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## **Hegel and Engels on the Family and the Politics**

### Introduction: Why Family Matters?

It is no exaggeration to claim that the relation between family and politics has become a provocative issue nowadays. In fact, the family as a political issue has been prominently highlighted in the feminist movements and sexual revolutions rising from the 1960s in the twentieth century. Most of the social activists and leftist theorists, from critical theory to psychoanalysis, from feminism to queer theories, who have an earnest concern in gender and sex politics or the politics of identity, have found an inspiration from the Marxist critique of marriage and family. Indeed, the Marxist critique inaugurates new approaches to social problems, such as the bondage of bourgeois family, the alienation of labor and property, the inequality of women and children, the individual freedom of love and sex.

“Abolition of the Family!<sup>1</sup>” is one of the most famous points made up by Marx and Engels who argue that the abolition of capitalism and the creation of communism should go hand in hand with the abolition of the family and the revolution of individual free love.

The most classical Marxist theory of family is developed in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) by Engels. According to this Engels’ work, the family leads to alienation because it is an origin of the private property and a division of labor developed in terms of sex and labor force. The abolition of family is also a step towards the overcoming of alienation.

To some extent, the threefold origin entitled in Engels’ work is likely relevant to Hegel’s threefold division of ethical life in terms of family, civil society and state, which have been particularly elaborated in the *Philosophy of Right* (1821). Compared with Marx and Engels, Hegel’s concept of family and its relation to the politics are considered as a “conservative” view of ethics and politics. Hegel neither proclaims

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<sup>1</sup> The original citation in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) by Marx and Engels is “Abolition of the family! Even the most radicals flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.” Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Paul Sweezy, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1968).

the abolition of family nor calls for a social revolution in gender and sex politics. But he affirms that the family is an essential moment in the formation of ethical life. He conceives that the ethical principle underpinning the constitution of the family unity is constitutive to the establishment of the modern democratic state. The family is – with the corporation – an ethical root of the state (*PR* § 255) but it is distinguished from the politics in itself. The moment of the politics as such is only grounded in the state. In order to reach the political moment, it is not to pursue the abolition but rather to extend the ethical unit of the family to the whole society. It is also no wonder to hear that the Hegelian critique is always notoriously treated as a conservative one which protects the interests of bourgeoisie and the domination of patriarchal system.

The objective of this paper is to give a brief account for the significance of marriage and family in Hegel's ethics and political philosophy according to the *Philosophy of Right* §158-§181 by comparing its difference to the Marxist critique of the family in terms of Engels' works; through which we finally turn to rediscover how the concept of love plays a role in Hegel's articulation of the concepts of marriage and family.

### 1. Engels on the Abolition of the Family

"The abolition of the family!" Such a few words are merely simplified as a slogan of the Marxist critique of the family. In fact, according to Richard Weikart, the Marxist critique of the family basically consists of three main points: 1) a historical critique of the origins and evolution of the family in history; 2) a moral critique of the bourgeois family; 3) an utopian vision of human liberation from the family structure in the future communist society<sup>2</sup>. In what follows, we will analyze these three points within the framework of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Weikart, "Marx, Engels, and the Abolition of the Family," *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 18, No. 5, 1994, p. 658.

<sup>3</sup> *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* was published in 1884 after the death of Marx. Although the book was published under the name of Engels, this one admitted that he finished it based on the extensive written notes by Marx's reflection of Lewis H. Morgan's *Ancient Society: Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization* (1877).

According to the “materialistic examination of history” (*Origin* p.35)<sup>4</sup>, the “determining factor in history is” “the production and reproduction of immediate life.” There are two aspects in this view: “on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species” (*Origin* p.36). In other words, the people living under a certain historical moment and place are determined by two kinds of production: “by the stage of development of labor on the one hand and of the family on the other hand” (*Origin* p.36). The form of the family (the institutional form of the propagation of the species) is determined by the first mode of production: the stage of development of labor. In light of this argument, Engels rejects any absolute norm for the study of families.

