

1975-2002. Teaching, administration, research: trying to find and communicate answers to my life's questions.

Up to 1974 I was learning the tools of the trade, writing my Ph.D. theses and learning how to write books. In 1975, fired with the questions I had early formulated, and the tools I was now partially equipped with, I was in a position to try to make a deeper contribution to communicating what I had learnt.

In January 1975 I took up a Lectureship in Anthropology at the Department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge and for a time left my Fellowship at King's (to return there in 1981). A full account of my (so far) 27 years in the Department would make an interesting book. As Department archivist and one of its central figures over a quarter of a century, collecting papers and involved in many developments, I could no doubt write such an account, which would enrich that by Jack Goody in his *The Expansive Moment*. For the present, however, I shall confine myself to a few observations.

I shall gloss over numerous figures who influenced that micro-world, Faculty officials, colleagues in neighbouring departments, especially archaeology, biological anthropology, social and political sciences. I shall omit distinguished visitors and speakers, the support staff of secretaries and technical assistants and many others. I shall also leave on one side dozens of undergraduates to whom I have lectured and whom I have taught individually, many of whom gave me excellent ideas and feedback. Even the fifty or so post-graduate students, particularly the Ph.D. students, will have to be omitted here, though supervising their theses has had a tremendous influence on my work. Something like ten to twenty percent of my intellectual energy over the last 27 years has been devoted to postgraduate supervision, but it has been a two-way process and many of my former students have not only become distinguished in their own fields but remained friends for life. This is also true of several other dozen graduates who I did not directly supervise, but who I got to know well over the years, through examining their theses or discussing their work. One day I hope to list them all.

Then there were numerous other 'attached' person, research fellows, college fellows, colleagues in various capacities. They also will be worth listing later since many of them have also given me ideas. But for the present I shall stick to the central task.

At the centre, of course, were the three William Wyse Professors I have served under. Each very distinguished, but otherwise totally unlike each other. Jack Goody I have written about at length (q.v.), wily and wide-ranging, he built up the Department with great energy until 1983. Ernest Gellner, deep and philosophical, kept it going to 1991 and influenced me in many ways. (q.v.) Then Marilyn Strathern, creative, kind, energetic, re-fashioned the Department between 1993 and 1998. Only Marilyn has not been described in her own right, so it is worth pausing on her for a moment.

Marilyn Strathern is a person of enormous integrity, highly moral, overly conscientious perhaps, very organized, with a wide-ranging interest and a formidable reputation. I have always found her courteous, considerate, supportive, a real friend and companion. Our interests overlapped in the study of kinship, English

communities, communication, and I have always found her writing and her comments at seminars extremely perceptive. As Mistress of Girton, as Dame, organizer and leading light, she has done a great deal for the public face of anthropology and I have found it a joy to work alongside her.

As for others in the Department, for a long time there was little change. Stephen Hugh-Jones was there when I started and later became an excellent Head of Department for three years and a delightful colleague, as have been Caroline Humphrey and Gilbert Lewis. Relations with the older generation of Cambridge anthropologists, Ray Abraham, Esther Goody, Malcolm Ruel were mostly fine, though there were difficult patches. Likewise the relationship with the mercurial Keith Hart was mostly amicable. Leo Howe has also always been an excellent colleague. Now there is an excellent generation of our own students coming into the posts, extremely intelligent and also pleasant to work with and always providing me with new ideas.

The other main institutional setting was King's College. Because of my deep involvement in the Department where I was running various research projects and deeply involved in teaching and administration, I spent less time in King's. I cannot not anyone of outstanding significance in my intellectual life since 1981, though many pleasant colleagues have provided important clues in my life's work.

Outside these two institutions, there have been a number of very important relationships. One of these was centred on Gerry Martin, whose influence is so great that I have written about him separately. (q.v.) Gerry's projects and funding since 1990 has made me part of an informal network of colleagues who work on global history and the history of technology. These include Professor Patrick O'Brien, Dr. Simon Schaffer and many others with whom I have had productive links and attended many workshops and conferences.

Another set of contacts lie in the field of communications, publishing, film, multi-media and so on. One long-term link is with my literary agent and long-time publisher with Blackwells, John Davey. A second is with various members of the Windfall Television Company with whom I helped to make the six-part millenium series for C4 'The Day the World Took Off', in which I learned so much. Particularly important there were David Dugan and Carlo Massarella, and David's wife Sally has read manuscripts of a number of my books to good effect. Max Whitby in multi-media work and a large number of readers, editors etc. working for various publishing firms have been an invaluable aid.

Another set of links is to foreign scholars. Notable amongst these over the years have been friends in India (particularly the distinguished Indian sociologist and anthropologist André Beteille and his wife Esha), a number of friends in Japan, particularly Toshiko and Kenichi Nakamura, Osamu Saito and Kaoru Sugihara, and very recently in China.

