

THE EARLY WRITINGS OF KARL MARX ON THE
POSITION OF WOMEN AND THE FAMILY IN BOURGEOIS SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

Karl Marx's political and social theory has its own distinct and special account of the position of women and the family in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois society. It also has a special conception of human nature in terms of the nature of men and women in bourgeois society. There are partial statements on women and the family in many of the early writings of Marx. These statements, although they do not provide a full analysis, provide a framework for an early Marxist theory of the position of women and the family in bourgeois society. There presently exists no one source that has attempted to bring together for analysis and discussion all the collected statements on women and the family that were presented in Marx's early writings. This thesis is the first scholarly work to do so. There are twenty-seven distinct references to women and the family that appear in eight of Marx's works written between 1840 and 1850. For Marx, the position of women in society was at least partially determined by their place in the family unit which usually consisted of the husband, the wife, and the children and which was based upon relationships of private property. When Marx's early writings on women and the family are viewed together, they provide an historical and theoretical account of the position of women in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois society in terms of what constitutes such a position, what causes such a position, and how such a position can be improved.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx formulated his political and social theories in mid-nineteenth century Europe at a time when the worst results of the industrial revolution were becoming apparent and when most of the liberal democratic or bourgeois revolutions had already occurred or were occurring throughout Europe. Liberal theory was usually associated historically with capitalism as both an economic and political system and often provided a rationale for it. Contrary to this, Marx's theory offered a major critique of capitalism and advocated its replacement by socialism. Marx's theory argued that the liberal theory employed to justify the bourgeois revolutions was merely egalitarian rhetoric, that served only to disguise the inequalities that characterize all societies which are divided by class. The concept of class provided an important basis for the understanding of all social phenomena, including the phenomena that characterizes and describes the position of women in bourgeois society. The good society is the classless society. Marx's theory has its own distinct and special account of the position of women in both pre-bourgeois and bourgeois societies in terms of what constitutes such a position, what causes such a position, and how such a position can be ended and improved. There is also a special conception of human nature in terms of the nature of both men and women in bourgeois society.

There are partial statements on the family and on the position of women in many of the early writings of Marx. These statements are of a largely philosophical and theoretical nature. There is a lack of a full or well-developed analysis in these works because Marx considered most women to be merely one of the diverse groups that belonged largely to the proletarian class. Although bourgeois women did exist their numbers were small as were the numbers of bourgeois men. Bourgeois men and women formed a minority of the population in the same way that proletarian men and women formed a majority. Although bourgeois men and women differed in terms of their social class they both had problems which were specific to their sex.

When Marx wrote of the many problems that women faced, such as alienation, in terms of women's position within the family and within society, he considered them in terms of their effect for the class as a whole and did not differentiate substantially between the various other social groups that belong to the class. Thus, when these problems are considered within the early writings of Marx, it must be remembered that the principles that apply to the proletariat class as a whole also apply to each and every member or groups that belongs to the class.

In this way Marx did not really confront the actual issue of women's position within the social life of the family in particular and society in general. Instead, he used it to symbolically describe the conditions of all those who were forced to struggle for survival in a society where some human beings live a more privileged life than others. In doing so, he is able to provide a general description of the lives of

all individuals, both male and female, who live in a bourgeois society, as well as a general description of the way a bourgeois society functions.

The material which he wrote during this period represents the formative years of Marx's theory and although it does not provide a full analysis, it does provide the frame work for a marxist theory of the position of women in bourgeois society. These writings are important because they seek to discover the conflicts that exist between males and females and how these are related to alienated forms of social life for all human beings.

Within the last thirty years numerous books and journal articles have been written which have paid substantial attention to the discussion of Marx's theory in particular and Marxist theory in general in relation to the position of women in both capitalist and socialist societies. It has taken selected concepts, elements, and ideas from Marx's theory in terms of his original writings and from those of other classical and contemporary writers such as Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, Zetkin, etc. who represent the broad range of Marxist theory, in an attempt to provide contemporary interpretations of Marxism which apply to twentieth century capitalist society. There is however, often, only a small attempt to separate Marx's theory in terms of his original writings from Marxist theory which represents the broad spectrum of Marxist writings. For example, Chao in Women Under Communism, Eisenstein in her three papers on the relations and theory of Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism, and Jaggar in Feminist Politics and Human Nature and Political Philosophies of Women's Liberation all provide a substantial discussion of the position of women in the family and in bourgeois or "capitalist"

society in terms of Marxist theory. There is however very little attempt to differentiate the specific writings of Marx from those of other writers who are considered Marxist. The discussion is in terms of Marxist theory in general rather than Marx's theory in particular. The writings of Marx are usually equated with those of Engels and other writers who are felt to differ mainly in terms of the fact that their writings are more elaborate and more extensive in relation to a discussion of women and the family.

This material has for the most part been both limited and selective in its approach to the study of Marx's writings on women and the family. It has examined only a small number of the many statements which Marx made on women and the family in his early writings and deals with their discussion in a rather random and scattered approach. Marx made many statements in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, The German Ideology, and Manifesto of the Communist Party which directly refer to women and the family. The contemporary material usually uses very few of these statements in terms of their discussions. The statements that are used are not discussed chronologically and are usually mixed in with a discussion of selected statements from Marx's later works such as Grundrisse and Capital as well as the writings of other authors such as Engels. Statements which Marx made in Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, On the Jewish Question, The Holy Family, Thesis on Feuerbach, and Wage Labour and Capital are few in number and are usually ignored. There is no attempt to utilize all of Marx's statements and integrate them with a cohesive and unified analysis of Marx's position. For example, Chao in Women Under Communism, Eisenstein in Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism, Jaggar in Feminist Politics and Human Nature, and Landis in

Women, Labor, and Family Life all present a few selected statements from Marx's early writings which are mixed in with a few selected statements from Marx's later writings, an extensive discussion of Engels, and some contemporary analysis. Jagger provides an excellent discussion of women in bourgeois or "capitalist" society in terms of their human nature as well as the economic, political, and social, realities. There are numerous references to Marx's earlier and later statements particularly from Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Manifesto of the Communist Party, and Capital. The emphasis is however upon Marxist theory as a whole rather than Marx's theory in particular in the form of a substantial discussion of Engels and other writers.

The major emphasis in the contemporary material is, in fact, not upon a discussion of the writings of Marx himself. Instead, the emphasis is upon the work of his friend and collaborator Frederick Engels who provided a detailed analysis of the position of women throughout history in The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State. Eisenstein in Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism and Jagger in Feminist Politics and Human Nature have both overemphasized the importance of Engels and underemphasized the importance of Marx to the development of a Marxist position of the position of women in capitalist society. Only selected statements and discussion of Marx's writings is presented as opposed to a detailed analysis and discussion on Engels. Other writers such as Gough in An Anthropologist Looks at Engels and The Origin of the Family, Sacks in Engels Revisited: Women, the Organization of Production, and Private Property, and Stern in Engels on the Family have discussed Engels exclusively.

A recent book by Vogel entitled Marxism and the Oppression of Women is worth noting in that it is the only source at present that has attempted to bring together for analysis and discussion in a chronological order a large number of the statements Marx made on women and the family in his early and later writings. Vogel devotes a separate chapter of her book to Marx's early and later writings as well as Engels' The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State. Although Vogel presents most of the primary works by Marx in which he made statements on women and the family, she still presents only selected statements. Many of the statements which specifically refer to women and the family are ignored. The statements that are presented are not presented in their original form but are paraphrased and shortened. The analysis and discussion of these statements is generally limited to a few short sentences. The footnoting of these statements is poor as they are footnoted collectively and not separately to various sources.

Thus, there presently exists no one source that has attempted to bring together for analysis and discussion all the collected statements of the family and women that were presented by Marx in his early writings.

This thesis will present a chronological account of all the early writings of Marx between 1840 and 1850 that make specific reference to the position of women and the family in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois societies. It is important to consider for discussion both women and the family because in Marx's theory the position of women in society is at least partially determined by their place in the family unit which usually consists of the husband, the wife, and the children and which is based upon relationships of private property. Each specific work to be

discussed will initially be considered independently in a separate chapter. A concluding chapter will summarize the findings and any common themes that are present in all the works. The meanings of Marx's early statements on women and the family will be presented within the framework of his early political and social theory. This will be accomplished by presenting where applicable, a portion of, or the entire argument of each primary source by Marx, and showing how women and the family are presented by Marx within the context of such an argument. The interpretation of Marx's arguments may, if required, be based on secondary standard sources on Marx such as Avineri's The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, Barbalet's Marx's Construction of Social History, and Teeple's Marx's Critique of Politics. Jagger in Feminist Politics and Human Nature has discussed Marx's theory in particular and Marxist theory in general in terms of the following areas of study: the exploitation of women in bourgeois or "capitalist" society; the family in bourgeois or "capitalist" society; the freedom and liberation of women in bourgeois or "capitalist" society; and the nature of men and women in bourgeois or "capitalist" society. This thesis will present an analysis and discussion of Marx's early statements on women and the family with particular reference to these areas of study where they are applicable. This will enable any common themes that are present within these statements to be clearly shown. This will make possible a cohesive and unified account of the early writings of Marx and its accompanying political and social theory and how they may be applied towards the formation of an outline for an

early and distinctive Marxist theory of the position of women and the family in bourgeois society.

Primary Reference Sources

Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1843)

On the Jewish Question (1843)

Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (1844)

The Holy Family (1844-1845)

Thesis on Feuerbach (1845)

The German Ideology (1845-1846)

Manifesto of the Communist Party (1847-1848)

Wage Labour and Capital (1847-1849)

These are the early writings of Marx which were written during the period 1840-1850 which contain specific statements on the family and on the position of women in bourgeois society. These are the statements which are useful in determining Marx's views of the relationship between the male and the female sexes. The dates which are indicated in brackets are the dates in which the works were written and published. The many other works which Marx wrote during the period of 1840-1850 such as the many articles and essays which appeared in Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher and Neue Rheinische Zeitung as well as other articles, essays, and letters written by Marx which were published in other sources or were never published have not been included in this study because they contain no statements on the family or women. Marx's major work The Poverty of Philosophy (1847) has not been included in this study because it contains no statements on the family or women.

CHAPTER TWO

CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT (1843)

In 1843 Marx began the first of his many criticisms of politics by working on a commentary of Hegel's treatise on the state. To the Hegelian political philosophy which he called "speculative criticism" he applied the method of "transformational criticism". The work was left incomplete and unpublished. Marx later said that it represented a milestone on his road to historical materialism: it led him to the view that instead of the state being the basis of civil society, as Hegel held, civil or bourgeois society is the basis of the state. The work is incomplete in that the commentary starts with paragraph 261 of Hegel's treatise and deals only with selected further sections up to paragraph 308.

This work does not contain any specific references either to women in general or to the position of women in bourgeois society. There is only one brief reference to the male and female sexes. There are numerous references to the family in which it is discussed in terms of its relation to civil society. The family is not discussed in terms of distinct male and female relationships between the sexes. There is no discussion of the position of women within the family and their position within bourgeois society.

Marx made an important argument with reference to primogeniture which was the custom of inheritance through the eldest son. Although Marx did not discuss primogeniture with respect to daughters, its implications

with respect to the position of daughters within the family nevertheless becomes apparent. This will be discussed after an account of Marx's argument has been presented. He showed that in order to justify the institution of entailed landed property (primogeniture) as a political good, Hegel contradicted his earlier assertion that the principle of the family is love, as love of one's children is violated by an institution like primogeniture which limits inheritance to the eldest son. For the purpose of maintaining the political desirability of primogeniture, Hegel openly contradicts his own earlier assertion that property as such is essentially alienable, as subject to the will of the owner, for the entailed landed property cannot be divided or sold by its owner, but only passed on to his eldest son whose ownership is subject to the same limiting condition. In this way Hegel gives his philosophical approval to an institution in which property is inalienable and the owner becomes the property of his property. In primogeniture it is the property, the inalienable landed estate, which inherits the man. These doctrinal inconsistencies reflect the irrationality of existing political society. Hegel's doctrinal account of primogeniture is in conflict with his doctrine on the family because the actual institution of primogeniture in fact violates family life, and his accounts of primogeniture and of property conflict in fact violates social life. Hegel however accepted these irrational ideas as being rational and justified.¹

This shows the regulatory function of the state in that it creates a community based on private property rather than individual interests. This type of society which requires regulation makes the possibility of true family life meaningless. Children who are equally loved do not share

in the father's wealth. It automatically entitles the eldest son to such wealth and demonstrates how it is property interests and not individuals which are recognized by the state. Hegel was therefore wrong. Marx concluded that to assume that the family recognized by the state is a true family unit based on love is wrong. Instead, it represents the barbarism of private property as opposed to family life. Marx sought to show that what Hegel thought starts with the natural family based on love, eventually changes into the bourgeois family based on money and private interests with the result that social inequalities occur within both the family and society.²

Marx's criticism of primogeniture which was reflected in society as both a social custom and a state law shows the basic inequalities present within the family. It was only the eldest son who could inherit the father's wealth. Thus the younger sons could not share in the family wealth. Marx did not discuss the position of the daughters within such an arrangement. It can be clearly seen however that they too would be excluded from any inheritance. If only the eldest son could inherit the father's wealth it therefore follows that the eldest daughter could not, even if she was older than the eldest son. If the younger sons could not inherit the father's wealth it therefore follows that the younger daughters could not also. Thus primogeniture was an unequal system of inheritance which favoured only the eldest son at the expense of the younger sons and any older and younger daughters.

Marx did not mention the specific inequalities accorded German women with regards to inheritance in his critique of Hegel. Their position may however be summarized as follows:

"From the earliest times, women in German law were accorded a different status from that enjoyed by men. This distinction was based, not on religious or philosophical grounds, but on their differing military and biological functions. From the moment of her birth, when the symbolic ceremonies attributed a lesser value to her than to a male child, and in matters of law and inheritance, a girl was treated less favourably.... Although women could acquire property according to Germanic law, they required a man to administer it, apart from cases where the husband was absent or imprisoned. Only in artisan circles was a woman in her capacity as a heiress or widow of the former master, in a position to run her business. However, in line with the traditional view that 'the state recognizes a burgher but not a burgess', she could not appear on her own behalf at guild meetings, but had to send a male representative."³

Marx's later works continued to develop many of the arguments with regard to the family which he presented in his critique of Hegel. In The German Ideology he criticized the 'German Ideology' of the family which saw the family as the natural and eternal basis of society. It is in the family that social divisions arise and the history of the family shows the accumulation of wealth and the division of labour which gradually transforms the simple relations of the family group into the complex relations of bourgeois society.

The only specific reference to the male and female sexes which appears in this work appears in terms of Marx's discussion of political extremes in civil society and the possibility of mediation between them. It is used merely as a comparative illustrative example and is not meant to present any sort of major statement on the relationship between the sexes. Marx stated that Hegel stated that:

"Actual extremes cannot be mediated with each other precisely because they are extremes. But neither are they in need of mediation, because they are opposed in essence. They have nothing in common with one another; they neither need nor complement one another. The one does not carry in its womb the yearning, the need, the anticipation of the other."⁴

Thus, Hegel's view is that the differences which exist between the two opposites cannot be settled merely because they are opposites. Furthermore, these opposites have no need to have their differences settled because their very beings or existences are directly opposed to one another. These opposites have nothing in common with one another. One opposite does not require the other opposite for completion or fulfillment to make itself whole.

Marx contradicted this view and stated that:

"This appears to be in opposition to the principle: Les extremes se touchent. The North and South Poles attract each other; the female and male sexes also attract each other, and only through the union of their extreme differences does man result.

On the other hand, each extreme is its other extreme. Abstract spiritualism is abstract materialism; abstract materialism is the abstract materialism of matter.

In regard to the former, both North and South are poles; their essence is identical. In the same way both female and male gender are of one species, one nature, i.e., human nature. North and South Poles are opposed determinations of one essence, the variation of one essence brought to its highest degree of development. They are the differentiated essence. They are what they are only as differentiated determinations; that is, each is this differentiated determination of the one same essence. Truly real extremes would be Pole and non-Pole, human and non-human gender. Difference here is one of existence, whereas there (i.e., in the case of Pole and non-Pole, etc.) difference is one of essence, i.e., the difference between two essences."⁵ (I)

Marx was of the opinion that Hegel's view was in opposition to the view that opposites do attract each other. Marx discussed this view through his use of two examples. The first example which he cited is based upon things which are non-human. The North and South Poles are non-human things which attract each other according to Marx. The second example which he cited is based upon people or persons. The female and male sexes are human people or persons which attract each other according to Marx. The female and male sexes possess many distinct and specific characteristics and qualities which categorizes or classifies them as part of mankind and members of the human species. There are many of these characteristics and qualities which distinguish the female and male sexes from all non-human and living forms of life such as animals, plants, and vegetables and from all non-human and non-living, non-life forms such as chairs, tables, and poles. Marx did not specify what these are but the characteristic or quality that can be universally applied to distinguish mankind and the human species in the form of the male and female sexes from non-human forms of life such as animals, plants, and vegetables and from non-human forms of existence such as chairs, tables, and poles is the possession of the power of speech and thought.

