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*Marx's Late Writings on Non-Western and Precapitalist Societies and Gender*

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Marx's 1850s writings on non-Western societies, especially those on India, are far better known than his post-1872 ones. The later writings, some of them still unpublished, lend support to the notion that Marx moved away from the unilinear and often Eurocentric perspectives that are frequently cited in critiques of his work. Unfortunately, some of these late writings are still unpublished, although there are plans to issue them as part of the new *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA<sup>2</sup>).

**Unilinearism, Eurocentrism, and Beyond: The 1848–59  
Writings on China, India, and Russia**

Although Marx's chief preoccupation was Western capitalism, there were two periods when he wrote extensively on non-Western and pre-capitalist societies. Not coincidentally, these periods were also ones when the European labor movement was quiescent. Shortly before the first of them, 1853–9, Marx had moved to London, the cosmopolitan center of a world empire. In the library of the British Museum, he began

reading widely on India, China, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia. He wrote thousands of pages on those societies in his analytical journalism in the *New York Tribune*. These writings have often been described as Eurocentric. In his introduction to the best-known collection of them, Shlomo Avineri wrote, “The general tone of Marx’s views on the non-European world is set in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848)” (1968, 1). In a brief treatment of colonialism in the *Manifesto* (1848), Marx had spoken in modernist fashion of the backwardness of Asia and the progressiveness of Western capitalism.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian nations into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians’ intensely obstinate hatred of the foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e. to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image. (MECW 6: 488)

In this passage, Marx seemed to support the First Opium War of 1842 by the British against China.

Marx adopted a similar perspective in his 1853 *Tribune* articles on India, a society he declared so static that it lacked any real history. In “The Future Results of British Rule in India,” he began by arguing that India was “the predestined prey of conquest” because it was so disunited. India was “not only divided between Mahomedan and Hindoo, but between tribe and tribe, between caste and caste.” Therefore, India’s history “is the history of the successive conquests she has undergone.” Then, with some strong Eurocentric overtones, Marx added that “Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history,” calling it an “unresisting and unchanging society” (MECW 12: 217). Writing a decade after Avineri, Edward Said (1978) focused on Marx’s Eurocentrism and ethnocentrism in these writings.

Up to now, most scholars have tended to agree with Robert Tucker’s suggestion that it was Marx’s “assumption that it was the fate of non-Western societies like that of India to go the way of bourgeois development as seen in modern Europe” (1978, 653). Putting a postmodernist touch on this older debate over what was frequently seen as Marx’s unilinear perspective, Jean-François Lyotard (1984) held that Marx was trapped in a grand narrative of modernization that subsumed all particularity and difference.

However, some specialist scholars such as Erica Benner (1995) have argued recently that Marx’s writings on nationalism, ethnicity, and colonialism are far more nuanced than is generally supposed. A balanced reading of the whole of his much-criticized 1853 India articles suggests that, even in 1853, his perspective was not as one-sided as is commonly assumed. For example, in the same *Tribune* article cited above, he also wrote: “The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself

the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether. At all events, we may safely expect to see, at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country” (MECW 12: 221). In this sense his view of India was dialectical: the British overturned precapitalist Indian society and brought progress but this progress, itself marked by “the inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization” (MECW 12: 221), would have to be overcome in its turn by the Indians. Nonetheless, while the ethnocentric 1848 dichotomy between a “barbaric” East and a “civilized” West has been attenuated, Marx is still operating within a unilinear perspective. India will, he wrote, still have to be swept into capitalist development as a precondition for eventual social emancipation.

