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The Cattle of Money and the Cattle of Girls among the Nuer, 1930-83

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the cattle of money and the cattle of girls among the Nuer, 1930–83

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Money's uniqueness, Simmel suggests, lies in its ability to extend and diversify human interdependence while excluding everything personal and specific (1978[1900]:297–303). Money distances self from other and self from object, generating within the individual dissident feelings of self-sufficiency and alienation, powerlessness and personal freedom (Simmel 1978[1900]:307–311):

In as much as interests are focused on money and to the extent that possessions consist of money, the individual will develop the tendency and feeling of independent importance in relation to the social whole. He will relate to the social whole as one power confronting another, since he is free to take up business relations and co-operation wherever he likes. [Simmel 1978(1900):343]

The “close relationship . . . between a money economy, individualization, and enlargement of the circle of social relationships” enables the individual to buy himself not only out of bonds with specific others but also, Simmel notes, out of those bonds rooted in his possessions (1978[1900]:347, 403ff.). As “the embodiment of the relativity of existence,” money drives a wedge between “possessing” and “being”: “through money, man is no longer enslaved in things” (Simmel 1978[1900]:409, 307, 404).

While Simmel welcomes elimination of the personal element of exchange as the gateway to “human freedom” (1978[1900]:297–303), he is acutely aware, nonetheless, of the potential instability, disorientation, and despair generated by money's perpetual wrenching of the personal values from things. The development of a money economy, he notes, encourages avarice and other socially detrimental forms of possessive individualism (Simmel 1978[1900]:247). Moreover, as money's empty and indifferent character wears away at the “direction-giving significance of things,” individuals strive, Simmel observes, to reinvest their possessions with “a new importance, a deeper meaning, a value of their own”:

If modern man is free—free because he can sell everything, and free because he can buy everything—then he now seeks (often in problematical vacillations) in the objects themselves that vigor, stability and inner unity which he has lost because of the changed money-conditioned relationship that he has with them. [Simmel 1978(1900):404]

For Marx, in contrast, money is a “privileged commodity” to the extent that the congelations of human labor embodied in all other commodities come to express their values in it

Sudanese Nuer draw a marked distinction between “the money of work,” you lad, and money acquired through the sale of cattle, you ɣɔk or “the money of cattle.” This dichotomy is balanced by a similar distinction between two sorts of cattle: purchased cattle, ɣɔk youni or “the cattle of money,” and cattle received as bride-wealth, ɣɔk nyiët or “the cattle of girls.” Together these four wealth categories, along with several subsidiary ones, play a prominent role in determining relations of autonomy and dependence among the Nuer. This article traces the emergence of these categories over the last half century and analyzes their centrality. [culture and political economy, commoditization, exchange, money, cattle, the Nuer]

(1967[1867]:93). The development of “a ‘money-form’ of commodity exchange” is thus critical, he argues, for the recognition of human labor and productive powers as an abstract totality and, concomitantly, for the creation of a universal labor market (1967[1867]:35–84). Yet in making possible the sale of human labor as a general commodity, “a ‘money-form’ of commodity exchange” also facilitates relations of exploitation and alienation within the production process by effectively dissociating the value of concrete labor from the value of the products it can produce (Marx 1967[1867]:167ff., 195–198). The monetization of production relations, in other words, tends to intensify the “fetishism” inherent in simpler forms of commodity exchange by further obscuring the subjective realization of the contribution that the producer makes to the product. For it is “just this ultimate money-form of the world of commodities,” Marx states, “that actually conceals, instead of disclosing, the social character of private labor, and the social relations between individual producers” (1967[1867]:76). In brief, money plays privileged symbolic as well as material roles in the transformation of “direct social relations between individuals at work” into “material relations between persons and social relations between things,” a transformation that lies at the heart of Marx’s analysis of capitalism (Marx 1967[1867]:73).

In this article, I draw on the theoretical perspectives of Marx and Simmel in an effort to understand how a particular cattle-raising people in Africa, the Nuer of southern Sudan, have creatively incorporated “a ‘money-form’ of commodity exchange” into their culture and social life over the last half century. Following Marx, I highlight social and economic processes connected with the spread of colonialism and of capitalist relations of production underlying the gradual empowerment of money in Nuer eyes. Yet I also aspire to a more phenomenological understanding—à la Simmel—of money’s enigmatic qualities as variously perceived, experienced, and evaluated by Nuer. How have these people been grappling with the allegedly “liberating” and “alienating” potentials of a rapidly expanding regional money economy?

In exploring these issues, I will concentrate on how Nuer have gradually interdefined cattle and money so as to create a unique system of wealth categories. Significantly, this system appears to exceed, both in complexity and in inner dynamism, anything previously reported in the burgeoning literature on the “commoditization” of human/cattle relations in other parts of Africa (see, for example, Comaroff and Comaroff 1990; Ferguson 1985; Murray 1981; Parkin 1980; Sansom 1976; Shipton 1989). Unlike the “one-” and “two-way barrier” systems recorded among the Basotho (Ferguson 1985) and the Luo (Shipton 1989) respectively, this system of wealth categories does not pivot on a simple opposition between “cattle” and “cash.” Nor may it be characterized as an unambiguous “attempt to dam the corrosive flow of cash,” as appears to be the case among the southern Tswana (Comaroff and Comaroff 1990:212). Rather, Nuer attitudes toward money appear far more ambivalent and contextually differentiated. Although individuals may “resist” equating money with cattle in some contexts, they actively seek out and use money in others as a means of tempering instabilities and inequalities within the cattle economy itself. In developing these points here, I try to show how the various wealth categories collectively devised by Nuer facilitate movements of money and cattle between “market” and “nonmarket” spheres of exchange at the same time as they affirm the existence of an axiological boundary between these spheres. I also reflect more generally on how the increasing use of money by Nuer has contributed over the last half century to a profound reevaluation of the place of cattle in their lives. All in all, it is hoped that this article will enrich our appreciation of the myriad ways in which market and nonmarket forms of consciousness and sociality are empirically entwined in the world today.

on the oneness of cattle and people: 1930

According to Evans-Pritchard (1940, 1951, 1956), the Nuer of the early 1930s were almost totally absorbed in the care, exchange, and sacrifice of their beloved cattle. Few Nuer at that

time understood the concept of currency; fewer still understood the impersonal principles of market exchange; and literally no one parted willingly with a cow for money. Wage-labor opportunities were universally spurned as being tantamount to slavery. Rather, people at that time were bound to their herds in an intimate symbiosis of survival (Evans-Pritchard 1940:16–50). Mutual “parasites” is how Evans-Pritchard characterized them (1940:36). Whereas cattle depended on human beings for protection and care, people depended on cattle as insurance against ecological hazards and as vital sources of milk, meat, leather, and dung. Yet cattle were valued far beyond their material contributions to human survival: cattle were the principal means by which Nuer created and affirmed enduring bonds among themselves as well as between themselves and divinity. In sacrificial and exchange contexts, cattle were considered direct extensions of the human persona. Their vitality and fertility were continuously being equated with, and opposed to, those of human beings. This human/cattle equation was perhaps most obvious in moments of bloodwealth and bridewealth exchange. However, it permeated myriad other contexts, saturating, as it were, the whole of Nuer social life at that time. Consider, for instance, Evans-Pritchard’s sensitive descriptions of the bonds of “identification” uniting a young man with the ox of initiation—or his analysis of the “substitution” of “the life of an ox” for that of a “man” at the heart of Nuer sacrificial acts (1956:248–271).

What is perhaps less evident from Evans-Pritchard’s descriptions is that something was definitely gained by Nuer communities as a whole through the cultural assertion of a fundamental identity between cattle and people. Because cattle and people were in some sense “one,” individuals were able to transcend some of the profoundest of human frailties and thereby achieve a greater sense of mastery over their world: death became surmountable, infertility reversible, and illness something that could be actively defined and cured. This equation gave “life,” as it were, a second chance. Were a man to die without heirs, his relatives were able—indeed obliged—to collect cattle and marry a “ghost wife” to bear children for him. Likewise, were a woman to prove infertile, she was “free” to become a social man, gather cattle, and marry a wife to produce children for her. And were it not for rites of cattle sacrifice, people would have stood condemned at that time to a passive forbearance of severe illness, environmental crises, and countless other difficulties. But because human and bovine vitality were identified in such contexts, all these experiences of vulnerability and hardship could be lifted to a collective plane where they could be given form and meaning and actively coped with. Lastly, the ever-present possibility of translating human values into cattle values enhanced people’s abilities to achieve lasting periods of peace among themselves. Although cattle were frequent subjects of dispute among kinsmen as well as non-kinsmen, there is a well-known saying that runs, “*Thilɛ duer mi baal yaɗ*” (“No [human] error exceeds the cow”). Cattle, in other words, were—and to a large extent continue to be—the conflict resolvers par excellence.

It was thus the ideological assertion of a fundamental “oneness” between cattle and people that enabled people to extend the potency of human action in tempering the perplexing vicissitudes and vulnerabilities of life. In a society where procreation, physical well-being, and communal peace were—and continue to be—among the highest cultural values, these “extensions” or “augmentations of life” should not be underestimated. To ignore them or to gloss over them by thinking of cattle exchange and sacrifice solely in terms of “reciprocity,” “compensation,” and “restitution” would be to reduce, I think, the creative potency of Nuer culture as a whole at that time.

