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Contents

History of Politics

173  Anglo-Dutch Relations and the Amboyna Massacre
     Joel D. Benson

History of Economics

178  The Soviet and American Business: Unique Examples of Economic Collaboration, 1920s-1930s
     Boris M. Shpotov

History of Thought

195  Martin Luther on Marriage and Family
     Trevor O. Reggio

Social History

219  Co-residence in Denmark in 1801
     Hans J. Marker

233  Changes in Post-World War II: Italians in Rochester, N. Y.
     Frank A. Salamone
Anglo-Dutch Relations and the Amboyna Massacre

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The economic relationship between the Dutch and the English was long established by the beginning of the Stuart era. With the accession of James I this situation began to change. The Treaty of London ended almost two decades of English military cooperation with the Dutch, and English and Dutch factors in the East Indies began competing not only with the Iberians but with each other. In 1619, representatives of both countries reached an agreement in London for joint access to the spice markets of the East Indies. Despite these efforts of business and government leaders, the Amboyna massacre marked the end of any real chance of Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the East Indies.

Keywords: Anglo-Dutch relationship, the Amboyna massacre, East Indies, spice trade

James I/Accord of 1619

In the early seventeenth century, the access to the spice markets of the East Indies was largely influenced by political realities in Europe. Despite the Twelve-Years Truce, signed between Spain and Netherlands in 1609, the Dutch and English merchants indirectly cooperated in an on-going struggle against the Iberians for control of this valuable trade. In 1619, representatives from England and the United Provinces of the Netherlands reached an accord in London for joint access to the Eastern markets. This effort to foster official cooperation in the East Indies was the result of the political hopes of the respective governments and was not reflective of the commercial realities on the other side of the world. Anglo-Dutch relations in the Far East continued to decline until February 1623, when the Dutch authorities arrested and executed nine English factors on the island of Amboyna on the charge that they had conspired with Japanese merchants to take over the island. Despite the efforts of business and government leaders to maintain amicable relations, the “Amboyna Massacre” ended any real chance of Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the East Indies.

By the seventeenth century, the separate Dutch companies trading to the East Indies had joined to form a United East India Company. In their first two voyages, the United Company sent out twenty-seven ships. As the United Provinces were still at war with Spain, the company directors instructed the leaders of these two expeditions to inflict all possible damage on the Iberians who thus far had monopolized the Eastern trade. Signing alliances with several Asian leaders, the Dutch factors in the East naturally turned to their traditional allies against Spain and England. Elizabeth granted a charter incorporating the English East India Company in 1600, but by the time of the second English voyage, Anglo-Dutch relations had changed dramatically. The first Stuart monarch, James I, concluded a separate peace with Spain. The Treaty of London conceded the right of Spain to exclude others from those lands they had previously conquered, but the agreement said nothing specifically about trade with the Indies. As Anglo-Spanish relations initially reflected the spirit of peace and
friendship, England continued to trade with the East Indies (Bruce, 1810, pp. 26-27, 111-113, 146-153).1

With this change of events, Captain Henry Middleton, the leader of the second English voyage, attempted to trade with the Portuguese-controlled island of Amboyna. While the English were there, the Dutch attacked and captured the Portuguese fort and forbade the English to trading. As Middleton had only two ships to the Dutch five, he withdrew and headed for the Moluccas. At Tidore, the Portuguese granted him permission to trade for cloves with the natives, but once again a Dutch squadron arrived and captured the Portuguese fort. The Dutch charged Middleton with aiding the Portuguese in the defense of the fort and denied him the right to establish a trading factory as he had hoped. Middleton returned to England with a valuable cargo, and received a knighthood from the king. But Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the East Indies had gave to open competition (Clark & Eysinga, 1951, pp. 38-39).2

For the next few years, the English commercial position in the East Indies remained somewhat unclear. England had settled its dispute with Spain, but many Englishmen still supported the Dutch primarily for religious reasons. The Iberians allowed the English to trade in all areas they controlled, but the Dutch remained determined to eliminate the Iberian stronghold in the spice trade. Toward this end the Dutch courted English cooperation but continued to deny them access to those islands and ports they had wrested from the Iberians (Sainsbury, W. N., Fortescue, J. W., Headlam, C., Newton, A. P., & Great Britain Public Record Office., 1862, pp. 162-163).3

The situation did not change appreciably until after 1609 and the signing of the Twelve-Years Truce. This agreement not only brought to a temporary halt the long years of hostilities between the Dutch and the Spanish, but after difficult negotiations, sustained the right of the Dutch to trade in both the East and West Indies. The Truce also had a significant impact on English trade with the East Indies. Hoping that peace in Europe meant peace in the East as well, the directors of the English East India Company set out to solidify and expand their trade. Unfortunately, with the end of hostilities, the Dutch also increased their efforts to limit English trade. As a result, the English Company decided the time had come to address their rivalry with the Dutch in the East (Bruce, 1810, pp. 157-158).4

With the support of their separate governments, the Dutch and English companies agreed to negotiations. Noel Caron, the Dutch Ambassador in England suggested one solution might merge the two companies in some manner. Discussions were held in 1613 and 1615 to search for a settlement, but a definite agreement was not forthcoming. The Dutch insisted that they had taken certain risks in expelling the Iberians, and that if the English wanted to reap where they had sown, they should contribute to the military expenses involved in maintaining the spice trade against Portuguese-Spanish incursions. Military actions against the Spanish were unacceptable to the English who pointed out that the Dutch had long preached the freedom of the seas for all nations. The Dutch claimed that they did not deny the English had the right to trade in the East Indies per se but insisted that the English did not have the right to take that which had been promised to another. The English Company felt that the Dutch only wanted to enlist English aid in their fight against the Iberians and in the process to help themselves with English trade (Great Britain Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1936, Vol. 2, pp. 68-69, 93-94, 124, 131-132, 260-261).

1 See also Kossman (1970); Chaudhuri (1965, pp. 3-10); Clark and Eysinga (1951).
2 See also Clark (1935).
3 See also Chaudhuri (1965, p. 49); Clark and Eysinga (1951, p. 40); Bruce (1810, pp. 154-155); Birdwood and Foster (1893, pp. 68-69, 93-94, 124, 131-132, 260-261).
4 See also Birdwood and Foster (1893, p. 210); Great Britain Historical Manuscripts Commission (1971, Vol. 21, p. 154); Great Britain Historical Manuscripts Commission (1936, pp. 154, 179).
The English had long complained about the treatment they received at the hands of the Dutch in the East Indies, but news of actual bloodshed did not arrive in Europe until 1618. Letters from English factors described Dutch atrocities, their intervention in English trade, and their seizure of several English ships. For their part, the Dutch presented a memorial to James that the English had assisted the natives at Amboyna, Pooloroon, and Banda in violating local trade agreements with the Dutch. The English presented their own “Declaration” to the king, insisting that they only attempted to introduce trade to islands not claimed by the Dutch. James ordered this “Declaration” presented to the Estates General, instructing the English ambassador in the Provinces to demand that commissioners be sent immediately, with full powers of negotiation to conclude some form of resolution. The Estates General agreed to another round of discussions (Bruce, 1810, pp. 201-203).

Six members of the Dutch East India Company and three representatives of the Estates General arrived in London in late November 1618. After eight months of difficult negotiations, the Accord of 1619 declared an amnesty for all past actions and a mutual restitution of ships and property. The agreement did not create an actual union of the two companies but opened trade to both with a few restrictions. The Accord also called for each side to provide ten ships of war and created a Council of Defense to oversee matters in the East Indies. Although James refused to jeopardize peace with Spain, the Twelve-Years Truce was due to expire in 1621, and the Dutch hoped to re-establish political ties if possible (Sainsbury, 1870, pp. 277-284).

If the Accord of 1619 was designed to foster Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the East Indies, but it failed. News of the Accord did not reach the East Indies until April 1620, and in the meantime, the hostilities between the English and Dutch had escalated. Despite feelings on both sides that Anglo-Dutch cooperation would inevitably fail, the English and Dutch factors in the East did make some effort to abide by the pact. The companies established a Council of Defense and collaborated with the king of Persia in stopping the Portuguese from entering the Persian silk trade. Admittedly, this cooperation was at times halfhearted, but the major problem was the end of the Twelve-Years Truce in 1621. The Dutch in the East Indies proceeded to fit out armed fleets to attack the Iberians, while the English still refused to get involved and did not contribute their stipulated share of money and ships to the Council of Defense (Foster, 1906, pp. 110, 125-126, 140-144, 200, 249-253).

From 1621 to 1623, the Dutch representatives came once again to London in the hopes of finding solutions to a number of mutual problems, including continued Anglo-Dutch rivalry in the East Indies. Throughout the long months of discussions, the primary aim of the Dutch was to secure English political and military assistance in their war against Spain. They declared themselves more than willing to abide by the stipulations of the Accord of 1619 but insisted that included English financial and material contributions for the mutual defense of the East Indies. James’s determination to preserve the peace with Spain, however, restricted the English negotiators, although the deputies from both sides did make a diligent effort to reach an agreement.

6 See also Birch and Williams (1849, Vol. 2, pp. 62-63); Hines and Great Britain Public Record Office (1909); C.S.P. Colonial (Vol. 3, pp. 185, 214).
7 See also Bruce (1810, pp. 31-32); Clark and Eysinga (1951, pp. 130-132, 212-214). A copy of the actual papers sent to the factors of both companies in the East Indies is included in British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Lansdowne Manuscripts (151/293-305).
8 See also Hines and Great Britain Public Record Office (1909, Vol. 16, pp. 54, 170, 352, 372, 424, 473, 617); C.S.P. Colonial (Vol. 3, pp. 358-359); Bruce (1810, pp. 32-33, 217-231); Chaudhuri (1965, p. 61).
(Sainsbury, 1870, p. 440; 1878, pp. 3-5).

While negotiations in England dragged on, Anglo-Dutch relations in the East continued to degenerate. In early 1623, the English merchants complained that the Council of Defense was completely controlled by the Dutch who used it to secure Dutch sovereignty of trade to the exclusion of the English. In these circumstances, the English Company leaders sent orders to their representatives at Amboyna to withdraw from that port and return to Batavia. In February, before these orders arrived, however, the Dutch governor arrested ten Japanese factors who confessed under torture that they had conspired with English agents on the island to seize the fort and expel the Dutch. The Dutch arrested the English factors and tortured them into admitting to this conspiracy. Claiming legal authority, the Dutch executed nine English and 10 Japanese factors, and one Portuguese sailor on 27 February, 1623(Sainsbury, 1878, pp. 206-209, 215-217, 249-251, 283).

The news of these executions took several months to reach the English council in Batavia and even longer to reach Europe. It was only when the news reached England that the Amboyna episode became the Amboyna “massacre,” and the last hopes of Anglo-Dutch cooperation disappeared. There was an immediate uproar throughout England. People mourned the dead and cried out for revenge. The English Company petitioned the king and council for permission to withdraw from the East Indies Completely, but James refused to make any decision until he knew all the facts. In June, six Englishmen who had been at Amboyna but had not been killed, arrived in England and presented their version of events. A pamphlet entitled, “True relation of the unjust, cruel, and barbarous proceedings against the English at Amboyna, in the East Indies, by the Netherlanders there,” reflected the common perception of the Dutch by the English people. The directors of the English Company sent copies of the pamphlet to the Hague and the king and demanded the Dutch to make restitution and execute justice upon those responsible for the massacre (Sainsbury, 1878, pp. 288-338, 351, 373-374, 418, 434).

James had political realities to consider. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Buckingham had recently returned from a secret mission to Spain, humiliated and ardently anti-Spanish. His dreams of an Anglo-Spanish marriage shattered, James reluctantly agreed to enter the war against Spain. At almost the same time, a pamphlet entitled “A true declaration of the news that came out the East Indies” appeared anonymously in the Netherlands. This work described in great detail the extent of the English conspiracy at Amboyna and argued that no true Christian could deny that such actions justified death. The unknown author declared the Dutch actions to be just and belittled the rumors of excessive torture (Sainsbury, 1878, pp. 32-33, 297-357, 374).

Tempers flared in both countries and the number of rumors concerning the entire affair increased. In early August 1624, the Estates General wrote to James and assured him that they would investigate the matter thoroughly. They declared the pamphlet, “A True Declaration,” “a scandalous and senseless libel” and offered to restore the specifics of the Accord of 1619. Politics largely determined James’s rejection of the Dutch offer. England had once again allied with the United Provinces in their war against Spain, but the English Company had already resolved not to agree to a new treaty as they now believed that the Dutch had no intention of sharing the trade. James initially ordered a number of Dutch East India vessels to be seized by way of exacting financial restitution, but no Dutch ships were seized, and in December 1624, the Dutch government announced

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10 See also Bruce (1810, pp. 33-34, 245-247).
11 See also Court and Times (Vol. 2, pp. 458-459, 465-466); Hines, A. B., & Great Britain Public Record Office. (1909, pp. 227-228, 302-320, 357, 374, 397, 406-429).
12 See also Hines, A. B., & Great Britain Public Record Office. (1909, Vol. 18, pp. 423, 429).
their “Final Resolution”. The governor of Amboyna and all who had a hand in the executions were to be brought home to face charges, and the Estates General ordered the Dutch Company to abide by the Accord of 1619. The English Company knew that the promises of the Dutch government had little impact on the commercial realities of the East Indies and continued their withdrawal from the Spice Islands. Despite the combined efforts of business and government leaders to maintain some basis of cooperation, Anglo-Dutch relations in the East Indies, the Amboyna massacre marked the end of any real chance of Anglo-Dutch cooperation in the East Indies (Sainsbury, 1878, pp. 1-2-103, 117, 297-369, 374, 386-476).13

Reference

13 See also: Hines & Great Britain Public Record Office (1909, Vol. 18, pp. 452- 455, 469, 479, 480); Great Britain Privy Council (1933, Vol. 39, pp. 449-451); Birdwood and Foster (1893, pp. 11-12, 118-119, 212, 222-227).
The Soviet and American Business: Unique Examples of Economic Collaboration, 1920s-1930s

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Concessions and technical assistance, described in this article, are historical examples of private-public partnership, which appeared in the industrial era. Even in homogeneous economic, political and legal systems, the business and state co-operation does not always reach harmony and consensus. Here, the researchers observe more complicated, contradictory and sometimes tense relations between the Soviet state institutions and the Western, particularly American companies, who participated in economic modernization of post-revolutionary Russia, initiated by its leadership. After termination of the New Economic Policy (NEP) (Dziewanowski, 1989, pp. 129-137, 155), and taking foreign concessions back to the state by the beginning of 1930s, the Soviet Union was preparing to become, in a few years, a high-rank industrial power. Giant American steel-making mills, automobile and tractor factories, assembling lines, oil-extracting, and oil-cracking installations, etc. attracted Soviet political leaders, “red directors” and engineers as the best examples to follow up. They were going to accomplish their plans by means of wide technological transfer: ordering and purchasing factory designs, patents and know-how, training Russian workers and technicians both abroad and at the Soviet constructions sites by placing them under supervision of contracted foreign specialists. However, the adoption of machinery and technologies without due organization and chains of supply diminished and distorted expected results.

Keywords: concessions, investments, technical assistance, industrialization

Pre-revolutionary Experience

American direct investments in the Russian Empire remained relatively small. The Singer Manufacturing Company and the International Harvester built factories which were the most significant undertakings (so-called “American Domain”). The Baldwin Locomotive Works, General Electric, International Bell Telephone Company, Westinghouse Air Brake Company, the Westinghouse Electric and a few others were sporadically active as suppliers and engineering experts. Before the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, there were 11 American companies in operation, including Equitable Life Assurance and New York Life Insurance (Wilkens, 1975, p. 40). However, attempts to obtain concessions for railroad construction in distant East Siberia regions were blocked by the government.

Russian manufacturers knew little about American industrial achievements. Visitors to the United States observed “craze” about technical appliances and machinery, but a few economists and engineers paid serious attention to American capital-intensive and labor-saving technologies.

During World War I, economic relations with the United States grew up substantially, in place of Russian

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pre-war links with Germany. The Packard and White truck-making companies became the exporters of motor vehicles to the Russian army. Two chambers of commerce were established, one in Moscow (1913) and the other in New York City (1916), and the society for promoting mutual friendly relations between Russia and America appeared in Petrograd (1915). They exchanged economical and engineering information, advertised or offered various commodities, and business services, including making factory designs and layouts, collaborated with Russian-American Engineering Supply Company and Russian-American Industrial Company.

Mechanical engineer Lavrov examined Ford factories in 1916 and became an ardent advocate for “Fordism” in Russia (upon his words, in 1916-1926, he gave about, 1500 public lectures about Ford’s methods), and published a book (Lavrov, 1926, p. 6). He was, perhaps, the first Russian who recommended Ford Motor Company to build an assembly plant in his country. In July 1916, the manager of the New York branch, Gaston Plantiff proposed to create a Russian Ford Company (Wilkins, 1964, p. 55). The idea was realized only in the middle of 1990s.

Concessions

Soon after the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, when the way of national development was drastically changed, the young Soviet Republic worked hard to re-establish diplomatic and commercial relations with the European countries and the rest of the world, but the head of the Soviet Government Vladimir I. Lenin considered relations with the United States as the matter of prime importance. “We need American manufacturing products, like locomotives, automobiles etc., even more than from any other country”, said Lenin in his interview to a World newspaper correspondent in February 1920 (Furayev, 1964, p. 54). The same he expressed repeatedly. Early Soviet “commercial diplomacy” was conducted in the absence of diplomatic recognition and official approval by the U.S. government.

A revolutionary refugee from the Russian Empire, Ludwig K. Martens lived in the New York City and maintained links with the Soviets. In the beginning of 1919, he was authorized by the Soviet government to be the trade representative of the Russian Soviet Socialist Federate Republic in the USA. Despite an interest of many American companies to establish commercial relations with the Soviet Russia, the trade agent was not officially recognized, and finally deported from the United States in the beginning of 1921.

The U.S. official standpoint was that the communist leaders had no idea about honest business transactions, conducted irresponsible and subversive policy, refused to return debts of previous Russian governments and compensate for the property of American citizens and companies expropriated during the Revolution. In response, the Soviet government claimed that the U.S. participation in the military intervention during the Russian Civil War inflicted serious damages, but restoration of trade and granting concessions would give a new ground for American and other foreign businesses in this country.

Two Types of Concessions

Concessions were granted in various extracting and processing industries, trade, transportation, fishing, timber cutting, etc., and appeared in the period of NEP (New Economic Policy), which allowed private entrepreneurship of native and foreign origin to manufacture various products to help the state to satisfy the consumer market, revive gold mining in Siberia, and develop other distant territories. Foreign capital was welcomed for big projects, while the small native-born capital was admitted mainly to the consumer goods, especially to bridge the gap in rural-urban trade. Proclaimed in March 1921, much under Lenin’s pressure, the boundaries of NEP were not defined. Was it a temporary measure or a new Soviet model of socialism? Anyway, it was widely understood as the continuation of
class and economic struggle against capitalism “by other means”, without revolutionary violence, but employing its ability to organize work and gain profit to share with the Soviet concedent (issuer of a concession).

The first, or a “pure” type, was the admission for foreign companies-concessionaire to use, develop, and exploit a piece of Soviet public property (land, public utilities, factories, mines, oil fields, etc.) for certain period of time, in order to get surplus or profit, taxed by the state. The company was obligated to reconstruct or build production units, increase productivity, maintain social infrastructure (schools, stores, housing), fulfill labor contracts, and comply with the Soviet rules and legislation. It worked directly with the state administration. Upon the expiration of agreed terms, the concessionaire was to return the enterprise and fixed capital in proper condition. The government retained the right to buy out the conceded enterprise before the term expired.

The second type, or a “mixed” concession, meant an enterprise in which Soviet and foreign shares were equal or almost equal with the Soviet chairman of the directorate. Foreign firm delivered money capital, organization, technology, skilled labor and specialists, while the Soviet partner conducted all relations with the state, provided Russian raw materials and other supplies, and hired native labor force. So-called “technical concession” was, in fact, a technical assistance agreement without capital investment. By the end of the 1920s, that type had been identified as “technical assistance”—everywhere in the Soviet Union. In fact, only “pure” or “mixed” enterprises were real concessions with invested private capital.

Upon expiration of the New Economic Policy in 1928-1929, there existed, according to the Soviet data, 114 concessions, including a number of “technical” agreements with American, German, British, and other companies and citizens (Khromov, 1999, pp. 227-233). According to American scholar Sutton, the number of operating concessions in 1920-1930 comprised 128 “pure” ones and 93 “mixed” ones. Of them, the American companies possessed, respectively, 35 and 14. There were also 118 technical agreements (Sutton, 1968, pp. 353-359). “Pure” concessions suited the Soviets more than “mixed” ones, because of shortage of the state capital. To accomplish large projects, companies from several countries were invited. In such cases, it was not easy to define whose contribution was larger, because they fulfilled interconnected tasks. Speedy restoration and development of the fuel and power industries were so urgent, that concessions were replaced by sending Russian engineers abroad to learn techniques and purchasing machinery.

**Conditions for Running Concessions**

One of disputable issues in the Soviet economic history of 1920s was the real opportunities of the enterprises with foreign capital. Here, the viewpoints were diametrically opposite. Soviet historians asserted, that after careful selection of proposals from abroad the government strictly observed its commitments and provided concessionaires with all necessary conditions. If business failed, it was explained as the concessionaire’s inability, mismanagement, or adventurism (e.g. Shishkin, 1983, pp. 247-273). Sutton pointed out the defenselessness of concessions, their shaky position, and maneuvering between permissions and limitations in the Soviet concession policy (Sutton, 1968, pp. 92-100, 158; 1971, pp. 16-31).

Concession agreement could remain unchanged as legal document, but it was the only “safeguard” for a foreign venture in the Soviet. In fact, the central or local government could change external conditions for doing any business in the country. Law-making remained a sovereign prerogative of central and local authorities, and no particular concessionaire was able to limit it. The Soviet press, directed by the state, could launch a campaign against a concessionaire’s tendency of becoming a monopoly, or “oppressive” labor policy, or the State Bank refused to exchange the ruble profits of concessionaires for hard currency to be taken out of Russia. Authorities felt free to ban
access to raw materials, or to prohibit wholesale of privately-made production.

