

From the politics of intimacy to the politics of intimidation on Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast (Seminar)

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Mark Jamieson, Senior Lecturer at University of East London, has many decades of fieldwork with Miskitu communities in Nicaragua.

His presentation focuses on the gradual shift from matrilineal descent and the emphasis on matrilineal forms of relatedness towards patrilineal forms in Kakabila, a Miskitu village on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast. It considers how this shift has been producing forms of strongman politics and engagements in criminality, notably in relation to the narcotics trade, as well as demonstrating elective affinities with strategies of migration to the United States.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X31f-vDNDJI>

Introduction

Camilla: Good evening to our elite audience here live. And, good evening to everybody joining us on Zoom.

We have a really excellent, classic anthropology field work talk tonight with my colleague Mark Jameson, who spent a long time with me teaching on the degree course at University of East London.

Mark got many years of field work experience with the Mosquito communities at Caribbean, Nicaragua coast and he's got a in-depth, case study of the ways that kinship is being changed in modern contemporary circumstances.

But before Mark was going to start, I was gonna invite Chris to say something about the importance of this issue of shifts from matrilineal or matrilineal kinship towards matrilineal tenancy.

Chris: Yes. Well, when anthropology was first established as a, a discipline, in the 19th century in the 1870 1880s, and, and right up until about 1920, right from the beginning, really everybody agreed that early human kinship was likely to have been matrilineal and that all human societies, if they're in transition, the, the direction of transition just about everywhere would be from, essentially matrilineal and matrilineal kinship, increasingly over time to, patrilineal and patrilineal kinship and that was just because no one had ever seen really, or recorded an example of, of changing the opposite direction.

It's very unusual to find a society which is patrilineal patrilineal shifting over to matrilineal and matrilineal.

although one or two examples have been claimed, and perhaps they're, they're, they're, they're genuine.

But what happened was that, when this was first, when, when, well, okay.

Kinship was founded by, as I think everybody probably knows, by, an American business lawyer called Lewis, Henry Morgan looking at, kinship systems across the, across North America.

And, he argued that early human kinship was not just ma matrilineal, but, but, but in, in important ways, collective.

he talked about communism and living.

He, he talked about the fact that women would tend to live with their own mothers, the groups of sisters would share their childcare and the very idea that this was kind of some form of communism, was, was central to his, i his theory.

and, this was adopted by, Frederick Engels as kind of part of communist doctrine and that was the problem, really, because of course, what it meant was that it got embroiled in all the issues about politics.

And, and when, in the 20th century, Mansky established a different way looking at, culture and history, he denounced the whole idea that it's even conceivable that, a child could have more than one mother.

He insists that, that, that the, that the, the fundamental human social structure and social order depended on the, on the nuclear family headed by a man, marriage being a primary institution.

And, and it, it, so it that at that point, it became right across anthropology, just impossible to even claim that there's anything other than just the odd, the odd incidents of transition from mat to pat and any society was likely just as likely to go near in the reverse direction.

So that it, it, it actually turns out now that probably the early theorists were correct, there were very good reasons why, for hunter gatherers, so women would want to live with her, her mum.

She, that means that when she gets pregnant and needs support, she's got a mom to support her and we now know that actually, at least initially among Hunterston gatherers, and of course, we were all once hunter gatherers, hunters and gatherers, living with mom was the, was the kind of the choice that most women would tend to make.

Where you live would tend to be pretty much up to individuals, but basically women would prefer to be with their, in the early, early years of their relationship with a guy in order to have the, that necessary help in, in childcare and that links up with, the, the, what's called the grandmother hypothesis as part of human evolution with Sarah, her's ideas about shared childcare and so, what, what's what's happening now is that we are, we're having a talk about a particular example.

and I, I just wanted to stress that although this is, this is an extremely interesting example.

we need to put it in, in a wider context.

It's not a, it is not an, it might seem, it's a rather unusual case that we have this, what mark's, I think gonna be talking about, about a transition, but actually this transition is, is of a kind which we find right all, all over the world.

So it's a, it's a particularly interesting case study or a much more general, trend in, in long term, history of kinship.

Lecture Begins

Thank you Camilla, for introduction, and thank you, Chris for that extremely cogent and clear, accounts of where, matrilineal descent fits into the, conversation of, conversations surrounding, kinship and social organizations, small scale societies.

as Chris was saying, that this is only but one example of, what a, a society that might or, that might be called matrilineal, looks like.

and, in some ways, it, it, it may be perhaps atypical in the sense that, the kind of, kinship that, the founding fathers and, and others of anthropology were interested in, were primarily hunter gatherer societies and Mosquito, are not hunter gatherer, soci hunter gatherers that they're, they hunt, but they're primarily hunter water culturalists, they practice slash and burn farming, and they're also fishermen.

And, in that sense, that, that perhaps rather different.

But at the same time, a lot of, what's, constitutes what I call have called, the politics of intimacy, which is political processes surrounding, domestic organization relationships, sexual relations, and so forth, is, is very much, like those that have been described for, hunter gatherer societies.

Right. I want to talk, first of all, a little bit more, follow on from where Chris was and talk a little bit about this particular style of kinship, which is, I think is, characteristic or the literature tells us is characteristic of, of small scale societies, about hunter, hunter gatherer societies.

So foraging societies in particular, but it's also, quite common amongst, some, slash and burn or, Sweden horticulturalists as well, of which Mosquito, one example, and this is style of kinship, which, is known as, bride service.

bride service is a style of con is a way, put simply the way by which conjugal unions are legitimated.

I call them conjugal unions, because I don't really want, I feel slightly uncomfortable about describing them as marriages because the way that conjugal unions actually, work, if you like, is actually, quite different.

and one thing about bride surface is that bride surface put very, crudely in the past, the difference between bride wealth and bride surface was cast as follows.

That, bride wealth involved, a transfer of property from, the, was transfer of property from, the groom to or prospective groom to the, brides, kin.

whereas bride, that was bride bride wealth, whereas bride service was actually, the involved the groom, giving labor instead of property, to the, the, brides group.

Brides group. so the difference was whether it was in terms of labor or property, but the direction of travel of, goods or services was essentially the same, but it came from the grooms group to the bride group.

So it's very different, for example, from, dowry, which is found, found in a lot of places like, northern part of South Asia and Europe where dowry involved, press stations or gifts or, property or whatever going from, the brides group to the grooms group.

This is in fact, bride wealth and bride service were different to both of those.

I mean, so far as they involved, this is what was the idea, was they evolved property or services going from, the, the grooms group to the brides group in the sense you were, either, put, some people put it, that they were buying the bride or bride buying the bride's labor or services or procreative powers or whatever.

But fact things.

There are, differences between bride wealth and bride service, which are kind quite substantial and they are really rather different kinds of, kinship.

So, they, they, and they produce different kinds of, political processes or micro political processes in the communities where these ways of legitimate mating marriages or contral unions more strictly speaking the way that they work.

So, perhaps we, one way to look at that is if we, look at the difference between them.

So bride wealth, as it's, classically described, involves, gifts or pres from the groom's skin to the bride skin.

Yeah. And it's typically, so that's, the classical description of it.

It's typically found in, or not exclusively, but it's typically found in, amongst groups of people where you have, patron local postnuptial residents and what that means is that the, the bride goes and live with the grooms group, and so forth and what you have is in, where you have bride wealth that typically, this involves transfers of property, like movable properties such as livestock, such as cattle and pigs, the given and there's part of the bride wealth and, therefore the groom in order, that he owes, the fact that he has now had a conjugal partner to his, to his own kin, they've provided him, cause young men typically don't have very much wealth.

So they get their, wealth from, in this model.

They get their wealth from, their fathers and their grandfathers and their, paternal uncles, people who are in their particular pat, patrilineal group.

They'll get, this property and they'll transfer it to the briskin, and therefore the groom, owes the fact that he's married, to his own, senior members of his own group.

So the debt is, if you like, for him getting married, for having a wife and all that is vertical up, if you like, the lineage towards senior elders.

So it's a, a debt which is vertical.

That's, so, sign, so vertical debt to senior aate, aate is just a p word in anthropology for people in the same, patrilineal group.

