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MAURICE FREEDMAN

1920–1975

MAURICE Freedman, Professor of Social Anthropology at Oxford, died suddenly of a heart attack in his London home on 14 July 1975. With his death at the early age of 54, the profession lost one of its most distinguished members—a brilliant scholar, a sage leader, a deeply humane man. Known primarily for his stunning monographs on the Chinese lineage (and for work on other aspects of kinship and Chinese society), Freedman also made significant contributions to Jewish studies, the field of ethnic relations, the sociology of religion, legal anthropology, and political anthropology. He is mourned not only by anthropologists, but by sociologists, historians and sinologists, not alone by British academia but throughout the world of learning.¹

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1. Some of the material on Freedman's sinological career is drawn from a short obituary written jointly by Arthur P. Wolf and myself immediately after his death (*China Quarterly*, Vol. LXIII, 1975, pp. i–iii (following p. 408)). The obituary in *The Times* was published on 22 July 1975. Others were written by Donald G. MacRae (*British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXVI, no. 3, pp. i–ii), Arthur P. Wolf (*Royal Anthropological Institute News*, no. 10, 1975, pp. 11–12), Julius S. Gould (*Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XVII, no. 2, 1975, pp. 125–9), and Göran Aijmer (*Man* n.s., Vol. X, no. 4, 1975, pp. 613–14). See also the memorial addresses delivered on 16 July 1975 by Percy S. Cohen at Hoop Lane Jewish Cemetery (*Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XVII, no. 2, 1975, pp. 121–3) and on 6 December 1975 by Raymond Firth in All Souls College Chapel [reprinted above in this volume].

Freedman was born in London on 11 December 1920.² Both his parents had migrated to England in their early teens, his mother from Russia, his father from Poland. His childhood was spent 'within the sound of Bow bells', as he used to say when emphasising his cockney origins, and he was an old boy of Hackney Downs Grammar School. Freedman read English on a scholarship at King's College, London, and after completing a shortened degree course joined the Royal Artillery in 1941. Out of his experiences as a British soldier in India (and, one may assume, as a Jew in English society) came an interest in race relations, which led him to the Department of Anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), where he enrolled as a graduate student in January 1946. Later that same year he married Judith Djamour, a fellow student, who was to be his devoted wife and intellectual sounding-board for the rest of his life. Freedman's chief mentor at the School was Raymond Firth, whose *Report on Social Science Research in Malaya* (1948) embodied the recommendations on which his doctoral research was based.

I first met the Freedmans in Singapore near the end of the research they began there in January 1949 and completed in November 1950. With characteristic relish Maurice recounted the *bon mot* that had been circulating among their Singapore friends: 'Mr Freedman is studying Chinese family life; Mrs Freedman is studying Malay family life; Mr and Mrs Freedman have no family life.' Fortunately, the marriage survived the field research, which led in due course to the publication of two important monographs: Maurice's *Chinese Family and Marriage in Singapore* (1957a) and Judith's *Malay Kinship and Marriage in Singapore* (Djamour 1959). Subsequent fieldwork took the Freedmans to Indonesia in 1954 and to Hong Kong in 1963.

Freedman's academic career is quickly summarized. He returned from Singapore to take up, in January 1951, a lectureship in anthropology at the LSE. He was made Reader in 1957 and Professor in 1965. The chair to which he was elected in that year was 'personal' rather than institutional—in his inaugural lecture he wryly noted that 'if I have a chair, it is...too metaphysical to be sat upon'—but in 1968 he succeeded to the established post vacated through the retirement of Professor Firth. During his tenure at the LSE, Freedman held visiting appointments at Yale (1960–1), the University of Malaya (1962), and Cornell (1965). In 1961, he had very nearly decided to leave the School in response to an offer from Yale. In 1970, an equally painful decision went the other way when he accepted the chair at Oxford left vacant by the retirement of Professor E.E. Evans-Pritchard. ('I was not an applicant for the chair,' he wrote at the time; 'I

2. I am indebted to Judith Freedman for many biographical and bibliographical details, and I gratefully acknowledge additional assistance from Professors Donald G. MacRae, Stuart R. Schram, and Arthur P. Wolf.

received an "invitation".) Part of the attraction was that with the chair went a Fellowship at All Souls College, for which Freedman quickly developed a close attachment.