Foreign concessions stirred mostly negative feelings in Soviet Russia. They introduced better organization and new technique, but competed with the Soviet enterprises, and, worst of all, embodied the hated capitalism - whatever small “islands” they occupied in the USSR. Concessionaires not only brought hard currency-British pounds, US dollars, Reichsmarks, etc.-to the Soviet treasury (State Bank), but also provided the Soviets with a legitimate source to pay for the imports of necessary raw materials and machinery. Concessionaires had no right to sell or mortgage any part of the state property, given them in temporary disposal and management. It was needless to say, that concessions were under constant bureaucratic watch by Chief Concession Committee and its local branches, People’s Commissariats (ministries) for finances, foreign relations, foreign trade, and also trade unions and political police (OGPU).

To conduct business in the USSR, make payments and other financial operations, each foreign company was obligated to transfer to the State Bank of the USSR the necessary sum in hard currency to exchange it for rubles as the legitimate money. The official Soviet exchange ratio was fixed - £1 equal to 9.4 rubles, $1 to 1.94 rubles. It did not correspond to real purchasing power of Soviet currency, which was five or six times smaller (Osokina, 1998, p. 161). Using rubles, to purchase somewhere abroad or within the USSR for lower (market) price beyond the State Bank, was strictly forbidden by law. In 1926, the ruble was made inconvertible national currency to protect the Soviet economy from fluctuations and panic and could be legally exchanged only via State Bank for specific purposes.

However, the Soviets badly needed foreign convertible money to provide imports, support diplomatic and other missions, and, of course, feed the international communist and leftist movements. In the late 1920s, the channels for hard currency exportation were closed for most concessionaires-under the pretext of its shortage. Thus, foreign concessions were becoming the “cash cows” of socialism and refused to continue business one after another.

The Soviet government granted concessions for 15, 20, 30 and years or more, to attract Western capital by profits on long-term investments, but tried to get rid of foreign capitalists as soon as they provided necessary investments, skills, and technologies. Compensations were paid but partly, if any. The Soviets practiced various types of pressure to make business impossible: excessive taxation, forbade exportation of hard currency, stirred strikes, frequent labor unions inspections, and the OGPU raids. Finding conditions precarious and Soviet demands oppressive, foreign companies preferred to withdraw without refund, and the Soviets took over functioning enterprises. The law suits were decided in the arbitration courts, and the coincident did all to prevent the restoration of concession.

The William Averell Harriman’s manganese ore-extracting concession in Chiaturi, the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, was the largest and, perhaps, the least successful American venture in the Soviet Union. The contract was signed in June 1925 for 20 years, but remained in force about three years. The company was to agree with its termination because of unfavorable combination of foreign competition, declining price of manganese, high costs of work and non-stop interference by local authorities and trade union. In one year, about 127 working days were lost because of various inspections. The ultimate conflict rose around currency exchange: Harriman’s managers preferred to change dollars for rubles at private traders, because of very low rate at the State Bank. In the meantime, American managers tried to rise wages and improve working conditions.

Harriman invested about $4,450,000 in technical reconstruction of manganese works, but could not get his money back. Instead, he was induced by the Chief Concession Committee to convert this investment in 15 year
loan. The Amtorg\textsuperscript{2} concession committee noted in 1929; that Harriman
avoids to harm us publicly, but tells so much negative about the Soviet Union to every visitor, who wants an
information, that hardly anyone would wish to negotiate about concession after conversation with him, or, especially, with
his directors. (Sevostianov & Tiurina, 1997, pp. 287-288)

The Ford Motor Company conducted cautious policy. Before making the final decision to build a tractor
or car-making factory on concession terms, five of its managers visited the Soviet Union in April-August 1926
to survey economic, social and labor conditions. Personal observations and talks at the Chief Concession
Committee convinced Ford envoys that, “The question of the company laying down any kind of a
manufacturing plant on Soviet soil would be nothing short of madness”. The most unfavorable features of that
project were, according to their report, as follows:(1) Placing of one labor representative to every 300 (or even
one to every 60) workmen employed, whose whole work would be devoted to looking out after welfare of
employees; (2) Price fixing by government of finished products; (3) Export of tractors allowed only after
domestic demand satisfied; (4) Export foreign exchange once a year and only after audit of concessionaire’s
books; and (5) High cost and difficulties in obtaining raw materials. Besides, the Ford managers hesitated about
safety of concession.

We could not with confidence feel that the [Soviet] Government would not take the plant over itself (without
compensation and before stipulated time limit expired)... There are various ways in which the Government could do this,
and in the absence of diplomatic recognition [of the USSR], no help could be expected from the American Government...
While the [Soviet] Government has not succeeded in attracting foreign capital for manufacturing purposes, it had
succeeded, to some extent, in interesting large companies in mining or other projects, the principal business of which is
taking materials out of the country. Yet no concessionaire can be named that is not experiencing great difficulty in
operating his concession. (Report of the Ford Delegation to Russia and the USSR April-August 1926, 1926)

As a result, the company refused to build the tractor plant in the Soviet Union.

The “Moscow Concession” of Armand Hammer was a modern stationery factory, equipped with German
tools and operated by trained workers, some of whom were hired in Germany. The enterprise imported
American cedar wood as perfect material to manufacture pencils. Its production was of supreme quality and
quickly won popularity all over the USSR, playing an outstanding role in the “cultural revolution”-as a useful
instrument to eliminate illiteracy. Good pencils were needed everywhere-at schools and universities, offices
and design bureaus, and even were exported. After repeating newspaper attacks against his business, Hammer
decided to enlarge production and cut prices, but could not get credit and met problems with hard currency.
Growing difficulties and pressures convinced Hammer to sell his excellent factory to the state in the end of
1929. Later in America, he successfully conducted various businesses and became a famous collector of Russian
arts.

The Economic Role of Concessions
Joseph Stalin considered socialism as a system without private capital, foreign or domestic, and reported
his vision to the Leningrad Party organization in April 1926. He spoke of foreign trade and said nothing about
concessions. It was a unequivocal hint, that the foreign investments’ time was running out. In the fall of 1927,

\textsuperscript{2} The American Trading Corporation, or Amtorg, with main offices in New York City and Moscow, was established in May,
1924 as the economic, information and intelligence center. Formally independent, Amtorg remained the Soviet intermediary
agency, connected with People’s Commissariats (Ministries) for foreign trade and foreign relations. Most of the Soviet bargains
with American companies and specialists, and payments to them went through Amtorg.
the XV Communist Party Congress declared the preference of wide technical assistance over concessions. Export trade was to serve the hard currency accumulation. In December 1929, the Chief Concession Committee chairman, Lev B. Kamenev, notified the government that the concession plan was no more expedient, for evident impossibility to calculate the inflow of foreign capital in forthcoming years (Sutton, 1968, pp. 234-235). But a few ventures remained in force after 1930.

Some concessions proved to be useful, some remained futile, but almost all were short-lived. Their expulsion from the Soviet economic strategy was attributed to fundamental change of economic policy at the end of 1920s. Liquidation of NEP put the end to officially allowed private enterprises.

For above-mentioned reasons, concessions did not play decisive role in the Soviet economy which was becoming more and more regulated, financed, and administered by the state. Concessions resulted from separate, individual applications by foreign companies made in accordance with their own profile, capabilities, and capital. Their applications and outcomes could not be predicted, and they could not be incorporated into the planned economy system. No individual capital, offered from abroad, was sufficient to fulfill even a small part of grandiose industrialization program with huge metallurgical plants, modern automobile, aircraft and tractor-building factories, hydro-electric plants, etc... Concessionaires avoided heavy industry and invested into either consumer goods with smaller capitals, or into timber, mining, and other export-oriented businesses. Their enterprises remained single units surrounded by a maze of state bureaucracy and hostile labor unions, with little chances to obtain a ruble credit in the Soviet bank, or convert their profits received in rubles into hard currency. Prohibitions to enter into financial combinations with the Soviet riches, grown up during the NEP, to practice stock-jobbing or take loans abroad left such businesses without perspectives.

Concessionaires relied upon their own business talents and experience, proved in their home countries, some believed in gradual liberalization of the Soviet legislation. Many had little, if any, information about real economic and political situation in the USSR, or imagined “red officials” as narrow-minded men incompetent in commercial affairs. But they certainly underestimated their ability to win both by conclusion and by breaking off concession agreements. Forced termination of long-term ventures meant taking over concession capital with partial or no refund.

Technical assistance was coming in place of concessions as more effective instrument of industrial modernization without Western money capital, but with Western know-how. American companies contributed outstandingly to massive technological transfer. One Soviet newspaper wrote in 1930: “The circles representing large and middle-size American manufacturing—from billion-dollar giants Ford and General Electric to an engineering firm, rendering us technical assistance, stand for maximum business cooperation of the United States with the Soviet Union” (Genkin, 1930).

Mastering New Technologies

One of the main objectives of the first Soviet Five-Year Plan (1928/1929-1932/1933) was construction of basic capital-intensive enterprises, and moved the heavy industry eastward to safer territories. By 1933, about 1,500 key enterprises had to be built anew or reconstructed. All that could be hardly attainable without large-scale adoption of the most advanced technological and technical achievements.

Technical assistance was either bought outright or included in large equipment orders. The duration of such contracts was much shorter than the concession terms, foreign companies made no risky investments, and the Soviet technicians and workers got the opportunity to take over Western technologies and skills as the
trainees at American, German, and other foreign factories. Technical assistance needed hard currency payments, but the Soviet state monopoly in foreign trade permitted to export everything what could be sold abroad – grain, timber, oil products, gold, furs, non-ferrous metals, antiques, and works of art. The USSR tried to establish favorable trade balance with every nation, and demanded long-term credits. In 1929-1933, the Soviet Union enjoyed favorable (to various degrees) trade balances with France, Italy, Great Britain, while trade with the United States, and since 1930 with Germany, remained passive (Ministry of Foreign Trade USSR. 1960, pp. 21, 23, 25, 27, 37).

**Technical Assistance Agreements and Other Ways**

Technical assistance agreements were by no means limited to delivery of blueprints, patents or machinery, or consulting services. They included both technical and educational aspects. The contracted firm amended or finished the Soviet project, or prepared, according to the given tasks, a detailed construction or technological design of future enterprise. It also provided specifications of materials, equipment, tools and machinery, know-how, patents, licenses, etc.; sent its experts to the Soviet Union to render supervision at the construction site and helped to launch the enterprise; allowed a number of Soviet engineers and workers to study production methods.

Soviet contracting organization was obligated to repay all company’s expenses, including costs of design, travel and per diem allowances to employees, and provide them with suitable lodging, interpreters, etc. The firm received cash rewards (as profit) - a stipulated per cent of general estimates of works, or a fixed sum. The Soviet organization supplied workforce, materials, and financed construction works. All negotiations and payments to the American firms went via the Amtorg.

Foreign firms worked in close contact with the Soviet specialists, who formulated demands and tasks, evaluated and approved prepared designs, selected equipment, tools and machinery according to given specifications. Purchase orders were placed at those companies, whose prices were more attractive and who offered better credit terms; the designing firm was not necessarily a supplier. That was why the large Soviet construction works usually received drawings and equipment from a number of American and European companies. Other sources of taking advantage of Western technological achievements were as follows:

1. **Education**: American and European cars, tractors and other machinery were displayed at Soviet industrial fairs and exhibitions, and visitors could also watch movies about factory production. On January 20, 1924, one day before his death, Lenin watched, with great interest, a film about Fordson tractor assembling (Lenin. 1982, vol. 12, p. 661). Books by Henry Ford, Henry L. Gantt, Frederick W. Taylor, etc., translated into Russian, were used for training at schools for “scientific organization of work”. The Soviet leaders and plain people praised “Fordism”, as they called assembly line, rationalization and efficiency. Feliks E. Dzerzhinsky, the first chief of the Soviet political police and, later, the Chairman of the Supreme Council for the National Economy (VSNH) in 1924-1926, urged Soviet innovators and economic executives to learn and implement Ford methods. (Dzerzhinsky, 1977, vol. 2, pp. 72, 117, 212-213)

2. **Invitation of workers and specialists**: A good part of them consisted of former Russian subjects who emigrated to the United States before the Revolution of 1917, as well as contracted American citizens, who lost jobs in the US. Some of them were curious about “republic of workers and peasants”, sympathized with the idea of socialism, and wished to help “Russian Comrades”. They found one-year or longer employment as skilled workers, foremen, and coaches. In 1930, there were located about 2,000 American specialists, engineers
and workers, together with the members of their families (as cited in *The New York Times*, November 13, 1930). In 1931, more than 4,000 foreigners from various countries were contracted on the individual basis, and besides them, arrived not less than 2,000 employees of 124 important firms according to the technical assistance agreements.

(3) Business travels and training abroad were considered in the Soviet Union as the most effective and economical means to learn as much as possible, even if production secrets were concealed by the host companies. Hundreds of engineers, technicians, and workers went abroad every year. From 1931 to 1934, about 1,000 Soviet citizens submitted visa applications to the U.S. consulate in Riga (Latvia) only, but visas were also issued in other cities of Europe with American representations. Establishment of diplomatic relations between the USA and the USSR at the end of 1933 simplified visa formalities. Smaller in volume, but more targeted technical assistance from the USA continued up to the attack of Germany in the Soviet Union in 1941, when it was changed into deliveries on the lend-lease base. Besides planned missions, Soviet organizations used technical assistance agreements and equipment purchases to send abroad numerous students. The Soviet tractor builder, engineer Ilya Sheinman described, with great astonishment, the helpful tactics of American managers and engineers. He and his Soviet mates enjoyed almost unlimited access to various technical data and permission to make drawings, copies, blueprints free. Patents had to be bought, which told him one manager but all the rest was just “the best advertisement for the company” (Sheinman, 1934, pp. 28-29).

(4) Fishing for economic and technical information was closely connected with various missions abroad. It was done via Amtorg, numerous engineering offices and examiners of purchased equipment, who represented various Soviet state “trusts” (Avtostroy, Magnitostroy, Traktorostroy, etc.). The industrial espionage was conducted abroad by some engineers and professional intelligence agents. In the USA, they established links with some employees at the enterprises that attracted Soviet strategic interests. Before the World War II, the stolen intellectual and even material property was outstanding (Pozniakov, 2005, pp. 126-140, 151-187).

(5) Illegal copying of foreign equipment and machinery. To buy sample equipment to make copies was accepted by Soviet practice. For example, attempts to build Red Putilovetz, the poor copy of Fordson tractor, at the nationalized Putilov Works in Leningrad after making drawings of disassembled parts. It resulted in enormous difficulties in the shop and malfunctioning of the Soviet tractors in the fields. The tractor builders did not know secrets of mass production and making special sorts of steel, patented by the Ford Motor Company. Ford production manager, Sorensen recollected his visit to the Soviet Union in August 1929: “In spite of the fact that they had stolen everything they could of the tractor, I offered to help them clear up the whole matter by sending them one of our experts from Dearborn” (Sorensen, 1956, pp. 202-203) Sorensen kept his word.

**In Quest of American Technologies**

European manufacturing practice seemed applicable to many Soviet industries. However, to produce cheaper goods in larger volume, the USSR needed industrial giants of American type. US technical experience was preferable in construction of hydro power plants, oil cracking, mining, chemical and metallurgic industry development, electrical engineering, and most important, in making cars, tractors, aircraft engines, and other standardized mass production, also in construction works (Sutton, 1968, pp. 247, 297-300, 317-324). The significance of American experience was understood despite unfavorable trade balance: in 1929, Soviet exports to the United States constituted only 24% against American imports.

In September 1927, the “Standing committee for technical and scientific contacts with America” was
created by the top Communist Party authority, *Politiburo* (Khromov, 1999, p. 226). Sutton enumerated 118 technical assistance agreements operated in 1920-1930 (mostly in 1928-1930), and 218 in 1929-1945, of which 64 and 139, or 54% and 64% respectively, were concluded with the US companies (Sutton, 1968, pp. 360-363; 1971, pp. 363-372).

The largest enterprises in Europe, like the Dnieper hydro-power plant, the Stalingrad, Kharkov, and Chelyabinsk tractor plants, the Magnitogorsk iron and steel works, and the Nizhny Novgorod automobile factory utilized to various degree American technologies. The huge Dnieper Dam was designed in the USSR with the expertise done by the Cooper Engineering Company and the German Siemens A. G.. The Soviet chief designer, Ivan G. Aleksandrov, got acquainted with American achievements in river dam construction. Some important proposals, made by Cooper’s firm were adopted, like the impressive “arch” configuration of the Dnieper Dam that maximized the flow of water.

American methods caused a revolution in architectural design and construction by introducing speed and standardization. The main innovations included simultaneous planning and excavation works, and introduction of photocopying in place of slow hand tracing. It became possible to select prefabricated metal and reinforced concrete constructions from the catalogues, and have them delivered to build cites by telephone orders. Such constructions ready for immediate use were stored in various cities. The integrated companies hired all necessary specialists and workers and mechanized assembling process, while the designing firms closely cooperated with subcontractors.

In 1927, the Austin Company of Cleveland (architects, engineers, and builders) designed and built the 35-acre Pontiac No. 6 car factory, then the world’s largest, in seven months. It attracted attention of the Amtorg and Soviet organizations responsible for the development of national automobile industry, and on August 23, 1929, the Austin Company was contracted to design and supervise construction of the auto plant in Nizhny Novgorod with yearly capacity of 100,000 cars and trucks (soon the task was changed for 140,000 units), and to participate in designing nearby a “socialist city” for workers (Greif, 1978, pp. 97-109; Austin, 2004). The Ford Motor Company provided layouts, specifications, patents and licenses to make the Soviet versions of car “A” and truck “AA” of 1927.

Famous American industrial architect Albert Kahn, whose firm designed a number of US industrial giants, including Ford’s River Rouge plant, introduced the Soviet Union his key principle, “all factory buildings for any one type of construction can be built on standardized principles. The result will be a great saving in time and in cost in the preparation of the plans and the cost of building” (Sutton, 1971, p. 251). Traditional type of factory building was replaced by long “boxes” for assembly lines. The Albert Kahn, Inc. created the Soviet school of modern industrial architecture and played a key role in organization of Gosproektstroy (the State Design and Construction Institute) and also directed the Building Commission of the VSNH.

In September 1925, the Soviet government decided to build a big state tractor factory in Stalingrad, but discussions continued till the beginning of 1929. Its initial capacity-10,000 units per year was re-ordered to 50,000. So drastic change demanded foreign expertise. In the long run, the government proposed the Albert Kahn, Inc. to make its design in Detroit. The model for Soviet-made tractor became the *International*, made by the International Harvester Company of Chicago. Ready-made building constructions were delivered from the United States. About 80 American and several German engineering firms participated in equipping the plant. More powerful plant in the city of Chelyabinsk, the Urals region, was designed also by Kahn to make Soviet *Caterpillars*, renamed into *Stalinetz-60*. The first Soviet project of the Magnitogorsk iron and steel factory was
abandoned, and its making was entrusted to the Arthur McKee Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in March 1930. The U.S. Steel corporation plant at Gary, state of Indiana, designed by that company, became the prototype of huge metallurgical combine at the Urals.

According to Soviet data, in 1923-1933 the USSR concluded 170 technical assistance agreements: 73 with German companies, 59 with American, 11 with French, nine with Swedish, and 18 with others (Khromov, 1999, pp. 227-233). Of that number, 37 (more than 21%) were canceled before the expiration date. By the Soviet explanation, some of them had been found to be too expensive, inefficient, incompatible with Five-Year Plan schedule, or “adventurist” (if the firm was found inapt). In a number of cases, the Soviet industrial base was not sufficient to cultivate advanced technologies, or they had been mastered without continuation of assistance. It is not always possible to calculate whose contribution was principal for many contracts were mixed. The Soviet state corporation Vostokostal, responsible for construction of the Magnitogorsk Steel Works, made agreement with the Arthur McKee Company to prepare its general plan, while the Demag Company of Germany was entrusted to design rolling shop, and another German firm was in charge of boring works. The All-Union Chemical Association (Vsekhimprom) made 20 agreements with various companies in the USA, Germany, Italy, France, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland\(^3\).

In 1931, the Nizhny Novgorod\(^4\) auto factory under construction expected about 2,350 units of equipment from USA, 2,300 from Europe, 550 from Soviet factories\(^5\). Such indispensable details of many machines, as ball and roller bearings, were made at three big plants. The Moscow plant GPZ-J used technical assistance from the Italian Riv Company (subsidiary of Fiat), was managed in part, by Swedish SKF engineers, and its buildings were designed by the Albert Kahn, Inc... Sutton roughly estimated that most factory designs and layouts proved to be of American origin and about one half of equipment came from Germany, but a large amount of the latter was made by American specifications, delivered there with Soviet orders. In quantity, US equipment was probably the second, and the British one was the third (Sutton, 1971, pp. 144-149, 163-165, 343).

Mixed American and European participation took place in many industries, but the American experience was most completely utilized in oil, automobile and tractor production, as well as in designing and major construction works. Misunderstanding and conflicts between Soviet organizations and contracted firms occurred around all those points.

Rendering technical assistance or selling machine tools, foreign companies expected easy profits without much risk. The Soviet leaders were held captive by the simple and seemingly unfailing idea that modern equipment and technology would work in the same way it did in the West if the Russian workers and engineers were trained to operate them. They did not intend to imitate the whole system of “capitalist” industrial production with all its economic, organizational, and managerial aspects. Elements of this system—technologies, machinery, and specialists, “cut out of the context”, fell into horribly inadequate environment.

**“Roses and Thorns” of Catching-Up Modernization**

Great Depression in the USA and parallel crisis of supplies in the USSR, caused by the Industrialization,

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\(^3\) “Guide to technical assistance agreements by March 1, 1931” contains annotated list of 108 operating agreements and names of the Soviet and foreign organizations. See the Russian State Archives for the Economy (further – RSAE), (RG 7620, Inventory (Inv.) 1, Folder (F.) 776) (in Russian).

\(^4\) In 1932, the city was renamed into Gorky, and the famous enterprise and its production received name “GAZ”, now “Rusavtogaz”.

