The contemporary family has within it all the freedom and complication which the liberation from what seemed the natural roles of husband and wife in their relations to each other and to their children has accomplished. Where former times saw women as the guardians of the domestic realm, not only of bearing children and nurturing them but of the whole domestic order, and men as the guardians of economic and political life, of competition and constitution, in the contemporary western world what seemed natural, rational and indeed liberating to previous ages is no longer the measure of our spirit.

There are those in our time who descry the loss of traditional roles and the order they enabled; there are likewise those who revel in the infinite freedom of the individual which has collapsed that order. It is a time of liberty and loss, the freedom and well-being of women, for example, achieved at the cost of broken homes. But emerging from that rubble is the ethical demand that the family not destroy the freedom it is meant to foster. Men also have been opened to participation in domestic activities foreign to them in previous times, and now know something of the struggle of working mothers with little rest at work or at home. Here is ground for a deeper equality and sharing of the burdens of the everyday.

We cannot return to a past age without subjugating the freedom which is its heritage, but we likewise cannot find in the limitless freedom of solitary individuals that which binds one to another and makes possible a common spiritual life. This volume of Animus explores contemporary and historical forms seeking the principles through which we can know better the spiritual order of reason and desire which is the institution of the family.

In this volume, which we order more or less historically, Vernon Provencal sets the theme with his treatment of Aristotle on the family, and Floy Andrews Doull draws a portrait of the Roman family in her essay on St. Augustine's treatise on widowhood. If Doull shows the negative side of family life, from which the Christian would escape in consecrated continence, David Peddle's essay on St. Augustine's account of the development of the child cradles that development in its Trinitarian origin and end. There are three articles on what might be gleaned from seventeenth thought concerning the family: Floy Andrews Doull writes on Descartes' responses to the grave family concerns of Princess Elizabeth; Heidi Ravven suggests the novel thesis that Spinoza provides a philosophy more promising for contemporary feminists than their Cartesian-Kantian presuppositions; and Paul Epstein situates marriage in late seventeenth century France in his reflections on Molière's Le Misanthrope. A second essay on a literary treatment of the family is provided by Holly Pike's analysis of Lucy Maud Montgomery's work. Finally, in F.L. Jackson's essay on the Hegelian account of marriage and the family, the theme is brought to its conclusion in our
Although possessing a certain breadth, the volume offers articles on its theme largely determined by the interests of its contributors. It cannot pretend to be comprehensive of its theme, and invites further reflections in the form of articles on "The Family" to be included in subsequent volumes of *Animus* as supplements to this volume.
The Family In Aristotle

In memoriam J. A. Doull

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Introduction

The principal sources for Aristotle's account of the family are Politics I and II and Nicomachean Ethics VIII. In Politics I, the oikos (family, household) is defined as that specific form of koinwnia (community, association) which integrates individuals into a common life that enables them to become, as members of an oikos, members of a polis (political community, city-state) as well. In Nicomachean Ethics VIII, the family is defined as that specific form of philia (love, friendship) that forms the basis of kinship (suggenikê) rooted in parental love (patrikê), which in turn rests upon the good will (eunoia) of spousal philia. In the spousal relationship, the natural origins of society and political community are overcome and the ethical foundation of human life, for both individual and community, is obtained in the rule of reason. Taken together, the Politics and Ethics define the family as a form of community based on a form of friendship (philia), the principle of which is self-love (philautia). Spousal philia is the true basis of the family in the Ethics, and this is true of the Politics as well, where the oikos is specified as the koinwnia of husband and wife. It is from this standpoint that Aristotle regards the family primarily as an ethical institution that invests natural ties of kinship and affection with meaning and value.

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1 This paper is in aid of a monograph on the family in Plato and Aristotle as a fundamentally spiritual institution that transcends its natural origins and has for its end the same activity on which rests the good of the state, namely, the acquisition of a practical virtue necessary to the contemplative life. It draws on two conference papers, ’To koinon and to idion as principles of the family in Plato’s Republic and Aristotle’s Politics’ (1997 meeting of the Classical Association of Canada, St. John’s, NF), and ’Meros polews: Aristotle’s study of the oikos in Politics I (1998 meeting of the Atlantic Classical Association, Sackville, NB).

2 Reference in Stephanus pages to the Republic are to J. Burnet, ed., Platonis Res Publica (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1902); reference in Bekker pages to the Politics and Ethics are to A. Dreizehnter, Aristoteles’ Politik (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970) and I. Bywater, Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea (Oxford 1894; rep. 1970.) Translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated. Secondary literature is cited by author and title abbreviation, with full documentation provided in the bibliography. Principal commentaries consulted are those of Jowett (1885), Susemihl and Hicks (1894), Newman (1902) and Saunders (1995).
Aristotelian scholars have generally paid insufficient attention to the logic that identifies the nature of the spousal relationship as constituting the rational basis of the Aristotelian oikos and, thereby, of the polis as well. In particular, they have failed to differentiate sufficiently between the physical relationship of male and female on the one hand, and the social relationship of husband and wife on the other, tending rather to conflate the two. Consequently, they have underestimated the equalisation of the natural inequality of male and female in a spousal relationship based on a mutual rational virtue that transcends the natural association rooted in sexual instinct and forms the basis of the free and equal partnership of husband and wife. The oikos appears in most accounts as natural both in origin and end, thereby justifying Aristotle's claim that the polis is natural, with the transition from an animal existence to a rational life taking place only in the polis. The main contention of this argument is that this transition from natural immediacy to human rationality (what has been called 'the transivity of naturalness principle') first takes place in the spousal relationship. For this reason, the family can be said to form the natural foundation of political life and yet also be treated as a 'political' relationship.

That Aristotle views the family as essentially a rational institution, and that he obtained this view most directly from Plato, is demonstrated by his criticism of Plato's view of the

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3 "The family is formed by nature out of the two smallest natural unions, of husband and wife, and of master and slave, solely for the support and propagation of life." Susemihl and Hicks PA 98. "From his observation of this process of growth of the polis out of the erotic union of male and female, Aristotle concludes that the polis exists by nature" (Booth PH 209, for whom "the family is a purer image of the natural order than is politics," 212.) For Mulgan, Aristotle's oikos is defined by its dogmatic entrenchment in those natural differences that it fails to transcend. "Initially he derives the naturalness of the household from the supposed fact that the rule of husband over wife and of master over slave accord with innate natural characteristics in human beings. We can now see that he offers no convincing empirical evidence for the existence of these innate characteristics. Instead his belief in them seems to depend on the assumption that the household itself must be natural. Because the household meets what to Aristotle are essential human needs, its relationships must be founded on natural differences, even if these are not readily discoverable by empirical observation" APT 46-47. "The continuation of the human species requires two primitive forms of interpersonal relation, that between male and female for the purpose of reproduction and that between master and slave for survival. Hence the most primitive social unit is that constituted by individuals bearing those relations to one another, viz., the household (oikia)...Households and villages are thus natural forms of association in that they develop in response to certain human needs." Taylor P 236. As with Saunders, the transition from the physical to the rational aspect of human 'nature' (i.e. the operation of the 'transivity of naturalness principle' Miller NJR 42, Saunders AP 68) is generally thought to take place in the transition from oikos to polis: "Man is an 'animal' naturally fitted to live in a polis (1253a2-3); he has a 'natural' impulse (1253a29-30) towards that kind of association. This impulse generates partly instinctive and partly calculated choices and actions over a long period of history; it thus constitutes an inner source of change and development from primitive beginnings (the 'pairings', household, village) into ... the polis. This is the complete and developed form of association, in that it is 'self-sufficient'...; it caters for all man's needs (not merely physical ones), and so enables him to fulfil his nature as a man" AP 62. See also Miller NJR 40-45 for further discussion of the teleological assumptions implied in the 'transivity principle of naturalness'.

4 'If the household is natural, so too must be the inferior status of women" Mulgan APT 45. "In some respects , Aristotle's treatment of the position of women is more culpable than his more commonly castigated justification of slavery." APT 46. "The first stage in this process of growth [of the polis] is the union of male and female, and this coupled with the joining of master and slave, form the household, an association for the 'satisfaction of daily recurrent wants'. Slave and wife, then, are subject to the rule of the master of the house...The difference between the woman and the slave is emphasized here, though the reason for this is left obscure." Booth PH 209.
family (chiefly as it appears in the Republic) in Politics II. Plato's Republic discloses how the unity of the state depends on the unity of the family by undoing the popular assumption that family and state are independently grounded in opposed principles, the state in what is common according to reason, to koinon, the family in what is private according to nature, to idion. To koinon is there presented as the sole principle of all forms of koinwnia: state, family, individual and soul; to idion appears as the principle of division, strife and self-destruction in states, souls, individuals and families. Aristotle chiefly criticizes Plato’s logic by which the unity of the state is made dependent on the unity of the family; yet, his criticism is more a reappraisal of Plato’s position than a mere rejection of it. That Aristotle would preserve the private household in its independence as the fundamental unit of political koinwnia (Politics I, 1253b1) is not simply a rejection of Plato’s overreaching idealism in favor of an empirical return to the historical independence of the oikos from the polis. The Aristotelian oikos does not exist apart in a natural independence from the polis, and its preservation in Politics I is precisely as part of the larger unfolding of the rational life of the polis. It is only in Aristotle’s view of the common good of the polis (to koinon) as a synthesis of private interests (ta idia) that the oikos is preserved in its integrity as essential to the polis. That is a logic more easily derived from the Platonic reduction of family and state to to koinon as a single unifying principle than from their historical independence, popularly regarded as based on the contrariety of to idion and to koinon.

Aristotle’s teaching on the family has found much less favour in studies of women in classical antiquity than Plato's teaching, which appears 'enlightened' by comparison. The relationships that constitute Aristotle's household, and form the basis of what he considers a moral and just society, may appear to us unquestionably immoral and unjust, based as they are on slavery, patriarchy and chauvinism. If we disagree with Aristotle, it is likely because we do not regard our humanity as ultimately subject to the natural limitations of sex, age, and function. The limit of Aristotle's humanism is that it is not

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5 Doull sees it inversely: "that the state depends primarily on the good Plato brings into view by a dialectic which undoes the hypotheses that it rests on the family or on the wealth and independence of a military-political class," HCHV 9, n.9. What makes Doull’s remark of interest is that it is not based on the errant view that the family is opposed to the state as a natural institution grounded in biological ties. He criticizes Plato for having a limited grasp of the Hellenic family as a religious institution: 'Plato had perceived rightly that the Hellenic family, which had its independent relation to the gods and could expect an unqualified attachment from its members, was the final impediment and threat to the formation of a political community which should know and be obedient to the good and a just ordering of human interests to it....What Plato would evade as destructive of any stable peace in human affairs, namely that there should be two equal and opposed relations to the highest good, occurred in fact among the Greeks, being indeed the essential structure of Hellenic institutions' (COCI 127).

6 "Under the scrutiny of feminist theory Aristotle has emerged in the last decade as one of the founders and major exponents of the misogynist strain dominating much of the Western intellectual tradition" Saxonhouse, FPU 202. For examples of the common opinion favouring Plato the 'revolutionary protofeminist' as against Aristotle the 'traditional misogynist', see Fantham, Foley, Kampen, Pomeroy, and Shapiro, WCW 122; Blundell, WAG 181-87. See also Mulgan, "[Aristotle's] attitude toward the role and status of women reflects, as we would expect, the attitudes prevalent in his own society...Though he usually parades his differences from Plato, he gives very little attention to Plato's radical suggestion that women should be politically and socially equal ... made possible by ... his abolition of the household. Aristotle, by supporting the retention of the household on the grounds of the value of personal family relationships and private property, is thereby committed to opposing the equality of women" APT 44-45.
unconditional. It is a reasoned account of human nature and social development based partly on theory, partly on observation. He inquires into whether all humanity possesses the same rational nature and virtue, and finds it an unjustifiable doctrine. Our differences in human potential are provided by nature; we are born neither free nor autonomous. Our freedom and happiness is conditional upon our joining together properly according to our specific function as parts that form a natural whole. The natural path by which we must fulfil our human potential is by way of the association of male and female, master and slave, parent and child. Unlike animals governed by mere instinct, however, we must ultimately realise our human nature by living together within institutions based on the exercise of the specifically human faculty of reason. Other societies, which do not follow nature's lead, never attain to that degree of rational freedom and virtue that is possible for the human.

Of greatest interest is the pivotal role that Aristotle gives to the spousal relationship in his account of the development of family and state. In Aristotle's view, the social basis of political and ethical life is the free and relatively egalitarian relationship of husband and wife as partners in a common life founded on the cultivation and enjoyment of virtue. While this may fall short of a more radical assertion of the freedom and dignity of the human to be found in Christian and subsequent thinking, it remains the most important and enduring assertion in antiquity of the conditional freedom and dignity of women (and men) as forming the basis of a truly human society.

I. Meros Polews: The Family In Politics I.

Aristotle's argument in Politics I presents the oikos as that species of koinwnia (common life, community, association, relationship) necessary to constitute a polis. In chapter one, we learn that the oikos is a different species of koinwnia from that of the polis. Yet, they are both forms of koinwnia, and the polis is the most complete form of koinwnia, containing the different and less complete forms of koinwnia, including that of the oikos, within itself. Plato, says Aristotle, does not understand that political community is of a different kind than domestic community: that the polis is not just a large oikos. Oikos and polis are distinct forms of koinwnia; yet, not wholly distinct. To study the polis, we should examine the elements of which it is composed, the lesser forms of koinwnia out of which the most complete form of koinwnia evolves.

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7 A polis is a species of community, other species being the household, the village, and the nation. The various kinds are defined by the different forms of rule or subordination (archê) which govern the activities of their members. The rule of master over slave, of the patriarch over wife and children, and of monarch over subjects are different forms of rule from political rule, which we saw to be a) exercised over free and equal subjects (1255b20) and b) exercised with a view to promoting the common interest (1279a16-21). So a polis is by definition a community of individuals who participate in the government of the community.’ Taylor P 243. Cf. Booth on Aristotle’s definition of polis and oikos as species of the genus koinwnia in Pol I: PHCAP 216-7; also Salomon: ‘l’Etat est une certaine espe ce de communauté (koinwnia tina [citing Pol 1252a1]’ (CBAP 177). Again, the Aristotelian reduction of family and state to a single genus of koinwnia, while it preserves the family, appears closer to their Platonic reduction to a single form of koinwnia than to their historical independence as separate and even fundamentally opposed.
Chapter two studies the origin of the *polis* in the *oikos*, and that of the *oikos* in two distinct relations that occur naturally among individuals: the *koinwnia* of male and female, and the *koinwnia* of master and slave. The *oikos* arises from these relations among individuals; the *polis* arises out of relations among *oikoi*. The *polis* is, therefore, "by nature prior to the *oikos* and to the individual", just as the body as a whole is prior to its individual members. Chapter three proposes that, since "every *polis* is composed out of *oikoi*" (*pasa gar sugkeitai polis ex oikiwn* 3.1253b2), it belongs to the study of the *polis* to make a study of the elements which make up the *oikos*: the relation of master and slave, husband and wife, and parent and child. This study is completed in the final chapters of book one, chapters twelve and thirteen.

Chapters four through eleven examines the nature of *oikonomia* or household management. Under this heading, he refines his views on slavery in chapters four through eight, then, in chapters nine through eleven, considers the acquisition of wealth. At the end of book one, Aristotle sums up in a single phrase the principal assumption that underlies his study of the *oikos* in *Politics* I: "every *oikos* is part of a *polis*" (*oikia men pasa meros polews* 13.1260b13).

**A. Defining the oikos.**

(i) Greek *oikos* and non-Greek household.

We learn from chapters one and two that not every state is a *polis*, nor every household an *oikos*. Greek societies are true political societies because they are *polis*-societies composed of *oikoi*. Conversely, they are societies composed of *oikoi* because the *oikoi* belong to *poleis*. Non-Greeks (*barbaroi*) live in non-*polis* societies composed of households that are not true *oikoi*.

It is natural for Aristotle to make his point by comparing the ways of Greeks and non-Greeks or *barbaroi* (2.1252a34-b9). About the *barbaroi*, he remarks in book seven that they are "intelligent and inventive, but wanting in spirit, and therefore always in a state of subjection and slavery" (Jowett *BWA Pol* VII.1327b20-30). Intellect is not wanting in the *barbaroi*; rather, it is their apparent failure to realize the good of intellect that Aristotle finds slavish. Hellene and barbarian were, of course, ethnic or cultural distinctions, based on language and custom.

The principal difference between the Greek *polis* and non-Greek society is that one is slave, the other free. Non-Greek societies do not recognize the distinction between free and slave. Non-Greek wives are treated as slaves. This failure to distinguish properly between free and slave means that the non-Greek household is an association of male and female slaves. Non-Greek societies are slave states composed of slave-households. Greek societies are based on the distinction between free and slave. Greek wives are not regarded as slaves, and thus Greek *oikoi* are associations of free men and women. The Greek *polis* is a free society made up of *oikoi*. The *oikos* is a *koinwnia* of free
individuals. By virtue of which element, then, is the oikos free?

(ii) Koinwnia of male and female: genêsis (reproduction).

The Greek oikos originates in two associations that occur naturally among individuals: the koinwnia of male and female, and the koinwnia of master and slave (2.1252a24-34).

It is a matter of natural necessity, not of choice (anagkê ... ouk ek proairesews 1252a26-31), that one exists as male or female and desires union with the opposite sex to reproduce another like one's self. The koinwnia of male and female is common to all living things: plants, animals and human beings. It is common also to both Greek and non-Greek households. There is neither free nor slave in these unions: the distinction between the Greek oikos and the non-Greek slave household has not yet appeared.

The koinwnia of male and female is not of itself an oikos. The species of koinwnia that is the oikos has its origin only partly in this natural desire of individuals to reproduce through one another that is common to all living things. Specific to the oikos as a species of koinwnia is the distinction of free and unfree, which is lacking in the relationship between individuals who unite to reproduce, whether plant, animal or human. The oikos is a koinwnia of free individuals. This distinction of free and unfree appears among human individuals not in their association as male and female, but in their association as master and slave.

(iii) Koinwnia of master slave: swtêria (survival).

Like male and female, the koinwnia of master and slave is natural and necessary; not a matter of convention, or of choice: like male and female, the existence of one presupposes the co-existence of the other. But unlike male and female, master and slave is a distinctively human association. While the union of male and female is common to all living things, the association of master and slave is natural only to the human. An ox might be a poor man's slave, but this is to substitute an animal for a man. The natural slave must possess a rational nature, which distinguishes the human as a species of animal (2.1252b9-15).

The association of master and slave is first likened to the association of soul and body. In the individual, the body is the natural slave of the soul (5.1254b15-22). In his final reflection on the relation of ruler and ruled (archon, archomenon) at the end of book one, Aristotle decides that master and slave is really more like that between the rational and irrational (co-rational?) elements within the human soul. In natural slavery, both parties must possess the capacity for reason, but differently. What Aristotle emphasises is that the slave qua slave must share in the rational principle, and possess the virtue of it, if the slave is to be able to carry out the command of reason.
Conventional slavery confuses the slave and the free; slavery is just only when it is an association of the naturally ruling and the naturally ruled, for the benefit of their mutual soteria. Whatever we think of it, Aristotle's position is clear: the institution of slavery is the natural and necessary basis of a free society. It is also just, in the sense that it rests on the natural capacities for a rational life on the part of both ruler and ruled, master and slave. As for our own confidence that human freedom is so immediately in our possession that we should consider slavery as the very evil by which we are deprived of it, Aristotle might well gaze upon us with all the wonder that Ferdinand draws from Miranda, who says of him, "I might call him a thing divine, for nothing natural I ever saw so noble." (Tempest I. ii. ll. 419-20)

(iv) Koinwnia of free male and female: pasa hemera (daily life).

Out of these two koinwniai (man and woman, master and slave), first is the oikos. ... The oikos is the koinwnia naturally constituted with respect to daily life (1252b9-14).

The oikos is compounded of these two associations: male and female (thêlu, arren), master and slave (despotês, doulos). Neither of these associations constitutes an oikos, nor is an oikos merely any composite of the two. It would not be an oikos, for instance, if a free man were to beget his children by female slaves. The confusion of the association of male and female with that of master and slave confounds the generation of the oikos. The oikos does not arise in non-Greek society, which confuses women and slaves. Such confusion gives rise, not to the oikos, but to the koinwnia of male and female slaves (hé koinwnia doulês kai doulou 1252b6). The slave household is not an oikos. The oikos is that species of koinoina which properly combines these two different kinds of koinwnia among individuals in such a way as to constitute a single new form of koinwnia. The oikos is the teleios ek doulwn kai eleutherwn (1253b4), the completion that arises of the union of the slave and the free. It is principally the koinwnia of free men and women, who share the rational capacity for ruling themselves and their slaves, that constitutes the oikos.

The koinwnia of male and female provides for genesis; that of master and slave for soteria. The oikos is the species of koinwnia that contains these lesser ends within the more comprehensive end of providing for pasa hemera, for the daily needs of its members. The members of the oikos share common names, such as homosipouoi, 'of the same cupboard,' and homokapoi, 'of the same manger'. The basic needs of individuals are ephemeral, but the oikos is not. It is precisely the life of the oikos that frees individuals of an ephemeral existence and unites them in a common life that transcends

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8 "The naturally ruling element lacking among non-Greeks (barbaroi) is one rational enough to distinguish the natural roles of women and slave...; hence non-Greek authorities (heads of households? kings?) are effectively, by stunted development, themselves slaves" Saunders 65.
(v) *Koinwnia* of *oikoi*: *oikos* as meros polews.

*proteron de têi phusei polis ê oikia kai hekastos hêmôn estin. to gar holon proteron anankaion einai tou merous*

By nature the *polis* is prior to the *oikos* and to each of us as individuals. For the whole is necessarily prior to the part. (1253a19-20)

Just as the *polis* is a *koinwnia* of *oikoi* in virtue of its difference from the *oikos* as a species of *koinwnia*, so is the *oikos* a *koinwnia* of individuals in virtue of its difference from the more elementary forms of *koinwnia* that exist among individuals. The *oikos*, as the *koinwnia* of free male and female is the first *koinwnia* to arise out of the *koinwnia* of male and female, master and slave. The *oikos* naturally gives rise to the village (*kwmê*), a colony of separate *oikoi* born of a single *oikos* (*apoikia oikias*). The *kwmê* is the first species of *koinwnia* to aim at something more than our daily life, for what appears in the *kwmê* is the first form of government, modeled on the patriarchal household. The *polis* arises out of a *koinwnia* of *kwmai*. The distinction between a patriarchal community and a *polis* is that the *polis* is a unity of *oikoi* that are not related by ties of blood and marriage. The *kwmê* dissolves into the *polis*, since the patriarch must be replaced by the statesman as the head of government. The basic unit of the *polis* therefore remains the *oikos*. The *polis* is a *koinwnia* of independent *oikoi*, whose various ties of kinship are politically irrelevant. Ultimately, then, the life of the *oikos* gives rise to the *polis*. The *polis* has its origin in the *oikos*, but the *oikos* has its end in the *polis*. The *oikos* has a specific end of its own, but it has also an end beyond itself. This is no more than to say that all citizens

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9 Saunders translates the logic of Aristotle's argument into a historical development that provides a useful illustration of the development taken beyond physical want, and as pointing to the further development of the spousal relationship in *EN*. ‘[T]he household was formed 'from these two associations' (i.e. man/woman, master/slave). Now when 'from' (*ek*) is used in [chapters] 4 and 5 of the later emergence of the village and state, it is clear that the associations 'from' which they were formed existed antecedently. Aristotle may then have envisaged a genuinely historical pre-household period in which a man might have ... either or both of a woman (or several) 'for breeding', and a slave (or several) 'for preservation'; and that he operated these two associations more or less independently, perhaps only occasionally... When however he combines the associations he has a household (he is an *oikonomikon* animal, 'fit for a household: EE 1242a23), in which a much wider an more constant range of cooperative activities than breeding and preservation can be pursued; and that ...is the point of the 'needs of every day' ... In the household, these two associations and their two purposes are obviously not overtaken or replaced. As *EN* 1162a17-22 explains, human beings live together not just for procreation, which we share with animals ..., but for the purposes of life. Breeding and preservation are the basis for the household's enlarged range of activity, which enables them to be achieved in greater security and comfort; and security and comfort are steps on the way to happiness ... Life in an early household may nevertheless have been rather grim. *EE* 1242a19-b2 and *EN* 1160b22-1162a33 explore the varieties of justice and friendship that exist within households as Aristotle knew them much later, in the economic, social, and ethical context of the state--and that would make a considerable difference. At any rate, in the household of his day he saw 'the origins and founts of friendship, of a constitution (*politeia*: perhaps citizenship?), and of justice (*EE* 1252a40-b12 ...)" *AP* 65-66.
of a *polis* must be members of separate *oikoi*, and that the head of every *oikos* must be a citizen of a *polis*.

**B. Analysing the *oikos*.**

(i) Species of rule within the *oikos*.

Chapter three specifies the relationships that constitute the parts of an *oikos*: master and slave, husband and wife, parent and child. (Aristotle, of course, is explicitly patriarchal and chauvinist: he speaks of *despotikê*, *patrikê* and *gamikê*). At this point the *koinwnia* of the free male and female which constitutes the basis of the *oikos* is identified as the relationship of husband and wife (*posis*, *allochos*).

In chapter twelve, Aristotle categorises these relationships as different species of rule (*archê*), each composed of two elements, the natural ruler (*archon*) and the naturally ruled (*archomenon*).

The relationship of master to slave is despotic, since it is a matter of ownership. The master owns the slave; the slave is the property of the master. The relationship of parent to child is monarchic, since both parties are free, but one is morally subject to the other by right of natural affection (*philía*) and seniority. The relationship of husband to wife is essentially political, with the exception that it is natural for the husband always to hold office, never the wife. The main point, however, is that husband and wife are not only free, like their children, but also, unlike their children, equal. To put it yet another way: as male and female, the woman is subject to the man as his natural inferior; as husband and wife, they are equal.

It is the free and equal relationship of husband and wife that constitutes the *oikos* as *meros polews*. Within itself, as a patriarchal household, the *oikos* is monarchic, just as the earliest form of government is patriarchal monarchy. But it is not the monarchic character of patriarchal rule that gives rise to a political community of free citizens. Rather, it is only when that is superseded and a political order is established on another basis than that of patriarchy, that the *polis* appears as a community of *oikoi* not unified by ties of kinship. The root of political *koinwnia* is the *koinwnia* of the free man and woman that constitutes the basis of the *oikos*. It is the free and relatively egalitarian relationship between husband and wife in the *oikos* that is the origin and basis of political society.10

(ii) Species of virtue within the *oikos*.

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10 "[The woman] is nearer to being the natural equal of her husband in rationality and deliberative power than she is to being as sharply different from him as would be implied by the kingly and aristocratic models... Her deliberative faculty requires consultation, argument, and persuasion...; to that extent, she has to be treated as one statesman treats another. Aristotle saw advantage in this continuity between domestic and political practice: for he regarded those virtues practised in the home as the 'origins and founts' of those practised in the state itself [citing *EN* 1160b22 ff.]"] Saunders *AP* 96-97
Chapter thirteen presents the *oikos* as concerned principally with the cultivation of virtue. It is, like the *polis*, an ethical or spiritual institution.

Clearly, therefore, *oikonomia* is more concerned with persons than with the acquisition of material possessions, and more with their acquisition of virtue than with their materialistic acquisition of what we call wealth, and more with the free persons [of a household] than with its slaves (13.1259b18-21).

The transition from economic to ethical life takes place in the intervening chapters of four to eleven, which, for the sake of expediency, we skipped over. The main point of that discussion is that, while the *oikos* is the species of *koinwnia* established with a view to daily life, the true end of economic life is not material gain. Private property is justified by Aristotle not for the sake of amassing wealth, but for the sake of acquiring virtue. A study of the *oikos* as an ethical institution would take us to the account of the friendship of virtue between husband and wife in *N.E.* VIII 7-12. Here, the ethical life of the *oikos* is of concern only to the extent that it is the source of civic virtue required of citizens. It is precisely as the species of *koinwnia* in which individuals acquire virtue that the *oikos* overlaps with the *polis*. It is here, finally, in the ethical life of the family, that we understand in the deepest sense why every *polis* must be composed of *oikoi*, and that every *oikos* must be part of a *polis*.

For since every *oikos* is part of a *polis*, and these [relationships of husband and wife, parent and child] are parts of an *oikos*, and the virtue of the parts must look to the virtue of the whole, it is necessary that both wives and children be educated with the *politeia* in mind, if the excellence (*spoudaios*) of wives and that of children makes any difference with regard to the excellence of the *polis*. Necessarily, it does make a difference, since wives are half of the free citizens, and from children are generated the community of citizens (13.1260b13-20).

The virtue of slaves, wives, husbands, and children accords with their rational nature that suits them to their specific role in the appropriate relationship of ruler and ruled. The *archon* in all these relationships is the patriarchal head of the household; he must possess the rational nature in full to perform his function as master, husband and father. His wife, their children and slaves, are all *archomena*. Slaves are rational but unable to deliberate; the rational nature of children is immature. The wife and mistress of the household has the rational nature of a female: she is able to deliberate, but lacks sovereignty (*akuron*1260a13). The virtues of husband and wife are complementary: the exercise of his active virtue requires that she exercise her passive virtue, and vice-versa. It is, like the other relationships that constitute the *oikos* of master and slave, parent and child,

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11 "Aristotle distinguishes between acquisition which is justified and should properly be a concern of the head of the household and acquisition which should be avoided." Mulgan APT 48. Miller emphasizes that Aristotle's dictum, "'private ownership, common use' implies that property owners ought to put their property to virtuous uses, thereby benefitting others" NJR 330. Aristotle's concept of private property is discussed below in conjunction with his criticism of Plato.
mutually beneficial. Though still a relationship of unequals, their relationship has a
greater degree of reciprocity than the others, since it assumes a woman's capacity for
friendship with her husband. Without the possibility of virtuous friendship between
husband and wife, the life of the *oikos* could not give rise to that of the *polis*. For without
the friendship of his wife, the patriarch could not exercise his specific virtue as head of
the household for self-government, which the *polis* assumes present in its active citizenry,
the patriarchal heads of *oikoi*, who rule their households by virtue of their full capacity
for deliberation.

When we look to the nature of the *philia* that has risen out of the natural inequality of
male and female natures and virtues, we see in it the true ground of their relationship as
husband and wife, as one in which all share equally the common good of their unity. It is
only when we look to this unified aspect of what is shared--and what is shared is
happiness, the good of each that is realised in its completion through the other--that we
can come to see the family for what it is really. The *oikos* then appears as an unity in
which each belongs to all, and all belong to each. In this view, the family is the practical
form in which the happiness of individual members is realised in common with others.
That is what is most distinctive about Aristotle's view of the family: that it is the good,
not of one, but equally of all. That this is the case comes more fully into view in the
*Ethics* where the family is studied as a species of *philia.*

II. Spousal *Philia*: The Family In *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII.13

(i) *Philia* and *philanthrwpeia*.

According to the *Ethics*, 'every *philia* exists in a *koinwnia* (en *koinwnia men oun pasa
*philia* *estin* 12.1161b11). The species of *philia* which depend upon the *oikos* can easily be
separated from non-familial relations as originating in a common parental *philia*.

One might distinguish [among the forms of *philia*] that of kindred and
that of friends…. There appears to be many kinds of friendship of kindred,
but they all depend on their derivation from parental friendship (*pasa ek

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12 "Characterizing the household as a place of inequality and affection, Aristotle seems to be contradicting
his claim in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that persons who are separated by some wide gap in virtue cannot be
friends (1158b33-35, 1159a5). And if household members cannot be friends, then the household cannot be
a model for the best regime, for "friendship seems to hold cities together, and legislators seem to concern
themselves seriously with friendship more than with justice" (1155a22-24). But, although it is true that
family members are not ordinarily complete and enduring friends in the way that those who are "equal and
similar" in virtue can be (*NE* 1159b2-4), they can be friends of a lesser sort ... Moreover, Aristotle opens
the possibility that family members can be complete friends if the party of lesser virtue loves the party of
greater virtue to such an extent as to compensate for inferiority: 'This above all is the way for unequals ... to
be friends, since this is the way for them to be equalized' (1159b1-2)." Swanson *PPA* 27-28.

13 A thoughtful treatment of the spousal relationship as a form of "character friendship" can be found in
Cooper *AF*. 
tēs patrikēs); for parents love their children as being something of themselves, and children love their parents as being something that comes from them (12.1161b12-19).

For Aristotle (as with Plato), the family is not simply a natural community rooted in blood-ties. It is not the biological tie per se that is significant, but the bond of natural affection that invests the blood-tie with ethical significance. It is this spiritual investment of natural ties of blood and affection that is the nexus of familial relationships, which are here regarded as various forms of philia developed out of parental philia. Perhaps what is most important about Aristotle's account of the family in the Ethics is simply that it is considered as a species of philia.14 That philia is properly regarded as a spiritual principle is made clear at the beginning of EN VIII by his observation of how it gives rise to philanthrwpia.

Aristotle's account of philia begins with a set of general observations, among which is his observation that philia appears as a natural unifying principle in families and societies, both animal and human.

Philia here appears as a kind of instinctual bond, which most particularly binds parent and child, and more generally unites members of the same species. It is a sort of 'species love' by which we instinctively bond to others as our own, as those to whom we belong as members of one koinwnia, rather than another. The human species shares this 'species love' with other animal species, but it is observed by Aristotle to exist especially among humans, where it manifests itself in that universal love of humanity for which we praise a few individuals as philanthrwpoi.

Aristotle's casual observation of familial affection alongside humanitarianism might suggest that familial love is the principle of philanthropy. But while the particularity of the parental tie is more universal in its appearance and thus cause for considering philia a natural principle, it is the more general love of the human race, which more rarely occurs

14 "That households are natural also does not mean that human beings establish them simply by instinct, without exercising judgement or choice. Nature, after all, includes human nature, and thus the ability to discriminate. Marriage is the work or result of friendship, and 'friendship is the [intentional] choice of living together" (Pol 1280b36-39)" Swanson PPA 26. Compare Saxonhouse's favourable estimation of Aristotle's view of the family, limited by her emphatic insistence on the continued presence of natural hierarchy. "The value of the family for Aristotle is not that it brings about subordination, but that it provides the orderly community of love and friendship, the natural hierarchy whose stability offers the preconditions for the pursuit of virtue. Though the family may not always conform perfectly to the rule of superior over inferior, it appears to order itself naturally, to be founded on a natural hierarchy that the city composed of supposed equals can only pretend to approximate." WHPT 85.
in individuals, that is defined as most specific to the human species. 'Species love' in two of its forms, then, is common to all genera of animal: in a most general way what unites us as 'birds of a feather'; in the most particular way, what unites us as parent and child. Philanthropy, however, is specific only to human beings, where it is praised by most as the love of all attained by the few, as a kind of heroic virtue. What distinguishes philanthropy from mere social instinct is that it involves the rational element of self-consciousness by which alone one can love others in their generic identity as members of the same species. Philanthropy, the form of *philia* most specific to the human species as the *philia* of the species *anthrwpos*, is a love or friendship grounded in the rational apprehension of the principle unifying the species. Philanthropy is the love of the human qua human, i.e. rational animal. In our reason abides our humanity, our capacity for philanthropy, as for instance, when Socrates confesses to Euthyphro that, 'I am afraid that my *philanthrwpia* makes the Athenians think that I pour out to anybody anything I have to say, not only without charging a fee but even glad to reward anyone who is willing to listen.' (Grube, *Euthyphro* 3d)

In every other creature, and in our own animal nature, 'species love' appears merely as the natural bond of affection that exists immediately, without the conscious mediation of knowledge and will, of deliberation and choice that are the foundation of ethical life. But we are that species of animal whose distinguishing feature is the rational faculty by which we are capable of a life higher than that of the natural and necessary, of the ethical life of ends freely chosen and pursued. Only among ourselves, and here more rarely than not, there appears in our specifically human capacity for philanthropy, the more complete manifestation of *philia* as the rational and universal principle of unity among the species, which, as the object of rational deliberation and choice, is most fully revealed as an ethical principle. It is precisely in this sense that the *casual* association of familial love and philanthropy is to be understood as *causal* as well: philanthropy is the fullest realisation of that 'species love' which is first present in us, as in all animals, as the bond of affection between parent and child.

This account of *philia* and *philanthrwpia* at the beginning of *EN* VIII serves to disclose that *philia* resides in the human species as an ethical principle, and prepares us for the ultimate disclosure in *EN* IX that human *philia*, the rational and self-conscious love of others that takes the form of *eunoia* or good will, springs from *philautia*, the love of self, the practice of *eunoia* towards one's self as one's own other. In light of this disclosure, philanthropy appears as the purely formal love of self at the level of one's species identity.

(ii) The origin of parental love in *philautia*.

*Philautia*, the species of *philia* proper to the individual, is the ground of all other forms of human *philia*, including the forms of 'species love'. If the most formal expression of *philautia* is philanthropy, its most immediate expression is in the natural bond of parent and child. Self-love first appears in the immediate, natural and mutual recognition of 'you in I' and 'I in you', that occurs spontaneously between parent and child.
Parents, then, love their children as themselves for being from themselves they form, by their separate existence, a sort of 'other selves' (*heteroi autoi*), while children love their parents as those from whom they are born (12.1161b27-30).

Implicit in the human infant's inarticulate love of its parent is the fully articulated love of the human parent for its child. As an expression of *philautia*, the *philia* that binds parent and child is both instinctive and spiritual. It is at once the instinctive expression of a rational self-conscious life, though that is not so available to view from the side of the infant as it is from the side of the parent. The parent's love for the child as its own actualises the child's love of self in the first degree in the love of its parent as its own. The love of self is actualised first as the love of other. From beginning to end in our spiritual development, love of self and love of other are inseparable: love of self always requires the mediation of love of other. One cannot love one's self simply; even the love of self is as other.

For they say that one must love most one’s dearest friend, and one’s dearest friend is one who, when he wills what is good for his friend, wills it for his friend’s sake, even if no one will know. But the same things belongs to one’s relationship with one’s self, along with everything else by which a friend is defined. For as we said all these marks of friendship extend to others from one’s relation to one’s self…. For all these marks would belong principally to one’s relation to one’s self: for one is above all a friend to one’s self; indeed, one ought to love one’s self above all (*EN* IX 1168b5-10).

It lies within the complexity of the inner society of self to develop outwardly into external societies, the most immediate of which is the family. The family in the *Ethics* is precisely a society of self-relations: the love of others as one's own other selves. In this sense, it is most profoundly spiritual, arising from the principle of self-relation, which is the characteristic power of the faculty of reason that other *zwa* do not share.

(iii) The ethical basis of the family in spousal *philia*.

The instinctive and spontaneous love between human and parent offspring is the natural beginning of a spiritual motion within the human soul towards its self-actualisation, which ultimately takes the form of the friendship of goodness. The full development of love of self from familial affection to moral friendship requires moral education and habituation in virtue by parents and teachers. Moral education is a mutual

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15 Cf. Cooper, "The central and basic kind of friendship, then, is friendship of character. Such friendships exist when two persons, having spent enough time together to know one another's character and to trust one another (1156b25-29), come to love one another because of their good human qualities: Aristotle's word for 'love' here is *stergein*, a word which is used most often to apply to a mother's love for her children and other such close family attachments. Each, loving the other for his own good qualities of character, wishes for him whatever is good, for his own sake..." *AF* 308.
concern of family and state insofar as its end is two-fold: to raise obedient children that will in turn become good parents and good citizens. But this might be said equally of Plato's community of guardians, who are precisely by definition good children, good parents and good citizens. What they are not, in an Aristotelian sense at least, are good individuals or good selves. There is *philia* in Plato's community of guardians, but there is no *philautia*. For Plato, all forms of community, that of the soul, the family and the state, must be founded on the love of the good, on *philosophia*. For Aristotle, *philautia*, the love of self, is the creative principle of all forms of community: of soul, family, and state.

Therefore, there is not present in the Platonic household, the generic family of the guardians, the practical good of self-realisation that forms the *ethos* of the family in Aristotle. It is in this sense of being the object of what Aristotle calls *praktikos nous*, of soul aiming at the practical end of self-sufficiency, that Aristotle brings forth the relation of husband and wife as the practical good of family life.

There seems to be a friendship between man and woman by nature. For the human being by nature is more disposed to live in pairs than in the polis, insomuch as the household is prior in time and more necessary than the *polis*, and the creation of children is more common with other animals. Among other animals, the community extends only this far [to the creation of children], but for the human being, living together is not only for the sake of reproduction, but also for various aspects of their lives. Immediately, the work is divided, and there is one task for men and another for women. So they assist one another, putting their individual talents into the common good. On account of these things, there seems to be both usefulness and pleasure in this sort of friendship. This friendship also exists in accordance with virtue, if they are both good. For there is a virtue of each, and they are pleased by this . . . . It seems that children are a bond, wherefore marriages without children dissolve more quickly. For children are a common good for both and what is common holds them both together (12.1162a16-29 Saxonhouse *WHPT 84*).

For Plato, the purpose of family life is to create a unified body of citizens in the state. That is not the end of family life for Aristotle. The consummate relationship of the family for Aristotle is not that of parent and offspring; husbands and wives do not exist for the sake of raising children; rather, the rearing of children belongs to the consummate familial relationship of husband and wife. The basis of the family is the spousal *philia* of husband and wife, their love for one another and their children, as their 'other selves'.

Now (1) parents know their offspring better than their children know that they are their children, and (2) the originator feels his offspring to be his own more than the offspring do their begetter; for the product belongs to the producer (e.g. a tooth or hair or anything else to him whose it is), but the producer does not belong to the product, or belongs in a less degree. And (3) the length of time produces the same result; parents love their children as soon as these are born, but children love their parents only
after time has elapsed and they have acquired understanding or the power of discrimination by the senses. From these considerations it is also plain why mothers love more than fathers do (12.1161b19-27 Ross BWA).

As in the Politics, so in the Ethics, it is the spousal relationship, rather than the parental relationship, that is the true foundation of family life for Aristotle, and precisely insofar as the family is an ethical--and in this sense, spiritual, as well--community of persons who will each other's good as their own. In contrast, it is always the parental relationship that is foremost in Plato's mind, the relationship of filial obedience to parental authority that in the Laws he calls "the most sacred of obligations" (717-718; 729). This paternal and hierarchical relation is no less sacred or honorable for Aristotle. It is, he tells us, "more honourable to sustain the authors of our being even before ourselves; and honour too one should give to one's parents as one does to the gods." But, he adds, "not any and every honour" (IX 2 1165a21-25). The relationship of parent and child, though essential to the family, is still not paramount. What is paramount, in Aristotle's view of the family, is not the strictly "royal" hierarchical relationship of parent and child, but the more egalitarian, "constitutional" friendship of husband and wife. Whereby, "how a man ought to live with his wife, and generally how a friend ought to live with a friend, is manifestly nothing other than to inquire how it would be just" (VIII 12.1162a29-31).

(iv) Eunoia as the substance of spousal philia.

Spousal philia assumes the natural difference and inequality of male and female, and by its very nature is an equalisation of that difference.

There is another kind of friendship, that involving the inequality of superior and inferior, such as a father has with his son, and adults with youths generally, as well as that which a husband has with his wife, and every ruler with the ruled. And these also differ from each other; for a parent does not have the same friendship with its child as a ruler has with the ruled, nor does a husband have the same friendship with his wife as a wife has with her husband. For the virtue and the function (erga) of each of these differ, as do the reasons that they love; therefore, their loves and their friendships differ as well. For the same thing does not come from one to the other, nor should they seek it…. Love must be proportional in all friendships involving inequality …for when the love exists in accordance with worthiness, then equality exists in a way, which is thought to belong to friendship. (7.1158b11-28)

Spousal philia equalises the hierarchical inequality of a superior active male virtue and an inferior passive female virtue. Each requires the other to complete itself. Their friendship arises from their difference, preserving it in the different roles men and women are to play in the household; at the same time, their friendship transcends their difference and grounds it in an unity prior to the differences themselves. Male and female virtue are
complementary parts of a single whole, which is nothing other than the *philia* that equalises their difference and holds them together.

Spousal *philia*, the love and friendship of husband and wife, is a form of the friendship of goodness that is grounded in *eunoia*; it is the actual state of willing the good of another. The good willed in this friendship is the good of the friendship itself: it is the mutuality of goodness, the possession of it and the recognition of it, in one's self and in the other (*EN* IX 5). What happens here is a kind of imitation of the friendship that the divine principle has with itself, the divine *nous* which contemplates the goodness of all things in contemplating the goodness of itself. That perfect self-relation of the first principle is most nearly approximated among human beings in the community of souls that are nearly identical in their goodness— the friendship of the good.