This is not to assert that all Nuer benefited equally from this potent equation. Quite the contrary. Since uninitiated women and children were excluded in principle, and cattleless men in practice, from full participation in sacrificial invocations and major cattle transfer negotiations, the added sense of control over the world made possible by the cattle/human equation directly enhanced the social powers of senior, cattle-wealthy men at the same time as it intensified feelings of dependence among other household members. In other words, this equation extended as well as reinforced men’s role as the protectors of women and children, as the de-

fenders of life and the social order—and hence, ultimately, men’s claims of physical and moral superiority over women and children as well (Hutchinson 1980, 1988). Furthermore, it is essential to realize that, without access to cattle, a man could not legally acquire heirs—no matter how many children he sired. From men’s perspective, cattle, not women, “produced” children (Evans-Pritchard 1940, 1951). In representing potential rights to the fruit of a woman’s womb, cattle gathered the procreative powers of both sexes and placed them in the hands of cattle-wealthy elders.¹ Unlike a man, however, a woman did not depend on their release to achieve full parental status: physical maternity and social maternity were inseparable in the eyes of Nuer.² Individual fertility, not cattle wealth, was the principal route to self-fulfillment, security, and independence for women. The procreative powers of men, in contrast, were essentially collective: a man’s reproductive potential merged with that of his agnatic kinsmen through “the ancestral herd.”³ Male corporate solidarity and continuity were, indeed, founded on this principle of “communal fertility” through shared cattle rights (Hutchinson 1980:376). In other words, man’s fundamental need for a woman as mother of his children was transformed via cattle into a broadened and deepened dependence on other men. Just how far these male bonds of dependence extended varied, of course, with factors such as the age, wealth, and birth order of the man concerned, the number of kinsmen to whom he could legitimately appeal for cattle contributions, the number of bridewealth cattle demanded, and the time period over which payments were expected to extend. In sum, cattle were in a very real sense the currency of power among men.⁴

Nevertheless, cattle and people were never equally valued. Hence there was always an element of asymmetry in their cross-directional movements. The bride that crossed paths with some 20 head of cattle was not equated directly with them. Rather, bridewealth negotiations invariably concluded with a declaration by the groom’s family that additional cattle would be forthcoming on the marriage of the bride’s daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters, until such time as the extended debt uniting the two families dissolved (Evans-Pritchard 1951:78; Hutchinson 1985:628–629). Similarly, everyone maintained that, despite the successful negotiation and transfer of bloodwealth cattle, blood-feuds endured “forever” (Evans-Pritchard 1940:154). In fact, the bulk of the cattle received was normally reserved for marrying a “ghost wife” in the name of the deceased, partially in the hope that she would bear a son who would someday avenge his father’s blood with that of the enemy (Evans-Pritchard 1940:155).

What is striking about Nuer culture and social life of the early 1930s is the extent to which the differences between cattle and people were continually underplayed. In dance, in song, in naming, and in speech, people constantly celebrated the fundamental “likeness” of cattle and people. The tremendous cultural energy devoted to the elaboration of this equation is, perhaps, readily understandable when we realize that the value of “life” itself affirmed it. With each gesture, each metaphor, each burst of artistic creativity in this direction, individuals both proclaimed and enhanced the added sense of control over their lives made possible by the “truth” that “cattle and people are one.” And with each such act, they also bolstered the dominant position of senior men as well as blurred other social asymmetries founded upon the implicit, if not explicit, recognition that human values could never be fully translated into cattle values. What remains to be seen, then, is whether and to what extent this “truth” survived the subsequent emergence of a radically different equation in Nuer social life—that between cattle and money.

the creation of cattle and labor markets in Nuerland: 1930–83

The experience of British colonial conquest (1898–1930), swiftly followed in some regions by that of famine, made the early 1930s deeply disillusioning years for many Nuer. Effectively

barred from replenishing their stock through raiding, men stood idle as successive waves of rinderpest decimated their herds (see Johnson 1980:469). For the conquering Anglo-Egyptian regime, in contrast, this was a period of optimism and of rapid political and economic advances. The radical administrative measures imposed as part of the "Nuer settlement" of 1929–30, which required among other things separation of the (Lou and Gawaar) Nuer from their Dinka neighbors, appeared to herald a new era of interethnic peace. Similarly, the successful elimination or capture of all major Nuer prophets seemed to clear the way for the birth of a new breed of tractable government chiefs (Johnson 1979, 1980:403–467). Such optimism, though shortlived in most instances, also sparked off scores of government work projects—carried out with conscripted Nuer labor—which included the construction of roads, steamer stations, administrative centers, and the like (END 66.A.2, 22 February 1934, "Assistant District Commissioner to Governor"). Conditions formerly hindering the expansion of northern trade into the region also ended abruptly (cf. Evans-Pritchard 1940:87–88). Improvements in public security and transport greatly facilitated the penetration of seasonal merchants, while cattle epidemics and food shortages ensured the rapid development of a hide export/grain import trade.

The extended cattle, grain, and labor markets that eventually developed in Nuerland were in no sense "free." Price controls intended to curb "profiteering" as well as to minimize government expenditure on local grain and labor were enforced intermittently throughout the colonial and postcolonial eras. Strict limits on the number of merchants permitted to trade in the area were also maintained through the late 1940s, as were regional quotas on the distribution and sale of cloth, sugar, and other imported consumer items (DAK I 49/1/1&2, "Passports and Permits: General Rulings"; UN 1/51/4, 1935, "Nasir District Notes Update"). These restrictions were motivated by a restrained conflict of interests between, on the one hand, profit-minded merchants and, on the other, British administrative officers, who were on the whole deeply conservative and paternalistic in their attitudes toward the Nuer. Though frequently at odds, these two groups nevertheless shared a common economic objective: the creation and maintenance of a profitable export trade in Nuer cattle. The greatest difficulty they faced in this regard was to devise adequate ways to tempt, force, cajole, or otherwise pressure Nuer into handing over their largest and fattest oxen for sale to meat markets in the north (WND 64 B.1., 25 March 1941, "J. Wilson, Assistant District Commissioner, to Governor").⁵

By 1933, seasonal Arab merchants had taken the lead by establishing two modes of cattle extraction, both of them circuitous. The first, a sort of cow/ox conversion racket, took advantage of interethnic cycles of trade then developing between the western Nuer and their Twic Dinka and Baggara Arab neighbors:

The Nuer . . . have no desire to sell bulls [oxen] for money but they will exchange them for cow calves. [Baggara] Arabs [bordering the Leek and Bul Nuer in the west] and Twij Dinka are willing to sell cow calves. Thus . . . the merchants buy cow calves for money from the former and exchange them to the Nuer and [other] Dinka for big bulls. [WND 64 B.1., c. 1933, "Assistant District Commissioner to Governor"].⁶

In eastern Nuerland, where neighboring ethnic groups were both more distant and more cattle-poor than in the west, merchants relied instead on seasonal fluctuations in local grain supplies to generate a cattle export trade:

The agents go out to various trading posts in September and October [at harvest time] and buy grain and hides in exchange for trade goods [such as fishing hooks, beads, spears, and cloth] mostly though occasionally money is used. A second series of posts along the rivers catch the more distant tribes on their way to the dry weather camp. From February to April trade is practically at a standstill but then the reverse flow begins and grain is sold back to the improvident at enhanced prices for animals. Generally speaking, the grain bought from the Nuer is sold for Province requirements, i.e. police, Army, merkaz [town] requirements, and the grain resold to the natives is imported. This naturally depends largely upon prices but few merchants can afford to keep their capital locked up. The turnover is small but the profits are large as the grain and hides, etc., are bought cheap for trade goods acquired at trade prices and imported grain is sold at a profit for animals valued cheaply. [SAD 212/13/3, 1930, "Eastern Nuerland, Province Handbook"]

Add to these extractive strategies the confiscation of thousands of cattle in annual tribute collections and in court fines and it's not surprising that the oxen export trade grew rapidly during the 1930s and 1940s.

But individual Nuer were still neither buying nor selling their cattle with money. The mutual convertibility of these two media had simply not been established for them. This situation continued, moreover, despite post-1935 administrative efforts to shift the basis of tribute collection in eastern Nuerland from cattle to cash (officials discovered early on that this "changeover . . . nearly always ends in more cash for Government" [UN 1/45/332, 1939, "E. G. Coryton, Handling Over Notes"])⁷ as well as to provide conscripted Nuer labor with "a small pecuniary reward."⁸ Barter continued to dominate the private sector, and government wages remained far too low to permit a ready conversion of coins into cattle.⁹

The situation changed dramatically, however, following the introduction during the late 1940s of government-sponsored cattle auctions for the disposal of livestock acquired through court fines. By this time, government chiefs' courts were well established throughout Nuerland and were generating increasingly vital administrative revenues.¹⁰ More important for our purposes, government fines' cattle, unlike tribute oxen, often included a large proportion of heifers.¹¹ Thus, for the first time Nuer men were able to purchase what they desired most: young, fertile heifers to increase their herds. And it was this opportunity that motivated them to enter the cattle market as buyers—and as money-paying ones at that. Because these auctions were carried out strictly on a cash basis, individuals wishing to participate were normally forced to sell an ox to a private merchant before the auction in order to have the requisite cash.¹² Hence from the government's perspective, these auctions had the added benefit of stimulating the export trade in Nuer oxen. Eventually, the administration established dry-season public auctions (to which anyone could bring cattle) in various district centers of Nuerland, first on a weekly and later on a daily basis.

It was soon apparent, however, that the long-term success of these auctions depended on two factors over which local administrators exercised little control. The first was a steady supply of female cattle. During some years, the number of heifers collected through court fines was so low compared with local demand that prospective buyers grew discouraged and no longer took the precaution of selling an ox before the auction.¹³ The second factor, no less troubling than the first, stemmed from a constant scarcity of coinage (UNPMD, May 1953). Up until the mid-1960s, Nuer steadfastly refused to accept paper currency for their cattle.¹⁴ In fact, the Nuer term for "money," *you*, means any kind of "metal piece," including metal spears (plural, *yieth*). *You wāragak*—literally, "paper metal" (from the Arabic term for paper, *waraq*)—was initially rejected for many reasons. As one frustrated British administrator explained:

If trade is to flourish in Nuerland, large supplies of silver [coins] must be made available. . . . Nuer dislike notes because they cannot keep them safely—they get burnt, blown away by the wind, eaten by white ants, dissolved by heavy rains and torn by rough usage. Quite apart from any conservative distrust of their value, the elements of the ordinary Nuer's existence make notes unacceptable to him. [UNPMD, May 1953]

Some of these environmental hazards were overcome by the importation during the 1960s and 1970s of small metal footlockers, equipped with lock and key, that have since become a standard household item. Skyrocketing inflation which began during the first civil war era (1955–72) was another factor contributing to the eventual acceptance of paper currency by Nuer. Until the late 1960s, however, cattle brought to market often remained unsold, while others were parted with at reduced rates, owing to a scarcity of coinage alone (UNPMD, May 1953). Despite these nagging difficulties, the regional cattle trade continued to expand in both volume and complexity. As early as 1942, some Nuer had begun to drive oxen directly to markets in the provincial capital, Malakal. Others sought higher prices for their oxen by butchering them and selling the meat directly in regional market centers (UNPMD, May/June 1942).

