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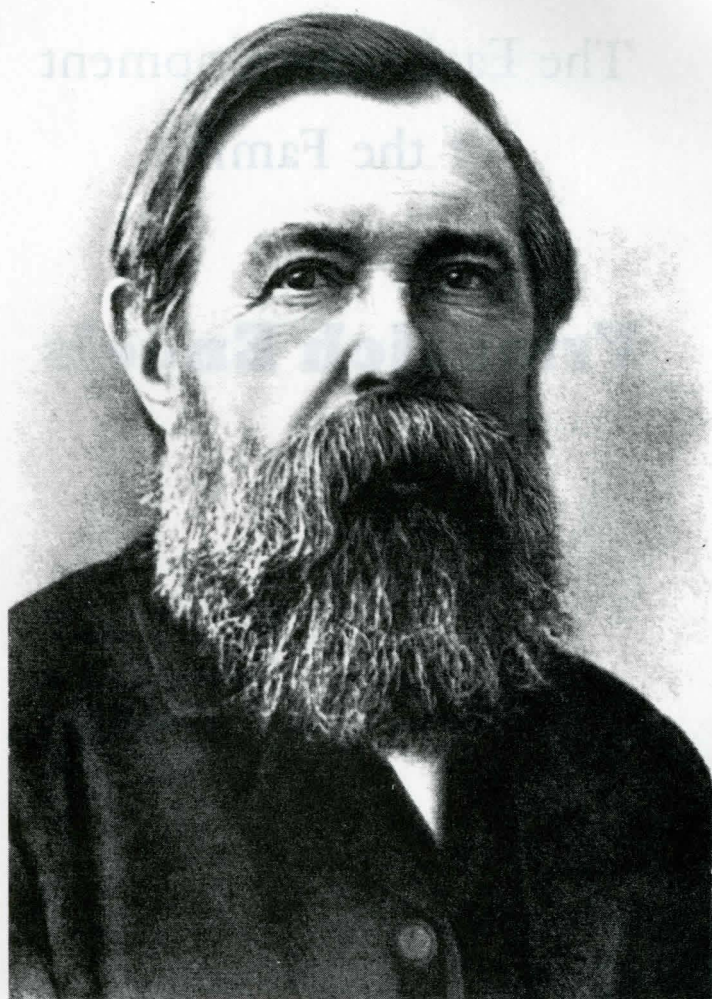
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F. Engels

I

PREHISTORIC STAGES OF CULTURE

Morgan was the first person with expert knowledge to attempt to introduce a definite order into the prehistory of man; unless important additional material necessitates alterations, his classification may be expected to remain in force.

Of the three main epochs, savagery, barbarism and civilization, he is naturally concerned only with the first two, and with the transition to the third. He subdivides each of these two epochs into a lower, middle and upper stage, according to the progress made in the production of the means of subsistence; for, as he says: "Upon their skill in this direction, the whole question of human supremacy on the earth depended. Mankind are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food. The great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence." The evolution of the family proceeds concurrently, but does not offer such conclusive criteria for the delimitation of the periods.

1. SAVAGERY

1. *Lower Stage.* Infancy of the human race. Man still lived in his original habitat, tropical or subtropical forests, dwelling, at least partially, in trees; this alone explains his continued survival in face of the large beasts of prey. Fruits, nuts and roots served him as food; the formation of articulate speech was the main achievement of this period.

None of the peoples that became known during the historical period were any longer in this primeval state. Although this period may have lasted for many thousands of years, we have no direct evidence of its existence; but once we admit the descent of man from the animal kingdom, the acceptance of this transitional stage is inevitable.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins with the utilization of fish (under which head we also include crabs, shellfish and other aquatic animals) for food and with the employment of fire. These two are complementary, since fish food becomes fully available only by the use of fire. This new food, however, made man independent of climate and locality. By following the rivers and coasts man was able, even in his savage state, to spread over the greater part of the earth's surface. The crude, unpolished stone implements of the earlier Stone Age—the so-called paleolithic—which belong wholly, or predominantly, to this period, and are scattered over all the continents, are evidence of these migrations. The newly-occupied territories as well as the unceasingly active urge for discovery, linked with their command of the art of producing fire by friction, made available new food stuffs, such as farinaceous roots and tubers, baked in hot ashes or in baking pits (ground ovens), and game, which was occasionally added to the diet after the invention of the first weapons—the club and the spear. Exclusively hunting peoples, such as figure in books, that is, peoples subsisting *solely* by hunting, have never existed, for the fruits of the chase are much too precarious to make that possible. As a consequence of the continued uncertainty with regard to sources of food stuffs, cannibalism appears to have arisen at this stage, and continued for a long time. The Australians and many Polynesians are to this day in this middle stage of savagery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the invention of the bow and arrow, whereby wild game became a regular item of food, and hunting one of the normal occupations. Bow, string and arrow constitute a very composite instrument, the invention of which presupposes long accumulated experience and sharpened mental powers, and, consequently, a simultaneous acquaintance with a host of other inventions. If we compare the peoples which, although familiar with the bow and arrow, are not yet acquainted with the

art of pottery (from which point Morgan dates the transition to barbarism), we find, even at this early stage, beginnings of settlement in villages, a certain mastery of the production of means of subsistence: wooden vessels and utensils, finger weaving (without looms) with filaments of bast, baskets woven from bast or rushes, and polished (neolithic) stone implements. For the most part, also, fire and the stone axe have already provided the dug-out canoe and, in places, timber and planks for house-building. All these advances are to be found, for example, among the Indians of North-Western America, who, although familiar with the bow and arrow, know nothing of pottery. The bow and arrow was for savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and firearms for civilization, namely, the decisive weapon.

2. BARBARISM

1. *Lower Stage.* Dates from the introduction of pottery. This latter had its origin, demonstrably in many cases and probably everywhere, in the coating of baskets or wooden vessels with clay in order to render them fire-proof; whereby it was soon discovered that moulded clay also served the purpose without the inner vessel.

Up to this point we could regard the course of evolution as being generally valid for a definite period among all peoples, irrespective of locality. With the advent of barbarism, however, we reach a stage where the difference in natural endowment of the two great continents begins to assert itself. The characteristic feature of the period of barbarism is the domestication and breeding of animals and the cultivation of plants. Now the Eastern Continent, the so-called Old World, contained almost all the animals suitable for domestication and all the cultivable cereals with one exception; while the Western, America, contained only one domesticable mammal, the llama, and this only in a part of the South; and only one cereal fit for cultivation, but that the best, maize. The effect of these different natural conditions was that from now on the population of each hemisphere went its own special way, and the landmarks on the border lines between the various stages are different in each of the two cases.

2. *Middle Stage.* Begins, in the East, with the domestication of animals; in the West, with the cultivation of edible plants by means of irrigation, and with the use of adobes (bricks dried in the sun) and stone for buildings.

We shall commence with the West, because there this stage was nowhere outgrown until the European Conquest.

At the time of their discovery the Indians in the lower stage of barbarism (to which all those found east of the Mississippi belonged) already engaged to a certain extent in the garden cultivation of maize and perhaps also of pumpkins, melons and other garden produce, which supplied a very substantial part of their food. They lived in wooden houses, in villages surrounded by stockades. The tribes of the North-West, particularly those living in the region of the Columbia River, still remained in the upper stage of savagery and were familiar neither with pottery nor with any kind of plant cultivation. On the other hand, the so-called Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, the Mexicans, Central Americans and Peruvians were in the middle stage of barbarism at the time of the Conquest. They lived in fortlike houses built of adobe or stone; they cultivated, in artificially irrigated gardens, maize and other edible plants, varying according to location and climate, which constituted their chief source of food, and they had even domesticated a few animals—the Mexicans the turkey and other birds, and the Peruvians the llama. They were furthermore acquainted with the working up of metals—except iron, which was the reason why they could not yet dispense with the use of stone weapons and stone implements. The Spanish Conquest cut short all further independent development.

In the East, the middle stage of barbarism commenced with the domestication of milk and meat-yielding animals, while plant cultivation appears to have remained unknown until very late in this period. The domestication and breeding of cattle and the formation of large herds seem to have been the cause of the differentiation of the Aryans and the Semites from the remaining mass of barbarians. Names of cattle are still common to the European and the Asiatic Aryans, the names of cultivable plants hardly at all.

In suitable places the formation of herds led to pastoral life; among the Semites, on the grassy plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris; among the Aryans, on those of

India, of the Oxus and the Jaxartes,¹ of the Don and the Dnieper. The domestication of animals must have been first accomplished on the borders of such pasture lands. It thus appears to later generations that the pastoral peoples originated in areas which, far from being the cradle of mankind, were, on the contrary, almost uninhabitable for their savage forebears and even for people in the lower stage of barbarism. Conversely, once these barbarians of the middle stage had taken to pastoral life, it would never have occurred to them to leave the grassy watered plains of their own accord and return to the forest regions which had been the home of their ancestors. Even when the Aryans and Semites were driven farther north and west, they found it impossible to settle in the forest regions of Western Asia and Europe until they had been enabled, by the cultivation of cereals, to feed their cattle on this less favourable soil, and particularly to pass the winter there. It is more than probable that the cultivation of cereals was introduced here primarily because of the necessity of providing fodder for cattle and only later became important for human nourishment.

The plentiful meat and milk diet among the Aryans and the Semites, and particularly the beneficial effects of these foods on the development of children, may, perhaps, explain the superior development of these two races. In fact, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, who are reduced to an almost exclusively vegetarian diet, have a smaller brain than the more meat- and fish-eating Indians in the lower stage of barbarism. At any rate, cannibalism gradually disappears at this stage, and survives only as a religious rite or, what is almost identical in this instance, sorcery.

3. *Upper Stage.* Begins with the smelting of iron ore and passes into civilization through the invention of alphabetic writing and its utilization for literary records. At this stage, which, as we have already noted, was traversed independently only in the eastern hemisphere, more progress was made in production than in all the previous stages put together. To it belong the Greeks of the Heroic Age, the Italian tribes shortly before the foundation of Rome, the

¹ *Oxus*: Now Amu Darya; *Jaxartes*: Now Syr Darya.—Ed.

Germans of Tacitus and the Normans of the days of the Vikings.

Above all, we here encounter for the first time the iron ploughshare drawn by cattle, making possible land cultivation on a wide scale—*tillage*—and, in the conditions then prevailing, a practically unlimited increase in the means of subsistence; in connection with this we find also the clearing of forests and their transformation into arable and pasture land—which, again, would have been impossible on a wide scale without the iron axe and spade. But with this there also came a rapid increase of the population and dense populations in small areas. Prior to tillage only very exceptional circumstances could have brought together half a million people under one central leadership; in all probability this never happened.

In the poems of Homer, particularly the *Iliad*, we find the upper stage of barbarism at its zenith. Improved iron tools, the bellows, the handmill, the potter's wheel, the making of oil and wine, the working up of metals developing into an art, waggons and war chariots, shipbuilding with planks and beams, the beginnings of architecture as an art, walled towns with towers and battlements, the Homeric epic and the entire mythology—these are the chief heritages carried over by the Greeks in their transition from barbarism to civilization. If we compare with this Caesar's and even Tacitus' descriptions of the Germans, who were on the threshold of that stage of culture from which the Homeric Greeks were preparing to advance to a higher one, we will see how rich was the development of production in the upper stage of barbarism.

The picture of the evolution of mankind through savagery and barbarism to the beginnings of civilization that I have here sketched after Morgan is already rich enough in new and, what is more, incontestable features, incontestable because they are taken straight from production; nevertheless it will appear faint and meagre compared with the picture which will unfold itself at the end of our journey. Only then will it be possible to give a full view of the transition from barbarism to civilization and the striking contrast between the two. For the time being we can generalize Morgan's periodization as follows: Savagery—the period in which the appropriation of natural products,

ready for use, predominated; the things produced by man were, in the main, instruments that facilitated this appropriation. Barbarism—the period in which knowledge of cattle breeding and land cultivation was acquired, in which methods of increasing the productivity of nature through human activity were learnt. Civilization—the period in which knowledge of the further working up of natural products, of industry proper, and of art was acquired.

II

THE FAMILY

Morgan, who spent the greater part of his life among the Iroquois—who still inhabit the State of New York—and was adopted by one of their tribes (the Senecas), found a system of consanguinity prevailing among them that stood in contradiction to their actual family relationships. Marriage between single pairs, with easy dissolution by either side, which Morgan termed the “pairing family,” was the rule among them. The offspring of such a married couple was known and recognized by all, and no doubt could arise as to the person to whom the designation father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister should be applied. But the actual use of the terms was to the contrary. The Iroquois calls not only his own children sons and daughters, but those of his brothers also; and they call him father. On the other hand, he calls his sisters’ children his nephews and nieces; and they call him uncle. Inversely, the Iroquois woman calls her sisters’ children her sons and daughters along with her own; and they call her mother. On the other hand, she addresses her brothers’ children as her nephews and nieces; and she is called their aunt. In the same way, the children of brothers call one another brothers and sisters, and so do the children of sisters. Contrariwise, the children of a woman and those of her brother call each other cousins. And these are no mere empty terms, but expressions of ideas actually in force concerning nearness and collateralness, equality and inequality of blood relationship; and these ideas serve as the foundation of a completely worked-out system of consanguinity, capable of expressing

some hundreds of different relationships of a single individual. Furthermore, this system not only exists in full force among all American Indians (no exceptions have as yet been discovered), but also prevails almost unchanged among the aborigines of India, among the Dravidian tribes in the Deccan and the Gaura tribes in Hindustan. The terms of kinship current among the Tamils of South India and the Seneca Iroquois in the State of New York are identical even at the present day for more than two hundred different relationships. And among these tribes in India, also, as among all the American Indians, the relationships arising out of the prevailing form of the family stand in contradiction to the system of consanguinity.

