

# The Production of Legal Identities Proper to States: The Case of the Permanent Family Surname

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We name a thing and—bang!—it leaps into existence. Each name a perfect equation with its roots. A perfect congruence with its reality. (Yolland and Owen)

But remember that words are signals, counters. They are not immortal. And it can happen—to use an image you'll understand—it can happen that a civilisation can be imprisoned in a linguistic contour which no longer matches the landscape of . . . fact. (Hugh)

I'll decode you yet. (Yolland<sup>1</sup>)

## I. INTRODUCTION

State naming practices and local, customary naming practices are strikingly different. Each set of practices is designed to make the human and physical landscape *legible*, by sharply identifying a unique individual, a household, or a singular geographic feature. Yet they are each devised by very distinct agents for whom the purposes of identification are radically different. Purely local, customary practices, as we shall see, achieve a level of precision and clarity—often with impressive economy—perfectly suited to the needs of knowledgeable locals. State naming practices are, by contrast, constructed to guide an official 'stranger' in identifying unambiguously persons and places, not just in a single locality, but in many localities using standardized administrative techniques.

### *There is no State-making without State-naming*

To follow the progress of state-making is, among other things, to trace the elaboration and application of novel systems which name and classify places, roads, people, and, above all, property. These state projects of legibility overlay, and often supersede, local practices. Where local practices persist, they are typically relevant to a narrower and narrower range of interaction within the confines of a face-to-face community.

A contrast between local names for roads and state names for roads will help illustrate the two variants of legibility. There is, for example, a small road join-

ing the towns of Durham and Guilford in the state of Connecticut (USA). Those who live in Durham call this road (among themselves) the “Guilford Road,” presumably because it informs the inhabitants of Durham exactly where they’ll get to if they travel it. The same road, at its Guilford terminus, is called, the “Durham Road” because it tells the inhabitants of Guilford where the road will lead them. One imagines that at some liminal midpoint, the road hovers between these two identities. Such names work perfectly well; they each encode valuable local knowledge, i.e., perhaps the most important fact one might want to know about a road. That the same road has two names, depending on one’s location, demonstrates the situational, contingent nature of local naming practices. Informal, ‘folk’ naming practices not only produce the anomaly of a road with two or more names; they also produce many different roads with the same name. Thus, the nearby towns of Killingworth, Haddam, Madison, and Meriden each have roads leading to Durham which the inhabitants locally call the “Durham Road.”

Now imagine the insuperable problems that this locally-effective folk system would pose to an outsider requiring unambiguous identifications for each road. A state road repair crew, sent to fix potholes on the “Durham Road” would have to ask, “Which Durham Road?” Thus it is no surprise that the road between Durham and Guilford is re-incarnated on all state maps and designations as “Route 77.” Each micro-segment of that route, moreover, is identified by means of telephone pole serial numbers, milestones, and township boundaries. The naming practices of the state require a synoptic view, a standardized scheme of identification generating mutually exclusive and exhaustive designations.<sup>2</sup> And, this system can work to the benefit of state residents: if you have to be rescued on Route 77 by a state-dispatched ambulance team, you will be reassured to know that there is no ambiguity about which road it is that you are bleeding on.

All place names, personal names, and names of roads or rivers encode important knowledge. Some of that knowledge is a thumbnail history: e.g., Maiden Lane [the lane where five spinster sisters once lived], Cider Hill Road [the road up the hill where the Cider Mill and orchard once stood], Cream Pot Road [once the site of a dairy where neighbors went to buy milk, cream, and butter]. At one time, when the name became fixed, it was probably the most relevant and useful name for local inhabitants. Other names refer to geographical features: Mica Ridge Road, Bare Rock Road, Ball Brook Road. The sum of roads and place names in a small place, in fact, amounts to something of a local geography and history if one knows the stories, features, episodes, and family enterprises encoded within them.<sup>3</sup>

For officials who require a radically different form of order, such local knowledge, however quaint, is illegible. It privileges local knowledge over synoptic, standardized knowledge. In the case of colonial rule, when the conquerors speak an entirely different language, the unintelligibility of the ver-

vacular landscape is a nearly insurmountable obstacle to effective rule. Renaming much of the landscape therefore is an essential step of imperial rule. This explains why the British Ordinance Survey of Ireland in the 1830s recorded and rendered many local Gaelic place names (e.g., Bun na hAbhann, Gaelic for “mouth of the river”) in a form (Burnfoot) more easily understood by the rulers.

The conflict between vernacular, local meaning in place names and a higher-order grid of synoptic legibility is, however, rather generic. It is heightened by cultural difference, but it rests ultimately on the divergent purposes for which a semantic order is created. In western Washington state, for example, county officials in the 1970s changed old street and road names (e.g., French Creek Grange Road, Rainwater Road, Picnic Road, Potato Road) to new names based on the comprehensive logic of serial numbers and compass directions (19th Avenue Northwest, 167th Avenue Southeast). The result was a standardized grid on which each house could be located with Cartesian simplicity.<sup>4</sup> As the title: “Towns in Washington Bringing Back the Poetry in Street Names,” indicates, a small popular revolt had succeeded in recuperating the old street names to the consternation of planning officials whose planning geometry had enabled ambulances or firefighters to be dispatched with greater speed and reliability. For a planner, a transportation manager, a tax collector, or a police officer, the conveniences of such a grid over vernacular practices is obvious. “With all these strange names, for an engineer like me, I go, ‘Aw, this is awful.’ With Killarney Place or Baloney Whatever, cul de sacs [sic] and circular streets, finding our way around is really difficult.”<sup>5</sup>

## II. STATE-NAMING AS STATE-MAKING: THE CASE OF INDIVIDUAL NAMING PRACTICES

Like place-names, permanent surnames help to chart the human topography of any region. Names play a vital role in determining identities, cultural affiliations, and histories; they can help fracture or unify groups of people. They represent an integral part of knowledge-power systems. This paper will study surnames as a social construct—a system of knowledge spun in the webs of power. Although most Westerners take their existence for granted, fixed, hereditary surnames are modern inventions. Through a comparative analysis, we will argue that the use of inherited familial surnames represents a relatively recent phenomenon intricately linked to the aggrandizement of state control over individuals and the development of modern legal systems and property regimes. In particular, the creation and diffusion of inheritable surnames represented a critical tool in the power struggle between local and outside authorities in the development of the modern nation-state, the emergence of ethnonationalist identities, and the imposition of credible private property systems.

### *The Problem of Confusion*

Where is our history?/ What are the names washed down the sewer/In the ceptic flood?/  
I pray to the rain/Give me back my rituals/Give back truth/Return the remnants of

my identity/Bathe me in self-discovered knowledge/Identify my ancestors who have existed suppressed/Invoke their spirits with power. . . . (Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act 3, Scene 2)

It is both striking and important to recognize how relatively little the pre-modern state actually knew about the society over which it presided. State officials had only the most tenuous idea of the population under their jurisdiction, its movements, its real property, wealth, crop yields, etc. Their degree of ignorance was directly proportional to the fragmentation of their sources of information. Local currencies and local measures of capacity (e.g., the bushel) and length (the ell, the rod, the toise) were likely to vary from place to place and with the nature of the transacting parties.<sup>6</sup> The opacity of local society was, of course, actively maintained by local elites as one effective means of resistance to intrusions from above.

Having little synoptic, aggregate intelligence about the manpower and resources available to it, officials were apt either to overreach in their exactions, touching off flight or revolt, or to fail to mobilize the resources that were, in fact, available. To follow the process of state-making, then, is to follow *the conquest of illegibility*. The account of this conquest—an achievement won against stiff resistance—could take many forms, for example: the creation of the cadastral survey and uniform property registers, the invention and imposition of the meter, national censuses and currencies, and the development of uniform legal codes.

Here we examine what we take to be one crucial and diagnostic victory in this campaign for legibility: the creation of fixed, legal patronyms. If vernacular landscape-naming practices are opaque and illegible to outside officials, vernacular personal naming practices are even more so. The fixing of personal names, and, in particular, permanent patronyms, as legal identities seems, everywhere, to have been, broadly-speaking, a state project. As an early and imperfect legal identification, the permanent patronym was linked to such vital administrative functions as tithe and tax collection, property registers, conscription lists, and census rolls. To understand why fixed, legal patronyms represent such a quantum leap in the legibility of a population to state officials, it is first necessary to understand the utter fluidity of vernacular naming practices uninflected by state routines.

Vernacular naming practices throughout much of the world are enormously rich and varied.<sup>7</sup> In many cultures, an individual's name will change from context to context and, within the same context, over time. It is not uncommon for a newborn to have had one or more name changes *in utero* in the event the mother's labor seemed to be going badly. Names often vary at each stage of life (infancy, childhood, adulthood, parenthood, old age) and, in some cases, after death. Added to these may be names used for joking, rituals, mourning, nicknames, school names, secret names, names for age-mates or same-sex friends, and names for in-laws. Each name is specific to a phase of life, a social setting, or a particular interlocutor. To the question, "What is your name?" the reply in such cases can only be: "It depends."



In the small vernacular community, of course, this cornucopia of names occasions no confusion whatsoever. Local residents know the names they need to know, the codes appropriate to their use, the room for maneuver within these codes, and the ways in which these codes might be transgressed. They are rarely in doubt about who is who.

How is local confusion avoided in the absence of permanent patronyms? Let us take the simplest case where there are a small number of fixed, given names (often called “first” or “Christian” names in western Europe). It is claimed, for example, that around the year 1700 in England, a mere eight given names accounted for nearly ninety percent of the total male population [John, Edward, William, Henry, Charles, James, Richard, Robert]. Without permanent patronyms, local people had innumerable ways of unambiguously identifying any individual. A by-name, second-name, or (sur)name [not to be confused with a permanent patronym] was usually sufficient to make the defining distinction. One ‘John,’ for example, might be distinguished from another by specifying his father’s name (“William’s John” or “John-William’s-son”/Williamson)<sup>8</sup>—by linking him to an occupation (“John-the-miller,” “John-the shepherd”)—by locating him in the landscape (“John-on-the-hill,” “John-by-the-brook”—or by noting a personal characteristic (John-do-little). The written records of the manor or the parish might actually bear notations of such by-names for the sake of clarity.

Local practice in a contemporary Malay-Muslim village, where there are no permanent patronyms and where the number of given names is similarly limited, follows much the same pattern. Kasim who owns a small store is distinguished from four other Kasim’s in the village by being called “Kasim-kedai” (‘store’ Kasim); Ahmad who can read the Koran is called “Lebai-[Ah]mat”; Mansor who was once tripped up when his sarong fell down while chasing children is called, only behind-his-back of course, “Mansur-terlondeh” (Mansor of the accidentally falling sarong), and Zakariah who has a harelip is called, also behind his back, “[Zakar]iah-rabit” (Hare-lip Zakariah). In this Malay-Muslim village, each of these names is locally, but *only* locally, definitive; only a relative insider is likely to know who has the village reputation for laziness, who can recite the Koran, who tripped on his sarong, or which John is William’s son. The vernacular system is perfectly discriminating for those with the requisite local knowledge to understand each reference. Without a ‘local-tracker’ to fill in the missing information for identification, the outsider is at a loss.

The vernacular communities of the past, in part because of their autonomous naming practices, were quasi-opaque to state officials. Access to individuals was typically achieved indirectly through intermediaries: the local nobleman, the village headman, the imam or the parish priest, the tavern keeper, the notary. Such intermediaries, naturally, had their own individual and corporate interests. They might profit handsomely from their gate-keeping role. In any case, their interests were never perfectly coincident with those of state officials and

often at cross-purposes. It is for such reasons that locally-kept census rolls have often under-reported the population (to evade taxes, corvée labor, or conscription) and understated both arable land acreage and crop yields. Wilfred Thesiger, in his classic account of the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq, provides an instructive example of how official ignorance of local identities might be deployed for local purposes. The provincial police, acting as conscription officers come to a marsh village with a list of thirty-two presumably eligible young men, two of whom they plan to take with them as recruits. Unable to identify anyone properly, the officials are told that the boys they seek are all either too young, have moved away, or have died. Instead they are given two young men whom village leaders had, all along, selected for them.<sup>9</sup>

*Remedies to Illegibility: The Taming of Chance*

The problem of naming and identification can be expressed generally. Let us imagine a police official (it could be a tax collector or a conscription officer) who is trying to locate a specific, unique individual. Assume further that he is faced with a situation not unlike that of a small English village in 1700, but with *no* surnames, let alone fixed, patronymic surnames. Take a comparatively simple case of a village with, say, 1,000 males bearing only one of eight names which are, for the sake of this initial case, perfectly evenly distributed across the (male) population. How likely, in this case, is our police official to collar the man he is after? If he knows he is looking for a "Henry," there will be 125 "Henrys" in this village and 124 of them will be the wrong "Henry." Without local assistance and under the assumption, for the sake of argument, that he actually knows the 'true' given names of all villagers, he will almost surely fail. What if we imagine that all males in this village have *two names*, which vary independently? In this case, the chances that the police official will grab the wrong "Henry" are much reduced, but still substantial, as there will be about 15 "Henry Thomass," 15 "William Jamess," etc. Once we move to *three names* (also varying independently), it is likely that the police official will get his man half the time on average. The opacity of the villagers to outside identification is reduced radically by the use of each additional identifying name.