Marx's statement that it is "only through the union of their extreme differences does man result" is a reference to the reproductive capacity of the human species. The attraction of the female and male sexes to each other results in their biological and physiological union in the form of the reproductive process and this results in the natural increase of mankind and the human species. Female and female and male and male do not have a natural sexual attraction for one another and do not

possess the necessary biological and physiological capabilities that would allow them to reproduce if a union between them occurred. This would not allow the natural increase of mankind and the human species to occur. Females and males do have a natural sexual attraction for one another and do possess the necessary biological and physiological capabilities that would allow them to reproduce if a union between them occurred. This would allow for the natural increase of mankind and the human species to occur. Thus the sexual union of the female and male sexes is both natural and necessary if the reproductive process is to occur. It is only through their union that the natural increase of mankind and the human species can take place.

Marx's statement that "each extreme is its other extreme" is an analogy to the essence or nature of mankind. The concept of essence (wesen) as it has been used by Marx may be defined as follows in the following manner:

"Marx's notion of essence appears to be much closer to that of Aristotle than that of Hegel. And the former defined it much as it is defined in common usage today. Essence is 'that which constitutes the nature of a thing'; 'that which makes a thing what it is', or 'that which differentiates a thing from all other things.' In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle states: 'the essence of a thing is that which it is said to be per se.' The essence is the thing 'as such.'

The essence may be hypostatized as in Plato or Hegel; but for Marx it was always derived from the empirical examination of existence. For him, essence was present in the particular, as the foundation of the inessential; it did not exist 'as such.' The essence of a thing, therefore, comprised the content of the definition of the thing."⁶

Marx discussed this view through his use of two examples. The first example which he cited is based upon things which are non-human.

The North and South Poles are non-human things which are both poles. Although they are both different or opposite to each other they nevertheless can both be categorized or classified as poles and as such have identical essences or natures. The second example which he cited is based upon people or persons which are human. The female and male sexes are human people or persons which are both members of the human race or mankind. They are both two different gender categories or classifications of the same species and as such have one nature which is human. The North and South Poles are opposite categories or classifications of one essence in the same way that female and male sexes are opposite categories or classifications of one essence. Pole and mankind are both representative of the highest level of development of their respective essences or natures. Marx stated that real extremes would be Pole and non-Pole and human and non-human.

Marx was careful to note that there is a fundamental difference between Pole and non-Pole and between human and non-human. For Poles the difference is one of essence while for humans the difference is one of existence. A pole has its own distinct and specific essence or nature which is reflected in its being or existence in the abstract. It is a physical entity of some sort which does not possess life. A human has its own distinct and specific essence or nature which is reflected in its being or existence in the concrete. It is a physical entity which does possess life.

In Quotation I Marx described the relationship that exists between extremes. These are relationships in which the extremes demand each other and can be defined only in relation to each other. The north pole and the

south pole are the differentiated extremes of one essence. The male and the female sexes are the differentiated extremes of the human being. This idea may be taken further. The individual and his social relationships are the extremes of the human being and society. In each example, each extreme is defined in relation to the other extreme. Each extreme exists only in relation to the other extreme.

These statements by Marx occupy an important place if they are to be viewed as statements of any type regarding the position of women in nineteenth century society. In these statements Marx acknowledged that although the female and male sexes are distinctively different, they nonetheless, possess an inherent attraction to one another. Marx was not conceptually clear or specific with regard to what he meant by these differences and used the term "differences" in only a general manner. There are economic, physiological, psychological, sociological, etc. differences between the female and male sexes. It is not clear however from Marx's statements what type of differences he was referring to. The statements must therefore be taken as a general acknowledgement that there are some differences which exist between the female and male sexes. Marx in these statements took great care to acknowledge the reproductive function of the female and male sexes by noting that it is only through the union of their great differences that they are able to reproduce themselves. This may be seen to provide some indication that Marx viewed both the female and male species as playing equally important parts in the reproductive process and making an equal contribution towards the natural increase of mankind and the human species. The most important acknowledgement that Marx made in these statements however was the view

that both the female and male sexes are both members of one species and possess one human nature. Thus they are both human beings. This was an important acknowledgement in that it occurred at a time when German social custom and law emphasized that the female sexes was distinctively inferior to the male sexes.

German women were viewed as being distinctly different in nature to that of men. For example, Hegel believed that women's deficiency in the "universal faculty" was such as to render women as different from men as plants were from animals.⁷ The German view of the nature of women can be summarized as follows:

"She could not perform the tasks for which the supposed masculine virtues of hardness, aggressiveness, toughness, boldness, devotion to duty, strict discipline to command, sense of honour, ability to think dispassionately and so on were felt to be necessary. Nor could she disturb with her presence the institutions which inculcated these virtues. The family, the school, the State and the nation it was felt, were analogous institutions all based upon the same aims and principles, and in each case the role of each sex was clearly defined; men were to rule, women were to obey; men were to think, to create, to develop their own personality, women were to lead a life of emotion and feeling, to sacrifice their individuality and potential to the interest of the larger social unit to which they belonged."⁸

Thus the statement by Marx on the relationship between the female and male sexes found in the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right can be viewed as an acknowledgement of the basic equality of the nature of the female and male sexes. This view can be considered to be very important because it occurred at a time when such a view was not prevalent.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 J. O'Malley, "Introduction", K. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. XXXVII.

K. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, pp. 97-102.

- 2 R. Coward, Patriarchal Precedents Sexuality and Social Relations, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, pp. 137-138.
- 3 E. Sagarra, A Social History of Germany 1648-1914, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1977, pp. 405-406.
- 4 K. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, p. 89.
- 5 K. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, p. 89 (I).

Note: The quotations from Marx's writings which specifically refer to women and the family will be numbered with all other quotations in Arabic numerals and independently in Roman numerals.

- 6 G. Teeple, Marx's Critique of Politics, 1842-1847, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, p. 263.
- 7 G. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 263.
- 8 R. Evans, The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933, London: Sage Publications, 1976, p. 22.

CHAPTER THREE

ON THE JEWISH QUESTION (1843)

On the Jewish Question was first published as an essay by Marx in Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher in 1843. This was a socialist journal which was published in Paris by Marx and other German exiles. In the essay he examined the difference between human emancipation and political emancipation on the basis of two treatises on the Jewish Question written by Bruno Bauer. The general theme of the essay was to contrast political emancipation which liberated man as little as religion with human emancipation which could only be achieved through the disappearance of the state and money and property.

The essay is divided into two parts. The first part examines the meaning of political emancipation by contrasting it to human emancipation and the rational unity of the individual and his society. There is a criticism of politics which lead to the conclusion that human emancipation will come about when there is no longer a division between man as an egoistic being in civil society and man as an abstract citizen in the state.¹ The second part examines the social prerequisite for human emancipation which is the transformation of civil society. There is a criticism of economics or business which he equated with Judaism. He called for "the emancipation of society from Judaism" which is in reality a call for the emancipation of society from what he called "huckstering"

or from what he was subsequently to call capitalism".² In both parts the argument is made in the form of a response to the view of Bruno Bauer.

This work contains only one specific reference to the relationship between men and women and to the position of women in bourgeois society. He wrote that the fullest expression and development of capitalism can be found within the Jewish religion which considered money above all else in life. Money degrades men and turns them into commodities. Money is the universal and self-constituted value of all things and has therefore robbed the human and natural world of all its values. Money is the alienated aspect of men's work that has come to dominate them. This has occurred throughout the world. Nature has been degraded in that it has come under the domination of money and private property.³ The capitalist's desire for money, private property, and other material possessions degrades male-female relations and turns them into human commodities:

"Even the species-relation itself, the relation between man and woman becomes an object of commerce. Woman is bartered away".⁴ (II)

In the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right Marx previously established that the female and male sexes are human people or persons which are both members of the human race or mankind. They are both two different gender categories of the same species and as such have one nature which is human. Marx has now taken this idea a step further by discussing female and male relations with respect to a specific level of economic development within society which is based upon bourgeois or capitalist values. The species relationship between females and males which is the most natural of all relationships now becomes distorted

through economics and in doing so becomes an object of commerce. Marx says that "woman is bartered away".

The term bartered may be defined as:

"to trade by exchange of goods or services without the use of money; to trade goods or services for something of equal value; the exchanging of commodities or of a commodity given in exchange".⁵

That which is bartered is in effect a commodity. A commodity may be defined as:

"a moveable article of trade or commerce; an element of economic wealth; something bought and sold".⁶

If this and the previous definition are used as a basis for analysis, then it can be seen that in the species relation in which the original natural relationship between females and males becomes distorted through the influence of economics and hence becomes an object of commerce, the female becomes in effect a type of human commodity who is traded or exchanged for something of equal value. The female may perform goods or services which are exchanged for other goods or services which are of equal value.

Marx was not conceptually clear or specific with regard to the way in which female and male relations become objects of commerce and for what goods or services females are exchanged for. The essential question that arises is: Why is it that it is the woman who is bartered by the man and not the man who is bartered by the woman? The natural relationship between the female and male sexes which Marx spoke about in the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right has neither barter involved nor is one sided in a way that would allow men to act in a certain way upon women or women to act in a certain way upon men. At this point in his writings all that can be definitely ascertained is that there exists a situation in

which females are placed in circumstances in which they occupy an inferior position in society and this position is based upon economic conditions. In the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right Marx showed how the natural family based on love eventually changed into the bourgeois family based on money and private property in which there are basic social inequalities. He showed this through his discussion of primogeniture. If the specified statement from On the Jewish Question is considered from this standpoint then its meaning becomes somewhat clearer.

In Europe in Marx's time the relationship between men and women in the marital and family relationship was not based upon love but was instead based upon money and private property. These relationships may be described as follows:

"The economic basis of marriage and the family cannot be stressed enough. Only those women fortunate enough to provide a satisfactory dowry would achieve marriage while the amount of the dowry largely determined the social and economic level of the mate selected by her parents, sometimes with the aid of a village matchmaker. A woman married a man not from a sense of fondness for his person but from the need for access to property for the future, since her parents' land would go to her brothers. Likewise the man chose his wife not for her physical charms but rather the size of her pig or cow, the common form of dowry offered. Sometimes a woman was contracted by her parents to marry a man she did not even know.

Finally, it was because the economic role of the family was so vital that marriage choice could not be left to a 'girl' of 25. She might know her suiter, but formal courtship might consist of a private talk of only half an hour, after which the parents came in, cursorily determined if the girl was willing to proceed, and then settled down to complex negotiations to make sure the son-in-law would have the right prospects or property and to determine the amount of dowry needed. Marriage, if contracted, was by no means the end of the story, but it had hardly been made in heaven even though a girl might well count herself lucky to marry at all. If her fate was better than a spinsters, however, and her status higher

and her functions more diverse, she paid her own price for a marriage that brought emotional satisfactions only by accident, a price in terms of toil and a toll on her physical being".⁷

In both upper class and lower class families in Germany in Marx's time the traditional paternalism which was based on the authority and the will of the husband and the father remained unchallenged and was supreme. There was a patriarchal division of labour with regards to females and males in the household which was determined by economic reasons. Marriage became an important way for males to gain both unpaid female domestic labour and property. The position of both upper and lower class German women in the family may be summarized as follows:

"The subordinate position of women in society had sound economic reasons. She was...the first worker in the household. The girl is made a future wife for the home. Everywhere, but especially in Germany, the woman's destiny has always been wife, mother, household...Even well-born women worked with their maids in the kitchen, linen room and dairy. Bettina von Brentano, married to the poet and landowner Achim von Arnim, expected her daughters to get up with the maids at 4 a.m. on washdays, working alongside them and ending the day with lentil soup around the same table. As the farmers wife was responsible for the farm hands as well as for her own family, so in commercial towns and in the homes of the master craftsmen, the housewife provided for the physical wellbeing of her husband's employees....The variety of tasks still performed in the home until the second half of the century left women little time for leisure".⁸

Thus it can be seen that in the Germany of Marx's time women occupied a position within the family that was decidedly inferior to that of men. Marriage was a way in which men could gain two types of services from women. The first of these involved a labour function. The wife would serve as an unpaid domestic labourer in the husband's household. The second of these was a reproductive or sexual function. Besides satisfying

the husband's sexual needs she would produce children. Male children would help to carry on the father's wealth either through business or through marriage with a woman who brought with her a dowry. Female children would work as unpaid domestic labourers in the family household until marriage when ideally they would marry a male with a suitable amount of wealth and property.

This type of marital and family situation is applicable to both upper class and lower class families. It allows the upper class families to increase their wealth and property. It allows lower class families to improve their economic and social situation. The choice of a correct and proper marriage partner is therefore very important if a family is to better itself.

The father and the husband benefits from the services which his wife and children perform. Marriage is a way of gaining unpaid female domestic labour in the form of the wife and her female children. Marriage is a way of increasing the wealth and property of the families of the bride and the groom. This occurs when the bride brings a dowry and the groom brings wealth and property into the marital arrangement. This makes the female daughter a valuable commodity who is to be bartered out by her family in exchange for the male son of another family. This allows the wealth and property of two families to be joined.

The daughter is however only a valuable commodity if she is able to add to the family's wealth by engaging in unpaid domestic labour within the household, by engaging in paid productive labour outside the household, or by obtaining a suitable marriage with a son from a family who possesses some wealth and property. If for any reason the daughter is

unable to do any of these she then becomes a burden to the family who must clothe, feed, and care and support her. The family must make a financial expenditure to do this without any type of financial reward as a return.

Marriages in Germany in Marx's time were usually arranged for business reasons. Second marriages were usually arranged by the parents themselves, often simply to provide for children of former marriages on both sides. Age differences were not generally considered. Practical questions were the more important when choosing a marriage partner since family and business expenses were defrayed from the same purse. An extravagant wife could bankrupt an enterprise. A reckless business partner could bring ruin to the family as well as the enterprise of his associate. To be recognized and take his place in the community a man must have a suitable wife. He could not choose just anyone. His wife should come from the same social sphere as he does.⁹

Marx did not discuss these ideas regarding marriage and the family in detail in On the Jewish Question. They are only hinted at in the one brief statement that he did make. They are considered at somewhat greater length in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, The German Ideology, and Manifesto of the Communist Party.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 K. Marx, "On the Jewish Question", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, p. 26, p. 46.
- 2 K. Marx, On the Jewish Question, p. 26, p. 48, p. 52.
- 3 K. Marx, On The Jewish Question, pp. 50-51.
- 4 K. Marx, On The Jewish Question, p. 51. (II)
- 5 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 116.
- 6 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 264.
- 7 P. Branca, Women in Europe Since 1750, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978, pp. 74-75.
- 8 E. Sagarra, pp. 410-411.
- 9 E. Sagarra, p. 66, p. 71.

CHAPTER FOUR

ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1844 (1844)

The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 comprises four unpublished manuscripts which Marx wrote in the period April to August 1844. These were later edited and titled for publication by numerous twentieth century scholars. The basic elements of Marx's interpretation of history are found in the manuscripts, including the idea of the proletarian revolution and a future communist society as the goal of the historical process. History, particularly under modern capitalism, is seen as being a process which outlines the story of man's alienation in his life as a producer. Communism is presented as being the transcendence of alienation by way of a revolution against private property. The work is a criticism of capitalist political economy and the capitalist economic system. Emphasis is placed on the alienation of the labourer and the estrangement of labour in bourgeois society.

The first manuscript given the title Wages, Profit, Rent, and Alienated Labour consists largely of excerpts from the writings of political economists on such topics as wages of labour, profit of capital, and rent of land. There is also a discussion of alienated labour in terms of the alienation and estrangement of the worker in bourgeois society as well as the nature of the human being in bourgeois society. The second manuscript given the title The Antithesis of Capital and Labour discusses the contradiction between labour and capital. The third manuscript given

the title The Transcendence of Self-Estrangement discusses the alienation and estrangement of the worker in bourgeois society, the nature of the human being in bourgeois society, the relationship between private property and communism, the role of money in bourgeois society, as well as many other issues. This manuscript consists of four sections entitled Estranged Labour, Private Property and Communism, The Meaning of Human Requirements, and The Power of Money in Bourgeois Society. The third manuscript is important for this thesis because it contains the four specific references which Marx made to women. The section entitled Private Property and Communism contains the first three references. The section entitled The Meaning of Human Requirements contains the fourth reference. The fourth manuscript given the title Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole does exactly as its title suggests.

In his discussion of the first form of communism Marx presented an argument concerning the relationship between men and women in society.

Marx stated:

"Finally this movement of counterposing universal private property to private property finds expression in the bestial form of counterposing to marriage (certainly a form of exclusive private property) the community of women, in which a woman becomes a piece of communal and common property. It may be said that this idea of the community of women gives away the secret of this as yet completely crude and thoughtless communism. Just as the woman passes from marriage to general prostitution, so the entire world of wealth (that is, of man's objective substance) passes from the relationship of exclusive marriage with the owner of private property to a state of universal prostitution with the community. In negating the personality of man in every sphere, this type of communism is really nothing but the logical expression of private property, which is this negation".¹ (III)

This argument suggests that private property infiltrates and undermines male-female relationships. Just as private property as exclusive and individual private property passes into universal private property which is property owned by all the community, also too, does the position of the woman within the state of crude communism pass from a form of exclusive private property or marriage to a form of communal or common property. This idea of a community of women where women are regarded as communal or common property gives away the secret of this form of communism. Women pass from marriage to general prostitution in the same way that the relation of capital and labour pass from private and particular prostitution to a state of universal prostitution. This occurs when the relationship between all men and women as labourers is the same as the community as capital. The relationship between men and women in a property relationship is one in which the woman becomes a possession of the man. It is a relationship of subject (man) to object (woman) rather than a relationship of human being or subject (man) to human being or subject (woman). Crude communism in which each person is dependent upon everyone else (the whole) is better than capitalism in which each person is dependent upon one other person.

