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Edward Westermarck: The First Sociobiologist

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Abstract and Keywords

The first sociobiologist was not Edward O. Wilson but, rather, the Finnish sociologist Edward Westermarck. Far ahead of his time, at the turn of the 20th century, Westermarck presented Darwinian natural selectionist theories of numerous social phenomena, especially marriage and family practices across a wide range of societies and the evolution of moral emotions. Westermarck was revered in his time, and yet despite his brilliance and extraordinary erudition, by the 1930s he was almost completely forgotten outside of Finnish sociology due to the rising tide of social environmentalism and determinism that was inhospitable to biological explanations of human behavior. However, with the revival of Darwinian thinking in the social sciences in the past four decades, Westermarck deserves to be rehabilitated. In sociology, he needs to be considered one of the great founding fathers of that discipline even by those who may not be receptive to Darwinism.

Keywords: Darwinism, sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, incest avoidance, sexual selection, retributive emotions, moral emotions, Darwinian conservatism, Durkheim rivalry

Edward Westermarck: The First Sociobiologist

THE field known as sociobiology was officially launched in 1975 when the Harvard zoologist Edward O. Wilson published his almost instantly famous (or infamous) book, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. The field (probably better identified as a theoretical approach or research program) was grounded in the Darwinian theory of biological evolution by natural selection and was defined by Wilson as the study of the biological basis of all social behavior, in both nonhuman animals and humans. In his book, Wilson concentrated mostly on nonhuman animals, but in the final chapter he sketched a set of ideas for understanding the biological basis of human social behavior. Marking a major intellectual revolution, it quickly attracted the attention of anthropologists and psychologists (and a handful of sociologists), but it also proved hugely controversial and was widely attacked (for an excellent history of the controversy, see Segerstråle, 2001). The name sociobiology seemed to have become toxic, and for this reason and several others, a number of psychologists and anthropologists changed the name to evolutionary psychology (Barkow, Cosmides, and Tooby, 1992). Whether the two approaches are the same thing with different names or something different is a matter of dispute, but it is clear that at the very least they are very close cousins, and in any event that debate is beyond the bounds of this chapter. (I prefer the term sociobiology and will use it here.). But Wilson and those who followed were actually not the first sociobiologists or evolutionary psychologists. This honor goes to Edward Westermarck.

Westermarck (1862–1939) was a sociologist who was part of the Swedish-speaking elite in Finland and took his doctorate at Imperial Alexander University, which is now the University of Helsinki. He was greatly influenced by Darwin, and in fact the bulk of his theoretical ideas owe to Darwin. He deserves to be called the first sociobiologist or evolutionary psychologist because he was applying Darwinian natural selectionist thinking in much the same way as modern-day practitioners of these approaches. Other sociologists who used Darwinian thinking at the time, such as Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner, and Albert G. Keller, used it to develop theories of *social* selection, not (p. 64) *natural* selection. (Natural selection is the environmental retention of favorable or adaptive genetic variants and the elimination of unfavorable or maladaptive genetic variations, whereas social selection is the retention of those ideas and institutions that prove most favorable to human survival and well-being in particular environments.) They were not seeking a deep Darwinian understanding of human nature that they could apply to understand social life, but that is exactly what Westermarck was doing. He was a thinker nearly a century ahead of his time.

Westermarck's best-known work was derived from his doctoral dissertation, which was a massive study of human marriage and family practices throughout the world. Written in English and completed in 1889, it was later published in 1891 as *The History of Human Marriage* (HHM). Westermarck revised and substantially updated HHM several times, with a greatly expanded fifth edition appearing in three volumes in 1922. Westermarck also had a keen interest in human morality, which led to his other major work, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* (ODMI), published in two volumes in 1906 (Vol. 1)

and 1908 (Vol. 2). It is less well known than *HHM*, but it is an extremely important work. Both *HHM* and *ODMI* were written from a Darwinian evolutionary perspective.