Our hypothetical example is, in effect, a *best case* scenario with only eight given names. Assume, for a moment, that the names are not evenly distributed; assume that the name, say, "William" is so popular that half the men in the village bear it, and the other seven names are evenly distributed among the remainder. In that case, the police agent, looking for a particular William, will face 285 aliases if the villagers have only a single name, 81 aliases in a village with two names, and 39 aliases in a village with three names.<sup>10</sup> The point is that anything less than an even distribution of names appreciably raises the odds that the 'suspect' with a more common name will elude identification.

If we impose, arbitrarily, on such a village a permanent legal patronym such that Thomas son of William is registered as Thomas Williamson and his son as,

say, Henry Williamson, and his son as, say, Edward Williamson, and so on, we do not improve the odds for the police who want to identify an individual in his generation but we *do* vastly improve the odds of identifying his parents, grandparents, sons and daughters who must necessarily bear the same permanent patronym. Questions of inheritance, paternity, and household affiliation become far more transparent, but never entirely so.

Before the advent of internal passports, photographs, and social security numbers, personal names were the form of identification most germane to police work. The use of personal names to locate a person depended, of course, on the compliance of the individual and the community in revealing true names. Where the community was hostile and the individual evasive, state officials were stymied. Hence the official predilection for internal passports that must be carried at all times under penalty of fines, or, better yet, for fingerprints which are unique and hard to efface or, better yet, for DNA profiles, a unique marker present in any sample of tissue.

Let us assume, for the moment, both a high level of compliance and a world in which the personal name is the key 'identifier.' The police—here used as a convenient shorthand for any authorities wanting to locate a specific individual—may have their task complicated in either of two ways. The smaller the number of names in use within a population, the more difficult becomes the process of identification. We might think of this as the 'needle' part of the 'looking for a needle in a haystack' problem. How many needles look just like the particular needle we are looking for? The size of the haystack is also crucial. Broadly speaking, the 'haystack' problem is a problem of scale. Once police-work becomes a matter of finding a unique individual in a large town, a province, let alone a nation, the confusion of identical names becomes an administrative nightmare. The nightmare is further compounded by geographical mobility, as we shall see. If people are moving with any frequency, it becomes well-nigh impossible to know in which of many haystacks to search them out.

The modern state—by which we mean a state whose ideology encompasses large-scale plans for the improvement of the population's welfare—requires at least two forms of legibility to be able to achieve its mission. First, it requires the capacity to locate citizens uniquely and unambiguously. Second, it needs *standardized* information that will allow it to create *aggregate* statistics about property, income, health, demography, productivity, etc. Although much of the synoptic, aggregate information officials of the modern state require is collected initially from individuals, it must be collected in a form that makes it amenable to an overall statistical profile—a shorthand map of some social or economic condition relevant for state purposes.

Officials of the modern state—and of large organizations generally—are, of necessity, at least one step removed from the society they are charged with governing. They "see" the human activity of interest to them largely through the simplified approximations of documents and statistics: tax proceeds, lists of

tax-payers, land records, average income, income distributions, mortality rates and tables, price and productivity figures. Once in place the tools of legibility and synoptic vision are readily deployed as the basis for gauging the progress of an 'improving' state.<sup>11</sup> Thus do trends in statistics on accidents, fertility, mortality, employment, literacy levels, and consumer-durable ownership serve as indices of the success of state policy. Programs of improvement, even more than mere identification, require a discriminating set of techniques to locate individuals and classify them according to the relevant criteria. The more intrusive and discriminating the level of intervention contemplated, the sharper the tools of legibility required. The demographic knowledge necessary, for example, to conduct a vaccination campaign during an epidemic, or to identify and locate all residents of a city who have engineering degrees or who have children with speech defects are cases in point.

The importance of statistics and measurement to legibility alert us to the fact that the permanent patronym is, as we have emphasized, only one of a larger series of state practices collectively designed to take a relatively illegible world of vernacular meaning and recast it in terms that are synoptically visible. The case of uniform, standardized measures, and the cadastral survey might as readily illustrate how the legibility of names nests, logically, with other state-making initiatives.

#### *Permanent Patronyms and the State: Origins*

Before the fourteenth century, if we confine our attention to Europe, permanent patronyms were very much the exception.<sup>12</sup> Surnames designating, say, occupation or some personal characteristic, were widespread, but they did not survive the bearer. The rise of the permanent patronym is inextricably associated with those aspects of state-making in which it was desirable to be able to distinguish individual (male) subjects: tax collection (including tithes), conscription, land revenue, court judgements, witness records, and police work.<sup>13</sup>

All of these activities require more or less elaborate lists. So it is hardly surprising that it is through such documents that the effort to render the population and its genealogy legible is best traced. The census [or *catasto*] of the Florentine state in 1427 was an audacious (and failed) attempt to rationalize the administration of revenue and manpower resources by recording the names, wealth, residences, land-holdings, and ages of the city-state's inhabitants. At the time, virtually the only Tuscan family names were those of a handful of great families [e.g., Strozzi] whose kin, including affines, adopted the name as a way of claiming the backing of a powerful corporate group. The vast majority were identified reasonably unambiguously by the registrars, but *not* by personal patronyms. They might list their father and grandfather (e.g., Luigi, son of Paulo, son of Giovanni)<sup>14</sup> or they might add a nickname, a profession, or a personal characteristic. It is reasonably clear that what we are witnessing, in the *cataso* exercise, are the first stages of an administrative crystallization of per-



sonal surnames. And the geography of this crystallization traced, almost perfectly, the administrative presence of the Florentine state. While one-third of the households in the city declared a second name, the proportion dropped to one-fifth in secondary towns, and then to a low of one-tenth in the countryside. The small, tightly-knit vernacular world had no need for a 'proper name': such names were, for all practical purposes, official names confined to administrative life. Many of the inhabitants of the poorest and most remote areas of Tuscany—those with the least contact with officialdom—only acquired family names in the seventeenth century. Nor were fifteenth-century Tuscans in much doubt about the purpose of the exercise; its failure was largely due to their foot-dragging and resistance. As the case of Florence illustrates, the naming project, like the standardization of measurements and cadastral surveys, was very much a purposeful state mission.

*England, Scotland, and Wales: Private Property, Primogeniture, and Law Enforcement*

Even in England and Scotland, where patronyms took several centuries to develop, there was a method to the madness. If patronyms emerged solely for local, individual recognition purposes, then a system of non-hereditary secondary appellations would have sufficed. However, the surname system that emerged involved the use of hereditary and fixed last names. This fact is crucial to understanding the importance of patronyms with respect to the state. Indeed, the development of patronyms helped enforce private property rights, advance primogeniture regimes, and secure the ability of the state to make its subjects legible to its gaze.

The use of last names did not become common until well after the Norman Conquest. Social norms developed by the twelfth century dictated that it was a disgrace for a proper gentleman not to have a last name.<sup>15</sup> The use of patronyms then spread, albeit unevenly, with the implementation of the poll tax under Richard II<sup>16</sup> and the legal requirement of baptismal registration by Henry VIII.

A closer analysis of the process of surname diffusion also reveals the link between the English naming system and the securing of private property rights. In a bargain that replicates itself in many other nations, the aristocracy gained security for their property rights by adopting heritable patronyms. Their new legal identity was a political resource in their claim to property in land and office. By the middle of the thirteenth century, a large proportion of large and medium landowners in England possessed hereditary last names. An examination of Exchequer and Chancery records listing feudal landholders reveals that most of these patronyms were derived from the lands possessed by the their bearers.<sup>17</sup>

It is significant to note that in the century or two following the reign of William the Conqueror, there was a great deal of uncertainty regarding the status of large land grants made by the King. As Richard McKinley notes,

How far his grants were grants of property in fee and inheritance was perhaps not clear. In these circumstances, anything which helped to stress the hereditary character of tenure was likely to be viewed with favour by landowners, and the acquisition of a hereditary patronym especially one derived from a landed family's estates, would obviously have this effect . . . [Thus, the adoption of patronyms was] part of a general trend from them to the consolidation of their position as hereditary property owners.<sup>18</sup>

The link between land and last names is further emphasized by the types of names introduced by the Normans when they invaded Britain: they were almost all territorial in derivation. Indeed,

[t]he followers of William the Conqueror were a pretty mixed lot, and while some of them brought the names of their castles and villages in Normandy with them, many were adventurers of different nationalities attracted to William's standard by the hope of plunder, and possessing no family or territorial names of their own. Those of them who acquired lands in England were called after their manors, while other took the name of the offices they held or the military titles given to them, and sometimes a younger son of a Norman landowner on receiving a grant of land in his new home dropped his paternal name and adopted that of his newly acquired land.<sup>19</sup>

Patterns of surname adoption also reveal a close link between primogeniture and naming practices. For example, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was not uncommon that a senior branch of a family would continue to use the hereditary surname while the junior branches would adopt new patronyms, since they no longer had any property right in the main family estate.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the reorganization of the system of land ownership, the establishment of a formal system of primogeniture, and the development of inherited copyhold tenure for manorial land under the reign of Edward I helped to accelerate the use of last names. The last name became, in this context, another way of displaying paternity and, hence, inheritance rights. More generally, the adoption of permanent patronyms retraced, geographically, the growing presence of the Crown and its agents. It occurred "sooner among the upper classes than the lower, and sooner in the south than the north,"<sup>21</sup> sooner in the large towns than in the countryside. The greater the contact with the Crown-crafted world of documents, rolls, taxes, conscription, wills, and deeds, the greater the need for unambiguous designations.

On rare occasions, one gets a glimpse, like a fly caught in amber, of the state-based process of crystallization. A Welshman who appeared before an English judge in the early sixteenth century during the reign of Henry VIII, was asked his name. He replied, in the Welsh fashion, "Thomas Ap [son of] William, Ap Thomas, Ap Richard, Ap Hoel, Ap Evan Vaughan." He was reprimanded by the judge to "leave the old manner . . . whereupon he after called himself Moston, according to the name of his principal house, and left that name to his posterity."<sup>22</sup> One imagines, however, that this newly minted administrative last name remained all but unknown to Thomas's neighbors.

This small episode from Wales alerts us to the fact that local, vernacular appellations persist and co-exist, often for long periods, alongside official nam-

ing practices. Each name is appropriate to a particular sphere of social relations, certain encounters, and situations. Local naming practices rarely if ever disappear completely; instead, they remain relevant to a diminishing social sphere. The slippage between official naming and vernacular practice is apparent in the institution of the telephone book in countries where permanent patronyms are recent creations.<sup>23</sup> As encounters grow with the extra-local world, the world of official documents and lists (e.g., tax receipts, military eligibility lists, school documents, property deeds and inventories, birth, marriage and death certificates, internal passports, court decision, legal contracts), so also does the social circumference of official patronyms. Large segments of social life that might previously have been successfully navigated without documents, and according to customary practice, are now impossible without the paper trail, stamps, signatures, and forms on which the authorities insist. The state creates irresistible incentives for calling oneself after its fashion.

#### *Citizenship, Identity, and State Administration*

The logic and geography of the adoption of *surnames* and, later, permanent patronyms in France was little different than in England or Florence. In medieval Languedoc, for example, only a few names (Guillaume, Bernard, Raimond, Pierre, Pons) might designate three quarters of the male population. Nobles increasingly adopted surnames (not yet a *nom de famille*) to distinguish the eldest, inheriting son. In this fashion, the use of *surnames* and, later, stable *noms de famille* proliferated, first among the nobility, in the large towns, and among the propertied. The professional agent of this transformation was the *notaire* who functioned as the local record-keeper and for whom precision of identity was essential.<sup>24</sup> The fifteenth century case of Marin Guerre, made famous in film, is precisely about the great difficulty of establishing identities, especially among mobile populations. When, much later, birth certificates became more common, it was forbidden for a subject to change his or her name without permission from the Crown.

More broadly, the link between state-making and state-naming is so strong that one might, in fact, use the synoptic legibility of permanent, registered patronyms as a reliable proxy for the degree of state presence. Here a long-run, time-elapse record would show the fissures and breakpoints of state saturation. That record would show, for Britain, that projects of legibility tended to stumble in the hills, where they encountered ecologies and populations that were distinct culturally and linguistically. The hills were, as Braudel has emphasized, bastions of relatively autonomous local societies.