Crude communism is better because it allows for a reciprocal dependency of each person upon every other person. Each person is equally dependent upon each other person for his economic and physical survival. Each person makes a contribution or works for the good of the whole. All the various persons are integrated with each person supporting the other persons as well as the whole. In such circumstances it is difficult for any one person to come to dominate all other persons. In capitalism this

reciprocal dependency does not exist in that each person rather than making a contribution to or working for the good of the whole is out to preserve and support his own selfish interests. The individual interests of each person take precedence over the interests of all individuals. In such circumstances it is relatively easy for one person to dominate all other persons.

In Quotation III Marx criticized crude communism which referred to certain communist ideas and practices in his time. In this stage of crude communism the relationships of material possession and private property remain. The establishment of a community of women is favoured by men who control and own property and male-female relationships are influenced and devalued through the existence of these relationships. Marx's whole concept of the nature or the self-realization of the human being comes into discussion here and can be fully understood in connection with his concept of work. Labour is a process in which both man and nature participates and in which man of his own desire starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between man and nature. He opposes himself to nature in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. He acts on the external world and changes it and at the same time changes his own nature. At the end of the labour process he effects a change of form in the material on which he works and also realizes a purpose of his own to which he must subordinate his will. Labour is the self-expression of man and is an expression of his individual physical and mental powers. Work is the meaningful expression of human energy and is enjoyable.² This type of activity represents the natural personality of the human being and is intrinsic to its full

development. In the stage of crude communism labour and work do not exist in this way and as a result the natural personality of the human being is negated and not fully developed to its true potential.

In the stage of crude communism the human personality needs of women are not met through the labour process. Women as a group are dependent upon men as a group for their economic existence and physical in society. The woman's status as a female places her in a dependent economic and social position in society. This is because she is unable to fully participate in the labour process. The woman is restricted to the private domestic sphere of the family household while the male participates actively in the public business sphere of society. In the family household and marital relationship all property is owned by the husband who is also the principle wage-earner in the household. The husband has control over the property of all family members. The woman is prevented by virtue of her female sex from actively participating in economic activity and earning and from having control over or earning property. This places her in a position which makes her dependent upon her husband for her existence and survival. Material possession, money, and property become alien objects to the woman because she is unable to participate in the labour process as her husband does and purchase them herself. The control of money and property allows the man to impose his will on the woman. The woman is unable to do what she desires because she is dependent upon the man for objects which are necessary for her very survival and existence. The woman is unable to develop her individual nature and her physical and mental powers because she is excluded from the labour process.

The woman is a possession of the man and not even a wage labourer. She is a possession who is purchased from her father by her future husband. The father gives the daughter along with a dowry of material possessions, money, and or property to her future husband who himself controls or owns a suitable amount of material possessions, money, and or property. The marital union of a daughter from one family with a suitable dowry to a son from another family who has a suitable amount of wealth allows for the joining of the wealth of two families.

The relationship of men and women in Europe in Marx's time has been characterized as a relationship which involves women being placed in a subordinate position in which they are totally controlled and dependent upon men:

"The Old Order is patriarchal authority over the family is vested in the elder males, or male. He, the father, makes the decisions which control the family's work, purchases, marriages. Under the rule of the father, women have no complex choices to make, no questions as to their nature or destiny: the rule is simply obedience.... For women it was total, inescapable. Rebellious women might be beaten privately (with official approval) or punished by the village "fathers", and any woman who tried to survive on her own would be at the mercy of random male violence".³

Marx made an important argument in this section concerning marital and family relations. Marriage is viewed as a form of exclusive private property which is based within the family. The wife is the private property of the husband in the same way that the daughter is the private property of the father. The relationship is based upon economics rather than personal feeling. Family relations in Europe in Marx's time may be described as follows:

"Family relations among the aristocracy were viewed and conducted as economic transactions.... the law of marriage was almost the groundwork of the law of property. Marriage was arranged according to the family's rather than the individual's interest. Love and sexual life was sought outside marriage and mostly by men. Arranged marriages necessitated the double standard, mistresses and illegitimacy. A major theme of the early bourgeoisie was an attack on the cynical personal relations of the money power and a defense of the family as the realm of both economic and personal life".⁴

The position of the wife within the marital and family relationship becomes even more apparent when viewed within German society in Marx's time. The Prussian Civil Code:

"firmly declared that the husband was the head of the family, and made him the legal guardian of his wife. Without his permission she could not take a job, sign a contract or engage in litigation; she was not a legal person in Civil Law.... mostly all the wife's property passed to the husband on marriage. Even money earned by the wife during marriage generally belonged legally to her husband. The law did not allow people to regulate their property relations within marriage by a legal contract..."⁵

The position of the daughters within the marital and family relationship was much the same when viewed within German society in Marx's time. The Prussian Civil Code stated that:

"The father was given full control over his children; he alone had the right to make decisions about their education, to approve their marriage if they were under age, to allow them to work, even-when they were babies-to decide when they should be weaned. Over the daughters of the family his power was most complete. Until they married, he represented them in law and held their property as his".⁶

Thus within the marital and family relationships of Marx's time there is a form of authority which is based upon the patriarchal rule of the father and the husband who is the exclusive owner and possessor of all forms and types of private property within the family household. This

includes the property of each person in the family. He possesses and owns all material objects and forms of property such as money and land in the same way that he has control over human forms of property such as his wives and daughters. They are his personal and private possessions and he may do with them as he pleases within certain limits. For example, while he may sell material possessions, land, and other forms of property to another person for money or other property of similar value, he may not however sell his wife and daughters to another person for money or other property. In other words, while he may sell a non-human object to another person he may not sell the physical body of a human being to another person. He may however sell the labour power of his wife and daughters so that they may become workers in a factory or industry. This however also depends upon whether he himself can some way compel or force them to enter into an agreement with an employer.

In a footnote to Quotation III, Marx claimed that prostitution was indistinguishable from wage labour. He stated:

"Prostitution is only a specific expression of the general prostitution of the labourer, and since it is a relationship in which falls not the prostitute alone, but also the one who prostitutes - and the latter's abomination is still the greater - the capitalist, etc., also comes under this head".⁷ (IV)

In this quotation Marx uses the word prostitution. The word prostitution may be defined as:

"The act or business of prostituting, the offering by a woman, of her body for purposes of intercourse with men for hire. The act of hiring or devoting to base purposes, as one's honour, talents, resources, etc."⁸

From this definition it can be seen that the word prostitution can be used in two different ways. The first way is within a totally sexual context.

This way refers to a woman selling her body to a man for sexual purposes. The second way is within a more open context. This way refers to a human being selling himself or herself to another human being for improper purposes. This way does not necessarily refer to the selling of sex but may also refer to the selling of honour, talent, resources or whatever else the human being may possess.

Marx also used the word prostitution in two different ways which are quite similar to the previously stated definition. In Quotation IV Marx was making a specific class reference to the working class woman and the working class family. He was also making an analogy between the prostitute and the labourer. The first type of prostitution is a type of particular prostitution which has a primarily sexual connotation and a primarily economic basis for its existence. Working class women were selling their bodies to both bourgeois and working class men for sexual purposes in order to economically survive in bourgeois society. For example, in Europe in Marx's time many working class women were forced out of economic necessity and for economic survival to become prostitutes in order to support themselves and their families.⁹ In Germany in Marx's time the authorities and the ruling class with the help of the police maintained certain areas, certain streets, and certain brothels in many German cities which staffed working class women who had become prostitutes. Their primary purpose was to provide sexual services to the upper classes. For these classes a visit by a young male to a prostitute was considered proof of honour and manhood.¹⁰

Engels writing independently, but at the same time as Marx, analyzed and described the social reality of prostitution. He strongly

condemned the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie whose values contributed to its maintenance and rapid increase in Europe in Marx's time. He wrote:

"Next to intemperance in the enjoyment of intoxicating liquors, one of the principal faults of English working-men is sexual licence. But this, too, follows with relentless logic, with inevitable necessity out of the position of a class left to itself, with no means of making fit use of its freedom. The bourgeoisie has left the working-class only these two pleasures, while imposing upon it a multitude of labours and hardships, and the consequences is that the working-men, in order to get something from life, concentrate their whole energy upon these two enjoyments... When people are placed under conditions which appeal to the brute only, what remains to them but to rebel or to succumb to the brute only... And when, moreover the bourgeoisie does its full share in maintaining prostitution - and how many of the 40,000 prostitutes who fill the streets of London every evening live upon the virtuous bourgeoisie! How many of them owe it to the seduction of the bourgeoisie, that they must offer their bodies to the passers-by in order to live?-surely it has least of all a right to reproach the workers with their sexual brutality".¹¹

The second type of prostitution is a type of general prostitution which has a primarily physical connotation and a primarily economic basis for its existence. The worker must sell his labour-power in the form of his bodily strength to the bourgeois factory in order to support himself and his family and in order to economically survive in a bourgeois society.¹²

Thus in Quotation IV Marx has expanded the word prostitution to a metaphor of dependency when he claimed that it was indistinguishable from wage labour. He felt that there was a similarity between the particular prostitution of the woman who must sell her sexuality to the man and the general prostitution of the labourer who must sell his physical labour to the capitalist. Both are selling themselves for money in order to survive in a bourgeois society.

The next quotation by Marx on the relationship between men and women has a large discussion of sexual relationships. Marx stated:

"In the approach to woman as the spoil and handmaid of communal lust is expressed the infinite degradation in which man exists for himself, for the secret of his approach has its unambiguous, decisive, plain and undisguised expression in the relation of man to woman and in the manner in which the direct and natural procreative relationship is conceived. The direct, natural, and necessary relation of person to person is the relation of man to woman. In this natural relationship of the sexes man's relation to nature is immediately his relation to man, just as his relation to man is immediately his relation to nature - his own natural function. In this relationship, therefore, is sensuously manifested, reduced to an observable fact, the extent to which the human essence has become nature to man, or to which nature has to him become the human essence of man. From this relationship one can therefore judge man's whole level of development. It follows from the character of this relationship how much man as a species being, as man, has come to be himself and to comprehend himself: the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being. It therefore reveals the extent to which man's natural behaviour has become human, or the extent to which the human essence in him has become a natural essence - the extent to which his human nature has come to be nature to him. In this relationship is revealed, too, the extent to which man's need has become a human need: the extent to which, therefore, the other person as a person has become for him a need - the extent to which he in his individual existence is at the same time a social being".¹³ (V)

In Quotation III Marx rejected the crude communism in which the relationships of material possession and private property dominate and which favoured the establishment of the community of women. The making of women into objects also involves the making of men into objects as well. Persons who obtain gratification from objects and who have no need to enter into subjective relationships with other human beings lose all their humanity. In Quotation V Marx emphasized that the particular condition of women was representative of the general state of emancipation

of society. The relationship that exists between men and women is a good indication of the state of existence of both men and women in bourgeois society.

Marx in these statements has extended his previous argument concerning the relationship between men and women by making it the means of judging the state of humanity of any society. He thought that the dependency of women was a reflection of the state of man's existence in society. There is also a particular class reference in these statements to the working class woman. Marx's statement that "in the approach to woman as the spoil and handmaid of communal lust is expressed as the infinite degradation in which man exists for himself" is indicative of this. This statement by Marx indicates two things. Firstly, women in their relationships with men are treated like servants and are denied expression of their natural and useful qualities in that they are used by men merely as a source of labour for their domestic households and to satisfy their sexual desires. These relationships between man and woman become relationships of master and servant rather than relationships of human being to human being. Secondly, man's existence in society is characterized by disgraceful behaviour and low morals and that one way in which this becomes apparent and obvious is through the way in which he treats women. Marx further wrote that "the secret of this approach has its unambiguous, decisive, plain and undisguised expression in the relation of man to woman and in the manner in which the direct and natural procreative relationship is conceived". This statement by Marx indicates that man's low behaviour is reflected in society in two ways. Firstly, it is reflected through his attitudes and behaviour towards women who are

considered to be unequal and inferior beings and whose main job in life is to service man. Secondly, it is reflected through the way in which the procreative or reproductive relationship of man to woman has been distorted from its natural purposes.

Marx considered the relation of man to woman to be the most direct, natural, and necessary relation of person to person. This statement by Marx implies three things. Firstly, the relationship of man to woman is direct because it is a relationship of human being to human being. Nature produces two different types of human beings in the form of the male and the female sexes. Men and women are both characterized by distinctively different physical characteristics. It is these differences which make it important for men and women to relate to each other directly as human being to human being. Secondly, the relationship of man to woman is natural because it is natural for man and woman to come together and form families. Natural in this sense is a reference to the procreative or reproductive function of men and woman. It is the differences which men and women possess which brings them together so that they may marry and reproduce children. This allows both men and women to become complete humans. A man is not fully human without a relationship to a woman. He is not complete by himself. Members of the same sex cannot naturally reproduce, that is, they cannot become complete humans. That is what makes the relationship between men and women natural and normal. Thirdly, the relationship of man to woman is necessary because the procreative or reproductive function of man and woman is necessary if human beings are to reproduce themselves and their species and their society. It is necessary that men and women come together and form families and reproduce children

so that their species and their society will continue through the addition of new members.

For Marx this natural relationship of the sexes shows man's relationship to his fellow man in the same way that his relationship to his fellow man shows his relationship to nature. This statement by Marx indicates that the relationship between the male and female sexes is direct, natural, and necessary in the same way that the relationship between man and nature is direct, natural, and necessary. The way in which the male and female sexes relate to each other also shows the way in which man relates to the surrounding environment and to other human beings. Man and woman need each other to be complete human beings in the same way that man needs nature to be a complete human being.

Thus the primary purpose of Quotation V is to show that one method of evaluating and judging the level of human and social development of any society is to observe the relationships between the male and female sexes. These relationships may be seen to exist in two forms. The natural relationships between the male and female sexes are ones in which there is a certain degree of economic and social equality present and both groups relate to each other as human being to human being. The unnatural relationships are ones in which there is a certain degree of economic and social inequality present and the original natural relationship of human being to human being has become distorted so that it is no longer recognizable. A society which has a high degree or level of human development will have natural relationships based upon economic and social equality between the male and female sexes. A society which has a low degree or level of human development will have unnatural relationships

based upon economic and social inequality between the sexes. It has been previously stated that European and German society in the nineteenth century and Marx's time was characterized by economic and social inequality between the male and female sexes and bourgeois mistreatment of working class women by bourgeois men. It therefore follows that if the relationships that existed between the sexes that existed in nineteenth century Europe and German society are used as a method of judging the human and social development of such a society, the level of such development that existed in Marx's time can be considered to be quite low.

Quotation V is important when it is considered from an analytical context by the secondary literature. This is because it is one of the few statements by Marx which deals with sexual relationships and the relationships between men and women that has been subjected to an extended analysis by the secondary literature.

Avineri in The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx wrote that the unique pattern of sexual relations has a systematic significance which makes it possible to project them as a general model for the structure of human relations in socialist society. Sexual relations are at once necessary and spontaneous, they are also other-orientated par excellence. Man's need for a partner in the sexual relationship makes his own needs depend upon another person's needs. By definition sexual relations are reciprocal. They are relationships between members of the opposite sex. They are relationships between males and females which involve the procreative or reproductive function so that families and children are formed. If they are unilateral and are relationships between members of the same sex such as men and men and women and women the

procreative or reproductive function is not possible and families and children are unable to be formed. When relationships are not reciprocal and are unilateral they are not natural relationships and the other person becomes a mere object rather than a co-equal subject. It then becomes a relationship of domination. Avineri further noted that this was presented in Quotation V by Marx and further emphasized in his criticism of the bourgeois family in The Manifesto of the Communist Party in which sexual relations were totally destroyed by the nineteenth century bourgeois who even made the limited reciprocity of family life impossible and turned the women into a mere object. The woman is dominated by the man and becomes dependent upon him for her existence and survival in society.¹⁴

Teeple in Marx's Critique of Politics wrote that the relationship between men and women in the first form of communism shows that the natural relationship between the sexes is in fact a falsification. According to Marx this relationship can be used to judge man's whole level of development. Teeple questioned how Marx could make such a claim and developed the following response. Marx in these statements is employing the method of a critique by saying that the level of organic organization of any particular society may be criticized (judged, discerned) by comparing its relations between men and women to the relation between man and woman in the manner in which the direct and natural species-relationship is conceived. In an age of widespread sexual antagonism and ambiguity the definition of the essence of human relations as that between man and woman is not easily accepted. If we accept Aristotle on the notion of essence as Marx did, we find that the essential refers to those attributes of a subject which are universal and necessary. The whole of

mankind is divided into male and female and their union is necessary for the creation and therefore the definition of man. Just male or just female is inconceivable as male is defined in terms of female and vice versa as the one demands the other. The relation between male and female is therefore essential to the definition of man. It is the essential relationship for neither can exist without the other. To be human is to stand in relation to another. But the most natural relation which is the relation necessary for the creation and definition of the human being is that between man and woman. It therefore follows, that in this relationship, the degree of harmony and universality and desire for it lies the secret of the level of human development of any existing society.¹⁵

The relationship of subject to object among human beings is an unnatural relationship in that it is between members of the same sex such as men and men and women and women and women who possess the same physical characteristics and who are therefore unable to procreate or reproduce themselves by forming families and having children. The relationship of subject to subject among human beings is the only natural relationship in that it is between members of the opposite sex such as men and women who possess different physical characteristics and who are therefore able to procreate or reproduce themselves by forming families and having children. This is a relationship between natural subjects (men) who need other natural subjects (women). This relationship is essential for the continuation of the human species and of society.

