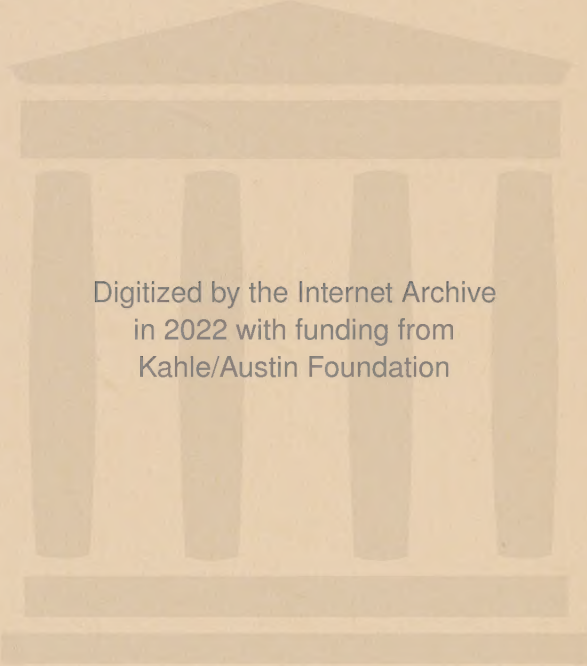


Eleanor Marx-Aveling  
Edward Aveling



Thoughts  
on Women  
and  
Society



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Thoughts on Women  
and Society

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and Society

By  
J. M. W. McKim  
Author of "The Art of Architecture"

International Publishers  
New York

Original title of the essay published  
first as a brochure in 1887:  
Eleanor Marx-Aveling  
Edward Aveling  
The Woman Question

Eleanor Marx-Aveling  
and Edward Aveling

# Thoughts on Women and Society

*Edited by*  
*Joachim Müller*  
*and Edith Schotte*



International Publishers,  
New York

Aveling, Eleanor Marx, 1855-1898.

Thoughts on women and society.

New ed. of: The woman question.

Written in answer to August Bebel's «Woman—past, present, and future.»

I. Women—History—Modern period, 1600—

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## Preface

In the first quarter of 1886, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling published their essay «The Woman Question» in the quarterly *Westminster Review*<sup>1/1</sup> (issued since 1824). This way they joined in the discussion of the role of woman in society and in the companionship of woman and man. This discussion had already been going on for a number of decades and was rapidly gathering force in those years. The authors' Marxist interpretation of the woman question, which has remained of interest up to the present, made them widely known and won them supporters in the growing struggle for the implementation of their ideas.

With this new translation and reprint of the essay on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of its first publication, we want to throw the limelight once more on this important document of working-class history, which deals with the emancipation of woman. Shortly before the founding of the 2nd International in Paris and Clara Zetkin's speech on the professional work of women held there, Marx' youngest daughter and her companion Edward Aveling offered a significant interpretation of the woman question, thus providing a Marxist explanation of a crucial social issue.

Eleanor was induced to write her essay by August Bebel's book *Woman and Socialism* which, in spite of its being banned by Bismarck's Law against Socialists, had become widely read and well received in 1879. Bebel's book was translated into English in 1885. Eleanor sought to confirm Bebel's thesis with respect to the socialist working-class movement that «there can be no emancipation of hu-

manity without the social independence and equality of the sexes.»<sup>12/</sup>

Of equal importance for the publication of Eleanor's essay was Frederick Engels' book *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* published in 1884, «one of the fundamental works of modern socialism.»<sup>13/</sup> Engels worked out a critique of bourgeois family and demonstrated that only the abolition of private property of the means of production would provide the prerequisite for the real emancipation of woman. Engel's book was, however, only translated into English in 1902.<sup>14/</sup>

These works encouraged Eleanor Marx-Aveling to join in the discussion of the relation of woman and society. In the English as well as in other working-class movements, among them the German Social Democrats, there had been the tendency to treat the question of the equality of woman and their participation in the struggle for a new, socialist society with ideological caution. Therefore, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling made an important contribution with their essay to the dissemination of Marxism in the English working-class movement and the application of Marxism to one particular aspect of the struggle of the working class.

The present edition is based on the reprint of the English original text in the periodical *Marxism Today*.<sup>5</sup> The original text is to be found in the Marx Memorial Library in London.

The Epilogue aims to demonstrate Eleanor Marx-Aveling's role in the struggle for the emancipation of woman in her time and, at the same time, to evaluate her contribution in the total context of history. Her biography as well as the list of her works illustrate the diversity of her political activities, the wide variety of her interests and her readiness to make personal sacrifices. The editors back up their analysis with the facts provided in Harald Wessel's book *Tussy*.<sup>16/</sup> Above all, we want to stress that «The Woman Question» was the first contribution of a woman who was herself active in the working-class movement, who became interested in the question of the role of woman in society and who

worked out her own interpretation on the basis of Bebel's analysis.

Just as important is Eleanor Marx-Aveling's thesis that a comprehensive discussion of the woman question is only guaranteed if man and woman think and work together. Consequently, she wrote her study in cooperation with her companion Edward Aveling.

She successfully demonstrates in this essay her basic assumption that the woman question is part and parcel of the general struggle for socialist society.

Therewith Eleanor wanted and had to struggle against all those who were guided by a feminist point of view in the question concerning the equality of woman. In the previous decades of the nineteenth century, there had increasingly appeared feminist demands concerning female suffrage. Such demands were put forward by William Thompson, Anna Wheeler, John Stuart Mill, Helen Taylor and others. At the same time, Jessie Boucherette demanded the possibility for woman to earn their living in England. In this context, the dissemination of Marxist ideas had become necessary in order to counteract such a feminist point of view.

We must also take into consideration that the *Communist Manifesto* was only published in England as an authorized edition in English in 1888.<sup>171</sup>

For a better understanding of the text as well as its historical references, the editors have added the necessary explanations in the form of notes. The two notes concerning the original text, were written by Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling.

# The Woman Question

*Edward and Eleanor Marx Aveling*

**T**he publication of August Bebel's<sup>/1/</sup> «Woman—Past, Present and Future»<sup>/2/</sup> and the issue of a translation of the work in English, make any attempt to explain the position of Socialists in respect to the woman question timely. The reception that the work has met with in Germany and in England renders such an attempt imperative, unless our antagonists are willing to misunderstand us, and we are willing to remain passive under the misunderstanding. The writers of this article have thought that the English public, with that fairness which is said to be its special prerogative, would give hearing to the views, the arguments, the conclusions of those who call themselves Socialists. Thus, whatever opinions may be held by that English public as to the conclusions, its opinions will at least have a basis of knowledge. And the writers have further considered that the treatment of such a question as this is as its best when it is that of a man and a woman thinking and working together. In all that follows they desire it to be understood that they are giving utterance to their own opinions as two individual Socialists. Whilst they believe that these opinions are shared by the majority of their fellow-thinkers and fellow-workers in England, on the Continent, and in America, they are in no sense to be understood as pledging their Party to all, or necessarily to any particular one, of the propositions put forward.

A word or two, first, on the work that serves as the text of this discourse. Bebel is a working-man, a Socialist, and a member of the Reichstag. His book «Die Frau»<sup>/3/</sup> has been prohibited in Germany. This has increased at once the dif-

ficulty of obtaining the book, and the number of those that obtain it. The German press has almost to a journal condemned it, and has ascribed to its author every possible and impossible vice. The influence of the work, and the significance of these attacks, will both be understood by those that bear in mind the position and the personal character of Bebel. One of the founders of the Socialist Party in Germany,<sup>14</sup> one of the foremost among the exponents of the economics of Karl Marx, perhaps the finest orator of his country, Bebel is beloved and trusted by the Proletariat, hated and feared by the capitalists and aristocrats. He is not only the most popular man in Germany. He is by those that know him, foes as well as friends, respected. Calumny has, of course, been busy with him, but, without any hesitation, we may say that the accusations made against him are as false as they are venomous.

The English translation of his latest work has met in certain quarters with a vituperative reception. The wrath of these irritated critics would have been well placed had it been poured out on the quite unequalled carelessness of the publishers of this English version. This carelessness is the more noticeable and unpardonable as the German edition, printed at Zurich, is singularly free from errors. We ought to except in part from our condemnation the translator, Dr. Harriet B. Adams Walther. On the whole, her work has been fairly well done, though an apparent want of acquaintance with economic words and phrases has here and there produced ambiguity, and there is a most unaccountable objection to the use of the plural. But the book teems with printer's errors, in type, in spelling, and in punctuation. To have in a book of only 264 pages an aggregate of at least 170 blunders is really too bad.

With the first or historical part of the work we do not propose dealing. Deeply interesting as it is, this must be passed over, as so much is to be said on the present relations between men and women, and on the changes that we believe are impending. Moreover, the historic portion is not quite the best in the book. It has its errors here and there. The most reliable book to consult on this particular

branch of the woman question is Friedrich Engels' «Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State».<sup>5/</sup> Let us turn, therefore, to the society and the women of today.

Society is, from the point of view of Bebel, and we may fairly say here of Socialists generally, in a condition of unrest, of fermentation. The unrest is that of a mass of rotteness; the fermentation that of putrefaction. Dissolution is at hand, in both senses of the word. The death of the capitalistic method of production, and therefore of the society based on it, is, as we think, within a distance measurable in terms of years rather than of centuries. And that death means the re-solution of society into simpler forms, even into elements, that recombining will produce a new and better order of things. Society is morally bankrupt, and in nothing does this gruesome moral bankruptcy come out with a more hideous distinctness than in the relation between men and women. Efforts to postpone the crash by drawing bills upon the imagination are useless. The facts have to be faced.

One of these facts of the most fundamental importance is not, and never has been, fairly confronted by the average man or woman in considering these relations. It has not been understood even by those men and women above the average who have made the struggle for the greater freedom of women the very business of their lives. This fundamental fact is, that the question is one of economics. The position of women rests, as everything in our complex modern society rests, on an economic basis. Had Bebel done nothing but insist upon this, his work would have been valuable. The woman question is one of the organisation of society as a whole. For those who have not grasped this conception, we may quote Bacon<sup>6/</sup> in the first book of the «Advancement of Learning». «Another error ... is that, after the distribution of particular Arts and Sciences, men have abandoned universality ... which cannot but cease and stop all progression. ... Neither is it possible to discover the more remote and deeper parts of any science if you stand but upon the level of the same science and ascend not to a higher». This error, indeed, when «men (and



women) have abandoned universality», is something more than a «peccant humour». It is a disease. Or, to use an illustration possibly suggested by the passage and the phrase just quoted, those who attack the present treatment of women without seeking for the cause of this in the economics of our latter-day society are like doctors who treat a local affection without inquiring into the general bodily health.

This criticism applies not alone to the commonplace person who makes a jest of any discussion into which the element of sex enters. It applies to those higher natures, in many cases earnest and thoughtful, who see that women are in a parlous state, and are anxious that something should be done to better their condition. These are the excellent and hard-working folk who agitate for that perfectly just aim, woman suffrage<sup>77</sup>; for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act<sup>8</sup>, a monstrosity begotten of male cowardice and brutality; for the higher education of women<sup>9</sup>; for the opening to them of universities, the learned professions, and all callings, from that of teacher to that of bagman. In all this work—good as far as it goes—three things are especially notable. First, those concerned in it are of the well-to-do classes, as a rule. With the single and only partial exception of the Contagious Diseases agitation, scarcely any of the women taking a prominent part in these various movements belong to the working class. We are prepared for the comment that something very like this may be said, as far as concerns England, of the larger movement that claims our special efforts. Certainly, Socialism is at present in this country little more than a literary movement<sup>10</sup>. It has but a fringe of working men on its border. But we can answer to this criticism that in Germany this is not the case, and that even here Socialism is now beginning to extend among the workers.

