorporated into a neighbouring state. Can this be viewed as a colonial process? As internal colonialism?

I have not attempted to answer such questions in scholarly work because this is where I have lived for two decades and I lack the necessary distance. Of course, I am aware of the success stories, of the basic fact that everyday consumer aspirations are better met in the shopping centres of today than they were in GDR times. But every now and again I chat to a resident of Halle, be it a worker or an artist, a tradesman or a judge, and I am reminded of the fact that this *is* a kind of colonial encounter. I only have to think back to the shock my teenage children experienced when they started their Gymnasium studies in Halle, after two years in the utterly different atmosphere of the Kennedy Gymnasium in Zehlendorf, West Berlin. They paid a high price for the parental decision to move as a family to Halle at the end of the 1990s. Insightful books about the transformations have been published by writers such as Wolfgang Engler (1999) and Johann Michael Möller (2019). Perhaps the most powerful plea on behalf of those East Germans who still feel that they are treated as second-class citizens is that of Petra Köpping. When public debate was still focused on how to integrate over a million foreign immigrants from Syria following the crisis of 2015, the Saxony politician published a volume with the title *Integriert doch erst mal uns!* (Köpping 2018): 'Integrate us first!'

It did not occur to me when I accepted the offer of the Max Planck Society that I would myself become a small part of this colonizing process. I was unaware at the time that a senior anthropologist at a prestigious institution in this region had already been deprived of his position, which had then been promptly filled by a West German (see Hann 2005). Obviously, I was targeted for recruitment because of my experience of research in countries that had hitherto been socialist. But I was naïve and slow to grasp the ways in which this particular postsocialist society differed from the others in the dramatic nature of its colonial encounter.

Decolonization: Rhetorical and Substantive

After this brief review of some of the colonial encounters that have popped up in my life in one guise or another, I want to close by returning to the state of our discipline. Half a century after the famous seminar in Hull, the *causa* of decolonization is still being explored. There have been heated debates in

the United States following the presidential address to the American Anthropological Association by Akhil Gupta in 2021 (albeit largely online, due to the pandemic). Gupta invited his audience to consider what might have been, had anthropologists from the beginning undertaken their research with the sensibilities of today (Gupta and Stoolman 2022). For some critics, his clarion call for decoloniality went too far in impugning the value and the ethics of the scholarship produced in earlier generations. This should be viewed, insisted the critics, not merely as antiquarian salvage but, in many cases, as contributing to the welfare and heritage of indigenous and other marginalized peoples (Lewis 2022). For those old enough to recall Talal Asad's volume, the battle lines are all too familiar. I learned recently that a decolonization wave is sweeping Switzerland, a state that is not known for its global imperial reach.

Of course, decolonization in the extended sense does not depend on the actual colonizing and colonized histories of particular countries. For many scholars nowadays, it has more to do with idealist purification of the mind. Few anthropologists would question the ethics behind the general intellectual and political agenda. But what concerns me in the current climate is that if we expend too much energy in generalized soul-searching we end in paralysis, ethnography becomes impossible, there is no incentive to invest in learning other languages, and we lose sight of our prime purpose of understanding the material world out there in all its complexity. The lenses and tropes of colonialism and imperialism will surely remain useful for many years to come. It will always be important to include the deeper entanglements of anthropology and colonialism in courses in the history of our discipline, and to question epistemological foundations, patriarchal bias, and many other distortions. At an institute where the focus has been on extended field research, it has been a prime concern to respect the scholarship produced in communities other than our own, as well as to protect those with whom we work 'in the field.' But what does this mean in practice? Must it mean that all interaction with human subjects requires the signing of protocols in advance? Problems arise with each and every photograph or video clip, especially of large groups, for which it is impractical or impossible to secure formal consent. I worry that the burden bureaucratically imposed on today's researchers, though introduced in the spirit of ethical concern and decolonizing critique of past practice, is not really in anyone's interests. The measures imposed upon us may make sense in other disciplines, but if taken too literally they will disable our enquiries by limiting them to formal, 'front stage' arenas.

At this institution, we are well endowed and can offer support to scholars in other places who are less privileged. If we draw these other

scholars into our conversations here, do we inevitably end up institutionalizing hierarchies of knowledge? Or should we instead make more strenuous efforts to join *their* debates, and formally adopt the principle of 'nothing about us without us?' Do we conclude that comparative social anthropology, as conducted hitherto at this institute, overwhelmingly in the medium of the English language, is itself a flawed colonial project? Do we take the view that, for a whole range of issues, only a native of the community concerned should be allowed to speak?

It will not surprise you to hear that my answer to every single one of these questions is negative. Even if we were not an institute of the Max Planck Society, with its commitment to science, I think we should be wary of overdoing the hermeneutics and perspectivist cosmologies, to the neglect of social organization in the old-fashioned sense of Raymond Firth. Anthropology was famously termed by Firth (1981) an 'uncomfortable science.' It depends on empathy with subjects, but also on objective analysis, for which a certain distance and a comparative frame generally prove helpful. It is not helpful to over-stretch a particular concept to the point of trivializing it – and I think this might now be taking place with the nexus *coloniality, decolonization*, and *recolonization*. Whether advocating a universalist human rights liberalism or the opposite (new forms of relativism), those who extend the concept of decoloniality to everything judged iniquitous by contemporary standards of political correctness frequently overlook and divert attention from the many forms of inequality and exploitation that cannot be adequately explained in such terms.[2]

For me, these problems are tightly linked to questions of method and attitude. The future of anthropology will depend on researchers having the courage to take risks and cross boundaries, and to continue engaging directly with the 'ordinary people' that other disciplines do not reach. We should not content ourselves with interview-based ethnography, and we should question whether it really makes sense for us to have all our 'interlocutors' sign consent forms whenever we enter a conversation or take a photograph. Experts of many kinds, state officials at many levels and NGO networks are important. So is analysis of the rhetoric and aesthetics of subjects' self-presentations in interviews, and nowadays in the social media. But we must not give up on the aspiration to know what is happening backstage, to overhear informal chat at the *Stammtisch* and at home in the kitchen. This is what I have spent a lot of my own time doing in the last half century.

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[2] We should also be alert to reactionary appropriations. In contemporary Hungary, *dekolonizáció* can refer to the reinvigoration of national conservative discourses allegedly "colonized" in the socialist era by progressive, secular ideologies of modernity. See Czopf 2018.

But interaction with the *Volk* at the *Stammtisch* in the present day is not enough: ethnography has to be connected with world history and world futures. In my case, that means situating MLM socialism in the broad sweep of human history. It has meant a continuous tension between *understanding* opinions and experiences of socialism on the ground (often bitterly negative) and *analyzing* the ever more pressing need to curb free markets for the sake of human well-being and this planet. It has been something of a consolation in recent decades to see some of those who were most critical of MLM socialism while it lasted, in villages such as Tázlár on the Danube-Tisza interfluve where I have worked since the mid-1970s, come around to recognizing that the core ideals of those regimes were respectable after all, and need somehow to be reasserted. The tension in the early decades of my career was how I, as a Western anthropologist with a basic sympathy toward socialist regimes, could engage with rural populations whose values and preferences were mostly quite different. The equivalent tension nowadays is perhaps that between a liberal enthusiast of universal human rights and publics characterized by 'populist' predilections. The underlying challenge is the same: the researcher aims to grasp and convey local experiences and the much vaunted 'native point of view,' but also to explain why people have the beliefs and values they hold and practice, with reference to power, ideology, and political economy. The values of the researcher should not distort either of these tasks.

No anthropologist has linked the micro with the macro more impressively than Jack Goody. It is sometimes suggested that his deployment of the comparative method in later life became abstruse and abstract, for example when outlining Eurasia's divergence from Africa, and postulating China as the long-term structural equivalent of Europe. But for Jack, starting with the LoWiili and LoDagaba, neighbouring communities in Northern Ghana, all human societies were grist to the comparative mill. The lecture he gave to open our conference on property and inheritance in December 2001, which was the very first major event to take place in the institute's permanent building, was a wonderful example. Who else but Jack would have proposed comparing socialist endeavours to counter social inequalities in the industrializing and industrialized societies of Eurasia with sorcery accusations in the communities of pre-industrial Africa (Goody 2003)? In her Goody Lecture here a few years ago (this volume, ch. 10), Carola Lentz complained that he imposed his own categories of identity and did not pay sufficient attention to historical sources and the concrete tensions of colonialism during his first fieldwork and the ensuing monographs. The criticism is doubtless warranted: like others in that era, his aim was to capture something of significance before it disappeared, hence the illusion of

'timelessness.' But as a member of Kwame Nkrumah's party, he made his political sympathies clear and in later work he engaged closely with the history of the region. Following Ghana's independence, an ideal of decolonization inspired everything Goody did as an anthropologist. His magnificent work in oral history, made possible by his command of the local language, gave voice to the LoDagaa. Though this collective name was his coinage not theirs, and though the way he gained access to the secret rituals of the Bagre would not be sanctioned by an ethics committee today, Lentz confirms that Goody's contributions are held in the highest esteem by members of these local Dagara groups in the 21st century.

As Nur Yalman pointed out in his own Goody Lecture (this volume, ch. 8), decolonization as observed by Goody on the ground in West Africa led him to recognize far-reaching implications. His later focus on Eurasia and his perception of 'alternating leadership' between East and West since the Bronze Age were a prescient correction to the tendency in most western scholarship to focus on Europe, even when nominally critiquing Eurocentrism. For Jack Goody, decolonization also meant transcending the disciplinary boundary between social anthropology and sociology. Thanks to Han Vermeulen (see his essay in this volume), I discovered recently that Jack was calling for the 'decolonization of the social sciences' as early as the 1960s, first in a short article in *New Society*, and later in more scholarly form (Goody 1966, 1969). He kept his eye on the big picture and never lost his way in theoretical fads.[3]

The theories and academic boundaries have somewhat different contours in Eastern Europe compared to sub-Saharan Africa, partly because across most of Eurasia the indigenous scholars can call upon their own written traditions stretching back centuries and even millennia. In countries

[3] Many of the trends I have in mind originated in France. Jack had good friends in Paris, whose scholarly contributions he respected. But he was dismissive of convoluted theorizing in any language when it seemed to serve no practical purpose in the analysis of data. The collection of fresh data in the field was particularly important at an early stage in one's career. In 1978, with a dissertation nearing completion and a full year of my Research Council funding still to be used up, I suggested to Jack that I might decamp to spend the academic year 1978-9 in West Berlin (a very cool place at the time). My proposal to approach Lawrence Krader and explore arcane aspects of Marxist theory then in vogue, such as the Asiatic mode of production, was greeted with scorn (my impression was that Jack's views concerning Marxism were rather similar to those of Firth 1972). Rather than sit at the feet of any contemporary guru in a western university, a novice anthropologist lucky enough to have funds should seize the opportunity to learn a new language and start a new project. Concretely, Jack then encouraged me to contact his friend Andrzej Paluch (a regular visitor to Cambridge) in Cracow and, with his local help, investigate how the Polish countryside might be compared and contrasted with my analysis of Hungary in the PhD thesis. This advice proved fruitful and led to a range of new interests that have stayed with me ever since.

such as Hungary and Poland (the ones I know best), social anthropologists – whether foreign or native – have to position themselves vis-à-vis a host of natives, including ethnologists, folklorists, sometimes historians, not to mention sociologists. Much has been written about the ensuing tensions, especially in the postsocialist decades. Some native scholars have given voice to new experiences of colonization as the field is opened up and dominated by Anglophone researchers (Kürti and Skalník 2009). Jack Goody would have done his best to break down these boundaries and the inequalities associated with them. The demise of socialist regimes has undoubtedly increased social inequalities in many domains; but there is no reason why it should deepen inequalities in the production of knowledge in our field.

The decolonization that Jack Goody called for is not to be confused with a blanket relativism that asserts the equality and incommensurability of myriad 'cultures.' On this essential point he was in full agreement with Ernest Gellner. Both are likely to fall foul of the 'cancel culture' of our times. Of course, they differed significantly. Ernest constructed abstract models and was inclined to emphasize discontinuity, including the break represented by the emancipatory forces of the Enlightenment at one end of Eurasia. Jack judged this to be Eurocentric and preferred to stress long-term continuities and a pendulum swing between East and West. For him, the Renaissance was something to be pluralized, rather than inscribed into a celebratory narrative of European exceptionalism (Goody 2009; see Burke, this volume, ch. 3). Ultimately, both men cared deeply about cultural difference but were at the same time committed to an understanding of social anthropology as more than Geertzian hermeneutics, more than performance and backstage social interaction, more than the *Stammtisch*. Social anthropology must embrace history and strive at the same time to meet the standards of a cumulative social science. In today's climate, this might sound like a reactionary philosophy. But it is one to which I am confident that the discipline will return in due course, with the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and our immediate colleagues, the anthropologists at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, as major institutional players.

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PART III

BIOGRAPHICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPROACHES

Chapter 14
John Rankine Goody, 1919–2015[1]

Chris Hann

One of the most productive themes addressed repeatedly by Jack Goody during his long and prolific career concerned the 'mode of communication,' in particular the impact of literacy. The invention of writing, especially in alphabetic form, enabled a new kind of 'knowledge society' in which people could 'look back' and continuously rediscover the stored wisdom of their ancestors. Goody's mature work reminds us that, in the early twenty-first century, this process is still regrettably segmented across the globe. Educated

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[1] This memoir was first posted on 14th November 2017 in *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy*, XVI, 457–481. It is republished here with referencing adjusted to the style of this volume. I thank Peter Brown, former Secretary of the British Academy, for supplying practical guidelines and a copy of a CV prepared by Goody himself.

Goody was my PhD supervisor in Cambridge between 1975 and 1979. Everyone seemed to call him Jack, so I did too, from the beginning. He retired in the year that I was appointed to the staff of the Department and I was not particularly close to him personally; but we kept in touch over the years and he gave the keynote lecture at the first conference in the permanent buildings of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in December 2001. When he visited again in 2004 he delivered a more personal talk about the development of his thinking [Chapter 1 of the present volume].

Jack Goody looked back on his life and work quite frequently. He paints a particularly harmonious picture of the Cambridge social anthropology department in its heyday in Goody 1991. Some personal detail can also be gleaned from Goody 1995, a foray into disciplinary history that includes wistful restatements of his philosophy of anthropology as a cumulative science, composed at a time when this was singularly unfashionable.

Jack would be the first to appreciate that elements of orality have intruded throughout this text. Numerous friends have helped me, either in person, or through informal communications in the latest digital media, or both. Special thanks to Ray Abrahams, Keith Hart, Gilbert Lewis and Alan Macfarlane for sharing their perceptions of a teacher and colleague; to Martine Segalen for the reception in France; and to Peter Burke, one of Jack's closest intellectual confidants from the 1980s onwards, who shares his determination to combat excessive specialisation in the humanities and social sciences, and to reunite these realms. I also wish to thank Jeremy Goody (Lokamitra), Esther Newcomb Goody, Mary Goody, Rachel Goody and Juliet Mitchell. The more information I received from family members, the clearer it became that, to cite the words of Ludwig Wittgenstein in a quite different context, 'whereof one cannot speak, thereof one should be silent.'

Europeans are familiar with the rediscovery of classical antiquity in the European Renaissance, but few appreciate that Song dynasty intellectuals in China were able to look back in much the same way to Confucian as well as Buddhist classics (Goody 2010a). The structural similarity of East and West in Eurasia eventually became Jack Goody's dominant theme. But his starting point was the flexibility of oral communication in Africa, where the transmission of knowledge, of political offices and of property, all differed significantly from Eurasian patterns. A transition from Africa to Eurasia structures the central sections of this memoir. But Goody is not to be pigeon-holed geographically and to speak of a transition in his work is not to deny continuity and unity. There was no sudden intellectual shift, but rather a gradual reorientation that coincided roughly with his tenure of the William Wyse chair in Social Anthropology at Cambridge between 1973 and 1984. The two sections in which I focus more on the professional accomplishments (in as much depth as a short memoir allows) are bracketed by sections in which I elaborate on the life and character of a man who was acknowledged, even by those unsympathetic to his intellectual positions and personality, as a 'big man' of the academic tribe of social anthropologists.

