

## [292]Chapter 13

# The Moral Norm of Sociality

### I<sup>1</sup>

The true definition of society as *organized morality* eliminates two now-fashionable falsehoods: *moral subjectivism*, which strips the moral will of the real means for realizing itself in community life, and *social realism*, according to which given social

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C] In **B**, this appears as Chap. 10 and is entitled “The Moral Foundation of Sociality,” spanning pp. 337–358.

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<sup>1</sup> C] *In A alone, this chapter began with the following lengthy prefatory paragraph:* A year or a year and a half ago, a well-known writer, academic and former minister Jules Simon published a newspaper article on the dangers posed to society from socialism. He wrote, “The chief misfortune lies in the fact that the moral foundations of society have grown extremely weak: religion is in decay, the family is breaking up and property is at risk of losing all its value, since the return on capital is constantly and rapidly decreasing. Until recently, it equaled 4%, but now it barely reaches 3%.” Of course, it is a pity for those who receive only three percent on their capital, but the status of religion is even more pitiful in those bourgeois-capitalist circles where its fate is so closely connected with high revenue. Furthermore, J. Simon does not say anything special. He expresses merely the prevailing frame of mind in his circle, though less cynically than others. Comparing the decline of religion to that of the profitability of capital, he gives us to understand by his tone—and others say just this—that for him what is more important is that religion could be well used to preserve the property interests of prosperous people. With regard to one particular parliamentary speech, the conservative press was full of bitter complaints about the irrationality of anti-clerical politics. “Earlier, religious hopes for heavenly bliss served as a substitute for achieving earthly happiness and served to reconcile the poor to all their deprivations. However, now after Gambetta, Jules Ferry and their successors have done everything to rob the people of their faith—an excellent substitution (!) for worldly pleasures—we naturally find among the wretched majority a desire to seize material goods through a socio-economic revolution.” Such a conception of religion and moral foundations reigns not just in France alone. It is shameful and distorted in that it sees in them nothing more than an instrument for the preservation of a particular external order that is advantageous to some and disadvantageous to others. To defend the dignity of these principles and in the interest of social consciousness, it is of the greatest importance that we address the questions: What in fact are the moral foundations of society, and in what sense and under what conditions can we ascribe, in general, such significance to religion, the family and property?

*Solov'ev adds in a footnote with regard to the first quotation ascribed to Simon:* I cite this from memory, but I vouch for the accuracy of its sense and tone. The article was published in *Figaro* in the fall of 1893. *Solov'ev does not provide any additional information on the source of the second quotation.*

institutions and interests have by themselves a decisive significance in life.<sup>2</sup> According to the latter, the highest moral principles turn out to be at best<sup>3</sup> only means or instruments for the protection of those interests. From this now quite prevalent point of view, one *real*<sup>4</sup> form or other of sociality is in essence the genuine and main one, although there are attempts to give it moral justification, to connect it with moral foundations and norms.<sup>5,6</sup> However, these attempts to find the moral bases of human society show that not just a definite form of society, but not even sociality *as such*, is<sup>7</sup> the highest and unconditional expression of the human being. In fact, if we were defined essentially as<sup>8</sup> a social animal (*ζῷον πολιτικόν*)<sup>9</sup> and *nothing more*, this would extremely narrow the *intension* of the concept “human being” and at the same time significantly expand the *extension* of that concept. The concept of humanity would then have to include such animals as, for example, ants, for which social life as such is as much an essential characteristic as it is for the human being. The most authoritative investigator of ants, Sir John Lubbock, says, “Moreover, their nests are no mere collections of independent individuals, nor even temporary associations like the flocks of migratory birds, but organised communities labouring with [293]the utmost harmony for the common good.”<sup>10</sup> According to the observation of this naturalist, these communities sometimes contain such a large population that, of human cities, perhaps only London and Beijing can be compared to them.<sup>11</sup> Of far greater importance are the three inner characteristics of the ant community. First, they have a complex social organization. Second, individual colonies have definite differences in the degree of this organization. This difference is quite analogous to the gradual development of the forms of human culture from hunting to an agricultural way of life. It shows that the social life of ants emerged not in some contingent and exceptional manner, but developed according to certain general sociological laws. Finally, third, what is remarkable is the extraordinary strength and

<sup>2</sup> C] eliminates two now-fashionable ... significance in life.] organized morality, eliminating the falsehood of moral subjectivism, also eliminates at the same time the contrary point of view, according to which various social institutions and interests have an unconditional significance in themselves. **B.**

<sup>3</sup> C] at best] *Absent in B.*

<sup>4</sup> C] *real*] *Absent in B.*

<sup>5</sup> C] The true definition ... foundations and norms.] *Absent in A.*

<sup>6</sup> C] and norms] *Absent in B.*

<sup>7</sup> C] that not just a definite form of society, but not even sociality *as such*, is] that sociality by itself is not **A**] that sociality is not **B.**

<sup>8</sup> C] as] only as **A.**

<sup>9</sup> E] A reference to Aristotle. Cf. Aristotle 1941: 1088 (1169b 18–19): “since man is a political creature and one whose nature is to live with others.”