A Comparative History of Human Marriage

Much of the first volume of *HHM* was devoted to a critique of the celebrated argument developed by several prominent social evolutionists of the day that the earliest humans lived in a state of sexual promiscuity. Westermarck exhaustively reviewed the evidence that its proponents used to justify this argument, and he found that on close examination, it utterly failed to garner any support. Regarding the statements that had been made of cases of primitive promiscuity, Westermarck said,

It would be difficult to find a more untrustworthy collection of statements. Some of them are simply misrepresentations of theorists in which sexual laxity, frequency of separation, polyandry, group-marriage or something like it . . . is confounded with promiscuity. Others are based upon indefinite evidence which may be interpreted in one way or another, or on information proved to be inaccurate. And not a single statement can be said to be authoritative. (1922a: 124)

Westermarck also observed that there were very good reasons for doubting that sexual promiscuity could ever have been a general pattern among humans. One reason was the emotion of sexual jealousy, which Westermarck thought to be extremely widespread and possibly universal. In this regard, he listed dozens of cases of the occurrence of sexual jealousy from many different types of societies from all over the world and also of the intensity and consequences of this jealousy. One consequence was the (p. 65) harsh condemnation and often severe punishment of the parties to adultery. Because jealousy was such an important human emotion everywhere, it was inconceivable to Westermarck that early humans could ever have tolerated widespread promiscuity.

Early humans, Westermarck contended, practiced marriage and lived in organized families. He viewed marriage and the family as both reproductive and economic institutions, it being the main role of the mother to nurture the children and of the father to provide economic support and protection. In classical Darwinian style, Westermarck sought the origins of the human family in humankind's hominoid ancestry:

I think we have reason to believe that the family, implying marital and paternal care, was hardly less indispensable for primitive man than it is for the gorilla and chimpanzee. If this was the case, the family may have been an inheritance from the parent species out of which the Anthropoids and the Hominides . . . gradually developed. (1922a:69)

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In the second volume of *HHM*, Westermarck developed the hypothesis on the origin of incest avoidance and exogamy for which he is today most famous, the “familiarity breeds aversion” theory. Westermarck thought that the tendency to avoid incestuous sexual relations with close kin sprang from a deep human emotion that had evolved by natural selection. He expressed the matter as follows:

Generally speaking, there is a remarkable absence of erotic feelings between persons living very closely together from childhood. Nay more, in this, as in many other cases, sexual aversion when the act is thought of. This I take to be the fundamental cause of the exogamous prohibitions. (1922b:192)

Westermarck acknowledged that he was not the first to have thought of this, for he located similar ideas in the writings of Montesquieu, the sociologist William Isaac Thomas, Havelock Ellis, and even Plato. In good Darwinian fashion, Westermarck noted that not only is incest avoidance a human universal but also that it is the common practice in many species of animals, even birds and honeybees.

What is universal in the incest rules is the prohibition of sexual relations among members of the nuclear family. Having an almost encyclopedic knowledge of ethnographic practices, Westermarck well knew that there was considerable variation beyond the nuclear family, with many societies extending the prohibition to certain categories of cousins but not to others, and yet other societies prohibiting all first and even many second cousins. He accounted for these exogamous practices in the same way. Lineages or clans that practiced exogamy were often territorialized units in which cousins grew up in close contact. Where there was a prohibition on the marriage of clanmates who grew up at considerable distance from each other, Westermarck theorized that these separated clans had in the recent past once been territorial:

The exogamous rules, though in the first place associated with kinship because near relatives normally live together, have come to include relatives who do not live (p. 66) together—just as social rights and duties connected with kinship, although ultimately depending upon close living together, have a strong tendency to last after the local tie is broken. (1922b:214)

But why did this disinclination to mate with agemates with whom one was in close contact in early childhood evolve? How was it adaptive? Westermarck’s answer is that it evolved to prevent the damaging genetic consequences of close inbreeding. He even cited statistical data from a number of studies of modern populations on the consequences of first-cousin marriages to support this claim, as well as observations of the effects of cousin marriages in preliterate societies (Westermarck, 1922b:226–232).

Westermarck concluded his discussion of incest avoidance and exogamy by stating that his theory “explains a world-wide institution by a mental characteristic which may be presumed to be common to all races of men” and that the theory

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co-ordinates three parallel groups of facts which seem intrinsically to belong together: the exogamous rules, the aversion to sexual intercourse between persons living together from childhood, and the injurious consequences of in-breeding. And it finds the same general law governing analogous phenomena in the two great kingdoms of the organic world: the cross-fertilisation of plants, the various arrangements to prevent in-breeding among animals, and the exogamy in mankind. (1922b:239)

Seldom has a sociologist, living or dead, held such a sophisticated conception of the aim of science—parsimonious explanation of as much as possible with as little as possible and backed by as much evidence as possible—and demonstrated an equal ability to practice it.