Nevertheless, the two basic extractive strategies established by itinerant merchants during the 1930s had really changed very little. Famine continued to fuel the grain import/cattle export trade, though coinage had replaced barter to some extent. The cow/ox conversion racket, in contrast, had been effectively captured by the government, with many local export merchants benefiting from this “takeover” as well. The net result was that individual Nuer were now replenishing their herds at one another’s expense rather than at the expense of outlying neighbors. As far as Nuer were concerned, money remained in such contexts little more than a means of swapping cattle with the government. In other words, cattle only became money in order to become cattle again: $C \rightarrow M \rightarrow C$.

Another major turning point in the gradual forging of the cattle/money equation occurred during the mid-1950s, when thousands of Nuer men were actively recruited by the government to work on private cotton plantations then burgeoning along the upper Nile near Renk and Geiger. These lucrative investment schemes grew so rapidly that they soon faced chronic labor shortages at picking time (December through February). By 1959, these schemes required an estimated 15,000 seasonal pickers in addition to permanent tenant labor (UNPAR, 1959–60). And thus each year the government would relay increasingly urgent appeals for additional “Nilotic” labor to migrate to these sites through local Dinka, Shilluk, Nuer, Atuot, and Anuak chiefs. Significantly, Nuer men were consistently singled out by scheme owners and by government administrators alike as the most desirable “backwater” recruits, for reasons made clear in the following quotation:

Nuers proved the best of the lot. They usually arrived in high spirits and spent the hours proceeding to their station, dancing and singing in the field; they show enthusiasm and interest in their work. Unlike comers from other localities who started grumbling the moment they arrived and when they are transported to the fields it needs a miracle to make them refrain from going on strike [sic]. [WND 57. A., 1959–60, “Eastern Nuer District Annual Report”]

Before long, however, these unwitting strike-breakers began venturing farther and farther north, encouraged by the promise of higher wages. By 1960, scores of young Nuer men had reached Khartoum, where they commonly obtained employment as day laborers in the construction industry. Because of these increasingly lucrative wage-labor opportunities, it actually became possible for a man to earn enough money during a dry season to purchase a cow calf or two on his return to Nuerland. Hence a new relationship between cattle and money was forged: no longer was it necessary for a man to give up a cow in order to get one. Money could yield cattle directly: $M \rightarrow C$.¹⁵

With the explosion of the civil war in Nuerland in 1963–64, all this economic activity ground to a sudden halt. Regional cattle and grain markets collapsed as their northern Arab controllers retreated to heavily garrisoned towns. Scores of villages were razed by rebel-seeking army battalions while local herds were plundered mercilessly by both parties to the conflict. Families living within reach of government roads and towns scattered deeper and deeper into the bush. Hundreds of young men working or studying in the north flocked back to join southern secessionist forces while others fled in the opposite direction. The eastern Jikany and Lou Nuer suffered most intensely. And thus, by the time a negotiated peace settlement was signed in 1972, some 40,000 eastern Nuer had abandoned their homes to seek refuge in Ethiopia. These were the fearful and chaotic years “when people jumped into the bush” (*mee ci naadh kai d̥aaar*), years from which Nuerland has never recovered.

As part of the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972, thousands of southern rebels (including an unknown number of Nuer) were integrated into the national army and police forces. Hundreds of others were offered civilian posts in the newly established southern regional government, only to be laid off a few months later due to inadequate funds. These new posts, though temporary in many cases, injected large amounts of paper currency into the regional economy, currency which Nuer were increasingly willing to accept in exchange for their cattle. Bachelors hoping to replenish their war-ravaged herds and thereby achieve a quicker road to marriage

adopted short-term, seasonal labor migration to northern cities on a massive scale. Following employment patterns set by their predecessors, most of these youths became day laborers in the Khartoum construction industry.¹⁶ After working some four to 18 months, many of them returned laden with colorful clothes, mosquito nets, plastic shoes, blankets, mattresses, sunglasses, and other highly valued goods and courting paraphernalia. Indeed, failure to obtain imported display items left young men in parts of eastern Nuerland vulnerable to the coordinated insults and rejection of marriageable girls. "If he comes back from the north and his dog recognizes him, don't converse with him!" runs the famous dictum of Nyaboth Nguany Thoan, an influential Lou girl leader. Among Nuer communities west of the Bahr al-Jabal, where during the early 1980s a fat stately ox was still more likely to catch a girl's eye than the flamboyant dance leggings so avidly adopted in the east, most migrants preferred to invest their earnings in bridewealth cattle.

During the post— (or, rather, inter—) civil war era between 1972 and 1983, the economic vacuum created by the hasty departure of northern merchants during the war began to suck in Nuer adventurers desiring to try their luck at trading. Although some of these would-be merchants managed to start their businesses with funds gained through wage labor or the sale of fish, grain, crocodile skins, and other local resources, most relied on a sale of family livestock. Eventually, the more prosperous of these succeeded in penetrating the long-distance grain import/cattle export trade formerly monopolized by their northern Arab counterparts. And as more and more Nuer began to appreciate the enormous profits that could be reaped by driving cattle overland to Kosti or by founding a modest "bush shop," it became easier for a young man to persuade his elders to sell a few head of cattle in order that he might become a part-time trader. This is not to say that the local customers benefited from the changeover. On the contrary, many of the newly established Nuer merchants proved to be even more rapacious than their Arab predecessors. Markups of over 200 percent on trade goods were standard in many outlying "bush" shops throughout the early 1980s. Furthermore, it was not uncommon at that time to hear ordinary people complain that the newly emerging class of Nuer merchants had begun to adopt novel attitudes toward money. As David Kek Moinydet, an eastern Gajio Nuer, explained:

The trouble with these young [Nuer] merchants is that they treat their money like cattle. In the old days, you didn't give a cow to just anyone. An [unrelated] man might have to live and work in your homestead for years before receiving a cow. Well, now, these young merchants are taking this same attitude toward their money: if you're not close enough to be "counted" a cow [in marriage], you're not close enough to be lent money!

However, these merchants were not the only ones who began to view money in a new light. During the same inter—civil war era, scores of Nuer communities initiated, under the auspices of local chiefs, "self-help" projects, including the construction of primary schools, veterinary facilities, and medical dispensaries as well as the repair and extension of local roads. These projects were invariably funded by local cattle contributions—some being more voluntary than others. Tragically, most of the buildings later remained idle owing to the central government's failure to provide promised staff and supplies. Yet even so, these developments would seem to reflect a definite attitudinal shift. Increasingly, cattle were being viewed, in some contexts at least, as potential sources of capital to be invested in specific projects, some private and others collective: C→M.

And thus, by the time I began investigating these issues firsthand in 1980, the mutual convertibility of cattle and money had become so well accepted that it was not uncommon among eastern Nuer for a "generous" father-in-law to accept cash in place of a bridewealth cow or two. In short, money had become a part of everyday social life. Or as one wry old eastern Gajio man quipped: "Today everyone wants to die with a piaster in his hand!"

The three basic stages I have identified in the gradual forging of the cattle/money equation (namely, C→M→C, M→C, and C→M) are helpful, I think, in understanding the nature and limits

of the mutual convertibility of cattle and money as these are revealed through a half century of archival records. They do little justice, however, to the intricacy of cattle/money ties as more recently defined by Nuer. For the various Ms and various Cs of which they consist are by no means interchangeable. Rather, contemporary Nuer, as we shall see, regard neither money nor cattle as “things in themselves.”

the circulation of blood, cattle, and money: 1980–83

first formulation: “money has no blood” To what extent did the increased mutual convertibility of cattle and money stimulate Nuer to reassess critically the inherent logic and general significance of the cattle/human equation so central to their culture during the early 1930s? I begin with the observation that by 1983, money (*you*) had penetrated some fields of exchange more thoroughly than others. In exchange for grain, fishing hooks, cloth, guns, and medicines, as well as in the payment of taxes, court fines, school fees, and the like, people gladly substituted money for cattle whenever they could. Indeed, the giving up of a cow in such contexts was regarded as a truly lamentable loss: ideally, Nuer reserved cattle for more important occasions such as marriage, initiation, and sacrifice, or—as I would summarize Nuer statements in this regard—for the creation and affirmation of enduring bonds among themselves as well as between themselves and divinity. In contrast, the role of cattle as sacrificial victim and as the indispensable exchange object at times of initiation, feud settlement and, to a lesser degree, marriage had scarcely been affected by the massive introduction of currency. This is not to say that people’s attitudes toward these rites remained constant between 1930 and 1983. On the contrary, the significance of cattle sacrifice, for instance, was steadily undermined by mounting waves of Christian conversion, by increased Nuer acceptance of Western medicines and concepts of illness, and by growing expectations that a host would provide meat for guests. Even so, money could not replace cattle in these contexts. Nor could it replace the gift of a “personality ox” at initiation, though the overall significance of this ox also declined in regions where increasing numbers of Nuer youths rejected scarification. Furthermore, most people actively resisted the idea that money was an adequate substitute for cattle in bridewealth and blood-wealth exchange—although small amounts of money, as I noted, had begun to infiltrate some marriage payments by the early 1980s.

I hasten to add that this characterization of the unequal penetration of money into Nuer social life—based as it is upon a distinction between “blood”- and “nonblood”-associated spheres of exchange—is entirely my own construction: Nuer would not use such terms. This idea developed, rather, out of numerous comments made by individual Nuer (during general discussions about cattle sacrifice, feuding, marriage, incest, pollution, and other issues) to the effect that “cattle, like people, have blood” but “money has no blood.” I interpreted these comments to mean that money was an “inappropriate” medium of exchange in certain contexts because it could not bind people together like *riem*, “blood”—whether that “blood” were conceived as human, bovine, or both in relation to particular types of enduring ties.