The friendship of *eunoia* in which the good of the individual is most fully realised is what brings both family and state into being. It is this *praktikos agathos*, present within the human soul as its desired end, that moves individuals to form families, families to form cities, and cities to form friendships of virtue which make possible the life of contemplation. But the life of contemplation on which the good of the city, the family, and the individual depends is not a life available to all (*EN* X 8). Rather, the highest human activity is limited to the fewest number; and even among the few, the highest human activity remains incomplete. And it just this incompleteness which necessitates the return from the contemplative life of the few good men to the active life of the city, and thus to the life of the family, which is the basis of the city, and to the relationship of husband and wife, which is the basis of the family (*EN* X 9). The friendship of husband and wife is itself a form of that same practical good whose ultimate manifestation is the contemplative life, the pure self-related activity of the soul as a thinking being. What husband and wife share in common is precisely their sharing in common, their community, their friendship. It is the presence of friendship in the family, the presence of love, of self-love manifest as love of other, that is the essence of the family.

Family, state, and individual are for Plato analogous forms of unity; the principle of unity, however, remains outside that which it unifies. The Platonic good is present for Aristotle as the moving end or *telos* in the soul; it is incompletely actualised in the life of family and state, and even in the friendship of contemplatives. Family, state, and individual possess in themselves their unifying principle of self-relation, self-actualisation; in terms of the *Ethics*, they express *philautia* in different species of *philiae*. It is more difficult to say where one specie of *philia* ends and another begins, since in truth they pass over into one another. The individual is the basic unit of the *oikos*; the *oikos* is the basic unit of the *polis*; the *polis* is a *koinwnia* of *oikoi*; the *oikos* a *koinwnia* of individuals. The *oikos* itself is based on the *koinwnia* of husband and wife, and the substance of that *koinwnia* is spousal *philia*: the familial form of the love of self that resides in the love of other. It is from this standpoint, then, that Aristotle criticizes Plato's view of the family in the *Republic*.
PROVENCAL: THE FAMILY IN ARISTOTLE

III. Aristotle's Criticism Of Plato's View Of The Family In Politics II.

In a previous study of the family in the Republic (summarised below), I argued that Plato regards to koinon as the sole principle of all forms of koinwnia: state, family, individual and soul; to idion appears as the principle of division, strife and self-destruction in states, souls, individuals and families. That argument is continued here in the form of the thesis that Aristotle's criticism of the Republic is more a reappraisal of Plato's position, than a mere rejection of it. Aristotle is indebted to Plato for having broken down the popular assumption that family and state are independently grounded in opposed principles, the state in what is common, to koinon, the family in what is private, to idion. In Aristotle's view, however, the common good of the polis (to koinon) is itself a synthesis of private interests (ta idia), so that the integrity of the oikos as a private institution is essential to the common life of the polis. The logic of Aristotle's position is more easily derived from the Platonic reduction of family and state to to koinon as a single unifying principle than from their historical independence, popularly regarded as based on the contrariety of to idion and to koinon.

For Aristotle, the problem is not so much, as commonly thought, that Plato is willing to destroy the family to create an ideal state, as that he is willing to destroy the state to create an ideal family. Concerning the purpose of Aristotle's criticism of Plato, two

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16 Provencal MNM argues that Resp. involves an implicit critique of the Hellenic oikos as degenerating from a principally religious association of communal membership (based on to koinon) into a merely conventional institution of private ownership (based on to idion). What first drew my attention to the need for clarification of Plato's view of the family was the prevailing ambiguity in scholarship concerning the paradoxical status of the family in Resp.: that the (private) oikos should be abolished as the source of political stasis by way of instituting a (communal) oikos as the source of political unity. The clearest admission of scholarly perplexity has been made recently by Halliwell (PRJ 20. For further evidence and discussion, see citations in n.18, below.) MNM resolves the paradox by attending to the logic evolving several stages of the oikos in Resp.: the idyllic oikos of the 'city of pigs' and the degenerate oikoi of wealth and poverty in the 'city of luxuries' (book II); the restored (private) oikos of the artisans and the ideal (communal) oikos (community of wives and children) of the guardians in the 'city of the blessed' (book V). The paradoxical status of the family as source of both political unity and strife is resolved by clarifying that it is the degenerate oikoi of wealth and poverty that must be abolished in order to restore the (purged) oikos as a private institution (among the lower class of artisans), which enables and necessitates the communal oikos as public institution among the ruling class of guardians.

17 Doull sets the Aristotelian relationship of oikos and polis in Aristotle within a complex dialectic of the underlying relationship of the practical and theoretical relations of the soul to the world and the divine principle. On the one hand he argues that, contra Plato, "Aristotle is true to the Hellenic tradition in dividing family from state, in finding in both a human freedom stabilized against immediate reduction to an absolute theoretic freedom" (COCI 127). "Of the practical Aristotle is able to say that it is its own end, is free in its labour to conform the world of its particular interests to its freedom, especially through the common work of domestic and political institutions" (COCI 147). On the other hand, he appears not to allow that in Aristotle the opposition of family and state, of private and public interest, is overcome in the practical life of these institutions, but only in a theoretical attitude which transcends them: "natural individuality has its rational good in the family, which if it be called the natural community as against the state is among Greeks a free community [citing Pol I, 13]. The individual belongs to both communities, but in relation to them is exposed to a profound division in himself. In this division appears the limit of practical freedom, where it confronts a necessity in which the individual can only find himself free by returning to a theoretical attitude" [citing EN X, 8] (COCI 148).
points require clarification.\textsuperscript{18} First, that Aristotle is making a two-fold response to a two-fold proposal by Plato to replace the private household with a communal family: (i) insofar as Plato (a) abolishes the private household (b) as exemplifying the evil of private interest (\textit{to idion}), (c) he is taken to destroy the family in order to preserve the state; (ii) insofar as Plato (a) converts the ruling class of the state into a family, (b) as exemplifying the good of the common interest (\textit{to koinon}), (c) he is taken to destroy the state in order to create a family. Second, that the principle target of Aristotle's criticism is the principle aim of Plato's argument, namely, the conversion of the state into a communal family; Plato's proposal to abolish the private household as a political evil is a secondary concern as the means necessary to the end of converting the state into a family.

\textit{A. Plato's view of the relation of family and state in the Republic.}

Contrary to common opinion, Plato does not regard private interest (\textit{to idion}) as the principle of the family.\textsuperscript{19} His abolition of the private household in the  \textit{Republic} follows from his view that the true principle of the family is the same sense of community (\textit{to koinon}) that unifies the state. What he condemns is the degeneration of family life into private interest, the corruption of \textit{to koinon} by \textit{to idion}, which he represents in the corrupt \textit{oikoi} of wealth and poverty in the city of luxuries. His true view of the family as a private household is envisioned in the city of pigs as the original form of \textit{koinwnia}, grounded in a communal sense of belonging, \textit{to koinon}. The institution of the \textit{koinwnia} of wives and children in the ideal state, the city of the blessed, is a rationalization of the Hellenic \textit{oikos}, purged of its tendency to degenerate into self-interest in the Hellenic cities of luxuries, and idealizing its Arcadian sense of community. This rationalization of the family in the \textit{koinwnia} of wives and children serves to complete the integration of the individual into the common life of the state. To prefer the family as belonging to \textit{to idion}, over the state as belonging to \textit{to koinon}, is characterized as \textit{idiosis} (462b8). While Plato does abolish the corrupted private household as exemplifying \textit{to idion}, that is to be seen within the larger context of restoring the family in its eidetic or idealized, communal form as exemplifying \textit{to koinon}. Though it extends only to the ruling class of Guardians, the force of Plato's \textit{koinwnia} of wives and children is effectively to unify the state by converting it into a family.

\textsuperscript{18} For summaries of the debate on the fairness and accuracy of Aristotle's criticism of Plato, see Mayhew  \textit{ACPC} 231-2; Simpson  \textit{ACSW} 99 n.1; Stalley \textit{ACPR} 182-3. Simpson and Stalley are useful for relating the existing controversy through Saunders (\textit{AP}) back to Bornemann's polemic against Aristotle as misunderstanding or misrepresenting Plato's argument at every turn (\textit{AUPPT} 113, 120,128,135, 137, 139, 145, 150), and to the more profound objections of Proclus (\textit{Kroll} II). For evidence of ambiguity (of varying degrees) about the primary purpose of Aristotle's criticism, see Irwin \textit{ADPP} 218-21; Mulgan \textit{APT} 38-9; Saunders \textit{AP} 107, 112; Saxonhouse \textit{FPU} 203-4, 212-13; Stalley \textit{ACSW} 184, 186. Ambiguity about Aristotle's criticism corresponds to an ambiguity about Plato's proposal: see Barker \textit{GPT} 262, 267; Bloom \textit{RP} 385-6; Grube 271; Halliwell \textit{PR5} 20; Nettleship \textit{LRP} 177; Saxonhouse \textit{WHPT} 47.

\textsuperscript{19} For evidence that Plato is commonly viewed (negatively) as regarding \textit{to idion} as the principle of the family, see Adam \textit{RP} 292; Annas \textit{IPR} 178-9; Benardete \textit{SSS} 119; Bloom \textit{RP} 386-7; Barker \textit{GPT} 252, 262; Grube \textit{PT} 270; Halliwell \textit{PR5} 20; Lacey \textit{FCG} 82, 177-8; Lee \textit{PR} 48; Murphy \textit{IPR} 76; Nettleship \textit{LRP} 179-80.
The key to Plato’s argument is the analogy of state (*polis*) and individual (*anthrwpos*) at 462c-d, by which we are to measure the *koinwnia* of wives and children. Plato’s individual is described as a *koinwnia* of body and soul, in which the soul unifies the body by way of its ruling element, reason. As such, the individual has the same tripartite constitution as the soul and state. The application of the analogy to the *koinwnia* of wives and children reveals that the structure of the family is analogous to that of state, soul and individual. The unifying principle of the family is the same rational element which unifies the state, the individual as a composite of soul and body, and the soul. For Plato, state, family, individual and soul are analogous in structure and in principle one. The principle of reason which looks to the Good (so far as it can be known) unifies and orders the soul as a composite of reason, spirit and appetites; unifies and orders the individual as a composite of soul and bodily members; unifies and orders relations among individual members of a family; unifies and orders relations among the members of the ruling class of guardians in the state, and by their rule also the classes of the state.

**B. Aristotle’s criticism of the Republic in Politics II.**

*Politics* II basically criticizes four premises of Plato’s argument for the *koinwnia* of wives and children: 

1. **Chapter 2: the unity of family and state.**

In Chapter 2, Aristotle begins straightway by criticizing the Platonic logic by which the state, family and individual are collapsed into a single form of unity:

‘Moreover it is clear that as the *polis* proceeds and becomes one (*mia*), it will be less a *polis*: for a *polis* is a certain multitude (*plêthos*) in its nature, and as it becomes one it will change from a *polis* to more of an *oikos*, and then from an *oikos* to more of an individual (*anthrwpos*). For we would say that the *oikos* is more of a unity (*mia*) than the *polis*, and the individual (*to hen*) more than the *oikos*. Consequently, even if someone were able to do this, it ought not to be done. For it will undo the state’ (1261a16-22).

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20 Provencal *WLLS* argues that an ‘organic interpretation’ of the analogy obfuscates its teaching that reason, the ruling principle of soul and state, rules also in the individual and family as the source of order and unity. The intent of this paper is to demonstrate that Aristotle also understood this to be Plato’s teaching and made it the focus of his critique in *Pol* II.

21 For a through and minute discussion of all points raised by Aristotle's argument, see Mayhew *ACPR*.

22 Newman *PA* 229; Saunders *AP* 107-8; Simpson *ACSC* 100-3; Stalley *ACPR* 183-4; Susemihl and Hicks *PA* 102-4, 216.
Aristotle agrees that unity is necessary to the state, but argues that the state is by nature a plurality in a way that the family is not (ch.5 1263b29-31), so that the whole premise of Plato’s argument that the most completely unified state is best (to mian einai tên polin hws ariston on hoti malista pasan 1261a15-16) is a fundamental error.

Political koinwnia requires a diversity that is excluded from the Platonic concept of unity (ex hwn de dei hen genesthai, eidei diapherei 1261a29-30). In particular, Aristotle

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23 For philological comment on the difficulties of Aristotle’s meaning, see Newman PA 230, 233-4; Saunders AP 107-10; Susemihl and Hicks PA 217-18. Simpson appraises the problem in relation to the objections of Bornemann and Proclus (ACSC 103-6). Bornemann complains that ‘Aristoteles habe den Platon vollig misßverstanden’, (AUPPT 128, esp. n.1), citing Proclus at Kroll II, 361 l. 29 – 362 l.2. Neither Bornemann nor Simpson show sufficient interest in the principle of Proclus’ objection. This oversight is especially unfortunate for Simpson, who rightly refers the question of the kind of unity Plato intends to his own analogy of state and individual (R. 462c-d) only to find that the analogy fails to explain anything: ‘how one is it possible for a city to be? To answer that something needs to be said about the difference between a city and a single human being, why the oneness that fits a city is not the same as the oneness that fits an individual, and why, nevertheless, it makes sense to set up the oneness of the individual as the sort of oneness that the city should aim at. None of this Socrates does. Therefore his supposition is inadequate in the way Aristotle says it is’ (ACSC 105). The argument of Provencal WLLS is that this tendency to dismiss the analogy of state and individual as ‘intractably obscure’ (Halliwell PR5 172-3) is the result of an ‘organic interpretation’ that misunderstands the basis of the analogy. Properly understood to represent the individual as having the same tripartite structure as the state, Simpson’s questions no longer arise, since state and individual are structurally analogous, with self-conscious reason (lo/goj) as the unifying and ordering principle in each. Where Proclus earlier treats directly of the analogy (Kroll II, 361 ll.1-13), he misrepresents it as referring to the division of labor as the elements of political unity, which is irrelevant to Aristotle’s criticism here. But at the point referred to by Bornemann (Kroll II, 362), he makes reference to it again and there clearly articulates the teleological nature of that unity which the analogy of state and individual in fact teaches to be the good of the state:

to de malista hen touto estin to sunechon to swma, eite logos heis phusikos eite kai psuchê tis, di’ hên hen to swma estin, kai tauta ek pollwn hon, ditton oun to hen, ê to hulikon ê to telikon. kai epeí heizein thelei tên polin, ouch ws eis to hulikon autên hen katagwn méchanataí tên henwsin, all’ eis to telikon kai auto to agathon, di’ ho kai ap’ hou pasin hè henwsis (Kroll II, 362, 8-14).

The difference between to hulikon and to telikon (‘l’un matiere’, ‘l’un cause finale’ Festugiere CR 319) for Proclus is that between the limbs per se and as parts of a body unified by the soul and governed by its reason, so that (citing the example of the Phaedo) if Socrates remains in prison, it is because he has decided that is best (Kroll II, 363). But I disagree with Proclus that Aristotle does not understand Plato’s political unity to be teleological. I think he does, and that the argument that exists between them here with respect
mentions the distinction of ruler and ruled, and how the principle of reciprocity is the salvation of states (to ison to antipeponthos swizei tas poleis 1261a30-31). The reciprocity of ruler and ruled preserves the difference that exists in the state as an unity of equally independent households (eleutherois kai iisois 126a31-32). I take this to be a criticism of the Platonic exclusion of to idion from to koinon.24 It is not numerical plurality so much as the plurality of private interests that Aristotle would preserve as the necessary basis of political community. For Aristotle, to koinon presupposes ta idia. Political koinwnia requires not the mathematical unity of similar interests (homoioi), but the synthetic unity of different kinds of interests (eidei diapherontes) (1261a24-25). As the criticisms of the subsequent chapters make clear, Aristotle’s problem with Plato is that he thinks of harmonia as homonoia, of unity of association as unanimity of mind, where there is no distinction between self and other, mine and not mine. Yet, for Aristotle, this is precisely the kind of difference of which political koinwnia is composed.

(ii) Chapter 3: the unanimity of ‘all’ saying ‘mine.’

Chapter 3 criticizes the premise that unanimity is signified by ‘all’ saying ‘mine’ and ‘not mine’ in unison.25 Aristotle notes that “all” (pantes) can be meant distributively (hws hekastos) and collectively (ouch hws hekastos)1261b20-30).26 The different senses of ‘all’ distinguished by Aristotle would seem to render the different senses of ‘mine’ distinguished by Plato, of ownership and membership.27 Spoken distributively, ‘mine’ would refer to to idion, ‘that which belongs to me as an individual’; spoken collectively, ‘mine’ would refer to to koinon, ‘that to which I belong as a member’. The distributive sense of ‘mine’ expressing to idion is used in the city of luxuries, giving rise to the cacophony of ‘mine’ and ‘not mine’ among private, competitive oikoi, signifying civic...
strife. The collective sense of ‘mine’ expressing *to koinon* is used by the guardians in the 'city of the blessed', giving rise to the harmony of ‘mine’ and ‘not mine’ in the *koinwnia* of wives and children, signifying political unity. It would be better, though impossible, remarks Aristotle, for Plato to say that political unity would be signified by all saying ‘mine’ distributively, expressing individual agreement on *to idion*; for collective agreement on *to koinon* would not signify unanimity (*ouden homonoëtikon* 1261b31-32). It is a telling remark, drawing attention to a fundamental difference in their accounts of the origin of political life.

Plato’s account of the origin of political *koinwnia* generates the 'city of pigs', where private *oikoi* would co-exist peaceably, but do so by virtue of the hypothetical absence of *to idion*. The principle of the Arcadian state, which has not developed beyond the life of the *oikos*, is *to koinon*; *to idion* infects the *oikos* only from without, by the human impulse toward *pleonexia* that generates the need for government in the 'city of luxuries', which the *oikos* is helpless to contain and by which it is corrupted. Plato hypothesizes a pre-political unity prior to the very plurality and division of private interests among *oikoi* out of which Aristotle generates the polis in *Politics* I. For Plato, the aim of government is to purge private interest, *to idion*, as far as possible from the unity of *to koinon*; for Aristotle, it is to reconcile private interests and to integrate them as far as possible into the unity of *to koinon*. But Aristotle’s disagreement with Plato is itself a direct result of re-thinking Plato’s concept of *to koinon*.

What does Aristotle really mean when he suggests that it would be better, though impossible, if ‘all’ individually agreed in saying ‘mine’, meaning ‘what is my own’? ‘What is my own’ for Aristotle is not primarily a matter of ownership and autonomy, but of membership and responsibility. His preference for the distributive use of ‘mine’ suggests that he has found in Plato’s contraries of *to koinon* and *to idion* a complementary sense of each in the other: *to idion* implies *to koinon*; *to koinon* requires *to idion*. His criticism of the collective use of ‘mine’ targets the aporia that arises from Plato’s conception of *to koinon* as exclusive, rather than inclusive, of *to idion*. A *koinwnia* based solely on a collective sense of ‘mine’ would actually fail to produce in its members a sense of social responsibility, of moral obligation to others inherent to membership: "for that which is common to most happens to be of least concern" (1261b34). Social responsibility requires also a distributive sense of ‘mine’, since "people care especially about their own interests, much less about common concerns, except insofar as they coincide with the individual." *twn gar idiwn malista phrontizousin, twn de koinwn hêtton ê hoson hekastwi epiballei* (1261b34-35). By ‘their own interests,’ *ta idia*, Aristotle must here mean ‘that which is in our care and for which we are responsible.’ Aristotle is not criticizing Plato’s failure to recognize the modern liberal’s right as an individual to property and autonomy. Rather, he criticizes Plato’s failure to recognize the impossibility of generating a sense of collective responsibility of ‘all’ toward ‘all’ except from a sense of individual responsibility of each toward his own. “Each citizen has a thousand sons and none are his own, but chances are that one is no more a son than another, so that all will mean little to him equally" (1261b38-1262a1). The problem with everyone having the same social obligation is that none will feel

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28 Gill *GT* 57; Irwin *ADPP* 216; 222-24; Nussbaum *SSPU* n.60 434; Miller *NJR*.309-331.
individually obliged to fulfill it. It will not be the particular concern of anyone. The justification for building on *to idion* is that it is necessary for that very sense of moral obligation and social responsibility that Plato would attribute solely to *to koinon*. But, Aristotle argues, moral sensibility is a matter of feeling personally responsible toward others. Without *to idion*, it is impossible to generate the unity of *to koinon*. The problem with the *koinwnia* of wives of children is that it excludes the basis on which individuals normally feel a sense of obligation toward others:

for the same man one addresses as his son, another as his brother, and another as his cousin or as some other kinsman, a relation either by blood or by marriage, first as an in-law by his own marriage, or as an in-law by other marriages in his family, and in addition to these, another addresses him as member of the phratry, another as member of the tribe. For it is better to be someone’s cousin (*idion anepisyion*), than anyone’s son (1262a9-14).

(iii) Chapter 4: the *koinwnia* of wives and children.

The criticism in Chapter 4 of the *koinwnia* of wives and children as a means of attaining unity in the state starts from common ground: the origin of moral responsibility in the family as a religious institution. The argument between Aristotle and Plato occurs within this Hellenic experience of the family as grounded, not in sex and race, but in religion. In this Hellenic tradition, ties of blood and affection, which might seem primary to some today as the basis of human relationships, were of little or no account in themselves, as the ancient Greek custom of infanticide attests. Ties of blood and affection were invested with significance only through religious rites and rituals such as the *amphidromia*. It is first on religious grounds, then, that Aristotle rejects Plato’s translation of sanctity and morality from particular ties of blood and marriage to generic ties of kinship in the *koinwnia* of wives and children. But Aristotle is no mere conservative defender of religious tradition. What he upholds in the sanctity of blood-ties is the preservation of the private and particular as essential to the full development of *koinwnia*. The severance of particular ties would only produce moral apathy, a diluted sense of fellowship (1262b17-22). For Aristotle, it is only insofar as *to idion* and *to koinon* stand in a complementary relation to one another in the family that individuals

29 "Pace Mayhew et. al. "I do not think Aristotle believes the holy (in the religious sense) is a legitimate moral concept. He believes, however, that most citizens do; and he believes the fact that they do, combined with the communism of women and children of the *Republic* would diminish the unity of the city." *ACPR* 65. His solution to the problems he perceives in attributing religious piety to Aristotle is just as problematic. That incest was not regarded as an act of religious impiety by Aristotle seems incredible and goes against the obvious sense of his criticism of Plato. Plato himself was thoroughly skeptical about traditional piety, yet he preserved the virtue of peity in a purified form as the form of justice that governed the relationship between the human and divine, as one can gather from the *Euthyphro* and *Republic* V. That the family was primarily a religious rather than natural institution was the sound and influential teaching of Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City*. For evidence of the view that ordinarily all forms of *koinwnia* were principally religious see Bremmer *GR*; Burkert *GR*; Lacey *FCG*; Pantel and Zaidman *RAGC*. For the domestic religious ritual of *amphidromia*, see Golden *CCCA* 101-104; 143.
develop their moral sense of obligation to others, their sense of membership and koinonia. ‘For there are two principles, which especially cause people to love and feel concern – to te idion kai to agapetôn (1262b22-23)’. So we come to Aristotle’s deepest reflection on the error of Plato’s argument, his failure to grasp the true nature of the love of one’s own.30

(iv) Chapter 5: the abolition of private property.

Aristotle’s criticism of the abolition of private property in Chapter 5 addresses Plato’s attempt to eradicate to idion, the love of one’s own, in the sense of ownership and selfishness. By doing so, Aristotle argues, he would also eradicate the very principle of moral and social responsibility: the love of self that is fundamental to the love of other.31

It is not the right of ownership that Aristotle defends; rather, private property is defended as necessary to the development of individual moral virtue, which is necessary to the well-being of the state.32 ‘In a certain way, property should be common (koinas), but in general, private (idias). For where the responsibilities are distributed, people will not make accusations against each other, but will more freely give of themselves, as the steady concern of each for what is their own (hws pros idion hekastou prosedreuontos). But for the sake of virtue, property shall be, in respect of its use, the proverbial “common things of friends” ’ (1263a26-30).

30 Cf. Mayhew ACPC 237-8. Pol 1262b22-4 has received considerable attention in light of Aristotle’s account of civic friendship in EN. Mayhew (ACPC 239) here has Cooper in mind. Cooper contends that Aristotle criticizes Plato for believing that the ‘only effective civic friendship…will be one resulting from the extension to the whole ruling group of just those family ties which in other, historical, cities serve to compromise it’ (n.15 PACV 233; cf. Mayhew, n.13 ACPC 237). From Pol 1280 b 36-38, Cooper extracts what he takes to be Aristotle’s own view of how the family forms the psychological basis of civic friendship. ‘The members of my family are my people, and any good enjoyed by any of them is shared in also by me, because as members of a family what affects them affects the family, and I too am a member of that. Civic friendship is just an extension to a whole city of the kinds of psychological bonds that tie together a family and make possible this immediate participation by each family-member in the good of the others. Civic friendship makes the citizens in some important respects like a large extended family…’ (PACV 236). Annas criticizes this view of civic friendship as a psychological extension of familial ties as too Platonic for Aristotle (CJC 244). Irwin, however, argues that civic friendship must at least proximate personal friendship (GPA 88, 91, 93, 95; ADPP 224). Debilitating this discussion is the common assumption that family ties are viewed by Plato and Aristotle as biological (Mayhew n.14 ACPC 237; Cooper n.15 PACV 233; Annas CJC 244), which neglects evidence that Plato and Aristotle view them as ordinarily religious and essentially spiritual. Cooper actually derives his definition of civic friendship from Pol 1280 b 36-38, which lists ‘connections by marriage, brotherhoods, religious festivals…’ (PACV 232; cited by Annas CJC 242, 244). One might ask on what basis might ties of blood and marriage be united with religious and business partnerships? Despite this oversight, Cooper’s account of civic friendship in Aristotle articulates a spiritual (i.e. moral and psychological) sense of domestic and civic ties that is close to how family ties are viewed by Plato and Aristotle (see also Irwin ADPP 220).

31 Irwin ADPP 224, GPA 91; Salomon CBAP 187; Saunders AP 119; Saxonhouse FPU 215; Stalley ACPR 195.

32 Miller’s consideration of whether ‘property rights’ in a Lockean liberal sense can be found in Aristotle’s concept of private property involves the observation that “He is not defending a system of unqualified privatization.” NJR 321.
Aristotle’s defense of private property and the love of one’s own is not as the basis of an independent individuality, but as the basis of personal responsibility towards one’s self and others. The love of one’s own originates in the love of self. As we know from the *Ethics* (IX 4-9), self-love is the root of moral relations, beginning with one’s own obligation to one’s self, to will what is good for one’s self, for one’s own sake.33 The moral sense of responsibility toward ‘my own’ arises precisely from this primary relation to one’s self as one’s own other. *To idion* is primarily the principle of self-relation, a relationship inherently moral and social, and the very basis of morality and sociability. *To idion* is really the simplest and most primary form of *to koinon*, and as such is the very basis of community, *koinwnia*. All forms of *koinwnia* spring from this self-obligation to seek self-fulfillment in the good life, which is a life of doing good to others.

Moreover, to regard a thing as one’s own (*idion*) makes all the difference in one’s enjoyment of it; for not without reason does each self love itself (*tên pros hauton autos echei philian hekastos*), but this is natural (*phusikon*) …. Even more, the greatest pleasure lies in the act of lending a hand or doing good to friends, strangers or companions, which occurs when property is private (*idia*). But these do not go along with making the *polis* too much of a unity (1263a40-1263b7).

The source of the evils which Plato would purge from the polis by the abolition of private life would be better treated by the education of private individuals. For while the proper love of self creates community, the improper love of self destroys it (*to mallon ê dei philein* 1263b2-5; *dia tên mochthriamon* 1263b22).

Conclusion

Aristotle had already learned from Plato that the family was essentially a form of community grounded in the human capacity for rational virtue rather than a natural association grounded in the immediacy of sexual instinct and biological blood-ties. His disagreement with Plato had to do with the relationship between the principle of unity and that which it unified. For Plato, the principle of unity, the good, lies outside that which it unifies, in such a way that it requires that individuals and private households seek to transcend their particularity in order to participate in the universality of a higher good. For Aristotle, the good is present in human nature in such a way as to give rise to a natural impulse (*hormê*) to form associations that are at first grounded in the immediacy of natural desire (*orexia*) and necessity (*anagkê*), so that it can be said that the family exists by nature (*phusis*). But a closer examination of the generation of the *oikos* (and the presence of the 'transivity of naturalness') brings to light that its natural principle is not such as to reside in the externality and expediency of sexuality and slavery, but in the ethical friendship of husband wife. As such, it should be clear that, while the *oikos* (and thus the *polis*) must originate in natural necessity, that is not its moving principle. The moving principle in both *oikos* and *polis* is the Platonic good, but that as present in, rather

333333 Two recent studies from SUNY on Aristotle’s philosophy of personal and political friendship are Stern-Gillet *APFI* and Schollmeier *APPF*
than to, the institutions themselves. The Platonic good is present in the Aristotelian family and political community in the form of the cultivation and enjoyment of goodness or excellence, by way of virtuous friendships that obtain happiness in the life of the state, family and the individual. The natural impulse to form ethical associations lies within the nature of the human soul as essentially rational in its powers of self-actualisation. As such, the family is essentially a spiritual institution, having for its true end the realisation of the ethical life of virtue and happiness. The Aristotelian family, then, is closer to the Homeric oikos of Odysseus and Penelope and the classical oikos of Sophocles' Antigone founded in religious piety and ancestral cult than the degenerate materialist oikoi censured in both the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts of family and private property.

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A Contemporary Assessment Of St. Augustine's
On The Good Of Widowhood

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Introduction

Augustine was criticized, even in his own day, for his account of 'original sin', that all the sons of Adam must suffer not only physical death, but are born with hearts disposed to sin, so disposed that without the saving waters of baptism and the saving grace which predestines, we are forever damned. Reading Romans 5:12 literally, "...as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned", it seems on the face of it quite unjust to visit the sins of a father on his children. But the root of sin, what therefore makes it "original" and inheritable, is our human nature itself, the antinomy between flesh and spirit, reason and nature, in all Adam's progeny. Hegel gives to the account of the Fall a distinctly philosophical significance:

Man, created in the image of God, lost, it is said, his state of absolute contentment, by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Sin consists here only in knowledge: this is the sinful element, and by it man is stated to have trifled away his natural happiness. This is a deep truth, that evil lies in consciousness: for brutes are neither evil nor good; the merely natural man quite as little. ... The state of innocence, the paradisal condition, is that of the brute. Paradise is a park, where only brutes, not men, can remain. For the brute is one with God only implicitly (not consciously). ... The Fall is therefore the eternal Myth of man in fact the very transition by which he becomes man.

1 In his own day by Pelagians, most notably by Julian, bishop of Eclanum; later by critics too numerous to survey, among them Kant who criticizes Augustine's position as a doctrine of "inherited sin". Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der Blossen Vernunft, 1st ed. 1793, Bk I observ. iv , note to "in Adam all have sinned." Contemporary feminist critics include Elaine Pagels in Adam, Eve, and the Serpent (1988), Rosemary Ruether, Mary Daly and others; see the bibliography in Augustine Through the Ages: an Encyclopedia, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, 1999, Article: "Women", 892.
It is not because of some peculiarity of Adam that he sinned, but rather that man is by his nature evil, at odds with himself. His innocence in the state of nature is for him an "unnatural" state, the starting point which must be transformed, a transformation that begins in infancy itself, as Augustine has described it with great insight and precision in *Confessions*, Bk. I. God's Curse, the penalties which follows Adam's fall, are clearly those which separate him from purely natural beings: he must work for his living, Eve must bring forth children in travail, for Nature is not their mother; expelled from the Garden, they know they will die.3

Nowhere, perhaps, is the conflict of reason and nature more evident than in our sexuality. We are not like animals for whom sexual relations are perfectly natural. Rather, as Augustine observes, sexuality in us is a source of embarrassment and shame Adam and Eve, once they have sinned and have knowledge of good and evil, clothe their nakedness. We can command our limbs to obey us, and they do so barring illness or injury; but as Augustine vividly reminds us, lust (*libido*) "refuses to be a servant not only to the will to beget but even for mere self-indulgence", for although lust is sometimes "an unwanted intruder", it also "sometimes abandons the eager lover and desire itself deserts desire."[De civ.Dei, xiv, 10] By Augustine's account, this would not have been the case in Paradise. There, the sexual organs would have been "the obedient servants of mankind, at the bidding of the will in the same way as the other"[De civ. Dei, xiv,23]. In the Paradisal state, man and woman lived in unalloyed bliss, their love for God and each other unperturbed by desire [*libido*] since, as Augustine puts it, "...the beloved object was always at hand for their enjoyment." [De civ. Dei, xiv,10]. There would not have been difference and the movement toward overcoming difference which human emotions engender.

But there would have been sexual intercourse and procreation with children to be loved. Augustine is clear that God's command to "increase and multiply" in accordance with God's blessing was the gift of marriage before man's Fall, something quite evident in the physical difference of male and female, that they might be "two in one flesh".4 How this might take place without lust [*libido*] Augustine admits is such that the very mention of the subject arouses a prurient interest and suggests only "the turbulent lust which we experience, not the calm act of will imagined in my speculation."5 There would have been that perfect tranquillity of mutual love and felicity, such that "without feeling the allurement of passion goading him on, the husband would have relaxed on his wife's bosom in tranquillity of mind and with no impairment of his body's integrity."6 But in Paradise as subsequently, sexual intercourse is solely for the sake of having children.

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3 In the Garden they were spared from the inevitability of death "not by that ultimate immortality, which is absolute and indissoluble", says Augustine "but by the tree of life." *De civ.Dei* xiii, 23. Adam and Eve were therefore naturally mortal.
4 Procreation was originally decreed to complete God's creation by spreading the human race over all the earth; after the Fall, it was required to check the effects of mortality; once the number of saints, traditionally taken to be replacements for the fallen angels, has been completed, procreation will cease. 
5 *De civ.Dei* xiv, 26. He admits that "a sense of shame inhibits my speech, though reason supplies abundant material for thought." *Ibid.
Since there is not lust in Paradise, sexual relations between Adam and Eve would never have occurred except for that purpose.

We live in history, after the Fall, specifically in the sixth age of the world, the *senectus mundi*, looking toward the end. How should Christians conduct their lives in this interim, this time between the Incarnation and the Parousia? Augustine has said what he could about human conduct in Paradise. He has something to say also about Christian conduct at the end of history, after the Final Judgment and the resurrection of the body. We turn briefly only to those reflections which might be relevant to the conduct of the married and the widowed who live neither in Paradise nor in Heaven, but in the 'pilgrim city' in this world.

Augustine has no doubt that in Heaven both men and women will have their appropriate bodies, all defects having been removed. The woman's sex, contrary to the opinion of some, is not a defect but entirely natural. Women will be free of the necessity of sexual intercourse, since free from child-bearing; her female organs will be part of a new beauty, not exciting lust in the beholder, but praises to God who created *ex nihilo* and freed what he created from corruption. [*De civ. Dei*, xxii, 17] The creation of woman from Adam's rib is for Augustine clearly a prophesy of Christ's relation to the Church: Adam's sleep an image of Christ's death; from Adam's side, as from Christ's side there flowed blood and water, i.e. the sacraments of the Church by which it is "built up", just as God from Adam's rib "built up" the woman; and although woman is created by God just as is man, still she is created "out of man" signifying their unity and foreshadowing the unity of Christ and the Church. [*De civ. Dei*, xxii, 17] Finally, as Scripture says [Matt. 22:29], there is no marriage or giving in marriage in resurrected life. [*De civ. Dei*, xxii, 17] Augustine is understandably cautious about speculating what the saints will be doing in their immortal, spiritual bodies, when the flesh lives 'according to the spirit', given St. Paul's characterization of that "peace of God" as "surpassing all understanding". When it is said that we shall see God "face to face", how, asks Augustine, is this to be understood? "And so, when there are some things which are beyond our understanding, and on which the authority of holy Scripture offers no assistance, then we must needs be in the state described in the Book of Wisdom, in these words: 'The thoughts of men are timorous and our foresight is uncertain.'"[*De civ. Dei*, xxii, 29]

The union of Adam and Eve in Paradise, a union of 'supreme pleasure' as Chadwick puts it, will have been considerably changed in Heaven. But Augustine offers this suggestion for how we might be said to see God "face to face":

...perhaps God will be known to us and visible to us in the sense that he will be spiritually perceived by each one of us in each one of us, perceived in one another, perceived by each in himself; he will be seen in the new heaven and the new earth, in the whole creation as it then will be; he will

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7 Robert Marcus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970) 25, observes: "The whole scheme [of the ages of the world] is an entirely formal expression of the theological conviction that the decisive event in history has already taken place, in the coming of Christ."

be seen in every body by means of bodies, wherever the eyes of the
spiritual body are directed with their penetrating gaze. The thoughts of our
minds will lie open to mutual observation; and the words of the Apostle
will be fulfilled; for he said, 'Pass no premature judgments', adding
immediately, 'until the Lord comes. For he will light up what is hidden in
darkness and will reveal the thoughts of the heart. And then each one will
have his praise from God.' " [1 Cor. 4:5] [De civ.Dei, xxii, 29]

The Christian living in the last age of the world contemplates what was, and what will be,
considers also what these two poles would teach him about the conduct of his life here
and now. It is with these thoughts about the beginning and the end that Augustine's
writings on marriage, and for this study, on widowhood, receive illumination.

A. A Sketch Of The Argument Of On The Good Of Widowhood

De bono viduatatis (A.D. 414) was not a treatise but a letter addressed to Juliana, a
widow from a noble Roman family. She had joined her daughter Demetrias, a
consecrated virgin, and her mother-in-law, Proba, "widow of the richest man in the
Empire"9, as a consecrated widow in a convent in Carthage. These three noble ladies had
come under the influence of the ascetism and moralism of Pelagius, appealing as it did to
Christian Roman aristocrats, "with the hauteur and exclusiveness which goes with it."10
The letter would correct the tendency to vanity of the consecrated virgin or widow -- as
he says in his monastic Rule, "Pride lies in wait for our good works to rob them of their
fruit" -- exacerbated in the followers of Pelagius.

Augustine wrote in answer to the entreaties and letters of Juliana "concerning the
profession of holy widowhood", that is, through a solemn vow, but he warns that some of
what he writes will not pertain to Juliana herself, and will not give counsel for the
conduct of her own life. "Forsooth this letter, though it be addressed to you was not to be
written for you alone," but rather profit others through her means.11 The work is divided
into two parts: the first, and most important here, is devoted to the doctrine or teaching
concerning widowhood, "that we may know what is to be done"[Ibid.2], a teaching
derived from Scripture, especially St. Paul; the second is devoted to exhortation, "that the
good which is known wisely may be pursued ardently." [Ibid., 20]. What is the primary
teaching of St. Paul? "I say unto the unmarried," that is, virgins and widows, "that it is
good for them if they shall have so continued even as also I" [1 Cor. 7:8] This is a good

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10 Gerald Bonner, "Augustine and Pelagianism in the Light of Modern Research", The St. Augustine
and his Critics, ed. R. Dodaro and G. Lawless, London, 2000, 147: "Pelagianism brought to light the
reluctance on the part of the upper classes in society to dethrone aristocratic ideals that had been entrenched
for centuries in the heroes and heroineis of ancient Rome."
11 De bono viduatatis. 1. Translation by Rev. C. L. Cornish, at [http://www.ccel.org], Nicene and Post-
Nicene Fathers, Series 1, Vol. III.
which St. Paul places above the good of Christian married women, to whom he says "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" [1 Cor. 6:15], not that the consecrated widow is anything more than a member of Christ, but rather that she has a better place, having gifts according to the grace which has been given to her. Wedded chastity, when intercourse is embraced for the sake of bearing children, and the marriage faithfulness of the Christian bed are also "gifts of God", as is the sacramentum or covenant of matrimony (indissoluble so long as both shall live). [Ibid. 5] Augustine emphasizes that widows are among the "unmarried", not now bound by marriage, for part of his argument will be directed against those who condemn second marriages, even regarding the widow who marries another as an adulterer.\(^\text{12}\)

But Paul allows the widow to marry again if her husband dies, even as he exhorts that she would be more blessed if she continue [a widow] according to his counsel [1 Cor. vii, 39-40]. Thus, contrary to "the heresies of the Cataphryges and of the Novatians" as well as of Tertullian, second marriages are not condemned, but are given lower honour. [Ibid. 6] He adds, "...marriage chastity is a good, but widowed continence is a better good."\(^\text{13}\) So Paul in exhorting to continence "that they have thought of the things of the Lord, how to please God" added that this is said "for your profit, not to cast a snare on you", that is, not to condemn as base what is but a lesser good. As though to instruct those ascetic widows who might be too haughty about their virtue, Augustine reminds them over four paragraphs that their good is to be praised not because those who are married are not also good, but simply because theirs is a better good. And the whole, married and unmarried, like creation itself is "very good". [Ibid., 9]

Moreover, Augustine reminds Juliana, "Nor, because I called Ruth blessed, Anna more blessed, in that the former married twice, the latter, being soon widowed of her one husband, so lived long, do you straightway also think that you are better than Ruth," for the times of the Prophets were different from this sixth age, that age after the birth of Christ. Holy women were kindled not by lust, but by piety to bring forth children "for the propagation of the people of God"; husbands were allowed to have several living wives; and Ruth, "not having seed such as at that time was necessary in Israel, on the death of her husband sought another of whom to have it." [Ibid., 10] Augustine grants that marriage, and therefore widowhood, can change from one age to another. A more thoughtful reflection on the comparison of Ruth and Anna reveals this: Anna, a widow even without sons (assuming she had none) refused to marry again "in that she knew that now was the time wherein Christ were better served, not by duty of bearing, but by zeal of containing, not by fruitfulness of married womb but by chastity of widowed conduct." Concerning Ruth, if she also was aware that from her seed Christ should hereafter be born, "I dare not any longer to say that the widowhood of Anna was more blessed than her fruitfulness." [Ibid.]

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\(^\text{12}\) The Montanists (Tertullian with them) and the Novatians are among these. Augustine places the condemnation of second marriages among the heretical doctrines. De Haeresibus, 26, 38.  
\(^\text{13}\) Ibid. "Marriage chastity" is the exclusive use of sexual intercourse between married couples for procreation; "continence" is abstension from sexual behaviour altogether.
But this is the time "not of casting stones, but of gathering; not of embracing, but of abstaining from embracing", or as St. Paul says, "...the time is short; it remains that they who have wives be as not having", that is, as themselves continent. Marriage in these times is not for the sake of offspring, of which there is already so great and abundant a supply needing to be spiritually reborn. The good of marriage, whatever it is, is ever a good. "But in the people of God it was at one time an act of obedience unto the law [i.e. "Go forth and multiply"], now it is a remedy for weakness, but still a solace of human nature." It is surely a good to be engaged in the begetting of children in the honest order of marriage, "not after the fashion of dogs", and not an affection to cast blame on a man. "Yet this affection itself the Christian mind, having thoughts of heavenly things, ...surpasses and overcomes."[Ibid. 11]

What of the virgin or widow who, having promised perpetual continence, marries in spite of her vow? Augustine would hold that though she had sinned in breaking her vow, her marriage is valid. This is in opposition to the Pelagians who hold that since the consecrated virgin is the bride of Christ, she is an adulteress if she marries. But, Augustine adds, such departures from the vow to Christ are worse than adultery. He rejects the thesis that the consecrated virgin is the bride of Christ, knowing from Scripture that it is the Church herself, of which all Christians are members, which is the bride of Christ.14

To emphasize that "any marriages whatsoever, being marriages, are not evil," he considers the extreme case of several marriages: three or four, or even "dare I say, seven," reminding the reader of Jesus' response to the question of the Sadducees that in heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage: Jesus in saying this showed no sign of condemning the woman for the "shame of their great number [i.e. her marriages]". Nor will Augustine condemn any number of marriages whatsoever, but simply state to a widow of one husband or more than one, "you will be more blessed if you shall have so continued." 15

There are those casuists (surely not Juliana herself!) who would ask who is more perfect, the widow who had but one husband, having lived with him for a long time, had sons with him, and after his death made profession of continence; or "she who as a young woman having lost two husbands within two years, having no children left alive to console her, hath vowed to God continence, and in it hath grown old with most enduring sanctity."[16] Augustine asks for argument from those who would weigh the merits of widows by the number of their husbands and not by the strength of their continence. Reducing their position to absurdity, he suggest three criteria -- one or more husbands,

14 Ibid., 13. Cf. II Cor. 11:2, where Paul says to the universal Church: "I joined you unto one husband a chaste virgin to present unto Christ." Augustine has much amusement in drawing out the absurdities of calling the consecrated virgin the "bride of Christ", asking would that mean the consecrated widow had Christ as her second husband, and if a married woman, with her husband's consent, were to vow continence to Christ, would this make Christ an adulterer?

