

Moses Finley and Politics

Edited by

W. V. Harris



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MOSES FINKELSTEIN AND THE AMERICAN SCENE:
THE POLITICAL FORMATION OF MOSES FINLEY, 1932–1955¹

Daniel P. Tompkins

'The World will have to be Changed, not the Past'

Sir Moses Finley's knighthood, conferred in 1979, honored three decades of achievement as scholar, teacher, organizer, broadcaster and writer: he was a well-known public figure as well as a professor at Cambridge. By contrast, his first four decades, spent in the United States, remained largely unknown, even to close friends in England. Finley himself was largely responsible for this asymmetry, for at least two reasons.

First of all, he was throughout his life intensely involved in the business of the moment and in projects for the future, seldom concerned with the past. Asked whether his family background had 'any bearing on your interest in the *World of Odysseus*?' he replied: 'I don't know. I've never been able to be terribly introspective about that sort of thing'.² Finley had, after all, revised Marx's revision of an apophthegm of Jesus to read:

The dead past never buries its dead. The world will have to be changed, not the past.³

Of course, the meticulous crafting of this remark, like a number of other passages in his correspondence, not to mention his cold fury on learning that he would be featured in Ellen Schrecker's *No Ivory Tower*, hint that Finley's past *did* lie close to the surface. But these moments were rare. Finley did not dine out on stories from his youth. There is no sign that he even responded when I. F. Stone urged him to write a memoir.⁴

¹ James 1907. Allusion to Henry James's great survey of American life may seem incongruous in a study of Moses Finley. Yet both men became British citizens. Both wrote for a living. Each studied, and shed new light on, the importance of culture, the strains of social interaction and the role of money. Most importantly, the American past lurked in both men's memory, shaping, even when unmentioned, their mature thinking about politics, society, finance, culture and other topics.

² Richard Winkler, 'A Conversation with Moses Finley', 1980 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

³ Finley 1968a, 196.

⁴ Cold fury: see Finley's letter to Alice Thorner, February 9, 1981 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library). He had not known he would be featured in *No Ivory Tower*

The sparse documentation of Finley's American years results also from his awareness that for most of that time, he was a marked man, the target of multiple official investigations and chains of rumors, in all likelihood a member of the Communist Party. In 1941 the heads of the American Civil Liberties Union and the FBI, and even a vice-president of Bloomingdale's, labeled him a suspicious or truly dangerous Communist, and at one point in the 1940s the FBI searched the basement of his apartment building. In such a climate, leaving papers around could be dangerous.⁵

The Finley Papers at the Cambridge University Library are a rich trove of information about Finley and about the study of ancient history in general from the early 1950s to 1986. But because they begin only with Finley's arrival at Cambridge, research for this paper has required consultation with a range of archives along with personal interviews whenever possible. The essay that follows is part of a larger effort to reconstruct the lifelong intertwining of scholarship and politics that distinguishes Finley from most other historians ancient and otherwise.

It is a biographical *cliché* to say that a person 'grew up against the background of' the Holocaust, the Civil War, or the Depression. Finley's 'American Scene', however, is not a backdrop or stage set, but a sequence of events in which he was an agent. His mature understanding of land tenure, labor practices, political participation, class and ethnic tensions, and

(Schrecker 1986). Rutgers historian Richard McCormick, an active supporter of Finley when he was under investigation at Rutgers in 1952, mentioned that during an extensive visit in 1961, there was no discussion of Rutgers events: Finley was working on new projects, McCormick said, and talked about them, not the past. See Birkner 2001, 85–86. I. F. Stone wrote to Finley on August 22, 1983 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

⁵ Ira Hirschman of Bloomingdale's, a member of the New York Board of Higher Education who had voted to terminate Finley's position at City College, wrote to Franz Boas: 'I still question his affiliations outside your group' (January 7, 1942). Roger Baldwin, the founder and director of the American Civil Liberties Union, wrote to Walter B. Cannon in April 1942: 'I know considerable about [Boas'] American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. . . . There is no doubt that the Committee. . . . has a strong pro-Communist slant and that its paid secretary, Finkelstein, is either a member of the Communist Party or close'. See Kuznick 1987, 337 n. 62. J. Edgar Hoover to Attorney General Francis Biddle on December 12, 1941: 'Boas is one of the leading 'stooges' for Communist groups in the U.S. He is used to put over propaganda. . . . Among other positions which he holds is that of Chairman, ACDIF, of which organization Mr. Moe Finkelstein is Executive Secretary'. December 12, 1941. These letters are all in the Franz Boas Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia. Finley's FBI file reports (January 29, 1944) that 'in accordance with Bureau letter of August 13, 1942' agents who searched his basement found copies of a suspicious-looking pamphlet: these turned out to be copies from the *Congressional Record* of a speech (June 1, 1938) directed against Nazi race science by Rep. Byron Scott. Finley's FBI file was obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

other topics followed not only study of but participation in three tumultuous decades of American history.

In previous contributions, I discussed Finley's activities as Executive Secretary of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom (1938–1942, Franz Boas, President) in considerable detail.⁶ Here, I emphasize new documentary findings that enable us to construct a suite of exemplary moments in Finley's life, while admitting that the evidence does not permit a full, detailed chronicle.

Finley changed his name in the autumn of 1946, and took a position at Rutgers in 1947. His activities as Moses ('Moe' or to friends often 'Mo') Finkelstein can be roughly grouped under the following heads:

Studying law at Columbia University, 1927–29

Research and writing:

Fact-checker, bibliographer, author, *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (1930–34)

Editor and translator, Institute for Social Research (1937–39 on a steady basis, 1935–37 and 1939–47 as an occasional employee)

Graduate studies:

Research assistant (Roman law), A. A. Schiller, Columbia (1933–34)

Completed examinations for Ph.D., Columbia History Department (1937)⁷

Teaching positions:

Instructor in History, City College of NY (1934–42); Rapp-Coudert investigation, not re-hired by City College (1941–42)

Tutor in history, Yeshiva College (1935–36)

Assistant Professor, Rutgers University, Newark (1948–52)

Salaried administrative positions:

Executive Secretary, American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom (1938–42)

National campaign director, American Society for Russian War Relief (1942–46)

National Campaign Director, American Russian Institute (September, 1946–March, 1947).⁸

⁶ See Tompkins 2006 and 2008.

⁷ Meaning that the only remaining requirement was the dissertation.

⁸ Shaw 1993. Finley omits his position with the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom and his role the American Russian Institute from his 'Supplementary Statement' *vita*, and apparently omitted his employment at City College (where he was dropped from the faculty) from the *vita* he provided Rutgers University, though it did appear in papers from the Columbia Placement Bureau. See Finley's exchange of letters with Dr. Edward Fuhlbruegge, Director, Division of the Social Sciences at Rutgers' Newark College of Arts and Sciences, February 26–27, 1948, 'Administrative History of the

These years of mixed scholarly and political activity were highly socialized: at every stage after the master's thesis, Finkelstein is functioning as a member in a group, often as the effective leader. These interactions deepened Finkelstein's political understanding, without any individual or theory fully 'influencing' ('flowing into') him as if being siphoned between two vessels.