Chinese society was the central concern of Freedman's scholarship; approximately two-thirds of his published work treats China and or the overseas Chinese. To sinological anthropology, as he came to call the field, Freedman gave definition and intellectual focus, and more than anyone else he brought the Chinese fifth of mankind into the fold of world ethnography. This specialization was related to the peculiar fascination which China came to hold for British social anthropologists, particularly those who were not in the first instance Africanists. In 1936, Radcliffe-Brown was lecturing in China and Fei Hsiao-t'ung was writing his celebrated village ethnography at the LSE under Malinowski's direction. In 1938, Firth published a paper in a Chinese journal (the issue was dedicated quite guilelessly to the 'London School of Anthropology'), and during the 1930s and 1940s several Chinese studied at the LSE, including not only Fei but Francis L. K. Hsu, who completed his doctorate in 1940, and T'ien Ju-k'ang, a contemporary of Freedman's at the School. Freedman's initial field research was part of a larger programme, promoted by Firth, which saw the completion of two other studies of overseas Chinese society, T'ien's *The Chinese of Sarawak* (1953) and Alan J. A. Elliott's *Chinese Spirit-Medium Cults in Singapore* (1955).

Four phases of Freedman's remarkable intellectual odyssey are relevant to Chinese studies. The first opened with the Singapore research, from which emerged not only the classic monograph on Chinese family and marriage (1957a; and see also 1962a), but also pioneering articles on Chinese law (most notably 1950 and 1968a), Chinese religion (1959b and 1961d), and Chinese community organization (most notably 1960a and 1960b). Freedman's example attracted other anthropologists to the overseas Chinese as a field of study, and throughout his subsequent career he closely followed his line of research, emphasising the significance of the Nanyang Chinese for our understanding of China as well as of the host societies in Southeast Asia, and continually reformulating the intellectual issues inherent in their comparative study (see in particular 1958d, 1961e, 1962d, 1965a, and 1974a). He pinpointed and analyzed some of the major social transformations that came to be studied comparatively: the change in overseas Chinese socio-political structure from controlled anarchy during the era of secret-society dominance to the orderly array of formal organizations that concealed as much as it revealed of Chinese social structure (1960b); the paradoxical re-sinification of the Baba Chinese and their gradual reabsorption by the Chinese-speaking community, a development that contrasted sharply with the fate of 'intermediate' societies elsewhere in Southeast Asia (1962a, 1965a); and the effect of nationalism and political independence in defining, on a pan-Malayan basis, ethnic

blocs which had previously been merely categories, thereby sharpening the plural nature of Malayan society (1960a). On the methodological side, he summarized the lessons to be drawn from his research in the following words (1963b: 4):

Social relationships among Overseas Chinese do not round themselves off neatly in suitable localities, and it is at once apparent that to delimit a 'community' and confine one's attention to it would miss the very characteristic of the society which makes it interesting: its scale and its scatter. Trying to study the Overseas Chinese a man must find his anthropological prejudices corroded away. He must be mobile. He must learn to contain his impatience when he cannot see all his subjects acting out their many roles.... He must adjust his vision so that he may see behaviour and ideas within the framework not only of the immediate locality but also of the society from which the migrants have come, of the largest territorial settlement within which they find themselves, and of the non-Chinese society in which they are embedded.

Freedman initiated the second phase of his work on Chinese society in the early 1950s, when he 'began to play with the notion of reconstructing traditional Chinese society...with special reference...to its institutions of kinship and marriage' (1970c: 8). The resulting book, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China* (1958a), revealed an exceptional skill for recreating social institutions in the round from myriad facts and clues in the published literature. On the methodological side, it taught us how 'to sit in archives (or at least in libraries) and interview the dead' (1963b: 5). 'One has to carry to the written word', he insisted, 'the organising ideas that one brings to the study of live societies' (1970c: 10). On the substantive side, Freedman drew, whenever appropriate, on the concepts developed by Evans-Pritchard, Meyer Fortes, and other Africanists, but he extended his analysis to topics that had no counterpart in the African kinship literature: social differentiation within the lineage, the interdigitation of lineage structure with political power and economic control, and relations between the lineage and the state. At one stroke Freedman summed up what was known of Chinese kinship, gave it a fresh interpretation and set the problems on which a generation of scholars have been at work. The book is now and will long remain the centre-piece of anthropological studies of China.

