CHAPTER 10

James Casey: Extrapolating from Early Modern Iberia

1 The Sociological Laboratory of Early Modern Spain

James Casey is professor and *Emeritus Reader* for the *School of History* at the *University of East Anglia* where he teaches and writes about family structure and parochial communities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. His publications include, *The Kingdom of Valencia in the Seventeenth Century* (1979), *The History of the Family* (1989), *Early Modern Spain: A Social History* (1999), and *Family and Community in Early Modern Spain: The Citizens of Granada 1570–1739* (2007).[1] In his preface to *The History of the Family*, R. I. Moore remarks on Casey's placement of the family in broad intellectual and historiographical perspective; perspective that situates the family unit as the fundamental atom from which the molecules of culture are fashioned. This summation could not be more apt. In this as in other works, Casey implicitly asks, how family organization affected social organization, and how social organization recursively affected family organization. Casey partly confines his studies to Early Modern Spain, but even thus geographically restricted, the complexity of his topic is legion. So, while his spatial and temporal scope is more circumscribed than that of Michael Mann, the sociologist introduced in Chapter 15, or that of world historian William McNeill just discussed in the previous chapter, it is not surprising that

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Casey explicitly struggles to find intelligible themes amidst disorienting detail. For instance, in his introduction to *The History of the Family*, Casey discusses the proliferation of detail, which threatens to derail the scholar's organizational efforts, even as it impresses and informs. "The tunnels being sunk into the past are numerous, short and uncoordinated," Casey (1989; p. xii) writes, "with the consequent risk of fatigue, asphyxia or a cave-in." To avoid asphyxia and related risks, Casey reviews historical and ethnographic data within theoretical frameworks developed by Montagne, Morgan, Montesquieu, de Tocqueville, Durkheim, Engels, and Chateaubriand, among other forerunners of modern historiography, economics, and sociology.

Casey intensively researches regional variation in *lineal descent*, *consanguinity*, and *patterns of inheritance* as they alternately impede or impel state formation. First, citing nineteenth-century anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan, Casey exposes the general correlation between patrilineal descent and the development of *high civilization*. As economic development ramped up and capital accrued, "…households began to acquire patrimonies, which men wished to transmit to their offspring. This led to efforts to monopolize the sexual services of wives, with a view to establishing clear lines of paternity"[2] (Casey 1989; p. 6). With augmented concern over female chastity came greater disapproval of premarital liaisons, elopement, bastardy, and autonomous partner choice. "Eventually," Casey (1989; p. 6) explains, "the state rendered the tribe redundant, and left the conjugal family household as the basic focus of human loyalties." Second, there is *consanguinity*; that is, having common blood, denoting genetic relatedness. *Endogamous* marriages, wherein mates are found among kin, increase consanguinity; whereas *exogamous* marriages, wherein mates are found among non-kin, decrease consanguinity. There are two competing interests, one recommending endogamy and one recommending exogamy. Couples have to avoid inbreeding depression, the risk of which increases with genetic similarity to one's mate. On the other hand, females can be looked upon as a resource which the family is loath to give over to outsiders.[3] Different cultures walked on different sides of this line. As contrasting examples, Casey puts forth Germanic peoples who married out, and Arab peoples who married within the clan. Recurring over generations, being on one or another side of this divide has implications that redound all the way to the highest level of state organization. Casey notes that the endogamy practiced by Islamists, for instance, created consanguineous conglomerates that frayed as relatedness

diminished. In turn, exogamy created more extensive communities that cohered over broader regions. Third, "nothing perhaps contributed more to the fashioning of family structure," Casey advises "than the system of inheritance" (Casey 1999; p. 197). To simply tabulate inheritance misses the significance of its social function as a barometer of conflict and cooperation between families, and among generations (Casey 1999; p. 199). Even subtle distinctions between the *bride wealth* of Northern Europe, and the *dowry* of more southerly regions, can mark profound differences in motivation and expectation. The former is apt to signify a contribution to an autonomous household, with the effect of strengthening its head; while the latter may represent an ongoing controlling interest in the bride by empowering her male relatives at the expense of her husband (Casey 1989; p. 77). Vying back and forth between patrilineal and mixed power relations was represented in law, with the Lateran Council of 1215 bolstering the bridewealth, and the thirteenth-century revival of Roman Law codifying the dower tradition. With the operation of these systems over time, the Anglo-Saxon home became more fully autonomous than its southern European counterpart, saddled as it was with competing claims of two lineages (Casey 1989; p. 78).