\(^5\) “The conditions of building of the Nizhny Novgorod auto-plant”, August 18, 1931, in RSAE. RG. 7620, Inv. 1, F. 34, p. 18.
made a negative impact on the American-Soviet economic relations. The Soviet leaders expected that economic troubles would force “capitalists” to seek for any incomes at any conditions, but situation turned another. Of course, American interest to big Soviet orders increased, cash earnings and additional working hours could help companies to conduct business. However, the costs increased because designing bureaus and factories could not work in full capacity, introduced short weeks. Deteriorated business conditions prevented American companies from extending credits, even in better times most of them preferred cash payments. Purchases of Soviet exported products diminished, which resulted in growing hard currency shortage. In 1929-1931, the Soviet exports in the US-USSR trade balance went down sharply—from 19.4% to 8.9%, and in 1932-1933 imports from the USA were also cut (Furayev, 1964, pp. 205-208). A loud political campaign against “Russian dumping”, purge trials, and prisoner labor aggravated situation.

Payments to foreign companies were under constant watch of influential “Hard Currency Commission” (Valiutnaya Komissiya) of Politburo, which controlled foreign currency accumulation and spending. However, the industrialization burdens were also shared by the Western companies hired to render technical assistance. To comply with Soviet demands and accomplish tasks or orders, they bore additional costs. Their managers and other men, sent to the Soviet Union, had to overcome unforeseen and inadequate everyday hardships.

On August 25, 1931, Joseph Stalin angrily demanded to stop seeking for the new contracts with the USA, break negotiations under way and cancel, if possible, the already given orders because of “hard currency troubles” and “unacceptable credit terms in America”. Soviet orders were to be transferred to European and home plants, without any exception even for the most important plants under construction (Sevostianov & Tiurina, 1997, p. 356). Politburo was soon informed about impossibility of canceling orders originally placed in the United States, but a good deal of them was placed in Europe. That was why a part of Soviet pledges to American companies remained unfulfilled, and European manufacturers received more orders.

In the fall of 1931, the Amtorg claimed that the Ford Motor Company overcharged its Soviet partner, Avtostroy, by $750,331 for making heavy punching-presses to install at the Nizhny Novgorod auto factory. The same mechanisms for California branch were much cheaper, and the company promised to sell such presses to Russians by actual costs without profit. But Ford tool makers did a big volume of extra work to fulfill the Soviet order. To be sure in perfect quality of unknown in the USSR and very expensive tools, the Avtostroy men insisted upon their fitting and testing, against the accepted Ford practice. Besides, the Soviet specialists believed that such additional operations were a part of any normal work and must not increase the price of things made. But workmen’s job tickets explicitly showed extra work done, and in the long run the Amtorg recognized the bills. On February 18, 1932, Charles Sorensen wrote to the Amtorg Chairman, Piotr A. Bogdanov: “We feel that we have been extremely liberal in carrying out this work, doing a good job, but not over-charging for it. Furthermore, we feel that you have benefited in many ways which never will show in the accounts” (RSAE, RG. 7620, Inv. 1, F. 766, p. 158). Sorensen meant know-how.

In October 1932, the Hard Currency Commission recommended to decrease expenditures. As a result, Politburo decided to cease auto parts imports and break off any negotiations with Ford⁶. The company lost about $578,000 probably because the Amtorg bought only half of agreed number of autos (Nevins & Hill, 1957, p. 683).

The desire of Soviet government to have at its disposal the most advanced technologies and the intention

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⁶ From the “Osobyie papki Politburo” (Politburo’s Special Files), in the Russian State Archives of Social and Political History (RSASPH) (RG. 17, Inv. 162, F. 10, pp. 173, 179; F. 11, p. 2, 36, 42; F. 13, p. 121) (in Russian).
of American business leaders to supply them to the USSR did create a foundation for American-Soviet cooperation. But it was just its formal side. Corporate employees sent into the Soviet Union under the provisions of technical assistance agreements, experienced lots of troubles. They were upset by many things they had to face. The same dissatisfaction expressed by those who arrived on individual contracts that specified not only guaranteed jobs, but also adequate (in their understanding) working and living conditions.

No persuasion or reprimands from Moscow could make the Avtostroy men to get along with the Austin company specialists, responsible for designing and construction of the Nizhny Novgorod auto factory and workers city. American methods seemed hardly usable to many Avtostroy engineers who stubbornly opposed them. The supreme instances tried to accelerate the process of works by dividing responsibility among Avtostroy, Metallostroy and a number of other state “trusts” with special functions, which, in fact, created organizational disorder and practically nullified the role of the Austin company, whose American experience was running all operations itself (Nevins & Hill, 1957, p. 683). Its vice-president for foreign works, Harry Miter, who stayed at the construction site, complained to high Moscow official about, “Utter disregard of every recommendation, letter, warning or instruction which we have issued and the record of results accomplished has been a disgrace, and without any reasonable or legitimate excuse”. The Soviet executives decorated their offices with charts and plans, but could not improve anything in absence of washed gravel necessary for making concrete needed for all modern buildings (Miter to, June 28, 1930).

Special correspondent of Za Industrializatsyu (For Industrialization) newspaper, Agapov lashed the Soviet engineering staff for the confusion at the construction site with the following sharp words:

You received big salaries, spat in the river, looked at the broken machine [old gravel washer] and watched how the local workers tried to get gravel with shovels... Look in your storages. They look like piles of scrap-iron but meantime there are parts of valuable foreign machines. Look in different districts. Go there first time in your life, because you have never been there. Don’t be afraid to spoil your shoes. Exactly here was the conflict with Americans, when they demanded to break one part roofing because the concrete was mixed by hand. The concrete was mixed by hand, and in quarter of a kilometer was standing a ready concrete mixer for three months and waiting... Ask your employees whether they have a schedule? Does the Mechanization Dept. know which machines are coming, and when and where to put them? No, they have no plans, and they know nothing. They receive information that a crane has arrived in the dock, and for weeks they trying to get instructions where to put it. If a chain is broken on a conveyor they do not know how to repair it. They fasten it with wooden sticks... they break the motors of conveyors, because they put them on full load at once. (Agapov, 1930) 7

Accidents and emergencies were frequent at all Soviet plants and construction works, unskilled laborers often wrecked the machinery.

However, Austin engineers patiently supervised works. Miter reported to the VATO8 chairman: “All the way through we did much more work than is ever required of us on similar projects in America... None of it was in accordance with American practice” (Miter, June 28, 1930). In the long run, big concrete mixers were installed on the construction site, although quality of concrete did not reach the American standards. Director of VATO major construction works, Makarovsky pointed out “decisive role” of the Austin team in making auto plant design, found their building methods superior and recommended to introduce them in the USSR. “Instead of carping at American methods, we must carefully study, master and employ them, and take over the secrets in

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7 This article was translated into English and quoted in: R.S. Austin, p. 73-77 under the title “Off the road”. The primary typewritten translation in the Austin Company Archives is entitled “Proceeding blindly without methods”, which shows its main idea. I quoted, by permission, an extract from the archival copy.

8 All-Union Association of Automobile and Tractor Industry.
making some patented construction materials unknown in Russia” (Makarovsky, November 10, 1931).

The Soviet bureaucratic routine was to submit the projects for approval to higher hierarchical levels and receive directives from above. If the new directive amended or contradicted the previous one, it disrupted the normal course of work and the deadline. In American companies, the important decisions were taken by their top managers and transferred for execution at once.

Local authorities did not have enough power to carry out the requirements and requests of the Americans, even if their claims were a part of individual contract or technical assistance agreement. It gave Americans explicit occasion to accuse Russians in violation of contracts. Those who worked on individual contract, received salaries and wages divided into two parts, half in hard currency, half in rubles. The former was to be transferred by the State Bank to foreign banks where the contracted men kept their savings. The latter was paid in cash to cover current expenditures in the USSR. Western specialists enjoyed substantial (in Soviet view) privilege to use stores for foreigners, with a variety of goods not available in ordinary stores. In 1931 or some time later, the foreigners began experiencing troubles - they had no proof that the currency transfers reached the banks, and the whole payments turned to be made in rubles. Being useless abroad, rubles had to be exchanged for hard currency in the State Bank or at the state border, but exchange rate “ate up” the sums accumulated in the Soviet Union.

Cultural Discrepancies

Notable difference in engineers’ training was also a disrupting factor, especially in various construction works. Americans relied upon experience and standards. Architects and building engineers could always find a ready construction in catalogue and use a bit heavier one to guarantee safety margin. Slight extra spending of steel and concrete, cheap in the United States, was ignored. Russian specialists were educated in other way - with strong emphasis on mathematics permitting to calculate each construction to provide safety and save materials. It was typical for German engineering school influential in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century. Spending time on calculation was considered as part of good, honest work. The main task of Albert Kahn’s team in the USSR aimed at teaching of American methods, but mistrust and opposition remained strong enough until their efficiency had been proved. Similar situation took place in other industries. The Business Week issued parting wishes to American engineers, going to leave for the USSR – be ready to meet Russians more competent in engineering theory (Business Week. September 2, 1931).

Sharing know-how and experience with Soviet engineers and workers proved to be a difficult process. One and the same problem was understood and performed by Americans and Russians in different ways (see Table 1).

Newly-built Soviet enterprises suffered from various internal imperfections and lack of “supply chains” - shortages of raw and related materials, fuel, trained workers, engineers, etc.. Attempts to manage supply chains by central economic planning met unforeseen obstacles. Construction and running big modern factory required dozens of suppliers, good transportation, specialists, and workers of different qualifications, but they were dispersed throughout numerous state organizations with their own bosses and budgets. To induce or compel them to work in concert was extremely difficult. Disputes were incessant because of lack of horizontal coordination. Foreign specialists felt themselves idle.

Table 1
Styles of Doing That Created Mutual Misunderstanding and Tensions.
### Issue | American style | Soviet style
--- | --- | ---
Organizational principles | Rapid execution of decisions; keeping deadline | Frequent delays because of discussing projects in various instances, making alterations and changes after agreed deadline
Managerial stability | Relatively rare change of managers | Often and unpredictable change of managers, sometimes caused by repressions (“the person has vanished”)
Governance | Strict subordination, obedience, carrying out orders | Discussions, debates. Workers could obstruct engineers’ decisions
Discipline | Strict | Poor. Frequent absenteeism, smoke breaks, slipshod work
Engineers’ functions | Controlling operations in person, troubleshooting, managing people at work. Most engineers acquired practical skills | Working rather in the office, than at production site; most engineers were theorists, with little practical experience
Factory equipment | Made in the USA | Mix of American, European, and Russian-made
Incentives to work | Earnings, career | Earnings, career, communistic enthusiasm
Industrial safety | Utterly important | Less important
Illegal copying of American technique in the USSR | Condemned as violation of patent laws | Normal practice
Economic creed | Economies of speed, scale and scope, reducing costs of production | Direct economy-cheaper materials, obsolete methods, etc., which created, in fact, additional costs

The KIM assembly plant, built in Moscow in November 1930, was a Ford-type, with Ford-made tools and machinery. In 1931, its average output was only 56% because of lack of imported parts caused by hard currency shortage. The state policy to save dollars placed that and other factories in intolerable position. Assembly plant No. 1 in Nizhny Novgorod, also of Ford-type, lacked skilled and disciplined workers, Ford instructions in Russian, protective gear, etc. In 1932, its work was disturbed by various extra operations and urgent orders, that confused the production schedules, and also by differences between the Ford and the Soviet production standards.

Performance and results of technical assistance drew attention of Soviet government. In general, the role of foreign experts and workers was estimated highly, and a few declared useless. In May 1933, Kaganovitch, the deputy chief of the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry, emphasized “significant help, rendered by foreign workers and engineers in building, launching and mastering the new kinds of production at the gigantic enterprises”. He also noted inefficient use and high turnover of foreign workers because of poor working and living conditions at large factories (Khromov, 1999, pp. 246-250).

A number of foreigners had been awarded Soviet orders, but many expressed disappointment and discontent and left the Soviet Union before the contract expired. Such was the case of invited individuals, not the corporate employees. Among awarded specialists, one of the best was building engineer Calder. A “troubleshooter”, who managed construction works in various regions, he learned Soviet conditions well and noted poor workmanship, high costs (overheads run about 40%), pay by piece work, lack of equipment, and bad food (Calder, July 15, 1933).

The issues most frequently commented on by Americans besides technical and engineering matters:
- low quality of production, lack of trained engineers and workers;
- resistance to American specialists and methods;

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• salaries to foreigners in non-convertible Soviet rubles;
• low quality of foodstuffs and goods, poor housing;
• peculiarities of Russian work style (inept work, poor management, pay-by-piecework compensation system);
• system of privileges, fear of repressions, use of prisoner labor as norm of Soviet life.

What Americans criticized in the Soviet Union most was employing women for hard manual work, low discipline, and impunity for idlers. At the Red Putilov plant in Leningrad:

In the machine shop nearly every place you look you see from two to six men sitting around in groups smoking during working hours with no apparent work near them and no one making any effort to give them any. If there is nothing for them to do inside I would certainly introduce them to the spades and picks and shovels that I see so many girls handling with good effect in the yard outside. I have seen more girls doing more hard manual labor in one hour here than I ever saw in all my life, candidly wrote to the plant’s “men in charge” Ford tractor expert Paul McGregor10.

The Soviet students who arrived at Ford’s Rouge plant and other American enterprises, were quite content with treatment and foremen’s willingness to show and explain everything what they wanted to learn. However, some Russians violated shop discipline, and Ford administration complained to the local Avtostroy office about their disobedience or absenteeism. The Amtorg men, charged to meet Russians at New York harbor, repeatedly reported to Moscow, that some of them abused hard drinking, brawled, sang revolutionary songs on the shipboard, and loudly protested against American immigration rules11.

The story of each agreement needs in-depth archival study, but, besides tremendous hard currency spending, we may outline two main factors that reduced technical assistance after 1933. First, it was evident success of industrialization itself. Plethora of new and rebuilt old factories started giving production, although slowly and poorly, and some were becoming centers for know-how proliferation and workforce training. Second, technical assistance became more targeted (agreements with the Radio Corporation of America, the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, etc.). Big factories needed enlargement, continued equipment, and machinery purchases without technical assistance.

The original Russian contribution to the technological base of industrialization was not indigenous re-inventions of what was already known in the West, but more or less skillful selection of foreign designers, suppliers, and equipment. Every Soviet industrial branch not only utilized, but, in most cases, completely or heavily depended on Western technologies and methods (Sutton, 1968, pp. 336-340; 1971, pp. 291-372). The world-wide “seine” for technological advances, consisting of numerous Soviet agencies and posts abroad, specialized institutes and design bureaus, were installed in the 1920s and later. Technological transfer played a major role during the forced industrialization, and resulted in speedy creation of modern enterprises. They became models to follow, and functioned as national know-how and training centers, reproduced in various parts of the country along with auxiliary and cooperating plants.

Conclusions

The main reasons for transfers of Western technologies were the Soviet government’s demands to enlarge size

10 “Report on the management and systems of the Pootilovetz works”, September 16, 1929, in which McGregor described his both negative and positive impressions about that enterprise. HFMGV. Acc. 38, Box 1, Fld. Tractor (Russia - McGregor), 1929.
11 Correspondence on the issue of Russian probationers’ behavior between Amtorg and other Soviet organizations in July and October 1930, is in RSAE (RG. 7620, Inv. 1, F. 722, p. 166; F. 785, pp. 219-221) (in Russian).
and capacity of enterprises, to accelerate their putting into operation, and to install the best machinery. Such pressures made technical assistance indispensable. However, its conceived role was partially shrunk. Rational decisions at the top had been weakened at the bottom, “great works of socialism” experienced at a critical moment lack of necessary supplies. The implanting of new technologies in inadequate environment created incalculable and unpredictable costs. To surmount them quickly was hardly possible for the following reasons:

- Absence of economic preconditions and resources for the large-scale industrialization. Its movers and levers laid in political and administrative sphere, and the government intended to mobilize resources “in motion”;
- Lack of raw materials and subsidiary products of necessary quality, of cooperating enterprises and transportation facilities, skilled labor, and engineering staff restrained development of supply chains;
- Food supplies, housing, stores, and other necessities of life in industrial centers lagged behind erecting huge enterprises;
- Branch associations, state trusts and administrative boards were subordinates to respective higher ministries and unwilling to co-operate and share responsibility with others;
- The government had to save hard currency and regulate imports;
- Many workers were poorly disciplined, but enjoyed perfect impunity;
- Tradition to time the start-up of unfinished enterprises to national political events or Soviet official holidays caused curtailment of their production afterwards, or stoppage to eliminate defects, which led to additional costs;
- Foreign specialists had no administrative powers and in most cases acted as advisors or discussants whose opinion was often neglected.

All these stimulated containing effects. Among them were the attempts of Soviet engineers to change and reshape designs made in the US, to defend traditional engineering solutions as more economical in current conditions, ignoring future development. Illegal copying certain machines and mechanisms proved to be expensive beyond all expectations, and gave inadmissible percent of waste.

By the middle of 1930s, young Soviet industry roughly mastered the basics of mass production, modern technologies, and made huge constructions. Assembly lines, mammoth power stations, complex machinery and equipment, aircraft and radio, cars, buses and tractors became the landmarks of successful industrialization. It contributed much to the Soviet victory in the Second World War and further economic growth of the USSR. However, burdens of Stalinist industrialization proved to be enormously hard for Russian nation. Contracted foreign companies and workers also suffered financial and moral losses. However, “Wheels of Big History” run in spite of such things. Technical assistance multiplied the Soviet industrial and military might to great extent, which shaped further history of the 20th century. If Industrialization meant the first Soviet take-off, lend-lease supplies and dismantling of German industry after World War II provided the Soviet Union with the next technological and economic spurt.

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Martin Luther on Marriage and Family

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This paper describes and analyzes Martin Luther’s views on marriage and family primarily from his own writings. Luther elevated marriage and family life to a place of respect and honor in the church and society at a time when singleness and celibacy were celebrated as ways of reaching a higher state of spirituality. Martin Luther’s teachings were so radically different from the traditional Catholic views of his days that the church became furious with him and tried almost everything in their power to silence him. Although Luther is known primarily for his views on Justification, but it is his teachings on marriage and family that has been more consequential. Many in the West who have never heard the name of Martin Luther, today enjoy a more biblical view on marriage and family because of his influence. He advocated divorce according to biblical principles, at a time when divorce was almost impossible; he encouraged priests to marry by showing that there was no conflict between their calling and marriage; he denounced celibacy, blaming it for encouraging lust rather than aiding chastity; he restored marriage and family life back to the arena of spirituality and respectability in society. Luther lived out his own advice by getting married and living an exemplary married life. What made Luther so effective was the passionate intensity with which he advocated these reforms. He wrote and spoke with such power and backed up his words with such a bold and courageous life, although living in the shadow of constant threats, that centuries after his death, the power and conviction of his ideas still resonate.

Keywords: celibacy, chastity, LW, WA, reformation pamphlets

Introduction

“With my wedding, I have made the angels laugh and the devils weep”.

Marriages and families are facing increasing pressure because of the stress of modern life. Divorce rates among Christians are equal to those among secular peoples. Christian homes are being broken and disrupted at an alarming rate. Marriage rates in America are at historic lows. People are marrying later or simply not marrying or engaging in other alternative living arrangements (Francis, December 14, 2011).

For most of the Christian era before the Reformation, marriage and family were discouraged and even denigrated. Sexual relations were condemned and associated with the evil of original sin. Singleness and...
celibacy were exalted as a higher and holier state of spirituality. Not until the Reformation were marriage and family restored to a place of honor within the Christian community. One who contributed much to the restoration of marriage and family to a place of honor and respect was Martin Luther, the great German reformer. The purpose of this study is to examine Luther’s views and experience regarding marriage and family and hopefully glean from his wisdom, insights that will enable us to strengthen marriage and family during this time of incredible stress.

Martin Luther elevated marriage and family life to a place of respect and honor in the church and society.

He placed the home at the center of the universe. His teaching and practice were so radical and so far-reaching, that some scholars had argued that other than the church, the home was the only sphere of life which the Reformation profoundly affected. (Ozment, 1993b)

Although writers like Cocke, Lazareth and Ozment have written on Martin Luther’s views on marriage and family and the author has quoted from them throughout the paper, the author has relied more on the Luther’s own writings for the analysis. The significance of this research will reveal that Luther’s reformation was not just theological but also profoundly sociological. His rejection of celibacy as a form of superior spirituality, his elevation of marriage and family life to the arena of spirituality, his moderate views on divorce are now commonly accepted views among the Christian community.

Although Luther is known mainly for his teaching on justification by faith, the author would propose that his views on marriage and family are as significant for the society at large. Most non-believers have never heard of justification by faith, but they have all been part of a family and whether they are aware it or not, Luther’s teaching on marriage and family has had a significant impact on marriage and family in the Western world. In the light of the crisis facing marriage and the home, the author is arguing that there is an urgent need to reexamine and apply Luther’s valuable principles on marriage and family to our present context.

**Luther’s Early Family Life**

Martin Luther was born on November 10th, 1483 in the small town of Eisleben, Germany (Jensen, 1992, p. 43). His parents were Hans and Margareta. Luther’s mother, Margareta Hannah Lindeman, was the daughter of a prominent burgher of Eisenach. Luther had three sisters and a brother. Martin was given the name Martin because he was baptized on St. Martin’s day. It was said that he had a striking resemblance to his father (Schwiebert, 1950, pp. 103-105). A year after Martin was born, his father moved to the city of Mansfield where he worked in the mines and later he became the owner of a half-dozen copper foundries. Luther’s family were clearly of peasant stock but his father’s ambitious business dealings advanced the families economic fortunes and made it possible for Luther to get the finest education available (Schwiebert, 1950, pp. 106-107). Luther’s parents were devout, God-fearing Catholics, typical of their time and culture. Their religion was superstitious and dominated by a fear of a vengeful God.