Few have noted that Marx came to support strongly Chinese and Indian resistance to Britain during the years 1856–9, a topic on which he wrote extensively. In an 1857 *Tribune* article, Marx seemed to reverse the thrust of his earlier description, in the *Communist Manifesto*, of the Chinese as barbarians and the British as civilized during the 1842 Opium War. Referring again to that conflict, he wrote: “The English soldiery then committed abominations for the mere fun of it; their passions being neither sanctified by religious fanaticism nor exacerbated by hatred against an overbearing and conquering race, nor provoked by the stern resistance of a heroic enemy. The violations of women, the spittings of children, the roastings of whole villages, were then mere wanton sports, not recorded by Mandarins, but by British officers themselves” (MECW 15: 353–4). There was a similar transformation in his perspectives on India as he wrote in the *Tribune* of the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. By now, references to colonialism as a source of civilization and progress had largely disappeared.

During this period, Marx also began to alter his perspectives on Russia, the large agrarian empire at the edge of European civilization. From the 1840s through the mid-1850s, in writings such as “The Secret Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century,” Marx had described Russia as an utterly reactionary society incapable of revolution from within, one that also threatened to suppress any revolutionary outbreak in Europe, as it had in 1848. By the late 1850s, however, with the agrarian unrest that accompanied the Tsar’s emancipation of the serfs, Marx began to look at Russia in a different light. In an 1858 *Tribune* article on emancipation, he wrote that if a social revolution broke out in Russia, it would be “the second turning point in Russian history, and finally place real and general civilization in the place of that sham and show introduced by Peter the Great” (MECW 16: 147). Significantly, all the writings on India, China, and Russia cited above, except for the *Communist Manifesto*, were composed not in German, but in English. This was not unrelated to the greater awareness that Marx seemed to have developed of the multiplicity of world cultures and civilizations since his move to London in 1849.

At an explicitly theoretical level, as Lawrence Krader (1975) and others have shown, the much discussed passages on precapitalist modes of production in Marx’s *Grundrisse* (1857–8) constitute the beginning of a move away from unilinear models. However, Marx did not follow up at that time his brief but suggestive remarks

on multilinear pathways of development. Instead, as is well known, he developed the parts of the *Grundrisse* dealing with modern capitalism during the next decade, finally publishing the first German edition of *Capital*, vol. 1, in 1867.

### **Toward Multilinearity and a New Focus: Three Strands in Marx's Last Decade, 1872–83**

With the collapse of the Western labor movement after the defeat of the Paris Commune, Marx began to concentrate once again on non-Western societies. In his last decade, 1872–83, three strands in his writings illustrate this turn in his thought: (1) changes introduced into the 1872–5 French edition of *Capital*, volume 1, in order to remove suggestions of unilinearism; (2) new writings on Russia that suggested that its communal villages could be a starting point for a socialist development; and (3) his extensive 1879–82 notebooks, many of them still unpublished in any language, and all of which are to appear in MEGA<sup>2</sup>, volume IV/27. These notebooks cover a far wider range of societies and historical periods, including Indian history and village culture, Dutch colonialism and the village economy in Indonesia, gender and kinship patterns among Native Americans and in ancient Greece and Rome, and communal and private property in precolonial and colonial Algeria and Latin America.

The first of these strands was the French edition of *Capital*, volume 1. The last version of this work that Marx personally prepared for the printer, it appeared in installment form from 1872 to 1875. In this edition and the second German one of 1872, he had made extensive changes from the 1867 first edition. Some of Marx's changes for the French edition have yet to make their way into standard English or even German editions. Other important changes, such as the development of a separate section on commodity fetishism, became standard.<sup>1</sup> Here I confine myself to two passages that bear on the issue of multilinearity and which cannot be found in standard English or German editions.