'Badges of slavery or servitude': Learning from Justice Harlan, 1927–29

Nathan Finkelstein, an immigrant who designed gears for Buick, knew his son was a prodigy, and had aspirations of great corporate success. Thus it happened that after graduating from Syracuse University at age 15 in 1927, Moses began graduate work in the Columbia University Department of Public Law and Government (now the Department of Political Science), where his courses included Public Finance with E. R. A. Seligman. He wrote a Master's thesis: *Justice Harlan on Personal Rights with Special Attention to Due Process of Law*. Then, 'My father got me a job in the legal department of General Motors, but after six months I walked out'. He hated the routineness of legal work. 'That led to a certain strain that never ended until the day he died, aged 90. He was very much a patriarch'.⁹

Though generally overlooked, this episode merits attention. Finkelstein benefited from formal graduate-level training in accounting, finance and law. Meeting Seligman, editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, may have led to his position there in 1930 (see below). The choice of thesis topic was also fateful: who could have been a more consequential subject for the future historian of slavery and inequality than John Marshall Harlan, the former Kentucky slave-owner whose forceful opinions on labor and civil rights, though barely noticed in 1927, were validated half a century later?¹⁰ Harlan was no legal craftsman: to Holmes, Harlan's mind was 'a powerful vise the jaws of which couldn't be got nearer than two inches to each other', and both supporters and opponents of federal aid to the

Rutgers University Board of Governors' Special Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure', Rutgers University Libraries: Special Collections and University Archives.

⁹ Winkler interview, 1980 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library). I wish to thank Sharon Finley and Gertrude Finkelstein for their generous assistance on a range of topics concerning the Finkelstein family.

¹⁰ To be sure, 'Great Dissenter' was a *cliché*, recklessly used later not only of Holmes but Stone, Brandeis, Clark, and Harlan's grandson. But Harlan appears to have been the first, and his dissents were among the most important.

downtrodden would utilize the verbal ambiguities in his dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*.¹¹ But Harlan's choice of issues was acute and his language memorable.

By 1927, Finkelstein appears to have been among the few still paying attention. Harlan was losing traction in the public mind, and soon enough, journalists passed the title of 'Great Dissenter' to Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., who had futilely joined Harlan against *Lochner*, the 1905 decision that favored employers over regulators and workers and that would remain dominant for another decade. Earl Warren's finding in *Brown v Board of Education* (1954), that *Plessy's* "separate but equal" doctrine . . . has no place in the field of public education' reversed the words of *Plessy* in 1896 and helped to restore Harlan's standing, but that was decades in the future.

Only one copy of Finkelstein's thesis exists, in the Columbia University Rare Book Library, and few appear to have read it. It is organized as follows:

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Due Process of Law
- Chapter 2: Privileges and Immunities of Citizens. Equal Protection of the Laws
- Chapter 3: Ex Post Facto Laws
- Chapter 4: The Fifth and Sixth Amendments
- Conclusion
- Appendix: Chronological Summaries of Cases Discussed

Finkelstein comments on pivotal decisions. He emphasizes Harlan's reliance on common law and the *Magna Carta*, and his constant concern with the boundary between federal and state law.¹² He notes technical challenges, for instance, Harlan's seeming indifference to precedent (p. 10).¹³ The footnotes are minimalist but to the point, suggesting rather than advertising Finley's underlying research. Exploring a simple reference to *Powell v. Pennsylvania* (1888), for instance, Finley brings us to Harlan's point that, 'in order to insure equal protection of the laws, a statute need

¹¹ 'How could Justice Harlan be a hero to both Justice Marshall and Justice Thomas . . .?': Liu 2008, 1384. See also Balkin 2001.

¹² Finley recurred to the *Magna Carta* in his 1971 inaugural lecture as Professor of Ancient History at Cambridge, but as 'bogus history'. See Finley 1975b, 34–59, especially 41. This inaugural lecture hints repeatedly at episodes from Finley's American past—but never does more than hint.

¹³ Also p. 17: 'His paramount, and virtually sole criterion was the common law, and he frequently applied it at the cost of violating recognized precedents of constitutional law, interpretations to which all his colleagues adhered'. Cf. pp. 8, 19.

not apply equally to everyone, but merely to all within the same class, as long as the classification by the State legislature is not 'Itself an unjust discrimination'. Further details about the case are not, Harlan says, the Court's business: the producers must 'appeal . . . to the legislature or to the ballot-box, not to the judiciary'.

Though Finkelstein's tone is cool, he is alert to memorable phrases and to issues of social justice, devoting nearly two full pages on *Plessy* to verbatim quotations including the now-famous three sentences that, at the time Finley wrote, had not appeared in the *New York Times*, *The Nation*, or even in the NAACP journal, *The Crisis*:

There is no caste here. Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law.¹⁴

The following cases exemplify Harlan's concerns and Finley's approach:

The Civil Rights Cases (1883). In these cases the Court overturned the Civil Rights Act of 1875. As Finley observes (pp. 19–21):

As with due process of law, Justice Harlan was never slow in declaring State action invalid as a denial of the privileges and immunities of citizens. And as with due process, he frequently dissented from the court in the face of seemingly overwhelming precedents and proofs. . . . Primary among the new rights which the black race received by the Fourteenth Amendment is, he believes, 'exemption from race discrimination in respect of any civil right belonging to citizens of the white race in that same State'.

Against the majority's finding that the Civil Rights Act's measures concerning private individuals and rights (hotel accommodations, admission to a theater and to a ladies' car on a railway) were unconstitutional, Harlan declared, in Finley's summary (pp. 37–38):

. . . that the Fourteenth Amendment granted negroes the right of citizenship and all the attendant privileges and immunities therewith. And if it did not grant them any other privilege, it at least gave them exemption from race discrimination with regard to civil rights. The discrimination in these cases

¹⁴ Pp. 58–9. The quotation does not appear in the on-line archives of these publications through 1930. It has been traced back to a speech by Col. Robert Ingersoll on October 22, 1883, at a rally in Washington D.C. after the Supreme Court, over Harlan's dissent, declared the 1875 Civil Rights Act unconstitutional. Ingersoll said that the Founding Fathers had in fact established 'caste' but that the 13th Amendment should have made us 'color-blind'. This phrase was adopted by Albion Tourgée, arguing for *Plessy* in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896, and then by Harlan himself. See Elliott 2001 and Westin 1957, esp. 675–6 n. 160.

was obvious, and therefore the verdict for the plaintiffs should have been affirmed.¹⁵

Hurtado v. California (1884)

In the following year, Harlan again dissented. The matter concerned due process, and revealed, as Finkelstein says, ‘the length to which Judge Harlan was willing to go in applying the common law rules . . .’. As Finkelstein notes, the lengthy dissent on the need for a full twelve-person jury in state trials rests on Edward Coke and other jurists, and on the *Magna Carta*. It is here that Finkelstein refers to Harlan’s ‘characteristic disregard for precedent’. For Harlan, though for no other Justice, the rights to ‘indictment by grand jury, trial by jury, and freedom from self-incrimination’, should be covered by the Fourteenth Amendment and used in state as well as federal law. As it happens, the Fifth Amendment, unlike many others, has still *not* been ‘incorporated’ into the Fourteenth Amendment and made applicable to the states. Justice Alito’s finding in *McDonald v. Chicago*, striking down a local law on gun control and applying the Second Amendment (as interpreted in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 2008) to the states, is built on a summary of Fourteenth Amendment jurisprudence. He mentions Harlan 26 times.¹⁶

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)

In 1954, Chief Justice Warren emphasized that *Plessy* had cemented ‘separate but equal’ as racial policy for large parts of the nation for six decades: ‘Any language in *Plessy v. Ferguson* contrary to this finding is rejected’.¹⁷ Finkelstein summarizes the facts (pp. 56–58), mentioning that *Plessy*

¹⁵ Abraham 1955, 885, says that the *Plessy* dissent was Harlan’s “favorite”.