Luther’s early childhood was not easy and was marked by severe discipline from both mother and father. Luther described an incident where his mother whipped him until the blood flowed for stealing a nut

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2 Martin Luther speaks of the contempt with which marriage was viewed in his time: “When I was a boy, marriage was considered so infamous on account of impious and impure celibacy that I thought I could not think about married life without sin. For all were convinced that if anyone wished to live a life holy and acceptable to God, he must never become a spouse but must live a celibate and take the vow of celibacy. This was why many men who had married became monks or contemptible priests (sacrificuli) after the death of their wives” (LW, 1: 135). See also Sheehan and Farge (1997, pp. 297 – 306).
Schwiebert, 1950, p. 109). On another occasion he spoke of his father who whipped him so severely that he ran away for a while and was angry with his father (Schwiebert, 1950, p. 109). His discipline did not end at home. Discipline at school was just as severe. Luther once reflected upon early school, “I was caned in a single morning 15 times for nothing at all. I was required to decline and conjugate and had not learned my lesson” (Bainton, 1950, p. 104).

In spite of Luther’s strict and disciplined upbringing, he turned out to be a normal child. His views, however, about God may have been influenced by his early experience, teachings about religion and his relationship with his father. Having a strict and judgmental father perhaps made it difficult for him to see his Heavenly Father as loving and merciful.

**Marriage and Family Life**

Martin joined the Augustinian Hermits in 1505 and took the three-fold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Marriage was out of the question with taking of such vows. He did not envision his life as a married man, even after he left the monastery and renounced his monastic vows. Unlike many Catholic scholars of the time, he did not denigrate marriage or saw it as lesser form of spirituality. Contrary to many of his critics who believed that Luther left the monastery in order to get married, Luther resisted the idea of marriage for himself but encouraged it for other clerics.

So why was Martin Luther so resistant to marriage? In 1521, he wrote to his friend Spalatin, “They will never force a wife upon me” (Luther, 1521). Three years later seeking to squelch a rumor about his marriage he wrote,

_Hitherto I have not been, and am not now inclined to take a wife. Not that I lack the feelings of a man, (for I am neither wood nor stone), but my mind is averse to marriage because I daily expect the death decreed to the heretic_.

(Thigpen, 1993)

One reason why Luther was averse to marriage was because he felt that his life could be taken from him at any moment. After the Diet of Worms in 1521 where Luther made his emphatic stance against the church, he was placed under a ban and authority had been given to any member of the church to turn Luther over to the authorities. Luther obviously saw no value in getting married and leaving behind a widow and children because of his impending death.

So why then did Luther change his mind about marriage when his circumstances had not changed? He was still under the emperor’s ban. He was still considered a notorious heretic and his life was still in jeopardy. Luther’s decision to marry may have been influenced by a number of factors. Chief among them was that his parents encouraged him to get married. They wanted grandchildren (Thigpen, 1993). His father was quite displeased when he joined the monastery, but now that he was no longer a monk he probably desired for Luther as normal a life for his son as he could be.

According to Professor Ozment, Luther actually encouraged fathers to remove their daughters from convents. In 1523, he praised Leonhard Koppe for engineering the escape of his daughter and 11 other nuns, among them was Katherine von Bora (Luther’s future wife). Luther would compare Koppe’s freeing the sisters to Moses’ deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ozment, 1983, p. 17). Most of these nuns returned to their families and found husbands except Katherine von Bora. She was in love with a Jerome Baumgartner but their relationship was aborted by his parents who disapproved of it. Katherine found herself alone. Several
attempts were made to marry her off but to no avail. Even Luther himself tried to find a suitable mate for her. It was brought to Luther’s attention by Nicolas Amsdorf, Luther’s close co-worker, that Katherine was interested in a match with him. Some suggested that Luther was motivated by pity and responsibility for Katherine, and that was why he married her (Cocke, 1973).

Another reason given why Luther might have chosen to marry was to live by example. He had written much on marrying, exalting marriage, calling it a natural and necessary part of life. Since his break from the monastery, he had encouraged former monks and priests to get married. Perhaps he saw an opportunity to practice what he preached (Lazareth, 1960, p. 23). Eventually Luther got married, but it was a very bad time in German history. He married the 26 years old Katherine on June 13, 1525, when he was 42, a difference of 16 years. Germany was in the midst of the Peasant War and that only added to Luther’s already dangerous situation. Peasant leaders were using Luther’s materials and revolting in his name. Luther was well aware of these developments, yet he entered into marriage nonetheless. Just days before his wedding, he wrote to his friend Spalatin, “If I can do it before I die, I will yet take my Katie to wife to spite the devil, when I hear that they are after me” (Luther, May 4, 1525).

Luther was married in a simple ceremony surrounded by close friends and family. Not all were in agreement with his marriage, notable among them was Melancthon, his closest and most trusted colleague, who did not agree with Luther’s marriage. The marriage was not preceded by much courtship and it was very unlikely he was in love with Katherine. After his marriage, he wrote, “God has willed and caused my act, for I neither love my wife nor burn for her but esteem her highly” (Luther, June 21, 1525). Luther may not have been in love with his wife at the wedding but he grew to love her dearly and they enjoyed a happy married life together. In a letter written in 1526, Luther praised his wife: “My Katie is in all things so obliging and pleasing to me that I would not exchange my poverty for the riches of Croesus” (August 11, 1526). Later he paid her this tribute: “I give more credit to Katherine than to Christ, who has done so much more for me” (Bainton, 1950, p. 293).

Near the end of his life, after recovering from a severe illness, Luther declared his love for Katie in these words:

I thought that I would never see my wife and little children again. How much pain that distance and separation caused me! …Since, by God’s grace, I have recovered, I now love my dear wife and children all the more…(Bainton, 1950, p. 293)

Judging from his words, it seems that Luther firmly believed that God’s hand was in his marriage and he saw marriage as a way of getting back at the devil, for he knew full well that the devil despised marriage.

What was life like for Luther as a husband and a father? What was his home life like? Luther and Katherine were married for 21 years and in spite of the age difference of 16 years, they enjoyed a fruitful and satisfying family life. The testimony of Katherine at the death of her husband told the story:

Who would not be sorrowful and mourn for so noble a man as was my dear lord who much served not only one city or a single land but the whole world? Truly I am so distressed I cannot tell my great heart sorrow to any one and hardly know what to think or how I feel. I cannot eat nor drink neither can I sleep. If I had a principality and an empire, it would never have cost me so much pain to lose them as I have now that our Lord God has taken from me this dear and precious man. (K. Luther, April 2, 1546)

In their two decades of marriage they had six children. He called them six “little heathens” from God;
Hans (1526), Elizabeth (1527), Magdalena (1529), Martin (1531), Paul (1533), and Margareta (1534). In spite of his prodigious scholarship work, Luther enjoyed the time with his children. Cocke (1973) observed:

He liked to gather the family around him and tell stories, teach songs and games, and say prayers together. Luther wrote letters to his children, which reveal he could enter childish fancy and imagination. His sermons and Table Talk are heavily illustrated with his observations of children’s activities (p. 107).

Luther was a stern disciplinarian with his children. On one occasion, he commented that he would prefer to have a “dead rather than a disobedient son” (Luther, WA, TR 5: 489, n. 6102). On another occasion, he forbade his son to see him for three days as punishment for his disobedience. At the end of the period, he required the boy to write a letter begging his father’s forgiveness. Although Luther was strict with his children, they never doubted his love for them. Luther and his wife, like so many couples of that time, experienced the death of an offspring. Elizabeth, their first daughter died when she was only eight months. He commented, “I so lamented her death that I was exquisitely sick, my heart rendered soft and weak; never had I thought that a fathers’ heart could be so broken for his children sake” (Ozment, 1993a, p. 167). The death of his second child, Magdalene at age thirteen almost devastated Luther and left him so grief stricken that he sobbed openly at her funeral.

The force of our natural love is so great that we are unable to do this without crying and grieving in our hearts…[and] experiencing death ourselves… The features, the words, and the movement of our living and dying daughter, who was so very obedient and respectful, remain engraved in our hearts; even the death of Christ… is unable to take all this away as it should. You, therefore, please give thanks to God in our stead. (Ozment, 1993a, p.167)

Luther’s home was a place not just for his own flesh and blood. Many were made to feel welcome at his home. His home was more like a motel for relatives, tutors, students, numerous nuns, and monks. There was a constant flow of guests who were expected to conform to family customs and study the Catechism, pray, and attend family devotions (Cocke, 1973, p. 107). Luther had a gregarious nature and enjoyed good conversation, singing, and fellowship.

Luther’s relationship with his wife was very good. She was an excellent manager of the home, having a small farm on their estate and managing the financial affairs with prudence.

Katie earned such respect from her husband, whom she excelled in virtually all worldly matters. She became a model housewife and an accomplished businesswoman. To increase their income, she remodeled the cloister in which she and Martin lived so that it would accommodate up to 30 students and guests. She expanded the cloister garden and repaired the cloister brewery. Luther dubbed her the “morning star of Wittenberg”, as her day began at 4:00a.m. (WA, TR 2: 650, n. 2772).

Thus, Luther was free from many of the cares of domestic life so he could pursue his writing and reformation work without much worry. Luther loved his wife and professed that love throughout his life. He once stated: “There is no bond on earth so sweet nor any separation so bitter as that which occurs in a good marriage” (Ozment, 1993b). Luther wrote repeatedly of his love for his wife as the following statements revealed:

I thank you in the Lord for the hearty congratulations, which you have sent me. I am a happy husband and may God continue to send my happiness, for from that most gracious woman, my best of wives, I have received, by the blessings of

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3Katherine rose at 4 a.m. in the summer and at 5 a.m. in the winter to oversee her large household. See Cobb (2001, p. 9); Stjerna (2011).
God, a little son. Hans Luther, and by God’s wonderful grace, I have become a father…. My Katie is in all things so obliging and pleasing to me that I would not exchange my poverty for all the riches of Croesus (Luther, August 11, 1526).

He also boasted to his table colleagues in 1531:

I would not trade my Katie for France or Venice for three reasons: first, because God gave her to me as a gift and also gave me to her; second, because I often come across other women with far more shortcomings than Katie, and although she has a few weaknesses of her own, they are far outnumbered by her virtues; and third, because faith serves marriage best through its fidelity and honor. (WA, Br 3: 900; WA, TR 1: 49)

Luther continued in rapturous admiration for his beloved wife:

The greatest gift of grace a man can have is a pious, God-fearing, home-loving wife, whom he can trust with all his goods, body, and life itself, as well as having her as the mother of his children. . . Katie, you have a good man who loves you. Thank God, and let someone else be empress. (WA, Br 3: 900; WA, TR 1: 49)

As Luther lay sick and contemplated the possibility of separating from his family, his feelings of tenderness and love for his family poured out with intense emotions in the following words.

Oh, how passionately I yearned for my family as I lay at death’s door in Smalkald. I thought that I would never see my wife and little children again. How much pain that distance and separation caused me! I believe that dying people must know the greatest natural love and affection of all, as when a man remembers his wife and a parent thinks of his children. Since, by God’s grace, I have recovered, I now love my dear wife and children all the more. No one is so spiritual that he does not feel this natural love and affection; it provides great strength to the bond of fellowship which exists between a man and his wife. (WA, TR 4: 4786)

### Medieval Concept of Marriage and Family

Some of Martin Luther’s views on marriage and family reflected the late medieval Catholic view. Luther was a child of his time and culture, so it should not be surprising that his early views on the subject would reflect the age in which he was born, but the greatness and originality of Luther was, he went beyond his age. What were some of the prevailing views on marriage, family, and sexuality during the late medieval period that might have influenced Luther’s views? Ozment (1993b) commented on medieval view of chastity:

The clergy of the Middle Ages were obsessed with chastity and sexual purity. Augustine portrayed sexual intercourse in Paradise as occurring without lust and emotion. A vernacular catechism from 1494 elaborates the third deadly sin (impurity) under the title, “How the Laity Sin in the Marital Duty. According to the 1494 catechism, the laity sin sexually in marriage by, among other things, having sex for the sheer joy of it rather than for the reasons God has commanded, namely, to escape the sin of concupiscence and to populate the earth. (p. 22)

These ideas on sexuality reached back centuries into the Christian era, when Jerome, writing in the fourth century, compared virginity, widowhood, and marriage. He gave virginity a numerical value of 100, widowhood 60, and marriage 30 (Ozment, 1993b, p. 22). Marriage was obviously not highly regarded.

Most of the church teachers including Augustine, Tertullian, Ambrose, Aquinas, and Gregory the Great considered sexual expression with any passion to be a “sin”, “evil”, “befoulment” and not much different from adultery, while virginity and celibacy were highly honored (Bowie, 2000, pp. 108-109). These attitudes became entrenched within Roman Catholic teachings, writings and meditation. Even the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic’s response to the Reformation, upheld celibacy and by its implication its attitudes towards sexuality within marriage being restricted to the conception of children (Banner, 2005).

Three models of sexuality existed during the time of Luther. The first model saw reproduction or
procreation as the primary goal of sex. This was a view championed by the Roman Catholic Church. The second model, called the pollution model of sexuality focused on the impurity and pollution caused by sex. Unlike procreationists, it advocated strong limitations on the marital relations by restricting time, seasons, places and circumstances in which sex was allowed. Hence, pollutionists attached secondary importance to procreation, tending to emphasize “nature” as a criterion of sexual morality, not being overly concerned about contraception, either (Brundage, 1990, p. 6).

The third model of sexuality viewed marital sex as a source of intimacy and affection and a symbol and source of conjugal love. Subscribers to this school of thought regarded sexual pleasure more positively than the proponents of the other two models. Writers at different periods during the Middle Ages adopted elements of each of these models of human sexuality in various combinations and with varying degree of enthusiasm (Brundage, 1990, p. 5).

Which of these three models did Luther subscribe to? Did his views change over time? Did he embrace elements of these three models at different periods in his life? From his writings, it appears that Luther embraced all three models at various times. In his procreationist mode, he said the chief purpose of marriage was to have children. On other occasions he seemed to agree with the pollutionist’s model. At other times, he spoke positively of sexual pleasure in marriage.

The exaltation of sexual abstinence implies a rejection and disapproval of pleasure, of recreational sex, and above all promiscuity. Western Christianity has historically accepted (and at some level, most of us still maintain) an unarticulated allegiance to an ascetic ideal of sexual morals: the less sex, the better, and the more the worse. Implicit is a belief that virtue demands self-control and self-control means a rejection of pleasure; whatever feeling good is probably wrong (Brundage, 1990, p. 7).

Christian teaching since the patristic period has postulated a tension between salvation and pleasure: Most influential Christian thinkers have nurtured a gloomy suspicion that one cannot be attained without renouncing the other. Similarly the medieval church long remained suspicious, even hostile towards family ties. The church leaders suspected that conjugal affection and parental love often disguised sensual entanglements and worldly values. For this reason the theologians saw little value in family attachments. While Luther never completely rid himself of this tension, he began a movement within Christianity that made it possible to be a good Christian and at the same time be happily married to and have an enjoyable sex life.

**Luther’s Theological Understanding of Marriage Before and After his Protestant Conversion**

While still a celibate priest, Luther wrote extensively on marriage. He viewed married life, among so many other things in the church, in need of reform. Luther’s writings on the subject would play a significant role in restoring marriage to its rightful place. The church made marriage and family a matter of low priority. Singleness and celibacy superseded marriage in spiritual excellence. It is an irony of history that it took a celibate monk who would eventually get married to restore the honor and dignity of marriage. You did not have to be married to know that marriage was under assault. Luther recognized this when he described marriage as “universally in awful disrepute”, with peddlers everywhere selling pagan books that treat nothing but the depravity of womanhood and the unhappiness of the state of marriage (Luther, 1522). With such low esteem of marriage no wonder people saw singleness as a better alternative than marriage.

One of Luther’s earliest works on marriage was a sermon he gave on the second Sunday after Epiphany in 1519 based on the Bible passage in John 2:01-11, the wedding at Cana. This was a revised version by Luther of a sermon he had preached earlier.
Luther described marriage as God’s special gift to man. It was not man’s idea but God’s and he was the best matchmaker. Luther counseled those who wanted to enter the estate of marriage to “earnestly pray to God for a spouse” (Luther, 1519). Marriage was no accident but was created for man. The woman was given to the man as a companion in all things but particular to bear children. Luther warned of how Sin has corrupted marriage so that people enter into it not for companionship or procreation but to fulfill their lust (Luther, 1519).

Luther described three types of love and identified “the love of man and a woman as the greatest and purest of all loves” (Luther, 1519). The three kinds of love are: false love, natural love, and married love.

False love is that which seeks its own as a man loves money, possessions, honor and women taken outside of marriage and against God’s command. Natural love is that between father and child, brother and sister, friend and relatives. (Luther, 1519)

He described married love as “a bride’s love, which glows like a fire and desires nothing but the husband. She says it is you I want, not what is yours. I want neither yourself nor your gold; I want neither. I want you.” But Luther acknowledged that even this pure love had become corrupted by sin. He described the temptation of the flesh so strong and consuming that “marriage may be likened to hospital for incurables which prevents inmates from falling into grave sin” (Luther, 1519). Luther had a clear grasp of how difficult it was to live a chaste life outside of marriage and he continually spoke of the difficulty of chastity. It was difficult in Luther’s day how much more so today in the sex-saturated society where sexual messages blared out at us from everywhere.

In this sermon, Luther agreed with the theologians of the church in calling marriage a sacrament. He would later reverse himself on this issue. Here, he described it as “an outward and spiritual sign of the greatest, holiest, worthiest and noblest thing that ever existed or will ever exist: the union of the divine and human nature in Christ” (Luther, 1519). He considered the fulfillment of lust within marriage as legitimate but reprehensible when expressed outside of marriage.

Luther also described marriage as a covenant of fidelity. The basis of the marital relationship was mutual self-giving and a promise of faithfulness to the other. Luther believes that this promise should be more than just words spoken to each other. He encouraged children to seek their parents’ counsel in choosing a life partner (Luther, 1519).

Luther also described that the chief purpose of marriage was to produce children. He however warned that it was more than just producing children, but it was rearing godly children. He described it in the following way: “They can do no better work and do nothing more valuable for God, for Christendom, for all the world, for themselves, and for their children than to bring up their children well” (Luther, 1519). He called it a kind of spiritual vocation, greater than all the good works of the church. In classic Luther, he said, “For bringing up their children properly is the shortest road to heaven. In fact, heaven itself could not be made nearer or achieved more easily than by doing this work. It is also their appointed work” (Luther, 1519). Addressing the issue on the other side, Luther said, “By the same token, hell is no more easily earned than to spoil children, let them curse and swear, let them learn profane words and vulgar songs and just let them do as they please” (Luther, 1519).

In Luther’s world there was no place for negligent, indulgent parents. He inferred that the salvation of parents depended on how parents reared their children. This sermon by Luther was his earliest reflection on marriage and it provided us a valuable insight on this subject. He was still very catholic in seeing marriage as a
sacrament. Although unmarried and a celibate priest he was a keen observer on marriage providing valuable counsel on love in marriage, selecting a mate, the meaning of marriage, and parenting advice on child rearing. I wonder if Luther received criticisms from married folks and parents about his own lack of experience in the matters he gave advice on.

While Luther wrote many positive things about marriage, he also described marriage similar to the way in which he described the role of the political order “to restrain greed and wickedness”. He saw marriage as a kind of remedy against sin. Marriage acted as a kind of restraint against the flood of human sensuality and immorality (LW, 1 : 134). Marriage was necessary because of the weakness of the flesh after the fall: “Is it not a great thing that even in the state of innocence God ordained and instituted marriage? But this institution and covenant are all the more necessary since sin has weakened and corrupted the flesh” (LW, 1 : 134).

This view of Luther is problematic because it suggests Luther’s view of marriage as kind of force to ward off evil and thus makes it highly superstitious. Is marriage primarily to satisfy the sexual desires of the couple? Is it designed simply to prevent a person from falling into sin? What about during the marriage when a couple cannot engage in sexual intercourse? While sex is an important part of marriage, it is not always possible especially at times when one or both cannot perform. Hence Luther provided what I consider a negative reason for getting married.

In his Large Catechism, he commented on marriage when he dealt with the Sixth Commandment (Catholic numeration). He called the commandment a hedge and protection for marriage, it sanctioned and guarded it. Marriage was the first institution of God, honored by God. Married life is no jest or presumption; it is an excellent thing and a matter of divine seriousness (Luther, 1529a). For this reason, marriage should not be despised or held in disrepute but adored and sanctified and not only placed in equality with other estates but precedes and surpasses them all. It is not a peculiar estate but the most common and noblest estate, which pervades Christendom and extends through the entire world.

Luther asserted that marriage is an honorable and necessary state solemnly commanded by God and it was designed that all men and women who are able should be married, with some exceptions:

When priests, monks, and nuns resist God’s order, they despise and forbid marriage through they abstain from the act, their hearts are full of unchaste thoughts and evil lust and continual burnings and secret suffering which can be avoided in the married life... All vows of chastity out of the married state is condemned by this commandment and free permission given to abandon unchaste life and enter married life. To remain in monastery life is to sin and more. (Luther, 1529a)

Luther encouraged young people to change their views on marriage and get to like it by restoring the honor of marriage, and immoral practices would decrease all over the world. He described love as having harmony with each other, having mutual respect and cherishing each other with faithfulness (Luther, 1529a). This counsel may not be relevant today but in Luther’s age when marriage was despised by many, this counsel was significant and was aimed to restore the honor of marriage among the youth.

In his Small Catechism 1529 illustrated, Luther wrote a small marriage booklet for the simple pastor, in this booklet, he called marriage a worldly business and that the church should not attempt to order or govern anything connected to it. In other words, it is a civil matter, but the church should be willing to bless and pray for the couple before the church or in the church(Luther, 1529b). Although marriage was a divine creation, it was a civil matter, but he considered it more spiritual than monasticism and therefore should be considered seriously by the youth(Luther, 1529b).
Freedom to Marry

In one of Luther’s famous Reformation pamphlets, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520), Luther explicitly encouraged priests to get married, thus repudiating their vows of celibacy. Luther writes, “Priests should be free to marry and not to as they choose,” because “God has not bound them and no one else ought to bind them” (Luther, 18 August, 1520). Freedom was one of the great theological themes of Luther’s writing and he applied it here to the religious workers of the church who had taken the vows of celibacy relative to marriage. Luther saw no contradiction between the divine calling of God and marriage. This idea was revolutionary for its time, for it was overturning a well-established tradition within the Catholic church.