2 The State and the Family Unit

Together, these three sociological variables are greater than the sum of their parts. Joined by a *spirit of capitalism*, a *market economy*, and the *division of labor*, lineal descent, consanguinity and patterns of inheritance each had a role to play as drivers of state formation, and markers of progress toward social complexity. When property was unambiguously transmitted through a single lineage, when exogamous marriages were practiced, and when inheritance became reliably transmitted, there was progression toward "an integrated and egalitarian community, overriding particular bonds of family and favor." This is what de Tocqueville recognized as a *democratic society*: "an economic and political framework within which competition for status is regulated by universal and standard rules, free of the patronage and corruption which characterize less highly integrated societies" (Casey 1989; p. 165). Patrimonial government and corrupting patronage, having weakened in the solvent of Republicanism, allowed de Tocqueville to report that "in America a man never obeys another man, but only justice or the law." However, the American republic was but the culminating end. In transitioning to modern state

forms, national governments had to take care not to stoke lineal resentments. Public order had to be imposed, but nepotistic leanings, like clannish resentments, had to be delicately adjudicated. Spain exemplifies the kin-based fractionalization that always threatened to degenerate into factionalism (Casey 1989). Alternatively, take France on the eve of the Revolution. As late as 1789, *lettres de cachet*, and the exceptions for nobility that they embodied, were just giving way to due process, which was to become a marker of nineteenth-century liberalism. States came to monopolize force, eventually outlawing the vendetta, blood feud, and duel, along with brigandage and banditry (Casey 1989; p. 58).

By the end of this tenuous process of state building, with its fits and stops, ebbs and flows, and with its groping and halting progression toward social accretion, one finds an interesting process of segmentation. We wind up with a notion of *family*, fully distinct from that of *nation*. This is, however, hardly where the story starts. Probably extending into prehistory, the two concepts were one. There were hunter-gatherer bands, and thereafter enlarged tribal units of extended kin. The nuclear family was harder to recognize amidst the larger mass of grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, first and third cousins. Paternity was less certain, and what male parental care there was, tended to be distributed across many men, and consigned to many women and children. Of course, this was not to say there was no paternal recognition, special emphasis, or favoritism. Indeed, there was nothing like a Platonic commune, in which all parents raised all children. Still, it is a far cry from the archetypical Victorian family. To the degree that kinship bands persisted, they acted simultaneously as an impediment to autonomous household formation, and to formal state formation.

3 The Evolution of Family Structure as a Barometer and Driver of Social Change

James Casey's work integrates the study of family into the history of nation building. Only with these two topics so consistently treated alongside one another is it possible to make inferences into the interaction between the two. Casey shows how the modern nation state matured and solidified alongside the nuclear family. Again, clannishness and tribalism slowly acceded to concepts of citizenship, with the family unit comprising the atom of the state. One can group these sociological variables into clusters, occupying opposite extremes along a spectrum of social

complexity. We maintain that these many variables have overlapping relevance with life history evolution, as it is discussed psychologically with respect to individuals, and sociologically with respect to populations. Exchanging extended kin groups, consanguineous bloodlines, polygynous mating systems, finite movable property, small dual inheritance, and nepotism, for nuclear families, exogenous marriage, monogamous mating systems, bourgeois capital, large patrimonies, and republicanism, marks the transition from *fLH*-selected to *sLH*-selected social organization. As Casey contends, changes in family organization underlay changes in social organization. Building upon this insight, we contend that changes in family organization and social organization were alike driven by ecological conditions and engendered evolutionary change.

To understand the relevant ecological conditions, it should be noted that the aforementioned differences in family organization, relatedness, mating systems, property, inheritance, and law, change as a function of time, yes; but also as a function of space. At present, there is a crude correlation running north and south across lines of latitude. Families tend to become more nuclear, and states solidify, as one moves north. Being that this is the tenth chapter, many of the population correlates and ecological explanations for this phenomenon have been implicitly reviewed; nevertheless, there is more to add, and much to consolidate.