Yeah. So, now bride service, which, some people, have, conflated with bride wealth insofar as seems that the property's going from the grooms group to the, the brides group, is, a completely different, it works on a completely different, logic.

whereas bride wealth is typically found in societies which have those kind of movable wealth.

They have kind of forms of movable wealth that serve as a kind of currency, and things like cattle or pigs and other forms of currency can work in that kind of way.

It way you find them is societies with cattle.

So you find it very often amongst pastoralists.

So people like, theu, the, in, in Africa, you find 'em about, in Papua New Guinea Mepa who, who peaks are very important and these are all, peoples where, patrilineal patrilocal, what I mean by petrol local is that the, the bride moves to the grooms group.

Those kind of things are very important.

So this bride wealth, this, as I've described it, this the kind of, if you like, the model of, kinship, if we can use that bracket, let's not talk about whether kinship exists or not.

That's something for another day.

But if we can bracket, the fact that maybe I'm reifying the concept of kinship, that that's, if you like, the model of kinship that works in those kind of societies.

So bride service, so as I said, is something which is very difficult and is very typically found in groups such as the, hunter gatherer foraging societies in some Sweden horticulturalist groups where you have, don't have plow agriculture and where land is important, but where you have shifting cultivation and grow things like, cassava and things like that.

So you find it, in amongst peoples, like kung who k who are, a foraging group in, Southern Africa, the Murkin who are, people in, Australian aboriginal people that I got in who are hunter horticultures in the Philippine, the arena, who are, quid and horticulturalists in Peru, and the Mosquito about whom I'm going to talk.

So what you find in this kind of, style of, kinship is, is a style, is a bride service and this is, it's so instead of, property coming from the grooms group, and that actually legitimates, if you like, the ma the conjugal union.

But what you find in, bride service types, of groups is that you find, really, you find press station, not from the groom's kin, but just from the groom himself.

It's just the groom himself.

The groom is not, cannot expect any help for the legitimation of his conjugal union, but, he can't expect any help from his, members of his own group.

Sorry, Chris, did you have your hand up thought? Not at all.

Oh, sorry, just hand down idea.

I just wonder where were we along got from? Philippines.

Yeah. okay.

So, you have a different sign of, kinship and again, I'm, some people have argued that people were using temp for verified that term, so I don't want to get that now, but let's just, so bright service involves press stations or gifts to legitimate Matt are conal unions, which are just from the groom, but not from his group.

So the groom has to do it himself.

He's doing it for himself and that what that means is that, any relationship he has with his bride, the bride is in no way, the, the property or a labor, the part of the property of the groom's group.

She is someone who's, has nothing to do with the grooms group.

She stays within her own group and typically what you find is then, matrilineal, postnuptial residents, in other words, that brides, typically stay where they are and grooms have to come over, to, brides and, live with them and not only that, but they have to, try and keep negotiating their marital status or their conjugal status with, their, their brides by performing bride service.

In other words, by, working for their in-laws or APHIS anthropology call them.

So bribes are working, for, so sorry.

Young men, grooms are working for their in-laws, and they spend the whole time trying to legitimate their conjugal union, which is always negotiable.

It's not cast in stone by a transfer of cattle or is in bridewealth society.

It's, constantly having to be renegotiated by labor and respect and using appropriate forms of language and all that thing.

The, the, the groom in the bride service society is constantly having to demonstrate, respect and working for his in-laws, particularly his mother-in-law, who has a particularly strong influence.

So the respect a relationship between mothers in-law and Sons-in-law is extremely important one in, in many of these societies, like the K and, the Mosquito that the mother-in-law son-in-law relationship is the most important relationship in, in those kind of communities.

It's the most important relationship of all.

So, what you have then is instead of this vertical debt to senior, members of your own lineage, as you get in with bride wealth in bride service, that grooms are constantly in debt to their in-laws for recognizing them as, conjugal part as partners of their daughters.

So you have this kind of thing of, trying to ingratiate themselves, young men, trying to ingratiate themselves and, into the good graces of their in-laws.

That's what kinship is about.

So it's completely different to bride wealth.

It's, very, very, very different and it's typically found where there isn't very little, land.

There's not really very much in the way of significant, movable property, and where there's, often a shortage of labor.

So you very much kind of find it in like, like forest areas bride service.

The style of, conjugal union is found all over the Amazon.

It's found in the foraging societies in, Southern Africa and, historically in of Australia, Aboriginal peoples and so on.

So you've got this very, very different kind of, style and what type terms, these kind of, style of, if you like, kinship or the way of imagining relations, I called it to the politics of intimacy, because political processes in the community, in these kind of communities often turn on these, a final relationships in, bride service societies where men have to find that they to ingratiate themselves with their aphis and what you find is that it's not so much even ingratiating yourself with your father-in-law because your father-in-law is an outsider too.

He's come to this same group.

So you've got these groups of women who live close by mothers, daughters, maternal aunts, maternal grandmothers, maternal granddads, who maybe in one place or imagine themselves as one particular group with this, who, which are called the Confederacy of sisters in somewhere else, although there may be sometimes others and aunts and so on and you have, Ben, you have the, these men, and it will include your father-in-Law, who's similarly an outsider, or we might have gone a little way further down the line to becoming, part of that group who've detached themselves from their own group and have almost some, in some instances, been thrown outta their own group to try and make it with the, a, a a confederacy sisters in another group.

So this is, classically, what you find in, bride service societies organized around what I called here the politics of, intimacy.

And, one article, which I think, is importantly described it, although I've argued in some work that, it only describes part of it.

It's like, bride service is a bit like this big elephant, and they've looked at one side of it, but I don't think it's, a complete account of pride service.

But nevertheless, it has a lot of merit that their particular model is what you find in this kind of, where situation is where grooms have to negotiate.

their status with APHIS is that they achieve adult status through marriages, through having a con or a conjugal union and those conjugal unions are made slowly by grooms insinuating themselves into their brides groups good graces, as I've said.

So men's adult status is always under threat from peers who view one another uneasily as competitors, because in these kind of, groups that, married, marriage, constable unions are always quite provisional there.

So marriage is not something that's, in these kind of groups.

It's not suddenly, that you have a, this big ritual one day and the next day your marriage and everything changes.

It's a gradual process of negotiation.

you find therefore that, brother-in-law, brother-in-law, relationships between wife giving a wife, taking Brother-in-Law, who can use those terms highly, although it's more the other way around.

It's more really women who are giving men.

But Brother-in-law, brother-in-law relationships are highly charged.

And, in some cases they're moderated by, classification, sister exchange, which diffuses the imbalance.

So a part of the aesthetic of the politics of intimacy, a a, a very nice aesthetic.

What people really like is Sister Exchange and there's some examples in the Village where I've worked, sorry, yeah, I'm Sorry. So the brother-in-Law between two men who both married into the same, No, no, no. One is, the brother of, sister, of the bride or the, or classification brother of the bride, and the other is the Marrying Inn. Oh, yes.

Good. Okay. Yeah, yeah. So it's an asymmetrical relationship.

Can I just echo something you said earlier, mark, which is the word marriage, is not Yeah, that useful.

An important con point really with Brian service, as you've said, the man never actually gets married.

He never acquires like, okay, I've got conjugal rights.

This is my wife. He's always earning, earning his relationship.

That's exactly right. And that's my next bullet point, which says that young women have little use for husband and consequently use sexual intercourse as a political weapon.

But this is very, classically the case in, these kind of, groups and certainly the case in amongst a Mosquito.

so, and sexual intercourse, which is very much about procreation in bribes, wealth societies where you're creating more children for the lineage and all this kind of thing.

But it's not because it's more, imagined and discourses surrounding sexual intercourse are more about recreation and enjoyment rather than, procreation.

Perhaps to add to that is that women have every interest in kind of denying that actually section of what creates a baby, creates baby.

You often get what's called ignorance of eternity.

It's not ignorance at all. It's just women have an interest in saying, this baby comes to us and our brothers, he's not from The man. And in Case he can use that as an excuse to hang on in there. And, And I've got a theory about that, which I've never, it's, it is in those kind of things because of exactly the point you are making that men have on the other hand, have a vested interest in trying really hard to claim those babies that legitimates their status as a conjugal partner.