The history of family is a process related to the economic forces rather than a metaphysical given. Following Morgan, Engels distinguishes four moments in the history of family: the consanguine family; the punaluan family; the pairing family; the monogamous family. The consanguine family refers to the group marriage in which the range of relationship between husbands and wives is limited only between the male and female members of the same generation. The punaluan family refers to the prohibition of sex between brothers and sisters but allows that sisters get married with husbands of each other and brothers get married with wives of each other. The pairing family is not based on a strict relationship because man remains the right to polygamy and infidelity but woman not; and it is made by extending incest prohibition to other familial lineages that is the exclusion of blood relatives from the marital relations. The monogamous family is “based on the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity; such paternity is demanded because these children are later to come into their father’s property as his natural heirs” (*Origin* p.92).

The monogamous marriage is also “the first form of the family to be based not on natural but on economic conditions – on the victory of private property over

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<sup>4</sup> *Origin* is an abbreviation which refers to Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, tr. Alick West, (London: Penguin, 2010). All quotations within parentheses marked with *Origin* are from this Engels’ book.

primitive, natural communal property" (*Origin* p.95). It is consistent with the principle of civil contract in the legal system which is to ensure that men and women have freedom of choice and have equal rights and duties in marital union. However, men would have the privileged positions in the monogamous family, especially when it comes to a contradiction between freedom of choices and equality of duties. Men have the right to dissolve the marriage. They are not strictly required to be faithful to their wives while the wives should be absolutely loyal to their husbands. Such a contractual relation just only creates a kind of "equality on paper" (*Origin* p.103) without giving any help to the liberation of women from the domination of men. In this case, marriage only creates the bondage rather than the freedom to women. It only reinforces the subordination of women to male dominance within the monogamous family system.

The ideal marriage for Engels must be based on a genuine feeling and genuine equality, that is, "individual sex love" (*Origin* p.107). Engels redefines the idea of marriage by reclaiming the right of the individual sex love. The individual sex love arises out of the contractual relation of capitalist system which privileges the individual freedom to have a personal choice by will at first. It consists in "personal beauty, close intimacy, similarity of tastes and so forth awakened in people of opposite sex the desire for sexual intercourse, that men and women were not totally indifferent regarding the partner with whom they entered into this most intimate relationship" (*Origin* p.107). The individual sex love in principle is concerned about "subjective inclination" rather than "objective duty". It comes from the inside feeling, sexual desire, emotional need, rather than the outside factors, such as family, property, social class or religious belief. Only marriage based on love is moral and also only marriage in which love still exists is moral. To love or not to love is a criterion to distinguish true consensual marriage or not. The individual sex love can be conceived as the purity of love without any requirements to being attached to social, cultural and economic factors. Engels finds out this pure love which only exists in the proletarian class in his days because they do not have the ownership of private property at all. Engels attempts to universalize the proletarian experience in

order to achieve the emancipation of the individual from all material form of necessity.

The monogamous family system which has an economic function in bourgeois societies should be abolished for the advantage of human liberation. Against the constraints of the bourgeois family, the establishment of communist society “will transform the relations between the sexes into a purely private matter which concerns only the persons involved and into which society has no occasion to intervene. It can do this since it does away with private property and educates children on a communal basis, and in this way removes the two bases of traditional marriage, the dependence rooted in private property, of woman on the man and of the children on the parents.<sup>5</sup>”

## 2. Hegel on the Family

### 2.1. The institution of family and its role

In Hegel’s view, the family – like the civil society and the state – is an institution of the ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*). More precisely, the family is the “ethical life in its natural form” (*PR* §157)<sup>6</sup>. It means that it is the most immediate level of ethical life, which is “the Idea of freedom as the living good which has its knowledge and volition in self-consciousness, and its actuality through self-conscious action” (*PR* §142). In other words, the family gives to the individuals a first structure of normativity, which is called natural, because it is immediate and not reflected. The institution of the family is actually based on subjective feelings.

For Hegel, “the family, as the *immediate substantiality* of spirit, has as its determination the spirit’s *feeling* [*Empfindung*] of its own unity, which is *love*” (*PR* §158). It means that it is the feeling of love, which directs the member of the family to act in a sense of what is morally right inside the domain of the family. In other words,

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<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Engels, “Principles of Communism,” in *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Paul Sweezy, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1968), p.80.

<sup>6</sup> *PR* is an abbreviation which refers to G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, tr. H.B. Nisbet, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). All quotations within parentheses marked with *PR* are from this Hegel’s book. The numbers indicates the section of the book. The capital letters are given following by the number: ‘R’ refers to ‘Remarks’; ‘A’ refers to ‘Additions’.

the right and the duty of the members of the family are not for Hegel at first written in a law, they are at first ascribed into the framework of the logic of the family, which is based on love.

