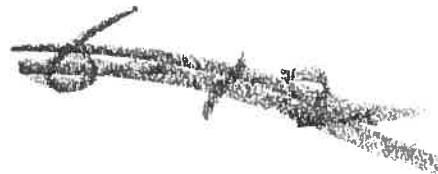


Committee IV
The Contemporary Family in
Cross-Cultural Context

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**PERSISTENT FAMILY FUNCTIONS AND SOCIAL HARMONY
THROUGH CREATIVE EDUCATION**



by

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"Indeed, the first community is the family."

Aristotle, Politics, 1257a.

I. Introduction

Some assert that the family institution is dying, or that it is already dead. My theory, however, is that family functions are so important that, despite various changes throughout history, the basic institution always survives and contributes to social harmony and continuity. Relatively familistic educational philosophies also facilitate such survival.

II. The Family

First, let us define the family and outline its main functions, which reveal its great importance and relative indestructibility.

A. Definition.

One of the earliest definitions of this institution is found in Homer's Iliad (I,29-31), where the family is presented as a rather large social unit, with emphasis on cooperation and continuity. Almost five centuries later, Aristotle wrote that "the family is a society established by nature for daily support" (Politics, 1252b).

A modern family sociologist refers to a "married couple and their children (the 'nuclear family') and some possible extension of this, including such people as grandparents or aunts and uncles ('extended family')." But he also refers to a "nearly infinite" variety of family forms throughout history and throughout the world--e.g., polygyny, polyandry, cenogamy, etc. ¹ A decade later, another family specialist wrote that the "family is a social group characterized by common residence (the spouses live together), economic cooperation (the spouses share their money and chores), and sexual reproduction (the spouses have or adopt children)." This definition, he admitted, excludes dual-career couples that live apart, spouses keeping separate property, child-free families, and so on. ²

The US Census Bureau, however, defines the family as a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

B. Functions.

An ancient sage known as Epimenides, whom even Saint Paul mentions (Titus 1:12), and about whom Goethe composed a sublime poem, stressed common residence on the part of family members for the sake of satisfying their needs. Thus, they are "users of the

same hearth," he said.

Similarly, Charondas, a great legislator of Catana, described family members as "feeders at the same manger."

Today's experts give various lists when they write on family functions.³ A rather inadequate account was given by William Ogburn in July 1938, in his "The Changing Family," published in The Family: economic production, status assignment, education, religious training, recreation, protection, and affection. A fairly complete enumeration, however, is as follows:⁴

1. Regulation of sex relations.
2. Procreation. The production of offspring, however, may be of secondary importance in some societies. In parts of Melanesia, for example, he who pays the midwife becomes the baby's father, his wife being the mother of the child.
3. The education and socialization of children.
4. Common residence.
5. Affection and emotional support.
6. Companionship.
7. Recreation.
8. Religious activities. In some civilizations (ancient Rome, for instance), the father has even functioned as a priest.
9. Economic cooperation. The family may be a unit of production and consumption.
10. Protection.
11. The creation of a common subculture.
12. Placement in the social class system.
13. Social control.

Such functions explain Jane Howard's words: "Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, wherever you are, you need one." Moreover, the dynamics of society and those of individual and collective needs do not affect the foundation of the basic social institution appreciably.

III. Family Change and Persistence

Yes, all social institutions are always changing.

Yes, the family is also changing--perpetually.

But the family also persists, thus contributing to social continuity and harmony, both of which must be promoted and facilitated by creative education.

A. A Roman Domestic Maelstrom and the Invincible Family.

One of the main reasons why we incorrectly believe that the family is declining catastrophically is our unfamiliarity with its genesis and history, thus ignoring maelstroms which the family faced triumphantly. Rome alone gives us valuable lessons in this area.

In the Eternal City, ⁵ divortium was so easy that mere mutual consent was sufficient. Divorce thus became exceedingly common. This is the reason why Tertullian observed, "The fruit of marriage is divorce," while even Juvenal spoke contemptuously of a woman who had eight spouses in five years. Saint Jerome mentioned a lady who married 23 men, the last one of whom had already had 20 other wives. Accordingly, Seneca stated that women no longer measured time in terms of the administrations of Roman consuls, but in terms of their husbands' names: "Two months before

Marcus," "Three days after Carus," etc.! Yes, divorce was quite common among ancient Romans, including the following: Ovid, Pliny the Younger, Mark Antony, Sulla, Pompey, Cato the Younger, Cicero, Julius Caesar, Maecenas, Augustus, etc. Still, such scandals, and even the fall of Rome, did not destroy the family institution.