In another one of Luther’s Reformation pamphlets, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), Luther repudiated marriage as a sacrament, which of course placed him in direct conflict with traditional Catholic teachings. Luther appealed to the Scriptures by showing that the chief text in Eph 5:31 upon which the sacramental nature of marriage established was based on a faulty translation of the Greek word *mysterion* as the word sacrament. The original Greek word had nothing to do with sacrament and simply meant mystery. Luther showed that by the definition, a sacrament was a word of promise, a sign of grace, so that marriage could not be a sacrament. Since marriage was also valid among non-believers, Jews, Turks, and others, it could not be a sacrament. It could not possibly be called a sacrament of the new law since it was not the exclusive possession of the church (Luther, 1520). Having removed the sacramental badge from marriage, Luther concluded that it was the civil authorities and not the ecclesiastical authorities that had authority over marriage. However, he was insistent that couples should seek out the church to receive blessings and guidance for their marriage.

In 1524, Luther wrote a small tract entitled “Parents Should Neither Compel nor Hinder the Marriage of Their Children and that Children Should not Become Engaged Without Their Parents’ Consent”. In this tract, Luther sought to answer a number of questions concerning parental authority in marriage. Canon laws at that time asserted that parental consent was not necessary for a valid marriage. Luther’s tract addressed three questions:

1. Did a parent have the authority to prevent his child from marrying a particular person? (2) Forbid his marrying at all? and (3) Force him into a marriage distasteful to him? Affirmation on the first question, emphatic no to the second question and the knottiest problem is question three which could go either way: A child was bound to obey parents but a child in good conscience may disobey tyrannical parents (mutual consent is important). (Luther, 1524)

Parents have neither the right nor authority to compel children to marry (may have right and authority to prevent one). Parental authority is limited. A father oversteps and exceeds his authority and becomes a tyrant when he forces a marriage. The same principle is applicable when he hinders his child’s marriage or lets the child go ahead on his own without intention of helping him in the matter. Children should not marry or become engaged without the knowledge and consent of their parents, according to the 4th commandment (Catholic numeration). There are no examples in Scripture of couples entering in an engagement of their own accord. Secret engagements are condemned. Parental authority should not be used to force celibacy. On the other hand, parents are duty bound to get good spouses for children. (Luther, 1524)

In his commentary on *the Sermon on the Mount* (1532), Luther addressed issues pertaining to marriage in Matthew 5:31-32. Luther’s question was, “What is the proper procedure for us nowadays in the matter of marriage and divorce?” Should it be left to lawyers and subject to the secular government? Marriage is secular and outward and Christians are not governed by compulsion and punishment. It is different for the Christian who is governed by the word of God. Christians should not be divorced but patiently bear the good and the bad in the relationship. However, Luther asserted that this advice only applies to the believer (Luther, January
“We have no right to make marriage a free thing, as though it were in our power to do with as we pleased, changing and exchanging” (Luther, January 1532).

Luther asserted that, “marriage is not thought of as God’s work and ordinance but his will is ignored”.

We are to put up with the difficulties in marriage and many see marriage as human and secular state which God has nothing to do with. When they get tired, they want a divorce because they are looking for a more comfortable way but they get twice or ten times as much discomfort in their new state. Marriage is life and no station in life is free of suffering and pain caused by you, your spouse, children, outside the home and all sorts of accidental trouble. If we want our marriages to be successful we must call upon God for help. (Luther, January 1532)

According to Luther, the legitimate cause for divorce given by Jesus is adultery. According to Matt 19:9 and Lev 20:10, adultery was punishable by death. By adultery, a man separates himself not only from his wife, but also from his life and he has no right to either of these. Luther concludes: “We neither commend nor forbid such divorce, but leave it to the government” (Luther, January 1532).

Luther encouraged the believers to stay together, if the guilty party humbled himself and repented. The innocent party should be reconciled and extend forgiveness. Sometimes it is hopeless, especially when the guilty party continues flagrantly committing sin. In this case, the innocent party has all rights to divorce (Luther, January 1532). Luther’s point is clear, the sin of adultery does not have to lead to a divorce, forgiveness and reconciliation should be the first option,

Additional cause for divorce is desertion according to Paul in 1 Cor 7:13-15. If a partner leaves home and nothing is heard from him for years and later shows up, the innocent party is not obligated to take him back (man who neglects to care for wife and kids). (Luther, January 1532)

Luther not only explained the grounds for divorce but set forth principles on Divorce Prevention: Learning patience in putting up with the faults and troubles of life, especially with the wife knowing that no situation is ever preferred or ideal in life. When there is trouble with your body you care for it even more, much less your wife who is a greater treasure. Following Paul’s counsels in Roman 12:4-5 and 1 Cor 12:12-26, accepting the faults of others, sympathizing with them, forbearing and doing everything possible to help them(Luther, January 1532).

For Luther the doctrine of forgiveness of sin was the most important of all for marriage and for our relationships with others.

In an important tract entitled, On Marriage Matters, written in 1530, Luther outlined important principles on marriage within the new Protestant lands. In the aftermath of the separation between Catholics and Protestants, Luther felt there was a need to clear up certain confusion among the clergy and civil authorities regarding marriage. Issues were as follows: How binding is an engagement? Does the validity of a marriage require witnesses? Is divorce permissible, and on what grounds? Luther sought to address these issues in this pamphlet.

Luther using arguments from Scripture, law and common sense, addressed these issues in five points:

(1) Secret engagement should not be made; (2) Public engagement takes precedence over secret engagement; (3) Of two public engagements the first is valid and punishment should be imposed for the second; (4) Intercourse with another man or woman after engagement is adultery and should be punished as such; and (5) Forced engagement, i.e. engagement imposed upon young people against their will and without their consent is not valid. (Luther, 1530)

He also laid down principles concerning divorce, and impediments to marriage. Luther spoke not only
from theory but from the experience of his own marital troubles.

Marriage is a public estate and must be entered into and recognized publicly (This is a point he has made repeatedly in an attempt to discourage secret engagements) and thus must be established by at least two witnesses, Matt 18:16. Secret engagement was one in which the knowledge and consent of those who have the right and authority to establish a marriage are excluded, that is the parents or their representatives. Luther denounced the church’s claim on binding secret engagements based on Matt 19:6 (Luther, 1530, p. 310).

Luther counseled those that are already married based on a secret engagement, that their marriage is valid, and they must remain together and do not divorce. This counsel was for those not yet married, (future engagements). He blamed the clergy for these secret engagements that resulted in marriages and described them as robbing parents of their authority and making children too free (Luther, 1530, p. 279). Luther was adamantly on the role of parents in the marriage of their children.

Luther suggested that punishment should be meted out to fornicators by the state. Private betrothal took precedence over the public, especially when the partners have secretly had intercourse. Marriage was not a shady business that was to be carried on dark corners. Private arrangements must yield to secret arrangements. Public engagement was equivalent to marriage in the sight of God and the world. Honor and virginity were more highly valued in Luther’s culture than the fruit of the womb. Marrying strangers was not encouraged since there should be public testimonies to their character. Chastity should not be chosen because it merited higher reputation but that one may have peace and opportunity to devote oneself to God’s word and prayer (Luther, 1530, p. 299).

In his *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 7* (1523), Luther provided more useful information on how to deal with sex in marriage, reasons for divorce and the nature of chastity and celibacy. Luther stated in his opening paragraph that he was interpreting this passage of Scripture to refute the interpretation given by some to support celibacy and condemn marriage. He was also giving counsel to someone to go ahead and get married without further delay. He undertook this task as a divine mandate to expose chastity as from the devil with the hope that youth will commit less fornication by getting married instead of falsely glorifying chastity.

Luther began by questioning the wisdom of those who oppose marriage. He attacked those who designate marriage calling them smart alecks, sophisticates, principle fools and blind men who “fill the world with their foolish and blasphemous scribbings and screeching against the married state”. These same men advise others against marriage but are unable to do without women (because they are created for marriage), indulge themselves with whores. Luther cites Johann Schmid of Constance as an example who writes books discouraging marriage but himself is a notorious whoremonger. Luther’s burden was that the only way to stop fornication was through marriage. He said woman is made for either marriage or fornication.

Luther interpreted Paul to mean that chastity is not some higher state of spirituality and keeping men and women or boys and girls separate will not necessarily keep them more chaste. Chastity cannot be conjured by us; it is a gift from heaven and must come from within. Outward chastity should not be forced upon young people and let them believe that there is some spiritual value in bearing this suffering. Luther calls this a “sinful suffering, that one cannot bear in good conscience for itself is sin and wrong” (LW, 28: 11). There is no escape for this suffering except through marriage. For Luther celibacy was a beautiful, delightful and noble gift for him to whom it was given to have the will and desire for celibacy. Without this gift of celibacy, it is better to marry. For Luther, if you cannot be happy living a celibate life, then it is far better to be happily married (LW, 28:12).
Luther expounding further on Paul spoke of conjugal rights to each other. “It is a right, yet it should occur voluntarily and this is because within the marital relationship no one rules over his own body but serves his partner which is the way of love” (LW, 28: 13). Luther called adultery the “greatest thievery and robbery on earth, for it gives away the living body, which is not ours and takes another living body which is also not ours” (LW, 28: 13).

In addressing Paul’s counsel on how and when couples should refrain from sex, Luther declared that no one has the right to tell the couple what to do. They should do it by mutual consent and be ever mindful that prolonged withdrawal can lead into sin. Luther presented this argument also to show Paul’s lack of confidence in chastity because of his knowledge of human nature and the devil’s tricks (LW, 28: 13).

Paul’s counsel on marriage here was that marriage should be a free choice, “therefore he [Paul] commands no one to marry but leaves it to the individual”. But why then does Paul said, “I wish all were as I myself am?” Luther asked the question, “Is this not spoken against matrimony as though he wants no one to get married?” Luther interpreted Paul as saying, he wished everyone had the great gift of chastity so they could devote themselves fully to God, free of domestic cares, but Paul also recognized that this is a special gift. Not everyone has been granted the gift. Luther called chastity and marriage gifts of God but that chastity is the nobler gift. Yet chastity and marriage are equal before God (LW, 28:16, 17). Luther then went to chide those who glorify the celibate state as a more glorious state than marriage. He called them both gifts from God; one is a common gift to all, while the other is a gift reserved for the few (LW, 28: 17).

According to Luther, Paul would go on to praise marriage and show how wrong it is to call marriage a secular state while calling the monastic order a religious order. Luther called for a reversal of this idea, because he considered marriage a more religious state than the monastic order, because “religious” suggested inner life of faith... where the spirit rules and marriage fit this better than the so-called religious orders (LW, 28: 17, 18). Here Luther does not confine marriage to some secular or mundane order, but makes it an activity of faith.

Luther explained further by elaborating that marriage by its very nature that “teach and compel us to trust in God’s hand and grace and in the same way forces us to believe”. while the religious order tempts men to settle themselves in “temporal and outward things...and do not have to have faith and trust in God” (LW, 28: 18, 20). Luther claimed that marriage should not exclude anyone from being a priest or a bishop. The apostles of the early church were married. Christ called married men to his service (LW, 28: 22, 24). In other words, being married is not at odds with God’s call to service.

Luther ridiculed the church’s definition of bigamy (marrying consecutively). Paul gave himself the right to remarry, which would make him a bigamist in the sight of the church. Widowers/widows may remarry (LW, 28: 25). Luther sarcastically remarked that, “It is a shameful pretense to confess marriage a godly thing and a holy sacrament and then not permit such a godly thing and holy sacrament to stand beside the holiness of priests” (LW, 28:25). Because the flesh is full with desire, marriage is a necessity, “For his flesh rages, burns and fructifies just like that of other men unless he helps and controls it with the proper medicine, which is marriage. God suffers this raging passion for the sake of marriage and its fruits” (LW, 28: 26).

Luther listed a number of reasons why people got married:

1. Money and property; 2. Sheer immaturity; 3. Seek sensual pleasure and satisfy it; 4. Beget heirs; and (5) Paul’s reason: NEED. Need commands it; nature will express itself in God’s command be fruitful and multiply, not outside marriage, and so everyone because of this need must enter marriage if he wants to live with good conscience and in favor with God. (LW, 28: 26)
Luther remarked,

When there is not a special gift of God, one must be aflame with passion or marry, if not married, one is still unchaste because the heart is unchaste even though the body may not be. Chastity becomes a way of earning salvation. Those who are married get rid of the burning. Christian is free to remarry if spouse separates or prevents Christian spouse from leading a Christian life. (LW, 28: 28)

In 1522, Luther preached a sermon entitled Living as Husband and Wife (LW, 28: 28) (sometimes called the Estate of Marriage), which is divided into three parts. Part one discusses sex as God’s creation and whom to marry, part two discusses divorce and new marriage, and part three discusses what it means to live as husband and wife.

In Luther’s preface, he expressed a fear of preaching on marriage because once involved in the subject it becomes a lot of work for him and others. What does he mean by this? Luther affirmed sexuality as something well created by God. Our physical anatomy speaks to our sexual identity. Unlike many of this time, Luther affirmed the essential goodness of the body as something created by God for a divine purpose. Such a view represents a marked departure from the prevailing Christian view of humanity where the body is denigrated. Luther made it clear that marriage is for male and female, thus ruling out same-sex marriage. He called God’s divine mandate to be fruitful and multiply a natural and necessary thing. Luther gave no indication here that sex is unnatural, dirty, perverse or immoral when conducted within the proper context. The sexual drive is powerful and it says it abides and rules within us and we can ignore it or we will be “bound to” commit heinous sins without an end. Luther denounced vows, covenant and pledges relating to chastity before God (LW, 28: 28).

In the second part of the pamphlet Luther addressed the 18 prohibitions of the types of individuals that are prohibited to get married. He found only one valid prohibition that has to do with the unfitness of husband and a wife for marriage based on natural deficiencies.

Luther’s View on Divorce

The second part of the pamphlet also deals with the issue of divorce and remarriage. He gave three valid grounds for divorce based on his understanding of Scripture:

1) Husband and wife not equipped for marriage because of bodily and natural deficiencies;
2) Adultery, Matt 19:3-9. The innocent party can remarry. If adultery is private, there are two options: Spouse may rebuke his wife privately or keep her if she changes, or divorce her. Public divorce so as to remarry must take place through the investigation and decision of civil authority, so that adultery may be manifest to all. The guilty party may be put to death by the state according to Bible (to prevent temptation), or go to a far country and there remarry if unable to remain chaste. But it would be better to put him to death lest a bad example be set (LW, 45: 30);

Luther addressed people who found fault with his solution of exile and blamed the government for failing to punish adulterers. “God will judge, who can prevent all wickedness. If innocent party decides to keep guilty, the guilty should be publicly rebuked” (LW, 45: 33);

3) Failure to fulfill conjugal duties (wife’s problem), “If you will not, another will; the maid will come if the wife will not”. Husband should warn her twice than take her to the church. If she still refuses, get rid of her. Esther 1:12-17; 1 Cor 7:4-5(LW, 45: 33).

The third part of the pamphlet deals with living as husband and wife. Marriage had fallen into awful disrepute. Books on the depravity of women and unhappiness of marriage estate proliferated. Man cannot live
without women. Men and women are work of God (order of creation). Luther wrote:

Do not criticize his work, or call that evil which he himself has called good... For this reason young men should be on their guard when they read pagan books and hear the common complaints about marriage, lest they inhale poison. For the estate of marriage does not set well with the devil, because it is God’s good will and work. (LW, 45: 37)

Luther argued that the devil has contrived to have negative things written about marriage to frighten man away from this godly life and entangle them in a web of fornication and secret sins. Proverbs 18:22 say that he that finds a wife finds a good thing while the world says “brief is the joy, lasting is the bitterness”.

Witte concluded that, according to many contemporary observers, Luther’s alarm over the decrepit estate of marriage and marriage laws was certainly not unfounded.

Germany suffered through decades of indiscipline and immorality in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Prostitution was rampant. High clerics and officials of government regularly kept concubines and visited the numerous brothels in German cities. The small fines of such activity discouraged few. (Witte, 1987)

Luther gave a fourth ground for divorce, this is a situation where a couple cannot get along together, but this time, remarriage is not in the card, because either the couple must remain unmarried or also become reconciled. In the case of an invalid wife who becomes incapable of fulfilling her conjugal duty, the husband ought to stay with his wife (LW, 45 : 35).

Luther attempted to modify the Catholic strict non-divorce policy and allowed divorce based on biblical grounds: adultery and desertion. He also allowed divorce for physiological deficiencies (e.g. impotence). Some have accused Luther of opening up the door to easy divorce which has resulted in a myriad of problems that have negatively affected society. How should we judge Luther on this issue? Luther in good faith attempted to reform a broken system where the church controlled marriage and refused to grant any divorce even in justifiable circumstances. Marriage was considered as a sacred sacrament and could not be dissolved without the death of one of the spouses. In situations where the church was forced to dissolve a marriage based on its stated impediments (consanguinity, affinity and spiritual relationship) that it established, such dissolution was not called divorce, but annulment. This was an absurd and nonsensical practice and Luther felt that the church’s position on divorce and remarriage only encouraged fornication, adultery, and other immoral practices. For Luther, divorce and remarriage according to biblical principles would reduce the level of sexual immorality in society by allowing individuals to be legally divorced and thus be eligible to legally remarry.

**Luther’s View on Sex**

Luther had much to say about sex, some of it was crude and earthy. He described much about sex as a procreative function and as an outlet for man’s passions and desires reflecting some of the traditional views of his times, although at times he spoke of sex in more affectionate tones. As a student of the Catholic and Augustinian theology, he was affected by the views of the sinfulness of sexuality (even in marriage).

The old Adam who fell in paradise and is inborn in us--that infamous bag of worms we carry around our necks--never ceases to plague us with his evil lusts and desires to commit sin and adultery. But one can control sin in the estates of marriage, virginity, and widowhood. Yet even marriage is not all pure. A married couple cannot sleep together without shameful desire even though they both want to live together blamelessly. Only when we grow old does this lust subside. But, for the sake of marriage, God does not reckon this as sin. He chooses to adorn marriage by not calling such sins sinful even though they are. Because God closes his eyes to this sin, it is forgiven in marriage. (Lazareth, 1960, p. 213)
Luther had difficulty ridding himself of the evil connotations associated with sexuality. Much of his writings reflected a one-sided view of sex and he seemed to be reactive against Catholic celibacy. Sexuality seemed to be associated with man’s sinful, carnal nature. Time and time again Luther spoke of marriage as a kind of remedy for the sinful, lustful desire of man. “Marriage is a mighty dike to hold back the destructive flood of human sexuality—a remedy against sin” (LW 1: 134). Luther interpreted Psalm 51 as an indication that our natures are corrupt from birth. He wrote:

As it says in the 50th [51] Psalm, all man’s flesh and blood is corrupted through Adam since we are all conceived and born in sin. Nor are man’s sexual relations sinless in marriage either. It is only that God embellishes them out of grace because the order of marriage is his own personal handiwork, and he preserves all the good which he has planted within it even in the midst of all the surrounding sin. (Lazareth, 1960. p. 21)

There is not much of the celebratory dimension of sex in Luther’s writings. There is little emphasis on the unitive and intimate function sex plays in the marriage. Luther downplayed the role of pleasure in sexual intercourse in the marriage, except on a few occasions.

Luther’s View on Celibacy

As I have pointed out previously, much of Luther’s counsel on marriage addressed situations during his time. One of the most important areas was how celibacy and chastity were seen as badges of spiritual superiority for Christians. Time and time again Luther came back to this issue. He wanted to make it clear that celibacy was not equivalent to sexual purity (chastity). Having taken the vow of celibacy himself as a monk, he was well aware of his own attempts of chastity, he was also a living eye witness to many of his companions’ lives. Luther claimed that celibate men still lusted and many even had concubines. In fact, Luther argued that marriage was the best state to remain chaste. The idea was that within marriage one could express one’s sexual desires within a legitimate context without guilt or sin (although he wavered on this point at times). Luther therefore discouraged celibacy and encouraged marriage because he saw celibacy as a part of the devil’s strategy to cause men to sin more than if they had not taken the vows.

The world says of marriage: “Brief joy and long sadness”… But Christians believe that it is God himself who instituted marriage. It is he who brings a man and wife together and ordains that they bring forth children. For God does not lie and he has given his word in order that men might be certain that the estate of marriage is well-pleasing to him in its nature, works, suffering and everything that belongs to it. (Lazareth, 1960. p. 219)

Although Luther at times had a negative reason for marriage and called it “a remedy against sin”, both personally and socially, he emphasized a positive dimension. He described it as an opportunity for man to engage in the noblest and most precious work of them all, which is the rearing of children in the knowledge and love of God (Lazareth, 1960. p. 219).

Historian Martin Marty observed:

The law of celibacy…was so deeply etched in the minds of the faithful and so strongly did the church leaders insist on it that to question it and to promote clerical marriage struck very close to social foundations of the church and government…to violate the rule of celibacy as many clergy did was one thing. To set out to abolish it was another, a rare and extreme consideration. (Marty, 2008, p. 102)

Luther denounced lawless clergy who went whoring or kept concubines because he believed that celibacy was an unnatural state for human to live in. Luther’s attack on celibacy, even calling for its abolition was
source of deep anger and concern for the Catholic Church hierarchy.

The elevation of celibacy and the denigration of sex have a long history in the Catholic Church. Augustine viewed sexual congress as necessary for child bearing but intrinsically lustful (Marty, 2008, p. 107). Many priests struggled with their vows as celibates as can be seen from the testimony of the following:

Thus am I entangled: on the one hand, I cannot live without a wife; on the other, I am not permitted a wife. Hence, I am forced to live a publicly disgraceful life, to the shame of my soul and honor and to the damnation of many who have taken offense at me [that is, by refusing to receive the sacraments from his hands]. How shall I preach about chasteness against promiscuity, adultery, and knavish behavior, when my own whore goes to church and about the streets and my own bastards sit before my eyes? (Ozment, 1983, p. 6)

In response to criticisms leveled against him for encouraging the breaking of celibacy vows, Luther replied in a lengthy treatise entitled On Monastic Vows in 1521. In it he made the following points: (1) Vows are not grounded in the word of God; (2) Vows are contrary to faith; (3) Vows are in opposition to evangelical freedom; (4) Vows are in opposition to the commandments of God; (5) Vows are irrational (LW, 44 : 243-400).