Normally, the ethical relationship in family consists in three different aspects: the conjugal love between husband and wife; the parental and filial love between parents and children; the communal love between brothers and sisters. Hegel explains that “among the three relationships, of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, the relationship of husband and wife is in the first place the one in which one consciousness immediately recognizes itself in another, and in which there is knowledge of this mutual recognition.”<sup>7</sup>

Hegel also focuses specially on the marital union of husband and wife. He explicates through this union the significance of love in the dialectical process of mutual recognition, which consists in a transformation of the “I” into something like a “We”, that is to say, a shared totality<sup>8</sup>. In other words, in the love union, there is a transformation of individual subject into an ethical whole.

Hegel writes: “Love means in general the consciousness of my unity with another, so that I am not isolated on my own [*für mich*], but gain my self-consciousness only through the renunciation of my independent existence [*meines Fürsichseins*] and through knowing myself as the unity of myself with another and of the other with me. But love is a feeling, that is, ethical life in its natural form” (PR §158A). The self renounces his abstract independence in order to gain his genuine or substantive independence in union with other, which is an intersubjective union or mutual recognition<sup>9</sup>. In this case, the relation of self to its own self is mediated by the relation of self to the other<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.273.

<sup>8</sup> On this subject, there is an interesting letter of Hegel (to his bride, sommer 1811), where he writes : « Deine Liebe zu mir, meine Liebe zu Dir – so besonders ausgesprochen – bringen eine Unterscheidung herein, die unsere Liebe trennte ; und die Liebe ist nur unsere, nur diese Einheit, nur dieses Band. » (Hegel, Briefe, p. 368).

<sup>9</sup> Williams, p.212.

<sup>10</sup> Williams reminds us that the self-surrender of one self to the other in love is not a kind of self-alienation because “the self’s relation to itself and even its self-surrender are immanently mediated by the self’s relation to the other.” In this case, the independent existence of the self that is negated in the first moment of love would become enriched, enlarged, and

In his analysis of love, Schlegel writes that “it is only in the reply of a “you” that each “I” can feel its infinite unity” (*Nur in der Antwort seines Du kann jedes Ich seine unendliche Einheit ganz fühlen.*) (Schlegel, p. 173). By Hegel, we have the same kind of relation of recognition, which is constitutive of the feeling of love. But Hegel considers that by Schlegel the relation of recognition is not really a reciprocal one. That is why he criticises so harshly the idea of romanticism.

To be precise, Schlegel considers that in *Lucinde* love is described as an object, to be consumed by the almighty subjectivity. The erotic love of Schlegel seems also to lead to the dissolution of marriage (*Philosophy of right* § 164 add.). In other words, the danger is to remain in the egoism of erotic (*Encyclopedy*, § 426 add.) and to deprive oneself of an institutional framework, which is objective.

However, the fact to defend the marriage as it is the case by Hegel doesn't mean that love and erotic are separated in the marital union and also excluded from this union as such. As by Plato, the erotic could be considered as a first step towards the idea of Beauty and Goodness<sup>11</sup>. The position of Hegel is also nothing related to the rejection of romanticist view of love rather than the transfiguration of this one into an institution of reciprocal recognition.

We can consider that Hegel make a kind of junction between the defenders of free love like Heinse<sup>12</sup> and the defenders of the marriage like Hippel<sup>13</sup>. For him the pleasure of love can be preserved in the felicity of marriage, which elevates the desire and its dialectics of domination to the equality of recognition between two free individual subjectivities.

As well as in the love the spouses come to have formed as a single soul, in principle, they have become a single person in the marriage. We thus have to be

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reappropriated in the second moment. The self is not simply negated but it would be enhanced by gaining itself back in the recognition of the other. The mutual recognition has fulfilled both negation and enhancement at the same time. (Ibid, p.213).

<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey Reid, « La jeune fille et la mort : Hegel et le désir érotique », *Laval théologique et philosophique*, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Wilhelm Heinse defends the love. He imagines an island of happiness where only the lovers could come (Heinse, 1787).

<sup>13</sup> Hippels is a typical example of the traditional tendencies about marriage. He defends the marriage in line with Kant and the Bible. For this one the love would have the pleasure as goal. In other words, love is only a private matter. The marriage is a way to increase the population. It contains a social function in itself (Hippel, 1828).

careful not to easily and quickly define Hegel as a conservative philosopher. In order to understand more precisely the idea of family by Hegel, it is also interesting to move further for the discussion of his conception of marriage.