¹⁶ Finley comments further on *Hurtado* at pp. 31, 41–42. For the opinion in *Heller*, see: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/07-290.ZS.html>. For *McDonald*: <http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/08-1521.pdf>. Eric Foner (Foner 2012) notes that ‘selective incorporation’ reflects the judges’ attitudes at particular times and places: the Court currently understands the Fourteenth Amendment to favor firearms possessors, but not women:

In 2000, in *United States v. Morrison*, the Supreme Court invoked the *Civil Rights Cases* to conclude that Congress lacks power to provide a remedy in federal courts for gender-based violence that is not state-sponsored, adding, . . . that the Fourteenth Amendment was not intended to ‘obliterate’ federalism. *Morrison* also cited *United States v. Harris*, from 1883, in which convictions for lynching under the Ku Klux Klan Act were overturned because Congress lacked the power to punish individual criminal acts.

¹⁷ <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=347&invol=483>.

'refused to remain in the coach for negroes', and quoting Harlan's claim that the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, on rights of former slaves and guarantee of personal liberty, go hand in hand, guaranteeing 'privileges and immunities' to all citizens:

Everyone knows that the statute in question had its origin in the purpose, not so much to exclude white persons in the railroad cars occupied by blacks, as to exclude colored people from coaches occupied by or assigned to white persons. . . .

The white race deems itself to be the dominant race in this country. And so it is. . . . But in view of the Constitution, in the eyes of the law, there is in this country *no* superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. . . .

Lochner (1905)

In the 'Lochner Era', the Fourteenth Amendment's 'due process' clause protecting 'life, liberty and property', was construed as serving employers' liberty to set work hours. Finkelstein summarizes (p. 71): the Court overturned a New York law limiting hours of employment for bakers, stating that 'There is no reasonable ground for interfering with the liberty of a person or the right of free contract by determining the hours of labor in the occupation of a baker. . . . Clean and wholesome bread does not depend upon whether the baker works but ten hours per day'.¹⁸ Harlan and Holmes both dissented, Holmes famously protesting the majority's economic theory ('the Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*'), Harlan attacking the majority dismissal of health concerns ('constant inhaling of flour dust causes inflammation of the lungs and of the bronchial tubes. The eyes also suffer through this dust, . . . The long hours of toil to which all bakers are subjected produce rheumatism, cramps and swollen legs'). Finkelstein emphasizes the danger to workers' health.

Finkelstein's concerns, then, included citizenship, race and minority rights, due process and the heritage of common law. Equally significant: his attention to 'technical' features such as Harlan's disregard of precedent. Soon, he would write his own political pamphlet attacking ethnic discrimination, *Can You Name Them*, and assailing the Nazi-friendly eugenics of the New York Chamber of Commerce (see below). Nearly half a century later, we find Finley remarking that:

¹⁸ <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/198/45/case.html>.

The 'mould' of Roman law, as of every other legal system examined by historians, was an instrument and a reflection of society and therefore of social inequality.¹⁹

We cannot miss the family resemblance between that comment and the observation of a legal scholar and Harlan expert to the effect that 'constitutional law became more egalitarian when American society became more egalitarian'.²⁰

Under investigation a quarter century later, Finley and his attorney Joseph Fannelli invoked, without great success, the very rights against self-incrimination he had studied as a boy. Compounding the irony, it would be Harlan's grandson, himself a Supreme Court Justice in 1957, whose *Yates* decision ended seventeen years of repression of leftist Americans under the Smith Act, the key instrument used by universities to fire, and by authorities to prosecute, left-wing faculty in America.²¹ By that time Finley was settled in Cambridge.

The currents in Finley's life often flowed together. After writing *on* Harlan he would collaborate *with* Franz Boas, whose lifelong effort against theories of racial superiority culminated in the American Committee's campaign against Nazi race theory, and who would help to shape the Supreme Court's momentous *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. From at least 1910, when he spoke to the Second National Negro Conference on 'The Real Race Problem', Boas had been allied with W. E. B. DuBois.²² Harlan, Boas, and DuBois helped to keep the issue of racial oppression alive for half a century. Finkelstein's important contribution in the later 1930s was perhaps overdetermined.

Stalinism and its friends and enemies: The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, 1930–34

Sergei Eisenstein's brilliant *Old and New* (1929) served as a Marxist 'Pilgrim's Progress' celebrating not just collectivized farms but the merging of agriculture and industry. The film's modern agricultural—genetic

¹⁹ Finley 1983, 7.

²⁰ Klarman 2004, as summarized by Graber 2005, 804.

²¹ The opinion can be found at: <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/354/298/case.html>.

²² Boas' speech was published in the NAACP journal, *The Crisis* (edited by DuBois): 1.2 (1910), 22–25. Lee D. Baker judiciously notes that *Brown v. Board of Education* used Boasian racial analysis sporadically and selectively: Baker 2010, 178–92. See also Baker 1998.

laboratory recalls comments on Soviet science in the 1920s by Columbia geneticist Leslie Dunn—a close friend of Boas and a mainstay of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. Dunn had visited Soviet laboratories and was impressed:

You can see the same dangers through which human genetics was going at that time, because many human geneticists in the so-called bourgeois countries were plain Nazis, just about. The Russians [before Lysenko] were, I think, on the ball, and the westerners were not... certainly the Soviet position was far superior to the western position as to what went on in Germany.

But Dunn is also haunted by the Soviet scientists Vavilov and Agol, who visited America in the early 1930s and returned, full of trepidation, after Lysenko had risen to power. Vavilov disappeared and Agol was executed: 'A whole small school of human genetics was wiped out with the Institute'.²³

Old and New is in truth no documentary.²⁴ Soviet agriculture was deeply troubled, as few understood better than Lenin's old foe Peter Struve, by 1932 living in exile in Paris. Active in the 1890s in trying to improve agriculture under the Czar, he wrote a data-based long essay on land tenure in Russia for Seligman's ambitious *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. His contribution arrived in the late summer of 1932. It begins in 800 C.E. and concludes in 1932, four years after Eisenstein's *Old and New*. The real Stalinist collectivization was now underway. Industrialization did not assist, it displaced peasants, who starved in huge numbers or were shipped in freight trains to factories. Surveying the data, Struve concludes dismally:

The real goal... has not been reached... a decrease in domestic agricultural production..., without at the same time promoting... export... a terrific famine, on a scale exceeding anything Russia has ever experienced.

'A terrific famine'. This grim indictment of Stalin's agricultural policy never appeared in print. As the *Encyclopaedia* archives, now housed at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, reveal, the New York editors replaced Struve's text, referring instead to Stalin's 'order against forcible collectivization' as reported in Walter Duranty's cheery *New York Times* account:

²³ Dunn's oral history is on file at the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA. On the laboratory in the film, see Goodwin 1993, 103–4.

²⁴ Kotkin 1995 captures the grim truth of Soviet industrialization and the de-kulakization that enabled it.

'Peasants Rejoice Over Stalin Order'.²⁵ They may have supposed that the *Times* man on the scene knew more than Struve in Paris. They could not have been more wrong, as subsequent inquiry into Duranty's fabrications revealed—after he had won a Pulitzer Prize in 1936, his career having been built on mendacious reports.²⁶

Who altered Struve's text? We cannot tell. The *Encyclopaedia's* archives include fact-checking data but yield nothing conclusive. However, the list of the fifteen assistant editors for this volume is suggestive: these included Lewis Corey, Louis Hacker, Max Lerner, Herbert Solow and Bernhard Stern, all of whom were, in the early 1930s, interested in Marx one way or another (alignments in the 30s were kaleidoscopic). Solow was to play a pivotal role in bringing Whittaker Chambers in from the cold. Corey, under the name Fraina, had been a founding member of the Communist Party of the United States, as he revealed to his surprised associate editor Alvin Johnson, whose response—another surprise—was not to fire him. Johnson records this moment in his memoir.²⁷

This was the *ménage* Finkelstein entered at age 18, immediately after leaving a firm—General Motors—that quite soon would be 'camouflaging' its collaboration with Nazi Germany and would ultimately use Jewish slave labor. GM managers told employees that names like 'Finkelstein' were career-enders.²⁸ Moses Finkelstein's younger brother Larry, hearing this fifteen years later, initiated a name change that ultimately included Moses and middle brother Murray.²⁹

It is hard to imagine a less *heymish* corporate culture. At the *Encyclopaedia*, on the other hand, Finkelstein would have felt welcome, and in fact he clearly made good friendships there: twenty years later, after being

²⁵ See *New York Times*, March 8, 1930.