<sup>10</sup> F] Lebbok, D. 1884. *Murav'i, pchely i osy. Nabljudenija nad npravami obshchezhitel'nykh pereponchatokrylykh*, trans. from the 5th edition by D. V. Averkiev. St. Petersburg, p. 92. E] Lebbok 1884: 92. For the English-language original, see Lubbock 1882: 93–94.

<sup>11</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 92. E] Lubbock 1882: 93.

stability of the social bond, and there is an amazing practical solidarity between all the members of the ant citizenry when it is a matter of the common good.

Regarding the first point, if the characteristic feature of a civilization is its division of labor, then it is impossible to deny the existence of an ant civilization. Ants have an extremely sharp division of labor. There are very brave warriors, armed with exorbitantly developed pincer-like jaws with which they deftly grasp and sever the head of the enemy. However, they are unable to do anything else. There are worker ants, who are distinguished by their hard work and skill. There are citizen ants with the opposite qualities going so far that they are no longer able to feed themselves nor walk but can only make use of others' services. Finally, there are the slaves (which are not to be confused with the worker ants).<sup>12</sup> They were acquired by conquest and belong to other species of ants, a fact which does not prevent their complete devotion to their masters. Excluding such a division of labor, the high degree of ant civilization is proven again by the abundance of domestic animals they retain (i.e., domesticated insects from other zoological families). Lubbock notes (of course, not without some exaggeration) "...we may truly [294]say that our English ants possess a greater variety of domestic animals than we do ourselves."<sup>13</sup> Some of these domestic insects, carefully reared by ants, are used for food (such, in particular, are the honeyed plant-lice (*aphidae*), which Linnaeus calls cows of the ants (*aphis formicarum vacca*).<sup>14</sup> Others perform some necessary social works, for example, serve as scavengers,<sup>15</sup> and a third group in Lubbock's opinion are kept for fun,<sup>16</sup> like our pugs or canaries. The entomologist André presented a list of 584 species of insects that are commonly found in ant communities.<sup>17</sup>

Currently, for many highly populated ant communities the chief means of existence is an ample supply of plant products they have collected. Crowds of worker ants systematically and skillfully cut stalks of grass and stems of leaves—as if *reaping*. However, this similarity to farming is neither their unique nor their original means of subsistence. Lubbock says, "we find in the different species of ants different conditions of life, curiously answering to the earlier stages of human progress. For instance, some species, such as *Formica fusca*, live principally on the produce of the chase; for though they feed partly on the honey-dew of aphides, they have not domesticated these insects. These ants probably retain the habits once common to all ants. They resemble the lower races of men, who subsist mainly by hunting. Like them they frequent woods and wilds, live in comparatively small communities, and the instincts of collective action are but little developed among them. They hunt singly, and their battles are single combats, like those of the Homeric heroes. Such species as *Lasius flavus* represent a distinctly higher type of social life; they show more skill in architecture, may literally be said to have domesticated certain species of aphides, and may be compared to the pastoral stage of human progress—to

<sup>12</sup> F] Worker ants (just like worker bees), as is well known, do not represent a separate species but descend from a common queen and remain (sexually) under-developed.

<sup>13</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 73. E] Lubbock 1882: 73–74.

<sup>14</sup> E] Lubbock 1882: 67.

<sup>15</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 74. E] Lubbock 1882: 75.

<sup>16</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 76. E] Lubbock 1882: 78.

<sup>17</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 73. E] Lubbock 1882: 74.

[295]the races which live on the produce of their flocks and herds. Their communities are more numerous; they act much more in concert; their battles are not mere single combats, but they know how to act in combination. I am disposed to hazard the conjecture that they will gradually exterminate the mere hunting species, just as savages disappear before more advanced races. Lastly, the agricultural nations may be compared with the harvesting ants. Thus there seem to be three principal types, offering a curious analogy to the three great phases—the hunting, pastor, and agricultural stages—in the history of human development.”<sup>18</sup>

Besides the complexity of their social structure and their gradual cultural development, ant communities are also distinguished, as noted above, by the extreme strength of their social ties. Our author repeatedly informs us that “the utmost harmony reigns between those belonging to the same community.”<sup>19</sup> This harmony is dependent *solely* on the common good. On the basis not just of observations alone but also on numerous experiments, Lubbock shows that in all cases where an individual ant undertakes something useful for the entire community but which exceeds its own capability, for example, dragging a dead fly or beetle that it encountered into the anthill, the ant always calls and finds other companions to help it. On the other hand, when an individual ant meets some disaster that concerns it alone, it does not usually arouse any sympathy, and no help is forthcoming. Our patient naturalist rendered individual ants unconscious many times by means of chloroform or vodka<sup>20</sup> with the result that the fellow ants either did not pay any attention to these unfortunate ones or threw them out like carrion. However, tender concern over another’s personal grief has no connection with any social function and consequently is not inherent in the concept of sociality as such. In return, both a feeling of civic duty and a devotion to the common order are so great in ants that disputes or internecine wars among them never arise. Their armed forces are designated for external wars alone. Even in the most developed communities, which have a special class of scavengers and a special [296]breed of domestic jesters, not a single observer could find any sign of an organized police or gendarmerie.

