Reconstructing Social and Cultural Evolution

The Case of Dowry in the Indo-European Area[1]

by Alain Testart

This article presents a systematic critique of phylogenetic linguistic methodology as applied to social or cultural data. The example that occasions this criticism is a 2006 article by Fortunato, Holden, and Mace on marriage transfers (dowry) in the Indo-European areas. The present article advances certain general proposals for methods of reconstructing the evolution of a custom or an institution. The concepts needed to properly consider the question of marriage transfers include the notion of combination and of differentiated social practice. After having reviewed the data from comparative anthropology and historical sources, the author concludes that the most plausible evolutionary scheme for the Indo-European area is the replacement of an ancient bridewealth, or a combination of bridewealth and dowry, by dowry.

In the last third of the nineteenth century, the field of ethnology was evolutionist, and there were a great many debates on the evolution of customs and social institutions, particularly on questions of kinship, such as the alleged antecedence of matrilineal over patrilineal systems. Over the course of the twentieth century, these debates and issues were largely forgotten, with a few notable exceptions (Murdock 1949:184–259). A school of cultural ecology, or multilinear evolutionism, was born in the wake of Steward's (1955) work, and numerous studies still draw on this approach (Fried 1967; Johnson and Earle 1987; Service 1962). Their aim, however, is less to retrace the evolution of a particular custom than to provide an overall classification of the societies that ethnologists study within an evolutionary framework, conceived in terms of levels of social integration that build in a general process of increasing complexification. A much more recent development in this line of evolutionary thought is the attempt to reconstruct certain distinctive cultural traits through a so-called phylogenetic method (Mace, Holden, and Shennan 2005). This method draws on cladistics and, more generally, evolutionary taxonomy in biology. But since its aim is to reconstruct cultural rather than biological evolution, the method is applied to languages, such as they have been reconstructed through historical linguistics. In some regards, this approach was proposed long ago by Dyen and Aberle (1974) in their work on the Athapaskans, which used the linguistic family in an attempt to reconstruct relational aspects (cross-cousin marriage, matrilineality) of the Proto-Athapas-

kans. This was an enormous undertaking that relied on rigorous methodological procedures; it gave rise to numerous debates, some of them published in the present journal (Dyen and Aberle 1977).

Fortunato, Holden, and Mace's (2006; reprinted in Fortunato 2008) article extends this general phylogenetic method to the subject of dowry among the Indo-Europeans. Institutional data on marriage transfers are taken from Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* (1967), with some minor corrections (Gray 1999). These data show that the vast majority of Indo-European populations today pay dowries at marriage, whereas very few engage in bridewealth practices. In view of the present uncertainties in linguistics regarding the reconstruction of the Indo-European phylogenetic tree, Fortunato, Holden, and Mace resort to a complex statistical method (which will not be examined in detail here) to select the most likely tree. They then look for the ancestral state that would account for the present distribution with the greatest economy (the fewest changes); the result is dowry, not bridewealth. They therefore conclude that "dowry is more likely to have been the ancestral practice" among the Indo-Europeans (Fortunato, Holden, and Mace 2006:355).

The intent of the present article is threefold: to critique the methodology employed by these authors and, more generally, the application of linguistic phylogenetics to social or cultural data; to advance several general methodological proposals for reconstructing the evolution of a custom or an institution; and to carry out this type of reconstruction using dowry in the Indo-European area as an example.

Alain Testart is Director of Research Emeritus at CNRS (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, 52 rue du cardinal Lemoine, 75005, Paris, France [alain.testart@college-de-france.fr]). This paper was submitted 22 I 09, accepted 16 VII 12, and electronically published 6 XII 12.
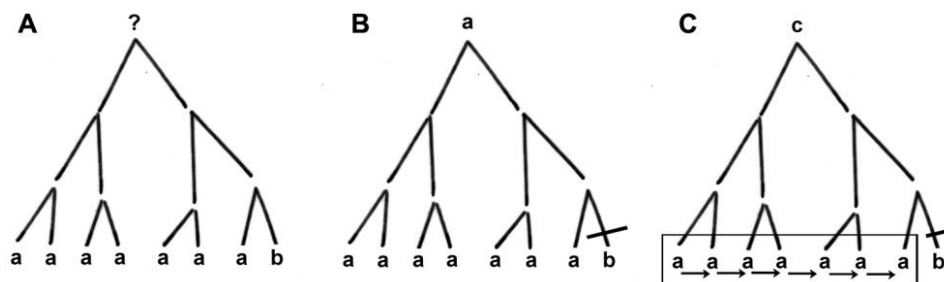
Figure 1. Distribution of a trait at the tips of a phylogenetic tree and possible reconstructions of the ancestral state.

Critique of Fortunato, Holden, and Mace's Method and, More Generally, of Linguistic Phylogenetics as Applied to Social or Cultural Data

Evolution Cannot Be Considered without Taking into Account Known Historical Facts[2]

In regard to dowry among the Indo-Europeans, there are at least two known historical facts (which will be discussed later): the Germanic peoples prior to and during the period of invasions observed the practice of bridewealth; in India, the practice of dowry was not widespread until 1950.

In both cases, we know that practices evolved toward dowry. In the case of the Germanic peoples, the evolution went from bridewealth to dowry, while in the case of India, there were more complex and distinctive expressions (to which we will return) that gave way to dowry. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace disregard these facts, which run directly counter to their thesis. One might argue that there is a difference between evolution and history, but even so, historical facts must certainly be integrated into evolutionary thought. These historical changes are known to have taken place over time—in some cases, over almost 2 millennia, which, given the historical depth attributed to the Indo-Europeans (no more than 7,000–10,000 years, by various theories), is hardly negligible. Finally, it is especially illogical, in purporting to reconstruct the past events of evolution, to consider only recent data—data from the present day (from 1967 or from 2000), all post–nineteenth century and marked by the effects of colonization, to say nothing of globalization. As far as possible, this type of study must build on the oldest data available.

Cultural Changes Can Affect Several Groups Independent of Their Lineage

There is a fundamental difference between biological evolution and social or cultural evolution, which makes it absurd to transpose a method taken from biological science to social or cultural studies. This difference can be explained as follows:

2. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (2006:356–357) do say that historical data must be taken into account, but they fail to do so themselves.

although cultural traits (or characteristics) are transmitted over time, like the traits of a species or a language, the changes in biological characteristics affect one species and not the others (since different species do not intermix). The idea that linguistic change might affect languages individually, independent of the others, is controversial. In any case, cultural changes certainly do not follow this rule; they can affect several populations, regardless of whether they have a common origin. There are plenty of examples: the adoption of mercantile economy, which originated in Europe, by non-Indo-European populations; the adoption of Islam, invented by the Arabs, by non-Indo-European populations; and so on. That is why biology or linguistics can posit a common origin of species or languages on the basis of similarities (although this is controversial in linguistics); cultural studies cannot.

This point is further illustrated in figure 1. Given a current distribution of a social trait as shown in figure 1*A*, with a vast majority of mode *a*, the proponents of linguistic phylogenetics would inevitably conclude that the proto-population corresponding to the proto-language possessed the trait in this *a* form, since a single change would account for the current distribution (fig. 1*B*). But suppose that this *a* form spread at a late date from a group that had adopted it first, or that a religion or a civilization originated by this group imposed it: in either case, the majority of the characteristic in the current distribution is irrelevant in determining the ancestral state (fig. 1*C*). For example, consider the Western Indo-European branch, with its linguistic families—Latin, Germanic, Slavic, and so on—in terms of religion. All the populations of this family are Christian, except for the Albanians, which would correspond to figure 1*A*. Linguistic phylogenetics would lead to the conclusion that all populations of the Western Indo-European branch were originally Christian, which is clearly absurd.

There are several known factors that explain why the adoption of a custom remains independent from the origin of the people who adopt it. First of all, there is the diffusion of culture, or cultural borrowing, the importance of which has always been recognized and which once gave rise to a great many debates. The first question to ask in trying to reconstruct an evolution is whether or not the observed facts can be

construed as the result of diffusion. The second aspect to consider is religion and, more generally, what one might call the great patterns of civilization. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace either do not know or do not wish to take into account an obvious fact: within the group studied, all the Islamic populations—including the Albanians, divided between Christians and Muslims but with a Muslim majority—have a mode of marriage that the authors list as bridewealth (we classify it differently, as shall be seen below); all the Christian populations—except for the Ossetes, who were less strongly converted—have dowry, as do all the Hindu populations. It is well known that patterns of civilization (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism) alone determine many customs within populations; this is especially true for marriage, and in particular for the presence of either dowry or bridewealth.

Why Would the Framework of Linguistic Phyla Be Relevant to the Evolution of Institutions?

In attempting to reconstruct the evolution of a custom or an institution, proponents of the phylogenetic method focus on a linguistic family, in this case the family of Indo-European languages. But there is no justification anywhere for this methodological focus. The procedure thus differs greatly from that of Dyen and Aberle's earlier work, which was a lexical reconstruction primarily concerned with kinship terms—that is, with vocabulary, which is an aspect of language. But marriage transfers are not, so why would a linguistic framework enable us to reconstruct their evolution? This question also brings us back to the previous point, for although diffusion is a major social and cultural phenomenon, why would cultural traits be mostly transmitted within one phylum rather than among different phyla?

Why Would Evolution Follow the Principle of Economy, and Why Would Current Distribution Shed Light on Past Evolution?

Ockham's principle—also called the principle of economy or parsimony—is a fine principle, but no one has ever been able to justify it. This is a general epistemological problem, and it is not our intent to pose it more broadly. But with regard to phylogeny, two points should be mentioned.

The first is that, in spite of what its proponents claim, this method almost always leads to the conclusion that the mode most prevalent in current distribution is the oldest (that of the proto-people). To dismiss this objection, Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (2006:357, fig. 1) construct a hypothetical phylogenetic tree (here reproduced as fig. 2). They conclude that in the case of such a figure, their method finds the trait 0 to be ancestral, even though it is not the majority trait in the current distribution. Their reasoning is correct, but the tree that they use as an example to support this reasoning has a very uncommon, somewhat unrealistic form (with two branches that join near the top and descend without any differentiation). Most linguistic trees are instead analogous to
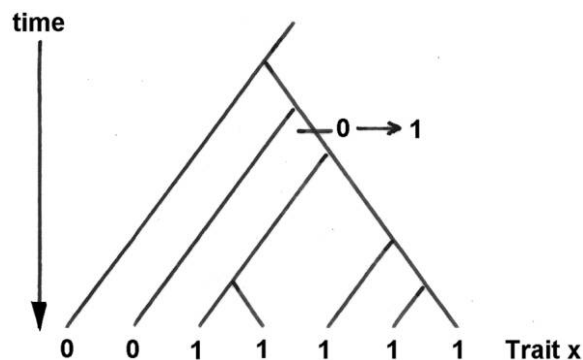

Figure 2. The tree conceived by Fortunato, Holden, and Mace to show that their argument does not always lead to the conclusion that the ancestral state is the one most highly represented in current distribution.

that shown in our figure 1. And if one is looking for a scenario that would minimize changes, this almost automatically leads to tracing the trait that is currently most widespread back to the origin. This is, in effect, what Fortunato, Holden, and Mace find in the case of dowry, and it was also what Dyen and Aberle found when they established matrilineality for the Proto-Athapaskans (the majority of today's Athapaskans are also matrilineal).

Second, conceiving an evolutionary diagram by minimizing the number of changes to have occurred since the origin presupposes two things: (1) that the changes are independent of one another and do not result in diffusion (see the "Cultural Changes Can Affect Several Groups Independent of Their Lineage" section) and (2) that there is no underlying law or tendency that might govern the evolution of the aspect being studied. By "underlying law," we mean that if x is the aspect being studied (in this case, marriage transfers) and a, b, c, and so on are its possible values (dowry, bridewealth, and other forms of marriage transfer), there exists, for a certain period of time and for every society belonging to a particular group, a specific value—for example, a—so that the probability of finding a will only grow over time and tend to 100%. But it is now quite easy to see that although biologists may make use of the principle of economy (a series of minimal changes), they do so only because they do not posit any general laws of evolution for the aspects being studied, which instead occur by chance, by mutation. Such is not the case in sociology or history, areas in which we can clearly ascertain many laws of evolution: the vendetta, for example, is incompatible with state organization and tends to die out gradually with the disappearance of stateless societies; mercantile economy is hard to conceive in the absence of money, and monetary economies tend to develop in tandem with trade; and so on. But a line of reason that favors minimal changes with regard to dowry can rest only on the hypothesis that there is no law of evolution, since if indeed there was one, it would make no sense to consider current distribution or to tally the

presumed changes. If we have good reason to believe that everything changed in a single direction within a certain type of society, then current distribution is of no use in reconstructing the past; it can only show that things have changed. Thus, it is pointless to rely on the principle of parsimony.

Fortunato, Holden, and Mace Give No Consideration to Geographic Distribution by Cultures and Cultural Areas

One of the arguments of evolutionism in nineteenth-century biology—an argument no longer heard today, since biological evolution is now a proven fact—was based on geography, namely the geographic distribution of species. An evolution of any kind must be able to explain the current distribution. That is why the study of distribution maps has always been one of the bases of thought on historical or evolutionary transformations. This facet, however, is completely lacking in the work of Fortunato, Holden, and Mace.

Fortunato, Holden, and Mace Carelessly Transpose a Technique Borrowed from Biological Science without Adopting the Numerous Safeguards That Biologists Have Put in Place to Make It a Complex and Valid Methodology

The principle of parsimony in no way guarantees the validity of a reconstruction. Biologists know this, and many classic examples show that this technique can produce erroneous results. Take, for instance, the comparison between mammals, birds, and lizards with regard to the morphology of the heart: because mammals and birds both have four-chambered hearts, the principle of parsimony would lead one to consider them close relatives and to separate them from lizards, but ample evidence contradicts this (Campbell and Reece 2007: 546). Biologists therefore conclude that a reconstruction is all the more accurate when derived from a large database, whether of morphological data or of DNA sequences. That is why biologists look at a great number of characteristics: this is the first safeguard. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace disregard it; they distort the method by looking at only one characteristic, which furthermore is a binary one (dowry or no dowry).

In biology, phylogenetic reconstructions rely on other safeguards as well. One of these, for example, is the outgroup, a complex notion that allows biologists to define the group under study on the basis of difference and to define its particular characteristics. Then these characteristics are polarized—that is, their ancestral value is hypothesized—all of which is done before applying the method of parsimony to every conceivable tree. These ancestral values are often assigned on an embryological basis, according to Haeckel's principle that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Thus, data drawn from sources beyond pure reasoning through application of the principle of parsimony are mobilized and integrated into the phylogenetic procedure. Use of paleontological data—of fossils—is not excluded either. Hennig himself, the founder

of cladistics, the most famous phylogenetic approach, acknowledged a principle of "geological precedence" (Campbell and Reece 2007:546; Lecointre and Le Guyader 2001:26–30; Tassy 1991:170). Biologists' reconstructions of phylogenetic trees therefore have a certain degree of plausibility because they turn to direct evidence from the past, evidence inscribed in the archives of the earth. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace do nothing of the kind; there is nothing analogous in their method. By using only current data and relying exclusively on pure reasoning without considering any direct evidence from the societies' pasts, they completely falsify the method that they claim to borrow from biological science. Their evolutionism is at best imaginary.

Methodological Principles

The principles that we shall now put forth stem directly from the preceding critique. We first present them generally and then give specific details relevant to marriage transfers.

Principle 1: The first task is to look for instances of historical transformations attested by historical or archaeological documentation.

In terms of marriage transfers, which leave few archaeological traces, only historical documents can be used. They are not always directly usable in the form in which historians and legal historians have recorded and commented on them, if only because the vocabulary of the social sciences is not standardized. Two types of preliminary work may therefore be required: first, a critique of the sources, especially with regard to ancient texts; second, adaptation and translation of the relevant concepts.

Principle 2: Take the oldest possible ethnographic data as the basis for the argument, in favor of more recent data.

To reconstruct an ancient state of affairs, older facts are more valuable than recent ones. This principle is self-evident.

Principle 3: Pinpoint great patterns of civilization and take them into account.

These patterns of civilization are datable for the most part, and they can be used in the following line of reason. When a characteristic is found in a population that is part of a larger civilization, this trait may indicate nothing about the ancestral state but merely the adoption of this civilization by these people. Thus, one must look at the larger circle or block of civilization rather than the specific population. The two extremes are as follows: either this civilization is completely transgressive (in the geological sense of the term "transgression")—that is, it was built up in reaction to the past and therefore bears no relation to what came before—or the civilization has integrated elements of the past, and as such it bears witness to the past. There is no general, a priori method for choosing between these two hypotheses; one can only argue based on knowledge of these patterns of civilization. In any event, this general line of reason comes down to excluding as irrelevant those cases that can be attributed to the wider patterns of civilization while retaining only that which may

possibly be seen as archaic. This is the classic form of reasoning in evolutionary ethnology, and we maintain that there is no viable alternative.

Principle 4: In matters of social practice, custom, or institution that are not clearly inscribed in language, there is no a priori reason for arguing within the framework of a linguistic family.