In bourgeois society a natural relationship between men and women becomes unnatural. This is because bourgeois society is influenced by

interests involving money and private property. Women are controlled by and are dependent upon men for their economic existence and physical survival. Women are restricted to the private domestic household and are prevented from earning money and owning property of their own. The husband works in the public business world and earns money and owns all property in the household. Male possession at the expense of the female is natural in bourgeois society.

In Quotation VI Marx reemphasized the idea of women being viewed as human commodities who can be bought and sold in the marketplace. He stated:

"You make everything that is yours saleable, i.e., useful. If I ask the political economist: Do I obey economic laws if I extract money by offering my body for sale, by surrendering it to another's lust? (The factory worker's in France call the prostitution of their wives and daughters the Xth working hour, which is literally correct.) - Or am I not acting in keeping with political economy if I sell my friend to the Moroccans? (And the direct sale of men in the form of a trade in conscripts, etc., takes place in all civilized countries)".¹⁶ (VI)

In this quotation Marx was again making a specific class reference to the working class woman and the working class family. He was again referring to a type of particular prostitution which has a primarily sexual connotation and a primarily economic basis for its existence. Working class women were selling their bodies to bourgeois men for sexual purposes in order to economically survive in bourgeois society. In Germany factory girls in Rheims in the 1830s often served as prostitutes in their scant spare time, calling this their 'fifth quarter of the day'.¹⁷

FOOTNOTES

- 1 K. Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, pp. 82-83. (III)

Note: Marx's footnote to Quotation 1, (III) is presented separately as Quotation (7) (IV).

- 2 E. Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man, New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Company, pp. 40-42.
- 3 B. Ehrenreich and D. English, For Her Own Good, Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1979, p. 7.
- 4 E. Zaretsky, "Capitalism, The Family, and Personal Life Part 1", Socialist Revolution, Volume 3, Numbers 1 and 2, 1973, p. 89.
- 5 R. Evans, p. 12.
- 6 R. Evans, p. 12.
- 7 K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, p. 82. (IV)
- 8 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 1013.
- 9 P. Branca, Women in Europe Since 1750, pp. 21-22.
- J. Scott and L. Tilly, "Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth Century Europe", Comparative Studies in Society and History, Volume 17, 1975, pp. 57-58.
- 10 R. Evans, pp. 16-17.
- 11 F. Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, London: Panther Books, p. 158.
- 12 F. Engels
- 13 K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, pp. 83-84. (V)
- 14 S. Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1971, pp. 89-90.
- 15 G. Teeple, pp. 150-151.
- 16 K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, pp. 96-97. (VI)
- 17 P. Branca, p. 133.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE HOLY FAMILY (1844-1845) AND THESES ON FEUERBACH (1845)

The Holy Family was written in 1844 and published in 1845 and represented the first joint written work of Marx and Engels. This work adopts the views of Feuerbachian materialism in order to present a criticism of Hegel's idealistic philosophical system. The work presents the initial principles of the materialistic conception of history. It presents statements on the role of social production in society and the role of the proletariat as a revolutionary force. It represents the formative period of Marxism when the basic principles of their materialist conception of history had not yet been fully stated.

Although the title of the book seemingly refers to the family, its content does not deal with it at all and there is only one specific section which discusses the issue of women in bourgeois society. Initially Marx reaffirms a view presented previously in On the Jewish Question and Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 that women's status as human commodities and as articles of private property allow them to be bought and sold to the highest bidder.

Marx began his discussion of women by referring to an example from fiction of a woman who had been placed in disadvantaged circumstances and a disadvantaged position in society. The woman he referred to was a fictional character in one of the many romantic novels written by French

novelist Eugene Sue in the 1840s and 1850s. Marx noted the arrest of a servant girl called Louise Morel. She was a maid who was reduced to misery, shame, and crime by her master who took advantage of her. Marx stated:

" 6) REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY OF THE EMANCIPATION
OF WOMEN, OR LOUISE MOREL

On the occasion of the arrest of Louise Morel, Rudolph indulges in reflections which he sums up as follows:

"The master often ruins the maid, either by fear, surprise or other use of the opportunities provided by the nature of the servants' condition. He reduces her to misery, shame and crime. The law is not concerned with this.... The criminal who has in fact driven a girl to infanticide is not punished".

Rudolph's reflections do not go so far as to make the servants' condition the object of his most gracious Criticism. Being a petty ruler, he is a great patroniser of servants' conditions. Still less does he go so far as to understand that the general position of women in modern society is inhuman. Faithful in all respects to his previous theory, he deplores only that there is no law which punishes a seducer and links repentance and atonement with terrible chastisement".¹ (VII)

Marx stated that "the general position of women in modern society is inhuman". A human relationship is one of human being or subject (man) to human being or subject (woman). An inhuman relationship is one of subject (man) to object (woman). A human relationship is one in which both men and women are freely able to participate in productive activity and to determine their own lives. If men and women are unable to do this then they are not complete humans. An inhuman relationship is one of dependency and possession. The woman is dependent upon the man for her economic and physical survival in that she is restricted to the domestic household and unable to participate freely in productive activity, or if

she is able to participate, is restricted to certain female orientated jobs.

Marx has again returned to a theme that he emphasized in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. He has again emphasized that working class women in nineteenth century bourgeois society were being used by bourgeois males for their labour and their sexuality. The bourgeois male is the master of the household and will use any means possible such as fear, surprise, or any other opportunities which become available through the conditions of the female working class maid's life circumstances to take advantage of her. Marx was not specific with regard to what these means of fear, surprise, or other opportunities might be. In the process of using these means of fear, surprise, or other opportunities the male bourgeois ruins the female working class maid and reduces her to misery, shame, and crime. Marx was not specific with regard to how this change in life circumstances for the girl came about. It is only inferred at through his mention of the word infanticide. Marx felt that the law was not concerned with any of the specific events which caused a crime committed by the girl to take place. The girl would be arrested as a criminal but in fact the real criminal was the bourgeois who made the girl dependent upon him because of her need for money and used her for her labour-power and her sexuality. This has reduced her to life circumstances which forced her to engage in criminal activity. Marx was not specific with regard to exactly what type of criminal activity the girl would engage in. The only crime suggested is that of infanticide. He was however very specific in stating that it is not the girl who is the real criminal but the bourgeois male. The girl is merely a victim of

circumstances which she has no control or say over. The girl's need to sell herself to live, led her to sell herself to the male and to her submission. Marx is however not merely criticizing the master. He is also criticizing the moralist who would blame only the master while ignoring the fact that it is the existence of property and property relationships which corrupt society.

In Quotation VII Marx suggested that there is a causal relationship between domestic service, illegitimate children, and illicit sexual liaisons. This does seem to be the case in nineteenth century Europe. Scott and Tilly have stated that:

"The conditions of domestic service, which usually demanded that servants be unmarried, also contributed to illicit liaisons and led many a domestic to abandon her child. This has long been true; what was different in nineteenth century Europe was that the great increase in the proportions of women employed in domestic service outstripped increased employment in manufacturing. This meant that more women than ever before, proportionally, were employed in this sector, which was particularly liable to produce illegitimate children".²

Marx continued with his discussion of the working class girl when he paraphrased Fourier and stated:

"Adultery, seduction, are a credit to the seducer, are good tone.... But, poor girl! Infanticide! What a crime! If she prizes her honour she must efface all traces of dishonour. But if she sacrifices her child to the prejudices of the world her ignominy is all the greater and she is a victim of the prejudices of the law.... That is the vicious circle which every civilised mechanism describes".

"Is not the young daughter a ware held up for sale to the first bidder who wishes to obtain exclusive ownership of her?... De meme qu'en grammaire deux negations valent une affirmation. I'on peut dire qu'en negoce conjugal deux prostitutions valent une vertu".³ (VIII)

In Quotation VIII Marx has reemphasized two themes which he had previously presented in previous quotations. The first paragraph of this quotation relates back to Quotation VII from The Holy Family. Marx has again emphasized that illicit sexual liaisons occur between bourgeois males and young working class women. For the males they are a sign of honour and status while for the girl they are a sign of dishonour and loss of self-respect. It must be mentioned however, that dishonour itself does not come from the illicit sexual relationship itself. Dishonour does not come from the alliance between the bourgeois male and the working class girl. Dishonour only occurs if the relationship becomes public or if the girl becomes pregnant and has a baby. If this occurs, both the bourgeois male and the working class girl are sure to face problems. The girl may commit the crime of infanticide and in doing so faces an even greater problem than dishonour when she becomes a victim of the prejudices of the law. In Quotations VII and VIII Marx uses the word infanticide. The word infanticide may be defined as "child murderer; one who murders a child".⁴ There is a suggestion by Marx that the girl may try to hide any evidence of her pregnancy by preventing the birth of the child in some way or by killing the child at birth. This makes the girl a criminal and subject to legal prosecution if she is caught. The girl is however not the real criminal. The real criminal is the male bourgeois who got the girl into trouble by making her pregnant and then abandoning her.

The second paragraph of Quotation VIII relates back to Quotation II from On the Jewish Question. Marx has again emphasized that the female is a type of human commodity who can be bought and sold in the marketplace to the highest bidder who wants to obtain use of her. This again suggests

that the idea of the marriage contract in which the pairing of daughters and sons was made by parents was made on the basis of economic (money and property) considerations rather than on the basis of the human needs of the woman or the young man (love and personal feelings).

In Quotations VII and VIII from The Holy Family Marx was not speaking as a moralist on sexual relationships but as an independent observer of living conditions in bourgeois society. Marx was not making a moral judgement on the rights and wrongs of unmarried women who engaged in illicit sexual relationships. Marx was however making a value judgement on the living and working conditions which working class women were subjected to in bourgeois society.

It is interesting to note that while Marx condemned the bourgeois male who engaged in illicit sexual relationships with the working class woman, he himself was guilty of the crime. In the same way that the fictional bourgeois male engaged in sexual relations with a fictional servant girl Louise Morel, the very real Karl Marx who had a bourgeois background himself, engaged in sexual relations with a very real servant girl Helen (Lenchen) Demuth. In the same way that the fictional servant girl Louise Morel became pregnant, the very real servant girl Helen (Lenchen) Demuth became pregnant.

In 1851 a servant girl named Helen (Lenchen) Demuth, then 27, gave birth to a boy Henry Frederick. The child was raised by Engels who accepted responsibility for him. The paternity of the boy was always in doubt as Engels himself did not declare paternity. After Marx had died and on his own deathbed Engels revealed to Marx's daughter Eleanor Marx that her father was the father of Henry Frederick. Eleanor was shocked by

this and at first refused to believe it.⁵ Padover in his biography of Marx has stated that Marx persuaded Engels to say that he was the father of the child and to accept responsibility for him. His wife Jenny was easily persuaded that Engels was the father as she had never approved of his morals as he had lived with a mistress. If Jenny had known the truth it might have killed her or at the very least destroyed their marriage. This was the reason why Marx who loved children and who was a good father never permitted himself to acknowledge the child as his son.⁶

Marx continued with his discussion by reemphasizing a theme which he had previously presented in Quotation V of Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 by once again discussing how the dependent position of women is representative of the state of man's existence in society. Marx paraphrased Fourier and stated:

"The change in a historical epoch can always be determined by women's progress towards freedom, because here, in the relation of woman to man, of the weak to the strong, the victory of human nature over brutality is most evident. The degree of emancipation of woman is the natural measure of general emancipation".

"The humiliation of the female sex is an essential feature of civilisation as well as of barbarism. The only difference is that the civilised system raises every vice that barbarism practises in a simple form to a compound, equivocal, ambiguous, hypocritical mode of existence.... No one is punished more severely for keeping woman in slavery than man himself".⁷ (IX)

Women are physically weaker and hence can be forced into subordination. The brutal physical force of barbarism or barbarian society has been replaced by the legal and social force based upon property of civilization or civilized society.

Men are by nature considered to be the stronger sex. Women are by nature considered to be the weaker sex. The relationship between men and women should ideally be a reciprocal relationship of subject to subject. The view of human nature however which views men as stronger than women converts the reciprocal relationship of subject to subject into a unilateral relationship of subject to object. When women are converted from a relationship in which they are co-equal subjects to a relationship in which they are unequal objects they become dependent upon men to their existence and survival and are placed in a disadvantaged economic and social position. This is because women are restricted by man to the private sphere of the domestic household and are prevented from engaging in productive labour as the men do in the public sphere of the business world. They earn no money and own no property of their own and are dependent upon their husband for objects which are necessary for their existence and survival. This makes them economically and socially disadvantaged in bourgeois society as compared to men.

Marx in these statements had contrasted the disadvantaged position of women in bourgeois society to the disadvantaged position of the general population of bourgeois society as a whole. The disadvantaged position of women was a reflection of the barbaric, brutal, and hypocritical character of bourgeois society which was responsible for the repression of the population as a whole. The degree of freedom which women could achieve would provide an adequate representative measure of what could be achieved by the general population. The disadvantaged position of women was an inherent part of modern civilization and was a reflection of man's

existence in bourgeois society which had not yet left the state of barbarism.

It must be noted that although Marx claimed that he was paraphrasing Fourier in the previously stated quotation, he was, in fact, taking a great deal of liberty with his paraphrasing and translation of Fourier's work. Fourier stated:

"As a general proposition: Social Progress and changes of period are brought about by virtue of the progress of women towards liberty and social retrogression occurs as a result of a discrimination in the liberty of women. Other events influence the political changes; but there is no cause which produces social progress or decline as rapidly as a change in the condition of women... In summary, the extension of the privileges of women is the fundamental cause of all social progress".⁸

Fourier considered the progress of women towards freedom and liberty to be a fundamental cause of all social progress. This differs from Marx's interpretation of Fourier in that Marx considered the progress of women to be a fundamental index of all social progress.

Fourier considered the progress of women to be a fundamental cause of all social progress. The word cause may be defined as:

"The power or efficient agent producing any event or thing; any occasion or condition upon the occurrence of which an event takes place".⁹

Social progress and changes within any particular historical period are caused or occur as a result of the progress of women towards liberty. Social backwardness within any particular historical period is caused or occurs as a result of discrimination against or a lack of progress of women towards liberty. There are other events which cause or produce social progress or social decline. Changes in the condition of women is however the major factor. The extension of improved social conditions and

of social privileges towards women is the major and most important cause of all social progress. Fourier felt that the extension of privileges to women is a general principle and major cause of all social progress. Capitalist society however with its emphasis upon private property relations and competition distorts and frustrates the needs and passions of men and women so that the social progress of women is hindered.¹⁰

Marx considered the progress of women to be a fundamental index of all social progress. The word index may be defined as:

"Anything that manifests or denotes; a numerical expression of the ratio between one dimension of magnitude and another on which it is regarded as comparable".¹¹

This is evident in Marx's statement that the change within any particular historical period can be determined by the progress of women towards freedom. This is a reemphasis of an idea which Marx discussed in detail in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. In Quotation V Marx emphasized that one method of evaluating and judging the level of human and social development of any society is to observe the relationships between the male and female sexes. In Quotation IX of The Holy Family Marx has extended his previous analysis so that the relationships between the male and female sexes become more than merely indexes of evaluating and judging the level of human and social development of a society. The relationships between the male and female sexes have now become indexes of evaluating and judging change within the level of human and social development of any society. One index that can be used to measure this change is the condition of women within the society.