More significantly, even after additional centuries of cataclysmic crises, the family has survived. In some respects, it is even healthier, as is indicated by comparing Rome's leaders with those in the materialistic and hedonistic United States of the 20th century (other countries supply analogous data, although pessimists and antifamilists have predicted the demise of the family). Below are a few examples:

1. Atlanta's Archbishop Eugene Marino, the nation's highest-ranking black Roman Catholic, spent more than \$20,000 in church funds on Vicki Long, his mistress. The archbishop was forced to resign.

2. In 1990, in Shelbyville, Indiana, Shelby County Court Judge Byron Wells was arrested for fondling two men.

3. Dana Rinehart, the wunderkind mayor of Columbus, had sexual relations with a 13-year-old girl and a married woman. As a result, he lost a third term in office.

4. Texas House Speaker Gib Lewis, although married, shared an \$800-a-night hotel suite in Mexico with a 24-year-old woman known as Barcellona. His expenses were paid illegally. Accordingly, Lewis was indicted.

5. Minnesota's gubernatorial candidate John Grunseth abandoned the race when it was discovered that he had

skinny-dipped with teen-aged girls.

6. On January 19, 1991, Robert Lujan, son of Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, was convicted on charges of sodomy and rape and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

7. Ohio's US Representative Wayne Hays paid dearly for his Freudian shenanigans.

8. In 1988, Ohio's US Representative Donald Lukens had sex with 16-year-old Rosie Coffman. In June 1989, he was sentenced to a 30-day jail term and fined \$500. Finally, on October 24, he resigned from Congress.

9. The meteoric rise and ignominious fall of Colorado's US Senator Gary Hart are well known.

And so forth, and so on, ad nauseam!

More significantly perhaps, which illustrates the value of the sociohistorical approach, in an earlier age, reporters did not write about the peccadillos of leaders. Now, however, the private life of a public leader is an open book, voters expecting certain standards of morality among those who wish to lead the nation. Accordingly, it is historically uninformed "scholars" who perceive the family as a constantly declining institution. (Incidentally, to me, Unificationism's greatest contribution is its enthusiastic emphasis on the family.)

B. Modern Domestic Typhoons.

Similarly, being historically illiterate nowadays, and deficient in other spheres, we exaggerate modern problems and approach them unwisely, individualistically, even selfishly.

Below are a few examples: ⁶

1. During the 1970's and 1980's, it was asserted that greed, personal ambition, and antifamilism had become prevalent in the US. Accumulating data, however, have indicated the opposite, namely, that the family and religion remain exceedingly important. Diane Colasanto, for instance, asserted that this is "not a new phenomenon"; it has been like that for a very long time (Princeton Survey Research Associates, January 17-20, 1991). An Associated Press poll of 1990 gave similar results. And so did Andrew Greeley's Religious Indicators and the Princeton Religious Research Center's 100 Questions and Answers: Religion in America).

2. Sociology, although Auguste Comte described it as "scientia scientiarum," remains chaotic, as my "Social Causation and Gnosocracy," based on thousands of data I have collected for decades, indicates (paper presented at the North Central Sociological Association Conference, Dearborn, Michigan, April 27, 1991). No, sociology has not proved, and cannot now prove, that the family is declining dramatically.

3. Antifamilists pretend to have proved that cohabitation alone tells us that the traditional family is practically dead! Why? Because, in 1986, 4.1 percent of all US couples cohabited!! We can easily guess the mentality and bigotry of those who assert that 4.1 is much, much greater than 95.9!!! Besides, like other authors, I have studied cohabitation and concluded that this practice is unwisely aimed at solving minor problems by creating more serious ones.

4. Affirmative action, although it is supposedly aimed at benefiting women and minorities, actually affects the family and

the entire society most negatively. It is frightening to hear affluent Ivy League women howling in a frenzied effort to invade men's clubs and feed themselves hedonistically, while millions of women and children are starving to death. This is affirmative action?

a. Studies prove that affirmative action usually promotes the status of women and minority members who already are leaders or middle-class persons. This is affirmative action?

b. Countless women and minority members who are American citizens, and who have been born in the US, cannot complete their high school education, despite numerous advantages. Now consider an Oriental family arriving without money, without knowledge of English, without practically anything. Still, thanks to their emphasis on both family and education, after three years, they own an automobile, a house, and a business. Everyone speaks English. As for the children, they triumph in school and even win spectacular prizes and awards. But the aforementioned women and minority members demand rewards for their ignominious Waterloos! This is affirmative action?