Yet a third phase of Freedman's work on sinological anthropology began with a 1963 field study in the New Territories of Hong Kong, to which he brought a sense of problem that was by then finely honed. Having shown that we could learn from the overseas Chinese and from archives, he now set out to show what we could learn from observation in what he later came to call 'residual China', notably Hong Kong and Taiwan. Several of his own students, Hugh D.R. Baker leading the way, subsequently carried out field research in Hong Kong or Taiwan, and

together with students from American and Chinese universities (not to mention the Swede Göran Aijmer), they produced during the 1960s studies whose number and scope exceeded the anthropological work done in China proper before 1949. Freedman's report on his Hong Kong research (1963d) and his magnificent *Chinese Lineage and Society* (1966a) provided the inspiration for most of this research. The latter book showed that he had developed to a fine art 'the interplay between the anthropologist as fieldworker and the anthropologist as bookworm' (1970c: 9-10).

At the time of his death Freedman was well into a fourth phase of research about China. He was studying the intellectual history of sinological anthropology. This concern was evident as early as 1961, when he tracked down and interviewed Daniel H. Kulp, the American sociologist who had conducted the first ethnography of a Chinese village. Freedman confessed in 1969 that 'the rhythm and pace of the anthropological studies of China never cease to fascinate me'. He was the chief chronicler of that story (1962c, 1963b, 1970c), and as he read us the lessons of false starts and lost opportunities as well as of critical turning-points and intellectual breakthroughs, he became convinced that it would be worthwhile to push the story back from the 1920s to the 1870s. During the last few years he spent time in Leiden and Paris interviewing people who had known his distinguished predecessors, J.J.M. de Groot and Marcel Granet. Freedman's translation of Granet's classic study of Chinese religion (1975a), together with a long critical introduction (1975b), was published shortly after he died, and his papers include extensive notes on de Groot's life. The place of these two sociologists of religion in the intellectual history of sinology was briefly appraised in a recent paper for a symposium volume (1974d), and other themes (the holism of the China Coast School and the pernicious influence of what Freedman dubbed the Redfieldian prejudice) were given a preliminary airing in his contribution to the *Festschrift* for Professor Karl Gustav Izikowitz (1975c). But the anticipated history of sinological anthropology remains unwritten.

Freedman felt scarcely less strongly about Jewish studies than he did about sinology, and he held up to both the same standards and ideals. Just as he deplored the paucity of Chinese within the ranks of sinological social scientists and endeavoured to rectify the balance, so he rejected the idea that Jewish studies should be monopolized by Jewish social scientists. 'Indeed, to promote a sociology of the Jews as a discipline manned by Jewish scholars thinking only about Jewish questions would be to run the risk of producing a spurious subject' (1957e). In a recent comment (1975e: 63) on an analysis of ethnicity that posed problems of Jewish social structure, Freedman observed, 'I do not think it is likely that a Jew would have raised that question, and it is all the more valuable for that.' Just as he deplored signs of Great Han chauvinism among Chinese social scientists, so he warned against treating Jewish matters 'as though they

were subject to some set of laws peculiar to the Chosen People' (1957e). In reviewing a book on race prejudice that had been submitted prior to publication for monitoring by a UNESCO committee, Freedman asked, apropos of an extraneous disclaimer: 'Has some professional Jew been at the manuscript? Ramming home the point that Jews are not a race suggests in this context that after all racial distinctions *are* important' (1959h: 271). He argued stoutly for the dispassionate study of both Jews and Chinese, and in this regard his scholarship in both fields was exemplary.

Freedman established himself as an authority on British Jewry by editing *A Minority in Britain* (1955a), to which he contributed a trenchant sociological analysis (1955b), and he later published other essays (1957e, 1962b), reviews (1955m, 1960m 1960n), and suggestions for research on Jewish minorities (1964c, translated into Hebrew as 1966c). In the Noah Barou Memorial Lecture for 1957 (1958b), he contrasted the closed minorities that characterized most of the history of the Diaspora with the open minorities found in modern Britain and North America, giving analytical attention to four modifications in social structure. This wide-ranging comparative study stimulated analyses not only of *the* Diaspora but of its closest East Asian analogue. Moreover, as he himself noted (1959f: 68), 'what things are common and not common to Jews outside Israel and overseas Chinese would make an interesting and instructive study—if there is a scholar who commands the literature of both'. Freedman himself was the only such scholar we had, and that project, too, was part of the agenda for a future that never came.

In 1959 Freedman helped establish the *Jewish Journal of Sociology* and from the start served as the managing editor. When his close friend Morris Ginsberg died in 1970, Freedman replaced him as editor, and Judith Freedman took over as managing editor. Published on behalf of the World Jewish Congress, the journal was staunchly international in direction and scope. Freedman's hand was apparent in its total lack of parochialism and in the high literary as well as scholarly quality of its contents.