The Apprentice

Jack Goody was conscious of the fact that his rather conventional Home Counties background made him an unusual recruit to a discipline in which middle-class Englishmen were outnumbered by South African Jews, Central European refugees, cosmopolitan aristocrats and 'colonials.' He joked about this by emphasising his mother's Scottish heritage.[2] He was born on 27 July 1919 in London and grew up in Welwyn Garden City and St Albans, where the Roman excavations of Mortimer Wheeler apparently made an impression on him as a schoolboy. St Albans School was almost as ancient and no doubt just as impressive in its own way.[3] Jack's father was a technical journalist and later an advertising manager in an electrical company. His mother worked as a civil servant for the Post Office before her marriage. Both parents valued education highly, and Jack dedicated his first monograph to them (Goody 1956). More than half a century later, in the Acknowledgements to his final book, he looked back as follows:

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[2] Jack's second Christian name was her family name. He and his younger brother Richard spent summers in the maternal home in Turriff, Aberdeenshire. Richard Goody is a distinguished atmospheric and planetary physicist and an Emeritus at Harvard University.

[3] Colin Renfrew, the archaeologist who later became Jack's sparring partner in Faculty Board meetings in Cambridge, was a pupil at St Albans School many years later. Ernest Gellner (who succeeded Goody as William Wyse Professor in 1984) completed his secondary education during the war at a different (less prestigious) grammar school in the same town.

> above all I remember the earlier help of my mother, Lilian Rankine Goody of Turriff (she always retained her maiden name) and of my father, Harold Ernest Goody of Fulham, both of whom left school at sixteen but developed their own interests in work and education and were so pleased when their two sons obtained sizarships and later PhDs (without loans) at St John's College, Cambridge, later becoming Fellows of the College, as they would also have been when they both subsequently became members of the National Academy of the USA (Goody 2012: xvii).

When Jack went up to Cambridge in 1938 to read English he encountered communists and radicals of diverse social backgrounds. Raymond Williams was a contemporary at Trinity College, but Jack established a closer relationship with Eric Hobsbawm at King's.[4] His undergraduate career was interrupted for six years by the Second World War. In several reminiscences, Jack attributed his decision to take up social anthropology to his experiences among Italian villagers in the Abruzzi, where he displayed great valour on the run from the Nazis, who had captured him at Tobruk in 1942.[5] After twice escaping and being recaptured, the second time in Rome, he spent over a year in Eichstätt, a Bavarian prisoner-of-war camp, where he was able to read James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Gordon Childe's *What Happened in History*.

The war brought traumas, but it also extended social horizons. When looking back on his adventures in Italy, Jack stressed his encounters with the 'olive skinned peasants.' But the ensuing literary efforts of the young officer to render the vernacular of his fellow soldiers, including British army privates, suggest a revelatory discovery of the diversity of his own society and its class structure. This memoir of the war, the first half of which was written in the camp at Eichstätt, reveals a connoisseur of Joyce: the hero—aka Jack—is called Stephen. When finally demobbed, Stephen is troubled by 'the fuss of relatives' and requests a rail warrant to John O'Groats 'to do his own adjusting, sort out his own cards of identity and social relations' (Goody 1992: 77). I think it is possible that Jack Goody might have chosen to take up sociology or perhaps even social psychology, had such options existed in Cambridge at the time.

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[4] Hobsbawm interviewed Goody in 1991 for Alan Macfarlane's digital archive: at http://upload.sms.cam.ac.uk/media/1117872 (accessed 11 July 2017).

[5] In 1997 he revisited the cave where he had taken refuge, following publication of his memoir of these events in Italian translation *(Oltre i Muri*, Rome, Il Mondo). A French translation was published in 2004 (*Au-delà des murs*, Marseille, La Découverte). The English typescript Beyond the Walls was copied privately by the Goody family; it can be accessed in the Manuscript collection of St John's College (Goody 1992).

After completing Part I of the English Tripos in 1946, Jack took a one-year Diploma course in social anthropology, passing with a Distinction. His practical curiosity toward his own British society then deepened during a two-year stint as an Assistant Education Officer in Hertfordshire, with responsibilities for adult education. But research scholarships were not available for sociology. He returned to university in 1949 with the help of a Colonial Social Science Scholarship to study social anthropology, not at Cambridge but at the institute headed by Edward Evans-Pritchard (E-P) in Oxford. This was the year in which E-P delivered a famous lecture calling for a rapprochement between anthropology and history.[6] However, this manifesto had little impact on the courses taught at Oxford. Goody accepted an offer to work on West Africa with Meyer Fortes, who was appointed at precisely this time to be William Wyse Professor in Cambridge. Formally Jack Goody spent the next few years as a Sociological Research Officer for the Gold Coast Government. The winds of change were already beginning to blow: though he still held a commission as an army officer, at his field site Jack promptly joined the local branch of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party. He spent a little over twelve months in 1950–1 among the acephalous, non-literate LoDagaa. This was his collective name for the inhabitants of the two settlements he studied, who he called the LoWiili and LoDagaba. He quickly realised that the old notion of a 'Lobi tribe' was a mirage, since no named groups existed on the ground in this region of north-western Ghana near the Black Volta River. Jack obtained a BLitt from Oxford in 1952 before returning to the district for a further nine months' field research. He was guided throughout this research by Fortes. Looking back, Jack sometimes spoke of the 'five years' he spent in Ghana at this time; but this was a form of amnesia that subsumed the writing-up process in Cambridge. For his wife Joan (née Wright), whom he had married in 1947, and their three young children Jeremy, Joanna and Jane, it perhaps did feel like a continuous five-year absence. The marriage collapsed.

Jack Goody's PhD dissertation was examined in 1954 by G. I. Jones (a veteran of the Colonial Service) and Max Gluckman from the University of Manchester. It secured its author immediate appointment as an Assistant Lecturer in the department that Fortes was consolidating. Jack was promoted to Lecturer in 1959 and elected to a Fellowship at St John's College in 1961. Meanwhile in 1956 he married Esther Newcomb, one of his first graduate students and the daughter of the distinguished American social psychologist Theodore Newcomb. Jack and Esther were a remarkable academic team, both in the field and in Cambridge. They wrote papers together and visited

[6] This Marett Lecture modified (and in places contradicted) the thrust of E-P's inaugural lecture just two years before. See Barnes 1987.

Ghana regularly throughout the first decade of independence, living there continuously from 1964 to 1966 with their daughters Mary and Rachel. Sabbaticals and many university vacations were spent mainly among the Gonja, a more stratified and centralised society than the LoDagaa. Esther also worked with West African migrants in London. While her focus remained firmly on kinship and interpersonal relations, Jack's interests began to diversify, to include precolonial history as well as the challenges of economic development and postcolonial statehood. Together they provided a stream of fresh empirical as well as theoretical insights to complement the Olympian overview of kinship theory provided by Fortes in his Morgan Lectures (Fortes 1969).

Jack succeeded Audrey Richards as Director of Cambridge's African Studies Centre in 1966. He applied for and was awarded the ScD degree in 1969, and he was appointed Smuts Reader in Commonwealth Studies in 1972. But not everything was plain sailing. Before the Smuts elevation he had failed in an effort to obtain promotion to a personal Readership, and his appointment to succeed Fortes as William Wyse Professor in 1973 was not quite a foregone conclusion. Factional opposition inside Cambridge was one thing (more about this below), but Jack had managed to make a few enemies in Oxford and other places with a say in the matter. Eventually, the depth and breadth of his publications list was decisive. At this stage, Jack Goody was still very much an anthropologist's anthropologist; but his increasing engagement with other academic fields presumably counted in his favour at this moment of disciplinary transition in the wake of empire.[7] It had been a long apprenticeship. Jack paid appropriate homage to his mentor by editing the Festschrift for Fortes that appeared shortly afterwards (Goody 1974). His own contribution to this volume, 'Polygyny, economy and the role of women,' gave a fair indication of his interests at the time; at this point few had any inkling of the scale of the changes to come.

The Africanist

The hallmark of the Cambridge department built up by Meyer Fortes was 'descent theory,' grounded above all in West African ethnography. Critics of

[7] One criterion that did not weigh heavily in those days was pedagogical skill. Formal teaching (as distinct from informal supervision and guidance, in which he invested a great deal) was never a priority for Jack Goody. His lectures were often unprepared and his delivery was poor. Even when Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, was sitting in the lecture rooms adjacent to the Haddon Library in the late 1960s, it is said that Jack mumbled and rambled much as he always did. The contrast with his lucid and well-crafted books and articles was so strong that audiences sometimes wondered if the awkward lecturing style was a deliberate ploy to reinforce his arguments about the deficiencies of the oral mode of communication.

the descent theorists, influenced by the path-breaking work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, emphasised prescriptive marriage rules and inter-group alliances, rather than the character of the kin group (clan or lineage) as a corporation. The alliance theorists were instrumental in popularising structuralist anthropology more generally. They were championed in Cambridge by Edmund Leach, who was recruited by Fortes in 1953 from the London School of Economics (LSE). Leach had studied engineering at Cambridge and worked in China before participating in Bronislaw Malinowski's seminar at the LSE in the late 1930s. His horizons, too, had been greatly changed by the war, much of which he spent in remote regions of Burma. Leach was a born provocateur, ready to tangle with Lévi-Strauss himself on some points, and dismissive of virtually all his contemporaries in Britain. Some of those criticised felt that Leach's preference for rationalist logic was a case of *faute de mieux*. Having lost his Burma fieldnotes and written a well-received book that was not burdened with ethnographic facts (Leach 1954), Leach went on to publish a second monograph that was full of them (Leach 1961). But *Pul Eliya* was based on just seven months' field research in Ceylon (as it was still called), and Leach did not match the standards of his Africanist colleagues as an ethnographer. He concluded the Ceylon study with a sharp attack on the primacy attached to kinship by the Africanists around him. Leach declared that the institutions of the domestic domain and kinship itself had no autonomy but were constantly refashioned by economic realities, in particular through the system of land tenure.

This sounded like a manifesto for a materialist economic anthropology based on ethnographic data, but Edmund Leach was incapable of pursuing such an agenda and soon moved on to other matters (notably the analysis of biblical myth). In his more general theoretical statements, he disparaged ethnographic 'butterfly collecting' in favour of an eclectic adaptation of the structuralist analysis practiced by Lévi-Strauss, with its origins in Saussurian linguistics. In his much-quoted 1959 Malinowski Lecture titled 'Rethinking anthropology,' Leach singled out Goody's early work in northern Ghana as an example of the kind of anthropology that had to be overcome:

> My colleague Dr Goody has gone to great pains to distinguish as types two adjacent societies in the Northern Gold Coast which he calls LoWiili and LoDagaba. A careful reader of Dr Goody's works will discover, however, that these two 'societies' are simply the way that Dr Goody has chosen to describe the fact that his field notes from two neighbouring communities show some curious discrepancies. If Dr Goody's methods of analysis were pushed to the limit we should be able to show that every village community

> throughout the world constitutes a distinct society which is distinguishable as a type from any other (Leach 1961: 3).

The Goody work in question here was his BLitt thesis, a revised version of which was published in 1956 (Goody 1956a). One might doubt whether Leach was ever a 'careful reader' of the works of his Africanist colleagues. Be that as it may, by the time Goody published a much-revised version of his PhD, even the most superficial reader could see that his purpose was hardly sterile classification (Goody 1962). Goody agreed with Leach that anthropologists should not limit themselves to writing 'impeccably detailed historical ethnographies of particular peoples' (Leach 1961: 1). But rather than generalisation via 'inspired guesswork,' as advocated by Leach, Goody wanted the discipline to get back to addressing the big questions of human history, and to do so on the basis of careful analysis of empirical evidence, rather than intuition and logical patterns.

Some in Leach's audience in 1959 and later readers of his lecture jumped to erroneous conclusions about the main protagonists in these Cambridge debates. Leach, the structuralist, was also marked by the Malinowski imprint, joking with his students that for half of the week he remained an old-fashioned functionalist. He upheld the same high standards of field research using local languages as those of the 'journeyman' (Fortes' ironic self-description) ethnographers in the other camp. Certainly there were vigorous debates and occasional misunderstandings between the leading personalities; affairs, and even religious heritage, might have been mischievously invoked on occasion. But looking back, one sees that the tensions between Fortes, Leach and Goody were intellectually productive. They did not impede significant collaborations across the departmental divide, such as a Cambridge Papers volume on bridewealth and dowry in which Jack and Stanley Tambiah (ostensibly a card-carrying member of the Leach faction and a rival of Jack's for the Chair in 1973) published complementary studies (Goody and Tambiah 1973; see also Fuller 2015).

Just as Edmund Leach never questioned the accomplishments of the Malinowskian tradition, so Jack Goody respected the impulses coming from Paris, where expertise on West Africa was as strong as that in Britain for some topics. His French was better than that of his colleagues and he was a frequent visitor as Directeur d'Études Associé at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales throughout the 1970s.[8] Yet Jack Goody was never seduced by the central precepts of French structuralist anthropology. Of course, for some hard-nosed Anglo-Saxon empiricists the entire Lévi-

[8] He also spent many summers in the vicinity of Figeac, in the department of the Lot, returning each year to the same gîte in a tiny hamlet, and later to the house he and Esther bought nearby.

Straussian school was an unfortunate consequence of the continental preference for armchair philosophising and reluctance to suffer the discomforts of the field. In Jack's case there were more serious intellectual reasons behind the critique. In his formative years he had come under the influence of 'three visiting Professors of Social Theory at Cambridge in 1953–56, Talcott Parsons, Lloyd Warner and George Homans' (Goody 1962: vii). All three were primarily sociologists (though Warner also made important contributions to anthropology). Jack was not overwhelmed by Parsonian theory. He was more impressed by Homans' bold ambition to develop a comprehensive science of human groups. If an American sociologist could publish a perceptive overview of medieval English villagers (Homans 1941), surely a social anthropologist could make equally valuable contributions from a somewhat different angle? This had some affinity to the 'natural science of society' programme of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, a Cambridge anthropologist of an earlier generation who had interacted with Warner in Chicago. Jack Goody, though not uncritical of Radcliffe-Brown, always preferred an explicitly comparative, sociological vision of the discipline to that offered by the later Evans-Pritchard. He may also have preferred the politics of a man known in his Cambridge years as 'Anarchy Brown' to the Catholic conservatism of E-P.

These key elements, assembled in Cambridge and cemented during a sabbatical year at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto (1959–60), were firmly in place by the time Goody published *Death, Property and the Ancestors* in 1962. This work meets the highest Malinowskian-Fortesian standards in terms of presenting fieldwork data. The comparative anthropologist recalls his earlier academic identity by punctuating his work with epigraphs and quotations from English literature. It is also instructive to note early signs of an engagement with English and European history as he draws on Henry Maine and other classical European sources to understand the transmission of property in northern Ghana. His analysis of the dual inheritance system of the LoDagaba showed that it allowed for greater choice than that of the LoWiili, the people with whom he spent most of his first stint in the field. The differences had implications both for the corporateness of descent groups and interpersonal relations. All this was new grist to the Fortesian mill, but at the same time it opened up original paths for comparison, of a kind not envisaged by the master. The significant differences between LoDagaba and LoWiili turned on inheritance, but how did the difference in property transmission come about? It could not be explained with reference to the regional ecology, and Goody was not disposed to give credit to speculative evolutionary theories about 'uterine inheritance' as an earlier stage in human evolution; the trend in the

savannah of the Niger bend in recent centuries seemed to be in the opposite direction.

To the best of my knowledge, Goody never resolved this question pertaining to the entanglements of regional migration histories. Instead, perhaps piqued by the teasing remarks of Leach, he turned his attention ever more ambitiously to the bigger picture, always with the archaeology of Gordon Childe in the back of his mind and influenced also by the Danish economic historian Ester Boserup. He argued that most of Africa south of the Sahara was characterised by rudimentary technology (the digging stick rather than the plough) and by the relative abundance of land. This was the deeper explanation for an intercontinental contrast with Europe and Asia, where fertile land tended to be scarce, surpluses were larger and property was transmitted to individual heirs, female as well as male, rather than collectively through kin groups. A series of publications elaborated this contrast, culminating in 1976 in *Production and Reproduction*.