Speaking in gross generalities, moist, southern climates yield year-round provisions in moderate proportions. Extreme density is not supported. Tropical fauna and flora provide a level of freely given subsistence that discourages intensive agriculture, but more importantly, tropical soils do not long reward intensive agricultural labors when applied. Slash and burn agriculture may produce high yields for a year or three, only to deplete the soil, leaving that exploited area less capable of providing calories than in its natural state. Arid southerly climates support much fewer people, and generally impose a nomadic existence. In neither case do populations become particularly dense. Low density, herding, and foraging promote mobile bands of kin, which, all else being equal, tend to mate endogamously by virtue of propinquity. Without abundance granted by the soils, without the necessity for expensive structures, and without the ability to accrue significant capital, female choice does not emphasize cognition, conscientiousness, social competition, or organizing ability, but instead tends to physicality, genetic diversity, social dominance, and disease resistance as marked by symmetry. In turn, sexual selection, as it is expressed through male choice, may well be weaker in many southern

climates, as offspring of short-term unions are more readily reared to maturity. Under such ecological conditions, males tend to mate more polygynously and females tend to mate more promiscuously. This has the dual effect of increasing male versus male conflict and paternal uncertainty. Males are correspondingly less often assiduously sequestered within a nuclear family unit, and less likely to exclusively bestow all their labor on one mate. In other words, male labor is at once less important in southerly climates, and also less concentrated. The consequence is often tribal organizations with strong matrilineal leanings, wherein maternal uncles and grandfathers are more important than fathers.

Competition among mating males is invariable, but the form of that competition is quite the opposite. Men will wrangle with one another to obtain preference, whether bestowed directly by the female, or indirectly through a match made by the female's parents. But the form of competition that they engage in can vary by the stage on which they have to perform. Likewise, female choice can change, with profound effects on male behavior. Both male competition and female choice are aspects of sexual selection, which together can drive the evolution of life histories toward the *r*- or *K*-selected ends of the continuum. To the extent that ecologies impose extrinsic mortality, they select for male aggression, increased mating effort and reduced parental effort. Ecologies imposing strong intrinsic mortality have quite the opposite effect. In this vein, we must recall from prior chapters that the consequences of migration were manifold. One was faced with an abundance of game that allowed carryover of nomadism so long as it held out. However, when supplies were eventually depleted, the hoe was put to ground, and cereal crops became the source of most calories. During this Neolithic Revolution and its transition to agriculture, selection, both natural and sexual, rather rapidly began to favor what we now recognize as the *sLH*-selected complex of traits, most importantly conscientiousness, restraint, forward thinking, and fidelity. Men were of the utmost significance in this transition. Females had always been burdened by pregnancy and nursing, while doing much of the work of gathering and processing foods, as Huntington (1927; p. 163) states:

> The women, as in so many tropical countries, seem to work harder than the men, and one sees them manning the innumerable boats, rowing hard against the tide, or walking under heavy loads balanced at the ends of poles across their shoulders.

Males on the other hand could more readily divert time away from hunting, fighting, display, courtship, and leisure. Directly under the influence of northern ecologies, and indirectly under the influence of female choice as it reflected these newfound ecological exigencies, males rapidly evolved in a more *sLH*-selected direction.