First, in a well-known passage on the relationship of capitalist to noncapitalist societies, the English edition reads: "The country that is more developed industrially only shows, *to the less developed*, the image of its own future" (Marx 1976, 91; emphasis added). Some of those who criticize volume one of *Capital* as a deterministic work have interpreted this passage to suggest that Marx thought *all* human societies would be forced to follow a single pathway of development, that of nineteenth-century capitalist England (Shanin 1983). But note how this same passage reads in the French edition, where Marx clarified his argument: "The country that is more

1. For more discussion of these various editions, see Anderson (1983, 1997), Rubel in Marx (1963), and Dunayevskaya (1958, 1982). MEGA<sup>2</sup> vols. III/7, III/8, and III/10, published in 1989 and 1991, document many of the extensive differences between the French edition and the earlier German ones, as well as Engels's failure to follow Marx's suggestions on preparing the supposedly definitive fourth German edition of volume 1, which appeared in 1890. This remains the basis for most editions to this day, including the most recent English one (Marx 1976).

developed industrially only shows, *to those which follow it on the industrial path [échelle], the image of its own future*" (Marx 1963, 549; emphasis added). Here the notion of one country following the pathway of another is *explicitly* limited to those that are moving toward industrialization. Nonindustrial societies of Marx's time such as Russia and India are now seemingly bracketed out, leaving open the notion of alternative pathways for them.

Marx did something similar with another passage, this one from the section on primitive accumulation, where he discussed the origin of capitalism in the expropriation of the peasantry. In the standard English and German editions, Marx wrote: "The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process . . . *Only in England, which we therefore take as our example, has it the classic form*" (Marx 1976, 876; emphasis added). However, in the later French edition, this passage reads: "But the basis of this whole development is the expropriation of the peasants. *England is so far the only country where this has been carried through completely . . . but all the countries of Western Europe are going through the same development*" (Marx 1963, 1170–1; emphasis added). Once again, he left room for a possibly alternative development for Russia and other non-Western societies.

The second strand in Marx's late writings on non-Western and precapitalist societies concerns Russia. His renewal of interest in that country was no doubt stimulated by the 1872 translation of *Capital* into Russian, its first non-German edition. Furthermore, to his surprise, the book was being discussed widely there (Resis 1970). In several texts, Marx examined anew the issue of whether Russia and the agrarian societies of Asia were destined to modernize in the Western manner. Teodor Shanin and his colleagues have contextualized these writings for Russia (Shanin 1983). In an 1877 letter responding to a critique of *Capital* by the Russian writer N. K. Mikhailovsky, Marx defended himself against the charge of unilinearism. Quoting from the second example from the French edition of *Capital* cited above, he also argued: "The chapter on primitive accumulation claims no more than to trace the path by which, in Western Europe, the capitalist economic order emerged from the womb of the feudal economic order" (Shanin 1983, 135). As to the charge of unilinearism, Marx also denied strongly that he had developed "a historico-philosophical theory of the general course fatally imposed on all peoples" (136). This letter was apparently never sent.

In his well-known 1881 letter to the Russian revolutionary Vera Zasulich, the topic is once again whether Russia is destined to be swept into the pathway of capitalist development that was already taking place in Western Europe. Marx again cited the same passage from the French edition of *Capital* before stating: "The 'historical inevitability' of this course is therefore expressly limited to *the countries of Western Europe*" (Shanin 1983, 124; emphasis in original). Again, he concluded that alternative pathways of development might be possible.<sup>2</sup> He based his judgment in large

2. An unfortunate curiosity resulting from the fact that these alternative passages from the French edition have yet to appear in English is that one of the most widely used collections of Marx's writings offers, without comment, the two very different versions of this text from *Capital*, first in its section on *Capital*, and second, in its material from the late Marx on Russia (McLellan 2000, 523, 617, 623).

part upon the marked differences between the social structure of the Russian village, with its communal property, and the medieval village in Western Europe. He added that his recent studies of Russian society had “convinced me that the commune is the fulcrum for a social regeneration in Russia” (124). In his far lengthier drafts for the letter to Zasulich, Marx indicated that the type of communal social relations he is discussing were also found in other non-Western societies such as India.

Finally, in his last published text, the preface to the 1882 Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, coauthored with Engels, he returned to the issue of the communal form of the Russian village, with its *obschina or mir*.