15 Ibid., 15. Augustine praises his mother twice for being the widow of just one husband: "Fuerat enim unius viri uxor..." Conf. IX, ix, 22. This the praise of 1 Tim. 5:9. "Sit ergo in pace cum viro, ante quem nulli et post quem nulli nupta est..." Conf. IX, xiii, 37.
length of widowhood, piety of life -- for the casuist to concatenate, weigh and measure. "Who can doubt that in this contest the palm must be given to the greater and more glowing piety?" [17]

Of note in Augustine's exhortations are his admonitions against the Pelagian concentration on free will, a tendency he would correct even in "certain of our brethren most friendly and dear to us". Juliana would obviously know to whom Augustine referred. He expresses the hope that this letter "by the worthy deed of your excellence will soon come into the hands of such" and on this account he thought he should say something about these matters pertaining to divine grace to answer his semi-Pelagian brethren. [22] The rest reads as a sermon encouraging fidelity, perseverance, holiness of life, reflecting on these times as the "last days", not as expecting the apocalypse imminently, but that since the coming of Christ there are no divisions in history to be discerned from sacred Scripture. [16] There are also exhortations which address particular matters which must have come to Augustine's attention: he cautions them to guard their character and reputation, and to encourage others to join them in their continence together. To the complaint "How shall the human race subsist if all had been continent?" he answers realistically that there will only be few who follow the invitation. But considered in principle, "If all have heard and all have received, we ought to understand that this very thing was predestined, that married goods already suffice in the number of those members which so many have passed out of this life." "As though it were for any other reason that this world is delayed, save that the predestined number of the Saints be fulfilled, and were this the sooner fulfilled, assuredly the end of the world would not be put off." [28]

**B. Understanding The Argument Of De Bono Viduatatis**

To set Augustine's teaching on widowhood in its context, it is required that we recreate briefly family life in early fifth century North Africa, analyze how Augustine accommodates his Christian views on marriage to his time, then draw from these considerations what might be said of the "good" of widowhood.

**i. Marriage in North Africa (400 D) as a Roman Institution**

The origins of Rome as recounted by Hegel did not augur well for loving family relations.

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16 Marcus [20-1] remarks on this fundamental theme of Augustine's reflection on history: "...since the coming of Christ, until the end of the world, all history is homogenous...it cannot be mapped out in terms of a pattern drawn from sacred history...it can no longer contain decisive turning-points endowed with a significance in sacred history. Every moment may have its unique and mysterious significance in the ultimate divine tableau of men's doings and sufferings; but it is a significance to which God's revelation does not supply the clues."
The founders of Rome...— Romulus and Remus -- are, according to the tradition, themselves freebooters [plunderers] represented as from their earliest days thrust out from the family, and as having grown up in a state of isolation from family affection. In like manner the first Romans are said to have got their wives, not by free courtship and reciprocal inclination, but by force. This commencement of Roman life in savage rudeness excluding the sensibilities of natural morality, brings with it one characteristic element -- harshness in respect to the family relation.\(^{17}\)

The Christian religion in its original revelation seemed to repudiate the family: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." \(^{18}\) [Luke 14:26] In Augustine's time, the Christian religion did not materially affect, much less inform, family life. Monnica's life, both before her marriage, and as wife to Patricius and mother to his children, manifests the thoroughly Roman character of her upbringing in her own family and her married life. Augustine writes of these matters simply and openly, in general without critical comment. Monnica grew up in a "believing household", "a good limb of your church" \(^{19}\) [Conf. ix, 17], therefore Catholic although she had Donatist relatives. She was under the control and tutelage of an old maidservant "vehement with a holy severity in administering correction," \(^{20}\) [Conf. ix, 8, 7] where she was brought up in modesty and sobriety, "made obedient to her parents by you, rather than by them to you," suggesting a willfulness not tempered in her childhood, although it would be in marriage. She and her sisters were being prepared by the aged slave woman to be good wives. So except when they ate their frugal meals they were not allowed to drink even water, "however great their thirst" a discipline to assure that when they grew up they would not be overcome by a love for stronger drink. \(^{21}\) Hegel notes that family relations among the Romans was not the free relation of love and feeling, as with the Greeks, but this was usurped "by the principle of severity, dependence, and subordination." \(^{22}\) [Phil. Of Hist. 297]

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\(^{18}\) J.A. Doull puts the matter more precisely and universally in "The Christian Origins of Contemporary Institutions" Dionysius VI (1982), 111: "The Christian religion was originally polemical towards worldly institutions: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:26)

\(^{19}\) Henry Chadwick in the introduction to his translation of Confessions, Oxford, 1991, remarks in a note: "Her name, spelt by Augustine Monnica, is probably Berber, and perhaps both parents were ethnically Berber. Their culture was Latin. Monnica had near relatives who were Donatists."

\(^{20}\) Kim Power, Veiled Desire: Augustine's Writing on Women, London, 1995, suggests this could simply be the Augustinian theme of attributing all things to God. The old maidservant had more influence than her mother in such matters which Power adds is "quite consistent with the data on the mother's role in antiquity." 74-5.

\(^{21}\) Conf. ix, 8, 17. Roman society was especially harsh in its judgment of women with the taste for wine, regarding that as a sure sign of adultery. O'Donnell remarks: "Thus they greeted male relatives with a kiss, to facilitate olfactory detection." Commentary, 9.8.18.
When she was old enough -- the legal age for Roman marriage was twelve years\(^\text{22}\) -- "she was given to a man and served him as her lord".\[^\text{[Conf. ix, 9, 19]}\] Patricius was her dominus, exceptional for both his kindness and for his quick temper, and she knew how to deal with this potentially explosive husband. "She bore with his infidelities and never had any quarrel with her husband on this account." \[^\text{[Ibid.]}\] Monnica was part of his property, in manum conventio, and she accepted that she was his servant.\(^\text{23}\) Augustine recounts with admiration this advice his mother gave to other abused women in Thagaste:

Indeed many wives married to gentler husbands bore the marks of blows and suffered disfigurement to their faces. In conversation together they used to complain about their husband's behaviour. Monnica, speaking as if in jest but offering serious advice, used to blame their tongues. She would say that since the day when they heard the so-called matrimonial contract read out to them, they should reckon them to be legally binding documents by which they had become servants. She thought they should remember their condition and not proudly withstand their masters. \[^\text{[Ibid.]}\]

The marriage contract to which Monnica refers are the tabulae matrimoniales, written contracts containing a statement of the contents of the dowry and what would happen to the dowry at the end of the marriage, as well as general statements about the duties and obligations entered into. It was usual, as in this passage, that the marriage contract was read aloud in the presence of the wedding guests, who then took turns attaching their seals to it. There is no evidence of a Christian marriage rite in North Africa in the early fifth century, no evidence that Christians either married in their churches or were accorded other Christian rituals such as veiling, blessing or other liturgical ceremonies, practices that were becoming common in other parts of the West in the late fourth century.\(^\text{24}\) In his sermons, Augustine makes frequent reference to these tabulae, most often to exhort his hearers to honour those contracts, observing that if married couples engage in sexual intercourse beyond what is necessary for offspring (proles), they violate their own marriage contracts.\(^\text{25}\) Indeed, the marriage contract did specify such a purpose -- "It is found in most legal definitions of Roman marriage\(^\text{26}\) though not as though to exclude sexual intercourse as simply a matter of conjugal right.

\^\text{22}\) Power, 75, notes "...in the fourth century twelve was considered too young to marry" and that Monnica was about twenty-three years old when Augustine was born. We don't know whether he was her first child. He had a brother, Navigius, and an unnamed sister, who as a consecrated widow was abbess of a convent.

\^\text{23}\) Patricia Clark, "Women, Slaves, and the Hierarchies of Domestic Violence", in Women & Slaves in Greco-Roman Culture, ed. Sheila Murnagh and Sandra R. Joshe, London, 1998, remarks: "This is the first example in Augustine's account ... of the language of slavery used to describe the relationship between husband and wife. In effect, Patricius' mode of domestic control was based, like slavery, on the implicit threat of violence: anger was his weapon, and he achieved behavior compliance...simply by the threat of his explosive temper and propensity for rage...Monnica for her part employs the techniques of patience, subservience, and placation..."

\^\text{24}\) David G. Hunter, "The Practice and Theory of Marriage in Roman North Africa (200-400 C.E.)", [http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/burns/chroma/marriage/huntermar.html].

\^\text{25}\) Ibid.

\^\text{26}\) Ibid.
Augustine also appeals to the *tabulae* to justify the subordination of the wife to the husband. "She regards the marriage contract as the deed of her purchase."

Thus, Augustine accepts the principles of the Roman family, urging women to accept that a good wife has to regard her husband as her master (*dominus*), and she as his handmaid (*ancilla*). Roman family life was based not on understanding and love but on domination, fear and violence. This must be borne in mind when one appraises Augustine's teaching on marriage and continence.

### ii. Augustine's Christian accommodations to Roman marriage

Émile Schmitt, in his thorough treatment of marriage in Augustine's thought, notes that Augustine regularly considers baptism and the eucharist sacraments of the Church. He sometimes adds "unction", that is, confirmation, which could be thought a completion of baptism, and also recognizes as sacramental rites, the "laying on of hands" in the rite of penitence, and "orders" for those who dispense "the word and the sacrament". Nor does Augustine leave out the rite of "unction for the sick". "When it comes to marriage, which interests us especially here, one searches in vain for some mention in the Augustinian enumeration of Christian sacramental rites." This fact is even more surprising because Augustine recognizes in every marriage, and especially in that of Christians, the quality he calls a "*sacramentum*", something Schmitt finds "absolutely exceptional, ..." "How to explain this absence of marriage in the category of Christian rites?" Schmitt asks.

The reason for the absence of marriage as a "sacramental rite" is explained probably from the perspective in which Augustine sees marriage: the conjugal union is not so much the contract itself, the marriage "in becoming", but the conjugal state, the marriage "in reality", not the ritual ratification but the common life which results. Marriage becomes a living reality in the bond which unites those conjoined, and it is this reality which Augustine calls a *sacramentum*.

Augustine acknowledges three "goods" of marriage: offspring (*proles*), fidelity (*fides*), and the "sacramental bond", and uses Genesis 2:24, "two in one flesh", to illuminate the third good, the *sacramentum*, not the second good, *fides*, as might be expected. The "essence" of marriage was principally this spiritualized, mystical bond. Hence, nothing physical could break a marriage, neither a wife's sterility [*De bono conj. 3.3, 7.7; De Gen. Ad Lit., 9.7; De nuptiis et concupiscentia, 1.10.11*] nor chronic

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27 Hegel comments: "Marriage, in its strict and formal shape, bore quite the aspect of a mere contract; the wife was part of the husband's property (*in manum conventio*), and the marriage ceremony was based on a *coemtio*, in a form such as might have been adopted on the occasion of any other purchase. The husband acquired a power over his wife, such as he had over his daughter; nor less over her property; so that everything which she gained she gained for her husband." *Philos. of Hist.*, 297.


30 *Ibid.*, 222. The word *sacramentum* is interesting. It is a legal term for a binding agreement, an oath, even a sacred bond, or a sacred mystery. Augustine uses it here as a solemn bond or, better, a convenant, the word I use here, acknowledging with gratitude Rev. Jane V. Doull who suggested it to me.
illness [De conjugiis adulterinis, 2.13.13] nor adultery [De nupt. et conc. 1.10.11, 17.19; De conj. adult. 2.4.4] This latter ‘cause’, even though apparently sanctioned in Matt. 5:32 and 19.9, linked marriage too heavily to sexual conduct. And if the couple separated, permitted on the grounds of infidelity, they were still married, hence no second marriage was possible. Schmitt finds fifteen passages where these "three goods" occur, and notes that 'sacramentum' is ordinarily given as the third of this triad. It is spoken of as a 'bond' [vinculum]\(^{31}\), an 'alliance' or 'compact' [foedus], once as a 'conjoint compact' [conciontionis foedus]\(^{32}\), once negatively as 'the impiety of separation' [impietas separationis]\(^{33}\) Marriage creates between the spouses a permanent and irreversible relation. It alone of the three goods is the one indissoluble good. Since Augustine accepts neither sterility nor infidelity as grounds for divorce\(^ {34}\), of the "three goods" it stands alone as absolutely necessary and is therefore the very substance of marriage. It is a bond which is broken only at the death of one of the spouses.\(^ {35}\)

This bond is not primarily nor necessarily a sexual one. Augustine would in fact exhort Christian married couples to continence. If among the Old Testament prophets, procreation, and hence sexual intercourse was a duty, "for the purpose of begetting and preserving a people for God, amongst whom the prophesy of Christ's coming must needs have had precedence over everything", now there is no longer the same necessity. Thus, Augustine concludes: "... we must acknowledge that the scripture which says there is 'a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing' is to be distributed in its clauses to the periods before Christ and since. The former was the time to embrace, the latter to refrain from embracing."\(^ {36}\) These three "goods" then exhibit an evolution through the 'ages', especially from the Age of the Patriarchs to this present age, the senectus mundi, and we can look forward to further modification in the significance and importance of these three goods at the parousia.

\(^{31}\) In De nupt. et conc., I, 11(13), "vinculum foederis"; in De bono conj., 7(6), "foedus nuptiale"; in De conj. adult. II, 5(6), "vinculo foederis conjugalis"

\(^{32}\) Contra Jul. III, 25 (57).

\(^{33}\) Ibid. III, 16 (30), in accordance with the Scriptural admonition, "What God has joined together let no man put asunder."

\(^{34}\) There is a certain evolution of his views on the subject of divorce. In De bono conj., 7 (A.D. 401), he would not grant that a man who has sent away an adulterous wife could himself marry again. But in de fide et operibus, 35 (A.D. 412-413), he recognizes a certain ambiguity in the Scriptural texts and writes: "As the Word of God does not say clearly that he who has sent away his wife lawfully because of adultery becomes himself an adulterer in taking to himself another, it would seem to me that a fault in this matter would not be grave." Augustine held subsequently, based on the premise that the law must be equal for husband and wife, what Kari Elizabeth Børresen says is his "definitive doctrine" that the marriage bond demands that the couple live together, except in the case of adultery, when separation but not remarriage is acceptable, Augustine's position in De conjugiis adulterinis (A.D. 419). Cf. her Subordination and Equivalence: the Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, Washington, D.C., 1981, 98-100.

\(^{35}\) Augustine is clearer about this than his contemporaries, allowing as we have seen, the survivor to remarry

\(^{36}\) De nupt. et conc. 14 (13), translation at http://www.ccel.org, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series I, Vol. 5. This accords with St. Paul's instruction, "Let them that have wives be as though they had none", which St. Augustine explains thus: For they who have wives in such a way as to care for the things of the Lord, how they may please the Lord, without having any care for the things of the world in order to please their wives, are, in fact, just as if they had no wives. And this is effected with greater ease when the wives too are of such a disposition..." Ibid.15 (13).
The first good of marriage, offspring (*proles*), was most important in Paradise and in the age of the Patriarchs, the former to complete the "blessing pronounced in the words, 'Increase and multiply' [until] the number of predestined saints was made up." [*De civ. Dei*, xiv, 10]. This first good in the age of the Patriarchs became so important that it modified the other two goods. Faithfulness (*fides*) and the covenant between spouses (*sacramentum*) would suggest that a man have but one wife. Yet to prepare for the coming of Christ and fulfill the promise made to Abraham that through his descendants a people would arise from whom the Saviour would appear, the patriarchs accepted procreation as their divine duty, even accepting multiple wives and the servants of their spouses. More purely than in this sixth age, the Christian era, the holy patriarchs sought through sexual intercourse as a means this "good" of marriage. Moreover, what is not permitted in Christian times in the case of sterility was without blame then: "Clearly with the good will of the wife to take another woman, that from her may be born sons common to both, by the sexual intercourse and seed of the one, but by the right and power of the other was lawful among the ancient fathers .. To have intercourse with females in right of marriage was to holy men at that time a matter of duty, not of lust." [*De bono conj.*, 17]

In the Christian period the requirement to "increase and multiply' is itself modified. Since Christ has come, there is no longer the need to preserve and expand the house of David. "The social institution which serves as the sign of the invisible City of the Saints on earth is no longer established and maintained by the generation of an ethnic group." Christians no longer have the obligation to bring forth children in the flesh, but to "increase and multiply" spiritual children in the conversion and baptism of those outside the fold, from every nation and people. Polygamy therefore gives way to monogamy and there is no barrier to marriage for the elderly or sterile. Sexual intercourse is virtuous within marriage only for the sake of begetting children, though permitted as a conjugal right, the right each has to the body of the other. Indeed, in these times "the very desire of sons is carnal, as in those [the holy men of old] it was spiritual..." [*De bono conj.*, 19]
But its *raison d'être* has been superceded. As a consequence, continence within marriage becomes the ideal, "seeing it to be now 'a time' as it is written 'not of embracing, but of abstaining from embracing' [Eccles.3:5]." [ *De bono conj.* , 15]

In a continent Christian marriage, the second "good", *fides*, is strengthened since husband and wife by mutual agreement, she having power over his body as he has over hers, purge themselves by subordinating their legitimate rights to the body of the other to a transcendent good. This new determination ought to strengthen them against being driven by lust to seek illicitly in extra-marital affairs what they could have legitimately within marriage. But if continence in marriage in Christian times is the ideal, one might well ask, "Why marry?", since continence outside marriage, the continence of the virgin or the widow, is an even greater good. There remains the third "good" of marriage to consider.

This third "good", *sacramentum*, is also strengthened in the continent Christian marriage:

> God forbid that the nuptial bond should be regarded as broken between those who have by mutual consent agreed to observe a perpetual abstinence from the use of carnal concupiscence. Nay, it will be only a firmer one, whereby they have exchanged pledges together, which will have to be kept by an especial endearment and concord, not by the voluptuous links of bodies, but by the voluntary affections of souls. *De nupt. et conc.*, 12 (xi)

If now it is asked of what value is marriage, continent marriage where children in the flesh cannot be anticipated and spiritual children, those regenerated in baptism, can be born too of virgins and widows, it is this sacramentum itself which gives to marriage its *raison d'être* in Christian times. This convenant between one man and one wife which cannot be broken is at the same time a sign or type of an even greater bond, that between Christ and his Church: "As therefore the sacramentum of marriage with several of that time signified the multitude that should be hereafter made subject unto God in all nations of the earth, so the sacramentum of marriage with one of our times signifies the unity of us all made subject to God, which shall be hereafter in one Heavenly City." Indissolubility is therefore essential to the marriage of Christians, and monogamy is its hallmark. "Forsooth in the marriage of one woman the sanctity of the sacramentum is of more avail than the fruitfulness of the womb." [ *De bono conj.*, 21. ]

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41 Augustine is emphatic that continence within marriage must be by the consent of both. "...although perpetual continence be pleasing to one of them, he may not save with the consent of the other." *De bono conj.*, 6. There is the now infamous case of Ecdicia, to whom Augustine wrote on the occasion of her having taken a vow of continence and her husband's subsequent adultery. He chided her for forcing continence on her husband against his will. The 'infamy' is Augustine's, at least in the mind of Kim Power [*Veiled Desire: Augustine on Women*, New York, 1996, 113], who sees in this criticism of Ecdicia a veiled concern about the growing power of women ascetics. "empowering them with virile status and the capacity for authority..."

42 *De bono conj.* 21. The sacramentum in that earlier age had a different signification: "...the many wives of the old Fathers signified our future Churches out of all nations made subject unto one husband, Christ."
Marriage is a temporal institution: it will end at the death of one of the spouses. But this third "good" gives to it its eternal dimension. Procreation in the flesh, the "first good", gave way to the strengthened fides of the continent marriage, the "second good", for where procreation in the flesh was primary, the faithfulness of one man to one wife was not sustained. Thus procreation in the flesh and fides are in a certain opposition. Only in the continent marriage, where procreation in the flesh gives way to the procreation of spiritual children in baptism, can the two goods be sustained. It is the "third good", the unbreakable bond signifying Christ's relation to the Church, which draws these opposed goods into unity where they find their completion and perfection: Christian marriage is the joining of two members of the mystical body of Christ who are united to consecrate themselves to the extension of that body. This unity in the body of Christ is an eternal unity, which is not dissolved with the death of the spouse. Its fullest expression is in the continent marriage.

Still, one must not romanticize Augustinian marriage. Husband and wife were not friends, although in an ideal marriage there would have been perfect mutual companionship, as in the relation of Adam and Eve before the Fall. Men and women were not equal, not simply sociologically but in principle. "If God had wanted Adam to have a partner in scintillating conversation he would have created another man; the fact that God created a woman" he writes, "showed that he had in mind the survival of the human race." Kim Power observes that Augustine's concept of marriage reduces to that of a contract rather than a relationship. "This perception reduces Augustine's presentation of the sexual relationship to an economic one. Intercourse is a mutual debt owed by spouses, preferably to be called due only for the procreation of children, or to be written off altogether, but tolerated as pardonable sin within marriage if it protects the partners from greater sin such as adultery."

Augustine knows that "What food is unto the conservation of the man, sexual intercourse is unto the conservation of the race," [De bono conj., 18] and therefore anticipates the murmur of some: "What, say they, if all men should abstain from all sexual intercourse, whence will the human race exist?" With impeccable logic he answers: "Would that all would this, only in 'charity out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned;' much more speedily would the City of God be filled and the end of the world hastened." [De bono conj. 10]

He sees nothing left to do in this world, and would be done with it.

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43 From his Literal Commentary on Genesis, quoted by Henry Chadwick in the Introduction to his translation of Confessions, xviii-xix.
44 Power, 125.
C. Continence In The Subsequent History

The new ascetic forms of worldly and sexual renunciation, both eremitic and monastic, which arose in Egypt in the early fourth century spread rapidly outside Egypt. St Athanasius introduced both hermits and cenobites to Rome and Italy (circa A.D.339). The movement was especially welcomed by women, among whom were certain aristocratic, wealthy and powerful women, who established monasteries and churches in independence of the male clergy. Its attraction to women is obvious when one considers the plight of women in Roman families.

Consider, for example, Augustine's everyday acquaintance with and experience of marital relations between men and women. Simply from Confessions we know these details: his father was unfaithful to his mother, something that did not seem of much concern to Monnica except in so far as it was harmful to his soul. Augustine saw the bruises and marks on women around him beaten by their husbands. His mother was wiser than most of her female friends, knowing how to escape Patricius' violent temper. She was obedient, tolerant of his drunkenness and rage, knowing that he would brook no opposition. Augustine himself lived with the mother of his son in a certain fidelity for at least twelve years, then allowed her to be dismissed, only to take up with another concubine, and this while he was betrothed to a young maiden. These were the ordinary mores of his North African relatives and neighbours. None of this was hidden from him nor does he hide it from the reader because it was obviously commonplace. Augustine's family was not poor, he was not underprivileged: this was rather the ordinary experience of the harsh treatment of women in Roman family life.

Thus, pious women flocked to nunneries or undertook the independent life of the anchorite. So popular were these movements that bishops sought to control their independence and numbers, some bishops restricting the numbers of women who could be consecrated virgins. It was therefore by their ascetical practices that consecrated virgins and other celibate women of the early church shook off the bonds which would have enslaved them in Roman marriages. Current feminist literature recognizes the part that such women played in what might be called "liberation movements". What is perhaps harder to grant is the role that the Church played in this liberation, a complex role not easily grasped at a glance. At first, it reined them in, veiling the virgins to put them under some sort of control. The symbolic sense of 'veiling' was female submission to sacerdotal authority. But this authority was in general much kinder and freer than the authority of the paterfamilias. It is important to note that these independent women who emerge in the fourth century are widows and virgins, 'continent women' in Augustine's terminology, who achieve their independence precisely through their continence.

David Hunter, "Clerical Celibacy and the Veiling of Virgins", in The Limits of Ancient Christianity, ed. William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vesey, Ann Arbor, 1999, 143: "At the Spanish Council of Saragossa in 380, for example, the assembled bishops declared that no virgin should be veiled until she had reached the age of forty."
And who can deny the subsequent power of monasteries in the middle ages, for men and women? Continence, one of the vows of religion, was assuredly part of a liberation movement from Roman culture, as were the other vows of religion.

As noted earlier [*infra*, n.18], the Christian religion was at first 'polemical toward worldly institutions'. Such institutions as the Roman family and Rome itself 'were not built in a day', nor were they be easily replaced. At first, Christians read their Scriptures rather literally. If the Scripture said, "Go sell what thou hast and come follow me," some took that to heart (Anthony the monk, for example), and provision or at least allowance was made, one way and another, for them to obey the injunction to 'poverty'; their religion after all bade them do it. Similarly with the other polemical quotations pertaining to human institutions: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children...", the injunction (among others) to 'chastity'; "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's", the injunction to 'obedience'. These three vows of religion define monastic life in the Middle Ages. Through them men and women moved beyond the Roman state, civil society and family, to a Christian freedom at the same time unfree, a freedom from worldly institutions but not a self-determined freedom within appropriately Christian institutions.

The Christian religion by its very doctrines cannot tolerate a 'world' outside itself not reconciled to it. Augustine would draw all into the celibate monastery, hastening the end of the world. But Christ came to redeem the world, not to destroy it. The secular institutions of family, civil society and state, from which monks had fled -- though of course these interests crept back into the monastery in corrupt forms -- more properly would be redeemed in coming forth from the Christian principle itself, the principle of freedom, of self-determination. "One inference," writes Hegel "is that Marriage is no longer deemed less holy than Celibacy. Luther took a wife to show that he respected marriage, defying the calumnies to which he exposed himself by such a step. It was his duty to do so, as it was also to eat meat on Fridays; to prove that such things are lawful and right, in opposition to the imagined superiority of abstinence. ...The Family introduces man to community to the relation of interdependence in society; and this union is a moral one"46 And so for the other vows of religion: it was thought more commendable, in place of the vow of poverty, for men by their activity, intelligence and industry to make themselves properly independent. The vow of obedience, blind obedience, was replaced by obedience to the laws of the state, and in general, the principles of moral conduct were derived now from the rational element in will and action, rather than externally from the prescriptions of confessors and bishops. "Reason and the Divine commands are now synonymous." Thus, the three vows of religion are done away with, and replaced by the properly Christian institutions of Family, Civil Society and State, as the principle of Christian freedom dictates.

46 *Philos. of Right*, 440.
Conclusion

How, in these times, is the widow's relation to her spouse to be understood? The Reformation announced that marriage was not to be regarded as less holy than celibacy, and in subsequent centuries the three vows of religion have been thoroughly supplanted by Christian institutions of family, civil society and state. How would the words of Paul, that she could contemplate the things of the Lord more readily as a widow than as married apply to her. Manifestly not as delivering her from the servitude of the classical Roman marriage. But if in her marriage she was called to such service of the Lord, how is she to understand this calling in her widowhood?

The historic Christ embodied in his person a full and final revelation of the divine nature, and apart from him the Father is unknown and unknowable. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." [John 14:6] But it was not enough that Jesus should walk this earth, preach to the masses, be with his disciples instructing them, suffer death and rise again. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." [John 16:7] But the Comforter who will come only after the death and resurrection of Christ is the Spirit of truth, not creating a new truth, "for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak." This Spirit who does not speak of himself is the gift of insight into the truths revealed in the historic Christ, revealing principally the substance of the Father which is in the Son..

Analogously, and for her, the Christian widow is given the opportunity and the calling to contemplate what it was she lived with her husband, in the Christian family, and what it might be in eternity. If her thoughts turn nostalgically to times past, the Spirit who comes to her only at the cost of the loss of those times, the diremption of marriage and family, bears to her the gift of insight into the truths revealed historically in her husband and family. In short, she is not called to forget the past in order to think of the things of God, but to embrace it for the great truths respecting the things of God revealed in her experience of Christian marriage and family.

From Augustine she should have learned that marriage which terminated at the death of her spouse and is done away with entirely in Heaven has as its eternal significance the relation of Christ to the Church. The unshakeable bond or covenant, the *sacramentum*, is temporal, but the truth of that relation - Christ eternally bonded to them, they to each other and to the whole body of Christ - is eternal. It is precisely through her relation to her husband, that eternal relation which perhaps she grasped only temporally while married to him, that she can come to know the truth of that relation. Nothing of the former relation is lost except its temporality; and that is not lost, but rather known in its truth.

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47 "To the Apostles, Christ as living was not that to which he was to them subsequently as the Spirit of the Church, in which he became to them for the first time an object for their truly spiritual consciousness." Hegel, *Philos. of Hist.*, 337.
THE CONCEPT OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN BOOK I OF AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

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Introduction:
The Contemporary Relevance of an Augustinian Theory of Child Development

1 Book I of Augustine's Confessions\(^{(1)}\) contains a remarkable account of child development. The maturation from infancy to later childhood is presented in its relation to the Trinitarian spiritual principle which animates human life, which is both the principle of its creation and the end which it seeks. Augustine's account is thus vibrant and exacting because it has hold of the objective principle of human subjectivity, because it knows the spiritual logic of the development of human reason and will.

2 It is this comprehensive standpoint which allows Augustine to speak vividly to those in our own time, which accounts for his attractiveness to those who profess either modernity or post-modernity, and which in its full development allows us to profess both.\(^{(2)}\) Augustine's portrait of child development does not fall into the trap of confining the contours of the human spirit to the patterns of his own specific social world. Were this the case he might be thought a guide to the cultural practices of North Africa under Roman dominion in the fourth century A.D. As such he might offer a sociology of child development but not a philosophy, and the significance of his account would be merely historical.

3 It is a genuine difficulty of our time to find in speculative thought a freedom which cannot be reduced to such social-psychological parameters. The contemporary reader of the Confessions, then, faces a difficult confrontation with a text which advances an infinite spiritual logic unfettered by contingent cultural structures which is by its own account the determinate principle by which we would understand the truth of all social engagement. Where the determinate expression of practical life extends no further than the production and acquisition of goods and the creativity of an unbounded aesthetic will, fueled by the moralism which either upholds or descries these expressions, one will find philosophical thought foreign and estranged from itself.

4 Paradoxically it is only if we adhere to our own world view as some finite absolute, beyond the purported oppression embedded in the western tradition that we have ground to reject Augustinian principles. But such thought merely replaces one absolute for another. Further the absolute thus constricted within the horizon of the finite is the political order.\(^{(3)}\) And, absent any common ethical good to make determinate its direction,
the political order loses its distinction from economic life. Contemporary theory inadequately self-conscious of its conceptual replication of such an emaciated institutional ethic will reduce the individual to a consumer whose freedom is mere choice among competing products or will rail vainly against the inhumanity of such a consumptive ethic while remaining singularly unable to produce a viable alternative beyond the politics of protest.

5 Both sides of this contemporary dogmatism are confined within a radically finite absolute, unable in principle to advance a concrete institutional life which would adequately unite human equality and freedom. As such they are condemned to mimic the economic ebb and flow they variously embrace or deny.

6 We do not find in Augustine's thought an account of institutional life which can invigorate and comprehend contemporary divisions: there is in his thought a decidedly polemical attitude to political life. Our contemporary reflection, however, will find in Augustinian psychology a conception of the individual which holds together the universal and particular dimensions of reason and will. From the standpoint of human subjectivity and its objective divine principle Augustine provides a rigorous psychology of freedom; a freedom whose absolute end implicitly contains that which is beyond all social construct and which is its measure.

7 To learn from Augustine, then, we must admit into our various histories of western subjectivity that which does not fall into the divisions of ancient and modern or modern and post-modern. The contemporary interest in Augustine's thought contains just this promise. In this spirit the present argument treats of Book I according to the following structure:

1. **Chapters i-v** Intimations of Trinity
2. **Chapters vi-vii** The Natural Relation to God and its Limit
3. **Chapters viii-xx** Education and the Division of Reason and Nature
   (i) **viii-xv** Language and the Divided Will
   (ii) **xvi-xx** Christianity and the Principle of Child Development

(1) Intimations of the Trinity

8 There is in the *Confessions* the difficulty that the logic which informs the whole work is not given explicit statement until the final four books. However, this logic is given in condensed and introductory form in Book I, **Chapters i-v** here considered in brief. The *Confessions* begins in prayerful reflection upon Scripture, in a direct address to the creator by the creature. It is a confession not only of the difference of the creature
from the creator, of human mortality and sinfulness, but also of the unity between God and man, a confession of praise for the spiritual order in which man finds himself and in which the division between God and man belongs to and is comprehended by the divine providence. This logic of division and return structures the Confessions as a whole. Augustine states: "You are great, Lord, and highly to be praised: great is your power and your wisdom is immeasurable. Man, a little piece of your creation, desires to praise you, a human 'bearing his mortality with him', carrying with him the witness of his sin and the witness that you 'resist the proud'"(I,i,1).

9 Our difference from God is defined in terms of our immersion in nature: as natural beings we die, as desirous of natural objects without reference to their place in the ethical order, we sin. But even in the immediacy of human nature (its mortality and sinfulness) there is implicit what is beyond the division between creator and creature. There is in man not only a falling away from the divine principle but at the same time a movement towards that principle: "You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you"(I,i). What from a finite standpoint is in the division of fall and return, from a divine standpoint is already reconciled and manifest in the Incarnation and in the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Through this objective order the subject is called to make explicit his own implicit unity with God in reflection on the image of the trinity present in human self-consciousness and freedom. In this calling, the Word spoken is both what stirs the individual and that toward which he is stirred. The inner desire to praise God, a desire which animates the human mind as image of the trinity, finds its objective historical completion in the Incarnation and the Church. This completion in its first form is faith, of which, Augustine, addressing God, states: "You breathed it into me by the humanity of your Son, by the ministry of your preacher"(I,i).

10 But how are we to come to a philosophical understanding of the content of this faith? Faith allows Augustine to call on God, to confess, but how is the content of this faith, the unity of God and man, possible.

11 This is the question at the heart of the first five chapters. In Chapters ii and iii, Augustine considers further the relation of creator to creature. From this standpoint God appears as the principle of all that exists and the creative power that brings all into existence. Augustine states: "Without you whatever exists would not exist." Further: "I would have no being unless you were in me. Or rather, I would have no being if I were not in you 'of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things'"(I,ii). God as creator is the principle of the being of all that exists. Thus at the level of being, natural and spiritual, there is unity with God, in some sense we are in God. But what is the nature of this unity?

12 Conceived as creator, God is the immutable, inviolable and unchanging source of all reality. In Chapter iii, Augustine raises questions of those accounts which would conceive the logos as corporeal or as simply immanent, and in which the divine transcendence is lost in the immediacy of pantheism. His remarks here foreshadow his sustained treatment of this question throughout the Confessions and especially in Book
VII. There he provides a vivid account of the limits of his own concept of God prior to his encounter with platonism. He states: "I conceived even you, life of my life, as a large being, permeating infinite space on every side, penetrating the entire mass of the world, and outside this extending in all directions for immense distances without end; so earth had you, heaven had you, everything had you, and in relation to you all was finite; but you not so"(VII,i).

13 For Augustine such a standpoint can render intelligible neither man's inner freedom (a freedom which involves sinfulness) nor the transcendence of nature by God and man. Again in Book VII he states: "I did not see that the mental power by which I formed these images does not occupy any space, though it could not form them unless it were some great thing"(VII,i). The first part of Chapter iv (Book I) asserts in condensed form the answer to 'pantheism' which Augustine finds in the platonic philosophy. The transcendence of God as the cause of nature must be upheld. The second part of the chapter goes beyond the division of transcendence and immanence. There is in this part the suggestion of Christ as redeemer: "You pay off debts though owing nothing to anyone, you cancel debts and incur no loss"(I,iv, 4). Chapter v, then, makes explicit that the unity between God and man revealed in Christ is not to be conceived in relation to corporeal substance but in terms of spiritual substance. The question is not of the relation of God to time and space but to human inwardness, here, specifically to the human will which itself transcends the corporeal, while nevertheless being embodied in it. It is not our natural distinction from God, our mortality, which is the focus but our spiritual division from God, our sinfulness. It is in human consciousness, not in the externality of the natural world that the true return to unity with God occurs. Who will grant me that you come into my heart and intoxicate it, so that I forget my evils and embrace my one and only good, yourself"(I,v,5)?

14 It is not simply in terms of God as the cause or logos of nature but as the salvation of man that the Confessions are ordered. Beyond the "pride of the platonists,"Augustine knows his dependence on the divine revelation: "In your mercies Lord God, tell me what you are to me. 'Say to my soul, I am your salvation.'"(I,v,5). What is required is that the divine word reveal itself to man as his salvation, so that man can embrace God with his entire will. The possibility of this conversion rests on the unity of all division in God's Trinitarian nature. It is this Trinitarian concept which underlies Augustine's conception of child development.

2) Chapters vi-vii - Nature as the Immediate Unity of God and Man (Infancy)

15 Man's relation to nature is immediate so far as he is not aware of nature as created and ordered by divine law. Thus, infants are born into a divine order to which they relate only in terms of their natural needs. They are nurtured without any awareness of the ultimate source of the natural world and fit into this order naturally: "You granted me not to wish for more than you were giving, and to my nurses the desire to give me what you gave them" (I,vi,7). Their awareness of the order is expressed in their natural instincts:
"For at that time I knew nothing more than how to suck and to be quieted by bodily delights, and to weep when I was physically uncomfortable" (I,vi,7).

16 However, this relation to the divine order is an inadequate union, because man does not freely and self-consciously know and will his relation to God. The absence of language has as its result an absence of memory as one cannot store oneself as an object to oneself in the "warehouse" unless image be stabilized into idea. Augustine states: "I do not know where I came from but the consolations of your mercies upheld me, as I have heard from the parents of my flesh, him from whom and her in whom you formed me in time. For I do not remember" (I,vi,7). But while the infant is immersed in an unconscious natural immediacy, this immediacy is itself mediated not only by its divine source but also in history by the institutional order of the family. Family life requires self-sacrifice and the discipline of one's natural urges. Whereas natural comfort has an implicit spiritual end, in the family humans are engaged in an explicitly spiritual activity.

17 The mention of smiling has a similar transitional structure. There is at once a natural satisfaction and a sense of that in man which is beyond nature. In this emergence out of an original natural immediacy there is a more than natural discomfort. There occurs in the child a divided rationality an inability to communicate that which he wishes to communicate: "Little by little I began to be aware where I was and wanted to manifest my wishes to those who could fulfill them as I could not" (I,vi,8).

18 So far as this division is at the level of reason, it expresses the distinction of the human infant from nature. However, so far as the child is not conscious of his own rationality, it is distinguished from the divine reason and self-consciousness. So while the emerging rationality of the infant cannot be satisfied in its merely natural relations, this rationality is not itself adequate to the divine principle which underlies it. As such, the development of human rationality in its finite and subjective dimension is temporal and historical its life-stages come to be and pass away. This transition occurs because nature, like human reason, is not an end-in-itself and is divided in relation to its principle which is its origin and final cause. There is then in the infant a division between his being, living, and knowing, by contrast with God in whose Trinitarian substance and its self-relation all such division is comprehended. This distinction between reason and nature as yet not fully explicit in the child's consciousness is nevertheless the basis of sin. As an infant, one does not know the divine order but nevertheless thrusts one's own will against this order. Augustine speaks of three infantile sins: (a) unmeasured crying: the infant cries even for things that would harm him; (b) tantrums: the infant attempts to force people to obey him; (c) jealousy: the infant is unable adequately to share what is given in the created order. The importance of this division between reason and nature does not come out in its full subjective significance until Book Eight where its reconciliation is the structure of Augustine's conversion.

(3) Chapters viii-xx - Education and the Division of Reason and Nature (Childhood)
In his emergence from a natural immersion and rational immaturity, it is necessary that the child move to an explicit distinction between his natural and rational desire. Such a division permits the child to make both his appetites and his ideas objects of his reflection and to will them freely. On Augustine's account, civic education has as its first role to discipline the individual in his natural immediacy and implicit rationality into an explicit opposition of reason and nature, an opposition which cannot be reconciled except the child be 'educated' to an awareness of the spiritual telos of his own inward self-consciousness. What is primary here is that through education in reading and writing, the child is moved beyond the natural society of the family into the universality of the civil realm. The first stage of this development involves the child in a division between his particular pleasures and the universality of social rules. These are the sins of 'early childhood' in which one's natural will is directly thrust against what appears an externally imposed reason. Sin here consists of adherence to the natural pleasure one finds in games in opposition to the rational education one receives. As the child matures, however, he is able more fully to appropriate a content adequate to his own universal spiritual principle but likewise the division within his will is deepened.

(i) viii-xv - Language and the Divided Will

Augustine's account of the education he received in his boyhood develops his conception of how it is that the child is liberated from his initial natural unity to a social unity beyond that present in his own natural family. This development makes it more explicit that there is in human spirituality a moment of opposition to nature which makes possible rational social unity, to be a member of society is to be educated into its customs and laws and is thus in principle beyond the givenness of nature. This development is made possible by the development of language implicit in the human mind. On Augustine's account, although the infant cannot speak, the power of speech is innate and becomes explicit as the child matures. The use of language introduces the child into a set of more universal relations beyond the immediacy of his own feelings. He can now reflect on his feelings and distinguish them from one another through the use of words. Also, he can treat feelings not simply as particular emotional states in which his consciousness is immersed but under the category of feeling. And he can make feeling an object for his consciousness, feelings can now be thought about and given direction by reason. Further, the child is freed, in part, from the inability to make the world correspond to his desires and the frustration this entails. Because he is still a boy, he is subject to his parents' authority and the satisfaction of his wants depends on whether or not they are approved by his parents. But, whereas in his infancy, his family could only become acquainted with what he expressed through the inadequate symbols he used, he can now make his meaning explicit to them, and his family can make their meanings explicit to him. Moreover, the child can communicate with people other than those in his family who had become acquainted with his infantile signs. He can talk to all those who speak his language and can become educated in the wisdom of his society. Thus he says: "[I] entered more deeply into the stormy society of human life"(I,viii,13).

On its own, however, grammatical skill and rhetorical eloquence, like all technique and art, are unable to reconcile the inner division of the child. Facility with
language is in itself ethically indeterminate and abstract. Language does not of its own accord comprehend the purpose for which it is used -- it may be used for plays or for prayers. As a result, emotions cannot be adequately ordered by language. Hence one is immersed in the pleasures of the finite world and sin is the result. What emerges in the absence of concrete ethical institutions is the following ethical division. On the one side, what remains is a "legalistic" discipline with no higher purpose than its own order, itself a kind of enjoyment, which creates the conditions for sins it must then punish: "the amusement of adults is called 'business.' But when boys play such games they are punished by adults..."(I.ix,17). Augustine is constantly beaten because the beatings are to little effect and he continues to sin; likewise his masters are unable to control their anger and envy. But the contradictions involved in Roman education and society drive the youthful Augustine to look beyond these contradictions to their reconciliation in God. He contends that although the Roman order was sinful, it served a spiritual purpose, that is, the disciplining of the natural will. He notes that often, for his own good, God did not grant his prayers. (17) On the other side, one is left with a merely aesthetic ethic. Caught in the abstract enchantment of imagination, one becomes immersed in a world of illusion, with the result that one is unconscious of the true condition of one's own soul. He states: "What is more pitiable than a wretch without pity for himself who weeps over the death of Dido dying for love of Aeneas, but not weeping over himself dying for his lack of love for you, my God, light of my heart, bread of the inner mouth of my soul, the power which begets life in mind and in the innermost recesses of my thinking"(I,xiii,20). But on what principle can the limitation of such education be judged?