For instance, I was once asked by a highly intelligent and unusually well traveled eastern Gajaak youth, who had ventured at one point as far as Iraq in search of profitable employment, whether I knew the ultimate source of money (*you*). After remarking spontaneously to the effect that he realized different countries used different currencies, Peter Pal Jola went on to say:

But there’s something I still don’t understand about money. Money’s not like the cow because the cow has blood and breath and, like people, gives birth. But money does not. So, tell me, do you know whether God [*kuɔdh*] or Man [*raan*] creates money?

Widespread as these uncertainties may have been among Nuer, they in no way prevented people from appreciating and using money as an everyday medium of exchange. Indeed, individual musings about money’s ultimate origin were in many ways extraneous to the immediate

feel of the various bits of metal and paper ever passing through their hands. It was not the mystery of money's generative powers that colored the give-and-take of daily life but rather, as we shall see, money's "sterility" as compared with the self-generating capacity of cattle. Similarly, it was the immediate, not the ultimate, source of money that defined what Nuer considered to be very different sorts of money. In order to understand why this was so, we must delve into the symbolism of "blood."

Although not equated with "life" (*tëk*) itself, blood or *riem* is the substance with which each and every human life begins. Conception is understood by Nuer as a mysterious merger of male and female "blood" flows, forged by the life-creating powers of *kuɔdh* (divinity). Without the direct participation and continual support of divinity, no child could be born or survive long enough to bring forth another generation. Moreover, since procreation is the paramount goal of life for everyone and the only form of immortality valued, "blood" may be understood as that which fuses the greatest of human desires with that profound humility with which Nuer contemplate the transcendent powers of divinity. A newborn child is "blood" and is referred to as such during the first month or two of life. Milk, semen, sweat—these too are "blood." It is as if *riem* were the mutable source of all human—and hence all social—energy.

As an element of life, blood converges with two other powerful forces of vitality: *yieg* (breath) and *tiy/tiei* (awareness). Blood, however, is unique among these cardinal principles of life in that it is eminently social. Unlike either "breath" or "awareness," blood passes from person to person and from generation to generation, endowing interpersonal relations with a certain substance and fluidity. Both the coming of manhood and the coming of womanhood are marked by passages of blood. For a girl, the blood that flows during her first childbirth ushers her into adulthood; for a boy, it is the blood shed during the ordeal of scarification at initiation. The perpetual expansion, union, and contraction of kin groups are likewise spoken about in terms of the creation, transferral, and loss of *riem*. And thus, by emphasizing the fact that cattle, like people, have "blood," individuals were calling attention to the fact that cattle and people are capable of a parallel extension of vitality through time. Money, of course, is not augmentative in that sense. If anything, it appears condemned in Sudan to a continual loss of force, to a perpetual withering in the face of mounting inflation. During the early 1980s, the concept of monetary interest was unfamiliar to most Nuer.

Now, insofar as individuals actually succeeded in restricting their use of cash to "nonblood"—as opposed to "blood"-associated fields of exchange, money was less a challenge than a support for the life-affirmed and life-affirming "truth" that "cattle and people are one." As Nyacuol Gaai, an elderly Leek woman, put it: "Money protects cattle" (*"Gange ɣək piny"*; literally, "[Money] delays them on the ground"). People with money, in other words, could keep their cattle with them longer.

Yet why, one might ask, all this emphasis on "blood" when there were so many other differences between cattle and money that people could have stressed as well? Money is not only "bloodless" (and hence milkless) but also devoid of "breath," "awareness," and individualizing names, colors, temperaments, exchange histories, and so forth (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1990:211). Money is an utterly depersonalized medium in this sense. Moreover, unlike cattle, money can pass in relative secrecy from one locked metal footlocker to another. In my experience, nevertheless, Nuer men and women did not mention these elements of contrast when debating the nature and limits of convertibility between cattle and money. This is not to say that they did not appreciate or take advantage of them from time to time; it is to say, rather, that the symbolism of "blood" which so pervades their culture had been taken up and elaborated once again—this time, it would seem, so as to deny the possibility of a direct equation between money and people. It was as though people were attempting to reassure themselves that, though cattle and people were equated in some contexts and cattle and money in others, money and people were—and always would be—incommensurate. The gulf that divided them ran as deep and broad as Nuer images of "blood" in the generation of life and in the contin-

uation of the social order. By stressing the unique “blood” linkage between cattle and people so as to exclude the intrusive medium of money, many Nuer, it would seem, were also rallying to the defense of those “augmentations of life” made possible by the ideological truth that “cattle and people are one.” In the process of this denial, however, it would seem that the significance of human/cattle relations was distilled down from the richly varied and diffuse notions of a total symbiosis reported by Evans-Pritchard during the 1930s to a more explicit “oneness of blood.” One wonders whether or not this admittedly hypothetical process robbed human/cattle relations of some of their former intimacy and multiplicity as well.

Everything I have said thus far presumes that “cattle” and “money” are discrete units of comparison. But for Nuer, as I hinted, these were not “things in themselves.” Rather, Nuer successfully crossbred the concepts of “money” and “cattle,” bringing forth a generation of hybrid categories that proved exceptionally adaptable to an increasingly unstable social and economic environment. And nowhere did these hybrid categories thrive so well as in the vast field of bridewealth exchange. For it was here, in an open environment, where negotiations ranged freely and where there were no rigid rules to mar the horizon, that these categories first came into their own. It was here, too, that my initial observation regarding the differential penetration of money into “blood”- and “nonblood”-associated spheres of exchange could be exposed as excessively static. For in reality, money and cattle were flowing increasingly out, in, and between these opposed spheres of exchange.

second formulation: the cattle of money and the cattle of girls I should, perhaps, first check the assumption that “money” and “cattle” were wholly interchangeable: not all money was good, I was told, for buying cattle. There was something called *you cieth*—literally, the “money of shit”—that allegedly could not be invested fruitfully in cattle. Strikingly similar in some ways to the cattle-harming money of the Kenyan Luo (Shipton 1989), the “money of shit” was, nevertheless, defined differently.¹⁷ Whereas the “bitter money” of the Luo originates in the sale of specific resources such as land, tobacco, cannabis, and gold, *you cieth* was quite literally money people earned in local towns by collecting and dumping the waste of household bucket latrines. Following the colonial administration’s introduction of bucket latrines during the 1940s, it was difficult, of course, to find people willing to empty them each day—or rather under the cover of night. Eventually, the administration came to depend on prisoners for this service. In the interim, however, it seems Nuer women and men collectively rejected this type of work by convincing one another that “a cow bought with ‘shit money’ cannot live” (“*yaŋ mi ci kok ke you cieth, /cɛ bi tēŋ*”). What began, I suspect, as a prideful statement that “we, the people of the people, will not do such work” soon became an accepted fact of social life. Thus, money earned in this way had to be invested, I was told, in things other than cattle. Since few, if any, Nuer willingly engaged in this work during the 1980s unless forced to do so as unpaid prisoners, the principal way in which this polluted money entered their hands was through the sale of locally brewed beer (*koaŋ in boor*) in towns where bucket latrines existed. Significantly, I met several Nuer women selling beer in Malakal and in Bentiu who consciously and carefully segregated money collected from non-Nuer clients known to engage in such work from the rest of their income. When I asked one of them how she planned to use this money, she smiled and said: “It’s going straight to the government.”

More interesting still, the notion of *you cieth* was recently extended to include money earned through domestic service in the north. In general, Nuer migrants openly scorned such work—“It’s work only a Dinka would do”—preferring, as we might say, the more respectable and manly labor of construction. But as if this ethnic slur were not enough of a discouragement in itself, by 1983 many Nuer men and women had begun to argue that “*you kädmani cetke you cieth en xöö liu xɔɔkien*” (“the money of servants is like the money of shit in that its cattle [will] die”).¹⁸ In this way, individuals sought to prevent the contaminating source of this money from polluting their cherished cattle, which were, after all, consumed as well as exchanged.

In addition to the “money of shit,” there were five basic categories of monetary and cattle wealth prevalent during the 1980s—all of them important for understanding contemporary patterns of bridewealth circulation.¹⁹ The first of these, *ɣɔk nyiēt*, “the cattle of girls/daughters,” referred to bridewealth cattle received by specific relatives of the bride on the basis of a system of “inheritable rights” (*cuɔŋ*) and “obligations” (*laad*; singular, *lat*) (cf. Evans-Pritchard 1951:74–89; Howell 1954:97–122; Hutchinson 1985).²⁰ Although nominally owned by the official recipient, these cows formed part of “the ancestral herd” from which close agnates ideally drew in order to marry, have sons, and thereby extend the patriline (see Evans-Pritchard 1951:83, 1956:285).

In contrast, purchased cattle, *ɣɔk youni* or “the cattle of money,” were less subject to the claims of extended kinsmen. They circulated between extended kinsmen, I was told, more as a “privilege”—that is, as a *muc* (a “free” gift) or a *lonɔ* (a “free” releasing)—than as a *cuɔŋ*, or inheritable right. Their purchaser, in other words, was somewhat freer to dispose of them as he wished—especially if he acquired them after having married and established a household of his own. In contrast, it was far more difficult—though by no means impossible during the early 1980s—for an unmarried youth residing in his father’s household to differentiate effectively between cattle acquired through his own labor and those gained through his sisters’ marriages, for the father retained formal rights of disposal over all cattle entering his household throughout his lifetime. He could, if he desired, redistribute cattle purchased by his sons among various wives’ households as well as draw freely upon them in meeting cattle obligations toward extended kin. Indeed, during the 1980s it was commonly expected in some parts of Nuerland—most notably in regions west of the Bahr al-Jabal—that bachelors engaged in seasonal labor migration would reaffirm their kinship solidarity upon their return home by freely giving one of the first bull calves purchased with their wages to a favorite maternal uncle, paternal uncle, paternal cousin, or other close relative. This gesture of solidarity was often complemented with a special sacrifice, carried out by a distant patrilineal kinsman (*guan böthni*), which was intended both to bless and to integrate other cattle purchased into the familial herd. The “cattle of money,” in other words, could be ritually transformed in these regions into the “cattle of girls.” Significantly, these expectations and concomitant rites were not, to the best of my knowledge, prevalent among Nuer groups east of the Bahr al-Jabal before the eruption of the second civil war (1983 to the present).

