

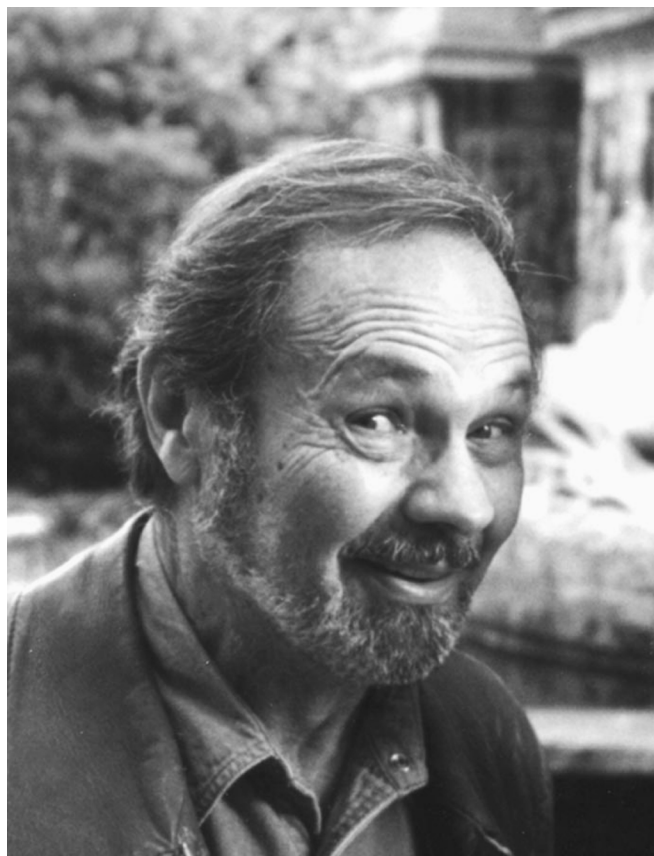
theoretical developments but it also directly inspired a great deal of recent historical and anthropological work. For Cohn, India was never devoid of history, and colonialism was no longer a problem of the distortion of certain kinds of sources. Yet he never accepted the reductive notion that colonialism was all-powerful. He taught his students to read colonial documents against the grain before we knew about deconstruction. He asked his students to bring history and anthropology together in ways that went beyond his own proposals for disciplinary rapprochement, for creating new kinds of archives, for writing different kinds of histories—of village, temples, castes, and kingdoms. He saw his real work to be goading his students to do the kind of work he knew he had only begun, and in most cases could not possibly do himself. In his graduate seminars he displayed a virtuosity that inspired his students with humility and more than a little fear. And yet he could reduce his audience to convulsions of laughter, even as he gave some of his most profound lessons with one liners: “When you get your graduate student obsession with being a theorist out of the way come and talk to me”; “do only one dissertation at a time”; and “I don’t care what your discipline is as long as you are ashamed of it.”

During Cohn’s years at the University of Chicago, which included chairing the department of anthropology between 1969 and 1972, he also served as a visiting professor at New York University, the University of Michigan, and the California Institute of Technology.

Over the last years of his scholarly career, Barney developed an interest in the history, iconography, and culture of the cemetery. In addition to commencing a study of the history of British colonial cemeteries in India, he took to visiting cemeteries whenever he traveled. Everywhere he went, he would seek out local cemeteries and walk his hosts and friends through a practical lesson in the historical anthropology of memorialization around death. Little did his friends and colleagues know that his own life would be cut off so soon, first from active scholarship by illness, and then by his death. To memorialize him properly, one might remember these walks, in which Barney would display his own special blend of historical seriousness and anthropological play. He saw monuments, buildings, and other historical “sites” as the markers of ways in which memory and history collided and then combined, requiring serious attention both to the quotidian nature of the lived world and its multiple historical determinations. Barney wore his learning with lightness and grace, but along with the originality and influence of his publications, we remember his wit and his capacity to take the questions of history so seriously while acknowledging how much fun it was to study history. He gave us formative models about how to do—as well as how to conceptualize—historical anthropology, but he also gave us a model of how to be a scholar in the world. All of us interested in the historical anthropology of India and of the colonial state more generally must walk in his shadow for a very long time to come.