How is this to be explained? In view of the decisive role which kinship plays in the social order of all peoples in the stage of savagery and barbarism, the significance of so widespread a system cannot be explained away by mere phrases. A system which is generally prevalent throughout America, which likewise exists in Asia among peoples of an entirely different race, and more or less modified forms of which abound everywhere throughout Africa and Australia, requires to be historically explained; it cannot be explained away, as McLennan, for example, attempted to do. The terms father, child, brother and sister are no mere honorific titles, but carry with them absolutely definite and very serious mutual obligations, the totality of which forms an essential part of the social constitution of these peoples. And the explanation was found. In the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) there existed as late as the first half of the present century a form of the family which yielded just such fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces as are demanded by the American and ancient Indian system of consanguinity. But strangely enough, the system of consanguinity prevalent in Hawaii again clashed with the actual form of the family existing there. There, all first cousins, without exception, are regarded as brothers and sisters and as the common children, not only of their mother and her sisters, or of their father and his brothers, but of all the brothers and sisters of their parents without distinction. Thus, if the American system of consanguinity presupposes a more primitive form of the family, no longer existing in America

itself, but actually still found in Hawaii, the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, on the other hand, points to an even more aboriginal form of the family, which, although not provable as still extant anywhere, *must* nevertheless have existed, for otherwise the system of consanguinity corresponding to it could not have arisen. "The family," says Morgan, "represents an active principle. It is never stationary, but advances from a lower to a higher form as society advances from a lower to a higher condition. Systems of consanguinity, on the contrary, are passive, recording the progress made by the family at long intervals apart, and only changing radically when the family has radically changed." "And," adds Marx, "the same applies to political, juridical, religious and philosophical systems generally." While the family continues to live, the system of consanguinity becomes ossified, and while this latter continues to exist in the customary form, the family outgrows it. However, just as Cuvier could with certainty conclude, from the pouch bones of an animal skeleton found near Paris, that this belonged to a marsupial and that now extinct marsupials had once lived there, so we, with the same certainty, can conclude, from a historically transmitted system of consanguinity, that an extinct form of the family corresponding to it had once existed.

The systems of consanguinity and forms of the family just referred to differ from those which prevail today in that each child has several fathers and mothers. According to the American system of consanguinity, to which the Hawaiian family corresponds, brother and sister cannot be the father and the mother of one and the same child; the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, on the contrary, presupposes a family in which this was the rule. We are confronted with a series of forms of the family which directly contradict the forms hitherto generally accepted as being the only ones prevailing. The traditional conception knows monogamy only, along with polygamy on the part of individual men, and even, perhaps, polyandry on the part of individual women, and hushes up the fact—as is the way with moralizing philistines—that in practice these bounds imposed by official society are silently but unblushingly transgressed. The study of the history of

primitive society, on the contrary, reveals to us conditions in which men live in polygamy and their wives simultaneously in polyandry, and the common children are, therefore, regarded as being common to them all; in their turn, these conditions undergo a whole series of modifications until they are ultimately dissolved in monogamy. These modifications are of such a character that the circle of people embraced by the tie of common marriage—very wide originally—becomes narrower and narrower, until, finally, only the single couple is left, which predominates today.

In thus constructing retrospectively the history of the family, Morgan, in agreement with the majority of his colleagues, arrived at a primitive stage at which promiscuous intercourse prevailed within a tribe, so that every woman belonged equally to every man and, similarly, every man to every woman. There had been talk about such a primitive condition ever since the last century, but only in a most general way; Bachofen was the first—and this was one of his great services—to take this condition seriously and to search for traces of it in historical and religious traditions. We know today that the traces he discovered do not at all lead back to a social stage of sexual promiscuity, but to a much later form, group marriage. That primitive social stage, if it really existed, belongs to so remote an epoch that we can scarcely expect to find *direct* evidence of its former existence in social fossils, among backward savages. It is precisely to Bachofen's credit that he placed this question in the forefront of investigation.¹

It has become the fashion of late to deny the existence of

¹ How little Bachofen understood what he had discovered, or rather guessed, is proved by his description of this primitive condition as *hetaerism*. This word was used by the Greeks, when they introduced it, to describe intercourse between unmarried men, or those living in monogamy, and unmarried women; it always presupposes the existence of a definite form of marriage outside of which this intercourse takes place, and includes prostitution, at least as an already existing possibility. The word was never used in any other sense and I use it in this sense with Morgan. Bachofen's highly important discoveries are everywhere incredibly mystified by his fantastic belief that the historically arisen relations between man and woman sprang from men's religious ideas of the given period and not from their actual conditions of life. [Note by Engels.]

this initial stage in the sexual life of mankind. The aim is to spare humanity this "shame." Apart from pointing to the absence of any direct evidence, reference is particularly made to the example of the rest of the animal world; wherefrom Letourneau (*Evolution of Marriage and Family*, 1888¹) collected numerous facts purporting to show that here, too, complete sexual promiscuity belongs to a lower stage. The only conclusion I can draw from all these facts, however, is that they prove absolutely nothing as far as man and his primeval conditions of life are concerned. Mating for lengthy periods of time among vertebrate animals can be sufficiently explained on physiological grounds; for example, among birds, the need of help by the female during brooding time; the examples of faithful monogamy among birds prove nothing whatsoever for human beings, since these are not descended from birds. And if strict monogamy is to be regarded as the acme of all virtue, then the palm must be given to the tapeworm, which possesses a complete male and female sexual apparatus in every one of its 50 to 200 proglottides or segments of the body, and passes the whole of its life in cohabiting with itself in every one of these segments. If, however, we limit ourselves to mammals, we find all forms of sexual life among them: promiscuity, suggestions of group marriage, polygamy and monogamy. Only polyandry is absent. This could only be achieved by humans. Even our nearest relatives, the *quadrumana*, exhibit the utmost possible diversity in the grouping of male and female; and, if we want to draw the line closer and consider only the four anthropoid apes, Letourneau can tell us only that they are sometimes monogamous and sometimes polygamous, while Saussure, quoted by Giraud-Teulon, asserts that they are monogamous. The recent assertions of Westermarck in his *The History of Human Marriage* (London 1891) regarding monogamy among anthropoid apes are also no proof by far. In short, the reports are of such a character that the honest Letourneau admits: "For the rest, there exists among the mammals absolutely no strict relation between the degree of intellectual development and the form of sexual union."

¹ Ch. Letourneau, *L'Evolution du Mariage et de la Famille*, Paris 1888.—Ed.

And Espinas (*Animal Societies*, 1877¹) says point-blank: "The horde is the highest social group observable among animals. It *seems* to be composed of families, but right from the outset the *family and the horde stand in antagonism to each other*, they develop in inverse ratio."

As is evident from the above, we know next to nothing conclusively about the family and other social groupings of the anthropoid apes. The reports directly contradict one another. Nor is this to be wondered at. How contradictory, how much in need of critical examination and sifting are the reports in our possession concerning even savage human tribes! But ape societies are still more difficult to observe than human societies. We must, therefore, for the present reject every conclusion drawn from such absolutely unreliable reports.

The passage from Espinas, quoted above, however, provides us with a better clue. Among the higher animals the horde and the family are not complementary, but antagonistic to each other. Espinas describes very neatly how jealousy amongst the males at mating time loosens, or temporarily dissolves, every gregarious horde. "Where the family is closely bound together hordes are rare exceptions. On the other hand, the horde arises almost naturally where free sexual intercourse or polygamy is the rule. . . . For a horde to arise the family ties must have been loosened and the individual freed again. That is why we so rarely meet with organized flocks among birds. . . . Among mammals, on the other hand, more or less organized societies are to be found, precisely because the individual in this case is not merged in the family. . . . Thus, at its inception, the collective feeling [*conscience collective*] of the horde can have no greater enemy than the collective feeling of the family. Let us not hesitate to say: if a higher social form than the family has evolved, it can have been due solely to the fact that it incorporated within itself families which had undergone a fundamental transformation; which does not exclude the possibility that, precisely for this reason, these families were later able to reconstitute themselves under infinitely more favourable circumstances."

¹ A. Espinas, *Des Sociétés Animales. Étude de Psychologie Comparée*, Paris 1877, pp. 303-04.—Ed.

(Espinass, *op. cit.* [Ch. I], quoted by Giraud-Teulon in his *Origin of Marriage and Family*, 1884,¹ pp. 518-20.)

From this it becomes apparent that animal societies have, to be sure, a certain value in drawing conclusions regarding human societies—but only in a negative sense. As far as we have ascertained, the higher vertebrates know only two forms of the family: polygamy or the single pair. In both cases only *one* adult male, only *one* husband is permissible. The jealousy of the male, representing both tie and limits of the family, brings the animal family into conflict with the horde. The horde, the higher social form, is rendered impossible here, loosened there, or dissolved altogether during the mating season; at best, its continued development is hindered by the jealousy of the male. This alone suffices to prove that the animal family and primitive human society are incompatible things; that primitive man, working his way up out of the animal stage, either knew no family whatsoever, or at the most knew a family that is non-existent among animals. So weaponless an animal as the creature that was becoming man could survive in small numbers also in isolation, with the single pair as the highest form of gregariousness, as is ascribed by Westermarck to the gorilla and chimpanzee on the basis of hunters' reports. For evolution out of the animal stage, for the accomplishment of the greatest advance known to nature, an additional element was needed: the replacement of the individual's inadequate power of defence by the united strength and joint effort of the horde. The transition to the human stage out of conditions such as those under which the anthropoid apes live today would be absolutely inexplicable. These apes rather give the impression of being stray sidelines gradually approaching extinction, and, at any rate, in process of decline. This alone is sufficient reason for rejecting all conclusions that are based on parallels drawn between their family forms and those of primitive man. Mutual toleration among the adult males, freedom from jealousy, was, however, the first condition for the building of those large and enduring groups in the midst of which alone the transition from animal to man

¹ A. Giraud-Teulon, *Les origines du mariage et de la famille*, Genève 1884.—Ed.

could be achieved. And indeed, what do we find as the oldest, most primitive form of the family, of which undeniable evidence can be found in history, and which even today can be studied here and there? Group marriage, the form in which whole groups of men and whole groups of women belong to one another, and which leaves but little scope for jealousy. And further, we find at a later stage of development the exceptional form of polyandry, which still more militates against all feeling of jealousy, and is, therefore, unknown to animals. Since, however, the forms of group marriage known to us are accompanied by such peculiarly complicated conditions that they necessarily point to earlier, simpler forms of sexual relations and thus, in the last analysis, to a period of promiscuous intercourse corresponding to the period of transition from animality to humanity, references to the forms of marriage among animals bring us back again to the very point from which they were supposed to have led us once and for all.

What, then, does promiscuous sexual intercourse mean? That the restrictions in force at present or in earlier times did not exist. We have already witnessed the collapse of the barrier of jealousy. If anything is certain, it is that jealousy is an emotion of comparatively late development. The same applies to the conception of incest. Not only did brother and sister live as man and wife originally, but sexual relations between parents and children are permitted among many peoples to this day. Bancroft (*The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America*, 1875, vol. 1¹) testifies to the existence of this among the Kaviats of the Bering Strait, the Kadiaks near Alaska and the Tinnehs in the interior of British North America. Letourneau has collected reports of the same fact among the Chippewa Indians, the Cucus in Chile, the Caribbeans and the Karens of Indo-China, not to mention the accounts of the ancient Greeks and Romans concerning the Parthians, Persians, Scythians, Huns, etc. Prior to the invention of incest (and it *is* an invention, and one of the utmost value), sexual intercourse between parents and children could be no more disgusting than between other persons belonging to different generations—such as indeed occurs today even

¹ H. H. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, vols. I-V, New York 1875-76.—Ed.

in the most philistine countries without exciting great horror; in fact, even old "maids" of over sixty, if they are rich enough, occasionally marry young men of about thirty. However, if we eliminate from the most primitive forms of the family known to us the conceptions of incest that are associated with them—conceptions totally different from our own and often in direct contradiction to them—we arrive at a form of sexual intercourse which can only be described as promiscuous—promiscuous in so far as the restrictions later established by custom did not yet exist. It by no means necessarily follows from this that a higgledy-piggledy promiscuity was in daily practice. Separate pairings for a limited time are by no means excluded; in fact, even in group marriage they now constitute the majority of cases. And if Westermarck, the latest to deny this original state, defines as marriage every case where the two sexes remain mated until the birth of offspring, then it may be said that this kind of marriage could very well occur under the conditions of promiscuous sexual intercourse, without in any way contradicting promiscuity, that is, the absence of barriers to sexual intercourse set up by custom. Westermarck, to be sure, starts out from the viewpoint that "promiscuity involves a suppression of individual inclinations," so that "prostitution is its most genuine form." To me it rather seems that all understanding of primitive conditions remains impossible so long as we regard them through brothel spectacles. We shall return to this point again when dealing with group marriage.