Exactly. And it's in those kind of, people in not amongst those kind of people that you typically find things like, the cove or, phantom pregnancies, because that's the way men part of the way that which they claim, the offspring of their conjugal partners, and therefore they become more men and more attached to the group and so forth.

in Mosquito, they call it bassy, but of course, it's found with same thing.

Really. That's fascinating, is exactly that.

so, right, that's just a little bit of background.

to contextualize my discussion of this particular case study I'm gonna talk about now, the Mosquito with whom I've been working for the last 32 years, the Mosquito, there are, approximately now 150,000 Mosquito speakers.

Most of them live on, Northeast Nicaragua and also bits Eastern Uras.

where I worked, was, a, a southern most, a, a Mosquito enclave and a predominantly Creole speaking area, Creole English speaking area.

This Caribbean English is spoken all along the coast of Central America, the Caribbean, in different communities and there are a number in this area where this hook, which is right on the middle of the Caribbean coast, just below where it says sea, you can see there's this little hook, and this is so-called Pearl Lagoon and you find here krill and Mosquito communities or communities that identify as such.

There was a puppet English speaking kingdom of it.

yeah, I mean, web, just to what extent it was puppet is a, a, a, a contested thing, but yeah, you're right.

Yeah. So, the, the, the, the, this particular area is, one where you have the southern most Mosquito communities, but also you've got, in this area not so much further up.

You've got, a lots of communities or some communities which are so-called Creole, which are Caribbean, English speaking, monolingual Caribbean, English speaking.

I did field work. I've been doing field work in a place called Illa, which is here.

And, like all the, it's identifies most people identify as in Mosquito, but, it's, people there speak Creole English and Raan Creole English or Mosquito cause Creole English, as well as Mosquito, Mosquito being a, an aminian language, which is related to a few other Central American languages, but, not very closely related to up other languages at all.

So the inhabitants in Cilla, are, bilingual in Mosquito and Mosquito coast, rill, an amerindian language, and, a ri language.

So the Mosquito coast, what is it actually like? Well, it's not really like Meso America at all.

it's not like, the communities up into Guatemala and me, Mayan communities and com, other communities in Mexico.

indigenous communities, it's mu Mosquito coast is much more like Amazonia.

It's like a bit of amazonia that's kind of stuck on the shoulder of Central America.

So it has, rainforests, it has, people use canoes rather than walking about.

It's, Sweden horticulture, there's classification cross cousin marriage, which one finds in Amazonia across Amazonia, but not really in, meso America.

So it's just really very much like Amazonia and, the lots of the floor and fauna are very much like what's in Amazonia.

So this is something, I got a photo I took on about when I was only there for about three weeks.

So that's show you, you, it's not like Mexico most of Mexico.

so how do people, what do people do then to earn a living? that historically it's been hor or when I was first there, and I was first doing field work there in the early nineties, it was, horticulture for subsistence.

So people grew cassava, plantain, dashing rice.

These were all, rogens that are grown more like in Amazonia than in, meso America.

There's hunting for deer peppery, and much smaller animals to some extent, although halter culture was much more important, in, the coast in some of the, of the, interior Mosquito communities in, in land of the coast, a little bit hunting's more important, but fishing is really important on the coast.

so does fish scale certain kinds of fish, shrimp, turtle out on the keys, which are little, desert islands just off the Caribbean coast, lobster and crab.

The thing for, marine resources when I was first there, that they, that's how people generated a little cash because you could sell some of those things for cash, whereas you couldn't, the horticultural, for, for the carts, you couldn't really sell those.

They had to be just given cash was those things were sold to some degree for cash.

But people primarily within the community, even marine resources were given freely in what's through a system that was known as pana pana, which really translates, the only thing that comes close to it is really reciprocity.

It's that pana is, what Mosquito term for, reciprocity.

Now, though there are new cash opportunities for people from this village that people now, are, much more, if you like, plugged into the global economy, there are opportunities for much more cash than before.

Before, when they were just fish, fishing and selling their catches for cash, it was really for very, very little money.

Now there's, comparatively there's a lot more money available for, lobster, which is a new kind of economy, puts us in new markets.

there's shipping out, which is young, men who speak Caribbean English, which the, southern Mosquito do as well as the Creoles that they, go and work on cruise ships as menial, and they send money home as remittances through, Western Union Money Gram and so forth.

And, there's, cocaine money that the cocaine trade is now.

the Mosquito coast has become a, one of the roots up from, the South America to North America.

The cocaine comes from St.

Andrews, which it's an island in the Caribbean, and it's moved forward along the Caribbean coast from Pearl Lagoon up through in Nicaragua, through Honduras, up to, and eventually through Mexico and so on and the other opportunity for new catch opportunities is what they call crossing, the Rio Bravo.

Has anybody heard of the Rio Bravo? Would've heard of it, yeah.

The film, but you'll have heard of it by its, English.

Its the Rio Grande Grande Yeah, they call it.

But in Latin America and south and Central America, they call it the Rio Bravo.

Yeah. Crossing the Rio Bravo means, going illegally into the united or semi illegally into the United States.

So crossing the rear bravo is just a word, even though many of them don't actually cross the river, they go more to the west in some instances where you don't cross the river, but it's still crossing the rear bravo.

You are going to the United States where you go some the legal, or semi-legal asylum seeker or whatever and basically, you, live in chip conditions doing chip jobs if you can find them and trying to get a little bit of money to send home. Sorry. Yeah.

So is that men and women? Men? It's predominantly men, because the women Tend to stay, They tend more to stay, but some women do go, I know certainly some women who, who, who go and Is the cocaine, this process.

Cocaine, which is Then, yes, sorry.

That's quite right. Yeah.

The cocaine is not, in any way, cultivated there at all.

It comes already, processed as powder, which is generally done, I think, on the Caribbean coast of Columbia, that kind of area based like Santa Marta, Baria, carna, and then it comes as powder, to, up through the coast.

I'm gonna talk a bit more about that later, but that's, yeah, that's a, a, a, a, a useful clarification.

So, the Mosquito, as I said, in Cilla are just like many other broad bride service.

peoples are organized around Bo I've called, this is not their term, confederacy of sisters and what you find is, this is very typically what you get when you take a photo, go to a Mosquito community, and just to say, oh, I'd like to take a photo of some of you.

What happens is to get all the people together who are part of their confederacy.

So this is taken in sling near the Honduras frontier.

This is taken in, Cara, in, but these are classically the kind of photos you get lots of groups of women.

So women are typically closest to their mother, sisters, daughters, maternal aunt.

These are people just like, as I've said, for the bride service model, who tend to group together.

So they typically live in houses that are clustered close by, that their spouses, which is the word is may mean spouse and Mosquito have built for them.

So part of the bride service is that men will build houses for their, spouses, for their women folk and, and so on.

So these relationships are, of these, confederacy of sisters are built on mutual health and assistance, and quite often enmity between, enemy groups, rival groups.

So you have these confederations who, sometimes are in alliances with other similar confederations, but are quite often at odds with them and you have these processes where, sometimes the one confederation may segment and then for another, for other context come back together again, much as how, as some of you anthropologists, here will know was the model described for patrilineal descent by Evans Bri.

It's actually quite similar.

It's surprisingly, usefully predictive for illa, except it's the, if you like, matinal groups.

so here's another one. This is, carala.

These are awa people who are not Mosquito, but they speak Mosquito as their first language, but they're awa.

And, this, very tough group, this particular group who I got to know, well, this is brand seller who's, important, who's a very feared sorceress as well as, fist fighter and everything like that's, yeah.

so you have this, idea of vision and fusion.

So the groups over time, these, confederation of sisters, as they get bigger and bigger, they're told to segment as cousins and second cousins, as they get more and more distance tend to end up in disputes with each other.

So there's the big group, in some contexts the groups will come together, but in others it'll be much smaller groups.

So try to imagine these triangles as actually circles, anthropologists amounts to, because anthropologists typically have, triangles as males.

But if you imagine this as circles, it's quite good.