We have already explained what is meant by a practice clearly inscribed in language, such as kinship vocabulary. For those practices not clearly inscribed in language, we reject the idea of an a priori argument within a linguistic framework, although there may be an a posteriori basis for one. In other words, this approach, which presupposes a parallelism between languages and social practices, must be justified. We see no justification for it in the case of marriage transfers, and therefore we will use neither a linguistic framework nor the idea of a tree or of phylogeny in our argument. A fortiori, we will refrain from any economic hypotheses.

In this article, we will, however, limit our focus to the Indo-European group, since this limit has no disadvantage, and likewise no advantage. The choice of examining marriage transfers solely within the Indo-European group is justified only by its didactic value—for the sake of contrast with Fortunato, Holden, and Mace, to show how one might build a thesis on a better foundation—as well as the space limitations of an article.

Principle 5: Make minimal hypotheses on major transformations; that is, formulate sociohistorical laws.

Principle 6: No explanation can be considered satisfactory unless it takes into account the geographical aspect; that is, it needs to be able to explain the current distribution as well.

Principle 7: Data and hypotheses can be summarized in a historical table that records historical transformations by the dates when they are attested; these known transformations will form the basis of our argument and the means of testing our hypotheses.

Preliminary Information on Marriage Transfers: Contemporary and Near-Contemporary Concepts and Distribution

Basic Marriage Transfers

It is not possible, within the context of this article, to summarize all the debates on bridewealth and, more generally, marriage transfers that have taken place in the field of anthropology. But certain salient points, as discussed in Testart, Govoroff, and Lécrivain (2002*a*), merit mention here. Dowry has always been defined as goods that the father gives to the couple. There is, however, a significant difference between dowry in the European tradition (from Roman times) and dowry in India, as Tambiah (1973, 1989) has pointed out. In India, the goods that make up the dowry are those that will be inherited by the daughters only—an inheritance that constitutes one of three parts of a specific category of goods in

Indian law, the *stridhana*, which can be passed down only to women. Therefore, women can be considered the ultimate recipients of the dowry. The same cannot be said, however, for the West. In ancient Roman law (perpetuated in *cum manu* marriage), the dowry is given to the husband and forms part of the husband's patrimony. In the dowry system elaborated in the Justinian code (fifth-century CE) at the end of the Roman Empire, and the general model observed in French law to the twentieth century, the goods that form the dowry remain separate from other property; they belong neither to the husband nor the wife and are not even their common property. However, because of the wife's legal incapacity, it is the husband who manages the dowry—that is, he receives whatever revenue it may produce, although he does not have the right to transfer this property. In order to take into account these distinctions with regard to the beneficiary, we define dowry as the transfer of goods given normally by the father (or other relatives of his generation) on the occasion of the daughter's marriage and intended either for the husband or for the wife (or, far less often, for both, in a communal property system).

Bridewealth, by contrast, consists of a transfer of goods that are (1) normally provided by the future husband and (2) intended mainly for the father of the bride (or her maternal uncle, in a matrilineal system). Thus, Goody (1973) was completely mistaken in presenting bridewealth as a horizontal transfer, from the husband to the wife's brother, because it is always a vertical transfer, going from the spouses' generation to that of the previous generation of the bride's family. Only in certain societies, when the bride's father is deceased, can the brother be the main recipient of bridewealth. In several South African societies, it is true that the father holds the bridewealth sum for the marriage of one of his sons, but in any case it is the father who receives the bridewealth; it is owed to the father and must be paid to him by the future husband. In view of these details, bridewealth can obviously not be conflated with *mahr* or *sadāk*, the transfer prescribed by Islamic law, which expressly stipulates that the husband must give to the wife (and not to her father). There are many other forms of marriage transfer outside of the Indo-European area, but these are not relevant here.

Mixed Modes of Transfer

A marriage generally entails several different transfers, of varying weight. Some are ordinary gestures: a father gives his daughter a gift when she leaves home for her husband's house; she brings her trousseau, which can be modest; at the ceremony all the guests offer gifts; and so on. Other transfers are purely ritual and symbolic. But certain transfers have greater prominence, whether because of their size, value, or obligatory nature. This prominence is what we will call, using Murdock's term (1967:155), the mode of marriage. For instance, saying that a population observes bridewealth does not mean that this transfer from the husband to the bride's father is all that

occurs. Most of the time bridewealth is associated with small favors to the mother-in-law; very often, part of the bridewealth is returned to the husband's family; and so on. The characterization of bridewealth assumes that these elements are deemed secondary and that the main aspect of transfer is the husband's giving of goods to his in-laws. Thus, there are simple modes, in which a single type of basic transfer clearly predominates, and there are more complex modes, in which two different types of basic transfers predominate and intermix. The latter are what we call mixed modes.

It is extremely common throughout the world that part of the goods received as bridewealth be returned to the husband by the wife's father. Bridewealth among the Gusii varies greatly but includes at least one bull and any number of cows and heifers (up to 20), in addition to goats, but only one heifer is returned to the son-in-law (Mayer 1950:15–16, 33). Among the Kachin, the groom's family gives 2–10 head of livestock (the number depends on the bride's rank), together with gongs, Chinese coats, Burmese skirts, embroidered fabrics, rupees, and so on. The bride's family likewise gives gongs, skirts, and so on, whose total value is equal to that of the goods received apart from the livestock, but the family does not return any of the livestock (Leach 1972 [1954]:180). In such instances, where the reverse transfer is worth less than 50% of the bridewealth, we consider bridewealth predominant, so that the mode of marriage can be classified as a simple mode of bridewealth. But this is not always the case.

In fact, a great many examples, some of them extremely well documented, demonstrate return gifts that are of the same or even clearly higher value than the bridewealth. Among the Cheyenne, Omaha, and other tribes of the plains and prairies, the future groom ties horses to his future father-in-law's tent; the next day, at the latest, the father, if he approves the marriage, will send his daughter together with an equal or greater number of horses (Dorsey 1884:259–260; Grinnell 1962 [1923]:137–138). In a fine study on China during the Tang and Song dynasties, Ebrey (1991) shows that the goods given by the father-in-law to the son-in-law were of approximately the same value as those the latter had given. The Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl), Nuxalk (Bella Coola), and other Northwest Coast Indians observe a custom known as the "repurchase of the wife," whereby the father-in-law gives his son-in-law two types of offerings: the first upon the marriage of his daughter and the second at a potlatch some years later, where he delivers valuable goods, such as the famous copper, whose overall worth is estimated at double that of the goods given as bridewealth (Boas 1966:53–54; McIlwraith 1948:382–396, 406–416). Here we disagree with Goody (1973: 2, 20; 1990), who proposed calling this phenomenon an indirect dowry. This expression is inaccurate for several reasons (Testart 1996–97:16–18). First of all, dowry signifies a transfer of goods from the girl's family, whereas in this case, the son-in-law initiates the process by furnishing goods; the father-in-law gives nothing. Second, it is erroneous to classify this phenomenon as either dowry or bridewealth, since in fact it

combines both types of transfers: goods go to the father-in-law, and goods come from him. It is a specific combination of bridewealth and dowry.

Many other combinations are found around the world, but in the Indo-European area, the main combination is one of bridewealth and dowry. Another combination is very common among Muslims because, in practice, the *mahr* is rarely given to the wife; it is given to the wife's father. If he turns over to his daughter all the goods that he has received in the form of jewelry or other gifts, then he will have been merely the provisional depositary, and the transaction as a whole can be considered an indirect *mahr*. This is even more obvious when the goods are given to the father by the son-in-law with the express intention of furnishing the daughter's dowry, as custom requires this conversion in conformity with the spirit of the law of Islam. This situation is occasionally found— today, for example, among the Zaghawa of Sudan, who follow the law to the letter (Tubiana 1985:289–291)—but it seems to have been rare. Far more frequently, the father keeps part of the goods received for himself and turns the other part over to his daughter in the form of a dowry. This results in a combination of *mahr* and bridewealth; however, if the part turned over to the daughter is slight, it can be classified as bridewealth.

Multiplicity of Modes—Dominant Mode

In any given society, there are generally several modes of marriage, as we have defined them. This is true even in small traditional societies, unstratified and independent of any state, that have been studied in classic ethnology. There, if the family lacks the means to pay bridewealth, the future groom might work for the father-in-law, for example, as an acceptable mode of marriage. Or he might elope with the bride—an irregular mode of marriage that can be regularized later. What we call the dominant mode of marriage is the mode deemed preferable in a given society—the one that researchers are told is best, which is also the one observed by those who are well-born, ambitious, or concerned with their social image. It is obvious, in any case, that in stratified societies the plurality of modes of marriage has greatest significance; the dominant mode is the mode of the dominant class.

The most impressive case is surely that of India. The *dharmaśāstra*, a compilation of all prescriptive texts in the Indian tradition going back to ancestral times, distinguishes eight forms of marriage, each requiring different marriage transfers (Fezas 1996:190; Kane 1974). But all observers, from Dubois (1985:173) in the eighteenth century to Bénéï (1995:13), with her recent work on Maharashtra, acknowledge that in practice only two of these forms survive: bridewealth and dowry. Bridewealth remained in force in Maharashtra up to the 1960s, at which time dowry became more widespread; in other provinces, the spread of dowry began much earlier. Bridewealth was for the lower castes, while dowry was for the higher ones, linked as it was to the well-known ideology of valorizing

gifts, in particular the idea of *kanya dana*, "the gift (by the father) of the virgin." The *dharmaśāstra* considered bridewealth illegitimate, since it was immoral to profit from kin, but this illegitimacy is solely the fault of the father who accepts money for his daughter and does not tarnish the marriage itself, which is considered completely valid (Mayne 1953:135). We should note as well that in practice, other forms besides those recognized in the *dharmaśāstra* existed, such as brideservice, elopement, and so forth; we thus can distinguish five or six forms in all for Hindu India. China constitutes an equally clear example of differentiation of marriage transfers by social strata. The dominant mode, as we have said along with Ebrey, is a combination of bridewealth with a return in the form of dowry. This phenomenon is well attested for China, going back almost to antiquity, through inscriptions, books of rites, and laws. But as is often the case, this historical documentation focuses almost exclusively on the upper classes. Work by sociologists and ethnographers in the twentieth-century has shown that only those classes fit this model (Lang 1946:37; Levy 1949:95–96). Poor peasants—that is, the vast majority of the population—received bridewealth and did not pay a dowry.

Critique of Murdock's Ethnographic Atlas

Between 1996 and 2002, a team of French scholars undertook a revision of the codes used in Murdock's *Ethnographic Atlas* concerning marriage transfers.[3] There were six reasons for this revision:

1. The main problem lay in the method employed by Murdock and his collaborators, which consisted of reading ethnographies and then creating codes based on the terms that the observers themselves had used. This simple method ignores an essential point—namely, that the assessments and terms used with regard to a particular group have varied greatly throughout history owing to the Western perception of "primitive" cultures. Whereas nineteenth-century observers would speak of bridewealth and "marriage by purchase," underlining the savage or barbaric nature of the group under study, observers studying the very same institutions, practices, and people after 1930 would call these same transfers marriage gifts, taking care to highlight the humanity of the people. It is thus impossible to retain the terms used by the observers. Our method, inspired by what is known as "source criticism" in history, is to take into account only the actions that are reported and the norms they exhibit, apart from the words used to describe them, as well as the direction of the transfers (e.g., from the son-in-law to the father-in-law).

2. Murdock did not recognize the existence of combined modes, so that he worked with only seven modes, whereas we distinguish 23.

3. The multiplicity of modes of marriage was given cursory mention in the *Ethnographic Atlas* (with a secondary mode concerning only Africa), whereas we consider it a fundamental aspect.

4. Classical civilizations (Hindu, Chinese, and so on) were notably underrepresented in favor of "primitive" societies, which were still the preferred subject of social anthropology.

5. Murdock's work is now quite old and therefore does not take into account the recent studies on the subject.

6. The historic horizon in which Murdock situated his data remains rather vague.

The first three points have already been explained, and the next two need no explanation. The last point, however, requires some development. Murdock assigned the code for dowry to the French in the *Ethnographic Atlas* (1967), even though French fathers had long ceased to provide dowries for their daughters, and French law, belatedly conforming to practice, definitively abolished the dowry system in 1965. Dowry is certainly a general characteristic of French society— but in the nineteenth century. This problem is reminiscent of one that arises in classical ethnography. The great Americanists, such as Lowie or Kroeber, were not studying American Indian reservation societies but used informants from that time in order to study societies that existed before the reservations. Likewise, the great Africanists, such as Herskovits or Evans-Pritchard, sought to reconstruct the state of pre-colonial African societies using contemporary informants. But the fieldwork date must never be confused with the reference period. One might seek information and informants in 1930 (the fieldwork date) and establish a reference period of 1890 or earlier.

Whereas Murdock indicated the fieldwork date for each ethnographic source, he completely omitted the reference period. We have opted for the following methodology. For illiterate societies, very little is known prior to colonization. Colonization was, for most of these societies, what first brought them to light and what ultimately brought their demise. Most classical ethnographies are situated between these two events, and this gives a historic horizon—eminently different from one region to another, depending whether the subject is a region of Canada, Melanesia, or Africa—but situated roughly in the nineteenth century. To differentiate it from the present (1967 or 2010), we call this horizon (to borrow a term from prehistoric archaeologists) near-contemporary.

This historic horizon offers three advantages. First, it allows one to compare things that are comparable, to the extent that the societies can be considered before the impact of colonization. Second, it takes into account the cultural diversity that reached its apex before European colonial expansion and globalization, which exerted a homogenizing influence. And last, in order to reconstruct past evolution, the near-contem-

porary is surely more useful than the contemporary horizon, which may be colored by extremely recent upheavals.

The codes that we established thus differ significantly from Murdock's. The basic marriage transfers and their combinations come to 23 in all, and each society that is analyzed is characterized not by a single code but rather by a list of codes arranged in order, the first being the dominant mode and the following ones the alternative or allowable modes, or even the modes of the disadvantaged classes. We have already explained the principle of modifications for Islamic societies and for India. The Serbs represent another important example.

The Case of the Serbs

It is well known that the Albanians practiced bridewealth (and were coded accordingly in the *Ethnographic Atlas*), a fact that is generally attributed to their predominantly Muslim religion. But it is much less known that the Serbs did as well (they are coded as practicing dowry in the *Ethnographic Atlas*). This is an important point, because it concerns a population whose religion is Orthodox, who are thus an exception to the rule discussed above that determines marriage transfers by religion. The fact that the Serbs, much as the Christian Macedonians, practiced bridewealth was noted by many twentieth-century observers (Erlich 1966:194–198; Lodge 1942:195). Their findings were confirmed more recently by Gossiaux (1984), who carried out two successive investigations, in 1965 and in 1978, of six villages in what was then Yugoslavia (fig. 3). In two of these villages, in Slovenia and Croatia, which were homogenously populated by Slovenians and Croatians of Catholic faith, there was no trace of bridewealth. The same was not true, however, of the four other villages. When asked, "Does there exist in your village a custom whereby the father of the groom gives the family of the bride a payment in money or in kind?" 90% of the heads of family in Smedovac (Serbia, with a homogenously Serbian and Orthodox population) responded *yes* in 1977 (Gossiaux 1984:266). The data differ from one village to another and vary significantly between 1965 and 1977, showing either a return to the bridewealth custom or its transformation into a gift from the groom to the bride (akin to the *mahr*). Even though those interviewed generally denied that they "bought" the girls, something seen as against their religion and portrayed as a sin, they admitted that this had been the case in the past. To see how the author concluded his survey, see figure 3.

The institution of bridewealth is not restricted to the Albanians. In the Bosnian village of Bastasi (Bosnia and Herzegovina; Orthodox Serbs and Muslims called Bosnians), purchase of the wife is reputed to have existed during the period when the oldest villagers' grandfathers lived. The native explanation of its disappearance is linked with the village's poverty, with families unable to come up with the necessary funds, as well as schemes in which the wife would escape to her parents' home after 2 or 3 years and the parents would refuse

to return the money paid, claiming that their daughter had been mistreated. But the existence of bridewealth in Dobra Luca (Kosovo; mainly Albanians, Muslims) and Bastasi does not mean that it is a Muslim institution. Among the Serbs in Brest (Serbia; exclusively Serbian, Orthodox), one also finds traces of it up to the twentieth century: "At the time of my marriage, you had to give ducats for the bride. My father gave six ducats, and the bride gave us presents" (informant born in 1902); "When I was young, I was supposed to buy my wife. But since I was poor and had no money to buy her, I had to steal her" (informant born in 1903). The sale of a daughter from a rich family (in decline) is an essential theme of the novel *Bad Blood* by Borisav Stanković, which is set in the Serbian town of Vranje at the beginning of this century (Gossiaux 1984:271–272).

These data present the familiar ingredients of bridewealth, including recourse to elopement for those who are too poor. All these villages, except for Bastasi, have dowry as well; the amount varies greatly and is often the subject of bitter negotiations between the son-in-law and father-in-law (Gossiaux 1984:272–284).

The Serbs are thus coded CL: C, as the dominant mode, the combination bridewealth dowry; L, as a secondary mode, elopement.

Near-Contemporary Distribution—Summary Table

Our codification concerns 406 societies that we have chosen in order to represent each cultural area in all its variety.[4] Table 1, for just the Indo-European populations, is drawn from that codification.