## II

Sociality is at least as essential a characteristic of the animals examined here as it is for humans. If, however, we do not want to recognize their equality with ourselves, if we do not agree now to accord all human and civil rights to each of the innumerable ants swarming in our woods, this is because human beings have another essential quality, independent of sociality. This quality, on the contrary, makes for the distinctive character of *human* society. It is that each human being, as such, is a moral

<sup>18</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 89–90. E] Lubbock 1882: 91–92.

<sup>19</sup> F] Lebbok 1884: 117 ff. E] Lubbock 1882: 119.

<sup>20</sup> E] In the Russian text (all editions), the word here is clearly “vodka.” Yet, Lubbock just as clearly performed his experiments not with vodka (!) but by immersing ants for a period of time in water until they were unconscious. See Lubbock 1882: 99–101. It should be noted, though, that the Russian word for water is “*voda*.”

being, or a person, having, independently of our social utility, an unconditional value, an unconditional right to existence and to the free development of our positive abilities. It follows directly from this that *no human being under any condition or for any reason can be seen as merely a means* for any outside purpose whatever. The human being cannot be only a means or *an instrument for the benefit of another person* nor for the benefit of *an entire class* nor, finally, for the so-called *common good*, i.e., for the benefit of the majority of other people. This “common good” or “common benefit” is a claim not on the human being, as a person, but on our activity or our work to the extent that it is done for the benefit of society and that, at the same time, provides the worker with a worthwhile existence. A person’s rights as such are based on our inherent and inalienable human value, on the formal, infinite reason in each human being, on the fact that each person has something special and irreplaceable and, consequently, must be an end in itself, and not a mere means or instrument. Such rights of a person are essentially *unconditional*, whereas the rights of society on a person, on the other hand, are *dependent* on a recognition of personal rights. Therefore, society can compel a person to do something only through an act of one’s own will. For otherwise the act will not be obligatory of a person but only the use of a thing. Of course, it does not follow from this (as for some reason one of my critics imagined)<sup>21</sup> that the social authority [297] must request the special consent of each person for each individual legislative and administrative measure. Instead of such an absurd *liberum veto*,<sup>22</sup> the moral principle logically entails (with respect to the political realm) only the right of each able-bodied person freely to change one’s allegiance as well as one’s religion. In other words, *no social group or institution has a right through force to prevent someone from withdrawing as one of its members*.<sup>23</sup>

The human value of each person, or what makes one a moral being, depends neither on one’s natural qualities nor on one’s utility. A human being’s position in society and how other people value someone can determine such qualities and such utility, but they cannot determine one’s own significance and human rights. Many animals are by nature more virtuous than many people. The conjugal virtue of pigeons and storks, the maternal love of hens, the gentle nature of deer, the loyalty and devotion of dogs, the kindness of dolphins and seals, the diligence and civic valor of bees and ants, etc. are all distinctive qualities that adorn our little brothers, but by no means do they constitute the predominant qualities of the majority of human beings. Why, then, has it not yet occurred to anyone to deprive the most rotten people of their human rights in order to pass them along to the most superb animal as a reward for its virtue? As for utility, not only is one healthy horse more useful than a great number of sick beggars, but even inanimate objects, for example, a printing press or

<sup>21</sup> E] Chicherin 1897: 647.

<sup>22</sup> E] *liberum veto*] A parliamentary device in the 17th-18th century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that gave any deputy to the Sejm the right to force an immediate cessation of the current session and void all legislation already approved. Although used commonly in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was abolished by the constitution of 1791. See Davies 2005: 265–266.

<sup>23</sup> C] Of course, it does not ... *one of its members.*] *Absent in AB.*

a steam boiler have undoubtedly served the general progress of history more than entire savage and barbarian nations. However, if (*per impossibile*) Guttenberg and Watt had to sacrifice intentionally and consciously even one savage or barbarian for their great inventions, the utility of their *efforts* would not prevent that *action* from being resolutely condemned as immoral. Otherwise, we would have to accept that the ends justify the means.<sup>24</sup>

In order to have the significance of a moral principle, the common good, or common benefit, should be common in the full sense, i.e., good not only for many or even a majority but *for everyone without exception*. What is actually a benefit for all is thereby also to the benefit of *everyone*—no one is excluded, and consequently in serving [298] *such* a social benefit, taken as the goal, *no* one thereby becomes only a means or instrument of something external and foreign. A true society, which recognizes the unconditional right of each person, is not his or her negative limit but a positive addition. In serving society with selflessness, a person does not lose but instead *realizes* unconditional value and significance. For taken individually, each of us possesses only a possible unconditionality or infinity. This *possibility* becomes a reality only through the intrinsic union of each of us with everyone.<sup>25</sup>

*The principle of human dignity or the unconditional significance of each person by virtue of which society is defined as the intrinsic, free consent of all is the sole moral norm.*<sup>26, 27</sup> Just as there cannot be many moral norms,<sup>28</sup> in the proper sense, so there cannot be many ultimate goods or many moralities. It is easy to show that religion (in its given, historical concrete sense), family and property do not contain in themselves moral norms in the strict sense.<sup>29</sup> Whether something in itself can or cannot be moral obviously must be determined as one or the other by something else. However, it cannot independently be a moral norm, i.e., impart to others a character that it itself, perhaps, does not have. It is indubitable, though, that a religion may or may not be moral. How can such religions, as, for example, the cults of Moloch or Astarte (remnants or analogies of which can still be found today here

<sup>24</sup> C] intentionally and consciously ... justify the means.] even one savage or barbarian for their great inventions, their endeavor could not be condemned as immoral and contrary to human dignity. **A.**

<sup>25</sup> F] See above, Chapter 10, “The Individual and Society.”