c. If you dare say all this to women and minority members, they will erupt like Vesuvius and accuse you of having the IQ of a mentally retarded dandelion! But, please remain calm. Do not bite any of them, although dandelion derives from the Latin dens leonis, namely, tooth of the lion. Instead, dare them thusly: "You are quite intelligent and potentially triumphant. But why, oh why, do you, consistently and systematically, prefer Mickey Mouse subjects, such as social work, sociology, and, especially,

education? Go to science. Go to mathematics. They'll be happy to see you there. And fabulous funds, fellowships, and scholarships are awaiting you!" On second thought, do not say that. I am interested in your physical integrity. Let me do it. Not because I have a leonine heart. My trick is to defend myself by modifying a famous Latin saying. I will shout: "Hic Rhodos, hic saltus, et hic hortus academicus, hic agon!" This is much safer, unless there is a Latin major in the group. A Latin major? Never! This is affirmative action!

d. Since the family is valuable and indestructible, and since education can promote it, the latter must be more supportive. Divisive and half-intellectual black studies, women's courses, and the like are not helpful, especially when we have a proliferation of pseudoacademic subjects. After all, we do not have Italian studies, despite the countless masterpieces Italy gave us in ancient, medieval, and modern times. We do not have Jewish studies, although the Bible and the Talmud are infinitely important. And, incidentally, we do not have men's studies! In brief, what will really promote the family and social harmony will be formal and informal education stressing Love, Truth, Cooperation, Integrity, and the like. (See Dinesh D'Souza, Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus, 1991.)

Now, let us consider, at random, some areas of family life which, it is often asserted, indicate the approaching demise of this institution. (Although I have published many historical and crosscultural family studies, I will confine myself to a limited amount of--mainly US--statistics. These are not identified if they

pertain to the US, but other countries are mentioned specifically.)

1. Virginity. In 1970, a Gallup poll found that 75 percent of a sample of students were indifferent about their spouses' virginity. In the 1980's, only about 10 percent of all brides and grooms were virgin. In 1982, of single women aged 18-44, 71 percent were sexually active, the 1987 percentage being 76--perhaps the actual values were higher. Of these, 9 percent in 1982, and 16 percent in 1987 used condoms. (Needless to add, social statistics are seldom accurate, if ever. Mayor Coleman Young, for example, has stated that the US Census Bureau itself had missed 121,350 people when it found only 970,000 residents in Detroit. ⁷⁾ Incidentally, some scholars object to the term "virginity," regarding it as a value judgment. Such projection merely betrays their own value judgment, since they reject both a biological concept and a sociopsychological one. Much worse, they adopt or reject something on the basis of their personal code without evaluating virginity and nonvirginity objectively. A prominent family sociologist, Gerald Leslie, does use the term virginity several times in his text (with Sheila Korman, The Family in Social Context, 1989, pp. 36,167,229,350-351). Other family sociologists do the same. This also recalls the equally prejudicial neologism, "birth mother," which is partly aimed at concealing illegitimacy. Such values, of course, are not universal, in view of what I have said regarding family evolution. Still, AIDS alone necessitates a more traditional sex code.

2. Cohabitation or ULSH. In 1960, 250,000 couples were cohabiting; in 1970, 523,000 couples; in 1977, 1,000,000 couples,

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or 1 percent of the population; in 1980, 1,589,000; and, in 1986, 2,200,000. In 1970, 1.2 percent of all couples were cohabiting; in 1980, 3.1 percent; and, in 1986, 4.1 percent. Cohabitation usually occurs between the ages of 18 and 24. Moreover, in 1970, 38 percent of cohabiting couples had children, and in 1980, 27 percent.

Many scholars in the social and behavioral sciences have asserted that cohabitation is neither common nor desirable. Robert Sternberg, for instance, a psychologist at Yale University, discussed this issue at the 1988 annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in Atlanta. After stating his strong reservations, he added: "No study finds that you do better by living together, and some find that you do worse." His main argument was that commitment is weak. (See, also, Maggie Gallagher, Enemies of Eros, Chicago Bonus Books, 1990.)

The present author himself has found numerous reasons why cohabitation tends to fail, as his "Trials and Tribulations of Trial Marriage," in the July-December 1979 issue of the International Review of Sociology of the Family, indicates. He has also rejected the term cohabitation for various reasons, preferring ULSH, or Unmarried Lovers Sharing Household.⁸

3. Homosexuality.⁹ One of the associations between homosexuality and some individual-social problems involves alcoholism. In 1979, for instance, among adults, 25 percent of all homosexuals were also alcoholics, which means four times higher than among heterosexuals.

Recently, homosexual lovers in the state of New York acquired

"the same right as surviving partners to take over rent-stabilized apartments upon the death of the partners" (Time, November 20, 1989, p. 101). Moreover, New York; Los Angeles; Madison, Wisconsin; San Francisco; Seattle; and Takoma Park, Maryland, provide bereavement leave for domestic partners.