Note on Causes for the Evolution of Marriage Transfers

In our opinion, methods for reconstructing sociocultural changes should be examined and judged for themselves, independent of any hypotheses on the causes of these changes. The present article concerns these methods; an earlier article (Testart 2001) focused on causal explanations. Here we shall simply summarize that article, whose argument is developed in three parts.

First, the correlations—often established on the basis of a summary comparison between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa—between dowry and plow farming or between dowry and state society (Boserup 1983:51–56; Goody 1976, 1990) are very crude. Not only did many precolonial states in Africa not have dowry, but also societies that were clearly stateless and completely nonagrarian, like those of the American Northwest Coast or the Great Plains, practiced dowry on a significant scale, not by itself but in combination with bridewealth (see above). It is thus impossible to explain the historical appearance of dowry as an effect of the adoption of certain cultivation practices or the emergence of the state.

4. The complete list of codes for the 406 societies in the study may be consulted at http://cartomares.ifrance.com.
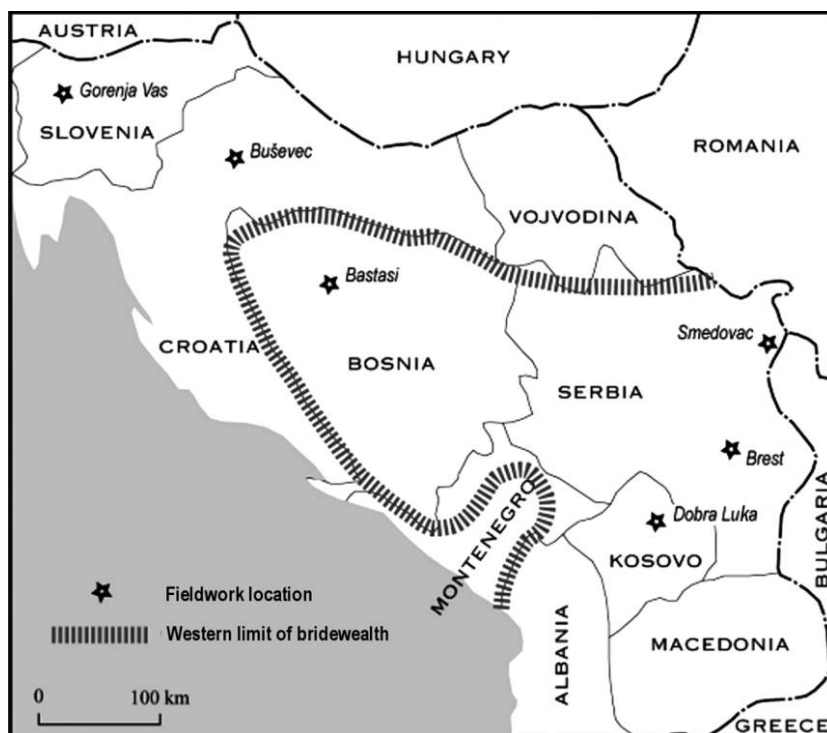
Figure 3. Distribution of marriage transfers in the former Yugoslavia, based on Gossiaux (1984).

Second, in the vast majority of cases, the husband is the beneficiary of the dowry; dowry is then a transfer from the wife's father to the son-in-law—the precise opposite of bridewealth (transfer from the son-in-law to the wife's father). This inverse parallelism carries through even to certain details of practices or institutions: same series of successive transfers. Just as the father can use the bridewealth he has received for his daughter's marriage to pay for the marriage of a son (a very well-known practice in Africa, sometimes even the rule), he can use the dowry received by his son to provide a daughter's dowry (Claverie and Lamaison 1982:283). Just as a dowry can be considered a premortem inheritance (an "advancement," in traditional legal terms), so can bridewealth. For the sake of symmetry, dowry is the daughter's premortem inheritance and bridewealth is the son's. This is seen in Yakut and Lotha Naga customs whereby sons who are already married are disinherited or have their inheritance reduced to half, having already benefited from their father's aid to furnish bridewealth (Mills 1922:98–99; Riasanovsky 1965:91).

These data reinforce the long-established idea in legal history of an inverse correlation between dowry and bridewealth but invalidate the equally traditional notion of dowry as a form of disinheritance with respect to daughters (since the same is true of sons having benefited from the father's aid in order to marry); they likewise invalidate the idea of simple relation between marriage transfers and the laws of devolution (Goody 1969, 1976:5).

Third, we have studied all the documents available for each of the 406 societies and have found, for every society that practiced bridewealth, the reasons given to justify furnishing a dowry (even if the value of this dowry is small compared to that of the bridewealth, and even if this practice is neither common nor preferred). These reasons fall under four categories. Two are very general (a matter of prestige; not letting the daughter leave "naked"). A third concerns the idea of limiting the husband's power, which could be too great if he were the only one to pay upon marriage; he could then believe he had "bought" the daughter and could thus do whatever he liked with her. The fourth category is even clearer: to let the daughter leave while receiving a substantial bridewealth but giving nothing in return would be like "selling her into slavery" (Deluz 1982:32–33; Kennedy 1955:238; Westermarck 1938:140).

Our general explanatory hypothesis is therefore that dowry appears on account of bridewealth, as its opposite, as a repayment of bridewealth. As the people of the Northwest Coast say, it "repurchases" bridewealth. It is a corrective intended to limit the harmful effects of that institution, because even though it may be clear that accepting bridewealth for a daughter does not mean selling her—nor does it mean selling her into slavery—one might nonetheless think that is the case. Returning bridewealth, in part or in whole, helps avoid these unfortunate associations while also protecting the married daughter.

Table 1. Marriage transfers among the Indo-Europeans

Location/Ethnonym	Indo-European subfamily	Religion[a]	Marriage transfers[b]	Sources
Western Europe:				
Spaniards (Andalusia)	Romance	C	OD	Harrell and Dickey 1985:115
Spaniards (Aragon)	Romance	C	D	Harrell and Dickey 1985:115
French (Paris)	Romance	C	D	Laroche-Gisserot 1988
French (Gévaudan)	Romance	C	D	Claverie and Lamaison 1982
French (Jura)	Romance	C	D′	Monier 1995:307
English (London)	Germanic	C	D	
Irish (rural)	Celtic/Germanic	C	D	Arensberg 1940
Southern Europe:				
Greeks	Greek	C	D	Friedl 1959; McNeill 1957; Sanders 1962; Stephanides 1941
Sarakatsani	Greek	C	WOL	Campbell 1964
Albanians	Albanian	M	CL	Erlich 1966; Garnett 1891; Hasluck 1954; Lane (Wilder) 1923
Serbs	Slavic	C	CL	Durham 1928; Erlich 1966; Gossiaux 1984; Halpern 1958; Lodge 1942; Pavlović 1973
Eastern Europe:				
Bulgarians	Slavic	C	?L	Sanders 1949
Romanians	Romance	C	D	Fleure 1936
Polish	Slavic	C	D	Benet 1951; Jerecka 1949
Great Russians	Slavic	C	DC′	Friedrich 1964; Lineva 1893; Schrader 1912; Tomasic 1953; Volkov 1891–92
Don Cossacks	Slavic (Great Russian)	C	D	Khodarkovsky and Stewart 1994
Ukrainians	Slavic	C	D	Volkov 1891–92
Lithuanians	Baltic	C	D?	Strouthes and Kelertas 1994
Caucasia:				
Ossetes	Iranian	C	BL	Iteanu 1980; Kovalewsky 1893; Lužbetak 1951
Iraq and Turkey:				
Kurds	Iranian	M	M′NYXL	Barth 1953, 1954; Johnson 1940; Masters 1954; Nikitine 1956
Iran:				
Iranians	Iranian	M	M″	Massé 1938; Nweeya 1910; Sykes 1910
Basseris	Iranian	M	NXL	Barth 1961
Afghanistan:				
Durranis (Pashtuns)	Iranian	M	NZ	Tapper 1981
Pakistan:				
Pathans (Pashtuns)	Iranian	M	M	Barth 1965
Pakistan and India:				
Dard	Indo-Aryan (Dardic)	M	C	Leitner 1893
Nepal:				
Tharu	Indo-Aryan		XBL	Krauskopff 1989
India:				
Punjab Hindus	Indo-Aryan	H	DBSXL	Blunt 1931; Briggs 1920; Dubois 1906; Hutton 1951; Karve 1953; Mandelbaum 1948; Mayne 1953
Gujarat Hindus	Indo-Aryan	H	DBSXLC	Blunt 1931; Briggs 1920; Dubois 1906; Hutton 1951; Karve 1953; Mandelbaum 1948; Mayne 1953
Uttar-Pradesh Hindus	Indo-Aryan	H	DBSXLV	Blunt 1931; Briggs 1920; Dubois 1906; Hutton 1951; Karve 1953; Mandelbaum 1948; Mayne 1953; Stevenson 1930
Bihar Hindus	Indo-Aryan	H	DBSXL	Blunt 1931; Briggs 1920; Dubois 1906; Hutton 1951; Karve 1953; Mandelbaum 1948; Mayne 1953
Maharashtra Hindus	Indo-Aryan	H	DBSXL	Bénéï 1995; Blunt 1931; Briggs 1920; Dubois 1906; Hutton 1951; Karve 1953; Mandelbaum 1948; Mayne 1953
Sinhalese (Center)	Indo-Aryan	B	ODBVL	Leach 1961 (1968); MacDougall 1971; Robinson 1968; Tambiah 1958, 1965, 1973; Yalman 1971
Sinhalese (Coast)	Indo-Aryan	B	DBO	Leach 1961 (1968); MacDougall 1971; Robinson 1968; Tambiah 1958, 1965, 1973; Yalman 1971

[a] Religion codes: C = Christian; M = Muslim; H = Hindu; B = Buddhist.
[b] Marriage transfer codes (′ and ″ indicate variants): B = bridewealth; C = B + D (combination bridewealth + dowry); D = dowry; L = elopement; M = *mahr*; N = M + BO (no transfer); S = brideservice; V = asser[v]issement; X = exchange of sisters with no payment; Z = exchange of sisters with payment of bridewealth; ? = insufficient data.

Data from Ancient History

The Ancient Germanic Peoples (1): Tacitus's Account

It has long been accepted fact in the history of private law (Ourliac and Malafosse 1968:241–244; Petot 1992:144–148) that the Germanic peoples of the first to seventh centuries had a form of bridewealth before they adopted, like all the other western European populations, the Roman dowry system. Their shift from bridewealth to dowry is the best known and most widely discussed example of this phenomenon. Two documents, or two groups of documents, give proof of this transformation.

The first is from Tacitus's well-known work *Germania*, also known as *De Origine et situ Germanorum*, written in 98 CE.[5] Its main lesson is that dowry is given to the wife by the husband—the complete opposite of what the Romans (and we today) understand as "dowry," given by the wife to the husband:

> The wife does not bring a dower to the husband, but the husband to the wife. The parents and relatives are present, and pass judgment on the marriage-gifts, gifts not meant to suit a woman's taste, nor such as a bride would deck herself with, but oxen, a caparisoned steed, a shield, a lance, and a sword. With these presents the wife is espoused, and she herself in her turn brings her husband a gift of arms (Tacitus 1942:717–718).[6]

This is what jurists call *dos ex marito*, a dowry that comes from the husband. Since at least the end of the nineteenth century, this *dos ex marito* has been related to customs from sub-Saharan Africa and Islamic countries and evidently interpreted as bridewealth. The legal historians who proposed this interpretation were not conflating this transfer (from the husband to the wife's father) with *Morgengab* (a transfer from the husband to the wife)—literally, the "morning gift," which the husband gives to the wife the day after their first night together—because this latter type of transfer is very well known and well documented in later Germanic tradition, in legal codes and in epics (the *Nibelungenlied*). Why, then, did they not interpret Tacitus's text as an indication of *Morgengab*? Because the goods that were given—"oxen, a caparisoned steed, a shield, a lance, and a sword"—were not, as Tacitus points out in the following sentence, of the sort that a woman would enjoy or that would even be owned by her at all: as goods of a masculine nature, they must have been intended not for the wife but for her father. A second point that reinforces this is the wife's final gift of arms to her husband. Since it is rather unlikely that a young woman would own

any arms, she appears merely to play an intermediary role in all these transactions. It seems to us most plausible, then, to interpret these transactions as bridewealth with a minor gift in return (the husband receives only arms in exchange for oxen, a horse, a shield, and so on); this is, moreover, the most widely accepted interpretation.

Goody, however, disagreed with this interpretation (1983: 245), pointing out that Tacitus's text indicates that the good are given to the wife and would thus constitute a sort of *Morgengab*—what he calls an indirect dowry. This objection seems to be based on an inadequate understanding of the Latin text. The verb that Tacitus used, *offero*, means not only "to give," but "to bring," "to present," "to exhibit." Thus, he does not say that the husband "gives" to the wife, in the sense that he would present an offering of which she is the beneficiary, but rather that he presents her with goods, without specifying that she is the beneficiary or the intended recipient. Throughout the world, it is common for gifts to be given to intermediaries rather than to the intended recipient, particularly when the latter is a superior or someone being honored. There are, indeed, parallel situations in ethnography, whereby bridewealth is briefly entrusted to the wife before she passes it on to her parents (McLendon and Lowy 1978:315). A final point, which we consider decisive, is that the interpretation of Tacitus's word *offert* as a gift does not work with the first part of the sentence ("Dotem non uxor marito . . . offert"), insofar as the Roman mode of dowry is concerned, because it is not the wife who "gives" the dowry to the husband; it is her father. Tacitus certainly knew this Roman custom, and he writes for a Roman reader who also knows it; here he simply alludes to it in a general way, without describing it in detail, by saying that the wife would "bring" the dowry, thus noting that the general direction of this transfer was from the wife's side to the husband's. And in this same general way he points out this inversion among the Germanic peoples, which has the contribution go in the other direction, from the husband's side to the wife's, whether to her or to her kin. Only the nature of the goods given (the classical argument that we have mentioned above, of which Goody says nothing) allows us to conclude that the wife is not the intended recipient.

Goody (1983:246) presents a second argument, which comes from the end of the paragraph cited above:

> This they count their strongest bond of union, these their sacred mysteries, these their gods of marriage. Lest the woman should think herself to stand apart from aspirations after noble deeds and from the perils of war, she is reminded by the ceremony which inaugurates marriage that she is her husband's partner in toil and danger, destined to suffer and to dare with him alike both in peace and in war. The yoked oxen, the harnessed steed, the gift of arms, proclaim this fact. She must live and die with the feeling that she is receiving what she must hand down to her children neither tarnished nor depreciated, what future daughters-in-law

---

5. References to Tacitus's *Germania* will be from the Church and Brodribb translation (1942) and may be cited by line number or page number.
6. "Dotem non uxor marito, sed uxori maritus offert. Intersunt parentes et propinqui ac munera probant, munera non ad delicias muliebres quæsita nec quibus nova nupta comatur, sed boves et frenatum equum et scutum cum framea gladioque. In hæc munera uxor accipitur, atque in vicem ipsa armorum aliquid viro offert" (Tacitus 1942, *Germania* 18.2).

may receive, and may be so passed on to her grand-children. (Tacitus, *Germania* 18.2–3, p. 718)

Here Goody finds proof that the goods have been given to the wife because she is the one who passes them down to her sons. This, we believe, rests on a misapprehension of the value of Tacitus's account, since Tacitus could not possibly have known with any precision the Germanic system of devolution or how the wife's own goods could be passed down to her children and grandchildren. Germania (what the Romans since Caesar's time understood to be everything beyond the Rhine) was still largely terra incognita. Unlike Gaul, it had never been conquered, and the Germanic people remained formidable enemies: in the year 9, under the leadership of Arminius, they inflicted a memorable defeat on the three legions of Varus, and only under Germanicus would order be restored. Modern critics admit that Tacitus never went to Germania; he may have written of it while copying a lost book by Pliny the Elder, who spent several years in Germania because of military duties, but at best he was drawing on the observations of soldiers or travelers, which were inevitably sketchy, compared to those that a professional ethnologist or administrator would provide. His knowledge is only hearsay. The main information on which the whole text of section 18 is based is that the direction of marriage transfers among the Germanic people is the opposite of that in Rome. But he knows nothing more. He may not even wish to know more, since his entire essay on Germania is shaped by moral considerations, with a measured admiration of the purity of Germanic morals, compared, of course, to decadence. He writes of something similar—well before the Enlightenment and Rousseau—to the myth of the noble savage.

He has very little concern for ethnographic details. This is particularly noticeable at the beginning of the section on marriage, where he writes that "no other part of [Germanic] manners is more praiseworthy" (18.1, p. 717). His elaboration of the symbolism of the yoking of oxen, the caparisoned horse, and the weapons (18.3) can only be considered fanciful. The religious nature that he reads into Germanic marriage is highly improbable, since, in general, marriage in antiquity is nowhere a religious function; it is only Christianity that makes it a sacrament. The notion of sacred marriage among the Germanic people stems more from a moralizing zeal directed at the Romans than from any ethnographic knowledge. For that reason, one may likewise easily regard the end of 18.3, concerning the way that dowry goods were transmitted, as equally fanciful.