According to Morgan, there developed out of this original condition of promiscuous intercourse, probably at a very early stage:

1. The *Consanguine* family, the first stage of the family. Here the marriage groups are ranged according to generations: all the grandfathers and grandmothers within the limits of the family are all mutual husbands and wives, the same being the case with their children, the fathers and mothers, whose children will again form a third circle of common mates, their children—the great-grandchildren of the first—in turn, forming a fourth circle. Thus, in this form of the family, only ancestors and descendants, parents and children, are excluded from the rights and obligations (as we would say) of marriage with one another. Brothers

and sisters, male and female cousins of the first, second and more remote degrees are all mutually brothers and sisters, and *precisely because of this* are all mutually husbands and wives. At this stage the relation of brother and sister includes the exercise of sexual intercourse with one another as a matter of course.¹ In its typical form, such a family would consist of the descendants of a pair, among whom, again, the descendants of each degree are all brothers and sisters, and, precisely for that reason, all mutual husbands and wives.

The consanguine family has become extinct. Even the rawest peoples known to history furnish no verifiable examples of this form of the family. The conclusion that it *must* have existed, however, is forced upon us by the Hawaiian system of consanguinity, still prevalent throughout Polynesia, which expresses degrees of consanguinity such as can arise only under such a form of the family;

¹ Marx, in a letter written in the spring of 1882, expresses himself in the strongest possible terms about the utter falsification of primeval times appearing in Wagner's *Nibelung* text. "Whoever heard of a brother embracing his sister as his bride?" To these "lewd gods" of Wagner's, who in quite modern style spiced their love affairs with a little incest, Marx gave the answer: "In primeval times the sister *was* the wife, and *that was moral*." [Note by Engels.]

A French friend and admirer of Wagner does not agree with this note, and points out that already in the *Ögisdrecka*, the earlier *Edda*, which Wagner took as his model, Loki reproaches Freia thus: "Thine own brother hast thou embraced before the gods." Marriage between brother and sister, he claimed, was proscribed already at that time. The *Ögisdrecka* is the expression of a time when belief in the ancient myths was completely shattered; it is a truly Lucianian satire on the gods. If Loki, as Mephistopheles, thus reproaches Freia, it argues rather against Wagner. A few verses later, Loki also says to Njord: "You begat [such] a son by your sister" [*vidh systur thinni gastu slikan mög*]. Now, Njord is not an Asa but a Vana, and says, in the *Ynglinga* saga, that marriages between brothers and sisters are customary in Vanaland, which is not the case amongst the Asas. This would seem to indicate that the Vanas were older gods than the Asas. At any rate, Njord lived among the Asas as their equal, and the *Ögisdrecka* is thus rather a proof that intermarriage between brothers and sisters, at least among the gods, did not yet arouse any revulsion at the time the Norwegian Sagas of the gods originated. If one wants to excuse Wagner, one would do better to cite Goethe instead of the *Edda*, for Goethe, in his Ballad of God and the Bayadere, makes a similar mistake regarding the religious surrender of women, which he likens far too closely to modern prostitution. [Note by Engels to the fourth edition.]

and we are forced to the same conclusion by the entire further development of the family, which postulates this form as a necessary preliminary stage.

2. The *Punaluan* family. If the first advance in organization was the exclusion of parents and children from mutual sexual relations, the second was the exclusion of brothers and sisters. In view of the greater similarity in the ages of the participants, this step forward was infinitely more important, but also more difficult, than the first. It was accomplished gradually, commencing most probably with the exclusion of natural brothers and sisters (that is, on the maternal side) from sexual relations, at first in isolated cases, then gradually becoming the rule (in Hawaii exceptions to this rule still existed in the present century), and ending with the prohibition of marriage even between collateral brothers and sisters, or, as we would call them, between first, second and third cousins. According to Morgan it "affords a good illustration of the operation of the principle of natural selection." It is beyond question that tribes among whom inbreeding was restricted by this advance were bound to develop more rapidly and fully than those among whom intermarriage between brothers and sisters remained both rule and duty. And how powerfully the effect of this advance was felt is proved by the institution of the *gens*, which arose directly from it and shot far beyond the mark. The *gens* was the foundation of the social order of most, if not all, barbarian peoples of the world, and in Greece and Rome we pass directly from it into civilization.

Every primeval family had to split up after a couple of generations, at the latest. The original communistic common household, which prevailed without exception until the late middle stage of barbarism, determined a certain maximum size of the family community, varying according to circumstances but fairly definite in each locality. As soon as the conception of the impropriety of sexual intercourse between the children of a common mother arose, it was bound to have an effect upon such divisions of old and the foundation of new household communities [*Hausgemeinden*] (which, however, did not necessarily coincide with the family group). One or more groups of sisters became the nucleus of one household, their natural brothers

the nucleus of the other. In this or some similar way the form of the family which Morgan calls the punaluan family developed out of the consanguine family. According to the Hawaiian custom, a number of sisters, either natural or collateral (that is, first, second or more distant cousins), were the common wives of their common husbands, from which relation, however, their brothers were excluded. These husbands no longer addressed one another as brothers—which indeed they no longer had to be—but as punalua, that is, intimate companion, partner, as it were. In the same way, a group of natural or collateral brothers held in common marriage a number of women, who were *not* their sisters, and these women addressed one another as punalua. This is the classical form of family structure [*Familienformation*] which later admitted of a series of variations, and the essential characteristic feature of which was: mutual community of husbands and wives within a definite family circle, from which, however, the brothers of the wives—first the natural brothers, and later the collateral brothers also—were excluded, the same applying conversely to the sisters of the husbands.

This form of the family now furnishes us with the most complete accuracy the degrees of kinship as expressed in the American system. The children of my mother's sisters still remain her children, the children of my father's brothers being likewise his children, and all of them are my brothers and sisters; but the children of my mother's brothers are now her nephews and nieces, the children of my father's sisters are his nephews and nieces, and they all are my cousins. For while my mother's sisters' husbands still remain her husbands, and my father's brothers' wives likewise still remain his wives—by right, if not always in actual fact—the social proscription of sexual intercourse between brothers and sisters now divided the first cousins, hitherto indiscriminately regarded as brothers and sisters, into two classes: some remain (collateral) brothers and sisters as before; the others, the children of brothers on the one hand and of sisters on the other, *can* no longer be brothers and sisters, can no longer have common parents, whether father, mother, or both, and therefore the class of nephews and nieces, male and female cousins—which would have been senseless in the previous family system—

becomes necessary for the first time. The American system of consanguinity, which appears to be utterly absurd in every family form based on some kind of individual marriage, is rationally explained and naturally justified, down to its minutest details, by the punaluan family. To the extent that this system of consanguinity was prevalent, to exactly the same extent, at least, must the punaluan family, or a form similar to it, have existed.

This form of the family proved actually to have existed in Hawaii, would probably have been demonstrable throughout Polynesia, had the pious missionaries—like the quondam Spanish monks in America—been able to perceive in these unchristian relations something more than mere “abomination.”¹ When Caesar tells us of the Britons, who at that time were in the middle stage of barbarism, that “by tens and by twelves they possessed their wives in common; and it was mostly brothers with brothers and parents with their children,” this is best explained as group marriage. Barbarian mothers have no ten or twelve sons old enough to be able to keep wives in common, but the American system of consanguinity, which corresponds to the punaluan family, provides many brothers, since all a man’s near and distant cousins are his brothers. The expression “parents with their children” may conceivably be a misunderstanding on Caesar’s part; this system, however, does not absolutely exclude the presence of father and son, or mother and daughter, in the same marriage group, though it does exclude the presence of father and daughter, or mother and son. In the same way, this or a similar form of group marriage provides the simplest explanation of the reports of Herodotus and other ancient writers, concerning community of wives among savage and barbarian peoples. This also applies to the description of the Tikurs of Oudh (north of the Ganges) given by Watson and Kaye in their

¹ There can no longer be any doubt that the traces of indiscriminate sexual intercourse, his so-called “*Sumpfzeugung*” which Bachofen believes he has discovered, lead back to group marriage. “If Bachofen regards these punaluan marriages as ‘lawless,’ a man of that period would likewise regard most present-day marriages between near and distant cousins on the father’s or the mother’s side as incestuous, that is, as marriages between consanguineous brothers and sisters.” (Marx.) —[Note by Engels.]

book *The People of India*¹: "They live together (that is, sexually) almost indiscriminately in large communities, and when two people are regarded as married, the tie is but nominal."

In by far the majority of cases the institution of the *gens* seems to have originated directly from the punaluan family. To be sure, the Australian class system also offers a starting point for it²: the Australians have *gentes*; but they have not yet the punaluan family; they have a cruder form of group marriage.

In all forms of the group family it is uncertain who the father of a child is, but it is certain who the mother is. Although she calls *all* the children of the aggregate family her children and is charged with the duties of a mother towards them, she, nevertheless, knows her natural children from the others. It is thus clear that, wherever group marriage exists, descent is traceable only on the *maternal* side, and thus the *female line* alone is recognized. This, in fact, is the case among all savage peoples and among those belonging to the lower stage of barbarism; and it is Bachofen's second great achievement to have been the first to discover this. He terms this exclusive recognition of lineage through the mother, and the inheritance relations that arose out of it in the course of time, mother right. I retain this term for the sake of brevity. It is, however, an unhappy choice, for at this social stage, there is as yet no such thing as right in the legal sense.

Now if we take from the punaluan family one of the two typical groups—namely, that consisting of a number of natural and collateral sisters (that is, those descendent from natural sisters in the first, second or more remote degree), together with their children and their natural or collateral brothers on their mother's side (who according to our premise are *not* their husbands), we obtain exactly that circle of persons who later appear as members of a *gens*, in the original form of this institution. They have all a common ancestress, whose female descendants, generation by generation, are sisters by virtue of descent from her.

¹ J. F. Watson, and J. W. Kaye, *op. cit.*, vols. I-VI, London 1868-72.—*Ed.*

² Here and below the author speaks of the large marriage groups of the Australian aborigines.—*Ed.*

These sisters' husbands, however, can no longer be their brothers, that is, cannot be descended from this ancestress, and, therefore, do not belong to the consanguineous group, the later gens; but their children do belong to this group, since descent on the mother's side is alone decisive, because it alone is certain. Once the proscription of sexual intercourse between all brothers and sisters, including even the most remote collateral relations on the mother's side, becomes established, the above group is transformed into a gens—that is, constitutes itself as a rigidly limited circle of blood relatives in the female line, who are not allowed to marry one another; from now on it increasingly consolidates itself by other common institutions of a social and religious character, and differentiates itself from the other gentes of the same tribe. We shall deal with this in greater detail later. If, however, we find that the gens not only necessarily, but even obviously evolved out of the punaluan family, then there is ground for assuming almost as a certainty that this form of the family existed formerly among all peoples to whom gentile institutions are traceable—that is, nearly all barbarian and civilized peoples.

At the time Morgan wrote his book our knowledge of group marriage was still very limited. A little was known about the group marriages current among the Australians, who were organized in classes, and, in addition, Morgan, as early as 1871, published the information that reached him concerning the Hawaiian punaluan family. On the one hand, the punaluan family furnished the complete explanation of the system of consanguinity prevalent among the American Indians—the system which was the starting point of all of Morgan's investigations; on the other hand, it constituted a ready point of departure for the derivation of the mother-right gens; and, finally, it represented a far higher stage of development than the Australian classes. It is, therefore, comprehensible that Morgan should conceive the punaluan family as a stage of development necessarily preceding the pairing family, and assume that it was generally prevalent in earlier times. Since then we have learned of a series of other forms of group marriage and now know that Morgan went too far in this respect. Nevertheless, in his punaluan family, he had the good fortune to come across the highest, the classical form of group marriage,

the form from which the transition to a higher stage is most easily explained.

We are indebted to the English missionary Lorimer Fison for the most essential enrichment of our knowledge of group marriage, for he studied this form of the family for years in its classical home, Australia. He found the lowest stage of development among the Australian Negroes of Mount Gambier in South Australia. The whole tribe is here divided into two great classes—Kroki and Kumite. Sexual intercourse within each of these classes is strictly proscribed; on the other hand, every man of one class is the born husband of every woman of the other class, and she is his born wife. Not individuals, but entire groups are married to one another; class to class. And be it noted, no reservations at all are made here concerning difference of age, or special blood relationship, other than those determined by the division into two exogamous classes. A Kroki legitimately has every Kumite woman for his wife; since, however, his own daughter by a Kumite woman is, according to mother right, also a Kumite, she is thereby the born wife of every Kroki, including her father. At all events, the class organization, as we know it, imposes no restriction here. Hence, this organization either arose at a time when, despite all dim impulses to limit inbreeding, sexual intercourse between parents and children was not yet regarded with any particular horror, in which case the class system would have arisen directly out of a condition of promiscuous sexual intercourse; or intercourse between parents and children *had already been* proscribed by custom when the classes arose, in which case the present position points back to the consanguine family, and is the first advance beyond it. The latter assumption is the more probable. Cases of marital connections between parents and children have not, as far as I am aware, been reported from Australia; and the later form of exogamy, the mother-right gens, also, as a rule, tacitly presupposes the prohibition of such converse as something already existing upon its establishment.