Much of this selection centered on the variety of dispositions denoted by the personality trait *conscientiousness*, which is itself understood as a component of life history. Conscientiousness is really a hybrid of labor and loyalty. As David Buss said long ago, conscientiousness predicts the predisposition to work hard at accruing resources, and *also* the propensity to dedicate those resources to mate and child. Conscientiousness correlates with somatic effort, which is a form of bodily maintenance described in the life history literature; and consequently is predictive of longevity. Further still, conscientiousness imparts future oriented cognition in the form of forward thinking, planning, and self-restraint. As population density augmented within these temperate regions, so did social complexity; and with social complexity came emphasis on other *sLH*-selected traits, such as general intelligence and the more complex aspects of executive functioning. With all of this, high-quality virginal females became a commodity, as did conscientious and intelligent males. The selective pressures coming from females were mutually reinforcing because of shared ecological motivations. *Quality* and *quantity* of offspring were bestowed upon those females securing faithful and industrious husbands; at the same time, males that dedicated, not only sperm, but also labor and resources to one mate and her offspring had to have reasonable assurance of paternal certainty. Paternal uncertainty, in other words, could coexist easily with low male investment, but was incompatible with high male investment. At the same time, with males having to work hard to support the offspring of one woman, polygyny became more difficult to bear, and thus became correspondingly rare. Nuclear families were also favored by two additional aspects of this *sLH*-selected evolutionary response; first, slow life histories are associated with delayed maturation and menstruation, so women become fertile later; separately, *sLH*-selected females often marry and mate later; and finally, they also tend to have longer inter-birth intervals. Collectively, this lengthened generational turnover and made grandparenting less viable, with the effect that assistance to nursing and pregnant females more consistently devolved upon husbands as opposed to grandmothers.

From all that went before, one can see the ecologically driven effects of migration on family organization. In turn, nucleated family organization redounded to broader social organization in two ways. First, small, sedentary, autonomous family units labored in the fields, accrued wealth from the richness of the soil, and began transferring land, housing, and eventually liquid capital to their children. With this turn inward, away from tribal organization, nuclear family units had to find alternate means of managing collective action problems, mediating disputes from within, and resisting attacks from without. In other words, in these and many other ways, they had to govern themselves. Such necessities put a premium on *sLH*-selected dispositions to monitor and cultivate reputation, cooperation, and reciprocal altruism. Second, and relative to Casey's discussion of consanguinity, there is another important nuance to appreciate. The transition to nuclear families enabled, as much as necessitated, the transition to mature, nontribal, governmental organization. Conflicts could be more impartially adjudicated, and power-sharing could be more equally applied within communities comprised of nuclear families with circles of insular nepotism that did not extend in long chains to innumerable extended kin. This avoided the shearing of societies along a fault line of kinship, which might have caused group fission among populations in prehistoric Africa, which did bring schism to seventh century Islamists, and dogged stable government in Renaissance Italy as the *Medici* vied with the *Pazzi* and other rival families for the reigns of state power. Imperfectly, haltingly, but eventually, kings replaced chieftains, law supplanted whim, consistency replaced severity in the sphere of punishment, tribalism gave way to republicanism, and the office eclipsed the office holder. In the fullness of time, a new social order was woven, partly because lineages were separated into the individual strands of the nuclear family. We cannot neglect to mention, however, that this process also potentiated slowing among individual life histories. The individual men and women of Neolithic evolved toward *sLH*-selected life histories, making them more efficient building blocks of city-state, duchy, canton, electorate, and nation. Northerly climates primed the pump, creating an initial impulse toward *sLH*-selected individuals, and nucleated families. This process invoked mature states, which then became anthropogenic pressure cookers, rewarding the *sLH*-selected with progeny.

4 An Imperfect Survey of Suggestive Data

We have allowed ourselves free reign! What could be done in reacting to such a complex coming together of *family* and *nation* as it relates both to James Casey's historical legacy and the mass of life history evolutionary literature? Indeed, this is the purpose of the third section of each chapter. However, the fourth section of each chapter is written to shore up our theses with reference to appropriate literature, evidence, and observation. More so than in other chapters, we can do this but imperfectly.

As before, prior chapters pull much of the documentary load. In Chapter 2, we have seen broad continental differences in life history speed across populations, which again proceed from fast to slow across Africa, Europe, and Asia. Chapter 4 demonstrates the importance of soils; lessons which should be recalled in connection with Chapter 6 wherein the selective pressures accruing to dense populations were discussed. Finally, Chapters 5 and 9, as before mentioned, document the importance of differing sources of mortality, *extrinsic* versus *intrinsic*. Added to this, subsequent chapters, such as Chapter 15, will continue to track state formation and concomitant higher levels of social organization. This releases us to focus on family organization as it relates to sexual selection, and state formation as tracked through markers of social stability.