After the publication of The Holy Family in 1845 Marx became interested in the nature of the conflict between social reality and its

ideological representation and as a result sought to critically analyze Feuerbachian materialism. Engels discovered the notes which Marx wrote in this area of study in 1845 and published them in 1888. He wrote:

"On the other hand, in an old notebook of Marx's I have found the eleven theses on Feuerbach, printed here as an appendix. These are the notes hurriedly scribbled down for later elaboration, absolutely not intended for publication, but they are invaluable as the first document in which is deposited the brilliant gem of the new world outlook".¹²

In these notes Marx made the following statement in which the word family was used:

"Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, of the duplication of the world into a religious, imaginary world and a real one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. He overlooks the fact that after completing this work, the chief thing still remains to be done. For the fact that the secular basis detaches itself from itself and establishes itself in the clouds as an independent realm can only be explained by the cleavage and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must itself, therefore, first be understood in its contradiction and then, by the removal of the contradiction, revolutionised in practice. Thus, for instance, after the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the holy family, the former must then itself be criticised in theory and revolutionised in practice".¹³
(X)

The word family may be defined as:

"A group of persons, consisting of parents and their children; a group of persons forming a household, including servants; a succession of persons connected by blood, name, etc.; a house; line; clan; tribe; race; any class or group of like or related things".¹⁴

In Quotation X Marx did not use the word family as it is traditionally used, to refer to a group of biologically related persons. Therefore the first three definitions in Quotation 14 do not apply. In Quotation X Marx used the word family to refer to a group of philosophers

who had similar views. Therefore the fourth definition in Quotation 14 does apply. Marx was being ironic in Quotation X and referring to the philosophers whom he called saints because they were pure in thought. These saints whom consisted of Bauer, Stirner, and others formed the holy family. Bauer, Stirner, and others felt that thought revealed truth. Critical thought would bring full enlightenment and this would bring freedom. This would be adequate and would be enough to better society. By calling Bauer, Stirner, and the other philosophers saints and by placing them in a grouping called the holy family Marx was in an ironic way referring to a group of people he was mocking.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 K. Marx and F. Engels, "The Holy Family", Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Collected Works Volume 4, New York: International Publishers, 1975, p. 195. (VII)
- 2 J. Scott and L. Tilly, p. 56.
- 3 K. Marx and F. Engels, The Holy Family, p. 196. (VIII)
- 4 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 647.
- 5 Y. Kopp, Eleanor Marx, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972, 1976, Volume I: p. 292, 297; Volume II: p. 597.
- 6 S. Padover, Karl Marx, An Intimate Biography, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1978, pp. 506-507.
- 7 K. Marx and F. Engels, The Holy Family, p. 196. (IX)
- 8 J. Beecher and R. Bienvenu, ed., The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier, London: Jonathan Cape, 1972, pp. 195-196.
- 9 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 212.
- 10 E. Zaretsky, "Capitalism, The Family, and Personal Life Part 2", Socialist Revolution, Volume 3, Number 3, 1973, pp. 28-29.
- 11 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 643.
- 12 F. Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy, New York: International Publishers, 1938, p. 16.
- 13 K. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach", F. Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy, New York: International Publishers, 1938, p. 74. (X)

K. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, p. 144 (translation quoted) (X)
- 14 Britannica World Language Dictionary, Volume 1, p. 457.

CHAPTER SIX

THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY (1845-1846)

The German Ideology was written between 1845 and 1846 and was published in 1846. It again represented the joint work of Marx and Engels. It was in this work that the materialist conception of history called historical materialism by later scholars such as Tucker, was first formulated as a theory, which discovered the genuine laws of social development and revolutionized the science of society. It investigates the basic determinants of the succession of phases in the development of social production and puts forth the basic features of the future communist society. The work however is important for another reason in that it represents Marx and Engels' first attempt to provide clear and comprehensive statements regarding the historical and theoretical development of the family and family relationships within pre-capitalist and capitalist societies. The majority of these statements are found in Part 1 of this work.

Marx dealt with the problem of women's position in history when he traced its origins from pre-bourgeois to bourgeois society. He began with a discussion of the division of labour in pre-bourgeois society in terms of tribal ownership which corresponds to an underdeveloped stage of production. The division of labour at this stage is confined to the family:

"The first form of ownership is tribal [Stammeigentum] ownership. It corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production, at which a people lives by hunting and fishing, by the rearing of beasts or, in the highest stage, agriculture. In the latter case it presupposes a great mass of uncultivated stretches of land. The division of labour is at this stage still very elementary and is confined to a further extension of the natural division of labour existing in the family. The social structure is, therefore, limited to an extension of the family; patriarchal family chieftains, below them the members of the tribe, finally slaves. The slavery latent in the family only develops gradually with the increase of population, the growth of wants, and with the extension of external relations, both of war and of barter".¹ (XI)

The division of labour in the family is considered to be natural. Marx did not specify whether this natural division is either necessary for or good for the functioning of tribal society. It is a division which is simply accepted by Marx as being inevitable. It is a division which will continue to exist, at least as long as tribal society continues to exist, because it is natural. At this early stage in historical development the division of labour in the family does not yet reflect the economic society that defines and surrounds it. Instead it structures the society and the division of labour. Women exist within the confines of tribal society and the patriarchal family in a manner which makes them subject to the rule of men. Male chieftains rule both the tribe and the family. Women however do not become slaves within the family and subject to total dependence upon and domination by men until changes occur in terms of the economic and social development of tribal society. These changes include an increase in population, the growth of new needs and wants, and the extension of external relations between which involves both war and an exchange of commerce in the form of barter and trade.

Marx argued that the development of private property and other forms of bourgeois activity transforms the social relations of the family so that the family becomes the only social relationship that is a subordinate need. When this occurs less importance is attached to social relationships within the family than to economic relationships within the community. Relationships involving economics become more important than and are accorded a higher status than relationships involving family matters. Marx viewed the family as a distinctive social form which is based in the relations of production because:

"life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things".²

He suggested three aspects of all social activity which are:

"the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history".³

These three aspects would satisfy the basic requirements of eating, drinking, habitation, clothing, etc. which allow men to exist and live and be in a position to make history.

The first historical act is the production of the means to satisfy these needs or the production of material life itself. This is a fundamental condition of all history which must be fulfilled in order to sustain human life.⁴ The second historical act is the production of new needs. The satisfaction of the first need through the action of satisfying, and the instrument of satisfaction which has been acquired, leads to new needs.⁵ The third historical act is the reproduction of the family which is a subordinate need:

The third circumstance which, from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the family. The family, which to begin with is the only social relationship, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relations and the increased population new needs, a subordinate one (except in Germany), and must then be treated and analysed according to the existing empirical data, not according to "the concept of the family", as is the custom in Germany. These three aspects of social activity are not of course to be taken as three different stages, but just as three aspects or, to make it clear to the Germans, three "moments", which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of history and the first men, and which still assert themselves in history today".⁶ (XII)

The third historical act which is the reproduction of the family becomes a part of the historical development of mankind from the very beginning of time. Men and women come together and propagate children and form biological nuclear families. The family is the biological relation between men and women and parents and children. It is natural that men need women and women need men to satisfy their sexual needs. It is natural that men and women come together to satisfy these needs. It is necessary that when men and women naturally come together to satisfy their sexual needs they procreate or reproduce themselves so that their species and their society will continue and expand with the addition of new members. These are ideas which Marx previously expressed in Quotation V of Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844.

Marx in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and in The German Ideology differentiated between human and non-human nature. These are ideas which Marx discussed briefly but not in detail in Quotation II from the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. The physical structure of the human body requires that, to survive, humans must use the resources

of the non-human world. They need food, drink, shelter, clothing, which they must obtain from non-human nature. Human beings have many biologically based needs and can be conceived only in relation to a world in which these needs may be satisfied. This makes it difficult to make a distinct conceptual distinction between human and non-human nature. The two are internally related aspects of the whole. Animals must also draw on the non-human world for physical survival. Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, religion, and numerous other factors. They begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence. This process is conditioned by their physical organization. Human beings differ from animals in that they do not simply utilize what the world provides in order to fulfill their needs. They also transform the world. People do not simply graze or find ready-made shelter. They also grow food and prepare it, and they construct their own shelters. Some animals too, produce their means of subsistence by building dams, nests, webs, etc. Although there is a superficial similarity between the way in which humans and animals utilize the world's resources, there is a fundamental difference. Contrary to the activity of animals, human activity is consciousness and purposeful. Consciousness physical labour is directed towards transforming the material world so it will satisfy human needs. It is directed towards satisfying human needs, which are needs based on human biology. Men must be able to live in order to make history. Life involves before everything else eating, drinking, habitation, clothing, and many other things. The first historical act is the production of the means to satisfy these needs or the production of material life itself. The satisfaction of the first

needs through the action of satisfying and the instrument of satisfactions which have been acquired leads to the producing of new needs. This first historical act has a double aspect. It provides the means of satisfying existing needs and simultaneously creates new needs. In this way conscious physical labour changes both the non-human world and the human producers themselves. As new needs emerge, people develop new means of satisfying those needs and the new products give rise to still further needs. Thus there is the notion that human beings create themselves and have human control of their own destiny.

When women are prevented from participating in productive physical activity and labour they are unable to obtain for themselves the objects which are necessary for their economic and physical survival. Their exclusion from the labour process prevents them from earning the barter or money which is necessary to obtain such objects. They then become dependent upon men who actively participate in productive physical activity and labour to obtain for them the objects which are necessary for their economic and physical survival. Men who actively participate in the labour process are able to earn the barter or money which is necessary to obtain such objects. In this way women (daughters, mothers, and wives) become dependents of men (sons, fathers, and husbands) and the family relationship becomes a relationship in which the men control and dominate the women. In such circumstances women are unable to create themselves and are unable to have control of their own destiny.

The family is the first and original social relationship in tribal society. This situation changes however when new forms of economic and social development occur and the rapidly increasing population requires

new needs. When this occurs, family relationships and family needs become subordinated to the new economic and other forms of social relationships and needs which are created. The family then becomes the only social relationship that becomes a subordinate need. Other social relationships and other needs take precedence over the social relationships and the needs of the family.

Once the family social relation becomes a subordinate one it becomes analytically peripheral for Marx. In particular, the last of the three aspects of social activity, the act of man propagating his own kind appears as natural and outside of history:

"The production of life, both on one's own in labour and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relationship. By social we understand the co-operation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force". Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange".⁷ (XIII)

These statements indicate that for Marx production occurs in society in two different and distinct forms. The first type of production is economic production which occurs through the use of the physical capabilities of the human being and which is expressed through human labour. The result of this type of production is the material product. The second type of production is human production which occurs through the union of the male and the female sexes and which is expressed in the sexual act. The result of this type of production is the child. The act

of production now appears as a double relationship. Economic production now becomes as common and natural as human production. It is as natural for the human being to physically labour in the workplace as it is for the male and the female sexes to engage in sexual activities. Economic production now becomes social in the same way that human production becomes social. Economic production requires the co-operation of several human beings in the creation of the material product. Human production requires the co-operation and union of the male and the female sexes in the creation of a child.

These statements indicate that for Marx production and reproduction occur simultaneously with production taking precedence over reproduction so that both production and reproduction were bourgeois in nature. In this sense the biological reproduction of people is a possible outcome of the ways in which the production and reproduction of the means of subsistence are socially organized. In this context the primary purpose of the family in bourgeois society is that it is responsible for the reproduction of human beings whose major purpose in life is that they participate in social labour.

In a footnote to Quotation XII Marx presented a historical discussion in which he traced the relationship between the individual economy which is based upon the ownership of private property and the family. Marx found that throughout both primitive and modern historical periods economic conditions prevented the development of a communal economy so that the existence of the individual economy which is characterized by private property is inseparable from the family. This lead Marx to conclude that the abolition of the individual economy and its

accompanying private property is inseparable from the abolition of the family. Marx wrote:

"3. The building of houses. With savages each family has a matter of course its own cave or hut like the separate family tent of the nomads. This separate domestic economy is made only the more necessary by the further development of private property. With the agricultural peoples a communal domestic economy is just as impossible as a communal cultivation of the soil. A great advance was the building of towns. In all previous periods, however, the abolition of individual economy, which is inseparable from the abolition of private property, was impossible for the simple reason that the material conditions governing it were not present. The setting-up of a communal domestic economy presupposes the development of machinery, of the use of natural forces and of many other productive forces - e.g., of water supplies, of gas-lighting, steam-heating, etc., the removal [of the antagonism] of town and country. Without these conditions a communal economy would not in itself form a new productive force: lacking any material basis and resting on a purely theoretical foundation, it would be a mere freak and would end in nothing more than a monastic economy. What was possible can be seen in the towns brought about by condensation and the erection of communal buildings for various definite purposes (prisons, barracks, etc.). That the abolition of individual economy is inseparable from the abolition of the family is self-evident. [Marx]"⁸ (XIV)

The individual economy of which Marx wrote found its basis within the patriarchal family. Each family formed its own distinct and separate economic unit with its own individual economy based upon the ownership of private property and small-scale production. The following paragraphs which draw upon secondary material will describe the economic and social relationships which existed within this type of family in early modern Europe.

Patriarchy is a term frequently used by modern feminists to describe the domination of men over women within the nuclear family, a domination which is then generalized throughout society. But in early modern Europe, patriarchy does not only refer to the domination of the husband over his wife and young children. Historians use

the very similar term "patriarchalism" to describe the basic authority relation that governed production in a society in which production took place primarily within the household. It was thus an authority that included not only the householder's biological family, but also the servants and apprentices who lived as members of the family.

Patriarchalism found its definition in the relationship between the father/head of household and the children, servants, and apprentices who were both his dependents and his workers. The proper relationship between master and servants was believed to be that of a father and children. Servants owed their master respect and filial obedience as well as labor, while he in return owed them religious education, moral governance, and education in a trade, as well as their keep.

The patriarchal relation was rooted in social conditions which made it a plausible view of the situation. The small scale of production combined with the practice of living in, meant that the head of the household "was in direct personal contact with those who worked side by side with him under his orders. He knew them and could hardly help feeling some responsibility both for their physical and for their spiritual welfare". The shared experiences of daily life must have done a lot to define the relationship as a familial one.

Equally important in contributing to this was a concept of the family which saw biological members as productive workers on whose labor the family depended. Daughters and sons of the family routinely worked alongside the servants or were themselves sent out to other households to work. Servants were typically young unmarried people, often children. Thus the categories of child and worker were overlapping, rather than distinct, because families viewed their biological children as workers, as well as their workers as family members.⁹

Marx stated that through increased productivity, the increase of needs, and the increase of population, a division of labour according to sex appears:

"This sheep-like or tribal consciousness receives its further development and extension through increased productivity, the increase of needs, and, what is fundamental to both of these, the increase of population. With these there develops the division of labour, which

was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act, then that division of labour which develops spontaneously or "naturally" by virtue of natural predisposition".¹⁰ (XV)

The first historical act which is increased productivity, the second historical act which is increased needs, and the third historical act which is increased population do not occur independently from one another but simultaneously. There is originally a natural distinction between men and women who are recognized as being biologically and physically different. It is because of these differences however that men and women are attracted to each other and their union results in the initiation of the reproductive process and this results in the natural increase through population of mankind and the human species. These are ideas which Marx previously expressed in Quotation I of Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right and Quotation V of Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. The recognition that men and women are biologically and physically different and are necessary to one another for the reproduction of mankind and the human species has come to mean a more extensive division of labour than the original division of labour which was based in the family and centered on the sexual act. The division of labour in the sexual act developed spontaneously and was part of being human. It occurred through the natural attraction of the male and female sexes who were different and opposites but who united together from natural instinct. From this natural division of labour based in the sexual act there developed a more extensive division of labour which was based upon economic considerations. This new division of labour which was based upon economic considerations also develop spontaneously. Men did

not intentionally plan to dominate women. This domination of men over women was the unintentional and unplanned result of an increase in economic and social development. Men impregnating women in the original division of labour which was based upon the sexual act now becomes just as natural as men hunting animals for clothes and food in the new more extensive division of labour which was based upon economic considerations.

Marx thought that the original division of labour was the natural division of labour in the family through the sex act. The act of child breeding begins the division of labour and it is through this act that the first appearance of property arises through the family. This is when the wife and the child become slaves of the husband. Marx wrote:

"With the division of labour, in which all these contradictions are implicit, and which in its turn is based on the natural division of labour in the family and the separation of society into individual families opposed to one another, is given simultaneously the distribution, and indeed the unequal distribution, both quantitative and qualitative, of labour and its products, hence property: the nucleus, the first form, of which lies in the family, where wife and children are the slaves of the husband. This latent slavery in the family, though still very crude, is the first property, but even at this early stage it corresponds perfectly to the definition of modern economists who call it the power of disposing of the labour-power of others. Division of labour and private property are, moreover, identical expressions: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity".¹¹ (XVI)

Marx saw the division of labour as being derived from the sexual act between men and women and corresponding exactly with the development of private property. The division of labour has no specific quality of its own. The original division of labour which was based upon the sexual act and which was centered within the family now becomes as natural as the

new more extensive division of labour which was based upon economic considerations. Property arising from a division of labour arising from the act of procreating within the family is not differentiated from property arising from the relations of capital. In other words, property which is owned and worked by individual families such as the family farm is not differentiated from property which is owned by individuals such as industrial factories.

Marx saw the propagation of fresh labour as one moment of social activity within the family before social relations came to refer only to the organization of labour within the economic community. Patriarchy in this sense can be used to refer to a specific relation of domestic production in which the head of the household owned or controlled the means of production as well as the property of all its members. He also organized the labour of all its members and distributed the product which they as a family produced. The patriarchal family is seen as the center of the division of labour in society and has no existence outside of property relations. Society consists of an innumerable and constantly increasing number of families each of which is involved in similar economic activities centered around the domestic household. When Marx referred to the "slavery latent in the family" the reference is to the organization of labour resources in terms of private property. The husband organizes the labour of all the family members within the domestic household for the purposes of production. The reference is therefore not to procreative resources in terms of male-female reproduction. There is no inference that the husband forces the wife into some type of sexual slavery which she must forcibly engage in sexual activity whether she

desires to or not. The slavery which is found within the family is viewed as the first form of property and represents the power of being able to determine the use of the labour of others for the purpose of producing an assigned product. The division of labour and private property are seen as identical expressions with a similar content and meaning.