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Claude Meillassoux, Paris. (Photo courtesy of Tom Bassett)

## Claude Meillassoux (1925–2005)

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Claude Meillassoux, a leading French social anthropologist who influenced the development of Marxist, historically informed anthropology in Europe and in the English-speaking world, died on January 2, 2005, in Paris. He was born on December 26, 1925, in the northern French city of Roubaix, into a wealthy family involved in the textile industry. After Claude graduated from the Institut d’Etudes Politiques in 1947, his family sent him to the United States to learn the new management techniques so as to eventually lead the family business. He earned an M.A. in economics and

political science from the University of Michigan in 1949. After serving as an interpreter for two years in the Marshall Plan administration and then working for a marketing and advertising firm in France, he changed course by turning to left-wing politics. In 1953–54 he became engaged in the Comité d'Action des Gauches Indépendantes, a small group of politically active intellectuals supported by Jean-Paul Sartre, and in 1957 he joined the Nouvelle Gauche, an alliance of radical groups that produced documents on current social and political conditions in the world.

In 1955, Meillassoux was hired by Georges Balandier to work in an International Social Science Council project funded by UNESCO. Balandier was then a young scholar establishing a reputation with two major books at the crossroads of anthropology and sociology (Balandier 1955a, 1955b), which focused on the colonial regime rather than on some essence of Africa captured by factoring out the colonial presence. Balandier assigned Meillassoux the task of reading British works and preparing reports for him, helping him to discover an anthropology that differed from academic trends in France. He also took a seminar with Paul Mercier on urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, two sets of influences marked Meillassoux's early career: the socialist circles independent of the prestigious post-war group of thinkers affiliated with the French Communist Party, and English-language social anthropology, including the works of Max Gluckman and his students (which Balandier and Mercier valued) and later the economic anthropology of Paul Bohannan and other U.S. substantivists.

In 1958, Balandier sent Meillassoux to Côte d'Ivoire to carry out the first of a series of investigations he started directing with geographer Gilles Sautter in the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes 6th section, (which in 1973 was reorganized and renamed Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales [EHESS]). Meillassoux was to study the Gouro, and he was paired with a coworker, Ariane Deluz, who later also published works on the Gouro. In that eventful year, president Charles De Gaulle proposed his limited referendum to the African colonies, offering them partial autonomy within the French community to stem demands for immediate independence. Meillassoux recollected how the small administrator and settler community shunned him when he revealed that he sided with Africans who demanded full independence.

Two years later, in 1960, Meillassoux published his first article resulting from fieldwork. It was immediately greeted in France as a turning point in anthropology. Its impact in the English-speaking world was more gradual but equally profound, and with hindsight it can be said that few single articles in the history of anthropology modified the intellectual ground so deeply. The article departed from earlier anthropological literature by focusing on the relations that control labor within a farm community. The senior elders achieved control with their mastery of social knowledge and of the terms and timing of marriages, while they delegated the management of food stocks to junior elders who headed the households. Women constituted a paral-

lel but subordinate hierarchy. Meillassoux also considered how these communities established a degree of contact with extralocal commerce without losing their identity. Among other things, the article brought economic anthropology to France and an awareness of the work of Karl Polanyi and many of the British economic anthropologists.

In 1962, Meillassoux participated in a project on African markets led by Paul Bohannan and George Dalton, and he contributed a chapter in English on Gouro markets. Meillassoux adhered to the substantivist school of economic anthropology more decidedly than did the younger French left-leaning anthropologists whom he influenced, most of whom at some point published critical remarks on Polanyi. In 1962, too, Meillassoux defended his doctoral thesis (troisième cycle) under Balandier, which was published two years later as a thick volume (Meillassoux 1964). It is one of the few important publications of Meillassoux that have not been translated, but it became the model for the new anthropology of the late 1960s and 1970s and was frequently referenced in England and the United States.

Meillassoux's early publications were noted not only in anthropology but also in the wider field of European social thought. In the years following World War II, scholars seeking new openings in Marxism were particularly impressed by a set of manuscripts of Marx that had been discovered only in the interwar period and published under the title *Grundrisse*, which included an extended section on non-European societies. The concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production became a hot topic of discussion and the hallmark of what was dubbed "Western Marxism." The historian Jean Suret-Canale brought the concept to African studies. Meillassoux's writings steered the discussion away from this concept toward ethnography. In 1965, the philosopher Louis Althusser published two collections of essays that made him the leading thinker in Europe, and in a more abstract way he also placed "mode of production" at the center of his social commentary. Meillassoux remained indifferent to this trend as well.