<sup>26</sup> F] This thesis is logically justified in the elementary part of moral philosophy, that part which received, thanks to Kant, the same character of rigorous scientificity in its sphere as pure mechanics has in another field. (See the Appendix at the end of this book.) C] This thesis is ... which received] This thesis is formally demonstrated in the fundamental part of moral philosophy. This part received **A E**] Since the appendix mentioned in this footnote is largely a collection of passages from Kant’s writings and is a reflection of Solov’ëv’s views from some 20 years earlier, it is omitted from this volume. See also the footnote at the end of the “Preface to the First Edition.”

<sup>27</sup> C] *free consent of all* is the *sole* moral norm.] free unity of all is the *sole* moral foundation of society. **A]** free agreement of all is the **sole** moral foundation of society. **B.**

<sup>28</sup> C] norms,] foundations, **AB.**

<sup>29</sup> C] religion (in its given ... in the strict sense.) general religion, family and property cannot in themselves serve as moral foundations in the proper sense. **A]** religion (in its given, historical concrete sense), family and property in themselves do not serve as moral foundations in the proper sense. **B.**

and there), serve as the moral norm of something when their very existence stands in direct contradiction to all morality? Therefore, when we point to a religion as the normal moral<sup>30</sup> foundation of society, we must still look whether this religion itself has a moral character,<sup>31</sup> whether it agrees with the moral principle. Hence, the final foundation and criterion remains this principle and not religion as such.<sup>32</sup> If we [299]see in Christianity the true foundation and the norm of all moral good in the world, this is only because Christianity, as the perfect religion, contains the unconditional moral principle. Should Christian sociality be *separated* in any way from the demands of moral perfection, the unconditional significance of Christianity would immediately disappear and it would then become an historical accident.<sup>33</sup>

It is also impossible to deny that the family may or may not be moral, not just in individual examples but also in its general given<sup>34</sup> structure. Thus, the family in Ancient Greece—not those special heroic families, where the wife kills her husband and is murdered by her son or where the son kills the father and marries his mother—but the ordinary normal family of educated Athenians, which required the institution of hetaeras, and even worse,<sup>35</sup> as a necessary complement, had no moral character. The Arab family (before Islam), in which new-born baby girls, if there were more than one or two of them, would be buried alive, was strong in its own way, but it too did not have moral character. It is also impossible to recognize as moral the very strong Roman family, in which the head of the house had the right of life and death over his wife and children. Therefore, the family too, not having an inherent moral character, must obtain a normal<sup>36</sup> moral foundation for itself before imparting it to something else.

As for property, to recognize it as<sup>37</sup> the moral foundation of a normal society, consequently, as something sacrosanct and inviolable,<sup>38</sup> is neither a logical nor, for me, for example (as I suppose it also is for my generation) even a psychological possibility. The first awakening of conscious life and thought occurred in us under the thunder of the destruction of property in two of its basic historical forms: slavery and serfdom. This destruction in both America and Russia was demanded and accomplished *in the name of social morality*. A pseudo inviolability was brilliantly refuted by the fact of such successful involvement and approved by the conscience of all.<sup>39</sup> Obviously, property is something that needs to be justified and that demands a moral norm and a support *for itself*<sup>40</sup> and by no means contains it.

<sup>30</sup> C] a religion as the normal moral] religion in general as the moral A] religion as the moral B.

<sup>31</sup> C] moral character,] moral foundation, AB.

<sup>32</sup> C] and not religion as such] *Absent in A.*

<sup>33</sup> C] If we see ... an historical accident.] *Absent in AB.*

<sup>34</sup> C] given] *Absent in AB.*

<sup>35</sup> C], and even worse,] *Absent in AB.*

<sup>36</sup> C] normal] *Absent in AB.*

<sup>37</sup> C] recognize it as] recognize it by itself as A.

<sup>38</sup> C], consequently, as something sacrosanct and inviolable,] *Absent in AB.*

<sup>39</sup> C] and approved by the conscience of all] *Absent in A.*

<sup>40</sup> E] *for itself*] An Hegelian expression meaning here “explicit” or “external.”

Every historical institution, be it religious or civil, is a fact of mixed character. However, a moral norm,<sup>41</sup> indubitably, can only be a pure principle, and not a mixed [300]fact. A principle that asserts in an unconditional form what *should* be is something inviolable by its very essence. One can reject it and not follow it. However, no harm is thereby done to the principle, but only to the one who rejects and does not follow it. The thesis that runs: “You should respect the human dignity of everyone; you must not use any person as a means or instrument” is a thesis that depends<sup>42</sup> neither on a fact nor does it assert a fact. For this reason, it cannot be affected by any fact.