Let us look at the movement of these goods if given to the wife or if passed down, as Tacitus says—that is, according to Goody's two hypotheses. They would not go to the daughter-in-law unless first passed down from mother to son (and not to any daughters); they would then be given to the daughter-in-law as gifts to the wife, who, once again, would pass them down to their sons, and so on (fig. 4). This figure does not correspond to any known marriage transfer. It is not the movement found in *stridhana* (which remains in the female line), nor is it that of bridegroomwealth, exceptionally practiced by a few societies in Asia. What is it, then? It is a system in which mothers would provide dowry to their sons. How did Tacitus come to imagine such an unlikely system? It is very simple: knowing that the direction of transfer was the opposite among the Germanic peoples—but knowing only that—he merely inverted the positions of men and women in what he knew of Roman dowry. For—at least in the ancient form of Roman dowry,[7] where it is part of the husband's patrimony—nothing prevents the dowry from being used by a father to provide dowry for his daughter, who then "brings" the dowry to her husband, who can again use it for the dowry of one of his daughters, and so on (fig. 5).

The Ancient Germanic Peoples (2): Barbarian Law

This interpretation is confirmed by the Germanic codes from the period of the invasions, documents written by the barbarian kingdoms founded on the ruins of the Roman Empire after the fifth century. Some evidence points to the existence of an ancient bridewealth among the Salian Franks (Petot 1992:171): the payment of a sum, modest in itself, of one sol and one denier, by the groom to the parents of the bride—this custom is generally interpreted as a relic; the payment, upon remarriage of a widow, of the *reipus*, in the amount of fifteen sols, to the family of the first husband—this unmistakably evokes certain African customs in which the lineage of the deceased retains the rights acquired by the payment of bridewealth, except that it is most often the lineage of the wife that repays the price to the family of the first husband and then has the new husband pay them back.

But the data concerning other Germanic peoples are far more convincing. According to the *loi Gombette* (Burgundian Law), the groom pays the *wittimon*, of which only a third goes to the wife, while the other two-thirds go to her parents; among the Lombards in Rothari's time, the *meta* was due to the parents unless the engagement was broken, in which case it would go to the wife; among the ninth-century Saxons, the bridewealth paid was equal to the wife's *wergeld*. Hughes (1978:267–268), who reports these data, considers it plausible to contrast these Germanic peoples who had settled long ago at the borders of the empire, for whom the wife would be the recipient of the goods given by the husband, to those coming from the east or from Scandinavia, such as the Burgundians, for whom these same goods would go to her parents. The Burgundian code speaks of *wittimon* as a *pretium uxoris* (price of the wife), just as Saxon law uses the terms,

7. Girard 1929, 2:1008; Ourliac and Malafosse 1968, 2:223. All Romanists agree on this point. Toward the end of the *Republic*, Cicero could still write: "If the woman marries according to one of the modes that transmits the *manus* to the husband, all of her goods become her husband's as dowry" (4.23). It is, moreover, in keeping with the Roman mentality to postulate that barbarian customs would correspond to the most archaic customs of Rome.
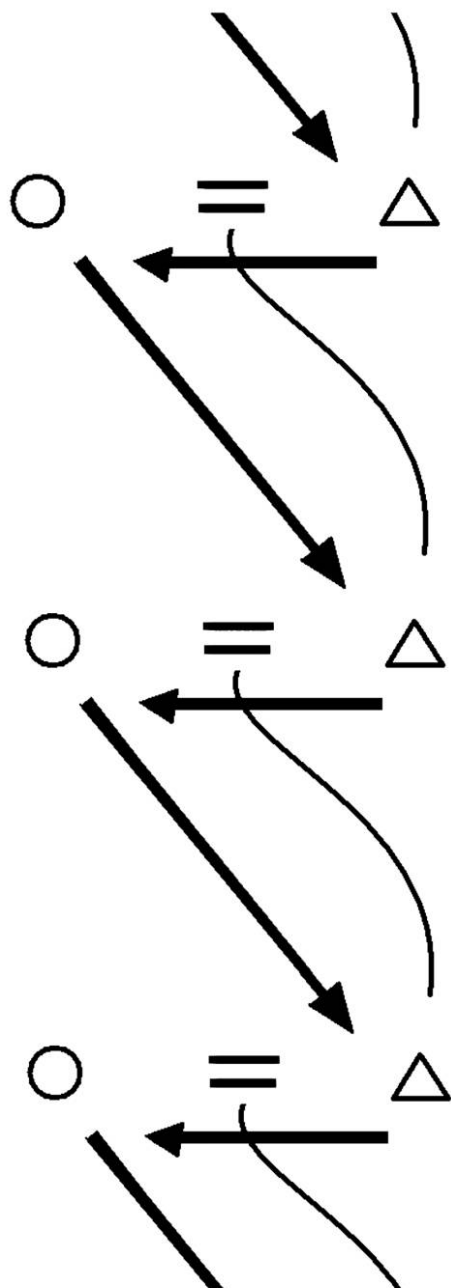
Figure 4. Hypothetical reuse of dowry goods among the Germanics over three generations, following Tacitus's description.

in reference to the man who marries, *feminam emere* (to buy a wife), and to the father who gives his daughter in marriage, *feminam vendere* (to sell a wife) (Petot 1992:171). Finally, let us remember that this ancient bridewealth is often—and correctly—conceived, at least by those who support the idea of it, not as a price for purchasing the person of the wife but as the price for acquiring *mundium*, the Germanic equivalent (although clearly less pronounced) of Roman *potestas*.

Goody (1983:246) responds to this classical thesis with ar-

guments that are far from clear. He maintains that in these codes, just as in Tacitus's text, there are only gifts to the wife, but he acknowledges that "they are sometimes not made to the bride . . . but to her father, or rather, her *parentes*." This is the case in Saxon laws where it is stated: "Uxorem ducturus 300 solidi parentibus eius" (cap. 40). "For taking a woman (in marriage) 300 solidi are (to be given) to her *parentes*" (Goody 1983:249). He asserts that it is not a question of a "price" or of "payments" but recognizes that men of that period used such expressions, whether in Latin, such as the nonambiguous term *pretium nuptiale*, or in Germanic languages, such as *gebigeð*, used in the earliest Anglo-Saxon laws, which means "to buy" (Goody 1983:249–250).

The Thracians

The Thracian language is part of a small, poorly known branch of Indo-European that is now extinct, sometimes grouped with Illyrian languages in a Thraco-Illyrian branch; its affiliation with Indo-European has never been questioned. Thracian marriage customs have been much less discussed than those of the Germanic peoples and seem not to have drawn much attention. Herodotus's assertion (2009:*Histories*, 5.6) whereby the Thracians buy their wives is unambiguous: "They purchase their wives, however from the women's parents for great riches." The reference to "great riches" is interesting with regard to the Thracians, who had coins struck with the effigy of their rules, but this was not, Herodotus says, what they used to pay bridewealth. This detail completely corresponds to recent ethnographic data, in which generally, apart from the postcolonial context, the people of Africa or Asia did not use money to pay for their wives. The riches they gave were "great," which must mean that the bridewealth was of high value. It is not surprising that Herodotus says that the Thracians "purchase" their wives; that is the way those who practice dowry (here, the Greeks) always perceive those who practice bridewealth, and the history of ethnology is full of such scornful or scandalized references to savages who "purchase" their wives.

This mention in Herodotus is extremely brief, figuring among a group of commonplaces about barbarians that are frequently found in classical literature (the barbarians' passion for war, their young women's lack of self-restraint, and so on). Herodotus clearly has no real interest in this practice, which must have seemed banal to the early fifth-century Greeks, not only because bridewealth is present in the *Iliad* (see below) but also because it must have been frequent among the barbarians. Thus, it would not have been particularly striking that the Thracians acquired their wives for bridewealth; perhaps any somewhat knowledgeable Athenian was aware of the fact. And although Herodotus's mention is cursory, the practice is confirmed in several other sources.

Xenophon's account in *Anabasis* is one of the clearest, and it has great value because Xenophon lived for a time at the court of the Thracian king Seuthes and waged war in that land. Seeking to engage Xenophon and his men in his service,
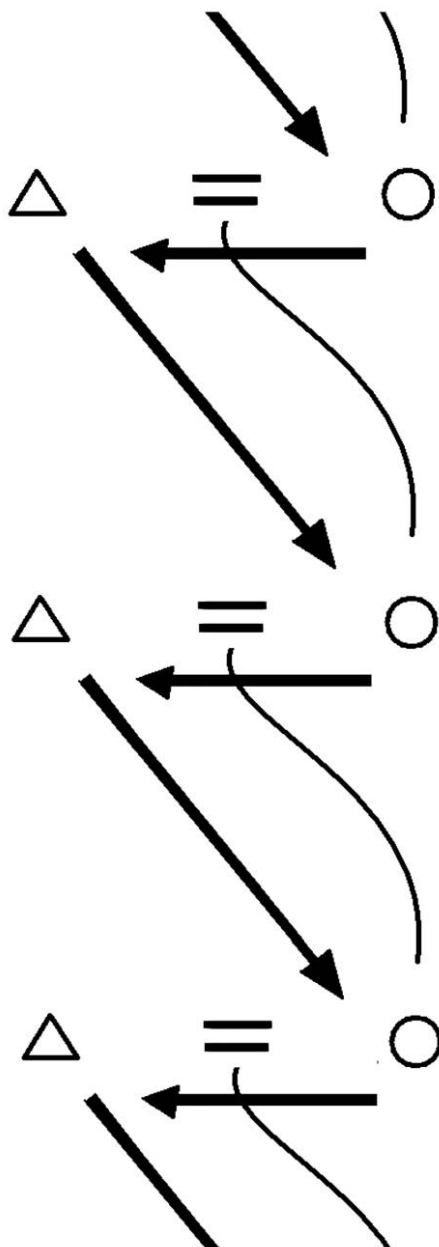
Figure 5. Possible reuse of dowry goods in the ancient system of Roman dowry, with the husband being the owner of the dowry.

Seuthes offered them fabulous incentives. He promised the soldiers money, yokes of oxen, and a fortified coastal town. To Xenophon, he promised far more: "To you, Xenophon, I will give my daughter, and, if you have a daughter, I will, according to the Thracian custom, buy her from you; and I will give you Bisanthe as a place to live in, which is the best of all my towns on the coast" (1972:*Anabasis* 7.2.38, p. 312).

The Thracian king offers to "buy" Xenophon's daughter in marriage "according to the Thracian custom"; this establishes that the custom is to buy daughters. However, he gives

his own daughter, and the contrast between the two verbs Ωνѿω and δίδαμι, "to buy" and "to give," is clear. The proposed transaction is entirely advantageous to Xenophon. But why would Seuthes give his daughter (for nothing) instead of requesting bridewealth? Is this a concession to Greek customs? We think not because, if it were, he would have further enticed Xenophon with the promise of a sumptuous dowry, which he does not do (unless the town of Bisanthe is considered a dowry, but it is not presented as such). In fact, the free bestowal of a daughter in marriage is, under certain conditions, completely compatible with a general system of bridewealth. With virilocal residence,[8] which is the usual case, bridewealth implies the husband's right to take the wife from the father's household. But if she is not taken from the father's household, and the husband instead goes to live with her there, he often does not have to pay bridewealth. And this is what Seuthes proposes here; he invites Xenophon to live in his kingdom and thus exempts him from paying bridewealth.

Anaxandrides, in a passage from his *Protesilaus*, conserved in Athenaeus (2006:*Deipnosophistae* 4.131), provides another account. He describes Iphicrates's wedding to the daughter of the Thracian king Cotys, poking delightful fun at Thracian customs, speaking of "butter-eating men . . . dirty-haired hordes," emphasizing their gluttony and lack of manners. He says that the king was the first to get drunk:

> As a dowry he got two herds
> of bay horses and a herd of goats,
> a gold wine-strainer,
> a limpet-shaped libation bowl,
> a pitcher of snow, a storage pit full of millet,
> a 12-cubit cookpot of hyacinth bulbs,
> and an enormous quantity of octopi.
> That's how, people say, Cotys arranged
> these matters in Thrace, as a wedding for Iphicrates.

(Athenaeus 2006)[9]

The bridewealth that the king of Thrace receives for his daughter is far from worthless; it includes two herds of horses, which were expensive animals, even if the Thracians were known to have bred them. It is, in fact, customary for bridewealth to comprise riches that were typical of the land; this is seen all over Africa and Asia among groups that practice bridewealth. Goats and gold are also common components of bridewealth, part of the usual list of a region's traditional goods enumerated by quality and quantity. But here the enumeration is intended to amuse the Athenian audience: the king is given a pitcher of snow, some hyacinth bulbs, some octopuses. But for an Athenian, however, the height of absurdity would be to wed the daughter without a dowry—and

8. The husband brings the wife to his home; we have no indication that this would not have been the case among the Thracians.

9. It is actually bridewealth being described here, but the Greeks had no term for this institution and so could only use expressions such as "dowry," which is what Anaxandrides does in using φερνάσ.

not only without a dowry, but literally with an inverse dowry—a father-in-law receiving "as a dowry" the goods that his son-in-law brings.[10]

The Scythians and the Sauromatians

In the seventh to fourth centuries BCE, a wide strip of southern Russia and the present Ukraine east of the Don River—and thus east of Scythia proper (the western Scythian lands)—was populated, according to Herodotus, by the Sauromatians. They can easily be identified as the ancestors of the Sarmatians (whose ethnonym is obviously related), who, some centuries later, would put an end to Scythian hegemony and then, spreading farther west, would ravage eastern and western Europe during the so-called migration period. At that time, they would be known as the Alans, who were dispersed by the Huns and, after many events that need not be detailed here, formed an independent kingdom in Alania, north of the Caucasus (and thus close to the area where they originated). This group—no doubt with a sizable dose of Caucasian—was newly identified as the present-day Ossetes (Kouznetsov and Lebedynsky 1997; Lebedynsky 2001:51–34, 2003:56–59). On the basis of certain nouns known from the Scythian and Sauromatian languages, they have been linked to the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European.

There exists an implication that Sauromatians may have practiced bridewealth. The argument is rather complex. I suggested in a previous article (Testart 2002) that the legend of the Amazons, as reported by Herodotus in a far more moderate version than those put forth by subsequent authors, such as Diodorus Siculus or Strabo—a version that Herodotus gives as formative legend of the Sauromatian people with regard to their difference from the Scythians—may well correspond to a real custom of these people: namely, uxorilocality in marriage, meaning that the husband went to live in the wife's home. Herodotus's text specifies that, just before the definitive migration of these people beyond the Tanais (Don) River, the women asked their future husbands to take along with them the goods from their fathers' households that were their due: "Go to your parents, take away your share of possessions, and then return to us and let us live together, but by ourselves" (Herodotus 2009:*Histories*, 4:114).

This passage has not, to our knowledge, been remarked or commented upon. How should we interpret it? What are the possessions it refers to? This evidence cannot be dismissed because of the mythical context: the myth draws on reality, and on real institutions, which it merely transposes in their actual state or inverts; it invents very little. What are the goods that these young men can claim from their parents and bring to their wives? A priori, there are two possible interpretations (although Testart 2002:188–189 maintained that there was only one; this was corrected in Testart and Brunaux 2004:

10. Another account exists as well, that of Pomponius Mela, but it is more difficult to read (Testart and Brunaux 2004:624–625).

627–628). The first follows the general system of dowry: from that perspective, the husband has been provided with a dowry; thus, the relation between the sexes is inverted, with the husband as the one who leaves the paternal household to live at the home of his wife, to whom he brings a dowry. This phenomenon is well known in ancient France, where it is referred to as a "distaff marriage" (*mariage* "*en quenouille*") or couched in terms that are similarly uncomplimentary toward the husband. It was an abnormal situation for a man, occurring only when the husband came from a poor family or was the youngest son. This interpretation does not fit the Sauromatian case, however, because the legend is intended to explain a general custom that would apply to the entire population. The second interpretation—the only one possible once the first has been eliminated—is that these goods are those of bridewealth. Note that there is no surprise, no questioning of the fact that the young men should take goods from their parents' homes to bring to the women: this would make sense according to the hypothesis that the Scythians practiced bridewealth, which seems highly likely. The great difference in the case of the Sauromatians is that although they had bridewealth, their mode of residence is uxorilocal: it is the men who come to live with the women. That is the distinctive trait of the Amazons. The custom is certainly exceptional: it is found nowhere in Africa, where the payment of bridewealth gives the husband the right to take the wife with him, but is, however, reported among several populations in Southeast Asia as well as in North America. It is logical that Sauromatian identity, as expressed in the legend explaining its formation, would be conceived in terms of this particularity; it would not be logical to conceive it in terms of husbands provided with dowries and of distaff marriages.

The Greeks

Homeric Greece (Finley 1955; Hughes 1978:262–263; Leduc 1990; Vernant 1974:65)—which, following Finley's revision (1977 [1983]), we situate within the Greek Dark Age (tenth or ninth century BCE) rather than the Mycenaean period (twelfth century or earlier), as previous scholars did—is characterized by the existence of *hedna*, which were goods given by the son-in-law to the father-in-law. The main passages in Homer that mention it are *Iliad* 9.146–157 (Agamemnon offers one of his daughters to Achilles without *hedna*), *Iliad* 22.472 (the *hedna* that Hector gave for Andromache), and *Odyssey* 1.257–128 (the *hedna* that Odysseus gave for Penelope). According to Vernant (1974:70), the term *hedna* is always used in the technical sense of goods given by a son-in-law to the father-in-law on the occasion of marriage, and therefore it cannot be used for other gifts, including those given in return by the father-in-law to the son-in-law, which are called *dora* or *meilia*. It therefore seems clear that the gifts called *hedna* are analogous to bridewealth and that marriage at that time did not, as a rule, entail a return of the *hedna*. The Homeric texts do mention a number of cases where *hedna*

are not given, but these variations are completely compatible with what we know of the practice of bridewealth elsewhere.