For there man can live out of reach of the pressures and tyrannies of civilization, its social and political order its monetary economy. Here there was no landed nobility with . . . powerful roots . . . There was no tight urban network, so no administration, no towns in the proper sense of the word, and no gendarmes we might add . . . The hills were the refuge of liberty, democracy, and peasant republics.<sup>25</sup>

Inaccessibility, demographic dispersal, poverty, and active resistance meant that permanent patronyms (not to mention standardized place names) came

late to the hills of Wales and Scotland. The higher the hills, the further from lowland centers of administration, the later their arrival. At the risk of over-generalization, it might be said that the more precocious the state-making, the earlier the appearance of permanent patronyms.<sup>26</sup> Thus they appear comparatively early in Italy, France, and England and later in Sweden, Germany, Norway, and Turkey. In many colonized countries, it occurred even later; in some cases it has hardly begun.<sup>27</sup> *Within* each political context, it is reasonably clear that the permanent patronym radiates out from the administrative center at a tempo that is conditioned by 'stateness': first in the capital, first at the top of the status ladder, first in modern institutions (e.g., schools) and last in marginal areas (mountains, swamps), among the lower classes, among the marginalized and stigmatized.

Once deeds, wills and testaments, property transfers, and certain contracts are subject to state validation, there are powerful incentives for becoming a legible subject. And yet, at the same time, the classic fear of the state as taxer and conscriptor continued to provide much of the population with continuing reasons for remaining illegible. As late as 1753, the British Parliament defeated a census bill over fears of more taxation and, five years later, a bill for the "mandatory registration of births, marriages, and deaths." Contrast this effective resistance in England with the Crown's colonial policy in Ireland nearly a century earlier when William Petty conducted a comprehensive survey of land, buildings, people, and cattle in order to facilitate seizure and control. Where autocracy or conquest permit state officials to pursue projects of legibility, unhampered by consultation, they are likely to proliferate earlier and more extensively, though they may provoke resistance and rebellion.

War, because of the exceptional demands it makes on the mobilization of resources, is the great handmaiden of all forms of legibility, including permanent patronyms. Mobilization for war, as Charles Tilly demonstrates, impelled the early modern state to abandon indirect, tributary rule through powerful, and often recalcitrant, intermediaries and, instead, directly seize the military resources it needed.<sup>28</sup> What the state requires, of course, is far more than just conscripts (who are hopefully, unambiguously identified). Fielding a 60,000-man army in the late seventeenth century would have required, for its men and its 40,000 horses, nearly a millions pounds of food a day: a quartermaster's nightmare. The task demanded impressive feats of organization and expenditure. The mere grain needed to keep this army in the field, let alone armed and clothed, cost the equivalent of the wages of 90,000 ordinary laborers. This last requirement meant taxation nets of finer and finer mesh to enumerate real property, wealth, commercial exchange, and above all, the individuals who would bear the responsibility for paying and fighting.

*Modern Citizenship and Statecraft: The Uneasy Bargain*

If state-making for the purposes of taxation, police control, and war were the great incentives to projects of legibility in ancient regimes everywhere, the rise



of democratic citizenship and modernist social engineering required entirely new forms of legibility. The reach of the modern state, together with its ambitions to social reform, gave rise to state lenses with far greater resolving power than any pre-modern regime.

The great emancipatory step of the French Revolution's Declaration of Human Rights created a new subject/citizen. Whereas, before, even the most intrusive absolutist regimes were obliged to work through social intermediaries—clergy, nobles, and wealthy burgers—the revolutionary regime sought a direct, unmediated relationship to the citizen. This new citizen was an abstract, unmarked individual who was the bearer of equal rights before the law. Universal citizenship implied, in turn, that a citizen be uniquely and reliably distinguishable *as an individual* and not as a member of a community, manor, guild or parish. Universal rights signified, in turn, universal duties vis-à-vis the state—duties which included direct, universal conscription and taxation.

This extension of citizenship, coupled with legibility, was part and parcel of the internationalization of the French Revolution carried by the forces of Napoleon. Prussia's law, passed in 1812, encouraged the adoption of patronyms by all members of the Jewish faith. Ostensibly in the progressive spirit of the Enlightenment, the Jewish population would receive citizenship in exchange. The connection between universal citizenship and the taking of a name proper to a legal state identity is nowhere clearer than for the Jews in Central Europe. Despite the widespread use of fixed and hereditary patronyms in Europe by the nineteenth century, one key group lacked last names—the Ashkenazim. The nomadic, Yiddish-speaking Jewish population of central and northern Europe, the Ashkenazim had managed to retain their ancient patronymic system since the Biblical era. However, during the nineteenth century, Austria, France, Prussia, Bavaria, and Russia all imposed modern surname systems on their Jewish populations. The motives for such policies varied, but generally focused on the adoption of a registered legal patronym as a condition of citizenship and emancipation. The new surname system enabled governments more easily to levy and collect taxes, regulate businesses, conscript for military service, and control movements,<sup>29</sup> in return for which the Jewish population would receive full citizenship for its cooperation. Drawing on Prussian councilor-of-war Christian Wilhelm von Dohm's memorandum 'On the Civic Betterment of the Jews' from 1781, several plans were advanced to establish economic and legal equality for the Jewish population. Although these plans differed in a variety of ways, they all agreed on one point: "no proposed law fail[ed] to declare an official choice of name to be obligatory"<sup>30</sup> for citizenship rights. Indeed, the eventual edict that passed gave the Jewish population citizenship in Prussia but only if they bore firmly fixed patronyms.

Soon after 1812, more insidious motives came to light. As Dietz Bering points out, "immediately after the Jews had chosen fixed surnames, attempts were made to secure via the names the dwindling recognizability of the Jews

as Jews."<sup>31</sup> The liberality of 1812 edict gave way to a new law passed on 22 December 1833, which required all Jews to adopt a surname, not just those who sought naturalization. Furthermore, the government took steps to assure that previously adopted last names by the Jewish population were in line with newly adopted ones. Government appointed committees forced the Jewish population to accept patronyms that the government chose for them, such as Himmelblau, Rubenstein, Bernstein, Hirsch, and Löew. Furthermore, numerous ministerial reports in the 1830s and 1840s demanded the enactment of a penal clause to prevent members of the Jewish faith from altering their last names. By 1845, laws were passed to render the Jewish patronym in Prussia a closed list. Jewish last names took upon an immutable quality. It was not long before "the Jews, for whom in 1812 the gates of the legal ghetto had been opened only half-heartedly and not even completely, were to be imprisoned again in another ghetto: one of names."<sup>32</sup>

By 1867, all loopholes were closed. A Royal Cabinet order signed on 12 July 1867 gave district presidents the right to confirm any patronym changes that resulted from members of the Jewish faith converting to Christianity. The order made it increasingly difficult to alter a surname through religious conversion. Thus, the democratizing revolutions of 1848 and other reforms played a role both in emancipating and in controlling the population that had previously been illegible. The Prussian state wanted permanent patronyms not only to identify unique citizens, but also to code for religious background. When Germany implemented the Final Solution, the closed list of Jewish patronyms made the task of genocide terrifyingly simple.

By the mid-nineteenth century the idea of universal manhood suffrage was joined, in the West, with a high-modernist ideology requiring entirely novel levels of intervention into society. Once the improvement of society itself (its health, skills, well being, intelligence, safety, community life, housing, morals, etc.) became an important state project, a wholly new level of legibility was required. It is one thing to round up a handful of recruits and seize part of the wheat harvest; it is quite another to vaccinate, block-by-block, the poorer quarters of a teeming city, to send disability checks to those (and only those) with a specific handicap, or to create an epidemiological database to identify rare diseases. High modernist intrusions typically require fine-grained, discriminating, unambiguous forms of identification. The preferences of administrators, left to their own devices, are nearly always *serial numbers* of one kind or another: an infinite, discriminating, continuous series, simple to apply and designed for maximum synoptic legibility.

### *Two Colonial Cases*

What happens when a modernizing state with large ambitions encounters a society that is largely opaque? The starkest version of this encounter is met in colonial situations where an authoritarian, mobilizing state faces a society at

once resistant and uncharted. Here, confronting a population with few, if any, formal rights to representation, state officials are free to invent schemes of naming that suit their ends, though implementing them successfully is another matter altogether.

We examine two such colonial cases, separated from one another by roughly a half century: the creation of permanent patronyms for Native Americans in the United States around the turn of the century and the attempt by the Canadian government to craft legible identities for the Inuit population in the 1950s. Each scheme, seemingly simple in conception, became in practice a baroque tangle of contradiction and confusion. The schemes were, of course, intended to create unambiguous (male) personal identities *legible to officials*. The immediate purposes animating each naming exercise varied: the Bureau of Indian Affairs was hoping to create and stabilize a new, private property regime and, not incidentally, seize more land from the reservations; the Canadian officials hoped to intervene more discriminatingly to promote their vision of welfare, health, and development. What the exercises share, however, is an overarching cultural project: to fashion and normalize a standard patriarchal family-system deemed suitable to their vision of citizenship, property rights, and civilized, moral conduct.

### *The Renaming of Native Americans*

The story of conquest, particularly in European settler colonies where the conquerors held overwhelming power, could be written as a vast project of renaming the natural world. Presto! Native names for flora, fauna, insects, mountains, valleys, birds were effaced and replaced by the nouns and taxonomies of the conquerors. This process, too, is a project of legibility, a transfer of knowledge in which the mystifying (to Europeans) hieroglyphics of native naming practices was replaced by imported practices transparent to Europeans and, now, mystifying to the conquered. Comprehensive re-labeling is a pre-condition for the transfer of power, management, and control.<sup>33</sup>

Nowhere is this hegemonic project more apparent than in the effort to rename the individual 'native subjects' of this colonial enterprise in a fashion that would allow the colonizers to identify each (male!) unambiguously as a legal person. To grasp the importance and scope of this undertaking, its function in promoting legibility and its role as a civilizational discourse, it is helpful to appreciate just how illegible Native American naming practices were to Europeans.

### *Illegibility*

Officials encountered, among 'Indians,' what they considered a radical instability and plurality of names. As in many small stateless societies, a person would have several names dependent on the situation of address (e.g. among age-mates, between generations, among close kin) and these names would of-

ten change over time. A child who ran screaming into the teepee on seeing a bear might be called "Runs-from-the-Bear." Later on, if she rides a horse from which others have been thrown, she might be called "Rides-the-Horse." A hunter who was called "Five Bears" may be called "Six Bears" when he has killed another.<sup>34</sup> Researchers tracing surname adoption among the Weagamow Ojibwa noted the plurality of names, in this case partly due to contact with Europeans. The same individual was variously known as Freed Smith, Banani, Nizopitawigizik, and Fredrick Sagachekipoo.<sup>35</sup>

The plurality of names, as the previous example illustrates, was not simply a consequence of indigenous naming practices; it was substantially increased by overlapping jurisdictions and by problems of transliteration. An individual might have one or another of his names recorded by several authorities: a trading post clerk, a missionary, a tribal scribe, or a military or civilian administrator. Each name might be different and, if the people in question were migratory, the places of registration would vary. Imagine trying to pin down the identity of persons who have five or six names and who are constantly on the move!<sup>36</sup> Here, of course, it is important to recall that the recording of names was either an attempt at translation into English (e.g., Six Bears) or a stab at transliteration for which there were no fixed rules. The result, in both cases, were names that bore an indifferent relationship to the indigenous appellation they purported to transcribe.<sup>37</sup> In the case of translation, even an accurate one, the name became nothing more than a nonsense syllable for non-English speaking Indians. In the case of transliteration, the problems were compounded by large phonological differences between English and native tongues. Thus, in the case of the Severn Ojibwa, such differences produced exotic local renderings of English given names: e.g., Flora = Pinona; Hector = Ehkitah; Telma = Temina; Isabel = Saben; Amos = Thomas; Louise = Anoy's.<sup>38</sup> In the case of direct transliteration of the indigenous names of different persons, as among the Crow at the Devil's Lake Agency in North Dakota, one imagines that the recorded names were only one of many possible phonetic renderings: "Eyau-pahamini," "Iyayahamani," "Ecanajinka," "Wiyakimaza," "Wakauhotanina," "Wasineasuwmami," "Tiowaste." Had there been standard rules for transliteration and had the recorders of names followed these rules rigorously, the results would have still been mystifying and unpronounceable to white officials.

There were two further problems from the point of view of government agents. First, even translated names that could be understood came in an incompatible format. Take, for example, the names "Barkley-on-the-other-side," "Alice shoots-as-she-goes," "Irvie comes out of fog" (Montana, Crow). The given name is clear, perhaps, but what should be taken as the surname: the whole phrase, the last word . . . ?

