Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology
Department 'Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia'

Martine Segalen

On *Papies* and *Mammies*: the invention of a new relative in contemporary European kinship

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MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

Jack Goody (1919–2015)

Sir John Rankine Goody was brought up near London and initially studied English at Cambridge. Formative experiences during the Second World War led him to switch to social anthropology. He undertook fieldwork in Northern Ghana during the last decade of British colonial rule and taught anthropology at Cambridge University alongside Meyer Fortes and Edmund Leach. After succeeding Fortes as William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology in 1973, he began to explore long-term historical contrasts between sub-Saharan African societies and those of Europe and Asia. Following V. Gordon Childe, Goody emphasized commonalities across the Eurasian landmass since the urban revolution of the Bronze Age. In numerous publications he highlighted developments in East Asia and criticised the eurocentric bias of Western historians and social theorists. Core themes include productive systems, the transmission of property and class inequality in global history; kinship, marriage and the "domestic domain"; technologies of communication, especially writing, the transmission of myth, and of knowledge generally; and consumption, including cuisine and flowers. These topics are not approached in isolation but in their interconnections. Ethnographic insights are essential, but they form just one component of Goody's comparative vision. His best known works include *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962); *Technology, Tradition and the State in Africa* (1971); *Production and Reproduction* (1976); *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977); *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (1983); *The Oriental, The Ancient and the Primitive* (1990); *The East in the West* (1996); *The Theft of History* (2006); *Renaissances: the one or the many?* (2010); *The Eurasian Miracle* (2010); *Metals, Culture and Capitalism: an essay on the origins of the modern world* (2012).

Goody's agenda is one which the Department 'Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia' at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology seeks to continue. In an annual lecture series, a distinguished scholar addresses pertinent themes for anthropology and related fields:

Goody Lecture 2011: Keith Hart, "Jack Goody's Vision of World History and African Development Today".

Goody Lecture 2012: Peter Burke, "A Case of Cultural Hybridity: the European Renaissance".

Goody Lecture 2013: Martha Mundy, "The Solace of the Past in the Unspeakable Present: the historical anthropology of the 'Near East'".

Goody Lecture 2014: Francesca Bray, "Rice as Self: food, history and nation-building in Japan and Malaysia".

Goody Lecture 2015: David Wengrow, "Cities before the State in Early Eurasia".

The sixth Goody Lecture was given by Martine Segalen on 9th June 2016.

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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 third volume of the *Histoire de la famille* which I co-edited with André Burguière, Christiane Klapisch and François Zonabend (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 later 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[1]: *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 Histor*y. 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 *Struc-*

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[1] See Appendix with the list of translations in French of Jack Goody's works.

tures 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 increasead 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, as 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 (Attias-Donfut and Segalen 2014; Thelen and Leutloff-Grandits 2010). 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 betwen 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 possiblity 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*, Emile 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*[2] "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. 'tad koz'

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[2] *How to be a Grandfather* by Timothy Adès, London, Hearing Eye, 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

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.[3] The future grandparents or the child who produces the first grandchild may choose the name, usually after some consultation. Some grandparents pretend, in an

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[3] 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 (edition 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.

enchanted tone, that it is the baby who named them.[4] These mechanisms can harmonise. 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 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

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

and still working, says she is not very attracted by newbabies 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, 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 Genevieve 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 call her Mamie and call the head of the household by his Alsatian name, Karl. Karl and Mamie, that sounded better than Romeo and Juliet, than Philemon and Baucis. My mother would repeat to me a hundred times a day, not without a purpose: 'Karlemami are waiting for us; Karlemami will be pleased; Karlemami (...,)' conjuring up, by the intimate union of those four syllables, the perfect harmony of the persons.[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 assonnance 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 personnalities" 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

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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 connations 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 babyboom) opens with the question: "What do your granchildren 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.[6]

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 1), 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

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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 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 subsidised child carer who looks after the children of working mothers at her own home.

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 Emile 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').[7]

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

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[7] 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.

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 meager, 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 babyboomers, 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 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 realised the contribution of the grandparents' generation to the redistribution processes did they start investigating the new topic. Second, choked under the concept of 'modernisation' 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.[8] 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

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[8] For instance in international surveys such as SHARE (Survey of Health, Aging and Retirement in Europe); ELSA (the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing); Glaser, K., Price, D., di Gessa, G., Ribe, E., Stuchbury, R. and Tinker, A. Grandparenting in Europe: family policy and grandparents' role in providing childcare. *Grandparents Plus,* July 2013. ISBN 978-0-9573281-6-7.

these patterns, including the participation of young grandmothers in the labour force . The importance of political organisation 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 suprised 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. As of the 1980s, as Santos (forthcoming, 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 childcare support has become a critical resource" (Santos forthcoming, 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 'everday 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 Roumanian 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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