Following the father’s death, there was considerably more room for negotiation and dissent among brothers—particularly paternal half brothers—over shared rights in the familial herd. Hence, when I questioned various men and women on this score, I received a wide range of opinions—each expressed with an air of uncompromised certainty. A group of middle-aged eastern Gajiok men, for instance, assured me that following the father’s death, “cattle of money” passed only as a “privilege” between paternal half brothers; full brothers, they argued, would normally be more supportive of one another and would thus willingly pool all cattle wealth. In contrast, several other Gajiok and western Leek men and women argued that half brothers retained full rights in one another’s cattle, however acquired, until such time as all had married. A third opinion ran that a married man could own purchased cattle individually, regardless of the marital status of his half brothers. Finally, there were some Nuer (notably several western youths in the process of collecting sufficient cattle for their own marriages) who boldly declared: “A cow of your wages is a cow of your sweat and no one has rights in it other than you.” In brotherly disputes over “rights” and “obligations” held in cattle, the ability to assert one or another of these interpretations of “cattle of money” would thus seem crucial.²¹ Indeed, from this perspective it would seem that the concept of *ɣɔk youni* had added a new twist to what was otherwise a longstanding “zone of contestation” among patrilineal kinsmen by giving hardworking younger brothers and sons a bit of turf from which to begin negotiating for a greater share of status and autonomy within the family fold.²²

But not all money could be turned into the “cattle of money.” Only money earned as wages or through the sale of grain, gum, fish, crocodile skins, or other goods obtained by self-exertion could become *ɣək youni*. Money acquired by these means was closely associated with *leth puany*, “human sweat,” and was referred to as *you lad*, “the money of work.”²³ This type of money stood opposed to that gained by the sale of collectively owned cattle: *you ɣək*, or “the money of cattle.” Whereas the former was individually owned, the latter carried with it all of the collective rights held in the cattle sold. Being an individual possession, the “money of work” could be “requested” (*thieie*) or “begged” (*liime*) from its owner by persistent relatives in need of school fees or simply desirous of a refreshing bowl of beer in the marketplace. The “money of cattle” was of a different order. Ideally, it was never squandered on small requests or projects but was instead reserved to purchase younger, fertile cattle to expand and upgrade the familial herd.

It is noteworthy that this distinction often worked to the disadvantage of Nuer whose immediate livelihood depended less on cattle than on wages. As a poorly paid, junior administrative official in Bentiu lamented:

When a man goes to sell a cow [ox] at market, we, the relatives, usually don't bother him because we know that he is going to use that money to buy [female] cattle that will increase the herd. But then that same man can come and pester me here [in Bentiu] to give him money for beer. He may have a thousand pounds in his pocket from the cattle he has just sold. But that money is different; he wouldn't think of using it for beer. Nor could it be begged from him like the money of work. That's why it is so difficult for us who now live in town.

The fifth and final wealth category was also referred to as *ɣək youni*, “the cattle of money.” However, these were not real cows at all but rather sums of money substituted for a usually quite small portion of bridewealth cattle requested. There was no possibility during the early 1980s of linguistically eliding the distinction between money parading as cattle and real cattle purchased in the marketplace in such contexts, despite the fact that both could be referred to as *ɣək youni*, “the cattle of money.” For real cattle, regardless of their exchange origins, were invariably identified during bridewealth negotiations on the basis of their sex, color, age, horn shape, and other distinguishing features. Hence any reference to “cattle of money” in such contexts was unambiguously understood to mean “money cattle” as opposed to “purchased cattle.” (For clarity's sake, I will use the term “cattle of money” here to mean only purchased cattle and will use the inverse term, “money cattle,” when referring to cash passed in lieu of bridewealth cows.)

Now, whether or not a young man could pass money in lieu of a bridewealth cow or two depended entirely, I was told, on the will of his would-be father-in-law. The latter could always refuse, demanding that the young man take his money and buy a real cow instead. Hence only a “generous” father-in-law, I was told, would accept such a “cow.” And for this reason, the number of “money cattle” transferred in Nuer marriages before the reeruption of civil war in 1983 was remarkably small. With the possible exception of marriages involving the educated elite, I doubt whether more than two or three “money cattle” ever passed in any particular marriage. Considering that bridewealth rates for a previously unmarried girl ranged at that time between 20 and 30 head of cattle, this was not a large percentage. In fact, the vast majority of marriages continued to be arranged solely with real cattle. Interestingly, several people suggested that the principal significance of “money cattle” was that it shifted the burden of finding an appropriate cow to purchase from the wife-takers to the wife-givers—hence the importance of a “generous” attitude among the latter. There was no significant disparity at that time between the “signal” and the “market” value of such beasts (Sansom 1976) and, consequently, “money cattle” were commonly converted into real cattle (classified as the “cattle of girls”) by the bride's family.²⁴ In situations where the bride's father spent some or all of this money instead on guns, grain, clothes, or other goods, he was likely to face greater difficulties mustering the cash (as opposed to the cattle) portion of the bridewealth payment in the event his daughter was later divorced.²⁵

The first thing to note about the various wealth categories outlined is that they facilitated movements of cattle and money between “blood” and “nonblood” spheres of exchange at the same time as they confirmed the presence of a conceptual boundary between these spheres. Social principles characteristic of “kinship” exchange were continuously being drawn, together with cattle and money, into the marketplace and vice versa. Consider the following hypothetical—though by no means atypical—series of cattle and money exchanges.

Imagine that an ox, originally obtained as bridewealth, is sold at market and the money so acquired is later invested in a young heifer: “cattle of girls”→“money of cattle”→“cattle of girls” (Cg→Mc→Cg). Now, in this sequence, the collective rights and privileges held in the original bridewealth ox are not lost as it is transformed into money and later back again into cattle. As a concept, then, the “money of cattle” both affirms and protects these collective cattle rights, based as they are on shared “blood,” as cattle pass in and out of the marketplace, a “non-blood”-associated sphere of social relations and exchange. Conversely, a successful migrant who invests his savings in cattle (“money of work”→“cattle of money” [Mw→Cm]) is able to smuggle principles of personal autonomy and private ownership associated with market exchange into the realm of kinship relations via the concepts “money of work” and “cattle of money.”²⁶ In this system, there are no absolutes: it is always a matter of specific cattle and specific sums of money, defined in terms of their immediate sources.

The relativity with which different sorts of cattle and money are classified is readily apparent in bridewealth exchange. For whether or not a particular cow is collectively defined as a “cow of money” or a “cow of girls” depends entirely on the negotiating position of the exchange partners. Whereas the groom and his party are normally quite conscious of which cows are “cattle of money” and which are “cattle of girls,” from the perspective of the bride’s family, all cattle received in marriage are “cattle of girls” (see Figure 1).

Once having reached the byre of the bride’s father, these cattle may be put to a variety of uses during their lifetimes. A significant portion of them will probably be redistributed among close agnatic and cognatic kin as *yɔk cungni*, “the cattle of rights.” Some of those remaining in the bride’s homestead may be sold to purchase “better” cattle, and others may be sold to counter grain shortages, to buy medicines, to pay taxes, or the like. Still others may be slain in sacrifice or in hospitality, while others may die of natural causes in the bride’s homestead (see Figure 2). Bridewealth cattle sold but not butchered in the marketplace will be either siphoned

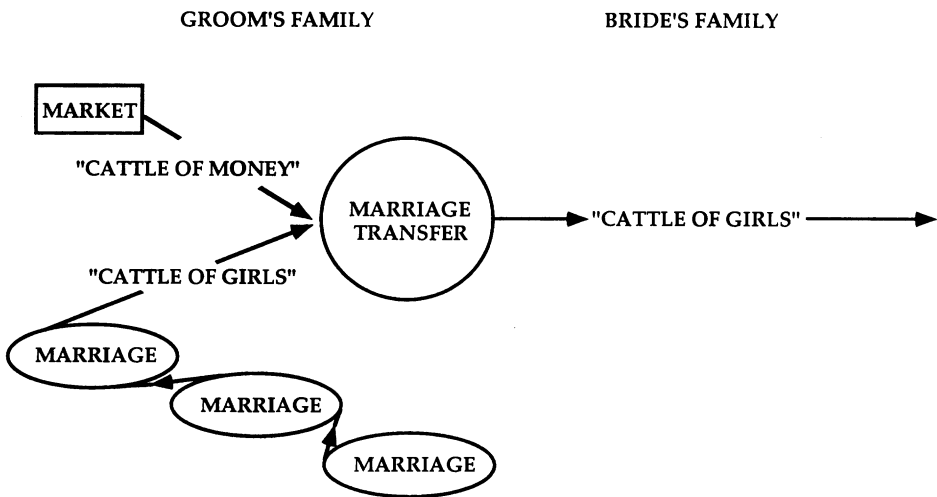


Figure 1. The relativity of the “cattle of money”/“cattle of girls” distinction.