In Luther’s revised Commentary on Galatians in 1535, he addressed the issue of marriage and celibacy. Luther affirmed marriage by calling it part of God’s natural order and the state of marriage is chief in the world after religion. He rejected those who reject marriage but instead keep concubines. Everything in nature from the animals to the plant exhibit maleness and femaleness as part of their natural make-up. Luther encouraged those who cannot live chastely to get married.

Luther also agreed with Augustine who said that a marriage without children is like a world without the sun. “All human laws should encourage the multiplication of families”. He called the state of matrimony the chief thing in the world after religion (Hazlitt, 1875, p. 298). He listed the following points that should be considered by those contemplating marriage:

(1) God’s command; (2) Christ’s confirmation of it; (3) Gift or present of Christ; (4) First blessing; (5) Promise that is made hereunto; (6) Communion and fellowship; (7) Example of the holy patriarchs; (8) Tempered laws and ordinances; (9) Precious benediction and blessings; (10) Examples of the wicked; (11) Threatenings of Paul; (12) Natural rights; (13) Nature and kind of creation; and (14) Practice of faith and hope. (Hazlitt, 1875, p. 299)

Luther’s View on Women

While Luther’s honored and elevated marriage, he veered little from the contemporary views about the subordination of women. He seemed to focus more on the male sexual drive and his need to satisfy himself by entering his wife. He supported the conjugal rights of both and encouraged both to find pleasure. In a hypothetical situation, he counseled that if a man who had been denied sex by his wife, he could turn to his handmaid or some other woman for sexual relations (Marty, 2008, p. 108). Because he respected the rights of the woman also, he balanced that advice with its counterpart. A woman who was married to an impotent man, but who desired to have children with her husband’s consent, could have intercourse with another man, for example her husband’s brother. In such a situation they were advised to keep their relationship secret and ascribe any children from this relationship to the “so-called putative father”. “Such a woman would be in a saved state and would not be displeasing to God” (Marty, 2008, p. 108).

One of the most persistent criticisms of Luther by his enemies was the view that he left the priesthood in order to get married and that he encouraged others to practice sexual license. In other words, Luther was a lustful degenerate who could not control his sexual desires and encouraged others in their immorality. Were
these criticisms truthful and valid? The following is an example of what critics wrote concerning Luther:

Mohammed granted men permission to have many wives and to put them away at will and take others. This man (Luther) in order to win the favor of the monks and the virgins dedicated to God and the priests who are guilty of lustful desire, preaches that vows of perpetual continence are not lawful and binding and that evangelical liberty permits them to marry. (Pope Adrian VI, November 25, 1522)

How did Luther respond to this criticism? Luther’s response must be seen on two levels. The first level is what he wrote to refute his critics and secondly how he lived his life especially on the area of sexual conduct. Any survey of Luther’s writings leaves no impression whatsoever that he encouraged sexual immorality. Time and time again he spoke out against sexual immorality. His great burden was for Christians to live in purity before God, not as celibates but as happy married couples. He was criticized primarily because he rejected the church’s view of sexual chastity and celibacy preferring instead marriage (Lazareth, 1960, pp. 200-201). Luther encouraged believers to pray and study God’s word as a solution for the problem of immorality (Lazareth, 1960, pp. 215-216). Secondly, his personal conduct was above reproach for he lived a life of sexual fidelity to his wife of 21 years and faithfulness before God. So on both levels the criticisms leveled against Luther are without merit.

King Henry VIII of England whose personal life was a moral disgrace, had the nerve to criticize Luther on matters of sexual morality. He described Luther’s movement as universally pernicious... “which profanes sacred things, preaches Christ so as to trample on his sacraments, boasts of the grace of God so as to destroy all free will, extols faith so as to give license to sin” (Henry VIII of England, January 20, 1523).

Luther would argue, and I think successfully, that it was not him that was encouraging immorality, but it was his opponents who were accusing him, they were the ones encouraging immorality. Because by their continual acceptance of the views of the church on celibacy, divorce, impediments and marriage they were in effect indirectly encouraging greater immorality. Most people agreed that the freedom that Luther taught concerning marriage resulted in a more upright moral climate. Priests no longer had to sneak around with prostitutes and concubines. People could enter marriage with the freedom that they could enjoy sex and still be serving God.

**Luther’s Call for Reformation in Marriage and Family**

Luther’s great contribution to marriage and family was to recognize that like so many of the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, the institution of marriage was broken, it had fallen into disrepute, and dishonor among Christians and was in need of major reformation.

According to contemporary observers, marriage and the family were in a crisis in late medieval and Reformation Europe. Humanists, reform-minded Catholics, and especially Protestants decried the amount of domestic litigation, particularly that of contested first marriages, and a casual demeaning of marriage and family life they perceived all around. (Ozment, 1983, p. 1)

There were many threats to marriage and family in the laws of the medieval church: On the one hand, the church encouraged immature and impulsive unions by recognizing as valid, so-called clandestine marriage that occurred without parental permission and apart from public confession. On the other hand, it placed legal obstacles to matured and reasoned marriages between peoples by arbitrarily defining numerous impediments to marriage between people related by various blood, legal, spiritual and familial ties. It became a major goal of
new Protestant and secular marriage ordinances in the 16th century to end such secret unions and define impediments more realistically (Ozment, 1983, pp. 1-2). An observer in Augsburg reported in 1534 that marriage there had become a weak, despised, and rejected estate, which the young, especially men, fled in fear; everywhere women were said to make fools of men (the biblical stories of the downfall of Adam, Samson, and David at the hand of a woman were current), and both sexes looked on the birth and rearing of children with “superstitious dread”. Having seen how much effort, anxiety, pain, need, care and work are involved in marriage, they would not recommend it to a dog, and to save their children from it, they give them over to the Devil by forcing them into the cloister. Thereby they gain for them an easy life on earth, but they dispatch their souls to hell. (Ozment, 1983, p. 4)

It was as in much need of reformation as was the doctrine of grace. Luther in his irascible and earthy style went about to reform the institution of marriage. How successful was Luther when compared to his reform of the doctrine of grace? The fact that many of the ideas that Luther proposed about marriage and family are commonly accepted and practiced within the context in which Western Christianity testifies of his success.

**Analysis of Luther’s View on Marriage and Sexuality**

One of the great ironies about marriage in Luther’s day was that, although it was considered one of the seven sacraments of the church, it was the only sacrament not available to the priests who were dispensers of the sacraments. They who administered the sacraments could not partake of this one sacrament. Why was this? Supposedly it was because they had taken an oath of celibacy and that was considered sexual chastity elevating them into a higher arena of spirituality. But this stated reason was laid bare by what was happening in secret. It was a well-known fact that bishops kept concubines and they allowed priests to keep concubines if the priest paid them a fee as the following statement reveals:

> Do not most bishops derive a large part of their annual income from the fees collected from the priests’ concubines? Whoever desires to have such a woman is obligated to pay the bishop at least a gulden a year. From this practice originates the common saying, “Chaste priests are the bishops’ worst enemies”. How can the procurers become any richer than our own bishops? Who would ever have thought that our spiritual fathers could permit such sexual promiscuity and deny their priests the right to marry just for the sake of money? Truly there are many forms of madness! (Lazareth, 1960, p. 206)

It seemed that the church’s reason for forcing celibacy on the clerics was not for the sake of chastity, for many of them were not practicing chastity; the church knew this and, in some cases, encouraged immorality. Marriage was denied them primarily out of economic reasons. The church wanted to make sure that priests would not be married and thus have legitimate heirs to inherit whatever they may possess, thus preventing priests from engaging in legitimate, marital relationships. Celibacy instead of creating chastity, indirectly fostered an atmosphere of gross immorality. This was one of the practices of the church that ignited Luther’s passion against the whole catholic system of celibacy and chastity. It seemed whenever he talked on the subject of marriage, sex or family he came back to the issue, blasting the church with strong language.

Some of Luther’s theology of marriage seemed to be highly polemic and reactive like when he spoke out against the corruption and denigration of marriage. There is an edge to his writing. His theology is not just “for something”, but against “something and someone”. It was a theology designed to restore in Luther’s mind the true biblical understanding of marriage. Rome had distorted, perverted and corrupted marriage as they had done with many of the truths of the Bible. Marriage was as much in need of restoration as was the Gospel, Justification and other truths. Time and time again he wrote of how the “papists”, “Rome” and the church had
made a mockery of marriage. His language in denouncing them was sometimes crude and vulgar. He called a spade a spade so he was not afraid to use words like “whore, antichrist, and fouled mouth”. In the words of one writer, “Luther was convinced that… the devil and his agents could not be handled with kid’s gloves” (Lazareth, 1960, p. 207).

Because many of the things that Luther said on marriage was polemical and at times reactive, he was sometimes intemperate in his use of language. While it was biblical, it was not always balanced. An example of this is his description of marriage as a remedy against sin. The use of this metaphor to describe one purpose of marriage is a major characteristic of Luther’s view on marriage. One writer suggested that this was based on his conviction that “God had not left his children unprotected in the midst of this fallen and sinful world. He has graciously provided them with a mighty dike to hold back the destructive flood of human sensuality and immorality: the divine ordinance of marriage” (Lazareth, 1960, p. 208). In the words of Luther, “Is it not a great thing that even in the state of innocence God ordained and instituted marriage? But now this institution and command are all the more necessary since sin has weakened and corrupted this flesh”. As one of God’s protective bulwarks in his struggle against Satan, marriage is interpreted by early Luther as a divine ordinance and institution, which provides fallen man and woman with a remedy, again sin (Lazareth, 1960, p. 208).

Even as we critique Luther’s view on marriage and family we must keep in mind that Luther was still many years ahead of his contemporaries, his church, society and the culture on this subject, especially his ideas on sex, divorce, roles of husbands and wives. Unlike the Catholic Church which had strict and rigid rules about divorce, Luther showed a flexibility that was admirable. Luther understood the complexity of the issues that he addressed and recognized the difficulty of providing traditional simplistic answers to many of the sexual and marital problems of his times. In the following words from Luther we get a small glimpse of his frustration in trying to deal with these problems.

> The matter troubles and distresses me; I meet cases of it every day whether it happens by the special malice of Satan or because of our neglect of the Word of God... In these matters I decide nothing, as I have said, although there is nothing I would see decided, since nothing at present more perplexes me and many more with me. (Luther, October 6, 1520)

Instead of relying only on canon law, tradition, or local legal codes, Luther depended on a mixture of biblical principles, common sense reason, and relevant elements from the existing legal code to deal with the issues. Most of his counsels were written from the heart of a caring pastor ministering to his flock and one who was deeply concerned about their spiritual well-being.

One of the most admirable qualities about Luther’s theology on marriage and family is the incarnational quality of his theology. Luther is no ivory tower theologian spinning out esoteric and theoretical views disconnected from real life. Luther lived and worked in the trenches of life, his hands were dirty and stained with life’s problems. His theology emerged from and was shaped by this immersion in life. He was married for 21 years and by all reports had a fulfilling and successful marriage. But it was not a marriage without challenges. Therefore, much of his counsel on marriage came from his own experience as a married man (he did not simply write about marriage, but spoke from his own marriage). He lived what he preached.

Luther’s view on the importance of teaching and training children led to the establishment of the public school system in Germany. Luther moved the sacred from the church and brought it into family context, so that the mundane activity of family life, rearing children, cooking and cleaning took on a sacred and valued character that was never part of medieval society (Lazareth, 1960, p. 134). Luther believed that God’s service
should not be limited to the pulpit or the altar, whatever our calling or profession whether in the home or outside of the home, we are as much engaged in the work of God as any priest or monk. “When a Christian dedicates his labors to serving his family and glorifying God’s name, faith can transform dreary occupation into a meaningful vocation” (Lazareth, 1960, p. 150). Here we see how Luther elevated marriage and family to a place it never was before. Luther sanctified the secular, he made sacred the common.

Luther affirmed the authority of parents in their homes and admonished children to respect and honor them. But even as he said this, he cautioned parents to exercise their authority with discretion and wisdom and not use it to abuse their children nor coerce them into decisions (especially regarding marriage) that they did not agree to.

Luther’s counsels generally were wise and supported by biblical principles but on a couple of occasions he made some serious mistakes. Two of the most well-known, one was the case of Phillip of Hesse concerning his bigamous relationship. The counsel he gave to this important leader of the reformation concerning his wife left much to be desired. Luther in counseling with Phillip of Hesse, one of the evangelical German princes who was having marital problems, suggested that he married another woman instead of a public marriage annulment. This played into the hands of Luther’s critics and gave credence to those criticizing Luther as providing license to sexual immorality.

On another occasion, he counseled an impotent husband to allow his wife to sleep with his brother.

Suppose I should counsel her, with the consent of the man (who is not really her husband, but merely a dweller under the same roof with her), to give herself to another, say her husband’s brother, but to keep this marriage secret and to ascribe the children to the so-called putative father. The question is: Is such a woman in a saved state? I answer, certainly. Because in this case the error and ignorance of the man’s impotence are a hindrance to marriage; the tyranny of the laws permit no divorce; the woman is free through the divine law, and cannot be compelled to remain continent. Therefore the man ought to yield her this right, and let another man have her as wife whom he has only in outward appearance.

Moreover, if the man will not give his consent, or agree to this division, rather than allow the woman to burn or to commit adultery, I should counsel her to contract a marriage with another and flee to distant parts unknown. What other counsel could be given to one constantly in danger of lust?... Is not the sin of the man who wastes his wife’s body and life a greater sin than that of the woman who merely alienates the temporal goods of her husband? Let him, therefore, agree to a divorce or else be satisfied with strange heirs; borne by his own fault he deceived the innocence of a maiden and defrauded her of the proper use of her body, besides giving her a well-nigh irresistible opportunity to commit adultery. (Luther, October 6, 1520)

Lessons from Luther on Marriage and family

Luther’s revolutionary teaching on marriage and family, undergirded by his exemplary marital life, altered and changed marriage and family forever. Marriage has fallen on hard times. In America, it is at a historic low. Americans are losing confidence in marriage and are resorting to other living arrangements. Cohabitation is on the rise; single parenting is increasing; and remaining unmarried, for whatever reason, is becoming more attractive to many. Some are even questioning the necessity and relevance of marriage. Marriage for some is considered a trifling matter to be entered in without any preparation and to exit with the least annoyance.

4Lazareth comments on this: “Having no remedial recourse in either civil or canon in such a case, Luther turns desperately to the Bible for guidance. The best he could come up with is questionable modification of the old Hebrew ‚levirate marriage’. Deuteronomy 25:10 decrees that when a male dies without a male descendant, the widow must not marry a stranger, but rather the surviving brother of the deceased (even if he is already married). He must take her as his own wife and her first born son together succeeds to the name and property of the deceased. In Luther’s eyes the impotent male was actually ‘dead’ to his wife as far as any possible procreation in their marriage was concerned” (Lazareth, 1960, p. 191, n. 85).
Luther’s unequivocal affirmation is needed today more than ever. Luther called marriage an order of creation, God-appointed, legitimate union of man and woman, necessary for the human race. He affirmed the permanency, relevancy, and necessity of marriage. Marriage is never out of style or old-fashion as long as there are humans living on the earth. He described it as the most serious and important matter in the whole world, because it is the source of human society and of the human race. Nothing in life excels it in worth (LW, 3 : 221).

Luther’s focus on premarital preparation, and the need for those contemplating marriage to seek the counsel of their parents and to pray to God, is especially necessary when so many rush into marriage unprepared and are forced to abort their relationship long before it has time to mature.

Luther’s concept of marriage as a vocation is a wonderful idea that needs to be recaptured by post modern Americans. The excessive demands of work, church, clubs, organizations, schools and a myriad of other responsibilities has squeezed marriage. There is never enough time for all the pressing demands of life. Invariably marriage and family suffer because many people do not see them as priority. If we see marriage and family as a vocation and worthwhile in value as any career, perhaps we would invest the time and energy needed to ensure its success.

Luther’s spirit of flexibility in dealing with the thorny issues of divorce, annulment, and remarriage, provides a wonderful template for Christian leaders dealing with similar issues. Luther attempted to balance his counsels by staying away from the rigid legalism of no divorce while not succumbing to the equally pernicious extreme of easy divorce. Using common sense reasoning and biblical counsel, and the extenuating circumstances of each case, he attempted to forge a path that will not be too burdensome for the parties involved without compromising the word of God.

Luther counseled that marriage is a remedy against sin is still good counsel for Christian young people to prevent them from committing sexual sins. But because it gives a negative reason for marriage, it is inadequate and must therefore be supplemented by more positive reasons. Getting married to satisfy one’s sexual desires may work for awhile, but what about during times in the marriage when sex is not possible for any number of reasons? There are more positive reasons that must be emphasized such as affection, companionship, friendship, having and rearing godly children, giving and receiving love.

Many of Luther’s ideas are still very relevant for those contemplating marriage and those already married. His counsels are not just the theological musings of a former monk turned reformer, but are counsels deeply rooted in the word of God and undergirded by a rich and rewarding marital experience, where Luther was always trying to learn and to share that knowledge with his followers.

Conclusions

Martin Luther’s views on marriage and family have revealed a radical departure from the traditional Catholic views of his times. He elevated marriage and family to a place of honor and respectability at a time when the single life and celibacy were celebrated as a higher state of spirituality. He denounced celibacy as a cause for lust rather than an aid to chastity. He advocated a moderate view on divorce at time when divorce was almost impossible. He provided counsel to couples and those contemplating marriage. He encouraged priests to marry and followed his own advice by getting married. Just as he had done with the doctrine of grace that had been perverted and corrupted by the church, Luther devoted no less energy to the restoration of marriage and family to its biblical foundations. One of Luther’s most important contribution is, he removed the sacred from
the church and placed it in family so that the mundane activities of cooking, child rearing, housekeeping took on a sacred nature.

Luther recognized that not only was the theology of Catholicism in need of serious reform but also the institution of marriage and family, and in his irascible and earthy style he went about that reform with a passionate intensity revealed in the power of his pen and the courage of his life.

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Co-residence in Denmark in 1801

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The Danish 1801 census is available in a fully coded and standardised digital version. This makes it possible to analyse the living conditions of the Danes in new ways. A very central aspect of living conditions is household and family. The census is divided by these lines and therefore calculations of household size and complexity are straightforward and this clearly gives one side of the picture. A totally different side is co-residence analysis. This is not straightforward, but because of the standardisation it is doable. By this means, you get a picture of the likelihood that a person of a given age group lives together with specific relatives. It gives an insight into a central part of living conditions and it gives a picture of differences between sexes and urbanisations. The paper brings the two ways of description together and shows that each has something to contribute to the picture of the Danes.

Keywords: the 19th century, census, co-residence, Denmark, household, family, population

Introduction

The study of co-residence is by no means new. There are classics as well as very recent publications in the field (Anderson, 1971; Ruggles, 2011). A very common technique is to base the co-residence analysis on linked data spanning several sources, e.g., censuses. In the present study, the analysis is based on calculations over a single census year. Both approaches have their advantages and drawbacks. This issue will be addressed in the conclusion. Another matter that this paper addresses is the relation between co-residence analysis compared to other ways of representing household complexity. And last but not least, the analysis gives us new insights into the living conditions of early 19th century in Danes.

The 1801 Census

The Danish census of 1801 is a nominal census taken in Denmark and Norway, including Iceland and the Faroe Islands in February 1801 and in Slesvig and Holsten in 1803. The forms used in the census are almost identical to the forms used in the 1787 census, which was only taken in Denmark, not in Norway or the Duchies. An example of the census form used in 1801 is shown in Figure 1. There were very slight variations between the forms used in towns and in the country side.

Contrary to the censuses from 1834 and onwards the 1787, and 1801 separates household position and occupation in two columns. It states occupation in column 6 under the heading “Personernes Titel, Embede, Forrening, Haandværk, Næringsvei, eller hvad de leve af” ². The household position is stated in column 3 under the heading “Hvad enhver Person er i Familien” ³.

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1 Slesvig and Holsten are often referred to under the common name “Hertugdømmernes”, the Duchies.
2 The persons’ title, position, business, art, trade, or what they live from.
3 What every person is in the family?
The 1801 census was made machine readable during the years 1992 to 2001 with the assistance of 320 volunteers, who were working under Kildeindtastningsprojektet⁴. Since 2001, the material has undergone thorough scrutiny and coding and standardization in the Danish Data Archive.

Part of this standardization has been an identification of households. In most cases, this is trivial because households are supposed to be clearly identified in the lists. So the cases that require attention are errors in the original source, abnormalities in household composition⁵ and poor transcription⁶.

The household⁷ division from the original census is expressed in the machine readable version through a unique household number which is stated on each person belonging to the household. To each household is attached a household type variable. Most households in Denmark 1801 were family type households which consisted of a head who could have spouse, children, servants, other relatives, employees, and others all directly or indirectly related to the head. There were some exceptions from this rule such as institutions, barracks, and groups of people with no household head. The census takers did all they could to make most households look

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⁴ The Source Entry Project
⁵ Abnormalities could be for instance where a barracks has some married officers and soldiers living in the same building as enlisted men. Then the list will usually show a family break for each new officer’s family, and the list of soldier until the next family will be placed in a similar position as servants in a townhouse.
⁶ Some volunteers have omitted household division entirely. Others have standardized things that are not standardized in the source. For instance widows, some widows are part of a preceding household with no other explanation than the term widow in household position; other widows are household heads with no other apparent reason than being widows. Both situations exist and the census does not show us why, unfortunately some volunteers have taken upon themselves to correct this “inconsistency”. This naturally has to be discovered and a source true transcription created.
⁷ Actually the census only knows of families. I take the liberty of replacing “familie” with “household” in order to get a terminology more in line with the present.
like families and usually they succeeded. 99.7% of the households are family type households and this analysis is restricted to those households (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household type code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
<th>Persons pr. household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>189,785</td>
<td>914,257</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>6,030</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Soldiers</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3,074</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Without head</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 190,408 924,987 4.9

In the household position field you find 39,814 different text strings. To make this more useful, a household position code has been created. This code essentially consists of normalising language and taking gender out of the terminology, i.e., saying parent instead of father. Gender is a specific variable which has also been added during standardisation by the way. The machine readable edition of the census is coded with 272 different household position codes. The codes give a large reduction in the variation of expression with a small loss of information. For instance, the code “sibling of head of household” replaces 1,100 original formulations.