By now, both the emphasis on materialist causation and the historical orientation distinguished Goody clearly from Fortes. This emerging interest in modes of production did not lead Jack Goody to embrace the neo-Marxist paradigms that became fashionable in these years (also largely derivative of developments in Paris, in particular the work of Louis Althusser). He did not take kindly to accusations of economic or technological determinism. The idealism of the neo-Marxist stress on the relations of production was little better than Leach's *trompe l'oeil* at the end of his Ceylon monograph. Contributing to a symposium on slavery organised by his friend Woody Watson, Jack elaborated a more general suspicion of 'theory':

> … in rural economy slavery has different implications in the simpler agricultural systems of Africa than in the more advanced ones of the Eurasian continent, under industrial than under craft production. To make such an assertion is viewed by some Althusserians as 'technological determinism' or 'vulgar Marxism.' However the obverse is an equally 'vulgar' form of 'idealism,' which can be maintained only by those who have little concern with the interplay of 'theory' and 'research,' and who view 'theory' as a body of ready-made constructs insulated from the realm of empirical systems. Such a binary approach to social theory and research has a long tradition in the decontextualized discussion of philosophers. It has little relevance to the dialectical process involved in the study of human society (Goody 1980: 17).

One counter move (also a favourite ploy of Ernest Gellner) was to insist on paying as much attention to the means of destruction as to the means of production. You could not understand political formations in West Africa

without appreciating the different implications of horses and guns as military weapons (not all regional experts were convinced by Jack's generalisations about this contrast). But the move which had greater significance for Goody's oeuvre concerned the mode of communication and the importance of literacy as a 'technology of the intellect.' This too emerged from his original field research, during which he wrote down a very long myth of the LoDagaba. The Bagre was a secret association and the way in which Jack first gained access and published his materials might not pass muster for the more restrictive ethics committees of our age. This was nevertheless work that gave him the satisfaction of being able to give back something of value pertaining to the past of the societies he had studied so intensively, while the LoDagaba themselves were now firmly focused on constructing new futures. *The Myth of the Bagre* was particularly well received in France, where it appeared in translation (Goody 1972; Goody with Gandah 1980). Later recordings of the myth revealed that substantial changes could take place in little more than a decade. Gradually, Goody recognised the deeper implications of oral transmission when compared with writing systems, such as the alphabet invented by the Greeks, which permitted systematisation and scientific procedures. The strong version of this contrast was first outlined in a paper written with his close friend at St John's, the literature scholar Ian Watt. This paper dominated the subject for years (Goody and Watt 1963, republished in Goody 1968). He returned to the theme repeatedly, retracting some of his stronger propositions and the excessive concentration on the case of Greece, which (from his later standpoint) reflected a Eurocentric bias and underestimated the potential of logographic representation.

But the core of the argument was retained and it was central to his answer to the structuralist challenge. Lévi-Strauss seduced his readers into a world of binary oppositions, all predicated on an opposition between 'hot' societies endowed with history (notably those of Europe) and the 'cold' societies which lacked such a past and formed the traditional terrain of anthropology (ethnology). To Jack Goody this always seemed feeble as a philosophy of history. The binary it implied was contradicted by the speed with which a new generation in Africa was adapting to modern systems of education and science. Jack called instead for a renewal of collaboration with historians and archaeologists to understand the multiple paths of human history. *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Goody 1977) was his most comprehensive riposte to the structuralists—the very title evokes a key concept of Lévi-Strauss). Here it sometimes seems as if Goody is positing the invention of writing as the key moment in a 'great divide' theory of his own. Translated into at least six major languages by the end of the century, this was probably the book that had most impact during his lifetime.

While these long-term historical interests were beginning to bear fruit, throughout the 1950s and 1960s Goody was also paying his dues to the Malinowskian-Fortesian tribe with publications in quite different genres. His standing as a kinship specialist was first established with a rigorously argued paper on conceptions of incest and adultery (Goody 1956). This was published (strange though it seems today) in the *British Journal of Sociology*, as was a later paper on religion and ritual (Goody1961a). Further papers in leading anthropological journals dealt with 'the mother's brother and the sister's son' (1959), 'double descent systems' and 'the circulation of women and children in Northern Ghana' (1967, with Esther Newcomb Goody). During these years, Jack also published papers in a variety of historical journals as well as the social sciences and regional studies outlets. The journal best suited to his growing ambitions was Comparative Studies in Society and History, which in addition to the above-mentioned seminal paper on literacy (1963, with Ian Watt) also published wide-ranging surveys of adoption (Goody 1969) and 'strategies of heirship' (Goody 1973). Seemingly 'arid' exercises to demonstrate that specialist terms could serve a useful purpose if rigorously defined and applied cross-culturally were complemented by the trenchant dismissal of terms that might have taken firm root, but which upon closer scrutiny were too imprecise to be saved for science. His objections to 'ritual' were no doubt prompted by the loose usage of Leach; they were repeated in the 1962 monograph and reformulated in his contribution to an influential volume devoted to 'secular ritual' (Goody 1977). Jack's reservations concerning the applicability of 'feudalism' on the African continent prefigured later elaborations of his critique of Eurocentric bias in the historical social sciences (Goody 1963). This essay was republished in a wide-ranging collection which showed how far he had come by the end of his apprenticeship. Africa was still at the centre of his work, but the agendas were expanding rapidly (Goody 1971).

The World Historian

I have stressed that there were no abrupt transitions in Jack Goody's work: the seeds of just about everything he wrote after 1973 can be found in the years preceding his appointment to the William Wyse chair. But along with a shift in the spatial focus from Africa to Eurasia, he strikes out ever more adventurously beyond anthropology and the social sciences in order to address the agendas of historians and archaeologists. Publications in exclusively anthropological journals become increasingly rare. There is an acceleration following his retirement in 1984 when, freed of managerial responsibilities, the emeritus is able to concentrate fully on his writing. Jack Goody produced some eighteen new works between 1984 and 2012. Almost

all were published in Cambridge. There was a falling-out with Cambridge University Press when it opted to change the name and governance of the monographs series for which he had long served as sole General Editor.[9] Yet he continued to publish his most substantial books with CUP. Several shorter works for wider audiences were commissioned by Cambridge sociologist John Thompson for Polity Press. Rich essay collections appeared with Blackwell (Goody 1997) and Verso (Goody 1998). The titles of these latter volumes are indicative of another slow shift over the years: from a comparative social scientist who engages with the very latest results of historical demographers, and who supports his generalisations with reference to Murdock's Ethnographic Atlas and statistical path analysis, to a historian of culture who is more concerned to provide narrative descriptions of patterns and associations than to measure causal flows. Throughout these decades Jack read incessantly in broad fields of world history; but whenever there was a danger of losing his way in details, he would pull up sharply and reconnect with his Childean master narrative of similarity and difference on the continental scale.

The 1980s brought fresh syntheses of his research into orality and the importance of writing as a technique with far-reaching implications for the organisation of society (Goody 1986, 1987). But the main area in which Jack continued to break new ground in this decade was property transmission. Not all of his historian colleagues were ready to accept scholarly trespassing of the kind which peaked in his book about the impact of the Roman Catholic Church on family and kin relations in medieval Europe (Goody 1983). Yet this was quickly translated into French and contributed significantly to his reputation there. It was followed by a work that pushed back in the direction of Eurasian commonalities (Goody 1990). Having shown that Western Christianity did indeed have distinctive features that impacted on kinship and marriage, Jack Goody did not wish to be classified as yet another theorist of the 'European miracle.' All of his African experience, in combination with what he knew of Europe and Asia through

[9] The series *Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology* published sixty-nine volumes between 1967 (when it was founded by Goody together with Fortes and Leach) and 1990 (when for marketing reasons the title was changed to include 'and Cultural'). In addition, CUP published eleven volumes of Cambridge Papers between 1958 and 1982 – volumes which served almost exclusively to disseminate the research of department members. These two series did much to project the department's worldwide reputation in its golden age. At CUP, Jack worked especially closely with Patricia Williams (wife of Bernard Williams the philosopher, and previously of historian Quentin Skinner). His editorial inputs declined in the 1990s and ceased altogether when he condemned the Press's failure to stand up to political pressure in dropping a monograph on Macedonia (Karakasidou 1997). The main series was terminated in 2003.

reading and travelling, led him to emphasise similarities and comparability across Eurasia. He was critical of the teleological tendency of so many Europeans to search for deep, long-term clues to the global domination exercised by Western Eurasia in recent centuries.

This argument was pursued both inside and outside the sphere of domestic institutions and driven home in several major works with meticulous critiques of the most influential Eurocentric thinkers. The most important are *The East in the West* (1996), in which he takes aim at Karl Marx and (especially) Max Weber; and *The Theft of History* (2006), in which Joseph Needham, Norbert Elias and Fernand Braudel are singled out for penetrating critique. These were significant contributions to a larger wave that was taking the discipline of history beyond traditional nation-state and imperial paradigms. Jack's message was clear: the Western passage from antiquity to feudalism had to be placed in a wider Eurasian context. Ideas such as that of renaissance are not relevant only to Europe, and the industrial and scientific revolutions an only be appreciated in the light of earlier contributions in the Near East, and South and East Asia. Jack Goody's world history emphasised oscillation between East and West, 'alternating domination' as he called it.[10]

Most Western scholars continue to think of capitalism and modernity as a product of the last 500 years or so, following European voyages of discovery and the concomitant expansion of global markets. This was followed by two further ruptures: scientific revolution and then (intimately related to the new scientific technologies) the transformation wrought by industrial capitalism, which created a proletariat obliged to sell its labour as a commodity. This basic narrative is common to Weberians and Marxists alike. Even the Marxist anthropologist Eric Wolf, whose notion of a tributary mode of production is welcomed by Goody as an improvement on the Eurocentric category 'feudalism,' privileges the last 500 years and neglects the three millennia which preceded this phase of European domination. But Jack Goody disagreed with neo-Marxist anthropologists (and also historians such as the young Chris Wickham) who thought they could escape the Eurocentric straitjacket by adapting the concept of 'mode of production,' and who then compounded their error by privileging the 'relations of production' ahead of the 'forces' (technologies). Instead Jack drew attention to much earlier forms of dispossession. Capital was deployed 'rationally' in earlier millennia by merchants who traded overland as well as by sea, when the economy of western Eurasia (i.e. Europe) was backward in comparison with

[10] For concise late syntheses see Goody 2010b, 2015 (the latter article was published in the month of his passing). For an incisive review article encompassing all the major works of the new century, see Hart 2014.

the east. Rather than focus on antagonistic relations at the point of production, Jack Goody drew attention to increasingly stratified societies and the emergence of 'connoisseurship' in various realms of culture, to complement his earlier analysis of how inequalities were reproduced through property transmission and domestic institutions.

Jack's alternative to the Eurocentric narratives did not change significantly over the years. The argument of his last, most archaeological monograph, which demonstrated the centrality of metal to the 'origins of the modern world,' still followed the contours that he had imbibed from Childe in the library of his prisoner-of-war camp (Goody 2012). Although he rejected Childe's unilineal evolutionism (for which he also criticised Marx and Freud), Jack repeatedly adapted the prehistorian's perspective to his own topics (for a notable late instance, see Goody 2006). Most of the historical works of the last decades are high-level syntheses packed with empirical data. It is futile to search for innovative causal hypotheses, or specific theoretical foundations. Jack was impatient with crude classifications such as 'structural-functionalist' or 'descent school,' and consistently eschewed jargon. Confronted with the abstract texts of non-anthropologists such as Parsons in the 1950s or Althusser in the 1960s, or Foucault in the 1970s and 1980s, he seems to have made a conscious decision to ignore them, no matter how popular they became with other anthropologists. How else would he have found the time to work through several different versions of the Bagre myth? Jack Goody certainly invested a lot of energy in studying the ethnography and languages of Ghana, and in enabling Ghanaians themselves to continue such work.[11] This empiricist disposition persisted in later decades: when postmodern, postcolonial theories became de rigueur in anthropological writings, Jack preferred to read ever more widely in world history. Colleagues and students struggled to put a label on his historical books, and on him; the absence of a theoretical framework was perceived to be a drawback. For example, in an otherwise positive review of his last major work, archaeologist Stephen Shennan suggests that the narrative might have been strengthened by an explicit adoption of neo-institutionalist economic history (Shennan 2013). The suggestion is not at all unreasonable, but in this respect Jack tended to disappoint; theory was either left implicit or it was altogether invisible. Not that he was an intellectual philistine: Durkheim, Marx and Freud were permanent benchmarks (though he was critical of them all). He paid surprisingly little attention to Marcel Mauss. One French contemporary for whom he had great respect was Pierre

[11] Jack once calculated that he had spent over a year of his life in painstaking transcription and (re)translation of different versions of the Bagre myth. See Grelet, Guichard and Lalande 2009: 12.

Bourdieu: Jack arranged for a translation of *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* soon after its publication and it became a bestseller in the Cambridge Studies series (Bourdieu 1977).[12]

As I have noted, because Jack Goody placed much emphasis on surplus production and technology in some of his best known works, he was sometimes accused of economic determinism. But in his later books there is nothing deterministic about the way in which technologies of communication and of violence interact with the realm of production. In the end, he was content to leave 'economic anthropology' in the hands of Raymond Firth and the neo-Marxists. What mattered most in the first phase of his career was not the mode of production per se, but the property system and transmission mechanisms in the domestic domain. Having exhausted this theme by 1990, Jack then preferred to explore how the Africa–Eurasia contrast played out in various cultural realms, rather than dig further into the political economy that made the 'Eurasian miracle' possible. Numerous works on topics such as food (Goody 1982), flowers (Goody 1993) as well as the last book on metals, are all rooted in the basic economic contrasts between Africa and Eurasia. All play down the significance of East–West differences within Eurasia. In some contexts, however, none of the axes for opposition suffice. A reluctance to represent the High God figuratively is a recurring feature of the 'world religions' of Eurasia, but it is also to be found in sub-Saharan Africa. (Goody 1997: ch 2). At this point Jack Goody acknowledges that historical accounts of divergent pathways must yield to recognition of cognitive universals: for example, concerning ambivalences (a favourite word) in domains of aesthetics and religion. At some level we are all the same, and binary models of otherness are simply false. However, Jack Goody's attitude to the emergence of a new 'cognitive anthropology' was itself ambivalent. He appreciated the work of scholars such as Dan Sperber and Pascal Boyer, as well as Stephen Levinson in linguistic anthropology; but he was unsympathetic to the emergence of named sub-fields in which conversations with biologists and psychologists would supersede those with other social scientists and historians.

Within Jack Goody's vast compass it is inevitable that some aspects receive more careful attention than others. Labour and exploitation are neglected in his insistence on pushing the origins of capitalism back to the 'merchant cultures' of the Bronze Age. Missing too, especially in the Eurasian context, is the messy business of politics. Perhaps neither production nor politics were particularly interesting phenomena among the LoDagaba, but the development of new forms of market exchange in the

[12] Goody arranged for numerous other translations for this CUP series, from Augé and Godelier to Segalen and Zonabend.

Eurasian civilisations was embedded in new forms of polity. Embeddedness was the key term of Karl Polanyi's substantivist economic anthropology, but Jack considered this approach to be flawed by a romantic anti-market ideology. He was influenced by Cambridge historian Moses Finley's account of the 'ancient economy' but in the end he judged Finley's position (Finley 1973) to be still too close to that of Polanyi (despite Finley's criticisms of the models of his mentor in 1950s New York).

Religion was even more complicated terrain.[13] Jack was initially directed by Fortes to focus on the religion of the LoDagaba and he spent most of his time in the field documenting mortuary rituals. In his definitive 1962 monograph he concluded (against Fustel de Coulanges and Durkheim) that, although religion was certainly embedded in this case, it had no causal priority. This conclusion was echoed decades later when he discounted the significance of religious beliefs for the emergence of stratified Eurasian society and divergent histories within the landmass (Goody 2010b, 2012). His criticism of the Weberian thesis of a unique 'Protestant ethic' underpinning the capitalist spirit is undoubtedly justified. But to discount the significance of belief and the institutions of religion altogether is another matter; after all, Jack himself had drawn attention to distinctive features of Latin Christianity and their impact on marriage and the family, as well as outside the domestic domain (Goody 1983). He did not engage with the debates about 'multiple modernities' which flourished in the early twenty-first century, nor with their possible roots in the philosophies of the 'Axial Age.' Jack cast the onset of the 'transcendental' rather simplistically as a hindrance to the scientific quest. But upholding a basic distinction between Eurasia and Africa, based in economy and technology, need not impede recognition of more complex civilisational histories, both in Africa and in Eurasia, in which a decisive role is played by the 'religio-political nexus;' this nexus receives scant attention in Jack Goody's historical analyses.[14]

The Big Man

When Jack Goody succeeded Meyer Fortes in 1973, the discipline of social anthropology, in Cambridge as everywhere else, faced an uncertain future. With the end of the colonial empires and the retirements of E-P in Oxford, Firth at the LSE and Gluckman at Manchester, it seemed obvious that an

[13] As far as I am aware, Jack Goody's writings about religion (unlike those of several other influential British social anthropologists of Africa) were not coloured by any personal religious faith. It took him some time and effort to accept that three of his children adopted Buddhism in a serious way.