Another set of overseas friends (and 'family') who have had a very profound influence are those in Nepal. Since I have spent over three years of my adult life in Nepal, during over fifteen visits spread over thirty years, it is not surprising that these contacts should be important. Sarah and I have built up an alternative social world in

Nepal, with many friends and in particular members of the family into which we have been adopted. Lt. I.B.Gurung is my uncle (with whom I have co-authored a short book and been on a long trek), Lt. Bhuwansing Gurung is my adopted 'father' and there are many others.

In particular, however, I would like to single out my 'sister' Dilmaya Gurung and her family. It is impossible to convey the debt I owe these adopted relatives and other friends in Thak. A hint of what is involved is in the acknowledgements and dedication to Dilmaya in *The Savage Wars of Peace*. Dilmaya and her daughter Premkumari have been the central emotional and intellectual stimuli to my recent work in Nepal, particularly my filming. I have learnt a huge amount from them and count the relationship with the tragically deceased Dilmaya as one of the richest of my adult life. Dignified, intelligent, hard-working, humorous, she changed my view of the world.

Finally I should not forget other younger colleagues with whom I have worked on specific projects over the years. The first of these was the Naga project, which I built up specifically so that I could work with one of my brightest post-graduate students, Julian Jacobs. From 1986 to 1990, Julian and I worked together with Sarah and later with Anita Herle (who became curator at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the end of the project). Julian was a delight to work with, and we developed our understanding of the Nagas, and our friendship with our Naga friends, particularly Lily Das (with whom we have travelled to Nagaland) with him. We also co-wrote the book on the Nagas, for which Julian produced an excellent text and the publisher Hansjorg Mayer did a brilliant job on the photographs.

In 2000 I set up another project to work alongside another brilliant younger anthropologist, Mark Turin. We first worked on Haimendorf's films and more recently, with Mark's friend Sara Schneiderman, Sarah Harrison and I have expanded this to include other archives as part of the Digital Himalaya project. (q.v.) Mark has read texts of my books and helped me in many ways. His father died when Mark was a baby and we clearly enjoy a sort of father-son relationship, centred on our mutual love of gadgetry and the Himalayan peoples.

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The one set of people who are conspicuously absent are our neighbours, but even they have formed an important part of the intellectual and emotional network within which our lives are embedded. When we first moved to Lode we established good relations with all the numerous neighbours living along our field, and particularly the old farming couple, Ted and Ida Golding who lived in the cottage next door. Later Ian and Sandy Middleton moved into the other half of our long cottage and Ian's expertise in video and computing has been of great help in various ways. He found me my first digital camera, we made a village video together, and we have discussed various computing and video problems over the years. We now have a new bunch of lively neighbours in a village which has turned in the 25 years of our residence from a small isolated fen village to part of the suburban silicone fen which surrounds Cambridge.

Then there are other 'neighbours'. Clive Bovill came to work in one of our sheds as a book-binder for over ten years and became inter-twined in various ways with our

lives. He employed Penny Lang part-time for a while and she expanded her work to help me. She spent many hours typing in some 80,000 quotations into a database, and typed and re-typed a number of my recent books. Without her I should not have been able to do many things. Her friend Ron Greenhill has also been very influential. A superb small builder, he has re-designed and re-built our house and outhouses in many ways and provided a wonderful environment for storing and analysing thoughts.

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All of the above, and there are dozens more, have enriched my life. Without them, what I have done, would not have been possible. And they, of course, are only the face-to-face contacts. There are a host of living writers whose work has deeply influenced me. Some of them are represented in essays under 'Encounter's on my web-site, but there are many others, many ghosts flitting from my ten thousand books.

Furthermore, the network does not just consist of the living or recently dead. It stretches back much further since I have been deeply influenced by many now dead authors and artists. I have written at length about a few of them (Montesquieu, Adam Smith, David Hume, Malthus, De Tocqueville, Sir Henry Maine, Marx, Weber, Fukuzawa, Maitland, Marc Bloch and others). But they are only a small part of the heritage. Nor have I noted the poets (particularly the Romantics and W.B. Yeats), or musicians (esp. Bach, Mozart and lately Handel) whose music feeds into an underground reservoir from which draw. Even painters (esp. Breughel, Leonardo, Rembrandt, Goya) influence deeply the world I see.

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In sum, we are composite creatures, the product of a million forces and personalities. Only a little is obvious to us. What we see and do not see, what excites and does not excite us is a reflection of these invisible influences. And often it is the less strictly academic ones who have the greatest long-term influence, for example Dilmaya, Gerry, Ron Greenhill. We may be under the illusion that we heroically climb the mountain of knowledge, but in fact we only stand on some lonely summit as the result of the work and friendship of a vast team of supporters and thinkers, in my case stretching back to the Greeks before and across to Nepal and Japan.