Apart from Mount Gambier, in South Australia, the two-class system is likewise to be found along the Darling River, farther East, and in Queensland, in the North-East, thus being very wide-spread. This system excludes only

marriage between brothers and sisters, between the children of brothers and between the children of sisters on the mother's side, because these belong to the same class; on the other hand, the children of brother and sister are permitted to marry. A further step towards the prevention of inbreeding is to be found among the Kamilaroi, along the Darling River, in New South Wales, where the two original classes are split into four, and each one of these four classes is likewise married bodily to another definite class. The first two classes are the born spouses of each other; the children become members of the third or the fourth class according to whether the mother belongs to the first or the second class; and the children of the third and fourth classes, which are likewise married to each other, belong again to the first and second classes. So that one generation always belongs to the first and second classes, the next belongs to the third and fourth, and the next again to the first and second. According to this system, the children of brothers and sisters (on the mother's side) may not become man and wife—their grandchildren, however, may. This strangely complicated system is made even more intricate by the grafting on of mother-right gentes, at any rate, later; but we cannot go into this here. We see, then, how the impulse towards the prevention of inbreeding asserts itself time and again, but in a groping, spontaneous way, without clear consciousness of purpose.

Group marriage, which in the case of Australia is still class marriage, the state of marriage of a whole class of men, often scattered over the whole breadth of the continent, with a similarly widely distributed class of women—this group marriage, when observed more closely, is not quite so horrible as is fancied by the philistine in his brothel-tainted imagination. On the contrary, long years passed before its existence was even suspected, and indeed, it has been again disputed only quite recently. To the superficial observer it appears to be a kind of loose monogamy and, in places, polygamy, accompanied by occasional infidelity. One must spend years, as Fison and Howitt did, on the task of discovering the law that regulates these conditions of marriage—which in practice rather remind the average European of his own marital customs—the law according to which an Australian Negro, even when a stranger

thousands of miles away from his home, among people whose very language he does not understand, nevertheless, quite often, in roaming from camp to camp, from tribe to tribe, finds women who guilelessly, without resistance, give themselves to him; and according to which he who has several wives offers one of them to his guest for the night. Where the European can see only immorality and lawlessness strict law actually reigns. The women belong to the stranger's marriage class, and are therefore his born wives; the same moral law which assigns one to the other, prohibits, on pain of banishment, all intercourse outside the marriage classes that belong to each other. Even where women are abducted, which is frequently the case, and in some areas the rule, the class law is scrupulously observed.

The abduction of women already reveals even here a trace of the transition to individual marriage—at least in the form of the pairing marriage: After the young man has abducted, or eloped with, the girl with the assistance of his friends, all of them have sexual intercourse with her one after the other, whereupon, however, she is regarded the wife of the young man who initiated the abduction. And conversely, should the abducted woman run away from the man and be captured by another, she becomes the latter's wife, and the first man loses his privilege. Thus, exclusive relations, pairing for longer or shorter periods, and also polygamy, establish themselves alongside of and within the system of group marriage, which, in general, continues to exist; so that here also group marriage is gradually dying out, the only question being which will first disappear from the scene as a result of European influence—group marriage or the Australian Negroes who indulge in it.

In any case, marriage in whole classes, such as prevails in Australia, is a very low and primitive form of group marriage; whereas the punaluan family is, as far as we know, its highest stage of development. The former would seem to be the form corresponding to the social status of roving savages, while the latter presupposes relatively stable settlements of communistic communities and leads directly to the next and higher stage of development. Some intermediate stages will assuredly be found between these two; here an only just opened and barely trodden field of investigation lies before us.

3. The *Pairing* family. A certain pairing for longer or shorter periods took place already under group marriage, or even earlier. Among his numerous wives, the man had a principal wife (one can scarcely yet call her his favourite wife) and he was her principal husband, among the others. This situation contributed in no small degree to the confusion among the missionaries, who see in group marriage, now promiscuous community of wives, now wanton adultery. Such habitual pairing, however, necessarily became more and more established as the gens developed and as the numbers of classes of "brothers" and "sisters" between which marriage was now impossible increased. The impetus given by the gens to prevent marriage between blood relatives drove things still further. Thus we find that among the Iroquois and most other Indian tribes in the lower stage of barbarism, marriage is prohibited between *all* relatives recognized by their system, and these are of several hundred kinds. This growing complexity of marriage prohibitions rendered group marriages more and more impossible; they were supplanted by the *pairing family*. At this stage one man lives with one woman, yet in such manner that polygamy and occasional infidelity remain men's privileges, even though the former is seldom practised for economic reasons; at the same time, the strictest fidelity is demanded of the woman during the period of cohabitation, adultery on her part being cruelly punished. The marriage tie can, however, be easily dissolved by either side, and the children belong solely to the mother, as previously.

In this ever widening exclusion of blood relatives from marriage, natural selection also continues to have its effect. In Morgan's words, marriage between non-consanguineous gentes "tended to create a more vigorous stock physically and mentally. When two advancing tribes are blended into one people... the new skull and brain would widen and lengthen to the sum of the capabilities of both." Tribes constituted according to gentes were bound, therefore, to gain the upper hand over the more backward ones, or carry them along by force of their example.

Thus, the evolution of the family in prehistoric times consisted in the continual narrowing of the circle—originally embracing the whole tribe—within which marital

community between the two sexes prevailed. By the successive exclusion, first of closer, then of ever remoter relatives, and finally even of those merely related by marriage, every kind of group marriage was ultimately rendered practically impossible; and in the end there remained only the one, for the moment still loosely united, couple, the molecule, with the dissolution of which marriage itself completely ceases. This fact alone shows how little individual sex love, in the modern sense of the word, had to do with the origin of monogamy. The practice of all peoples in this stage affords still further proof of this. Whereas under previous forms of the family men were never in want of women but, on the contrary, had a surfeit of them, women now became scarce and were sought after. Consequently, with pairing marriage begins the abduction and purchase of women—wide-spread *symptoms*, but nothing more, of a much more deeply-rooted change that had set in. These symptoms, mere methods of obtaining women, McLennan, the pedantic Scot, nevertheless metamorphosed into special classes of families which he called "marriage by abduction" and "marriage by purchase." Moreover, among the American Indians, and also among other tribes (at the same stage), the arrangement of a marriage is not the affair of the two parties to the same, who, indeed, are often not even consulted, but of their respective mothers. Two complete strangers are thus often betrothed and only learn of the conclusion of the deal when the marriage day approaches. Prior to the marriage, presents are made by the bridegroom to the gentile relatives of the bride (that is, to her relatives on her mother's side, not to the father and his relatives), these presents serving as purchase gifts for the ceded girl. The marriage may be dissolved at the pleasure of either of the two spouses. Nevertheless, among many tribes, for example, the Iroquois, public sentiment gradually developed against such separations. When conflicts arise, the gentile relatives of both parties intervene and attempt a reconciliation, and separation takes place only after such efforts prove fruitless, the children remaining with the mother and each party being free to marry again.

The pairing family, itself too weak and unstable to make an independent household necessary, or even desirable, did

not by any means dissolve the communistic household transmitted from earlier times. But the communistic household implies the supremacy of women in the house, just as the exclusive recognition of a natural mother, because of the impossibility of determining the natural father with certainty, signifies high esteem for the women, that is, for the mothers. That woman was the slave of man at the commencement of society is one of the most absurd notions that have come down to us from the period of Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Woman occupied not only a free but also a highly respected position among all savages and all barbarians of the lower and middle stages and partly even of the upper stage. Let Arthur Wright, missionary for many years among the Seneca Iroquois, testify what her place still was in the pairing family: "As to their family system, when occupying the old long houses [communistic households embracing several families] ... it is probable that some one clan [gens] predominated, the women taking in husbands from other clans [gentes].... Usually the female portion ruled the house; the stores were in common; but woe to the luckless husband or lover who was too shiftless to do his share of the providing. No matter how many children or whatever goods he might have in the house, he might at any time be ordered to pack up his blanket and budge; and after such orders it would not be healthful for him to attempt to disobey. The house would be too hot for him; and he had to retreat to his own clan [gens]; or, as was often done, go and start a new matrimonial alliance in some other. The women were the great power among the clans [gentes], as everywhere else. They did not hesitate, when occasion required, to knock off the horns, as it was technically called, from the head of the chief and send him back to the ranks of the warriors." The communistic household, in which most of the women or even all the women belong to one and the same gens, while the men come from various other gentes, is the material foundation of that predominancy of women which generally obtained in primitive times; and Bachofen's discovery of this constitutes the third great service he has rendered. I may add, furthermore, that the reports of travellers and missionaries about women among savages and barbarians being burdened with excessive toil in no way

conflict with what has been said above. The division of labour between the two sexes is determined by causes entirely different from those that determine the status of women in society. Peoples whose women have to work much harder than we would consider proper often have far more real respect for women than our Europeans have for theirs. The social status of the lady of civilization, surrounded by sham homage and estranged from all real work, is socially infinitely lower than that of the hard-working woman of barbarism, who was regarded among her people as a real lady (lady, *frowa*, *Frau*-mistress [*Herrin*]) and was such by the nature of her position.

Whether or not the pairing family has totally supplanted group marriage in America today must be decided by closer investigation among the North Western and particularly among the South American peoples who are still in the higher stage of savagery. So very many instances of sexual freedom are reported with regard to these latter that the complete suppression of the old group marriage can scarcely be assumed. At any rate, not all traces of it have as yet disappeared. Among at least forty North American tribes, the man who marries the eldest sister in a family is entitled to all her sisters as wives as soon as they reach the requisite age—a survival of the community of husbands for a whole group of sisters. And Bancroft relates that the tribes of the Californian peninsula (in the upper stage of savagery) have certain festivities, during which several “tribes” congregate for the purpose of indiscriminate sexual intercourse. These are manifestly gentes for whom these festivities represent dim memories of the times when the women of one gens had all the men of another for their common husbands, and *vice versa*. The same custom still prevails in Australia. Among a few peoples it happens that the older men, the chiefs and sorcerer-priests, exploit the community of wives for their own ends and monopolize most of the women for themselves; but they, in their turn, have to allow the old common possession to be restored during certain feasts and great popular gatherings and permit their wives to enjoy themselves with the young men. Westermarck (pp. 28 and 29) adduces a whole series of examples of such periodical Saturnalian feasts during which the old free sexual intercourse comes into force again for a short period, as, for

example, among the Hos, the Santals, the Panjas and Kotars of India, among some African peoples, etc. Curiously enough, Westernmarck concludes from this that they are relics, not of group marriage, which he rejects, but—of the mating season common alike to primitive man and the other animals.

We now come to Bachofen's fourth great discovery, that of the wide-spread form of transition from group marriage to pairing. What Bachofen construes as a penance for infringing the ancient commandments of the gods, the penance with which the woman buys her right to chastity, is in fact nothing more than a mystical expression for the penance by means of which the woman purchases her redemption from the ancient community of husbands and acquires the right to give herself to *one* man only. This penance takes the form of limited surrender: the Babylonian women had to surrender themselves once a year in the temple of Mylitta. Other Middle Eastern peoples sent their girls for years to the Temple of Anaitis, where they had to practise free love with favourites of their own choice before they were allowed to marry. Similar customs bearing a religious guise are common to nearly all Asiatic peoples between the Mediterranean and the Ganges. The propitiatory sacrifice for the purpose of redemption becomes gradually lighter in the course of time, as Bachofen notes: "The annually repeated offering yields place to the single performance; the hetaerism of the matrons is succeeded by that of the maidens, its practice during marriage by practice before marriage, the indiscriminate surrender to all by surrender to certain persons" (*Mother Right*,¹ p. xix). Among other peoples, the religious guise is absent; among some—the Thracians, Celts, etc., of antiquity, and many aboriginal inhabitants of India, the Malay peoples, South Sea Islanders and many American Indians even to this day—the girls enjoy the greatest sexual freedom until their marriage. Particularly is this the case throughout almost the whole of South America, as anybody who has penetrated a little into the interior can testify. Thus, Agassiz (*A Journey in Brazil*, Boston and New York, 1886, p. 226) relates the following about a rich family of

¹ J. J. Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht*, Stuttgart 1861.—Ed.

Indian descent. When he was introduced to the daughter and enquired after her father, who, he supposed, was the mother's husband, an officer on active service in the war against Paraguay, the mother answered smilingly: "*não tem pai, é filha da fortuna*"—she has no father, she is the daughter of chance. "It is the way the Indian or half-breed women here always speak of their illegitimate children, unconscious of any wrong or shame. So far is this from being an unusual case that the opposite seems the exception. Children [often] know [only] about their mother, for all the care and responsibility falls upon her; but they have no knowledge of their father, nor does it seem to occur to the woman that she or her children have any claim upon him." What here appears to be so strange to the civilized man is simply the rule according to mother right and in group marriage.