(ii) xvi-xx Christianity and the Principle of Child Development

Chapters xvi to xx take up this question and examine the relation of ethical education to its underlying spiritual principle. From a merely finite perspective it is impossible adequately to conceptualize the principle which animates the spiritual development and ethical education of children -- inevitably the underlying principle will fall into internal oppositions. This is reflected in Augustine's portrayal of the Roman gods in Chapters xvi and xvii. In Roman religion the divine principle is divided, the multiplicity of Roman gods contrasting with the unity of the Christian God. Thus the harmony among the gods is contingent because subject to the whims of the particular gods. Further, this division in the divine will expresses itself in immorality: "Have I not read in you of Jupiter, at once both thunderer and adulterer"(I, xvi,25)? Although Jupiter is portrayed as a divine judge in that he "punishes the wicked", he is not sufficient to reconcile the rational will and the habits of the natural will because, in himself, he is not such an eternal unification. For Augustine, because it is not based in a sufficiently concrete spiritual principle, one adequate to the objective basis of human subjectivity, the Roman concept of God is merely the product of human imagination and is itself a form of drama or mythology. He states: "It would be truer to say that Homer indeed invented these fictions, but he attributed divine sanction to vicious acts, which had the result that immorality was no longer counted immorality and anyone who so acted would seem to follow the example not of abandoned men but of the gods in heaven"(1,xvi,25). Such divinities cannot in principle adequately correct human sin. The Roman concept of God reflects its human origin and, as the product of a divided will, is itself reduced to finitude.
23** Chapters xviii and xix** contrast the instability of the secular ethos with the ethical stability which emerges when one has as one's end a concrete spiritual principle in whose objectivity the division of reason and nature in the human will is reconciled. The divisions of Roman secular life result not only in individual instability, the product of the divided will, but also in the instability of Roman society. The formalism of an education which does not consider the rational spirituality that animates the human mind prevents the concrete unification of the divided will. Uninformed by a determinate ethical content, social laws and customs cannot make the will respond to its own universality, these laws will not comprehend and correct the division within man but rather will only serve to deepen it. The sins of 'later childhood' exhibit a deepening of sin as the child enters into the wider world. In *chapter xvii* we see the origins of these sins in the enthusiasm in which Augustine gives himself over to works of the imagination. But in the absence of a determinate ethical principle as the measure of imagination, what emerges is illusion, ultimately lying, stealing and cheating. Augustine states:

[I]n those endeavours I was the lowest of the low, shocking even the worldly set by the innumerable lies with which I deceived the slave who took me to school and my teachers and parents because of my love of games, my passion for frivolous spectacles, and my restless urge to imitate comic scenes. I also used to steal from my parents cellar and to pocket food from their table either to satisfy the demands of gluttony or to have something to give boys who, of course, loved playing games as much as I and who would sell me their playthings in return. Even in this game I was often overcome by the vain desire to win and was often guilty of cheating (I,xix,30).

Situated in society the child must mediate his pursuit of his particular pleasures through a relation to the social order. However, because that order wishes to correct his immersion in particular pleasures he must lie in order to achieve his ends. Here the child does not merely thrust his particular desires against rational rules but turns his reason against itself. The universality of reason has its objective expression in the reciprocity between individuals, a simple form of which is trust. When the child lies he both relies upon this trust and thwarts it. Likewise in stealing, the child claims possession of some object while denying the social ground of such possession, that is, the concept of property. Further, to play a game requires adherence to rules: to achieve victory through cheating both asserts and denies the rules at one and the same time, desiring victory to be recognized and usurping the rules under which such recognition is meaningful. This inwardness which rebels against objective principle has in itself a freedom which, caught in its own absolute wilfulness, cannot be reconciled with any social standard. Thus deepened, the sin of later childhood is hypocrisy in which the child refuses to consider his actions as having any universal dimension. Augustine states: "Any breach of rules I would not tolerate and, if I detected it, would fiercely denounce it, though it was exactly what I was doing to others"(I,xix,30). Augustine has thus acquired a degree of worldliness.

24 What is required is a determinate ethical principle such as is present in the Trinitarian conception of God which can command the indeterminacy of the free will. In
terms of this principle all human finitude is known to belong within the activity of the spiritual substance which underlies its true development. And this is a crucial point: the spiritual telos of child development is comprehensive even of sin: sin is not to be seen in mere opposition to God but as itself furthering His purposes. In the City of God, Augustine states: "God, as he is the supremely good creator of good natures, so is He of evil wills the most just Ruler; so that, while they make an evil use of good natures, He makes a good use of even evil wills. Accordingly, He caused the devil (good by God's creation, wicked by his own will) to be cast down from his high position and to become the mockery of His angels; that is, He caused his temptations to benefit those whom He wishes to injure by them. While God in His goodness created him good, He yet had already foreseen and arranged how he would make use of him when he became wicked" (XI,17). And further: "For God would never have created any, I do not say angel, but even man, whose future wickedness he foreknew, unless he had equally known to what uses in behalf of the good He could turn him, thus embellishing the course of the ages, as it were an exquisite poem set off with antitheses" (XI,18).

Chapter xx ends Book I with a recapitulation of its logic expressing in general terms the transition from immersion in nature to a rational reflection on one's relation to nature and to its rational source. Our unity with the divine in both natural and rational terms is the product of the divine activity, a creative gift. The material gifts for which Augustine praises God are: existence, life, feeling, an instinct for self-preservation, and an inner organic harmony. The rational gifts for which Augustine praises God are pleasure in the truth and discomfort at being wrong, command of words which in the end would allow him to communicate the truths of Scripture, and enjoyment of the company of friends. Each stage of the reception of the divine gifts, each stage of child development, in other words, must pass through a phase of immediacy which reflects the maturity of the child. While children have a relation to truth, it first occurs at the level of pleasure: they are more concerned with how the truth makes them feel than with truth itself. Further, although the command of words allows the child to communicate to others, unless disciplined in relation to an objective spiritual end, language can serve only finite purposes, which in abstraction from such a principle inevitably become absurd, violent or pornographic. Friendship indicates the possibility of a social order based on love and beyond the rhetoric of legal relations. It is important to see, however, that friendship can serve such a purpose only if related beyond itself to its own spiritual basis. The love of one's friends, like the love for one's spouse, must be subordinated to the love of God. It is a mark of the immediacy of such abstract unifications that they cannot reconcile the divided will and cannot correct sinfulness. Augustine states: "My sin consisted in this, that I sought pleasure, sublimity, and truth not in God but in his creatures, in myself and other created beings" (I,xx,31). From this immediacy the child's growing rationality incurs a diremption through which he can reflect on the opposed moments of the self and can then know their reconciliation in a spiritual whole which is the source and end of all that exists, lives and knows. He concludes Book I: "I thank you for your gifts. Keep them for me, for in this way you will keep me. The talents you have given will increase and be perfected, and I will be with you since it was your gift to me that I exist" (I,xx,31).
NOTES

1. Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, Tr. Henry Chadwick, (Oxford University Press, 1998). All references are to book, chapter, paragraph. I am grateful to Professor F. Doull for her numerous helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay.


3. There is from Hobbes to Hegel the thought that the state is a finite god.


6. That the mind is the image of the trinity is intimated in the desire to know God which obviously underlies chapters 1-5, somewhat less obviously in the mention of forgetting in chapter 5 which is of course relative to memory, and in the references throughout chapters 1-5 to love and sin which are acts of will. The logic of this sketch from the side of the human and the divine is more explicitly developed in Books XI and XII.

7. In chapter xviii, Augustine makes this point explicitly: "To be far from your face is to be in the darkness of passion. One does not go far from you or return to you by walking or by any movement through space"(I,xviii).

8. For an instructive account of the limits of the Roman family see Floy Doull's *A Contemporary Assessment of St. Augustine's On the Good of Widowhood* in this volume of *Animus*.

9. Starnes in his account neglects the distinction of spiritual and material gifts implied in this section (the first instance of this division in the *Confessions*) because at this point he stresses the harmony of the natural order.
10. As Starnes states: "The point will be lost to us unless we recognize that it was a commonplace of ancient popular wisdom that man is the only animal which laughs" (p.3) Starnes quotes Martianus Capella's *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (IV,398): "For just as it is a property of man to be capable of laughter, so it is a property of beings other than man not to be able to laugh."

11. Caught in a division of living and knowing, the individual's knowledge of his own infancy is thus historical and is gained only by watching other babies (Adeodatus, for example) and discussing his own infancy with others (I,vi),8.


13. Augustine knows in Book VIII the will itself divided between reason and nature, finding its reconciliation in the saving grace of Christ.

14. The division is itself spiritual because the product of a self-conscious subject.

15. It is a common dogma of the contemporary world that language is the *prison house of thought*, that the supposed universality of reason masks the actual differences of situated languages and language users. Cf. F.L. Jackson, "The Post-Philosophical Attack on Plato", *Animus* 5 (2000). Commensurate with this *linguistic turn* is the sense of culture as an expression of language and as the ethical source of the identity and self-esteem of the individual. What universality can be obtained is that of a common language game or the interpersonal embeddedness of custom. Augustine's account of Roman education brings to the fore the *ethical* instability of such a linguistic measure.

16. The culture which disciplines its students is hypocritical because it replaces the games which drew Augustine from his studies not with truth but with more games.

17. See Starnes, p.11 for a lucid discussion of the legitimacy of the correction of the natural will and of the Roman's understanding of this legitimacy and p. 28,n49 for references to Virgil's statement of this understanding. Also, see James Doull. "Augustinian Trinitarianism and Existential Theology", p. 127: "The separation of his natural individuality from this discipline is an essential stage in his subsequent Christian conversion." Also p.127n. 15.

18. Augustine states: "See the exact care with which the sons of men observe the conventions of letters and syllables received from those who so talked before them. Yet they neglect the eternal contracts of lasting salvation received from you"(I, xviii,29).

19. This becomes the basis of what is philosophically interesting in Augustine's account of the "theft of the pears" in BookII.

20. Augustine points to the parable of the prodigal son and its inherent principle of reconciliation. By contrast with the anger which Aeneas' journey causes Juno, the journey of the prodigal son, though sinful, falls within the divine providence. For a fuller

We have seen through the present argument that there is both an individual and an institutional component of child development. It is worth noting the distinction, for example, between Augustine's *institutio* and Hegel's *Bildung*. Whereas Augustinian education occurs as mediated by the *civitas dei*, at best a paradigm for the political order, Hegelian education has as its objective telos *Sittlichkeit* as articulated through the modern state and as thus comprehensive of the totality of finite interest is in a deeper relation to absolute spirit. For a discussion of the significance and limits of Augustine's *civitas dei* cf. James Doull, "The Christian Origin of Contemporary Institutions Part Two: The History of Christian Institutions", *Dionysius* 8 (1984) 53-103. For an interesting response to Doull's argument see Robert Crouse, "The Augustinian Philosophy and Christian Institutions", forthcoming in *Philosophy and Freedom: The Legacy of James Doull*, eds. D. Peddle and N. Robertson, (University of Toronto Press).


22. What immediately moves individuals is desire. Unless mediated by an ideal which comprehends and spiritualizes it, desire takes on an endlessness that is destructive of a rational and free ordering of the passions. In the absence of a free spiritual measure one is lost in the indeterminacy of pleasure. Here occurs a despiritualized inwardsness in which reason turned against itself and its own order, finds satisfaction only in a crude self-reflection which knows itself at once as beyond nature and reason (willing to subvert any and all standards) and as totally immersed in a naturalistic content it cannot escape.

23. Cf. also Augustine's discussion of the "unfriendly friendship" of thieves (II,iii-viii).
Amour In Descartes' Thought And Life

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What is the first thing one thinks when the philosopher "Descartes" is mentioned? Too often the reply is "dualism". Descartes is universally recognized as that philosopher who radically distinguished mind from body, mind understood as 'thinking substance', body as 'extended substance'; he is understood to have maintained that thought pertains to his very nature, and cannot be separated from that nature. This is true of Descartes, even though it is not true to conclude that he held that he was a thinking thing and only a thinking thing.¹ But we tend to think of Descartes as regarding himself as bodiless, or at best as having some remote relation to his body. Insofar as this is the understanding we have of him, we dismiss his philosophy as obviously abstract and fantastic. However compelling intellectually its first indubitable proposition, "I think, therefore I am", its irrelevance to our own concerns is the chief impediment to taking Descartes seriously.

Descartes is a very rigorous philosopher who insists that what comes first is what must be known before something else can be known. It was his genius to recognize that thought precedes what is the object of thought, and thus that mind must be known before body can be known. He established this with such authority that the whole seventeenth century revolution is science was founded upon it. This persists in our own time, in the science now of the twenty-first century, even though we have become terribly confused about these matters and this order of priority of thinking over all else. If ever we needed the antidote of Cartesian reason, it is today when we wonder if the computers we create are really the paradigm of our thinking, or when we speculate that the mapping of the human genome might finally reveal who we really are. But to make Descartes relevant to such discussions, we must be convinced that his philosophy does have something to say not only about mind, not only about body (which is the object of natural science), but about our embodied selves. This paper addresses these matters as Descartes himself addressed them in the last few years of his life. It shows Descartes intimately engaged in his times, in life and friendship, and always in lively thought.

Its subject is amour as it appears in Descartes' thought, and also as it is exhibited in his relation to Princess Elizabeth of the Palatinate. As we shall see, these two love, as one of the passions which he writes about, and love as he experiences it and shares it with

¹ He says this in Meditation II: "I am, then, in the strict sense only a thing that thinks; that is, I am a mind, or intelligence, or intellect, or reason words whose meaning I have been ignorant of until now." But this is preceded by the important statement: "At present I am not admitting anything except what is necessarily true." AT vii, 27.
Princess Elizabeth, are intertwined in an intriguing, compelling way. Descartes reveals himself tender, compassionate, gentle and loving to this very intelligent, passionate young woman. Descartes met her in 1643 -- she was 24, he was 47 -- at The Hague where with her mother and siblings she lived under the protection of the Dutch government, the family having been exiled from the Palatinate since the beginning of the Thirty Years War [1618-1648]. It is to answer her questions about her duty to her family, especially as this impedes her pursuit of a philosophical life, that he writes *The Passions of the Soul*, his final work.

To her earlier he had dedicated the *Principles of Philosophy*. His words on that occasion are not flattery -- he has learned how she abhors the compliments of courtiers but the honest esteem of one who sees in her his true intellectual companion and soulmate:

I have even greater evidence of your powers and this is special to myself in the fact that you are the only person I have so far found who has completely understood all my previously published works. Many other people, even those of the utmost acumen and learning, find them very obscure; and it generally happens with almost everyone else that if they are accomplished in Metaphysics they hate Geometry, while if they have mastered Geometry they do not grasp what I have written on First Philosophy. Your intellect is, to my knowledge, unique in finding everything equally clear; and this is why my use of the term 'incomparable' is quite deserved.

The correspondence between Descartes and Elizabeth began in May, 1643, and continued until shortly before his death. While she resided at The Hague he visited her occasionally from his country house in the village of Egmond, but not as frequently as she would have liked. After her disagreeable mother could take her no longer, Elizabeth removed to Berlin in the autumn of 1646, to the home of her childhood friend and cousin, Frederick William, the elector of Brandenburg, to live again with her Aunt Charlotte, the dowager electress. Descartes and Elizabeth never saw each other again, although it was Descartes' plan three years later that he would, on his return from Stockholm in the summer of 1650, visit her, perhaps even to join her scholarly enterprises at Heidelberg, the long war having finally been concluded with the Treaty of Westphalia, 24 October 1648.

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2 The actions of her father Frederick, the Elector of the Palatinate, in accepting the throne of Bohemia from Protestant rebels precipitated that war. He was routed from his kingship in less than a year, stripped of his electorship in the Holy Roman Empire and all his territories, and fled to Holland under the protection of his uncle, the Prince of Orange.
3 The opening paragraph of his first letter to her is effusive to an extreme, clearly the efforts of one untrained in the ways of the courtier. She writes back noting that false praise has an opposite effect on her from what is intended: "...my upbringing, in a place where the ordinary fashion of conversing has accustomed me to listen to people incapable of telling the truth, has made me always sure of the contrary of their discourses." AT, iii, 683.
5 His last letter to her is from Stockholm, 9 October 1649, and hers to him on 4 December 1649. He died of pneumonia in Stockholm on 11 February 1650.
1648. Elizabeth too had plans. Her brother, Charles-Louis, had returned to Heidelberg, the capital of his ruined kingdom, and immediately set to work to rebuild, re-establish, re-invent the Palatinate. He consulted Elizabeth concerning the re-opening of the University. She drew up a list of scholars to be invited to teach at Heidelberg, and Descartes was of course on her list, as was Spinoza. Heidelberg succeeded, the University was restored, but her plans for Descartes and Spinoza did not materialize.

The correspondence was initiated by Elizabeth, following a visit to The Hague by Descartes expressly to see her. She was indisposed at the time, and wrote immediately to express her disappointment at missing his visit, especially in view of a question about his metaphysics which she with some urgency wanted to raise with him. Her question, as Descartes observes, is the one which most properly can be put, in view of his published work: how can the soul, being only a thinking substance, move the body by voluntary action? He begins, "There are two things about the human soul on which the entire knowledge of its nature depends. The first is that it thinks, the second that, being united to the body, it can act and be acted upon with it." He grants that he has said almost nothing about the second, because his metaphysics rests on the first, and the distinction between soul and body. To discuss their union at the same time would have been a possible hindrance. But on the union depends all ethics and it is an essential part of his project to address that issue. The crucial matter is not to attempt to conceive the action of soul on the body after the manner of one body moving another body. It is in her reply that she gently rebukes him for his excessive compliments, which he never attempts again, and then makes her question more personal and of practical significance.

...the life I am constrained to lead does not leave me the disposition of enough time to acquire a habit of meditation according to your rules. So many interests of my house that I must not neglect, so many conversations and civilities that I cannot avoid, batter my feeble spirit with such bad feelings and boredom that it rendered it for a long time afterward useless for anything else.8

Her life at court, full of tedium and treachery, hypocrisy, the irritability and scorn of her mother who neglected the upbringing and discipline of her many unruly children9, was a source of great tribulation for Elizabeth, yet her sense of duty would not allow her to escape from responsibility for her family and kingdom. Her questions about the interaction of soul and body are not the abstract questions of an academic but the

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7 AT iii, 664; CSMK 217-8.
8 AT iii, 684.
9 Her mother, Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I, had squandered what was left of the family money, her eldest brother had died in a boating accident, her father helplessly looking on [he himself died of fever in 1632 on the battlefield], somewhat later her brother Edward will prove traitor to the Protestant cause by converting to the Roman Church to marry a Polish princess, her flirtatious sister Louise will bring down the wrath of her brother Philip on the head of her boastful lover (Monsieur Espinay boasted he had "succeeded" with both Louise and the Queen herself), murdering him on the street. The princes were frequently in brawls and other sorts of rowdiness, and her mother left all responsibility for the behaviour of her siblings with Elizabeth, blaming her for their failings. See Nye, 3, 5-7, and passim.
questions of a real woman immersed in affairs of family and state who is all the same scholarly and greatly attracted to the Cartesian philosophy.

In an effort to do better, although he can only do what a philosopher can do, Descartes replied more amply: there are three kinds of primitive ideas, "each of which is known in its own proper manner and not by comparison with any of the others": the soul conceived only by the pure intellect; body likewise known by the intellect alone, but much better by the intellect aided by imagination; and the union of soul and body, known only obscurely by intellect or even the intellect aided by the imagination, but very clearly by the senses. "It is the ordinary course of life and conversation, and abstention from meditation and from the study of things which exercise the imagination, that teaches us how to conceive the union of the soul and the body." Then he exhorts the Princess to follow his own example: "I can say with truth that the chief rule I have always observed in my studies, which I think has been the most useful to me in acquiring what knowledge I have, has never been to spend more than a few hours a day in the thoughts which occupy the imagination and a few hours a year on those which occupy the intellect alone. I have given all the rest of my time to the relaxation of the senses and the repose of the mind." Although he admires her ability to devote time to the meditations needed to know the distinction of mind and body, that is the source of her present difficulties: "I think it was those meditations rather than thought requiring less attention that have made Your Highness find obscurity in the notion we have of the union of the mind and the body."

Her response is frank and inquisitive still: "I see that the senses show me that the soul moves the body, but they do not teach me really (any more than the Understanding or the Imagination) the way in which it does this." Moreover, without such an explanation it still seems possible to her that there might be properties of the soul, unknown to us, perhaps even extension. "Although extension is not necessary to thought, not being repugnant to it either, it could suit some other function of the soul not less essential to it."

10 To Elizabeth, 28 June 1643, AT iii, 692; CSMK 226-7.
11 Ibid., 693; CSMK 227.
12 Ibid., 695; CSMK 228.
She adds, "I despair of finding certainty in any thing of the world, if you don't give it to me, which is all that keeps me from the skepticism to which my first reasoning led."\textsuperscript{13}

There is a break in the correspondence, and during that time Descartes did visit Elizabeth at The Hague. We do not know his answer to her suggestion, although it is clear enough what he should have answered, that 'mind' is precisely what 'body' is not, 'body' precisely what 'mind' is not, both opposed yet related to each other most remarkably 'body' as the wholly appropriate object for 'mind', possessing characteristics of no interest except in relation to a 'thinking thing', 'mind' with faculties wholly appropriate not to itself but to an 'extended thing'. He will be moved through the course of their correspondence to make explicit a stronger union of soul and body.

\section*{A. Descartes As Physician And Psychotherapist}

When the correspondence resumed in July, 1644, it is clear that there was a growing warmth between them. Descartes writes from France, where he has been on family affairs. He begins: "My journey could not be accompanied by any misfortune, since I have been so happy during it to have been in Your Highness's mind." He is aware that she has been ill, which he attributes more to her soul than to her body. No doubt, he observes, the soul has great power over the body, but not directly through its own volition. Rather only by willing or thinking something else. And the best thing to think about is the power of nature to heal itself, or keep itself from falling ill. He hopes, he says, she is no longer ill. "At the same time, the desire to be certain makes me want very much to return to Holland...As soon as I have put my affairs in order [he was about to visit Poitou on family business] I shall be very anxious to return to the region where I have been so happy as to have the honour of speaking from time to time with your Highness. Although there are many people here whom I honour and esteem, I have not yet seen anything to keep me here." He closes with these words, "And I am, already beyond all that I can say, etc."\textsuperscript{14}

With the appearance of the \textit{Principles of Philosophy} and its public testimony to Princess Elizabeth, Descartes declared to her and to the world her great worth in his eyes. "It would ill become me to use flattery or to put forward any assertion which has not been thoroughly scrutinized, especially in a work in which I shall be trying to lay down the foundations of the truth. And I know that your generous and modest nature will welcome the simple and unadorned judgement of a philosopher more than the polished compliments of those with smoother tongues. I shall therefore write only what I know to be true either from reason or by experience, and in this introduction I propose to philosophize just as I do throughout the rest of the book." The Dedication is in praise of her virtues and, as already noted, a candid admission that no one understood his work better than she.

\textsuperscript{13} To Descartes, 1 July 1643, AT iv, 1-3.
\textsuperscript{14} To Elizabeth, 8 July 1644, AT v, 64-66; CSMK 237-8.
His admiration is sincere; he had nothing to gain from Princess Elizabeth or her ill-fated House except her scholarly appraisal of his work, her intellectual collaboration in prompting its extension to matters pertinent to the union of soul and body, and the warmth of her friendship. His concerns about her health touch her, and there will be letters back and forth about her various illnesses. In May, 1645, he heard that she was ill again, this time gravely. For several weeks she had been having a low-grade fever. Descartes' assessment is again that the condition is psychosomatic. He writes: "The ordinary cause of a slow fever is *tristesse* [sadness, depression]." He attributes her depression to the continuing persecution of her House and the persons she cares about, and would find its cure in this: ",by the power of your virtue, you would make your soul content in spite of the disgraces of Fortune." Vulgar souls who give themselves up to their passions are only happy or sad insofar as the things that happen to them are agreeable or disagreeable; noble souls have arguments that are so strong and powerful that their reason, in spite of sufferings, remains the master.

For on the one side considering themselves immortal and capable of receiving very great contentments, and on the other side considering that they are joined to a mortal and fragile body, subject to many infirmities which cannot but perish in a few years, they do everything in their power to render Fortune favourable in this life, but nonetheless they esteem it so little, in regard to Eternity, that they almost think of events as we know them in the Comedies. And just as the sad and lamentable Histories which we see represented in a theatre, give us as much entertainment as the happy ones, even as they bring tears to our eyes, so those noble souls of which I speak have satisfaction in themselves from all things which happen to them, even the most vexing and insupportable.\(^{15}\)

But Elizabeth takes his exhortations as male abstractions. She writes back: "Know then that I have a body imbued with a great part of the weaknesses of my sex, that it registers affictions of the soul very easily, and does not have the strength to dismiss them." Then she adds,

I would confess to you that although I do not place my happiness only on things which depend on fortune or the will of men, or think myself absolutely unhappy when I see that my house will never be restored or my dear ones far from misery, I cannot consider the harmful accidents that befall them as other than evil, nor the efforts which I take for their service useless without much inquietude, which as soon as it is calmed by reason is aroused by yet another disaster.\(^{16}\)

To his urging, she gives only more evidence of her suffering. He replies acknowledging her great trials, but still he knows only one remedy: "so far as possible to distract our imagination and senses from them, and when obliged by prudence to consider them, to do

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\(^{15}\) To Elizabeth, 18 May 1645, AT iv, 200.

\(^{16}\) To Descartes, 24 May 1645, AT iv, 207.
so with our intellect alone." She should free her mind from all sad thoughts, she should be "like people who convince themselves they are thinking of nothing because they are observing the greenness of a wood, the colours of a flower, the flight of a bird." He admits that all this is well known to the princess, and that it is not the theory but the practice which is difficult. Then he adds a very personal example: "I take the liberty of adding that I found by experience in my own case that the remedy I have just suggested cured an illness almost exactly similar...I was born of a mother who died, a few days after my birth, from a disease of the lungs, caused by some distress [déplaisirs]" From her he inherited a dry cough and a pale complexion, and the doctors thought he would come to an early death. But the condition was cured by his optimism originating in the habit of making his principal happiness to depend solely on himself. 17

There is something perhaps a little neurotic in Elizabeth's reply as she adds a new dimension to the argument. "If I could follow your last advice, I do not doubt that I would promptly cure myself of the maladies of my body and the weakness of my spirit. But I confess that I have trouble separating sense and imagination from things which are continually represented in discussion and letter, because I do not know how to do it without sinning against my duty." His therapy of separating mind and body is for Elizabeth a sin against her obligations. She must live in this world, must confront it and deal with it. She cannot absent herself to his little cottage, walk in his garden and observe with him the "green of a wood, the colours of a flower, the flight of a bird". "This is when I feel the inconvenience of being a little rational. For if I were not at all so, I could find common pleasures with those with whom I must live ... And if I were as rational as you are, I would cure myself as you have done." 18

Still he persists, and she resists. 19 With great patience and tenderness, he tries another tack. In his letter of 21 July 1645, noting that most letters Elizabeth receives likely arouse unpleasant emotion, declares that his will be different: "...if they do not give you any cause for joy, at least they will not make you sad... To entertain you, therefore, I shall simply write about the means which philosophy provides for acquiring that supreme felicity which common souls vainly expect from fortune, but which can be acquired only from ourselves." He proposes to read with her Seneca's De Vita Beata, "examine what the ancients have written on this question, and try to advance beyond them by adding something to their precepts." 20 Andrea Nye says aptly, "...a philosophical troubadour amusing his lady." 21

17 To Elizabeth, May or June 1645, AT iv, 218; CSMK 249-50.
18 To Descartes, 22 June 1645, AT iv, 233.
19 In his to her, June 1645, AT iv, 236, where he does not buy the argument that it is her duty to be sad. Then he visits her some four or five days later.
20 AT iv, 251; CSMK 256.
21 Nye, 49.
B. From Psychotherapy To Philosophy

He does not wait for her to reply to his letter, since his intention is simply to bring to her some relief and happiness. He sends his assessment of Seneca on 4 August 1645. He has not found Seneca's work sufficiently rigorous. "I will try to explain how I think it should have been treated by such a philosopher, unenlightened by faith, with only natural reason to guide him." Seneca has said well that 'all men want to live happily,' and Descartes interprets this to be a perfect contentment of mind and inner satisfaction not dependent on fortune, indeed commonly not possessed by those favoured by fortune. What things give supreme contentment? "It seems to me that each person can make himself content by himself without any external assistance, provided he respects three conditions, which are related to the three rules of morality of the Discourse:

1. Always apply his mind as well as he can to discover what he should or should not do in all circumstances of life;

2. Have a firm and constant resolution to carry out whatever reason recommends without being diverted or appetites. "Virtue, I believe, consists precisely in sticking firmly to this resolution..."

3. Bear in mind that while he guides himself as far as he can by reason, all good things which he doesn't possess are entirely outside his power. Thus he will become accustomed not to desire them. [Nothing can impede our contentment except desire and regret or repentance. When something is clearly outside our power, to be taller or handsomer for example, it is relatively easy to rid ourselves of the desire for such.]

Virtue is sufficient to make us content in this life. But virtue unenlightened by reason may be false. The right use of reason, giving us true knowledge of the good, prevents virtue from being false. Thus the greatest felicity of man depends on the right use of reason. This is what Seneca should have taught.

Elizabeth does not fully agree: "I do not know how to rid myself of the doubt that one could arrive at the happiness of which you speak without the assistance of what does not depend entirely on one's own will." What about those whose illness prevents them from reasoning at all, or others which diminish the power of reason? Her examples seem in some way to be describing herself. She has recovered but now she is nursing sick Philip, her headstrong brother who will not take his medicine without her. She ends with "I wish to assure you that I will be, all my life, your very affectionate friend at your service."

These difficulties which she brings to him might be simply her inadequacies and neuroses disguised as somehow universal human problems. But then, they might be more than that revealing inadequacies and lacunae in Descartes' thought. We shall see.

22 16 August 1645, AT iv, 269-70.
Before her letter arrives another is on the way to her. He does not know whether his
last letter reached her. "All the same I shall continue our correspondence in the belief that
you will not find my letters any more tiresome than the books in your library." They
contain no news, nothing urgent, so they can be read at her leisure. He turns now to what
Seneca actually wrote, criticizing it chapter by chapter, giving as appropriate his own
views. Seneca didn't distinguish carefully, but Descartes does, these three: happiness, the
highest good, the final end at which our actions should aim. Happiness is not the
highest good but presupposes it, for it is the contentment of the mind that comes from possessing
it. The final end is both the highest good and its possession, therefore both happiness and
the highest good. The ancients had three main views about the supreme good and the end
of our actions: Epicurus, who said it was pleasure; Zeno, who insisted it was virtue;
Aristotle who made it consist of all the perfections. Aristotle is thinking of human nature
in general, the good which may be possessed by the most accomplished of men; Zeno is
thinking of the supreme good which each person can possess, and he is right to say it is
virtue, since that alone depends entirely on our free will; Epicurus, who considered
happiness to be contentment of mind. And he is correct, but in order to achieve a
contentment which is solid, we need to pursue virtue, that is to say, to maintain a firm and
constant will to bring about what we judge to be the best, and to use all the powers of the
mind to judge well. Thus Descartes draws together his three rules from the Discourse
and the ancients.

Elizabeth's next to him, August 1646, assures him that she has received both his
letters; and indicates here that she has understood Descartes' views as comprehending and
reconciling the views of the ancients in a higher consideration. But in her letter of 13 Sept
1645, Elizabeth takes up Descartes' previous comments, to rebut them. "To evaluate
goods adequately, it is necessary to know them perfectly; to be completely acquainted
with all those among which we must choose in an active life would require an infinite
science." What Descartes has said does not seem to capture her experience.

Then she asks the question which will result in Descartes' final work. "I would like to
see you define the passions, in order to know them better, because those who call them
disturbances of the soul would persuade me that their force only consists in dazzling and
subjecting the reason if my experience didn't also show me that there are some that lead
to rational actions." We are beginning to understand that between them there is no longer
the relation of master to disciple, but a dialectic at work he, the metaphysician
relentlessly presenting the consequences of that metaphysics of the separation of mind
and body; she, the vibrant living womanly princess for whom "virtue is not a rational
distance from emotion nor a stoic attitude of indifference to events. It is the proper
handling of life." 23

He certainly does not relent in the presentation of his position, altogether consistent
with the metaphysics of the Meditations and indeed a deduction from it. This is most
evident in his answer to her last letter, where she had asked how one could strengthen the
understanding to discern what is the best in all the actions of life. Two things seem

23 Nye, 60.
necessary: knowledge of the truth; the other is practice in remembering and assenting to this knowledge whenever the occasion demands. Only God knows everything. We have to be content with knowing the truths most useful to us. First and chief there is a God on whom all things depend, whose perfections are infinite, whose power immense, whose decrees are infallible. This teaches us to accept calmly all the things which happen to us as expressly sent by God, that is, a firm belief in divine providence. The second thing the nature of our soul, that it subsists apart from the body, is much nobler than the body, is capable of enjoying countless satisfactions not to be found in this life. This prevents us from fearing death, detaches our affections from the things of this world so that we look upon whatever is in the power of fortune with nothing but scorn. Thirdly, there is the immensity of the universe, which would persuade us against the view that all the heavens are made only for the service of the earth, and the earth only for man, a firm antidote therefore to anthropomorphism. We cannot know final causes, and therefore have no sound argument for one outcome in history or nature rather than another. Finally, though each of us is a person distinct from others, whose interests are accordingly in some way different from those of the rest of the world, we ought still to think that none of us could subsist alone...each of us is really one of the many parts of the universe, ...the earth, the state, the society, the family. And the interests of the whole, of which each of us is a part, must always be preferred to those of our own particular person, with measure though since it would be wrong to expose ourselves to a great evil in order to procure only a slight benefit to our kinsfolk or our country. "Once someone knows and loves God as he should, he has a natural impulse to think in this way; for then, abandoning himself altogether to God's will, he strips himself of his own interests, and has no other passion than to do what he thinks pleasing to God."\textsuperscript{24} This is the philosophical and theological basis for the maxims he has proposed to Elizabeth.

It is clear from her response that she has no firm belief in the divine providence, for it cannot extend to what arises from free will: "But those [misfortunes] which are imposed on us by men, for which the decision seems to us to be entirely free, for these the existence of God would only console if we had faith that could persuade us that God takes the care to regulate the wills of men and that he has determined the fate of each person before the creation of the world." Further, the immortality of the soul "along with the knowledge that it is much more beautiful than the body, is capable of making us seek death as well as fear it...", again not a firm conviction in taking all elements of our lives as emanating from a benevolent God, as Descartes has indicated. Further, "The great extent of the universe...serves to detach our affections from what we experience in it; but it also separates us from that individual Providence which is the foundation of theology from the idea we have of God."\textsuperscript{25} In his next to her and her answer, it is clear that she continues to dispute with him, sometimes seeming to play the devil's advocate. She is not the docile disciple but feisty and combative. One thing seems clear: abstract arguments where the conclusions are contrary to her experience do not satisfy her. And this even extends to basic Cartesian principles such as the infinite Divine power, the separation of soul and body, etc. She takes on all of them. He is too sanguine. If he urges 'prudence',

\textsuperscript{24} To Elizabeth, 15 September 1645, AT iv, 290.
\textsuperscript{25} To Descartes, 30 September 1645, AT iv, 302-3.
she is moved by 'passion'. So he must explain the passions, or else he leaves his work unfinished.

C. The Near Occasion Of The Passions Of The Soul

In late autumn of 1645, Elizabeth's brother Edward brought the cause of the whole House of the Palatinate to a sorry state. He married Anne de Gonzague of loose morals, but that was not the worst of it. She was a Polish princess and part of the marriage agreement was that he would convert to the Roman Church. To understand the implications for his family, indeed for the Protestant cause, a little historical account is called for. In 1613, Ferdinand, elector of the Palatine, had married the beautiful Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I, and united in that marriage the two sides of Protestant reform, Calvinism and Lutheranism. The Palatine court had been the first to sound the alarm of an alliance of the Empire, the papacy and Spain against the Protestants, and proposed a Protestant league of unite the reformers in Holland, England, French Huguenots and France. Then Frederick, urged by his maternal relatives of the House of Orange, accepted the Bohemian throne from Protestant reformers. The Holy Roman Empire and Philip of Spain were not willing to have the Bohemian throne go to the Protestants, and in less than a year defeated Ferdinand, dethroned him, stripped him of his electorship and all his territory. Thus was begun the Thirty Years War. Ferdinand died in 1632, and passed to his sons whatever leadership he still possessed in the Protestant cause. "Edward's conversion to Catholicism was no simple personal choice; it was an affair of state."26 The household in The Hague was mortified and enraged at the treachery of Edward, and Elizabeth, in despair, wrote to Descartes, her faithful friend and confidant. Her brother Edward has defected to the other side, "has fallen into the hands of certain sorts of people who have more hate for our house than affection for their religion, and has let himself be caught in their traps to the point of changing his religion to make himself Roman Catholic without giving the slightest indication that he was following his conscience." She sees him "whom I love with as much tenderness as I have for anyone" now universally despised and, according to her faith, having lost his soul. There is not for her any consolation in the thought that the Divine Providence was at work here. She still has trouble reconciling the independence of free will to its dependence on the will of God, and clearly in the case of her brother she cannot but blame him and those who conspired against her House. "I have trouble persuading myself that we have always more good in life than evil...there are so many ways to lose one's way for one which leads down the right path, there are so many persons with the design and power to do harm for a few who have either the one or the other to serve us." She knows her state of mind has not seemed to profit from his words, but still she asks for enlightenment from him "that is, if I dare to ask you for more light, after having so badly used that which you have already given to ..."27

26 Nye, 78.
27 To Descartes, 30 November 1645, AT iv, 335-7.
There was no answer to her letter, no comment or sympathy. Then on 27 Dec. a young man appeared at the door, with a short note from Descartes asking that she not favour a rival to the bearer, the son of Professor Schooten, for the post in mathematics at Utrecht. She writes to assure Descartes that not only will she not harm his chances, but will do all she can on his behalf. She spoke with one of the curators, Monsieur de Wimenom, who promised to work in his behalf, even though there is some plan to abolish the post altogether. The young Schooten rushed away before she had a chance to reassure him. Then she adds poignantly "I am afraid that you have not received my last letter of the 30th of November because you made no mention of it. I would be upset if it got into the hands of one of those critics who condemn as heresy any doubts one has about received opinion." Descartes' note was business-like and, in the light of her troubles with Edward, distant and cold.

Then a letter, Jan. 1646. It begins, "I cannot deny that I was not surprised to learn that Your Highness was annoyed, to the point where her health was affected, by an event which most people will consider to be good, and which the rest may overlook for several strong reasons." All the Catholics, the majority in Europe, will approve it; even if Edward's motives were not noble, still the Catholics will reflect that God employs even base motives to draw souls to Himself. The Protestants, if they speak badly of him, must reflect on such a judgment, for where there are two sides it is impossible to please the one without displeasing the other. They have no reason to ridicule one who leaves their church, given that they would not themselves belong to it if their forefathers had not left the Church of Rome.

It is a hard reply, but wholly in accordance with the principles he has stated to her over and over again. Then these words: "...it is true that those who have Fortune as a house guest are right to stay close to her, and to join forces in order to prevent her from escaping; whereas I think those whose home she has fled [Gloss --your house, Madame!] will do well to agree to follow various different paths so that at least one of them may meet her, even if not all can find her. [Gloss Edward has taken a different path] At the same time, because each of them is thought to have many resources, including friends in various places, this makes them more powerful than if all followed the same path." This is his answer to her claim that Edward has fallen in with certain people "who have more hate for our house than affection for their religion." He adds that he does not suppose that his arguments would prevent Elizabeth from feeling resentment, and only hopes that time has weakened her pique before this letter reaches her. He fears it would reawaken it if he discussed the matter at greater length. The response is not sympathetic, but it is practical and sensible. Perhaps he waited this long to respond because he knew her passions were aroused and what he might say would fall on deaf ears. Even now he takes a chance.

He returns to the problem of free will, giving an interesting analogy which really touches the issue: a king had forbidden duels while knowing with certainty that if A and B meet they will fight a duel. The king then orders A to go to a certain place where he knows B will be. Although he knows that they will engage in the duel, they engage freely. The subtext here is that in disobeying the king's command and engaging in the duel, they bring their private differences and hatred into relation to the king, which is
both better and worse than their antipathies outside the command, better because the king knows there is no cure for their mutual hatred until it is brought to a head, worse because A and B now know that their differences are not merely private but harmful to the kingdom itself. Then Descartes turns to the problem of whether in this life we always have more good things than evil. Because on his principles we must count as worthless anything which does not depend on us ourselves, then whatever outside us that befalls us [as Edward's marriage, for example] is to be regarded as no more important than actors performing a drama before us. "...It is with this profession that I observe in all my actions, and with the profession in particular of being always, etc."

There is no extant correspondence between them for four months. Did he visit? Or was there an estrangement as there appears to have been in the letter he wrote. But he was at work on the Passions, the manuscript which he brought to her in early March, 1646. Perhaps his silence was simply necessary to him to do this serious work. It is a work inspired by her questions, her difficulties with his programme of living solely the life of the mind, turning away therefore from life and its problems. What he produces is far more developed than the assertion he made in Meditations of the union of soul and body in man, and comprehensive of the whole correspondence with her. This development in Descartes' thought is too little known, and clearly he owes a great deal to Elizabeth in its production.

D. The Passions Of The Soul

Early in his correspondence with Elizabeth, Descartes had referred to "three kinds of primitive notions", the mind, the body, and the union of the two. In Principles II, Descartes gives the argument for our knowledge that the human body is closely conjoined with the mind, an argument analogous to the argument that material things exist:

By the same token, the conclusion that there is a particular body that is more closely conjoined with our mind than any other body follows from our clear awareness that pain and other sensations come to us quite unexpectedly. The mind is aware that these sensations do not come from itself alone, and that they cannot belong to it simply in virtue of its being a thinking thing; instead, they can belong to it only in virtue of its being joined to something other than itself which is extended and moveable namely what we call the human body.

But Descartes first knows the substantiality of himself as a thinking thing. This is primary, and anything else he comes to know must be subsequent or it cannot be said to be known by him. He knows God in himself precisely as a thinking thing. Next, through

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28 Cf Romans 7.
29 To Elizabeth, 28 June 1643, AT iii, 691.
30 Principles, Part Two, n. 2.
the mediation of God, he comes to know nature as unlike and opposite to himself as a thinking thing, nature also as substance and as such incorruptible. In nature, he finds the proper object for his scientific understanding. His relation to nature is to something to be known, not something in which he is immersed or in which he exists.

That he is a substance means that he "exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for [his] existence." He is a finite substance, depending therefore on the sustaining concurrence of God, but self-subsistent nonetheless in the sense that he exists without need of any other created thing. But perhaps the pronoun "he" is improper here we do not mean the individual Descartes for it is of the nature of substance to be indestructible, and so to continue in existence unless annihilated by God: "... we need to know that absolutely all substances, or things which must be created by God in order to exist, are by their nature incorruptible and cannot ever cease to exist unless they are reduced to nothingness by God's denying his concurrence to them." [Synopsis to Meditations, CSM 2.10] Descartes will die, all temporal life having the germ of death within itself, but his substantiality endures, as does the substantiality also of body in general, corpus in genere: "...we need to recognize that body, taken in the general sense [extension] is a substance, so that it too never perishes..." [Ibid.]

Yet Descartes also comes to know himself as man, a mind in a body, a body quite unique to himself, and thus different from those bodies he studies with his scientific understanding. He can study his own body, its anatomy and physiology, as he might objectively study other bodies; but its relation to him is nonetheless intimate -- it is truly his own, unlike other bodies which he can see and touch, but are not his very self. He knows himself as a man to be temporal and immersed in nature, encountering bodies via his body, bumping into them, experiencing them with his external senses. He knows hunger and thirst, pain and pleasure, via his internal senses. Even before he came to know these things, he experienced them. But it is only because he is a thinking substance who came to know nature in the manner sketched above that he can be said now to know these things.