Another recent poll of adult Americans found that 69 percent disapproved of legalized homosexual marriage, while 75 percent indicated that homosexual couples should not be legally permitted to adopt children. The percentages for approval were 23 and 17, respectively.

In October 1989, Denmark became the only industrial country to permit registered homosexual partnerships.

On the other side is San Francisco's Archbishop John Quinn, who has led the fight against granting various partnership rights to homosexual municipal workers. This, he asserted, would be a serious blow to the family and our entire society. (See, also, a critique on the incorrect term, "homophobia": Panos D. Bardis, "On 'Homophobia,'" American Sociological Association Footnotes, September 1990, p. 5.)

So where is the demise of the family?

4. Illegitimacy.¹⁰ Between 1940 and 1975, the illegitimacy rate increased fivefold, namely, from 90,000 (40,000 for whites and 50,000 for blacks), or 3.6 percent of all births, to 448,000 (191,000 for whites and 257,000 for blacks), or 14.2 percent. In 1979, there were 600,000 illegitimate cases, or 17 percent of all births. In 1983, over 20 percent of all births (3,640,000) were illegitimate (740,000), namely, 19 per 1,000 white women, and 78

for black ones. In 1988, 25 percent of all births were illegitimate. In 1970, the number of illegitimate births was 400,000 (11 percent of all births), their distribution being as follows, in percentages: whites 5, blacks 38, American Indians 23, Chinese 3, Japanese 5, and Hawaiians 17. In Boston, an agency found that, among white women, 10 percent kept their babies in 1960, and 45 percent in 1970. (An important point: we often speak of a "dramatic" increase in illegitimacy rates. This "dramatic" proportion, however, is nonexistent, since it is due to the much lower number of children among married women.)

For the sake of contrast, one should mention that, in 1983, 33 percent of all births in Sweden were illegitimate, despite much emphasis on sex education, moral freedoms, and state support.

A new trend among some women is to stay single but have children. New York's Single Mothers by Choice members wear tags indicating the following: T for thinking about having a baby on her own, A for attempting to get pregnant, P for having succeeded, M for motherhood, I for donor insemination, and so on (Time, Fall 1990, p. 76). A 38-year-old woman has explained: "I really love kids and feel I have a lot to offer."

(Many questions come to mind. Has she interviewed her child to determine his or her own attitude? Is there no man in the entire world worthy of her love? Does she really love children? How? Is there some self-love involved here? Of what type? Is she unable to adjust to a fairly traditional family system? If not, why does she waste her skills? If yes, how can she succeed in an unknown, uncharted, untried, untested family form? Can she

alone give to a child what even two parents find it difficult to offer? And so forth and so on.)

The highly problematical nature of such experimentation is revealed by a disturbing fact: an untested innovation is always compared with a pathological marriage. It is exactly like arguing thus: "I want a lame burro. Who needs a dilapidated car?" This is exactly the attitude of the director of Single Mothers by Choice, who also is a psychotherapist! Just listen to her little son: "Wasn't my dad silly not to want to be a dad? He is missing out on all this fun." Imagine the brainwashing! Imagine his life and attitudes at 20! Is it not wiser to stress kindness and love, instead of promoting unkindness and hatred?

And, again, like "virginity," "illegitimacy" is an almost universally acceptable term, despite the radical minority's objections. See, for example, Jenny Teichman, Illegitimacy, 1982; Black's Law Dictionary, recent editions; etc. Or are we expected to imitate the generals of Operation Desert Storm who never hurt a fly? Indeed, instead of killing, US weapons merely caused "collateral damage"; instead of bombing, they only "suppressed the enemy's assets"; and, whenever US weapons failed, they simply "visited and retargeted the enemy"!

5. Abortion.¹¹ Between 1977-1987, the annual abortion rate among women aged 15-44 remained fairly constant. The percentage was 3, or, more specifically: Hispanics 4.3, non-Hispanic whites 2.3, nonwhites (mainly blacks) 5.3 (the highest); Catholics 3 (the same as the general percentage); and Protestants and Jews 30 percent lower than the general value. In the early 1980's, there

were about 1,600,000 abortions per year, and, in 1985, about 5,000 a day. In 1989, the number of abortions was about 1,500,000. In 1988, girls under 18 had 12 percent of all abortions. Recently, among pregnant teenagers, 64 percent of whites and 44 percent of blacks have had abortions. ¹² The annual cost of abortion itself is \$5,000,000,000!

In 1988, the USSR continued to perform 7,000,000 abortions per year (some sources give 11,000,000).