First, there is the very well-known case of Agamemnon offering Achilles one of his daughters without *hedna* (*Iliad* 9.146, one of the rare explicit mentions of marriage without the marriage payment, or *anahednaa*). Critics have considered this dispensation completely exceptional, interpreting it as a way of appeasing Achilles, whose anger opens the *Iliad*. We believe there are further motives: Agamemnon is at fault, in several ways. He has wronged Chryses by refusing to return his daughter; he has wronged Achilles by taking the warrior's beautiful captive, Briseis; and he has indirectly wronged the Greeks for having precipitated the disaster that ensues. And it is to make amends that Agamemnon, having recognized his errors, offers Achilles one of his daughters without bridewealth, along with countless goods. Thus, this gesture represents not an exception but rather a combination of two rules: if one must provide goods to marry a daughter, one must also give up goods to amend an error. Observing both rules, one could amend an error by giving a daughter without requiring any bridewealth in return.

In the case of Othryoneus (*Iliad* 13.363–384), who did not provide *hedna* and sought to wed Priam's daughter Cassandra, the Trojans accepted on condition that he fight on their side against the Greeks. Thus, one form of compensation (military aid) replaces another (the customary bridewealth).

Finally, in two instances (*Iliad* 155 and *Odyssey* 7.312; Leduc 1990:275), kings offer a prestigious hero—Bellerophon in one case, Odysseus in another—one of their daughters in marriage, with no mention of *hedna*; moreover, these heroes are honored with countless gifts and are to be made kings. But these marriages are uxorilocal, since Bellerophon settles in Lycia, his wife's land, just as Odysseus would have remained in his father-in-law's realm had he accepted the proposition; this type of marriage, throughout the world, generally precludes bridewealth. The data from Homer's texts tend to prove that *hedna* are indeed—like bridewealth elsewhere in the world, in a virilocal system—the sum that the husband must pay in order to take the bride away with him. If he does not take her away, he need not pay anything.[11]

11. It should be noted in this regard—and contrary to what we shall say below about the gift in the classical period—that the term *hedna*, which dictionaries generally translate as "nuptial gifts," is not related to a root that means *gift* in Greek. The term, which is rarely used outside of Homer, has been linked to Old Russian *veno*, and with less certitude to Anglo-Saxon *wituma* and Burgundian *wittimon*, all terms that are thought to mean bridewealth (Chantraine, cited in Hughes 1978:262 n. 1). Benveniste (1969:240), who links *hedna* to other terms attested in other languages, has them come from Indo-European *wedh*, meaning "to lead" and, particularly, "to lead a woman home." This information, however fragile it may be, nonetheless seems eminently significant: it is the idea of leading the wife to the husband's home, according to the well-known Latin formulation *uxorem ducere*, that appears to be inscribed in the rare terms denoting bridewealth for which we have some linguistic clarification. This obviously reinforces our theory that bridewealth is essentially (in a system of virilocal residence) the price that the husband must pay to acquire the right to take his wife to his home.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* recount other transfers as well. Besides the trousseau that the father provides for his daughter, and the gifts that the suitors offer to a woman they hope to win, there is something that resembles a dowry but is not called one (in the classical terms used to designate a dowry). Finley (1955:171, 182–185) insisted on this point: he asserts that in the Homeric epics, transfers from the husband to the father and the inverse transfer from the father to the husband go hand in hand. He counts 13 instances of the first and nine of the second, underlining the fact that wives are referred to just as often as "those for whom goods are provided" as "those who has brought numerous gifts"; he rejects, finally, the old notion that dowry is not found in the *Iliad* and first appears in the *Odyssey* ("dowry is fully attested in all sections of the poems"). Although these are useful observations,[12] we are not able to determine their significance. In all societies that practice bridewealth, in particular those of Africa, marriage is celebrated with a reciprocal exchange of gifts between the two families; this is a perfectly ordinary occurrence. Does the world described by Homer reflect this ordinary situation, which would imply bridewealth alone, or is there in fact a combination of bridewealth and dowry? This cannot be determined without more substantial data than those that the epics convey. One would have to know the relative value of one transaction and the other, as well as the ritual and juridical status of these transactions in that society. Finally, one would have to have more than a few examples, and not just those concerning the elite, the "godlike heroes" of whom Homer speaks. So we must leave this question unsettled. The possible existence of a combination of dowry and bridewealth can in no way be ruled out, but the only certainty is that there were *hedna*, which are not to be found in subsequent texts.

In the classical period (fifth and fourth centuries BCE, taking Athens as the reference point), Greece was, in fact, uniformly characterized by dowry—*proix* or *pherne* (Beauchet 1897:244–337; Harrison 1968:1:45–60; Woodhouse 1915).

12. Also useful is Finley's salutary refutation—absolutely indispensable at the time he was writing (in 1955)—of the old expression "marriage by purchase," seen to imply that purchase was the means of marriage and that marriage in the end was only a purchase. One can confidently affirm that in no society did a man ever buy a wife as he would buy an object or a slave. But although marriage was not the purchase of a wife, it did entail a purchase of the rights to that woman, and that is what we call bridewealth. Those who rightly object to the absurd notion of marriage by purchase sometimes go so far as to reject—erroneously, in this case—the notion of bridewealth. That is what Finley does when he asserts that there is neither buying nor selling in Homer's world, so that to imagine these acts with respect to marriage would be completely "incongruous" (Finley 1955:175). We can dispense with this argument simply by taking into account the most common ethnographic data, which show that the societies that practice bridewealth are not merchant societies—far from it. There is, moreover, much to be said on this subject: the market must not be confused with payment, and if the societies that practice bridewealth are not merchant societies, they are still societies in which things are paid for. This is certainly true of the society described by Homer, where ransom is a notorious practice. Men were paid for and women were paid for; that seems completely "congruous."

Dowry was not, however, obligatory—several authors speculate that the poor may have married without dowry—but it was, strictly speaking, the norm. It served as proof of the marriage's legitimacy, since concubines did not bring a dowry. The dowry was "given" by the father of the bride, and this gift reinforced the father's first gift to the son-in-law, namely, that of his daughter. As Leduc (1991:260) aptly put it, "The wife is always given (*didomi*), and the man authorized to give her always additionally gives (*epididomi*) riches." The contrasting data between the Homeric and the classical worlds mark what the Hellenists generally saw as a reversal or an inversion (Mossé 1985; Vernant 1974:70).

The Hittites

The Hittites provide the oldest historical documentation in the Indo-European area. Moreover, unlike the documents on the Germanic peoples, the Thracians, or the Sarmatians, the Hittite documents are not ethnographic texts—that is, writings about them by others—but rather their own legal texts, the Hittite laws, drawn up at two different times, in the sixteenth and twelfth centuries BCE, when the Hittite kingdom was in full splendor. This documentation poses serious limitations, how ever, because it represents only the rules—which may or may not have been enforced and which are often stipulated only for very specific cases—but not the actual practices. In any event, all Hittite specialists accept the existence of both *kušata*, given by the son-in-law to the father-in-law and thus translated here as bridewealth, and *iwara*, or dowry. Gurney's notion of *kušata* as merely a "symbolic gift" (1975:100), though restated by Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (2006:372), is clearly rejected by later authors such as Bryce (2002:121), whom Fortunato, Holden, and Mace also cite, and Imparati (1995:573), whom they do not cite. This rejection is based on several articles of Hittite law (§29 and §30) that carefully stipulate the methods for returning the *kušata*, or even paying a fine equal to the *kušata*, should the terms of the agreement not be met; these stipulations would make no sense if the *kušata* had only a "symbolic" value. Imparati (1995:573) and Bryce (2002:121) also demonstrate the legal nature of the *kušata* payment: acceptance of *kušata* indicates acceptance of the marriage; its payment validates the agreement.

The articles on marriages between a free man or woman and a slave, which Bryce discusses in detail (2002:121–124, 127), are of interest here:

§34. If a male slave gives *kušata* for a woman and takes her as his wife, no one shall change her social status.

§36. If a slave gives *kušata* for a free young man and acquires him as a son-in-law who enters his family [*anti-yant-*], no one shall change his [i.e., the son-in-law's] social status.

These clauses are parallel not only in wording but also in function: both allow the free partner—in one case, the wife; in the other, the son-in-law—to maintain free status while entering into a servile family. And the legal means for maintaining this status is the payment of *kušata*. Article 35 clearly highlights its role, stipulating that without payment of *kušata*, a woman who elopes with an overseer or a herdsman will be considered a slave for 3 years. Article 36, which mentions giving bridewealth for a son-in-law (the very opposite of the custom of bridewealth), requires comment. It is, to our knowledge, unique in the world. But it can be understood in light of the common practice, noted earlier, whereby in an overall virilocal system, if the son-in-law goes to live in his father-in-law's home (a distinctive case of uxorilocality, not of "matrilocality," as Bryce terms it), there is no payment of bridewealth. The Hittites take this idea a step further: not only does the son-in-law not have to pay bridewealth; he will, moreover, receive bridewealth. What, then, might these two clauses describing parallel situations of a free person entering into a servile family imply? As Bryce explains perfectly, the slave has no doubt become rich, while the free wife or son-in-law who enters into the family must be poor. Under these circumstances, the *kušata* could well serve as an incentive for free persons of modest means to contract marriages with slaves. Articles 34 and 36 guarantee that their free status will not be compromised as long as a *kušata* is paid, and their material interest could well lie in the large sum that the *kušata* would provide to their own family.

Since we have no documents of this practice (such as notarial deeds or marriage contracts) and no ethnographic observations, we do not know the value of the marriage transfer. The codes stipulate the principles but not the amounts, and, in any case, actual behavior does not always adhere to legal prescriptions. But what can be said, at least, is that in the second half of the second millennium, the Hittites considered payment of bridewealth a necessary condition to legitimate a union. It is also certain that a dowry, a subject of great concern in the codes (particularly with regard to inheritance), also had to be paid. But, as elsewhere in the world, the proportion of the two must have varied by social station. We would guess that in the dominant class, dowry was much higher than bridewealth, while in the poor or servile classes, dowry may have only been "symbolic," if indeed there was any dowry at all. Whatever code we might assign to this society—DB, CB, or DCB—it is certain that it did not lack bridewealth.

The Balts and the Slavs

The latest references to bridewealth among the western Indo-European group come from the Balto-Slavic subgroup. These documents are not nearly as convincing as those for the Germanic peoples, but at least they furnish clues. There are two historical accounts (Schrader 1912:749–750). The first is by Peter of Dusburg (or Duisburg), a Catholic priest who was the first chronicler of the Order of Teutonic Knights. He wrote toward the end of the thirteenth century of the *Pruteni*, the Latin term for the people known as *Prussen* in German, who

are today called Old Prussians. Their language was close to Lithuanian, and they were widely known to be pagan before the spread of the Order of Teutonic Knights: "According to an ancient practice, the Prutheni still follow the custom of buying their wives for a specific amount of money" (Peter of Dusburg, *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, vol. 1 [from Schrader 1912]).[13]

Three centuries later—probably in the sixteenth century, although the work itself was not published until 1615—an author whose identity remains uncertain, but who was Lithuanian and was no doubt sent by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the Tatars of Crimea, wrote: "Just as formerly in our own nation, one would pay the parents a price for the wife, which [price] the Samagitis call *krieno*" (Michalon Lituanus, *De moribus tartarorum, lituanorum et moscorum* [from Schrader 1912]).[14] The account is clear in its description (the price is paid to the parents) as well as its vocabulary, referring to both *pretium* (as in the *pretium nuptialis* of the Germanic codes) and the term *krieno*, which Schrader (1912:749) translates as "purchase money."

For the Slavs, *The Primary Chronicle* (compiled by Nestor in the twelfth century, but relating events from the ninth century onward)—frequently cited (Kovalewsky 1890:463–465; Volkov 1891–92:2:167 n. 5) to support the thesis of bridewealth at that time, based on its references to marriage transfers among the Polans—must be used with care, given the two versions of the manuscript and uncertainty as to the original, as well as the lack of precision in the text, which mentions "goods brought" without saying from or to whom they were brought. More useful is the account by Ibrahim ibn Yaqub, a Sephardic Jew from Andalusia who traveled through central and eastern Europe between 965 and 971. It tells of Mieszko I, the first known ruler of the Piast dynasty and the first historical duke of Poland and, specifically, in the following passage, of the entourage of armored knights in his keep:

> And when a child is born to one of them he (Meshek [i.e., Mieszko]) orders at once after the birth of the child to appoint him a salary, whether it is male or female. And when the child reaches full age he makes him take a wife, if it is a man, and pays for him to the father of the girl the marriage present, and if it is a female he makes her take a husband and pays to her father the marriage present. The marriage present among the Slavs is a very considerable one and their custom about it is like the customs of the Berbers. And when one has born to him two or three daughters they become the cause of his growing rich, but when two sons are born they are the cause of his becoming poor (Ibrahim ibn Yaqub, *Relatio Ibrahim ibn Yaqub de itinere slavico, quae traditur apud Al-Bekri*, trans. in Rapoport 1929:336–337).

13. "Secundum antiquam consuetudinem hoc habent Prutheni adhuc in usu, quod uxores suas emunt pro certa summa pecunia."
14. "Quemadmodum et in nostra olim gente solvebatur parentibus pro sponsis pretium, quod krieno a Samagitis vocatur."

In the context of feudal Europe, the existence of such an armed retinue is not surprising. Furthermore, throughout the world, it is rather common that the protection a powerful figure affords to those in his service would extend to affairs of matrimony. The same general principle is observed when a master marries a slave or a freed slave (since the latter lacks the means to pay for the marriage expenses, the master pays them). What is interesting about Ibrahim ibn Yaqub's account is that it gives information on the nature of these expenses. For the marriage of one of his male dependents, it is Mieszko I who pays the bride's father; thus, this "marriage present" was owed by the husband as bridewealth, and Mieszko I, by paying it himself, releases the knight from this financial obligation. It may be hard to understand why Mieszko I also pays for the marriage of one of his female dependents. According to the translation that is available, if we understand it correctly, he pays the daughter's father, to whom the bridewealth is due. The knight in his service neither gains nor loses anything by this transaction, but the husband's side is relieved of its financial obligation, facilitating the marriage of the knight's daughter. Whatever the case may be—this slight textual difficulty would doubtless merit a critical review of the original and its translation—the end result is quite clear. For just as dowry might impoverish families with too many daughters (which accounts for the many French folk proverbs on the misfortune of having a daughter), bridewealth would enrich them. This is a well-known circumstance, and Ibrahim ibn Yaqub, a native of southern Spain or Morocco and thus familiar with the Berber world, would certainly have been aware of it.

There is little doubt that Kievan Russia (twelfth to thirteenth centuries) overwhelmingly practiced dowry (Gieysztor 1967:65). But several scholars have also suggested that bridewealth continued to be practiced among Russian peasants (Friedrich 1964:149; Schrader 1912:750; Volkov 1891–92:168). What is certain, in any case, is that popular rites of marriage that strongly suggest bridewealth subsisted up to the nineteenth century. In Ukraine, following a classical rite in which the two parties simulated a fight, the husband would give a small sum of money to the wife's brother, whereupon the latter, before riding off on horseback, would tell his sister: "Now you are no longer mine, and henceforth you belong to X; I have sold you!" (Volkov 1891–92:549–550, 554). In an analogous custom of the Don Cossacks, the groom would display a coin to persuade the bride's parents, who would at first refuse to "sell" their daughter but would finally accept the coin; the groom would then proclaim that "the total brideprice had been paid" (Khodarkovsky and Stewart 1994:105). In Old Russia, a daughter of marriageable age was called *kunka*, from *kuna*, or "marten," because her parents could exchange her for marten furs, which were a common means of payment. At the turn of the nineteenth and even in the twentieth century, it was customary for the parents of the suitor to tell the girl's parents: "We have a purchaser; you, a commodity: will you sell your ware?" (Schrader 1912:750).

Russian folk songs commonly refer to the bride as "merchandise" and the groom as a "merchant" (Kovalewsky 1890: 480).

Results of the Historical Approach

Mentioned above are the main facts that can be reconstructed based on ancient and, in some cases, medieval texts. One could no doubt infer others—such as, for example, the possibility that a very ancient form of bridewealth existed in Rome for the poor classes, based on study of the *coemptio* (from *emere*, "to buy"), a legal form of marriage that was considered archaic in the classical period; this argument, however, would entail lengthy and complex critical work on Roman law to yield only probable results (Testart 1996–97, pt. 2:124–127). Nor do we have the space here to explain why we believe the Gauls practiced dowry right before the Roman conquest (Testart and Brunaux 2004:627). The Veneti (people from the area of today's Veneto, from whom the region is named) perhaps had bridewealth, if one follows Herodotus (*Histories*, 1.196); conversely, the Lydians certainly had dowry (*Histories*, 1.93), because the custom that Herodotus mentions of Lydian women obtaining money in any way possible, including prostitution, cannot have been completely fabricated, so well it evokes the plight of poor young women elsewhere—whether in nineteenth-century France or in today's India—who need to come up with a dowry. We are aware that the review we have undertaken is limited and could greatly benefit from expansion through a more systematic collaboration between social anthropologists and Hellenists, Romanists, and Assyriologists. Nonetheless, an unquestionable conclusion clearly emerges. As soon as we move away, in time and in space, from classical Greece and Rome, we encounter bridewealth, alone or in combination.