Freedman's professional commitment to race relations both encompassed and transcended his scholarly concerns with Jews and overseas Chinese as minorities. Most of his work on the former addresses directly their relations with non-Jews, while two of his sinological pieces are focused on inter-ethnic relations of the Chinese in Southeast Asia (1956a and 1961e). From his graduate days on, he was also concerned with inter-ethnic relations in general, as a matter of both public concern and scientific interest. Several publications (1953b, 1954a, 1957d, 1960e) are products of his effective work against racialism, but all of his writing in this area reveals a fundamental concern with the social embeddedness of minorities. Ethnic minorities are of particular sinological interest, he pointed out (1959f: 61), because of 'the light they throw on the societies of

which they are a part'. And he went on to ask: 'What kinds of society breed minorities? How do the characteristics of a minority depend on those of the 'host'? To what extent can we understand the workings of the larger society watching the way in which it handles marginal groups?' In quite another context (1973d: 120), he wrote: 'One form of liberalism and largeness of spirit is to strive to understand difference where it exists and to honour it by the effort so made.' That 'largeness of spirit', too, pervaded his work on ethnic relations. Finally, he warned against scholarly tendencies both to make too much and too little of ethnicity. Of China he wrote: 'there is a great danger...that people will assume for all Hakka or Hokkien or Cantonese or Teuchiu that what some of them do in one place is characteristic of the behaviour of all of them' (1966a: 95). And of Africa: if we apprehend the nature and importance of the ethnic entities only by 'the ways in which, as interest groups, they enter into struggle for economic and political values', then we 'presuppose what needs to be explained: the prior existence of something (not necessarily a group) to be mobilized' (1975e: 59).

Freedman contributed handsomely to several traditional subfields of the discipline, kinship foremost among them. His four major books (1957a, 1958a, 1966a, and 1970a), his inaugural lecture (1967c), and his numerous articles analyze in detail virtually all aspects of Chinese kinship and marriage within the framework of contemporary anthropological theory. Much of this work is explicitly comparative (with Japan, Vietnam, Malaya, India, Africa), and not the least of its virtues is the unobtrusive cumulation of an integrated theory. Few anthropologists have worked with models of kinship that are so all-encompassing, and fewer still have been able to inject so much subtlety without obscuring the simplicity of the theoretical framework. The controversies he sparked and the analytical problems he defined will occupy students of kinship for years to come.

Rather more needs to be said about Freedman's contribution to religious studies, for here his work is less accessible and was very much *in medias res* at the time of his death. In a review of main trends in social and cultural anthropology (written for UNESCO in 1970-1: 1979) he wrote:

There have been times when some anthropologists have placed the accent on the pragmatic side of religious belief, to stress the support it may give to the arrangements of social life to deprive it of its interdependence as a mode of experience and thought. In a narrow sociologism of religion the nuances and complexity of belief are lost to view, and the problem of striking deep into its roots does not present itself. In many areas of anthropology, the last decade and a half or so have marked a shift from religion as only an institution to religion as a way of apprehension. There has been a 'religious revival'.

Freedman would, I think, place his own work within this overall trend. He began by examining the sociology of Chinese religion in Singapore

(1959b, 1961d) and of ancestor worship in south-eastern China (1958a: 81–91). In retrospect these otherwise fine analyses exhibit something of a narrow sociologism to which the mature Freedman referred. His subsequent work took religious ideas more seriously, and the studies of ancestor worship and geomancy published in the late 1960s (1966a: 118–154, 1967b, 1969a) bring us squarely into the realm of religious cognition.

Meanwhile, his work on marriage rites (1967c, 1970b) confronted him with ‘the rich symbolism—in word, action, and object—of which each significant step in the unfolding of rites is composed’, and after noting that these symbols are ‘each part of wider fields of discourse in Chinese culture’, he pointed to another line of future work: ‘We cannot fully understand what goes on at a Chinese wedding until we have studied all the realms of symbolic meaning that bring their significance to this one set of rites. Once again, we have to end one study by saying that it is merely the beginning of another’ (1970b: 186–7). Several years later (1974d: 39), we find him pointing up features of a theology that underlay both the pragmatic-agnostic interpretation of elite religion and the polytheistic religious world of common people. In a structuralist mode he posits transformations that bridge the metaphysical gulf that has traditionally been held to pervade all spheres of Chinese religion.