Among still other peoples, the bridegroom's friends and relatives, or the wedding guests, exercise their old traditional right to the bride at the wedding itself, and the bridegroom has his turn last of all; for instance, on the Balearic Islands and among the African Augilas of antiquity, and among the Bareas of Abyssinia even now. In the case of still other peoples, again, an official person—the chief of the tribe or of the gens, the cacique, shaman, priest, prince or whatever his title—represents the community and exercises the right of first night with the bride. Despite all neoromantic whitewashing, this *jus primae noctis*¹ persists to this day as a relic of group marriage among most of the natives of the Alaska territory (Bancroft, *Native Races*, I, p. 81), among the Tachus in North Mexico (*ibid.*, p. 584) and among other peoples; and it existed throughout the Middle Ages at least in the originally Celtic countries, where it was directly transmitted from group marriage; for instance, in Aragon. While the peasant in Castille was never a serf, in Aragon the most ignominious serfdom prevailed until abolished by the decree issued by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1486. This public act states: "We pass judgment and declare that the aforementioned lords (senyors, barons) . . . also shall not sleep the first night with the woman taken in wedlock by a peasant, nor on the wedding night, after

¹ Right of the first night.—Ed.

she has gone to bed, stride over it and over the woman as a sign of their authority; nor shall the aforementioned lords avail themselves of the services of the sons or daughters of the peasant, with or without payment, against their will." (Quoted in the Catalanian original by Sugenheim, *Serfdom*, Petersburg 1861,¹ p. 35).

Bachofen is again absolutely right when he contends throughout that the transition from what he terms "hetaerism" or "*Sumpfzeugung*" to monogamy was brought about essentially by the women. The more the old traditional sexual relations lost their naïve, primitive jungle character, as a result of the development of the economic conditions of life, that is, with the undermining of the old Communism and the growing density of the population, the more degrading and oppressive must they have appeared to the women; the more fervently must they have longed for the right to chastity, to temporary or permanent marriage with one man only, as a deliverance. This advance could not have originated from the men, if only for the reason that they have never—not even to the present day—dreamed of renouncing the pleasures of actual group marriage. Only after the transition to pairing marriage had been effected by the women could the men introduce strict monogamy—for the women only, of course.

The pairing family arose on the border line between savagery and barbarism, mainly at the upper stage of savagery, and here and there only at the lower stage of barbarism. It is the form of the family characteristic of barbarism, in the same way as group marriage is characteristic of savagery and monogamy of civilization. For its further development to stable monogamy, causes different from those we have hitherto found operating were required. In the pairing family, the group was already reduced to its last unit, its two-atom molecule—to one man and one woman. Natural selection had completed its work by constantly reducing the circle of community marriage; there was nothing more left for it to do in this direction. If no new, *social* driving forces had come into operation, there

¹ S. Sugenheim, *Geschichte der Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft und Hörigkeit in Europa bis an die Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* [History of the Abolition of Serfdom and Bond Service in Europe until the Middle of the Nineteenth Century], St. Petersburg 1861.—Ed.

would have been no reason why a new form of the family should arise out of the pairing family. But these driving forces did commence to operate.

We now leave America, the classical soil of the pairing family. There is no evidence to enable us to conclude that a higher form of the family developed there, or that strict monogamy existed in any part of it at any time before its discovery and conquest. It was otherwise in the Old World.

Here the domestication of animals and the breeding of herds had developed a hitherto unsuspected source of wealth and created entirely new social relationships. Until the lower stage of barbarism, fixed wealth consisted almost entirely of the house, clothing, crude ornaments and the implements for procuring and preparing food: boats, weapons and household utensils of the simplest kind. Food had to be won anew day by day. Now, with herds of horses, camels, donkeys, oxen, sheep, goats and pigs, the advancing pastoral peoples—the Aryans in the Indian land of the five rivers and the Ganges area, as well as in the then much more richly watered steppes of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, and the Semites on the Euphrates and the Tigris—acquired possessions demanding merely supervision and most elementary care in order to propagate in ever-increasing numbers and to yield the richest nutriment in milk and meat. All previous means of procuring food now sank into the background. Hunting, once a necessity, now became a luxury.

But to whom did this new wealth belong? Originally, undoubtedly, to the gens. But private property in herds must have developed at a very early stage. It is hard to say whether Father Abraham appeared to the author of the so-called First Book of Moses as the owner of his herds and flocks in his own right as head of a family community or by virtue of his status as actual hereditary chief of a gens. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that we must not regard him as a property owner in the modern sense of the term. Equally certain is it that on the threshold of authenticated history we find that everywhere the herds are already the separate property of the family chiefs, in exactly the same way as were the artistic products of barbarism, metal utensils, articles of luxury and, finally, human cattle—the slaves.

For now slavery also was invented. The slave was useless to the barbarian of the lower stage. It was for this reason that the American Indians treated their vanquished foes quite differently from the way they were treated in the upper stage. The men were either killed or adopted as brothers by the tribe of the victors. The women were either taken in marriage or likewise just adopted along with their surviving children. Human labour power at this stage yielded no noticeable surplus as yet over the cost of its maintenance. With the introduction of cattle breeding, of the working up of metals, of weaving and, finally, of field cultivation, this changed. Just as the once so easily obtainable wives had now acquired an exchange value and were bought, so it happened with labour power, especially after the herds had finally been converted into family possessions. The family did not increase as rapidly as the cattle. More people were required to tend them; the captives taken in war were useful for just this purpose, and, furthermore, they could be bred like the cattle itself.

Such riches, once they had passed into the private possession of families and there rapidly multiplied, struck a powerful blow at a society founded on pairing marriage and mother-right gens. Pairing marriage had introduced a new element into the family. By the side of the natural mother it had placed the authenticated natural father—who was probably better authenticated than many a “father” of the present day. According to the division of labour then prevailing in the family, the procuring of food and the implements necessary thereto, and therefore, also, the ownership of the latter, fell to the man; he took them with him in case of separation, just as the woman retained the household goods. Thus, according to the custom of society at that time, the man was also the owner of the new sources of food stuffs—the cattle—and later, of the new instrument of labour—the slaves. According to the custom of the same society, however, his children could not inherit from him, for the position in this respect was as follows:

According to mother right, that is, as long as descent was reckoned solely through the female line, and according to the original custom of inheritance in the gens, it was the gentile relatives that at first inherited from a deceased

member of the gens. The property had to remain within the gens. At first, in view of the insignificance of the chattels in question, it may, in practice, have passed to the nearest gentile relatives—that is, to the blood relatives on the mother's side. The children of the deceased, however, belonged not to his gens, but to that of their mother. In the beginning, they inherited from their mother, along with the rest of their mother's blood relatives, and later, perhaps, had first claim upon her property; but they could not inherit from their father, because they did not belong to his gens, and his property had to remain in the latter. On the death of the herd owner, therefore, his herds passed, first of all, to his brothers and sisters and to his sisters' children or to the descendants of his mother's sisters. His own children, however, were disinherited.

Thus, as wealth increased, it, on the one hand, gave the man a more important status in the family than the woman, and, on the other hand, created a stimulus to utilize this strengthened position in order to overthrow the traditional order of inheritance in favour of his children. But this was impossible as long as descent according to mother right prevailed. This had, therefore, to be overthrown, and it was overthrown; and it was not so difficult to do this as it appears to us now. For this revolution—one of the most decisive ever experienced by mankind—need not have disturbed one single living member of a gens. All the members could remain what they were previously. The simple decision sufficed that in future the descendants of the male members should remain in the gens, but that those of the females were to be excluded from the gens and transferred to that of their father. The reckoning of descent through the female line and the right of inheritance through the mother were hereby overthrown and male lineage and right of inheritance from the father instituted. As to how and when this revolution was effected among the civilized peoples we know nothing. It falls entirely within prehistoric times. That it *was* actually effected is more than proved by the abundant traces of mother right which have been collected, especially by Bachofen. How easily it is accomplished can be seen from a whole number of Indian tribes, among whom it has only recently taken place and is still proceeding, partly under the influence of increasing

wealth and changed methods of life (transplantation from the forests to the prairies), and partly under the moral influence of civilization and the missionaries. Of eight Missouri tribes, six have male and two still retain the female lineage and female inheritance line. Among the Shawnees, Miamis and Delawares it has become the custom to transfer the children to the father's gens by giving them one of the gentile names obtaining therein, in order that they may inherit from him. "Innate human casuistry to seek to change things by changing their names! And to find loopholes for breaking through tradition within tradition itself, wherever a direct interest provided a sufficient motive!" (Marx.) As a consequence, hopeless confusion arose; and matters could only be straightened out, and partly were straightened out, by the transition to father right. "This appears altogether to be the most natural transition." (Marx.) As for what the experts on comparative law have to tell us regarding the ways and means by which this transition was effected among the civilized peoples of the Old World—almost mere hypotheses, of course—see M. Kovalevsky, *Outline of the Origin and Evolution of the Family and Property*, Stockholm 1890.¹

The overthrow of mother right was the *world-historic defeat of the female sex*. The man seized the reins in the house also, the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children. This lowered position of women, especially manifest among the Greeks of the Heroic and still more of the Classical Age, has become gradually embellished and dissembled and, in part, clothed in a milder form, but by no means abolished.

The first effect of the sole rule of the men that was now established is shown in the intermediate form of the family which now emerges, the patriarchal family. Its chief attribute is not polygamy—of which more anon—but "the organization of a number of persons, bond and free, into a family, under the paternal power of the head of the family. In the Semitic form, this family chief lives in polygamy, the bondsman has a wife and children, and the purpose of the whole organization is the care of flocks and

¹ Maxim Kovalevsky, *Tableau des origines et de l'évolution de la famille et de la propriété*, Stockholm 1890.—Ed.

herds over a limited area." The essential features are the incorporation of bondsmen and the paternal power; the Roman family, accordingly, constitutes the perfected type of this form of the family. The word *familia* did not originally signify the ideal of our modern philistine, which is a compound of sentimentality and domestic discord. Among the Romans, in the beginning, it did not even refer to the married couple and their children, but to the slaves alone. *Famulus* means a household slave and *familia* signifies the totality of slaves belonging to one individual. Even in the time of Gaius the *familia*, *id est patrimonium* (that is, the inheritance) was bequeathed by will. The expression was invented by the Romans to describe a new social organism, the head of which had under him wife and children and a number of slaves, under Roman paternal power, with power of life and death over them all. "The term, therefore, is no older than the ironclad family system of the Latin tribes, which came in after field agriculture and after legalized servitude, as well as after the separation of the Greeks and (Aryan) Latins." To which Marx adds: "The modern family contains in embryo not only slavery (*servitus*) but serfdom also, since from the very beginning it is connected with agricultural services. It contains within itself in *miniature* all the antagonisms which later develop on a wide scale within society and its state."

Such a form of the family shows the transition of the pairing family to monogamy. In order to guarantee the fidelity of the wife, that is, the paternity of the children, the woman is placed in the man's absolute power; if he kills her, he is but exercising his right.

With the patriarchal family we enter the field of written history and, therewith, a field in which the science of comparative law can render us important assistance. And in fact it has here procured us considerable progress. We are indebted to Maxim Kovalevsky (*Outline of the Origin and Evolution of the Family and Property*, Stockholm 1890, pp. 60-100) for the proof that the patriarchal household community (*Hausgenossenschaft*), such as we still find today among the Serbs and the Bulgars under the designations of *Zadruga* (meaning something like fraternity) or *Bratstvo* (brotherhood), and among the Oriental peoples in a modified form, constituted the transition stage between

the mother-right family which evolved out of group marriage and the individual family known to the modern world. This appears to be proved at least as far as the civilized peoples of the Old World, the Aryans and Semites, are concerned.

The South-Slavic *Zadruga* provides the best existing example of such a family community. It embraces several generations of the descendants of one father and their wives, who all live together in one household, till their fields in common, feed and clothe themselves from the common store and communally own all surplus products. The community is under the supreme management of the master of the house (*domàcin*), who represents it in external affairs, may dispose of smaller objects, and manages the finances, being responsible for the latter as well as for the regular conduct of business. He is elected and does not by any means need to be the eldest. The women and their work are under the direction of the mistress of the house (*domàcica*), who is usually the *domàcin*'s wife. In the choice of husbands for the girls she has an important, often the decisive voice. Supreme power, however, is vested in the Family Council, the assembly of all adult members, women as well as men. To this assembly the master of the house renders his account; it makes all the important decisions, administers justice among the members, decides on purchases and sales of any importance, especially of landed property, etc.

It was only about ten years ago that the existence of such large family communities in Russia also was proved; they are now generally recognized as being just as firmly rooted in the popular customs of the Russians as the *obščina*, or village community. They figure in the most ancient Russian law code—the *Pravda* of Yaroslav—under the same name (*vervj*) as in the Dalmatian Laws, and references to them may be found also in Polish and Czech historical sources.

According to Heusler (*Institutes of German Right*¹) the economic unit among the Germans also was not originally the individual family in the modern sense, but the "house

¹ A. Heusler, *Institutionen des deutschen Rechts*. Bd. I-II, Leipzig 1885-86.—*Ed.*

community" (*Hausgenossenschaft*), consisting of several generations, or individual families, and more often than not including plenty of bondsmen. The Roman family, too, has been traced back to this type, and in consequence the absolute power of the head of the house, as also the lack of rights of the remaining members of the family in relation to him, has recently been strongly questioned. Similar family communities are likewise supposed to have existed among the Celts in Ireland; in France they continued to exist in Nivernais under the name of *parçonneries* right up to the French Revolution, while in Franche Comté they are not quite extinct even today. In the district of Louhans (Saône et Loire) may be seen large peasant houses with a lofty communal central hall reaching up to the roof, surrounded by sleeping rooms, to which access is had by staircases of from six to eight steps, and in which dwell several generations of the same family.