Can the Russian *obschina*, a form, albeit heavily eroded, of the primitive communal ownership of the land, pass directly into the higher, communist form of communal ownership? Or must it first go through the same process of dissolution which marks the West’s historical development? Today there is only one possible answer. If the Russian revolution becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that the two complement each other, then Russia’s peasant communal land-ownership may serve as the point of departure for a communist development. (139)

While the correspondence with Zasulich is well known, few are aware of either the French edition of *Capital* or Marx’s 1879–82 private notebooks, composed just before his death in 1883. These notebooks, the third strand of his writings on non-Western societies from his last decade, are much rougher in form than other posthumously published Marx writings such as the *Grundrisse* or the *1844 Manuscripts*. Their unpolished, often ungrammatical structure, plus the mixture of languages Marx used, means that transcribing them from his minuscule and almost illegible handwriting is quite challenging. Rather than draft manuscripts, they are notebooks in which Marx recorded or summarized passages from books he is studying. However, they are far more than summaries; they show us Marx’s own thinking in several ways. First, they include occasional important comments in which Marx was speaking in his own voice. Second, they show Marx as a “reader.” Not only do they contain his direct or indirect critique of the assumptions or conclusions of the authors he is studying, but they also show how he connected or took apart themes and issues in the texts he was reading. Third, they indicate which themes and data he found compelling in connection with these studies of non-Western and precapitalist societies. In short, they offer a unique window into his thinking at a time when he was moving in new directions. It is to this third and most substantial strand of Marx’s new thinking on non-Western societies in his last decade, and the plans to publish these notebooks, that I turn in the next section.

### **An Overview of Marx’s 1879–82 Notebooks on Non-Western and Precapitalist Societies and Gender**

In 1972, Lawrence Krader published his transcription of the *Ethnological Notebooks*, a multilingual volume containing several hundred pages of Marx’s 1880–2

notes on anthropological works by Lewis Henry Morgan, Henry Sumner Maine, John Budd Phear, and John Lubbock. An all-English edition with a far more extensive editorial apparatus will be published soon (Smith, forthcoming). However, the *Ethnological Notebooks* contains only about half of Marx's 1879–82 notes on non-Western and precapitalist societies. Working with a group of Marx scholars and editors in Russia, the United States, the Netherlands, and Germany as part of the MEGA<sup>2</sup> project, we plan to produce an annotated edition of them in their entirety. For MEGA<sup>2</sup>, vol. IV/27, we intend to develop a volume of these writings in their original multilingual form, usually a mixture of German and English.<sup>3</sup> We also intend to publish as much as possible of the material that Krader did not include in his *Ethnological Notebooks* in an all-English edition (see table 1).

During his last years, 1879–83, Marx published little. For example, he did not complete volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital*, which Engels edited posthumously. Many early studies of Marx's life and thought suggested that these were years of ill health during which Marx lost the capacity for serious intellectual work. Since the 1960s, new publications and discussions of Marx's late writings have begun to challenge this view, although it remains the dominant one. In the *Ethnological Notebooks*, Marx engaged in a systematic effort to acquaint himself with diverse non-European or early peoples such as the Iroquois of North America, the Aztecs of pre-Columbian Mexico, the Australian aborigines, the villagers of northern India, and the Celts of ancient Ireland. This led him to a sustained emphasis on clan and village culture across a variety of precapitalist societies. Marx's interest was organic to his wish to understand what was then the periphery of an expanding global capitalist system. In these writings, he pursued the core theoretical issues of (1) multilinear versus unilinear models of social development, (2) family and gender relations across a wide variety of societies, (3) the rise of social classes within tribal societies, and (4) the history of communal and private property. These issues did not arise, except briefly, during any other period of Marx's work.