Cognition, symbolism, and theology are identified in Freedman’s UNESCO essay as the chief ‘styles’ of the ‘religious revival’ within anthropology, and it is not unreasonable to surmise that, with all three brought into focus by recent work, he was gearing up for a full-scale analysis of Chinese religious ideas. (He made it known in the spring of 1975 that divination was to be the subject of a forthcoming lecture series.) The UNESCO essay continues: ‘The newer styles have, so to say, tried to do justice to ideas while maintaining the study of the interaction between them and the social arrangements of the men who hold them.... It is as if structuralist impulses had here made their impact without overthrowing a functionalist sense of the due proportions of ideas, actions, and social relationships.’ To my mind, this is less a description of what has been done in the anthropology of religion than a prescription for future work, his own included. It now becomes a charge and a challenge to his surviving colleagues and successors.

Finally, one must take note of Freedman’s important work in legal and political anthropology. His first major publication (1950) was a penetrating study of law in Singapore Chinese society, in which the interplay between Chinese customary law and the enacted law of the colony was pursued to its several paradoxical conclusions. The story was updated in a study of Chinese family law in Singapore (1968a), which pointed up not only the ironies of women’s liberation via transcultural legislation but also the personal-cum-cultural tragedies that legal entanglements can entail. In his subsequent work on the jural aspects of marriage and divorce in China and

his astute views of classical monographs (1955l, 1962f and, above all, 1972d), he explored with critical acumen the 'obvious' distinction between 'law as a body of binding norms, which every society has by definition, and law as judicial institutions, a privilege not universally enjoyed' (1976a). As for political anthropology, Freedman unobtrusively developed a model of Chinese local politics in the course of placing Chinese lineages in the context of other local systems. In a historical treatment of changing political structure in the corner of China that in 1899 became the New Territories of Hong Kong (1966b:6), he incidentally supplied a key to understanding how it was that the minuscule bureaucratic apparatus of Ch'ing China could hold in thrall the vast local élite on which it relied for the management of society: 'Order was provided [*inter alia*]...by the desire on the part of ambitious inhabitants of the county to stay on reasonable terms with the mandarins in order to keep them in check and ensure free access to the examinations. It would seem that the most effective sanction the county magistrate could apply to the lineages of high social status was to prevent their members going forward to prefectural examinations.' In 'The Politics of an Old State' (1974c:75), he drew the paradoxical connection between the political strength and solidarity of a rich lineage and the exploitation of poor families within it.

I turn now to Freedman's academic roles. In the words of a former colleague at the LSE (D.C.W. 1975), he was 'enormously...stimulating and helpful to young scholars, not merely in...social anthropology but in any of the many fields in which his interests and theirs might overlap or coincide'. It should be added that his generosity extended to students from universities throughout the world who turned to him for guidance. We have the testimony of a former student that as a teacher he was 'marvellously disciplined and disciplining, inspired and inspiring' (Cohen 1975:123). His leadership within academic councils relied not only on his intellectual authority, commanding presence, and resolute sense of purpose, but also on the integrity and decency that were the essence of the man. As a lecturer and reader in the 1950s he was active in reforming the governance of the LSE, and as a professor in the late 1960s he played a leading role in steering his Alma Mater through the series of disruptions that raised important policy issues even as they taxed the School's resources for dealing responsibly with them. Although he served until his death as a governor of the LSE, his departure for Oxford 'left a perceptible emptiness behind him' (D.C.W. 1975).

Freedman played a major role in promoting and organizing research. It is fitting that his single most successful effort in this regard, the London-Cornell Project, was both international and interdisciplinary in scope. Founded in 1962 jointly with the present writer, the project pooled the relevant resources in London of the LSE and the School of Oriental and African Studies with those of Cornell University in order to promote

field research by social scientists throughout East and Southeast Asia. In the course of the subsequent decade, the project, which was jointly funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Nuffield Foundation in Britain, sponsored scores of field studies and enriched intellectual life at the co-operating institutions through faculty and student exchange, field seminars, and research conferences. Freedman's vision and leadership were also made available to the Subcommittee on Research on Chinese Society of the Social Science Research Council in New York. He crossed the Atlantic for five of the ten seminars (1962-4) that helped forge sinological anthropologists into a community of scholars, and in 1966 he organized the first of the Subcommittee's research conferences.