[14] I borrow this phrase from Johann Arnason. See Arnason and Hann 2018.

epoch had come to an end. That Cambridge proceeded to reinvent itself as the pre-eminent department in the country owed much to Jack's own prodigious activities in these years (as well as to the above-mentioned creative rivalry with Edmund Leach, who was Provost of King's College between 1966 and 1979 and attracted excellent students with his own unique magnetism). It was clear to us in the 1970s that social anthropology had entered a new era of expansion. The graduate students who turned up in Pembroke Street were admitted to an intimate scholarly community, but their field projects diverged more and more from the kind of face-to-face community of a few thousand inhabitants that Goody himself had studied in his own apprenticeship.[15] The physical move to new premises around the corner in Free School Lane brought the social anthropologists into the immediate proximity of a similarly expansive sociology. Cambridge's first professor of sociology was John Barnes, an old friend of Jack's, for whom the notion of an intellectual boundary between anthropology and sociology made even less sense than it did for him. Jack was also close to Geoffrey Hawthorn, appreciative of his efforts to push the new department of Social and Political Sciences beyond the narrow paradigms of textbook sociology.

Links to historians had long been important and Jack greatly enjoyed working for many years as a member of the editorial board of Past & Present.[16] He was on good terms with Munir Postan as well as Moses Finley, and he was an early supporter of the historical demography developed in Cambridge by Peter Laslett and others. Ties to history took a significant new twist with the arrival of Peter Burke in 1979 to pioneer new styles of cultural history in Cambridge. Jack admired Alan Macfarlane's efforts to bring anthropology and history together, and was instrumental in recruiting him to the Cambridge department. Macfarlane's work, however, later took him in quite different directions (Macfarlane 1978).[17] The two men remained close, despite their obvious intellectual differences. For Jack, it was misleading to

[15] Keith Hart, whose doctoral project in the late 1960s on urban migrants in Accra was supervised by Goody and examined by Fortes, summed up the transformation in his obituary (Hart 2015): 'Jack was in many ways Meyer Fortes' opposite, bringing to his headship the spirit of his own research and writing. He had no respect for disciplinary boundaries, telling us "You must find a question and follow it wherever it takes you." As a result, Cambridge social anthropology became an assemblage of solipsists, with PhD students often pursuing topics unknown to their supervisors.'

[16] He collaborated with Edward Thompson and Joan Thirsk in a comparative volume which emerged from a conference of the Past & Present Society: Goody, Thompson and Thirsk 1976. This collaboration was doubtless facilitated by the editors' common left-wing political proclivities.

[17] In a generous memoir available at his website, Macfarlane concludes by describing Jack as 'the man who has shaped my life most … a constant inspiration.' See http://www.alanmacfarlane.com/ (accessed 11 July 2017).

highlight distinctive features of the English case; even the evidence for East–West differences in marriage patterns within continental Europe (the much debated 'Hajnal line') paled into insignificance when one considered commonalities in the 'woman's property complex' stretching all the way to East Asia.

The upshot was that, far from fading away as some had feared in the aftermath of empire, social anthropology in Cambridge boomed (even if a price was paid in terms of coherence). The well-established ethnographic focus on Africa was extended with the appointment of specialists on regions such as Amazonia and Melanesia, but work on Europe was also encouraged, including 'anthropology at home' (as it was called by the 1980s). My own case was not so unusual. I wanted initially to go to New Guinea, like many others in the 1970s. But Cambridge had already invested significantly in Melanesia, and Jack Goody urged me to go back to my undergraduate specialisation in the economics and politics of socialist Eastern Europe. Since no one among the core staff, or even in the penumbra of the colleges and other affiliated institutions, had the necessary regional or thematic expertise, Jack took me on himself.

In those days it was taken for granted that the William Wyse professor was the Head of Department, who would promote its interests at meetings of the Faculty Board (vis-à-vis colleagues in archaeology and physical/biological anthropology) and beyond in the labyrinthine structures of the university. Jack invested much energy at multiple levels, beginning inside the department, where from the very beginning he had to fight his corner if appointments were not to be dominated by Leach.[18] Positions were always scarce: not every Certificate (later MPhil) student could secure PhD funding, not every PhD would become a Junior Research Fellow, not every JRF could be taken on as an Assistant Lecturer, and not every Assistant Lecturer could be awarded tenure. Some of those who missed out saw a typical academic patriarch, scheming and sometimes bullying to get his way. Nor did the unfairness end with tenure: some Cambridge colleges were rich enough to look after their Fellows very well, but the support available to Esther Goody at New Hall was very limited in comparison to that available to Jack at St John's. It was the college system which allowed him to make time for reading and writing. Mornings were generally taken up with teaching and administration in the vicinity of Downing Street and Free School Lane, but after lunch in John's (if no meetings were scheduled) he was usually able to retreat to his famously untidy college room in the New

[18] The department only took shape as such after his appointment to the chair. Prior to 1973 bureaucracy was minimal and the anthropologists were an informal cluster in a Faculty where archaeologists formed a majority. See Goody 2008-9.

Court block popularly known as the 'wedding cake,' where he would work without disturbance through to dinner.

Appointments and political battles outside Cambridge did not have the same significance. Jack declined to join the Association of Social Anthropologists and considered its annual conferences too introverted (because they lacked interdisciplinary stimulus). He was a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (and was awarded its highest honour, the Huxley Memorial Medal, in 1995), but he avoided office-holding. It was the same story in St John's College and also in the British Academy, where he remained loyal to the sociology section that elected him in 1976, after the majority of social anthropologists fissioned to form a new section with geographers. Jack also shunned the American Anthropological Association. The importance of his year in California in 1959–60 was noted above, and he visited the country often enough. But he never became close to the likes of Clifford Geertz, David Schneider or other influential figures in the golden age of US cultural anthropology. Like Geertz, Jack Goody started out as a student of English literature. But he was convinced that a British school focused on social relations and emphasising links to a more general comparative sociology and to history had more to offer than the North American predilection for cultural particulars. Geertz visited Cambridge in 1983 to deliver an early version of the argument later published as 'Anti-anti-relativism' (Geertz 1984); but this was at the invitation of Anthony Giddens (who succeeded John Barnes as Professor of Sociology at this time). The lecture was not even advertised in the Department of Social Anthropology, situated next door in Free School Lane.

I think this disdain and lack of hospitality towards Geertz were altogether exceptional. When Marshall Sahlins visited from Chicago at about the same time (invited by Peter Gathercole, the Curator of the Haddon Museum, to present a version of his celebrated Frazer Lecture on the death of Captain James Cook), he was welcomed according to the local cultural script, which included being entertained by Jack and Esther at 8 Adams Road. By the time Jack retired, Esther was securely established as a senior member of the department (given the conventions of that era, she had been obliged to resign her post after his appointment to the Chair; but having provided abundant evidence of her independent scholarly creativity, especially at the interface between anthropology and psychology, she was reappointed to a Lectureship in 1978). The Goodys lived in a large house in Adams Road which they acquired from St John's College (initially leasehold and later freehold). It was ideally suited to the sort of informal suppers and

Sunday lunches that Jack and Esther liked to host.[19] Numerous more or less penurious young scholars lodged here over the years. When Jack retired in 1984 he insisted on hosting his own rite of passage (not without morbid jokes about having to endure yet another funeral: hadn't he sat through enough of them during his first field research in Ghana?). House and garden were full to overflowing. Maurice Godelier came over from France, Alan Macfarlane brought his guitar from the Fens, Keith Hart adapted a well-known folk song from Yorkshire to provide a satirical salute, Cesare Poppi and Paul Sant Cassia added Mediterranean accents to the conversations and the cuisine, Stephen Hugh-Jones demonstrated yet again that reports of a continuing feud with the Leach camp at King's were, to say the least, exaggerated, and Gilbert Lewis embodied the continued vitality of anthropology within John's. All of these men were close to Jack, and there were many more. However, to the very end of his life the patriarch liked to stress that women had exerted a greater influence.[20]

Jack continued to value his room at St John's and his summer holidays in France throughout the peripatetic decades of his retirement. He accepted invitations from all over the world, seemingly indifferent to whether the occasion was a Distinguished Lecture or a run-of-the-mill doctoral examination or consultancy. Though he never warmed to Germany as he did to France (hardly surprising in view of the war), he was a regular guest of the Max Planck Society. On a memorable December evening in 1997 in Berlin, after drinking some decent red wine at the Wissenschaftskolleg, Jack, Eric Hobsbawm and Perry Anderson (three quite different hues of the British academic left) regaled their companions with revolutionary songs. Alas Jack tripped on the way back to his room and was hospitalised for several weeks with a broken hip. He was thus unable to attend a meeting the next day

[19] Food was also a central theme of Jack's writing for decades. In addition to the 1982 monograph noted above, several chapters and articles are staples in the interdisciplinary field of Food Studies.

[20] A small example: I think he cited the work of Q. D. Leavis on the emergence of the English novel more often than he mentioned the impact of her equally distinguished husband on generations of literature scholars in Cambridge. It is worth bearing in mind that from his school years onwards, Jack Goody spent the greater part of his life as a member of exclusively male or male-dominated institutions. (The two years he spent working for Hertfordshire County Council between 1947 and 1949 were the main exception.) Even after his retirement, High Table at St John's was often an all-male gathering. This is the social context in which to place not only his enduring intellectual fascination with the 'woman's property complex' but also his energetic campaigning for the admission of women to his beloved college (accomplished in 1981). Privately, he was unstinting in the support he gave his daughters to realise their potential.

charged with taking the decision whether or not to establish a Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.[21]

Jack Goody received numerous honorary degrees, medals, prizes and a belated Festschrift (Olson and Cole 2006). He also responded to a symposium in *Theory, Culture and Society* in which his work was addressed mainly by historians and cultural sociologists (Featherstone, Burke and Mennell 2009). More formal international recognition came as early as 1980 in the USA, when he was elected an Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; in 2004 he was elected to the National Academy of Sciences. In France, he was appointed Chevalier (later Officier, and in 2006 Commandeur) of the Ordre des Arts et Lettres. In 2005 he was elevated to a Knighthood by the Queen 'for services to anthropology.'

Lectures and extended stays in prestigious academic bolt-holes equipped with good libraries all functioned to hone Jack's ability to generate texts for staff at St John's to process back in Cambridge. But so did long train journeys, or even airport stopovers where he had only the back of an envelope at his disposal. Mrs Susan Mansfield, Fellows' Secretary at John's, had an almost unique ability to decipher his handwriting. (Fittingly, she was the only non-family invitee when he went to Buckingham Palace to be knighted.) Jack made some use of research assistants for his later books. These writings were shaped not only by promiscuous encounters in seminars and conferences around the world but also by the contingencies of High Table interaction in Cambridge, especially within his own College – and by whatever he happened to have been reading lately.

Jack met the psychoanalyst and feminist Juliet Mitchell in the early 1990s at Yale University. In 2000 Juliet became his wife and her daughter Polly his step-daughter. Summers in France continued, but henceforth at her base at Bouzigues (Herault). When Jack's health deteriorated in the new century, in addition to providing practical help with his writing and editing his texts, Juliet cared for him. Her professional background enabled her to trace the origin of his most intemperate moods to his wartime experiences and she accompanied him on visits to key sites in the Mediterranean. Jack's third family opened new horizons on feminism and changes in British society, while at the same time rekindling his interest in Freud and his love of English literature. In addition to looking over each other's latest texts, Juliet and Jack read poetry to each other. His unique gravelly voice fell silent on 16 July 2015 in a Cambridge care home.

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[21] Fortunately, a second distinguished foreign consultant had been invited: Marilyn Strathern remained sober throughout her stay in Berlin.

Conclusion

I have tried to provide a sketch of Jack Goody the human being as well as an indication of the significance of his work. In both respects, my effort is necessarily preliminary. He undoubtedly warrants a full biographical study. In one way or another, Jack Goody's gruff charisma touched just about everyone who came into contact with social anthropology in Cambridge in the second half of the twentieth century. Although I have identified a gradual shift of focus during the 1970s, his work has a high degree of unity. It was rigorously materialist, and at the same time holistic in its embracing of art, literature and science. While reaching out to the humanities, especially in his later books, Jack never abandoned the view that anthropology should contribute to a cumulative social science. Long before the advent of postmodernism made things much worse, he deplored the fact that many sociocultural anthropologists were forgetting their discipline's history and losing their way in 'soggy' jargon.

Jack was one of the last of the colonial ethnographers. His fieldwork was excellent and the touchstone for everything that followed. Ghana never ceased to matter (he visited for the last time with Juliet Mitchell in the new century). But Ghana and Africa were never enough. In terms of intellectual ambition, Jack Goody had more in common with predecessors such as James Frazer and 'Anarchy' Brown than with most of his contemporaries and successors in anthropology. His scholarship was also shaped by sociologists such as George Homans, whose aspiration to construct a science of human society he shared. If, in addition, such a social anthropologist can make connections with archaeologists like Gordon Childe and cultural historians of the calibre of Peter Burke, he is well qualified to transcend the conventional boundaries of his discipline—to lead the way in revising dominant European narratives, through comparative investigations of the social relations of Africa, Eurasia and the entire planet.

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Chapter 15

Expanding Interests: Jack Goody's scholarship from ethnography and social anthropology to comparative sociology and world history

Han F. Vermeulen

> 'He had no respect for disciplinary boundaries, telling us: "You must find a question and follow it wherever it takes you"' (Hart 2016: 27).
>
> '… to break down the barriers between disciplines' (Goody 1975: ix).

For a scholar who held the chair in social anthropology at the University of Cambridge, John Rankine Goody (1919–2015), mostly publishing under the name Jack Goody, nurtured a remarkable interest in history, particularly world history. He once referred to himself as 'a kind of anthropologist' (Goody 2009c: 148). In an article on his contributions to kinship theory, Maurice Bloch and Dan Sperber (2002: 745) hailed him as a 'classical anthropologist.' At an early stage in his career, he characterized his own field as 'comparative sociology' – an enterprise 'not simply limited to Western Europe' (Goody 1962: v, vii).

Re-reading his main publications, we may conclude that Goody was a British social anthropologist who also worked on history, sociology, and historical and cognitive anthropology. His writings cover many subjects, including the family, the ancestors, inheritance, literacy, technology, foodways, flowers, and the state. His purview extended beyond the social sciences to include history and other fields of the humanities.

Active as an anthropologist-fieldworker in West Africa from 1950 to the late 1960s, Goody became a lecturer at the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge after defending his PhD there in 1954. He served as Director of the African Studies Centre in Cambridge from 1966 to 1973, Smuts Reader in Commonwealth Studies from 1971 to 1973, and William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology from 1973 to 1984. He was a Fellow of St John's College from 1961 until his death in

2015, aged 95. In the sixty years between his Oxford B.Litt. thesis (1952) and the final book he published, *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: An Essay on the Origins of the Modern World* (2012), Goody was immensely productive: 46 books, including 14 edited volumes, and 370 articles and reviews.