In the *Ethnological Notebooks*, Marx did not simply record the findings of others. Often he ruminated about their assumptions and conclusions. For example, in his notes on the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan, he distanced himself from the latter's romantic portrait of Native American society. In addition, he frequently inserted scathing attacks on colonialism or patriarchal family structures not found in the originals of the authors he was studying. For example, in his notes on the English legal historian Henry Sumner Maine, Marx writes in a mixture of German and English: "According to the Ancient Irish Law women had some power of

3. At present, the editing group includes Kevin B. Anderson (United States), David Norman Smith (United States), Norair Ter-Akopian (Russia), Georgi Bagaturia (Russia), Jürgen Rojahn (The Netherlands), Heinz Osterle, Charles Reitz, Gerhard Schütte, and Annette Kuhlmann (all United States). Our Russian colleagues have been responsible for transcribing Marx's notoriously difficult handwriting, while others have done most of the translation from the German and the Latin. Thus, the account developed in this and the concluding section of this article is a product of this collective effort. However, I am of course solely responsible for the interpretive comments below.

Table 1  
Provisional Contents of MEGA Volume IV/27

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Karl Marx: Excerpts and Notes, 1879–82  
Key themes: Anthropology, non-Western societies, gender, history of landed property

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**Part 1: London Notebook, 1879–80**  
(139 manuscript pages, 140,000 words)

1. Chronological History of India, based on Sewell (47 manuscript pages, 50,000 words)
2. Notes on Central and South America, India, and Algeria from Kovalevsky (47 manuscript pages, 50,000 words)
- \*3. Notes on Roman Slave Revolts from Bücher (4 manuscript pages, 4000 words)
- \*4. Notes on Roman Culture, Economy, and Class Structure from Friedländer (9 manuscript pages, 9000 words)
- \*5. Notes on Gender, Family, and Class in Rome from Jhering (8 manuscript pages, 7000 words)
- \*6. Notes on Gender and the Family in Early Rome from Lange (24 manuscript pages, 20,000 words)

**Part 2: London Notebook, 1880–1**  
(198 manuscript pages, 154,000 words)

7. Notes on Native Americans and Other Tribal Societies from Morgan (98 manuscript pages, 68,000 words)
- \*8. Notes on Dutch Colonialism in Indonesia from J. W. B. Money (29 manuscript pages, 20,000 words)
9. Notes on Village Life in India and Ceylon from Phear (28 manuscript pages, 20,000 words)
- \*10. Notes on Roman and Frankish Law from Sohm (5 manuscript pages, 5000 words)
11. Notes on Early Institutions from Maine (38 manuscript pages, 26,000 words)

**Part 3: London Notebook, 1881–2**  
(16 manuscript pages, 10,000 words)

12. Notes on Tribal Societies from Lubbock (8 manuscript pages, 5000 words)
- \*13. Notes on Egyptian Finances (8 manuscript pages, 5000 words)

**Part 4: London Notebook, 1876–81**  
(69 manuscript pages, 54,000 words)

- \*14. Notes on Cave Dwellers in Britain from Dawkins, 43 manuscript pages, 27,000 words
- \*15. Notes on Prehistoric Europe from Geikie, 26 manuscript pages, 17,000 words

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\*Texts that have never been published in any language.



dealing with their own property without the consent of their husbands, and this was one of the institutions expressly declared by the English blockheaded judges to be illegal at the beginning of the 17th century” (Krader 1972, 323). Elsewhere, in notes on Morgan, Marx again addressed gender, this time in ancient Greece. He quoted Morgan’s statement that the Greeks exhibited a “principle of studied selfishness among the males, tending to lessen the appreciation of women.” However, Marx, now speaking in his own voice, immediately added his own more nuanced view: “But the situation of the goddesses on Olympus demonstrates nostalgia for the former free and more influential position of the women” (121).