The principle that the human individual has rights does not depend on anyone or anything. However, societies and institutions obtain their moral character from it alone. We know that in ancient and modern paganism there were and are great cultural-national bodies with extremely strong families, religions and property relations, but all that notwithstanding they did not and do not have the moral character associated with human sociality.<sup>43</sup> At best, they are like a community of wise insects that has a well-ordered mechanism but no purpose for which this mechanism serves. There is no moral good itself, because there is no bearer of it, no free individual.<sup>44</sup>

### III

A certain vague and perverted awareness of the essence of morality and of the true norm<sup>45</sup> of human society exists where the moral principle has no apparent application. Thus, in Eastern despotisms there is only one who has the full scope of rights<sup>46</sup> and is correctly recognized as a genuine human being, or a person, and such dignity is accorded<sup>47</sup> there to only one. However, transformed into an exclusive and externally determined privilege, human dignity and rights lose their moral<sup>48</sup> character. Their sole bearer, then, ceases to be an individual, and as a real, concrete being with no possibility of being a pure principle, this being becomes an idol. The moral principle demands of human beings that we respect human dignity as such, i.e., in others as in ourselves. Only by treating others as persons are individual human beings themselves determined as persons. However, the Eastern sovereign finds<sup>49</sup> in his world no one with full rights, only things without rights. Therefore, owing to the

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<sup>41</sup> C] norm] foundation **AB**.

<sup>42</sup> C] The thesis ... a thesis that depends] The theses ... the theses that depend **A**.

<sup>43</sup> C] the moral character associated with human sociality.] moral foundations and a moral character. **AB**.

<sup>44</sup> C] that has a well-ordered.. free individual] *Absent in* **AB**.

<sup>45</sup> C] norm] foundation **AB**.

<sup>46</sup> C] the full scope of rights] an unconditional right **AB**.

<sup>47</sup> C] and such dignity is accorded] but such dignity is unjustly accorded **AB**.

<sup>48</sup> C] their moral] their unconditional moral **AB**.

<sup>49</sup> C] sovereign finds] sovereign in antiquity found **A**.



impossibility of having [301]any personal moral relationships with someone, he inevitably himself loses his personal moral character and becomes a thing—the most important thing, a sacred, divine, worshipped thing—in a word, a fetish or an idol.

In the civil societies of the classical world, the full scope of rights became the privilege not of one, but of several (in aristocracies) and of many (in democracies). This expansion was very important, since it, albeit within narrow confines, made possible independent moral interaction between individuals and, consequently, also personal self-consciousness, and realized, at least for a given social union,<sup>50</sup> the idea of equal rights or justice.<sup>51</sup> However, the moral principle by its very essence is universal, since it demands a recognition of the unconditional intrinsic dignity of the human being as such, consequently, without any external limitations. Meanwhile, ancient society—both the gentile troops of the Spartans, the Athenian demos and the original combination of both forms—*senatus populusque romanus*<sup>52</sup>—recognized the true significance of the human being only within the bounds of its respective civil union. This is why they were not societies founded on the moral principle, but really only preliminary and approximate models of such a society.

However, the structure of this life is<sup>53</sup> for us not just of historical interest. In essence, we have still not outlived it. Let us recall, in fact, what limited the moral principle in the ancient world and prevented its true realization. There were three classes of people who were not recognized as possessing any rights and not seen as objects of any moral obligation. Consequently, they were not considered to any extent as an *end* of an activity; they were not included in the idea of the *common good* and were considered only as *material instruments* or as *material obstacles* to this good. These classes were: (1) *enemies*, i.e., originally all foreigners,<sup>54</sup> then (2) *slaves*, and finally (3) *criminals*. [302]Despite all of their particular differences, the legal status of these three categories of people were essentially one and the same, since that status was throughout equally immoral. There is no need to represent in some exaggerated form the terrible institution of slavery, which replaced, as is well

<sup>50</sup> C] social union] group **AB**.

<sup>51</sup> F] In Eastern despotisms there can be no talk of an *equality of rights*, only of a negative equality of all in the general absence of rights. However, the equal distribution of *injustice* does not make it just. The concept of equality in itself (taken abstractly) is only mathematical, and not ethical. C] (taken abstractly)] *Absent in AB*.

<sup>52</sup> E] Latin: “the Senate and the people of Rome”—a reference to the government of the Roman Republic. The initialism (from the Latin) SPQR appeared on the standards of the Roman legions.

<sup>53</sup> C] of this life is] of life in antiquity is **AB**.

<sup>54</sup> F] Although very ancient, hospitality to peaceful strangers, as a phenomenon, is hardly original with us. In Greece, its founder was thought to be Zeus—the representative of the *third* generation of gods (after Kronos and Uranus). Before being a guest in the sense of a disinterested but friendly visitor, a stranger was a guest in the sense of a merchant. Even earlier, the word was understood simply in the sense of the Latin word “*hostis*” (enemy). Moreover, even further back in antiquity accounts of which have been preserved in the classical tradition, a good guest was met with even more joy than in later hospitable times but only with a savory roast at a family feast. Besides such extremes, the dominant attitude towards strangers in primitive society was, undoubtedly, similar to what Sir John Lubbock continually noticed in an ant colony. When a newcomer came along, even though of the same species but from a different community, having been pulled about by the antennae long enough until it was exhausted and half-dead, it was either finished off or driven away.

known, the simple slaughter of prisoners. Slaves had a secure means of existence and in general were not treated badly. However, this was an accident, albeit a frequent one, and not an obligation. Consequently, it had no moral significance. Slaves were valued for their utility, but this had nothing to do with a recognition of their human dignity. As opposed to these useful things, which prudence dictates we should care for, enemies, both internal and external, as notoriously *harmful things*, were subject to ruthless destruction. Ruthlessness towards the enemy in a war could still be limited by respect for his power and fear of retribution, but towards defenseless criminals, whether real or imagined cruelty knew no bounds. In civilized Athens, even before any inquest, those accused of ordinary criminal offenses were tortured as the first order of business after being taken into custody.