Marx in Quotation XVI has shown that historically it was the woman who became the slave of the man. The question therefore arises as to why it is that the wife becomes the natural slave of the husband and why it is not the opposite that the husband becomes the natural slave of the wife? The sexual act itself is a natural act between husband and wife and based upon the natural attraction and union of the two biologically opposite sexes. Despite this, as you go from the original division of labour which is based in the sexual act and which is natural, to a more extensive division of labour which is based upon economic considerations, the wife becomes the slave of the husband. Why then does this occur?

Adam Smith in The Wealth of Nations discussed a number of issues which could provide a possible answer to this question. Labour is in such demand and is so well rewarded that a numerous family of children, instead of being a burden, is a source of opulence and prosperity to the parents. The labour of each child, before it can leave their house, is computed to be worth a hundred pounds clear gain to them. The value of children is a great encouragement to marriage. There is a great deal of infant mortality and many children do not arrive at maturity.¹²

The high rate of infant and child mortality required that women constantly reproduce during the childbearing years of 20 - 40 so as to ensure that a suitable number of children reach maturity. The lack of

both available and suitable lactation for infants and children required that women were constantly available to provide for their children. It was necessary for the woman to engage in both these activities if the family was to reproduce itself and the children were to reach maturity. In this way the wife became the slave of the husband, in that she was restricted to the domestic household where she was required to both constantly reproduce and constantly take care of the children, whose labour in later years would serve as a method of increasing the wealth of the family household.

Marx thought that the division of labour implies that there is a contradiction between the interests of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have social relationships with each other. Marx wrote:

"Further, the division of labour implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And indeed, this communal interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the "general interest", but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labour is divided. And finally, the division of labour offers us the first example of how, as long as man remains in natural society, that is, as long as a cleavage exists between the particular and the common interest, as long, therefore, as activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the

morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic".¹³ (XVII)

In the division of labour in the natural society there is a separation between the individual and the common interest. Man's actions are not voluntary but are instead forced. They are not voluntary because man is not allowed to freely determine his place within the workforce. They become an alien power which is opposed to him and which enslaves him rather than being controlled by him. In terms of the division of labour each man is forced to participate in a specific form of economic activity which he cannot change. Sex plays an important part in determining the economic activities men and women will engage in. Men will actively participate within the workforce while women will be restricted to the domestic household where they will be responsible for the care and raising of children. In such circumstances however both men and women are not freely able to determine their actions in that both are restricted to participation in a singular type of economic activity. For men it may be as a hunter, fisherman, shepherd, etc. while for women it is as a housewife and mother.

In a communist society the situation is entirely different in that each man is not restricted to one specific form of economic activity but can instead be accomplished in many types of economic activity. It is only in communist society that sex will not determine the economic activities men and women will engage in unless it is a natural necessity that it do so. The question then arises as to what is a natural necessity? This is a question which Marx does not answer.

In the natural society each human being may only perform one specific economic role within the division of labour while in a communist society each human being may perform a variety of economic roles within the division of labour. In the natural society economic roles are not functionally interchangeable because everyone is accomplished in only one area of specialization. In a communist society economic roles are functionally interchangeable because everyone can be accomplished in many areas of specialization. Men may learn a variety of skills and be as qualified to be a hunter as a fisherman or any other economic activity they may desire to learn. Women may now be more than just housewives and mothers and may become whatever their natural inclinations will allow them to be.

Marx in The German Ideology believed that every society has been characterized by a division of labour "which was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act". This sexual division of labour has taken a fairly constant form until the beginning of capitalism. Even in the most primitive societies, however, the division of labour between men and women went beyond that which was required for the act of procreation and the conceiving of children. From earliest times there was a natural division of labour between men and women with men specializing in producing the means of subsistence and women specializing in work involving the household. According to this division of labour within the family, it was the man's job to obtain the food and the instruments of labour which were necessary for the production of the means of subsistence, while it was the woman's job to perform any tasks associated with managing the household and raising the children. The division of

labour within the family is natural because it is biologically determined and based upon purely physiological foundations. Men are the physically stronger sex and by virtue to this are accorded the more physically demanding job of producing the means of subsistence. This involved the hunting and fishing of animals for food, clothes, etc. and the creation and fashioning of implements and tools as instruments of labour. Women are the physically weaker sex and by virtue of this are accorded the less physically demanding jobs associated with the household. These include cleaning, cooking, sewing, and caring for the children.

Despite this early sexual division of labour Marx did not believe that the earliest women were in any way subordinate to men. Instead, each sex was dominant in its own sphere and since the work of both was important to survival women's status in the community was at least equal to that of men. Women's supposed equality or supremacy was finally destroyed by developments in the sphere of production. With the invention of agriculture and the domestication of animals, the forces of production greatly expanded and a surplus was created. It now became profitable to own slaves and so the first form of class society came into being. Because these developments occurred in the male sphere of production they gave men economic and social dominance over women. Men now acquired wealth and now wanted to be able to control its disposal and in particular to be able to bequeath it to their own biological offspring. This allowed for the establishment of a patriarchal and patrilineal kinship system which was based upon monogamous marriage. Male dominance in the sphere of production and male control and ownership of property gave them dominance over women, who were prevented from participation in productive activity

and restricted to the household and its domestic duties, as well as to the caring and raising of children, especially male children who would inherit family wealth and property as well as participating in productive activity themselves.

Marx assumed that whatever historical changes occurred certain basic features remain constant. In particular he assumed that there is a constant division of labour by sex. Men impregnate women who then bear children and perform infant care and early socialization. Men participate later in the process to take charge of certain aspects of the education of older children, especially boys. This division of labour by sex is viewed of as being natural which seems to mean that it is biologically determined. Marx however provides no theoretical analysis of procreation and provides no explanation of exactly what features of women's biology make them unsuited to perform certain aspects of productive labour. He views it as being self-evident that human biology requires women to conceive and bear children and to be responsible for infant care. Human procreation is viewed as a process which is fixed by human biology. Biology sets fairly rigid limits to how far procreation is susceptible to historical change. This is evident when Marx talks about the basic requirements of human life. When he talks about production he says that the act of satisfying the biologically based human needs for food, shelter, clothing, etc., leads immediately to the production of new needs. This sets in motion the process of the historical construction of human nature. When he talks about procreation however, which is the third circumstance which from the very beginning enters into historical development, he allows for only very limited changes in the social

organization of conception in terms of the social rules which establish which men and which women are able to marry each other. Human nature is transformed through productive rather than procreative labour.

The result of the contradiction between the interests of the individual and that of the community is the formation of the independent state. The state is separated from the real interests of the individual and the community and appears as an illusory form of communal life which is based upon bonds which are found within various forms of the family and the tribe. Marx wrote:

"And out of this very contradiction between the interest of the individual and that of the community the latter takes an independent form as the State, divorced from the real interests of individual and community, and at the same time as an illusory communal life, always based, however, on the real ties existing in every family and tribal conglomeration -- such as flesh and blood, language, division of labour on a larger scale, and other interests -- and especially, as we shall enlarge upon later, on the classes, already determined by the division of labour, which in every such mass of men separate out, and of which one dominates all the others".¹⁴ (XVIII)

This creates a system of domination in which some individuals or groups of individuals control or dominate other individuals or groups of individuals. In such circumstance man as an individual and men as a group come to dominate woman as an individual and women as a group. Men occupy a more economically important place within the division of labour in that they earn money and control and own all private property within the domestic household. They are active participants in economic activity. Women occupy a less important place within the division of labour in that they earn no money and control and own no private property. They are prevented from engaging in economic activity and are restricted to

managing the domestic household and raising the children. In the bourgeois state women are dependent upon men for their economic survival and come to be dominated by them.

Marx also briefly discussed the sexual division of labor in terms of a sexual division of property. He argued in connection with guild production that:

"Capital in these towns was a naturally derived capital, consisting of a house, the tools of the craft, and the natural, hereditary customers; and not being realisable, on account of the backwardness of commerce and the lack of circulation, it descended from father to son. Unlike modern capital, which can be assessed in money and which may be indifferently invested in this thing or that, this capital was directly connected with the particular work of the owner, inseparable from it and to this extent estate capital".¹⁵ (XIX)

Marx provided no explanation for the system of male inheritance of productive property in connection with either land, guild, or factory production. The sexual division of property is regarded as being natural in the same way that the sexual division of labor is regarded as being natural. Both are natural phenomena which are orientated towards male control and dominance with the result that the female becomes little more than a slave. The female became a slave because the entire system of inheritance was male rather than female orientated. The male could inherit productive property from which he could become self-supporting and possibly wealthy. The male need not marry only for the purpose of economic survival as he could survive economically on his own. The female had no such option open to her. The female could not inherit productive property as such property always went to the eldest son. Therefore she could not become self-supporting and possibly wealthy. The female had to

marry for the purpose of economic survival as she could not survive economically on her own. She had to marry a man who could support her through his ownership of productive property. This made the female dependent upon the man and subject to his control and domination.

Marx viewed the concept of freedom in terms of the development of conscious mental and physical productive activity. Individual freedom for all human beings whether they are male or female has two social preconditions. The first precondition is the development of the forces of production which will reduce the necessity of workers on crude and outdated instruments or production. Marx wrote:

"We shall, of course, not take the trouble⁹ to enlighten our wise philosophers by explaining to them that the "liberation" of "man" is not advanced a single step¹ by reducing philosophy, theology, substance and all the trash to "self-consciousness"² and by liberating man from the domination of these phrases,³ which have never held him in thrall.⁴ Nor will we explain to them that it is only possible to achieve real liberation in the real world and by employing real means, that slavery cannot be abolished without the steam-engine and the mule and spinning-jenny, serfdom cannot be abolished without improved agriculture, and that, in general, people cannot be liberated as long as they are unable to obtain food and drink, housing and clothing in adequate quality and quantity. "Liberation" is a historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions, the [development] of industry, commerce, [agri]culture, the [conditions of intercourse]".¹⁶

9. Marginal note by Marx: "Feuerbach".

1. Marginal note by Marx: "Philosophic liberation and real liberation".

2. Marginal note by Marx: "Man. The Unique one. The individual".

3. Marginal note by Marx: "Geological, hydrographical, etc., conditions".

4. Marginal note by Marx: "The human body. Need and labour".

It has been previously discussed with regard to Quotation XVI that the high rate of infant and child mortality and the lack of available and suitable locations required that women constantly reproduce and constantly be available to provide for their children so as to ensure that a suitable number of children reach maturity. This made the wife the slave of the husband in that she was restricted to the domestic household where she was constantly required to engage in these activities. Thus the lack of scientific knowledge which allowed these problems to continue was at least partially responsible for women's disadvantaged condition which prevented her from engaging in productive activity. From this it follows that an increase in scientific knowledge would prevent these problems from occurring and free women from these tasks within the domestic household and allow her to engage in productive activity. In this way an increase in scientific knowledge will allow the liberation of women to occur.

The second precondition is the abolition of the forced labour that characterizes class society. The development of forces of production in bourgeois society is shaped by the economic and political considerations of the property owning ruling class. In a free society industrial and technological development would not enslave the worker to the machine. This would only be possible in a classless society where the goal of production would be the satisfaction of human need for all the population rather than the accumulation of surplus wealth for the ruling class.¹⁷

Marx also briefly discussed the role of the family in communist society. He was examining the relationship between forms of social organization and the state of development of productive forces.

Early agricultural societies were characterized by individual economy and were not able to develop along communal lines. In early agricultural societies each family had its own home in the form of a cave or a hut. Each family formed its own distinct and separate production unit in that they obtained most of the material necessities which they required for their economic and physical survival such as clothes and food through fishing, hunting, and the working of their land themselves. The development of this type of individual economy is enhanced and made more necessary by the development of private property. The abolition of the individual economy is inseparable from the development of private property. It was impossible because the proper material conditions were not present. Early agricultural societies were characterized individual economy and were not able to develop along communal lines. Throughout all previous historical periods economic conditions prevented the development of a communal economy so that the existence of the individual economy which is characterized by private property is inseparable from the family.

This lead Marx to conclude that the abolition of the individual economy is inseparable from the abolition of the family. This is an idea which Marx previously expressed in Quotation XIV of The German Ideology. The relationships which existed between men and women in the early patriarchal family which was based upon the individual economy has been previously described in Quotation 9. The abolition of the individual economy and the establishment of a communal economy was impossible because the proper material conditions were not present. The establishment of a communal economy requires that there be a high level of industrial and technological development which is in itself based upon increased levels

of scientific knowledge. Without the development of new scientific knowledge and new productive forces such as machinery, water-supplies, gas-lighting, and steam-heating, etc., the development of a communal economy is almost impossible. Marx thought that the replacement of the individual economy which is based upon private property is inseparable from the replacement of the family which is based upon private property. Thus the abolition of private property upon which the individual economy and the family are based and an increase in scientific knowledge for the development of new productive forces are two of the necessary preconditions for the development of a communal economy and the establishment of a communist society.

Marx in a further statement compared the attitudes of the bourgeois to the institutions of society to that of the Jew to the law. The bourgeois evades the institutions of bourgeois society in the same way that the Jew evades the law. He also compared bourgeois behaviour in family relationships to bourgeois behaviour in business relationships and noted that the family was an institutionalized agent of bourgeois domination of society. Marx wrote:

"The attitude of the bourgeois to the institutions of his regime is like that of the Jew to the law; he evades them whenever it is possible to do so in each individual case, but he wants everyone else to observe them. If the entire bourgeoisie, in a mass and at one time, were to evade bourgeois institutions, it would cease to be bourgeois--a conduct which, of course, never occurs to the bourgeois and by no means depends on their willing or running. The dissolute bourgeois evades marriage and secretly commits adultery; the merchant evades the institution of property by depriving others of property by speculation, bankruptcy, etc.; the young bourgeois makes himself independent of his own family, if he can by in fact abolishing the family as far as he is concerned. But marriage, property, the family remain untouched in theory,

because they are the practical basis on which the bourgeoisie has erected its domination, and because in their bourgeois form they are the conditions which make the bourgeois a bourgeois, just as the constantly evaded law makes the religious Jew a religious Jew".¹⁸ (XX)

Marx is now saying that the bourgeois is guilty of disreputable or improper behaviour within both the private domestic sphere and the public business sphere of human existence. Marx is very specific about the form this disreputable or improper behaviour takes within each sphere of human existence. In the private domestic sphere "the dissolute bourgeois evades marriage and secretly commits adultery". This is a reference to the fact that the bourgeois is immoral and does not honour his marital relationship with his wife and seeks to avoid it by cheating on his wife and engaging in extramarital affairs with other women. The bourgeois cannot be trusted to honour his personal family relationships with women. In the public business sphere "the merchant evades the institution of property by depriving others of property by speculation, bankruptcy, etc.". This is a reference to the fact that the bourgeois is immoral and does not honour his business relationships with other men and seeks to them by cheating other men and depriving them of their property. The bourgeois cannot be trusted to honour his public business relationships with other men.

Marx has compared the position of women in marital and family relationships with that of men in business relationships. The male bourgeois controls and dominates the domestic household in the same way that he controls and dominates his business and factory. He controls and dominates his wife who works within the domestic household and receives no wages in the same way that he controls and dominates the workers who work within his business and factory and receive low wages. The wife who earns

no money and owns no property of her own is dependent upon her husband for her economic and physical survival in the same way that the worker who earns a low wage is dependent upon the bourgeois owner for his economic and physical survival. The wife and the worker do not own the means of production and are totally dependent upon the male bourgeois husband or owner to provide them with the material possessions or money that is necessary for their economic and physical survival. He takes advantage of and cheats on his wife through extramarital sexual relationships in much the same way that he takes advantage of and cheats other men in business relationships through which he seeks to deprive them of both their money and their property. The women in marital and family relationships as are other men in business relationships victims of the bourgeoisie's continual attempts to satisfy their extensive sexual and material desires.

Marx thought that the concept of the family continues to exist in theory but not in actual practice. He wrote:

"This attitude of the bourgeois to the conditions of his existence acquires one of its universal forms in bourgeois morality. One cannot speak at all of the family "as such". Historically, the bourgeois gives the family the character of the bourgeois family, in which boredom and money are the binding link and which also includes the bourgeois dissolution of the family which does not prevent the family itself from always continuing to exist. Its dirty existence has its counterpart in the holy concept of it in official phraseology and universal hypocrisy. Where the family is actually abolished, as with the proletariat, just the opposite of what "stirner" thinks takes place. There the concept of the family does not exist at all, but here and there family affection based on extremely real relations is certainly to be found. In the eighteenth century the concept of the family was abolished by the philosophers, because the actual family was already in process of dissolution at the highest pinnacles of civilisation. The internal family bond, the separate components constituting the concept of the family were dissolved, for example, obedience, piety, fidelity in

marriage, etc.; but the real body of the family, the property relation, the exclusive attitude in relation to other families, forced cohabitation -- relations determined by the existence of children, the structure of modern towns, the formation of capital, etc. -- all these were preserved, although with numerous violations, because the existence of the family is made necessary by its connection with the mode of production, which exists independently of the will of bourgeois society".¹⁹ (XXI)

Marx in Quotation XXI is continuing his critique of bourgeois morality within family relations which he previously expressed in Quotation XX. In theory the family is viewed as something holy or special and is based upon certain ideas which include obedience, piety, fidelity in marriage, etc. This is however not the case in actual practice as the internal family bond of human feelings does not exist within the contemporary family. The relationship between husband and wife within the family is not based upon human feelings and love but is instead determined by capital and the existing relations of production. The relationship between husband and wife is an inherently unequal one in which the wife is excluded from participation in productive activity while the husband is an active participant. The wife earns no money and controls and owns no property of her own. The husband earns all money and controls and owns all property within the domestic household. This places the wife in a position where she is dependent upon her husband for the material necessities which she requires for her economic and physical survival. The husband behaves immorally within the marital and family relationship by engaging in extramarital affairs with other women as so to satisfy his extensive sexual desires. The wife becomes merely an unpaid domestic labourer in the domestic household where she performs two tasks. She continually reproduces children who will serve as additional sources of

wealth for the family through their productive labour or through a marriage with a wealthy partner. She cares for the children and manages the domestic household. Marx notes that there are cases where proper family relationships based on human feelings and love occur but these are sporadic and infrequent. The family in bourgeois society is based upon boredom and money. Boredom is a reference to the fact that the husband is not satisfied sexually by his wife and seeks other women to satisfy his sexual desires. Money is a reference to the fact that the bond between family members is based upon property. The purpose of the family is to continually accumulate property. The entire concept of the family is preserved because it is necessary for the continued existence of private property and thus the maintenance of the capitalist mode of production.