Besides Krader (1972, 1975), only a few scholars have discussed these notebooks. The German historian Hans-Peter Harstick, who published Marx’s 1879 notes on the Russian anthropologist Maxim Kovalevsky’s book on communal property in Algeria, India, and Pre-Columbian America, wrote that “Marx’s gaze turned from the European scene . . . toward Asia, Latin America, and North Africa” (1977, 2). The Marxist humanist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya ([1982] 1991, 1985) brought the *Ethnological Notebooks* and other late writings of Marx on noncapitalist societies to the attention of a wider public, emphasizing their focus on gender. Other feminist thinkers, such as Adrienne Rich (1991) and Danga Vileisis (1996), have also entered this discussion, as has the economist Paresh Chattopadhyay (1999). Earlier, Peter Hudis (1983) related the notebooks to Marx’s writings on the Third World and Franklin Rosemont (1989) commented on their relevance to Native Americans, while David Norman Smith (1995) connected them to Rosa Luxemburg’s work (see also Levine 1973; Ito 1996).

As mentioned above, in addition to what Krader published in the *Ethnological Notebooks*, there are an equivalent number of notes that Marx wrote between 1879 and 1882 on non-Western and precapitalist societies, the vast majority of them never published. Occasionally, these texts contain some direct statements of Marx’s own views. For example, in his 1879 notes on Kovalevsky’s book on Algeria, India, and Latin America, Marx took issue with Kovalevsky’s attempt to impose European-based categories of feudalism and private property on pre-Columbian South America. Similarly, in his notes on the classicist Ludwig Lange’s discussion of the Roman family, Marx critiqued Lange for having “distorted” things by taking “individual property as the starting point,” thus downplaying the importance of communal property (cited in Harstick 1977, 10).

Such comments do not exhaust the importance of these texts, however. In addition, they show not only the topics Marx concentrated on in his last years, but also the ways in which he sifts, takes apart, and then reconstitutes themes in the works he is reading. For example, his notes on Lange show a focus on the varying forms of the marital power of the Roman *paterfamilias*, across not only class and ethnic lines, but also historically, as it gradually weakened. In his notes on the economic historian Karl Bücher’s book on Roman slave uprisings, Marx took up the Roman family in a wider sense, in the relation of the master to his slave, also considered part of the patriarchal household. This was in keeping with Marx’s statement elsewhere in his

notebooks that the “family contains in embryo not only slavery but also serfdom” (Krader 1972, 120). In his notes on Bücher, he looked at slave revolts during the second century B.C., noting year by year the simultaneous development of class conflict within the free population of Rome during the period of the Gracchi. In his notes on Indian history, Marx concentrated on anticolonial revolts, as against his focus in 1853 on what he considered to be the lack of resistance by Indians to foreign conquest. In his notes on Java, he concentrated on the village social structure, just as he did in his notes on India and Russia during the same period.

### Marx’s Unpublished 1879–81 Notes on Indonesia and Rome

To conclude, I will look in more detail at two of the texts that will be published in MEGA<sup>2</sup>, volume IV/27 for the first time in any language.

Marx’s 20,000 word notes on Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, written in 1880–1, indicate a considerable interest in that society and its early integration into the world market. He concentrated on the social organization of the traditional Javanese village. Marx’s notes were based on the 1861 book, *Java; or, How to Manage a Colony, Showing a Practical Solution of the Questions Now Affecting British India*, by James William Bayley Money, a British barrister born in India. Money’s book, the product of a visit to Java during 1858, at the height of the Sepoy Rebellion in India, was an unabashed panegyric to Dutch colonial rule. In Java, the Dutch had retained more of the precolonial system than had the British in India, where market forces had severely disrupted the traditional communal village. The Dutch extracted a surplus from above while allowing many aspects of traditional land tenure patterns, political organization, and communal village culture to persist.