²⁶ On Duranty, see Taylor (1990), and Karl E. Meyer, 'The Editorial Notebook; Trenchcoats, Then and Now', *New York Times*, June 24, 1990.

²⁷ See, in addition to Johnson's autobiography (Johnson 1952), Petr 1998.

²⁸ Turner 2005, 16. Turner explains (without advocating for GM) that since German law prevented Opel from transferring profits out of the country, this was the only way for management to keep the company going. At p. 152 and elsewhere Turner mentions the personal and political antipathy of many in GM leadership toward Hitler, Göring and Himmler. But GM policy was to continue doing business, whatever the regime of the moment.

²⁹ According to Finley's sister Gertrude Finkelstein, Larry reported to their father that he had just read of a judge named Finley: if the name was good enough for a judge, it would serve for him. Nathan approved. Moses Finley left no account of this decision, and indeed got the date wrong (see his letter to Nelson quoted below, under 'The crisis of spring 1947'). I have found no non-family account of Finley's change of name. (Personal interview, Gertrude Finkelstein with the author, April 27–28, 2005. Finley's FBI file dates the name change to October 1946).

fired at Rutgers and turned away by all potential American employers, Louis Hacker, as a dean at Columbia, became his most effective agent, making contacts at both Cambridge and Oxford that led to offers of a position.³⁰

Bernhard Stern was one of the most affable of this lot, befriending Lerner, Edward Mims, and others.³¹ Stern merits a book. Trained as an anthropologist, he produced studies of medical anthropology that influenced the young Robert Merton (who became a leader, decades later, in saving Stern's Columbia lectureship when Senator McCarthy targeted him).³² By 1932, Stern already knew Lionel Trilling, Meyer Schapiro, Granville Hicks, Max Lerner and others at Columbia.³³ He was one of two Finley acquaintances who praised Stalin's 1938 pamphlet, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*³⁴ in print, and his Stalinism infuriated the Frankfurt School scholars.³⁵ Like others in the Boas ambit, Stern rejected notions of racial 'inferiority' and joined the African-American philosopher Alain Locke to produce the 750-page anthology, *When Peoples Meet: A Study in Race and Culture Contacts*, with contributions by Ruth Benedict, Boas, Rostovtzeff, Melville Herskovits, Raymond Firth, Robert Redfield and more than sixty others.³⁶

³⁰ Finley, in Richard Winkler, 'A Conversation with Moses Finley', 1980 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library). Copies of Packer's correspondence with Antony Andrewes and M. M. Postan are in the Finley file at Rutgers University Library.

³¹ See Lakoff 1998, 56–57, on the friendship of Lerner, Mims and Stern.

³² Two essays in *Science and Society* were used to demonstrate his 'independence' and thus his fitness to teach at Columbia: 'Genetics Teaching and Lysenko', 13 (1949), 136–149 and 'Engels on the Family', 12 (1948), 42–64. See James Gutmann, 'Memorandum for the Files (June 4, 1953)' [on the Stern case], Robert Merton Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

³³ See note 35 below, and Trilling's letter to Schapiro mentioning the other names, December 14, 1933 (Meyer Schapiro Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library).

³⁴ Kazakevich 1944 and Stern 1943.

³⁵ One of Stern's many Stalinist moments: Stern 1944. In a letter to Max Horkheimer on August 2, 1946, Leo Lowenthal of the Institute for Social Research reported that Stern had alienated an important sponsor of the Institute's *Studies in Prejudice* series, Samuel Flowerman of the American Jewish Committee. At a crucial meeting, according to Flowerman's report to Lowenthal, Stern:

... betrayed so outspokenly that his first loyalty belongs to Soviet Russia that he wrote himself his own farewell ticket. ... I used the opportunity again to emphasize that I consider Stern's appointment by Flowerman as his greatest mistake in personnel matters. ...

Lowenthal 1989, 212.

³⁶ This book was published in New York by the Progressive Education Association in 1942. Stern's longtime concern about eugenics is evident in *Historical Sociology. The Selected Papers of Bernhard J. Stern* (New York, 1959). See pp. 213, 218 (on Boas, first published 1943) and 304–27 (on Karl Pearson and others, first published 1950).

Stern had another side: he recruited very effectively for the Communist Party. In precisely this period he had dinner with the literary historian Granville Hicks and persuaded him to join.³⁷ He may have done the same with Finkelstein. In their papers, Stern and Finley never mention each other. But hostile press accounts linked them closely, using terms like ‘real organizer’ and ‘notorious Stalinist’.³⁸ And Stern may have been the unnamed ‘anthropologist in the cafeteria’ who, in a ‘crazy caper’, introduced Finley to Frans Boas in 1938 (see below, on the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom).

The *Encyclopaedia* had other benefits for Finkelstein. He not only checked facts and composed bibliographies, but wrote one self-consciously magisterial entry on the biblical scholar Julius Wellhausen, finding that Wellhausen ‘shows a remarkable critical ability in the use of source materials and considerable detachment from theological bias but fails to overcome certain a priori notions, as, for example, regarding the role and ideas of Jesus. Furthermore his conception of history was almost exclusively politico-religious. . . . The most significant and valid criticism is his disregard for new discoveries in the ancient Orient’.

And the *Encyclopaedia* put him in touch with the German historian Fritz Heichelheim. As Brent Shaw has shown, Finley fact-checked Heichelheim’s entry on ‘Land Tenure in the Ancient World’ in the summer of 1932 and initiated a correspondence with Heichelheim that began his life-long interest in ‘problems of the soil’.³⁹

In the 1930s, land use joined race as a crucial policy topic. Social scientists and historians contributed to and benefited from the political discussion. In Washington and at the state level, sharecroppers, acreage limits, and the large landowners’ war against small became national issues, and

³⁷ Hicks omits Stern’s name, but Stern volunteered the information to faculty colleagues at Columbia two decades later. Gutmann, ‘Memorandum for the Files’, Robert Merton Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

³⁸ Benjamin Stolberg, “Innocent Front” Catspaws of Communism’, *Washington Post*, December 2, 1939, p. 11. The following spring (April 27, 1940), an unsigned article in the *New Leader* called Finkelstein a ‘well known Stalinist’, also attacking Mary Dublin (future wife of Truman economic advisor Leon Keyserling) and I. F. Stone. When Stone and Finley corresponded, decades later, neither mentioned this early linkage. On Dublin see the fine study by Storrs 2003. In 1941, Daniel Bell, who had chosen to major in Ancient History at City College under Finley’s influence (class of 1939), became editor of *New Leader*, publicly aligned with Finley’s foe Sidney Hook: ‘I always thought that one could prepare oneself best to be a sociologist by studying ancient history. . . . [Later] we were political antagonists in the old wars of New York intellectual culture’. (Letter to Elisabeth Sifton at the Viking Press, October 28, 1980. Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

³⁹ Shaw 1993, 180–1.

the American left played an active role. One example is the case of Walter Goldschmidt, a young anthropologist trained by A. L. Kroeber, who caused turmoil in Washington and Sacramento when he reported in 1944 that large farms exacerbated economic inequality and social problems in the towns they surrounded. California agribusiness was furious, and the political response included closing Goldschmidt's unit, the California Bureau of Agricultural Research, and reorganization of the federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics.⁴⁰

Finley and the Frankfurt School, 1934–46

Interviewed in 1980, Finley remained enthusiastic about his time with the Institute for Social Research.⁴¹ Though on salary there for three years (1936–38), he was busy reviewing, translating, editing and advising between 1934 and 1946 on a part-time basis. Leo Lowenthal became a friend and Max Horkheimer a supporter. Finkelstein was particularly close with Herbert Marcuse.