What happens is that, the crisis that one has in many of these groups is the death of the cka.

The cka is the senior woman in any one of these groups is known as the cka, that's Mosquito for a grandmother, but it also means senior elder, respected woman and when you have the death or, or loss of influence, of, of cka is the, the moments where you have segmentation as often as when particular, subsegments if you like, or leaders of those subsegments sub leaders, and test, the authority of their group.

So why are, why don't we have certain, why not, why aren't we triangles on you data? Well, this 'cause I didn't make it, and I'm not the technologically manual five one, which is taken from Copy every time. Sub Yes, Please circle The triangle.

Confusing, yeah. But it's easy.

So vision, but sometimes fusion where, different segments will come together and a classic example of this is that women play baseball against other villages and what will happen, these segments, who maybe you find in Cilla, you find maybe anything between five and 10 segments at any particular time in, in the recent history will come together, as a, as a, as a, as a, as a united group, against other villages thing and then, when the, the tournament ends, the different segments will, separate and be odds with one another again.

But the co-founding of Cilla is really a, a myth, which is that the myth of Cilla is that it was founded by, two men called, Sylvester Vega and, no, Sylvester Joseph and Christabel Vega and Sylvester Joseph, married one of, Christabel Vega's daughters and so you have this myth of, this man marrying in into this group of sisters, and that these are sisters, Angelina Fina, Reda, Paulina Matilda.

These are the supposedly the founding Confederacy of sisters through which all the others are, if you like, split off in over in time as a segment.

So it's probably, the, the history of Pilla is obviously a lot more complicated than that.

But it's interesting that the Pilla people, that they have centralized their history in terms of this myth of a man marrying into this confederacy of sisters and that's how it came about and these were representative being the grandparent, the grandmothers of, the existing old women at Illa, although it is probably, their grandmothers in, in fact represented them as their grandmothers too.

So this is a kind of myth that perhaps, has perhaps less, exact truth than it has, more a a lot of sociological truth, if you see what I mean, which is very often the case as anthropologists from time have, argued.

So, yeah.

Now what about men though, in this kind of, how do they work in this, social, thing? So the male social universe in Caterpillar is I've said is men attach themselves as aphis, which is anthropology, talk for in-laws and establish relationships with their brothers-in-law, which are called, and with their fathers in-law, which are mutually, they call each other Dattner with their wife's mother's brothers, wigga and so forth.

So they, try to attach themselves with other males from their wife's, group, who some of whom have married into the group, some of whom are perhaps brothers of the members of the Confederacy of sisters.

So they, work with one another and they, so here you have Son-in-law working with his father-in-Law.

this is Dharma Mecado, and this is, Castro or Loko seems, seems nicknamed, and they work, with work one another.

That's very typical kind of thing and these kind of, a final, or in-law relationship between males are typically reproduced through rum, junking rituals and so on and they project, these ritual, forms of avoidance and respect, especially with their female in-laws.

So men, have to show great respect to their father-in-Law, but even more to their mothers in-law and but also to other senior, a aphis That's something that's incredibly important.

So young men would, approach their, mother-in-law.

They wouldn't approach them face to face, even if they were living in the same house or close by.

They typically, if they had to address 'em, they'd turn away from them and address 'em in a high, squeaky voice thing, which is, a interesting socio electoral thing that they do that shows respect.

So this is, this is what they do and this applies not just into life, but also into death.

So here is, KU Sandra, who's an old lady who's died in the village of Awa and her relatives have all insisted that her, bride service observing, sons-in-law all come and be photographed showing respect to their mother-in-law, even after her death, that she's still exercising this enormous influence over her sons-in-law.

So this is, the, funeral for Cooper Santa.

These, are her four sons-in-law, gathered together to demonstrate, respect for her in, in a kind of, postmortem bride service.

So, this, how is this actually, these, the politics of intimacy, how has it actually policed its police through things like respect, as I've said, as you've just seen an example, but also respect and, as well, but also through, something which is like shame.

So it's avoidance, is, used.

They use the word swer, which translates as shame and also, in other ways it's beliefs.

So men are, if you like, resources, it's like about, in some ways it's like about groom capture.

So men are resources to be captured by the confederacy of sisters and then domesticated sometimes through magic.

So, the krill term panty water, which is just like what it sounds, is a kind of magic where women use their, secretions are in their panties to as a form of, magic to really disempower, their husband for the ritualization ask what kind of sufficient, what well, the family imagination, shall we? Yeah. But anyway, the ritualization of the capture of males says is a broadcast, a groom capture is ritualized by women in a game called Kitty Alley, which is played once a year, where all the men of the village play.

All the women. And the men typically are encouraged to wear something red, sorry, blue and they have these blue, you can't see this black and white photo, but the blue is on the right hand cause the men are sitting this side, the women all sit on the other side and wear red for the day and you have red, ribbons here.

So this is, called kitty alley and so this is a ritualization, this capture of males and what happens during the course of Kitty Alley, very typically is the older women will be sitting on some benches over there, basically just making fun of, or taking piss out of the young men and so telling them that they don't throw away their shots or lose their shots, they're not gonna let them dance with their daughters that night at the dance, which always follows Kitty Adam.

So this is a ritualization of groom capture.

So magic can ritual reproduce the politics of, intimacy through things like kitty alley, fancy water and a number of other things.

But I just want to give those two as kind of e examples.

so, this was, illa, 32 years ago when I first started doing field work there that you have here properly.

The women are circles again, and the men are properly triangles.

cause I could do this myself. This one, this is just about the extent of my technological expertise.

Each different, color of circles is a confederacy of sisters, a group of women who are together and they're co identified by the same color and you have the men who move.

So the men from the, if you like, the red group from the bottom of women leave this confederacy of sisters to attach himself as an in-law to, the Blue Confederacy of sisters and so on.

So, we see the men leaving their own confederacy of sisters to try and ingratiate themselves with their in-laws who are the, these blue circles in that kind of case that's what this red triangle male is trying to do. It is a beautiful target.

And, yeah, I did it myself.

So, yeah. and so, this is, what we found 32 years ago.

Yeah. So this is what happens and, in the ole communities, which are close by it, you've actually also got confederacy of sisters.

But what happens is that, and this is very well described by Nancy, Gonzalez in her books on the Garifuna or black Garbs who, of Honduras, that, and but also other people who've worked in, Caribbean, English speaking communities, since you tend to have women who come stick together and the males may go off and make children, but they inevitably they'll come back or they'll come back a lot to their group.

So it's quite different to the Mosquito thing, which is where the men move the, in the, c communities, close to Cilla or the communities that identify Creole, you tend to get this kind of, thing I should add that you do get both kinds in both communities, but part of being Mosquito or Creole is not about who your parents is, but it's about projecting what kind of morality you subscribe to, determines whether you identify as Creole or Mosquito and this is all part of the kind of morality that you project will determine whether you say I'm Creole or I'm Mosquito.

So, so in that version, the men are really up, they move to and fro.

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

I mean, that's really important because in any matter, society, a man always has us keep in touch with his sisters.

So yeah, always an innovative, But here it's very, very strong in this.

And, it is very well described in the number of books on the black so called Black Caribs or Hondura of, Honduras and Belise, by people like Virginia Kears by Nancy, Gonzalez and things who've described this.

But it's very interesting because some of the villages in the Peggo basin are descendants of, black carbs who came down to work in the logging camp in the, about a hundred years ago, 120 years ago.

So I, the, I, the, the, what visiting, is it visiting day at a time several days of a month at The time? Well, the Creole things, yes. It's more like that.

he might go and, live, say a man might go and live in this kind of community for a bit in what looks like the Mosquito model for a bit, but then decides, he's had enough things and so you have serial monogamy from, for both men and women, if you like.

Yeah. So conjugal unions or illa, but those who identify as Mosquito and, practice this kind of model, it, it, it's that conal unions tend to be, lifelong or quite lengthy, whereas on those, they're kind of short-lived, basically.

So that's fundamentally the difference.

So that's a moral difference.

It's a moral difference, difference.