The second point is that all these ideas of our «advanced» women are based either on property, or on sentimental or professional questions. Not one of them gets down through these to the bedrock of the economic basis, not only of each of these three, but of society itself. This

fact is not astonishing to those who note the ignorance of economics characteristic of most of those that labour for the enfranchisement of women. Judging from the writings and speeches of the majority of women's advocates<sup>111</sup>, no attention has been given by them to the study of the evolution of society. Even the orthodox political economy, which is, as we think, misleading in its statements and inaccurate in its conclusions, does not appear to have been mastered generally.

The third point grows out of the second. The school of whom we speak make no suggestion that is outside the limits of the society of today. Hence their work is, always from our point of view, of little value. We will support all women, not only those having property, enabled to vote; the Contagious Diseases Act repealed; every calling thrown open to both sexes. The actual position of women in respect to men would not be very vitally touched. (We are not concerned at present with the results of the increased competition and more embittered struggle for existence.) For not one of these things, save indirectly the Contagious Diseases Act, touches them in their sex relations. Nor should we deny that, with the gain of each or all of these points, the tremendous change that is to come would be more easy of attainment. But it is essential to keep in mind that ultimate change, only to come about when the yet more tremendous social change whose corollary it will be has taken place. Without that larger social change women will never be free.

The truth, not fully recognised even by those anxious to do good to woman, is that she, like the labour-classes, is in an oppressed condition; that her position, like theirs, is one of merciless degradation. Women are the creatures of an organised tyranny of men, as the workers are the creatures of an organised tyranny of idlers. Even where this much is grasped, we must never be weary of insisting on the non-understanding that for women, as for the labouring classes, no solution of the difficulties and problems that present themselves is really possible in the present condition of society. All that is done, heralded with no matter what flourish of

trumpets, is palliative, not remedial. Both the oppressed classes, women and the immediate producers, must understand that their emancipation will come from themselves. Women will find allies in the better sort of men, as the labourers are finding allies among the philosophers, artists, and poets. But the one has nothing to hope from man as a whole, and the other has nothing to hope from the middle class as a whole.<sup>12/</sup>

The truth of this comes out in the fact that, before we pass to the consideration of the condition of women, we have to speak this word of warning. To many, that which we have to say of the Now will seem exaggerated; much that we have to say of the Hereafter, visionary, and perhaps all that is said, dangerous. To cultured people, public opinion is still that of man alone, and the customary is the moral. The majority still lays stress upon the occasional sex-helplessness of woman as a bar to her even consideration with man. It still descants upon the «natural calling» of the female. As to the former, people forget that sex-helplessness at certain times is largely exaggerated by the unhealthy conditions of our modern life, if, indeed, it is not wholly due to these. Given rational conditions, it would largely, if not completely, disappear. They forget also that all this about which the talk is so glib when women's freedom is under discussion is conveniently ignored when the question is one of women's enslavement. They forget that by capitalist employers this very sex-helplessness of woman is only taken into account with the view of lowering the general rate of wages. Again, there is no more a «natural calling» of woman than there is a «natural» law of capitalistic production, or a «natural» limit to the amount of the labourer's product that goes to him for means of subsistence. That in the first case, woman's «calling» is supposed to be only the tending of children, the maintenance of household conditions, and a general obedience to her lord; that, in the second, the production of surplus value is a necessary preliminary to the production of capital; that, in the third, the amount the labourer receives for his means of subsistence is so much as will keep him only just above starvation

point: these are not natural laws in the same sense as are the laws of motion. They are only certain temporary conventions of society, like the convention that French is the language of diplomacy<sup>/13/</sup>.

To treat the position of women at the present time in detail is to repeat a thousand-times-told tale. Yet, for our purpose, we must re-emphasise some familiar points, and perhaps mention one or two less familiar. And first, a general idea that has to do with all women. The life of woman does not coincide with that of man. Their lives do not intersect; in many cases do not even touch. Hence the life of the race is stunted. According to Kant, «a man and woman constitute, when united, the whole and entire being; one sex completes the other».<sup>/14/</sup> But when each sex is incomplete, and the one incomplete to the most lamentable extent, and when, as a rule, neither of them comes into real, thorough, habitual, free contact, mind to mind, with the other, the being is neither whole nor entire.

Second, a special idea that has to do with only a certain number, but that a large one, of women. Every one knows the effect that certain callings, or habits of life, have on the *physique* and on the face of those that follow them. The horsy man, the drunkard are known by gait, physiognomy. How many of us have ever paused, or dared to pause, upon the serious fact that in the streets and public buildings, in the friend-circle, we can, in a moment, tell the unmarried women, if they are beyond a certain age which lively writers call, with a delicate irony peculiarly their own, «uncertain»? But we cannot tell a man that is unmarried from one that is wedded. Before the question that arises out of this fact is asked, let us call to mind the terrible proportion of women that are unmarried. For example, in England, in the year 1870, 42 per cent of the women were in this condition. The question to which all this leads is a plain one, a legitimate one, and is only an unpleasant one because of the answer that must be given. How is it that our sisters bear upon their brows this stamp of lost instincts, stifled affections, a nature in part murdered? How is it that their «more fortunate brothers» bear no such mark? Here, assuredly, no



Birthplace of Eleanor Marx, 28 Dean Street, Soho, London.  
The Marx family lived there from 1850 to 1856.

now, but dare say you will  
hear from me again.

Give my love to my cousin  
Elizabeth and to Dada.

Goodbye, dear uncle

I am

Your affectionate

Eleanor Marx.

My dear uncle

Although I  
have never seen you I  
have heard so much about  
you that I almost fancy  
I know you, and as there  
is no chance of my seeing  
you I just write these

lines to ask you how you  
are. Are you enjoying  
yourself? I am, and always  
do at Christmas time when  
I think is the jolliest in  
the year. I wish you every  
happy new year, and dare  
say you are as glad to  
get rid of the old one as  
I am. I hear from papa  
that you are a great po-  
litician so we are sure to  
agree. How do you think  
Poland is getting on? I  
always hold up a finger for  
the Poles those brave little  
fellows. Do you like  
A. B.? He is a great  
friend of mine.  
But I must say goodbye

A letter by Eleanor Marx to her great-uncle  
Lion Philips from 1863.



Karl Marx and Frederick Engels with the Marx-daughters  
Laura, Eleanor and Jenny in London in May, 1864.



Lydia Burns, Frederick Engels' companion.  
Eleanor liked her as a travel companion.





Eleanor in 1874.  
In contrast to the conventions, she used to wear  
her dark curly hair hanging loose.



Helene Demuth – Eleanor's motherly friend  
and confidant.



Memorial plate at the Hotel Hochstein  
in Leipzig.



Eleanor in 1874.

«natural law» obtains. This licence for the man, this prevention of legions of noble and holy unions that does not affect him, but falls heavily on her, are the inevitable outcome of our economic system. Our marriages, like our morals, are based upon commercialism. Not to be able to meet one's business engagements is a greater sin than the slander of a friend, and our weddings are business transactions.

Whether we consider women as a whole, or only that sad sisterhood wearing upon its melancholy brows the stamp of eternal virginity, we find alike a want of ideas and of ideals. The reason of this is again the economic position of dependency upon man. Women, once more like the labourers, have been expropriated as to their rights as human beings, just as the labourers were expropriated as to their rights as producers. The method in each case is the only one that makes expropriation at any time and under any circumstances possible—and that method is force.

In Germany at the present day the woman is a minor with regard to man. A husband «of low estate» may chastise a wife. All decisions as to the children rest with him, even to the fixing of the date of weanings. Whatever fortune the wife may have he manages. She may not enter into agreements without his consent; she may not take part in political associations.<sup>/15/</sup> It is unnecessary for us to point out how much better, within the last few years, these things have been managed in England, or to remind our readers that the recent changes were due to the action of women themselves. But it is necessary to remind them that with all these added civil rights English women, married and unmarried alike, are morally dependent on man, and are badly treated by him. The position is little better in other civilised lands, with the strange exception of Russia,<sup>/16/</sup> where women are socially more free than in any other part of Europe. In France, the women of the upper middle class are more unhappily situated than in England. Those of the lower middle and working-classes are better off than either in England or Germany. But two consecutive paragraphs in the «Code Civil»<sup>/17/</sup>, 340 and 341, show that injustice to

women is not only Teutonic.<sup>/18/</sup> «La recherche de la paternité est interdite», and «La recherche de la maternité est admise.»<sup>/a/</sup>

Every one who refuses to blink facts knows that Demosthenes<sup>/19/</sup> words of the Athenians are true of our English middle and upper classes today. «We marry in order to obtain legitimate children and a faithful warder of the house; we keep concubines as servants for our daily attendance, but we seek the Hetairai for love's delight». The wife is still the child-bearer, the housewarder. The husband lives and loves according to his own bad pleasure. Even those who admit this will possibly join issue with us when we suggest as another wrong to women the rigorous social rule that from man only must come the first proffer of affection, the proposal for marriage. This may be on the principle of compensation. After marriage the proffers come generally from the woman, and the reserve is the man's. That this is no natural law our Shakespeare has shown. Miranda, untrammelled by society, tenders herself to Ferdinand. «I am your wife if you will marry me: if not I'll die your maid;»<sup>/20/</sup> and Helena, in «All's Well that Ends Well»<sup>/21/</sup>, with her love for Bertram, that carries her from Rousillon to Paris and Florence, is, as Coleridge<sup>/22/</sup> has it, «Shakespeare's loveliest character».

We have said that marriage is based upon commercialism. It is a barter transaction in many cases, and in all, under the condition of things today, the question of ways and means plays of necessity a large part. Among the upper classes the business is carried on quite unblushingly. The Sir Gorgius Midas pictures in *Punch*<sup>23</sup> testify to this. The nature of the periodical in which they appear reminds us that all the horrors they reveal are only regarded as foibles, not as sins. In the lower middle class many a man denies himself the joy of home life until he grows out of the longing for it; many a woman closes the book of her life at its fairest page for ever, because of the dread *rerum angustarum domi*.<sup>/b/</sup>

a Enquiry into paternity is prohibited. ... Enquiry into who is the mother is permitted. (original footnote)

b of the narrow confines of domestic life. (original footnote)

Another proof of the commercial nature of our marriage system is afforded by the varying times at which wedlock is customary in the varying grades of society. The time is in no sense regulated, as it ought to be, by the time of life. Some favoured individuals, kings, princes, aristocrats, marry, or are married, at the age to which Nature points as fitting. Many of the working class marry young—that is, at the natural period. The virtuous capitalist who at that age makes a habitual use of prostitution dilates unctuously upon the improvidence of the artisan. The student of physiology and economics notes the fact as interesting evidence that not even the frightful capitalistic system has crushed out a normal and righteous instinct. But, with the stratum of society wedged in between these two, unions, as we have just seen, cannot take place as a rule until years after the heyday of youth is passed and passion is on the wane.

All this tells far more on the women than on the men. Society provides, recognises, legalises for the latter the means of gratifying the sex instinct. In the eyes of that same society an unmarried woman who acts after the fashion habitual to her unmarried brothers and the men that dance with her at balls, or work with her in the shop, is a pariah. And even with the working classes who marry at the normal time, the life of the woman under the present system is the more arduous and irksome of the two. The old promise of the legend, «in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children», is not only realised, but extended. She has to bring them up through long years, unrelieved by rest, unbrightened by hope, in the same atmosphere of perennial labour and sorrow. The man, worn out as he may be by labour, has the evening in which to do nothing. The woman is occupied until bedtime comes. Often with young children her toil goes far into, or all through, the night.