These relationships require study of their own. One item that has not been studied reveals Finley's debt to Frankfurt School Marxism. As often with Finley the information is buried in his correspondence. In July 1971, Quentin Skinner wrote to thank Finley for a copy of his Inaugural Lecture, *The Ancestral Constitution*; the ensuing exchange continues a discussion begun earlier over dinner at the home of E. H. Carr. About the lecture, Finley volunteers, 'If you are up to a large chunk of rather Hegelian German, you might find interest in Max Horkheimer's 'Egoismus und die Freiheitsbewegung', *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 5 (1936). I read it when it appeared (I was then working for the Institute in New York), and I suspect that, in the last analysis, that is what originally put me on to the whole idea. I didn't cite it in the Inaugural because when I re-read it for the occasion, I found that it went off into *very* different matters quickly'.⁴²

This remark leads to later exchanges in which the three thinkers—Horkheimer, Skinner and Finley—are revealed as meditating common themes across a discursive chasm: Skinner talks about 'prescriptivism',

⁴⁰ Koppes 1978; also Kirkendall 1966, esp. 223–4.

⁴¹ 'They were the first people, I suppose, who were really involved in the sociology of culture': Winkler, 'Conversation with Moses Finley', 1980 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

⁴² Finley to Skinner, July 13, 1971 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

Finley about *structures mentales* and the need for historians to attend to psychology, Horkheimer about the ‘antagonistic structural dynamic’ in ‘bourgeois society’. All three are concerned with the politics of social psychology.

For Finley and Horkheimer, this was an issue within Marxism. Horkheimer’s psychological approach to Marx was the opposite of *Diamat*, ‘dialectical and historical materialism’, which Stalin was forcing on orthodox Marxism in those years.⁴³ As Finley reveals, ideas he came across in New York at age 24 remained fruitful in Cambridge at age 59.

Finley, Boas, and the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, 1938–42

I have written elsewhere about Finley’s work with Franz Boas.⁴⁴ Here, the focus is some recent documentary finds and interpretive developments.

The Committee was by far the most consequential of Finkelstein’s left-wing activities. It was portrayed as a ‘Communist Front’, and provided a charge against Finley in later hearings. How did it all begin? Finley’s account is disarmingly offhand:

My involvement was never in straight politics. It was always on the fringe. In 1938 *Nature* published, as a deliberate provocation, an article by a virulent Nazi physicist on ‘German and Jewish Physics’, a bitter assault on Einstein.⁴⁵

Three of us, sitting in a cafeteria, decided we had to get something done about this. One of us was an anthropologist. He went to Franz Boas, who said O.K. and drew up a short statement. Then, in a very crazy caper, we

⁴³ In the 1970s and 1980s, a theme of Moses Finley’s correspondence and meetings with the Czech historian Jan Pecirka and with several East German ancient historians was the need to move beyond *Diamat*. Even then this was dangerous, as Stasi communications about ‘pseudowissenschaftliche’ historians at the Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften made clear. See *inter alia* this Stasi report in Florath 2005, 191–2:

Information über eine operativ interessante Person...: „Im Zusammenhang mit dieser Information übergab uns unser IM [Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter] eine Konzeption für ein Kolloquium, das auf Initiative von [...] und [geschwärzt] mit Unterstützung von [geschwärzt] im März/April 1977 stattfinden soll (Fotokopie siehe Anlage). Nach Einschätzung unseres IM, dessen fachliche Kompetenz auf diesem Wissenschaftsgebiet ausser Zweifel steht, soll mit diesem Kolloquium der Versuch unternommen werden, die revisionistische These von der Existenz einer 6. Gesellschaftsformation, der sogenannten asiatischen Produktionsweise, zu propagieren und pseudowissenschaftlich zu belegen.

⁴⁴ Tompkins 2006.

⁴⁵ Stark 1938.

got hold of the faculty lists of about 1200 universities, sent the statement out over Boas's signature and produced 1500 names. We were just a gaggle of students, not knowing anything about anything, but we issued a press release with all the names and hit the front page of the *New York Times*.⁴⁶

So then Boas said, 'We can't leave it at this, can we?' He went and got some money and organized the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. . . . One of its youngest members was a man named J. Robert Oppenheimer. We made noises, as pressure groups do, and then we took on the Dies Committee ['Un-American Activities'].

It was at that point that 'Communist front' talk started and, given the structure of the committee, I had to be the Communist front. Oh boy! All the others were just being led by the nose. Well, when the United States entered the war there was no point to the committee's continuing and it was wound up. But by that time I had a fair label on me.⁴⁷

Readers may ask, with *which* anthropologists was Finkelstein friendly in 1938? The only evident candidate is Bernhard Stern, the former *Encyclopaedia* colleague. Stern had also worked with Boas. If we replace 'an anthropologist' with 'an important Communist Party author, editor and recruiter', the narrative conveys, perhaps, not an impish 'caper' but a premeditated initiative. Did Finley's failure to name his contact reflect the casual nature of the interview, or long, artful practice? We do not know.

In any case, despite the accusations of its foes the Committee's work was positive, and the Committee's most active members were not Party members but people like Leslie Dunn. Nor can we infer from the correspondence and other documents that Boas was becoming senile, as asserted by J. Edgar Hoover and others. Indeed, Dewey's correspondence with Hook in this period shows far less involvement and command of detail than Boas' with Finkelstein, and at one point Hook undermines Dewey's relationship with his old Columbia colleague by leaking anonymously to the *New York Times*.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Finley played the key role in placing 'Nazis' Conception of Science Scored' in the *New York Times* (November 1, 1938).

⁴⁷ Richard Winkler, 'A Conversation with Moses Finley', 1980 (Finley Papers, Cambridge University Library).

⁴⁸ See Tompkins 2006, 116; see Hoover letter of December 12, 1941 (note 5 above), and the draft notes of Esther Goldfrank, *Notes on an Undirected Life*: 'The political climate in the Department of Anthropology'. E. S. Goldfrank Papers, National Anthropological Archives, Suitland, Maryland, Folder 2, p. 225. The affiliations of both Boas and Dewey in this period were shifting radically: Boas served with Dewey on the Trotsky defense committee until at least February, 1937, and Dewey was on the board of the American Russian Institute. See Hook 1995, 43–47, and this Moscow communication provided by Russian historian Svetlana Chervonnaya: from Neiman, Head, 3rd Western Department, NKID to VOKS/Arosev,

The Communist Party was still legal at this time, though members were often prudent about revealing their affiliation. In any case, Finkelstein's enemies were prompt, as Finley later said, to give him a 'label'.