As I wrote in my article, on Mosquito or Creole, I wrote an article about this identifying as Mosquito or Creole in Cilla and some of the neighboring communities is not so much about, to do with some kind of primordial identity, something to do with your descent your, or, anything like that.

It's about to which particular morality you've subscribed to and Illa is primarily a community which, where Mosquito and use of the Mosquito languages is, if you like, the preferred, identity and moral, stance if you like, to Creole.

Whereas in other communities, it's, it's not necessarily the case.

I mean, it's a bit more complicated than that, but it's, that is quite like that.

So now I want to look, let's see how we're doing, some changes, to the economy and this, there are a number of changes that have taken place in the area.

one is the, so-called Advance of the ER, agri, and now, that Nicaragua has had a frontier, like just as like Brazil has in the United States in the 19th century and other places.

But the frontier has moved from west to east.

The Spanish speakers settled the Pacific sides of, Nicaragua and Honduras, and didn't really come very much over to the other side because it was, there weren't really much in the way of exploitable things, products there at least, that they could extract at that time and now it's a bit different 'cause and so forth.

But, in the, since the 1950s, the, agricultural frontier has gradually moved, Spanish speaking frontier into Mosquito, the area of the Mosquito and other, indigenous peoples.

So, what you found also is the Mosquito have become much more involved in the extraction of marine resources.

It's in the past, they were primarily, like 80 years ago, they were primarily involved in Sweden, horticulture and hunting, but now they're much more involved in fishing and to this have added lobster.

The Mosquito crows have become progressively monetized as people have to, states kind of sets up things like schools and, people have to buy school uniforms and, but, and, all lots of other things that food stuffs like rice and beans have come in and some, people become more dependent on those.

So you have the progressive monetization of the coast.

You have the employment of young men as menial and cruise ships.

Those in English speaking further up in the northern Mosquito communities, you don't get that because the people don't really speak English very much.

But in the southern Mosquito where I've been working, they speak English as well as Mosquito and so they can get jobs menial on cruise ships and also, but in the north, the lobster economies become very important, and dollars have come into the economy that way.

and what you've also had is another change to the economy is you've had this massive in common with, all the rest of Nicaragua is you've had, hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans traveling north into the United States seeking El Sweno, Americana,

the American dream of, and so on and something like, possibly as much as nearly 10% of Nicaraguans have left their country and gone seeking work across the Rio Bravo in the United States as much as that since two and including 2018, that's an extraordinary figure.

Wow. Also, sorry, that's since 2018. Yeah, 18.

So that, just recently, recently, yeah, the last six years.

Wow. Enormous number.

I know so many people who have gone villages have been emptied out, all open in Piragua, not, this is not just the Mosquito coast and then you've had on the Mosquito coast, what you've had is, they've sent, some of them in some cases have sent remittances back, money back and so money from cruise ship employees and from those who have, in the United States, these, dollar remittances constitutes a big change.

So you've got a lot of money coming in.

You've also got the creator, involvement of many Mosquito in the cocaine economy because since around about the turn of the century, a lot more cocaine has been coming up into this area as we already decide.

one reason it's come up this way rather than historically, it's gone up before then, the more ease up the trans American highway and across up Central America or the, the west Indie, chain or something like that.

the Mosquito coast, is much less well policed.

It's much more remote. This is very remote.

There are virtually no roads in this whole area.

This is really remote. There's one road that goes like that and now in the last few years, another one just gone from down here, but this is really remote.

Nearly all transport within this area is waterborne or on foot along the rivers, up the coast on, canoes and, or little sailing here, vessels or on foot, or perhaps some patient on horse, some not patient, but sometimes on horseback.

So the, it is also the cocaine economy is much less well policed.

On the other hand, it's still like the wild west in so far as, it's, much less control and the traffickers are much more dependent, because of the remoteness on local people and so, it's a lot more precious and, dangerous for the traffickers than otherwise.

Although the prop, it's much less well for leased.

Right. so what you've got now though is, are we doing for time? yeah.

Is now that what has happened is that you have this monetization of the economy, the economy, of capla.

And, this area in general is where it was dependent.

people's subsistence was dependent on pana, on reciprocal health in terms of looking after your farms, your Sweden, horticultural plots.

In other words, working together, building houses with something that people did together.

Often brothers-in-law and fathers in-law and Sons-in-law, and then women from the kind group whose house it was being built for, 'cause houses belong to women, would provide sustenance for men helping the house.

This was all part of the pana, complex, which was part of, if you like, matrilineal, illa, all of that is like eroding now because you've got money now.

People are, instead of having to reciprocate, they'd rather pay someone those who have money and there are the inequities or inequalities because there are, some, families who've done quite well out of things.

They've found cocaine fines for fines are typically opportunists.

And, they've done quite well and been able to use their money to employ others.

Others have done much less well in this monetized economy.

And, so you have a growing, if you like, inequalities between different, groups and so on.

What you find that those groups, kin groups who have got access to money, have, have been able to invest it and make more money.

They've been able to buy outboard motors instead of relying on, sheet sales skiffs to be able to, catch fish, to go and look for turtle and things like that.

They've been able to kind of, extract lumber through buying chainsaws and things like that.

So, they've been able to build strong better houses or better what they think is better houses outta cement rather than the leaf houses, or later the board houses Mosquito used beforehand and so on.

So, you, you have this, mon great term monetization of the economy.

Now, what's happening with that, the moment is that men now who, because they have the, they're in the, if you like, the industries where cash comes in, that they're using the cash for themselves and they're building their houses are permanent, so they can't say, well, wait a minute, I don't wanna build next to my in-laws for the rest of my life.

Before when I built a legal board house, I could move quite quickly.

I want something permanent. They're building them next to their own pin group, their own nat natal pin group.

So you get, men now are collecting and you're now you're getting groups of men, groups of brothers who are becoming, if you like, Confederacy in a sense.

This is not still the old model still is there, but it's now being joined by this other kind of, competing model of, if you like, kinship, if you can call it that, which is, it, organized around groups of brothers and quite often this involves things like, buying weapons, especially for those.

cause the cocaine economy is very pervasive, and if you're involved in that, and that's a very good and quick way that it is.

So it's thought to get money that you need to be armed.

So, as well as the, AK 40 sevens that still, around from the time of the contra war in the eighties, these have been joined by other new kinds of as assault weapons that are

out there, as well as pistols and, hunting rifles have been used for other effect, and you have now much more, violence and these, this violence typically takes place between groups of brothers, groups of brothers, often, as I said, because of this changing style of cement houses with money from all these sources, build their houses closer together and if you like, women's, position is like being more marginalized in this new kind of politics of intimidation as opposed to the politics of intimacy.

This hence the title.

I changed the title a bit, but, that's just came to me this yesterday.

And, so you've got this new kind of politics, which is, where, men, are, are, and, this is going on.

So you have groups of brothers who start businesses and then protect those businesses against rival businesses through intimidation.

Like they start little bars, which they call ranches in the local, Caribbean English they call.

you have, men who, get, who work together, as, in working for bigger traffickers and things like that.

so you have typically brothers and fathers and sons.

and, it's only, yesterday that two brothers who were involved in the killing of, two other brothers in a cocaine transaction that went wr wrong, were, were surrounded by the police, and one of them was killed in TA county by the police and another escaped wounded.

And, so this happens all the time.

You have a vengeance killings, revenge killings by, people when groups of brothers, become in conflict with, in conflict with one another and you really, this is a very, very different kind of, there's that, society has a, if you can call that term again for a moment, has a very different complexion now than it had, in this area, 32 years ago, where, essentially, everyone more or less had the same kind of technology insofar as they'd have their machete, a hoe.

they had their board house and they had a canoe and that was it and their fishing nets and so on, everyone had that.

So you had, if you like, communities, were organized by a very, kind of fairly safe, equality that was perhaps never and the only, ripples were perhaps, bride service, arguments or things like that, ripples, which were but now what you're having is, something which is, much sort of, more dangerous and much more horrible, I think.

so, basically gang warfare, it's essentially, yeah, it gang warfare.

and it's organized around, kinship.

And, and one example of that is that one of the leaders, one gangster in Cilla who now has just been captured, the police have just done a major crackdown, thank God they got rid of the, the corrupt police that were there.