A map, being a picture, is worth a thousand words. These juxtaposed maps show broad continental differences in family organization. Produced by A. H. Bittles and M. Black,[4] the map on the left charts consanguineous unions, which, as denoted by darker shades, preponderate in southerly latitudes. Produced by the University of Toronto,[5] the map to the right depicts the distribution in family organization, with polygyny preponderating in Africa and monogamy preponderating in temperate Eurasia (Figs. 1 and 2).

This first map is broadly reflective of the literature on consanguineous unions, which are well known to prevail in southerly states (Bittles 2001; Bittles and Black 2010), such as Saudi Arabia (El-Hazmi et al. 1995; El-Mouzan et al. 2007), Kuwait (Al-Awadi et al. 1985), Jordan (Hamamy et al. 2007), Oman (Rajab and Patton 2000), Qatar, Yemen (Tadmouri et al. 2009), Iran (Asadi-Pooya 2005), Sudan (Ahmed 1979), Iraq (Hamamy and Al-Hakkak 1989), the United Arab Emirates (Bener et al. 1996), Pakistan (Bittles et al. 1993; Grant and Bittles 1997), and throughout much of Africa (Lamdouar 1994; Mokhtar and Abdel-Fattah 2001;

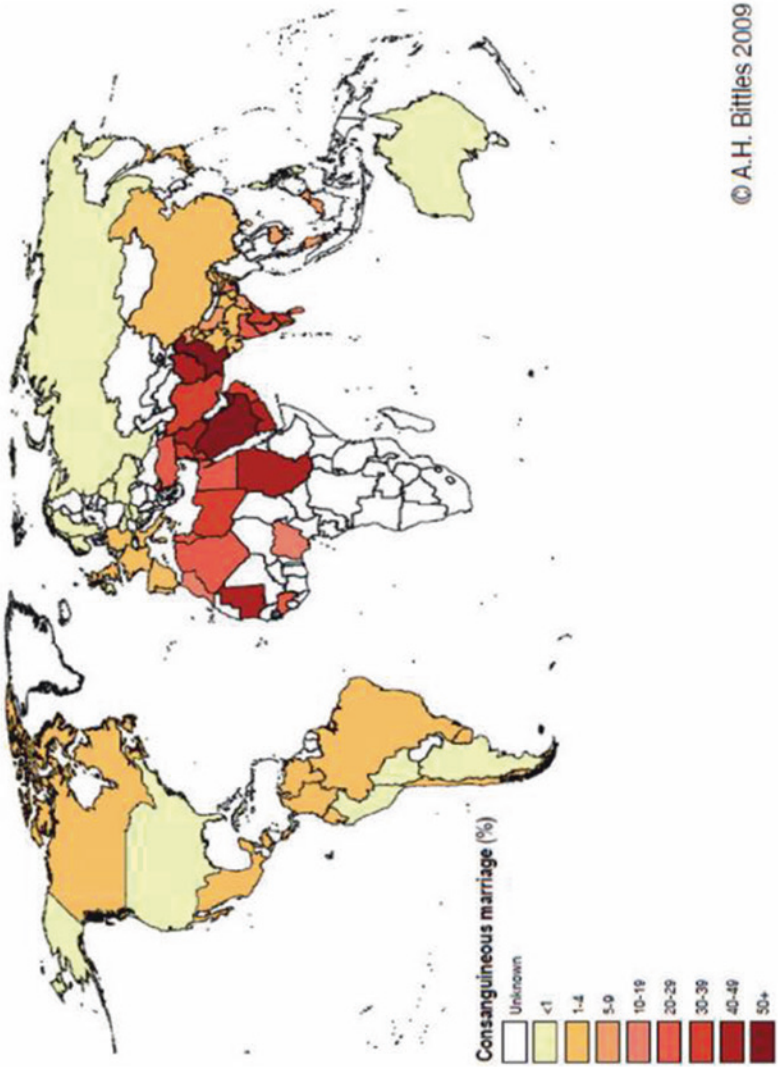

Fig. 1 World map of consanguineous unions produced by A. H. Bittles and M. Black

Fig. 2 World map of family organization produced by the University of Toronto

Hammami et al. 2005; Kerkeni et al. 2007; Anwar et al. 2014). By comparison, consanguineous unions are rare in Europe, and even within Europe show a relationship to latitude judging by papal dispensations affording exceptions to canonical prohibitions (McCullough and O'Rourke 1986). In turn, consanguinity has effects on social organization, lowering the degree of democratic participation (Woodley and Bell 2013), increasing financial burdens (Jaber et al. 1998; Weller et al. 2012), and reducing educational and occupational attainment (Khlat 1988).