Secondly, and more seriously, the indigenous naming system only rarely gave any indication of sex or family relationship. Among the Southern Cheyenne, the following "family names" were recorded:



Father	Gunaoi
Mother	Deon
1st Daughter	Halli
2nd Daughter	Aisima
3rd Daughter	Imaguna
1st Son	Inali
2nd Son	Zepko

The letter recording these names notes that they do not indicate the sex of the children; in fact, what the writer means is that, if sex is indicated, it is not a code that he understands. Even when translation into English names prevailed among the Cheyenne, they very rarely indicated roles in a nuclear family so prized by officials. Thus, "Crow Neck," his 'wife' "Walking Road," their sons "Clarence Crow Neck," "Rested Wolf," and "Hunting Over." On the Arapaho roll: "Bear Lariat," his 'wife' "Mouse," sons "Sitting Man" and "Charles Lariat," and daughter "Singing Above." As we shall see, such 'illegible naming practices were unsuited to the twin normative legal requirements of civilized life: property ownership and marriage by law.

*Property: The Dawes Act*

The experience of Native Americans in the United States also suggests an intimate link among the consolidation of the modern nation-state, ethnic assimilation, the development of a private property regime, and the imposition of a European-style surname system. In their study of the Native Americans of the Oklahoma, Dakota, and Wyoming Territories, Daniel Littlefield and Lonnie Underhill examine the nature of this link in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>39</sup> Prior to 1887, Native American tribes had held land in common. However, with the passage of the General Allotment Act of 1887, the United States government required Native Americans to receive individual title to land. Though represented as a pro-assimilation policy that would give Native Americans the ability to pursue the American Dream,<sup>40</sup> the imposition of a private property regime actually condemned Native Americans caught in the reservation system to generations of poverty.<sup>41</sup>

Just as significantly, the new regime also represented a major attack on the power of tribal authorities.<sup>42</sup> Property rights accompanied the right to national citizenship, making the Native Americans subject to the law of the United States and not the laws of their tribe. Furthermore, with the elimination of common property rights, the tribal governments lost a major source of their power. The intermediary of the tribe was removed, allowing the United States government to directly control individual Native Americans.

So long as the administrative regime governing Native Americans resembled indirect rule—so long as the aims of white officials were containment and military security—their seemingly promiscuous and illegible naming practices were inconvenient, but not fatal. Officials worked through their own Indian em-

ployees and a handful of chiefs. They were dependent on “native-trackers” for detailed information or for locating a particular individual.

All of this changed with the Dawes Act of 1887, which authorized the President to allot 160 acres to each family head (presumptively a male) on a reservation. The title to the land would be held in trust for twenty-five years (apparently to prevent victimization of the new landowners by speculators) after which it would revert to the allottee and *his* heirs. The goal, aside from seizing more tribal land for white settlers,<sup>43</sup> was the cultural assimilation of Native Americans. “(A)fter receiving his allotment, which signified his severance from the tribe and its communal ways, he would become subject to the laws of the state or territory in which he resided.”<sup>44</sup> In this sense, the Dawes Act was “a mighty pulverizing engine for the breaking up of the tribal mass.”<sup>45</sup>

Now that many Native Americans would become property-owning citizens, no longer exclusively under tribal jurisdiction, but citizens with rights and obligations under the laws of the larger society, their illegibility as (male!) individuals was no longer acceptable. Native American naming practices were suitable for a common-property regime with a loose family structure and nomadic ways. They were not suitable for a newly created, sedentary, property-owning, citizen yeomanry. As legal persons, Native Americans now needed a legal identity proper to the state.

The immediate impetus behind a standardization of Indian names was the institution of private property in land. Allotments meant deeds, titles, cadastral surveys, and inheritance, and these, in turn, required an unambiguous legal identity—preferably one that reflected close kinship ties (i.e., the ‘normative’ nuclear family). Reformers, who believed allotments were the route to a necessary and beneficial assimilation, were intent on avoiding the confusion and litigation that customary naming practices might encourage. They set about standardizing names to make sure that land was registered under an unambiguous identity: names with permanent patronyms that would reduce the legal confusion about exactly who a deceased landowner’s heirs were.

What is noteworthy here is the unavoidable, not to say coercive, logic joining standardized legal identities on the one hand and property-ownership on the other. As one official wrote, the American system of naming was,

a good system, for it fixes the name of each individual after an unvarying fashion, and establishes the same practically beyond alteration. . . . We cannot see how it could be otherwise than it is. Furthermore, and what makes it so important, it is practically the only system known to American law, and it is impossible not to see that in all things, prominent among which is the transfer of property or the bequeathing of the same to heirs, trouble must come to those who disregard his system.<sup>46</sup>

Once the allotments were decided on, a whole set of gears were inexorably set into motion. The process is a classic example of practical, systemic hegemony; after all, property deeds, land records, and property taxes require synoptic, standardized forms of identification.

The enormous diversity of Native American naming practices, varying de-

gresses of contact and assimilation, and the huge variety of administrative arrangements under which they were governed, created nearly insurmountable problems of illegibility. The "Poet of the Prairie," Hamlin Garland, made "the naming of the Red Men as they became citizens" a personal mission, seeking the confidence of President Theodore Roosevelt in carrying it out successfully. Stressing the legal necessity of a legible surname system for private property purposes and promoting the assimilation of Native Americans into Anglo-American society, Garland brought the renaming project to the President's attention on 1 April 1902.<sup>47</sup> In a letter urging Roosevelt to place George Bird Grinnell (a naturalist and ethnographer of the Cheyenne) in charge of a committee to rename all Native Americans, he made his goals clear: he wanted to establish a secure legal identity for all Indians: "It is imperative that family names should be reasonable and according to some system. The whole list is an inextricable tangle. . . . They must be named according to their family relation in order to prevent endless legal complication. . . . The work should be done by a central committee and not by the various clerks of the agencies."<sup>48</sup>

With Roosevelt's blessing, Garland cooperated with various members of the executive branch to execute a thorough renaming project among the Native Americans residing in the Territories. The overriding concern with establishing a systematic, centralized formula for renaming was echoed by The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Thomas J. Morgan, in 1890. Although "the command to give names to the Indians and to establish the same as far as possible by continuous use had been part of the Rules and Regulations for years past," it had not been widely applied or generalized.<sup>49</sup> Morgan proposed general guidelines for the renaming exercise. A further regulation deplored the lackadaisical efforts to systematize and enforce the new names, which left in their wake a host of confusing, unpronounceable, and insulting patronyms. He further scolded both his subordinates and his Native American charges:

Such Indian agents and superintendents of Indian schools have not sought to impress the Indian people with the importance of having their names fashioned after the whites, consequently they have had in this direction the opposition instead of the cooperation of the Indians. In this thing, as in nearly all others, the Indians do not know what is best for them. They can't see that our system has any advantages over their own, and they have fought stubbornly against the innovation.<sup>50</sup>

Morgan, Grinnell, and Garland tried, by the standards of the time, to be as accommodating as they could to indigenous naming practices, *so long* as they conformed to minimal standards of legibility. Morgan and Grinnell were not opposed to retaining Indian names providing that they were not "too difficult to pronounce." The rub, of course, was that "difficult to pronounce" referred to the difficulty experienced by native English speakers. Otherwise English names and translations were to be substituted whenever the original name was long and/or difficult. Garland agreed. Easily spoken names such as "To-re-ach" or "Chonoh" might be retained while others would require translation and, fre-

quently, shortening as well. "Black Bull" might be shortened to "Blackbill" or "Blackbell"; "Standing Bull" to "Stanbull"; "Albert Spotted-Horse" to "Albert Spotted"; "Black Owl" to "Blackall"; "Brave Bear" to "Bravber." A Christian "given name" was normally appended as a first name: e.g., "Charles Stanbull." The Garland proposal aimed to make all names "decent and reasonable," to show a legal connection to the family. Brevity, ease of pronunciation to whites, and "pleasantness" were emphasized values, all favoring legibility. Existing names would be adopted if they met this criteria. If not, family names might be abbreviated or even altered and spelling would be made uniform.<sup>51</sup> As Garland noted, the point was that "*our* Indians should be entirely renamed according to some general system," retaining the Indians' own name whenever possible, shortening or modifying it so that it can be spoken by the Red Man's neighbor," so that it name(s) all children after their father or a name chosen by their mother." In short, he desired "a system which will show family relations, which will meet the wishes of the red people and be comprehensible to the white people."<sup>52</sup> The aim, Garland wrote, was to start each allottee with a decent and reasonable name—names that, when translated, seemed demeaning (e.g., "Ghost-faced Woman," "Drunkard," "Let them Have Enough," "Nancy Kills a Hundred," "Rotten Pumpkin.") were to be avoided.<sup>53</sup>

### *The Civilizational Project*

The renaming of Native Americans was a 'civilizing project' in at least two respects. The first is most obvious. The "Red Man" was being inducted, through the Dawes Act, into a radically new life that would eventually lead, it was hoped, to complete assimilation. Just as the pre-condition of the emancipation and full citizenship of the Jews in Central Europe was the legal adoption of permanent patronyms along Christian lines, so was a fixed legal patronym a condition of post-reservation life. The creation of such a legal identity was the necessary 'universal gear' which would then engage the other gears of the official machinery of the modern state.

In 1819, Congress had established a "Civilization Fund" to introduce the Indian to "the habits and arts of civilization." In general, the Fund's goal was to transform what were seen (often mistakenly) as exclusively "hunting-and-gathering" cultures dependent on nomadism and communal ownership of land into a sedentary, agrarian (and artisan) society based on private property. The former condition, requiring bravery, shrewdness, and honor were associated with savagery, whereas a settled life with cultivated property was seen as the handmaiden of civilization: ". . . you may look forward to the period when the savage shall be converted to the citizen, when the hunter shall be transformed into the mechanic, when the farm, the workshop, the school-house, and the church shall adorn every Indian village; when the fruits of industry, good order, and sound morals shall bless every Indian dwelling."<sup>54</sup> As the Director of the Bureau of Ethnology John Wesley Powell reasoned, accomplishing this work



required new names which “tend strongly toward the breaking up of the Indian tribal system, which is perpetuated and ever kept in mind by the Indian’s own system of names.”<sup>55</sup> As a structure of physical confinement and surveillance, the reservation system was itself not conceived as a project of cultural autonomy but as a prelude to transformation. “Restricting the tribes to a limited and permanent area was a prerequisite to successfully civilizing them.”<sup>56</sup>

The second civilizing project—one embedded in the formula for renaming the Indians—was the restructuring of the “family” to bring it into line with the normative patriarchy of their white Christian neighbors. Family and kinship practices varied widely among Native Americans, but it is safe to say that they rarely resembled the codified religious and legal forms of the dominant society.<sup>57</sup> Plural and serial unions, child-rearing by the extended family, and changes in the composition of bands over time were common and only served to confirm the need for ‘civilizing’ efforts.

The illegibility of Native American kinship nomenclature was frequently taken by the ‘would-be civilizers’ as a direct indication of confusion and disorder among the Indians themselves about kinship relations, *not* as a sign of a different kinship *order*. Just as the Spanish Governor General of the Philippines in 1847 imposed permanent patronyms on the premise that they would help Filipinos figure out who their cousins were (and avoid marrying them), so did the namers of the ‘Red Men’ imagine that they were helping their charges sort out the primeval mess of their savage ways. Hamlin Garland, for example, supposed that the mere absence of a common patronym joining siblings was evidence “that each child stands alone in the world.”<sup>58</sup> Writing of the Southern Cheyenne tribal roll, he declared, “The whole list is an inextricable tangle. For example, practically only one man can straighten out the family ramifications among the Southern Cheyenne.”<sup>59</sup> It is not entirely clear whether Garland imagined that the Cheyenne themselves were in doubt about their relationship to one another; but it is clear that he believed that they, as well as the white man, would be thankful for a kinship terminology that clarified matters. Reading the correspondence and official circulars of the time makes it appear that the reformers believed that *if* they just got the kinship terminology right, the actual practices of Native Americans would soon fall in line with white, “civilized” norms.<sup>60</sup>

### *Boarding Schools*

Nowhere was the civilizational project more evident than in the boarding schools set up for Native American school children. The logic behind the boarding school was precisely the logic of the ‘total institution.’ One might flail away at effecting small changes among masses of Native Americans on the reservation or, alternatively, concentrate on removing a smaller number of children of an impressionable age away from the contaminating influence of the tribe and into highly controlled, disciplinary surroundings. By a reduction in scale, one

achieved a commensurate increase in micro-control of the environment. Here the new elites could be shaped from the ground up, Pygmalion-fashion.<sup>61</sup> The results were also more legible: so many graduated, so many literate in English, so many taught certain crafts and mechanical skills, etc.