Such a feat is impressive by any standard. But what is his legacy? Is JRG best thought of as the last colonial ethnographer, a world historian determined to counter Eurocentric bias, a comparativist in the tradition of Adolf Bastian and James George Frazer, or as all of these and more? The present essay, by a historian of anthropology with no personal links to Goody or Cambridge, seeks answers to these questions on the basis of his published work. Following the paradigmatic-chronological approach developed in my earlier work (Vermeulen 2015), I shall combine a thematic analysis of Goody's publications with biographical notes in a bio-bibliographical analysis of central themes in his scholarly career spanning sixty years.[1]

The range of subjects addressed by Goody can be classified into five categories:

1. Ethnography, anthropology and history of Africa (18 books, including five volumes written by other authors and edited or co-edited by Goody);
2. Kinship, marriage and the domestic domain (10 books);
3. Orality, literacy and the written tradition (7 books);
4. Comparative studies of culture and society (10 books);
5. History of anthropology (1 book).[2]

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[1] My analysis makes use of published works as well as two CVs, dated May 1972 and January 2004. In addition to Chris Hann's several pieces (2008, 2009, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) and memoir of his supervisor (reprinted in the present volume), I have profited from articles by Peter Burke (2002, 2009), Keith Hart (1985, 2006, 2007, 2011a-b, 2014, 2016), Isidore Lobnibe (2018), Alan Macfarlane (2015) and Peter Skalník (2015, 2021). I am grateful to Juliet Mitchell, Mary Goody, Keith Hart and Sophie Chevalier for encouragement and support, to Ray Abrahams, Susan Drucker-Brown and Alan Macfarlane for comments and suggestions. I appreciate exchanges regarding Goody's legacy with the current William Wyse Professor, James Laidlaw. Many thanks are due to William Kelly and Helen Siu of New Haven, Connecticut, for presenting information on Goody's sojourns in Japan and China; to Goody's research assistant Mark Offord for bibliographical support; and to Fiona Colbert and Kathryn McKee of St John's College for providing biographical data. Due to Covid-19 restrictions in 2020–22, Goody's unpublished papers kept at St John's College Library could not be consulted.

[2] See Goody's bibliography in the present volume. An earlier 'Bibliography of Jack Goody's Work' was published in Olson and Cole (2006: 325–342).

This classification is related to, but differs from, the one by Alan Macfarlane (2015), who subdivides twenty-six of Goody's works into five categories: 'African history and anthropology; Kinship, marriage and demography; Orality, writing and representation; General comparative theory and sociology; The history of anthropology.' David Olson and Michael Cole's 2006 volume honouring Goody presents two categories: 'Historical anthropology: kinship, inheritance, and the state' and 'Orality, literacy, and written culture.' Goody himself titled a sequence of his own books, published by Cambridge University Press between 1968 and 1990, 'Studies in literacy, family, culture and the state.'

Literary Studies, War Experience, Anthropology

A pupil at St Albans School from 1930, Jack Goody matriculated at St John's College in Cambridge to read English literature in 1938. Influenced by literary theory and the New Criticism developed by F. R. Leavis, he befriended students such as Ian Watt and Eric Hobsbawm, both members of the socialist club and aficionados of jazz music. Enlisting in the British Army in October 1939, Goody underwent officer training at Sandhurst and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Sherwood Foresters in March 1940. During the Second World War he was stationed at Nicosia (Cyprus) with brief sojourns in Port Said (Egypt) and the Western Desert of Libya. Captured by Rommel's German forces during the Siege of Tobruk in June 1942, he was transported to southern Italy, before being sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Chieti, central Italy. After escaping with three companions from a train during transportation to northern Italy in September 1943, he was hidden by illiterate shepherds in the Abruzzo Mountains, east of Rome, for six months. This encounter sparked his interest in the difference between oral and literate communication. In a way, it was the birth of his vocation as a social anthropologist. Captured by the SS in Rome, Goody was interned in a POW camp near Moosburg, Bavaria, in April 1944. He was soon moved to an officers' camp in Eichstätt, which housed a library where Goody read the abridged edition of Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and the historian E. K. Chambers's *The Mediaeval Stage* (Goody 1992, 2012b). He also read V. Gordon Childe's *What Happened in History* (1942), 'a book that has always remained at the forefront of my thinking' (Goody 2006b: 503). Liberated by the US 14th Armored Division on 29 April 1945, Goody returned to England in May 1945 – after a military interlude lasting almost six years.

Back in Cambridge, he completed his degree in English literature by passing Part I of the tripos in June 1946. He then switched to the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, acquiring a Diploma in Anthropology in

June 1947. The course dated back to 1908 and resembled the one initiated by Edward B. Tylor in Oxford in 1902. At that time, anthropology was what Meyer Fortes (1953: 5) called 'an omnibus subject': the syllabus included 'prehistoric and historic anthropology' as well as 'ethnology (including sociology and comparative religion), physical anthropology and psychological anthropology' (Haddon 1908). The program Goody followed would have been similar to what Alfred Radcliffe-Brown had studied in 1904: prehistoric archaeology, ethnology, physical and psychological anthropology. Had there been a Diploma in Sociology, Goody would have opted for that. Weekly lectures were delivered by Edward Evans-Pritchard, who came over from Oxford to expound on the feud in Sudan and Libya (Goody 1991: 4; 1995: 122).

Goody entered the field at a dynamic moment. Bronislaw Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown had laid the groundwork for British social anthropology during the 1920s and 1930s, and a period of rapid expansion followed the Second World War (Goody 1995; Shankland 2019). The Association of Social Anthropologists (ASA) was established at Oxford in 1946 with Evans-Pritchard as its first secretary and Radcliffe-Brown as its president. In that same year, Evans-Pritchard succeeded Radcliffe-Brown as Professor of Social Anthropology at Oxford. Radcliffe-Brown's comparative study of kinship and descent in Australia was an important influence on Goody's early work, especially in connection with reading the work of Émile Durkheim and *L'Année sociologique* (Goody 1984, 1995; from here on, all references without author names refer to books or articles by Goody).

Goody established valuable contacts with archaeologists such as Dorothy Garrod, Graham Clarke and Glyn Daniel, and passed this holistic course 'with Distinction.' He was supervised by the prehistorian Daniel (2006b: 503). In March 1947, Goody married Mary Joan Wright, a teacher of English, and began work as an Assistant Education Officer for the Hertfordshire County Council. He left this post in 1949 to register as a research student in Oxford, having become 'interested in the comparative study of human society' (1995: 120). At Oxford, he was 'attracted, like many of my contemporaries at Cambridge, by the teaching of Evans-Pritchard. I wanted to work in West Africa so it was Fortes who interviewed me' (1983c: 2). 'I ... was asked to talk to Meyer Fortes, the West Africanist' (1991: 4). Fortes was Reader in Sociology at Oxford in the years 1946-50 before being appointed William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology in Cambridge in 1951; he remained Head of Department until his retirement in 1973, when his outstanding pupil, Jack Goody, succeeded him. Goody was awarded with a scholarship from the Colonial Social Science Research Council and spent the year 1949–50 in Oxford as a member of Balliol

College, studying in the Faculty of Geography and Anthropology under Evans-Pritchard and Fortes.

Goody later reminisced that his decision to go to the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) for field research under the supervision of Fortes included a personal element: a friend at Cambridge called Joe Reindorf had begun a PhD in history and then returned to Ghana to work for a relative's firm (1995: 121). He also remarked that he did not want to 'work too far from Europe' as he had a family and 'distance mattered.' Carrying out ethnographic fieldwork on kinship and inheritance as a Sociological Research Officer, Goody was employed by the Gold Coast Government from September 1950 until September 1951. He worked among two neighboring Mooré-speaking groups in what is now the border area of northwest Ghana, southern Upper Volta and northeast Ivory Coast. From October 1951 on, he wrote up his data and in March 1952 was awarded a B.Litt. in Social Anthropology in Oxford for a thesis titled 'The Social Organization of the Lo Wiili.' This monograph was published under a slightly different title in London in 1956 (second edition 1967). Prior to this, Goody saw to it that his mimeographed book, *The Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, was printed in London at the Colonial Office (1954).

Ethnography, Anthropology and History of Africa

After finishing his B.Litt. thesis, Goody left that same month for a second period of fieldwork, again in the Northern Territories, which lasted from April to December 1952. Having spent his first 'tour' in a community he called the LoWiili, he now lived among the LoDagaba (1962: vi); collectively, he referred to these communities as LoDagaa (ibid. 4).

He submitted his PhD thesis to the University of Cambridge in June 1954, a massive manuscript on 'the ritual institutions of the LoWiili and the LoDagaba' (iii + 410 pp.). Its subtitle reveals the interest he developed in the field: 'with special reference to death, inheritance and the ancestors.' His fieldwork in two nearby communities added up to one and one half years and included 'some hundred days attending funeral ceremonies [and] about twenty-five burial services.' A decidedly ethnographic study, including rich detail on ancestor worship and descent groups, property relations and ritual institutions, Goody's dissertation was explicitly presented as a contribution to 'comparative sociology' (1962: vi-vii). It was influenced not only by Durkheim's blend of sociology and ethnology, and Radcliffe-Brown's comparative sociology (Radcliffe-Brown 1952: 189), but also by Talcott Parsons. Parsons was the author of *The Structure of Social Action* (1937) and *The Social System* (1951), who had set up the interdisciplinary Department

of Social Relations at Harvard in 1946 and had lectured in Cambridge during Goody's formative years.[3] The dissertation led to Goody's early masterpiece, *Death, Property and the Ancestors: A Study of the Mortuary Customs of the LoDagaa* (1962).

After defending his PhD thesis (with Max Gluckman as external examiner and G. I. Jones as internal examiner), Goody was appointed Assistant Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge in October 1954. In a 1972 CV, he wrote: 'During my tenure of this post I spent four vacations and one sabbatical term doing fieldwork among the Gonja of Northern Ghana, under grants from the Social Science Research Council and the Nuffield Foundation.'[4] This third stint of fieldwork focused on the Gonja Kingdom and was carried out in cooperation with Esther Newcomb, Jack's first graduate student. They married in the Gold Coast in September 1956. Esther's research was sponsored by the Ford Foundation. She completed her PhD in 1961 and became a member of the same department.[5] They published six articles together. Goody supervised students at St John's College from 1958, was promoted to University Lecturer (with tenure) in 1959 and elected a Fellow of St John's in 1961.

The political context of Goody's work in the Gold Coast had significant consequences for the direction of his research. As Keith Hart has noted, 'Goody embraced the anti-colonial revolution after the war and Ghana was its epicentre in Africa. He joined Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party during his first period of fieldwork and soon realised that an independent West Africa would need histories of the pre-colonial past in order to chart a post-colonial future. Goody then switched to the pre-colonial history of West African kingdoms. In the process, he led the move from ethnography to history that marked African anthropology then and African studies in general today' (Hart 2016: 27). 'Ghana is in many ways a paradigmatic African state,' wrote Goody. 'It was the first to undergo the process of decolonisation with the elections of 1951 and with independence in 1957. It was one of the earliest and best organised of the new nations of Africa' (2007: 1). In 1960, the Year of Africa, Nkrumah proclaimed Ghana to be a republic, of which he assumed the presidency. Goody concluded that this 'new Africa was ... demanding a history.' 'Earlier anthropologists had

[3] Talcott Parsons, Lloyd Warner and George Homans were visiting professors of social theory at Cambridge in the years 1953–56 (cf. Goody 1962: vii).

[4] As Goody stated in the Curriculum Vitae attached to his application for the William Wyse Chair in Social Anthropology to the University Registry, University of Cambridge, 1 May 1972.

[5] 'In Remembrance of Dr Esther Goody.' Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge. Tributes from Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Marilyn Strathern, Stephen Levinson and Penelope Brown, Barbara Bodenhorn, Chris Hann, David Zeitlyn, Susan Drucker Brown and Keith Hart. https://www.socanth.cam.ac.uk/about-us/news/dr-esther-goody-2018 (last accessed 6 June 2023).

often steered away from historical considerations' – 'partly because of the often rash speculations of their predecessors about the past, partly because of an alternative methodological approach associated with fieldwork, and partly for the practical reason that archives and records were officially closed' (1991: 3).

Between March and October 1964, Goody was a visiting professor at the Institute of African Studies in Legon and the Department of Sociology of the University of Ghana. Four months were spent in Gonja. In 1964–66, Jack and Esther supervised ten PhD students, including Keith Hart.[6] In 1965–66 Goody was again a visiting professor at this institute, supervising T. M. Mustapha and C. Y. Boateng on behalf of the Ashanti Research Project at the University of Ghana.[7] During this period he also worked in the Ghana National Archives. A critical appraisal of Goody's 'ethnography of the LoDagaa (Ghana)' is given by Carola Lentz (2019); see also Isidore Lobnibe on Goody's fieldwork in *Ghana Studies* (2018). In October 1966 Goody succeeded Audrey Richards as Director of the African Studies Centre at Cambridge, a position he held until his election to replace Meyer Fortes in 1973.

Goody's major works from this African period can be summarized as follows:

Table 1. Ethnography, Anthropology and History of Africa (18 books)

– *The Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast* (London 1954)
– *The Social Organisation of the LoWiili* (London 1956)
– *Death, Property and the Ancestors: A Study of the Mortuary Customs of the LoDagaa* (Stanford and London 1962)
– (eds.) Jack Goody, and Kwame Arhin, *Ashanti and the Northwest* (Legon 1965)
– (ed.) *Succession to High Office* (Cambridge 1966)
– Joseph Adam Braimah, and Jack Goody, *Salaga: The Struggle for Power* (London 1967)
– *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa* (Oxford 1971)
– *The Myth of the Bagre* (Oxford 1972)
– (ed.) *Changing Social Structure in Ghana* (London 1975)
– Jack Goody, and Nelson O. Addo, *Siblings in Ghana* (Legon 1975)

[6] Research report 'Work in Ghana: 1964–66' by Jack and Esther Goody, Legon, Ghana, March 1966, 3 pp.

[7] Cited in Goody and Arhin (eds.) *Ashanti and the Northwest*. Legon, 1965, Preface, p. 86.

– Jack Goody, and S. W. D. K. Gandah (eds.) *Une Récitation du Bagré* (Paris 1980)
– Jack Goody, and S. W. D. K. Gandah, *The Third Bagre: A Myth Revisited* (Durham, NC 2002)
– *Ghana Observed, Africa Reconsidered* (Legon 2007)
Including five books written by other authors and edited or co-edited by Goody:
– (ed.) David Tait, *The Konkomba of Northern Ghana* (Oxford 1961)
– (ed.) J. C. Dougah, *Wa and its People* (Legon 1966)
– (ed.) Meyer Fortes, *Religion, Morality and the Person: Essays on Tallensi Religion* (Cambridge 1987)
– (eds.) Emrys L. Peters, *The Bedouin of Cyrenaica* (ed. with Emanuel Marx, Cambridge 1990)
– (ed.) Sunkuol Wura Der Kumboono Gandah, *The Silent Rebel* (Nairobi 2004)

A milestone in this series was *The Myth of the Bagre*, a study of the myth and rituals of the Bagré 'secret' association. Goody wrote down a first version from a recitation spread over ten days. He recorded four renditions of the Black Bagre and ten of the White Bagre with his friend Sunkuol Wura Der Kumboono Gandah in 1969–70. The English publication (1972a) was followed by a version in French (1980) and an extended 'third' version with Gandah (2002). More than anything else Goody published, this work reveals that he was not just another 'colonial ethnographer' but an anthropologist and historian deeply concerned with local myth-making and oral performances encountered in initiation rituals among groups of the Akan hinterland. The fifteen years during which he worked in and on Ghana, and Africa more generally, also included the early results of his comparative research on marriage and the family.

Kinship, Marriage and the Domestic Domain

The study of kinship and descent, marriage and the family, was central to the work of Meyer Fortes and remained so for Jack Goody. The latter adopted the term 'domestic group' as the basic unit of society in order to help resolve ambiguities concerning the terms family and household (Goody 1958, 1972b). He took up Fortes's concept of a domestic cycle and heeded his call to examine the domestic domain as a dynamic process (Fortes 1936). Goody continued to publish in this field long after he had turned to other themes.

Table 2. Kinship, Marriage and the Domestic Domain (10 books)

– (ed.) *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups* (Cambridge 1958)
– *Comparative Studies in Kinship* (London 1969)
– (ed.) *Kinship: Selected Readings* (Harmondsworth 1971)
– Jack Goody, and Stanley J. Tambiah, *Bridewealth and Dowry* (Cambridge 1973)
– (ed.) *The Character of Kinship* (Cambridge 1973)
– (eds.) Jack Goody, Joan Thirsk, and Edward P. Thompson, *Family and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200-1800* (Cambridge 1976)
– *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain* (Cambridge 1976)
– *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (Cambridge 1983)
– *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive: Systems of Marriage and the Family in the Pre-Industrial Societies of Eurasia* (Cambridge 1990)
– *The European Family: An Historico-Anthropological Essay* (Oxford/Malden, MA 2000)

Noteworthy in all these works is the comparative approach and the gradual widening of perspective to focus on the family in Europe and Asia.