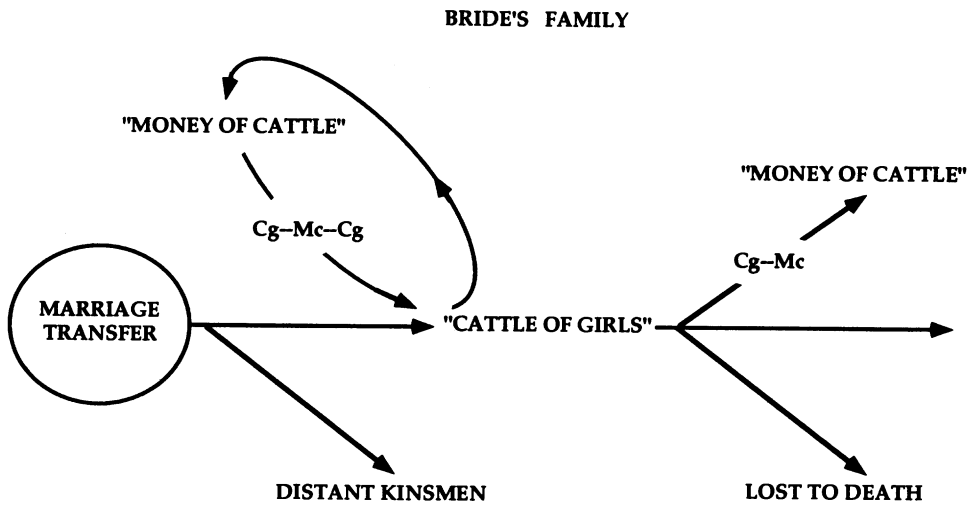


Figure 2. The “cattle of girls” at the bride’s home.

off into the export trade or purchased by other Nuer, in which case they may well pass on again some day as bridewealth. Whether they enter their new owners’ byres as “cattle of money” or “cattle of girls” will depend on the type of money used to purchase them. Of the cattle remaining with the bride’s family, several will probably be used in the negotiation of additional marriages.

So, to follow through this ideal-typical series of exchanges, let’s imagine that a brother of the bride desires to arrange a marriage for himself. How will he go about it? What types of wealth might he use? Well, he will probably combine some of the cattle received from his sister’s marriage with others collected from paternal and maternal uncles and whomever else he or his father can persuade to assist him. He may also add a few cattle purchased with money earned in Khartoum. Assuming that his future father-in-law looks kindly upon him, he may even be able to pass a “money cow” or two (see Figure 3).

Together, Figures 1, 2, and 3 sketch the principal movements of cattle and money within and between kinship and market spheres of exchange. They also reveal how Nuer marriages have tended both to build on and to extend through one another. But what interests, one might ask, has this system of cattle/money distinctions really served? What has been its role, if any, in patterning relations of autonomy and dependence between men and women, young and old, kin and non-kin, wife-takers and wife-givers, the cattle-rich and the cattle-poor, wage earners and nonwage earners, and so on?

With respect to familial and extended kin ties, this system of wealth distinctions certainly enhanced individual possibilities for autonomy by weakening feelings of mutual dependence among agnates and among cognates. With the expansion of the market economy, young men became far less dependent on the good will of their fathers, older brothers, and paternal and maternal uncles in the collection of bridewealth cattle than they were, say, during the 1930s and 1940s. The abilities of senior men to amass power in the form of cattle wealth declined accordingly—though, as I noted earlier, western Nuer elders developed ritual means of muting the “cattle of money”/“cattle of girls” distinction. Although one might suspect that these developments may contribute in the long run to the development of sharper inequalities of wealth among men, it would be difficult, I think, to convince many contemporary Nuer of this. In fact, several men and women argued that the introduction of money and the creation of local cattle, grain, and labor markets had significantly eased social inequalities inherent in the cattle econ-

BRIDE'S FAMILY

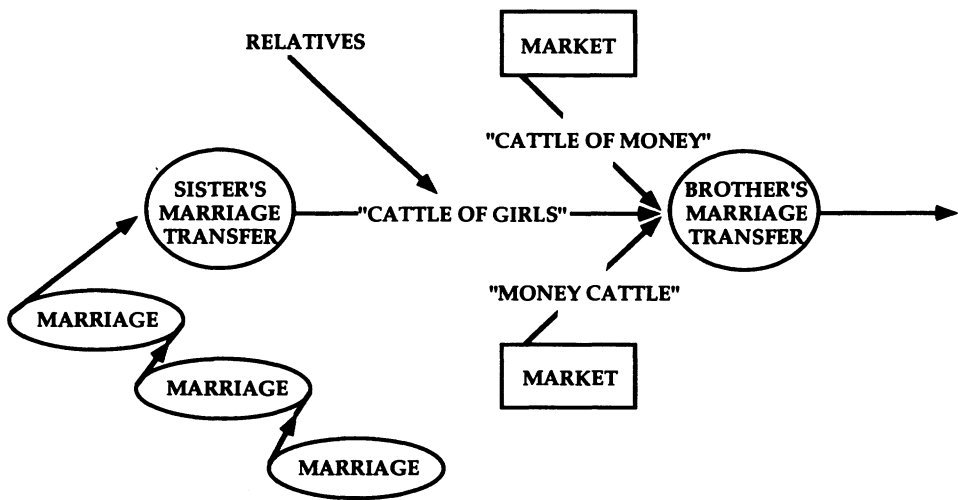


Figure 3. The brother's collection of bridewealth.

omy itself—most notably, inequalities based on birth order and on relative family size. Whereas a sisterless man was often condemned to a bachelor's life during the 1930s and 1940s, he was “free” during the early 1980s to take up trading and wage labor in order to obtain marriage cattle.²⁷ The money economy, in other words, was valued by many for having provided industrious individuals with additional opportunities to transcend poverty and misfortune. As one optimistic eastern Gajiok youth exclaimed, “*Ci caan ɣoɔk*” (“Poverty [misfortune] has ended”).

The establishment of local markets, together with a system of government chiefs, customary courts, and police posts, also made it considerably easier for unmarried women, widows, and divorcees to establish and maintain independent households. For they could now escape to town, brew beer, earn money, and live under the guardianship of no man. Rebecca Nyaboth, an independent widow who happened to run the biggest beer-selling parlor in Bentiu in 1983, captured the implications of these developments well when she said: “*Kɔaŋ ɛ yaandā ke kume ɛ cɔadā kene maar*” (“Beer is my cow and the government my husband and mother”).

Married women, however, did not benefit from emerging market opportunities to the same extent, for Nuer husbands retained formal rights of ownership over all cattle and monetary wealth acquired by their wives during the marriage. Furthermore, the husband's rights in this regard were staunchly upheld by local government courts—which were run, of course, entirely by Nuer men. Hence it was impossible during the 1980s for a wife to sue in court for the return of “beer cows” used by her husband, without her permission, to arrange an additional marriage.²⁸ Nor could she take such cattle or their offspring with her upon divorce: “Upon divorce, a woman leaves [her husband's home] barehanded.”²⁹

With regard to affinal ties, this system of wealth categories had an additional advantage, for it provided a farsighted individual with an opportunity to reduce the risk that his own marriage would someday be negatively affected by the divorce of a close female relative. When one considers the fact that divorce rates among Nuer nearly tripled between 1936 and 1983, this was not an insignificant advantage. Indeed, for reasons described in detail elsewhere (Hutchinson 1990), Nuer men and women of the 1980s were divorcing not only more frequently than earlier generations but also at later and later points in the marriage. Whereas Evans-Pritchard

claims that during the 1930s divorce was “highly unusual” after the birth of a child to the union and “impossible” after the birth of a second (1951:94), during the 1980s it was not uncommon for government courts to sever unions involving two, three, or even four children (Hutchinson 1990:402–404). Recovery of the original bridewealth cattle and their offspring was especially arduous in such cases since the cattle had usually long been dispersed through a multitude of other marriages. If they had not spread too far afield and the woman’s husband knew of their whereabouts, he was likely to push in court for the return of those cows and their calves.³⁰ If not, the courts maintained that substitutes be provided. Yet sometimes the family of the wife was unable to muster suitable substitutes without recalling cattle used in other marriages. Although the bride’s people were not responsible for replacing cows that had died naturally in their own homestead, they were expected to replace all those that “had accomplished something” (“*mi ci duor laat*”) for the bride’s family—that is, those that had been used to solidify a second marriage, nullify a familial debt, or otherwise further the bride’s family’s objectives before dying in other people’s homesteads. As a result of these rather stringent court-sanctioned interpretations of the cattle obligations of the wife’s family vis-à-vis the divorcing husband, the rupture of one marriage sometimes weakened others. If the marriage secondarily affected was a relatively recent one, it too could end in divorce.³¹

What must be realized, however, is that these potential difficulties could be avoided by farsighted individuals through the skillful manipulation of the cattle/money categories outlined above. A young man could attempt to reduce the risk that his own marriage would someday be weakened by the divorce of a female relative by including as many “cattle of money” in his bridewealth settlement as possible. For, unlike the “cattle of girls,” purchased cattle did not conduct shock waves created by other people’s divorces. Since they came from the market, they could only be reclaimed, in principle, by the groom himself. During the 1980s this marriage strategy was especially favored by western Nuer men.³² I often heard men advocate the advantages of marrying with “cattle of money” as opposed to “cattle of girls” with the expression “*Yaj mi ci kok ke you, thile riek*” (“A cow bought with money is risk-free”).

I was also told by an educated eastern Nuer youth that a “clever” father would arrange the marriage of a son claimed on the basis of a paternity payment (*ruk*) with as many “cattle of money” as possible so as to decrease the possibility of a future rupture between that son and other sons after his death. For were the adopted son to marry with cattle received through the marriages of his half sisters, it would be very difficult for him to reciprocate when it later came time for his younger half brothers to marry, since he would have no full sisters to bring in additional bridewealth cattle.

Furthermore, several easterners and westerners alike remarked that, though the distinction between “cattle of money” and “cattle of girls” was formally lost when the bridewealth cattle passed into the possession of the bride’s family, a father might nevertheless prefer to marry his daughter to a man who could offer a relatively large portion of “cattle of money.” The father could then use these cattle in a subsequent marriage for himself or a son, confident in the knowledge that the fate of such cattle, so to speak, depended upon the continuation of only one marriage—that between his daughter and son-in-law. And were that union ever to falter, he would presumably have considerable say in whether or not it actually ended in divorce.