All these phenomena—war, slavery, execution—were regular<sup>55</sup> occurrences in the ancient world in the sense that they logically followed from an outlook on the world that everyone accepted and took shape from the general state of consciousness. If the significance of a human being as an independent person, if the full nature of his worth and rights were dependent solely on belonging to a certain civil union, then [303]the natural consequence of this would be that people who do not belong to this union, who are foreign and hostile to it, or, although belonging to it, break its laws or threaten the general security are thereby deprived of human dignity and rights. Everything is thereby permitted towards them. However, this state of mind in antiquity changed. Ethical thought developed first among the Sophists and Socrates; then came the Greco-Roman Stoics and the work of Roman jurists. Indeed, the very character of the Roman state embraced many and was international. It, therefore, willy-nilly extended the intellectual and practical outlook.<sup>56</sup> All this gradually smoothed over<sup>57</sup> the old borders and established in personal consciousness the moral principle as formally infinite and universal. Meanwhile, from another, an Eastern shore, the religio-moral preaching of Israeli prophets elaborated a living ideal of unconditional human dignity. At the same time as one Roman in a theater of the eternal city proclaimed through the mouth of an actor the new expression “*homo sum*” (“I am a man”)<sup>58</sup> to convey the highest stage of personal dignity instead of the earlier “*civis romanus*” (“Roman citizen”), another Roman in a remote Eastern province and at a more tragic scene supplemented this statement of the new principle by simply pointing to its actual personal embodiment: *Ecce homo* (Behold the man!).<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> C] regular] normal **AB**.

<sup>56</sup> C] It, therefore, willy-nilly extended the intellectual and practical outlook] *Absent in AB*.

<sup>57</sup> C] smoothed over] eliminated **AB**.

<sup>58</sup> E] “*homo sum*”] A reference to a line in the play *Heauton Timoroumenos* by Publius Terentius Afer (184 B.C.—159 B. C.), better known in English as Terence. In his *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant also quotes this line. See Kant 1996a: 577.

<sup>59</sup> E] A reference, of course, to the words of Pontius Pilate when he presented the tortured Jesus to the crowd. The Latin is from the Vulgate translation of John 19: 5—“*et dicit eis ecce homo*.” The English translation, of course, is from the King James Version.

It would seem that the internal revolution that occurred in humanity from the interaction of events in Palestine with Greco-Roman theories was bound to start an entirely new order of things. A complete renovation of the physical world was even expected. Instead, the socio-moral world of paganism still remains without fundamental and definitive changes. If we<sup>60</sup> picture to ourselves the entire scope of what is involved in the moral regeneration of humanity, we will not complain and be astonished in this regard. A gradual process must prepare the resolution of the task confronting us before the final catastrophe.<sup>61</sup> This much is clear from the essence of the matter and was foretold in the Gospels themselves.<sup>62</sup> This preparatory<sup>63</sup> process has not yet been completed, but is being completed. Yet, it is indubitable that from the fifteenth century and especially from the end of the eighteenth the course of history has accelerated at a significantly progressive rate. In the moral and practical sense, it is important<sup>64</sup> [304] to come to a clear understanding for ourselves of what has already been done and what still remains to be done in certain, definite respects.

## IV

When people of various nationalities and social classes were spiritually united in worshipping *an indigent*<sup>65</sup> *foreigner*—a Galilean, who was executed as a *criminal* in the name of national and class interests—international wars, the deprivation of the rights of social classes and the execution of criminals were all *internally* undermined.<sup>66</sup> Yes, this internal change<sup>67</sup> needed 18 centuries to reveal itself even in part, and, yes, this manifestation has become noticeable just when its first motivating force, the Christian<sup>68</sup> faith, is weakening and apparently disappearing from the superficial consciousness. Nevertheless, this change of attitude towards the old pagan foundations of society<sup>69</sup> has internally penetrated the soul of humanity and is being revealed all the more in our lives. Whatever be the thoughts of individual people,

<sup>60</sup> C] If we] If only we **A**.

<sup>61</sup> C] A gradual process ... final catastrophe.] Not a sudden catastrophe, but only a gradual process can resolve this task. **AB**.

<sup>62</sup> F] In the parables of the leaven, of wheat and weeds, of the mustard seed, etc.

<sup>63</sup> C] preparatory] regenerative **AB**.

<sup>64</sup> C] Yet, it is indubitable ... it is important] We have no definitive and reliable standard by which to recognize it as slow or fast. Since it is not some foreign concern but our own, it is much more useful **AB**.