Goody's call for a comparative sociology (see Goody 1962, 1969a, 1982) was innovative in the context of social anthropology's rise as an academic discipline in the English-speaking world. After the establishment of the ASA in 1946, chairs in social anthropology were created in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, Edinburgh and elsewhere, which evolved into departments (Kuper 1973; Goody 1995; Mills 2008). As Goody put it: 'It was truly an expansive moment … students of Malinowski (and to a lesser extent Radcliffe-Brown) … presented fieldwork in a theoretical frame, trained students in this framework and assisted them in turn to undertake fieldwork and eventually to get teaching positions' (1995: 117). When Goody studied at Oxford under Evans-Pritchard and Fortes in 1949–50, ethnography ('intensive fieldwork') was a major part of the curriculum. During his own fieldwork, Goody had focused on kinship, marriage, inheritance and religion, vital subjects of anthropological inquiry. He largely followed Fortes, who had published *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi* (1949), a classic study of a patrilineal society only one hundred miles eastwards of the LoDagaa. Goody acknowledged his merits by editing *The Character of Kinship* as a Festschrift for Fortes on the occasion of his

retirement (1973) as well as a 'Memorial Issue' (1983b) and a posthumous volume of Fortes's essays on *Tallensi Religion* (1987).

More than anyone else in his generation, Goody added comparative research to the agenda of British social anthropologists. Founding fathers such as Tylor, Bastian and Frazer had established the comparative method in late nineteenth-century anthropology. George Peter Murdock proposed it as a baseline for cultural anthropology in the United States and created the Human Relations Area Files at Yale University in 1949. In Britain, few professional anthropologists pursued comparison in the middle of the twentieth century. In contrast, Goody's study of mortuary rituals and property transmission in two LoDagaa communities was comparative. The published version of his thesis addressed 'social anthropologists working in an unfamiliar society' (1962: 1) but stated ambitiously in the first sentence: 'Field work apart, the development of a sociology that is not simply limited to Western Europe requires three things: first, hypotheses, second, the comparative analysis to test them, and, third, the conceptual tools to build them.' Yet, while Goody asserted the need for comparative analysis, he admitted that he had no experience with in-the-field comparative research: 'the only instrument I know of that might have helped,' namely, the Human Relations Area Files, 'was not available to me during my research' (1962: v–vi).

Goody started with a conventional project in ethnography, critically discussing articles on ethnohistory (1959a) and ethnology (1960), but his fieldwork was explicitly comparative. He applied the comparative analysis prominently in his articles on 'Incest and Adultery' (1956b), 'The Mother's Brother and the Sister's Son in West Africa' (1959b) and 'The Classification of Double Descent Systems' (1961). The latter publication presented the LoWiili (the 'true Lobi') as a society with a double descent system. Yet Goody's real originality in these kinship studies lay in proposing to include 'property relations.' In a diagram in *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962: 9) he worked out a system of 'double clanship and double inheritance among the LoDagaa' in which both the LoWiili and the LoDagaba had matriclans and patriclans – the difference being that among the LoWiili all property was inherited patrilineally whereas among the LoDagaba only immovable property was inherited patrilineally and movable property was inherited matrilineally.

Goody returned to the concept of comparative sociology on numerous occasions: in an article on 'The Prospects for Social Anthropology' (1966b), in the first chapter of his collection of essays *Comparative Studies in Kinship* (1969b), in the subtitle of his edited volume *Changing Social Structure in Ghana* (1975) and in his major contribution to food studies, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (1982). Without

emphasizing the concept as such, he compared complex political systems in *Succession to High Office* (1966a) and *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa* (1971). In *Comparative Studies in Kinship*, Goody formulated his intentions very clearly: 'We must create the conditions for the emergence of a truly comparative sociology' (1969a: xiv).

In 1967 he was awarded a two-year grant from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) for 'the comparative study of African institutions employing modern techniques of data processing.' This project was implemented in 1968–72 as the SSRC Research Project on a 'Comparative Study of Institutions, with special reference to Africa' (Goody, CV of May 1972). As director of the African Studies Centre, Goody hired research assistants, among them Joan Buckley, Barrie Irving and Nicky Tahany.[8] His collection of *Comparative Studies in Kinship* (1969) included a chapter on 'Comparative Sociology and the Decolonization of the Social Sciences.' In 1968, Goody applied for the degree of ScD (*Scientiae Doctor*), which was awarded in November 1969.[9] A grant provided by the Ford-Rockefeller Foundation for a comparative investigation of population and inheritance was acquired in 1971–72. By this time, he had persuaded the Cambridge department to subscribe to the Human Relations Area Files.

The fullest account of Goody's contributions to the comparative method is *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain* (1976). In it he posed the following questions:

> How did the states and local communities in Ghana resemble and differ from those of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East with which they were so often compared and contrasted? … What made people think the adjectives 'tribal,' 'primitive,' 'savage' appropriate to one set of cultures and not to the other? Were there no better ways of assessing similarity and difference than by means of a pair of crude binary oppositions? (1976: ix).

With a comparative historical theory and twenty-six statistical tables deriving from Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* (1967), Goody postulated the development of domestic institutions, the family, marriage and conjugal roles in relation to shifts in the mode of productive activity, notably the change from hoe to plough agriculture. He argued that 'the differences between the centralised societies of Africa and Eurasia are highlighted in the household economy. While Eurasia had a *haute cuisine* as well as a lower, *basse cuisine*, Africa had neither; its cooking was demotic' (1976: 104).

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[8] For a fuller list of research assistants active during this period, see the acknowledgments in Goody 1976, p. xi.

[9] In Cambridge, a Doctor of Science (ScD) degree constitutes 'the highest degree awarded by the University for distinguished research in science.'

Discussing the reasons why Europe and Asia favour marriage within the social group, whereas in Africa the tendency was to exogamous marriage, he noted similar differences with reference to other criteria, including the division of labor by sex. Behind all these lie discrepancies in the systems of agriculture and the social hierarchies they support. Goody concluded that 'the central differences of production and reproduction in Africa on the one hand and Europe and Asia on the other ... have to be interpreted not only in specific cultural terms but also in the wider context of the broad historical changes in man's social life' (1976: 120). According to Hart (2006: 29), this book 'launched the series of large-scale comparative investigations for which [Goody] is now best known.'

In 1973, Goody succeeded Meyer Fortes as William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology at Cambridge, a chair he held until his retirement in 1984. He was a vigorous Head of Department throughout this period. Edmund Leach, lecturer since 1953, had received a personal chair in 1972, but as Provost of King's College he had to spend much time and energy on college matters. Goody had more time to pursue the goals announced in his 1972 application, in which he remarked regarding 'future policy':

> Clearly I would want to continue the work in which the Department has been successfully engaged over many years. Any changes would come about as the result of discussion among the staff and students. *But I would myself press for an extension of the frontiers of the subject [anthropology] into comparative analysis, and into linguistic and literary work.* I would also wish to build up the Laboratory of Social Anthropology, which I have helped to institute, and to encourage intellectual links with other fields of study, as I have tried to do in the context of regional studies. Although I have always been interested in history, I am concerned that Social Anthropology should not become an historical subject, purely concerned with vanishing or vanished societies.[10]

As professor, Goody's work came to have an ever-greater concentration on the family in Europe and Asia, without giving up Africa. The intended title for his volume *Changing Social Structure in Ghana* included both Africa and Eurasia (CV 1972). His *Comparative Studies in Kinship* (1969) included a chapter on Indo-European kinship. His *Cambridge Papers* volume co-written with his colleague Stanley Tambiah, *Bridewealth and Dowry* (1973), deepened comparisons between societies of Africa and Eurasia. His venture into European history (*The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, 1983a) 'outraged Cambridge historians for invading the historians'

[10] Goody, Application to the Registrar, University Registry, for the William Wyse Chair in Social Anthropology, 1 May 1972, plus Curriculum Vitae, 9 pp. (italics added).

territory even more than Alan Macfarlane's [1978] study of English individualism [had done]: they were stealing history!' (Hann 2009: 128).

The culmination of Goody's widening interest was his monograph, *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive: Systems of Marriage and the Family in the Pre-Industrial Societies of Eurasia* (1990). Detailed chapters discussing material from China, India and the Near East as well as 'Greece and Rome, yesterday and today' manifest a solid comparative approach, stemming 'from an attempt to understand why the particular groups I first studied in Africa differ in certain definite ways from pre-industrial Europe' (1990: xi). 'My thrust has been *to look at the entire domestic domain*, especially in relation to the domestic economy, and to argue that neither Oriental nor Ancient systems were "primitive" in this sense but resembled the pre-industrial societies of Europe in significant respects' (1995: 133, italics added).

Orality, Literacy and the Written Tradition

Goody's research on the Bagre myth helped him to deepen his interest in modes of oral and literate communication. As a student, he had worked on literary theory and the New Criticism. His stay in the Abruzzo Mountains had inspired reflection on communication among illiterate people. His vocation as an anthropologist had resulted from being deprived of books and from contact with the illiterate Abruzzian shepherds who had hidden him (1985: 5). This interest grew during fieldwork in Ghana by observing differences between oral communication and religions of the book (e.g. Islam, Christianity) across West Africa.

In 1959–60, Goody enjoyed a 'stimulating year' at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University (Palo Alto, California). This sojourn resulted in a joint article written with his college friend Ian Watt on 'The Consequences of Literacy' (Goody and Watt 1963). Scholars working in 'advanced' societies had taken the existence of writing for granted and social anthropologists tended to focus on 'preliterate' societies (Goody 1968: 1). However, the dichotomy between 'the "mythical" thought of primitives and the "logico-empirical" thought of civilized man' was 'untenable,' as was Lévy-Bruhl's (1910, 1922) distinction between 'prelogical' and 'logical' mentalities (Goody and Watt 1968 [1963]: 43). Arguing that literacy allowed for the objective recording of historical facts, 'there arose an attitude to the past very different from that common in non-literate societies' (ibid. 48). This had resulted in the creation of what Goody called 'a politically literate community' across Europe and Asia.

This article stimulated waves of comparative research into written and oral communication. In Goody's edited volume *Literacy in Traditional*

Societies, scholars explored 'the "ethnography" of literacy in "traditional" or pre-industrial societies' (1968: 4). It included chapters on literacy in 'traditional' China and India, a Buddhist village from North-East Thailand, in Kerala (India), the Western Sudan, 'a nomadic society' (Somalia), Madagascar, New Guinea and Melanesia, and in pre-industrial England. In the introduction to this volume, Goody refers to literacy as 'the technology of the intellect' (1968: 1).

Continuing this line of inquiry in *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977), Goody sought to analyze 'the effects of writing on "modes of thought" (or cognitive processes) on the one hand, and on the major institutions of society on the other' (1977: ix). Again taking issue with the 'we/they division, which is both binary and ethnocentric,' he criticized Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* (1966, French edition 1962) for replacing earlier dichotomies between 'primitive' and 'advanced' societies with another binary view that contrasted 'wild' (*sauvage*) and 'domesticated' (*domestiquée*) thought (1977: 7). This critique was against the grain, and disregarded the merits of Lévi-Strauss's productive use of binary structures to analyze a vast corpus of myths (1964–1971). Structuralism, as presented by Lévi-Strauss, provided an important alternative to the structural-functionalism dominating British social anthropology during the 1960s. Other leading anthropologists, such as Edmund Leach, were sympathetic to the new impulse. Leach taught a course on *Culture and Communication* (lectures later published, Leach 1976a) and wrote, in a critical review of Radcliffe-Brown's achievements, 'in Cambridge under the guidance of Professor Fortes and Professor Goody, the tradition of British empiricism has been most staunchly upheld' (Leach 1976b: 173). Goody responded to this critique in *The Expansive Moment*, arguing that anthropology needs 'fieldwork, ethnography and "empiricism"' and 'the comparative dimension' (1995: 155–56).

Tensions within the Cambridge department were productive. Goody's aversion to the presentation of a 'grand dichotomy' between primitive and advanced societies, between anthropology and sociology, between them and us spurred his investigation of 'cognitive developments in human culture' (1977: 8, 146 ff). He linked these 'somewhat vague dichotomies' through their characteristics, to 'a third set of facts,' namely, technological changes since the Bronze Age (*c*. 3000 BCE) and the 'technology of communication' worldwide (1977: 16). Convinced that 'differences in cognitive processes could be looked at in a developmental way' (1995: 137), Goody proposed to study 'non-European forms of literacy,' the position of literates in predominantly oral communities, the 'effect of literacy on human culture, especially in "traditional" or "pre-industrial" societies' (1968: 25), and the

power of the written text – not only in enabling ancient empires and modern nations to dominate their non-literate counterparts, but also in empowering subordinated groups such as women and slaves.

Goody's interest in comparative studies of cognition and the differences between non-literate and literate knowledge systems occupied him until the end of his life. He published seven books on this subject, including *The Power of the Written Tradition* (Washington, DC 2000a) and his penultimate book *Myth, Ritual and the Oral* (Cambridge 2010).

Table 3. Orality, Literacy and the Written Tradition (7 books)

– (ed.) *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge 1968)
– *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge 1977)
– *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society* (Cambridge 1986)
– *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge 1987)
– *Representations and Contradictions: Ambivalence towards Images, Theatre, Fiction, Relics and Sexuality* (Oxford 1997)
– *The Power of the Written Tradition* (Washington, DC 2000)
– *Myth, Ritual and the Oral* (Cambridge 2010)

All these books feature the Bagre myth and deal with the difference writing makes to oral memorization. Goody used the term 'cognitive anthropology' to describe his approach (e.g. 1995: 143) and collaborated with the psychologists Sylvia Scribner, Michael Cole and David Olson on language and cognition. The latter two published a Festschrift containing essays on Goody's oeuvre, including his work on orality and literacy (Olson and Cole 2006).[11] In 1990, the Fyssen Foundation awarded Goody the International Prize for Cognitive Studies..

He elaborated the concept of 'technologies of the intellect,' including speech, the alphabet, writing, lists, tables, etc., in a lecture at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC in 1989–90, and a seminar of the Max Planck Society project group Cognitive Anthropology at Berlin in 1990. Reprinted in his collection *The Power of the Written Tradition* (2000a), the paper concluded that 'earlier discussions [of the history of

[11] In addition to Olson and Cole (2006), other volumes honouring Goody are Guichard (2012) and Klein and Murcott (2014). See also the special section on 'Occidentalism' in *Theory, Culture & Society* (Featherstone, Burke and Mennell 2009) and the special issue 'Jack Goody on Asia and Europe' in *History and Anthropology* 26 (3), 2015.

writing in Greece, China and East Asia] now seem very ethnocentric, Eurocentric, or Near-East-centered' (2000a: 140).[12]

Goody lectured on orality, literacy and power while attending conferences at the Whitney Humanities Center of Yale University, the first in November 1988, the second in February 1991. Both papers were published in *Yale Journal of Criticism*. During the second event, the Center's Tenth Anniversary Symposium, he met Juliet Mitchell, a psychoanalyst and feminist writer. Brought together initially by shared disagreements with Martha Nussbaum, they began a conversation in New Haven that continued until Jack passed away in 2015. Having published two articles together in 1997 and 1999, they married in 2000. Thereafter, they read everything the other wrote and commented on each other's work.

Goody's studies of history in pre-industrial societies and of historians in literate societies in Eurasia were impressive but necessarily selective. He never once mentioned the historian August Ludwig Schlözer (1771), who coined the term 'ethnology' in German and formulated the principle that documented history begins with writing: 'Before [the existence of] written documents, no history can be conceived.'[13] With this idea, Schlözer introduced modern chronology into historiography. Goody was certainly aware of this principle and adhered to it. As the universal historians Voltaire, Schlözer and Herder had done in the eighteenth century, he turned to world history because of its relevance for anthropology.