Now they put in a a a a, but I dunno how long it will last, but they put in, a police were very much more on it.

they captured, one fellow, a Creole fellow who wasn't even from Ville.

He was living in Pack Villa with a Illa woman that he got his son to murder the son of another gang leader in another community.

And, that's how it works.

It's father and son and brothers who are members of your king group.

So, what you've got now is, this move away from bride service to, we don't know what yet.

We don't know how, what is happening yet because the role of women, so for example, Dean, this person who they just capture, who terrorized Cilla a little bit for quite a lot for, a while who's now being captured, but his wife, was really, polluted in, or, or, or they saw his conjugal partner, if we can call, Kelsey that.

But, it was basically that she would, operate in sort of, in a kind of reflected, glory or fear of her husband.

But say if anyone disagreed with her, she'd say, you don't know who you are dealing with, thing and this was an allusion to her gangster, spouse thing.

So, this is what's changing and it interesting to kind of think about, and I've been trying to work it out, but these are comparatively new developments and they still coexist with the old bride service style of model, which many people are, are still quite poor in these communities, and still working with the old kind of pan panner as far as they can.

But you've got this new kind of style of, politics, intimidation, which if you like, is, infiltrating and poisoning the politics of intimacy.

So I'll stop there. Thank you.

There's a picture of the old style houses.

You see that the, the leaf roof and the board, and this is a new cement house here, cement, which had built by partly drugs money, partly shipping out money.

these is a cruise ship, the times that they work on many of them young men and this is the, the Coast Guard who are just picking up these bales of cocaine, which are floating out there on the, Caribbean sea and are been waiting to be, rescued.

what happens is that when the, the panas, which are the, the speedboats, which the, when they're, trailed by the Coast Guard or whoever, or the police or the naval or whoever, they, they'll throw the cargo over to make them go faster and at the same time get rid of the evidence and then sometimes the police will pick them up.

Sometimes they'll, float along onto the, onto the shore or one of the keys and be picked up by, a fisherman as we call his life, who suddenly find himself with This Land, \$5,000 worth of whatever.

In fact, one of the, famous, the most famous gang, leader of this kind of, cocaine, barren in the region, Ted Haman, that he actually started off just like that as a poor fisherman who had a find of maybe half a dozen of these kind of sacks and built up his empire from that.

Okay. I'll stop there.

Audience questions

So any questions in the room? That was so sad and heartbreaking.

Yeah, it is. Yeah. Yeah.

I'm gonna tell, I would tell everyone that as well.

I was just wondering what your interaction was like.

okay. You remember? Yeah. Your, your relative. Yeah, I mean, I'm fine.

I'm a, I'm an ine in the, I've been married to a Mosquito woman who, I met, well it's, when I first met her, she was at the University of Managua, who's not entirely, although she from a village background, but she's actually, but yeah, she is Mosquito.

And, I lived there twice, first for a year and a half, and then for a year and I've been there apart from that and about another 13 times between one month and, three months.

So I probably spent all together about maybe five years on the coast, on the Mosquito coast.

I speak Mosquito fluently or so I'm, they charitably.

Tell me I speak it better than Spanish, which, is kind of surprising.

It's a bit like someone who comes to the UK and ends up speaking better Welsh than English probably.

So. Yeah. so yeah.

And, so I'm in con my wife is in contact with the members of a family on a day-to-Day basis and we'll talk over WhatsApp, which is now, thankfully WhatsApp has, really saved my finances.

It's free now to, talk and people have internet and, now or they can buy what they call car Your wife News just up here In London.

In London, yeah. Yeah. London up the road.

Well, for the last 21 years. Yeah. In, yeah.

So, yeah.

So, I'm sort of, yeah, I mean I, I would say I'm pretty without.

Great question. well, that's a very good question.

I mean it is, of course men who do bride service always say, and I'm not going to buck the trend.

They always say, I never didn't have to do that.

But of course it's probably not true. Yeah, Yeah. More What happens in the bride to the older men, you, there is men get older, like seeing the in the bride wells.

Mm. Sort of like when you get discarded, don't they? As they get older, just Yeah. In bride service it's kind of very interesting.

cause it's slightly to converse to that, it's not exactly, but, that men, become more surplus to requirements of the, as they, yeah and it, what you find is, and this is something that you see a lot, is older men who really try hard to keep going to their farm, even though they shouldn't really be going and should be kind of having a rest and they probably would be in many other places, but they desperately don't

want to show that they're no longer productive and it's sometimes it's kind of quite heartbreaking when you see some like really old fellas really kind of, struggling and Yeah.

But they taken care of, They are taken care of.

But, they, they, or usually they are, yeah, I mean, I wouldn't say always it's very varies like anywhere else but, yeah.

But, somehow that their position, they lose perhaps less respected and that people, younger people make more fun of them and things like that.

So, And any other questions in the room? what about Zoom? Did you have any, anybody wanting to ask anything? I had a question.

Wait, manga, no, I'll come back. Manga.

do you ever see, groups of brothers that married groups of sisters, something like that happen was Marrying groups of sisters? Yeah. that's very interesting case. Yes.

that does happen.

not, it's not something which is kind of organized specifically, but what you'll find is that, people will say, oh, I see a lot of, people in your family have married a lot of people in their family and they'll say, yes, well, they're good people.

That's the way they ra they rationalize it. Mm-Hmm.

So, it's, yeah, you do see that, but it, it, it's not something which is kind of ever discussed as a kind of a strategy so much.

but yeah.

What you find often is in this interesting new, the new kind of, style of kinship, is that where you have, if you like, brides now coming to live with groups of brothers more, which is the new style of kinship, if you like, can call it kinship, the new, what you find is that, you find that, a lot of hostility between, sisters in law.

Mm-Hmm. It's what sisters in law, his hostility was always something that was there.

it's part of the politics of intimacy and that there's this kind of, perception of, of a tug of war between the sister and the spouse over the, the man for their labor and everything like that.

And, whatever they can provide.

So you find that is something, which is a kind of very common.

But the thing with sisters-in-law in the old kind of thing, was that they were at a distance to one another.

So I don't go to that part of the village because so and so lives there and that's my sisters-in-law basically is what they mean.

But now what you find is with this mix of the two new things that you find sisters-in-Law, who actually living together and loathe each other because of these same issues, and that's Sister-in-law, hostility is something which has, really, become, endemic or at least existed before, but was, sort of, moderated by geography, if you like, and now it's not Hmm. In the traditional system, when a man would do some work with sister and sun work is bride, would, would, would they be different types of work? Would

it be, or would, would there be a real conflict that's exactly the same kind of work would be demanded of both category? it would depend very much on, the particular example.

But I know of cases where it is the same kind of, thing, which is, and this is often comes to the sort of, but that's an interesting question in the sense that, can you go to, your brother or to your, and, or will your brother come to you rather? And, ask for cooked food or, things like fish or things that are not cooked, food and things like that. So In my theoretical model, I suppose I would, I wouldn't have expected a man's hunting produce to go to his sister, his sister, if it's too sexual hunting for meat.

Bringing that back would imply some kind of wrong kind of relationship. So would Turtles and things come? No. turtle, it would likely go some turtle go to the mother, but probably the mother-in-law would be the most, likely to be the, principal recipient of it.

Yeah. And quite often that sort of, mothers and sisters often kind of, express that a bit of feeling hard done by that they're not getting what, they're, their, What the bride's giving what their Yeah.

Sister-in-law's giving Mm-Hmm. If, if the brother's bringing meat back to, mother and sister, is that a slight on their spouses? Yeah, I mean, if they don't give any, if they don't give any to the spouses, then it would, I mo I would, I would think in most cases, well, No, no, what I'm meaning something, but no, I meant that if, if, if the man is married to a, to a woman and then he comes and brings me to his sister and his mother, is that a slight on his, sister's husband and his mother and mother's? I wouldn't say so. No. I can't think of that.

But what it would be would be, it would be a sign of distancing self from his spouse.

Yes. So that is probably where that might be flagged up.

But that's a very interesting point and something I'll look out for Mm-Hmm.