When marriage has taken place all is in favour of the one and is adverse to the other. Some wonder that John Stuart Mill wrote, «Marriage is at the present day the only actual form of serfdom recognised by law».<sup>124/</sup> The wonder to us is that he never saw this serfdom as a question, not of

sentiment, but of economics, the result of our capitalistic system. After marriage, as before, the woman is under restraint, and the man is not. Adultery in her is a crime, in him a venial offence. He can obtain a divorce, she cannot, on the ground of adultery. She must prove that «cruelty» (i. e. of a physical kind) has been shown. Marriages thus arranged, thus carried out, with such an attendant train of circumstances and of consequences, seem to us—let us say it with all deliberation—worse than prostitution. To call them sacred or moral is a desecration.

In connexion with the subject of divorce we may note an instance of the self-deception, not only of society and its constituent classes but of individuals. The clergy are ready and willing to marry anybody and everybody, age to youth, vice to virtue, «and no questions asked», as a certain class of advertisements put it. Yet the clergy set their faces most sternly against divorce. To protest against such discordant unions as they again and again ratify would be an «interference with the liberty of the subject». But to oppose anything that facilitates divorce is a most serious interference with the liberty of the subject. The whole question of divorce, complex in any case, is made more complicated by the fact that it has to be considered, first in relation to the present conditions, second in relation to the socialistic conditions of the future. Many advanced thinkers plead for greater facility of divorce now. They contend that divorce ought to be made at least as easy as marriage; that an engagement entered into by people who have had little or no opportunity of knowing one another ought not to be irrevocably, or even stringently binding; that incompatibility of temper, non-realisation of deep-rooted hopes, actual dislike, should be sufficient grounds for separation; finally, and most important of all, that the conditions of divorce should be the same for the two sexes. All this is excellent, and would be not only feasible but just, if—but mark the if—the economic positions of the two sexes were the same. They are not the same. Hence, whilst agreeing with every one of these ideas theoretically, we believe that they would, practically applied under our present system, result, in the



majority of cases, in yet further injustice to women. The man would be able to take advantage of them; the woman would not, except in the rare instances where she had private property or some means of livelihood. The annulling of the union would be to him freedom; to her, starvation for herself and her children.

We may be asked, will these same principles of divorce hold under the socialistic regime? Our answer is this—the union between men and women, to be explained in the sequel, will be seen to be of such a nature as wholly to obviate the necessity of divorce.

Upon our treatment of the last two points, where we consider the future, we expect more hostile judgement than on anything that has gone before. To both of these points passing reference has already been made. The first is the sex instinct. To us, the whole of the method adopted by society in dealing with this is fatally wrong. It is wrong from the very beginning. Our children are constantly silenced when they ask about the begetting and the birth of offspring. The question is as natural as one about the beats of the heart or the movements of respiration. The one ought to be answered as readily and as clearly as the others. Perhaps there may be a time in the very young life when an explanation of any physiological fact in answer to a question would not be understood, though we are not prepared to define that time. There can never be a time when falsehood should be taught about any function of the body. As our boys and girls grow up, the whole subject of sex relations is made a mystery and a shame. This is the reason why an undue and unhealthy curiosity is begotten to them. The mind becomes excessively concentrated upon them, remains long unsatisfied, or incompletely satisfied—passes into a morbid condition. To us, it seems that the reproductive organs ought to be discussed as frankly, as freely, between parents and children as the digestive. The objection to this is but a form of the vulgar prejudice against the teaching of physiology, a prejudice that found its truest expression in a recent letter from a parent to a School Board mistress. «Please, don't teach my girl anything about her inside. It

does her no good, and which it is rude». How many of us have suffered from the *suggestio falsi* or the *suppressio veri*<sup>/25/</sup> in this matter, due to parents, or teachers, or even servants? Let us each honestly ask ourselves from whose lips, under what circumstances, did we first learn the truth about parentage. And yet it is a truth which, having to do with the birth of little children, we cannot err in calling sacred. In how many cases was it from the mother who had the holiest right to teach—a right acquired by suffering?

Nor can we admit that to speak honestly to children on these matters is to injure them. Let us quote Bebel, who in his turn quotes Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker. «In order to satisfy the constant questionings of her little boy of eight, whith regard to his origin, and to avoid telling him fables, which she regarded as unmoral, she told him the whole truth. The child listened with the greatest attention, and from the day on which he had heard what pain and anxiety he had caused his mother, clung to her with an entirely new tenderness and reverence. The same reverence he had shown also towards other women». To us at least one woman is known who has told all her children the whole truth. The children have for her a love and reverence altogether deeper than, and different from, that which they had before.

With the false shame and false secrecy, against which we protest, goes the unhealthy separation of the sexes that begins as children quit the nursery, and only ends when the dead men and women are laid in the common earth. In the «Story of an African Farm»<sup>/26/</sup> the girl Lyndall cries out, «We were equals once, when we lay new-born babies on our nurses' knees. We shall be equals again when they tie up our jaws for the last sleep». In the schools this separation is carried out, and even in some churches the system, with all its suggestiveness, is in vogue. Its worst form is, of course, in the non-human institutions called monasteries and nunneries. But all the less virulent forms of the same evil are, only in less degree, non-human.

In ordinary society even, the restrictions laid upon the intercourse of the sexes are, like repressive measures with

school-boys, the source of much mischief. These restrictions are especially dangerous in regard to conversational subjects. Every man sees the consequence of this, though he may not know it as a consequence, in the kind of talk that goes on in the smoking-rooms of middle and upper class society. Only when men and women pure-minded, or, at least, striving after purity, discuss the sexual question in all its bearings, as free human beings, looking frankly into each other's faces, will there be any hope of its solution. With this, as we are constantly iterating, must go the understanding that the basis of the whole matter is economic. Mary Wollstonecraft<sup>/27/</sup>, in the «Rights of Woman», taught, in part, this commingling of the sexes, instead of the separation of them throughout life. She demanded that women should have equal educational advantages, should be educated in the same schools and colleges with men; that from infancy to adult age the two should be trained side by side. This demand is a sore thorn in the flesh of Mr. J. C. Jeaffreson in his latest compilation.

Two extreme forms of the distinction of the sexes that spring from this their separation are, as Bebel points out, the effeminate man and masculine woman. These are two types from which even the average person recoils with a perfectly natural horror of the unnatural. For reasons that have been indicated more than once, the former is less frequent than the latter. But these two types do not exhaust the list of diseased forms due to our unnatural dealing with the sex relations. That morbid virginity, of which mention has already been made, is another. Lunacy is a fourth. Suicide is a fifth. As to these last two, a few figures in the one case and a reminder in the other. The reminder first. Most women suicides are between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. Many of these, of course, are due to the pregnancy which our social system drags down to the level of a crime. But others are due to ungratified sex instincts, often concealed under the euphemism «disappointed love». Here are a few lunacy numbers, taken from p. 47 of the English translation of Bebel:—Hanover, 188, 1 lunatic to 457 unmarried, 1 lunatic to 1,376 married inhabitants; Saxony, 260 un-

married lunatics to a million unmarried sane women, 125 married lunatics to a million married sane; Prussia, in 1882, to every 10,000 inhabitants 32.2 unmarried male lunatics, 9.5 married male lunatics, 29.3 female unmarried lunatics, 9.5 married female lunatics.

It is time for men and women to recognise that the slaying of sex is always followed by disaster. Extreme passion is ill. But the opposite extreme of the sacrifice of healthy natural instinct is as ill. «They that are in extremity of either are abominable fellows»<sup>/28/</sup> is as true in this connection as of melancholy and over-mirth when Rosalind railed at them in the Forest of Arden. And yet thousands of women pass, through what hell-fires they only know, to the Moloch of our social system; thousands of women are defrauded, month after month, year after year, «of their unreturning May-time». Hence we—and with us, in this, at all events, most Socialists—contend that chastity is unhealthy and unholy. Always understanding by chastity the entire suppression of all instincts connected with the begetting of children, we regard chastity as a crime. As with all crimes, the criminal is not the individual sufferer, but the society that forces her to sin and to suffer. Here we are at one with Shelley. In his Notes to «Queen Mab» we have the following passage:—«Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality; for it strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolise according to law»<sup>/29/</sup>. Finally, in this most important connexion, we call to mind the accumulated medical testimony to the fact that women suffer more than men under these restraints.

Our other point, before we pass to the concluding portion of this article, is that necessary result of our today system—prostitution. This evil is, as we have said, recognised, and it is legalised, in some European countries. All that we need add here is the truism that its chief supporters are of the middle class. The aristocracy are not, of course, excepted; but the mainstay of the hideous system is the respectable, well-to-do, «most seeming-virtuous» capitalist.

This is not due only to the great accumulation of wealth and the consequent habits of luxury. The significant fact is that in a society based upon capital, whose centre is therefore the capitalistic middle class, prostitution, one of the worst outcomes of that society, is supported chiefly by that very class. This points clearly the moral that once again, under a new form, we urge. That which might be said on the special cases which the *Pall Mall Gazette* has made familiar to us applies to prostitution generally. To get rid of prostitution, we must get rid of the social conditions that are its parent. Midnight meetings, refuges for the distressed, all the well-meant attempts to grapple with this awful problem are, as their initiators despairingly admit, futile. And futile they will remain as long as the system of production lasts which, creating a surplus labour-population, creates with this, criminal men, and women that are very literally and sadly «abandoned». Get rid of this, the capitalistic system of production, say the Socialists, and prostitution will pass away.

This leads us to our last point. What is it that we as Socialists desire? What is it that we expect? What is that of whose coming we feel as assured as of the rising of tomorrow's sun? What are the evolution changes in society that we believe are already close at hand? And what are the changes in the condition of woman that we anticipate as consequence of these? Let us disclaim all intention of the prophetic. He that, reasoning on a series of observed phenomena, sees the inevitable event to which they lead is no prophet. A man cannot prophesy any more than he has a right to wager, about a certainty. To us it seems clear that as in England the Germanic society, whose basis was the free landholder, gave way to the feudal system, and this to the capitalistic, so this last, no more eternal than its predecessors, will give way to the Socialistic system; that as slavery passed into serfdom, and serfdom into the wage-slavery of today, so this last will pass into the condition where all the means of production will belong neither to slave-owner, nor to serf's lord, nor to the wage-slave's master, the capitalist, but to the community as a whole. At the risk of raising

the habitual smile and sneer, we confess that into every detail of that Socialistic working of society we are no more prepared to enter than were the first capitalists to enter into the details of the system that they founded. Nothing is more common, nothing is more unjust, nothing is more indicative of meagre understanding, than the vulgar clamour for exact details of things under the social condition towards which we believe the world is moving. No expounder of any new great truth, no one of his followers, can hope to work out all the truth into its ultimate ramifications. That would have been thought of those who rejected the gravitation discovery of Newton<sup>/30/</sup> because he had not, by application of it, found out Neptune? Or of those who rejected the Darwinian theory<sup>/31/</sup> of Natural Selection because instinct presented certain difficulties? Yet this is precisely what the average opponents of Socialism do; always with a vacuous calmness, ignoring the fact that for every difficulty or misery they suppose will arise from the socialisation of the means of production a score worse are actually existent in the putrescent society of today.