Finkelstein and Boas took strong positions on racial matters.⁴⁹ Internationally, Boas had consistently opposed imperial oppression. Commenting in 1919 on Versailles in 'Colonies and the Peace Conference', he warned that League of Nations mandatories '... have an ugly habit of forgetting their mandate and of considering their temporary charges as their permanent property'. If colonies *are* maintained, the welfare of 'inhabitants... and... humanity as a whole' requires minimal standards including non-removal of 'valuable raw materials' and preservation of natives' 'industrial and social life'.⁵⁰ Boas was unwavering. As he wrote to Finkelstein in 1941:

It has always been my position and my regret that our help to England has not been made conditional upon the recognition of the rights of oppressed races.⁵¹

And for Boas, 'oppressed races' were not just an international challenge.

It is not surprising therefore that in the busy summer of 1939 Finkelstein wrote *Can You Name Them*, a short and attractive brochure on undistinctive phenotypes (English, Swedish, Jewish...⁵² His arguments were brief and pointed:

Today the term 'race' has taken on a high emotional intensity and is almost unavoidably associated with an exaggerated nationalism and with claims of 'racial' superiority.

Serious anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists have emphasized over and over again that no proof has ever been given to show that the mental characteristics of a 'race' can be deduced from its descent...

Finkelstein added two-page sections on 'Race in Textbooks' and 'Vulgar Modes...' and a longer one, 'What Science Teaches...'.

28 June, 1937: 'sending over an excerpt from Oumansky's letter from 31/V [1937]. We attract your attention to the paragraph discussing the need to push the American Russian Institute to get rid of Dewey ASAP...'. Referent S. Vinogradov.

⁴⁹ Peter J. Katzenstein details the longstanding racial bias of American foreign policy: Katzenstein 2012. See especially 217 on Woodrow Wilson.

⁵⁰ Boas 1919. Sidney Hook's memoir, *Out of Step* claims (Hook 1987, 258) that Boas had never 'been political' before the late 1930s: a claim that serves Hook's rhetorical purpose, but does not square with the facts of Boas' life.

⁵¹ July 16, 1941. Boas Papers, American Philosophical Society.

⁵² American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom 1939.

'Race' now concerned whites, especially Jews, for obvious reasons. Not only Hitler but the New York Chamber of Commerce were the foes. Since 1934 the Chamber had deployed the 'findings' of the eugenicist Harry Laughlin to oppose Jewish immigration.⁵³ In 1939 it published Laughlin's *Immigration and Conquest. A study of the United States as the receiver of old world emigrants who become the parents of future-born Americans*, a curious document that deploys fanciful charts to claim that Italians are moronic, because many wind up in mental institutions, while 'Africans' score low (along with Italians, Poles, Belgians, and Latin Americans) on the vague measure of 'inventiveness'.⁵⁴ Americans of French descent score highest, English in the middle. No one in the Chamber appears to have asked why, if this supposed difference is 'racial', Belgians score low and the French high.⁵⁵

Jews are the Chamber's real target. A long section on immigration 'loopholes' (123–161) bemoans the government's passivity in admitting Jews who violated German law to escape Hitler. Jews, to Laughlin and the Chamber, were 'human dross . . . slow to assimilate to the American way of life'. (p. 20). The *New York Times* story ('Immigration Curb is Urged in Survey') appeared on June 8, 1939. Finkelstein developed a reply, writing Boas on July 17, 'I have given you a back seat in the Chamber of Commerce story, which, by the way, may create an explosion'. It appeared on July 23 under the headline:

Aliens Defended in Race Dispute. Educators Denounce State Chamber's Report . . . View Held Unscientific.

This was only one of several tiffs with the Chamber that summer.⁵⁶

⁵³ On May 7, 1934, the *New York Times* reported a protest by Rabbi Stephen Wise and others against a previous Laughlin-Chamber effort to prevent refugees from Hitler to enter the United States ('State Chamber Assailed by Jews').

⁵⁴ No one complained about the dissonance between a fine-tuned separation of Belgians from French and, on the other hand, use of an entire continent for 'Africans'.

⁵⁵ The *Times* headed a later Finkelstein response to a Chamber report on schools, 'Report on Schools Scored as "Fascist"' (October 3, 1939). The adjective worried Boas. Finkelstein explained, 'We did not call the report of the Chamber of Commerce fascist. What we did say was that its conception of the state was fascist'. (Boas Papers, October 4, 1939).

⁵⁶ I can find no evidence that the Chamber has ever apologized for, or even acknowledged, portraying Jews as 'human dross'.

Finley and His Fellow Students, 1932–47

To a certain extent, Finley and his friends educated each other:

At Columbia University I first studied ancient history. . . . Those were years of considerable tension. . . . the Nazi seizure of power, . . . the Spanish Civil War. . . . As I think back to this period, I have the firm impression that the lectures and seminars were pretty severely locked in an ivory tower. . . . I . . . refer . . . to the irrelevance of [our professors'] work as historians. The same lectures and seminars could have been given—and no doubt were—in an earlier generation, before the First World War. . . . We, who were growing up in a difficult world . . . sought explanation and understanding. . . . And so we went off on our own to seek in books what we thought we were not getting in lectures and seminars.

We read and argued about Marc Bloch and Henri Pirenne, Max Weber, Veblen and the Freudians, . . . Marx and the Marxists . . . not just *Das Kapital*, not even primarily *Das Kapital*, but also Marxist historical and theoretical works.⁵⁷

Many of Moses Finkelstein's brilliant comrades were severely damaged in the McCarthy years, even though some continued teaching careers (Thorner and Finley in exile). A large number were on the left, though the sociologist Benjamin Nelson was not. A number of them, including Daniel Thorner, Jack and Phil Foner, Ben Paskoff, and Finkelstein himself, taught history at City College. Records of this group are scattered when they exist at all, and some names emerge by sheer chance: Ted Geiger is barely mentioned in the correspondence, but figures importantly in the reminiscences of Alice Thorner.⁵⁸ The name of Renaissance historian Charles Trinkaus does not seem to appear in the Cambridge Finley Papers, but a visit to the Sarah Lawrence College Library uncovered not only very full correspondence with Moses Finley in later years but a beautifully written paper Trinkaus prepared for Lynn Thorndike in 1933 on 'economic freedom and guilds', detailed typed notes, probably from the '30s, on Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, and an unpublished paper on Marxism from the 1990s.⁵⁹

There is no sign that any of those who continued teaching harmed the country or indoctrinated their students, as was often claimed. Indeed,

⁵⁷ Finley 1967a.

⁵⁸ Personal interview, August 10–11, 2005.

⁵⁹ The paper on guilds is 'The Problem of Economic Freedom in the Craft Guilds of Thirteenth Century Paris. A Study of the Relationship of the Individual and the Institution Based upon the *Livre des Métiers d'Étienne Boileau*', Charles Trinkaus Papers, Sarah Lawrence College Library Archives.

some were later assailed as ‘anti-Marxists’. Charles Trinkaus’ case is exceptional since Sarah Lawrence College, perhaps more than any American institution, treated the political preferences of its faculty as a private matter and punished no faculty for their convictions.