Comparative Studies of Culture and Society

From 1991, in the last decades of his life, Goody's work on 'the contrasting socio-cultural situations in Africa and Eurasia' (1995: 139) expanded. He published ten more books, most of them detailed comparative investigations that were inter-continental if not global in scope. Their basis was laid in the POW camp in Germany where he had read Gordon Childe's *What Happened in History* (1942). In his school days Goody had become interested in archaeology thanks to a schoolmaster at St Albans and excavations of the Roman town Verulamium under Mortimer Wheeler (1995: 118; 2009b: 133). The Marxist prehistorian Childe was a main influence on Goody's comparative historical work, although Goody never adopted a Marxist perspective in any formal sense. Childe had identified three stages in the evolution of production: the Neolithic Revolution, the Urban Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution (the latter term had been popularized by the

[12] For more on Goody's 'technologies of the intellect,' see Levinson, Goody Lecture 2020, this volume.

[13] August Ludwig Schlözer 1771: 4, 256, 618, cited in Vermeulen 2015: 295–300, 498 n. 69.

economic historian Arnold Toynbee in the 1880s). Goody followed Childe in emphasizing technological and economic developments and in highlighting the Eurasian Urban Revolution of the Bronze Age as a pivotal moment in human history.

Arguably the finest result of Goody's pursuit of the differences between Africa and Eurasia is *The Culture of Flowers*. Introduced as a 'personal ethnography' (1993a: xi), this book synthesized data on 'the symbolic and transactional uses of flowers' in Africa, the Near East and the Mediterranean as well as in India, Persia, China and Japan. The abundance of domestic flowers in Bali contrasted with their absence in Africa, so the culture of flowers could not be universal. 'Visiting Bali and carrying out limited fieldwork with Esther Goody in Gujarat, India, I was amazed at the use of cultivated flowers, especially in worship, for which they were deliberately produced and purchased. This "non-utilitarian" form of agriculture was virtually absent from Africa, where the usual form of offering to a shrine is blood sacrifice' (1995: 139). In the opening chapter, 'No flowers in Africa?' Goody posed the question 'Why did flowers play so little a role in African life and so great a role in Asia and Europe?' (1993a: 18). He explained the contrast with reference to Cato's *De agri cultura* and proposed to focus on 'the problem of the uniqueness of the West that underlies so many approaches to the study of the growth of capitalism, of knowledge and of modern life as a whole' (1993a: 3, 26).

Table 4. Comparative Studies of Culture and Society (10 books)

– *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (Cambridge 1982)
– *The Culture of Flowers* (Cambridge 1993)
– *The East in the West* (Cambridge 1996)
– *Food and Love: A Cultural History of East and West* (London 1998)
– *Islam in Europe* (Cambridge/Malden, MA 2004)
– *Capitalism and Modernity: The Great Debate* (Cambridge/Malden, MA 2004)
– *The Theft of History* (Cambridge 2006)
– *Renaissances: The One or the Many?* (Cambridge 2009)
– *The Eurasian Miracle* (Cambridge/Malden, MA 2009)
– *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: The Origins of the Modern World* (Cambridge 2012)

Goody's *Food and Love: A Cultural History of East and West* (1998) was a sequel to his *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*

(1982). Both were devoted primarily to the anthropology of food and beverages, in particular the 'grand cuisine' of China, India and the Muslim world. Arguing against 'the uniqueness of Europe,' 'of Judaeo-Christian civilization' (1998; 2004a: 7), he related the lack of haute cuisine in Africa among others to the fact that African societies had been 'lacking many of the major inventions of the Bronze Age' (1993: 18).

In *The East in the West* (1996) Goody returned to the issue of 'the uniqueness of the West' with a focus on the tendency of both Marx and Weber in the heyday of capitalism to view the East as 'static' or 'backward.' The notion that 'Europeans were "almost another order of beings" was not simply ethnocentrism … but … based upon the achievements of the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment.' In the view of Marx, Asia had taken 'the road to a stagnant "oriental" form of society,' based on irrigation, that is, the road of 'Asiatic exceptionalism.' At issue was 'the nature of the Uniqueness (which all societies obviously possess) in relation to the gap that grew up in this period' (1996: 2–4). Asian exceptionalism was also discussed in *The Power of the Written Tradition*. However, 'Asia has never been the stagnant oriental society of which European writers have written' (1995: 132–33). During the Middle Ages, the East had been pre-eminent in many fields. Moreover, Europe was not the only part of the Eurasian landmass able to modernize in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, Eurocentrism fails to explain the achievements of the East and misrepresents Western history. An appendix to *The East in the West* lists the 'early links between East and West.'

In a short sequel, *Islam in Europe* (2004a), Goody argued that Islam had played a central role in European history, both militarily and culturally. Three routes had led Islam into Europe: with the Arabs through North Africa, Spain and Mediterranean Europe; the Turks through Greece and the Balkans; and the Mongols through Southern Russia into Poland and Lithuania. He estimated that by 2004, Europe had incorporated some eleven million immigrants. The book included a review of developments in Europe and Asia under the title 'Bitter Icons and Ethnic Cleansing' that was originally published in the *New Left Review* (2001).

Goody would continue to analyze factors separating the West from the East, factors 'leading to "modernization," industrialisation and capitalism, the "economic miracle"' (1996: 5). Books like *Capitalism and Modernity: The Great Debate* (2004b), *The Theft of History* (2006a) and *Renaissances* (2009a) enlarged the argument, bringing in ever more comparative material and critical analysis. The 'great debate' of *Capitalism and Modernity* concerned the economic rise of the West and the question when and how Europe had transitioned to capitalism, industrialization and modernity

(2004b: 16). Dedicated to the memory of the historian Peter Laslett, and the Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and Social Structure he had founded, Goody was critical of part of their work. He could not accept the way some historians emphasised the demographic and family differences of East and West and described the Great Debate as Eurocentric, insisting that modern is 'a moving target' (2004b: 3–6) and modernity a fleeting concept.

The Theft of History builds on *The East in the West* and deals with the take-over of history by the West, the 'stealing' of the achievements of 'other cultures' (a term borrowed from John Beattie's 1964 textbook) in such fields as democracy, capitalism, individualism and love. Goody discussed a number of theorists, including Joseph Needham, Norbert Elias and Fernand Braudel, arguing that 'while most historians aim to avoid ethnocentricity (like theology), they rarely succeed in doing so because of their limited knowledge of the other (including their own beginnings). That limitation often leads them to make unsustainable claims … about the uniqueness of the west' (2006a: 4). Their Eurocentric, or Occidentalist, bias has prevented them from recognizing that Europe and Asia shared socio-cultural features since the Urban Revolution of the Bronze Age, which Africa had missed out on. Yet the 'many similarities between Europe and Asia in modes of production, communication, and destruction become more apparent when contrasted with Africa' (2006a: 3) – 'at a time when notions of "global history" are filtering into the historical mainstream for the first time.'

In *Renaissances: The One or the Many?* (2009a), Goody raised the question: 'does the European Renaissance deserve its unique status at the heart of western notions of modernity?' In addition to the rise of science and civilization in sixteenth-century Europe, and the golden age in Persia during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, he identified not one but five Renaissances: in Europe, Islamic countries, Jewish cultural history, India and China. Dedicated to Eric Hobsbawm, this work included three chapters co-written with Stephen Fennell: 'Rebirth in Islam,' 'Cultural Continuity in India,' and 'Renaissance in China.' Goody added an introduction on 'The Idea of a Renaissance,' as well as chapters on the Renaissance in Italy and France, and on Sephardic and Ashkenazi Judaism in Andalusia and elsewhere. The conclusion was crystal clear: 'renascences' were by no means restricted to Europe.

Another volume dismantling Eurocentrism is *The Eurasian Miracle* (2009b). Peter Burke, expert on the European Renaissance, described it as 'one more nail into the coffin of Western ethnocentrism.'[14] This title harked

[14] Burke cited in a blurb of Goody's *The Eurasian Miracle* (2009b); see also his conversation with Goody (Burke 2002), the interview by Maria Pallares-Burke (2002), Burke's appraisal of

back to a paper Goody presented at a 1985 conference in Cambridge on 'The European Miracle,' in which he had provoked a discussion by asking 'Why European and not Eurasian?' In his response to contributions in a special section titled 'Occidentalism: Jack Goody and Comparative History' in the journal *Theory, Culture & Society*, the master, knighted in 2005, advanced the position that arguments for 'the uniqueness of the west' put forward by Europeanists such as 'Marx, Weber, Braudel, Laslett' were 'mistaken, even teleological' and 'overlooked the contributions of the east to "modernization," mechanization and industrialization' (2009b: 2–4).[15] On the basis of extensive reading and repeated visits to India, Japan and China, Goody concluded that 'it appears that the period of western supremacy is now coming to an end' and he predicted that 'we are about to experience a further alternation in favour of the east' (2009b: back cover).

For Goody, China should be seen as a long-term structural equivalent of Europe. China's rise in the twenty-first century confirmed that the 'miracle' of the modern world was not a European event but a Eurasian one. The argument that China had developed a form of capitalism without having had feudalism was 'mistaken precisely because it was teleological, that is to say, it started from the present situation and looked back at history, defining the past and the categories for analyzing it in that light, rather than looking at them as a *Ding an sich*, as themselves.' Such a 'forward-thinking' view was teleological. It is 'ethnocentric to think that industrial production itself developed only in that corner of Europe [Britain].' Therefore, 'Europe needed to broaden its perspective to include Asian history, Asian sociology and Asian anthropology, and see itself in this wider context' (2004c, this volume, pp. 10–12).

Goody's last book, *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: The Origins of the Modern World*, another masterpiece, pointed out that the smelting of metals was only one aspect of urban civilization:

> The fact that the book is largely about metals should not make us forget the other aspects of urban civilisation, the spread of literacy and of written religions. All these are linked together and it is a mistake completely to separate off the two spheres, as so many do, both scientists and humanists. Given the frequent use in the humanities of the dichotomy between sciences (and technology) and the arts (and communication), I must stress that I am not seeking to exclude one or the other (nor yet the religions or the secular) but to

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Goody's contributions to comparative history (Burke 2009) and his Goody Lecture of 2012 (reprinted in the present volume).

[15] See also Goody 2009c and Featherstone et al. 2009.

> *trace the connections in a rounded (anthropological) view* (2012a: xi-xii; italics added).

His final article, 'Asia and Europe' (2015) once again outlined the similarities and differences between Europe and Asia. Written in 2013 and published online in *History and Anthropology* on 7 July 2015, nine days before his passing, Goody reaffirmed the need to challenge 'the widely held perceptions about the supremacy of the West in the context of world history.' The similarities observed in Eurasian cultures are more important than the differences: 'The essay documents the unity across Eurasia as an interconnected landmass, the legacies of the common Bronze Age of the Ancient Near East, its associated plough agriculture, and the traditions of writing and use of metals in order to reassess the primacy of material resource endowments in shaping human history' (2015: 263). In reality, he insisted, civilizations in East and West alternate and there is no basis for assuming western superiority.

History of Anthropology

Goody's love of history extended to the history of anthropology. He published a book on this subject, *The Expansive Moment: The Rise of Social Anthropology in Britain and Africa, 1918–1970* (1995), and about twenty articles.[16] Adorned with a cover picture portraying Meyer Fortes 'observing a prayer-offering' prior to a ritual sacrifice in Tongo (Tallensi District, northern Ghana) in 1936, this book makes extensive use of the Fortes papers held in the University Library at Cambridge to review Fortes's career (1995: chapters 2, 3 and 4, Appendix 1). Goody discussed the friendship between Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, their vital role in building social anthropology in Britain, and the latter's dislike of Malinowski: 'When I first attended Friday seminars in Oxford in 1949 … I was surprised at the level of animosity against Malinowski displayed by Evans-Pritchard' (1995: 70). After 1946, 'social anthropology was increasingly separated from the fields of human

[16] Goody's articles on the history of anthropology include: 'Under the Lineage's Shadow' (1984), 'Meyer Fortes' (1990, 1993b), 'Marc Bloch and Social Anthropology' (1990), 'Emrys L. Peters' (1990), 'Towards a Room with a View' (1991), 'History and Anthropology' (1993, 1997 in French), 'Anarchy Brown' (1999–2000, 1997 in French), 'Godfrey Lienhardt' (1997), 'The Isnad of the Cambridge Expedition to the Torres Straits 1898' (1999), 'Watt, War and Writing' (2000b), 'Germaine Dieterlen and British Anthropology' (2001), 'Peter Laslett' (2002), 'Elias and the Anthropological Tradition' (2002), 'The Bagre and the Story of My Life' (2003a), 'Gordon Childe, the Urban Revolution, and the Haute Cuisine' (2006b), 'Weber, Braudel, and Objectivity in Comparative Research' (2007), 'Religion and Ritual from Tylor to Parsons' (2010), 'Maurice Godelier and the Asiatic Mode' (2012). Full references in Goody's bibliography, this volume. See also his chapter 'Personal Contributions' in *The Expansive Moment* (1995).

biology, archaeology and museum work' – 'partly under pressure from the Association of Social Anthropologists.' Thanks to 'strong and effective leadership' – Evans-Pritchard at Oxford, Fortes at Cambridge, Gluckman at Manchester, Raymond Firth and later Isaac Schapera and Lucy Mair at the London School of Economics, Daryll Forde at University College, London – 'the highly amorphous subject of anthropology … was given some manageable bounds' (1995: 82–83).

Goody's assessments of the rise and consolidation of social anthropology are not uniformly positive. He recognizes his own participation in this 'tribal phase' from 1949 on.[17] When listing the ethnographic projects funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, and the resulting monographs, he calls this period 'the expansive moment' of social anthropology (1995: 85–86, 158). Yet elsewhere he speaks about breaking disciplinary boundaries, and indeed we can interpret much of his work as a series of attempts to transcend the confines of social anthropology in British academia. Goody was not content to limit anthropology to fieldwork and theory (e.g. Fortes 1953; Kuper 1973). He wanted to connect with wider trends in international academia.

Goody was a regular guest at conferences in France and Italy. He was *Directeur d'Études Associé* at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris for seven terms between 1973 and 1987, and attended the anniversary conference of Germaine Dieterlen in June 2001. He was a close friend of Maurice Godelier and Martine Segalen. Visits to Italy (where he received numerous awards and where dozens of his publications were translated) were also important, as were visits to the USA (especially Stanford and Yale). Goody knew American academia well, even though the Americas, along with Australia, were never well integrated into his comparative studies. He also lectured in Germany on several occasions.[18]

In the sixty years of his scholarly career, Jack Goody published 46 books, including 32 books and 14 edited volumes. Cambridge University Press published 22 of these: 15 books and 7 edited volumes. Many of his books are major monographs; other books are collections of articles, published previously in journals or handbooks. Most of his books were

[17] In his critical analysis of Henrika Kuklick's (1991) portrayal of British anthropology, Goody represented himself 'as a historian of the 1930s and participant in the post-war period' (1995: 209 n. 3).

[18] Goody presented a paper at a seminar of the Max Planck Society Project Group Cognitive Anthropology in Berlin in 1990 and was a Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin from October 1992 to January 1993. He participated in the committees that laid the foundations for the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, launched in Halle (Saale) in 1999. He lectured in Halle in December 2001 (published in 2003) and June 2004 (this volume). The 'Goody Lectures,' reprinted in the present volume, were delivered between 2011 and 2022.

translated in foreign languages. His bibliography lists 370 articles, of which only 22 are reviews. He was interviewed on 36 occasions and featured in at least four documentary films.[19]

His bibliography also includes two unpublished books (a memoir and a collection of articles). In an appendix, his unpublished documents, field notes, audio-visual material, recordings and offprints are listed.[20] In his war memoir, *Beyond the Walls* (1992), mostly written in a POW camp in southern Germany, Goody looked back on his six-month stay among illiterate shepherds in Italy, during which he became interested 'aux paysans des Abruzzes et au milieu cosmopolite de la haute société romaine' (Goody 2004d). Written from the perspective of a character called Stephen (an allusion to Joyce's Stephen Daedalus is unmistakable), this book appeared first in Italian (1997) and then in French (2004).