What is the relation between these two senses of himself, his substantial, eternal thinking self, really distinct from body, and his temporal embodied self? Implicit in the doctrine that substance is incorruptible is the denial of substantial form, the principle of substantial change in the Aristotelian philosophy. And with this also the denial of generation and corruption. Change, even the apparent coming-into-being and passing-away, is simply the alteration of figure, size, shape and the transfer of motion from one part of matter to another. The common-sense world of everyday experience is reinterpreted as a scientific, mechanistic world. If it is inconceivable that a substance should come into existence without being created de novo by God, then what we seem to

31 Synopsis 2.10. It is not therefore 'indivisibility' which is the source of the incorruptibility of substance, since although mens is indivisible, corpus in genere is not. See AT vii, 13-14, CSM 2.10. Rather, it is simplicity in this sense, that accidents or modes of mind are not included in its essence, in contrast to particular bodies which are constituted precisely by their accidents. As for corpus in genere, it too is not constituted by its accidents, but rather that which sustains them, itself remaining incorruptible throughout these constant changes which constitute particular bodies.
see every day various so-called substances coming into existence by purely natural means -- is mistaken.\(^{32}\)

There is, however, one exceptional case, for the human soul is "the true substantial form of man"\(^{33}\) Descartes had always affirmed the substantial union of soul and body, the essential unity of the human being. This is one of the principal theses of the Sixth Meditation. "This body" which "by a particular right I call mine" is not such that I am "merely lodged in it like a pilot in his ship", which would be the condition of an angel if it were conjoined to a body. "If an angel were united to a human body", he writes "it would not have feelings like us, but would merely perceive the movements caused by external objects, and in that respect would differ from a genuine human being."\(^{34}\) Descartes also says that the human body is "informed" by the soul: "The numerical identity of the body of a human being does not depend on that of its matter, but on its form, which is the soul."\(^{35}\) Earlier he had called the soul "the true substantial form of man"\(^{36}\). As Geneviève Rodi-Lewis notes, "These statements...are not in any way a concession to the traditional vocabulary or a residual formula from previous ways of talking, ineptly tacked on to the surface of Descartes' dualism. On the contrary, they refer to the reality of a substantial form, the 'only' authentic example of the genre."\(^{37}\) It is for this reason that only humans have true feelings, only they have sensory perceptions, which are useful, he says in \textit{Principles} II, 3, not for instructing us about objects as they are in themselves but only to show us what is beneficial or harmful to man's composite nature. And for this reason that, whereas the behaviour of animals can be explained reductively, the behaviour of the human being cannot.\(^{38}\)

Who or what is this individual human being? Elizabeth, Descartes, whoever and how is she related to that individual thinking thing, the \textit{cogito}, which can exist without a body?\(^{39}\) We are much more acquainted with the \textit{cogito}, the "I" which is substantially distinct from body, indivisible and therefore purportedly immortal, an ego which can be what it is whether it has senses or not, or whether the objects of those senses exist or not. But the individual human being, that unity of mind and a very particular body, with a history and definite relations to other bodies and other humans, is also introduced in the

\(^{32}\) Indirectly, AT iii, 505; CSMK 208. Note that an account of nature in terms of 'substantial forms' is not equal, indeed opposed to, the Christian doctrine of creation. It is part of Descartes' definition of "substance" as found in the \textit{Synopsis} that if it is finite it is a "thing which must be created by God in order to exist."

\(^{33}\) To Regius, Feb. 1642, AT iii, 439.

\(^{34}\) To Regius, Feb. 1642, AT iii, 493.

\(^{35}\) To Mesland, 1645 or 1646, AT iv, 346; CSMK 279.

\(^{36}\) To Regius, January 1642, AT iii, 505; CSMK 208.

\(^{37}\) "Descartes and the Unity of the Human Being" in \textit{Descartes: Oxford Readings in Philosophy}, ed. John Cottingham, Oxford, 1998, 197-210, on 205. The passage continues: "...and this reveals the genesis of the classic error of the Aristotelians an anthropomorphic generalization, where everything is, as it were, 'animated' by little entities."

\(^{38}\) "We observe in animals movements similar to those which result from our imaginations and sensations; but that does not mean that we observe imaginations and sensations in them. On the contrary, these same movements can take place without imagination, and we have arguments to prove that they do so take place in animals..." To Gibieuf, 19 January 1642, AT iii, 479; CSMK 203-4.

\(^{39}\) Amélie Rorty asks this question in a remarkable article, "Cartesian Passions and the Union of Mind and Body" in \textit{Essays on Descartes' Meditations} (ed. Amélie Rorty), Berkeley, 1986, 213-234.
Sixth Meditation. Much greater elaboration is given in the work inspired by Elizabeth's questions, *The Passions of the Soul*.

In all cases where there is something in the soul caused by the body, there is in Descartes' terminology a 'passion'. There are three elementary kinds of 'passion': perceptions of things external to the soul; then perceptions we refer to our own body (bodily sensations), such as hunger, thirst, pain; finally, perceptions we refer to our soul-effects we feel as being in the soul itself, e.g. sadness, anger, joy, which are aroused sometimes by objects which stimulate our nerves and sometimes by other causes.

Although all these are 'passions' with respect to the soul (the soul is in some sense passive and receptive with regard to them), we reserve the word for this third class, and this class is what Descartes undertakes to explain in *Passions of the Soul*. He defines them as "those perceptions, sensations or emotions of the soul which we refer particularly to it, and which are caused, maintained and strengthened by some movement of the spirits." [Part I, n.27]. We might note with him that to call them 'perceptions' does not mean that they are evident. Indeed, they are likely confused and obscure. Thus, it might be better to call them 'emotions' of the soul because, of all the kinds of thoughts which the soul may have, none agitate and disturb it so strongly as these passions.

But each of these three reveals something distinctive about the mind's relation to body. The first sort, perceptions, although they are "confused representations of their causes", show that the mind can be conjoined with its body in such a way that it can be affected and modified by extension. The second sort, bodily sensations, show that the mind is conjoined with one piece of extension in such a way that it permeates and penetrates every part of it, as though it were mixed with (quasi permixtum in the words of Meditation 6) its own body. Even though they too only confusedly represent the body's true condition, bodily sensations reveal that the relation of mind to body in us cannot be "as a pilot is in the ship". But they do not tell us, as does the third sort, the passions proper, that mind is the substantial form of the body, its true unity, that mind and body form a substantial union. An angel, to use the earlier example, could 'see' the green of the wood, 'hear' the song of a bird, if it were somehow filtered through an angelic pineal gland to the angelic soul, but would not be transported by these perceptions; a Cartesian ego-cum-scientist could conduct his experiments, grow weary at his desk, stop his work for a light supper, but would not enjoy the work, rest or supper. Only a man or woman could be moved by laughter or tears, could temper his natural fear of the enemy with

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40 These to be distinguished from perceptions of internal states, such as perceiving that we're thinking, or perceiving that we are willing, doubting, etc.
41 These are the 'animal spirits', described in this passage from *Passions* I, 7: "Finally, it is known that all these movements of the muscles, and likewise all sensations, depend on the nerves, which are like little threads or tubes coming from the brain and containing, like the brain itself, a certain very subtle air or wind which is called the 'animal spirits'."
42 Rorty, 520-21: "If we had only perceptions and bodily sensations, the mind might be merely mixed with the body ... Passions proper, passion-emotions, reveal that the mind, when quasi-permixed with the body, forms unified whole that can function well or ill as that whole, and not merely as a continuing, individuated mixture of two substances, mind and body."
devotion to king or country, blush or wonder or be amazed. For this reason Descartes adds: "It is on the passions alone that all the good and evil of this life depends."43

"It is on the passions alone that all the good and evil of this life depends." How could he have come to such a conclusion? Perhaps he knew this as he wrote his earlier works, but if so the reader would not have seen any evidence of it, would not have guessed it. It is not in any way inconsistent with his former works, is in every way a further development of the *Meditations*, but it is nonetheless surprising. What has transpired in the interval between the *Meditations* and the *Passions of the Soul* to have prompted this explicit development? It is clear in the correspondence with Princess Elizabeth that her difficulties had not been addressed in Descartes' earlier work, clear also that his answers did not seem to address her explicit questions. Has he been moved to these new thoughts by her insistent opposition to answers which would dismiss or diminish her passionate engagement with life? That is obvious in the course of their relationship and correspondence.

Elizabeth's demand is nothing less than a demand for a reconciliation of Cartesian reason and history, her history and the history of her people, the reconciliation of the universal and particular, of human and divine in short, making the Christian reconciliation concrete to herself. She is not satisfied to let go of either side: she is a scholar whom Descartes says has best understood his philosophy, but she is also completely engaged in her world. When pushed, she takes her place on the side of the human, the events of her time, the particular she is more attached to or persuaded of human freedom, the tragedy of her House, her own vexing family problems, than of the side Descartes holds out to her. She does not deny what he says, and opposes him only so far as the consequences appear to her to deny or diminish the other side which she brings before him, presents to him for the longed-for reconciliation.

Descartes for his part knew the union of soul and body in his idea of God: God would be a deceiver if we were not such a unity, just as God would be a deceiver if material bodies did not exist. Still, he would not deny that soul and body are separable.

I would say the same about the soul and the body and in general all the things of which we have distinct and complete ideas; that is, I say that their being inseparable involves a contradiction. But I do not on that account deny that there can be in soul and body many properties of which I have no ideas; I deny only that there are any which are inconsistent with the ideas of them that I do have, including the idea I have of their distinctness.44

Descartes knows the real distinction of mind and body in his own thinking, and on that distinction his whole science of nature is founded. On the one hand he knows the union, on the other the distinction. But he is not able to draw these two into relation, and he

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43 *Passions* III, n. 212.
44 To Gibieuf, 10 January 1642, AT iii, 478; CSMK, 203.
knows it too, he says we can't think both sides at once. This philosophy is not therefore equal to a proper philosophical account of human institutions; ethical and political philosophy are outside the Cartesian philosophy of substance. Does Elizabeth's demand move him farther along in this dialectic? This much can be said: the Passions of the Soul is inspired by her, shaped by her questions and their correspondence, and draws together as far as he is able her position and his. In it for the first time he has been able to say perhaps he has come to know that "it is on the passions alone that all the good and evil of this life depend."

Concluding Unscientific Postscript

As one might expect, Descartes writes about amour in the Passions of the Soul in the dispassionate manner of the physicien. The passion of amour he defines as "an emotion of the soul caused by a movement of the spirits, which impels the soul to join itself willingly to objects that appear agreeable to it." (PA ii, n.79) He does not think that the distinction of 'benevolent love' and 'concupiscent love' is very helpful, since both benevolence, i.e. joining to the beloved things we believe agreeable to it, and concupiscence, desiring to possess the beloved, are principal effects of love, present not inevitably but normally where there is love. There is nothing original in Descartes' description of the kinds of love, based on the difference in esteem we have for the beloved. Simple affection is the esteem we have for those objects that we esteem less than we esteem ourselves, for example the love we might have for "a flower, or a bird, or horse"...or M. Grat, Descartes' little dog. When we esteem the beloved as much as we esteem ourselves, then there is friendship (amitié). "They are so truly objects of this passion that there is no person so imperfect that we could not have for him a very perfect friendship, given that we believe ourselves loved by him and that we have a truly noble and generous soul." When the object of our love is esteemed more than we esteem ourselves, then there is 'devotion'. The principal object of devotion is God, but also perhaps our sovereign, country, town, or even some person for whom we have more esteem than ourselves.

And what sort of love does Descartes have for Princess Elizabeth, and she for him. Geneviève Rodis-Lewis, in her biography of Descartes, speculates, "If one distinguishes concupiscent love from benevolent love by its effects, the first is ruled out because of Descartes' and Elizabeth's respect for each other." Yet Descartes says that both

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45 He characterized his intention in that work as "explain[ing] the passions only as a physicien [physicist, natural philosopher], and not as an orateur or as a Philosophe moral." Second Prefatory Letter to Passions of the Soul, AT xi, 326.
46 The ambitious man's passion for glory, the miser's passion for money, the drunk's for wine, might be almost exclusively concupiscent, as the father's love for his children or the honourable man's love for his friend might be almost exclusively benevolent. PA ii, 82.
47 Descartes' little dog, Mr. Scratch, is mentioned in a letter to l'Abbé Picot, 28 Feb. 1648, quoted by Baillet. AT v, 133, note a.
48 In a letter to his friend, Chanut, the French ambassador to Sweden, Descartes writes: "And if I asked you frankly whether you love that great Queen at whose Court you now are, it would be useless for you to
benevolence and concupiscence are 'normally' present wherever there is love. Rodis-Lewis continues: "The second, which incites us to wish well on those we love, includes family affections and the attachment between two friends. But respect is equal between friends; it becomes devotion when one of them bows down to the other. 'Your devoted one' Descartes added to the usual formulas of politeness, and Elizabeth signed, 'Your very affectionate friend'.' But Descartes uses precisely the same formula, 'Your very humble and very obedient servant' to his equals, to Huygens, Mersenne, to many people he corresponds with, even to a lawyer.49

The relationship between Descartes and Elizabeth has been the subject of some speculation ever since the nineteenth century editor, Foucher de Careil, speculated that there was something more than respect between them. G. Cohen suggests that the relationship was not altogether love or altogether friendship, but had "hidden tokens of affection" together with "refinement, which has the charm of love" as elements in it.50 For anyone who has read the letters of medieval 'spiritual friendship', or of Heloise and Abelard, for anyone who has had the good fortune to engage in such a correspondence, bordering on the romantic but not explicitly so, there are elements in the letters between Descartes to Elizabeth which suggest a deepening familiarity, concern and openness between them. It could not be more than it is, however. As Descartes writes to Chanut: "It is true that the custom of our speech and the courtesy of good manners does not allow us to tell those whose condition is far above ours that we love them; we may say only that we respect, honour, esteem them, and that we have zeal and devotion for their service...But philosophers are not accustomed to give different names to things which share the same definition, and I know no other definition of love save that it is a passion which makes us join ourselves willingly to some object, no matter whether the object is equal to or greater or less than us."51

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day that you had only respect, veneration and admiration for her; I would judge none the less that you have also a very ardent affection for her."1 Feb 1647, AT v, 611. That would seem to be more than 'devotion'.
49 "Your devoted one" never appears in the Adam-Tannery edition. Perhaps Mme Rodis-Lewis has access to manuscripts which are not available to others. She is otherwise an excellent source of information and analysis on Descartes.
50 Les écrivains français en Hollande dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle, 1920, quoted in Rodis-Lewis, 246, n.4.
51 To Chanut, 1 Feb. 1647, AT v, 610-11.
Spinoza's Intermediate Ethics For Society
And The Family

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"We are necessarily passive only in so far as we have inadequate ideas,
and only in so far as we have inadequate ideas are we passive."

Introduction: Feminist Reflections On Spinoza

Spinoza envisioned the philosophic life, which was also the consummate ethical life,
as aiming at the liberation from all forms of oppression and, particularly, internalized
oppression. He termed the latter "passivity." This liberation could be gained, he said, only
through developing independence of mind by embracing the pleasures of the broadest
human and natural connectedness. I offer here a liberationist reading of Spinoza's ethics
and argue that feminists ought to take it seriously. We discover that Spinoza was inspired
by Jewish conceptions of ethics and of politics in developing his liberationist theory.

Although Spinoza was not himself a proto-feminist -- yet neither was he anti-feminist--,
he understood the plight of the marginalized and oppressed. He was
recognized in his time as having cast his lot with political radicalism. One of his mentors
was the radical democrat Franciscus Van den Ende, his Latin teacher. Spinoza also
displayed ideological (not Christian) affinity with the Quakers and other radical
Protestants. Spinoza captured in the Ethics --albeit in a highly formal and technical
philosophic language-- the plight of the powerless in society and proposed a remedy for
the internal emotional and cognitive effects of such powerlessness. I suggest here that
Spinoza's greatest concern was with the psychological effects of social oppression. Thus
he was perhaps the first to recognize, articulate, and try to develop a remedy for what we
feminists have called the personal effects of the political. Nor did he limit his remedy to
an internal cure but also went on to propose a politics that would eliminate as much as
possible the social hierarchy and political authoritarianism at their base.

Spinoza recognized the political and social construction of belief. All thinking, he
held, is driven by desires, by interests rooted in one's body and in one's social and natural
contexts. This insight follows from his claim of the identity of mind and body, theory and

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1 EIIP56Dem (Shirley, 138)
praxis. Knowledge is always and necessarily of the body's interconnectedness in the web of its life. Knowledge captures and furthers the ever-expanding relations of our body in the world. Thus it is never neutral with respect to our own interests and purposes. But belief need not be, nor is it in our interest that it be, private and subjectively distorted.

Spinoza never thinks of ethics as having to do with rational choice or any kind of choice. His determinism precludes the possibility of choice as a self-serving fiction. We are left with the determination of our minds by our desires expressive of our body's relations, material and social. The individual is never, for Spinoza, the Hobbesian atomic individual. The individual in the Spinozist sense includes and encompasses its bodily and mental interactions with the world. Andrew Collier proposes in a paper on Spinoza's materiality of morals that the transpersonal nature of the individual is the cornerstone of his moral philosophy. Spinoza relies on a "conception of interests transcending 'ego boundaries." Collier suggests that most contemporary philosophical ethicists would regard Spinoza as an "anti-moralist," for Spinoza holds that "we will not make people more moral by telling them to be moral; we will not even make ourselves more moral by trying to be more moral." Better morals in the conventional sense come about only from understanding how our interests are interconnected and stand or fall together.

Thus Spinoza engages in a different kind of discourse, one incommensurable with contemporary Anglo-American discussions of almost any variety because his metaphysics and psychology differ so markedly from those originating in the Cartesian or Kantian traditions, to which most discussions, even feminist ones, are heir. The various versions of the feminist ethics of caring, ironically perhaps, share more assumptions with the Cartesian and Kantian models of mind, which many feminists in other respects eschew, than with the Spinozist: because these are still wedded to a notion of ethics as involving how we make choices and find reasons for our choices. They presuppose that our minds are separable from our desires (and hence bodies and situatedness) in ways that

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2 EIIP23 (Shirley, 81): "The mind does not know itself except in so far as it perceives ideas of affections of the body."

3 EIIP25 (Shirley, 82): "The human mind does not perceive any external body as actually existing except through the ideas of affections of its own body."

4 Andrew Collier, in his paper, "The Materiality of Morals: Mind, Body and Interests in Spinoza's Ethics" (in Studia Spinozana 7 (1991), devoted to "The Ethics in the Ethics", 69 - 93) has argued that the bounds of the individual person whose survival and flourishing are the object of ethics are never atomic. He holds that "we must consider the body as extendible, in the sense that the more the body in the narrow sense interacts with the world about it, the more the world is to be counted as part of the person's 'inorganic body'" (76).


5 As Lee Rice puts it, "Freedom, conceived in a spinozistic sense, is neither the exercise of desire divorced from its empirical conditions (Descartes) nor the exercise of will displaced into a world outside space and time (Kant)." Lee C. Rice, "Reflections on Spinozist Therapy" (unpublished manuscript, p. 10)

6 See, e.g., Held, Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society, and Politics (Chicago University Press: 1993), p. 24: "Moral experience is the experience of consciously choosing to act, or to refrain from acting, on grounds by which we are trying conscientiously to be guided. Moral experience is the experience of accepting or rejecting moral positions for what we take to be good moral reasons or well-founded moral intuitions or on the basis of what we take to be justifiable moral feelings."
Spinoza thinks are pure fantasy and self-deception. Some feminists go so far as to
denigrate theoretical understanding as an enterprise as a result of tearing scientific
explanation and reflections from their rootedness in self and body. By privileging ethical
praxis over rational theory they thereby reinstate the mind-body dualism from which the
false dichotomy arises and merely choose the other side. Spinoza, instead, aims his
scathing critique at the false dichotomy itself. The feminist approaches of Virginia Held
and Sarah Ruddick and others thus seem to have more in common with, e.g., the
modified classical liberalism of Martha Nussbaum, than either has with a Spinozist
approach. The critique of Cartesianism even by feminist ethical theorists of the anti-
liberal school has not gone as far as Spinoza's critique and rethinking had in the
seventeenth century. Susan James, in her work on seventeenth century philosophical
theories of the emotions, points out that too much feminist philosophic ink has been
spilled on caricaturing and demonizing earlier philosophers at the cost not only of
honesty but, ironically, of repetition. Many feminists philosophers have not broken with
Descartes and the aftermath deeply enough because their critique has been too crude, too
simplistic.

Spinoza's ethical goal of freedom breaks with liberal individualism in that its
hallmark is a deeper belonging in larger and larger contexts and webs of relation. We
come to see these relations as constitutive of self. Thus Spinoza's understanding of the
self is in direct opposition to Descartes' willed subjectivity and all liberal accounts of
atomic individualism. Spinoza's independence of mind is positively correlated with
extended interrelations rather than with the transcendence of relations. Instead, the polar
extremes are between selves that is, our desires and hence our ideas--as constituted by the
widest web of social and natural relations or instead by the narrowest, most parochial,
and most coercive ones.

Spinoza recognized that at times the survival and furtherance of narrow group needs
must take precedence over the psychological and intellectual openness necessary for
personal liberation and social reconstruction. Sometimes we must use the enemy's
weapons in the immediate interest of survival. There are times for battening down the
hatches. Virginia Held, Sarah Ruddick, Eva Kittay, Carol Gilligan all propose variants of
an ethic of nurturance, of care, as a feminist model for social relations and for society at

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7 See, e.g., Held: 8, where she attacks causal explanation as inappropriate to authentic feminist
epistemology. The feminist rejection of science suffers from the worst kind of caricature of not only the
rational but of women! My paper argues that feminists ought not to eschew science but do better science as
embodied, relational human beings.

8 See, e.g, Nussbaum's Presidential Address, "The Future of Feminist Liberalism," in Proceeding and
Addresses s of the American Philosophical Association (November 2000, vol. 72, #2).

9 Some feminist interpretations, James writes in Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century
Philosophy (Oxford, 1997), p. 19, "belong to a not-yet-completed stage in which the patriarchal face of
philosophy as it has traditionally been practiced has been boldly, if sometimes cruelly, outlined. " But
feminist research has now reached a point at which the insights yielded by the demonizing approach have
been absorbed, and it is safe and indeed necessary--to muddy the picture by looking more critically at the
strategy of vilification.

James (18, and footnote 68) identifies Susan Bordo, Genevieve Lloyd, N. Scheman, N. Tuana. E. Fox
Keller, J. Flax, E. Grosz, and S. Benhabib as among those with a tendency to vilify as philosophic strategy.
large. This parochialism is understandable but regrettable. To expose the constrictedness of an ethic of caring let's turn for a moment to data, in this case to experience, a proposal in keeping with Held's own approach.¹⁰ I will speak personally for a moment.

Nurturance describes my relationship to my daughter as an infant, and my present relation to my cats. Nurturance is a hierarchical relation if there ever was one. No matter how kind one hopes to be, the inarticulate child has no say in this relation. Analysts' couches are filled with the victims of the often well-meaning tyranny of nurturance. My present relation with my daughter, by contrast, is more like the mentoring of my students. An ethic of care, the ideal of nurturance, is simply not true to my experience of myself as a scholar, a teacher, and, most telling, as a mother. For while the mind engaged in discovery is not selfless and disinterested, neither is it confined to articulating theoretically and justifying a narrow group praxis. Spinoza's discovery that the mind monitors the body, its body, at every stage from the simplest sensations of cold and hot, for example, to the discovery of quantum mechanics, ever delving into both its own connections and origins, legitimates and eroticizes all our endeavors. If true, opportunities for broadening our attachments are always before us as is openness to new ways of life. For we follow the infinite trajectory of erotic attachment from our center outward. We see here Spinoza's famed collapsing of the distinction of the theoretical and the practical intellect. Thus there is no thinking for Spinoza that is not practical, embodied and impassioned. But neither is the practical thereby reduced to finding means to ends derived either from some purportedly detached and pure Beyond or alternatively from some irreducible, natural quarter.

There is this advantage to our experience as women from a Spinozist point of view: rather than confining us to normative stereotypes, our experience ought to prepare us better than men for gaining an ever wider perspective expressive of our wider webs of relation. Knowledge at best reflects and grasps our ever-expanding practical activities and engagements in the world. Hence knowledge in the Spinozist sense and that not only includes but is exemplified by philosophy and science--involves empathic endeavors, extending our identifications. Since we cannot constrain the world from affecting us or control how it affects us, there should be no constraint on our engagement with it or on deepening and broadening our understanding of those interactions. Mortality and the practical demands of living are constraints enough.

Spinoza argues that an ethic that falls short of the Intellectual Love of God or Nature (what we today call intellectual passion and wide-ranging curiosity), as feminist nurturance and the various versions of the ethics of care do, is simply not in our ultimate interest. They offer neither liberation from oppression nor the attainment of the widest interrelations. Such an ethic may serve a pressing need to overcome the effects of being devalued as women but our vision for ourselves, our engagement with the world, Spinoza warns, would suffer thereby painful constriction. Some feminist ethical theorists thus recommend what would be classified in Spinoza's schema as an intermediate stage of group life and group-think. Such solutions falls short of full liberation, and hence,

ultimately of ethics. For Spinoza identifies the aim of the ethical project as Freedom.\textsuperscript{11} Stereotypes in our case, e.g., the nurturing mother, the supportive wife--he warns us,\textsuperscript{12} can be either negative or positive, denigrating or valorizing. But as social constructions that we passively adopt or even embrace, they are always personally constricting and oppressive to others. Spinoza uses a normative model of human being as an intermediate ethical strategy (that of Reason/Ratio) but never as ethics' ultimate form (as Intuition). This is a warning we feminists ought especially to heed. We are far too quick to valorize and romanticize the stereotype of the Nurturant Mother no doubt an important temporary corrective after decades of the vilification of mothers. I suspect that this is more likely than not a generational temptation. Virginia Held acknowledges this possibility\textsuperscript{13} but still recognizes nothing beyond or between the dichotomy of a liberal atomic individualist ethics of impartial rational principles versus an ethics which "sees the world and society and everything in it from the points of view of women"\textsuperscript{14} and our stereotypic endeavors, values, and engagements. Spinoza offers us a way to escape the horns of this dilemma both theoretically and practically.

A. Ethics As The Transition From Passivity To Activity

Spinoza adapted the technical language of seventeenth century scientists and philosophers to articulate and address the problem of internalized oppression. He redefined the problem of "passivity," a familiar and central philosophic concept from Aristotle to Descartes, to capture the condition of psychological and cognitive submission to external powers tyrannically exercised. He did so by building on seventeenth century mechanical philosophers' (especially Descartes' and Hobbes') reinterpretations of the Aristotelian active-passive dichotomy. The Ethics, as a whole, aims at the overcoming of "passivity," Spinoza tells us repeatedly. Passivity is to be overcome not in a flight from society but through embracing a different posture within it. I call his a feminist ethic because the moral problems it aims to resolve fit so perfectly and speak to two aspects of the historic condition of women. For Spinoza's philosophic ethic aims to redress the necessary psychological price we all pay for the existence and maintenance of society. Every society, even the most just, democratic, and egalitarian, sacrifices individual self-determination to conformity to societal pressures and authoritative expectations. Spinoza defines passivity as the external determination of beliefs, desires, and emotions. Passivity delineates a life lived, an identity forged, through the introjection of social, religious, cultural, (and we today would add) class, and gender imperatives and incentives. The problem of passivity refers to the external group influence over, and even determination of the individual as a result of how power is wielded and distributed in a given society. That is the major concern of the Tractatus Theologico-Politicus. The price of creating

\textsuperscript{11} Lee C. Rice, in an unpublished paper, "Spinoza's Ethical Project," holds, as I do, that Spinoza envisioned two stages of the ethical life, a rule-bound one, the "Servitude" of E IV, and the ultimate "Freedom" of E V.
\textsuperscript{12} EIIIP46 Lee C. Rice (private communication) pointed out to me that Spinoza's account of stereotypes includes a critique of the group think applicable to many of those who propose solutions.
\textsuperscript{13} Held, 168
\textsuperscript{14} Held, 168
and maintaining social conformity and authority cashes out for the individual as a loss of self-determination. It is internalized oppression and gives rise to a roller coaster ride of emotions and a narrowed focus on the group rather than on the fullest human community and the natural world. For society as a whole, the problem of passivity cashes out as enormous competitive conflicts over the limited supply of rewards meted out by the authoritative institutions that control the system of incentives in order to create conformity in desires and beliefs.

We today recognize a recognition not lost on three thinkers whom Spinoza influenced, Marx, Freud, and Hegel—that Spinoza's moral problem of passivity is exemplified *par excellence* by the weak and marginalized -- for they experience this problem at its most acute. It is the privileged who are most tied to the system of incentives since they benefit most by it. Hegel will later on make much of this paradox in the nature of power, noting that it is the slave and not the master who has less to lose from throwing off his chains. Indicating his understanding of women's subordination, Hegel will call women the perpetual "Irony of the Community." And Freud will muse in *The Future of an Illusion* that the lower classes cannot be fully socialized because they have so little stake in a system that offers them so few rewards. While Spinoza's political theory aims to mitigate the structures of oppression as much as possible for a society as a whole, the philosophic ethic of the *Ethics* aims to resolve the remaining and unavoidable internal strictures on identity thus imposed, thus accepted. This is the "freedom" at which it aims.

The intermediate rational ethical life, the one in pursuit of a model of the good human person, only partially resolves the problem of passivity, for it does so to the greatest extent possible for society as a whole. But a deeper freedom is possible for some and desirable for as many as possible. So the second ethical problem emerges from the limitations of the socio-political solutions of the intermediate ethical life. It is to replace a socially, culturally, and theologically constructed and politically instituted and enforced morality with the full liberation of desire. Spinoza indicates repeatedly that his ethics aims at transforming what he calls passive pleasure to active ones, i.e., the liberation of desire from its social construction, its internalized tyranny. Spinoza attempts to work out a systematic shift in incentives that makes that liberation possible. Those reading the *Ethics* for the first time --and those re-reading it for the first time without moniker of Continental Rationalism with which so many of us studying Philosophy in the U.S. in the '60s and '70s grew up-- will be surprised not only at Spinoza's emphasis on the body but on desire and pleasure as the only worthy motives. He wants us to discover our true pleasures. "The principle that guides me and shapes my attitude to life is this:" he writes toward the end of the *Ethics*, "no deity, nor anyone else but the envious, takes pleasure in my weakness and my misfortune. On the contrary, the more we are affected with pleasure the more we pass to a state of greater perfection." Summing up the remedies for passivity, Spinoza proposes this principle: We must "be determined to act always from...

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15 EIVP45S (Shirley, 181)
the emotion of pleasure." Nietzsche loved this about Spinoza and transformed it for his purposes. But perhaps the best literary representation of what Spinoza is getting at is Falstaff. Harold Bloom calls Falstaff the consummate exemplar of the exuberant embrace of life and one of the few persuasive images of human freedom, the Socrates of the Elizabethan age.

Spinoza hardly advocates an antinomian frenzy of pleasure as the antidote to the strictures and tyrannies of life necessarily operative in even the most democratic and just societies. His Ethics aims to prove both globally and precisely in reference to each of us that our true interests are served only in the furthering of the intricate web of all life. Desire and pleasure freed from their internalized social tyrannies are to be refocused on realistic personal goals and common benefits. He aims to awaken in individuals the desire to stake their lives on the concern for the entire human community and for the natural world. This too, I think, speaks to feminist insights emergent from women's historic social and embodied experience.

A study recently came out addressing the topic in question: Susan James' *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy* (Oxford, 1997). James traces the dichotomy of activity/passivity to its origins in Aristotle's causal model of an active formal principle and a passive matter or material principle. Then she delineates the ways seventeenth century philosophers broke with Aristotelian metaphysics and physics— in particular jettisoning the theories of formal-substantial essences and of final causality. Nevertheless, they retained the passive/active dichotomy transforming it in the light of the new mechanistic science, especially in theories of the emotions. The very Latin term, *passiones*, from which we derive the English 'passions,' is a translation of the Greek, *pathe*, which means both suffering and passivity. So the emotions as passions were thought to embody passivity in its pure state. Emotions are thus the paradigmatic case of passivity.

The Aristotelian tradition located the emotions in the 'sensitive' part of the soul, the part devoted to perception and appetite. These represented two types of receptive posture toward the external world. The Aristotelian tradition, unlike the Stoic and unlike the 17th century philosophers who in this followed the Stoics, theorized discrete parts or faculties of the soul, each with its separate function. On the Aristotelian account emotions were

16 EVP10S (Shirley, 210) This is not to say that Spinoza regards acting on every pleasure as beneficial. For some pleasures do not express the desires of the person as a whole. Acting on pain, however, is always bad. (See, e.g., EIVP41)
17 In *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998), Chapter 17 "Henry IV": 314 and throughout. Bloom writes here (288): "Sir John [Falstaff] is the representative of imaginative freedom, of a liberty set against time, death, and the state, And a fourth freedom to timelessness, the blessing of more life, and the evasion of the state, and call it freedom from censoriousness, from the superego, from guilt."
18 Bloom, 292f. Also Spinozist is Bloom's characterization of Falstaff as one who "teaches us not to moralize" (297) and as someone who is beyond superego (313).
19 I do not wish to imply that Spinoza advocated self-indulgence in sensual pleasures. That reading of Falstaff Bloom forcefully eschews (288).
20 *Passion and Action*, 11
thought to span body and soul. They were states of body and soul as a composite, precisely bodily changes with their accompanying feelings. The Aristotelian psycho-physical account of the emotions was retained by seventeenth century mechanical theorists along with the distinction between active and passive, now divested of many of its Aristotelian metaphysical assumptions. Active and Passive were reinterpreted as expressing not Aristotelian formal, final, and material causality but instead aspects of the new mechanical account of causality, its reduction of all causes to (what in the Aristotelian taxonomy were) efficient causes of motion.

i. Descartes' Account of Activity and Passivity

For Descartes, passive and active characterize the poles of relation of a unified soul to its body. All the functions of the soul were thought to be aspects of its conscious thinking—understanding, willing, imagining, remembering, sensing, and emotional feelings. The union of body and mind is a relation of agent and patient, or patient and agent—and complex permutations thereof. Thus passivity and activity identify the direction of causality between body and mind in any given behavior. The passivity of one is necessarily inversely proportional to the activity of the other, since it indicates both the source of the impetus of the given motion and its recipient. Descartes held that willing and understanding occur in the soul alone and thus represent its activity, whereas some other modes of thinking—sense perception, the passions, some memories and imaginings—result from interactions of mind and body. Thoughts are either passions or actions depending on whether they originate in the soul and are initiated by it—these are the "volitions"—or originate outside it and are thus passively received and represented by it—these are the "passions." Thus for Descartes and for Spinoza who follows his lead in this—passion and action designate internal psychic states of relative mental weakness or strength in initiating thoughts. For Descartes (but not for Spinoza) when the body affects the soul, the soul is passive, and vice versa.

Spinoza follows Descartes in holding that cognitive passivity consists in the mind's determination in part by its own past experiences. It is that aspect of it that is open to modification. The passions thus express a relation, according to Descartes, since they result from external causes and our bodies interacting with our mind. Generally speaking, the passions further the well being of the body and involve a judgement about the harm or benefit of whatever it is we have an emotion about. Passions, Descartes says, move us to consent to those things that help us survive and thrive as unions of body and mind they serve to strengthen the link. Even the most abstract thinking initiates

21 *Passion and Action*, 65
22 *Passion and Action*, 75 - 76: "Advocates of the mechanical philosophy construe the actions and passions of bodies as motions. A body acts when it transfers its motion to a second; and the second body is acted on when the direction and force of its motion are changed. Equally, the standing capacities or powers of bodies to move and be moved in particular ways are also explained by their motions, in conjunction with their geometrical properties such as size and shape."
23 *Passion and Action*, 91
24 Descartes, *Passions of the Soul*, 17 quoted in *Passion and Action*, 91
25 *Passion and Action*, 102 - 103
26 *Passion and Action*, 101
emotions. Thus for Descartes all thinking is affective and not tangentially so—an insight that is also the basis of Spinoza's account of the remedies for the passions. Abstract thinking is deeply affective, initiating bodily motions, which we feel. Susan James remarks (107) that "not only our experience of the world, but our thinking about that experience is shot through with passions like a piece of silk." Thus Descartes, like Spinoza, never regards the Stoic apatheia passionlessness—as an ideal.  

Descartes' theory of the passions draws a line between our passive perceptions and our active volitions. Our perceptual passivity and our passions thus expose part of us as, in a sense, exterior to what is the 'true' locus of self. The activity/passivity dichotomy redraws the boundary between self and other, self and world, and relocates it within the customary bounds of the person—the skin. Since only volitions are identified by Descartes as truly 'our own,' or ourselves, what counts as the self is radically narrowed a solution with Stoic echoes. According to Descartes, it is the will alone that makes us able to have some control over the often-unsettling waves of emotion that can arise. The will is the movement that the mind's judgement initiates. It reverses the direction of passivity from the mind's pervasion by painful passions to its mastery of them. Volition is the activity of the mind, par excellence. Virtue, according to Descartes, consists in judging what is best and then acting with complete resolve on those judgements. Our virtue is thus our strength of will. The rewards of such virtue are our pleasure in our capacity for self-control and our satisfaction and ease in knowing that the passions emerging from the winds of fortune cannot move us. Such joy Descartes regards as not itself a passion because it is strictly interior to the mind and thus involves no passivity to the body while moving the body to emotional expression. Active emotions, that is emotions that originate strictly within the soul as if the soul were without connection to the body, are the ideal for Descartes. Susan James remarks that this is a rather narcissistic pleasure. Descartes' active virtue suggests a kind of psychological independence from external circumstance—a Stoic virtue—that will also characterize Spinoza's account of virtue as activity. Yet for Spinoza activity does not originate in the freedom of the will.

ii. Spinoza's Account of Activity and Passivity

While Spinoza, like Descartes, identifies 'activity' with virtue, he parted company with Descartes over the latter's identification of virtue with the active exercise of mental will over an unruly body and environment. He astutely recognized the moralism and

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28 Passion and Action, 204
29 Passion and Action, 204
30 Beyssade, 181
31 Passion and Action, 204 In "Mind and Its Relation to the Psyche-Soma," (British Journal of Medical Psychology vol. 27 (1954)) D. W. Winnicott argues (207 208) that the localization of the mind in the head is a sign of mental illness. Psychotherapeutic cure results in the mind being experienced as an unlocalized pervasive consciousness and awareness of the body. Winnicott would seem to bear out the normativity of the Spinozist account of the mind as the consciousness of the body and call into question the Cartesian account as representing psychological abnormality.
theological orthodoxy implicit in Descartes' voluntarism and rejected them both. Spinoza sought to follow what he regarded as the narrow path of scientific psychological explanation devoid of veiled condemnation and praise. He also rejected the Cartesian dualism of mind and body locked in a struggle for dominance. Eschewing what he called Descartes' positing of a mental 'kingdom within a kingdom,' Spinoza repudiated voluntarism and dualism and maintained, instead, a causal determinism as rigorous in Thought as in Extension. With Hobbes he held that there is no causal principle in thoughts other than that in the thoughts themselves. Neither is there any motivational impetus from a free, i.e., uncaused, will but only the appetites themselves. Unlike Hobbes who identified activity and passivity as simply cause and effect every thought being at once both a cause of some things and an effect of others—, Spinoza instead retained the distinction between passive and active as metaphysically, psychologically, physically, epistemically, and ethically significant.

Spinoza replaced the Cartesian free will as the source of mental activity by linking his account to both the necessary self-causality of God and also to a doctrine of the conatus. The latter notion was adapted in part from Hobbes' materialist conception of a basic human striving for power, the power to maintain bodily stability in the face of external onslaught. In this Spinoza was influenced by both Hobbes' and Descartes' understanding of an inertial power inherent in things to resist being destroyed by external forces. Spinoza's notion of activity also includes the new seventeenth century characteristic of internal coherence or equilibrium (his ratio of motion and rest). Spinoza

32 *Passion and Action*, 124 - 125
33 *Passion and Action*, 152: "There is a further crucial connotation of the opposition between activity and passivity which is all but obliterated in Spinoza's philosophy: the association of mind with activity and passivity with body. [T]his remained influential among those mechanical philosophers who conceived bodies, including human ones, as passive because they have no power to move themselves, and who contrasted this feature of the material world with the capacity of human minds to will. For Spinoza, however, there can be no such asymmetry. The body and mind are one thing viewed under two attributes. Moreover, the conatus is a single power manifested in both attributes; whatever bodily events constitute the body's striving to persevere in its being are matched by ideas that constitute the same striving in the mind."
34 EIII Preface J. M. Beyssade in "De L'émotion Intérieure chez Descartes à l'Affect Actif Spinoziste" comments (177) that Descartes is the only philosopher cited by name by Spinoza in the *Ethics* and the only work of his referred to is *The Passions of the Soul.*
35 He writes that "the mental decision that is believed to be free is not distinct from imagination and memory, and is nothing but the affirmation which an idea insofar as it is an idea, necessarily involves (Pr. 49, II). So these mental decisions arise in the mind from the same necessity as the ideas of things existing in actuality." (E3P2S; Van Vloten and Land, vol. 1: 125 - 126; Shirley: 108)
36 *Passion and Action*, 135
37 *Passion and Action*, 136
38 *Passion and Action*, 134; and 77 where James writes: "Hobbes identifies endeavour with the motion of the internal parts of a body."
39 Lee Rice comments (private communication) that the "conatus was widely used in 17th century physics for what we now call inertial mass (it was used by Huyghens). And Spinoza's sense of conatus, or so Gueroult argues, is closer to Huyghens than to Hobbes. The general law of conatus ("every being tends....") is just the mental equivalent of the physical law of inertia given following E2P13."
40 See *Passion and Action*, 77 78: "Both philosophers are suggesting that the internal motions of bodies conform to comparatively stable patterns of motion which are not necessarily destroyed by impact, so that a body's capacity to resist change survives many of its interactions."
41 EIIP13 Lemma3 Ax. 2Def. and Lemma5

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replaces Descartes' theory of an active mental capacity to exercise will power over a passive body (and thereby over the external world) with a theory of an active striving toward psycho-physical self-organization and self-coherence in all organic beings. He identifies the conatus as each individual thing's essence and glossed it as desire, a desire of the organism as a whole, manifested in both physical and mental expressions, to resist the external forces of disintegration. It is at once a self-organizing principle and an erotic self-relation. The desire expresses itself in thought with the same causal necessity and order it does in extension. Spinoza's famed 'coherence theory of truth' is better understood as a coherence theory of understanding. When functioning optimally, the mind progressively integrates inputs in an expanding and self-correcting unified account of causes. The body at the same time experiences itself as a continuous part of the natural order. I have characterized Spinoza's account as a 'systems theory of organism'.

Spinoza breaks with the Cartesian theory in that for him active and passive are attributable to body and mind as one entity in God. They are an identity since the mind and the body are not two substances but two mutually exclusive modal expressions of one thing. They are active or passive as the relative condition of a single thing in relation to its environment and not as a composite entity in never-ending internal and external struggle. Spinoza defines the mind as the consciousness of the body. We register in awareness all the changes in the body as it is affected by or affects the external world. Our emotions span body and mind, registering, as either pleasure or pain, the cognitive and affective awareness of an increase or decrease in the power of the conatus. In this

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42 EIII P7 Lee Rice comments that Spinoza's claim of the identity of the conatus with an individual's essence is "what Einstein calls the central claim. When reworked by Einstein, it becomes the principle of equivalence (gravitational and inertial mass are identical) in general relativity. It was the ultimate vindication of Leibniz/Spinoza over Newton (for whom the two concepts are only equal in force, but not equivalent)."

43 EIII Defs. of the Emotions#1

44 "Notes on Spinoza's Critique of Aristotle's Ethics: From Teleology to Process Theory", Philosophy and Theology, Volume IV, #1, Fall 1989, pp. 3 -32

45 EIII P11 Susan James's reading agrees with mine here. See Passion and Action, 155: "Because mind and body are the same thing described under different attributes, they can only act or be acted on together."

46 EIII P11, P12, & P13

47 EIII Definition. 3 (Shirley, 104): "By emotions (affectus) I understand the affections of the body by which the body's power of activity is increased or diminished, assisted or checked, together with the ideas of these affections." Thus if we can be the adequate cause of one of these affections, then by emotion understand activity, otherwise passivity. See also General Definition of the Emotions (Shirley, 151 152): "The emotion called a passive experience is a confused idea whereby the mind affirms a greater or less force of existence of its body, or part of its body, than was previously the case, and by the occurrence of which the mind is determined to think of one thing rather than another."

Explication

I say in the first place that an emotion, or passivity of the mind, is a 'confused idea.' For we have demonstrated (Pr.3, III) that the mind is passive only to the extent that it has inadequate or confused ideas. Next, I say 'whereby the mind affirms a greater of less force of existence of its body than was previously the case.' For all ideas that we have of bodies indicate the actual physical state of our body rather than the nature of the external body (Cor.2, Pr.16, II). Now the idea that constitutes the specific reality of emotion must indicate or express the state of the body or some part of it, which the body of some part of it possesses from the fact that its power of activity or force of existence (vis existendi) is increased or diminished, assisted or checked, etc.
the emotions "cater [to] the whole self." When the mind is considered by itself, its passivity is found in its very thinking, in the inadequate ordering of its thoughts, in its mental organization or 'method.' "The active states of the mind arise only from adequate ideas;" Spinoza writes, whereas "the passive states depend solely on inadequate ideas." In *Imaginatio*, Spinoza's First Kind of Knowledge, the mind is the incomplete cause of its own ideas, and hence passive. Reason and Intuition (the Second and Third Kinds of Knowledge), in contrast, always give rise to adequate ideas. Spinoza makes an important distinction between Imagination (*imaginatio*), the most primitive kind of thinking, and the imaginative component (the reformed images) of the two higher levels of knowledge. In *Imaginatio* thinking is not creative and original, as we might expect, but a product of its local environment, personal experience, and cultural milieu. This kind of mental organization represents a passive psychophysical posture in the world. It shapes both our beliefs and desires.