Finley’s relationship with Meyer Reinhold is particularly interesting. Finley and Reinhold knew each other from the mid-thirties. Westermann told them and Naphtali Lewis ‘You are the ablest... students I have ever had’,⁶⁰ but he did not always treat them well.⁶¹ Mary Finkelstein had introduced Reinhold to his future wife, Diane, and Reinhold had a number of worthwhile stories about their early years. Unfortunately, we know nothing about the composition of Reinhold’s bold assault on Rostovtzeff. There is good reason to believe that his friend Moses Finkelstein was involved, but—as so often in this essay—no hard evidence.⁶² Finley praised Reinhold’s analysis in later years, noting that the profession had treated it unfairly.⁶³

Reinhold begins by contrasting ‘scientific’ study with Rostovtzeff’s ‘subjective, *a priori* method’. He notes Rostovtzeff’s tendency to ‘modernize’ antiquity by using modern terminology (‘capitalist’, ‘mass production’), and his view of the ancient world as an ‘infant capitalist system’ that was ‘more or less similar to modern capitalism’. For Reinhold, this runs ‘counter to the objective facts’: the ‘foundation of economic life in all periods of antiquity for all classes was agriculture’, and—as Gunnar Mickwitz had recently claimed—‘scientific rationalized agriculture is [only] a product of modern times’.⁶⁴ Rostovtzeff ignores mass poverty; influenced by his class location in the prerevolutionary Russian bourgeoisie, he imagined a ‘mythical’ ancient ‘bourgeoisie’, portraying the Ptolemies as ‘impartial and just’ and Roman emperors as ‘protectors of the weak’ (90, 93). Most importantly, he divorced class struggle from the ‘economic order’.

⁶⁰ Briggs 2006.

⁶¹ When Rutgers University Press in 1951 asked his opinion of Finley’s *Studies in Land and Credit*, Westermann responded: ‘I must say in frankness, that in my judgment its publication is not really imperative. It is a good doctoral dissertation’. Quoted in G. W. Bowersock’s unpublished paper, ‘Westermann’s Role in the Development of Ancient History in America’ (2000; copy kindly provided by Professor Bowersock).

⁶² The original initial footnote in Reinhold’s critique of Rostovtzeff (Reinhold 1946) credits ‘several friends’ and in particular the third in their group, Naphtali Lewis. In the reprinted version in Reinhold 2002, the reference to ‘several friends’ is dropped.

⁶³ ‘When... Meyer Reinhold wrote a sympathetic, perceptive, but critical article on Rostovtzeff in 1946, ... he was castigated in private for his “bad taste” and he was ignored in public. Only Momigliano noticed the article...’: Finley, reviewing Momigliano’s *Terzo Contributo* (Finley 1968b, 357).

⁶⁴ Mickwitz 1937.

[I]t is only in part his pluralistic historical methodology that accounts for the glaring contradictions and inconsistencies... Equally responsible are his ambivalent petite [*sic*] bourgeois ideological position,... and eclecticism..., and his projection into antiquity of modern social and economic forms. (99)

That Reinhold's essay was published not in a classical journal (which journal, we can ask, would have accepted it?), but in Bernhard Stern's Marxian *Science and Society*, possibly contributed to the baseless charge that Reinhold was a Communist and to his resignation from the Brooklyn College faculty a decade later.⁶⁵ The essay reveals wide reading, substantial effort, and a sound core principle, i.e. that modern economies, with their industrial basis, massive financial coordination, and wage labor, are very different from ancient. That Reinhold never again wrote in this vein is a loss to the profession.

Reinhold does not mention Finkelstein, but linkages emerge. Like Finkelstein and unlike any other American ancient historian at that time, Reinhold favored not only Mickwitz but Max Weber's *Agrarverhältnisse im Altertum* (98).⁶⁶

In style and manner, the essay is very much that of a young scholar immersed in economic history, with a family resemblance to Finley himself. Their tones are different, however. Finley never spoke of an 'ambivalent petite bourgeois ideological position'. Finkelstein's critique of Victor Ehrenberg a decade earlier had used some leftist terminology ('scientific' below), but relied more an allusion than direct attack:

The study of history has reached an impasse. Unless the basic postulates are shifted, no real advance is possible any longer. Most historians... continue to flounder in positivistic analysis and the eternal reiteration of 'the glory that was Greece...'. [M]any, led by Berve, demand a backward step to Treitschkean 'Individualgeschichte' where 'Volk, Stamm und Rasse' will receive the center of the stage... Ehrenberg attacks this position strongly—and lands in the same camp [of] dialectical idealism...

He thus avoids... a simple struggle of Europe against Asia [or] racial mysticism [but avoids] still more strictly those very problems... which can provide a consistent scientific understanding of antiquity... [He has] an unintelligible conception of the break between ancient and medieval society: of the change from slavery to feudalism he knows nothing... Despite himself, E. constantly ends in mysticism... The discussion of politics is unrealistic.

⁶⁵ Could Finkelstein, as an acquaintance of Stern, have placed the article there?

⁶⁶ Finley was citing Mickwitz in the same period: Shaw 1993, 192.

He confuses motives with propaganda symbols . . . and he frequently resorts to the very racial explanations which he elsewhere attacks.⁶⁷

Russian War Relief (RWR) 1942–46

If Bernhard Stern's career deserves a book, so does Russian Jewish War Relief, which raised over \$50 million to send goods to embattled Soviet villages. Finley became national campaign director, and the sparse and scanty records of the group, at Columbia University Library and in the Edward Carter Papers at the University of Vermont, as well as others unearthed by Fred Naiden, reveal Finkelstein's senior role in this organization, including occasional disagreements with senators, Zionists, immigrant groups hostile to the USSR, and the Roosevelt administration.⁶⁸

Wealthy financiers, carefully excluding anyone who seemed 'pink', had founded this group in the 1930s to raise 'millions not just thousands' for Soviet medical relief. During the war, Rabbi Wise and Albert Einstein became honorary co-chairmen and Finley escorted them to the dais at Madison Square Garden.⁶⁹ Documents from Moscow show that by late 1943 the Kremlin was increasingly critical of the 'independence' of Russian War Relief and in 1945 or 1946 ceased to provide financial support. Svetlana Chervonnaya, a Russian historian and archival scholar, remarks that this was 'a story of two different cultures, of perception gaps on both sides, and of how the Soviets were their own worst enemies—initiating the first ever *de facto* pro-Soviet lobby and then killing it with their own hands'.

A fascinating detail: William Nelson Cromwell, co-founder of the very white-shoe law firm Sullivan and Cromwell, was also one of the wealthy founders of Russian War Relief. When Cromwell died in July 1948, his executors—led by John Foster Dulles—were dismayed to learn of a major bequest to Russian War Relief. Dulles went to court, and succeeded in canceling this bequest since the organization was 'not functioning within the terms of the will'. On May 30, 1950 New Yorkers learned that Cromwell's funds went instead to Columbia, to support a new building on Amsterdam Avenue housing the Law School, International Studies, and

⁶⁷ Finley [Finkelstein] 1936, 439–40. At the same time, the Nazi historian Helmut Berve was condemning the "jüdische-apologetische Tendenz" of Ehrenberg's book: *Philologische Wochenschrift* 23/24 (June 12, 1937), 650–55: 655.

⁶⁸ See Naiden forthcoming for a full account of Finley's work with RWR.

⁶⁹ Wealthy founders: Svetlana Chervonnaya, April 25, 2005, personal communication. Einstein and Wise: Fred Naiden, May 2012, personal communication.

Public Law and Government—where Finley had begun graduate study, 22 years before.