Marx in The German Ideology wrote that the relation between the sexes for the reproduction of the species was first of all part of the whole process of production in which man had already been engaged long before history began to be written. The first division of labour is that between man and woman for the propagation of children. The family which was dominated by the male had existed in some form from the beginning of recorded history. It operated as a production unit to secure its members' existence and the future of their children. In the nineteenth century this economic unit was being changed by the introduction of machine manufacture, and the antagonism between men and women had taken on a new aspect. Woman was exploited as an unpaid worker in the home and a wage labourer outside of it. Her inferior status made her an instrument for the intensified exploitation of the working class. The loveless bourgeois marriage jealously guarded its integrity and its myths, for it represented

a union for the consolidation and expansion of property stolen from the workers. In this family the wife was wholly owned by her husband and fidelity was demanded of her to ensure the legitimacy of his heirs.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 K. Marx and F. Engels, "The German Ideology", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, p. 151.
- 2 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 156.
- 3 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 155-156.
- 4 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 156.
- 5 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 156.
- 6 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 156-157. (XII)

Note: Marx's footnote to Quotation (6), (XII) is presented separately as Quotation (8), (XIV).
- 7 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 157. (XIII)
- 8 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 157. (XIV)
- 9 M.A. Clawson, "Early Modern Paternalism and the Patriarchal Family", Feminist Studies, Volume 6, Number 2, Summer 1980, pp. 371-372.
- 10 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 158-159. (XV)
- 11 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 159-160. (XVI)
- 12 A. Smith, The Wealth of Nations Books I-III, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1986, Book I, Chapter VIII, p. 173, p. 182.
- 13 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 160. (XVII)
- 14 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 160. (XVIII)
- 15 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 178. (XIX)
- 16 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 169.
- 17 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 197-200.
- 18 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, p. 180. (XX) MECW ED.
- 19 K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology, pp. 180-181. (XXI) MECW ED.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (1847-1848) AND WAGE LABOUR AND CAPITAL (1847-1849)

In 1847 the newly formed Communist League asked Marx and Engels who had recently become members to draft a theoretical and practical platform. Engels drafted two preparatory versions. The first version was called Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith and was published in June 1847. It was written in a question and answer format and was discussed at the First Congress of the Communist League in London in June 1847. The second version was called Principles of Communism and was published in October 1847. It was also written in a question and answer format. Both these initial versions provided a small discussion on the position of women in bourgeois society.

These initial versions however through their use of the question and answer format did not provide an adequate historical discussion of the transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist societies. Engels suggested to Marx that they change the form of the document. The Manifesto of the Communist Party was written between December 1847 and January 1848 on the instructions of the Second Congress of the Communist League. Although it represented the joint work of Marx and Engels, Marx was generally thought to be the one who gave it its final form as both a statement of Marxian programs and a concise summary of the Marxian theory of history. It represented the first pragmatic document of the international proletarian

movement. It was the first document to put forth Marx's principles in a comprehensive and systematic form. It presented Marx's conception of the proletarian party as the organizer and leader of the working class and outlined the fundamentals of its tactics. Marx and Engels also presented their views on the problem of women's exploitation and their position in capitalist society in terms of a communist program for the restructuring of such a society.

Marx in his previous writings did not present a detailed or a fully integrated analysis of the position of women in bourgeois society. The issue of women and their position in bourgeois society which is the relevant topic of discussion for this thesis was used by Marx in his previous writings as asides to other issues and lines of thought. Marx used the issue of women as explanatory and introductory examples to other issues which he sought to discuss in greater detail. Marx in The Manifesto of the Communist Party presented a more detailed and fully integrated analysis of the position of women in bourgeois society than he had done in any of his previous works.

Marx sought to show the relationship between the family and private property in bourgeois society and its effect upon male and female relationships within both the family and society. He wrote:

"The bourgeois has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and reduced the family to a mere money relation".¹ (XXII)

"The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with bourgeois family-relations".² (XXIII)

"Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women, which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with, is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalised community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private".³ (XXIV)

Quotations XXII, XXIII and XXIV may be divided into two parts each of which has a distinct and separate theme. Part A consists of Quotations XXII, XXIII and the part of XXIV which begins with "Abolition of the family"... and ends with "articles of commerce and instruments of labour". Part A is a critique of the family in bourgeois society. Part B consists of the part of Quotation XXIV which begins with "But you communists would introduce community of women"... and ends with "of prostitution both public and private". Part B is a defense of the communist program. These three quotations bring together in a coherent and integrated form many ideas which Marx previously expressed and which this thesis previously discussed with regard to the quotations from the section on the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and with regard to Quotations XXI and XXII from the section on The German Ideology.

Marx said in Part A that the bourgeois have caused the family relation to lose its emotional or sentimental quality and have reduced it

to a mere money relation. The family relation is no longer based upon family ties which are reflected by human bonds and feelings of emotion, love, and warmth. It is now based upon family ties which are reflected by the material possession of wealth and property. Thus the human basis of the family relation as reflected in the relations between human being and human being has now been replaced by a non-human basis of the family relation as reflected in the relations between human being and object. In such circumstances the relationships between male and female, man and woman, husband and wife within the marital and the family relationship will become distorted. The family serves as a productive unit whose primary purpose is to increase its material wealth and property either through the labour of its members or through the marriage of its children with other families who also seek to increase their own material wealth and property. The wife's primary purpose within the family is to reproduce children and care for and manage the domestic household. In the bourgeois family the relations between human being and human being, between husband and wife, between parents and children lack the internal family bonds and feelings necessary to bind its members together and to relate to each other in terms of the common biological heritage which they share. This is because the family's only purpose is the reproduction of capital. The relations between human being and human being, between husband and wife, between parents and children then take the form of human being to object relations. The accumulation and reproduction of capital in the form of material objects and property takes precedence over the accumulation and reproduction of family bonds and feelings. For the husband the wife and children are important only as long as they are able

to contribute towards the accumulation of capital. It is the capital itself that is important.

The proletarian or working class family is without the ownership of material wealth and property. Since the proletarian or working class is without the ownership of material wealth and property their particular form of the family is distinctively different from the bourgeois form of the family. This distinction has been made possible by the modern bourgeois economic system and its subjection of the worker to capital. The bourgeois family is the only completely developed form and is based upon the accumulation of wealth. Modern bourgeois industry which is based upon industrial capital has destroyed all proletarian family relations and has turned its members into articles of commerce and instruments of production in bourgeois industries. Engels in The Condition of the Working Class in England clearly described the effect the development of modern bourgeois industry on the proletarian or working class family. The proletarian or working class family was characterized by many factors which were creating great hardship for its members and destroying it as a viable functioning unity of biologically related members. These included alcoholism, fighting, high birth rate, high mortality rate, physical illness, poverty, prostitution, and starvation. Engels described the social reality of life within the proletarian or working class family and how it has been effected by the development of modern bourgeois industry:

"Thus the social order makes family life almost impossible for the worker. In a comfortless, filthy house, hardly good enough for mere nightly shelter, ill-furnished, often neither rain-tight nor warm, a foul atmosphere filling rooms overcrowded with human beings, no domestic comfort is possible. The husband works the whole day through, perhaps the wife also and the elder children, all in

different places; they meet night and morning only, all under perpetual temptation to drink; what family life is possible under such conditions? Yet the working-man cannot escape from the family, must live in the family, and the consequence is a perpetual succession of family troubles, domestic quarrels, most demoralising for parents and children alike. Neglect of all domestic duties, neglect of the children, especially, is only too common among the English working-people, and only too vigorously fostered by the existing institutions of society. And children growing up in this savage way, amidst these demoralising influences, are expected to turn out goody-goody and moral in the end! Verily the requirements are naive, which the self-satisfied bourgeois makes upon the working-man"!⁴

Marx recognized that his conception of the family and his call for its abolition was familiar to people. Even the radicals who objected to his proposals knew of them. Marx thought that the only completely developed form of the family was the bourgeois family which was based upon the accumulation of wealth in the form of private property and capital. The incompletely developed form of the family was the proletarian or working class family which was unable to accumulate wealth and therefore lacked private property and capital. This contrast between the bourgeois and the proletarian family is therefore based upon ownership. The presence of ownership is what distinguishes the bourgeois from the proletarian family. The lack of ownership is what distinguishes the proletarian from the bourgeois family. The bourgeois family controls or owns the means of production while the proletarian family has no control or ownership over the means of production. Therefore the bourgeois family has direct access to the industrial forces which are necessary for the accumulation of capital. The proletarian family however has no direct access to the industrial forces which are necessary for the accumulation of capital. There exists two distinct and separate forms of the family

both of which are unsuitable for a society in which all individuals will be free and productive citizens. In such circumstances the bourgeois family will not disappear or vanish until its complement the proletarian family disappears or vanishes. Neither will however disappear or vanish until the economic system which is based upon the accumulation of capital and private property disappears or vanishes.

Marx's reference to the exploitation of children is a reference to the use of children by their parents for the parents means. Labour was in a great demand so that a large number of children was a source of wealth to their parents. The labour of each child had a specific monetary value. The value of children was also related to marriage. A marriage if arranged to a partner from a family of considerable wealth would increase the wealth of both families. Children often served as productive workers for the family. They often worked alongside servants or were sent to other families to work. In order to obtain a good marriage for a daughter from which the wealth of a family could be increased, the parents had to accumulate a suitable dowry for her so that she would be attractive to another family who also sought to increase their wealth. The parents also sought to obtain some good years of work from a healthy adult daughter before she left to get married.⁵

Marx distinguished between two types of education. Home education is education that occurs within the family. Social education is education that occurs in the schools. The education that a child receives is not determined by the family but is instead determined by bourgeois society. It is determined by capital in schools. Children are not free to learn a variety of skills which will allow them to be flexible and interchangeable

with regard to the selection of jobs. They are instead channeled into one type of job which is required by bourgeois society for the reproduction of capital. The communists seek to change all this. The child should be free to learn a variety of skills so that he can engage in the type of productive labour which he requires most satisfying. If he no longer finds one type of job satisfying he can begin another. The purpose of productive labour is to satisfy the requirements of the individual and not the requirements of capital.

Marx said in Part B that the bourgeois sees his wife as an instrument of production who is to be exploited as are all other women in bourgeois society. The housewife is restricted to the household where she must manage and perform household duties as well as taking care of the children. She is an unpaid wage labourer in the sense that she does not earn a regular and specific salary. Her exclusion from paid productive activity makes her totally dependent upon her husband for financial and material support. The husband performs and works in the business community where he seeks to accumulate as much money and property as possible. The woman in this type of bourgeois marriage has not really married for love but rather for economic support. The exploitation of the woman in this type of marriage relationship results from the sexual division of labour that assigns the husband the role of economic provider. The woman is further exploited because she is assigned work that is menial, that does not exercise her rationality and is more concerned with tending to household needs. The woman is further exploited because she is excluded from public life. Her isolation allows her no opportunity to participate in and to develop a conception of herself as a member of a

community that is wider than that of the bourgeois family. Marx noted that the bourgeois is unaware that the communists seek to eliminate the exploitation of women and eliminate their status as instruments of production. This would involve women entering the business community even at the status of wage labourers. When they are members of a community that is beyond that of the domestic household they will have the opportunity to achieve the material basis of equality with men in that they can take part in changing their physical and social world. The housewife in the seclusion of the home and the family is denied such an opportunity.

Marx next presented a criticism of bourgeois morality. This is a further elaboration of the criticism of bourgeois morality which Marx presented in Quotations XX and XXI from the section on The German Ideology. The bourgeoisie have extensive sexual desires and seek to satisfy them by seducing proletarian women, common prostitutes, and the wives of other bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie engage in many extramarital affairs and have many women at their command. The bourgeoisie also use the labour of all women in productive activity. This helps them to increase their wealth. Wives serve as unpaid labourers while female servants and workers receive low wages.

Marx's reference to prostitution both private and public is a reference to women being used by men in both a sexual and a non-sexual context. This is a further elaboration of the view that prostitution was indistinguishable from wage labour which Marx presented in Quotation V from the section on Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844. In such circumstances working class women were selling their bodies to bourgeois

men in order to economically survive in bourgeois society. In the same way working class men and women were selling their labour to bourgeois men by working in their factories so that they and their families could economically survive in bourgeois society. Thus private prostitution involved the selling of female sexuality for economic purposes while public prostitution involved the selling of male and female labour for economic purposes.

Marx has argued that the contemporary bourgeois family implies the economic dependence of bourgeois women and the prostitution of proletarian or working class women. This reflects the property relationships of a class based society. In European society of Marx's time the belief in separate spheres for men and women came to dominate the ideology of the bourgeois European family in the age of industrial capitalism. As the family was idealized so was the familial role of women. Men were assigned their specific place as leaders and wage earners in capitalist industry in the public sphere of human existence. Women were assigned their specific place as practical and intelligent housewives who would manage the family household and raise the children in the private sphere of human existence. In such circumstances where women were restricted to the household and prevented from earning a wage for themselves they were economically dependent on men.⁶

In European society of Marx's time proletarian or working class women were prostitutes both figuratively and literally. They sold their physical labour to male employers in the same way that they sold their sexuality to male clients. Part-time prostitution was very common at this time. Servant girls or textile workers very frequently took to

streetwalking to tide them through a period of unemployment or to win a bit of money for a new dress or some other necessity. With ingenuity one could get by. Prostitution might be degrading but it might also provide earnings which could make up a dowry and hence be the escape into marriage. The fact remains that for the majority of working class women marriage was essential to secure one's economic position.⁷

Marx also stated that bourgeois men committed adultery and engaged in extramarital affairs with proletarian or working class women as well as common prostitutes. In Europe in Marx's time many servant girls were seduced by their masters, many prostitutes served as mistresses to wealthy men and lived comfortably, and many prostitutes working in high class houses could earn more money from the respectable clients than a servant.⁸ To a large extent sexual interest was removed from the bourgeois family and assigned to prostitutes who were an important group among proletarian or working class women.⁹

Marx in The Manifesto of the Communist Party viewed the bourgeois family as the preserve of private wealth. They felt that civil society or political economy directly infected family life. The early bourgeois ideals of the family such as love, equality, and common work could not be realized as long as society was organized around private property. The family under capitalism while supposedly private, was in fact, continually being transformed by the needs of the dominant class. He saw the bourgeois class and the bourgeois institutions as parasitic and responsible for the degradation of women. The bourgeois made the laws for others to observe. The transgression of the laws was a special talent for the bourgeois. He violated the laws of marriage, family, and property.

These institutions however remained intact and formed the foundation of class society. Since the only real ties existing within the bourgeois family were boredom, money, and adultery, an infraction of the outward judicial form was in fact of no importance. It was in fact one of the ways through which the bourgeois family was maintained as it existed in fact and not as it appeared within the judicial superstructure. This was the view that Marx took in countering the charge that the communists wanted to introduce a community of women. He explained that for the bourgeois, woman is a mere instrument of production and the communists propose to introduce common ownership of the instruments of production. This causes the bourgeois to conclude from this that the communists want to introduce a community of women. For the bourgeois however, such a community already existed in that they take great pleasure in seducing both the wives and daughters of the proletarians as well as each others wives. Communism would liberate the family from its subjection to capital and would make the relations between the sexes a purely private affair which would concern only the two persons involved.

Marx also discussed the problem of the structure of the wage with respect to the household. He stated:

"The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labour, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex".¹⁰
(XXV)

Marx made a simple but important statement regarding the physical labour of men and women and their relationships to both the domestic

household and the business community. The scientific and technological development of modern bourgeois industry has resulted in the creation of industrial jobs which require less skill and less physical strength. This has resulted in male workers who previously had a certain degree of skill and a certain level of physical strength being replaced by female workers who have lower levels of skill and lower levels of physical strength than their male counterparts. This further allows the employer to pay lower wages to his female employees than he previously did to his male employees. This new lower wage is based upon the lower level of skill and lower level of physical strength that his female employees have as compared to his male employees. The employer is now free to employ any member of the working class regardless of his or her age and sex. All now become potential sources of cheap labour who are inexpensive to use regardless of their age and sex.