Next time I see it. And, and also the other question I had before was, to what extent are looking at love matches repair bonds? And what extent is it just faculty according to, what the man is perceived as being capable of delivering in terms of, the label and results? Yeah, I mean, yeah.

I mean, people become con with spouses for all kinds of reasons there, just as they do over here.

but what's interesting is perhaps that, is the discourses of why people do that.

Like the discourse over here, not say it's always here, but the discourses that people marry for love, whereas in clar amongst older people, is that people marry because, um perhaps they're a good family, meaning they, they show respect and that generally when you try to, pat that, pick that down and that they have, the web, the means of support perhaps for their daughter, that the groom has the means of support for the daughter and so on.

So in that sense, it's perhaps, framed in a economic way.

It's not that, oh, well, he's, but, now you do get more kind of, amongst young people.

There are discourses of, of, love, these, but, one wonders to what extent that these discourses of love are, not to say love didn't exist, but discourses that, mention love are in fact, introductions from tele novella world now since Illa, when I was first there, it didn't have electricity, didn't have running water, no roads.

There's still no road there. But there is electricity and there's periodically running water and the electricity goes down, some of them, but there's lot of the time they watch the, television and tele novellas have, I think perhaps had, which are basically Spanish language soap operas.

Yeah. Which are made in, for those who dunno it in mostly in, Mexico or Colombia.

They have these tele novellas and, that, that these are, I think perhaps had an influence on, discourses of how people talk about their relations, even if perhaps there's not so much difference.

But they certainly have a influence on discourses of, um I Oh, yeah. yeah, go, sorry, go ahead.

I, I was gonna ask Shakti, but go, yeah, it's very interesting.

The question that I just, just wanted to ask was about, the, when the women are now moving into, well, yeah.

When, when they're, when they're the ones that migrating to live with their spouses, is that, do they justify that somehow, in the, in the old older morality? or is there a, is there another like the No, ethic of individual rationalism involved? Yeah, I think so. I think probably so.

And, I think with that becomes a more, a reinvention of, selfhood if you like, in terms of ideas about individual choice and things like that.

it's a very interesting question and one I would, I'd have to kind of give some more thought to, but it really is an interesting question. Yeah.

Hmm. Shati, anyone who else? hi. Yeah, that was a really interesting talk.

I wanted to ask, so with this transition in a way, in the economy of men and also in the kinship system, has there been a transition in women's economy as well in terms of what they're doing now? And, Oh, that's another good question. Good Question. So, so Sha asked if there's been, with this transition, has there also been a transition in women's economy specifically? Yeah and related to that also, what the, what the parental, the childcare system look like in terms of female and male participation before and now? So for instance, were there men participating more, for instance, in looking after children, before these economic changes? And, and has that shifted so that women are now doing more childcare and things like that? So I guess I'm asking about both those things linked together as well and also about the shifts of patterns of childcare.

Were men more, more involved previously and are women now doing more of it? yeah, I mean, that's interesting.

I think women are doing more of it because I think men's, the, the kind of, I, I should add that still, that many, groups within places like Caterpillar are still, um rely

on, Sweden horticulture and fishing, and still kinship is very much like the old kind of style of, bride service and so on.

But where it's changed, I would say that, that, men are absent much more, they're absent on cruise ships or up out in the United States.

They're, they're absent on runs doing taking, cocaine to different places that, so there's much male absence is more profound and so the burden of looking after women, looking after children has fallen more, more on women.

But that said, also, some women have also shipped out.

They've worked on cruise ships.

There are a few who do, quite a few who do that and there are some women who have, crossed the Rio Bravo, gone to the United States, and so on.

And, there are some women who, who've managed to get quite a lot in remittances or through cocaine money like Delsey, who I was talking about, and are able to employ people to do that.

So, it's quite different and many women who have gone, to work overseas that the children have, and fallen into the hands now of grandmothers and usually maternal, mother.

So grandmothers who always were important, in it, it, it within the confederacy of Sisters have now within the, this new, kind of style of, domestic organization or family or whatever we call it, that now grandmothers are becoming much more directly responsible, in many cases for, they are become the primary, if you like, carers and nurturers for grandchildren.

So that's something which is very much a tendency. Yeah.

Thank you. Good. Very good question. No go or do you do it now In your discussions with colleagues in, and, it's within Amazonian studies, can you just say a little bit about any, conclusions you arrived at in respect to what I was saying in the beginning, which is like, how general is this pattern? And I mean in other words, it do, would you and other colleagues think that? Yes, in most cases, when you do get a transition, it's in that direction from Mat Mackey to, to bright price, bright service and that, I mean, is how did this, how did your work fit into a wider pattern, I suppose? Okay. there are some colleagues who've looked at, the same kind of things that I've done, and some of them have come, have found, very similar patterns emerging where they've worked like, Dean Bartholomew amongst, or Arena, for example, has written, about Pride Service Arena, our, Sweden horticultural group, group, horticulturalist group in, Peru in, the Peruvian Amazon.

And, there's also, colleagues who've worked, done some very interesting work, amongst colleagues who've done some interesting work amongst the, the Kuna who of, Panama who, kind of unusual, group of people, but in some ways they're quite like, the Mosquito in some ways, but in other ways, not like them at all.

But, the, people who, anthropologists who worked on the Kuna have found, some of the things that I've describing have described those as well.

There are, many, people who work low and South Americanists who are, the tendency is, for many, low and South American to focus on, if you like, we can use perhaps what is perhaps a slight, I dunno if it's a dated distinction or not, but focus on culture rather than society and so, whereas I, I'm interested here in looking at social processes that many, colleagues who are, I guess Americanists, we could call them, worked in lowland South America.

South South and Central America, are interested in more kind of things like, myth and ritual and language and ideas, which is all very interesting.

But I think those things need to be, I, I think my criticism of some of them is that they need to anchor their work more in, social processes, ? So that's my own feeling. Yeah. Mm-Hmm.

Because those, I mean, I guess those myths have been Those myths of, sorry.

Okay. So that the, the prospect is with these transition processes that we've got some models potentially for earlier historic processes of evolution from, what, what we construe is probably the very original egalitarian hunter gatherers using by service, going into economies where there's much more movable wealth and yeah.

Things like pig farming, things like livestock obviously, and then land owning, with bride wealths.

But the difficulty obviously is, is really do we correlate those processes with these very modern situations, that are creating real inequities of, of wealth? And what's so interesting is the, the flux going on.

So you've got two types of, yeah.

Two types of processes or trajectories going in different directions in the same clay you see them. Yeah. And I think if, if you found there's some interesting work being done in Central Africa, which has looked at these kind of things by, on the Suku, for example, where they've looked at this, kind of thing and, interesting ways, by the fellow who wrote, that kinship textbook that I used to teach, what's his name again? What? Holy Not Yeah, Lala. Yeah.

He's got, that, and he, in his book, he discusses, it's a textbook on kinship, but he looked, he looks at exactly this, he added a section on this process because he's clearly quite interested in this, what's going on.

Yes. And he cites some examples of something very similar that's going on in Africa.

Yes. yeah, I mean, There was also ca what's her name, Chloe's book on the matrilineal group in the Lupo Valley, and then the Protestantism of the, of the people who broke away from the matrilineal clan and began working for their own like household Mm-Hmm.

that same process, although I wasn't involved in this kind of the criminality or the, or the luck and chance.

Well, that's quite interesting.

cause what you're saying, I haven't read that, but it sounds like it's, if you like, it's, culture that's determined that Yeah and insofar as thinking new ideas about Yeah.

morality and so forth, whereas some people have approached it with a more perhaps technological determinism.

Mm-Hmm. And one thinks of perhaps some of the work that has examined why you have the ma the so-called matrilineal belt in Africa.

Yeah. You know, which is, Zambia, Zimbabwe, parts of Congo and Bwe, all that, that area is predominantly, matrilineal descent and what's the reason for that is because there isn't much cattle and because there isn't much cattle, 'cause the tey fly.

So with that, the tely is in the sense, preserved, preserved naturally. Yeah, Yeah, yeah.

I said in harmony. Yeah.