What is it that we feel certain is coming? We have wandered so far from Bebel along our own lines of thought, at the entrance of whose ways his suggestive work has generally placed us, that for the answer to this question we return gladly and gratefully to him. «A society in which all the means of production are the property of the community, a society which recognises the full equality of all without distinction of sex, which provides for the application of every kind of technical and scientific improvement or discovery, which enrolls as workers all those who are at present unproductive, or whose activity assumes an injurious shape, the idlers and the drones, and which, while it minimises the period of labour necessary for its support, raises the mental and physical condition of all its members to the highest attainable pitch».<sup>/32/</sup>

We disguise neither from ourselves nor from our antagonists that the first step to this is the expropriation of all private property in land and in all other means of production. With this would happen the abolition of the State as

it now is. No confusion as to our aims is more common than that which leads woolly thinking people to imagine that the changes we desire can be brought about, and the conditions subsequent upon them can exist, under a State regime such as that of today. The State is now a force-organisation for the maintenance of the present conditions of property and of social rule. Its representatives are a few middle and upper class men contending for places yielding abnormal salaries. The State under Socialism, if indeed a word of such ugly historical associations is retained will be the organised capacity of a community of workers. Its officials will be no better and no worse off than their fellows. The divorce between art and labour, the antagonism between head and hand work, that grieves the souls of artists, without their knowing in most cases the economic cause of their grief, will vanish.

And now comes the question as to how the future position of woman, and therefore of the race, will be affected by all this. Of one or two things we may be very sure. Others the evolution of society alone will decide positively, though every one of us may have his own idea upon each particular point. Clearly there will be equality for all, without distinction of sex. Thus, woman will be independent: her education and all other opportunities as those of man. Like him, she, if sound in mind and body (and how the number of women thus will grow!) will have to give her one, two, or three hours of social labour to supply the wants of the community, and therefore of herself. Thereafter she will be free for art or science, or teaching or writing, or amusement in any form. Prostitution will have vanished with the economic conditions that made it, and make it at this hour, a necessity.

Whether monogamy or polygamy will obtain in the Socialistic state is a detail on which one can only speak as an individual. The question is too large to be solved within the mists and miasmata of the capitalistic system. Personally, we believe that monogamy will gain the day. There are approximately equal numbers of men and women, and the highest ideal seems to be the complete, harmonious, lasting

blending of two human lives. Such an ideal, almost never attainable today, needs at least four things. These are love, respect, intellectual likeness, and command of the necessities of life. Each of these four is far more possible under the system towards which we move than under that in which we now «have our being». The last is absolutely ensured to all. As Ibsen makes Helmer say to Nora, «Home life ceases to be free and beautiful directly its foundations are borrowing and debts».<sup>/33/</sup> But borrowing and debts, when one is a member of community, and not an isolated man fighting for his own hand, can never come. Intellectual likeness. The same education for men and women; the bringing up of these twain side by side, until they join hands at last, will ensure a greater degree of this. That objectionable product of capitalism, Tennyson's «In Memoriam» young woman, with her «I cannot understand, I love»,<sup>/34/</sup> will be a myth. Every one will have learnt that there can be no love without understanding. And the love and respect that are wanting, or are lost today, because of sins and shortcomings, the product of the commercial system of society, will be more easily forthcoming, and vanish almost never. The contract between man and woman will be of a purely private nature, without the intervention of any public functionary. The woman will no longer be the man's slave, but his equal. For divorce there will be no need.

And whether we are right or not in regarding monogamy as the best form of society, we may be sure that the best form will be chosen, and that by wisdoms riper and richer than ours. We may be equally sure that the choice will not be the barter-marriages, with its one-sided polygamy, of our own sad time. Above all, we may be sure, that two great curses that help, with others, to ruin the relations between man and woman will have passed. Those curses are the treatment of men and women as different beings, and the want of truth. There will no longer be one law for the woman and one for the man. If the coming society, like European society today, regards it as right for man to have mistresses as well as wife, we may be certain that the like freedom will be extended to women. Nor will there be the



hideous disguise, the constant lying, that makes the domestic life of almost all our English homes an organised hypocrisy. Whatever the matured and deliberate opinion of the community finds best will be carried out fairly, openly. Husband and wife will be able to do that which but few can do now—look clear through one another's eyes into one another's hearts. For ourselves, we believe that the cleaving of one man to one woman will be best for all, and that these will find each in the heart of the other, that which is in the eyes, their own image.

# Epilogue

The invention and introduction of machines in England in the second third of the eighteenth century gradually caused the transition to industrial production in England as well as in other European countries. At first, modern technology was only applied in some industrial branches, thus leading to large-scale production. As a result of the tremendous need of labour for production in the new factories, the question as to what kind of labour was cheapest was soon raised. Especially the textile industry was most rapidly transformed by these revolutionary changes. Factory production attracted at its early stage especially women and children. Masses of people were streaming into the rapidly-expanding cities. Thus, the proletariat was coming into existence.<sup>1/</sup>

Philanthropists and humanitarians were from the very beginning concerned with the misery of the working people who were living and working under the most debased and degrading conditions. Their ideas and activities were based on a kind of altruism without, however, realizing the contradictory nature of the historical processes they were facing.

Their anxiety about the destruction of traditional social relations caused by the increasingly expanding capitalist production, induced them to develop quite a number of models of a possible new future society. This way they wanted to prevent what could not be prevented any more.

The most important representatives of such ideas were the Utopian socialists, among them the Frenchwoman Flora Tristan.<sup>2/</sup> They had not failed to realize that the

changes towards industrial production were accompanied by changes that directly concerned the women and which were transforming their traditional life style. Karl Marx was quoting Fourier who masterly formulated in his characterization of these changes that the extent of the emancipation of woman reflects the extent of the general social emancipation.<sup>13/</sup>

First voices were to be heard now that demanded political rights for women and along with these they demanded female suffrage. Other theories looked for ways of changing the social position of woman by reshaping the relationship between man and woman. Accordingly, they were questioning the historical usefulness of conventional marriage or were criticizing the privileged position of the men without the least understanding and criticizing the roots of these phenomena, namely private ownership of the means of production.

In England as well as in France, the awakening bourgeois political consciousness had raised the question and the demand for the emancipation of women. Accordingly, Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her polemic *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792.<sup>14/</sup> In 1825 William Thompson, Robert Owen's comrade-in-arms, joined in the heated discussion of the woman question. Arguing against narrow-minded and even hostile ideas about the emancipation of woman, he published a book by the title *Appeal of one half of the Human Race, Women, against the Pretensions of the other half, Men, to retain them in the political, and thence civil and domestic slavery; in reply to a paragraph of Mr Mill's celebrated article on Government.*

Thompson's book was the first detailed study of the problem since Mary Wollstonecraft, the first in England by a man. William Thompson had developed his ideas together with Anna Wheeler who had been acquainted with Fourier and who had introduced Flora Tristan to Robert Owen. Thompson's notes of his talks with Anna Wheeler contain primarily attacks on the historian James Mill who argued that women were sufficiently protected by their fathers and husbands. His son, John Stuart Mill, later be-

came one of the most fervid supporters of female suffrage in England. In 1869 he wrote *Subjection of Women*, a book which reveals the strong influence of his ingenious companion Harriet Taylor. His adopted daughter, Helen Taylor, belonged to those radical political forces who, in spite of the differing aims of their struggle, had found an organizational basis for their ideas in the Democratic Federation in the 1880s.

To be sure, by the middle of the nineteenth century, the woman question as well as the demand for changes in the social position of woman had become widely discussed issues in the developed capitalist countries; theoretical works had been published and practical political reforms had been introduced in several countries. Indeed, some of these contributions had even been made by women who were struggling for the emancipation of their sex.

The general upheaval of the 1848/49 revolutions on the Continent helped to promote this process which resulted finally in organized forms of a women's liberation movement where questions of the struggle for more rights were discussed and formulated. In Germany, for example, such a movement was headed by Louise Otto-Peters who can be ranked among the left wing of the democratic movement.<sup>15/</sup>

Yet, by that time these middle-class movements for the improvement of the social position of women, their struggle for a professional career of women and for the improvement of the working and living conditions of the women of the proletariat had already become unable to find a satisfactory answer to these questions. In contrast to these middle-class movements, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels treated the woman question as a constituent of the main social issue. They were analysing the social position of women in class society and, at the same time, suggested possible ways and means for their emancipation as well as features of their future social position in society. Already in the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels emphasized the close connection between the emancipation of women and the future of the working class. Moreover, they developed a scientific method on the basis of which a strategy could be

worked out for the emancipation of women from their dependence on men, for the development of their personality as well as ways of fully integrating them into society.<sup>16/</sup>

As a result of the continuing development of capitalist production, the «modern» woman question, as Clara Zetkin later formulated it, came into existence in the middle of the nineteenth century. The imperative alternative to capitalist society was a new quality in the struggle of all oppressed and exploited people, including the women. Thus, issues, such as the financial independence of women and the amount of money women were to receive for their work, were raised and opportunities for vocational training for women were demanded. To be sure, the discussion of the relationship of woman and man, the role of woman in family life, and particularly with regard to the upbringing of children, remained closely connected with these economic issues. None of these questions could be ignored or answered casually. They could, of course, be pushed aside for the moment, and, as a matter of fact, the working class in those days was full of conventional notions about the role of woman in the family and in society, notions which had been taken over from the bourgeoisie. The dominant and privileged social role of man remained even for those people of the proletariat who were otherwise active Marxists the basic premise for their evaluation of the changes within traditional marriage, family relations and even within those women who were now struggling for the emancipation of their sex.

To be sure, it had been extremely difficult for Marx living in the capitalist society himself, to work out his theory that anticipated social relations for which society had no real place yet. This problem was particularly distressing with respect to his own family which had been a never-ending source of support for Marx even in the most painful years of their emigration.

Marx' love for and care about his family has already been amply demonstrated. August Bebel, for example, mentioned in his autobiography that Karl Marx had been a very affectionate grandfather.<sup>17/</sup>

After the birth of this grandson Marcel Longuet at the end of April 1881, Marx sent his daughter Jenny this warm, concerned and affectionate letter: «My dear Jenny, I congratulate you on the happy birth of your son. I assume at least that everything is all right, since you took the trouble to write yourself. My «women» had expected that the baby would swell the «better half» of mankind. I prefer for myself the «male» sex for the new generation that is born at this turning point of history. These men have the most revolutionary period before them which mankind ever had to face. It is hard to be «old», to predict only instead of seeing.»<sup>8/</sup>

Marx' theory lived in his family and particularly his daughters who were acting according to their father's principles.

Particularly Eleanor Marx born in London on 16 January, 1855 and usually called Tussy, was the most active of Marx' offspring to disseminate her father's theory in word and deed. Eleanor applied Marxism to the subject that concerned her most directly, namely the emancipation of woman. Thus, she could use her abilities and skills to the benefit of society.

Already at the age of nineteen, she wrote in a letter to Natalie Liebknecht the very important sentence: «It is about time that women get the chance of a professional career and find a different occupation than just being clothes horses.»<sup>9/</sup>

As a child she had been deeply affected by the experience of the class struggle of the developing working-class movement, its beginning international organization, and the response to the first volume of Marx' *Capital*. She had seen how her father's theory about the historic mission of the working class influenced both theoretical work and practical politics and how Marxism was gaining international relevance.

Frederick Engels' influence on Eleanor's future development must be especially emphasized. His winning manner, his affectionate companionship with the Irish working woman Lydia Burns as well as his clear assessment of the

hypocritical morality of the bourgeoisie did not fail to impress the sensitive Tussy.

She was no doubt intellectually the most highly charged of the Marx-daughters, with an eager desire for knowledge. She was absolutely convinced that the victory of Marxism would depend to a considerable degree on her will, knowledge and skills. It is already here that we find a first answer to the question as to why Eleanor Marx became such an outstanding figure in the struggle for the social emancipation of her sex.