The second map is broadly reflective of the literature on polygynous unions, which are well known to prevail in southerly latitudes. Since George Peter Murdock's (1957) classic survey of human mating systems, the distribution of polygyny has been recognized as geographically skewed, with Benin (Klissou 1995), Zaire (Magnani et al. 1995), Senegal (Cudeville et al. 2017), Togo (Cissokho 2017), and other parts of Africa having high prevalence (Konotey-Ahulu 1970; Welch and Glick, 1981; Hayase and Liaw 1997; Antoine 2006; Andrews 2009). Polygyny also remains common in the Middle East (Mason 2010). Biogeographical differences are reflected in law (Berger 2012), with, for instance, Islamic nations permitting polygyny (Badawi 1976), while it is outlawed in much of the European West (Kaufman and Bailey 2010). These extant biogeographical differences extend partly from ecological dissimilarities. Much mating literature on animals suggests that bi-parental care evolves only to the extent that it provides considerable improvement in reproductive success (Orians 1969; Emlen and Oring 1977; Kleiman and Malcolm 1981; Black 1996; Gowaty 1996). Life history constraints and the altricial state of human young require intensive maternal care and some form of cooperative breeding, whatever the environmental conditions (Muller and Thompson 2012), but the exigencies of northerly latitudes, perforce, enlist intensive paternal assistance (Frost 2006; Cant 2014). Cochran and Harpending (2009; p. 104) cogently contrast these broad continental conditions, citing African women as "largely self-supporting," in contrast to "much of Eurasia," wherein "hard work from two parents barely allowed break-even reproduction."

Having established latitudinal variation across rates of consanguinity and polygyny, it now remains to consider their combined effect on social organization. Instability, from within and without, augment with polygyny and consanguinity. Even after simultaneously considering competing explanations, consanguineous mating negatively predicted

democratic government across seventy nations; findings which Woodley and Bell (2013) attribute to (1) individualism and individual rights being overwhelmed by kin-based collectivism; (2) kin loyalties trumping power-sharing with non-kin; and (3) the tendency for groups of related elites to practice resource predation and nepotism. In turn, Henrich et al. (2012) have demonstrated rape, murder, assault, robbery, fraud, gender inequality, domestic violence, child neglect, abuse, accidental death, and homicide to follow from non-monogamous males that emphasize mating effort over parental effort. The consequence is that, as one progresses from Asia, to Europe, to Africa, or in other words from slow to fast along the life history spectrum as it applies to continental populations, one increasingly finds delayed state formation,[6] alongside markers of instability once the state is formed, as indicated by delayed acquisition of sovereignty, territorial modifications, and recent subordination by other nations.

Notes

1. This information taken from the University of East Anglia's profile page on Professor Casey: https://www.uea.ac.uk/history/people/profile/j-casey.
2. The ability to accrue and transmit wealth to one's offspring made males ever more conscious about what evolutionists refer to as *paternal certainty*. Paternal uncertainty will be discussed later in section three of this chapter.
3. Casey cites Emperor Charlemagne and his several spinster daughters as an example of such reluctance.
4. This map was cited by Anwar et al. (2014), and was taken from *consang.net:* http://www.consang.net/index.php/Global_prevalence. The map is produced by Dr. Alan H. Bittles and Dr. Michael Black of Murdoch University, who graciously allowed its reproduction in the current volume.
5. This map of marital composition has been cropped to show Eurasia and Africa. It is provided by the University of Toronto's Open Access Database: https://www.utoronto.ca/news/massive-open-access-database-will-answer-your-questions-about-human-cultures.
6. This metric can be fraught with problems, but in aggregate has some validity. One potential objection may be Africa's recent history of colonization, but it should be borne in mind that we are discussing the ability of nation states to remain stable from both internal disorder and external threat. Dates of nation formation are referenced from the United States Central Intelligence Agency's *World Fact Book*: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2088.html.

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