Age in the census is given in a specific column. It is not achieved age as more commonly used today. Age in the census starts with age one at birth. For the present analysis, the author uses five years age groups starting with group “1-5” and continuing to group “81-”, which contains all persons aged 81 and over.

Calculating Co-residence

Taking one specific member of a household as the starting point, determining co-residence basically then is the task of deducting who else is in the household and what their relation to the first person is, based on the household position code and information of the whole household. Sometimes this is simple. When a person is a common child of the head of household and spouse and lives in a household with a male head then the person in question lives together with its father. In this way, you can determine that of the 52,966 girls aged one to five who were children of the head of household 51,553 living together with their father.

Breaking the whole data material down after age group and relation to the head of household, you get some chunks that are of some or almost some significance—say about half a percent of the whole population—and some that are even smaller and are disregarded in this analysis. For each subgroup of any significance, it has been determined if possible whether they resided together with grandparents, a father, a mother, foster parents, a spouse, siblings, children, foster children, or grand children.

There is some under representation of co-residence when a certain relation cannot be determined exactly based on the codes. For instance, it is almost certain that the 383 children of servant are living with one of their parents. The author does not remember any example of a servant’s child living in a household, where none of their parents were present. It is not certain however whether it is father or mother or both. And thus, it cannot be coded automatically. Of course, it would not be a big deal to go through the 383 cases and hand code them.

\[ \text{You get these numbers by querying the database directly. First, simply select count(*) from ft1801 ft where kön = K and alder_tal between 1 and 5 and husstskode = 5 ; and then, select count(*) from ft1801 ft where kön = “K” and alder_tal between 1 and 5 and husstskode = 5 and exists (select postid from ft1801 ft2 where ft.husstnr = ft2.husstnr and ft2.kön = “M” and ft2.husstskode = 1) . The code is slightly simplified for clarity.} \]
but then, there would be another similar example, and taking together all the small deals would make a big deal. What is more significant is that the 383 cases does not alter much compared to the 296,966 living with their fathers and the 318,619 living with their mother. We are well below 0.2%.

Calculating in this way, people can get a co-residence for the women as shown in Figure 2 and for the men as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 2. Co-residence women**

**Figure 3. Co-residence men**
Co-residence for Women

In Figure 2, you see that fortunately the vast majority (90%) of young girls (age group 1-5) were living with both their mothers and their fathers, slightly more with their mothers than their fathers. It was also very common (almost 80%) to have siblings. Many (16.5%) also lived with their grandparents. Some lived with only their grandparents and no parents, but that was less than 1% (408 persons actually).

In the next age group (6-10), it was slightly less likely to live with parents or grandparents but a little more likely to live with siblings. The logic here must be that the vast majority of families had many children, so if you were a lonely child, you were probably the first, and more were to come. Thus, if you were five years old or older, it was very likely that you had younger siblings.

In the age group 11-15, your likelihood to be with any kind of family was lower than for the younger age groups. The big reason for this was that a higher proportion of 11-15 year olds than in younger age groups lived with their employer instead of with their family.

For the 16-20 years old, it was even more likely not to live with family.

Among the 21-25 years old women, over 20% were living with their spouses. This was still less than living with their mothers, but more than living with siblings or fathers. Actually the three were close. More than 12.6% were living with their own children.

For the age groups from 26-30 until 41-45, it became more and more likely for the women to live with spouses and with children. The probability of living with parents or siblings was even lower than for the younger age groups.

From the age group 46-50 and onwards, it became less and less probable for a woman to live with a spouse. Widowhood was achieved!

Likewise, it became less probable for the age groups from 46-50 to 61-65 for a woman to live with her children. For the age groups 76-80 and 81-, the likelihood increased. One must resist the temptation to conclude that the old women moved in with their children after the age of 75. The data does not support that conclusion though. The proportion of women living with their children increased for ages over 75, while the actual numbers did not. In age group 71-75, 6,851 women lived with children; in age group 76-80, it was 5,508, and in age group 81- it was 3,307. Another way of explaining the increasing proportion of women living with children is to assume that women living with children lived to be older than that women without children. There was a slight indication of this in the data. The average age of women over 75 living without children was 80.4, for women living with children, it was 80.8.

For women aged 56-60 there was a probability of 6.4% of living with grandchildren. This likelihood increased over the years. For a woman in age group 81-, it was more likely to live with grandchildren than with a spouse.

Co-residence for Men

The picture for men in the age groups from 1-5 to 16-20 was almost identical to that for women.

In the age group 21-25, you can see the effect of higher marriage age for men than for women. It was much more likely for a man aged 21-25 to live with parents or siblings than with a wife.

The likelihood of a man living with his spouse increased through the age groups until 51-55. For the older age groups, it declined. It did not decline as rapidly and far as it did for women though. In the age group 81-,
more than 50 % of the men lived with spouses while there were only about 20 % of the women. This was a trivial consequence of a higher living age for women than for men combined with the lower average marriage age for women than for men.

In the age group 46-50, men had the highest likelihood (66.9 %) for living with their children. After that, it declined until it reached 52 % at age group 71-75. For the remaining age groups, the probability stayed in the 52-53 % level. This was somewhat different from the situation for women where the likelihood dropped to under 50 % in the age group 61-65, and then, recovered to 54 % for age group 81-.

In the age group 81-, the men had a slightly higher probability of living with children than with a spouse.

Men had an increasing probability of living with grandchildren throughout the age groups. It was slightly lower than the probability for the women.

Urbanisation

The census was formally divided into three sections: Copenhagen, the cities (“købstæderne”), and the rural parishes. This was also a divide in legislation. There were different laws on taxation and trade in the three areas. The capital was a little more than 10% of the population, the cities were a little less than 10% and the rural areas were about 80%. For demographic purposes, a major divide was between rural and urban. This divide was used in the following.

Urban Women

In Figure 4, you can see a picture of co-residence for urban women.

The probabilities of urban women living with grandparents were drastically lower in all age groups than they were for all women. In the age group 16-20, the probability for urban women living with grandparents approached two thirds of that for women in general in all other age groups they were under a half. Clearly, three generation families were more common in the countryside.

The urban women had slightly lower likelihood of co-residence with their mother than other women in the age groups 1-5 and 6-10. In the age group 11-15, the probability of living together with their mothers was higher in the towns. The probabilities of co-residing with their fathers were slightly lower for age groups 1-5 and 6-10, but the same for age group 11-15. The probabilities of living with siblings were lower for age groups 1-5 and 6-10, while it was higher for age group 11-15. This was a little difficult to interpret. A possible explanation could be that incomplete families, i.e., lonely mothers with one or more children, had a higher tendency to be dispersed when the children entered the age group 11-15. Children from incomplete families in average went into service at a younger age than children from complete families. At the same time, the well of families kept their children at home longer than average.

In mature and old age, for age groups 46-50 and 56-60 and onwards, the probabilities of living with siblings were higher for urban women than women in general.

From the age group 16-20, the probability of urban women living with a spouse was higher than for all women. For all other age groups it was lower, the highest level which was reached in age group 41-45 was 72.0 % as opposed to 83.3 % for all women. Until the age group 41-45, the probability of an urban woman living with a spouse increased. After that, the co-residence with spouse among urban women declined steadily.

9 There are four persons in the census of age 15 that are recorded as married. I assume either the age or the marital status is erroneous. These persons are ignored here.
to a level of 14.4 % as opposed to 20.1 % for all women.

Similarly the co-residence with children\(^\text{10}\) was higher in the cities for age group 16-20 and lower for all higher groups. It peaked in age group 41-45 with 60.2 % (72.3 % for all women), it then declined to 29.0 % (45.5 % for all women) in age group 71-75 and recovered to 38.1 % (54.0 % for all women) in age group 81-.

Finally, there was an increasing probability of urban women living with grandchildren through the age groups culminating with 13.7 % in age group 81- for all women this figure was 24 %. In age group 41-45, urban women had a higher probability of living with grandchildren than women in general for age group 31-35 it is the same. For all other age groups, it was lower. For the higher age groups, it was actually much lower not much more than half.

Altogether you can see that when you disregard mature and old siblings living together, urban women were lonelier than the average women.

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**Urban Men**

In Figure 5, you can see the graph for co-residence of urban men.

The probability of urban men living with grandparents was low and decreased rapidly. From age group 36-40, it was virtually zero. For all age groups amounting to anything the probability of urban men living with grandparents was lower than for men in general. This of course showed that three generation families were most common in rural areas.

The probability of urban men living with parents decreased through the age groups. The probability of living with a father was slightly lower than of living with a mother. This showed that more women than men

---

10 One of the 15 year old married women is Johanne Wichmand (1801:888.802) from the city Sakskøbing she also has a daughter Bolette in her first year of life. That could be a very good explanation that Hartmann who is 30 years old had has to marry the very young Johanne. But all that remains speculation and Johanne is ignored in this context.
were living with their children and with no spouse in the home. In the age groups 1-5 and 6-10, slightly fewer boys in the cities were living with their parents than boys in general. In the age group 11-15, this was reversed. If you take the numbers very strictly you have to admit that actually the difference between city boys increased a little from age group 1-5 to age group 6-10 before it reversed in age group 11-15. The author does not have a good suggestion that explains this. It would be tempting to just dismiss this as an error of recording but the numbers were somewhat on the large side for that.

The probability of living with siblings increased from age group 1-5 to 6-10 from that on it decreased until age group 55-60. After that it fluctuated somewhat but the numbers were very low. The probability of living with siblings was generally lower in the towns than in general. There were exceptions in age groups 11-15, 61-65, 71-75, and 81-. The 11-15 exception probably showed that the bigger families in the towns hold the children at home longer than the smaller families. In the older age groups we see the siblings living together in the towns but also some noise caused by fluctuation in small numbers.

The probability of living with grandchildren increased from age groups 41-45 and onwards. It was always lower than in the general case and usually less than half.

![Co-residence urban men Denmark 1801](image)

**Figure 5. Co-residence urban men**

**Rural women**

In Figure 6, you can see the co-residence diagram for rural women.

The probability of living with grandparents decreased from age groups 1-5 and onwards. From age group 36-40, it was totally insignificant. It was always higher in the countryside than in the general case. It was in the country you find the three generation families.

Likewise the probability of living with parents decreased through the age groups. The probability of living with mothers was always higher than living with fathers. Compared with the general case, the probability of
living with fathers was the same or higher in the rural areas. The difference increased with higher age group. The probability of living with mother was the same in the rural areas as in the general case in the age groups 1-5 and 6-10, slightly lower in the age group 11-15, higher in the age groups 16-20 and 51-55 and lower in the age groups over 56-60 which had a more than 0.0 cell probability. So two things were influencing the picture. The country girls took up service early, especially those living with lonely mothers. And grown women were less likely to live with their mothers in towns than in the countryside.

The probability of living with siblings increased from the age group 1-5 to 6-10 and after that it decreased through the rest of the age groups. The initial increase was explained above at page 223. In the age groups 46-50, 56-60 and higher, the probabilities of living with siblings were lower in the rural area than in the general case. This reflected that the custom of siblings living together was a city phenomenon.

Living with grandchildren increased through all the age groups. In most age groups, it was more common in the rural areas than in the general case to live with grandchildren the exceptions were age groups 31-35 and 41-45. There were more three generation families in the rural areas.

![Co-residence rural women Denmark 1801](image)

**Figure 6. Co-residence rural women**

**Rural men**

The co-residence graph for rural men is seen in Figure 7.

The probability of living with grandparents decreased through the age groups until 36-40 where it reached 0.0. For all age groups with a probability over 0.0, the probability was higher in the rural areas than in the general case.

The probability of living with parents decreased over the age groups. The probability is of living with a mother was slightly higher than living with a father. The probability of living with a father was usually higher in the rural areas than in the general case. The exceptions were age groups 1-5 and 11-15 that were the same. The probability of living with mother was higher from age group 16-20 to older. For age group 11-15, it was
slightly lower and for age groups 1-5 and 6-10 they were slightly higher.

The probability of living with siblings decrease from 6-10 and onwards while it was lower in 1-5 than in 6-10. It was higher in the rural areas in age groups 1-5, from 6-10 and 16-20 to 56-60 and 76-80 while it was the same in 11-15 and was lower in 61-65, 71-75 and 81-.

The probability of rural men living with grandchildren increased through the age groups. For all age groups where it was positive it was higher in the rural areas than in the general case. There were more three generation families in the country side.

![Co-residence rural men Denmark 1801](image)

**Figure 7. Coresidence rural men**

**Measuring Family Structure**

Another way of expressing how people live together is taking the household as unit of observation. Then one challenge becomes how to measure household complexity. In this field, I would suggest two measures: highest distance from head and generation span.

**Distance From Head**

Highest distance was obtained by looking at how many links it took to express each household member’s relation to the head of household, where a single link relationship would be from head to

1. spouse, fiancé etc.;
2. child;
3. parent;
4. family relation of unknown nature;
5. residence, lodging, nursing or other nonworking relationship;
6. employment or co-ownership.
Of course, the number of links you get between two persons is very much dependant on what you accept as a link. In this case, the definitions are such that a link cannot be expressed by other link definitions. Thus, sibling is not part of the definition because it can be expressed by parents’ child. The most distant relationship found in this definition is “child of great grandchild, of sibling, of parent, of head, of household”. There is only one of those. This represents a complexity of seven links away from head of household.

As seen in Table 2, the vast majority of the households were the simple families as for instance head, wife, children and employees. This was seen from the number of links being one or less. This was true for 151,695 of the households which was 76.9 %. Less than a quarter of the households have something more complicated like grandchildren, employees’ wife, etc.. Naturally, there was a basic dependence of complexity on size. A household of one must have complexity zero. Actually, this dependence was double sided because a family household with a size of more than one must have a complexity of more than zero, because there was somebody in that household who was not the head.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link away from head</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>145,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>28,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 3, you see the relation between size and complexity. The larger the households become, the more likely it is that they have complicated relations in them. In two-person households, 97 % are simple. In households with 10 or more members, only 58 % are simple.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Link from head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons in household</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29,047 670 118 15 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>27,715 3,600 899 362 16 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>45,462 9,734 2,164 700 43 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>37,959 12,512 3,571 1141 73 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>4,889 2,106 967 344 28 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generation Span

Another way of looking at complexity is comparing the generation of the family members to the generation of the head of household. This naturally only works for family members. There is no formal way of expressing the generation of an employee or lodger in relation to the generation of the head of household. For
family members, it works. You can set the parents of the head of household to generation -1, his wife and sister to generation 0 and his children to generation +1. Extending this principle, the outcome is that the family members are divided over generations -2 to +3 as seen in Table 4. Note that though it makes sense in Table 2 to divide households after the person with the largest distance to the head of household, it does not make sense to divide households after generations present in them. To be able to divide the households in a reasonable way, it is necessary to calculate generation span (see below).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation in household</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2 (Grandfather)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1 (Father)</td>
<td>22,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 (Spouse)</td>
<td>363,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Child)</td>
<td>341,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Grandchild)</td>
<td>6,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Great grandchild)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in family</td>
<td>181,309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Naturally, the seven persons that were of the great grandchild generation have attracted attention. It was possible to prove that the term for great grandparent (“oldemor” or “oldefar”) was always used incorrectly in the census meaning just grandparent (“bedstemor” etc.), but the same thing did not seem to be the case for the great grandchild (“oldebørn”) generation that they should be interpreted as grandchildren (“børnebørn”).

Having a generation number assigned to all family members, you can calculate the generation span within a household as highest generation minus lowest generation plus one. It turns out that the highest generation span in a household is four. Naturally, a generation span of three does not guarantee that three different generations are present in the household. It could be just a grandmother and grandchild living together.

In Table 5, you see that one-person household naturally had only one generation. Two-generation households were very typical. Again, the larger the household, the more likely it was complicated. In generation terminology, it had more than two generations. 99% of the two-person households had less than three generations, while 24% of the households with 10 or more members have more than two generations.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons in household</th>
<th>Generation span</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generation span</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,594</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25,020</td>
<td>4,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6,089</td>
<td>25,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>5,544</td>
<td>46,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>2,484</td>
<td>42,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>5,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the census table, a relation connected to information on geographical units. These units were in turn divided after degree of urbanisation in three levels: the Capital, the Cities, and the Country Parishes. Thus, it is quite simple to select all the records from the country parishes. As the occupations are coded with less than
3,000 codes that belong to an even lower number of HISCO\textsuperscript{11} codes, it is very simple to group the occupations in main groups. The author has chosen the eight groups found in Table 6. Now, you can divide the rural families after generation span and prime occupation of the head of household. This division is found in Table 6.

Table 6

*Number of Families Divided after Generation Span and Occupation of Head (Column Percent)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Farmer</th>
<th>Cottager</th>
<th>Day labourer</th>
<th>Artisan</th>
<th>Servant</th>
<th>Forester</th>
<th>Saylor</th>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>None and other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>73.81</td>
<td>65.41</td>
<td>64.80</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>62.01</td>
<td>71.40</td>
<td>70.50</td>
<td>69.57</td>
<td>55.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first four categories “Farmer”, “Cottager”, “Day labourer” and “Artisan” comprises 81 % of the families. The next four categories cover only 2.4%. The category ‘None and other’ primarily contains poor and unemployed, but also civil servants. It is obvious that four generation households are very unusual in all categories. In the big occupation categories, there is a clear correlation between social status and the proportion of three generation families. By the farmers, it is a sixth of the household that spans three generations. That is actually a quite considerable proportion, especially when you take into consideration that the population under consideration was growing. In a growing population, a person probably has more siblings than parents. In some cases, the reason that a household spans three generations is that the grandchildren of the head are present. The extent of this can be judged from Table 4 that shows that there are 3.7 times more parents to the head than grandchildren of the head in the households. Thus, the typical three generation family is one where the parents live by their children.

**Conclusions**

When approaching the description of household structures from the perspective of the individual, you can clearly obtain different information than when approaching it from the perspective of the household as a whole.

From the individuals’ perspective, you can get an insight into the living conditions of different age groups which would not readily present itself with other starting points for the analysis.

On the other hand, comparisons between households of different population groups are more easily made, when taking overall household measures as the starting point. Theoretically, it would naturally be possible to make a co-residence graph based on, e.g., the households with a cottager as the head. But the interpretation of such a graph would be highly disputable. It is no sure thing that children of cottagers will grow up to become cottagers or that old people in cottager households used to be cottagers. So, though you would get a picture, it would be a picture with a very unclear object.

Actually, even the distinction between urban and rural used above is debatable because a large number of the young people moved from the rural area to the urban to find occupation or serve in the military. This clearly distorts the basis for the co-residence diagrams shown above. Essentially, the effect is that the amount of unrelated persons in urban households are higher than they should have been had this move not taken place. This again lead to co-residence probabilities being generally lower in the cities than they would have been had the move not taken place.

\textsuperscript{11} About HISCO. Retrieved from http://historyofwork.iisg.nl/
This study uses a full census from a single year whereas other studies use linked censuses from several years (Anderson, 1971, p. 19; Ruggles, 2011, p.136). The strength of using linked censuses is that you can determine the actual development on co-residence of a particular person. A crucial weakness is that by linking you only get a part of the population and it is difficult not to get a bias between linked and not linked. Furthermore, you have a general issue of representativity arising from small numbers and incomplete knowledge of what the actual composition of the population was at the time. A final issue is that co-residence patterns might very well be changing over time. So your linked material will have a tendency to show the patterns for the young people in the early period and older people later in the time period covered.

The co-residence patterns over a single census year are somewhat more complicated to calculate and require a high degree of standardisation. This is probably similar to the issues arising from the linkage. But given that the standardisation is in place you can get a very complete coverage.

On the other hand, the problem encountered on page 223 that you cannot determine whether old women actually moved to their children is a consequence of using calculations of a single census year. In a linked material that type of questions would be easy to answer. The ideal would probably be to make cross sectional calculation in a fully linked material. But that is far from the possibilities we have presently. In the time of personal numbers (Denmark after 1970) that would be possible.

The co-residence graphs in themselves are easily over interpreted. The people shown in these graphs are people born through most of the 18th century, but the co-residence patterns shown are those that existed in 1801. You cannot assume that a person from age group 71-75 would have lived in the same household structure in 1731 as the children of age group 1-5 did in 1801. Likewise, it would be very unsafe to assume that the children in age group 6-10 would live in the exact same household structure in 1871 as the 76-80 did in 1801.

So, although the co-residence graphs look as if they are telling something about life courses that would only be true in a completely static society. Denmark (1731-1871) was far from that. Actually, the author does not know of any completely static societies from which we have the data to make co-residence graphs.

The co-residence analysis adds other facets to the picture of households and describes features that are not easily described in other ways, but they do not completely replace other descriptions.

References
Changes in Post-World War II: Italians in Rochester, N.Y.

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This article examines the major similarities and differences among Italians who migrated to Rochester, N.Y., before World War II and post-World War II. It offers explanations on the similarities and differences among these two groups of migrants. Investigation of historical, sociological, and anthropological sources along with interviews among both populations provides abundant data bearing on the investigation. The successful completion of the research reported in this article has major bearing on the issue of migration itself, theories in history, sociology, and anthropology, and even on social psychological understanding of how choices are made and identity is formulated.

Keywords: identity, migration, intra-group relationships, cultural ecology, cultural change and stability

Introduction

In 1940, according to the census, about 18% of the Rochester, N.Y.’s population was of Italian origin, which amounted to 53,329 people. Keene (1946) indicated that Italians cost Rochesterians a good deal of money. They were heavy patrons of the welfare system and had a high delinquency rate; in fact, more than twice as high as other Rochester’s children, and many lived in Rochester’s worst slums. Keene (1946) was not unsympathetic to the plight of Rochester’s Italians. As a sociologist, she put her hopes in their assimilation and acculturation to the wider population. She was wise enough to understand that there was not a single homogeneous Italian culture in Italy, much less in Rochester (pp. 5-6).