For all of these reasons, many men and women had come to regard “cattle of money” as a more secure form of wealth than “cattle of girls.” Hence, contrary to what one might have expected, the growth of cattle and labor markets in Nuerland actually contributed in some ways to the stability of marital alliances: the more rapidly “cattle of girls” were transformed via market exchange into “cattle of money,” the less likely it was that the rupture of one marriage would adversely affect others. In other ways, of course, the expanding market economy had a profoundly negative impact on Nuer marriages. During the 1980s, marriages were often strained to the breaking point by the extended absences of husbands striving to earn a bit of cash in Khartoum.³³ Age- and gender-based asymmetries within the community were also re-

duced to some extent by the continual transformation of “cattle of girls” into “cattle of money” via the marketplace. For in principle, anyone could earn money and purchase cattle—although, as I have explained, the rights of bachelors and married women were far more circumscribed in this regard than were those of married men and unmarried women.

At the same time, however, “cattle of money” were continually being transformed into “cattle of girls” via bridewealth transfers and special sacrificial offerings. As “cattle of girls,” they could be used to justify and support the same age and gender asymmetries that they would tend to undermine as “cattle of money.” In this way, Nuer were able to integrate and, in some sense, even synthesize practices and principles of monetary exchange with those characteristic of more enduring bonds of kinship and community. The synthesis achieved, however, was based on a perpetual alternation between, rather than a definitive fusion of, the conflicting social principles concerned.

From a slightly different perspective, one might argue that Nuer fused the concepts of cattle and money in such a way as to permit certain market values to bleed into bridewealth exchange without threatening the uniqueness of the cattle/people equation so fundamental to their social order. One did not actually need to use money in bridewealth transfers in order to take advantage of principles of private property and of limited liability associated with money: a few “cattle of money” would do. Thus, the self-generating aspect of bridewealth cattle, so central to Nuer images of the perpetuation of alliances, was preserved—and all those “augmentations of life” rooted in the cultural assertion of an identity between cattle and people were protected.

Yet money, as I noted, had begun to make some inroads into the field of bridewealth exchange via the concept of “money cattle.” Though these inroads were still limited during the early 1980s, there is every reason to believe that the tremendous hardships of war, famine, and disease Nuer are currently suffering will so decimate their herds that more and more people will be reduced to marrying with “money cattle” in the future.³⁴ A major shift from cattle to cash as the dominant medium of bridewealth exchange would require, however, a radical rethinking of the nature and logic of alliance. The notion that alliances are founded on an equation between human and bovine “blood” and perpetuated through a parallel extension of cattle and people through time would have to be totally reformulated in order to take account of money’s “bloodless” nature. It remains to be seen whether or not the Nuer communities will transcend the overwhelming hardships they are currently experiencing to create more radical reformulations of their concepts of alliance, descent, and personhood in the future.

conclusions

As of 1983, money had not developed into a generalized medium of exchange among Nuer. Nor had its introduction over the previous half century precipitated the emergence of a “uni-centric economy” (Bohannon 1959:501). Rather, Nuer incorporated money into a weighted exchange system in which cattle remained the dominant metaphor of value. The elaborate system of cattle and money wealth categories they devised provided them with a sense of stability in the midst of change. Cattle and money were able to move freely between “market” and “kinship” spheres of exchange without threatening the cattle/human equation so fundamental to cultural concepts of personhood and transgenerational alliance. Money’s powers of effacement were largely checked by an ideological elaboration of the unique “blood” links binding people and cattle. At the same time, the hybrid cattle/money categories developed greatly enhanced the abilities of young Nuer migrants, in particular, to understand and come to terms with the noncattle, “nonblood” forms of sociality increasingly binding them to the world at large.

Although the emergence of the cattle/money equation did not sunder the strong human bonds of identification with cattle, it contributed to a significant contraction of Nuer concepts

of selfhood and sociality. Before the introduction of currency, the sense of self people cultivated in and through their relations with cattle invariably implied the support and participation of a collectivity of persons, including ancestors and divinities as well as numerous contemporaries. Cattle's role in creating and maintaining this socially enriched sense of self was subsequently weakened, as we have seen, by the emerging opportunities for individually acquiring and owning cattle made possible by "a 'money-form' of commodity exchange." Although cattle could now be converted into money and vice versa, the "cattle of money" and the "money of work" could not be used to augment self and society in the same way as the "cattle of girls" because, as Nuer put it, "money has no blood."

While the wealth system that Nuer developed would appear, from this perspective, to be an ingenious compromise between market and nonmarket forms of consciousness and sociality, it also reflected, as I have shown, major socioeconomic transformations in the relative autonomy and dependence of senior men versus junior men, cattle owners versus those without cattle, full brothers versus half brothers, wage earners versus nonwage earners, men versus women, husbands versus wives, married women versus unmarried women, wife-takers versus wife-givers, and merchants versus nonmerchants. I have pointed out, for instance, how this system of categories contributed to a marked decrease in the ability of senior men to amass power in the form of cattle wealth. "Cattle of money" and "money of work" played key roles in this power shift by giving wage-earning younger brothers and sons a potential basis from which to assert greater autonomy and status within the family. With respect to patrilineal connections, this system also aggravated conflicts of interest, inherent in the very structure of agnatic descent, between the collective and the individual procreative goals of lineage members. Nevertheless, older men and women continued to maintain strong moral pressure on the younger generation to reject formal division of the family's "energy" before marriage and the establishment of an independent household.³⁵

These issues, however, were far from resolved in 1983. Moreover, Nuer at that time were profoundly aware of the increasing precariousness of their social world in general and their cattle wealth in particular with respect to the widening vortex of violence then gaining momentum throughout the southern Sudan. More recently, the traumas of an increasingly brutal civil war have been exacerbated by encroaching rinderpest epidemics, slave raids, disease, and unprecedented famine. Thousands upon thousands of Nuer have been forced to seek refuge in northern cities or across the international frontier (see Hutchinson 1991). Their herds are being steadily decimated, their communities and families severed and destroyed. This continuing tragedy will undoubtedly provoke further reexaminations of their notions of selfhood and sociality in the years to come.

notes

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¹See Evans-Pritchard (1951) and Hutchinson (1980, 1988) for further elaboration of the points developed in this paragraph.

²A foster mother who cares for but does not suckle another's child establishes no permanent bond of *maar*, or "kinship," with that child.

³As Evans-Pritchard explains: "The ancestral herd is a fiction, for the cattle are being constantly dispersed and replaced by others at marriages, but conceptually it is an enduring collectivity" (1956:258).

⁴I am less convinced, however, that men's authority over women was rooted, on a day-to-day basis, primarily in their control of cattle (cf. Hutchinson 1980, 1988).

⁵Since steamer charges for the northern transport of oxen were calculated on a per capita rather than a per pound basis, export merchants sought to obtain the largest, fattest oxen possible.

⁶The willingness of the Twic Dinka to sell heifers at that time was due to the ease with which they could acquire them from the Baggara in exchange for female goats and sheep.

⁷Unlike itinerant merchants, who stood to gain from a continued barter economy, the colonial administration sought the rapid "monetization" of the regional economy.

⁸A note in the Lou Nuer District Annual Report of 1953–55 (WND 57 A. 3.) reveals how long it took for cash to displace cattle in the collection of tribute among the Lou and other eastern Nuer groups: "For the first time [1954] cattle were spared being dragged off for sale by Government, a thing which they never escaped in previous years." Nuer west of the Bahr al-Jabal, in contrast, were never formally taxed in cattle. Hoping to avoid the bitterness generated by earlier tribute raiding campaigns among the eastern Nuer, the officer commissioned with opening up western Nuerland to British administration, Captain V. H. Ferguson, introduced instead compulsory cotton cultivation in 1925. Western Nuer adult males experienced their first annual tax of five piasters four years later (SAD 212/14/9, 1930, "Western Nuerland, Province Handbook"). The initial success of this cotton-for-tribute campaign was short-lived, however, owing to widespread corruption among the (primarily Dinka) cotton cultivation overseers appointed by the local administration. The overseers were in the habit of arbitrarily imposing "cattle fines" on individual Nuer who failed to produce the required cotton. Unable to curb these abuses, the administration revoked compulsory cotton cultivation in western Nuerland in 1934. However, many western Nuer continued to produce significant quantities of cotton until World War II.

⁹Throughout the famine era of the early 1930s, thousands of Nuer were conscripted to clear, bank, and bridge roads, to raise government "rest houses," and to cut and stack wood fuel for government steamers. In principle, these people were paid for their efforts at the rate of one or two piasters per day plus grain rations. In practice, however, few coins changed hands. As one British officer explained:

Owing to the people's ignorance which renders them an easy prey for the average Northern accountant, I have been unable to devise any workable system whereby some 10,000 men are given a few pt. [piasters] each, for the purpose of paying it in as tribute after various pieces of different colored paper have been inscribed by a foreigner in an unknown language. So in practice no money changes hands, and each sub-shen [chief] is required to do a definite piece of work every year under the supervision of its chiefs. [SAD 212/14/8, 1930, "Revenue, Zeraf Valley, Province Handbook"]

As the years passed and the famine subsided, "normal road maintenance," portage, and other government tasks were increasingly defined as the "normal duty of our tribesmen," and the pretense of a "small pecuniary reward" was dropped (UN 1/45/331, 1934, "Upper Nile Province Roads"). Yet even when monetary payments were made, at the rate of one piaster a day—standard throughout much of the 1930s—a man would have needed the equivalent of 150 days of wages in order to purchase a small heifer in the marketplace. Consequently, the small amounts of money that entered Nuer hands were normally invested in grain or in cloth for mosquito netting.

¹⁰Government cattle fines were routinely imposed as "deterrents" in cases of fighting, homicide, theft, and slander as well as in certain types of adultery and fornication suits (cf. Howell 1954:63, 168).

¹¹The ratio of cows to oxen among fines cattle collected by the government in homicide cases, for instance, was approximately seven to three (UNPMD, November 1940).

¹²In a letter to the governor dated 15 March 1947, J. Wilson, the Assistant District Commissioner of the western Nuer, reported: "Two items have a big influence on the cattle trade: 1. the government's sale of fines cattle, which causes people to sell bulls [oxen] to the merchants for money in order to have the ready cash to buy a government cow and 2. famine" (WND 64 B. 1.).