What Can Be Inferred from the Current Distribution?

The Role of Ideologies

We have already noted the close connection between marriage transfers and the great religions (see the "Cultural Changes Can Affect Several Groups Independent of Their Lineage" section and table 1 above), which stems from the fact that each of these religions imposes norms of conduct on its followers. In Islam and Hinduism, marriage transfers are explicitly codified. Although the same is not true of Christianity, the church, whether Catholic or Orthodox, seems to have always considered bridewealth an anti-Christian institution: the Mexican Council of 1585 condemned bridewealth among the American Indians (Bernand and Gruzinski 1986:181); the Russian government, declaring bridewealth among the Ossetes "contrary to the Christian spirit," abolished it in 1877–78 (Kovalewsky 1893:162); and Serb informants made similar statements (above). Religions are not the only institutions at issue. Colonization propagates Western values; in a country

like India, marked by a hierarchy of castes, it promotes the values of equality, leading the lower castes to imitate the marriage practices of the higher ones, so that dowry becomes widespread. Conversely, in the West, the current ideology of male and female equality has led to the demise of dowry, given its association with the legal incapacity of women.

First law: in the Indo-European area, for the contemporary and near-contemporary periods, marriage transfers are more than 95% determined by religions and other major ideologies.

Given that marriage transfers as prescribed by Islamic law are not comparable to bridewealth, we can formulate a second law.

Second law: in the Indo-European area, for the contemporary and near-contemporary periods, all the major ideologies valorize or adopt as standard a form of marriage transfers that is differentiated from bridewealth.

The methodological implications of these two laws are clear. Ideologies hold such strong sway—almost a determinism—over marriage transfers that we may conclude: contemporary or near-contemporary distribution, considered *globally* (average value or summation), is of no help in conceiving the past evolution of marriage transfers, because the major ideologies, which are very recent in terms of evolution—that is to say, 2,000 years old, at most—account for almost the entire contemporary or near-contemporary distribution. This point corroborates the criticism formulated in the section "Why Would Evolution Follow the Principle of Economy, and Why Would Current Distribution Shed Light on Past Evolution?"

Some Anomalies in Geographic Distribution

However, there are interesting exceptions: Why do the Serbs, who are Orthodox, and the Ossetes, who are mostly Christian (even if their conversion remains superficial), practice bridewealth? An analogous question arises concerning the Albanian Christians who likewise practiced bridewealth, but it is of less consequence because those Christians represent a minority within a mostly Muslim country. The same applies to the Russian peasantry—where traces of bridewealth or even the practice itself still seemed strong in the nineteenth century—given the clear influence of the Turco-Mongol and Finno-Ugric areas (which both practiced bridewealth). Two a priori explanations for these exceptions are conceivable: the first, along the lines of nineteenth-century evolutionism, would be that these practices are archaisms or relics; the second, considering that all these groups are situated at the edges of the Muslim world (fig. 6), would attribute their marriage practice to borrowing.

Although none of these explanations can be ruled out, none can be proven. It is striking to note that the only four exceptions to the law whereby religion determines marriage practice are all located at points of contact, exchange, and conflict with different realms. Based on a map, borrowing would be the simplest explanation. However, external influences alone seem insufficient to explain this predominance
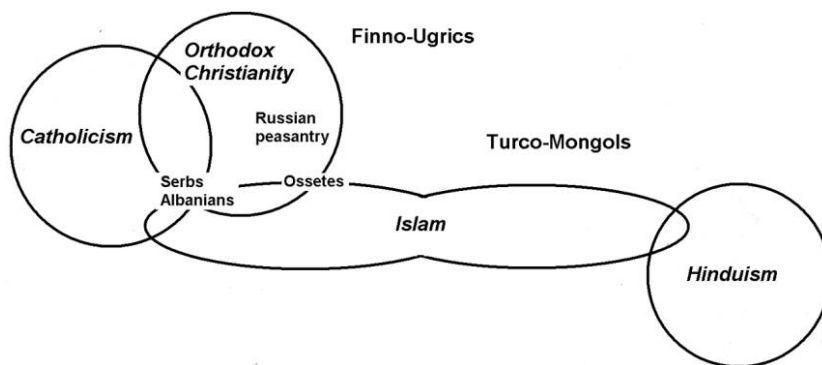
Figure 6. Sketch map of geographic distribution.

of bridewealth: Islam has a very different form of marriage transfers, and it also prohibits slavery within the community of the faithful, including the selling of children into slavery by their parents—something the Ossetes, according to reliable data, considered lawful (Kovalewsky 1893:189; Lužbetak 1951: 183–184). Borrowing does not explain everything. Although the argument that these practices are archaisms or relics must be used with extreme caution, it seems admissible in the case of the Ossetes, at least. The Caucasus has often been considered a repository of customs, owing to its inaccessibility and the narrowness of its valleys, and the Ossetes probably descended from the Alans, steppe peoples who were related to the Scythians or the Sarmatians, for whom evidence of bridewealth exists. In any event, the argument would be less convincing without the support of historical data. The same can be said for the Serbs: the distinctive characteristics of their marriage transfers can be considered an archaism only insofar as we find similar elements in the larger Slavic family, ones going back to very early times.

The Indo-European Family within the Great Human Family

There is little doubt that late nineteenth-century scholars relied on a rather simple argument to conclude that the Indo-Europeans formerly practiced bridewealth—namely, they knew at that time that bridewealth was by no means a typically African institution; ethnology had shown that it was more or less ubiquitous in societies that were then known as "primitive." They found a sort of universality of bridewealth during an evolutionary stage that, to clarify their ideas, we might call Neolithic, or, in any case, within stateless agrarian societies. The Indo-European groups, as part of humanity, would necessarily have passed through this stage before the classical Greek city-states created dowry, which would become widespread with the Roman Empire and subsequently with Christianity. Can this argument still be made today?

First, some qualification is needed. Many of the societies formerly thought to practice bridewealth or "marriage by purchase," and even some still classified as such in the *Ethno-*

graphic Atlas, in fact practiced a combination of bridewealth and dowry. This was very clearly the case for the Northwest Coast societies, which were stratified but stateless, and for the Plains Indians, which likewise did not have a state and could be considered stratified, with some exceptions (see above and Testart 2001:184–187). Greece, then, did not invent dowry, nor did the civilizations of the Near East, since the phenomenon was already very present and well developed in those small stateless societies that American neo-evolutionist anthropologists call *tribes* or *chiefdoms*. However, none of these societies practiced pure dowry as the West has done since the Greeks or the Brahmans have done in India. What remains valid in this nineteenth-century argument is the general assertion on which it rests, even if it needs to be reformulated: except in very rare cases, stateless societies that raised livestock and/or farmed on a wide scale had bridewealth, either alone or in combination.[15] The argument follows the same reasoning: since the Indo-European groups are not apart from humanity, it is logical to believe that they too had a stage of bridewealth or of combined bridewealth and dowry. And if classical Greece was the innovator, it was not by inventing dowry but rather by suppressing bridewealth—that is, making dowry the only normal and legitimate form of marriage transfer.

The Indo-Europeans do have one distinction with regard to marriage transfers: they are the only group among whom we find pure dowry. That is a very great distinction. But can this distinction be attributed to ancestral practice, as Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (2006) maintain? Can the Neolithic or Chalcolithic milieu in which the Indo-European protolanguage developed—sometime between 10,000 and 7000 BCE, according to the different theses—be considered a milieu that would promote pure dowry? Comparative studies tend to negate this possibility, since we know of no tribal societies or chiefdoms that have pure dowry. And finally, pure

15. This law results directly from considerations presented in Testart, Govoroff, and Lécrivain 2002:183–189, but there it was not formulated as such.
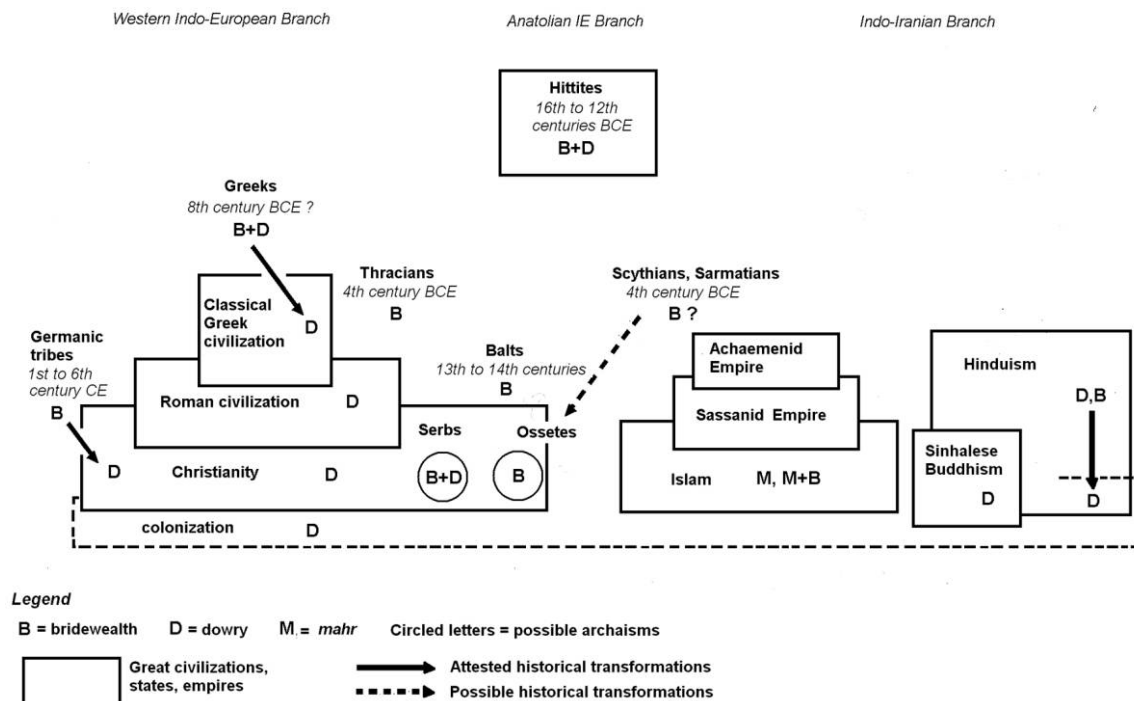
Figure 7. Global evolutionary outline.

dowry is attested in societies that are not only state-organized and stratified but also have classes—namely, Western societies since the Greeks and Hindu society. We cannot imagine Neolithic societies with these characteristics.

All the arguments drawn from comparative social anthropology thus lead in the same direction, but we still cannot consider them conclusive. For it will always be impossible to refute the classical objections to this type of argument: even though all the small, stateless agrarian societies observed in the nineteenth century have bridewealth, how can one be sure that the same was true in the distant past? Why might history not have taken a different course in Europe than in the rest of the world? And since there are some exceptions to the law that dictates that these societies have bridewealth, why cannot the Indo-European groups also be an exception? Once again, only historical data can yield a decisive conclusion.

Summary and Conclusion

The following diagram (fig. 7) summarizes the principal data and allows us to recapitulate our main arguments: the great religions and, more generally, the great ideologies that have marked the Indo-European world over the past 2 millennia all reject bridewealth: the fact that most contemporary peoples do not have bridewealth merely reflects the sway of these ideologies and cannot constitute an argument in favor of the antiquity of dowry; the existence of bridewealth among certain populations that belong to religions associated with

dowry is an argument, albeit not decisive, in favor of the antiquity of bridewealth; comparative studies in social anthropology also provide an argument to the extent that the societies studied by ethnographers that are agrarian and stateless, like those of the Neolithic period, during which Indo-European is thought to have developed, all have bridewealth, alone or in combination, but this argument is susceptible to objection. The main arguments, then, come from historical data that attest to the existence of a practice of bridewealth, alone or in combination, among ancient peoples either who have disappeared or who later adopted dowry. Thus, we conclude that, based on examination of documents from the Indo-European area, all data indicate that marriage transfers in ancestral times were either bridewealth or a combination of bridewealth and dowry.

Acknowledgments

Comments

Nick Allen

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford, 51 Banbury Road, Oxford, United Kingdom (nick.allen@anthro.ox.ac.uk). 12 VI 12

In the first part of the paper, Testart critiques a computational or quantitative method applied to a question of cultural history; in the second, he answers the same question differently using more conventional methods. The critique targets specifically Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (2006; Fortunato 2008 is a shortened and recast version of the 2006 paper, not a reprint). Similar computational methods are being applied to language families other than Indo-European (IE) and to questions other than marriage exchanges, so Testart's critique transcends its specific target and bears on the wider issue of using tree diagrams for culture-historical purposes.

The tree model that applies pretty well to biological taxa and language families clearly works less well when applied to culture. A social change is not very like a genetic mutation, a phonemic shift, or (one might add) a scribal innovation in manuscripts deriving from an archetype. But I have some reservations. (1) Comparativists are urged (reasonably) to consider both diffusion across language boundaries and religion—but the spread of a religion is just one type of diffusion. (2) It would have been worth noting that linguists generally recognize that branching or tree models need to be complemented by wave or network models. (3) Ockham's law may be vulnerable philosophically, but of two competing explanations, the simpler remains preferable, other things being equal. (4) Testart asks why language phyla should relate to the evolution of institutions. But language is part of culture, and language split does usually imply cultural divergence in other respects. (5) It is too simple to say that kinship terms belong to language, not to institutions. In fact, they help to bridge the language-culture gap, for instance, when they reflect a contemporary or earlier positive marriage rule. (6) One objection to Fortunato, Holden, and Mace is raised here in relation to figure 2, which Testart claims to be of a rare type. But the usual tree for Austronesian languages is comparable; even if the observation is true, the weight it can bear is debatable.

Nevertheless, Testart's critique is forceful (which by no means implies blanket dismissal of all computation-based phylogenetics). It is odd to pose culture-historical questions while ignoring documented history and geography/diffusion, and the most interesting questions cannot necessarily be posed in binary terms (bridewealth or dowry). Moreover, phylogenetic methods in general do tend to ignore the possibility of underlying trends (Testart says "laws") operating across the population in question but independent of external influence. One might think here of the work of Chris Ehret (e.g., 2008) on the reconstruction of kinship terminologies within African

language families. If there exist general and irreversible trends toward the appearance or disappearance of certain types of equation, they would affect the plausibility of such reconstructions.

In the second part of the paper, a small point concerns Homer. His poems "are no longer viewed, as by M. I. Finley . . . as an accurate portrait of the social institutions of the so-called Dark Ages" (Saïd 2012:696). As for the overall conclusion, it is well worth consulting Testart, Govoroff, and Lécrivain 2002*a*, with its attractive world maps and helpful format for diagramming marriage transfers: proto-IE speakers surely practiced bridewealth as well as dowry. But, as Testart is aware, the neat binary contrast may be more a convenience to analysts than an emic phenomenon salient to the people in question. In India, "love marriage"—not necessarily implying economic transfers—is a recognized category, and marriage by capture was not only approved for warriors in the old Sanskrit law codes but was still an option in a village in Kinnaur (U.P.) in the 1980s.

The Sanskrit case is interesting because Georges Dumézil (1979) argued that dowry, capture, and bridewealth manifested the first, second, and third functions in IE ideology and that Roman law showed a comparable triad. To focus debate on dowry versus bridewealth is to risk overlooking both native typologies of marriage and other methods of writing cultural macrohistory. Actually, arguments are accumulating that Dumézil's triadic schema needs expansion at both the bottom of the hierarchy and the top. This would accommodate far better the "ghoulish" type of marriage, listed last and profoundly devalued (Olivelle 2004:44–45), and the epic *svayamvara*, so typical of royalty. The case for a pentadic schema is argued in Allen (1996), with special reference to the liaisons of Arjuna in the *Mahābhārata* and of Odysseus in Homer.

In any case, however Dumézil's IE work is treated by posterity, it is the most impressive example so far of applying a language-tree framework to cultural history. Although Testart does not mention the Dumézilian approach, his paper serves to emphasize the need for theoretical thinking about such undertakings. The need is slowly being recognized by historians (McMahon, Trautmann, and Shryock 2011, which also ignores Dumézil).