Like the military model they mimicked, school techniques were meant to be a shocking and comprehensive baptism. The clothes they arrived in were discarded and a "military kit" was issued in its place; their diet was changed to a Western one; their hair (often an important cultural badge) was forcibly cut; facial paint was forbidden; time discipline was imposed; conversation in native languages was severely punished; and, of course, new names were mandated. A Sioux memoir of naming in the boarding school captures the atmosphere:

The new recruit's acquisition of a uniform was followed by the acquisition of a new name. Most often this occurred on the first day of instruction. In the case of Luther Standing Bear, he remembers that one day there were a lot of strange marks on the blackboard, which an interpreter explained were whitemen's names. One by one the students were asked to approach the blackboard with a pointer and were instructed to choose a name. When a name was selected, the teacher wrote it on a piece of white tape, which was then sewn on the back of the boy's shirt. When Standing Bear's turn came, he took the pointer and acted as if he were about to touch an enemy. By the end of the class, all the students had the name of a white man sewn on their backs. In the case of Luther Standing Bear, he needed only to choose a first name and was able to keep part of his Indian name in English translation. Not all the boarding school students had this luxury.<sup>62</sup>

As in many utopian schemes of standardization, the project of renaming Native Americans was a messy affair. It was common for one authority to codify names without noting, in each case, the results of earlier naming exercises. Efforts to create new names in the boarding schools to indicate paternity were seldom coordinated with renaming on the reservation where the students' fathers lived, thus leading to nearly hopeless confusion. Two brothers named in separate exercises might not be given the same last name. But, as in the case of the Philippines, over several decades, the frequency of contact with officialdom ensured that most Native Americans had legal names that conformed to the Anglo-American normative patriarchal order. Practice, of course, was something else again.

#### *Serial Numbers and Synoptic Order: The Case of the Inuit*

Roughly half-a-century after the Dawes Act, Canadian Authorities set about identifying their most nomadic and illegible population: the Inuit. Thanks to the existence of one closely observed study,<sup>63</sup> some comparisons with surname creation among Native Americans in the United States are possible. The similarities are more striking than the differences, which arise, it would seem, from Canada's more developed and centralized federal administration.

The Inuit, like many Native American groups, had naming practices that, while perfectly adequate for Inuit purposes, baffled the officials in charge of ruling them. Most Inuit had a single name, one that might, furthermore, change

more than once in the course of a lifetime. In common with many other peoples, the Inuit believed in appeasing the restless ghosts of the deceased and, to this end, they strove to ensure that a dead person's name was given to a newly born infant as soon as possible. Gender-specific names arose only under colonial rule and it was quite common to have a daughter given the name of an admired and recently deceased male, whether or not he was a close relative.

Inuit names sounded odd and unpronounceable to European ears (e.g., Itukusuk or Kilabuk) and, as in the United States, even when European and biblical names were adopted, phonological differences made transliteration a tenuous art. As early as 1935, well before a comprehensive renaming was proposed, the difficulties had been noted. One official charged with following migrating individuals from one part of Northern Canada to another complained to the Department of the Interior:

There are five divisions to the settlement and I think that if I left it to get the names from the natives, each has a different spelling for each name. . . . It does not seem to ease our troubles any that [the Inuit] have in recent years taken their names from the Bible. A good example of this is the common name "Ruth." The native cannot get his sounding mechanism around the letter "R" at the first of a word. As a result, different persons would write down the following when the native gave the child's name, 'Vrootee,' "Olootie," "Alootah," and other alterations along the same line. *To one who does not know them personally, this makes it rather difficult when it comes to putting them in alphabetical order.*<sup>64</sup>

To the problem of variant transliterations must be added that of multiple jurisdictions. Names might be exotically and differently crafted by the Nursing Station personnel, the Royal Mounted Police, and the school administration.

Like Native American personal and place names, Inuit names offered a condensed reference-shelf of narratives which, taken in the aggregate and expanded on, amounted to local histories. Such names marked the landscape and its inhabitants and created a local habitat rich in order and meaning, but largely inaccessible to outsiders. Projects to re-label places and people in standardizing ways carry at least three implications: they facilitate identification and control by extra-local authorities; they help nest the locality in a larger pattern of regional and national meanings; and, finally, they overlay and often efface local systems of orientation. As systematic re-mapping ventures, they re-orient some actors, typically powerful state agents, and dis-orient others. The transfer of knowledge via synoptic legibility is, at the same time, always a cultural project of internal colonialism. Thus, the 'tidying up' of Inuit nomenclature went hand-in-hand with the creation of boarding schools, the ban on Inuit drum dancing and, in the case of the Coppermine Inuit, a prohibition of lip ornaments—actions all intended to make the Inuit into *national* subjects and citizens.

Unlike the United States government, which, in the 1890s, was preoccupied with confinement, sedentarization, and legal order, the Canadian state, after the Second World War, was animated as much by the delivery of services as by the

creation of legal persons. The Canadian welfare state, though in its infancy, was committed to providing social security, pensions, family allowances, vocational schooling, and medical services for everyone, including the nomadic, illegible Inuit. Such discriminating intervention required an equally discriminating system capable of pinpointing each individual.

Bureaucratically speaking, the simplest system of identification is the serial number. Anything else is second best. Given half a chance, administrators are drawn to the arithmetic beauty of a potentially endless series of consecutive numbers. It eliminates, at a stroke, all the ambiguity and discretion which plague any system of last names, for example how to transliterate names not previously written, what part of a name to consider as a patronym (e.g., "de la Fontaine, Oscar" or "Fontaine, Oscar de la"; "McArthur" or "MacArthur").

Inspired by the experience of military "dog tags," the Ministry of the Interior at first devised for the illegible Inuit a disk system. Each small fiber disk had, printed in relief, a crown, the words, "Eskimo Identification-Canada" and then a letter and a number: e.g. "E-6-2155." The "E-6" would stand for "East Zone, District 6" indicating the administrative zone of the North where this particular Inuit had been sighted, registered, and tagged! The succeeding number, "2155," was a personal identification reference (as a social security number might be in the United States) which directed an official to the appropriate dossier containing all the information of interest to the state (name, aliases, birth-date, civil status, vaccinations, criminal record, pension and welfare records, etc.).

The intention of the administrators was that each Inuit would wear his or her disk on a necklace; in fact, they were manufactured with a hole stamped in them for this purpose. Analogies with the military "dog tag" system were not implicit but quite conscious. The 1935 proposal noted that: "My humble suggestion would be, that at each registration, the child be given an identity disk along the same lines as the army identity disk and the same insistence that it be on at all times. The novelty of it would appeal to the natives."<sup>65</sup>

Nor is the analogy superficial. The military "dog tag," like the hospital identification bracelet, is worn on the body precisely to identify someone who cannot, or will not, identify himself. It identified the dead or unconscious soldier, or the one whose remains are otherwise unidentifiable. The Inuit disk, like the military dog tags, was invented as a device for outsiders to keep track—in the face of muteness, death, or willful resistance—of the people or objects so ordered. Not expected to speak for themselves, the fugitive hunting and trapping Inuit were to be branded like migratory birds so as to track their movements. Had the technology of the age permitted, there is little doubt that officials would have preferred small electronic transmitters and global positioning systems to monitor all movement by satellite.

Imposition of the disk system was seen as the key to all development and welfare among the Inuit.<sup>66</sup> The disk numbers, distributed exclusively to the Inu-



it following the 1935 census, were the template for assembling all vital statistics about health, education, income, crime, and population. In order to make it stick, officials insisted that the disk number be used in all official correspondence and on all birth, marriage, and death certificates. Evidence that the Inuit did not like the disk system<sup>67</sup> and suggestions for alternatives were rebuffed by its supporters, who urged stricter enforcement: "In my opinion there is no necessity whatsoever to replace the present identification disk with a medal or token of any kind. As I have been pointing out for twenty years, once the Eskimo realizes that the white man wants him to memorize an identification number and use it in all trading and other transactions, the Eskimo will fall into line."<sup>68</sup>

It was a very rare Inuit, indeed, who wore the disk around his or her neck.<sup>69</sup> Many Canadian agencies did not insist on the use of disk numbers in their dealings with Inuit, and the utopian single identifying number fell gradually into disuse. The Inuit complained that their children at school were asked to call out their disk number rather than a name and that they occasionally got mail addressed to their disk number alone.

Finally, in 1969, the disk system was formally abandoned, and a three-member board was created to take charge of establishing family names and their consistent spelling. Thus was born "Project Surname," a crash program to create and/or register proper patronyms for all Inuit before the Centennial. Those officials for whom unambiguous identification was paramount argued for retaining the disk scheme—"the alternative would be an unacceptable level of confusion."<sup>70</sup> "What about variable spellings of the same name?" they asked. "What about people using the same name?" (One official pointed out that in Pongnirtung there were three women named Annia Kilabuk.) "How will we keep track of people who move around?" "How do we know we are paying the right person?"<sup>71</sup>

Unlike disk numbers, patronyms did not lend themselves to a smooth, unambiguous series. A brochure explained why European-style names were preferable: Inuit names were too hard to pronounce, too long, and too similar.<sup>72</sup> As with most crash programs, implementation was chaotic and coercion fairly high. One official told the startled Inuit that everyone had to have a last name by the time he left the settlement the same afternoon: "I was in Baker Lake . . . There were 800 people. It was just like a sausage factory . . . 'Do you have a surname? What's your father's name? OK. You're [new name]' . . . Project Surname ended up by creating a situation which is just horrendous."<sup>73</sup>

Serial numbers and permanent patronyms are each civilizational projects. But while the doling out of serial numbers bore an air of lofty abstraction, the choosing of surnames involved, as elsewhere, an implicitly cultural project. One primary reason why Inuit names did not reflect sex and paternity was because the Inuit simply did not live in standard normative European-style families. (Nor, of course, did many Canadians of European ancestry!) The scolding tone of the administrative summary of Project Surname admitted as much. It complained of,

a total lack of understanding among the Eskimo people about the legal, social, and moral aspects of names. . . . family- or sur-name, under which all members of a family are identified, is unknown. Legal usage, ownership of property under a family name is impossible . . . Marriage customs have never developed in the sense of the "Western civilized ethic," as a family unit has no common name tying it together. Adoption of children has presented extreme difficulty.<sup>74</sup>

Adoption among relatives was very common and many Inuit children were named to reflect their adoptive parents rather than their birth parents. Nor was the concept "head of family," even as a formal status, particularly germane in the Inuit context. The desire of officials to create a viable system of identification and get welfare checks to the right person [and avoid fraud] was germane enough; but the desire to create a modern Canadian identity for the Inuit and muster them, at least on paper, into a standard, normative family was at the very core of Project Surname's logic.

This exercise did not, of course, eliminate Inuit naming practices. What it did produce was rampant name pluralism. Many, perhaps most, Inuit had an administrative name that followed European usage but also one or more local Inuit names, not recorded in any document, by which he or she was known locally. Thus, most Inuit move back and forth between a local identity with its own codes and an administrative identity with its own code. As the mother of a newborn son explained, "It [a child's Inuit name] won't go on any record at all. But he *will* be known as another name . . . It's still followed today. Like right now my own baby is named by three different names, which aren't going to be on his birth certificate."<sup>75</sup>

These two spheres of naming can coexist for long periods. Unlike the Inuit 'register' of names, however, the Canadian register of names is underwritten by a state, an army, the police, and the law. The greater the necessity and frequency of the Canadian code in Inuit lives, the greater the practical, daily hegemony of European-style surnames.

### III. NAMES AND THE PRACTICAL HEGEMONY OF THE STATE

Just as industrialized nations are extending long-standing projects of legibility to the far reaches of their periphery, new states, with modernizing agendas, have been inventing permanent patronyms for the first time. Other techniques of identification, as we shall see, are now available. Most of them are more discriminating, legible, and efficient than the proper name. Nevertheless, to follow the progress of legal naming throughout the world is to follow, simultaneously, the rise of regimes, which have plans for the mobilization and/or improvement of their population.