In India, the household community with common tillage of the soil was already mentioned by Nearchus, in the time of Alexander the Great, and exists to this day in the same area, in the Punjab and the entire North-Western part of the country. Kovalevsky himself was able to testify to its existence in the Caucasus. It still exists in Algeria among the Kabyles. It is said to have existed even in America; attempts are being made to identify it with the *calpullis*¹ in ancient Mexico, described by Zurita; Cunow, on the other hand, has proved fairly clearly (in *Ausland*, 1890, Nos. 42-44) that a kind of mark constitution existed in Peru (where, peculiarly enough, the mark was called *marca*) at the time of the Conquest, with periodical allotment of the cultivated land, that is, individual tillage.

At any rate, the patriarchal household community with common land ownership and common tillage now assumes quite another significance than hitherto. We can no longer doubt the important transitional role which it played among the civilized and many other peoples of the Old World between the mother-right family and the monogamian family. We shall return later on to the further conclusion drawn by Kovalevsky, namely, that it was likewise the transition stage out of which developed the village, or mark, community

¹ *Calpullis*: Aztec family community.—Ed.

with individual cultivation and at first periodical, then permanent allotment of arable and pasture lands.

As regards family life within these household communities, it should be noted that in Russia, at least, the head of the house is reputed to be strongly abusing his position as far as the younger women, particularly his daughters-in-law, are concerned, and to be very often converting them into a harem; these conditions are rather eloquently reflected in the Russian folk songs.

A few words more about polygamy and polyandry before we deal with monogamy, which developed rapidly following the overthrow of mother right. Both these marriage forms can only be exceptions, historical luxury products, so to speak, unless they appeared side by side in any country, which, as is well known, is not the case. As, therefore, the men, excluded from polygamy, could not console themselves with the women left over from polyandry, the numerical strength of men and women without regard to social institutions having been fairly equal hitherto, it is evident that neither the one nor the other form of marriage could rise to general prevalence. Actually, polygamy on the part of a man was clearly a product of slavery and limited to a few exceptional cases. In the Semitic patriarchal family, only the patriarch himself and, at most, a couple of his sons lived in polygamy; the others had to be content with one wife each. It remains the same today throughout the entire Orient. Polygamy is a privilege of the rich and the grandees, the wives being recruited chiefly by the purchase of female slaves; the mass of the people live in monogamy. Just such an exception is provided by polyandry in India and Tibet, the certainly not uninteresting origin of which from group marriage requires closer investigation. In its practice, at any rate, it appears to be much more tolerable than the jealous harem establishments of the Mohammedans. At least, among the Nairs in India, the men, in groups of three, four or more, have, to be sure, one wife in common; but each of them can simultaneously have a second wife in common with three or more other men, and, in the same way, a third wife, a fourth and so on. It is a wonder that McLennan did not discover a new class—that of *club marriage*—in these marriage clubs, membership of several of which at a time

was open to the men, and which he himself described. This marriage club business, however, is by no means real polyandry; on the contrary, as has been noted by Giraud-Teulon, it is a specialized form of group marriage, the men living in polygamy, the women in polyandry.

4. The *Monogamous* family. As already indicated, this arises out of the pairing family in the transition period from the middle to the upper stage of barbarism, its final victory being one of the signs of the beginning of civilization. It is based on the supremacy of the man; its express aim is the begetting of children of undisputed paternity, this paternity being required in order that these children may in due time inherit their father's wealth as his natural heirs. The monogamous family differs from pairing marriage in the far greater rigidity of the marriage tie, which can now no longer be dissolved at the pleasure of either party. Now, as a rule, only the man can dissolve it and cast off his wife. The right of conjugal infidelity remains his even now, sanctioned, at least, by custom (the *Code Napoléon* expressly concedes this right to the husband as long as he does not bring his concubine into the conjugal home), and is exercised more and more with the growing development of society. Should the wife recall the ancient sexual practice and desire to revive it, she is punished more severely than ever before.

We are confronted with this new form of the family in all its severity among the Greeks. While, as Marx observes, the position of the goddesses in mythology represents an earlier period, when women still occupied a freer and more respected place, in the Heroic Age we already find women degraded owing to the predominance of the man and the competition of female slaves. One may read in the *Odyssey* how Telemachus cuts his mother short and enjoins silence upon her. In Homer the young female captives become the objects of the sensual lust of the victors; the military chiefs, one after the other, according to rank, choose the most beautiful ones for themselves. The whole of the *Iliad*, as we know, revolves around the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon over such a female slave. In connection with each Homeric hero of importance mention is made of a captive maiden with whom he shares tent and bed. These maidens are taken back home, to the

conjugal house, as was Cassandra by Agamemnon in Aeschylus. Sons born of these slaves receive a small share of their father's estate and are regarded as freemen. Teukros was such an illegitimate son of Telamon and was permitted to adopt his father's name. The wedded wife is expected to tolerate all this, but to maintain strict chastity and conjugal fidelity herself. True, in the Heroic Age the Greek wife is more respected than in the period of civilization; for the husband, however, she is, in reality, merely the mother of his legitimate heirs, his chief house-keeper, and the superintendent of the female slaves, whom he may make, and does make, his concubines at will. It is the existence of slavery side by side with monogamy, the existence of beautiful young slaves who belong to the *man* with all they have, that from the very beginning stamped on monogamy its specific character as monogamy *only for the woman*, but not for the man. And it retains this character to this day.

As regards the Greeks of later times, we must differentiate between the Dorians and the Ionians. The former, of whom Sparta was the classical example, had in many respects more ancient marriage relationships than even Homer indicates. In Sparta we find a form of pairing marriage—modified by the state in accordance with the conceptions there prevailing—which still retains many vestiges of group marriage. Childless marriages were dissolved; King Anaxandridas (about 650 B.C.) took another wife in addition to his first, childless one, and maintained two households; King Aristones of the same period added a third to two previous wives who were barren, one of whom he, however, let go. On the other hand, several brothers could have a wife in common. A person having a preference for his friend's wife could share her with him; and it was regarded as proper to place one's wife at the disposal of a lusty "stallion," as Bismarck would say, even when this person was not a citizen. A passage in Plutarch, where a Spartan woman sends a lover who is pursuing her with his attentions to interview her husband, would indicate, according to Schömann, still greater sexual freedom. Real adultery, the infidelity of the wife behind the back of her husband, was thus unheard of. On the other hand, do-

mestic slavery was unknown in Sparta, at least in its hey-day; the Helot serfs lived segregated on the estates and thus there was less temptation for the Spartiates¹ to have intercourse with their women. That in all these circumstances the women of Sparta enjoyed a very much more respected position than all other Greek women was quite natural. The Spartan women and the *élite* of the Athenian *hetaerae* are the only Greek women of whom the Ancients speak with respect, and whose remarks they consider as being worthy of record.

Among the Ionians—of whom Athens is characteristic—things were quite different. Girls learned only spinning, weaving and sewing, at best a little reading and writing. They were practically kept in seclusion and consorted only with other women. The women's quarter was a separate and distinct part of the house, on the upper floor, or in the rear building, not easily accessible to men, particularly strangers; to this the women retired when men visitors came. The women did not go out unless accompanied by a female slave; at home they were virtually kept under guard; Aristophanes speaks of Molossian hounds kept to frighten off adulterers, while in Asiatic towns, at least, eunuchs were maintained to keep guard over the women; they were manufactured for the trade in Chios as early as Herodotus' day, and according to Wachsmuth, not merely for the barbarians. In Euripides, the wife is described as *oikurema*, a thing for housekeeping (the word is in the neuter gender), and apart from the business of bearing children, she was nothing more to the Athenian than the chief housemaid. The husband had his gymnastic exercises, his public affairs, from which the wife was excluded; in addition, he often had female slaves at his disposal and, in the hey-day of Athens, extensive prostitution, which was viewed with favour by the state, to say the least. It was precisely on the basis of this prostitution that the sole outstanding Greek women developed, who by their *esprit* and artistic taste towered as much above the general level of ancient womanhood as the Spartan women did by virtue of their character. That one had first to become a *hetaera*

¹ *Spartiates*: Class of citizens of ancient Sparta enjoying full civil rights, in contrast to the Helots.—Ed.

in order to become a woman is the strongest indictment of the Athenian family.

In the course of time, this Athenian family became the model upon which not only the rest of the Ionians, but also all the Greeks of the mainland and of the colonies increasingly moulded their domestic relationships. But despite all seclusion and surveillance the Greek women found opportunities often enough for deceiving their husbands. The latter, who would have been ashamed to evince any love for their own wives, amused themselves with *hetaerae* in all kinds of amours. But the degradation of the women recoiled on the men themselves and degraded them too, until they sank into the perversion of boylove, degrading both themselves and their gods by the myth of Ganymede.

This was the origin of monogamy, as far as we can trace it among the most civilized and highly developed people of antiquity. It was not in any way the fruit of individual sex love, with which it had absolutely nothing in common, for the marriages remained marriages of convenience, as before. It was the first form of the family based not on natural but on economic conditions, namely, on the victory of private property over original, naturally developed, common ownership. The rule of the man in the family, the procreation of children who could only be his, destined to be the heirs of his wealth—these alone were frankly avowed by the Greeks as the exclusive aims of monogamy. For the rest, it was a burden, a duty to the gods, to the state and to their ancestors, which just had to be fulfilled. In Athens the law made not only marriage compulsory, but also the fulfilment by the man of a minimum of the so-called conjugal duties.

Thus, monogamy does not by any means make its appearance in history as the reconciliation of man and woman, still less as the highest form of such a reconciliation. On the contrary, it appears as the subjection of one sex by the other, as the proclamation of a conflict between the sexes entirely unknown hitherto in prehistoric times. In an old unpublished manuscript, the work of Marx and myself in 1846,¹ I find the following: "The first division of labour is that between man and woman for child breeding." And

¹ The reference is to *Die deutsche Ideologie* (*The German Ideology*); Eng. translation of parts I and III published in New York, 1939.—Ed.

today I can add: The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male. Monogamy was a great historical advance, but at the same time it inaugurated, along with slavery and private wealth, that epoch, lasting until today, in which every advance is likewise a relative regression, in which the well-being and development of the one group are attained by the misery and repression of the other. It is the cellular form of civilized society, in which we can already study the nature of the antagonisms and contradictions which develop fully in the latter.

The old relative freedom of sexual intercourse by no means disappeared with the victory of the pairing family, or even of monogamy. "The old conjugal system, now reduced to narrower limits by the gradual disappearance of the punaluan groups, still environed the advancing family, which it was to follow to the verge of civilization. . . . It finally disappeared in the new form of hetaerism, which still follows mankind in civilization as a dark shadow upon the family." By hetaerism Morgan means that extramarital sexual intercourse between men and unmarried women which exists *alongside of monogamy*, and, as is well known, has flourished in the most diverse forms during the whole period of civilization and is steadily developing into open prostitution. This hetaerism is directly traceable to group marriage, to the sacrificial surrender of the women, whereby they purchased their right to chastity. The surrender for money was at first a religious act, taking place in the temple of the Goddess of Love, and the money originally flowed into the coffers of the temple. The hierodules¹ of Anaitis in Armenia, of Aphrodite in Corinth, as well as the religious dancing girls attached to the temples in India—the so-called bayaderes (the word is a corruption of the Portuguese *bailadeira*, a female dancer)—were the first prostitutes. This sacrificial surrender, originally obligatory for all women, was later practised vicariously by these priestesses alone on behalf of all other women. Hetaerism among other peoples grows out of the sexual freedom permitted to girls,

¹ *Hierodules*: Female slave temple attendants.—Ed.

before marriage—hence likewise a survival of group marriage, only transmitted to us by another route. With the rise of property differentiation—that is, as far back as the upper stage of barbarism—wage labour appears sporadically alongside of slave labour; and simultaneously, as its necessary correlate, the professional prostitution of free women appears side by side with the forced surrender of the female slave. Thus, the heritage bequeathed to civilization by group marriage is double-sided, just as everything engendered by civilization is double-sided, double-tongued, self-contradictory and antagonistic: on the one hand, monogamy, on the other, hetaerism, including its most extreme form, prostitution. Hetaerism is as much a social institution as any other; it is a continuation of the old sexual freedom—in favour of the men. Although, in reality, it is not only tolerated but even practised with gusto, particularly by the ruling classes, it is condemned in words. In reality, however, this condemnation by no means hits the men who indulge in it, it hits only the women: they are ostracized and cast out in order to proclaim once again the absolute domination of the male over the female sex as the fundamental law of society.

A second contradiction, however, is hereby developed within monogamy itself. By the side of the husband, whose life is embellished by hetaerism, stands the neglected wife. And it is just as impossible to have one side of a contradiction without the other as it is to retain the whole of an apple in one's hand after half has been eaten. Nevertheless, the men appear to have thought differently, until their wives taught them to know better. Two permanent social figures, previously unknown, appear on the scene along with monogamy—the wife's paramour and the cuckold. The men had gained the victory over the women, but the act of crowning the victor was magnanimously undertaken by the vanquished. Adultery—proscribed, severely penalized, but irrepressible—became an unavoidable social institution alongside of monogamy and hetaerism. The assured paternity of children was now, as before, based, at best, on moral conviction; and in order to solve the insoluble contradiction, Article 312 of the *Code Napoléon* decreed: "*L'enfant conçu pendant le mariage a pour père le mari,*" "a child conceived

during marriage has for its father the husband." This is the final outcome of three thousand years of monogamy.