Marx had made an earlier set of notes on Java at the time of his 1853 writings on India, these based on Henry Stamford Raffles’s classic historical and ethnographic study, *The History of Java* (1817). His notes on Raffles<sup>4</sup> stressed indigenous village life and culture, including gender relations, especially in Bali. In his 1880–1 notes on Money’s book, Marx almost completely ignored Money’s central theme, the comparison to British rule in India. Instead, he concentrated on the empirical data Money presented on Javanese economic and village life (for a more detailed analysis, see Tichelman 1983). He made no directly critical comments on the vantage point of this rather superficial chronicler of life in Java. But with a careful sense of objectivity, Marx left aside the most dubious parts of Money’s account, while still managing to turn to his own use a book which was at that time one of the few detailed accounts of life in colonial Java by an outside observer. Marx skipped some parts of Money’s text and quoted isolated lines within others, sifting out of Money’s book those data he seemed to find relevant and reasonably accurate, while paring away Money’s naive praise of Dutch rule.

4. These will eventually be published in MEGA<sup>2</sup>, in a volume containing Marx’s notebooks from the early 1850s.

After Marx's death, Engels appeared to have read Money's book and likely Marx's notes as well. In a letter to Karl Kautsky of 16 February 1884, Engels viewed the solidity of Dutch rule as an example of a conservative "state socialism" that, "as in India and Russia" at the time, was grounded in "primitive communism" at the village level (MECW 47: 102–3). This would seem to contrast with Marx's stress in his late writings, especially those on Russia, on the notion that primitive communism could become a jumping off point for revolutionary developments. Here Engels appeared to have ignored the 1882 preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, which he had coauthored with Marx.

Marx's 45,000-word notes on Rome from 1879–80 are virtually unknown even to Marx specialists and have never been published in any language. They center on the family and on relations between the social classes. As mentioned earlier, to Marx, these were not entirely separate issues. The notes on Rome are mainly in German, but with many passages in Latin and occasional phrases in English. Marx took the longest of his notes on Rome, some twenty-four handwritten pages, on *Römische Alterthümer* [Roman Antiquities] (1856), a three-volume history by Ludwig Lange of Roman social customs during the archaic, pre-Republican period. Lange was an important historian of early Rome. In these notes, made in 1879, Marx focuses on variations within the patriarchal family, marriage and tribal law, the social role of women, and the development of property law. Some of these notes dealt with the Roman husband's power over his wife. Other parts deal with the power of the Roman *paterfamilias* in other spheres: over his children and grandchildren, his free laborers, his bondsmen, his slaves, and his livestock and land. Still other parts of Marx's notes on Lange dealt with clan and tribal relationships. Marx noted that as Roman civilization developed, marriage came increasingly under the jurisdiction of state-based secular law rather than traditional law. This led to a weakening of the power of the *paterfamilias* and a concomitant rise in the power of the wife, at least within the aristocracy.

Again, this part of Marx's notes suggests a different perspective from the more one-sided position of Engels, who wrote more schematically in the *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) of a prehistoric period of supposed matriarchy followed by a "world-historical defeat of the female sex" (MECW 26: 165). Overall, Marx's notebooks of 1879–82 seem to offer a more nuanced, dialectical perspective on gender. Dunayevskaya, who drew a sharp contrast between Marx and Engels on gender, wrote that Engels tended toward a "unilateral instead of a multilateral attitude" to gender. She added with respect to *Origin of the Family*, "it was great, in 1884, to stress the manner in which woman had always been oppressed," ever since the rise of patriarchy. She concluded, however, that on these issues Engels "is neither very dialectical nor comprehensive" ([1982] 1991, 106).

In summation, these and other Marx texts that are to be published in MEGA<sup>2</sup>, volume IV/27 will reveal in a new way his thinking during his last years, 1879–82, on non-Western and precapitalist societies such as India, Indonesia, Algeria, Latin America, and ancient Rome. They also will show his preoccupation with gender

during these years. As a whole, Marx's writings in his last decade suggest a turn away from the modernist models of social development espoused in the *Communist Manifesto* and other earlier writings, where he saw Western capitalism as a stage through which all of humanity was destined inevitably to pass.

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