Eleanor spoke several languages and translated numerous works into English, French and German. As an admirer of William Shakespeare, she translated Nikolaus Delius' study *The Epic Elements in Shakespeare's Drama*. Eleanor performed as an actress and worked for a number of years as a teacher.

We know today that Eleanor Marx became an important figure in the struggle for a socialist society in her time. Moreover, together with other outstanding women she came to represent a whole historical period in the revolutionary struggle for the emancipation of their sex from their twofold exploitation and oppression.

To be sure, Eleanor's struggle was also influenced by incidents that she herself was unable to control. They had a rather tragic effect on her life revealing at the same time the kind of sacrifice people had to make at any time in order to help socialism to its present success. To live, on the one hand, according to the principles of a convinced and committed socialist and, on the other hand, earn a living in a capitalist society with all the degradation that goes with it, is enough to break a person.

To grow up as a woman, to find a place and even become a leading figure in the developing working-class movement side by side with men, was certainly not easy for the young Marx-daughter and often brought her into conflict with the people of her time who had been brought up and educated in terms of bourgeois morality.

Therefore, it cost her a lot of energy and strength to find an answer to problems, such as love, marriage, the family

and children. Bourgeois society itself had answered these questions by treating bourgeois moral values as unchangeable and inviolable, any attempt to question conventional morals resulted in the isolation of the victim.

Eleanor did not escape such bourgeois prejudice that had developed even before she joined in the struggle for the emancipation of her sex.

She even had to face such prejudice in her own family. Karl and Jenny Marx were very much concerned about the future financial security of their daughters, so that every would-be husband had to provide evidence about a permanent income. This applied to Charles Longuet who married Jenny, as well as to Paul Lafargue with whom Laura lived in Paris. Marx had been too conscious of his own poverty as to allow his daughters to set up a family which would have from the very beginning financial difficulties. It is not surprising that Marx was particularly anxious about Eleanor who had been the youngest and always the favorite of his daughters. Moreover, after her sisters had been married and moved away from London, she was more and more looking after her parents.

Yet, Eleanor was also young and in love. She fell in love with Prosper Lissagaray, a participant in the Paris Commune, who was, however, sixteen years older than Eleanor. The reason for Marx' rejection of Lissagaray probably was that he did not have a permanent income that would provide a secure future for the young family. They remained engaged for many years, but were not allowed to get married. Eleanor was twenty-six when her mother died. Now she became more responsible for the care of her father. She had to accompany him on every journey. Although she liked looking after her father, Eleanor soon understood that she had to sacrifice her personal life, that her life went by and she could not realize her interests.<sup>10/</sup> Moreover, she had to earn a living. She writes in a very affectionate letter to her sister Jenny in 1881: «If you knew how difficult it is to get work of any sort you'd not wonder that I stick to the little I have.»<sup>11/</sup>

At that time, Marx' health was beginning to fail him. Par-



ticularly after the death of his wife on 2 December, 1881, it declined very rapidly.

Following the advice of his doctor, Marx went on a longer trip to Algiers at the beginning of February 1882. As he was rather worried about Eleanor's health,<sup>12/</sup> he finally decided to travel without her. Accordingly, Marx writes to Engels on 12 January, 1882: «She is right, of course, that at her age she cannot afford to lose more time. I do not want in the least that she thinks she is expected to sacrifice her life to the family as the nurse of her old father.»<sup>13/</sup>

In those years Eleanor increasingly admitted to herself her desire to be independent and to do her own work. Accordingly, she writes to her sister Jenny Longuet in January 1882: «After all *work* is the chief thing. To me at least it is a necessity.»<sup>14/</sup> According to Eleanor, it was the prospect of her independence that she found particularly tempting. Therefore, she worked regularly in the British Museum on her translations.

Karl Marx died on 14 March, 1883. Eleanor was, together with Frederick Engels, very busy sorting out and organizing her father's voluminous posthumous works. Moreover, Marx' unpublished works had to be prepared and authorized for publication. Eleanor was getting more and more interested in this kind of work. At the same time, she must have met Edward Aveling in those days, perhaps in the British Museum.<sup>15/</sup> He introduced her to the group of politically active intellectuals whose point of view was developing in the general process of the formation of a socialist party within the working-class movement in England.<sup>16/</sup>

Socialist ideas were most widely discussed in the Social Democratic Federation with H. Hyndman as its leader. Eleanor and Edward were beginning to be very active in this organization. Edward's personal differences with former acquaintances and ideological brothers-in-arms, such as Anni Besant, were for the time being rather heavy on Eleanor's mind, even though these differences were eventually overcome.<sup>17/</sup>

More important was her opposition to Hyndman's style of leadership and her persistent struggle for a Marxist line

in the Social Democratic Federation. She was supported in her struggle by Edward, Frederick Engels, William Morris, Ernest Belfour Bax and others. In the end, the more persistent forces were successful. They formally declared their split from the SDF on 27 December, 1884. Eleanor was one of the most active members of the new group that became the Socialist League. The fact that a woman played a leading role in the discussion of political questions, such as the organization of the working class, was remarkable for the then working-class movement. Thus, Eleanor had made a major contribution to the formation of the Socialist League which was the organizational basis for the Marxist wing of the working-class movement.

Only one year later August Bebel's famous book *Woman in the Past, Present and Future* was published in English. Immediately after its publication Eleanor wrote a press review. This book as well as Engels' study *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, which had come to England at the same time, provided the intellectual stimulus for Eleanor to write her own analysis of the social position of women in class society and the possibilities of their development.

Eleanor's outspoken intention was to contribute to the general organization of all Marxist forces by working for the solution of the woman question. There can be no doubt that it was Eleanor who put forward the demand that women must have the same rights and duties in the working-class struggle as men. Her study was the first statement of a woman on the woman question in the international working-class movement and thus of particular significance on the eve of the foundation of the 2nd International. Its historic place as well as its theoretical insight make it one of the fundamental works in the tradition of Marxist writing.

«The Woman Question» contains a whole programme for the emancipation of woman. Accordingly, Eleanor stressed in her study the need for the close cooperation of man and woman and defined the woman question as part of the general social question. Thus, discussions of the woman question had received a new quality in England.

Moreover, by strictly following the principles she had herself set out for the emancipation of her sex, Eleanor became one of the outstanding figures in the struggle for the emancipation of woman in the history of the international working-class movement.

While busy with the publication of «The Woman Question», Eleanor was at the same time politically very active in the struggle for the organization of all Marxist forces and the preparation and organization of the International Socialist Congress in Paris. For over a year she was, together with Frederick Engels and with other Marxist friends in Paris and Berlin, persistently working for the leadership of the Marxists in the forthcoming congress. The struggle was crucial for the further development of the movement, since the possibilities in France and the English opportunists behind Hyndman were hoping to gain a dominant position.

At the Congress Eleanor translated a number of speeches and reports into several languages, such as Clara Zetkin's speech into English and French.

She returned to London immediately after the Congress in order to join and to lead the strike movement and to continue organizing the working-class women. She did not allow herself any rest; every day from morning until late at night she was active as a propagandist and organizer. Even after the defeat of the strikes she hurried from one meeting to another where she was continuing her struggle in the hope of a final victory. Eleanor also went to Halle in 1890 in order to participate in the first party congress of the German Social Democrats after the abolition of Bismarck's Law against Socialists and in order to prepare the next international congress.

To be sure, this struggle was both physically and emotionally extremely strenuous. Yet she also found that she was recognized as a pioneer in the struggle for equal rights for women in the working-class movement and that her ideas were highly esteemed. Eleanor left, however, the Socialist League when the anarchists became the dominant force in the organization and were pushing out the Marx-

ists. She was trying again to find possibilities for the implementation of her ideas in the SDF. Eleanor was, however, never strong enough to play a decisive role in the formation of a Marxist working-class party in England.

Eleanor was more successful in the preparation of the May Day celebrations on 4 May, 1890 in Hyde Park where she stood together with Frederick Engels on the platform. Engels whose assessments are usually careful and differentiated, enthusiastically describes the participation of about 300,000 people, among them  $\frac{3}{4}$  workers, in the celebrations, the untiring work of Eleanor and Edward, and expresses his confidence that the English working-class movement will eventually join in the big organization of European style.<sup>18/</sup>

Eleanor devotedly prepared such May Day demonstrations a number of times<sup>19/</sup> and her addresses to the demonstrators were always well received. Yet, she never became a leading figure in the British working-class movement.

With the death of Frederick Engels in 1895, Eleanor lost a decisive stake in her life. During those happy years of her companionship with Edward, she had successfully defied her enemies. Now her strength seemed to weaken. Eleanor's depressions in those years cannot be exclusively contributed to Edward's wavering. Eleanor had to experience that some of her best friends from those years of the most severe class war had begun to give up Marxist principles and to find explanations for their revisionism of Marxism in the face of a «reformed capitalism». All that darkened her life, the life of a woman who had made a significant contribution to the development of the personality of woman and to the dissemination of a specific selfconsciousness. Moreover, she had worked out principles governing the emancipation of her sex and was trying to live her own life in accordance with the new principles governing the relationship of man and woman. Suffering from severe depression, she committed suicide on 31 March, 1898.

## Biographical data

16 January, 1855, 6:00 a.m.: Eleanor Marx (Tussy) is born as the youngest daughter of Jenny and Karl Marx in 28 Dean Street, London.

Summer 1859: Eleanor comes down with whooping cough.

November 1860: Eleanor and her sisters stay with Wilhelm and Ernestine Liebknecht for a few weeks when their mother comes down with small pox.

1861: Eleanor attends school. According to reports from her mother, Eleanor loved telling stories.

29 May—about the 15 June, 1868: Eleanor accompanies her father on his visit to Frederick Engels in Manchester.

End of June, beginning of July 1868: Eleanor comes down with scarlet fever.

1868/69: Eleanor attends a private dancing school.

March/April/May 1869: Eleanor visits her sister Laura in Paris.

25 May—October 1869: Eleanor stays with Frederick Engels until the beginning of October (from 29 May—14 June with her father), plays the piano and reads a lot, including Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea*, *Götz von Berlichingen*, sagas, Serbian folk songs, etc. At the beginning of Sep-

tember she accompanies Frederick Engels and Lydia Burns on their visit to Ireland. During their three-week stay Eleanor visits Dublin, the Wicklow Hills, Killarnay and Cork.

May 1870: Eleanor visits Frederick Engels with her father.

9–31 August, 1870: The whole Marx family goes to Ramsgate for a holiday.

Beginning of May, 1871: Eleanor and her sister Jenny visit Laura, their sister, in Bordeaux because she is very weak after the birth of her third child. After the defeat of the Paris Commune, the three Marx-daughters are forced to leave the town and take refuge in Bagnères-de-Luchon in the Pyrenees.

6 August, 1871: Eleanor, Jenny and Laura visit Paul Lafargue in the Spanish small town of Bosost where he had taken refuge after the defeat of the Paris Commune. On their return journey, Eleanor and Jenny are taken into custody on the Franco-Spanish border and brought back to Bagnères-de-Luchon under an escort of 24 policemen. There they are placed in custody and questioned until 9 August. On the 19 August their English passports are returned to them.

December 1871: Eleanor begins to conduct correspondence for her father.

May 1872: Eleanor becomes acquainted with the exile Communist Prosper Lissagaray, who had taken refuge in her parents' home in London, during an evening party.