#### *Modernization Projects*

The modern Turkish republic of Kemal Ataturk decreed universal, legal patronyms in the context of one of the most comprehensive projects of modernization and Westernization the world has seen. Having "reformed" the clock

and the calendar, adopted the metric system, abolished feudal tithes, created a national system of citizenship, and rewritten the legal code to bypass the *shari'a*. Ataturk ordered the adoption of permanent legal family names in 1934.<sup>76</sup> The creation of a powerful modern state required a system of meticulous taxation and conscription that improved on the techniques of the Ottomans. This objective, in turn, required legible, personal identities. As we have seen in other instances, however, the mandating of last names was part and parcel of a vast cultural project designed to transform Turkey into a modern European nation. To this end, Arabic script was replaced with Roman, words with Ural-Altai roots were emphasized, the wearing of the fez and the veil was banned; Islam and, with it, the Islamic tithe (*zakar*) was dis-established. The adoption of distinctively Turkish names, as opposed to Islamic and, especially, Arabic names was encouraged.<sup>77</sup>

The brusque legal change was easier to bring about than the revolutionizing of naming habits. Turks (not to mention the many national minorities) had many different names, some of which might change in the course of a lifetime. Locally, this posed no confusion as local residents knew the names of their neighbors and could, if necessary, add qualifying nicknames to clear up any possible misunderstanding. The new names co-existed with older naming practices for a long time, especially where contact with the state was episodic. Even at the center, the adoption of novel patronyms threatened, if rigorously and suddenly imposed, to provoke commercial and administrative chaos. Very few citizens actually knew the new patronyms of their acquaintances<sup>78</sup> and, mercifully, the Istanbul telephone book listed subscribers alphabetically by *first* name until 1950, fourteen years after the patronym decree. Nor was Turkey unique in this regard. Authorities in Thailand, where permanent last names were instituted in the 1950s, also have a healthy respect for the importance of practical knowledge. Names in the Bangkok phone directory are still listed and alphabetized by first name.

#### *Fixing Names, Fixing Identities*

So far we have examined the creation of names as official legal identities only in the context of Western-style naming practices. It should be perfectly clear, however, that the legibility of names as legal identities is intrinsic to *any* project of governance requiring discriminating intervention in local affairs. Thus, the conflict between parochial and outside authority and the legibility questions prevalent in the naming process are not merely vestiges of our past. Witness, for example, the legal and policy issues surrounding the creation of fixed identities in the relatively anonymous world of the Internet. The development of Internet "cookies" to better track cyber-identities, the quest for a consistent domain-name registration system, and judicial reforms aimed at awarding jurisdictional authority over the Internet to the courts of modern nation-states all represent early efforts to make cyberspace legible.

Meanwhile, the older process of state-making through naming continues, often with non-Western wrinkles. In China for example, the contemporary regime confronts a host of nationalities (fifty-six by official codification). Some have no tradition of permanent patronyms at all, some have many names and surnames, and still others have family names that do not conform to Han-Chinese usage. The standardized Chinese administrative system is no more able to accommodate exotic minority names than was the Bureau of Indian Affairs able to absorb—even after translation—the Crow name “Irvie comes-out-of-fog.” Confronted with Kachin minority naming practices at the southwest frontier in Yuna’an Province, Chinese authorities do what Hamlin Garland did. They shoe-horn Kachin practices into the nearest available standard Chinese equivalent. An ethnographer from Taiwan, studying the Kachin, described how they were fitted into the grid.

Names in official records have to be able to be written in Chinese characters; hence family names that are mono-syllables are changed into Chinese (usually single character) surnames. Among the Zaiwa [sub-division of the Kachin] “Muiho” is a common and important surname whose standard matching surname in Chinese is “he” [Wade-Giles “Ho”], my own surname.<sup>79</sup>

For many of the isolated Kachin who have thus been conjured by a Han administrator into “He(s)” or “Ho(s),” the Chinese record-keeping is of little moment. Their Han administrative identity is invoked only on those infrequent occasions when they have official business (e.g., taxation, contracts, conscription, inheritance of property) with the state. For the rest, for daily transactions, local naming practices are perfectly satisfactory.

Initially, then, state schemes of naming may hardly touch the citizens whose identities they aim to fix. “Name pluralism” may persist for centuries, with state-devised identities being invoked for some purposes, and local vernacular identities for others. But we must not imagine that official and vernacular names are on an equal footing. Official names have, in the final analysis, the weight of the nation-state and its associated institutions arranged behind them. Here the concept of “traffic patterns” as applied by Benedict Anderson to state-sponsored identities is instructive. “Traffic patterns” are what make imaginary administrative identities into the solid realities of social life. Thus the Dutch colonizers in Indonesia “identified certain residents as Chinese [Chinezen] although they were part of a huge diaspora that did not think of themselves as Chinese,” nor were they so thought of. Nevertheless, the Dutch government, working on their ‘ethnoscape,’ proceeded to organize, “the new educational, juridical, public-health, police and immigration bureaucracies it was building on the principle of ethnic-racial hierarchies. The flow of subject populations through the mesh of differential schools, courts, clinics, police-stations, and immigration offices created ‘traffic-habits’ which, in time, gave real social life to the state’s earlier fantasies.”<sup>80</sup>

Vernacular names, like vernacular identities, do not typically disappear; but



state naming systems typically become hegemonic for several reasons, all having to do with the institution of the modern nation-state. The state can insist that one use one's legal name in all official acts: e.g. certification of birth, marriage, and death, inheritance, legal contracts, last wills and testaments, taxes, written communications to officials. Correspondingly, the greater the frequency of interaction with the state and state-like institutions, as we have seen, the greater the sphere of public life in which the official name is the only appropriate identity.

Take, for example, the birth certificate. Along with the death certificate, it is a remarkable and very recent innovation; even in the West, people managed, until quite recently, to be born and die without official notice! The birth certificate is the first official recording of a proper, [paper] legal identity and it is governed by many regulations. Care is taken to devise a proper surname when the normal parental agreement is lacking: "In cases where the mother and father have joint custody of the child and disagree on the selection of a surname, the surname selected by the father and surname selected by the mother shall both be entered on the certificate, separated by a hyphen, with the selected names entered in alphabetic order."<sup>81</sup>

Notice, also, that the normal, modern, institutional setting for birth and, hence, for the birth certificate forms, is the maternity ward of a hospital, where state-like bureaucratic routines for the collection of vital statistics prevail. When, by contrast, most children are born at home, with or without professional care, the official registration of births is that much more complex. Modern, formal institutions are handmaidens to the creation and hegemony of official patronyms. The hegemony of state-structured institutions such as schools, social security, military service, taxpaying, property registration and transfer provide the "traffic patterns" that ensure the dominance of state-identification practices. It is in most citizens' interest to be duly recorded whenever state institutions have the power to provide a benefit or to diminish or cancel a penalty. Official identities, then, constitute an iron cage enclosing a great deal of social life in the contemporary modern state.

#### IV. VERNACULAR OPTICS, STATE OPTICS

Central to the institutional hegemony of the nation-state has been the project of synoptic legibility. Its hard-won achievement against dogged resistance, an achievement requiring massive institutional investments in creating records and the personnel to manage them, represents the armature of state knowledge. Without this synoptic grasp, without the field of vision it affords officials, most of the activities of the modern state, from vaccinating schoolchildren to arresting criminals (or political opponents) would be inconceivable.

The early modern state faced a population whose land tenure practices, identity, production, wealth, and health were largely opaque. An exotic tangle of local measurement practices, nicknames, customary rights, and forms of local ex-

change thwarted any monarch's scheme to mobilize resources for war or for public works. At the very least, officials at the center were hostage to the cooperation of local authorities for what intelligence they chose to offer. We have examined the creation of the permanent patronym as an essential, though rudimentary, element in this project of synoptic legibility. In a larger study, the permanent patronym would take its place beside a host of other state 'optical technologies': the standardization of weights and measures, the centralization of the legal code, the creation of uniform cadastral maps and property registers, a uniform tax code, a common currency, and the promotion of a standard dialect.<sup>82</sup>

Each of these projects represents a transfer of power and a corresponding switch in codes. The transfer of power, in terms of state capacity, is obvious, as is the fact that it is achieved against opposition. As socio-linguists are fond of saying, 'the difference between a dialect and a national language is that a national language is a dialect with an army.' Nation-states, even revolutionary ones, could not simply decree projects of synoptic legibility; they had to be enforced. In 1791, the Revolutionary State in France required all prefectures to furnish the "name, age, birthplace, residence, profession, and other means of subsistence of all citizens living in its territory."<sup>83</sup> Only *three* of 36,000 communes replied! While the Napoleonic State a decade later did achieve better results, it required heroic efforts against substantial odds.

The switch in codes is vital. Both vernacular systems and state systems of, say, naming and measurement, are codes. The question is who holds the key to the code, who can break it. In the case of vernacular naming, as with the Inuit or Native Americans in the United States, the keys to the code are held locally—and often, but not always, fairly democratically—while the code remains an opaque hieroglyph to outsiders. In the most synoptic forms of identification—for example the serial number—the keys to the code are held by specialists (clerks, lawyers, statisticians) while the code typically remains a hieroglyph to local, non-officials. Such specialists might be termed 'trackers,' but they track synoptic forms of knowledge that are proper to the modern state. Access to these trackers ordinarily depends on political influence, financial resources, or both.

The 'bird's-eye view' achieved by official projects of legibility is best seen as a neutral instrument of state capacity. Synoptic views are by no means neutral in how they privilege and empower state officials over local citizens and subjects. But they are utterly neutral with respect to the purposes for which they are used. They are, as we shall see, the basis for beneficial interventions that save lives, promote human welfare, without which contemporary life is scarcely imaginable. On the other hand, they enhance the capacity of the state to carry out the most fine-tuned and gruesome projects of surveillance and repression. In between these extremes lie the vast majority of uses: uses with both beneficial and troubling consequences.

Let us take the unambiguous identification of individuals through system-

atic, standardized birth records. This capacity, along with hospital records of birth defects, has existed for some time in Norway and has allowed epidemiologists to learn rather precisely how likely it is that a mother with a birth defect herself will give birth to a child with a defect.<sup>84</sup> Having a complete record of nearly half-a-million births from 1967 to 1982 (8,192 of which involved birth defects), researchers were able to establish that while women with birth defects were more likely than women without to bear children with birth defects, the *added* risk was quite small (1.4 percent), and that the small risk applied only to the passing on of their own birth defect. The findings have obvious implications for more informed genetic counseling and social policy, not to mention women's decisions about child bearing. None of these statistical facts is even imaginable without the personal legibility—two generations long—that makes possible this correlation between the birth defects of mothers and their children.

The way in which massive projects of legibility are often driven by a laudable concern for public welfare is manifest in the recent debate in the United States about a "health identification number." Originally seen as a means to ensure that employees could retain medical insurance if they changed employers, the proponents of "portability" suggested an electronic code for *all* patients.<sup>85</sup> In the words of the Chairman of the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics, this code would be "a way to identify people uniquely."<sup>86</sup> Existing procedures, they reasoned, were inadequate. Names were not unique; they changed and were subject to various spellings; drivers' license numbers were not universal nor unique except within a single state; the social security number, though unique, was not universal. Furthermore, the existing system of medical record keeping had all the charm and confusion of vernacular naming practices. The varying modes of identification and software programs of different health-management organizations, hospitals, clinics, and employers ensured a mutually unintelligible dialogue of the deaf.

Reaching for a utopian solution, planners suggested a comprehensive and unique number for each patient, consisting of date of birth, latitude and longitude of hometown, and additional digits unique to the individual. Others suggested bio-medical markers such as thumbprints, electronic scans of the retina, or DNA profiles. The advantages of this vast administrative simplification are obvious; all patient records will be tracked as patients change doctors or addresses (or names!); billing would be streamlined, patients could get their records expeditiously, and last, but not least, the system would create the kind of national data-base of which epidemiologists have long dreamed. For the Center for Disease Control, it promised comprehensive information on illnesses (as opposed to the Center for Disease Control's system of reporting hospitals), and, for the individual practitioner, it promised the possibility of matching a comparatively rare individual case with others like it nationwide and learning which treatments worked best.

The opposition to a unique and comprehensive health identification number

came from those who were in no doubt about its efficacy as a project of legibility. It was, in their view, all too legible, especially for those who wanted to put it to other uses. Sensitive health information could be conveyed to employers (e.g., HIV status), it could be linked to financial data and used for blackmail; it might be used by the police to track down suspects or witnesses (thus driving them away from medical care). Patients, thinking that a medical history of depression, abortion, or sexually-transmitted disease might end up in a database available to their employers or creditors, would be reluctant to confide in their doctors in the first place.<sup>87</sup> Once a comprehensive project of legibility is in place, it represents a vastly expanded capacity for discriminating intervention by *whoever* commands and surveys the synoptic heights.

#### V. CONCLUSION: THE MODERNIZATION OF IDENTIFICATION

The accurate identification of individuals, let alone actually locating their whereabouts is, historically speaking, a very recent phenomenon. Lacking a comprehensive and standardized population registry, the best that most early-modern European states could hope for was a tolerably accurate census and cadastral survey to guide levies of grain, draft animals, and soldiers. The specification of individual identities was typically confined to the local level, where the state was hostage to the collaborators it could find. Even where permanent patronyms were already established, the vagaries of their recording, standardization, duplications, variant spellings, not to mention population movement, made accurate extra-local identification of a resident a tenuous affair.