In 1983, Sweden had one of the highest abortion rates in the world, or 50 percent of all pregnancies. This sounds curious, in view of the following policies: sex education beginning in kindergarten; confidential provision of contraceptives to young people; and special services provided to sexually active girls and funded by the state--maternity leaves, daycare centers, and the like.

In 1986, the number of abortions for the entire world was 65,000,000. Two years later, the number of abortions per woman in the reproductive ages (15-44), was .80 in Italy, 2.24 in Greece, and so on--the Netherlands had the lowest rate.

Once more, when we think of the entire population, these statistics do not really constitute the harbinger of the family's death.

6. Divorce. ¹³ The number of divorces per 1,000 people was 1.0 in 1910, 2.2 in 1962, 4.8 in 1975, 5.3 in 1981, 5.1 in 1982, and 4.8 in 1986. In 1967, 20 percent of divorces were secured during the first two years of marriage. In 1980, 60 percent of divorces involved children, and 500,000 divorced fathers reared

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their offspring alone. Between 1970 and 1978, the number of children under 18 living with divorced fathers increased by 136 percent. (See Lenard Marlow and S.Sauber, The Handbook of Divorce Mediation, New York: Plenum, 1990.)

In 1984, the mean income for household heads with children was as follows: parents living together, \$30,600; divorced father, \$24,200; widowed mother, \$15,500; divorced mother, \$12,300; and unwed mother, \$5,700.

Among Roman Catholics, there were 338 annulments in 1968, and 27,690 in 1978. The new grounds for annulment explain this increase, since, before 1978, there were only three, that is, fraud, bigamy, and impotence. Now, grounds such as psychological immaturity are also recognized.

In 1983, Sweden's divorce rate was 60 percent higher than that of the US, despite rigorous sex education, numerous freedoms, and the like.

In the 1980's, the USSR had about 1,000,000 divorces per year. About 50 percent of them occurred in major cities, while 33 percent were granted during the first year of marriage.

Again, from hedonism to economic factors, many forces explain the rising divorce rate. But this rate has not only fluctuated for millennia, it also represents a rather small segment of the population. Besides, instead of promoting a problem, we should seek its solutions.

7. Drugs and Alcohol.¹⁴ Alcohol and drug addiction cost more than \$120,000,000,000 in 1984 (through lost production, accidents, crime, and treatment). Ten percent of those who take

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alcohol become addicted, but 75 percent of drug users become addicts. In 1969, 16 percent of drug addicts were female. In 1976, more than 1,000 babies born in New York City were heroin addicts, due to their mothers' own addiction. Half of all street crimes in the US are committed by drug addicts.

The first national study of anabolic steroids taken by high school boys to develop their physique and achieve athletic success discovered 500,000 such cases in 1988--the study was conducted by Pennsylvania State University.

In 1988, more than 100,000 Americans produced marijuana, and in 1976, 36,000,000 persons used this drug. Users paid \$5,000,000,000 for marijuana in 1976, and \$10,000,000,000 in 1988.

In 1986, cocaine was the largest business in the world--more than \$98,000,000,000 in sales. In 1985, the US imported 130,000 pounds of this substance, and 275,000 pounds in 1986. The average user begins at age 12. The percentage of high school seniors who had ever tried cocaine was 15.2 in 1987--this value does not include crack, which is becoming more popular. By 1986, 26,000,000 people had tried cocaine. Six million had done so at least once a month, and there were 3,000,000 addicts.

Christopher Jencks, however, in a chapter dealing with drugs, doubts that this problem is really so serious (with Paul Peterson, editors, The Urban Underclass, Brookings Institution, 1991). In high school, for instance, all forms of drug use declined dramatically during the 1980's. Moreover, among the poor, this and related problems have not actually increased since 1970. In fact, he asserts, the entire theme of a growing underclass

constitutes a confusing oversimplification.

Besides, since the drug problem is not even near-universal, and since the average user begins at 12, we all know what basic social institution must be sufficiently reinforced in order to combat this and other problems.

8. Violence.¹⁵ Wife beating is the most unreported crime. About 2,000,000 women per year are battered by their husbands and lovers--1,500 such women died in 1987 as a result. In 1979, 10 percent of all children attacked their parents physically--minor incidents are not included here--but parents seldom file legal charges. Violence in schools is more common than on the streets, but many incidents are never reported.

But it seems that we often analyze violence and other social problems as components of a metaproblem, such as the underclass, and suggest comprehensive metasolutions, instead of piecemeal reform. This wasteful philosophy is basically revolutionary and can only lead to chaos. So, what we really need is a series of countless minute solutions involving changes in individual attitudes and in our social institutions, especially the family.

Still, although the number of violent crimes doubled between 1964 and 1974, it remained constant in the late 1970's, dropped significantly in the early 1980's and became slightly higher in the late 1980's. This was especially typical of blacks.