Mahé Ben Hamed

Databases, Corpora and Language Lab, Department of Linguistics, University of Nice-Sophia Antipolis, 24, avenue des Diables Bleus, 06300 Nice, France (mbenhamed@unice.fr). 19 VI 12

The use of phylogenetic methods outside their original field of conception has gained momentum in the past decade and is regularly met with a healthy dose of skepticism in the fields they are transposed to. But for a critique to be constructive, it needs to first acknowledge what each application is truly

made of, which Testart fails to do on all six points he critiques in the work of Fortunato, Holden, and Mace. The phylogenetic approach is indeed based on the reconstruction of the past from more recent observations. As for taking into account historical facts, they were factored in, though maybe arguably, in the procedure of character coding. The fact that changes can affect several groups independently of their lineage is not a specificity of cultural evolution, and though it may be argued that it has more weight in cultural evolution than in biological evolution, we are unable to quantify the relative role of each evolutionary process a priori of the data analysis: it is the resulting tree that allows, a posteriori, to identify whether a character has followed a vertical, genetic trajectory, or if its distribution was shaped by a nonvertical process of change (convergent evolution, parallel evolution, reversals . . . collectively termed *homoplasy*). Questioning the relevance of linguistic phylogenies to the evolution of institutions or cultural practices is a valid question, to which abundant arguments and evidence are supplied in the literature. The rationale behind it is not, however, to envisage cultural evolution in a linguistic framework (as Testart puts it) in the way Dyen and Aberle did on kinship terms, but rather to use the phylogeny of languages as a proxy of the phylogeny of the populations that speak them, and to consider them better proxies than genetic/biological phylogenies. A specific character (here marriage transfer practices) is then projected on this phylogeny, which serves to test its distribution against the distribution expected under a given hypothesis or scenario of cultural evolution. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace have gone one step further by actually reconstructing the ancestral states at the nodes to estimate the original state of the character at the root of the tree (a putative original Indo-European population). Contrary to Testart's claims, Fortunato, Holden, and Mace are within the scope of acceptable phylogenetic practice: they use 200 meanings to reconstruct a tree for 95 languages, which may not be a very large data set but is certainly not "looking at only one characteristic." These are the data usually available to anyone interested in reconstructing language phylogenies, and although it may be argued that lexicon is not the best data pool to reconstruct a language phylogeny, they are the data most available at hand and have led to quite robust reconstructions. Fortunato, Holden, and Mace certainly do not deserve to be qualified as careless, or as falsifiers of the phylogenetic method as practiced in biology, especially when Testart seems to have missed the methodological point they are making and the fact that it was rooted from start to finish in a Bayesian framework, which is different both in theory and in application from the parsimony framework he discusses in the section "Why Would Evolution Follow the Principle of Economy, and Why Would Current Distribution Shed Light on Past Evolution?"

The fundamental issue here—which Testart raises in the second part of the paper, is that within a given population, there is a multiplicity of modes of marriage transfers that cannot necessarily be reduced to a simple binary (dowry vs. bridewealth) coding. And this touches precisely on the limits of the phylogenetic framework as prototypical: it views the unit of evolution (the species, the group, or, here, the population) as homogeneous, when it is actually a pool of variants and therefore handles quite badly data polymorphism. The reencoding Testart proposes is, however, as problematic as Fortunato, Holden, and Mace's, as he chooses to overly expand (for the sake of accuracy) the length of description of the character (marriage transfer practice) where they chose to overly reduce it (to a binary coding), and it results in a situation where there is virtually a state per data point, which cannot make sense in a comparative perspective. In the framework of a prototypical approach, Fortunato, Holden, and Mace's methodology is sound, but is the prototypical approach the limit of our phylogenetic exploration of linguistic and cultural practices? In biology, the gap is being bridged through a shift of perspective from phylogenetics to population genetics within the coalescent framework, where lineages are reconstructed not for an average representative prototype of the group/population/species but rather for individual variants within that group. It is not yet clear, however, how we could transpose such an individual-centered framework to either linguistics or anthropology. From this paper, this appears to have become a necessity and would help address in a quantitative fashion the correlation or implicational patterns between what Testart calls "the great patterns of civilization" and individual cultural practices.

Dimitri Karadimas
Laboratoire d'anthropologie sociale, Collège de France, CNRS-EH-ESS, 52, rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, 75005 Paris, France (dimitri.karadimas@college-de-france.fr). 25 VI 12

One of the more interesting points given by Testart in his contribution to the debate on bridewealth and dowry is to present them through their vinculum with major ideological civilization patterns, mainly religion. The proposal to look at these institutions as evolution from one another and to rely on archaeological and historical facts (here texts) is also of great interest to the anthropological debate, as the demonstration does not rely entirely on sociological implications.

To link both practices with postmarital localities is also of great relevance because it shows that the questions of inequality and hierarchy between father-in-law and son-in-law are central to the understanding of the evolution from one practice to the other. Thus, as Testart proposes in his argument, to have dowry in a society is not linked synchronically to its opposite, namely bridewealth, but the contrary is true.

As the two institutions are linked as mirrors of each other, being exactly a vinculum between a father-in-law and his son-in-law, both practices appear as a positive expression of an affinal relation, of which negative expression is predation—or, as Testart points out, to rapt a women, when it is not

possible to have the monetary counterpart to pay the bride-wealth. But it should also be compared to another widespread institution, the son-in-law/mother-in-law avoidance. As compensation flows between males engaged in an affinal relation, and between two generations (G+1 to G0), a positive relation, the opposite can be said of an affinal relation of the other sex, avoidance as negative relation. Bridewealth and dowry should thus not be seen as compensations or a circulation of wealth between families or groups, but precisely between individuals of the same sex and from two distinct generations entering into an affinal relation.

In societies where there is no monetary system, as in traditional Amazonian societies, for example, which I am more familiar with, these institutions are absent or at least rare. Predation and capturing spouses, on the contrary, are the usual ways of presenting the access to woman, as it is the common interaction mode between affinals, or potential affinity. But it should be noted that the husband continually offers game to his father-in-law (and most of the time at the request of his wife). These kinds of gifts that exist in non-monetary systems or in societies where valuable goods or manufactured goods are scarce have to be regarded as a way of having a "constant bridewealth" that is paid with game or work for the father-in-law.

As such, in some Amazonian societies, it could be said at first glance that there is no bridewealth, as nothing is given at all for the bride to the father-in-law. But the ways of taking a wife are rather interesting for the subject here studied: Are wives-to-be captured in a predatory act, or are they taken after making for the parents what I call premarital service? In the first case, by capturing them, it is common to "arrange" the capture afterward, sending gifts to the father-in-law: it is a kind of a posteriori payment (and this payment will goes on until the couple splits). The nature of the gifts is mostly game, and the gifts are sent each time the hunter comes back from a hunting expedition. The other possibility is to make a "premarital service," which is more present in societies with patrilocal postmarital residence. There, an adolescent searching for a wife has to complete one or more years close to the parents of his future wife, and especially next to his father-in-law, demonstrating his ability to be a good hunter and persuading his father-in-law that his daughter will stay in good hands.

This is one of the modalities of the constitution of localities in Amazonia: a father and his daughters and their husbands living near him, making the bridewealth a debt system until one of the couples forms a new nexus for himself with his own daughters to marry. This premarital service goes for one year or more, until the couple decides to install himself in the locality of the husband. As we have seen before, they can also decide to stay near the wife's parent, creating an apparent uxorilocal nexus, which is in reality a locality built around the wife's father. Thus, the same sociological implications presented by Testart for the past European cultural area can be found as an active institution in Amazonian societies.

Valérie Lécrivain

Independent Researcher, 53 rue Charlot, 75003 Paris, France (lecrivain.valerie@wanadoo.fr). 10 VIII 12

The study of marriage is a sure means of reconstructing the social and cultural evolution of world societies—in this case, that of the Indo-European family. Reconstructing the evolution of marriage forms does not, however, demand recourse to a linguistic framework or to methodology borrowed from the biological sciences. To grasp the evolution of social institutions, one must first take into account the history and culture of the societies in question. Alain Testart does just that in this article, examining historical facts, cultural borrowings, and great patterns of civilization, as well as geographical distribution in terms of cultures and cultural areas. Testart looks essentially to ancient texts in his attempt to reconstruct the evolution of marriage in the Indo-European family. Throughout this article, he investigates the historical transformations attested in these texts, evaluating the context of matrimonial practice shown in them and giving priority to direct accounts from these societies' pasts.

The significance of the correctives that Alain Testart has brought to this problem results from a wide-ranging effort undertaken with his team on the issue of marriage transfers around the world (Testart, Govoroff, and Lécrivain 2002*a*, 2002*b*). The crucial point in this study was research of methodological principles through which a typology of marriage forms could be constructed. It focused as much on the definition of terms relative to the circulation of goods given at marriage (dowry, bridewealth, *mahr*, etc.) as on the diversity of marriage modes that George Peter Murdock's method of codification and Jack Goody's work do not always take into account. Various issues that have not been considered in earlier analyses of marriage were examined: multiple forms of marriage found within the same society, multiple transfers over the course of a single marriage, dominant modes of marriage, and so on. In the course of this study, the complexity of situations discovered by examining the oldest ethnographic data has led Testart to distinguish two types of marriage modes: "simple" modes of marriage, such as bridewealth or dowry, and "combined" modes of marriage, where two types of transfers predominate and combine, as in the case of the specific combination of bridewealth and dowry mentioned in this article. The study showed that combined modes of marriage are quite common around the world and that numerous societies studied by ethnologists have opted for these types of marriage (societies in North America, China, the Middle East, North Africa, etc.).[16] The combination (or association) of bridewealth and dowry was found above all in Eurasia, North America, and the Horn of Africa, as well as in the geographical area between Mali and Chad.

The bridewealth-dowry combination is also found among

16. See synthetic maps 1 and 2 in Testart, Govoroff, and Lécrivain 2002*a*.

the Indo-Europeans, as this article demonstrates: the ancestral marriage practice among the Indo-Europeans—not the practice going back to classical Greece and Rome, but that which preceded it—corresponds to a specific phase of bridewealth, or the combination of bridewealth and dowry. According to Testart, dowry cannot be ascribed to the origins of the Indo-European peoples, as some have maintained: although dowry was found in certain Indo-European societies, such as classical Greece, it came about only through the suppression of bridewealth. At this evolutionary stage, the social involvements of the Indo-European peoples were significant. Testart proposes a bold sociohistorical hypothesis that is the end result of both ethnographic analysis and long-term archaeological reflection: namely that, except in very rare cases, the societies that adopted bridewealth, alone or in combination, were stateless societies that raised livestock or practiced agriculture as well as wide-scale storage.

Reply

Three of the four reviewers of my article are generally in agreement with my argument and conclusions, which is satisfying. Nick Allen underlines my main critical point: "It *is* odd to pose culture-historical questions while ignoring documented history and geography/diffusion" (emphasis added), as does Valérie Lécrivain: "To grasp the evolution of social institutions, one must first take into account the history and culture of the societies in question."

There are also criticisms and/or reservations. One is with respect to the principle of economy (Ockham's razor) evoked by Allen, which is fundamental in reconstruction using the phylogenetic method. I do not absolutely reject it, but it is a stopgap to which one might resort only for lack of a better argument. However, my whole article asserts we have better—indeed, far better—means: we have all the historical facts that I cite, from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, showing populations that practiced bridewealth in ancient times, whereas today they practice only dowry. And I believe—and further believe that all would agree on this point—that even the best reasoning must give way to the facts. The main objection I pose to the authors whose work I have critiqued is that they ignore these facts; they even seem unaware of their existence.

I thank Dimitri Karadimas for mentioning archaeology ("archaeological and historical facts"). For the present subject, there is none, and never will be—obviously because the payment of bridewealth or dowry does not leave material traces. This is a fundamental point, which renders the question of the evolution of matrimonial transfers as exciting as it is difficult. We have no direct testimony for the distant past; that is why Fortunato, Mace, and Holden resort to their method of phylogenetic reconstruction, and I to my historical method. Because if we had archaeological evidence going back

to 8000 or even just 4000 BC, all our reasoning would have to give way to those facts. This is a point that Ahmed seems to forget when he asserts that Fortunato, Mace, and Holden have made proper use of the phylogenetic method. Perhaps they have. But he forgets that evolution in biology is first based on paleontology, the only discipline that can furnish reliable reference points. Without paleontological facts, phylogenetic reconstruction in biology would yield only probable results. Likewise, without archaeological facts, phylogenetic reconstruction in linguistics produces results that are highly uncertain—and, moreover, strongly disputed by many linguists.

Regarding the relationship between language and culture, both Allen and Mahé Ben Hamed reject my third criticism of Fortunato, Holden, and Mace (see the section "Evolution Cannot Be Considered without Taking into Account Known Historical Facts"). However, they did not understand it well: I do not deny that there exists a relation between language and culture; what social scientist would do so? I simply question the relevance of the choice of a linguistic family as the framework for thinking about matrimonial transfers, coupled with the total absence of any sociological considerations that I find to be the case in Fortunato, Holden, and Mace. To give some evident facts that few would dispute: no population of hunter-gatherers practiced dowry or bridewealth, almost all herders practiced bridewealth, no large state practiced pure bridewealth (i.e., uncombined with dowry), and so on. A sociological framework would be much more relevant, and it is not too difficult to trace, at least in its broad outlines, an evolution of societies progressing from hunter-gatherers to state societies by way of stateless farmers. The relation between language and culture is obvious, my critics tell me. In general, this is true. But with respect to our subject, it is less certain, since, notwithstanding linguistic subfamilies, Christians were the ones to practice dowry while Muslims practiced bridewealth. One might just as well have taken religions as a frame of reference; they can just as easily be placed in historical or evolutionary order.

Two further comments on language: Allen notes that "Dumézil's IE work is . . . the most impressive example so far of applying a language-tree framework to cultural history." I find this formulation excessive: Dumézil reasoned within the framework of the Indo-European linguistic family reconstructed by others, but he never used language trees or phylogenetic methods in his arguments. As for Allen's objection that it would be "too simple to say that kinship terms belong to language, not to institutions," I must point out, first of all, that I never said that, and second, that the works that I have devoted to kinship vocabularies among the Australian aborigines and partially among the Amazonians (Testart 1996, 2006) demonstrate quite well that I do not treat kinship terms as simple language data. In any case, kinship terms cannot be considered in the same way as the quantities of goods that are given at marriage, which are practices: the first are phe-

nomena directly inscribed in language, while the second are not.

All my reviewers emphasized, each from a different viewpoint, the tremendous multiplicity of forms of marriage transfers, far from the simple binary opposition of dowry/bridewealth. Hamed noted the methodological difficulty that this poses for a phylogenetic treatment. I do not believe, however, that it constitutes a "fundamental issue," because we know how to address it. In each society, there are several ways to get married (and thus to pay or not pay), but some of these are substitutive while others are ideal or, let us say, preferential. For example, in a society where bridewealth is regular (where it constitutes the norm) and thus ideal, those who are too poor to provide the necessary goods can put themselves in the service of their father-in-law (as in the biblical story of Jacob and the two daughters of Laban), which is generally called brideservice. This latter mode is thus substitutive, secondary, and demeaning in this type of society. But in the Amazonian societies mentioned by Karadimas, in which bridewealth is normally absent, brideservice is the regular and normal mode. In table 1, only the regular and normal modes are noted.

These considerations would seem to distance us from the world of the Indo-Europeans. But in reality, it is essential to note that very generally throughout the world, it is the man who pays for the woman: either he gives money, which is bridewealth, or he gives of himself, which is brideservice. Dowry is the opposite, in a sense, because there it is the daughter's parents who must, in addition to giving their daughter in marriage, also give a dowry. How can such an inversion be explained? That is the question that Lécrivain implicitly poses when she writes, "Although dowry was found in certain Indo-European societies . . . it came about only through the suppression of bridewealth." I have clearly indicated (in the section "Note on Causes for the Evolution of Marriage Transfers" and in Testart 2001) the reasons for which dowry was established and that its establishment rested on the preliminary foundation of bridewealth. And I do not see how one can propose hypotheses on the evolution of marriage transfers without at least proposing one on the causes of this inversion.

—Alain Testart

References Cited

Allen, N. J. 1996. The hero's five relationships: a Proto-Indo-European story. In *Myth and myth-making: continuous evolution in Indian tradition*. J. Leslie, ed. Pp. 1–20. London: Curzon. [NA]

Arensberg, Conrad Maynadier, and Solon Toothaker Kimball. 1940. *Family and community in Ireland*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Athenaeus. 2006. *The learned banqueters*. S. Douglas Olson, trans. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Barth, F. 1953. *Principle of social organization in southern Kurdistan*. Oslo: Brødrene Jørgensen Boktr.

———. 1954. Father's brother's daughter marriage in Kurdistan. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 10:164–171.

———. 1961. *Nomads of south Persia: the Basseri tribes of the Khomosh confederacy*. Boston: Little, Brown.

———. 1965. *Political leadership among the Swat Pathan*. London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology. London: Berg.

Beauchet, L. 1897. *Histoire du droit privé de la république athénienne*, 4 vols. Paris: Chevalier-Marescq.

Bénéï, V. 1995. *To give or not to give: from brideprice to dowry in Maharashtra (Pune District)*. Pondichéry: Institut Français de Pondichéry.

Benet, Sula. 1951. *Song, dance and customs of peasant Poland*. New York: Roy.

Benveniste, E. 1969. *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*, 2 vols. Paris: Ed. de Minuit.

Bernand, C., and S. Gruzinski. 1986. Les enfants de l'Apocalyse: la famille en Méso-Amérique et dans les Andes. In *Histoire de la famille*. A. Burgière, C. F. Klapisch, M. Segalen, and F. Zonabend, eds. Pp. 157–209. Paris: Armand Colin.