## 2.2. Hegel's concept of marriage

Marriage, first of all, according to Hegel, is an ethical relationship and it is the form of natural ethical life. "Marriage, as the *immediate ethical relationship*, contains *first* the moment of natural vitality; and since it is a substantial relationship, this involves life in its totality, namely as the actuality of the *species* [*Gattung*] and its process" (PR §161).

Conceiving marriage as an ethical relationship, Hegel is clearly opposed to Kant's conception of marriage<sup>14</sup>. Marriage is more than a contract as such. Contract is an agreement between two wills about the exchange of property. In contract there is only a legal duty but it does not require an ethical commitment of the property owners.

The object of the marriage is not an external property but a way to conceive the self in relation with others. As Hegel writes, the two different persons in marriage "consent to constitute a single person, and to give up their natural and individual personalities within this union" (PR §162). Hegel obviously indicates that "marriage is not a contractual relationship as far as its essential basis is concerned. For the precise nature of marriage is to begin from the point of view of contract – i.e. that of individual personality as a self-sufficient unit – in order to supersede it [*ihn aufzuheben*]" (PR §163R). The two persons in the contract still remain two different individual persons but they become one person in marriage<sup>15</sup>. The marriage, which is

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<sup>14</sup> According to Kant, the marriage is "die Verbindung zweier Personen verschiedenen Geschlechts zum lebenswierigen wechselseitigen Besitz ihrer Geschlechtseigenschaften". Kant, AA, VI, p. 277.

<sup>15</sup> Robert R. Williams has a well description of the difference between contract and marriage according to Hegel. Marriage for Hegel is a contract but it is a contract to transcend contract. Williams points out that the difference between contract and marriage is dependent on the difference of mutual recognitions. "In contract the common will or we is about property; this common will is a merely superficial, external convergence. This is why in contract, the two selves expressly retain their independence and self-sufficiency." Robert. R. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.218. For contract, the ownership is a form of mutual recognition through which the legal personality is recognized.



the ground of the family, is also an institution of ethical life rather than a realization of abstract right.

### 2.3. The Limits of Love and Family

We can find in the early Hegel's concept of love that has been given as an ontological meaning<sup>16</sup>. Such an ontological meaning can be traced back to his early theological studies. There is a fragment written by Hegel in 1798 particularly concerned about this ontological approach of love. At this time, it seems that Hegel remains under the influence of Hölderlin which explains love as the principle of union or synthesis in terms of reconciliation of oppositions or separation within the unity of love.

Love is a main topic in Hölderlin's *Hyperion*. In this great book, Hölderlin follows in a certain way the line of the myth of Aristophanes developed in Plato's *Symposium*. This myth tells us about the loss of unity and the desire to overcome what is missing through the union of love. The *henologic* tendencies are widely accepted at the time of Hegel too. He shares the slogan "Hen kai Pan" with his friend Hölderlin. He seems quite nostalgic to a model of the unity in the Ancient Greece. He tries to search for the similarity of this unity and also restores it in the Christian tradition through the concept of love.

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By contrast, this legal person is no longer valid in a marriage. "The marriage partners form a new union, a new corporate or legal person, and their property is no longer exclusive, but is now held in common. From the standpoint of ethical life and marriage, contract is a deficient form of intersubjectivity disposition, namely, self-recognition in other and the will to make this an enduring union, an end in itself" (Ibid, p.218). In Williams's view, Hegel specifically highlights the importance of intersubjective disposition that plays a role in the case of marriage. This subjective disposition cannot be made by contract or other legal powers. But it can lead a person towards an ethical union with the other. Although marriage shares some similarities with contract, it is finally completed by the intersubjective disposition in mutual recognition. It is subjective disposition as an inward force that distinguishes marriage from contract which binds two persons with an external force.

<sup>16</sup> Here Williams draws our attentions with making his remark to define the principle of Hegel's concept of love, "The concept of love for Hegel is both a speculative ontological principle and an account of intersubjectivity. His speculative dialectical ontology and his phenomenological account of recognition are not two entirely different and separate analyses but two sides of the same coin." Robert. R. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.208.