I was only gonna say that, that you, you with everybody, the stories, the myth of the ideas of how to do things will then be adapted to suit what you actually Oh, yeah. What you do. Mm-Hmm.

Yes, exactly. The social, yeah.

The culture follows the social process, different D aspects of it, depending for sure.

Yeah. And I, I, I, that's why I included, things like kitty alley for ritual and the myth of the foundation at Illa with, the, the five sisters and everything.

Yes. Because I wanted to show that, myth and ritual are, embedded in kind of, social processes and ideas about, social processes.

Someone on Zoom wanted to know if you had played Kitty Ali.

yes, I have, I have played Kitty Ali. Yeah.

it's, and he Wouldn't win.

Well, they, they always say, and this is a classic bride surface argument, and I love it because it's so bride service, they always say, oh, the women always win because the men get drunk and miss their shot and that you couldn't sort of, make up a better, cause, men, create solidarity in-laws through ritual drinking that they get drunk.

But women win because they do in bride service societies.

So this is the thing. So this is, those two ideas are captured in this nice little idea that, kitty Alley is always won by women cause men get too drunk and miss their shots.

So, I've played it. Yeah.

But it, but it's quite clear that there will be circumstances we've spoken about the Sister-in-law or animosity, but also about, was it Delsey who is this fist fighting and gun toting lady? But, But there fight. Yeah.

No, she doesn't, in fact, she gets others to do before.

Yes. But, women will soon, some women will have interests in going with the patri-lineal situation.

There will be a kind of, split apart or Yeah.

Of different way a division of a a, a kind of divide and rule.

So you've got a very diff a great difference between Delcy on the one hand, who's perhaps a product of this new kind of style.

Mm-Hmm. And then, you've got Fela, who is the Allwell woman who's the fist fighting, user of Sary.

That's Fran, yeah. Right, right. Yeah.

That, she represents, tough women in the old kind of, old, yeah.

So Fela's old school buff old. Yeah.

What, what about women and firearms? Yeah.

women and Firearms.

generally firearms seem to be women's kind of things, so, but women, kind of sometimes give firearms to hide and it's suspected that, Delsey still might have part of whatever, the police didn't find of Dean's arsenal, ? So That mean, do women actually use firearms? no. what i, I have seen is though that women using knives, I remember I was in, staying in, Carala, which is, a awa village, but it's Mosquito speaking.

It's just like same kind of thing.

In fact, ELA is from there.

And, there was this, I was staying in this little kind of guest house there, and an Austrian sociologist who knows quite a lot about Rag, but he hadn't been to this partner in Greg for Jorge, Greenberg.

And, he said to me, he said, well, so what do you think, Carala, what do you think is really interesting about Carala Carala? You had these groups of confederacy of sisters who were much more at odds than the equivalents were in Pilla.

This was real warfare between different groups.

So I told him that, and he said, oh, surely not and the very next morning we woke up to a, a kerfuffle in front of the veranda of two women going at it and some of them produced a knife, but she was restrained, fortunately by someone else and so on and he said, I think you're right, humor.

But I, is this an escalation of levels of violence because of the weaponry? Yeah, yeah. I mean, there's definitely, um there is, now, there are murders some in the last few days that I've heard, not in Cilla, but, in the, in the Lagoon, which is the area of only about 10,000 people in the Butch Cilla is one of 12 communities in the lagoon.

There was a murder just a few days ago.

And, it, it, it's it's two murders, in fact.

Yeah. And, yeah.

Whoa, Not good.

No, it's not. So, before the, they were very, very rare.

There were fist fights between, fist people, fist, but, you never heard of, killings at all.

And, now this violence has become much more serious.

So would you say that the, the greater the access to this new source of wealth, these two new sources of wealth has in ordinarily gone to the men, so therefore there's pressure towards a, a, that kind of pride, wealth asset and perhaps a local system because of their basically a great economic belief? Yeah, just one thing there though.

I don't think it's really gone to bride wealth.

It's going to something different, but we don't really, I'm not really even sure what it is yet, but it doesn't look like bride wealth insofar as, that women aren't kind of, or women's labor isn't transacted with any kind of movable goods or anything like that.

So it's not like that. But so the male That hasn't stabilized enough to be able to create that? Yeah, either that, or it's something that I haven't, I identified it doesn't look like any, is it Solidified language? is it solidifying marriages to be long? Is it becoming in women's interest to have more permanent marriage bonds in that situation? Or is it likely to, or I dunno, You Dunno. It's, I really don't know.

It's a really interesting question.

And, I, I, I, I, I don't, I just don't know So there's a plan. Very Interesting question For future research.

Yeah, I think so.

I mean, I think I've heard a lot of points from everyone tonight that have made me think about, stuff that I hadn't thought about before. You know? No, it's a totally fascinating case study and where it's gonna go to in a few years.

It's amazing.

Yeah. Also, because I, I don't know how much this is, how much factor there is in it, because I haven't really pursued it properly, but I've heard do you, have you heard of Jeju Island in Korea? Jeju Island. It's this island in Korea where you get these female free divers.

So they're women who kind of free dive for, seafood.

So they dive without, oxygen tanks and they've been doing this, apparently this, this started, during either the first or second world, or maybe the first one or something like that, at, at around that time.

This is what I hear.

But because, because they started freediving and collecting all this, seafood essentially and then over time that seafood, the value of that has gone up.

So the women are bringing in a lot of cash. Mm-Hmm.

And, I hear, and as a result of that, men are staying home more and, they're doing more, childcare.

Mm-Hmm. And so it seems like, because otherwise they were, they were, they were patrilineal and patri local or whatever as the rest of Korea.

But now in Jeju Island, I've heard you get these slightly different patterns and also these similar kinds of things because that free diving, skills are passed down by women to other women, and they That's Interesting. Can that be Summarized? Yeah. Yeah. J so it's a place called Jeju Island Shack. Yeah.

I'll just spell it here And read on the, the chat.

Yeah. But I mean, but the other thing, Korea, Jeju Island, Korea, South Korea. North Korea, Korea, I don't know exactly which part of Korea.

Oh, South Korea. South Korea.

So the, the women have traditions of free driving for what? Pearls or what? No, for various kinds of seafood.

Seafood, basically like, seafood at the so things like, that very expensive sea abalone, Abalone, You know, all sorts of other things.

Cash rich seafood, yeah.

But passing traditions down through mother to daughter, mother to daughter.

Well, I don't know about mother to daughter groups of women.

They're staying at home doing childcare while the women are doing this.

I hear, but I don't know how much truth there is to this, but to all, but also that the women, they, and, and they, they, they die in groups.

So they dive in groups and I think for some reason the women do seem to be better diving because even when you, you go diving with a tank, men use up oxygen much faster than, women for an oxygen tank.

You know, like scuba diving.

Have better, women have better, yeah. That's Actually, they might do Actually the, the anxiety and the carbon dogs.

That's seems by theory, by, But yeah, I mean, on the, the northern Mosquito further north than where I was, they, died for lobster.

It's men who died for lobster.

And, the lobster been getting, the, the low hanging fruit, in other words, the lobster that is, um in the more, the easier to die areas gets harder to find.

They having, having to go to areas where they have to dive deeper and deeper.

And, because there isn't necessarily enough, good equipment for decompression and people having to dive more that many people have become permanently, disabled through getting what they known as the bends, ? and, yeah.

also another thing with diving, that diving, men go diving together and it's produced a whole in the north, a whole kind of diving culture that's centered on the regional capital of coa.

and men will sell, their, catches, um they'll come off the boats and they'll sell all their catches or be paid for if they're being employed by someone, in, in dollars or perhaps order or they might be paid in cocaine.

And, then, this, this culture has grown up of men after, as soon as they come off the boat, that the women are all in Puerto bases.

They're all waiting for them to try and intercept them before they get off into taxis in Puerto Casa, which, which region capital and go off spending their money on all kinds of, wine women and song, basically.

Yes. So the, there's a very good, interesting book about, women divers, Mosquito divers, which is not in the capital, but in a village, much about same size, Cilla called Curry and Honduras by, Laura Hurley Hay, if anyone's interested she's quite a character. Laura. She's written, a rock opera in Mesquite. You can find it online.

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