<sup>65</sup> C] *indigent*] *Absent in A*.

<sup>66</sup> C] international wars, ... all *internally* undermined.] international wars, class advantages and oppression, and the cruel punishment of criminals were all rendered impossible internally. **A**] international wars, the deprivation of the rights of social classes and the execution of criminals were all rendered impossible internally. **B**.

<sup>67</sup> C] change] impossibility **AB**.

<sup>68</sup> C] the Christian] *Absent in A*.

<sup>69</sup> C] this change of attitude towards the old pagan foundations of society] this impossibility **AB**.

progressive humanity as a collective whole has reached a level of moral maturity such that our consciousness and feelings are starting to make impossible what was natural in antiquity. Indeed, the moral principle that does not accept the legalization of collective crimes exerts an obligatory force on those individuals, if not in the form of religious belief, then in the form of a rational conviction<sup>70</sup> for those who have not renounced reason. The very fact of becoming acquainted with the farthest reaches of humanity, of getting to know and developing connections with them to a significant extent eliminates the mutual barriers and estrangement that were a natural outlook in antiquity. At that time, the Straits of Gibraltar were the extreme boundary of the universe,<sup>71</sup> and along the Don and Dnieper Rivers lived people with the heads of dogs.<sup>72</sup>

International wars have not yet been eliminated, but our specific attitude towards them, particularly in recent years, has changed strikingly. The *fear* of war has become the predominant motive in international politics, and not a single government will dare admit having aggressive intentions.<sup>73</sup> Slavery, properly speaking, has been unconditionally and definitively abolished. Other crude forms of personal dependence that have endured until the last century, and in some places up to the middle of the present century, have also been abolished. Only [305]an indirect economic slavery remains, but it too is a question whose time has come. Finally, our attitude towards criminals has sharply changed from the eighteenth century in line with the Christian moral principle.

And to think that precisely this quick and decisive progress, even though late, on the path laid out 19 centuries ago arouses concern for the moral foundations of society! In fact, a false understanding of these principles is the chief obstacle delaying a fundamental moral revolution in social consciousness and life. Religion, family, property—none of these in themselves, i.e., by their factual existence alone, can be, as we know, the normal moral<sup>74</sup> foundations of society. Our task is not to uphold these institutions at any cost *in statu quo*, but to make them commensurate with the unique moral norm in order to imbue them fully with the one true principle.<sup>75</sup>

By its essence, this principle is universal, the same for everyone. Religion, as such, may not be universal. Indeed, all ancient religions were narrowly national ones. Christianity, though, as the embodiment of the absolute moral ideal is as uni-

<sup>70</sup> C] a rational conviction] an abstract consciousness **A**.

<sup>71</sup> C] were a natural outlook in antiquity. At that time, the Straits of Gibraltar were the extreme boundary of the universe,] in antiquity were inevitable. Then, the Straits of Gibraltar were Herculean pillars, **AB**.

<sup>72</sup> E] people with the heads of dogs] Cynocephaly does appear to be as old as antiquity. Herodotus writes of “dog-headed” men in northern Africa. See Herodotus 1996: 276 (book 4, 191).

<sup>73</sup> C] The *fear* of war ... aggressive intentions.] Judging by the unprecedented universal glorification that the peaceful, external politics of our late Sovereign deserved, we should think that those who seek to provoke a European war would be buried under an avalanche of world condemnation. **AB**.

<sup>74</sup> C] as we know, the normal moral] as we saw, the moral **A**] as we know, the moral **B**.

<sup>75</sup> C] to make them ... one true principle.] to give them the true moral foundation, so that they be entirely imbued with the one true moral principle. **AB**.

versal as the moral principle itself. And it appeared as such from the start. However, the historical institutions associated with it during the course of centuries did not remain universal, and they, thereby, lost the purity and richness of their moral character.<sup>76</sup> While we affirm our religion, *first* in the form of a particular denomination and *then* as universal Christianity, we deprive it not only of its sound logic but also of its moral significance<sup>77</sup> and make it an obstacle to the spiritual rebirth of humanity. Furthermore, universality is expressed not only through the absence of barriers, be they external, national, denominational, etc., but even more through freedom from internal limitations.<sup>78</sup> In order to be truly universal, a religion must not isolate itself from intellectual enlightenment, from science, from social and political progress. A religion that fears<sup>79</sup> all this, obviously, does not believe in its own strength. It is intrinsically imbued with disbelief, and with its claim to a monopoly on the moral norm for society<sup>80</sup> it lacks the most elementary condition, namely, sincerity.

The positive significance of the *family*, by virtue of which it can serve<sup>81</sup> in a certain sense as the moral norm of society [306] lies in the following. It is really physically impossible for a *single* individual<sup>82</sup> to implement his or her moral attitude towards *everyone* in daily life. Even with the most sincere recognition of the unconditional demands of the moral principle a person cannot in reality apply these demands to *every* individual, for the simple reason that this “everyone” does not really exist for this person. We cannot demonstrate *in practice* our respect for the human dignity in billions<sup>83</sup> of people of whom we have no idea. We cannot make them *in concreto*<sup>84</sup> the positive end of our activity. Nevertheless, without the *complete* realization of the moral principle in *palpable*<sup>85</sup> personal relations, it remains an abstract principle, enlightening our consciousness, but not regenerating our personal life. The way out of this contradiction lies in the fact that the full realization of moral relations for each of us actually takes place within the specific, intimate environment that constantly and actually surrounds us. This is precisely the true purpose of the family. Each family member is actually an end for the others, not just intentionally thought and wished to be so but in fact.<sup>86</sup> The unconditional significance of each member is palpably<sup>87</sup> recognized; each is irreplaceable. From this point of view, the

<sup>76</sup> C] lost the purity and richness of their moral] lost their moral **AB**.