In fact, Hegel's concept of love is dialectical and relational. On the one hand, the oppositions between the self and the other would be finally overcome within the unity of the one. On the other hand, the interpersonal relation between the self and the other would remain distinctive after unifying in the totality of love; but not being reduced to be the same. "In love the separate does still remain, but as something united and no longer as something separate; life [in the subject] senses life [in the object]" (*Love* p.305). Love creates a new ontological condition for all living beings. Subject and object are united in love in terms of the mutual sensing of life of one another.

At this time Hegel was thinking that love could be the principle of a new unity. But he becomes after suspicious about this principle. It seems for Hegel that the principle of love is necessarily limited. He writes also in his *Phenomenology* that: "Thus the life of God and the divine cognition may well be spoken of as a disporting of love with itself, but this idea sinks into mere edification, and even insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience and the labour of the negative."<sup>17</sup>

In Iena, Hegel becomes conscious of the negativity, which is typical of the modernity, is not only negative. The separation considered as moment is a way to reflect the totality. The dimension of reflexivity is missing in the substantial unity of love and the beautiful totality of the Greek "polis". Love could not be the unique principle of everything in this case. The family, which lies on the feeling of love, could also not be a model for the whole. Hegel underlines the merit of the family but he sketches its limits too.

The problem of the family is its limited domain of validity. The family has validity only for the members of the family. There are no strangers within the family. But family is not to signify the whole ethical moment of one self. There are also other people which exist outside the family at the same time. And then the concrete person is not only a member of family but also a human in the general sense with the particular needs, social obligation, etc. In order to fulfill the development of ethical moment, the member of the family must be led to enter into the civil society, in

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<sup>17</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.10.

which man lives as an individual, and to the state, in which the unity of wills concerns the whole community of citizen.

Also, another problem of the family is about its immediacy. There is a natural unity based on feelings. There is also a lack of reflection. As Honneth points out, the kind of recognition which is developed in the family lies on love and the kind of self-consciousness, which is correlative, is the trust in oneself<sup>18</sup>. The other kind of relation with other people such as right and solidarity (and the correlative aspects for the self-constitution: the respect of the self and the self-esteem) are conditioned by this first kind of recognition but are developed in independent sphere of interaction, which are the civil society and the state.

As we can see, the family in the ethical life is only a part of its three stages but it is not complete enough to cover the truth of the whole story.

### 3. Two Different Approaches on Family and Politics

The significance of the family for Hegel consists in its construction of being a ground of the modern ethical life. Such an ethical ground is determined by a feeling of love. This feeling of love is essential to the construction of ethical life. In Ormiston's view, "From without the experience of love, there is no drive forward in civil society; there is no hope that the extreme individualism that characterizes the reflective standpoint can be transcended."<sup>19</sup>

Only the moment of family is, however, not complete enough to construct a modern ethical life. Basically, Hegel definitively insists on drawing a rigorous distinction between the family, civil society and the state. The family is not involved in economic production and it is restricted from adapting itself to be an affiliated part of any political participation. For Hegel what is the most important is the whole. That is why he considers the State as the accomplishment of ethical life. The idea of the whole by Hegel is, however, not an immediate one. In this case, Hegel recognizes that the singularity of love in the family and "the right of the subject's particularity,

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<sup>18</sup> Axel Honneth, *Der Kampf um Anerkennung: Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009.

<sup>19</sup> Alice Ormiston, *Love and Politics: Re-interpreting Hegel*, (Albany (N.Y.): State University of New York Press, 2004), p.85.

his right to be satisfied, or in other words, the right of subjective freedom" (PR §124R), is limited to the modern civil society.

The concept of State is not anything but abstract. In a certain way, Hegel is a socialist<sup>20</sup>. He thinks that the social is more important than the individual. That is why he criticizes the conception of a State based on a contract. The state – like the family – as an institution could not be relied on the contractual relations among individuals or on the basis of an egoistic individualism.

Against this kind of individualism, Hegel underlines the role of the different institutions. In this perspective, he thinks that the family could be – as a moment – a first way to link the individuals to a social whole. Alice Ormiston writes in this sense that by Hegel love is the first experience of the unity of individual subject with an objective institution<sup>21</sup>. That is why Hegel thinks that the family is – with the corporation – "the first ethical root of the state, which contains the moment of subjective particularity and objective universality in substantial unity" (PR §255). In other words, the individuals in the family unity learn that they are part of a social institution, which is constitutive for their identity.