26 May, 1872: Jenny Marx writes to Wilhelm Liebknecht: «Eleanor is ... a politician from top to toe.»

May–September 1873: Eleanor works in Brighton as a teacher in a private school.

May 1873: Eleanor becomes engaged to the former Communist Prosper Lissagaray.

24 November–15 December, 1873: Eleanor goes with to Harrogate her father to take the waters.

19 August–21 September, 1874: Eleanor accompanies her father on a rest cure to Karlsbad.

21–24 September, 1874: Eleanor visits Wilhelm Liebknecht in Leipzig with her father.

24–27 September, 1874: Eleanor and her father in Dresden.

27–29 September, 1874: Eleanor and her father in Berlin.

29 September–1 October, 1874: Eleanor visits Hamburg with her father.

November, December 1874: Eleanor translates the Reichstag's speech delivered by Wilhelm Liebknecht on 21 November, 1874, for publication in the journal *Rouge et noir* edited by Lissagaray and published in London.

15 August–15 September, 1876: Eleanor is again in Karlsbad with her father.

15 September–21 September, 1876: She visits Prague with her father (seeing Max Oppenheim), as well as Kreuznach and Lüttich.

1877: Eleanor's English translation of Nikolaus Delius' *The Epic Elements in Shakespeare's Dramas* appears in the Scholarly Reports of the New Shakespeare Society.

8 August–26 September, 1877: Eleanor accompanies her parents on a rest cure to Bad Neuenahr.

1878: Eleanor works for the following literary societies:

Chaucer Society, Shakespeare Society and Philological Society.

8–20 August, 1879: Eleanor visits St. Hélier on Jersey.

4 July, 1880: Eleanor's fiancé Prosper Lissagaray returns to Paris.

9–16 December, 1880: Eleanor meets August Bebel, Eduard Bernstein and Paul Singer who were visiting Marx and Engels in London.

July 1881: Eleanor becomes an actress. She has the reputation of the intellectual spirit of a small circle of literary associates in the Shakespeare Society.

August 1881–January 1882: Eleanor is seriously ill (nervous depression).

2 December, 1881: Jenny Marx died.

29 December, 1881–16 January, 1882: She accompanies her father to the Isle of Wight.

February 1882: Eleanor formally breaks off her engagement with Lissagaray after the last meeting in Argenteuil.

July, August 1882: Eleanor visits her sister Laura in Argenteuil.

14 March, 1883: Karl Marx died.

1883: Eleanor meets Edward Aveling.

24 July, 1884: Start of Eleanor's partnership with Edward Aveling.

July, August 1884: Eleanor and Edward go on a honeymoon trip to Middleton, Derbyshire.



August 1884: Eleanor Marx-Aveling joins the Social Democratic Federation.

27 December, 1884: Eleanor Marx-Aveling, Edward Aveling, William Morris and Ernest Belfort Bax found the Socialist League.

16 January, 1885: Eleanor, Bax, Mahon, Morris and others sign a circular where they explain the reasons for their split from the Social Democratic Federation.

20 September, 1885: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling take part in a meeting of several thousand people in Dod Street. During the course of the meeting, clashes between the demonstrators and the police occur. The meeting revived the struggle for the freedom of speech.

1886: Prosper Lissagaray's *History of the Commune of 1871* is published in England in a translation from the French by Eleanor Marx-Aveling. Eleanor had already translated the book in 1877. She also translated Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* from the French into English.

1886: Eleanor and Edward Aveling publish «*The Woman Question*» in the *Westminster Review*.

14 April, 1886: The three Marx-daughters publish a reply to Bismarck's slander of their father in the *Sozialdemokrat*, No. 16 (1886).

31 August, 1886: Eleanor and Edward travel on the «City of Chicago» from Liverpool to America.

10 September, 1886: Arrival at New York. New York is the starting point of a political rally through more than 40 American towns. They were accompanied by Wilhelm Liebknecht who had arrived at New York on 13 September.

September–December 1886: They visit after New York Adams, Manchester, Boston, Lawrence, New Bedford, Providence, Holyoke, Springfield, Rockville, Meriden, New Haven, Elizabeth, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, Washington, Newark, Jersey City, Bridgeport, Albany, Troy, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, Sandusky, Detroit, Loominton, La Salle, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Davenport, Kansas City, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Louisville, Cincinnati, Dayton, Pittsburgh, Williamsport. On 25 November–last joint demonstration with Wilhelm Liebknecht who goes back to Europe on 27 November.

25 December, 1886: Edward and Eleanor return to Europe.

4 January, 1887: Arrival at London.

26 January, 2 February, 1887: Eleanor speaks about her trip to the USA at a mass meeting in Farringdon Hall, Farringdon Street.

11 April, 1887: Protest meeting against the new criminal law for Ireland in Hyde Park. About 15,000 people take part in the meeting. Eleanor Marx-Aveling speaks to the people from one of the fifteen platforms. Her speech was enthusiastically received by the people.

April, May 1887: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling give a number of talks in Radical Clubs in the East End of London. Their aim was to form an English working-class party with a Marxist programme.

21 May, 1887: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling speak at an open-air meeting in Victoria Park, Hackney.

29 May, 1887: Eleanor participates in the 3rd Annual Conference of the Socialist League where the anarchists win the majority (17:11). Eleanor quits the League for this and other reasons.

- Summer 1887: Eleanor and Edward are on a rest cure in Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace.
- November 1887: Eleanor decides to stop acting after a bad critique of a theatre performance.
- 13 November, 1887: Eleanor participates in a mass demonstration of 100,000 workers in Trafalgar Square and is attacked by police. She is, however, not injured.
- Early summer 1888: Three plays by Ibsen (including *An Enemy of the People*) which Eleanor translated into English, are published by Ellis.
- 9 August, 1888: Eleanor Marx-Aveling, Edward Aveling, Frederick Engels and Carl Schorlemmer go on another trip to the USA.
- March, April 1889: Eleanor Marx-Aveling played a major role in the preparation of Eduard Bernstein's brochure *The International Working Men's Congress of 1889. A Reply to 'Justice'* which was edited by Frederick Engels.
- Early April 1889: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling see Hyndman in order to present him Bernstein's reply to the editorial board of *Justice* where he suggests a joint international congress.
- Spring 1889: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling belong to the leadership of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of Great Britain and Ireland. Eleanor maintains a close friendship with the leader of the union of gasworkers, Will Thorne, whom she taught reading and writing.
- 21 May, 1889: Eleanor uses a typewriter.
- 25 May, 1889: Eleanor Marx-Aveling meets Eduard Bernstein, John Burns, Tom Mann and others in preparation

of the Paris Congress. The meeting is organized by Eleanor.

6 July, 1889: Eleanor and Edward arrive at Le Perreux (Paris) in preparation of the International Socialist Congress.

14–20 July, 1889: Eleanor participates in the founding congress of the II. International in Paris. She translates Clara Zetkin's and other speeches into English and French.

12 August–14 September, 1889: Eleanor active in the strike of the London dockers and gains a good reputation.

25 August, 1889: Eleanor speaks to the London dockers at one of their big demonstrations in Hyde Park.

Early September 1889: Eleanor and Edward participate in the annual congress of the British trade unions.

Middle of September–December 1889: Strike of the working women of the cable factory and the rubber plants in Silvertown. Eleanor, who was the most active leader of the strike, founds an association of young working women during the strike.

14 November, 1889: Frederick Engels writes to Paul and Laura Lafargue that Clara Zetkin informed him about Eleanor's political activities. Clara Zetkin had taken part in strike meetings of the Silvertown working women where Eleanor had delivered speeches.

December 1889: Eleanor founds an association of working women as part of the Gasworkers and General Labourers Union.

December 1889–February 1890: Eleanor is very active in the strike of the gasworkers in the south of London.



Karl Marx in Algiers in February 1882.



Jenny Marx in her last years.



Eleanor in 1877/78.

THE  
WOMAN QUESTION.

BY  
EDWARD, AND ELEANOR MARX AVELING.



FOURTH

THOUSAND.



LONDON:  
SWAN SONNENSCHN, LOWREY, & CO.,  
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.  
1885

Die Frau  
und der Sozialismus.

VON  
August Bebel.

Zürich-Hottingen  
Verlag der Volksbuchhandlung  
1879

Der Ursprung der Familie,  
des  
Privateigentums  
und des Staats.

Im Anschluss  
an  
Lewis H. Morgan's Forschungen  
von  
Friedrich Engels.

Hottingen-Zürich.  
Druck der Schweizerischen Genossenschafts-Verlagsdruckerei.  
1884.

Berliner Arbeiterbibliothek.

herausgegeben von Max Schubel.  
III. Heft.

Die  
Arbeiterinnen- und Frauenfrage  
der Gegenwart.

Von  
Clara Zetkin (Paris).

Preis 20 Pfennige.

Verlag der „Berliner Volks-Tribüne“.  
Berlin NO., Cranichstraße 23.  
1889.

Title pages of the most important works  
on the woman question  
published in the 1870s and 1880s.



11455.

HISTORY  
OF  
THE COMMUNE OF 1871.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY  
LISSAGARAY.

BY  
ELEANOR MARX AVELING.

LONDON:  
REEVES AND TURNER, 196 STRAND.  
1885.



Eleanor Marx-Aveling translated  
Prosper Lissagaray's *History of the Commune of 1871*  
into English.

Prosper Lissagaray, a Communard,  
lived in exile in London from 1871 to 1880  
and was engaged to Eleanor  
from 1873 to 1882.

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THE

WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT  
IN  
AMERICA.

BY

EDWARD & ELEANOR MARX AVELING.

SECOND EDITION,



LONDON

SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO.,  
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1891

*The Working-Class Movement in America*  
was written by Eleanor Marx-Aveling  
and Edward Aveling.



Wilhelm Liebknecht, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling during a political rally in America in 1886.



EUROPEAN PLAN.

Broadway, opposite Bond Street,

JULIUS A. ROBINSON PROP'R.

# ST. NICHOLAS HOTEL,

EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN PLANS.



Broadway, Washington Place and Mercer Street.

JULIUS A. ROBINSON, OWNER AND MANAGER.

New York, 21. 8. 1888

My dear Laura,

Here we are in New York & I can  
 scarcely realize that Engel is in America  
 with us! Our voyage over was very jolly, tho'  
 it was rough part of the time & drained. But we were  
 well & all in the best of health & spirits. I've not known  
 the General to be so well - or so lively! - for years. When  
 his eyes were full of troubles. - Unfortunate!  
 The great heat here, (it is cooler, thank goodness, today)  
 & a cold we caught knocked him up a bit. But it is  
 nothing much & on the whole he is wonderfully well.  
 Indeed of the two arguments I think him ten years  
 younger than Jollymer, who is quite an old man  
 compared with Engel. I fear that fall & blow on the  
 head has hurt Jollymer more than we or he  
 supposed. You have no idea how he has aged. He  
 is now, I think, about the same age as your father. Perhaps

Page of a letter  
 which Eleanor wrote to her sister Laura  
 in Paris on 21 August, 1888.