So where is the constantly approaching catastrophe?

C. The Family Phoenix.

In view of the above data, whenever I think of Shakespeare's immortal verses (Cymbeline, I,vi),

"If she be furnished with a mind so rare,
She is alone the Arabian bird,"

I do not give much thought to his phoenix. Yes, this unique bird, when its death is near, builds a nest of spices, sings a sweet but melancholy dirge, flaps its wings to set fire to the pile, consumes itself to ashes, but then attains triumphal resurrection. Instead, I have grown accustomed to thinking of the miraculous attributes of the family institution, as history indicates. Yes, there are semideaths, neardeaths, and even deaths. But the family phoenix always returns, albeit in modified forms. Besides, the aforementioned maelstroms are not really that catastrophic or cataclysmic. Otherwise, adjustment would be impossible. As Plato observed, "all living beings feel the strain intensely and are unable to endure it, when radical changes of many different forms happen simultaneously" (Statesman, 270).

Sometimes it is refreshing to ignore the modern social scientist's terminological gymnastics and ideological acrobatics in order to return to the scintillating jewels of the immortal giants of the past dealing with social institutions and their change.

Zeno of Elea, whom Aristotle considered the inventor of dialectic, developed many paradoxes of change, motion, space, and time dealing with continuity and related concepts.

Theophrastus of Eresus, a pupil of Plato and Aristotle, wrote 30 Ethical Characters. The little book's timelessness illustrates social and psychological continuity. Indeed, once I mentioned this masterpiece to the 150 students in a university class of

mine. Some of them went to the library and read the book. But they mentioned it so frequently that practically the entire class imitated them. How fascinating and hilarious to read, almost 2,500 years later, all about their own modern relatives and friends--yes, all about those infuriatingly lovable, cherubically despicable, and diabolically adorable characters!

Marcus Aurelius perceived continuity but, wisely and somewhat melancholically, advised us to adapt to inevitable change (Meditations, V,23; VI,15; VII,18).

More optimistically, Saint Thomas Aquinas observed both inescapable change and continuity: "Change becomes pleasant to us, since our nature is changeable" (Summa Theologica, I-II,xxxii,2).

William Wordsworth dreamed more poetically: "I long for a repose that ever is the same" (his longing for tranquility undisturbed by cataclysmic change--"Ode to Duty," 1805).

In modern times, many scholars share my gradualism, a gradualism that explains the universality and indestructibility of the family institution.¹⁶ Let me briefly discuss the work of two authors.¹⁷

In 1990, the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in New Orleans included a symposium on sexual behavior. Two of the speakers were Thomas Smith, of the University of Chicago, and Freyda Sonnenstein, of the Urban Institute in Washington.

Smith reported that, in 1989, the average adult American had only 1.16 sexual partners, while 25 percent of all adults had no

sex partners. Of married couples, merely 1.5 percent had sex with a nonspouse each year. He added: "Despite much chatter about open marriages and 'swinging' and the normalcy of infidelity, Americans actually seem to live up to the norm of fidelity fairly well." As for homosexuality, Smith found that 98.5 percent of sexually active adults had been exclusively heterosexual during the previous year. He also reported high marital fidelity rates, married people usually hesitating to expose themselves and their spouses to AIDS.

Similarly, Sonnenstein attacked various stereotypes, including the popular description of male teen-ages as "sexual adventurers." Sexually active adolescents, she found, did not engage in regular sex.

When it comes to family continuity, then, it seems that the French are right: "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose."

IV. Guided Creative Adjustment

But how can we strengthen the family and promote social harmony?

First of all, we must critically examine philosophical and socioeconomic systems, both past and present, which affect the family positively or negatively, at least to a certain extent. On the basis of such examination, appropriate educational programs may then be adopted. For the sake of illustration, only three systems will be discussed here--briefly!

A. Social Telesis.

Lester Frank Ward (1841-1913), a geologist, paleobotanist, evolutionist, lawyer, and sociologist (he founded American

sociology in 1883), studied the functioning of society at the expense of social structure. In evolutionism, he postulated four stages: cosmogeny, biogeny, anthropogeny, and sociogeny. Unfortunately, he opposed quantitative sociology, although both this and the qualitative approach are valuable. Fortunately, he supported woman's freedom, and his "applied sociology" stressed "social telesis," namely, human purposive action aimed at improving society. Moreover, he advocated state participation through an informed electorate for the purpose of social reform. But his attack on laissez faire (in the US, in the 19th century!) and his inadequate educational philosophy sabotaged his dream. ¹⁸

Social telesis, then, must stress both sound family goals and effective means.