Younger historians and anthropologists later tried to synthesize Meillassoux's and Althusser's separate inspirations. Emmanuel Terray (1969) reinterpreted Meillassoux's ethnography in terms of the coexistence of different modes of production; translated into English, Terray's essay was at times treated as a summary of Meillassoux's less-accessible original volume, although its tenor was completely different. Some scholars referred to a "lineage mode of production"; Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch proposed an "African mode of production"; Pierre Pilippe Rey elaborated Meillassoux's observations on the mutual adaptation of European and local African social systems into a complex theoretical construct, "the articulation of modes of production." Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, Marc Augé, Georges Dupré, Eric Pollet, and Grace Winter were among anthropologists of the younger generation who wrote brilliant studies of African communities in the path opened by Meillassoux, without reference to the language of "modes of production." In this growing company, Meillassoux's own voice became less

distinguishable, at any rate in the English-speaking world, and his views were merged with those of the younger authors he inspired, although they often argued against him in what was a contentious intellectual milieu.

In anthropology, Meillassoux's work contrasted with two tendencies in France. The broader one stemmed from Claude Lévi-Strauss, who after a series of important publications was elected professor in the Collège de France in 1960. *Anthropologie sociale*, which Lévi-Strauss had introduced in its English meaning to France, and structuralism vied with Sartre's existentialism for the nation's attention. Lévi-Strauss recruited as a disciple the young and upcoming philosophy graduate, Maurice Godelier, who went on to conduct fieldwork in New Guinea. Godelier brought together influences from structuralism and Marxism, becoming an alternative pole to Meillassoux. As Balandier—with his emphasis on political process, the sociology of emerging African nations, and the critique of colonialism—constituted a counterweight to Lévi-Strauss's speculative anthropology, so Meillassoux stood in an analogous position of contrast to Godelier, representing a more fieldwork-oriented Marxist anthropology.

The second tendency in France was the important ethnography conducted in West Africa by Marcel Griaule and his collaborators. In contact with the avant-garde art circles in Paris, they ignored the work of an earlier generation of well-known Africanists. After 1947, Griaule had moved away from the study of material culture, in which he had made a seminal contribution in his early years, toward imaginative examination of systems of thought, an interest continued by his students and followers. They were aloof to history and the presence of Islam, but also untouched by structuralism. Meillassoux with his ideas and emotional support opened some space to younger researchers such as Walter van Beek and Jacky Bouju, who had started research among the Dogon and felt uneasy about the post-1948 ethnographic style of Griaule, Germaine Dieterlen, and their disciples (Beek 2004:52, 60, 63). Members of the Griaule circle and the young scholars fostered by Meillassoux often encountered each other as rivals for the few positions that opened up in the African field.

The early period of Meillassoux's work also marked the feminist debates of the 1970s and 1980s. Many participants in these debates were indebted to Meillassoux for pointing out generational rivalry, the importance of marriage in the constitution of the farming unit, and transitions to market production. In the style of those decades, however, Meillassoux drew as much fire as praise. In particular, his *Femmes, greniers et capitaux* (1975a), which with translations into six languages is the most widely diffused of all Meillassoux's writings and offered a systematic account of the absorption of the self-sustaining farm community into the capitalist world, was criticized for confusing social and demographic reproduction, for making women invisible, and for homogenizing the category of women. It is possible that a dispassionate reading today would draw more tempered conclusions (as, e.g., in Guyer 1981), but Meillassoux responded by trying to clarify some of his positions.

In 1964, Meillassoux was recruited to the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), and that year he started fieldwork in Mali and in Senegal. He returned to these areas repeatedly for many years, focusing on the Soninke and the wider Mande world. This work led to writings infused with a profound sense of history. He critically incorporated the rich harvest of philological and historical work accomplished by the generation of scholars that Griaule had discarded, notably that of Charles Monteil. This period stretched over much of Meillassoux's productive life, although it is less well known in the English-speaking world than the shorter Gouro phase. It generated publications on a wide range of topics: a book-length transcription and translation of a griot text, a Soninke dictionary, maps of precolonial forts, old maps of West Africa, writings on theatrical traditions, Ibn Battuta's West Africa travels, women's hairdo styles, historical legends of various groups, narratives of precolonial wars, and the bureaucratic process and class in modern Mali, as well as a book on voluntary associations in Bamako, which was part of a larger study initiated by the International African Institute (IAI). Meillassoux expressed regret that he had been able to publish only a small part of his ethnographic material because he was often derailed by the urge to respond to politically relevant topics or to participate in current debates.