<sup>77</sup> C] significance] foundation **AB**.

<sup>78</sup> C] but even more ... from internal limitations.] but also, and even more, in the absence of internal obstacles. **A**] but even more in the absence of internal limitations. **B**.

<sup>79</sup> C] that fears] that would fear **A**.

<sup>80</sup> C] to a monopoly on the moral norm for society] to be the moral foundation of society **A**.

<sup>81</sup> C] serve] become **AB**.

<sup>82</sup> C] really physically impossible for a *single* individual] actually physically impossible for a real, individual **AB**.

<sup>83</sup> C] billions] millions **A**.

<sup>84</sup> C] *in concreto*] *Absent in* **AB**.

<sup>85</sup> C] *in palpable*] *Absent in* **AB**.

<sup>86</sup> C] , not just intentionally thought and wished to be so but in fact] *Absent in* **AB**.

<sup>87</sup> C] palpably] *Absent in* **AB**.

family is the elementary, exemplary and formative cell of universal brotherhood or of human society as it should be. However, in order to maintain this significance the family obviously must not become a unit of satisfied mutual egoism. From this first stage, each family member must always be open to the further, ascending path leading to the realization of the moral principle in the world to the extent that that is possible for each of us. The family is either the *pinnacle* of egoism or the *rudiment* of a universal union. To protect the family, understood in the first sense, does not mean to protect the “moral foundation” of society.

Property in general has<sup>88</sup> no moral significance. No one is obliged to be wealthy, and no one is obliged to enrich others. The equality of all possessions is just as impossible and unnecessary as everyone having the same color or quantity of hair. There is, however, one condition under which the property status of an individual becomes a moral issue. It is simply contrary to human dignity and the moral norm of society<sup>89</sup> when we as people cannot provide for our own existence or when in order to provide we must spend so much effort and so much time that there is not enough left either to care for or to increase our human, intellectual [307]and moral perfection. A person in such a situation ceases to be an end for oneself and others, becoming only a material instrument of economic production on a par with a soulless machine. The moral principle unconditionally demands that we respect human dignity in everyone and in each one, that we look on everyone and each one as an end, not simply as a means. Thus, a society wishing to be morally normal<sup>90</sup> cannot remain indifferent to the situation of any of its members that runs counter to this. It directly obliges us to insure a certain minimum level of welfare for all and for each of us, namely what is necessary to maintain a worthy human existence. How to do this is an issue not of morality, but of political economy. In any case, it should be, and therefore it can be done.

Every human society and, in particular, a society that calls itself Christian can consolidate its existence and elevate its dignity only by aligning itself with the moral norm. It is not a matter of externally protecting certain institutions, which can be good or bad, but only of a sincere and consistent effort to improve intrinsically *all* institutions and social relations that can become good. This is done by increasingly subordinating all of them to the one, unconditional moral ideal of a *free union of all in the perfect moral good*.

Christianity posed this ideal as a practical task for all people and nations. It was entrusted with fulfilling this task, assuming a good will, and promised that there would be help from a higher power for its fulfillment. Both personal and historical experience sufficiently informs about such help. However, by the very essence of the Christian task as moral, and consequently free, the help of the supreme Moral Good offered to us cannot be such as to constrain the evil will or the external elimination of obstacles placed by that will on the road to the realization of the Kingdom of God. The people and nations comprising humanity must themselves experience

<sup>88</sup> C] in general has] in general and in itself has **A**.

<sup>89</sup> C] and the moral norm of society] *Absent in* **AB**.

<sup>90</sup> C] to be morally normal] to have a moral foundation **AB**.

and overcome these obstacles that appear not only in the form of the evil will of an individual but also in the form of the complex results of a *collective evil will*. Here, we find the reason for the actual slow progress seen in the Christian world and the *apparent* inactivity and stagnation of Christianity.<sup>91, 92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> C] Every human society ... stagnation of Christianity.] If our religion believes in the maxims of its Founder and becomes in reality, and not just nominally, the religion of all humanity, if the family clearly takes itself to be the model and embryo of universal brotherhood, if the economic system takes as its chief task to provide a dignified human existence for everyone and each one, then our social crisis will certainly lose its fatal significance. And when the one, true moral principle is understood as applying to all problems of social life, then there will be no need to protect the pseudo moral foundations of society with futile efforts. **A.**

<sup>92</sup> C] by aligning itself ... stagnation of Christianity.] by actually placing itself on a moral foundation. This is achieved not through externally defending these or those institutions, which can be good or evil, but only through sincere and consistent efforts to make all institutions and social relations internally good, subordinating them to the one, unconditional moral principle and filling them with the spirit of Christ. **B.**