Thus, in the monogamous family, in those cases that faithfully reflect its historical origin and that clearly bring out the sharp conflict between man and woman resulting from the exclusive domination of the male, we have a picture in miniature of the very antagonisms and contradictions in which society, split up into classes since the commencement of civilization, moves, without being able to resolve and overcome them. Naturally, I refer here only to those cases of monogamy where matrimonial life really takes its course according to the rules governing the original character of the whole institution but where the wife rebels against the domination of the husband. That this is not the case with all marriages no one knows better than the German philistine, who is no more capable of ruling in the home than in the state, and whose wife, therefore, with full justification, wears the breeches of which he is unworthy. But in consolation he imagines himself to be far superior to his French companion in misfortune, who, more often than he, fares far worse.

The monogamous family, however, did not by any means appear everywhere and always in the classically harsh form which it assumed among the Greeks. Among the Romans, who as future world conquerors took a longer, if less refined, view than the Greeks, woman was more free and respected. The Roman believed the conjugal fidelity of his wife to be adequately safeguarded by his power of life and death over her. Besides, the wife, just as well as the husband, could dissolve the marriage voluntarily. But the greatest advance in the development of monogamy definitely occurred with the entry of the Germans into history, because, probably owing to their poverty, monogamy does not yet appear to have completely evolved among them out of the pairing marriage. This we conclude from three circumstances mentioned by Tacitus: Firstly, despite their firm belief in the sanctity of marriage—"each man is contented with a single wife, and the women lived fenced around with chastity"—polygamy existed for men of rank and the tribal chiefs, a situation similar to that of the Americans among whom pairing marriage prevailed. Secondly, the transition from mother right to father right could only

have been accomplished a short time previously, for the mother's brother—the closest male gentile relative according to mother right—was still regarded as being an almost closer relative than one's own father, which likewise corresponds to the standpoint of the American Indians, among whom Marx found the key to the understanding of our own prehistoric past, as he often used to say. And thirdly, women among the Germans were highly respected and were influential in public affairs also—which directly conflicts with the domination of the male characteristic of monogamy. Nearly all these are points on which the Germans are in accord with the Spartans, among whom, likewise, as we have already seen, pairing marriage had not completely disappeared. Thus, in this connection also, an entirely new element acquired world supremacy with the emergence of the Germans. The new monogamy which now developed out of the mingling of races on the ruins of the Roman world clothed the domination of the men in milder forms and permitted women to occupy, at least with regard to externals, a far freer and more respected position than classical antiquity had ever known. This, for the first time, created the possibility for the greatest moral advance which we derive from and owe to monogamy—a development taking place within it, parallel with it, or in opposition to it, as the case might be, namely, modern individual sex love, previously unknown to the whole world.

This advance, however, definitely arose out of the circumstance that the Germans still lived in the pairing family, and as far as possible, grafted the position of woman corresponding thereto on to monogamy. It by no means arose as a result of the legendary, wonderful moral purity of temperament of the Germans, which was limited to the fact that, in practice, the pairing family did not reveal the same glaring moral antagonisms as monogamy. On the contrary, the Germans, in their migrations, particularly south-east, to the nomads of the steppes on the Black Sea, suffered considerable moral degeneration and, apart from their horsemanship, acquired serious unnatural vices from them, as is attested to explicitly by Ammianus about the Taifali, and by Procopius about the Heruli.

Although monogamy was the only known form of the family out of which modern sex love could develop, it does

not follow that this love developed within it exclusively, or even predominantly, as the mutual love of man and wife. The whole nature of strict monogamous marriage under male domination ruled this out. Among all historically active classes, that is, among all ruling classes, matrimony remained what it had been since pairing marriage—a matter of convenience arranged by the parents. And the first form of sex love that historically emerges as a passion, and as a passion in which any person (at least of the ruling classes) has a right to indulge, as the highest form of the sexual impulse—which is precisely its specific feature—this, its first form, the chivalrous love of the Middle Ages, was by no means conjugal love. On the contrary, in its classical form, among the Provençals, it steers under full sail towards adultery, the praises of which are sung by their poets. The "*Albas*," in German *Tagelieder* [Songs of the Dawn], are the flower of Provençal love poetry. They describe in glowing colours how the knight lies with his love—the wife of another—while the watchman stands guard outside, calling him at the first faint streaks of dawn (*alba*) so that he may escape unobserved. The parting scene then constitutes the climax. The Northern French, as well as the worthy Germans, likewise adopted this style of poetry, along with the manners of chivalrous love which corresponded to it; and on this same suggestive theme our own old Wolfram von Eschenbach has left us three exquisite Songs of the Dawn, which I prefer to his three long heroic poems.

Bourgeois marriage of our own times is of two kinds. In Catholic countries the parents, as heretofore, still provide a suitable wife for their young bourgeois son, and the consequence is naturally the fullest unfolding of the contradiction inherent in monogamy—flourishing hetæerism on the part of the husband, and flourishing adultery on the part of the wife. The Catholic Church doubtless abolished divorce only because it was convinced that for adultery, as for death, there is no cure whatsoever. In Protestant countries, on the other hand, it is the rule that the bourgeois son is allowed to seek a wife for himself from his own class, more or less freely. Consequently, marriage can be based on a certain degree of love which, for decency's sake, is always assumed, in accordance with Protestant hypocrisy.

In this case, hetaerism on the part of the men is less actively pursued, and adultery on the woman's part is not so much the rule. Since in every kind of marriage, however, people remain what they were before they married, and since the bourgeois of Protestant countries are mostly philistines, this Protestant monogamy leads merely, if we take the average of the best cases, to a wedded life of leaden boredom, which is described as domestic bliss. The best mirror of these two ways of marriage is the novel—the French novel for the Catholic style, and the German novel for the Protestant. In both cases “he gets it”: in the German novel the young man gets the girl; in the French, the husband gets the cuckold's horns. Which of the two is in the worse plight is not always easy to make out. For the dullness of the German novel excites the same horror in the French bourgeois as the “immorality” of the French novel excites in the German philistine, although lately, since “Berlin is becoming a metropolis,” the German novel has begun to deal a little less timidly with hetaerism and adultery, long known to exist there.

In both cases, however, marriage is determined by the class position of the participants, and to that extent always remains marriage of convenience. In both cases, this marriage of convenience often enough turns into the crassest prostitution—sometimes on both sides, but much more generally on the part of the wife, who differs from the ordinary courtesan only in that she does not hire out her body, like a wage-worker, on piecework, but sells it into slavery once for all. And Fourier's words hold good for all marriages of convenience: “Just as in grammar two negatives make a positive, so in the morals of marriage, two prostitutions make one virtue.” Sex love in the relation of husband and wife is and can become the rule only among the oppressed classes, that is, at the present day, among the proletariat, no matter whether this relationship is officially sanctioned or not. But here all the foundations of classical monogamy are removed. Here, there is a complete absence of all property, for the safeguarding and inheritance of which monogamy and male domination were established. Therefore, there is no stimulus whatever here to assert male domination. What is more, the means, too, are absent; bourgeois law, which protects this domination,

exists only for the propertied classes and their dealings with the proletarians. It costs money, and therefore, owing to the worker's poverty, has no validity in his attitude towards his wife. Personal and social relations of quite a different sort are the decisive factors here. Moreover, since large-scale industry has transferred the woman from the house to the labour market and the factory, and makes her, often enough, the bread-winner of the family, the last remnants of male domination in the proletarian home have lost all foundation—except, perhaps, for some of that brutality towards women which became firmly rooted with the establishment of monogamy. Thus, the proletarian family is no longer monogamous in the strict sense, even in cases of the most passionate love and strictest faithfulness of the two parties, and despite all spiritual and worldly benedictions which may have been received. The two eternal adjuncts of monogamy—heterism and adultery—therefore, play an almost negligible role here; the woman has regained, in fact, the right of separation, and when the man and woman cannot get along they prefer to part. In short, proletarian marriage is monogamous in the etymological sense of the word, but by no means in the historical sense.

Our jurists, to be sure, hold that the progress of legislation to an increasing degree removes all cause for complaint on the part of the woman. Modern civilized systems of law are recognizing more and more, first, that, in order to be effective, marriage must be an agreement voluntarily entered into by both parties; and secondly, that during marriage, too, both parties must be on an equal footing in respect to rights and obligations. If, however, these two demands were consistently carried into effect, women would have all that they could ask for.

This typical lawyer's reasoning is exactly the same as that with which the radical republican bourgeois dismisses the proletarian. The labour contract is supposed to be voluntarily entered into by both parties. But it is taken to be voluntarily entered into as soon as the law has put both parties on an equal footing *on paper*. The power given to one party by its different class position, the pressure it exercises on the other—the real economic position of both—all this is no concern of the law. And both parties, again,

are supposed to have equal rights for the duration of the labour contract, unless one or the other of the parties expressly waived them. That the concrete economic situation compels the worker to forego even the slightest semblance of equal rights—this again is something the law cannot help.

As far as marriage is concerned, even the most progressive law is fully satisfied as soon as the parties formally register their voluntary desire to get married. What happens behind the legal curtains, where real life is enacted, how this voluntary agreement is arrived at—is no concern of the law and the jurist. And yet the simplest comparison of laws should serve to show the jurist what this voluntary agreement really amounts to. In countries where the children are legally assured of an obligatory share of their parents' property and thus cannot be disinherited—in Germany, in the countries under French law, etc.—the children must obtain their parents' consent in the question of marriage. In countries under English law, where parental consent to marriage is not legally requisite, the parents have full testatory freedom over their property and can, if they so desire, cut their children off with a shilling. It is clear, therefore, that despite this, or rather just because of this, among those classes which have something to inherit, freedom to marry is not one whit greater in England and America than in France or Germany.

The position is no better with regard to the juridical equality of man and woman in marriage. The inequality of the two before the law, which is a legacy of previous social conditions, is not the cause but the effect of the economic oppression of women. In the old communistic household, which embraced numerous couples and their children, the administration of the household, entrusted to the women, was just as much a public, a socially necessary industry as the providing of food by the men. This situation changed with the patriarchal family, and even more with the monogamous individual family. The administration of the household lost its public character. It was no longer the concern of society. It became a *private service*. The wife became the first domestic servant, pushed out of participation in social production. Only modern large-scale industry again threw open to her—and only to the proletarian

woman at that—the avenue to social production; but in such a way that, when she fulfils her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded from public production and cannot earn anything; and when she wishes to take part in public industry and earn her living independently, she is not in a position to fulfil her family duties. What applies to the woman in the factory applies to her in all the professions, right up to medicine and law. The modern individual family is based on the open or disguised domestic enslavement of the woman; and modern society is a mass composed solely of individual families as its molecules. Today, in the great majority of cases, the man has to be the earner, the breadwinner of the family, at least among the propertied classes, and this gives him a dominating position which requires no special legal privileges. In the family, he is the bourgeois; the wife represents the proletariat. In the industrial world, however, the specific character of the economic oppression that weighs down the proletariat stands out in all its sharpness only after all the special legal privileges of the capitalist class have been set aside and the complete juridical equality of both classes is established. The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary, it provides the field on which it is fought out. And, similarly, the peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as the manner, of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the re-introduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished.

* * *

We have, then, three chief forms of marriage, which, by and large, conform to the three main stages of human development. For savagery—group marriage; for barbarism—pairing marriage; for civilization—monogamy, supplemented by adultery and prostitution. In the upper stage of

barbarism, between pairing marriage and monogamy, there is wedged in the dominion exercised by men over female slaves, and polygamy.

As our whole exposition has shown, the advance to be noted in this sequence is linked with the peculiar fact that while women are more and more deprived of the sexual freedom of group marriage, the men are not. Actually, for men, group marriage exists to this day. What for a woman is a crime entailing dire legal and social consequences, is regarded in the case of a man as being honourable or, at most, as a slight moral stain that one bears with pleasure. The more the old traditional heterism is changed in our day by capitalist commodity production and adapted to it, and the more it is transformed into unconcealed prostitution, the more demoralizing are its effects. And it demoralizes the men far more than it does the women. Among women, prostitution degrades only those unfortunates who fall into its clutches; and even these are not degraded to the degree that is generally believed. On the other hand, it degrades the character of the entire male world. Thus, in nine cases out of ten, a long engagement is practically a preparatory school for conjugal infidelity.

We are now approaching a social revolution in which the hitherto existing economic foundations of monogamy will disappear just as certainly as will those of its supplement—prostitution. Monogamy arose out of the concentration of considerable wealth in the hands of one person—and that a man—and out of the desire to bequeath this wealth to this man's children and to no one else's. For this purpose monogamy was essential on the woman's part, but not on the man's; so that this monogamy of the woman in no way hindered the overt or covert polygamy of the man. The impending social revolution, however, by transforming at least the far greater part of permanent inheritable wealth—the means of production—into social property, will reduce all this anxiety about inheritance to a minimum. Since monogamy arose from economic causes, will it disappear when these causes disappear?