From 1969 on, for about a decade, Meillassoux ran a legendary seminar in Paris, which is remembered as "the Meillassoux seminar." It was a place of cross-disciplinary encounters and innovation, but also a forum for discussing "fundamental questions... the link between traditional economies and capitalist economy, lineage societies and the construction of nation-states, neo-colonialism and imperialism, development and underdevelopment" (Schlemmer 2005). Two important academic volumes and a book contributing to policy debates came out of this seminar. The first was the famous bilingual volume on the development of trade in West Africa (1971), which, drawing on an IAI-funded meeting in Freetown, included African, British, and U.S. contributors. Comparing it to Paul Bohannan and George Dalton (1962), one is surprised today that only a decade separates these two volumes; a tribute to the vigor of intellectual discussions in the 1960s, but also to Meillassoux's personal impact on the field. Most contributions were alert to history and regional flows, which resonate even more strongly with the tone given by Meillassoux's own masterful introduction. The second book dealt with slavery in precolonial West Africa (Meillassoux 1975b). Reading the contributions to this volume, one realizes how Meillassoux's historical acuity drew anthropologists and historians to drop their reluctance to deal with this subject because it brought to mind colonial discourses and contradicted Rousseauian notions of harmonious native life. It became the first of a long series of important writings on slavery by many scholars, including Meillassoux himself (1986). The third volume was a response to the Sahel drought (Meillassoux 1974). It argued the responsibility of the North for worsening an ecological disaster, an argument that was picked up in public discussions. Two other

important collections, the volumes on primitivism in anthropology edited by Jean-Loup Amselle (1979) and on war edited by Jean Bazin and Emmanuel Terray (1982) also took shape in this seminar.

Meillassoux directed several colloquia and produced a number of works on South Africa, making him a participant in international debates on the Apartheid regime and a pioneer in anti-Apartheid public opinion in France. After writing editorials in newspapers and contributing to anonymous tracts on the topic, he published a selection from the South African press preceded by his own introduction (Meillassoux 1979). In the 1980s, he edited two book-length reports on South Africa, prepared for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNESCO, respectively, and between 1988 and 1991 he directed a CNRS team focusing on southern Africa.

A theme that appeared periodically under different guises in Meillassoux's writing was the way immigration and labor reserves increased the pool of labor available cheaply to industrial centers. It was the core of his theory of modern imperialism. He also wrote on foraging groups, initially inspired by Colin Turnbull but based on a wide set of comparative material. This work was well received by specialists in the field. He was invited to write an overview of the contributions made to the Fourth International Conference of Hunting and Gathering Societies held in London in 1986, but he was unable to attend. His long essay on hunters of the Arctic is a continuation of this interest. Another topic to which he contributed was caste in India. In his final years Meillassoux put his scholarship and militancy in the service of denouncing child labor in the world, contributing a theoretical chapter and a conclusion to a volume on this theme (Schlemmer 2000).

Meillassoux's last major work was on kinship (2001), which he had been preparing for several years. This 480-page tome is not tightly integrated but has a common thread. The book begins with a long chapter maintaining that many anthropological studies of kinship continue to rely surreptitiously on a biological notion of kinship, projected from contemporary Euro-American understandings. Structuralism, including influential contemporary work of Françoise Héritier, is singled out as a target. Meillassoux proposes instead that a functional relationship between members of domestic units is the reality that anthropologists mistake for kinship. A second section presents a tripartite discussion of foraging societies (with a long chapter on the Inuit), domestic communities, and warrior-aristocratic societies. Meillassoux argues that the naturalist model of kinship emerged in societies of the third type, in which power holders sought to limit succession to persons whom they could dominate personally. The final section of the book offers an interpretation of Inca kingship, focusing on how the emergence of the dynastic system led to a strong sense of consanguinity, culminating in royal incest. Meillassoux's overall thesis clearly has an affinity with the views associated in the United States with David Schneider, whom Meillassoux quotes albeit not as a major inspiration, and undoubtedly others would subject him to the same criti-

cisms on logical and empirical grounds that were made in the kinship debates in the United States

In an interview with the newspaper *L'Humanité* (October 26, 2001), Meillassoux differentiated between being inspired by Marx and being inspired by Marxism; Marx's words, he said, are not catechism but an orientation. Both his activism and his scholarship accorded with this view. He quoted Marx sparingly and avoided technical-sounding vocabulary derived from Marx, but he did not hesitate to describe himself as Marxist. One notion that he absorbed from his readings underlay many of his theoretical constructions: That of social reproduction of (1) the domestic community through marriage and authority patterns, (2) unpaid labor in the case of child labor or immigration, and (3) slavery and trade in the turbulent past of West Africa. This was perhaps his greatest originality at a time when much anthropological discourse aimed at synchronic representation, and it is still relevant.