One can sketch, roughly, something of a continuum of identification practices, ranged according to how legible, exhaustive, and unambiguous they were. At one end would be, say, the Inuit before the disks and before "Project Surname": a population totally legible to local insiders and almost totally illegible, synoptically, to outsiders. The introduction of permanent patronyms, even with all the liabilities we have noted, is a substantial step forward. Standardization of record keeping across jurisdictions and of spellings, as well as declining duplication of names, has made the name increasingly discriminating. The name remains, in most cases, the first element in most systems of identification (e.g., "name, rank, and serial number" in army parlance).

The next step is the unique identification number, of which the Social Security Number is the classic American example. Where it covers every citizen and is coordinated with other data (e.g., address, father's name, mother's maiden name, date of birth), it can be quite discriminating. Its major drawback is that officials are stymied when a citizen refuses or is unable to give his or her name and "serial number." Many nations have attempted to remedy this defect in legibility by imposing substantial penalties on citizens who fail to deliver their internal passport or piece of identification to an authority. It is for this reason that the first thing a gendarme says to someone he has accosted is, "*Vos papiers, Monsieur.*" One of the most notorious cases of requiring all subjects to carry



an identity card was the “pass system” of South Africa under apartheid. Here the pass was used to authorize and control movement between the cities and white areas on the one hand and the ‘native locations’ on the other. Elsewhere, as in nineteenth-century France, the pass system was sometimes combined with a record of employment (including the notation of employers) as in the *livret de famille*.

The development of photography in the mid-nineteenth century made possible the photo-identification and, with it, the police “mug shot.”<sup>88</sup> The photograph aids formidably in the progressive elimination of possible misidentifications afforded by several forms of identification—a name, a social security number, and a signature. Here one thinks of the “Wanted Posters” made famous by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in U.S. Post Offices, with a photo (front view, side views), name, aliases, height and weight, fingerprints, and the location last seen. For most civilian purposes, however, name, photo-ID, social security number, and signature are sufficiently definitive.

The next step, of course, and one devised long before the advent of the modern state, is the indelible marking of the body. This practice too amounts to a document of identity: an identity mark one has no choice but to bear corporeally. Tattooing was, for example, used in pre-colonial Siam on commoners in much the same fashion as a cattle-brand—to indicate to whom the commoner was enserfed. Like the mutilations used elsewhere to identify criminals, runaway slaves or serfs—such as notching or severing the ear or distinctive scarring—they identified less the individual than a class of people, almost always in a stigmatizing way. More permanent than dress, such marks nevertheless served, like sumptuary laws, to make status legible to any observer. In principle, permanent marks, such as tattoos, could be made the basis for unambiguous personal identification. One need only imagine that Canadian authorities had thought of tattooing the disk number on each Inuit for handy reference.

One decisive advantage of an indelible identification marked on the body is that it does not require the cooperation of the subject. When physically present, he reveals his identity whether he wishes to or not. The most modern forms of identification—and therefore those most favored by administrators—are virtually definitive for personal identity as in the case of bio-medical markers—e.g., the fingerprint,<sup>89</sup> the iris scan, and the DNA profile. In the case of the DNA profile, it is definitive long after death; a bit of tissue from a 2,000 year-old corpse exhumed from the permafrost yields the same absolutely distinctive DNA signature.

The disadvantage of *all* these technologies is that they require the physical presence of the body to be identified. But, the trick to much police work is, of course, successfully locating a suspect or witness whose identity is already known. It is not a radical step from fingerprints and DNA profiles to imagine electronic bracelets transmitting distinctive signals to a global-positioning satellite, allowing the police to know, at any time, the precise location of every

person of interest—just as naturalists and wildlife ecologists now track the movements of a particular individual of a migratory species. Such totalizing possibilities are close to being realized for certain felons on probation or on work release under the United States judicial system.

The capacity that a society made perfectly legible by meticulous policies of identification affords state officials is far beyond what the early modern state could achieve—though not beyond what its ministers could imagine. In fact, a chief distinction between the early modern state and the modern state is precisely the hard-won terrain of synoptic administrative legibility—of geography, people, property, goods, commerce, health, skills—that makes large projects of mobilization and transformation conceivable.<sup>90</sup> Nowhere is this more apparent than in modernist projects of extermination. The efficient deportation of most of the Jews (some 65,000) of Amsterdam to their deaths during the Nazi Occupation would have been unthinkable in the early nineteenth century. The roundup was made possible by a meticulous and comprehensive population and business registry—names, addresses, ethnicity/religion—and cartographic exactitude. A map produced by the city's Office of Statistics in May 1941 is titled "The Distribution of Jews in the Municipality." Each black dot represents ten Jews, making it clear which blocks, when surrounded, would yield most of the Jewish population.<sup>91</sup>

Under more controlled conditions—i.e. the concentration camps—schemes of synoptic legibility could be pursued ruthlessly. The very term "concentration camp" is, of course, a shorthand reference to the involuntary confinement and regimentation of prisoners in a miniaturized setting, allowing close surveillance and near perfect legibility. In Auschwitz, serial numbers were tattooed on the left arm of all Jews and Gypsies, in the order in which they had arrived: the handful of long-term survivors became known as "old numbers" (i.e., low numbers).<sup>92</sup> An elaborate "sumptuary" color code to mark the sub-sets of prisoners was introduced. In addition to the well-known Jewish star of David, sewn on the left breast and the right trouser leg, there were a series of triangles (apex down) affixed to clothing to make the taxonomy of prisoners legible at a glance: brown for gypsies, green for "criminals," red for "politicals," pink for homosexuals, mauve for Jehovah's Witnesses, blue for émigrés, and black for "asocial" elements. Prisoners were identified at roll call by number, not by name.

Many of the same technologies of concentration, identification, and control are also the basis for what we could consider humanitarian interventions. The operational procedures of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) are a striking illustration of how a comparable state-like capacity to generate legible social landscapes can also be deployed to provide a safe-haven for victims of terror and/or feed famished civilians. A "Practical Guide for Field Staff" entitled "Registration" distills the experience of refugee administration over the past fifty years.<sup>93</sup> "Fixing the Population," a key term in the manual, refers to enumerating, concentrating, and identifying the people "of concern"

to the UNHCR. It requires, though without the barbed wire and electrified fences, a secure perimeter with a single, easily controlled entrance and exit. As refugees arrive, they are given "fixing tokens"; then, if the situation permits, wristbands and temporary identification cards, all of which are serially numbered to facilitate a rough census. Both the wrist-bands and the temporary identification cards have numbers from one, to twenty-four or thirty, each of which can be punched like a railway ticket to indicate the receipt of certain supplies and rations, depending on the code established. One purpose of the wristbands and identity cards is to prevent double registration and fraud; another is to identify particularly vulnerable groups (e.g., women nursing infants, aged and infirm) for special attention. Together with orderly, barracks-style, shelter construction, enumerated also by "section/block/individual shelter," the identity cards permit a more-or-less complete census of individuals by location in the camp. This too facilitates locating a particular individual who, say, needs special medicine or rations, has received a letter, or who has special skills of value to the camp's operation.

Recent technological advances, however, have made camp organization easier and more efficient. The use of computer-generated bar codes on the wristbands and identity cards, read by laser guns, allow camp officials to monitor the refugees and the distribution of rations more efficiently.<sup>94</sup> In mid-1999, volunteers from Microsoft Corporation were being deployed to the refugee camps bordering Kosovo to establish a standardized, digitized, photo-ID to be issued to all refugees. The aim was to produce a single, instantly accessible, database, which, among other things, would allow individuals to locate relatives and friends lost in the scramble to leave.

Despite the radically different purposes of concentration camps and refugee camps, despite the fact that the former routinely employs violence to achieve its ends, the discriminating administration of large numbers of strangers requires practices of legibility that bear a family resemblance to one another. Thus, unless one wishes to make an ethical-philosophical case that no state ought to have such panoptic powers—and hereby commit oneself to foregoing both its advantages (e.g., the Center for Disease Control) as well as its menace (like fine-combed ethnic cleansing)—one is reduced to feeding Leviathan and hoping, perhaps through democratic institutions, to tame it.

#### NOTES

1. Brian Friel, *Translations*, Act II, Scene 1. London: Faber and Faber, 1981.

2. Strictly speaking, governmental road designation systems vary by level of jurisdiction. Thus one has, moving step-wise from local to supra-local, town roads, county roads, state roads, and national roads. At this last level the Interstate system, built with military needs in mind, is logically calibrated with east-west highways designated by 'tens' (Interstate Routes 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90) growing larger as one moves north, and north-south highways designated also by tens (Interstate Routes 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, 95) growing as one moves east. The older and smaller the jurisdiction, the greater the like-

likelihood that its road and street system will have 'folk' characteristics that will be difficult for a stranger to fathom.

3. Where a place has been named before the occurrence of events that will forever mark it, the unmarked association is nevertheless indelible: Katyn forest, Guenica, Selma, Pearl Harbor, Auschwitz, Place de la Bastille, Hastings, Hiroshima, Bandung. For a mobile or nomadic people, the place names that trace their trajectory through the landscape often represent, collectively, like a pilgrimage route, their history, their myths, and their moral orientations. See Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque, N.Mex: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

4. "Towns in Washington Bringing Back Poetry in Street Names." *The New York Times*, 8 June 1997, p. 40.

5. *Ibid.*

6. In much of pre-modern Europe, it was common for powerful lenders, aristocratic or secular, to insist on the use of a different, and larger bushel, for the repayment of loans of grain than the bushel used for advancing it. Where domainal power was stronger, the disparity was correspondingly greater. See Witold Kula, *Measures and Men*, transl. by R. Szyreter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

7. For a far more elaborate discussion of the range of naming practices, see Richard D. Alford, *Naming and Identity: A Cross-Cultural Study of Personal Naming Practices* (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1987).

8. Since this would not be a permanent patronym, if John's son was named Richard, then, that son would be called "Richard-John's-son" thus dropping the grandfather's name "William" altogether.

9. Wilfred Thesiger, *The Marsh Arabs* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 198–99.

10. We want to thank Lincoln Moses for helping us figure out the mathematics of identification in these hypothetical examples.

11. See the excellent account in Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

12. China, by contrast, had a centralized surname scheme as early as the Qin dynasty [fourth century B.C.E.], which tried to register the entire population of the kingdom, but it is not clear how universally it was applied. This initiative may well have been the origin of the term "laobaixing" meaning, literally, the 'old one hundred surnames,' and which, in modern China, has come to mean 'the common people.' Before this time, the fabled Chinese patrilineage was absent among commoners.

13. The role of surnames as an official state function is also revealed in female naming practices. This is especially the case when one examines the tradition of married women taking their husband's last name. Strangely enough, "no hunting, gathering, or fishing society, no society with nuclear family organization; and only one society without patrilocal residence requires" women to change their names at marriage. R. Alford, *Naming and Identity* . . . , *op. cit.*, p. 88. Indeed, the only sociocultural variable that correlates with female name changes at marriage is the technological complexity of a society. In the Anglo-American tradition, women typically took the last names of their husbands. "as women did not pursue an occupation outside the home and inheritance typically passed through sons or other male heirs, women took upon marriage their husband's surname as their own. It was the name that *best described and identified women to local officials.*" See Ralph Slovenko, "Overview: Names and the Law." *Names*, 32, 2 (June 1984):107–13, 109 (emphasis added).

14. Recalling the biblical: "And x begat y who begat z."

15. James Pennethorne Hughes, *How You Got Your Name: The Origin and Meaning*



of *Surnames* (London: Phoenix House, 1959) p. 20. It is instructive to note that social norms of this kind continue to exist, especially with respect to namelessness. As Helen Lynd writes, "The wood in *Through the Looking Glass* where no creature bears a name is a place of terror" (qtd. in Harold R. Isaacs, "Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe," in *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, eds., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975, 29–52, p. 51). Moreover, as Isaacs points out, "The sanction of namelessness imposed on bastardy in our culture is one of the most fearful that a group can impose. Namelessness of any kind, indeed, is almost beyond bearing 'nameless fear' is worse than any other kind of fear. Names, like social norms, provide a certain minimum security, bearings that every individual must feel around him or else be lost" (ibid.).

16. See C. M. Matthews, *English Surnames* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 43–44; Beverly S. Seng, "Like Father, Like child: The Rights of Parents in their Children's Surnames." *Virginia Law Review* 70 (1984):1303, 1307–8, 1324–27, see supra note 24

17. Richard McKinley, *A History of British Surnames* (London: Longman Group, 1990), pp. 29–30.

18. R. McKinley, *A History of British Surnames*, p. 30.

19. George Fraser Black, *The Surnames of Scotland* (New York: New York Public Library, 1946), p. xlv.

20. R. McKinley, *A History of British Surnames*, p. 30.

21. C. M. Matthews, *English Surnames*, pp. 43–44.

22. William Camden, *Remains Concerning Britain*, ed. R. D. Dunn, originally published in 1605 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 122.