One might not unjustly answer: far from disappearing, it will only begin to be completely realized. For with the conversion of the means of production into social property, wage labour, the proletariat, also disappears, and therewith,

also, the necessity for a certain—statistically calculable—number of women to surrender themselves for money. Prostitution disappears; monogamy, instead of declining, finally becomes a reality—for the men as well.

At all events, the position of the men thus undergoes considerable change. But that of the women, of *all* women, also undergoes important alteration. With the passage of the means of production into common property, the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public matter. Society takes care of all children equally, irrespective of whether they are born in wedlock or not. Thus, the anxiety about the “consequences,” which is today the most important social factor—both moral and economic—that hinders a girl from giving herself freely to the man she loves, disappears. Will this not be cause enough for a gradual rise of more unrestrained sexual intercourse, and along with it, a more lenient public opinion regarding virginal honour and feminine shame? And finally, have we not seen that monogamy and prostitution in the modern world, although opposites, are nevertheless inseparable opposites, poles of the same social conditions? Can prostitution disappear without dragging monogamy with it into the abyss?

Here a new factor comes into operation, a factor that, at most, existed in embryo at the time when monogamy developed, namely, individual sex love.

No such thing as individual sex love existed before the Middle Ages. That personal beauty, intimate association, similarity in inclinations, etc., aroused desire for sexual intercourse among people of opposite sexes, that men as well as women were not totally indifferent to the question of with whom they entered into this most intimate relation is obvious. But this is still a far cry from the sex love of our day. Throughout antiquity marriages were arranged by the parents; the parties quietly acquiesced. The little conjugal love that was known to antiquity was not in any way a subjective inclination, but an objective duty; not a reason for but a correlate of marriage. In antiquity, love affairs in the modern sense occur only outside official society. The shepherds, whose joys and sorrows in love are sung by

Theocritus and Moschus, or by Longus' *Daphnis and Chloë*, are mere slaves, who have no share in the state, the sphere of the free citizen. Except among the slaves, however, we find love affairs only as disintegration products of the declining ancient world; and with women who are also beyond the pale of official society, with *hetaerae*, that is, with alien or freed women: in Athens beginning with the eve of its decline, in Rome at the time of the emperors. If love affairs really occurred between free male and female citizens, it was only in the form of adultery. And sex love in our sense of the term was so immaterial to that classical love poet of antiquity, old Anacreon, that even the sex of the beloved one was a matter of complete indifference to him.

Our sex love differs materially from the simple sexual desire, the *eros*, of the ancients. First, it presupposes reciprocal love on the part of the loved one; in this respect, the woman stands on a par with the man; whereas in the ancient *eros*, the woman was by no means always consulted. Secondly, sex love attains a degree of intensity and permanency where the two parties regard non-possession or separation as a great, if not the greatest, misfortune; in order to possess each other they take great hazards, even risking life itself—what in antiquity happened, at best, only in cases of adultery. And finally, a new moral standard arises for judging sexual intercourse. The question asked is not only whether such intercourse was legitimate or illicit, but also whether it arose from mutual love or not? It goes without saying that in feudal or bourgeois practice this new standard fares no better than all the other moral standards—it is simply ignored. But it fares no worse, either. It is recognized in theory, on paper, like all the rest. And more than this cannot be expected for the present.

Where antiquity broke off with its start towards sex love, the Middle Ages began, namely, with adultery. We have already described chivalrous love, which gave rise to the Songs of the Dawn. There is still a wide gulf between this kind of love, which aimed at breaking up matrimony, and the love destined to be its foundation, a gulf never completely bridged by the age of chivalry. Even when we pass from the frivolous Latins to the virtuous Germans, we find, in the *Nibelungenlied*, that Kriemhild—although secretly in

love with Siegfried every whit as much as he is with her—nevertheless, in reply to Gunther's intimation that he has plighted her to a knight whom he does not name, answers simply: "You have no need to ask; as you command, so will I be forever. He whom you, my lord, choose for my husband, to him will I gladly plight my troth." It never even occurs to her that her love could possibly be considered in this matter. Gunther seeks the hand of Brunhild without ever having seen her, and Etzel does the same with Kriemhild. The same occurs in the *Gudrun*, where Sigebant of Ireland seeks the hand of Ute the Norwegian, Hetel of Hegelingen that of Hilde of Ireland; and lastly, Siegfried of Morland, Hartmut of Ormany and Herwig of Seeland seek the hand of Gudrun; and here for the first time it happens that Gudrun, of her own free will, decides in favour of the last named. As a rule, the bride of a young prince is selected by his parents; if these are no longer alive, he chooses her himself with the counsel of his highest vassal chiefs, whose word carries great weight in all cases. Nor can it be otherwise. For the knight, or baron, just as for the prince himself, marriage is a political act, an opportunity for the accession of power through new alliances; the interests of the *House* and not individual inclinations are the decisive factor. How can love here hope to have the last word regarding marriage?

It was the same for the guildsman of the medieval towns. The very privileges which protected him—the guild charters with their special stipulations, the artificial lines of demarcation which legally separated him from other guilds, from his own fellow guildsmen and from his journeymen and apprentices—considerably restricted the circle in which he could hope to secure a suitable spouse. And the question as to who was the most suitable was definitely decided under this complicated system, not by individual inclination, but by family interest.

Up to the end of the Middle Ages, therefore, marriage, in the overwhelming majority of cases, remained what it had been from the commencement, an affair that was not decided by the two principal parties. In the beginning one came into the world married, married to a whole group of the opposite sex. A similar relation probably existed in the later forms of group marriage, only with an ever-increasing

narrowing of the group. In the pairing family it is the rule that the mothers arrange their children's marriages; and here also, considerations of new ties of relationship that are to strengthen the young couple's position in the gens and tribe are the decisive factor. And when, with the predominance of private property over common property, and with the interest in inheritance, father right and monogamy gain the ascendancy, marriage becomes more than ever dependent on economic considerations. The *form* of marriage by purchase disappears, the transaction itself is to an ever-increasing degree carried out in such a way that not only the woman but the man also is appraised, not by his personal qualities but by his possessions. The idea that the mutual inclinations of the principal parties should be the overriding reason for matrimony had been unheard of in the practice of the ruling classes from the very beginning. Such things took place, at best, in romance only, or—among the oppressed classes, which did not count.

This was the situation found by capitalist production when, following the era of geographical discoveries, it set out to conquer the world through world trade and manufacture. One would think that this mode of matrimony should have suited it exceedingly, and such was actually the case. And yet—the irony of world history is unfathomable—it was capitalist production that had to make the decisive breach in it. By transforming all things into commodities, it dissolved all ancient traditional relations, and for inherited customs and historical rights it substituted purchase and sale, “free” contract. And H. S. Maine, the English jurist, believed that he made a colossal discovery when he said that our entire progress in comparison with previous epochs consists in our having evolved from status to contract, from an inherited state of affairs to one voluntarily contracted—a statement which, in so far as it is correct, was contained long ago in the *Communist Manifesto*.

But the closing of contracts presupposes people who can freely dispose of their persons, actions and possessions, and who meet each other on equal terms. To create such “free” and “equal” people was precisely one of the chief tasks of capitalist production. Although in the beginning this took place only in a semi-conscious manner, and in religious guise to boot, nevertheless, from the time of the

Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation it became a firm principle that a person was completely responsible for his actions only if he possessed full freedom of the will when performing them, and that it was an ethical duty to resist all compulsion to commit unethical acts. But how does this fit in with the previous practice of matrimony? According to bourgeois conceptions, matrimony was a contract, a legal affair, indeed the most important of all, since it disposed of the body and mind of two persons for life. True enough, formally the bargain was struck voluntarily; it was not done without the consent of the parties; but how this consent was obtained, and who really arranged the marriage, was known only too well. But if real freedom to decide was demanded for all other contracts, why not for this one? Had not the two young people about to be paired the right freely to dispose of themselves, their body and its organs? Did not sex love become the fashion as a consequence of chivalry, and was not the love of husband and wife its correct bourgeois form, as against the adulterous love of the knights? But if it was the duty of married people to love each other, was it not just as much the duty of lovers to marry each other and nobody else? And did not the right of these lovers stand higher than that of parents, relatives and other traditional marriage brokers and match-makers? If the right of free personal investigation unceremoniously forced its way into church and religion, how could it halt at the intolerable claim of the older generation to dispose of body and soul, the property, the happiness and unhappiness of the younger generation?

These questions were bound to arise in a period which loosened all the old social ties and which shook the foundations of all traditional conceptions. At one stroke the size of the world had increased nearly tenfold. Instead of only a quadrant of a hemisphere the whole globe was now open to the gaze of the West Europeans who hastened to take possession of the other seven quadrants. And the thousand-year-old barriers set up by the medieval prescribed mode of thought vanished in the same way as did the old, narrow barriers of the homeland. An infinitely wider horizon opened up both to man's outer and inner eye. Of what avail were the good intentions of respectability, the honoured guild privileges handed down through the generations, to

the young man who was allured by India's riches, by the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Potosi? It was the knight-errant period of the bourgeoisie; it had its romance also, and its love dreams, but on a bourgeois basis and, in the last analysis, with bourgeois ends in view.

Thus it happened that the rising bourgeoisie, particularly in the Protestant countries, where the existing order was shaken up most of all, increasingly recognized freedom of contract for marriage also and carried it through in the manner described above. Marriage remained class marriage, but, within the confines of the class, the parties were accorded a certain degree of freedom of choice. And on paper, in moral theory as in poetic description, nothing was more unshakably established than that every marriage not based on mutual sex love and on the really free agreement of man and wife was immoral. In short, love marriage was proclaimed a human right; not only as man's right (*droit de l'homme*) but also, by way of exception, as woman's right (*droit de la femme*).

But in one respect this human right differed from all other so-called human rights. While, in practice, the latter remained limited to the ruling class, the bourgeoisie—the oppressed class, the proletariat, being directly or indirectly deprived of them—the irony of history asserts itself here once again. The ruling class continues to be dominated by the familiar economic influences and, therefore, only in exceptional cases can it show really voluntary marriages; whereas, as we have seen, these are the rule among the dominated class.

Thus, full freedom in marriage can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations created by it, has removed all those secondary economic considerations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner. Then, no other motive remains than mutual affection.

Since sex love is by its very nature exclusive—although this exclusiveness is fully realized today only in the woman—then marriage based on sex love is by its very nature monogamy. We have seen how right Bachofen was when he regarded the advance from group marriage to individual marriage chiefly as the work of the women; only the advance from pairing marriage to monogamy can be placed

to the men's account, and, historically, this consisted essentially in a worsening of the position of women and in facilitating infidelity on the part of the men. With the disappearance of the economic considerations which compelled women to tolerate the customary infidelity of the men—the anxiety about their own livelihood and even more about the future of their children—the equality of woman thus achieved will, judging from all previous experience, result far more effectively in the men becoming really monogamous than in the women becoming polyandrous.

What will most definitely disappear from monogamy, however, is all the characteristics stamped on it in consequence of its having arisen out of property relationships. These are, first, the dominance of the man, and secondly, the indissolubility of marriage. The predominance of the man in marriage is simply a consequence of his economic predominance and will vanish with it automatically. The indissolubility of marriage is partly the result of the economic conditions under which monogamy arose, and partly a tradition from the time when the connection between these economic conditions and monogamy was not yet correctly understood and was exaggerated by religion. To-day it has been breached a thousandfold. If only marriages that are based on love are moral, then, also, only those are moral in which love continues. The duration of the urge of individual sex love differs very much according to the individual, particularly among men; and a definite cessation of affection, or its displacement by a new passionate love, makes separation a blessing for both parties as well as for society. People will only be spared the experience of wading through the useless mire of divorce proceedings.

Thus, what we can conjecture at present about the regulation of sex relationships after the impending effacement of capitalist production is, in the main, of a negative character, limited mostly to what will vanish. But what will be added? That will be settled after a new generation has grown up: a generation of men who never in all their lives have had occasion to purchase a woman's surrender either with money or with any other means of social power, and of women who have never been obliged to surrender to any man out of any consideration other than that of real love, or to refrain from giving themselves to their beloved for

fear of the economic consequences. Once such people appear, they will not care a rap about what we today think they should do. They will establish their own practice and their own public opinion, conformable therewith, on the practice of each individual—and that's the end of it.

In the meantime, let us return to Morgan, from whom we have strayed quite considerably. The historical investigation of the social institutions which developed during the period of civilization lies outside the scope of his book. Consequently, he concerns himself only briefly with the fate of monogamy during this period. He, too, regards the development of the monogamous family as an advance, as an approximation to the complete equality of the sexes, without, however, considering that this goal has been reached. But, he says, "when the fact is accepted that the family has passed through four successive forms, and is now in a fifth, the question at once arises whether this form can be permanent in the future. The only answer that can be given is that it must advance as society advances, and change as society changes, even as it has done in the past. It is the creation of the social system, and will reflect its culture. As the monogamous family has improved greatly since the commencement of civilization, and very sensibly in modern times, it is at least supposable that it is capable of still further improvement until the equality of the sexes is attained. Should the monogamous family in the distant future fail to answer the requirements of society it is impossible to predict the nature of its successor."

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