¹³British colonial officials were well aware of the stumbling block. In 1946, J. Winder, an Assistant District Commissioner, proposed to coordinate tribute collection among Nuer with the compulsory sale of female cattle. His plan would have required each taxpayer to provide a heifer that would then be auctioned off among the taxpayers of each district for cash. A portion of the sales "profits" would then be claimed by the government as tribute. Although it was hoped that a small number of the female cattle sold might eventually be siphoned off into the general market, the scheme was primarily intended to impress upon Nuer the ready convertibility of money into female cattle and thereby encourage them to value and use money (SAD 541/8, 23 December 1946, "Nilotic Economics"). Not surprisingly, this plan was rejected in-house as much too radical. It was influential, nonetheless, in stimulating a critical review of government policy

with respect to the cattle trade. Ultimately, the administration pinned its hopes on the creation of a cattle “surplus” through improved veterinary services. And the massive cattle inoculation campaigns against rinderpest and bovine pleuropneumonia that followed during the late 1940s and 1950s were in general highly beneficial to Nuer herds—though some epidemics spread further and faster as a result of the concentrations of cattle fomented by the inoculation process (UNPMD, August 1948).

¹⁴Most of the paper notes that circulated through Nuer hands before 1950 were those substituted for coin wages to government chiefs beginning in the late 1940s, much to the chiefs’ initial disappointment and anger (UNPMD, January 1948). Otherwise, most Nuer completely rejected paper payments until well into the 1960s.

¹⁵Marx, of course, would not have differentiated this economic stage in the commoditization of human/cattle relations from the preceding one, since both are part of a money-mediated chain of commodity exchange. In one case, cattle are the commodities exchanged; in the other, cattle and labor are. However, this second mode of commodity exchange was a definite economic “breakthrough” in local terms. For the commoditization of labor/cattle relations suddenly empowered money in ways previously unperceived or, at least, undervalued by most Nuer.

¹⁶For information on Nuer labor migrants in Khartoum, see Kameir (1980).

¹⁷Shipton’s (1989) stimulating analysis of “bitter money” among the Luo draws attention to the fact that people can and often do trace sums of money from source through release in the hope of protecting treasured possessions, like cattle, from potentially polluting influences. Shipton’s development of this important theme might have been even stronger, however, had he more fully explored the interface between cattle and money among the Luo. It would be interesting to know, for instance, whether or not those cattle and sums of money that actually slip through the “two-way barrier system” he constructs blaze a trail, like “bitter money,” through Luo social relations—as is the case among Nuer.

¹⁸In fact, several people argued that no meaningful distinction between the “money of domestic service” and the “money of shit” could be maintained because all servants were forced at some point to clean the latrines of their employers.

¹⁹Bridewealth rates for previously unmarried girls rose during the late 1970s and early 1980s from between 20 and 25 head of cattle to between 25 and 30. Bridewealth rates for divorcées, in contrast, ranged between 10 and 15 head of cattle during this period.

²⁰Regional variations in the transgenerational scope of bridewealth claims are discussed in Hutchinson 1985. There I point out that, during the early 1980s, Nuer east of the Bahr al-Jabal were less likely to honor the bridewealth claims of distant kinsmen than their western cousins were. What is important to stress here, however, is simply that “cattle of girls” were associated with a system of collective rights and obligations—however those rights may have been negotiated and defined in specific instances.

²¹Admittedly, relations among the various strains of opinion about “cattle of money” outlined above were, sociologically and historically, far more complex than is suggested here. Failure to work out these relations in any detail (even though such is impossible within the scope of this article) remains one of the shortcomings of my argument.

²²“Zone of contestation” is a phrase adopted from Ferguson’s intriguing analysis of the “category interests” upholding the “mystique” of bovine wealth among the Basotho (1985). Basotho men value cattle wealth, Ferguson argues, less for its self-reproducing capacities than for its relative immunity, as compared with money, to the claims of other household members—most notably, dependent wives. Significantly, in his analysis of the key power axes in Basotho society Ferguson does not mention the possibility of disputes over cattle wealth arising between men of the same household, extended family, or lineage. This, however, was the most important “zone of contestation” shaping contemporary Nuer attitudes toward both cattle and money wealth.

²³The fact that the potential link between human blood and sweat on the one hand and between human sweat and money on the other was never explicitly noted or developed by any of my informants would seem to lend support to my earlier observation that Nuer conceived of the “blood-bonds” between cattle and people primarily in procreative terms.

²⁴Although little disparity between the nominal and the market value of “money cattle” existed during the early 1980s, I discovered on a return research trip to the Sudan in 1990 that a major gap between these values had emerged, most notably among Nuer war refugees camped on the outskirts of Khartoum. These Nuer, of course, had no direct access to cattle—although they sometimes conducted cattle transfers by notifying relatives remaining in the south. Although I intend to discuss this and other consequences of the second Sudanese civil war in later publications, I should perhaps note in passing that the recent emergence of this value disparity among displaced Nuer must be analyzed not only in terms of cultural resilience and “resistance” but also in terms of evolving alliance patterns and of property relations more generally. To cite a comparable example: although the Pedi (Sansom 1976:148) may well have succeeded in removing “the sting of invidious comparison” by refusing to distinguish nominal cattle from real cattle when referring to specific bridewealth agreements, the fact of the matter remains that, with each substitution of a “green-tongued” cow for a real one, the wife-taker’s side effectively reduces its exchange obligations toward the wife-givers. It would thus be interesting to know, for instance, whether or not the wife-givers have attempted to compensate for this disparity by inflating bridewealth demands—as they have, say, among displaced Nuer in recent years (see note 34).

²⁵Significantly, there was no categorical equivalent for “money of girls.” Thus, fathers and brothers of the bride were often able to shield this “money cattle” from the claims of distant kinsmen. This was especially true in eastern Nuerland. For, as I describe elsewhere (Hutchinson 1985), eastern Nuer fathers and brothers have, over the last half century, laid claim to progressively larger proportions of their daughters’ and sisters’ bridewealth settlements, at the expense of distant kinsmen. I should also note that it was becoming common among eastern Jikany Nuer for guns to pass in place of a proportion of bridewealth cattle. The exchange value of such guns was negotiated between the families concerned and spoken about in terms of so many “cattle of the gun,” *ɣək maac* (cf. Hutchinson 1985, 1988).

²⁶The hybrid wealth system of the Nuer raises interesting questions with regard to Bohannan’s (1955, 1959) famous hypothesis about money’s scrambling effect on traditional exchange spheres among the Tiv. I have found Bohannan’s thesis somewhat difficult to relate to the Nuer case, however, because it is premised on the idea that “things in themselves,” rather than the social relations through which things flow, differentiate “spheres of exchange.”

²⁷The male singer of a popular song (*tuar*) circulating on cassette among the eastern Jikany Nuer joyfully proclaimed in 1981: “I’m so happy to be born at a time when anyone can become a merchant; for now even a sisterless man can marry!”

²⁸Hence, when an older, largely independent woman named Nyapuka threatened to sue her husband in court for the return of four beer cows he had seized in order to marry another wife, he immediately countered with a divorce threat. Nyapuka was thus forced to drop her case.

²⁹Although it was very difficult during the early 1980s for married women to assert independent ownership of cows acquired through their own marketing efforts, they could actively reinforce the “cattle of money”/“cattle of girls” distinction with regard to cattle purchased by wage-earning sons. Conflicts between paternal half brothers over rights held in the familial herd were thus intimately entwined with the divergent long-range interests of their mothers.

³⁰During the 1980s there was an emerging consensus among Nuer chiefs that bridewealth cattle which had passed through more than two additional marriages should be replaced by the divorced woman’s family rather than recalled. Nevertheless, all calves born to the original cow before its passage through the third marriage were subject to recall by the courts.

³¹I documented three cases of “chain divorces” in the west and two in the east—all of them occurring relatively early in the second marriage.

³²As noted earlier, western Nuer migrants were more likely to invest their full earnings in bridewealth cattle than were their eastern counterparts. Moreover, as is explained in detail elsewhere (Hutchinson 1985), western Nuer marriages tended to be more extensively interwoven than eastern marriages since the bridewealth claims of distant kinsmen continued to be honored in that region.

³³Furthermore, due to transformations in Nuer customary law wrought by the British colonial regime, it was increasingly easy for husbands to divorce their wives on grounds of adultery. For an extended discussion of these legal complexities, see Hutchinson 1990.

³⁴Although I reserve for future publications a discussion of the impact of the continuing Sudanese civil war on Nuer marriage practices, I should perhaps note here that the proportion of “money cattle” offered in bridewealth negotiations has grown rapidly among the communities of Nuer refugees currently camped on the outskirts of Khartoum. By 1990, most of these Nuer had responded to the inaccessibility of whatever cattle remained with their extended families in the south by nominally doubling bridewealth rates from some 25 to some 50 head of cattle. Up to half this amount could then be offered in the form of “money cattle” (at a mutually agreed upon rate lower than the market value of real cattle). Although this money transfer enabled the initiation of the union, the groom was not thereby relieved of the obligation to provide his in-laws with a comparable payment of real cows at some admittedly vague point in the future: “when the world becomes good again.” In contrast, those Nuer remaining in their southern homelands—the vast majority in 1990—have continued to negotiate bridewealth settlements with real cattle, though at greatly reduced rates.

³⁵Significantly, I learned during my return visit to Sudan in 1990 that the ritual transformation of “cattle of money” into “cattle of girls” common among the western Nuer during the early 1980s had subsequently gained popularity among eastern Nuer as a means of affirming familial support in a period of extreme insecurity and hardship.

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END	Eastern Nuer District Files, Nasir, Upper Nile Province, Sudan
SAD	Sudan Archive, Oriental Library, University of Durham, England
UN	Upper Nile Province Files, National Records Office, Khartoum, Sudan
UNPAR	Upper Nile Province Annual Reports, Western Nuer District Files, Bentiu, Upper Nile Province, Sudan

UNPMD Upper Nile Province Monthly Diary, University of Khartoum Library, Khartoum, Sudan
WND Western Nuer District Files, Bentiu, Upper Nile Province, Sudan

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