B. Capitalism.

Capitalism is an economic system characterized by four features: (1) There is private ownership of the means of production. (2) There is private ownership of property. (3) The marketplace determines who will produce what and who will receive the output. (4) The government's chief function is to facilitate free and fair competition. ¹⁹

An objective critic of capitalism would be ambivalent regarding its influence on the family. Despite higher educational and economic standards, especially among some social strata, numerous problems remain. Family allowances in France, for instance, known as allocations familiales, which have been financed through a tax on employers, have not been spectacularly successful, although payments to the family have also been

tax-free. ²⁰

Family budgets through economic and educational research have not been more successful. Scholars such as Dudley Baxter, L. Levi, Hector Denis, V. Brants, L. Bodio, and others were surpassed by the dean of family "budgeteers," Frederic Le Play (1806-1882), who devoted his life to this subject. As a result, he established the Societe Internationale d'Economie Sociale, in Paris, in 1856, and traveled widely to study 300 educationally and economically "typical" families. His magnum opus, the six volumes of Les Ouvriers Europeens, appeared in six volumes in 1877-1879. Still, his cyclopean effort was a relative failure. Too paternalistic, too moralistic, and insufficiently inductive, it could not help the family much. His family typology was equally disappointing: patriarchal or stable (community of goods), famille-souche (family stock, with primogeniture and younger branches), and unstable (forced partition, as in France). In fact, some of Le Play's own students characterized his work as poor sociology and worse economics. So, they soon deserted him.

It seems superfluous to analyze additional new and old systems in order to prove that capitalism has not been a family panacea. ²¹ Still, through education and other institutions, its positive contributions must be strengthened at the expense of its destructive elements.

C. Communism.

Government control of the family, education, and the economy in the communist world has proved also inadequate.

In communist China, ²² mothers still employ ancient methods

to kill their baby girls: feeding them poisonous oleander berries, smothering them in their afterbirth, letting them starve to death, etc. New methods, such as sonograms and amniocentesis, are also used in order to detect the sex of the fetus and then destroy female ones. Male chauvinism, after three millennia, remains rampant.²³ Ignorant of genetics, husbands may even divorce their wives, although it is the former that supply the Y chromosome! Little girls are often drowned deliberately. In 1979, female infanticide was promoted further, since only one child per couple was permitted by the new law. Even intellectuals greet a baby girl with derision. Still, the family has survived all crises, all tempests.

In the Soviet Union,²⁴ in order to oppose both family and church, Lenin thundered: "We must engage in a most decisive battle against reactionary clergy and suppress their resistance with such cruelty that they will remember it for several decades to come." Still, even in 1980, there were 3,000,000 Jews, 5,000,000 Catholics, 8,000,000 Protestants, 30,000,000 Moslems, 84,000,000 Orthodox, etc. Recent changes are more impressive.

Similarly, the rest of East Europe has been renewing its "religious heritage. Christians and Jews, seeking to reconnect with the past, are requesting religious materials."²⁵ And, in this sphere, they now are much more successful.

In the rest of the world, even in Italy and Chile, where powerful communist parties have thrived for decades, communism is declining. Indeed, "many national Communist parties have been blown to smithereens in less than a year."²⁶

Planning in the Soviet Union has also been a disaster. Needless to add, this policy has covered practically everything: the kolkhoz market, individual peasants, and so on, which explains the waste and chaos that followed (Harry Schwartz, Russia's Soviet Economy, 1954; H. Chambre, L'Amenagement du Territoire en URSS, 1959; C. Bobrowski, Formation du Systeme Sovietique de Planification, 1956). Under Stalin, deliberate sabotage led to his personal control of the economy, which never resulted in utopia, either. ²⁷

In education, ²⁸ major reforms occurred after the Revolution (G. Kline, editor, Soviet Education, 1957; George Counts, The Challenge of Soviet Education, 1957). The family was neglected mercilessly, religion was attacked viciously, and ideological brainwashing became the chief pedagogical technique (George Bereday and Jaan Pennar, editors, The Politics of Soviet Education, 1960). Thus, at the age of seven, compulsory "incomplete secondary" education began and lasted eight years, the curriculum being uniform throughout the country. The next stage was optional and students could select one of the following programs: three-year vocational technical schools, general secondary schools, or professional secondary schools. In 1958, Nikita Khrushchev influenced education through the Five-Year Plan. But, as we now know, both the family and religion managed to survive.