Some questions remain unanswered. Goody's 2004 CV lists dozens of trips to France, the USA, India, China, Taiwan, Japan, Brazil, Sweden, Germany, Portugal, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Hungary, Switzerland, Norway, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Singapore, Syria, Turkey, Israel and Egypt.[21] An inventory list of his foreign travels and fellowships, as well as a list of his lectures and the interviews he gave would be revealing. Also, it would be instructive to examine how Goody's books and articles were reviewed in the literature. How was his work received in the Americas and in various European, Asian or African countries? Did he comment on American scholarship? Which works exist in translation?

Conclusion

> 'What I have done is to try and place such remarks [from correspondence] in a wider context of understanding, the *verstehen* of the anthropologist' (Goody 1995: 6).

During the sixty years of his scholarly career, Jack Goody moved from one academic field to another, accumulating interests. In his view, anthropology should be a cumulative science. He combined ethnography, social anthropology, comparative sociology, historical anthropology, economic

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[19] See 'Bibliography of Jack Goody' in the present volume, a corrected and expanded version of Goody's bibliography that his research assistant Mark Offord updated in collaboration with Jack between 2005 and 2014.

[20] Goody's archival material is stored in 139 boxes containing field notes and research papers, two crates and seven bound volumes of offprints in Jack Goody's papers, held at St John's College Library, Cambridge (see overview by Adam Crothers, Special Collections Assistant, added as an Appendix to the present volume).

[21] Curriculum Vitae of Jack Goody, n.d. [January 2004], 9 pp. (Courtesy of Chris Hann.)

anthropology, cognitive anthropology and world history in an effort to 'contribute towards the understanding of the differences and similarities between North and South on the one hand, and West and East on the other' (1993a: xv).

Instead of limiting anthropology to conventional subjects such as kinship and marriage, inheritance and religion, Goody's view of anthropology was both dynamic and comprehensive. He regarded anthropology as comparative sociology, 'not limited to Western Europe,' and widened its scope: ethnography was an elementary part of social anthropology but history should also be included. In his view, social anthropology consisted of ethnography combined with theoretical concerns, but it should be combined with comparative and historical studies: 'the fieldworker with a wide comparative background (that is, in the range of pre-industrial societies) has a positive role to play in contemporary social science. The documentary techniques of the historian cannot be ignored' (1975: viii). Having started in 1949 with the most recent ideas of British social anthropology – fieldwork *and* theory – Goody soon began to innovate by strengthening the comparative approach of international sociology and by expanding his interest in history through studies in Africa, the Near East and Eurasia.

Goody was not the only anthropologist interested in comparative studies. In fact, comparison is inherent to all anthropology in that ethnographers compare their own views and experiences with those of others. But he added the comparative method to that of fieldwork-based anthropology. In his own work, he increasingly invested so much history that he combined socio-historical anthropology with world history and with economic and cognitive studies. He legitimately added 'a third set of facts' in his consideration of the role of technological changes since the Bronze Age (1977: 16, 146).

In an obituary, Keith Hart (2016) sketched three major moves in Goody's thinking. Firstly, during his fieldwork in Ghana, while the Gold Coast was undergoing an 'anti-colonial revolution' Goody 'switched to the precolonial history of West African kingdoms' and 'led the move from ethnography to history that marked African anthropology then and African Studies in general today.' Secondly, he proposed, from the early 1960s on, that the discipline of social anthropology, which had been founded by Radcliffe-Brown, Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes in the 1930s and 40s, 'should be renamed comparative sociology' – 'a new synthesis of sociology, politics and anthropology' – 'much to the dismay of Meyer Fortes.' Thirdly, after succeeding Fortes as head of the department, Goody no longer tried 'to merge social anthropology with sociology and politics' but 'soon launched his series of books on world history, at first contrasting Africa with Eurasia,'

beginning with *Production and Reproduction* in 1976 (Hart 2016: 27) and continuing right up to his last book, *Metals* (2012a).

Goody's attitudes toward social anthropology shifted in the course of his career. In an essay on 'The Prospects for Social Anthropology' (1966b) in *New Society*, a weekly magazine of social inquiry published in the UK, he suggested that anthropology could either become social archaeology, a branch of historical sociology based on its 'traditional preserve,' or morph into comparative sociology. Making an early case for a 'decolonisation of the social sciences,' Goody found the distinction between sociology and social anthropology in Britain to be xenophobic, as if sociology comprised the study of complex societies and social anthropology that of simple societies. In the new nations, however, their 'other culture' was 'our sociology' (1966b: 576, cited in Peirano 1998). Continuing this line of inquiry in his article 'Comparative Sociology and the Decolonization of the Social Sciences' (1969b), he later specified that the 'study of new nations … helps to break down the barriers between disciplines' (1975: ix). Goody observed, perhaps clearer than other scholars, that the West's dominant position was evaporating because many emerging nation-states in Africa and elsewhere were resisting neo-colonialist practices.

The question of disciplinary boundaries and 'the barriers between disciplines' was a serious issue for Goody. His interest in history was so profound that, at the end of an interview with Eric Hobsbawm, filmed by Alan Macfarlane, he declared that his major contribution to anthropology lay in the 'recording of unrecorded myths' (the myth of the Bagre, published in three versions in 1972, 1980 and 2004) and in 'pointing out the value of historical facts for anthropology and the comparison of societies now and in the past' (Macfarlane 1991).

Goody's view of anthropology was broad, much wider than the 'omnibus subject' signaled by Fortes in 1953. He continuously combined material from one field with that of another, usually several other fields. Sometimes the earlier interests (history, archaeology, literary studies) returned. His professional identity as an anthropologist often seemed too limiting. He wanted to break out and regularly did so. Or, perhaps he never stopped adding to the framework he had created: a comparative study of similarities and differences between the East and the West, the North and the South, including studies of culture and society in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Near East.

John Rankine Goody, a.k.a. Jack Goody, was a complicated person, composed of several persona. Combining findings from social anthropology, historical and economic anthropology, cognitive anthropology, global history and world sociology, he could shift identities from being an

ethnographer to a 'comparative sociologist,' from 'a kind of anthropologist' to a world historian. He was not afraid to cross boundaries and juggled identities in the process. His transnational network warrants historical analysis in order to assess how it reflects in his published work and its impact. Also, a study of how his work was reviewed internationally would be welcome.

This would help answer the question regarding Goody's legacy in anthropology and the world today. His published record is clear-cut but extensive and complex. It seems highly relevant in the contemporary multipolar world, and surely deserves deeper scrutiny.

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Chapter 16
Bibliography of John Rankine Goody, 1919–2015

Han F. Vermeulen

The following bibliography is an updated and expanded version of Jack Goody's bibliography, which was kept by St John's Fellows' Secretary Susan Mansfield and updated by his research assistant, Mark Offord, between 2005 and 2014. At Jack's request, his daughter, Mary Goody, added his final article (2015).

I have remained faithful to Goody's list and retained the chronological order of his publications within the same year. I included details from the "Bibliography of Jack Goody's Work" published in David R. Olson and Michael Cole (eds.), *Technology, Literacy, and the Evolution of Society: Implications of the Work of Jack Goody* (2006: 325-342). Foreign editions and translations are as indicated in the list I received from Mary Goody in June 2020. All entries were checked, either on paper or in online catalogues, and in many cases corrected and augmented. Annotations in square brackets were added by me.

In the sixty years of his scholarly career, Jack Goody published 46 books, including 32 books and 14 edited volumes. Cambridge University Press published 22 of these: 15 books and 7 edited volumes. Many are monographs, based on fieldwork and extensive library research. Other books are collections of Goody's articles, many of which were published previously in journals or handbooks. Most of his books were translated into foreign languages; many of these are listed. His bibliography also lists 370 articles, including 22 reviews. He was interviewed on 36 occasions and featured in at least four documentary films.

This bibliography consists of six parts: Dissertations; Books and edited volumes, 1954-2012; Book chapters, articles, and translations of Goody's books; Reviews; Interviews; Unpublished articles in press, in limbo or forthcoming and lectures as of 2014. The latter list was compiled by Jack Goody in collaboration with Susan Mansfield and Mark Offord.

Dissertations

1952 The Social Organization of the Lo Wiili, a People of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. vi + 233 pp. [Text for a B.Litt. in Social Anthropology, supervised by E. E. Evans-Pritchard in Oxford.]

1954 A study of the ritual institutions of the WiiliLo and DagabaLo of the Gold Coast, with special reference to death, inheritance and the ancestors. iii + 410 pp. [PhD thesis, University of Cambridge.]

Books and Edited Volumes, 1954-2012

1954 *The Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, West of the White Volta*. London: The Colonial Office. Mimeographed, ii + 59 pp.

1956 *The Social Organisation of the LoWiili*. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office. vi + 119 pp.

1958 (ed.), *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. vii + 145 pp.

1961 David Tait (ed.), *The Konkomba of Northern Ghana. Edited from his published and unpublished writings by Jack Goody*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. xviii + 255 pp.

1962 *Death, Property and the Ancestors: A Study of the Mortuary Customs of the LoDagaa of West Africa*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press/ London: Tavistock Publications. x + 452 pp.

1965 Jack Goody, and Kwame Arhin (eds.), *Ashanti and the Northwest*. Legon: University of Ghana. Mimeographed, 185 pp. [Introduction dated: Legon, January 1966.]

1966 (ed.), *Succession to High Office*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. viii + 181 pp.

1966 J. C. Dougah (ed.), *Wa and its People. With an introduction by Jack Goody*. Legon: University of Ghana. Mimeographed, ii + 117 pp.

1967 Joseph Adam Braimah, and Jack Goody, *Salaga: The Struggle for Power*. London: Longmans, Green. xviii + 222 pp.

1968 (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. vi + 350 pp.

1969 *Comparative Studies in Kinship*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul/ Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. xvii + 261 pp.

1971 *Technology, Tradition, and the State in Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. viii + 88 pp.

1971 (ed.), *Kinship: Selected Readings*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books. 399 pp.

1972 *The Myth of the Bagre*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. x + 381 pp. [Includes the White Bagre and the Black Bagre in Dagari and English.]

1973 Jack Goody, and Stanley J. Tambiah, *Bridewealth and Dowry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. x + 169 pp.

1973 (ed.), *The Character of Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xii + 251 pp. [Published on the occasion of Meyer Fortes's retirement.]

1975 (ed.), *Changing Social Structure in Ghana: Essays in the Comparative Study of a New State and an Old Tradition*. London: International African Institute. ix + 285 pp.

1975 Jack Goody, and Nelson O. Addo, *Siblings in Ghana*. Legon: University of Ghana. 116 pp. [Published by the Population Dynamics Programme, University of Ghana and the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana.]

1976 Jack Goody, Joan Thirsk, and E. P. Thompson (eds.), *Family and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200-1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. vi + 421 pp.

1976 *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xiii + 157 pp.

1977 *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. x + 179 pp.

1980 Jack Goody, and Sunkuol Wura Der Kumboono Gandah (eds.), *Une Récitation du Bagré*. Précédée d'une introduction de Jack Goody. Paris: Armand Colin, 405 pp.

1982 *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. viii + 253 pp.

1983 *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xii + 308 pp. [2nd French edition with an introduction by Martine Segalen and avant-propos by Jack Goody, 2012.]

1986 *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xvii + 213 pp.

1987 *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xxi + 328 pp.

1987 Meyer Fortes (ed.), *Religion, Morality and the Person: Essays on Tallensi Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xiii + 347 pp.

1990 Jack Goody, and Emanuel Marx (eds.), *Emrys L. Peters. The Bedouin of Cyrenaica: Studies in Personal and Corporate Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. x + 310 pp.

1990 *The Oriental, the Ancient and the Primitive: Systems of Marriage and the Family in the Pre-Industrial Societies of Eurasia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xix + 542 pp.

1993 *The Culture of Flowers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xvii + 462 pp.

1995 *The Expansive Moment: The Rise of Social Anthropology in Britain and Africa, 1918-1970*, viii + 235 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1996 *The East in the West*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. x + 295 pp.

1997 *Representations and Contradictions: Ambivalence towards Images, Theatre, Fiction, Relics and Sexuality*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. vii + 293 pp.

1998 *Food and Love: A Cultural History of East and West*. London: Verso. ix + 305 pp.

2000 *The Power of the Written Tradition*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press. viii + 192 pp.

2000 *The European Family: An Historico-Anthropological Essay*. Oxford/ Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers. x + 209 pp. [Original title *The Family in European History*.]

2002 Jack Goody, and Sunkuol Wura Der Kumboono Gandah, *The Third Bagre: A Myth Revisited*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press. xxvii + 479 pp. [In English and Dagara.]

2004 *Islam in Europe*. Cambridge/ Malden, MA: Polity Press. viii + 178 pp.

2004 *Capitalism and Modernity: The Great Debate.* Cambridge/ Malden, MA: Polity Press. vii + 200 pp.

2004 Sunkuol Wura Der Kumboono Gandah (ed.), *The Silent Rebel*. Nairobi: James Currey & Legon: Institute of African Studies. 288 pp.

2006 *The Theft of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. x + 342 pp.

2007 *Ghana Observed, Africa Reconsidered*. Legon: Institute of African Studies. vi + 357 pp.

2009 *Renaissances: The One or the Many?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ix + 322 pp.

2009 *The Eurasian Miracle*. Cambridge/ Malden, MA: Polity Press. v + 159 pp.

2010 *Myth, Ritual and the Oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. vi + 180 pp.

2012 *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: An Essay on the Origins of the Modern World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xix + 349 pp.

Book Chapters, Articles and Translations of Goody's Books

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Halle (Saale), June 2023

Appendix
Jack Goody's Papers at St John's College Library: scope and current state

Adam Crothers

At the time of writing (January 2022), the papers of Professor Sir Jack Goody held at St John's College Library have yet to be formally catalogued. Happily they did not come to the Library in total disarray. Much of the material arrived in labelled files, in which it has remained; thematic arrangement was retained as items were transferred into boxes.

While the task of arranging these boxes' contents and listing them in item-level detail lies ahead, the current arrangement allows for an overview of the papers' scope, and the possibility of directing enquirers towards sections of interest.

The items are stored across 139 archive boxes, 2 crates, and 7 bound volumes of offprints; there are also 3 large atlases/maps, and a box of medals.

The collection contains not only paper but also electronic and audio-visual items: floppy disks, photographs (prints; film reels; negatives; slides) and audio recordings (reels; cassettes; CDs). It consists primarily of academic material pertaining to Goody's professional life, including:

- Correspondence with colleagues
- Correspondence with publishers
- Administrative material
- Field notes and field recordings
- Archival reproductions
- Diaries and notebooks
- Loose-leaf notes, lectures, articles
- Reviews by Goody
- Reviews of Goody
- Offprints of papers by Goody and others

Personal correspondence and documentation also appear, as do Goody's copy of *A Wartime Log for British Prisoners*, and material (including a full typescript) pertaining to the autobiographical *Cambridge Made Us and We Made Cambridge* (which incorporates the third-person war narrative 'Beyond the Walls'). Five boxes contain writings by or pertaining to Goody's colleague J.A. Braimah; three boxes of papers towards a history of social anthropology contain correspondence with, and writings by, other colleagues, particularly Meyer Fortes.

Approximately half of the material relates to Goody's research into Ghana, with particular attention paid to the Gonja, the LoDagaa and the Bagre myth. There are notes, archival indices, photographs, concordances, interviews, slides, survey data and sound recordings, as well as microfilms of material consulted in archives circa 1964.

There is also material on West Africa and on the continent more broadly, on the Mediterranean, on China, and on Gujarat, India.

In addition to these geographical groupings, there are files of notes, lectures, essays and suchlike on various subtopics (pertaining to Ghana and elsewhere). Some run to multiple boxes, and some fill only slim folders; in total these subtopics take up no more than 20% of the physical space of the collection, but in other respects they cover much ground. Among the many labels Goody chose are: beverages; class; domestication; drugs; economics (including the economics of slavery); family; flowers; folk tales; food; gender; hats; iconography; kalabule and African socialism; kinship; knowledge; limits; literacy; love and law; marriage; the mind; modernity; modes of production; monastic households; nature and culture; nudity; oral culture; politics/law/war; property; puritanism; religion; riots and rebellions; science; semiotics; senses and sensations; social evolution; sorcery; terror; thought; trade; travel; the week; widows; and the written word.

Creation dates range from the 1930s to the 2010s.

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Chris Hann is Emeritus Director and **Han F. Vermeulen** is Research Associate at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.



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