Blunt, E. A. H. 1931. *The caste system of northern India*. London: Oxford University Press.

Boas, F. 1966. *Kwakiutl ethnography*. H. Codere, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Boserup, E. 1983 (1970). *La femme face au développement économique*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Briggs, George W. 1920. *The Chamārs*. Calcutta: Association Press; London: Oxford University Press.

Bryce, T. 2002. *Life and society in the Hittite world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Campbell, J. K. 1964. *Honour, family and patronage: a study of institutions and moral values in a Greek mountain community*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Campbell, N. A., and J. B. Reece. 2007. *Biologie*. Paris: Editions du Renoueau Pédagogique.

Claverie, E., and P. Lamaison. 1982. *L'impossible mariage: violence et parenté en Gévaudan, XVII, XVIII et XIXe siècles*. Paris: Hachette.

Deluz, A. 1982. L'air de la calomnie: l'esclavage et son héritage chez les Gouro (Côte d'Ivoire). In *Symboles et sociétés en Afrique*. M. Centlivres-Demont et al., eds. Berne: Ethnologia Helvetica.

Dorsey, J. O. 1884. Omaha sociology. In *Third Annual Report for 1880–1882*. Pp. 211–368. Washington, DC: Bureau of American Ethnology.

Dubois, Abbé J. A. 1985 (1825). *Moeurs, institutions et cérémonies des peuples de l'Inde*. Paris: A. M. Métailié.

Dubois, J. A. 1906. *Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies*. 3rd edition. H. K. Beauchamp, trans. and ed. Oxford: Clarendon.

Dumézil, G. 1979. *Mariages indo-européens*. Paris: Payot. [NA]

Durham, Edith M. 1928. *Some tribal origins, laws and customs of the Balkans*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Dyen, Isidore, and David Aberle. 1974. *Linguistic reconstruction: the case of the Proto-Athapaskan kinship system*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1977. Lexical reconstruction: response to multiple review. *Current Anthropology* 18(2):362–371.

Ebrey, P. B. 1991. Shifts in marriage finance from the sixth to the thirteenth century. In *Marriage and inequality in Chinese society*. R. S. Watson and P. B. Ebrey, eds. Pp. 97–132. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ehret, C. 2008. Reconstructing ancient kinship in Africa. In *Early human kinship: from sex to social reproduction*. N. J. Allen, H. Callan, R. Dunbar, and W. James, eds. [NA] Oxford: Blackwell.

Fezas, J. 1996. La dot en Inde: des textes classiques aux problèmes contemporains. *Les Annales de Clermond-Ferrand* 32:183–202.

Finley, M. I. 1955. Marriage, sale and gift in the Homeric world. *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité*, 3rd ser., 2:167–194.

———. 1983 (1977). *Le monde d'Ulysse*. Paris: La Découverte/Maspero.

Fleure, H. J., and R. A. Pelham, eds. 1936. *Roumania: eastern Carpathian studies*. London: Le Play Society.

Fortunato, L. 2008. A phylogenetic approach to the history of cultural practices. In *Early human kinship: from sex to social reproduction*. N. J. Allen, H. Callan, R. Dunbar, and W. James, eds. Pp. 189–199. New York: Blackwell.

Fortunato, L., C. Holden, and R. Mace. 2006. From bridewealth to dowry? a Bayesian estimation of ancestral states of marriage transfers in Indo-European groups. *Human Nature* 17(4):355–376.

Fried, M. H. 1967. *The evolution of political society*. New York: Random House.

Friedl, Ernestine. 1959. The role of kinship in the transmission of national culture to rural villages in mainland Greece. *American Anthropologist* 61:30–38.

Friedrich, P. 1964. Social structure: an instance from Russia. In *Exploration*

in cultural anthropology: essays in honor of Georges Peter Murdock. W. H. Goodenough, ed. Pp. 131–166. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Garnett, Lucy Mary Jane. 1891. *Albanian women*. In *The women of Turkey and their folk-lore*, vol. 2. Lucy Mary Jane Garnett and John Stuart Glennie, eds. London: David Nutt.

Gieysztor, A. 1967. La femme dans la civilisation des peuples slaves. In *Histoire mondiale de la femme*, vol. 3. P. Grimal, ed. Pp. 45–95. Paris: Nouvelle Librairie de France.

Girard, F. 1929. *Manuel élémentaire de droit romain*, vol. 2. Paris: Edouard Duchemin.

Goody, J. 1969. Inheritance, property, and marriage in Africa and Eurasia. *Sociology* 3:55–76.

———. 1973. Bridewealth and dowry in Africa and Eurasia. In *Bridewealth and dowry*. J. Goody and S. J. Tambiah, eds. Pp. 1–58. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1976. *Production and reproduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1983. *The development of the family and marriage in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1990. *The oriental, the ancient and the primitive: systems of marriage and the family in the preindustrial societies of Eurasia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gossiaux, J.-Fr. 1984. *Le groupe domestique dans la Yougoslavie rurale*. Paris: Centre d'Ethnologie Française.

Gray, J. P. 1999. A corrected *ethnographic atlas*. World Cultures 10(1):24–136.

Grinnell, G. B. 1962 (1923). *The Cheyenne Indians*, vol. 2. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Gurney, O. R. 1975. *The Hittites*. London: Allen Lane.

Halpern, Joel Martin. 1958. *A Serbian village*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Harrell, S., and S. Dickey. 1985. Dowry systems in complex societies. *Ethnology* 24:105–119.

Harrison, A. R. 1968. *The law of Athens: the family and the property*, vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon.

Hasluck, Margaret. 1954. *The unwritten law in Albania*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Herodotus. 2009. *The landmark Herodotus: the histories*. Robert B. Strassler, ed. Andrea L. Purvis, trans. New York: Anchor.

Hughes, D. O. 1978. From brideprice to dowry in Mediterranean Europe. *Journal of Family History* 3:262–296.

Hutton, J. H. 1951. *Caste in India: its nature, function and origins*. 2nd edition. Bombay: Oxford University Press.

Imparati, Fiorella. 1995. Private life among the Hittites. In *Civilizations of the ancient Near East*, vol. 1. J. M. Sasson, J. Baines, G. M. Beckman, and K. S. Rubinson, eds. Pp. 571–586. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Iteanu, A. 1980. Qui a tué pour demander la main de ma fille? Violence et marriage ches les Ossètes. In *La vengeance*, vol. 2. R. Verdier, ed. Pp. 61–81. Paris: Editions Cujas.

Jerecka, Louise Llewellyn. 1949. *Made in Poland: living traditions of the land*. 1st edition. New York: Knopf.

Johnson, A. W., and T. K. Earle. 1987. *The evolution of human societies: from foraging group to agrarian state*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Johnson, J. C. A. 1940. The Kurds of Iraq II. *Geographical Magazine* 11:50–59.

Kane, P. V. 1974. *History of Dharmasastra*, 5 vols. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

Karve, Irawati. 1953. *Kinship organisation in India*. Poona: Deccan College Monograph Series.

Kennedy, R. 1955. *Field notes on Indonesia: Flores, 1949–50*. New Haven, CT: Human Relations Area Files.

Khodarkovsky, M., and J. Stewart. 1994. Don Cossacks. In *Encyclopedia of world cultures*, vol. 5. P. Friedrich and N. Diamond, eds. Pp. 102–107. New York: G. K. Hall.

Kouznetsov, Vladimir, and Iaroslav Lebedynsky. 1997. *Les Alains: Cavaliers des steppes, seigneurs du Caucase*. Paris: Editions Errance.

Kovalewsky, M. 1890. Marriage among the early Slavs. *Folk-lore* 1:463–480.

———. 1893. *Coutume contemporaine et loi ancienne: droit coutumier ossétien*. Paris: Larose.

Krauskopff, G. 1989. *Maîtres et possédés: les rites et l'ordre social chez les Tharu (Népal)*. Paris: CNRS.

Lane, Rose Wilder. 1923. *Peaks of Shala*. New York: Harper.

Lang, O. 1946. *Chinese family and society*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Laroche-Gisserot, F. 1988. Pratique de la dot en France au XIXe siècle. *Les Annales* 43(6):1433–1452.

Leach, E. 1972 (1954). *Political systems of Highland Burma*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Trans. as *Les systèmes politiques des hautes terres de Birmanie: Analyse des structures sociales kachin*. Paris: Maspero. [In French.]

Leach, Edmund Ronald. 1968 (1961). *Pul Elya, a village in Ceylon: a study of land, tenure and kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lebedynsky, Iaroslav. 2001. *Les Scythes: la civilisation des steppes. VIIe–IIIe siècles av. J.-C.* Paris: Editions Errance.

———. 2003. *Les nomades: peuples nomades de la steppe des origines aux invasions mongoles. IXe siècle avant J.-C. au XIIIe siècle après J.-C.* Paris: Editions Errance.

Lecointre, G., and H. Le Guyader. 2001. *Classification phylogénétique du vivant*. Paris: Belin.

Leduc, C. 1991. Comment la donner en mariage? La mariée en pays grec, IXe–IVe siècle av. J.-C. In *L'Antiquité*, vol. 1 of *l'Histoire des femmes d'Occident*. Pp. 259–317. Paris: Seuil.

Leitner, Gottlieb William. 1893[?]. *Dardistan in 1866, 1886 and 1893: being an account of the history, religions, customs, legends, fables, and songs of Gilgit, Chilás, Kandiá (Gabriál), Yasin, Chitrál, Hunza, Nagyr and other parts of the Hindukush, as also a supplement to the second edition of The Hunza and Nagyr Handbook, and an epitome of part III of the author's "The languages and races of Dardistan."* Woking: Oriental University Institute.

Levy, M. J. 1949. *The family revolution in modern China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lineva, Evgenia. 1893. *Russian folk-songs as sung by the people, and peasant wedding ceremonies customary in northern and central Russia*. Chicago: Clayton F. Summy.

Lodge, O. 1942. *Peasant life in Jugoslavia*. London: Seeley, Service.

Lužbetak, L. J. 1951. *Marriage and the family in Caucasia: a contribution to the study of north Caucasian ethnology and customary law*. Vienne-Möding: St. Gabriel's Mission.

MacDougall, Robert Duncan. 1971. *Domestic architecture among the Kandyan Sinhalese*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mace, R., C. Holden, and S. Shennan, eds. 2005. *The evolution of cultural diversity: a phylogenetic approach*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast.

Mandelbaum, David G. 1948. The family in India. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 4:123–139.

Massé, Henri. 1938. *Croyances et coutumes persanes* [Persian beliefs and customs]. Paris: Librairie Orientale et Américaine.

Masters, William Murray. 1954. *Rowanduz: a Kurdish administrative and mercantile center*. PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Mayer, P. 1950. *Gusii bridewealth law and custom*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mayne, J. D. 1953. *Treatise of Hindu law and marriage*. 11th edition. Madras: Higginbotham.

McIlwraith, T. F. 1948. *The Bella Coola Indians*, 2 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

McLendon, S., and M. J. Lowy. 1978. Eastern Pomo and southeastern Pomo. In *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 8., *California*. W. C. Sturtevant and R. F. Heizer, eds. Pp. 310–319. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

McMahon, A., T. R. Trautmann, and A. Shryock. 2011. Language. In *Deep history: the architecture of past and present*. A. Shryock and D. Smail, eds. Pp. 103–127. Berkeley: University of California Press. [NA]

McNeill, William Hardy. 1957. *Greece: American aid in action 1947–1956*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund.

Mills, J. P. 1922. *The Lhota Nagas*. London: Macmillan.

Monier, M. 1995 (1810). Vestiges d'antiquité: observations preliminaries. In *Aux sources de l'ethnologie française: L'Académie celtique*. N. Belmont, ed. Pp. 302–315. Paris: CTSH.

Mossé, C. 1985. De l'inversion de la dot antique? In *Familles et biens en Grèce et à Chypre*. C. Piault, ed. Pp. 187–193. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Murdock, G. P. 1949. *Social structure*. New York: Macmillan.

———. 1967. The ethnographic atlas: a summary. *Ethnology* 6:109–236.

Nikitine, Basile. 1956. *Les Kurdes: étude sociologique et historique*. Paris: Editions d'Aujourd'hui.

Nweeya, Samuel K. 1910. *Persia: the land of the Magi*. Philadelphia: John C. Winston.

Olivelle, P., trans. 2004. *The law code of Manu*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ourliac, P., and J. de Malafosse. 1968. *Histoire du droit privé*, 3 vols. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Pavlović, Jeremija M. 1973. "Folk life and customs in the Kragujevac region of the Jasenica in Šumadija." Unpublished manuscript, Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, CT.

Petot, P. 1992. *Histoire du droit privé français (I): la famille*. Paris: Loysel.

Rapoport, Semen. 1929. On the early Slavs: the narrative of Ibrahim-Ibn-Yakub. *Slavonic and East European Review* 8(23):331–341.

Riasanovsky, V. A. 1965 (1938). *Customary law of the nomadic tribes of Siberia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Robinson, Marguerite S. 1968. *Some observations on the Kandyan Sinhalese kinship system*, vol. 3, no. 3. London: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.

Saïd, S. 2012. Homer. In *The Oxford classical dictionary*. 4th edition. S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow, eds. Pp. 695–700. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [NA]

Sanders, Irwin Taylor. 1949. *Balkan village*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

———. 1962. *Rainbow in the rock: the people of rural Greece*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schrader, O. 1912. Family (Teutonic and Balto-Slavic). In *Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics*, vol. 5. J. Hastings, ed. Pp. 749–754. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Service, E. R. 1962. *Primitive social organization: an evolutionary perspective*. New York: Random House.

St. Erlich, Vira. 1966. *Family in transition: a study of 300 Yugoslav villages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Stephanides, Charalambos Stephoros. 1941. *A sociological sketch of the village of Megali Vrisi, Macedonia, Greece*. MS thesis, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Stevenson, Margaret Sinclair. 1930. *Without the pale: the life story of an outcaste*. London: Oxford University Press.

Steward, J. H. 1955. *Theory of culture change*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Strouthes, D., and K. Kelertas. 1994. Lithuanians. In *Encyclopedia of world cultures*, vol. 5. P. Friedrich and N. Diamond, eds. Pp. 102–107. New York: G. K. Hall.

Sykes, Ella C. 1910. *Persia and its people*. New York: Macmillan.

Tacitus. 1942. *Complete works of Tacitus*. Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb, trans. Moses Hadas, ed. New York: Random House.

Tambiah, Stanley J. 1958. The structure of kinship and its relationship to land possession and residence in Pata Dumbara. *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland Journal* 88:21–44.

———. 1965. Kinship fact and fiction in relation to the Kandyan Sinhalese. *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland Journal* 95:131–173.

———. 1973. Dowry and bridewealth and the property rights of women in south Asia. In *Bridewealth and dowry*. J. Goody and S. J. Tambiah, eds. Pp. 59–169. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1989. *Bridewealth and dowry* revisited: the position of women in sub-Saharan Africa and north India. *Current Anthropology* 30(4):413–435.

Tapper, Nancy. 1981. Direct exchange and brideprice: alternative forms in a complex marriage system. *Man* 16:386–407.

Tassy, P. 1991. *L'arbre à remonter le temps: les rencontres de la systématique et de l'évolution*. Paris: Bourgois.

Testart, A. 1996. *La parenté australienne: etude morphologique*. Paris: Ed. du CNRS.

———. 1996–97. Pourquoi ici la dot et là son contraire? exercice de sociologie comparative. *Droit et cultures* 32 (pt. 1):7–36; 33 (pt. 2):117–138; 34 (pt. 3):99–134.

———. 2001. Nouvelles hypothèses sur la dot. *Droit et culture* 42:183–210.

———. 2002. Les Amazones, entre mythe et réalité. *L'Homme* 163:185–194.

———. 2006. La question du sujet dans la parenté. *L'Homme* 179:165–200.

Testart, A., and J.-L. Brunaux. 2004. Esclavage et prix de la fiancée: la société thrace au risque de l'ethnographie comparée. *Annales* 59(3):615–640.

Testart, A., N. Govoroff, and V. Lécrivain. 2002*a*. Les prestations matrimoniales. *L'Homme* 161:165–196.

Testart, A., V. Lécrivain, and N. Govoroff. 2002*b*. Le prix de la fiancée: richesse et dépendance dans les sociétés traditionnelles. *La Recherche* 354:34–40. [VL]

Tomasic, Dinko. 1953. *The impact of Russian culture on Soviet communism*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Tubiana, M.-J. 1985. *Des troupeaux et des femmes: mariage et transferts de biens chez les Beri (Zaghawa et Bideyat) du Tchad et du Soudan*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Vernant, J. P. 1974. *Mythe et société*. Paris: Maspero.

Volkov, T. 1891–92. Rites et usages nuptiaux en Ukraïne. *L'Anthropologie* 2:160-184; 3:541-588.

Westermarck, E. 1938. *Histoire du marriage*, 4 vols. Paris: Payot.

Woodhouse, W. J. 1915. Marriage (Greek). In *Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics*, vol. 8. J. Hastings, ed. Pp. 444–449. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Xenophon. 1972. *The Persian expedition*. Rex Warner, trans. London: Penguin.

Yalman, Nur. 1971. *Under the Boo Tree: studies in caste, kinship and marriage in the interior of Ceylon*. Berkeley: University of California Press.