Numerous professional bodies in Britain benefited from Freedman's dedicated and imaginative leadership. He served the Royal Anthropological Institute as President from 1967 to 1969. From 1971 he was chairman of the Committee on South East Asian Studies in the United Kingdom, and from 1972 chairman of the Social Anthropology Committee of the Social Science Research Council. He was a member of the committee set up in 1967 by the School of Oriental and African Studies to discuss arrangements for establishing the Contemporary China Institute, and he participated enthusiastically in the deliberations of the Institute's executive committee from 1968 until his death. I have already referred to his editorship of the *Jewish Journal of Sociology*; he also served on the editorial boards of *Race* (the Journal of the Institute of Race Relations, 1959-72), the *British Journal of Sociology* (1966-74), and the *China Quarterly* (1968-75).

'Not everyone who studies man is an anthropologist,' Freedman wrote in his UNESCO essay (1979), 'but anthropologists listen to all who do.' An ecumenical approach to our subject-matter coloured every aspect of his scholarly work, without diminishing in any way his commitments to the best interests of the anthropological endeavour. He knew well enough the differences between sociology and social anthropology (they are in fact enumerated in 1959h: 270), and he never disguised his distrust of survey research or his distaste for methodological fussiness, but that there should be any barrier in the flow of ideas between the two disciplines seemed to him preposterous. This 'most sociological of our anthropologists', as he was described by Donald MacRae (1975), was also drawn to history by his growing interest in the social forms of late imperial China. Suspicious of ethnohistory, which (as noted in the UNESCO essay) 'runs the risk of being another name for another kind of shoddy history created by the inexpert use of the total range of possible evidence', he none the less promoted history-in-the-field and applauded historical sociology. Nothing pleased him more than to see sinological historians drawing inspiration from the work of anthropologists and vice versa, and he continually urged his disciplinary colleagues to hold up their end: 'I do not see why we

should leave it to the historians to ask the anthropological questions' (1970c: 11). He called for co-operation with scholars in other fields 'not because co-operation is a good thing in itself, but because it is a condition for the transfer to our subject of some of the intellectual excitement being aroused outside our frontiers' (1963b: 15).

Within the discipline, Freedman was an advocate of what he called 'big anthropology', not as a substitute for the microsociology that was once orthodox within British anthropology or for the microeconomics and local-level politics that so many American anthropologists consider the sum and substance of their subfields, but as a necessary complement when studying complex societies. He demolished the notion that the village was somehow a microcosm of the total society, and he decried the practice of generalizing from a range of meticulously executed community studies as the 'most grievous' of 'all the biases to which the anthropological approach has been subject' (1963b: 3). For Freedman there is hierarchy—subsystems nesting within higher-order systems—in both culture and social structure, the parts always being conditioned by the whole. Behind the heterogeneity of anthropology he perceived 'a basic programme: the pursuit of "totality"—not the study of everything pertaining to man, but the "total" study of whatever it is that is chosen for investigation' (1976a).

Freedman was one of those rare beings who honour mankind by respecting the humanity and sustaining the dignity of its every representative. He was thoughtful, discreet, scrupulously considerate of others, and tolerant of human foibles. But for those who presumed to scholarship Freedman held up high standards. He had no patience for scholastic pompousness, intellectual dishonesty or sloppy thinking, and his criticisms of faulty scholarship could be devastating. He once scolded me obliquely with the observation that 'American scholars are unduly worried about writing pointed criticism. What good are reviews if they don't tell you what's wrong with the books?' There was, to be sure, an abiding air of propriety about him and a certain majesty in his bearing, but more than anything else they served as a foil for the ebullient wit and humour he could never long suppress. Even his bibliography is witty. The title of his first piece on race relations is 'Race against Time'. 'The Chinese language is a natural for punning', he tells us in a lecture entitled 'Rites and Duties, or Chinese Marriage'. A review of the missionary enterprise in China is entitled 'Eastward, Christian Soldiers'; one of a treatise on divination 'To Divine is Human'. He loved the English language, and even the most complex of his ideas were set in prose of elegant simplicity.

The deep-seated morality of the man pervades his work. Of sinology he wrote: 'We have to further the study of Oriental civilization among us, not simply because it is a matter of national security that we have people equipped in Asian languages and cultures, but because our own title to civilization must be kept alive by our capacity to view the world

impartially' (1963b: 12). And he had this to say of anthropology: 'From time to time it may puff itself up in scientific pride, but its dominant mood is one of deep humility before the facts of human experience and of tenderness to human suffering' (1976a).

The scholar lives on in the body of knowledge he enriched; the man recedes from view. Those who would honour Maurice Freedman will cultivate their own resources of honour, compassion, and rectitude in order to emulate that remarkable man.

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