- 1 January, 1890: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling begin to work as sub-editors for the monthly *Time* edited by Bax.
- 4 May, 1890 (Sunday): May Day demonstration in Hyde Park. Eleanor Marx-Aveling is on the central committee which is responsible for the demonstration of 250,000–300,000 workers. Together with Eduard Bernstein on a platform.
- 1–6 September, 1890: Eleanor is probably at the Trades Union Congress in Liverpool in which 400 delegates take part.
- 10 October, 1890: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling travel from London to Lille where they take part in the VIII. Congress of the French Workers' Party (11 and 12 October). Eleanor extends greetings from the Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of London. She holds the chair at one meeting.
- 13 October, 1890: Eleanor travels with the French comrades Jules Guesde, Ferroul and Duc-Quercy from Lille to Halle. They arrive there at midnight.
- 14–17 October, 1890: Eleanor is a guest at the party congress of the German Social Democrats.
- 16 and 17 October, 1890: Eleanor participates in a meeting of August Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht and other members of the party leadership of the Social Democrats and foreign guests discussing the convention of the International Socialist Congress in Brussels in August 1891.
- 18 October, 1890: Eleanor returns to London.
- 2 December, 1890: August Bebel and Paul Singer meet John Burns, Robert Cunningham-Graham, William Thorne and others at Eleanor's house.

- 3 May, 1891: Eleanor addresses the participants in the May Day demonstration in Hyde Park.
- 17 May, 1891: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling take part in the 2nd Congress of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 16–22 August, 1891: Eleanor Marx-Aveling and William Thorne participate in the 2nd International Socialist Workers' Congress in Brussels as delegates of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of Great Britain and Ireland.
- August 1891: Eleanor's report to the Congress is published as a brochure by the title of *Report from Great Britain and Ireland to the delegates of the Brussels International Congress*.
- End of November 1891: Eleanor is on an eight-day political rally to the gasworkers of the north of Ireland.
- 5 February, 1892: Eleanor published an article by the title of «How shall we organize?» in the Viennese *Arbeiterinnen-Zeitung*.
- 5 March, 1892: Eleanor represents the Union in Plymouth.
- 11 May, 1892: May Day demonstration of several hundred thousand people, including representatives of the working classes of other countries, in Hyde Park, London. Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Frederick Engels are on the platform.
- Beginning of July 1892: Eleanor participates in the 3rd Congress of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of Great Britain and Ireland.
- January 1893: Eleanor is on a political rally in the Midlands, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

1893: The collected works of Ferdinand Lassalle are published in England by the title of *Ferdinand Lassalle as a Social Reformer*. Eleanor translated the introduction into English.

6–12 August, 1893: Eleanor participates in the International Socialist Workers' Congress in Zürich as a delegate of the gasworkers union. She meets Clara Zetkin at the Congress again.

25 June, 1894: Eleanor, Edward Aveling, Frederick Engels and Louise Kautsky attend «The Messiah» as part of the Handel Festival in the Crystal Palace, London.

Beginning of July 1894: Eleanor visits her sister Laura in Paris and participates in the congress of the gasworkers.

August–November 1894: Eleanor writes from now on weekly articles on the development of the international working-class movement in the *Workman's Times*.

15 November, 1894: Frederick Engels discusses with Eleanor her article «Wie Lujo Brentano zitiert» published in *Die Neue Zeit*, XIII (1894/95), vol. I, No. 9.

December 1894: Eleanor stays in Manchester.

1895: G. W. Plechanov's *Anarchism and Socialism* (translated by Eleanor from German into English) is published in London.

1895: Eleanor Marx-Aveling's book *The Working-Class Movement in England* is published in German in Nuremberg with a preface by Wilhelm Liebknecht.

5 August, 1895: Frederick Engels died.

May 1896: Eleanor writes an article for the May Day pamphlet *Rabotnik* initiated by Plechanov. The pam-

phlet also contains articles by Wilhelm Liebknecht, Karl Kautsky and Paul Lafargue.

27 July–1 August, 1896: Eleanor Marx-Aveling participates in the 4th International Socialist Congress in London. Eleanor, Clara Zetkin, Emma Ihrer and Adelheid Popp draft a resolution for the political emancipation and organization of women, which is adopted unanimously. On 31 July Eleanor Marx-Aveling takes part in a meeting of the women delegates to the Congress who were meeting separately while the Congress is going on. They decide to table a motion about the role of working-class women in the working-class movement and the class struggle.

January 1898: The strike of the mechanics for the eight-hour day is defeated. Eleanor is deeply disappointed by Bernstein's revisionist position.

31 March, 1898: Eleanor Marx-Aveling commits suicide.



# Notes

## Preface

- 1 See Eleanor Marx-Aveling in a letter to P. L. Lawrow in Paris, 7 June, 1886: «Have you received our little brochure?» in *Correspondence of the members of the Marx family with Russian political personalities* (Moscow, 1974), p. 88 (in Russian). The essay «The Woman Question» was issued as a separate publication by the London publishers Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey and Co. in 1887.
- 2 August Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, trans. from the original German text of the 33rd edition by Daniel de Leon (New York, 1971), p. 6.
- 3 Vladimir I. Lenin, «The State. A Lecture delivered at the Sverdlov University, July 11, 1919,» *Collected Works*, vol. 29 (Moscow, 1974), p. 473.
- 4 Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Chicago, 1902). The book was first published in German as *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats. Im Anschluß an Lewis H. Morgan's Forschungen* (Hottingen-Zürich, 1884).
- 5 *Marxism Today*, London, No. 3/1972.
- 6 Harald Wessel, *Tussy oder zweiunddreißig Reisebriefe über das sehr bewegte Leben von Eleanor Marx-Aveling* (Leipzig, 1982).
- 7 The *Communist Manifesto* was translated by Samuel Moore who, together with Edward Aveling, had already translated the first volume of Marx' *Capital* into English.

## The Woman Question

- 1 August Bebel, one of the founders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and one of the most outstanding leaders of the German and international working-class movement. He joined the International Working-Men's Association in 1866 and became the President of the Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine in 1867. Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht and W. Bracke founded the Social Democratic Workers' Party («Eisenachers») in 1869. Bebel became one of their leaders. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment for alleged high-treason in 1872.

Bebel was one of the leaders of the Social Democrats in their twelve-year struggle against the so-called Law against Socialists, a law introduced by the German Reichskanzler Otto von Bismarck to prohibit all activities of the Social Democrats. Bebel made a significant contribution to the dissemination of Marxism in the German working-class movement and was one of the founders of the 2nd International. One of his most important theoretical works is *Woman and Socialism* (*Die Frau und der Sozialismus*) published in German in 1879.

- 2 August Bebel's book *Woman and Socialism* was first published in Leipzig in February 1879. On 24 March of the same year the book was banned by Bismarck's Law against Socialists that had been introduced in October 1878. Therefore, Bebel had to change the title of his book for the following eight editions. It was published by the title of *Woman – Past, Present and Future* (*Die Frau in Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft*). The first English edition was also published under this title.
- 3 The authors use here the common short form of Bebel's book *Die Frau*.
- 4 The authors refer to the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Germany that was founded in Eisenach in 1869 and changed its name to Socialist Workers' Party of Germany at the uniting party congress at Gotha in 1875.
- 5 Frederick Engels' study *The Origin of the Family* was first published in German in Zürich in 1884 and was first published in English in the U.S.A. after the turn of the century. Eleanor Marx-Aveling adopts Engels' thesis that family relations are historically determined and can therefore be changed.
- 6 Bacon, Francis Verulam, Viscount St. Albans, English philosopher, statesman and jurist. Karl Marx regarded Bacon as «the true father of English materialism and all modern experimental science» because he consistently supported materialist principles, regarded the empirical method as the basis of knowledge and demanded man's control over nature as the aim of science. Thus, Bacon laid the basis for English empiricism.
- 7 The authors refer to John Stuart Mill who delivered a speech on the need for female suffrage in the House of Commons on 20 May, 1867. This speech was published separately as a pamphlet in 1867. Mill had been dealing with the social and political position of women since about 1830. His ideas were strongly influenced by Harriet Taylor, a feminist and forerunner of the women's liberation movement. *The Subjection of Women* published in 1869 was their most important joint work. Mill's speech in the House of Commons was based on the ideas of this book.
- 8 A bill to prevent contagious diseases in the army was tabled in 1864. Its main object was the compulsory examination of all prostitutes. The bill was adopted in 1869 as the Contagious Diseases Act.
- 9 The first women's colleges appeared in the form of boarding schools

- in England (primarily in Oxford and Cambridge) in 1869. Women have been admitted to examinations at these universities since the 1880s, in London already since 1878. About 4,000 women received a college education in England between 1881 and the turn of the century.
- 10 In the early 1880s a number of intellectuals organized themselves around Hyndman («A careerist democrat and rejected candidate for Parliament» – Engels) and founded the Democratic Federation. Soon an influential Marxist group, including Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling, formed within this organization. In summer 1884 the organization changed its name to Social Democratic Federation. As the Marxist group opposed Hyndman's opportunist line, they were forced to split off from the Federation and form an organization of their own, the Socialist League. The Avelings, Ernest Belfort Bax, William Morris and others were active in the Socialist League. When the anarchist wing got the upper hand in the late 1880s, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and others quit the League.
- 11 The authors refer to the followers of the Fabian Society, as, for instance, George Bernard Shaw.
- 12 The «middle class» is another expression for the «bourgeoisie».
- 13 Latin had been the diplomatic language in the Middle Ages. French became the official international language in the days of Louis XIV until it was replaced by English at the beginning of the twentieth century.
- 14 According to Kant, the laws of nature exist independently of the cognitive subject who only classifies the various objects. The object of cognition is therefore only the outer appearance of things but not its essence, objective reality. «The main feature of Kantian philosophy is the reconciliation of materialism and idealism.» (Lenin). Kant understood peace in his «Traktat ‹Zum ewigen Frieden›» (1795) as a task mankind had to solve step by step. The authors' quotation adopts Kant's idea in Immanuel Kant, *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (Leipzig, 1943), p. 270 ff.
- 15 Prussia introduced laws governing organization and the right of assembly. According to these laws, all associations and meetings had to be under police control. Women, apprentices and school students were prohibited to join associations.
- 16 Clara Zetkin, who had to emigrate to Paris, deals with this phenomenon in her essay «The Russian girl students» which was published in *Neue Zeit* (1888).
- 17 Code civil de Français or Code Napoléon. The Napoléonic Code was published in 1804 comprising the main body of French civil law. It was the first modern, easily comprehensible civil code and is still valid in France today.
- 18 Teutons, an ancient Germanic people from Jutland who migrated to Gaul in the second century B.C. On their migration, the Teutons defeated the Roman army several times and thus became a serious threat to the Roman empire. They were annihilated by a Roman army under

- Marius near Aquae Sextiae in 102 B.C. Often used as a synonym for the Germans.
- 19 Demosthenes. Most important Athenian orator and statesman. He was a lifelong opponent of the power of Macedonia. He set himself the task to reestablish Athens' predominance. When he realized his failure, he committed suicide.
  - 20 Miranda and Ferdinand are figures in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611).
  - 21 Comedy by Shakespeare.
  - 22 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, English poet and representative of the early Romantic school. His original enthusiasm for the French Revolution is reflected in the drama *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794). He was full of social illusions. Coleridge also wrote a literary autobiography *Biographia Literaria* (1817) that reflects the influence of Kant, Fichte and Schelling.
  - 23 Thackeray founded this most important English satirical magazine. The caricatures referred to, are by Sir John Tenniel who also created the humourous figure of John Bull.
  - 24 See John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, Helen Taylor, *The Subjection of Women* (London, 1869).
  - 25 False suggestion and actual oppression.
  - 26 Olive Schreiner wrote the novel *The Story of an African Farm* (1883) which was well received in the women's liberation movement. Eleanor knew Olive Schreiner personally.
  - 27 Mary Wollstonecraft's work *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published in 1792. Based on the doctrines of the enlightenment, the book discusses the influence of society on human nature. Education is regarded as a means to change human consciousness. Wollstonecraft also supported the idea of coeducation.
  - 28 William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act IV, i.
  - 29 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, English poet. His poem *Queen Mab; a Philosophical Poem*, which was published in 1813, reveals his vision of the history of mankind from the past through the present into the future.
  - 30 Newton, Isaac, English physicist, mathematician and astronomer. He derived his general law of gravitation from the Kepler's laws, thus laying the basis for cosmic mechanics. His system of mechanics made him the father of classical physics.
  - 31 Darwin, Charles, English scientist who formulated the theory of evolution by natural selection. His book *On the Origin of Species* (1859) opened a new era in the history of biology. Marx and Engels welcomed Darwin's theory enthusiastically.
  - 32 See August Bebel, *Woman and Socialism*, p. 303, Berlin 1979.
  - 33 Ibsen, Henrik, Norwegian dramatist. In 1879 the drama *Et dukkehejm* (*Nora or A Doll's House*) where he discusses the social position of an oppressed middle-class woman. Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House*, Act I.
  - 34 Alfred Tennyson, Lord (1809-1892), English poet. *In Memoriam* was first published in 1850.