Imaginative thinking is passive and inadequate because it is associative. It creates ongoing mental links among things that we happen to encounter at the same time and place, or that exhibit some similarity. It thereby creates patterns of mental association and constructs explanations on the basis of the arbitrary correlations that we find around us in the common order of nature and, as the *TTP* shows, in the common order of culture as well. *Imaginatio* is driven by these remembered associations. Imagination is both our uncritical introjection of what surrounds us and also our helplessness in the face of how past experiences exercise a continuing dominion over the present. We cannot control either how those memories are formed or when and how they recur. For "it is not within the free power of the mind to remember or to forget anything." The imagination is essentially a historical kind of thinking, in contrast with the timeless truths of philosophy and science.

We conceive things as actual in two ways: either in so far as we conceive them as related to a fixed time and place, or in so far as we conceive them to be contained in God and to follow from the necessity of the divine nature. (*EVP29S*)

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48 *Passion and Action*, 147
49 For an excellent article on what Spinoza's method is and how it operates, see Vance Maxwell's "The Philosophical Method of Spinoza" in *Dialogue* XVIII (1988) 89–110.
50 *EIIP3* (Shirley, 108)
51 *EIIP29S*
52 *EIIIP41*
53 Spinoza's insists that the imagination functions passively (*E3P1*; Van Vloten and Land, vol. 1: 122) "for it is not within the free power of the mind to remember or forget anything" (*E3P2S*; Van Vloten and Land, vol. 1: 125–126; Shirley: 108)
54 Lee Rice comments (private communication), Spinoza follows Descartes in part and [anticipates] Skinner completely. The connexions/association of affects are guided by TEMPORAL laws. Skinner claims this as one of behaviorism's "revolutionary" aspects.
55 *EIIP2S* (Shirley, 108)
56 Van Vloten and Land, vol. 1: 264; Shirley: 218
That *imaginatio* introjects a context that is cultural and social and even political is borne out in that the great institutions of the Imagination are, according to Spinoza, Language and Religion. Causal explanations, the second and third kinds of knowledge, on the other hand, are our mind's reconstruction of its experience and memories according to rigorous scientific methods and laws.

The cognitive component of the passions consists in imaginative associations. The passivity of association as a mental operation is simple introjection of the arbitrary correlations of external happenstance, circumstance, and preference—makes these emotions passive responses to the world. Much of the Third Part of the *Ethics* is devoted to delineating how imaginative association operates, giving rise to the various passions. In the passions we associate contemporaneous (and other imaginatively associated) external objects with our affective experiences of pain and pleasure, naively and mistakenly assigning to these objects a false causal efficacy, and hence power over ourselves.\(^{57}\) Our passive emotions thus take us on a roller coaster ride as both fortune dictates and our associations have us react. And no Cartesian resolve can help us. Nevertheless, the associative component of the passions is open to modification. For Descartes a given physical state and mental association could be disconnected from each other and the former reconnected to a different thought, thereby reforming the passion. For Spinoza, since a given physical state cannot but be expressed mentally, it is the entire complex that must be modified. The remedy for our domination by the passions will be to make the mind express a different physical order, namely, the global scientific causal order. To do that one must replace passive mental associations with active, that is, self-generated causal explanations. Causal explanation redefines the source and object of a passion as a combination of the internal order of ideas, that is, our own active thinking process, and the global order of causes. It is thus a different extensional state that will be expressed mentally: the new object-subject expressed in a given affect is both internalized and globalized. We see ourselves and God—ourselves in God—as the source and object of our emotions and thereby partially under our control, and hence active. We now see the behaviors of others, for example, to which we reacted so strongly before we understood it, as merely the last link, the effects, in an infinite causal chain which we have reproduced mentally and is thus our own. As a result, we are no longer subject to the great waves of emotion occasioned by the presence or absence of (what we falsely imagined to be) isolated external objects acting upon us over which we have no control and which we formerly endowed with such power over us.

Spinoza turns the Cartesian analysis on its head, deriving his moral categories from what his version of the new science could expose about organic stability as well as about emotional health and contentment rather than falling back on moral judgements clothed

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\(^{57}\) See my chapter, "Spinoza's Rupture with Tradition—His Hints of a Jewish Modernity," in H. M. Ravven and L. E. Goodman, editors. *Jewish Themes in Spinoza's Philosophy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002). I write there: "It is the nature of the passive emotions to be occasioned by the presence--or the imagined presence--of objects *imaginatively associated* with the changes in the affections of the body. All emotions are directed at objects and include the implicit judgment that the object of the emotion is its cause. In the passions, the causal judgments are false or incomplete, insofar as they are determined by imaginative associations to which the mind is passive."
in scientific garb. This is Spinoza's famed to some, notorious--ethical naturalism. The active emotions are good qua active. That is to say, Spinoza redefines the 'good' in terms of the psycho-physical internal organization captured in the designation 'activity'; so, too, the passive redefines the 'bad.' We are nature qua Thought as well as qua Extension. When we come to think, especially about ourselves, scientifically and globally rather than locally we enhance our self-determination. Then we are nature thinking itself, aware of itself, as nature nurturing, that is, actively producing itself both materially and mentally. In us that state is the Intellectual Love of God.

Spinoza's doctrine has important political implications. He believes it has the power to set us free. Spinoza proposes that if we turn to scientific causal self-explanation, then the withholding or bestowal of external rewards by authoritative individuals or social or political institutions can no longer hold such sway over us psychologically. For in seeing social rewards and punishments as only the last link in a chain of necessary causes the inevitability of which we now understand to be the outcome of both nature itself and of our own thinking, they lose their tyranny over us. They will not be capable of inducing in us desires and beliefs that serve powerful interests and cultural norms. Here we begin to see how Spinoza's Passivity incorporates a social dimension.\(^{58}\) The great danger of the passions is political: namely, that they will, as Spinoza so succinctly puts it in the Preface to the Tractatus, lead us to "fight for [our] servitude as if for salvation." Thus passivity is less our moral weakness than our tragedy. Spinoza captures here several insights about the nature of learning. It expands the boundaries of the self, enabling us to identify with an ever more inclusive perspective. It frees us from social control. And finally it enables us to escape the psychological dangers of group think and the politics that drives it.\(^{59}\)

**B. The Family**

Morals arise, Spinoza says, in what we today call the socialization process rather than through any regulative power in ethics or in the mind itself. Standards of behavior are constructed by society and depend on both its culture and its means of enforcement, its rewards and punishments. What we experience as moral conscience is simply the internalization of these social mores. "Our upbringing," Spinoza writes, "is chiefly responsible for" "our actions that are customarily called wrong" being "followed by pain, and those which are said to be right, by pleasure.

By disapproving of wrong actions and frequently rebuking their children when they commit them, and contrariwise by approving and praising right actions, parents have caused the former to be associated with painful

\(^{58}\text{I argue in "Spinoza's Rupture with Tradition." that there are three principles of social conformity that Spinoza identifies in Ethics III in his discussion of the passive emotions.}^{59}\text{The dangers of group think cut both ways. The Spinozist analysis suggests the terms of our freedom and also should serve as a warning about our own capacity for reintroducing an oppressive conformity in thought within our own group to wit, the tyranny of feminist political correctness, for example.}
feelings and the latter with pleasurable feelings. Not all people have the same customs and religion. What some hold as sacred, others regard as profane; what some hold honourable, others regard as disgraceful. So each individual repents of a deed or exults in it according to his upbringing. 

Socially defined norms, mediated and internalized through the authority of the family, can be transcended only by the informed cultivation of pleasures not tied to external rewards, chiefly the joy of learning and discovery. The turn to internal incentives frees one's judgement about what is in one's own best interest from the corrupting influences of the social institutions that mete out external rewards and punishments to serve political ends. A political drama is played out internally in the soul. For Spinoza, the personal is overwhelmingly and ultimately—the political!

Paradoxically, however, the coercive forces of socialization can be mustered to implement the principles of a rational, liberating ethic as well as to bolster more authoritarian norms. There is a positive role for both society and the family to play as moral educators, even if coercion can never be entirely eliminated from either. Norms that are imposed familially and politically can, nevertheless, bring about an increase in activity (freedom) even if the coercion inherent in these institutions hampers full liberation. For the authority of a culture and the rewards and punishments its institutions dispense can reinforce the political democracy that reason independently and freely recommends. Democracy is the most liberatory form of government but it is also both our cultural inheritance and mandated by law. We transmit its values and practice many of its principles in the family as well as in society at large. Our public culture and institutions, including the family, thus, at best and in principle, conform to the Spinozist model of politics as the imposition of freedom.

It is not only the freedom and reason of democracy, however, that are capable of imaginative expression in politics and culture, society and the family. For the global reach of the natural causal system and its internalization in our (self-) understanding can also be embodied in culture and praxis as well as expressed in science. We find just that

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60 III Def. of Emotions #27 Exp. (Shirley, 147)
61 IIIP59
62 Spinoza speaks (EIVP47 & Schol) of freeing the mind from the influence of Hope and Fear, the defining characteristics of the social control exercised by religion.
63 EIVP19 & Dem; and also EIVP20&Scho. (Shirley, 166) : Nobody, unless he is overcome by external causes contrary to his own nature, neglects to seek his own advantage, that is, to preserve his own being. A man kills himself when he is compelled by another who twists the hand in which he happens to hold a sword and makes him turn the blade against his heart; or when, in obedience to a tyrant's command, he, like Seneca, is compelled to open his veins, that is, he chooses a lesser evil to avoid a greater. Or it may come about when unobservable external causes condition a man's imagination and affect his body in such a way that the latter assumes a different nature contrary to the previously existing one, a nature whereof there can be no idea in mind (Pr. 10, III).
64 Vance Maxwell (private correspondence) here points to EVP20 that the love of God is held in common with as many others as possible.
in the ecology movement. Spinoza's ethics has been aptly called an eco-ethic\textsuperscript{65} for its metaphysics suggests that, ultimately, we stand and fall together as those whose fates are intimately and thoroughly interdependent as components of one natural world. We all are aware that eco-ethics is embodied politically in a movement and also has popular expression in quasi-religious terms. Moreover, the family is often the transmitter of eco-values and of ecological practices in fact in many cases far more than the government institutions are.\textsuperscript{66} So although Spinoza did not anticipate it, the ecology movement expresses Spinoza's notion of the popular imaginative embodiment of reason as much as democracy does. While the latter was an outcome he fervently hoped for and contributed to no doubt Spinoza would be most pleased about the former as well.

Society and the family can thus introduce their members to the pleasure of self-contentment, acquiescentia. Although self-contentment is not the same as Intuition's Intellectual Love, this joy accompanies the exercise of Ratio (Reason) upon which the best societies (and families) are based. Spinoza reminds us in IVP63Dem that "all emotions that are related to the mind in so far as it is active, that is (pr.3, iii), emotions that are related to reason, are emotions of pleasure and desire only (pr.59, iii)." The Corollary is that reason eschews the external social motivations of Fear and Hope. The dependence of Spinozist ethics upon cultural embodiment in conventions and upon political implementation in society and in the family flies in the face of the freedom and globalism it promises and that is logically its own. Yet society and the family also make these values available to all and thereby open up further avenues to their fuller development. For Reason, Ratio, turns out to be the first stage of a two-stage process of gaining activity or freedom, one that can be completed only in Intuition. We now understand Spinoza's repeated insistence that Intuition emerges essentially from Ratio.

For the accomplishment of Ratio is Intuition. Spinoza initially intends in Ratio to hold the two conceptions, the regulative and coercively imposed ethical model and his notion of activity/freedom, in an uneasy identity and tension. This tension cannot, however, be consistently maintained and it pushes beyond Ratio beyond political life and beyond the family-- for resolution in divine Intuition. For the conatus to be completely active and free, Ratio's coercive ethics, as an interim socio-political strategy, can and must be transcended by the cognitive and affective achievements of Intuition. Yet that is the province of the few, never of the many, nor of society as a whole or of the family as a part.

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\textsuperscript{66} I am grateful to Vance Maxwell (private correspondence) for suggesting this point and also for proposing how it contributes to my argument about the family.
Marriage In Molière's *Misanthrope*

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Those of a Western culture tend to assume today that the true basis of marriage is love, variously defined, and that any other ground is radically insufficient. This belief makes it difficult to understand that other eras have with reason been suspicious of love as a sufficient ground of marriage. In the *Misanthrope* of Molière, the one character deeply in love, the protagonist Alceste is also incapable of marriage. In the course of the drama, he experiences both misanthropy and exclusive love so deeply that he cannot agree to marry a woman who will marry him only if they live in society and not, as he proposes, in the solitude of virtue and love. This woman's refusal of Alceste's terms leaves him unable to address another woman, Éliante, who esteems him highly, and allows her to accept the offer of Alceste's friend, Philinte, who has never shared his friend's misanthropy nor sought to base marriage uniquely on romantic love. The play ends with the sharp contrast between the deep spirit who cannot marry and those whose marriage does not arise from the depths of human subjectivity.

The play is set in the 1660's at Paris, during the time of Louis XIV. It shows the collision between two powers that would have seemed absolute to the cultivated Frenchman of the day. The more obvious is the absolute monarchy of the King and the social order that depended on it. The aristocratic revolt that had earlier menaced the Throne was gone, and the sun King had attained his majority at the beginning of the decade. The reverence in which he was held appears very clearly also in Molière's *Tartuffe* With almost semi-divine powers, the King can see the hypocrisy of Tartuffe, expose it, and restore Orgon to his earlier place in Society.

The other independent and absolute spirit is the aristocratic Alceste. While he would never challenge the King in the political realm, he aims at an equal and parallel freedom in the social and private spheres. He judges all actions by absolute standards of virtue, and he judges others not to reform them, but to denounce them and flee from them: in this lies his misanthropy. Even the Court, that magnet for aristocrats, has no appeal for him; because he despises its hypocrisy and flatter, he will flee it if necessary, to live in solitude

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1 All references to the French text are parenthetical and will take two forms, one according to the division into acts and scenes that Molière himself has made, and two, according to the consecutive numbering of lines made by G. Sablayrolles in his *Nouveaux Classiques Larousse* edition (Paris, Librairie Larousse, 1971). In the body of the paper, the text will be quoted in English translation, with the French in a footnote.

2 When the title character has duped a formerly respectable bourgeois, Orgon, and even denounced him to the King for treason, only the King can set matters to right.
in the country. He is moved by romantic love, that is, in his case, a love that finds in one other person a necessary and unique complement to oneself to the exclusion of all others. In brief he has in himself the kind of free subjectivity that one might find in the Meditations of Descartes or the paintings of Rembrandt, but this appears in his case without that governing reason which would order his passions.

This kind of collision presents an important difference from ancient Greek drama. On the one side there are the Olympian gods, the basis of the polis, the real existence of which they are. The hero is not a complete individual in himself from the beginning but by asserting or opposing one or another aspect of life in he polis, he discovers his subjectivity.³

The action of Misanthrope consists of two major plots. The first shows the development both of Alceste's misanthropy and of his love for the coquette Célimène, who lives in the vanity of being widely and constantly admired. His misanthropy becomes complete when the State prosecutes him wrongly for publishing a scandalous book, and it is revealed that Célimène has been hypocritical in her professions of love. Alceste then regards a true love-match between Célimène and himself as the only resolution possible in his situation. The other plot follows the developing friendship of Alceste's friend Philinte and Célimène's cousin, Éliante. While neither Philinte nor Éliante has the deep subjectivity of Alceste, they possess a certain freedom. Neither marries for money or station, and neither is constrained to marry according to parental match-making. Rather, as Alceste becomes more misanthropic and love-besotted, they grow in benevolent regard until the absolute failure of Alceste's proposal allows them to marry.

The action is set in the house of Célimène and presents the parallel development of Alceste's misanthropy and love. While various other characters, such as Célimène's other suitors and a woman intensely jealous of her appear, the action is centred in Alceste, Célimène, Philinte and Éliante. The first act develops Alceste's misanthropy, showing his insistence on absolute virtue and sincerity in the realms of private friendship and in civil society, and his violent hatred of anyone who does not live in accord with these absolute standards. The second act shows him in desperate love with a woman whose sincerity he openly doubts, and whose circle of admirers he despises. In the third act some of these admirers are shown growing weary of pursuing her, and a woman jealous of Célimène hypocritically advises her about her admirers. This latter also treacherously offers to prove Célimène's faithlessness to Alceste. The audience learns in the fourth act how Alceste's sincerity has led to his prosecution at the hands of the State. He also confronts Célimène for hypocrisy in maintaining her love for him and grows more obsessive in his love the more he despises her character. The fifth act shows Alceste's total hatred of

³ In the Oresteia Of Aeschylus, for example, Clytaemnestra can kill Agamemnon because she defines herself as a mother wronged by a hybristic king. Orestes can kill her only as the son of a wronged King. Finally, only the goddess Athena, appearing as the vice-gerent of Zeus, can reconcile the equally divine claims of those who defend the family and those the State. Thus human subjectivity is free only in relation to the divine and polis-order which incarnates it.
society, the revelation of Célimène's complete perfidy, and the failure of Alceste to persuade Célimène to join him in the solitude of marriage and virtue.

As the action opens, Alceste denounces his putative friend Philinte for showing excessive regard for a man he only recently met, and whose name he cannot now remember (I, i;17-22). In launching his criticism, Alceste implicitly claims to know the nature of friendship and what external expressions are suitable to the various degrees of it. In his view, one does not heap a new acquaintance with endless expressions of praise. Even for this seemingly minor social lying, Alceste thinks that the penalty should be high. If he were to do it himself, he says, he would hang himself in disgust.

Philinte is far from agreeing. He thinks it folly to be always sincere in expressing one's sentiments and telling one's acquaintance their faults as one sees them (I, I; 73-80). Further, he finds Alceste's entire attitude of misanthropy mistaken. The sins and vices of men excite his surprise, he says, no more than the various attributes of animals, inherent in their nature (I, I; 175-178), "It disturbs me no more to find men base, unjust, or selfish than to see apes mischievous, mowves savage, or the vulture ravenous for its prey." 4

Alceste inhabits a world in which virtue is a very serious business, and in which one fall from grace spells catastrophe. Soon after this exchange, Alceste declares his ideas of proper behavior, and now in relation to his own situation. First, he declares to Philinte, and in contradiction to this latter's urging, that he will take none of the steps then customary, such as visiting the judge, to insure his victory in a law-suit now pending, with an unnamed adversary about an unnamed subject. He is in the right, he declares, and his opponent is a scoundrel; that is sufficient (I, i; 185-192). He manifests his actions as consonant with his recently expressed views about friendship. A certain Oronte approaches him, loads him with praise and declares his friendship. Alceste balks at this, saying that friendship is not the work of a day, but needs time to develop. Oronte then asks him to examine some verses that he has recently written, and despite Alceste's efforts to excuse himself, Oronte presses him, until Alceste declares them ill done and inferior. The result of Alceste's honesty is no improvement in Oronte's verses but the alienation of someone who had been eager for his friendship.

As Act II opens Alceste is in a different relation to the behavior of others than mere censoriousness. Here he combines censoriousness with love, to the amusement and disdain of the object of them both, Célimène. He tells her that she admits the company of others far too readily, and that if she will not change her behavior, it will end in a breach between them. Célimène does not at all deny that she enjoys having many admirers but assures Alceste of her love for him. During this interview Alceste also denounces her admirers to their faces, telling them that their flattery only encourages Célimène's worst

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characteristics, gossip and insincerity. With the object of his love, his criticism according to his absolute ideas of virtue does not end in an aloofness based on disgust, but aim at a reform that will contribute to the well-being both of himself and Célimène. Thus two sentiments war within the breast of Alceste. He is an acerbic misanthrope toward all the world but also a man deeply in love with one member of that world, despite his knowledge of her faults. As his hatred of the world grows so does his dependence on the one person whom he despises in order to reform.

During the interview between Alceste and Célimène, Éliante has shown something of her character. Alceste had therein not only denounced Célimène's faults to her face, but had also declared criticism of the beloved an essential aspect of the lover's love. Against this Éliante expressed the view that it belongs to the lover to regard as good what is really negative in the beloved (II,iv; 711-730). Thus she says of lovers that "they count defects as perfections and know how to give them favorable names. The pale woman is comparable to jasmin in her whiteness." This sentiment indicates that Éliante does not regard Alceste as an ordinary lover; the peculiar form of his love, just expressed in her hearing, is beyond her experience and comprehension.

Thus the first two acts have set forth the contradiction in Alceste's character that defines the action. The final three acts resolve this contradiction; they show a deepening of Alceste's misanthropy as a result of the injustices he suffers and the gradual exposure of Célimène's perfidy, ending with Alceste's attempt and failure to unite virtue and love by living with Célimène in married solitude. In the third act it appears that not only Alceste is critical of Célimène. Two other suitors, presented as conceited and silly, resolve that if either receives a sure sign of her affection, the rival will give up his suit. Her vanity, as all vanity, manifests itself as completely dependent on others, and even her less observant suitors are willing to desert her. Further, a pretend friend, Arsinoé, first hypocritically advises her to behave more guardedly to her large circle of admirers, and then offers to show Alceste proof of her unfaithfulness. The temporary success of vanity in one can give rise to a jealousy that will oppose it, and thus the ultimate exposure of Célimène's unfaithfulness has its beginning here.

As the spectators discover from Philinte's report (IV,ii; 1133-1162), Alceste has had to appear before the marshals of France to answer Oronte's charge that he has been dishonored by Alceste's criticism of his poetry. Alceste, his friend reports, has been as obstinate as one could imagine. He has refused to retract his opinion of Oronte's poetry and would only agree to say that he was sorry to be so difficult to please in these matters. Alceste's insistence on speaking the truth as he understands it has thus made him an enemy where he could easily, if insincerely, have gained a potentially powerful friend. Misanthropy, therefore, does not exist in a vacuum, but can rouse a desire for vengeance in others upon one who insists on speaking his mind.

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5 *Ils comptent les défauts pour des perfections,
Et savent y donner de favorables noms.
La pâle est aux jasmins en blancheur comparable.*

6 This is a different action than the lawsuit Alceste has with the unnamed person.
At this stage in the action, moreover, Éliante's relation to Alceste becomes clearer. On the one hand, she tells Philinte, she hopes that Alceste is successful in his love for Célimène. Nevertheless she admires him for his sincerity and she would accept his hand if his suit to Célimène fails. Thus marriage is not for her based on romantic love, but on a certain esteem. Philinte now makes a proposal surprising to her, that he would happily marry her if she does not marry Alceste. Just as Philinte does not share Alceste's views on virtue, so he does not share his idea of love.

The next stage shows the love of Alceste turn to jealousy and revenge. On the basis of a letter given him by Arsinoé, Alceste realizes that Célimène does not love him alone. This sends him into a transport of rage. Earlier his denunciation of vice had been very strong and objective, but now he speaks as one himself wronged, as if here were the centre of the universe, imagining that the wrongs committed against him are the worst in the world. This appears first in his asking Éliante to marry him, so that he might be avenged on the unfaithful Célimène. Even though he will offer himself wholly to Éliante (IV,ii; 1252-1258), the end he has in mind is retaliation. Both the institution of marriage and the life of Éliante would be reduced to mere instruments of a private and subjective vengeance.

Neither Éliante nor Philinte can persuade him to moderate his passions, which only increase when he sees the object of his love and wrath. His megalomania reaches new depths as he exclaims to her (IV,iii 1281-4), "That all the horrors the mind can conceive are nothing in comparison with your perfidy! That fate, Hell, Heaven in its wrath never produced a thing so vile as you." He speaks here as if he were a god, that faithfulness to him is the criterion of virtue, and lack thereof the measure of vice.

Alceste's love takes a different turn when Célimène denies her lack of faithfulness. He does not accept this and declares how completely dependent he is on her love, (IV,iii; 1417) "My very soul depends upon your love." And he wishes her totally dependent on him as well; to this end he wishes that she were reduced to a kind of nothingness, so that he might supplant Heaven in supplying her every need. Love has led Alceste even to a kind of usurpation of divine prerogative.

This interview of love is interrupted by the arrival of Alceste's servant, who announces that a friend has left a message at his house to warn him of his imminent arrest, which arising from the lawsuit. When he returns to Célimène's house, he

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7 Molière, op. cit., p. 60.
Que toutes les horreurs don't une ame est capable
À vos deloyautés n'ont rien de comparable;
le sort, les démons et le Ciel en courroux
N'ont jamais rien produit de si mé chant que vous

8 Op. cit., p. 64
À votre foi mon âme est toute abandonnée..
announces what has happened. Not only has he lost the suit, and thereby 20,000 francs to a man he regards as a complete scoundrel, but his opponent, aided by Oronte, has wrongly accused him of writing a scandalous book; a warrant has been issued for his arrest. Philinte indicates that both these decisions can easily be contested, but Alceste would sooner suffer the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' in order to prove his misanthropic view of the world. In response, moreover, he has determined to leave Paris.

It is now apparent to Alceste that not only has society shown itself wicked in itself, but that this wickedness has now turned on him. To be punished wrongly for a dreadful crime is indeed the limit of society's injustice toward an individual. Thus it is logical that he can no longer live in it. In the hope, however, that Célimène might still love him he intends to consult her on this decision. Before he can do so, Oronte insists that Célimène make a definitive decision about her suitors, and Alceste joins in this. Thereupon proof is produced of Célimène's complete cynicism and hypocrisy: she has written letters critical of all her suitors. Célimène offers no defense and admits to Alceste that he has a right to despise her.

Alceste still loves her and will forgive everything she has done if she marry him and live in the seclusion that he has earlier proposed. She agrees to marriage, but not to the seclusion. This is intolerable to Alceste (V, iv; 1781-3), "Since you can't bring yourself to make me your all in all as you are mine, I renounce you."9 The proved wickedness of both the world and Célimène had meant that he could live only in secluded virtue where Célimène's repentance would make her still worthy of his love. Her refusal leads him, he thinks, no alternative but embittered solitude. While addressing Éliante as a woman whom a hundred virtues adorn, he feels that he cannot now offer her his hand. He truly esteems her, but having been refused by Célimène, thinks himself unworthy of her. Éliante neither accepts nor rejects these sentiments, but indicates that she would accept the offer of Philinte, who immediately makes one. Alceste, though wishing them the best, betakes himself to the solitude that his misanthropy has long indicated. Deprived of her suitors, Célimène is reduced, if only temporarily to the nothingness which vanity is. Philinte, who cannot understand the depths of his friend's spirit, concludes the drama by proposing to save him from his resolve.

The audience will see in this a benevolence that cannot be realized. Philinte has never experienced the depths of his friend's subjectivity, whether his love or misanthropy. Only when these have reached their extreme can his marriage with Éliante based on benevolent regard be realized. They can live in the mixed realm of good and evil, and so Philinte can see his friend's determination only as a kind of extremism. In comparison to the society of the day it indeed is, but it will only leave the stage for a time. In the

9 *Op. cit.*, p.74,

*Puisque vous n'êtes point, en des liens si doux,*

*Pour trouver tout en moi, comme moi tout en vous*

*Allez, je vous refuse*
Revolution that demands the absolute realization of inner virtue, it will cause all Europe to quake.

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Family vs. Kin: Is Spirit Thicker Than Blood?

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According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, when the word family was first used in English, its primary meaning was "the servants of a house or establishment; the household," a meaning which is now practically obsolete. The earliest use of "family" to mean "parents and children, whether living together or not," is dated 1667. So, when "family" was first used in English in the fifteenth century, adapted from Latin, it served a different purpose than the native English "kin", which throughout its history has referred to blood connection, or descent from a common ancestor. "Kin" also developed the sense "Related in character or qualities", parallel to "kindred," which since the sixteenth century has meant "Affinity in respect of qualities; resemblance, agreement." Both family (the shared household) and kin (the connection through blood or affinity) are important in many of L.M. Montgomery's works because plot and characterization in her works suggest that while heredity determines behaviour, it is not blood connection that determines who your family is. That is, blood kinship will cause one to behave like one's ancestors, but spiritual kinship is the proper grounding of family (household) life.

We can see the distinction between kin and family--blood relations and household companions, or spiritual kin and relatives--in Montgomery's most famous work, *Anne of Green Gables*. Anne wants to call Marilla "aunt Marilla" because, she says, "I've never had an aunt or any relation at all--not even a grandmother. It would make me feel as if I really belonged to you" (AGG 54). That is, she wants to feel that she is connected to the family as if by blood. Marilla refuses to pretend that such a connection exists, but the lack of it does not prevent Anne becoming "dearer to her than anything on earth" (AGG 186). Anne also wants "[a] bosom friend--. . . a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul" (AGG 57). Anne's concern with finding kindred spirits is important throughout the Anne books, but is most marked in *Anne of Green Gables*, in which Matthew, Diana, Miss Barry, Mrs. Allan, and Miss Stacey are all explicitly identified by Anne as kindred spirits. In *Anne's House of Dreams* the phrase is supplemented with "the

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1 When citing Montgomery's works, I will use the following abbreviations: *Anne of Green Gables*, AGG; *Anne's House of Dreams*, AHD; *Anne of Windy Poplars*, AWP; *Anne of Ingleside*, AI; *Kilmeny of the Orchard*, KO; *Emily of New Moon*, ENM; *Jane of Lantern Hill*, JLH; *Rainbow Valley*, RV; *Akin to Anne*, Akin.
race that knows Joseph", which designates the same kind of sympathetic understanding and shared point of view. For instance, when Anne first meets Cornelia Bryant, "with her old instinctive quickness to discern kindred spirits she knew she was going to like Miss Cornelia" (AHD 44). Miss Cornelia in turn tells Anne, "You belong to the race that knows Joseph," to which Anne responds "with the smile that only they of the household or the faith ever saw' (AHD 51), a phrasing which emphasizes the connection that is assumed to exist between sharers of a household or sharers of a belief system: that is, between family in the earlier meaning of the word.

The importance of finding spiritual kin is highlighted in the 'Anne' novels because the communities depicted have a strong belief in inherited traits coming out, no matter what environment a person is raised in, and therefore whole families may be eliminated a priori as unsympathetic companions. For instance, when Marilla is first contemplating keeping Anne instead of sending her back to the asylum, she thinks, "And there's nothing rude or slangy in what she does say. She's ladylike. It's likely her people were nice folks," attributing Anne's behaviour to heredity rather than training (AGG 41). The same concept of inborn character is revealed in Mrs. Lynde's warning to Marilla when she hears that the Cuthberts are considering adoption: "You're bringing a strange child into your house and home and you don't know a single thing about him nor what his disposition is like nor what sort of parents he had nor how he's likely to turn out" (AGG 7). The assumption underlying this tirade is that if one knows a child's antecedents, then one knows how he or she is likely to behave. Marilla is not wholly wedded to the notion of heredity as an absolute determinant of character, since she says in reply, "There's risks in people having children of their own if it comes to that--they don't always turn out well" (AGG 7). As well, the community identifies certain traits with certain families, and explains the behaviour of individual members of these families by referring to the family name, as when Marilla says, "Josie is a Pye, . . . so she can't help being disagreeable" (AGG 299), or when Cornelia Bryant says, "Mrs. Roderick was a Milgrave, and the Milgraves never had much sense" (AHD 47). Similarly, Franklin Westcott in Anne of Windy Poplars engineers the marriage of his daughter according to his knowledge of the family into which he wants her to marry:

"Why, I picked Jarvis Morrow out for Sibyl when they were kids . . . I knew the Morrows root and branch . . . .They're a good family, but the men don't want things they can get easily. And they're determined to get a thing when they're told they can't . . . . So I forbade him to come near the place and forbade Sibyl to have a word to say to him." (AWP 225-26)

The doom of heredity is also spelled out when a character says, "I am not doubting that the Drew babies yell all the time . . . . Yell at the thought of having to be Drews, I presume" (AI 55-6), and in a saying common in Four Winds, the setting of the books dealing with Anne's married life: "From the conceit of the Elliotts, the pride of the MacAllisters and the vain-glory of the Crawfords, good Lord deliver us" (AHD 212).

The fullest account of heredity as a factor in development occurs in Kilmeny of the Orchard, a brief romantic novel Montgomery published after the first two 'Anne' books.
In this story, the beautiful, musically gifted heroine, Kilmeny Gordon, is dumb, apparently as a result of her mother's stubborn refusal to speak a word of forgiveness to her dying father. As her aunt says, "Kilmeny can't speak because her mother wouldn't" (KO 113). It is not a case of physical heredity, but, she says, "the Good Book is right when it says the sins of the parents are visited on the children" (KO 109). Early in the novel, the hero, Eric, is warned by his cousin, a doctor, to be careful in choosing a wife, because heredity is so important:

> If people worried a little more about their unborn children--at least, to the extent of providing a proper heritage, physically, mentally, and morally, for them--and then stopped worrying about them after they are born, this world would be a very much pleasanter place to live in, and the human race would make more progress in a generation than it has done in recorded history. (KO 7)

All aspects of human behaviour, that is, are seen as part of a heritage, not as factors controlled by environment or companions. The lack of influence of environment is demonstrated in the novel through the example of Neil Gordon, the child of Italian peddlers abandoned at the Gordon home as a newborn infant and raised as one of the family. Despite having the family name and being baptised, schooled and trained in every way to fit into the rural community, Neil is a bit of an outsider, and is seen as dangerous (KO 23-4). As one of the neighbours says, "Some folks think [the Gordons] made too much of him. It doesn't always do with that kind, for 'what's bred in the bone is mighty apt to come out in flesh,' if 'taint kept down pretty well" (KO 24). According to this view, it is one's "kind" that determines behaviour, and environment and training can rarely overcome what heredity ordains. As another character says later of Neil, "he's just as much a foreigner as his parents before him--though he has been brought up on oatmeal and the shorter catechism, as the old saying has it" (KO 74). The truth of this is borne out in Neil's threats to Eric, when "the untamed fury of the Italian peasant" overrides "all the restraint of his training and environment" (KO 83).

While it is clear that Montgomery believes that blood determines behaviour, she does not suggest that it determines family affection. One need only think of the titles of the novels to see how often a household or local designation is used to define the primary relationships of the central character, suggesting that the earlier definition of family--the inmates of a household whether related by blood or not--governs Montgomery's interpretation of relationships. All of the Anne books have place names (either household or geographical) in their titles. The titles referring to houses are most significant, since those are the novels most specifically about finding or creating a family; *Anne's House of Dreams* recounts the development of the new family unit of Anne, Gilbert, their first children, and their live-in servant, Susan, while *Anne of Ingleside* is about their completed family and the development of their marriage long term. *Emily of New Moon* also recounts the creation of family ties, when Emily is taken in to the home

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2 Montgomery titles with house or place names include *Anne of Green Gables, Anne of Avonlea, Anne of the Island, Anne of Windy Poplars, Anne's House of Dreams, Anne of Ingleside, Rilla of Ingleside, Emily of New Moon, The Blue Castle, Pat of Silver Bush, Jane of Lantern Hill.*
of her mother's half-sisters, and has to learn to fit in there. Significantly, both of her aunts recognize traits in Emily that link her to their genetic inheritance and govern how they respond to her. Aunt Laura sees the smile that she remembers from her young half-sister (ENM 27, 29) and is drawn to Emily because of it, while Aunt Elizabeth recognizes the commanding "Murray look" of her father, and resents Emily because of it (ENM 107). For her part, Emily is immediately captivated by the house and Murray traditions and is happy to belong there, although she does not immediately feel affection for all her relatives.

That sharing a household does not guarantee love and emotional kinship any more than blood relationship does is shown in *Jane of Lantern Hill*, which opens with Jane Victoria Stuart, an unhappy, insecure child, living in Toronto with her mother and grandmother, believing for most of her life that her father is dead. The household atmosphere is poisoned by Jane's grandmother, who is very angry, for instance, when she finds a newspaper picture of columnist Kenneth Howard, which Jane has kept because she likes the face:

she felt as if it were the picture of someone she knew very well and liked very much . . . . She liked . . . . the slightly stern look in the eyes which yet had such jolly wrinkles at the corners . . . . the square, cleft chin which reminded Jane so strongly of something, she couldn't remember just what . . . . She knew, right off, that if she had loved her father instead of hating him she would have wanted him to look like Kenneth Howard (JLH 34).

Jane's liking is based both on the feeling of physical familiarity--an instinctive recognition of the blood tie--and on the visual clues to shared character traits, which may also be hereditary. Shortly after the picture incident, Jane's father makes contact and asks to have Jane for a summer in Prince Edward Island. Although she is unwilling to go, when Jane meets her father, she finds that he in fact is the man whose picture she had clipped from the paper, and is immediately comfortable with him, finding that they understand each other perfectly: "She felt at once the call of that mysterious kinship of soul which has nothing to do with the relationships of flesh and blood" (JLH 61). Furthermore, her experience of comfort and happiness with her father helps her develop numerous useful skills, and she becomes a self-confident and competent person, much to her jealous grandmother's chagrin. Finding spiritual kin therefore allows a character to develop talents that might otherwise be wasted, as is also shown in other stories by Montgomery. The assumption that blood connection does not guarantee love is also shown through grandmother Kennedy's relationship with her children from her first marriage. She is jealously possessive only of the child of her second marriage, Jane's mother, and does not seem to love the children of her first marriage (JLH 2-3) or to have loved their father (JLH 206).

Elsewhere, Montgomery shows that family or household attachment can be taken too far. In *Pat of Silver Bush* and *Mistress Pat*, Pat Gardiner feels her ties to her family and home (including the live-in servant, Judy) so strongly that she resists any change and rejects all her suitors rather than leave home. She eventually realizes that she loves her
childhood friend Hilary, and that it was her love for him that prevented her from accepting any of her other suitors, but this does not happen until all her siblings are married and the family home has burned down. The possibility therefore remains that it is an unhealthy attachment to family and kin at least as much as love for Hilary that keeps her from marrying, and that only the destruction of any possibility of retaining the family of her childhood frees her to accept Hilary.

The greatest concentration in Montgomery's works of stories dealing with the finding or creation of families is the collection *Akin to Anne*, consisting of magazine stories involving orphans. These stories were not meant to be read consecutively, so looking at them together makes the repetition of themes and plots clear, and draws attention to the underlying assumptions about family and orphanhood that drive the plotting of both these stories and the accounts of orphans in Montgomery's other works. In "Orphans, Twins, and L.M. Montgomery," Elizabeth Waterston states that "the orphan and the twin are aberrations in the normal family structure" (72), and argues that the frequent appearance of orphans in Montgomery's works is due to Montgomery's own position: "With no parents to protect her, she set out to make her own way in the world, intellectually, morally, and financially" (Waterston 73). This argument leaves Montgomery's kin (her extended family) out of the picture, and also leaves out her family, in the sense of the household she grew up in, shared with her maternal grandparents. Waterson assumes that the lack of the nuclear family is the drawback for an orphan, but this does not seem to have been Montgomery's own way of looking at the issue in fiction. Montgomery shares Waterston's belief that an orphan will find life difficult, much more difficult than her own life ever was, but the difficulties she depicts are caused by lack of love and sympathy rather than lack of blood relatives.

For instance, if one looks at the opening chapters of *Anne of Green Gables*, it is obvious that the role assigned to any orphan in this society is work. When Matthew and Marilla decide to get a child from the asylum, they want a boy to help Matthew because of the difficulty of getting hired help: "We decided [ten or eleven] would be the best age-old enough to be of some use in doing chores right off and young enough to be trained up proper. We mean to give him a good home and schooling" (AGG 6). The schooling is mentioned secondarily to the work, because it is primarily a worker the Cuthberts are seeking. The same is clear in Anne's account of her life before she is sent to the asylum. In the first household she lived in after her parents' death, Anne says she "helped look after the Thomas children--there were four of them younger than me--and I can tell you they took a lot of looking after," then she was taken by Mrs. Hammond, because she was "handy with children" (AGG 40). The practice of taking orphans as "menials" rather than as "foster children" (Rooke and Schnell 152) is further exemplified in the Anne series in the case of Mary Vance in *Rainbow Valley*, who was taken from the asylum by Mrs. Wiley, who, she says, "worked me to death and wouldn't give me half enough to eat, and

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3 This view of orphans is, incidentally, confirmed in *Discarding the Asylum: From Child Rescue to the Welfare State in English-Canada 1800-1950*, where the authors argue that adoption was frequently "a cloak for using [orphans] as cheap labour" (Rooke and Schnell 146) and note that *Anne of Green Gables* reflects "the typical attitudes and practices of the day" (147).
she used to larrup me 'most every day" (RV 31). Even the child who persuades Mrs. Elliott to adopt Mary when it is learned that Mrs. Wiley is dead presents the case in terms of the work Mary could do (RV 60), although when the Elliots decide to take her, they treat her as the Cuthberts treated Anne, Mrs. Elliott saying, "I'm going to do my duty by her" (RV 63), just as Marilla says that "It seems a sort of duty" to save Anne from another home where she is valued only for her labour (AGG 47). Despite work being the original purpose for which the Cuthberts want an orphan, Marilla realizes the cruelty of the life Anne has led to this point; she thinks, "What a starved, unloved life she had had--a life of drudgery and poverty and neglect" (AGG 41). Marilla chooses to keep Anne partly to save her from Mrs. Blewett, "[a] terrible worker and driver" who is looking for a little girl to help her (AGG 44). Whatever the adults may want, Anne wants kin, as is shown by her desire to address Marilla as "aunt" (AGG 53). That Anne comes to regard the Cuthberts as family, although there is no indication that she is legally adopted, is shown when she does her "duty" and gives up her college plans to stay with Marilla after Matthew's death (AGG 302). Anne does this to preserve the household, since without Anne's presence and income, Marilla would have to sell Green Gables.

A tale similar to Anne's found in Akin to Anne is "Freda's Adopted Grave", in which Freda, like the orphans referred to in the 'Anne' books, has been taken from the asylum not to form part of a family, but to "be worked to death and treated like a slave" (Akin 58). Freda feels left out of community life because she has no family grave to attend to on "graveyard day," so, finding a neglected grave, that of a thief, Freda begins to care for it the way the other girls care for family graves. This endears her to the sister of the thief, who has returned for a visit, and Freda goes with Mrs. Halliday at the end of the summer "to be her own little girl for always" and call her "Aunty" (Akin 62). Of the stories in Akin to Anne, only one, "Charlotte's Ladies", actually refers to asylum life, which is bounded by rules and regulations, although the children seem sociable and carefully tended (Akin 239). The children in the asylum assume that only the pretty children are ever adopted (Akin 242), and that "orphans should be very thankful to have any place to live in" (Akin 243), showing that they are taught to expect nothing from the world. Looking out through the asylum fence, Charlotte makes friends with two women (not knowing that they are estranged sisters), of whom she wants one for a mother (Akin 240), and the other for an aunt (Akin 241), but fears that because of her "mousy hair and freckles" no one will want her (Akin 242). As it happens, however, the woman she calls the Pretty Lady once had a daughter with mousy hair and freckles, and therefore wants Charlotte for her resemblance to the lost daughter. The 'Tall Lady,' on the other hand, wants Charlotte for her intelligence ("her usual astuteness" [Akin 249]). That is, each of the two estranged sisters individually finds something in Charlotte that suits her. When they all meet in the Matron's office when the two women come independently of each other to adopt Charlotte, the sisters are reconciled so that the three can live together, reconstituting the family and adding to it a person suitable to the household both physically and mentally.