That fact continued to be important after World War II. Indeed, it even grew in importance as newer immigrants entered from areas that had been underrepresented previously. To complicate the scene, many Italians had returned to Italy before World War II; these Italians were termed pendulari, or pendulums. Undeniably, more people returned to Italy than stayed in the United States. However, too often overlooked were those who had swung like the pendulum back and forth—leaving and returning. Both of these latter groups played a major role in Post-World War II migration. They also at least delayed if not refute Alba’s thesis that Italian-American ethnicity is dying (1985). Mancuso (2001) and Parenti (1967, 2009) has convincingly argued that Italian-American identity is not about to die anytime soon. I add it to their argument that a major reason for this delay is the work for Italians came to America after World War II.

It is also important to note that a large number of Italians left America and returned to Italy. Indeed in the 1920s, more Italians left to return to Italy than came to America. Many, in fact, did come to America with the explicit idea of staying for a short time and, contrary to many myths that had arisen, did just that. 62.8% of all Italians who came from Italy returned. When one considers that young men who came without their families made up the majority of those coming to America and that there were 135.8 males for every 100 females and
including the 1940 Rochester census, it was not surprising that so many people returned. It also suggests that those Italians who remained in the United States differed from those who did not.

There was little talk of ending ethnic differences for those of us growing up in the 1940s and 1950s. But, there was one distinction; namely, that between Italians and Americans. All other distinctions, within the Italian community or the American one was subsidiary to this big dichotomy. I can remember resisting the dichotomy even as I also unconsciously embraced it. However, many of those who “came up” in the forties and fifties branched out away from the tried and true, made close friends across ethnic lines without losing their ethnic sense, but we also developed a dual sense shaped by the changing world of that period, a dual identity.

This study examines the manner in which Rochester’s Italians developed their particular ethnic identity vis-à-vis other ethnic groups. It examines the social and cultural ecology of the area. Moreover, it looks at how those Italians who came to Rochester before World War II and their children differed from those who came after that cataclysmic event. The need to present a united front when faced with Rochester’s other ethnic groups tended to cover over these differences but these were indeed present and still are, causing friction among the members, which surface in conversations.

Personal Reflections

 Barely three years after the end of World War II, a radio program entitled “Life with Luigi” debuted on Columbia Broadcasting System. Luigi Bosco was a post-war (World War II) immigrant who came to Chicago to find “the American Dream” and escape the European nightmare. My grandfather, parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins listened faithfully to the weekly program, which lasted till March 1953, with a short TV run. We enjoyed it immensely and found it to be truthful to our experiences. Early “political correctness” caused the show to be attacked for stereotyping Italians. We did not think so, nor did we care that J. Carol Naish, an Irish-American actor, played the lead. We felt it a sign of respect and of our “arrival”, although at that time I really did not know we had to arrive anywhere. I felt I was already an American, with an Italian background granted, but everyone had some kind of ethnic background in the schools which I attended (We called it “nationality” then). Mine happened to be Italian.

Although the elementary schools I attended were not solely or even mainly comprised of Italians, there were always enough of us to make us feel part of the mix. I do not recall ever having an Italian-American teacher in either public or parochial elementary school. At times in public school there was a teacher or two who might not like Italians but there are no incidents of any blatant anti-Italian feelings I can recall. Although most of my childhood friends were Italian-American kids, I had friends from Rochester’s other ethnic groups in the schools: Germans, Poles, Jews, Irish, and even the rare African-American student who was inevitably the smartest and best-dressed girl in the class, at least in public school. In the Catholic elementary school I attended, however, the good sisters came mostly from Maryland and showed their scorn for the very few “colored” kids in school. Being naïve and believing that America meant equality and Catholicism stood for love of all God’s children, I was appalled and, yes, even scandalized by this lack of Christian charity. Little did I know how much more events would scandalize me as a teenager and adult. But those were simpler times, the 1940s and 1950s.

Most of my friends, then, were Italian-Americans although I did not think of them in that light. I knew that some Italians came to Rochester after World War II. Indeed, I had a clear memory of Italian Prisoners of War (POWs) clearing snow from the streets and waving to people as they did so. My mother would speak her
version of Italian to them, and it was close enough for them to understand and respond cheerfully. I waved as
best I could from my mummy-like snowsuit, required wear in Rochester’s winters. It was a bright spot in the
war, a war that was part of my earliest memories and lasted in children’s play long past its official ending.

Therefore, the sudden arrival of a boy in our neighborhood walking home with the girls next door was a
somewhat unpleasant surprise. By that time, I no longer attended the public school. The new kid on the block
was about my size but with light skin and blond hair. As expected, I was inclined not to like him. However, he
became my closest unrelated friend. He was also the first kid I had ever met, much less befriended, who had
been born in Italy and had come to America after World War II. At the time, it was an interesting fact but I did
not remember our making much of it. It was just like one of my other friends’ glass eye. It was part of the
person, not the person himself.

However, the fact must have made an impact on me. It was something I always remembered. Over the
years, it would come up in casual conversation as we grew to adulthood. Somehow it added to our friendship
without analyzing how. I do think this issue has been part of my unconsciousness for some time. Indeed, as a
colleague once said of our anthropologists, what we ultimately study is ourselves. At the time, I resisted the
idea because he was referring to my work with a Nigerian ethnic group who had changed identity and religion
to maximize their commercial goals and survive. I was under a lot of pressure at the time, and being a Catholic
Italian-American did not help. Anti-Italian-American bias in academic life was common in the 1970s as was
anti-Catholicism.

I have made my peace with the “missed opportunities” and the sly and not-so-sly comments about Italians,
the Mafia, spaghetti-bending, hot tempers, and such. I have no time for that nonsense. I do have time for things
I love and discovering how they shaped me. Who I am is inextricably bound with Rochester and its Italian
community. As a person who by nature and training is an observer, one who is both not fully inside nor outside
of what he observes, it has been difficult and rewarding to study my home town.

This last puzzle piece has shown me the similarities and differences between pre- and post-war Italian
migration. It has also helped put those quintessential Italian qualities in high relief, which transcend regional,
class, and other differences among Italians. These are: love of the good life, which includes love of family,
religion, food, and music, driven by a desire for respect. Interestingly and significantly, Foster’s (1965) high
relief theory of the limited good still prevails. Thus, your good fortune may subtract from my own, and by and
large there is suspicion and secretiveness beneath a pleasant patina. Indeed, suspicion is often warranted and the
secretiveness a reasonable tool in self-protection.

The Impact of World War II

The Second World War was a major factor in changing the lives of Americans.

It changed the lives of those young and old as well as those yet to come. The 1950 census marked a
growth of the city of Rochester’s population to its highest level, about 333,000; it has never reached that
number since. By the 1960s, Rochester began to lose population, falling to 318,611, declining from 23rd to
38th in U.S. city size. Many people, including Italian-Americans, moved to the suburbs. Others just moved out
to New York, St. Louis, California, Florida, and Arizona, among other more exciting places. Interestingly,
some of the suburban areas to which Italians moved were areas Italian contractors developed and which were
close to other Italian settlements, such as Irondequoit.

During the immediate post-war period, it was still possible to reach a consensus on what it meant to be an
American, a Rochesterian, and an Italian-American. The euphoria of the victory of the Allies in World War II, which most Rochesterians translated it as the American victory, overwhelmed everything else. The return of prosperity and the resurrection of “the American Dream” eclipsed all else for a time. The culture wars of the sixties, which changed many things, would have been beyond comprehension. Ecology played its part in shaping the consensus and its identity. To be an Italian-American in Rochester was both similar and different to being one elsewhere. There were different social structures to take into account. Rochester’s culture was different from other cities in the United States while, of course, sharing many aspects with those cities.

Similarly, those Italians who came to Rochester, New York, had to adapt to a social system and a culture already established. As they adapted, they also helped make changes in that culture. Of course, they had to adapt not only to many different ethnic groups but also to differences in what came to be their own ethnic group, Italian-American, a catch-all phrase that covered over many differences among its separate segments from different regions of Italy as well as differences among those from the same region. By 1940, most of these differences were covered up in what was an uneasy alliance. Among the youngest generation of the first and second generation Italian-Americans born in the United States, these differences were blurring and those differences between ethnic groups, while not blurred, were no longer seen as barriers to friendships or even alliances.

Indeed, there were many things that were seen as desirable, consciously or not, in other ethnic groups. Many of us had begun to dream we could be upwardly mobile and enter the elite world, radio, movies, and later TV showed us. We bought “the American Dream” and often saw ourselves as different from our parents, and, yes, “smarter” because, thanks to their hard work and dedication, we were being educated, spoke better English than they did, and read all the right books. Unfortunately, reality was to set in over the years.

There were a number of major parts of life that shaped people: the war, education, entertainment, politics, crime, dating and marriage, and religion among others. In each case, the mutual shaping of Rochester and its ethnic groups are prominent. The destiny of the Italian-American ethnic group has been inextricably intertwined with the city and its other ethnic groups ever since the first Italian migrations, even before, there was an Italian state.

Italians have been in Rochester for many years. However, they came in large numbers beginning in the 1880s and their migration continued into the 1920s. The migration of Italians slowed down in the 1930s and then increased for a time after World War II. Italians became Rochester’s largest ethnic group, adding their flavor to the ethnic mix, along with the English, Scots, Irish, Germans, Poles, and other ethnic groups who settled in Rochester. Initially, they faced rejection and scorn. However, by the end of World War II they had become well-integrated into the Rochester community. With others, they moved to more integrated city neighborhoods and to Rochester’s suburbs. They began to fill professional jobs, political and civil, including that of mayor.

While the Mafia had a foothold in Rochester, so did more reputable and civic minded institutions. Italians took their rightful place in church organizations, Catholic and Protestant as well. The language may have faded from common public use but other customs remained, and their food became as American as the hot dog. But more subtle aspects of Italian culture remain—attitude, aesthetics, and family. There are other characteristics that mark the community but the work ethic still appears to be strong in descendants of Italian immigrants and their children.

It is important to note that it was during World War II that Italian-Americans became super patriots.
McKelvey (1960, pp. 23-24) provided the rationale for that transformation.

Unfortunately, the Italians faced an additional handicap in Rochester at the outbreak of World War II, when Mussolini’s collaboration with Hitler placed those who had failed to secure full citizenship on the enemy alien lists. Of course, the Italian societies had long since banned the use of the fascist salute, and some of their leaders had been outspokenly critical of many of Il Duce’s edicts and programs. Few Rochesterians doubted the loyalty of local Italians, and the demand for workers soon assured jobs to all, enabling many to improve their status. Local Italians rallied with other residents when the attack on Pearl Harbor drew America into the war, and many rejoiced with a special sense of relief when the American forces liberated Sicily and southern Italy in 1943. They celebrated Columbus Day with unusual fervor that year happy over the announcement that all restrictions had been lifted from Italian aliens, but another tense year and a half elapsed before they could rejoice over the surrender of the German forces in Italy.

Rochestrians of Italian descent bore their full share of the war’s losses, but as Americans, not Italians. Many returned from the war with such a strong sense of national unity that the attempts of the older ethnic societies to emphasize their cultural origins aroused but limited response.

McKelvey (1960) noted that there was even a noticeable drop in the occurrence of spoken Italian in public and even the Italian language newspaper *La Stampa Unita* not only changed its name to *The Rochester Press* but dropped the use of Italian, publishing in English.

It took the arrival of post-war Italians to begin the revival of Italian culture in Rochester. They were joined, it is true, by some Italians who had come to Rochester before the war. These earlier arrivals tended to be better educated than the average earlier immigrant or people born in the United States who had attended college. The example of the founding of Rochester’s Casa Italiana at Nazareth College is a case in point. Two of the people mainly responsible for its successful completion were Sib Petix, born in Rochester, N.Y., and his uncle Joe Lo Curto, who came to Rochester before World War II to escape from Benito Mussolini’s rule. Lo Curto was a successful businessman, who fought for the teaching of Italian in the public schools and who worked diligently to get the Casa Italiana established. Most of the others involved were post-war immigrants.

This pattern is found in various Italian-American societies. Even those initiated early in the 20th Century generally either died out or were revived by those Italians who migrated after World War II. Again, some first or second generation Italians who were educated and who stayed in the Rochester area helped keep these institutions alive. However, I saw one society after another kept alive through those people who migrated after World War II. Though no one was more culturally Italian than my mother, for example, she would always become irritated with my questions about the old way and usually say that we were Americans not Italians. An uncle once became upset with my love of books by Rochester’s Italian-American authors. He would say that those days they wrote about were terrible and he did not want to remember them. He ended with the usual statement that he was American. It is a statement one does not hear from people who came to the United States Post World War II. Rather that segment of immigrant Italians and their children opposed any than a cultural tie with Italy. The men opposed a political tie, which would subject them to an Italian military draft. Indeed, they exaggerated their patriotism and had no use for a “dual identity”. The majority of Italian-Americans who migrated to the United States before the war openly or secretly mocked those who refused to become citizens or who gave the fascist salute. They had little sympathy for those who found themselves interred; privately, saying that those who had been interred by the government should have become citizens as they had done. They found no romance in being “dual citizens” as many of the post-war migrants did. America meant security and they
had battled for a respected place there, not for a return to a disgraced homeland.

Conclusions

Ethnic identity is a type of political identity. It is a means of mobilizing support to attain perceived goals, support which calls upon the principle of ethnicity, or presumed common descent (Cohen, 1978). That it changes over time to suit various situations which has been established in numerous places. Although ethnic, and therefore, political identities are mutually negotiated, there are limits to the process. These limits come from the cultural ecological setting in which an ethnic group is located.

In Rochester, N.Y., that setting originally consisted of a dominant English, German, and Irish culture. Although many of the Germans and almost all of the Irish inhabitants of Rochester were Catholic, there was a Catholicism alien to the largely southern Italian settlers. White (1940) wrote,

During the early years of Italian Immigration not much attention was given to meet their religious needs and other wants. A very large number of Catholic priests were Irish. Many times they would upbraid the Italians especially at funerals. (p. 6)

The German-American clergy were often not much better. The religious style of Rochester’s Italians was also the style of much of their life; namely, it was an improvisational arrangement of what was at hand and what worked toward survival. Thus, Italians had to adapt to the cultural and social ecological conditions which they found. The underlying constant in that adaptation whether it took place in Rochester, New Orleans, San Antonio, or Los Angeles was the ability to improvise in order to adapt. It was as true for post-war Italian migrants as pre-war newcomers. What changed was the cultural ecological setting to which they adapted. In the post-war years, the “older” members and descendants of the earlier Italian immigration were part of the overall setting to which newer migrants adapted. There were, of course, other differences.

After World War II, America experienced the greatest prosperity that the world had ever seen. For a time, it was the only super-power left standing after the great destruction of the worst war which the world had known. As the Worcester Historical Museum website describes it in a paragraph that it could have written about Rochester, or almost any other American city.

America emerged from World War II as the pre-eminent economic force in the world. Worcester and the nation experienced a brief tremor as industries reconverted to non-military production, dismissed the thousands of women who held war-time factory jobs, and absorbed returning GIs. The country then launched into a quarter-century of unprecedented economic boom. The air was charged with confidence. This was the era when developers built extensive neighborhoods of ranch-style houses on the city’s west side, which were quickly occupied by workers and their wives and children, the “baby-boomers”. (Worcester Historical Museum, August 8, 2011)

This prosperity attracted immigrants from many different groups to Rochester after World War II. These groups included Ukrainians, Poles, Romanians, Jews, and many others, including Italians. Many of these people entered the United States under the Displaced Persons Act.

The Displaced Persons Act (1948) was an act passed by the 80th United States Congress which gave permanent residence to 400,000 World War II refugees. President Harry Truman signed the Displaced Persons Act but with strong critic of it. He stated in a speech after the signing:

It is with very great reluctance that I have signed S. 2242, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. If the Congress were still in session, I would return this bill without my approval and urge that a fairer, more humane bill be passed. In its present form this bill is flagrantly discriminatory. It mocks the American tradition of fair play. Unfortunately, it was not
passed until the last day of the session. If I refused to sign this bill now, there would be no legislation on behalf of displaced persons until the next session of the Congress. It is a close question whether this bill is better or worse than no bill at all. After careful consideration I have decided, however, that it would not be right to penalize the beneficiaries of this bill on account of the injustices perpetrated against others who should have been included within its provisions. (Truman, June 25, 1948)

One of the leaders in the study of Italian migration to America is Gabaccia (2000, 2006a, 2006b, 2010) and her work has detailed the relatively recent embrace of Italian ethnic identity. Gabaccia argued that until recently the majority of migrants to the United States had come to the US to escape conditions and felt little loyalty to Italy. There was a longstanding distrust of authority in Italy and an abiding trust in their communities and families. There was also an allegiance to the Catholic faith. Some of that is changing with the influx of the new Italian migrants who grew up under a united Italian state and who, by and large, came from a middle or even upper class background, from northern rather than southern Italy.

Cavaioli (2008) provided an in-depth discussion of waves of Italian migration to the United States and the differences among the waves. He is one of the few scholars to publish on the impact of the recent post-war wave of Italians migrating to the United States and the impact they have had. His article presents the relevant material on these different but related periods of migration and how each was unique from but related to the others. He noted the problems that the huge influxes of people were so different from those who already inhabited the United States caused, providing important references to key works. Additionally, he addressed the issue of nativism and its intellectual ties to Social Darwinism and the now discredited viewpoint of Cultural Evolution. Indirectly, he also disputed Gabaccia’s view that Italians were not a persecuted group. He cited the legislation aimed against them and barriers to their immigration which Woodrow Wilson raised, grouping them together with Jews, Asians, and African-Americans as part of the “lesser races”.

Indeed, it was only in 1965 that the restrictive acts of the 1990s and 1920s were replaced with Lyndon Johnson’s new immigration policy, encapsulated in the Hart-Celler Immigration and Nationality Reform Law. Johnson noted that Italian-Americans had played a key role in getting the bill passed. There were 300,000 Italians waiting to migrate to the United States at that time. Cavaioli discussed the impact of the new immigrants on Italian life in America, a key feature of my current work. Additionally, David Gilmour’s The Pursuit of Italy (2011) argued that to this day regionalism, loyalty to one’s own area or town, dominated Italy and differences in language, style, history, custom, and traditions prevail. I argue that the influx of new Italian migrants exaggerated those differences with Italians who had arrived from different regions before World War II. These differences manifested themselves in many ways, not the least of which is their self-identity.

Northern Italians were part of the post-war immigration to Rochester. Certainly, there were people from regions other than the Mezzogiorno before 1946 in Rochester’s large Italian population. However, economic conditions after World War II were such that a greater number of northern Italians came to the United States, helping to change the cultural ecological situation. These great changes in economic, social, and cultural factors made for interesting times in Rochester.

Recent literature on migration has questioned the assumption that the migration process necessarily involves cultural and ethnic identity transformation. Similarly, the assumption, which Albas (1985) and Alba and Nee (2002, p. 192) have made, for example, that migration will inevitably lead to a loss of ethnic identity and the assimilation of the Italian-American ethnic group into a broader Euro-American one is open to empirical verification. Some label this approach, which accounts for social economic, demographic and cultural
changes “transition theory”. It also encompasses contact with the homeland over time and return migration. Social, cultural, demographic, and economic changes in the land to which migrants go are given due to consideration (Courgeau, 1982; Zelinksky, 1971).

The key issues in my research have been the search for authenticity, grappling with dual identity, and ecological adaptation. Certainly, the settlement of Italian migrants and their adaptation in Rochester, N.Y., from the late 19th century to the present day has provided ample opportunity to explore the relationship among ecological adaptations, identity formation, the problems of dual identity, and the search of an ethnic group for authenticity. Moreover, it has presented a gateway to understanding negotiation within groups toward achieving consensus on issues of identity as well as breakdowns in these negotiations.

It must be clear that ethnic groups are not static entities. Ethnic groups are positional groups and chameleon like sets of meaningful relationships. For many years now, anthropologists have moved away from a primordial static view of ethnicity or ethnic groups. Few if any anthropologists do not view ethnicity as a process but not a thing. It is important to note that these relationships are internalized relationships fraught with meaning in which socialization plays a vital role. Furthermore, along with socialization, interactions are vital in the formation and maintenance of ethnic groups. The number, type, structure, and meaning of relationships help define groups and shape their identities.

Northern Italians were part of the post-war immigration to Rochester. Certainly, there were people from regions other than the Mezzogiorno before 1946 in Rochester’s large Italian population. However, economic conditions after World War II were such that a greater number of northern Italians came to the United States, helping to change the cultural ecological situation. These great changes in economic, social, and cultural factors made for interesting times in Rochester. Not the least of these changes were those in the Italian-American community. The creation of new Italian-American clubs is but one manifestation of the change. There is also an increase in “boosterism”, a kind of chauvinism that exaggerates the contributions and splendor of one’s own group and which partially grows up in clear response to that of other ethnic groups.

As one migrant puts it

There was quite a difference. The level of education especially, from our prospective, our family, because, like I say, my sister, Maria, was a school teacher and Rita was at the university in Milan, and, of course, I was going to school. The level of education was different. We looked at things a little differently. We had knowledge of Italian, knowledge of Italian history, because of the school, and extremely proud of our heritage, which you probably didn’t have as much perhaps with the people that came earlier. Some could not read or write. So, the knowledge of Italy was very limited from an old town. We, again, I grew up in the north, which was, there was very little difference between coming from < my area> to the United States. The only thing difference was the language, to be honest with you. Everything else was pretty much the same. And the people that came after World War II, and perhaps maybe because of the exposure that they had, not only the school but television, radio, you know, were a little different from the earlier Italians that came here, strictly from the towns. (Salamone, June 14, 2011)

This sentiment was repeated in one fashion or another in many interviews, from people from both northern and southern Italy. This area requires further investigation and interpretation in understanding the forging and maintenance of identity.

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