Meillassoux continued to write and publish until his last months and a few pieces are scheduled for publication posthumously. Claude Meillassoux blazed many trails and put his imprint on the social anthropology of an era. He was also a warm, generous, and unassuming man, one who inspired others with his seamless blend of scholarly enthusiasm and political engagement. He is survived by his partner of many years, Corrine Belliard, a son, and a granddaughter.<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTE

1. Among the many tributes to Meillassoux on his death, those by Emmanuel Terray in 2005, *L'Homme* 174:269–72; by Jean Copans in 2005, *Cahiers d'Études africaines* 45(177):5–13; and by Schlemmer (2005) are particularly informative. The Schlemmer document also contains a nearly complete list of Meillassoux's publications.

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Elisabeth Jane Tooker. (Photo courtesy of Kurt Carstensen)

## Elisabeth Jane Tooker (1927–2005)

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Iroquoianists have lost one of their major scholars with the death of Elisabeth Tooker on January 13, 2005, in Philadelphia. As a researcher and author, she was remarkably productive. Although her interests in North Ameri-

can ethnology and ethnohistory were wide ranging, she made a specialty of Iroquois studies and the work of Lewis Henry Morgan. She was also active in a number of anthropological organizations, including service as editor for the *American Ethnological Society* (1978–82) and as president of the *American Society for Ethnohistory* (1981–82).

Elisabeth Tooker was born in Brooklyn, New York, on August 2, 1927, and grew up in the village of Riverhead, New York. Her father, Clyde Tooker, was a lawyer who had joined his father's practice. Her mother, Amy (née Luce), had been a social worker and a teacher. She had worked with the progressive educator Elisabeth Irwin, founder of the Little Red School House movement, and she named her firstborn for her friend.

Betty and her siblings, Robert and Margaret, were educated in the public schools of Riverhead. On graduation from high school, Betty attended Radcliffe College at Harvard University, receiving her B.A. in 1949. Always intellectually curious, she showed an early interest in scholarship and in an academic career. Her initial research focus was on the Southwest Indians. From 1949 to 1952, she did fieldwork among the Papago and Yaqui, and received an M.A. in 1953 from the University of Arizona with a thesis entitled "Papagos in Tucson: An Introduction to Their History, Community Life, and Acculturation." She then returned to Radcliffe for her doctoral work and became a teaching fellow at Harvard in 1956–57. From 1957 to 1960, she was an instructor at the University of Buffalo while completing her doctoral requirements.

Teaching in Massachusetts and Buffalo, Betty became increasingly interested in Indians of the Northeast, especially the Iroquois. She began attending the Conference on Iroquois Research, an informal group of both established and younger scholars interested in pursuing Iroquois studies. It had been organized in 1945 by Merle H. Deardorff, Charles E. Congdon, and William N. Fenton and subsequently met more or less regularly until its success in reviving Iroquois studies made it an annual and more formal affair. Fenton, with his vast knowledge of the Iroquois and a good command of the Seneca language, became a significant guide to Betty as she entered the Iroquois field. In 1958, she had begun doing fieldwork with the Tonawanda Seneca, near Buffalo. That year, while teaching at Buffalo, she promoted the organization of an ongoing informal discussion group with the other two Iroquoianists on the faculty—Marian White and Wallace Chafe—to share knowledge in their fields of ethnography, archeology, and linguistics.

Betty received her Ph.D. from Radcliffe in 1958. Her dissertation topic was "Ritual, Power and the Supernatural: A Comparative Study of Indian Religions in Southwestern United States." She returned to Harvard as a teaching assistant in 1960–61 and then secured a post at Mount Holyoke College as an assistant professor (1961–65).

By this time, Tooker's major research interest had clearly shifted from the Southwest to the Northern Iroquois. Between 1958 and 1973, she engaged in fieldwork among Seneca of upstate New York, primarily at Tonawanda but also at Allegany. She was fortunate to study the culture at