The family ²⁹ itself was particularly invincible. As is well known, in Marxist theory, the ultimate goal for this institution was to be a free association of individuals, free of any tradition

or contract, and with no obligation to rear children--that would become the community's function. In fact, soon after the Revolution and until about 1935, the state attempted to eradicate the family. Its heroic resistance, however, was so stubborn that even Stalin himself admitted defeat, permitted the family to continue, albeit with an effort to employ it as a propaganda instrument. But the family perpetuated itself defiantly, breeding nothing but recalcitrant opposition to the Soviet regime!

It is only incorrigible ideologues, then, that will never admit the failure of communism in the sphere of both familial and economic relations. But education must enlighten the masses for the purpose of promoting both the family and genuine welfare.

D. So What Is to Be Done?

Before doing anything for the family, we must realize and teach that the family is neither dead nor dying. New impressive reports tell us so.

Charlee Scott,³⁰ for instance, states that marriage is becoming more popular, sexual mores are now somewhat more traditional, and the divorce rate is declining, since marriage is considered preferable to divorce, the latter being an economic catastrophe and harmful to children.

Father Greeley³¹ informs us that, for four decades, Catholic and Protestant families have remained essentially the same. The family-religion bond is still strong. Ninety percent of husbands and wives remain faithful to their spouses. "Marriage in America is in better condition than most Americans think it is." Romance persists long, long after the honeymoon--even after age 65, when

people describe their spouses as "kind" and "exciting."

Edward Kain's The Myth of Family Decline ³² concludes, on the basis of myriads of impressive data: "Will the family survive? My simple answer to that question is, 'Yes, there is no doubt.'" And he thunders, "The family is not dying, it is changing" (his italics).

Internationally, despite dramatic changes and even new features that persist, the family still survives triumphantly, but, for instance, there is no excuse for continuing offenses against women, especially when we are about to enter the 21st century. Such offenses are countless. In Africa, for example, even untrained, half-blind women may perform sunna (traditional) female circumcision which involves "cutting off the tip of the clitoris; excision, the removal of the clitoris and the labia minora; and infibulation, the removal of the clitoris, the labia minora and labia majora. With infibulation, the pubic area is stitched up." ³³ Is this women's emancipation? Is this equality? Is this freedom? At the end of the second millennium, both the local and international communities are guiltier than ever when they offend against both women and the family. Global cooperation should aim at eliminating all such problems.

One could go on and on and on, writing countless tomes to illustrate the persistence of the family and its functions, its valuable contributions to society, and the innumerable creative educational techniques that could promote the welfare of the family, of society, of the entire world. Here, however, I will merely recommend the following:

Specifically, we need a variety of courses at all educational levels, in all spheres of the family: mate choice, engagement, family planning, blended families, dual-career families, adjustment, cooperation, mobility, etc. Comparative family courses are indispensable (our own family system and those of other cultures, current forms and past forms, including lectures by experts or visitors on other peoples' family customs), since such knowledge reveals both similarities and dissimilarities, thus leading to mutual understanding, flexibility, proximity, and adjustment. More and better home economics courses would help with financial planning and related subjects. Special courses in biology would diminish our vast ignorance of our own bodies. Psychology, sociology, and the like could also make valuable contributions. Religious institutions, by means of thoughtful lectures and carefully planned programs, including interreligious ones, would help immeasurably, particularly if they stressed the values and practices that unite us at the expense of those that divide us. Special publications promoting the family and social harmony would also be invaluable. It is not utopian to hope that, at the national or federal level, special family departments or ministries could be created. It is not too idealistic to expect the international community to establish a special family organization to deal exclusively with family problems and their solutions, with family programs and their administration. Appropriate awards or prizes could be granted by the local, state, and federal chiefs (the equivalents in other countries) to couples whose marriage has lasted 50, 60, or 70 years, respectively. And

so forth and so on. The guiding principle for all this should be emphasis on cause and effect for the sake of rejecting the destructive and both retaining and reinforcing the creative.

At a more general level, we must guide social change, again strengthening positive forces and diminishing negative ones. Individual and collective adjustment must be creative, imaginative, democratic. Ideology and prejudice must never be emphasized. Four rigorous and objective steps, namely, research, publication, application, and education, both informal and formal, cannot be ignored with impunity. After all, if not abused, as Sir Francis Bacon concluded, "Scientia potestas est."

V. Conclusion

After exploring the nature, history, present, and future of the human family, I feel compelled to attempt, most humbly, to climb the august heights of its beauty, magnificence, and sacredness by composing a Pandebur-poem consisting of a metaphor and a simile:

FAMILY

(A Pandebur)

Flaming fable, fiery Phoenix!

* * *

Flap your wings and sing your dirges.

Like a star that soon emerges

From forbidding, stormy skies,

Once again your form will rise!

Notes

* Presented at the International Conference on "The Contemporary Family in Crosscultural Context," Seoul, South Korea, August 26, 1991.

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