The American Russian Institute, 1946–47

In March 1946, Soviet-friendly institutions began a massive publicity campaign and membership drive. The month is significant: on March 5, Winston Churchill had delivered his Iron Curtain speech in Fulton, Missouri, and interoffice communication at Russian War Relief reflect an awareness that Soviet-Western relations were about to shift. In March, the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship called for a national conference. On June 12, the board approved expending \$25,000 above the budget for an organizing campaign, and on June 19, Fred Myers, Finkelstein's immediate superior at Russian War Relief, moved from Executive Director of that organization to the same post in American Russian Institute: Finkelstein followed in September, either as 'activities director', his term in a letter to Edward Carter, or 'membership director', in his FBI file.⁷⁰

August 1946 was a busy month at the National Council. Richard Morford, Executive Director and Corliss Lamont, Chairman of the Board were charged with contempt of congress; a call was issued for nationwide organizing in the interest of Soviet-American friendship; facilities were enlarged; staff changes seem to have verged on frenetic, and fund-raising became urgent. Then, in January 1947, internal memos record disappointing fund-raising, despite a Madison Square Garden rally in December.⁷¹

We have two reports on Finley from this period. On the one hand, from his FBI file, informants report that the American Russian Institute lost large sums in the expansion drive, infuriating Lamont and other backers and leading to charges that Finkelstein and Myers were 'wreckers': a consequential term in Stalin's day. One informant adds:

Throughout his activities at the American Russian Institute, . . . Finley was meticulous in his efforts to retain the American Russian Institute at an unassailable level in relation to political controversy.⁷²

The other, new, perspective was recently discovered in papers from the Moscow archives:

⁷⁰ 'Named By Russian Institute', *New York Times*, June 20, 1946, mentions Myers' move.

⁷¹ All the above is based on the files of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship at the Tamiment Library, New York University.

⁷² Finley FBI File.

From A. A. Ermolaev's diary, Moscow. Record of conversation with the editor of foreign department of the *New Masses*, John Stuart, March 20, 1947, p. 142:

Finley is a devoted person, member of the Communist Party and sort of [Fred] Myers's political commissar, but he has not determined his place at American Russian Institute . . . and does not understand his tasks.⁷³

Why, at this point in his career, did the issue of Finkelstein's role in the Party come up, eight days before his known contacts with the Party terminate? Was Stuart being asked whether Finkelstein was reliable? We don't know, but the date makes clear that Stuart was reporting on a colleague whose mission had failed.

On March 28, Finley resigned from his position.⁷⁴

The Crisis of Spring 1947

Now, at last, Finley's name figures in multiple documented accounts, though they are not transparent:

March 28: Finley resigns post at American Russian Institute.

March 30: Finley writes to Benjamin Nelson:

I now NEED the Corpus Iuris and the other books that you have . . . So please be a good guy and dispatch them this week . . .

P.S. Since last December, by the way, the name has changed to Finley.⁷⁵

Early April, 1947, Professor Westermann responds to Finley's inquiry about returning to Columbia:

As I recall your thesis, as previously outlined, was not in the field of the mechanics of polis administration. . . . Of your proposed problems [only a few] offer anything new to me. . . . I wish to repeat that I am not at all convinced that I want this business of carrying your thesis through under my direction. If I should decide to accept this task I can not accept any responsibility in respect to getting a position for you. There are too

⁷³ The source for this report is Fond 5283, op. 22s, file 25, Corp. 142, State Archive of the Russian Federation. Fond (record group) 5283 contains the records of VOKS, Russian abbreviation for the Soviet Society for Cultural Contacts with Foreign Country. 'Ermolaev was at the time VOKS's representative in NYC; likely from MGB, working under the roof of the Soviet Consulate General. Fred Myers was not only the executive Director of the New York American Russian Institute and previously a leader at RWR, but had represented RWR in Moscow'. This information is provided by Russian historian Svetlana Chervonaya, personal communication, July 9, 2012. Stuart was not ignorant: he was the person sent to talk to Granville Hicks when Hicks left the Party in 1939; Hicks 1965, 183–4.

⁷⁴ Finley FBI file.

⁷⁵ Nelson Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Finley's FBI file dates the name change to October.

many handicaps. Lack of sufficient ability in handling Greek and Latin is decisive, in itself, in making it impossible for me to recommend you as a primary candidate for a position in ancient history. Other hurdles, also, exist which are known to us both. I would strongly advise you to go back into the work in which you have apparently found success, because I see little help of a future in this revival of your old interests. Meanwhile I will reconsider the problem of sponsoring your thesis. . . . As it now stands the subject is not acceptable to me.⁷⁶

April 20, 1947, Finley thanks Benjamin Nelson and adds:

The point to my urgency is, as you must have guessed, no Weber-Tawney acquisitive instinct but a slowly maturing decision to return to the world from which I came. Last year I began to make up my mind that I belonged in the academic world, if it will have me, and last month I seized upon the fortuitous fact of suddenly losing a job to turn the decision into reality.⁷⁷

Horkheimer's very positive letter of recommendation arrived, May 28.⁷⁸

Spring 1947 is a turning point. From March 28, 1947 through the rest of his life, Finley no longer had any visible association with any Russian, or with any Communist Party, group. The scholarship he produces in the next decade seems not to be 'Marxist', and the non-Marxist sources he uses are exuberant—Mauss, Polanyi, Weber, Richard Thurnwald, Nietzsche. As his long correspondence with Jan Pecirka and other East Bloc scholars, and his treatment of these scholars in *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* indicate, he certainly remained interested in Marxist topics and in economic oppression. All these are topics for another day. But as regards Party-oriented activism, a long and action-filled arc of his career appears to have ended.

Like others, Finley took large risks. His FBI file shows agents hard at work in 1953 on a possible a perjury case against him. They finally decided they could not build one. But especially since the 'Communist' tag is so often employed to condemn, we must note the activities he engaged in. He helped to shape American opposition to Nazi race theory. As the author of the American Committee's statements, he was a leader against racist and lethal eugenics. He also fought the intrusive inquisitions of the House Un-American Activities committee, and helped to send \$50 million worth of goods to suffering Russians. This is an impressive list of achievements.

⁷⁶ Westermann Papers, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷⁷ Nelson Papers, Columbia.

⁷⁸ Lewis Webster Jones Papers, Rutgers University.

The final archival find comes from the Hoover Institution. The historian Arthur Schlesinger wrote to Sidney Hook about an apparent attempt to derail Finley's effort to find work in England:

I have forwarded the information about Finley on to Oxford, where it will serve a useful purpose.⁷⁹

That month at Oxford, Finley's strongest backer was Hugh Trevor-Roper, who had read Finley's *World of Odysseus*, and persuaded his college to extend an offer to Finley:

I determined to get him to Christ Church. Of course there was a panic on the Right Wing, but after a tremendous struggle I persuaded the governing body of Christ Church to make him an offer. Unfortunately, by that time my old classical tutor, Denys Page, . . . persuaded Cambridge to make him a better offer, so we lost him.⁸⁰

Finley, working with Boas in 1938–39, had been opposed by Hook, who was allied with Dewey. Hook carried on his campaign, as was his wont, for more than a decade and a half, reaching even into foreign countries.⁸¹ In this case, he failed.

Ironically, the other topic in Schlesinger's letter is the international Congress for Cultural Freedom, the organization that grew out of American Committee for Cultural Freedom that Hook and Dewey set up against Boas.⁸² Under Hook's leadership, the Congress had evolved into an entity generously and secretly funded by the CIA.⁸³

⁷⁹ Sidney Hook Papers, Hoover Institution.

⁸⁰ Trevor-Roper 2007, 198–9.

⁸¹ Any doubts about Hook's unremitting bitterness about the 1930s are dispelled by a review of his correspondence in the 1980s with Harry Slochower, a boyhood friend who had gone to prison in the McCarthy era, in the Hook Papers at the Hoover Institution. Fifty years after the events, they are still quarreling about who signed which petition with what intent in 1939. At one point Slochower explodes: 'I *did* know what I did in the thirties and did so in the deepest conviction that it was Nazism which was the enemy of mankind and I supported *any* force which fought against it'.

⁸² 'I agree with most of your comments about the Committee. I am particularly grateful for the fight you made to gain a measure of tolerance in New York for the activities of the Congress'.

⁸³ See, among many treatments, Walter Goodman, 'Studies Thaw the Exploits of Undercover Cold Warriors', *New York Times*, June 10, 2000.