The State is not quoted by Nietzsche as "the coldest of all cold monsters"<sup>22</sup>. It is by Hegel based on an institutional background, whose meaning is not to destroy the individuals, but to conceive a concrete link between the individuals and the whole.

In fact, the idea of "institutionalism" can be interpreted in many ways. By example, Dieter Henrich thinks that institutionalism leads to determinism. The individuals would be by Hegel the instrument of the whole, which is incarnated by the State<sup>23</sup>. On the contrary, Kervégan has shown that we can find another concept of the institution by Hegel<sup>24</sup>. According to Kervégan, the institution is an objective

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<sup>20</sup> Refer to Herla's forthcoming article about Hegel and his political philosophy.

<sup>21</sup> Alice Ormiston, *Love and Politics: Re-interpreting Hegel*, p.83

<sup>22</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche. 2006. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Ed. Robert Pippin. Tr. Adrian Del Caro, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.34.

<sup>23</sup> Dieter Henrich, *Vernunft in Verwirklichung*, in: *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Philosophie des Rechts, Die Vorlesung von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift*, hrsg. von Dieter Henrich, Frankfurt am Main, 1983.

<sup>24</sup> Jean-François Kervégan, *L'effectif et le rationnel. Hegel et l'esprit objectif*. Paris : Vrin, 2007.

structure which makes possible the different kinds of recognition, which constitute the ethical life<sup>25</sup>.

By contrast, in Marx and Engels' view, the states and institutions in general are contradictive to freedom. They insist by the way that the state would come to the end in itself one day, more precisely: the day of the success of the communist revolution and the overthrow of the capitalism<sup>26</sup>. The abolition of the family, the religion and the class society would come to the end as same as the state.

Actually, before the success of communism, the state and the family are able to continue to exist, since the bourgeoisie class as the dominant power of these social institutions in the class struggle continues to erect their exploitative power on the proletarian class for the sake of sustaining their oppressive political interests.

The abolition of the family is inseparable with the abolition of the ownership of private property, which is the cause of alienation. The abolition of the institutions, which for Marx and Engels are equivalent to the end of capitalism, would bring forth the liberation of each single individual. It will become an individual freedom without alienation, which is the true form of individual freedom. Man is free to work, to live and to love. Everyone works for its own needs. No one is forced to work because of the reason for the satisfaction of the needs. It will be the first time in the history that man can enjoy the full liberation by taking back the control over his nature in order to further the growth of a full human individuality. All human needs would be freely satisfied in the status of communism.

The liberation of individuality by the success of the communist revolution is the ultimate concern of the Marxist critique. However, regarding to the development of history, it seems that such the Marxist concern is like a wish more than an ethics. Compared to Hegel, the Marxist critique has neither conceived the family as an ethical moment for the recognition of individual nor offered us a rigorous distinction

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<sup>25</sup> Carré, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Engels explains the abolition of the state in *The Principles of Communism*: "Question 22: What will be the attitude of communism to existing nationalities?" "The nationalities of the peoples associating themselves in accordance with the principle of community will be compelled to mingle with each other as a result of this association and thereby to dissolve themselves, just as the various estate and class distinctions must disappear through the abolition of their basis, private property." Friedrich Engels, "Principles of Communism," in *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Paul Sweezy. New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1968.

between the family, civil society and the state. Rather, the method to define the nature of family by Marx and Engels is a political economy of family based on historical materialism. The family is entirely considered as a political and historical issue of alienation but not as an ethical institution. Finally, the role of the family is placed as a strategic position which will be overthrown by revolution that motives us to pursue the utopia of communism. To some extent, the pursuit of utopia would probably be diverted to the revivable constitution of ethical moments through a better understanding of the institutions of the ethical life. In this sense, Hegel's threefold division of ethical life could give us some insights to ponder on this critical issue. Nevertheless, it also does not imply that Hegel's understanding is promising enough that is able to explore the nature of institution in the contemporary world without coming to the limitations in a theoretical sense, such as the crisis of modernity, the politics of identity, or the issues of gender, etc. To some extent, the institutions of Hegel – in particularly about his concept of family – should be reviewed in order to meet the challenges out of the new social critiques of the family from the feminist theories, queer theories or the others leftist critiques, etc. In this case, we have to turn to another chapter to discuss the issue further in deep in future.

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