## Epilogue

- 1 See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 6 (Moscow, 1976), p. 491: «The more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labour of men superseded by that of women (and children).»
- 2 See Clara Zetkin, *On the History of the Proletarian Women's Emancipation Movement in Germany* (Berlin, 1958), p. 161 (in German).
- 3 Frederick Engels and Karl Marx, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, in *Collected Works*, vol. 4 (Moscow, 1975), p. 196.
- 4 Mary Wollstonecraft's book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published in French and English in 1792.
- 5 For reference to Louise Otto-Peters see Clara Zetkin, p. 151–160.
- 6 See Marx, Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 482 ff.
- 7 See August Bebel, *Aus meinem Leben* (Berlin, 1978), p. 623.
- 8 Karl Marx in a letter to Jenny Longuet, 29 April, 1881, in *Marx Engels Werke*, vol. 35 (Berlin, 1967), p. 136 (in German).
- 9 Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Correspondence with Karl Marx and Frederick Engels* (The Hague, 1963), p. 418–419, cit. in Wessel, *Tussy*, p. 47.
- 10 See Eleanor Marx-Aveling to Jenny Longuet, 8 January, 1882: «I am not young enough to lose more time in waiting—and if I cannot do this soon it will be no use to try it at all.», in *The Daughters of Karl Marx. Family Correspondence 1866–1898*. Commentary and notes by Olga Meier, transl. and adapted by Faith Evans (London, 1982), p. 146.
- 11 *The Daughters*, p. 134.
- 12 In January 1882 Eleanor finally decided to break with Prosper Lissagaray. It was possible that she had already met Edward Aveling at that time. See Eleanor Marx to Jenny Longuet, 15 January, 1882: «Not only that the burden had become too heavy – I had other reasons.», in *The Daughters*, p. 148.
- 13 Karl Marx to Frederick Engels, 12 January, 1882, in *Marx Engels Werke*, vol. 35, p. 34.
- 14 *The Daughters*, p. 148.
- 15 *The Daughters*, p. 148.
- 16 *The International Working-Class Movement. On its History and Theory*, 7 vols., vol. 2 (Moscow, 1981), p. 261 (in German).
- 17 Anni Besant was spreading slander about Edward Aveling in order to take jealous revenge. Anni Besant was a bourgeois radical who was moving temporarily towards the socialist movement in the 1880s.
- 18 See Frederick Engels in a letter to August Bebel, 9 May, 1890: «Aveling and especially Tussy organized the whole celebration and since then have acquired quite a different stand in the movement.». In *Marx Engels Werke*, vol. 37 (Berlin, 1967), p. 401.
- 19 See *Correspondence of the Members of the Marx Family*, p. 120 ff.

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Eleanor Marx-Aveling (and Edward Aveling), «The Factory Hall», published in the series *The Socialist Platform*, No. 3, ed. by the Socialist League (London, 1885).

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According to Harald Wessel, *Tussy* (Leipzig, 1982).

# List of Persons

- Adams, Walther; Harriet, B.  
Aveling, Edward (1851-1898)  
Bacon, Francis (1561-1626)  
Bax, Ernest Balfour (1854-1926)  
Bebel, August (1840-1913)  
Beecher Hooker, Isabella  
Bernstein, Eduard (1850-1932)  
Besant, Annie (1847-1933)  
Bismarck, Otto v. (1815-1898)  
Bracke, Wilhelm (1842-1880)  
Burns, John (1858-1943)  
Burns, Lydia (1827-1878)  
Cobridge, Samuel Taylor (1772-1834)  
Cunningham-Graham, Robert (1852-1936)  
Darwin, Charles (1809-1882)  
Demosthenes (384-322 v. u. Z.)  
Engels, Friedrich (1820-1895)  
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb (1762-1814)  
Fourier, François-Marie-Charles (1772-1837)  
Guesde, Jules (1845-1922)  
Hyndman, Henry Mayers (1842-1921)  
Ibsen, Henrik (1828-1906)  
Ihrer, Emma (1857-1911)  
Jeaffreson, I. C. (1831-nach 1900)  
Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804)  
Kautsky, Louise (1860-1950)  
Lafargue, Laura (1845-1911)  
Lafargue, Paul (1845-1911)  
Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864)  
Lawrow, Pjotr Lawrowitsch (1823-1900)  
Liebknecht, Ernestine (1834-1867)  
Liebknecht, Natalie (1835-1909)  
Liebknecht, Wilhelm (1826-1900)  
Lissagaray, Hippolyte Prosper Oliver (1838-1901)  
Longuet, Jenny (1844-1883)  
Longuet, Marcel (1881-1949)  
Maitland, Dolly  
Mann, Tom (1856-1941)



Marius, Gaius (156–86 v. u. Z.)  
Marx-Aveling, Eleanor (1855–1898)  
Marx, Jenny (1814–1881)  
Marx, Karl (1818–1883)  
Mill, James (1773–1836)  
Mill, John-Stuart (1806–1873)  
Morris, William (1834–1896)  
Napoleon I. (1769–1821)  
Newton, Isaac (1643–1727)  
Nieuwenhuis (1846–1919)  
Otto-Peters, Louise (1819–1895)  
Owen, Robert (1771–1858)  
Plechanow, G. W. (1856–1918)  
Popp, Adelheid (1869–1939)  
Robespierre, Maximilian-Marie-Isodor de (1758–1794)  
Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph (1775–1854)  
Schorlemmer, Carl (1834–1892)  
Schreiner, Olive (1855–1920)  
Shakespeare, William (1564–1616)  
Shaw, George Bernard (1856–1950)  
Shelley, Percy Bysshe (1792–1822)  
Singer, Paul (1844–1911)  
Sonnenschein, William Swan (1855–nach 1917)  
Taylor, Harriet (1807–1858)  
Taylor, Helen (1831–1907)  
Tenniel, Sir John  
Tennyson, Alfred (1809–1892)  
Thackeray, William Makepeace (1811–1863)  
Thompson, William (etwa 1785–1833)  
Thorne, William (1857–1946)  
Tristan, Flora (1803–1844)  
Wollstonecraft, Mary (1759–1797)  
Zetkin, Clara (1857–1933)

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Herrn Wilhelm Liebknecht,

Amtsgericht Gefängnis

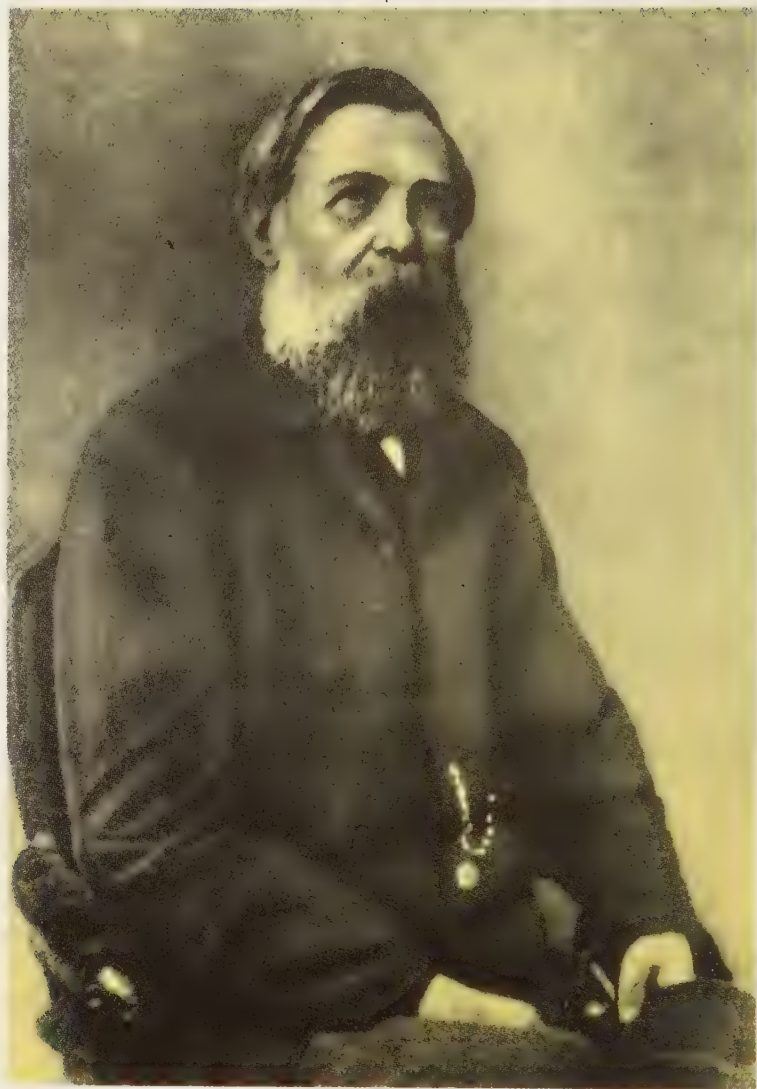
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Germany.

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Envelope of a letter  
which Eleanor wrote to Wilhelm Liebknecht  
in 1897 when he was imprisoned  
in Berlin-Charlottenburg.



Frederick Engels in the early 1890s.



Die Frauen auf dem Parteitag.

Eleanor (standing on the left) during a discussion  
with four women-delegates to the Halle party congress  
of the Social Democratic Party of Germany  
in Halle in 1890.—

Frau Ihrer (sitting on the right), Frau Steinbach,  
Frau Blohm and Frau Gundelach.

Reprinted from *Der Wahre Jacob*, No. 112 (1890).



According to *Der Wahre Jacob*, No. 112 (1890), Eleanor, who had “a graceful appearance with very attractive, intelligent features,” also participated in the *Kommers* of the Halle party congress in the “Prinz Karl,” the biggest music-hall of the town, on 14 October, 1890 (Eleanor is the first on the left in this drawing from *Der Wahre Jacob*).





Eleanor as a participant  
in the International Socialist Congress in Brussels in 1891  
(below, middle door, first on the right).



May Day demonstration in Hyde Park, London in 1892:  
Eleanor (wearing glasses) next to Frederick Engels,  
Louise Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein and others on the platform 14 -  
Edward Aveling is speaking to the demonstrators  
for the Eight-Hour working day  
who are wearing an 8 on their hats.



Eleanor as a participant  
in the International Socialist Congress  
in Zurich in 1893  
(first row, the second on the right).



Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling.  
This contemporary drawing of Eleanor was published  
in a memorial article by Wilhelm Liebknecht  
in the *Neue Welt Kalender* in 1899.







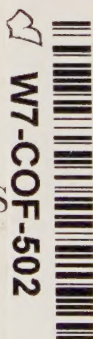
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