The above-mentioned story contains many of the themes that run throughout the Akin to Anne. Most strikingly, the separation of families is accepted as a fact of life in the stories, reflecting the actual conditions of nineteenth and early-twentieth century Canada,
when the remarriage of a widowed parent frequently led to half- and step-siblings, from whom one might be separated on the death of a parent or step-parent. Given the relative difficulty of long-distance communication a hundred years ago (most of the stories in *Akin to Anne* were written between 1900 and 1910 (Akin 251-52), it is easy to see how a half-sibling might be lost, even without the animosity that sometimes develops among both blood relations and families connected by marriage. The separations of the families in these stories occur for all the above reasons. In "An Invitation Given on Impulse," "Millicent's Double," "Penelope's Party Waist," "Margaret's Patient," and "Why Not Ask Miss Price?" siblings or half-siblings are separated when the death of a parent leads to the children being divided up between the two sides of the family. In "Charlotte's Quest," "The Fraser Scholarship," "Margaret's Patient," and "Charlotte's Ladies" bad feeling between or within families is given as a reason for loss of contact, while in "Her Own People" the central character has no family because her mother ran away from home to an unhappy marriage. While the stories often involve reconciliation with or finding of lost family members, the primary relationship established is not necessarily between blood relations, showing that families need not be related by blood ties. As well, the central characters usually find something familiar or attractive about each other before a connection is established. The phrase used in the stories is that a character "reminds" another of someone, or a character thinks he or she would like to have another character for a relative. This sense of familiarity with the hitherto unknown person indicates his or her fitness to become a member of the "family" in the sense that includes all members of a household, whether connected by blood or not. The stories illustrate that blood ties do not guarantee compatibility or liking, and that a feeling of familiarity is more important than a blood relationship. Furthermore, the instant recognition of compatible companions suggests that it is not always true, as Susan Drain argues of *Anne of Green Gables*, that "adoption . . . means adaptation" (15). In these stories, it is the lack of any need to adapt when one finds one's true family that is emphasized.

For instance, In "Charlotte's Quest", the central character is unhappy living with her father's relatives, whom she does not resemble either physically or mentally. Although they are blood relations, in Montgomery's depiction this is not enough to create family love and happiness, so Charlotte seeks the help of a reputed witch to find a mother. Witch Penny recognizes Charlotte's physical and mental resemblance to her maternal grandmother, whom Charlotte does not know, and determines to send Charlotte to her home on her quest. She tells Charlotte, "But there's a chanct, there's a chanct . . . seeing as ye've got your grandmother's mouth" (Akin 22), suggesting that the grandmother's recognition of the resemblance will be a factor in determining the outcome. Following the witch's directions and reaching the house, where she is forced to stay by bad weather, Charlotte finds the place familiar and attractive, thinking that she remembers it from a dream. However, she learns that it is not a dream, but a memory of being there with her mother that makes the place attractive (Akin 30). At the end of the story, she has found a familiar place and a person she resembles and is comfortable with, and will be happier there than she would be with her equally close relatives from her father's side of the family.
Chester's case in "The Running Away of Chester" also shows that blood relationship is not necessary for a family to exist, since he leaves his father's step-sister and eventually finds a home with his mother's cousin's sister-in-law. The former is a cruel woman who keeps him only for his labour value, will not send him to school (Akin 108), and lends his labour to other people and collects the pay herself (Akin 110). The latter initially hires Chester because he needs a job, not because she needs work done, and because he reminds her of her dead nephew, Johnny (Akin 126). Significantly, Chester is attracted by the appearance of Miss Salome the first time he sees her, the day he runs away, and thinks, "If I was looking for anyone to adopt me I'd pick her" (Akin 114). Although Miss Salome values Chester as a worker, she treats him like family, putting him into her nephew's bedroom and having him take his meals with her. When she decides to keep him, saying "you are my boy now" (Akin 134), she also plans to send him to school, although she uses the terms of a business deal, saying "you shall have your board and clothes for doing odd jobs" (Akin 133). When Chester finally tells the whole story of his past, his blood connection to Johnny is revealed, but that is not enough to warrant Miss Salome keeping him, although her "help", Clemantiny, makes the argument that "you have as much claim on him as Harriet Elwell has. She ain't any real relation to him any more than you are" (Akin 138). Chester can only earn the right to stay with Miss Salome by choosing to return to Aunt Harriet, thus proving that he shares Miss Salome's values, and accepting that running away from Aunt Harriet was wrong. Aunt Harriet refuses to have him back when he offers himself, leaving him free to return with Miss Salome, who now asks to be called "Aunt Salome" (Akin 142). Another instance in which the young boy is under the harsh guardianship of his father's stepsister is "The Softening of Miss Cynthia." Cynthia Henderson does not think of her stepbrother as a relation, and therefore intends to send his orphaned twelve-year-old son Wilbur off to find work (Akin 222-23). The neighbours consider it "mean" that Cynthia "won't even take in her brother's child" (Akin 223) and Cynthia herself feels uncomfortable with her choice to send Wilbur out to work, but is not until he is gravely ill that Cynthia accepts her wrongdoing in not keeping the boy, who had told her, "[Daddy] said you were so good and kind and would love me for his sake" (Akin 224). Then she feels like a "murderess", and urges the doctor to do everything he can to save Wilbur (Akin 227). Miss Cynthia has to accept that her childhood affection for Wilbur's father, with whom she was "brought up together just like brother and sister" (Akin 221) constitutes just as strong a bond and responsibility as blood relationship would.

In some of the stories, there is a physical recognition rather than a sense of emotional kinship. The strength of the physical resemblances in these stories is itself a comment on the primacy of blood ties, since the resemblance constitutes a public pronouncement of kinship to those with the knowledge to read it. Heredity is thus presented as a strong force. In "An Invitation Given on Impulse", for instance, Ruth Mannering sees her mother's half-brother for the first time, and says, "He reminds me of somebody . . . but I can't think who it is" (Akin 51). Her uncle, in turn, is startled into seeking her family history by her resemblance to his lost sister: "you are the living image of what she was when I last saw her" (Akin 52). In "Why Not Ask Miss Price?" Miss Price's resemblance to her mother causes her brother to recognize her when they meet at the Allen's party, despite being separated as small children on their parents' death (Akin 90). Worth Gordon
of "Millicent's Double" finds a home and family through her close resemblance to a stranger's lost half-sister. Ada Cameron, "The Girl Who Drove the Cows", lives with her father's half-sister (Akin 77) and does not seem to be overworked like other orphans, but feels that since her relatives are poor and have children of their own, she must support herself and forgo her wish to study to be a teacher in favour of immediate employment (Akin 79). Ada's finding her family depends on two instances of resemblance. Pauline Palmer notes that Ada reminds her of someone, but cannot say whom (Akin 80), though she later realizes that it is an acquaintance, Mrs. Knowles (Akin 81). Mrs. Knowles sees Pauline's photograph of Ada, identifies her through her appearance as the child her cousin, and "hope[s] to find a daughter in her" (Akin 81). Ada's dream of a college education is fulfilled in her new family, proving their suitability as sympathetic companions (Akin 82).

In these stories, a character's physical resemblance to a long-lost relative is not as important as finding the family or home he or she has longed for. In a twist on the recognition plot, Penelope of "Penelope's Party Waist" connects with her grandmother's lost half-sister when the backing of a family quilt, made from a dress cherished by her grandmother, is recognized. Penelope is studying to be a teacher and her sister Doris is a typist, but their talents for music and housekeeping respectively cannot be cultivated because of their poverty. Again, Penelope feels a kinship to her great-aunt before the relationship is known, thinking, "I'd love to have a grandmother like her," and feeling that the woman looks like Doris (Akin 162). Because Doris has no false pride about using the old fabric, the sisters are granted their wishes and get a "dear, sweet aunty" (Akin 164). Similarly, the title "Her Own People" suggests just what Constance needs to find, and she is put in the position of doing so by the kindness of a fellow teacher who is sorry for the lonely woman. When Constance is forced by bad weather into a cottage that has "a strange attraction for her" (Akin 193), she finds herself "strangely attracted" to the elderly couple living there (Akin 194) and discovers that they are really her great-aunt and great-uncle. Again, the unknown family members find something familiar in each other before the relationship is known, Constance feeling "as if she had known them all her life" (Akin 194) and Aunt Flora saying that Constance reminds her of her runaway niece, Jeannie (Akin 195). As well as finding someone to love, she has learned about her mother, hitherto unknown to her, and, most importantly to her, God (Akin 196), experiencing a rebirth as a member of a family and a person (Akin 197). Like Constance, the elderly Miss Sally of "Miss Sally's Company" (who can hardly be considered an orphan, because of her age) wants contact with her cousins, because "[n]obody can quite take the place of one's own, you know" (208). The Seymour girls, who become her friends and bring their friends to meet her, also engineer her meeting with her nouveau-riche cousins, who benefit from contact with her "sincerity and honest kindliness of heart" (209) and thereby earn entry into the upper-class society of the Seymours, where they have been longing for admission (208). Another character looking for relatives is Margeret Campbell of "Margaret's Patient," an orphan who had a hard childhood and five years as paid companion to an old lady "infirm of health and temper" (Akin 231), has inherited a small house and an income from her late employer, and now only lacks "somebody of my very own to love and care for, a mother, a sister, even a cousin" (Akin 232). Through choosing to perform the generous action of nursing a young teacher, Freda, rather than going on a
pleasure trip, Margaret finds they are cousins when she discovers her mother's name in a letter in Freda's desk.

Just as finding kin is the wish of the characters mentioned above, in "Ted's Afternoon Off," "The Little Black Doll," and "Jane Lavinia" the characters want loving relationships even more than they want to cultivate their inborn artistic talents. Ted Melvin of "Ted's Afternoon Off" is an orphan put to work who has not had any time off in the four years he has lived with the Jacksons. However, he generously gives up his first half-holiday to spend the afternoon caring for a lame boy and entertaining him by playing his fiddle. This generous act is rewarded when Ted's playing for Jimmy is overheard by a famous violinist who offers to give him lessons, and finally asks him to "live with me--be my boy", which Ted is happy to do, not, as he says, "because of the music--it's because I love you" (Akin 71). The kinship is formed through the recognition on Mr. Milford's part of Ted's musical gift, so there is a similarity between them to draw them together. In the case of "Jane Lavinia", no change of abode or family occurs, but Jane chooses to stay with her aunt rather than move to New York with the family of an artist who has recognized and encouraged her talent. In New York, she would be housemaid part time, and art student part time, and there is a suggestion that she is wanted most as a maid, when her aunt says, "You needn't let Mrs. Stephens work you to death either" (Akin 101), and the narrator states that "Perhaps [Mrs. Stephens'] thoughts were less of the loss to the world of art than of the difficulty of hunting up another housemaid" (Akin 103). However, Jane Lavinia is content to stay with her aunt once she learns that her aunt loves her and appreciates her artistic talent, because "Jane Lavinia would have given love for love unstintedly, but she never supposed that Aunt Rebecca loved her" (Akin 101), showing that it is the spiritual rather than the physical kinship that matters. In "The Little Black Doll," as in "Jane Lavinia," receiving love outweighs all other considerations. Little Joyce lives with her grandmother, who does not love her because she is plain and awkward (Akin 167). Joyce will do anything for Denise, a servant who has always been a member of the household and whom she describes as "the only person in the world" who loves her (Akin 172), so she unselfishly offers her beloved doll to a famous singer if she will come and sing for Denise. Through this encounter, Joyce's own musical gift becomes known to her grandmother, who commits herself to developing Joyce's talent, but more importantly from Joyce's point of view, also starts to show affection for her (Akin 175). This story shows both that love can be shared within the broader family, the household, without existing between blood relations, and that even between blood relations, a spiritual understanding and appreciation of each other may be necessary for love to develop.

In these stories the family needs the assistance of an outsider to see the value of the child, just as in the other stories the kind act of someone outside the family puts the separated relatives in a position to recognize each other. Pauline in "The Girl Who Drove the Cows" initially seeks Ada's friendship because she thinks Ada looks "nice and jolly" despite her apparent status as a servant and therefore she wants to know her better (Akin 75). In "An Invitation Given on Impulse" Carol's generosity, prompted by her conscience, in asking the neglected Ruth rather than popular Maud to visit over the holidays causes the meeting of uncle and niece. The generous invitation of a shy outsider to a party also
leads to recognition in "Why Not Ask Miss Price?", again after a statement that, "She reminded me so much of somebody I've seen" (88). Worth Gordon earns her adoption by the confession of her part in a harmless prank, showing her moral values. In these stories, the kind or honourable act of one character makes possible the recognition that leads to the formation of new families, suggesting that there are social forces that work against the union of kin, and that only the efforts of well-intentioned outsiders can restore kin to each other after the damage done by time and separation. Just as heredity is shown to be insufficient to guarantee love, blood ties alone are not enough to keep families together or to bring them back together.

In three of the stories, good behaviour is rewarded by connection with a family without any spiritual kinship or blood connection being discovered. In "Marcella's Reward", Marcella, who works in a store, and her twelve-year-old sister live with their father's unsympathetic half-sister, until Marcella's exemplary patience with a difficult customer attracts the attention of another customer, whose face shows "a mingling of common sense and kindliness" (Akin 40). This woman turns out to be the childhood friend of Marcella's mother, and she brings the two girls to live with her, asking that they call her "Aunt Josephine" (Akin 43). Similarly, Grace, in "The Story of an Invitation", is adopted by the aunt of a friend rather than a blood relation, and, as in "An Invitation Given on Impulse" and "Why not Ask Miss Price?" the meeting of the two parties is the result of a generous act. Both parties find the family they want, Grace getting an "Aunt Meg" (Akin 216), and Aunt Meg getting "a daughter of my own" (Akin 217). Elliott Hanselpakker Campbell is another orphan, like Marcella, whose decency earns him a home, love, and security when his birth name is recognized by his mother's half-sister, who wants him to be "my boy forever" (Akin 185). In this case there is no recognition of familiar appearance or sympathetic character traits beyond the description of Mrs. Fraser as "motherly-looking" (Akin 184), just as in "Marcella's Reward" and "The Story of an Invitation" there is nothing to prompt an interest in the orphan except personal qualities. The families created are therefore formed entirely on the basis of esteem, even Mrs. Fraser in "The Fraser Scholarship" finding out Elliott's original surname through the interest she feels on account of his integrity.

The stories in Akin to Anne and the novels, when viewed together in this way, seem to present a view of family that goes against dominant twentieth century western views of the primary and crucial family unit being the "nuclear" family of parents and children. While such families exist in Montgomery's works, they do not dominate, and may be, as is suggested regarding Pat Gardiner, unhealthy. While some characters do find long-lost blood relatives, the emphasis in the stories and novels is not on the blood relationship, which is just a device that allows recognition to occur, but on the creation of congenial households. Kinship affinity of spirit outweighs blood, and family is found in a sympathetic household rather than in descent from a common ancestor.
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Freedom And The Tie That Binds: Marriage As An Ethical Institution

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I. Marriage And Modern Freedom

The issue of the breakdown of the marriage bond in Western societies has become a routine object of social and moral concern, political and public debate. This is striking, given that in most non-western cultures still and in every society heretofore, marriage has been insisted upon as the required precondition for the mating of men and women as the act that initiates and sustains the family order considered the foundation of all tribal and civil life. As the bedrock of communal social order and wellspring of a whole complex of coincident cultural values, it has traditionally been not only legally required, regulated and protected, but regarded as divinely ordained and thus to be sacramentally consecrated.

Contemporary statistics tell a different story; the question is seriously raised how the marriage tie can survive the optionalism that dominates modern attitudes or whether, after all, it is an outmoded institution whose time has run out. The rate of divorce soars beyond one out of every two; the serial polygamy of successive remarriage is not only accepted but prepared for in prenuptial agreements; the incidence of single parenthood, so-called, has increased by leaps and bounds. The legitimization of liaisons once thought beyond the moral pale -- 'open' marriage, single parenthood, homosexual coupling -- now test the boundaries of established legal and moral definition based in most cultures on the gold standard of once in a lifetime monogamy.

Contemporary moralists interpret these changes negatively as a collapse of 'traditional family values' in a popular culture which, in the name of sexual freedom, has given itself over to the frantic pursuit of unlimited promiscuity and sexual anarchy. Nor is it Christians alone who view Western society as in decay; it is the principal charge other world-religious cultures now make against the West. Efforts to reverse the libidinal tide prove notoriously ineffectual, however, for the spirit of 'decadence' is far too alive, far too certain of its right, to be influenced by attempts to reinstate former moralities or resuscitate old time religion. For what they oppose is the irresistible force of a principle, the modern principle of freedom which, having broken in upon human consciousness and human history, simply will not be denied.

The freedom of the individual is modernity's absolute; from it the whole contemporary culture of subjective or natural right draws its energy. How this freedom is actually understood and applied is thus crucial. It can readily be agreed that in practice the vaunted right to sexual freedom is widely exploited to justify what may be described more conventionally as erotic excess and plain lasciviousness, but it no doubt has also just the opposite, and positive, connotation of the liberation of individuals from what may be seen as the prison of a former legalistic and moralistic obsessions with sexual relations, identifications and fixations. The idea of freedom simply has this ambiguity in it: it implies self-determination but also caprice, conscience but also wantonness; at once a principle of peace and of violence, of community and anarchy.

It is principally the presumption of freedom that underlay the ultra-modernist revolutions that dominated the twentieth century. It is characteristic of their outlook that everything is made to flow from the assumption, wholly dogmatic, that freedom is more than a mere moral ideal or intellectual principle but the actual truth of human existence. 'Man', 'the individual' is said to be freedom become flesh; there is no freedom other than this here-and-now human freedom. That this alone is absolute truth becomes the chief article of faith of a para-religious, 'ideological' spirit for which freedom is directly identical with human nature as such, thus also the immediately given end of all human practice.

The psychology and sociology of the 20th century are founded on this dogma which is also plainly enough witnessed in common everyday assumptions: that democracy is the only valid political system, that justice is founded on individual right, that free choice is the basis of social order, that no wisdom preempts the individual's own opinion, that every problem is open to a human solution, that techno-economic conquest of nature is prime mover in human practice, that the analysis of instinctive human behaviour is the true business of psychology. The common theme is the certainty individuals have of themselves as freedom incarnate; of being, though finite in a thousand ways, nonetheless the ultimate reference point for whatever is or is not, ought to be or ought not, makes sense or nonsense, can or cannot be done. Ethically radical individual freedom yields the principle that one has an absolute right to choose, indifferent to whether what is actually chosen be judged 'good' or 'evil', for this judgement too belongs to the chooser. This principle is devastating when applied to social and ethical institutions since it suggests that these are tolerable only where they are answerable to individuals and exist solely to advance their rights, interests and advantages. Accordingly, institutions that should claim an authority independent of these subjective interests must be summarily declared illegitimate: freedom demands their overthrow.

The authority of the institution of marriage would seem especially compromised by an ethics wherein individual freedom preempts every other basis of human compact. It is more than that in a marriage between free individuals the feelings, interests and choices of each must be absolutely respected: they must be paramount, taking precedence over the compact itself. This runs entirely contrary to the traditional language of the marriage sacrament which typically expresses quite the opposite sentiment and priority, enjoining individuals to join together as one and to submit themselves to this union. For individuals...
who assume their freedom to be immediately their own, as given and unlimited, nothing would appear to be more offensive than that matrimony be thought binding in the sense of requiring an unreasoned, unchosen submission to the institution itself. They will demand to be seen, not only as freely choosing to marry at all, but as retaining and enjoying their freedom within the marriage thereafter.

Where the ultra-modernist dogma of individual freedom holds sway in human relations, the only legitimate grounds for marrying are subjective ones. It may be to consummate a consuming sexual infatuation, to affirm a commitment to an otherwise casual relationship, to facilitate the legal status of children or property, to defer kindly to traditional scruples of society or family, to provide occasion for friends to celebrate a couple's romantic liaison; something of the kind. The standard of subjective choice is the common theme: the married state is viewed as having no objective ethical or logical status of its own; it is certainly not, as was traditionally assumed, the sole precondition of entry into sexual partnership. It is for the participating individuals alone to decide what the terms of their marriage shall be. It has accordingly become common for couples not to bother with marriage at all, to marry only after years of living together on other terms, to set contractual preconditions under which the marriage is to be tolerated or annulled, to agree that the marriage remain 'open'; even to argue seriously (and not inconsistently) that a couple truly dedicated to and respectful one another will deliberately reject the option of marriage as an archaic limitation upon an authentic loving relationship.

If a majority still chooses to go through the customary rituals, even then they are rarely undergone in the traditional spirit of a religious sacrament and explicit legal act. Vows declaring two individuals permanently one in the sight of God, a bond no one may put asunder, are taken as mostly a quaint rhetoric or archaic poetry. To take such words seriously would contravene what alone is infinitely important: the certainty individuals have of their absolute freedom, requiring as it does that self-esteem take precedence over other-esteem and certainly esteem for long-abandoned divinities. The idea of a 'bond' is tolerated only where understood as a metaphor for good intention. Otherwise, marriage is taken for the most part as an optional extension of what is vaguely called a 'relationship', i.e., a sexual compact entered into and sustained by the force of subjective commitment alone, a commitment which can be just as freely withdrawn as made. On these terms the ideal relationship is one in which its participants are at once engaged and disengaged; at once liberated from the condition to which they are also committed.

To the conservative traditionalist, marriage so reduced to a subjective relationship only is intrinsically unstable, tentative and unfulfilling -- not to speak of 'immoral'. It makes marriage a wholly arbitrary option within a culture otherwise given over to promiscuous sexual 'openness'. The sacrament of marriage is in this context at best a matter of romantic deference to tradition, confirming a decision already taken to 'live together'. What is said over the couple or who says it matters little, as does where or how the wedding takes place: in a church, a lawyers office or a hot-air balloon.

The incompatibility between individual freedom and institutional life, where a principle of positive liberation appears also as a principle of social and moral decadence,
has become a major contemporary issue on many fronts. The issue is not a new one but belongs to the recent history of humanism in its attempt to work out how human freedom can be understood as the basis of a new order and civilization. The leading strains of nineteenth and twentieth century were concerned chiefly with this task, and with specific regard to their attitudes toward the marriage bond three in particular are instructive to consider: the socioeconomic theory of marriage, the psychoanalytical and the ethical. The first and the second are generally negative with respect to the consequence of modern freedom for the family in general; the third has a positive view. Engels and Freud provide examples of the former negative, doctrinaire approach, Hegel of the positive or speculative; their differences stemming from the manner in which each understood freedom as the prime motive force in human relations: whether as labour or libido, or as love.

II. Marriage As A Repressive Institution

i. Ultra-modernist Anthropology

The perennial difficulty with giving a philosophical account of marriage lies in its having at once a natural and an ethical basis, an ambiguity generative of tensions and contradictions in practice as well as in theory. That marriage inevitably involves the sexual, procreative impulse common to all animals tempts the view that the institution itself is wholly biological in origin, driven and sustained by instincts no different than found in other animals. If the married state is characterized as more than this, as having an authentically legal, moral and public status, this can be thought to describe no more than peculiar habits and customs which the human species has somehow developed to stabilize reproduction and ensure species survival. The institution of marriage can thus still be seen as grafted upon what otherwise remains a purely sexual-organic liaison

Yet it remains the fact that, wherever marriage has existed among human beings (namely everywhere), it has in all cultures been viewed as primarily an ethical union, that is, specifically not a liaison entered into spontaneously but with deliberation and consciousness, a bond ceremonially authenticated according to some rubric meant to bring the sexual relation under a law that is higher than the natural. Apart from the timeless appeal, romantic or simply lascivious, to the 'illicit' pleasures of sexuality, it is only in very recent times that a serious intellectual and 'post-moral' case has been made for seeing non-marital sexual activity as a right, even a virtue. Indeed, far from socially destructive or morally improper, open non-, pre- and extra-marital sexuality has come to be regarded as itself an expression of freedom, its indulgence a liberation from the repressive strictures of traditional sexual morality.

It is a view that owes its development to those nineteenth century philosophers who attempted, in various ways, to sketch the terms of an ultra-modern, post-traditional 'return to nature': Marx, Nietzsche, Engels, Freud et al. The return they would advocate, however, was not to 'nature' in the older sense of a mechanistic order external to mind or spirit, but to a humanized nature or naturalized humanity in the sense of a reductionism
which, though recognizing the distinctiveness of the human, would see it nonetheless as continuous with nature. The followers of Feuerbach, for example, never tired of insisting that 'materialism' as they intended it was not the materialism of Enlightenment, limited precisely in presupposing a de-humanized nature no less metaphysical in conception than the de-naturalized reason or mind of traditional philosophy. Nietzsche also, from a reverse perspective, would insist that the existential psychology he would install as "the new queen of the sciences" is not the older psychology of the soul or spirit but the very contrary: a psychology of specifically human instincts generalized as a universal principle of nature. This collapsing of the distinction between spiritual and natural is thus anti-metaphysical, anti-theological and anti-moralist in very principle. It falls generally into two types: as an enthusiasm for evolutionary biology as providing the clue to a new, naturalistic analysis of human psychology and culture, and a spiritualistic enthusiasm for the occult deriving from the idea of spirit as a para-natural dimension. From either standpoint, that nature be viewed as a reality alien to conscious human life is no less unacceptable than that the account of the human leaves the immediacy of human nature out of account.

In the post-Hegelian era, the coincidence of the spiritual and the natural in the human being as such was to become the general presumption. On this account ultra-modernist thought would seek the overthrow of all former theology and philosophy, supplanting them with ideological and existential dogmas that would render the human realm as absolute unto itself. Freedom comes to be represented as concretely manifest in human self-existence and human self-activity, that is, wholly in biological or socioeconomic terms. In this revolutionary rendering of the ultimacy of human being and the human world is born the spirit of absolutism, the soul of ultra-modernist culture. It set itself against the politics, morality, aesthetics, religion and philosophy of tradition, accusing it of having sought falsely to ground the human in the transcendent, hence in a manner hostile to the appreciation of human freedom as a living and present spiritual-natural identity.

To the extent in absolutism that freedom comes to be determined specifically and exclusively as immediate in the existing individual, whether as such or collectively, to that extent freedom itself acquires a 'naturalistic' meaning. The objective of the new ideologies was accordingly to produce a doctrine of 'man' wholly from the side of nature, appealing to some para-natural quality or capacity the possession of which distinguishes man from the animals but which makes no reference at all to any un-natural ground in God, reason, self-consciousness, spirit or whatever. The new human sciences they founded opposed themselves to the so-called 'alienated' freedom of philosophical idealism and the theological tradition, to which they presumed themselves the successors; they sought rather to adapt natural-scientific method to take account of the human dimension in nature while avoiding any simple reversion to the simplistic physicalism of the older sciences. The newer biological sciences and especially the theory of evolution provided a principal resource for this enterprise.

This ultra-modernist 'overcoming' owed its origin nonetheless to the principal fruits of the same speculative tradition against which it turned, namely the key idea of a
unification of the spiritual and the natural developed in modern philosophy from Descartes to Hegel. How this principle can be at once preserved, and yet wrested from all its historical or philosophical mediations and asserted dogmatically as the immediate truth of human freedom, is a problem that has continue to vex post-modern thinking ever since. Proposals for a theory of 'natural' human freedom have developed generally along two distinct lines, one defining freedom in terms of a practical, economic-technological subordination of nature, the other defining freedom rather as the very immediacy of the particular individual's existence. These two positions, sociological and psychological humanism, continue directly to oppose and sustain one another. To a freedom thought to belong immediately to the existing individual as such, the idea of a freedom dependent on practical-material circumstances is anathema; to the practical will whose aim is to achieve an objectively free human world, the idea that freedom is no more than an existential quality is equally to be shunned. This ambiguity had been already recognized by Hegel who perceived human freedom, as 'human', to be finite in precisely this sense: that where grasped only in its immediacy, that is, only on its natural side, it falls inevitably into these two contrary absolutisms, a practical and an existential, each contradicting the other and each fatally unable to realize the freedom it would claim as concrete.

It is just into such a division that post-philosophical absolutism after Hegel actually fell, seeking to transmute the principle of freedom into human terms. Both equally demanded an end to all theology, metaphysics and morality, both were hostile to traditional institutions, both confronted each other from the beginning in mutual, irreconcilable opposition. From their initial statements with Comte and Schopenhauer, through various mutations of the later Marxist-Existentialistist standoff, to current attempts of the post-philosophers to be free of all 'metanarratives' as such, positivism and nihilism have dominated thinking since Hegel. In what follows, two writers who later gave these post-philosophical arguments a more popular form, Friedrich Engels and Sigmund Freud, are briefly consulted to note how the institution of marriage fares in their hands; then we return to the question as to how, in a properly philosophical view, not only are freedom and marriage reconcilable but their reconciliation is essential to a true account of one and the other.

ii. Marriage as Means of Production

While the traditional fine words of religion and romanticism remain the lingua franca of formal marriage, the institution itself has been rendered impotent and chaotic by ever more extreme appeals to the sanctity of the freedom of the individual. But in addition to the hollowness introduced by a pervasive culture of choice-centred subjectivism, more overt obstacles to the survival of marriage exist in the continuing impact of para-philosophical ideologies spawned in the past century which directly opposed the idea of an ethical or spiritual basis of human institutions and would replace it with a counter-philosophical, natural-scientific anthropology which attempts to discover

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the origin of institutions wholly in biological or evolutionary causes. Thus, however festooned with ritualistic paraphernalia and symbolic confections, courtship and marriage are to be described as nothing more than extensions and elaborations of sexual mating as found among all animals, entirely instinctive in meaning and motivation and having no other significance beyond the biological maintenance of the species. Like the bow-and-arrow or cooking, marriage is an evolutionary tool for the regulation of reproduction to ensure the collective economic welfare of a human herd.

As Marx's collaborator in the development and defense of 'scientific socialism' it was Engels' special preoccupation to seek its justification in the natural sciences. The aim of 'dialectical materialism' (as also the root of its self-inconsistency) is the reinterpretation of freedom as an aspect of human 'species-activity', i.e., the productive behaviour through which an animal species acquires its means of subsistence. Human species-activity is unique only in that it involves the evolutionary contingencies of a larger brain, an opposable thumb and the like, differences which permit the human animal to develop a much wider range of technical skills. From this difference alone, it is thought, the whole of human society and history may be deduced, without any appeal to religious or ethical-philosophical concepts. 'Freedom' here will mean only the free exercise of such species-productivity, and if society as it stands is so ordered as to inhibit free access on the part of its members to the means of production, then dialectical tensions result leading inevitably to the demand for liberation from this impediment. On this swings the whole history of the world; it is all that need be said regarding the human aspiration to freedom.

The remarkable enthusiasm for anthropological studies in and since the nineteenth century was nurtured by this absolute-humanist ideal of a wholly socio-economic account, not only of the origins of specific customs and institutions but of the human community itself. Engels was driven by the wish to discover in the very dawning of human society the pure paradigm of a primitive communist order of life, assuring absolute equality of access to the means of production, as a way of justifying a revolutionary understanding of subsequent civilization, seen as a falling away from this original condition -- a common tactic in all ultra-modernist ideologies. In his The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State he surveys recent anthropological literature on the origin and development of the institution of matrimony in particular. Noting that the marital practices of primitive peoples are typically at variance with what is paradigmatic in later civilized societies, namely the institution of monogamy, Engels turns this commonplace observation on its head: earlier customs regarding group marriage, rules against clan incest, polygyny and the like are not to be seen as rude and confused precursors of a civilized ethic of monogamy, but as way-stations in a long history of cultural decay culminating in the institution of monogamous marriage as representing the final corruption.

\[3\] Conjuring cultures predating those for which there is any reasonable archaeological evidence is a typical ploy of nineteenth and twentieth century romanticism, as is distorting known ancient cultures in support of ultra-modernist ideologies, as Nietzsche or Heidegger. Cf. my "The Post-Philosophical Attack on Plato" Animus 4 (1999), www.mun.ca/animus/1999v4/Jackson4.
Engels had a considerable acquaintance with, and enthusiasm for, the scientific theories of his day: the transformation of energies, the discovery of the living cell, the theory of evolution etc. He drew on them in support of a dialectical account of nature designed to facilitate an anthropology that could justify a politics of freedom-as-equality consistent with a seamless continuity between nature and humanity. The principal feature distinguishing man from other animals, he argued, is 'labour', the unique capacity for advanced forms of natural productive and reproductive activity made possible through the evolution of fingers and toes, a "brain capable of consciousness", unique teeth and tongue and the like.

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is ... the production and reproduction of immediate life -- on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species.

Labour for Engels is "infinitely more" than a mere aspect of human behaviour: "we have to say that labour created man himself." In support, he recites a familiar Darwinian tale of apes descending from trees, liberating hands as first among tools, the evolution from 'savage' grazer to 'barbarian' meat-eater, requiring the harnessing of fire, the domestication of animals and so on. With these 'events' begin the long history of the "emancipation of man", conceived as evolution extended into the progressive technologization of production.

Among all the innovations contributing to this emancipation, on Engels' account, is the "invention" of society, described as a regime of absolute equality among individuals in the common production of the means of subsistence and the reproduction of the race. As freedom for Engels has reference only to equality in natural-productive activity, a free society has nothing to do with conformity to some divinely established or rational ethical order, but with the recovery of an original 'natural' instinct to social equality that has been perverted. And this ideal equality is to apply to free access, not only to the means (and fruits) of material production, but also to the means of propagating the species: "sexual equality". That Engels chooses to speak of sexual 'reproduction' as itself a form of 'production' is of key significance for his view on marriage and the family.

Conceived in evolutionary terms, social organization has the aim of herd-solidarity, a technique of preservation no different in principle than tooth, claw, venom or flight in the case of other species. As the chief means of survival of a species too weak to defend itself otherwise against predators, the requirement of herd-solidarity -- of 'equality' -- is for human beings absolute, requiring among other things a reproductive regime unique to the species. Engels notes that while a whole range of human marital customs is found also found among animals -- polygyny in wolves, polyandry in bees, monogamy in bears and

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4 This concern with reinterpreting the sciences of nature consistent with a seamless "transition from nature to man" is the theme of Engels' Dialectics of Nature, (tr. Dutt) New York, 1940.
6 Ibid, p.251.
birds, etc. -- none qualify as the uniquely human form of the sexual relation. Indeed, what is remarkable among other animals, Engels claims, is that the formation of exclusive sexual liaisons among males and females inevitably breeds jealousies and fractious competitions where only the fittest survive, a circumstance that would be inimical to the welfare of the human herd. The 'invention' of society required a new regime of non-exclusive sexuality as alone compatible with maintaining herd solidarity. In short, promiscuous sexuality is the reproductive relation most consistent with the preservation of the human community and so must have been, Engels speculates, the instinctive tendency among the earliest peoples.

If we consider the most primitive known forms of family ... then the form of sexual intercourse can only be described as promiscuous -- promiscuous in so far as the restrictions later established by custom did not yet exist.7

Engels hastens to add that universal promiscuity does not necessarily imply a general melee of "mixed mating" but is tolerant of sexual pairing and other formats so long as these are understood as non-binding and non-exclusive.

The hypothesis of a pre-primitive culture in which marriage as such did not yet exist has all the earmarks of a nineteenth century ideal read back into the mythical past. On its basis, Engels analyzes the matrimonial customs of all subsequent societies as strictures imposed on this original promiscuity of the human herd, strictures whose removal requires a revolutionary subordination of all human activity, including sexual activity, to the one standard of absolute equality of production. Engels quotes with conviction a contemporary kindred spirit, the American anthropologist L. H. Morgan, notable for his mid-century studies of the Iroquois, who foresaw a final "mastery over property" and the "dissolution" of social relations based on it, foreshadowing "the next higher plane of society, a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes."8 For this revival, conjectured ancient cultures provide the template: fictional promiscuous societies where males and females participate as equals in reproductive and productive activity; a fusion of economic with domestic life indifferent to gender, where marriage is irrelevant since every woman is already married in principle to every man, as every man to every woman; where all children, conceived and raised in common, have all adults for parents; in short, a society in which the family as a distinct social structure simply does not exist. Such a vision of a "higher liberty", barely imaginable let alone practicable, provided the model for many recent and notoriously violent experiments.

More general anthropological opinion now hews to the view that wherever human community is found there is inevitably a system of kinship of some sort with distinct customs regarding sexual relations. "Central to the social organization of most primitive peoples" writes a noted anthropologist, "is the grouping of tribesmen into kin of various categories, some of whom one can marry and some of whom one cannot".9 Kinship theory is indeed one of anthropology's principal obsessions. Engels, however, would

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7 Ibid., p.101.
8 Ibid., p.237. The italics are Engels'.
9 E.B.Leacock, in an Introductory essay in Engels, The Origin etc.
develop a history of kinship beginning with the hypothesis of a primitively promiscuous and thus essentially kin-less society, tracing its stages of 'decline' through various kinship systems to the institution of monogamy, seen as an institution for the protection of private property through "enslavement" of women. The 'consanguine family' (no pure form of which, again, is actually known) forms the first stage in this decay; husbands and wives possess each other in common to form broad families, the only sexual taboo being against relations between parents and offspring. Then in the 'punaluan' system the sexual ban is extended to incest between siblings; more definite families are formed from which, however, the brothers of wives and the sisters of husbands are excluded. Occupying a vast territory between total promiscuity and strict monogamy, is a host of interim variations on the marriage/incest theme, expressed through complex kinship regulations which establish and conserve clan distinctions, the rules of endogamous (in-tribal) exclusions or the exogamous (out-tribal) bartering or stealing of brides and the like. The family thus has its definition for Engels within such broad determinations of kinship relations, relations typically based on matrilineage since, under such systems, only mothers can possibly know who their children are.

Out of this miasma emerges a general restriction against marriage between blood relatives and a tendency toward 'pairing' which only approximates monogamy since, typically, absolute fidelity is required only of females on pain of severe punishment, while males remain free to practice polygamy as in many late-barbarian cultures still. An abrupt shift from matrilineage to patrilineage as determinative of ancestry is coincided with male usurpation of sexuality as a means of securing private property. It is then only a short step to the ancient Roman familia (= patrimonium) where the pater familias had power of life and death over the whole household, and from there to modern bourgeois monogamy under which regime, according to Engels' hyperbole, women are reduced to whores and marriage exists exclusively for the pleasure and profit of males.

The overthrow of mother right was the world-historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children.¹⁰

While among upper bourgeois families of Engels' day, robber-baron capitalism had indeed a degrading effect upon family life, the view that monogamous marriage has its sole inspiration in a perverse economics is supported neither in fact nor in principle. It rather belongs to an ideological view of human history which, presupposing a primeval, natural impulse to social solidarity, sees only the corruption of this pristine order by greed and lust as modes of production become progressively more complex and wealth more fluid. The promiscuous paradise mutates into an endogamy of hunter-gatherers, again into the exogamy kinships of herders and farmers and finally, in the age of industrial work, into bourgeois monogamy as the nadir of the human sexual relationship. The historic war of classes, clans and sexes ends with private ownership, enforcing divisions of labour and the enslavement by some of others through control of the means

¹⁰ Engels, The Origins etc. p.120.
of production and reproduction. The "revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes", the final liberation from the bondage of class, corporation, family and state, is to be accomplished at a single stroke in the social revolution which would eliminate private property.

Engels' account of how sexual freedom is to be renewed in the revolutionary society seems dubiously simplistic:

The first condition for the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry and this in turn demands that the characteristic of the monogamous family as the economic unity of society be abolished. (137-80)

As to the actual form sexual relations and the parenting of children are to take in the new order, Engels, like Marx, remains vague. His account of a society of liberated individuals no longer limited by moral or institutional constraints on promiscuity and for whom monogamous marriage has come to be regarded as a bourgeois convention containing a bias against the absolute right to choose whatever form of sexual relationship, parenthood or gender preference one should choose, more aptly describes the currently extant situation in late-liberal societies so much complained of by conservatives. Engels' view of the end of the family would seem to offer, in place of traditional monogamy, two equally uncertain alternatives: either the maintenance of the shell of family life as an extension of collectivist political policy (generally what happened under most communist regimes) or else the fragmentation of the marital bond into a myriad of experimental relationships with total emphasis on the element of free choice -- marriage as state-approved sexual mating or marriage as socially approved and tolerated promiscuity.

iii. The Psychopathology of Marriage

The theories of Sigmund Freud provide an influential example of the other main form of ultra-modernist ideology, namely psychological absolutism, the attempt to construct a theory of human self-consciousness based on the redefinition of subjectivity as a quasi-biological human instinct. The principal assumption is that there is nothing spiritual, supra-natural or even 'psychic' about human psychological life, that it has its whole commencement in organic or para-organic impulses, that it is the extension of nature into human nature, as it were. Conscious, rational experience is as a whole reduced to this source in 'the unconscious', that is, the immediacy of instinctual subjectivity conceived as primal psycho-physical energy or an epi-biological drive. Having so appropriated the whole human world to this absolute, the new psychologies set up shop as the scientific successors to theology and philosophy.

Psychological absolutism precisely mirrors the sociological absolutism Engels was among the first to expound. Pan-psychism -- as it used to be called -- had its earliest proponent in Schopenhauer, whose works Freud knew and admired. Schopenhauer had argued that absolute reality is Will, not 'will' in its practical meaning but understood as 'pure affect', a relentless and irrepressible impulse to selfhood by definition irrational and
of which the phenomenal or rational world-for-consciousness is but its 'representation'. Nature has its being in this absolute urging or will-to-self; the violence of nature generally and the limitless egoism of the human animal being its typical manifestations. With Nietzsche will-to-self becomes more closely defined as self-affirmation, will-to-power -- "freedom as instinct" as he described it. The same ontology of self-feeling as an absolute affect has been elaborated from various perspectives: aesthetic with Jung, parapsychological with Reich and Blavatsky, existential with Jaspers. Borrowing directly from Nietzsche's principle, Adler devised a psychoanalysis of dominance and submission, an approach later revived with Foucault and others as a general phenomenology of power. Freud, however, insisted such a psychology could only be 'scientifically' argued where instinct is defined biologically, and on this ground adopted sexual desire (lat. libido) as the instinctual substance of psychic life.

In Freudian science, actual persons -- deliberating, self-conscious individuals -- are nowhere to be found, only the erotically charged human animal whose subjective life consists entirely in endless excitation, 'catheysis', rationalization and release of libidinal tensions. Libido is not to be thought as sexual instinct in the strict biological sense of a fixed species-propensity impelling organisms to mate and reproduce. Human libido is more than that: a wholly amorphous, indiscriminate, self-centred eroticism that seeks its objects for no other purpose than the satisfaction that comes with release of its own tensions. In the older moral language, libido is simply lust; in Freud's own term, the "Lustprinzip". It is due to its indiscriminateness that human sexuality is inherently prone to perversion -- a wisdom tradition knew well enough in other ways but which Freud reconstructs in psychiatric terms of a naturally uninhibited sexuality (cf. Engels' primitive promiscuity) that suffers various forms of repression and stands in need of restoration to 'health' by means of clinical techniques of disinhibition.

Libido, sexual lust, is not merely a 'factor' in the psychology of individual subjectivity; it is subjectivity itself, 'id', the 'unconscious self'. All other aspects of selfhood -- 'ego', 'superego' -- are derivative moves. As with Schopenhauer's Wille, libido is by definition narcissistic, that is, it is 'auto-erotic', attaching itself to objects indifferently whether they be one's own or another's body-parts or even inert things. For psychoanalysis, sexuality is 'the' human instinct precisely because it has this primitive relation to another inherent in it: a drive to cathexis, of being-for-self-in-another, and it is upon this essentially narcissistic relation that Freud took all other relations to be constructed. Relentless in seeking its excitation and satisfaction, libido finds itself frustrated by restraints imposed by society, an obstacle whose origin turns out to be enigmatic for Freud. At first convinced social mores too had an erotic origin, the embodiment of psycho-sexual ambiguities arising out of an inner sense of guilt or remorse, in later writings, despairing of this argument, he postulating a universal counter-instinct, the death-wish or thanatos, as responsible for the repressiveness of civilized society. Freud's concern to assign libidinal inhibition to a source that is equally instinctive rather than simply to some externally restrictive force -- 'culture', 'society' or whatever -- springs from the desire to maintain a strict psychological absolutism which requires that nothing be brought in from outside, that everything be drawn into the orbit of the unconscious life itself and its complex of dynamics: cathexis, conflict, repression,
perversion and so forth; so that even the restrictiveness or 'malaise' of moral culture itself can be seen as rooted in the unconscious life.\textsuperscript{11}

Freud's view of marital relations is of course entirely an extension of his theory of universal libidinal narcissism. As the theory runs, the form of libidinal desire alters as the body matures and so do its preferred objects of cathexis. The transitions from oral to anal to coital forms of excitation and satisfaction are fraught with unique psychoneurotic pitfalls: fixation upon one or another sexual object, anxiety or frustration in adapting from one object to another, perseveration of earlier in later libidinal forms and so on. The resulting dynamics of regression, transference, repression, sublimation and the rest were the stock in trade of Freud's ventures into the "psychopathology of everyday life".