Engels in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* described the social reality of these potential sources of cheap labour in bourgeois industries:

"Let us examine somewhat more closely the fact that machinery more and more supersedes the work of men. The human labour involved in both spinning and weaving, consists chiefly in piecing broken threads, as the machine does all the rest. This work requires no muscular strength, but only flexibility of finger. Men are, therefore, not only not needed for it, but actually, by reason of the greater muscular development of the hand, less fit for it than women and children, and are, therefore, naturally almost superseded by them. Hence, the more the use of the arms, the expenditure of strength, can be transferred to steam or water-power, the fewer men need be employed; and as women and children work more cheaply, and in these branches better than men, they take their places. In the spinning-mills women and girls are to be found in almost exclusive possession of the throstles; among the mules one man, an adult spinner (with

self-actors, he, too, becomes superfluous), and several piecers for tying the threads, usually children or women, sometimes young men of from eighteen to twenty years, here and there an old spinner thrown out of other employment. At the power-looms women, from fifteen to twenty years, are chiefly employed, and a few men; these, however, rarely remain at this trade after their twenty-first year. Among the preparatory machinery, too, women alone are to be found, with here and there a man to clean and sharpen the carding-frames. Besides all these, the factories employ numbers of children - doffers - for mounting and taking down bobbins, and a few men as overlookers, a mechanic and an engineer for the steam-engines, carpenters, porters, etc.; but the actual work of the mills is done by women and children. This the manufacturers deny.¹¹

Marx discussed the theoretical questions concerning the wage in more detail in a series of lectures which he gave to a German worker's society in Brussels in December 1847. He published the work in April 1849 in Neue Rheinische Zeitung as Wage Labour and Capital. He stated that with the development of capitalism competition increases and wages fall and:

"Machinery brings about the same results on a much greater scale, by replacing skilled workers by unskilled, men by women, adults by children".¹² (XXVI)

This causes the depreciation of the value of labour power and changes the structure of the household's income:

"But in place of the man who has been discharged owing to the machine, the factory employs maybe three children and one woman. And did not the man's wages have to suffice for the three children and a woman? Did not the minimum of wages have to suffice to maintain and to propagate the race? What, then, does this favourite bourgeois phrase prove? Nothing more than that now four times as many workers' lives are used up in order to gain a livelihood for one worker's family".¹³ (XXVII)

The factory may now employ in the place of one man, three children and one woman. The higher wage which was originally paid to one man is

now subdivided into four so that it is now paid to three children and one woman. The higher wage of one man is now equal to the new lower wages of three children and one woman. The factory may now employ four times as many workers at a cost equal to that of employing one. The worker's family must now have four times as many of its members employed so that they may earn an income equal to that of having one of its members employed. The worker's family must now have four of its members employed at a subsistence wage level whereas originally it had one of its members employed at a minimum wage level. Thus four family members (three children and one woman) employed at subsistence wage level is equal to one family member (one man) employed at a minimum wage level.

Engels described the social reality of this type of employment situation on the proletarian or working class family. It resulted in a complete role reversal with regards to who supplies the greater part of the family income. Whereas originally it was the husband who was the primary economic provider, it may now be the wife and children who are the major economic providers. This has resulted in a dissolution of normal family life. Engels stated:

"The employment of women at once breaks up the family; for when the wife spends twelve or thirteen hours every day in the mill, and the husband works the same length there or elsewhere, what becomes of the children? They grow up like wild weeds, they are put out to nurse for a shilling or eighteenpence a week, and how they are treated may be imagined".¹⁴

"The employment of the wife dissolves the family utterly and of necessity, and this dissolution, in our present society, which is based upon the family, brings the most demoralising consequences for parents as well as children. A mother who has not time to trouble herself about her child, to perform the most ordinary loving services for it during its first year, who scarcely indeed sees it, can be

no real mother to the child, must inevitably grow indifferent to it, treat it unlovingly like a stranger. The children who grow up under such conditions are utterly ruined for later life, can never feel at home in the family which they themselves found, because they have always been accustomed to isolation, and they contribute therefore to a general undermining of the family in the working class. A similar dissolution of the family is brought about by the employment of the children. When they get on far enough to earn more than they cost their parents from week to week, they begin to pay the parents a fixed sum for board and lodgings, and keep the rest for themselves. This often happens from the fourteenth or fifteenth year. In a word the children emancipate themselves, and regard the parental dwelling as a lodging-house, which they often exchange for another, as suits them. In many cases the family is not wholly dissolved by the employment of the wife, but turned upside down. The wife supports the family, the husband sits at home, tends the children, sweeps the room and cooks. This case happens very frequently; in Manchester alone, many hundred such men could be cited, condemned to domestic occupations. It is easy to imagine the wrath aroused among the working-men by this reversal of all relations within the family, while the other social conditions remain unchanged".¹⁵

This total reversal of the role of the sexes has occurred only because the sexes were placed in a false position from the very beginning. If the rule of the wife over the husband has been brought about by the factory system and can be regarded as inhuman, it therefore follows that the previous rule of the husband over the wife can also be regarded as inhuman. The rule of the wife over the husband is based on her role as the primary economic provider for the family in the same way that the rule of the husband over the wife is based on his role as the primary economic provider for the family. If the husband or the wife can base his or her domination and rule on the fact that he or she provides the greater part or the whole of the family income, it therefore follows that the family is not a rational institution since domination and rule is based upon one

member of the family contributing a greater share of the income. This shows that the bonds which bind family members together are not based upon family affection and family feeling but upon the ability of each member of the family to accumulate as much capital as he or she possibly can.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, p. 476. (XXII)
- 2 K. Marx and F. Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 482. (XXIII)
- 3 K. Marx and F. Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, pp. 487-488. (XXIV)
- 4 F. Engels, "The Condition of the Working Class in England", Karl Marx Frederick Engels Collected Works, Volume 4, New York: International Publishers, 1975, pp. 424-425.

Note: For a detailed description pp. 393-478.
- 5 P. Branca, p. 74.
M.A. Clawson, pp. 371-372.
A. Smith, p. 182.
- 6 E. Zaretsky, pp. 88-106.
- 7 P. Branca, p. 22.
- 8 P. Branca, pp. 21-22.
- 9 E. Zaretsky, pp. 103-104.
- 10 K. Marx and F. Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, p. 479. (XXV)
- 11 F. Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, pp. 434-435.
- 12 K. Marx, "Wage Labour and Capital", R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1978, p. 215. (XXVI)
- 13 K. Marx, Wage Labour and Capital, p. 216. (XXVII)
- 14 F. Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, p. 436.
- 15 F. Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, pp. 437-438.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The general propositions in Marx's early writings are important towards the formation of an outline for an early and distinctive Marxist theory of the position of women and the family in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois societies. Although they are not explicitly formulated, they lay the foundation of his approach to the study of women and the family, and organize his method of analysis. As a useful index, the main themes of his early writings which are directly applicable to the study of women and the family may be summarized. These themes must be viewed in terms of the interconnection between women, the family unit, and the relationships of property ownership. These themes may be summarized as follows:

- (1) Although the female and male sexes are distinctively different, they nonetheless, possess an inherent and natural attraction to one another. The female and male sexes are both members of one species and possess one human nature. In doing so they both may be regarded as equal human beings. The female and male sexes through their natural attraction to one another both play an equal and necessary part in the reproductive process and both make an equal and necessary contribution towards the natural increase of mankind and the human species and the society in which they reside.
- (2) One method of evaluating and judging the level of human social development of any society is to observe the relationships between the female and male sexes. The particular condition of women is representative of the general state of emancipation of society. The relationship that exists between the female and male sexes is a good indication of the state of existence of both the female and male sexes in bourgeois society. The relationships that exist between the female and male sexes in bourgeois society

are unnatural relationships which are characterized by economic and social inequality between the female and male sexes and bourgeois mistreatment of working class women by bourgeois men. This indicated that the level of human and social development of bourgeois society is quite low.

- (3) The first form of the family was based, not on natural, but on economic conditions characterized by the dominance of private property over primitive, natural community property.
- (4) Changes in methods of production result in changes in the relations of production and thus they modify the totality of social relations within the family. To obtain the necessities of life had always been the business of the man. The obtaining of clothes and food and the hunting and taming of animals and the subsequent care of them were the man's work.
- (5) The division of labour is characteristic of all societies and originated as the division of labour in the sexual act. The division of labour went beyond that which was required for the act of procreation and the conceiving of children. The division of labour in the family is biologically determined and based upon purely physiological foundations. Men who are physically stronger are accorded the more physically demanding job of producing the means of subsistence. Women who are physically weaker are accorded the less physically demanding jobs associated with the household.
- (6) Authority and property relationships between the female and male sexes in the family are determined by the role men and women play in the productive process. As it was the man's part to obtain food and the instruments of labour necessary for the productive process, he was the owner of the instruments of labour. The man's position in the family became more important than the woman's position in proportion to the increase of wealth which occurred.
- (7) The establishment of the exclusive supremacy of the man over the woman had its first effects in the patriarchal family. With the invention of agriculture and the domestication of animals and the breeding and care of flocks and herds, the forces of production greatly expanded and a surplus was created. This innovation developed into a new and unsuspected source of wealth and created entirely new social relations. The new social customs of the time, which were based upon the division of labour, the man was the owner of the new source of subsistence, the cattle, and the new instruments of labour, the slaves. As a result the first form of class society came into being. Because these

developments occurred in the male sphere they gave men economic and social dominance over women.

- (8) Individual sexual love which is based upon strong personal attachments and feelings between the man and woman, plays only a small part in the rise of the monogamous and patriarchal family. The aim of the monogamous and patriarchal family which is based upon economic conditions is to make the man supreme in the family, and to propagate as future heirs to his wealth children who are indisputably his own.
- (9) The patriarchal family which was characterized by monogamous marriage caused household management to lose its public character. Male dominance in the sphere of production and male control and ownership of property gave them dominance over women who were excluded from participation in social production and restricted to the domestic household. This resulted in her economic disadvantage as well as in social and sexual discrimination. Women were prevented from earning the barter or money necessary to obtain the objects necessary for their economic and physical survival because of their exclusion from the productive process. Men however were able to earn the barter or money necessary for their economic and physical survival because of their active participation in the productive process. This caused women to become dependents of men.
- (10) Along with the rise of monogamous marriage, there emerged sexual intercourse between men and unmarried women outside marriage which developed into open prostitution. Bourgeois men engage in sexual intercourse with working class girls.
- (11) In bourgeois society marriage is a matter of convenience for the preservation and inheritance of property. The son of the bourgeois family is theoretically free to choose a wife on the basis of mutual love. This is however an example of bourgeois hypocrisy, since, in the view of property relations, parents still preserve the power to choose mates for their children from their own class.
- (12) The position of women in marital and family relationships is similar to the position of men in business relationships. The male bourgeois controls and dominates the domestic household and his wife who is a paid domestic worker in the same way that he controls and dominates his business and factory and his workers who receive low wages. The wife is dependent upon the bourgeois husband in the same way that the worker is dependent upon the bourgeois factory owner. They are totally dependent upon him to provide the material objects or money necessary for their economic and physical

survival. The bourgeois husband cheats on his wife through extramarital sexual relationships in the same way that he cheats other men in business relationships.

- (13) The emancipation of women is possible only when women can participate in productive activity outside of the home on a large and a communal basis and when domestic work no longer involves more than a small amount of time. Large-scale industry has taken the wife out of the home and into the labour market and into the factory. This has destroyed the basis for male supremacy in the proletarian household.
- (14) The high rate of infant and child mortality and the lack of available and suitable lactation required that women constantly reproduce and care for their children so as to ensure that a suitable number reach maturity. This made the wife a slave of the husband in that she was restricted to the household where she was constantly required to engage in these activities. An increase in scientific knowledge would prevent these problems from occurring and free women for productive activity. This would allow their liberation to occur.
- (15) The transfer of the means of production into common ownership will prevent the single family from becoming the economic unit of society. The care and education of children becomes a public affair and this relieves the wife of home burdens. The woman is now free to engage in productive activity.
- (16) The transformation of private property into social or common property will reduce to a minimum the problem of inheritance. Full freedom of marriage cannot be established until economic considerations which exert a strong influence on the choice of a marriage partner are eliminated. Mutual love rather than money must be the motive for marriage. This will eliminate the economic considerations that face women into a marital relationship in which they are dependent upon men.

The important question that must now be asked is whether an outline for an early Marxist theory of women and the family can be found within the works which were considered for analysis and discussion in this thesis? My response to this question is that such an outline does exist. This thesis considered eight works which were written by Marx between 1840 and 1850. These works contained a total of twenty-seven distinct and separate references to women and the family. Seven of these works and

twenty-six of these references are applicable to the formation of an outline. The Theses on Feuerbach contained no references to women and only one reference to the family (X). This reference did not use the word as it is traditionally used to refer to a group of biologically related persons. Instead, the word family was used to refer to a group of philosophers who were pure in thought. Therefore this work and this reference are not applicable to the formation of an outline.

When Marx's early writings are considered in chronological order the references to women and the family appear infrequent and scattered. Their relevance to the formation of an outline is present, although they lack an orderly progression from one theme to another. A wide variety of themes appear in relation to women and the family such as the nature of men and women, methods of evaluating and judging a society, women and the family in pre-bourgeois society, the division of labour, the role of private property, changes in the forces of production, monogamous marriage and the patriarchal family, women and the family in bourgeois society, the bourgeois and proletarian family, bourgeois morality, prostitution, women as commodities, women as instruments of labour, inheritance, the wage and labour, and freedom and liberation. These are all themes which are discussed in Marx's early writings and which provide an account of the position of women in pre-bourgeois and bourgeois societies in terms of what constitutes such a position, what causes such a position and how such a condition can be improved.

When the references to women and the family are not considered in chronological order and are instead grouped according to their themes a clear outline of an early Marxist theory of women and the family can be

made. Table 1 shows the number of references to women and the family in Marx's early writings along with their Arabic and Roman numeral reference numbers which appear in this thesis. Table 2 shows an outline for an early Marxist theory of women and the family. The references are grouped according to six topics. The introductory topics are those relating to the nature of human beings and how a society can be evaluated. There is then an historical account of the position of women and the family in pre-bourgeois society and how this position changed when the transition to bourgeois society occurred. The position of women and the family in bourgeois society is discussed in terms of the bourgeois and proletarian family, bourgeois mortality, prostitution, women as commodities, women as instruments of labour, inheritance, etc. The concluding topics show the effect of the wage and labour on the proletarian men and women and their families, and how freedom and liberation can occur for women in bourgeois society.

NUMBER OF REFERENCES TO WOMEN AND THE FAMILY
IN MARX'S EARLY WRITINGS

<u>Source</u>	<u>Number of References</u>	<u>Arabic Numeral References in Thesis</u>	<u>Roman Numeral References in Thesis</u>
Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1843)	1*	2-5	I
On The Jewish Question (1843)	1	3-4	II
Economic and Philosophic Manu- scripts of 1844 (1844)	4	4-1 4-7 4-13 4-16	III IV V VI
The Holy Family (1844-1845)	3	5-1 5-3 5-7	VII VIII IX
Theses on Feuerbach (1845)		5-13	X
The German Ideology (1845-1846)	11	6-1 6-6 6-7 6-8 6-10 6-11 6-13 6-14 6-15 6-18 6-19	XI XII XIII XIV XV XVI XVII XVIII XIX XX XXI
Manifesto of the Communist Party (1847-1848)	4	7-1 7-2 7-3 7-10	XXII XXIII XXIV XXV
Wage Labour and Capital (1847-1849)	2	7-12 7-13	XXVI XXVII

*Includes only the one reference which is directly applicable to women

TABLE 2

AN OUTLINE FOR AN EARLY MARXIST THEORY OF
WOMEN AND THE FAMILY

1.	The Nature of Men and Women		
	→ Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right	2-5	I
	→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844	4-13	V
2.	Methods of Evaluating and Judging a Society		
	→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844	4-13	V
	The Holy Family	5-7	IX
3.	Women and the Family in Pre-Bourgeois Society		
	The German Ideology	6-1	XI
	The German Ideology	6-6	XII
	The German Ideology	6-7	XIII
	The German Ideology	6-8	XIV
	The German Ideology	6-10	XV
	The German Ideology	6-11	XVI
	The German Ideology	6-13	XVII
	The German Ideology	6-14	XVIII
	The German Ideology	6-15	XIX
	→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844	4-1	III
4.	Women and the Family in Bourgeois Society		
	Manifesto of the Communist Party	7-1	XXII
	Manifesto of the Communist Party	7-2	XXIII
	Manifesto of the Communist Party	7-3	XXIV
	The German Ideology	6-19	XX
	The German Ideology	6-20	XXI
	→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844	4-7	IV
	→ On the Jewish Question	3-4	II
	→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844	4-16	VI
	→ Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right	Discussion of inheritance or primogeniture	
	The Holy Family	5-1	VII
	The Holy Family	5-3	VIII

TABLE 2 (Cont'd)

5. The Wage and Labour in Bourgeois Society

→ Manifesto of the Communist Party	7-10	XXV
✓ Wage Labour and Capital	7-12	XXVI
✓ Wage Labour and Capital	7-13	XXVII

6. Freedom and Liberation

→ Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844	Discussion of the self-realization of the human being through labour
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The German Ideology

Discussion of two social preconditions

→ Manifesto of the Communist Party	Discussion of communist proposals for change
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