23. Thus, while Atatürk obliged the population of Turkey to take permanent patronyms between 1934 and 1936, they were little used in daily society and hence, the telephone book entries began, until the 1950s, with the first, or given, name.

24. Monique Bourin, "France du Midi et France du nord: Deux systemes anthroponymiques." *L'Anthroponomie: Documents de l'histoire sociale des mondes mediterraniens medievales* (Actes du colloque international organise par l'Ecole francaise de Rome, 6–8 October 1994 (Ecole francaise de Rome, Palais Farnese, 1996), pp. 179–202.

25. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Vol. I, transl. by Sian Reynolds (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 38.

26. It appears (though the timing and comprehensiveness are in dispute), that by the fourth century B.C.E., the Qin dynasty had been imposing surnames on much of its population for the purposes of taxes, forced labor, and conscription. The imposition of surnames was, of course, also a cultural project to superimpose the patrilineage on commoners and give the new, male family heads legal jurisdiction over their wives, children, and juniors. Patricia Ebery, "The Chinese Family and the Spread of Confucian Values," in *The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and its Modern Adaptation*, ed. Gilbert Rozman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 45–83.

27. For example, permanent surnames are mostly absent in Indonesia and Burma.

28. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 25–30.

29. See Kaplan and Bernays, *The Language of Names*, p. 57.

30. Dietz Bering, *The Stigma of Names: Antisemitism in German Daily Life, 1812–1933*, transl. by Neville Plaice (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), p. 29.

31. Ibid., p. 15.

32. Ibid., p. 51.

33. In the case of the United States, Native American names persist here and there,

particularly in the names of rivers—the great arteries of early colonial trade. Interestingly enough, it seems that geographical features that were not fixed points but rather whole regions or great stretches of river had, perhaps because of the continuity of the native name, a better chance of retaining their indigenous name.

34. Frank Terry, Superintendent of the U.S. Boarding School for Crow Indians, Montana, "Naming the Indians." *American Monthly Review of Reviews* 3 (1897), pp. 301–2.

35. Edward S. Rogers and Mary Black Rogers, "Method for Reconstructing Patterns of Change: Surname Adoption by the Weagamow Ojibwa, 1870–1950." *Ethnohistory*, 25, 4 (Fall 1978), p. 336.

36. Nor, of course, should we overlook the advantages of illegibility for subjects who might have had good reasons for remaining elusive. Colonial subjects have some of the same reasons as the underworld for multiple aliases.

37. Thomas Morgan, Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the Dept. of the Interior in 1890, related the story of a boy delivered to a government school by an Apache policeman. On being asked by the white school teacher what his name was, the policeman replied, "Des-to-dah," which, henceforth became his name and which, in fact, meant "I don't know" in that Apache dialect. (Qtd. in Frank Terry, Superintendent of U.S. Boarding Schools for Crow Indians, Montana, "Naming the Indians." Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library, p. 304, see <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbn/toccer-new2>.)

38. Edward S. Rogers and Mary Black Rogers, "Method for Reconstructing Patterns of Change . . .," op. cit., p. 343. The name recorded in one instance as "Charlie Kanate" was variously rendered as "Johnnie Kenneth," "Cainet," "Kennet," and "Kunat."

39. Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr. and Lonnie E. Underhill. "Renaming the American Indian: 1890–1913." *American Studies*, (1971), 12, 2:33–45, p. 34.

40. Henry E. Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860–1890* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), p. 19.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 198–221.

42. Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr. and Lonnie E. Underhill. "Renaming the American Indian, 1890–1913," op. cit.

43. The impulse came because of the Organic Act for the Territory of Oklahoma in which Indian lands became part of the Territory. Land was allotted individually, for the most part, to Native Americans (among them Fox, Shawnees, Sac, Potawatomi, Cheyenne-Arapaho, Tonkawa, Pawnees, Kiowa-Comanche) with the 'left-over' land going to white settlers. See Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr. and Lonnie E. Underhill, "Renaming the American Indian: 1890–1913," op. cit.

44. David Wallace Adams, "The Federal Indian Boarding School: A Study of Environment and Response, 1879–1918," Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University School of Education, (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1975), p. 44.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Frank Terry, "Naming the Indians," op. cit., p. 306.

47. See Hamlin Garland, *Companions on the Trail*. (New York: Macmillan, 1931).

48. Letter from Hamlin Garland to President Theodore Roosevelt, 29 July 1902 or thereabout, in *Selected Letters of Hamlin Garland* (Lincoln, Nebr. and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 157–58.

49. Morgan was in favor of retaining Indian names and transliterating them into English script where they were reasonably short and pronounceable (to whites). The practice of renaming had, of course, begun with those Native Americans who were employed by Reservation authorities, because they figured first on payrolls and ration lists. Naming, as we have seen earlier, spread as a function of the intensiveness of contact with officials. (Frank Terry, op. cit.)

50. Dr. W. N. Hailmann, General Superintendent of Indian Schools, "Naming the Indians." *American Monthly Review of Reviews* 15 (March 1897), p. 302.

51. Hamlin Garland to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 3 Nov. 1902, Letter-Book, 1901–1904, 112, *Hamlin Garland Collection*, University of Southern California Library, Los Angeles.

52. Letter from Hamlin Garland to Charles F. Lummis, 26 Nov. 1902, in *Selected Letters of Hamlin Garland*, op. cit.

53. Each of these colorful names, of course, were attached to narratives which, collectively, mapped much of the individual, family, and local history of a Native American society.

54. From a document of the United Foreign Missionary Society's Board of Managers, quoted in David Wallace Adams, "The Federal Indian Boarding School . . .," op. cit., p. 14.

55. Daniel F. Littlefield and Lonnie E. Underhill, "Renaming the American Indian, 1890–1913," op. cit., p. 36.

56. David Wallace Adams, "The Federal Indian Boarding School . . .," op. cit., p. 17.

57. It should be clear that the pattern being imposed was the *normative* pattern of the nuclear, patriarchal family, not the great range of practices characteristic of late nineteenth-century white society.

58. Letter to Charles F. Lummis, 3 Dec. 1902, in *Selected Letters of Hamlin Garland*, op. cit. p. 164.

59. Letter to Charles F. Lummis, 29 July 1902, *Selected Letters of Hamlin Garland*, op. cit. p. 164.

60. This belief recalls the reformers of the Meiji Restoration in Japan who toured Europe examining constitutions, believing that, if they got the constitution "right" an enlightened modern government would follow.

61. There was, for example, great concern over "summer holidays" during which time the students returned to their families and reservations. The boarding school authorities thought that all their civilizational work was undone over the summer and that they had to begin again from scratch in the fall.

62. David Wallace Adams, "The Federal Indian Boarding School . . .," op. cit., p. 101.

63. Valerie Alia, *Names, Numbers and Northern Policy: Inuit, Project Surname, and the Politics of Identity* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 1994). This section is based almost entirely on Alia's fine study.

64. Letter from D. A. J. MacKinnon to the Department of the Interior to protest the difficulty of following individuals from one part of Pangnirtung district [E-6] to another. Cited in V. Alia, *Names, Numbers and Northern Policy*, op. cit., p. 29. Emphasis added to highlight MacKinnon's recognition of how much of the identification problem is confined to outsiders with no local knowledge.

65. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers and Northern Policy* . . . , op. cit., p. 32.

66. The same system was tried on the !Kung in South Africa. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy* . . . , op. cit., p. 75.

67. Here it is apposite to recall the social commentary embedded in the army slang "dog tags" in order to imagine what the Inuit might have thought about wearing disks around their necks.

68. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers and Northern Policy* . . . , op. cit., p. 36. Many people suggested using the Canadian Social Insurance number as the standard identification formula as it was used for other Canadians.

69. The exception that proved the rule was one Qallunaaq (Canadian of European descent) who, desiring assimilation, wore his disk to prove he had been 'classed' as Inuit.

70. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy* . . . , op. cit., p. 56.

71. Northwest Territories Document, 1971a: 12, cited in *ibid.*, p. 56. V. Alia (p. 80) reports the following conversation in the course of her research: "A territorial government employee told me disk numbers were needed because 'all Inuit had the same name or so close you couldn't tell the difference. You needed something logical. You had to have an order. There weren't any names.' I replied that there were names and they were not the same. He insisted that Inuit were 'impossible to identify.'"

72. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

73. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 69. Elsewhere in the circum-polar region, the Yuit of Siberia had single names like Canadian Inuit but were given last names in the 1930s, under Stalin. In the 1960s the polar Inuit were given last names by the Danes—first by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs. There were mixed names (e.g. the hunter "Itukusuk Kristiansen"). "People got surnames for administrative convenience." V. Alia, *Names Numbers, and Northern Policy . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

74. V. Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 75. Note the remarkable assumption that the absence of an appropriate naming system, by itself, prevents anything like 'family feeling.'

75. Valerie Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

76. The process was not, however, completed until 1936. The late Ottoman Empire itself had moved, during the period known as the "Tanzimat" toward codification, systematization, and more fine-tuned administrative control. See, in this context, Recep Boztemur, "State-Making and Nation Building: A Study of the Historical Relationship Between the Capitalist Development and the Establishment of the Modern Nation State," Ph.D., University of Utah, Languages and Literature, 1997, pp. 260–423.

77. For this discussion see: Robert F. Spencer, "The Social Context of Modern Turkish Names." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 17, 3 (Autumn 1961), pp. 205–18; Donald E. Webster, "State Control of Social Change in Republican Turkey." *American Sociological Review*, 4, 2 (April 1939), pp. 247–56; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 263–83; A. L. Macfie, *Ataturk* (New York: Longmans, 1994), pp. 136 et seq., Vanik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, *The Immortal Ataturk: A Psychobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

78. Two brothers might, in the naming exercise, take different patronyms, thereby, in effect beginning two separate patrilineages so far as names were concerned.

79. Ts'ui-p'ing Ho, "Exchange, Person, and Hierarchy: Rethinking the Kachin," Ph.D. Thesis, Anthropology, University of Virginia, 1997, p. 23. Thanks to Magnus Fiskesjo for bringing this thesis to our attention.

80. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 169.

81. Lois Law Library, 10D-49.0192. "Naming of Child When Parents Disagree on the Selection of the Name." Jeremy Mathias, unpublished lecture, n.d.

82. One can imagine the overwhelming impact of this process in colonial possessions where the language of documents, law, and administration were suddenly switched from the local vernacular to the metropolitan language.

83. Tore Frangsmyr, J. L. Heilbron, and Robin E. Rider, *The Quantifying Spirit of the 18th Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 13.

84. "New Data on Babies of Women with Birth Defects." *The New York Times*, 18 Apr. 1999, p. A18.

85. There would also be electronic codes for employers, health providers, physicians, and hospitals. "Health Identifier for All Americans Runs into Hurdles." *The New York Times*, 19 July 1998, pp. 1, 11.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 1.



87. The Social Security system is now linked to many records, and practical access to credit histories, medical records, wages, and employment records is within the grasp of most talented computer hackers. In addition there are a great number of counterfeit cards. Opponents of the health identification number fear that the same abuses and unauthorized access to confidential information will quickly overtake a health identification number. For the United States, it is the closest thing to a national identification number (137 million numbers issued since 1936).

88. And, later, a series of techniques by which witnesses could attempt to build a likeness from various elements of a face with the help of trained specialists.

89. The fingerprint as a form of identification was developed around 1880 and first applied in Bengal to combat pension fraud. Like so many other advances in police-work, it was tried first in the colonies and then transplanted back to Britain. Most of the uses of fingerprints involve trying to match the fingerprints of a suspect in custody with fingerprints collected at the crime scene. The fingerprint was never universal (though attempts were made in the 1920s in the United States to make it universal), and, despite the patina of pure science about it, it requires specialists with long experience to match fingerprints definitively. Lecture by Simon Cole, Dept. of Anthropology, Stanford University, November 1998.

90. For an elaborate argument along these lines, see James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 87–102.

91. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–79. It is also true that this map could equally have been used to feed the Jews or to evacuate them secretly to the countryside. The map was only information; it was the Nazis and their collaborators who supplied the deadly purpose.

92. Anton Gill, *The Journey Back from Hell: Conversations with Concentration Camp Survivors*, (London: Grafton Publishers, 1988), pp. 26–32. Each camp designated prisoners by number but it appears that only at Auschwitz was the number tattooed on the skin of gypsies and Jews. The designation “Z” (for “ziegeuner”) appeared before the number in the case of gypsies. Some thought was given to branding prisoners’ names on their forehead.

93. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Registration: A Practical Guide for Field Staff* (Geneva, May 1994).

94. Letter from Bela Hovy, Statistician, Division of Operational Support, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 10 July 1998.