In justifying these pan-eroticism conjectures as a complete account of the human psyche, Freud's principal appeal was to clinical evidence; but he also sought to demonstrate their plausibility through ventures into other areas of inquiry -- art, anthropology, religion. The maturing in the human animal from its infantile libidinal state to further forms of sexual expressions -- oral, anal, phallic, genital -- provided Freud with the map and model for excursions into the anthropology of human customs and institutions, including especially those of marriage and the family, the central theme identified as a universal conflict between the demands of sexual instinct and inhibitions embodied in a universal horror of incest. Where Engels understood the history of the forms of marriage and kinship as a function of modes of production, Freud interprets the same from the standpoint of this alleged primeval fear of incest. 'Libido' thus bears the same burden in psychoanalysis as 'labour' does in socialist economics: the primal activity which, in Engels' phrase, "creates man", that is, defines the human species as human in distinction from other animals. If the theory of man-as-labour sought validation in the postulation of a pristine economic relation of human beings to nature subsequently corrupted as production became increasingly capitalistic, so Freud provides the precise psychological counterpoint: the roots of human society not socio-economic but springing from libidinal conflicts aboriginal in human nature struggling to come to terms with restrictions of its own making. In contrast with Engels he finds in primitive customs of marriage, kinship and taboo the further paradigm and proof of his conception of primal psychosexual dynamics.

His account of the origins of society, marriage and the family is another classic of the romanticist mythopoetic appeal to primitive human beginnings, which image provides the template against which later civilization and its 'discontents' are then to be judged. For Freud, what is 'primitive' is not savage society, however, but infantile sexuality, the instinctive and libidinal attachment of a suckling child to its mother. However repellant to moral convention, Freud always insisted that infantile sexuality was key to the whole theory, oral gratification the original libidinal experience underlying all later forms of sexual interaction. Mother-lust is thus a regressive yearning residual in everyone, and as

such a principal object of repression throughout life. It is held in check partly by a socially inculcated horror of incest whose purpose is to destroy family feeling at its root, thereby to make higher levels of social organization possible.\(^12\) Partly it remains in competition with other modes of sensuality as they appear: with the negative eroticism of anal excitation, with the bi-sexual, 'phallic' eroticism of puberty, and finally with the 'mature' sexuality which appears when reproductive biochemistry leads individuals to find their chief erotic satisfaction in the explicit act of mating. In coitus with a mature sexual mate, mother-love is consummated in a sublimated form: in the female the male has a surrogate mother while her satisfaction is found in appropriating just that role -- marrying her father in effect. In these permutations, half symbolic, half bio-erotic, Freud turns the traditional relations of marriage to parenthood on its head: infantile lust authors a fatal Oedipal triangle in which the wish to possess one parent as sex-object conflicts with the wish to negate the other.

This hypothesis of a primal libidinal dynamic finds its way into Freud's well-known excursion into anthropology, where he finds the primitive origins of the family to lie in the erotic subjectivity -- 'unconscious life' -- of the individual. Marriage, family, kinship - indeed society itself -- have their basis, not in economics, but in strictures imposed on uninhibited libidinal expression to restrict its regressive infantile tendency, to 'civilize' it. Freud conjectures the situation of a human 'primal horde' with a dominant male enjoying exclusive mating privileges over all females, as with many pack animals. Other males and male offspring have no recourse but either to accept celibacy, look elsewhere, or kill the father. The latter, however, would only renew competition among the parricidal males, a vicious circle that is only avoided if all accept equality with respect to the possession of mates. And so, for Freud, 'society' is a mutual pact for the repression of elemental lust.

Through this piece of fictive palaeontology Freud represents the Oedipus complex as the root of the institution of marriage. However 'unconsciously' or symbolically, the residual primitive lust to murder one parent to possess the other generates explosive libidinal ambiguities. Regression to infantile mother-lust conflicts with the adult sexual relation, for which the actual mother and father are the role-models. Elemental, infantile libido falls into conflict with its more developed adult forms, repression ensues, only resolved if the conflict can be brought to consciousness and sublimated, whatever this can entail. The meaning of human culture and custom thus lies in the requirement that the domineering narcissism of infantile sexuality be quelled, while keeping it somehow satisfied nonetheless. The first is accomplished by suppressing incestuous relations between children and parents through a system of kinship and clan taboos designed to ban sexual relations between individuals too closely consanguine. The second is promoted by a system of rituals, which reinvoke and celebrate the original passions of the primal crime, designed to expiate incestuous feelings of guilt. Religion, thought Freud, has it source and meaning in the a symbolic reconstitution of the awesome figure of the father as author of the ban on sexual relations among kin, its typical rituals reenacting the

parricidal event through which the primal horde was originally replaced by the fraternal clan.\textsuperscript{13}

Religious rites of marriage Freud views entirely from within this perspective. The traditional 'bond' of marriage has everything to do with a socially approved signing-on to the primal compromise through which the destructive consequences of unlimited libidinal passion are avoided. At his most pessimistic, Freud saw nothing positive in this, only a fatal necessity of civilization. More optimistically, a psychoanalytical view of a healthy sexual union would be one wherein individuals, having somehow surmounted their infantile conflicts, are able to give their sexual impulses uninhibited free rein. It is a view now solidly established in contemporary popular culture that any limit whatever imposed upon free and open eroticism is a sign of sexual oppression and/or repression inimical to psychological health.

For Freud, human discontent through the ages has its roots in the inhibition of sexual instincts and resulting proneness to neurotic complexes, not in a political or economic reform of society. It is therapy, not revolution, which is to emancipate humanity, a 'sexual liberation' from repression brought about internally by overcoming psychological fixations, and externally by ridding culture of its anti-libidinal prejudices. The traditional institution of marriage is of all things repressive in this latter sense, being founded upon cultural sanctions that limit sexual 'expression', restrict the selection of mates, demand permanence in the marital bond and fix the rules according to which one does or does not enter into it.

\section*{III. Marriage As An Ethical Bond}

\textit{i. Ethical Institutions}

In Hegel's systematic account of the forms according to which practical life is ordered, freedom or self-determination is at all points the operative principle. This view of practice, metaphysically expressible as the view that it is not nature as such that animates human action \textit{qua} human and establishes its essential ends and motives, but the breaking in upon nature of a spiritual dimension of self-conscious life. It is a view consistent with the general intuition of the ages, assumed and declared in the most ancient mythopoeic accounts of the origin of ethical and political order. But it is a view with which ultra-modernist anthropology and psychology are clearly at odds, attempting as they do to define freedom in terms of natural needs or instincts, reverting to a sort of quasi-physiological determinism. The philosophical account of practice, by contrast, duly commences from the concept of freedom itself and from the consciousness of it as one's own inward, \textit{de facto} truth; then seeks from that standpoint to know how the relation of free human beings to nature -- both to nature generally and to their own human nature --

comes to be drawn into an actual order of life, an objective 'system of right' with freedom recognized as its substance and basis.

In the Hegelian account, objective freedom has its first expression in legal right, then in moral conscience, then as the ethical or communal spirit. Legal and moral right represent limited vehicles for the embodiment of freedom which can be complete only in a political community where an ethically-minded people explicitly accept and promote freedom as the sustaining principle of their everyday domestic, social and political life. The law recognizes the individual as a legal 'person-in-general' whose freedom consists in a general right of 'ownership', to invest one's interest in anything material, animate or intellectual and to appropriate it as 'property', as 'one's own'. Legal ownership thus brings the whole of the given world under the form of the human will, laws setting out the particular rules according to which things are appropriated, alienated or contractually exchanged. As questions of rights to ownership form the chief theme of socialist thinking, it can be said that it is in its legal aspect that Engels understood the family institution. It is as a legal bond that marriage has been and still is chiefly understood in most older cultures: a contract where husbands acquire ownership of their wives in an exchange of real property or the like. It is because the law is addressed to the person-in-general, and not the particular individual, that all are supposed 'equal' under it; but on just that very account the law, whether human or divine, appears as externally imposed relative to any particular individual, conferring rights only to the degree it is submitted to. For this reason the spirit of the law fails directly to engage the individual's subjective spirit, the inward sense of freedom, awakening rather a rebellious tendency to place oneself beyond the law, whether in acts of outright criminality or, in some more positive way, to refuse to 'live by the letter'. In a society of laws, individuals thus know themselves as both free and not free, as prisoners of the law as much as liberated under it. There is evoked thereby a will to uncover a surer, a less equivocal spring of freedom within themselves.

Self-determination as the form of the particular will, *subjective* freedom, has its measure, not in ownership and the external force of law, but in the concept of the single individual's free agency, guided by the inner voice of reason. Here the autonomous individual is the actual author of what is right, not a passive beneficiary of rights under the law. From this standpoint, any objective relation of individual to individual -- marriage, for instance -- has its source and sole justification in the free subjective assent of those involved in it. Self-determination in this subjective sense is in general 'morality', and it is in its moral sense, Hegel observes, that the modern world generally understands freedom.

Subjective or 'moral' freedom is what a European especially calls freedom. In virtue of the right thereto, a man must possess personal knowledge of the distinction between good and evil in general; ethical and religious principles shall not merely lay their claim on him as external laws and authoritarian precepts to be obeyed, but have their assent, recognition, or
even justification in his own heart, sentiment, conscience, insight, etc. The subjectivity of the will in itself is its very aim, even its essential moment.\textsuperscript{14}

Morality, however, is self-conflicted in another way, on which grounds it too is a limited expression of freedom. Assuming the autonomy of the self-conscious subject, it opposes to the givenness of the world an objective moral order based on individual freedom and brought about through autonomous individual action. But the 'objectivity' of this moral order still belongs to the idealism of the subjective will only, a world that ought to be but is no actual state of affairs. The unfree world of experience and impulse thus remains ever in opposition to the good intentions of the individual's free choice, and so the only good morality produces, as Kant admits, is a good will. Put metaphysically, in morality, spirit opposes itself to natural impulse; but an autonomy so defined only negatively must remain ambiguous, bound to remain entangled in just that which it denies. Accordingly, the moral individual can never know in the end whether his actions really spring from his own free will or from his own selfish interests, or how indeed to tell the one from the other, an ambivalence lying in the subjective standpoint itself that renders morality, at least in its purist form, a source of the greatest hypocrisy. The 'decline of morality' in subsequent Western culture should not be seen as a mere falling-away, but a tendency to degeneracy lying in the very standpoint of moral autonomy itself.

As a consequence of this latent contradiction, morality in its strict form gave way historically to later mutations which would seek to conserve the standpoint of subjective freedom is other ways. Romanticism is moralism turned ironically against itself, the tragic sense of the impotence of an inner freedom nonetheless deeply felt giving rise to an unrequited yearning after authentic selfhood expressible only poetically. The form in which morality defends itself in the present day is as moral relativism or some variant of it. Here freedom is still conceived as belonging primarily to the individual subject, though all idea of a rational standard of moral good and evil is abandoned. The sheer act of choosing, in and of itself, expresses the individual's freedom, which is not to be limited regardless of what actually is or is not chosen. The contradiction remains in that, on this account too, the most perversely self-interested actions must be tolerated along with the most selfless, as both have their source equally in the individual's absolute freedom of choice.

It is as a moral relationship, diluted in some such romanticized or relativistic way, that marriage is understood in post-modern culture. Not only does it possess the obvious instability of a relation which, dependent on nothing beyond individual free choice, can just as easily in the next moment be dissolved or displaced by another, but at a deeper level it involves the confounding of the amoral and the moral aspects of the union, its sexual and its personal dimensions. It was noted generally of morality that hypocrisy arises because its unification of spiritual and natural is accomplished only subjectively in 'conscience', that is, only in a negatively founded inner reflection which cannot, in the end, distinguish well-intentioned motives from ill-intentioned impulses. Where morality is only the relativism of arbitrary free choice, the indistinguishability between freedom

\textsuperscript{14} Hegel, \textit{Enzyklopädie; Werke}, Felix Meiner 1959. (Hereafter abbrev. 'EN').
and sensuality becomes ever more marked: sexuality trumps constancy, renders all vows retractable, and turns true lovers into temporary libidinal objects.

The limit of morality is thus to be found in the want of an objective context for freedom, a want that becomes increasingly evident as subjective freedom, rendered absolute, eventually degenerates into a principle of moral chaos and decay, producing a melt-down of all substantial human relations, customs and institutions. For while freedom of choice (as against mere legal right) does recognize the interest of the thinking individual and brings this element positively into play, it is unable to reconcile inner freedom with the outward way of the world in which it can finally know its freedom only in negative or anarchistic action. For such a decadent will, submission to any ethical standard whatever will appear as an unacceptable limit, as is now generally the view. On the basis of subjective freedom alone, therefore, no objectively free order of life can arise, to which inevitability a good deal of recent history attests. Where freedom is equated with the sanctity of whatever one chooses to do, so far as this sense of inner autonomy remains unconscious of its own limit -- an 'instinctive' freedom in Nietzsche's oxymoronic phrase -- then it is indistinguishable from any number of contingent impulses and passions. It is often observed the human animal can be more vicious, carnal or excessive than any other, a fact which has its root, not in some irredeemable wickedness, but in freedom itself, the vivid witness to the infinity of one's inwardness. Once this infinity attaches to even the most trivial or dissolute of ordinary passions it lends the full force and import of freedom to it, fueling an obsessive and insatiable fanaticism. If tradition spoke of the natural human will as 'fallen', it is the same to say an ethically unredeemed freedom is in principle anarchic, as much a source of violence and depravity as of humane ennoblement.

Hegel had already clearly pointed out this potential for decadence in the moral view, and proposed beyond it an ethical life in which individual freedom is recognized and conserved but as a moment of a more substantial communal and institutional spirit which provides the context for its objective realization and satisfaction. What appeared to others in and after his time as a need to repudiate rationalistic morality and in some way revert to a more 'natural' freedom, was for Hegel rather the need to advance to the standpoint of an objective spirit comprehensive of both its natural and subjective elements: the subordination of the mere 'ought-to-be' of free choice to a freedom actually lived. For Hegel, this step was of world-historical significance: if legal right has been the principal basis of institutional life in more ancient societies,

the right of the particular subject, ... of subjective freedom, is the pivot and centre of the difference between antiquity and modern times. This right in its infinity is articulated, and as an actual, universal principle become constitutive, of a new form of the world. Among its various expressions are love and the romantic, the eternal salvation of the individual and so forth; likewise morality and conscience. In what follows [i.e., further on in PR] it will be treated in [quite] another way: partly as the principle of civil society and an aspect of political constitutions, partly
as it turns up generally in history, particularly the history of art, science and philosophy.\(^\text{15}\)

For Hegel, then, subjective 'free choice' is an essential moment in freedom but it is not, as for later culture, freedom itself. From it Hegel would distinguish the more complete freedom found in what he calls 'ethical life' (*Sittlichkeit* as opposed to *Moralität*), founded in the intuitive certainty individuals have of their freedom as their necessity, not just as a subjectively free will but as the very substance and end of an actual practical life. The consequent practical impulse is not simply to affirm one's subjective autonomy, but to reproduce, sustain and experience freedom as an objective fact, to generate a distinctively human world of concrete cultural institutions wherein particular individuals can find the certainty of their own inner freedom reflected and through participation in which they may know themselves to be actually free. Thus, on the one side, "ethical life is a subjective disposition, though imbued with what is inherently right [PR141]", while on the other it is

freedom shaped into the actuality of a world, [receiving thereby] the form of necessity, whose substantial nexus is the system of the institutions of freedom and which has its phenomenal [i.e. subjective] side in the conscious recognition of their authority. [EN484]

While participation in an objective ethical life in one sense involves a limiting or overcoming of the immediate subjective intuition of freedom it is equally the means of completing or fulfilling what lies in it. In submitting to life within a complex of free institutions, individuals do not compromise their freedom but know it as confirmed, enlarged and enhanced, given substance as a freedom universally and objectively shared. An ethically constituted civility engages the conscience of individuals to the extent they will it and embrace it. Ethical life thus provides, not only for the disciplining of caprice -- the abstract identification of freedom with subjectivity -- but also for the cultivation in individuals of a developed consciousness of what their fuller freedom truly is, namely a communal life so ordered that individuals find their own freedom recognized and guaranteed in it and which they themselves conserve and advance through their own actions. But of course, much depends on whether extant institutions actually do have self-determination as their principle rather than power, property, privilege or whatever -- that they are *ethical* institutions. Only where they are ethical can they provide the means of delivering individuals from the abstractness of their unredeemed subjectivity; where they are not, they become the most deadly forms of bondage, as has been clearly witnessed in the violent and destructive consequences for free institutions of the literal imposition of twentieth century ideologies.

ii. Hegel on the End of Marriage

Though Hegel lived half a century and more before Engels and Freud, he would seem to have anticipated their arguments even if he had not read their books.

\(^{15}\) Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts; Werke*, ed.Felix Meiner, 1955, s.124. (Hereafter 'PR').
When marriage is treated, not in the context of natural right but is grounded in sexual instinct or arbitrary convention -- when monogamy, for example, is explained in superficial physical terms of the relative number of men to women, or when dark feelings of revulsion are advanced as the reason behind the prohibiting of consanguineous marriage -- such views are rooted in a common notion of a state of nature and a natural origin of rights, a notion devoid of a concept of rationality and freedom.[PR168]

In short, there is no accommodating an account of freedom that appeals to some para-natural aspect of human biology, 'instinct' or 'species-activity', to the ethical or spiritual view of marriage. If individuals were primarily moved to form mature sexual liaisons by a need to sublimate infantile eroticism, the measure of married love would be whether wife and husband found in each other adequate surrogates for a residual animal attachment to breeding parents. And were marriage an economic protocol for the regulation of reproduction, then marriage is tolerable only where it serves the subsistence of tribe or clan, and there is absolutely nothing personal about it. Indeed, the appeal to a psychology or sociology of marriage modeled on the sciences of nature -- as the so-called 'human sciences' now generally are -- requires that any idea of individuals freely committing themselves to conscious and reasonable bonds be summarily abandoned or else demoted to the rank of superficial customs grafted upon a unique but otherwise dumb animal species. Foisting in zoological categories as a means of 'explaining' intelligent human life, however, not only grossly contradicts the possibility of the very scientific perspective it assumes, but so to omit a priori the rational dimension in human experience inevitably renders the account of it strained and contorted.

In Hegel we find a far more subtle treatment of these matters. The unity of spirit and nature, to use the speculative terminology, is neither to be understood reductively -- spirit as natural or nature as spiritual -- nor as an abstract relation in which each is defined as the negative of the other -- nature as the non-spiritual, spirit as the non-natural. Combinations and permutations of such views -- spiritualism, naturalism, romanticist nature-spiritualism, psycho-physicalism, scientific dualism etc. -- do not make them any less spurious; the relation is rather to be understood as a dynamic one, that is, spirit as neither super-natural nor a natural mode of existence but a reality latent in nature and attaining to actuality in human self-consciousness. For Hegel, 'spirit' is life so far as it has freedom as essence; it is no other worldly entity but the infinite form life itself assumes in thinking, practical beings. Hegel's own unique psychology accordingly understands human sensibility, imagination, emotion, desire, etc. as prototypical of a free thinking and willing, while his sociology similarly understands social, moral and cultural institutions as having their implicit end in the resolution of this subjective potential for freedom into an objective form.

Thus, unlike 'scientific' accounts of human institutions, Hegel's account is at least consistent with the ordinary experience of life as divided, on the one side, as one's animal species-life with all its given physiological and psychological contingencies, on the other side, as one's free existence-for-self or self-conscious individuality. Animals are not true
individuals, he observes, their souls no more than their species moving instinctually in them. The human being, however, has its own essence for object, as Hegel puts it; it is its species, an autonomous self-relative or 'thinking' individual. For such an individual, its being is not simply its nature, nor is its nature alien to it. Rather nature has the specific character of its own, as existing for it, and this is what is meant by saying that, in spirit, in self-conscious life, nature is in principle completed and sublimated. In this sense, as more than simply beings of nature, human beings are not, nor could they be, moved by instinct alone; rather by the will to make their instinctive life their own, to appropriate it as a subordinate moment within a freely emergent self-conscious life. It is a common wisdom that, unlike innocent animals, when human beings submit to instinct they corrupt their true nature.

Ethical institutions have their beginning in the deliberate ordering of the given material and organic conditions of life in accordance with a principle of rational freedom. Hegel speaks of the family as basic among ethical institutions in this sense, that its end is the 'domestication' of the human animal, the latter's first liberation to the free individuality upon which all further possibility of community, of civil life guaranteed in an ethically founded state, wholly depends. While certainly prefigured in nature -- murres build nests, mate for life, rear young etc. -- domesticity among human beings is qualitatively unique in that its end is not the survival of the species but the creation of the conditions of freedom. For so far as 'human nature' entails in itself the sublimation of nature, the motive to domesticity does not lie in any instinctive impulse to mate, reproduce etc., but in the will to place all such matters in the service of a wider intent, a 'higher' end, namely to bring the whole impulsive, need-dominated aspect of natural life under the discipline of a common life founded in free personality.

Marriage is the immediate form of ethical relationship containing, first, the moment of natural vitality in general, the totality of the life-process of the species, and second, the element of self-consciousness in virtue of which the merely implicit unity of an external relation between sexual partners is transformed into a spiritual relation of self-conscious love. [PR161]

The passion of love, says Hegel, is freedom as it appears in feeling: the feeling of being recognized and fulfilled as a person in the intimate relation to another whose person one desires in turn to affirm and possess as one's own. Marriage is the decisive act of translating this passion of personal mutuality into a permanent, everyday, personal, practical and physical reality, to 'institutionalize' it and make a new life together. In this decision to live as one it is not only an untamed sexuality that is willingly sacrificed to this supra-natural union, but the totality of one's spiritual-bodily life: one's talents and needs, temperament and character, fortunes and happiness, one's life and death. All are surrendered, to be taken up into and sublimated in the freely chosen wedded state. Marriage is thus not a sexual union primarily, or even necessarily, but a bond wherein the whole range of natural needs and contingencies, including the sexual, are brought under a freely instituted domestic order. As such, marriage is a first liberation from nature, not of course in any literal or absolute sense, but as the vehicle for the reconciliation and satisfaction of natural impulses and needs within a discipline obedient to a calling beyond
the call of nature itself, namely the desire to cultivate and extend the possibilities for a rational life through a relation in which each recognizes the other as first of all a free spiritual being, a unique and special person.

If subjectively marriage may appear to spring from the mere inclinations of those involved or from the concerns and contrivances of parents and so forth, its objective commencement lies rather in the free assent of these persons to make themselves one person and to surrender their natural and particular personhood to this union. And if on its face this amounts to a self-limitation it is in truth their liberation since, in it, they attain to a true consciousness of themselves. [PR 162]

That is to say, it is only as explicitly recognized in a living relation with another free, self-conscious being, wherein each defers wholly to the other, that one's individuality assumes objectivity -- for oneself no less than for the other -- and one's personhood, as confirmed in this loving relation, is no longer merely a kind of isolated interiority. Though the end of marriage is an ethical union it is nonetheless essentially a bodily relation. It is this in the sense that in it everything bodily is brought under a discipline in which physical and psychological needs, in being mutually fulfilled and satisfied are also thereby limited and transcended, clearing the way for a relation that is explicitly free and personal. Individuals attracted maritally to each other know the experience of a powerful desire, not merely to possess each other sexually, but to 'settle down', make a home, share in a rational domestic order wherein each is devoted to the other's material, emotional and spiritual well-being. While almost always involving sexual passion, marriage comprehends a much wider range of mortal contingencies: of sleeping and waking, accommodation and security, daily bread and daily work, a common leisure and experience of the world, the rearing of children perhaps, a society of mutual friends, provision for each other in sickness and health, one presiding finally over the other's death and memory.

As Hegel points out, in marriage it is the whole of one's species-being that is set aside to make way for another principle to awaken and mature. The 'sacramental' aspect of marriage lies just in this mutual offering up of mortal life in its totality, thereby to initiate and enjoy the fuller satisfaction that springs, not from meeting bodily need as such, but from this mediated, redeemed and sanctified by recognition each of the other as a 'soul-mate', an alter ego, in whom the consciousness and confirmation of one's personal wholeness is secure. It is indeed this immediate linkage of sensuous feeling with mutual fulfillment of self through another that fires and sustains the passion of marital love, which, unlike the love of friends or heroes, in whom one admires virtue, ability or likeness of mind, is not simply spiritual but spiritual-physical, personal-sensual, in which ambiguity is generated the familiar paradox of married love: that it is the other as person one wishes nonetheless to embrace in all his or her fleshly vitality, while contrariwise, passionate exchanges between lovers typically evoke an extreme of tenderness beyond what the sexual act itself can offer, springing from the intensely personal character of reciprocated affections.
iii. Sexuality and the Ethics of Love

It is common to speak of married couples as 'made for each other.' But "how it comes about just these two particular individuals should marry is at bottom a matter of contingency"[EN163]. In pre-modern cultures (especially "amongst peoples who hold the female sex in scant respect [PM 162, Add."]), the decision is taken by parents or others according to considerations of compatibility, clan, property, political power etc. The marriage is first imposed and the couple left to learn to love and respect one another as best they can. But from the reflective standpoint of the modern world, it is subjectivity, particular individuality that comes first. Accordingly, two individuals, each infinitely unique yet 'made for each other', through some miraculous turn of fate 'find' each other, directly 'fall' in love, 'lose' their hearts etc. Such terms signal the element of sheer accidentality that belongs essentially to the subjective ideal of romantic love, whose basic claim is that true love is only to be found in inner feeling, in individual 'hearts'. The ambiguity that notoriously attaches to romantic love springs from just this its root in subjectivity, in feelings fated to hover between the sexual and the platonic, the former fueling the latter, where what belongs to elevated moral sentiment and what simply to lust are only abstractly distinguishable from each other.

Love affairs founded on sheer accidentality are thus of their nature unstable, evocative of typical romantic themes of idealized individuality, unrequited passion, inconstancy, tragic consequence and the rest. For, where love is grounded only in the inner passions of particular individuals, the union is one that only 'ought' to endure, the ideal in fact inevitably wrecked on the reef of fickle sensualities and fates. Subject to changing affect and circumstance, the fires of love are prone to go out, and those who 'fall' thoughtlessly in love just as thoughtlessly fall out of it. Belonging to the 'natural' aspect of human psychology, sexuality, while a prime means for the expression of love, is also destructive of it so far as it makes lovers its prisoner. Apathy, infidelity and even contempt for each other are the all but inevitable consequences of a union that has no more than inner intensity of feeling rather than open and objective inter-personal recognition, as its principal measure. It belongs to marriage as an ethical union, accordingly, that beyond being freely chosen, its primary object must be the institutional commitment to an objectively disciplined common life that is more than, though comprehensive of, a life based on subjective feeling.

What is ethical in marriage consists in the consciousness of this unity as a substantial end, sharing in common, in love and in trust, their entire existence as individuals; in which attitude, where actual, natural passion sinks to the level of a physical moment which in its very satisfaction is destined to pass away. The spiritual bond secures its right thereby as the substance of marriage, which, as thus inherently indissoluble, rises above the contingency of passion and the transience of particularistic caprice. [PR 163]

This principle of substantiality, of ethical indissolubility, is what is affirmed in the rites in which marriage is typically instituted, requiring of a couple they make an overt decision to forsake all others and to subordinate their passionate life wholly to this new objective relation in which the passions are to play only an incidental and expressive role.
For the romantic view, on the contrary, the marriage rite appears as at best a mere traditional formality or civil requirement, at worst a superficiality alien to the true marriage of souls since detracting, as Schlegel argued, from an inwardness of love more purely expressed in unfettered surrender to sensual impulse -- "an argument" Hegel adds, "not unknown to seducers". [PR 165] It is not only that the consequences of a commitment to 'unfettered passion' can be obsessive and thus degrading, but that it obstructs the development of the 'substantial' love of which Hegel speaks, i.e., a love rendered ethically objective. And the latter is impossible where there is not first a openly declared commitment to self-imposed sexual restraint, a restraint civilized intuitions know as the ordinary sense of sexual chastity and modesty.

In these times 'chastity' and 'modesty' have an amusing, even neurotic ring to most ears, an indication of unhealthy inhibitions, the assumption being that they express merely moralistic virtues. But they have also an objective, ethical meaning, one measure of which might be the different experiences of married and casual sexuality. In purely sexual encounters, bodily self-consciousness tends to be amplified one way or the other, whether in furtiveness born of shame, or in exaggerated elaboration of the particulars of the sexual act as if to find in it a surrogate for the infinity of love -- the futility of the erotic ideal. In married love, on the contrary, an already assumed and accepted subordination of passionate to ethical intimacy breeds an attitude of unembarrassed familiarity regarding everything bodily. The true character of the sexual relation in marriage lies in this, that by virtue of an ethical commitment that goes beyond the contingency of bodily desire, lovers are free to abandon themselves to their passions in the knowledge that their physical relation is already redeemed by a more substantial, personal communication obtaining between them. In this sense in marriage both sensual and ascetic motives are wedded and satisfied, the one sanctifying the other.

It is in this sense Hegel speaks of married love as redemptive of the passions, thus a form of liberation. Sexuality is certainly the prefiguration of love in nature [EN368], for which reason it does in fact provide a most telling metaphor and means of expressing the love between self-conscious human beings. It could with justice be said that there simply is no such thing as pure sexual love where human beings are concerned, the element of self-consciousness ineradicable and bound to intrude. This is why libidinal passions, submitted to outside any ethical context do tend to degrade, their indulgence a bondage rather than a bond. Marriage is by contrast 'sacred' in that it entails what amounts to a vow of limited celibacy regarding the instinctive life, the commitment to a liaison in which the passions, far from being denied, are reciprocally offered up to each other so that both are free of them because free in them. And where, through a freely enacted subordination to a personal relationship, sexuality is in this manner at once contained and fulfilled, where it is no longer an unlimited obsessive and domineering passion, a society of liberated individuals first becomes possible, and this, for Hegel, is the true aim and end of family life.
IV. Conclusion - Limits Of The Marital Tie

In Hegel's speculative language, ethical institutions are forms of the 'objective spirit', that is, of communal structures willingly entered in and adhered to by individuals who find in them the confirmation and security of a freedom they otherwise possess only subjectively or intuitively, but which, in institutional life, has for them the form of an objective fact, an order of life in which their reality as persons is explicitly and actively cultivated. Of the three principal human institutions -- the others being civil society and the political community -- the family is for Hegel the most 'immediate' in so far it has its point of departure in given natural characteristics and relations. One's place in a family may be as spouse, parent, sister, infant, cousin etc. or several of these at once, but the ethics of family life is not simply based on the living out of stereotyped roles of wife, father, adolescent or whatever, distinctions which are essentially physiological in their basis, but on the instilling in each member a consciousness of his or her particular and transient natural role as belonging to and dependent upon the unity of family life in its totality, expressing an overall rational end. Accordingly, the family, so far as it is a 'natural' community, does not have its end in itself but in another lying beyond it and which it serves. This end is a wider human freedom of which the family forms only the foundation. The human family thus exists, not for the breeding of children, but of persons, of individuals who, having passed through its discipline, acquire a sense of independence, not only with regard to the ordering and satisfaction of bodily needs, but also, through having undergone and experienced all the psycho-physical ramifications of family life -- of age, gender, nurture, intimacy, obedience, authority and so forth -- an independence and competence in subsequent relations to others as free individuals. The experience of family life is thus the prior education presupposed by a free society.

Ethical life in its most complete form is for Hegel the political community, a fully realized ethical state, synthetic of legal, moral, familial, personal and social values and founded on the recognition of freedom as their common, unifying principle. Although family and civil society are the twin foundations of this overall ethical order, each in itself is a limited form of that freedom and does not stand on its own. The general limit of the family lies in that, though its end is spiritual, it still has one foot in nature as it were. Accordingly, while the experience of family life is the means by which free and reasonable personality is first cultivated, and while this end is the very core of the ethics of family life, yet the family order is neither of itself absolute nor an adequate embodiment of freedom due to the element of natural contingency that remains dominant in it: contingencies of birth, death, material circumstance, determination of roles by sex, maturity, genealogy and so forth. Civil society, on other hand, presupposes a collectivity of individuals already liberated from nature at least in principle; a freedom they seek to realize through the practical exploitation of nature and human nature in the pursuit of privately conceived interests. It has its limit in turn in this, that since whatever human beings accomplish is dependent wholly on luck, talent, opportunity and a host of other material and social conditions, it is a freedom only realized as a never-ending competition of all against all where some succeed and some fail and a universal human welfare thus remains no more than an abstract ideal.
That marriage, even as an ethical institution, is limited has only partly to do with the internal instability of marriage as a relation between particular individuals, subject to vicissitudes having to do with sexual, social or familial compatibility, conflicts of personality, infidelity and the like. Its more fundamental limit lies in the ambiguity entailed in being partly grounded in the natural passions even while the means of their sublimation. Where this limit is unrecognized, where the natural family order as its stands is regarded as absolute, the bond then turns into bondage, the kindly family order into despotism. Prone to this tendency are traditional dogmatic characterizations of marriage as necessitated by nature, required by God, rooted in inexorable sexual instincts, an instrument of raw economic ends, a 'political' state where males have the legal ownership and use of women and children -- views ever current but which Hegel relegates to the phenomenological pre-history of a properly ethical conception of marriage.

For the greater part of human history, however, the family has indeed been treated as the supreme ethical institution, and still is in large parts of the contemporary world. To the extent it is so treated, the family, and by extension clan and ancestry, are regarded as the absolute standard for all community, the dominant factor in all social and class relations and forming the nepotistic basis of political power and its continuity. Marriage in such cultures is thus the all-important, sacramental event, the root of all other relations, a bond imposed and maintained by religious authority and legal force, involving fixed rights, obligations and rules -- the subjection of women as property (as Engels), taboos of caste and tribe (as Freud) -- to which the participants are bound to adhere at pain of severe repudiation, punishment or even death.

In Western culture, however, where the basis of marriage is moral rather than legal, the family is no longer thought to be rooted in some inexorable natural or divine law, but rather in the feelings and choices of particular individuals -- in 'love' in the subjective or romantic sense, with all its sexual-platonic ambiguity. Thus as the family order was the foundational communal relation in earlier societies, for modernity it is rather 'civil society' that provides the paradigm for all other relations, including marriage itself. In the West, the freedom of the individual reigns as dogma, which means that all relations are to be conceived as obtaining between particular individuals who do not give up this particularity of their freedom in them; relations which are therefore never more than 'social', that is, collective rather than communal, freedom itself understood as subjective, the absolute and unqualified right of autonomous individuals expressed in universal rights, free choice, the right of dissent and so forth. What is witnessed in the present time as the 'decline of family values' and the disintegration of the marriage tie is due in large part to this moral-romantic conviction that institutional life has its sole justification in the self-justifying freedom of particular individuals, a view that nonetheless contains key ambiguities which have progressively brought about a degeneration of the moral standpoint itself from its original rational shape to its contemporary expression in moral relativism and the positive celebration of caprice.

The reactionary view of this post-modern decay is to see it as a catastrophic eventuality, evoking, perhaps, a wish to return to an earlier, more rigorous morality of family life, or even to a pre-moral and anti-modernist spiritual fascism, as most recently
in Islamism. But the continuing decline of the moral-romantic view of marriage and family life is not the result of any delinquency as to principle, but consists in the progressive revelation of a contradiction already native to that principle itself. The consolidation of subjective freedom as an absolute in modern democratic culture has meant that the model of 'civil society' -- community as any set of external relations among otherwise autonomous individuals resting on their assent -- has become more and more definitively the model for all institutional life, including that of the family. The 'moral' and 'romantic' views of marriage are earlier shapes of this individualistic ideal. The more the social model has come to prevail, the more the inconsistency between individual freedom and the idea of inviolable trans-individual bonds has become evident. The marriage bond itself then falls into controversy, increasingly suspected by libertarians who, as many feminists, see it as self-evidently contrary to freedom and thus a form of oppression, and vainly defended by those who would somehow restore a 'God-given' family ethic with emphasis on fixed gender roles and damning as 'un-natural' any deviation from the 'natural' model of the heterosexual breeding family. The real issue underlying, however, is the apotheosis of subjective freedom which both sides in the argument assume -- for even the return to a natural ethic of family life must be a matter of individual 'choice'.

The challenge to think beyond this definitive post-modern conflict, now reaching its critical phase, requires a more complete understanding of objective ethical relationships and the fuller freedom they confer. So long as the right of the individual as such is supreme, such understanding is, of course, impossible. For the limit of the subjective standpoint, expressed metaphysically, lies in this: that the reconciliation of spirit to nature remains incomplete. Either freedom is affirmed as an immediate existential consciousness, which knows itself nonetheless to be fatally limited by time, nature and circumstance, or conceived as the practical goal of a conquest of nature that ideally issues in the triumph of a wholly human order of freedom. But this 'nonetheless' and this 'ideally' betray the fact that a disjunction between freedom and nature remains as the underlying assumption, so that any liberation affirmed or sought in this manner is in principle incomplete; not an actual freedom. The more complete freedom is to be found, not in paradoxical acquiescence or endless activism, but in a redemption of nature through freedom, which is at once a realization of freedom as nature. And this is what an ethically ordered life is: in it the appearance is transcended of a subjective life 'in here' to which an alien nature 'out there' stands opposed. In ethical institutions the demands of subjective freedom and of the natural and historical conditions of human life are equally met and in principle reconciled; in them, nature and freedom belong to the one life in which the former is conserved and sublimated and the latter rendered real and self-fulfilling.

Marriage as ethical is such a reconciliation, though at the level of 'natural individuality'. That is, it involves individuals as living, physical beings with given sexual and emotional natures as well as distinct personalities and personal histories. In freely sacrificing the whole of their bodily fate to the marriage tie, the partners come to know one another in their very bodily presence and difference, and in so doing find their isolated, mortal existence redeemed, since fixed and held in the other's free loving regard.
In married intimacy there is thus a distinct liberation, not only from sexual differences, but from all the limitations of bodily existence: one knows oneself as loved entirely, for oneself, as one is, for better or worse, even 'unto death' -- loved, that is, in the unity of one's natural-spiritual being. In this free relationship, the given elements of nature and human nature are neither denied, violated, nor suppressed, as in some purely spiritual or romantic-platonic union. On the contrary, within the marriage bond, one's immediate nature, even in its crassest biological aspects, is conserved and dignified, afforded a universal, spiritual meaning, just as, on the other hand, one's spiritual self-consciousness is given substance as an actual life.

That naturalistic and romanticist views of the institution of marriage -- as either a wholly legal or a wholly moral relation -- are no longer tenable, introduces into marriage many implications that only in recent times have begun to come to light. As no longer an order imposed by nature, it is clear that subjective freedom is an essential desideratum: the relation of marriage must of all things be between self-consciously free individuals. Moreover, where nature is no longer the absolute standard, there are new and valid questions to be raised as to what constitutes 'normal' physical relations. A wholly celibate marriage is thus in principle quite conceivable, as is some variation of marriage between those more at home physically with those of their own gender. Reproduction confined strictly to marriage, once considered its prime obligation, becomes secondary to the fulfillment of its ethical end; there are many alternative opportunities and arrangements whereby children may be brought into family life and adequately nurtured.

But what is more difficult is to identify and surmount the limits of the moral-subjective view where insistence on the radical autonomy of married partners becomes a major obstacle to the stability and permanence of the relation. Clearly there is no route back to the 'traditional family', only the one ahead. The infinity of the subjective standpoint, the truth of individual freedom, whatever its limits, has worked its way throughout the whole of contemporary culture to become an irreversible presupposition, so that older notions of the marriage bond as in some divine or human legal sense literally trumping the element of individuality and personal love is no longer tenable. This new attitude cannot be denied; the demand that a married relation be such as to engage and respect the freedom of one and the other party has put an end to a host of literal and material reasons why, in the past, it was thought married couples should be required to 'stick together', no matter what, even where the light of love and respect has gone out in a marriage, where violence or indifference has turned it into a living prison, where its essential end, the fidelity that ensures redemption of the passions, has been compromised, or again, where passion itself has become a tyrant, dominating and disrupting matrimonial harmony. Again, the moral respect for individuality (among other factors) has meant a momentous release of both women and men, physically and mentally, from the older obligations and strictures of married life that bound each to fixed gender-determined roles, a change whose most striking result has been the flowering of women into vital and complete individuals and a corresponding liberation of men from the prejudices of a limited maleness. Of course, the inroads made by subjective freedom in contemporary culture has also its negative side in the excessive dogmatic casualness with
which sexual promiscuity or 'openness' is aggressively pursued as a matter of principle while the idea of marriage as institutional chastity is ridiculed and belittled.\textsuperscript{16}

For many cultures, and to a degree still in the West, the concept of the natural family persists, though the modern concept of marriage as a moral-romantic relation between free individuals has in democratic societies superseded it. The great difficulty in modern times is to recognize what is limited in this latter concept; to reveal the impotence of relationships based on no more than subjective choice, relationships that cannot liberate individuals from the bondage and finitude of their bodiliness, a bondage expressed in the infinitely unrequitable character of contemporary sexuality. It is this 'immortal' freedom, which the commitment to an objective ethical-physical relationship in marriage is meant to establish through willing subordination of bodily life as whole to a regime that answers first to the requirements and obligations of personal love.

It is thus a living, day-to-day freedom that is formed and cultivated in the marriage relation and through it passed on to others. That the family has long been said to be the 'foundation of society' cannot mean that it is itself the ultimate form of community but that it is the principal instrument of liberation from the particularities of bodily life, which makes a society possible. For as the primary end-product of family life is the experience of being educated and confirmed as a person, a free individual, marriage in its ethical meaning is more than a merely natural order of life or a romantically founded relation; it is able to tolerate any number of options and variations not applicable in a relation that is 'eternal' in only a legal or moral sense. It may indeed not be essential one marry at all: one may choose celibacy to satisfy a special calling, or out of widowhood, necessity of age or physical condition, or simply according to disposition. A single person may sustain a relatively satisfying home life in other ways, through maintaining a circle of relatives or intimates, the single adoption of children and the like, while those

\textsuperscript{16} Much nonsense has been made of Hegel's remarks on the psychological, metaphorical and spiritual import of natural male-female differences, especially with respect to institutional roles. The perspective of the ancient poetic account of such matters (e.g., as in Sophocles' \textit{Antigone} the family is woman's eternal destiny, as worldly struggle is man's) is contrasted with the bourgeois-romantic understanding of family roles in his own day, where husband and wife are thought to bring specific emotional and intellectual talents and aptitudes to the unity of a family life no longer seen as absolute, but as secondary to the 'higher' freedom of individual autonomy. Hegel's account of gender differences and their sublimation have been repudiated especially by some feminists who, writing from within ultra-modernist assumptions of radical individualism or socialism, can see nothing in them but the outdated prejudices of a nineteenth century European male. But one understands little if anything of Hegel if it is not recognized that he is already thinking beyond the standpoint of modernity, thus also beyond the merely bourgeois, romantic view of the family. His remarks concerning gender differences (for that matter concerning psychological, cultural, racial, religious or any other differences elsewhere in his works) have accordingly to be understood entirely in terms of his vision of a freedom which is reconciled to nature, and not the abstract freedom for which natural differences are \textit{either} absolute or else wholly irrelevant.

A most excellent and balanced survey and commentary concerning this issue is found in A.M. Stafford, "The Feminist Critique of Hegel on Women and the Family", \textit{Animus} 2 (1997), www.swgc.mun.ca/animus
whose nature precludes heterosexuality may still find opportunity for stable domesticity in chosen singleness or some variation of a loving spousal relation.\textsuperscript{17}

The essential point is that some form of spiritual domestication is achieved in which the passions and needs of natural life can find a measure of fulfillment which allows for their muting and the cultivation beyond them of a life free to become centred wholly on personal and spiritual ends. But if marriage and family life have long been the chief institutional form in which the spiritual domestication of the human animal has been effected, with the emergence in the contemporary world of a much fuller and wider consciousness of freedom, it is to be expected the older forms of the marriage tie can no longer assert exclusive legitimacy.

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\textsuperscript{17} Clearly, these elaborations on the contemporary implications of the Hegelian position are not to be found in Hegel's text, but it is argued they nonetheless follow from it. That Hegel could set forth no more than the principle of a post-moral, post-modern view of the family (as other institutions) within the wider context of an overall philosophy of freedom; that for his comments on the extant actualities of ethical life he could only draw on the still 'pre-post-modern' ethos of his day; these considerations in no way limit the contemporary import or relevance of his conceptions. The thrust of much of nineteenth and twentieth century ideology may be described as precisely the attempt to realize, through extension and radicalization of what are still essentially modern categories -- and thus with limited success -- the same post-modern, post-historical world whose logic Hegel had already sketched philosophically.