Nevertheless, Westermarck's theory, although highly regarded at the time, fell into disrepute in later years and yielded to explanations that focused on the contribution made by incest avoidance (and exogamy rules) to social cohesion (see, for example, Davis, 1949; Lévi-Strauss, 1969). The theory was totally dismissed by almost all sociologists and anthropologists as a simple-minded notion that was of mere historical interest. But the theory was revived in the 1970s when certain striking empirical data came to light (Shepher, 1971, 1983; McCabe, 1983; Wolf, 1995; Sanderson, 2001:215–220, 238–239; Turner and Maryanski, 2005:30–32; Wolf and Durham, 2005). Joseph Shepher (1971) examined nearly 3,000 marriages undertaken between members of several Israeli kibbutzim. Incredibly, he found that only 13 of these marriages occurred between children who had grown up in the same communal nursery. This overwhelming preference of young kibbutzniks to marry outside of their own childhood groups occurred despite the absence of any norm against marrying nursery mates; indeed, kibbutzniks were generally encouraged to marry their nursery mates. When Shepher asked these kibbutz youth about their failure to marry childhood associates, they often said such things as “we feel like siblings” or “we have no attraction to each other.”

Research by Arthur Wolf (1970, 1995) on Taiwanese marriage practices is also highly consistent with Westermarck's theory. In the early 20th century, two contrasting marriage patterns were found in Taiwan, which Wolf called “major marriages” and “minor (p. 67) marriages,” the latter known locally as *sim-pua* marriage. In a major marriage, the bride and groom were individuals who did not know each other in childhood, often not even meeting until the day of the wedding. In the *sim-pua* marriages, the bride was a woman who had been adopted into her future husband's household as an infant or young child and brought up in close association with this boy. Wolf predicted that persons who married in *sim-pua* fashion would show much higher levels of marital dissatisfaction compared to persons who were involved in major marriages, and this is what he found. He determined that 24% of the *sim-pua* marriages ended in divorce or separation compared to only 1% of the major marriages. Moreover, 33% of the women in *sim-pua* marriages had committed adultery compared to only 11% of the women in the major marriages. Wolf also found that *sim-pua* marriages produced fewer offspring than did

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major marriages, which he interpreted to mean that intercourse was considerably less frequent in the *sim-pua* marriages.

Justine McCabe (1983) obtained results similar to those of Wolf in her research on Lebanese marriage practices. Some Lebanese groups have practiced what is known as patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage, which involves the marriage of cousins who belong to the same patrilineal descent group and who grew up together (a boy marries his father's brother's daughter). In most societies, this practice has been regarded as incestuous, and it is found almost exclusively in Arab societies in the Middle East and North Africa. McCabe found that compared to all other Lebanese marriages, parallel-cousin marriages were more than four times as likely to end in divorce and produced approximately 23% fewer children.

Relatively recently, Daniel Fessler discovered a fourth case, the Karo Batak of Indonesia (Fessler, 2007; Kushnick and Fessler, 2011). Among these people, the ideal form of marriage is one in which a boy marries a cousin who is his father's sister's daughter (from the girl's perspective, her husband would be her mother's brother's son). Despite parental encouragement of such marriages, the cousins, known locally as *impal*, seldom marry. The cousins say they do not marry because they are not sexually or romantically attracted and "feel like siblings." And, as the reader may already have concluded, the majority of *impal* grow up in close contact from early childhood.

The Westermarck theory also receives support from patterns of inbreeding avoidance among other animals. Incest avoidance is widespread (although not universal) among primates and other mammals, and it is also common in birds. Chimpanzees, for example, avoid close inbreeding by virtue of the fact that females from one community transfer to another community after sexual maturity and mate only with that community's males. Another very strong line of evidence derives from studies of inbreeding depression, which is the genetic defects and premature deaths that occur in the offspring of closely related individuals. Contemporary studies consistently show inbreeding depression in the offspring of related individuals and that the level of inbreeding depression increases, often dramatically, as genetic relatedness increases (Seemanova, 1971; other studies reviewed in Ember, 1983; Shepher 1983; Durham, 1991; Scheidel, 1996). In one of the most recent studies, Saggarr and Bittles (2008), analyzing several different populations, estimated the likelihood that offspring of individuals related by one-fourth or (p. 68) one-half of their genes would carry two copies of a deleterious recessive gene. Their estimates were 8-10% for the offspring of uncle-niece and half-sibling matings (related by one-fourth of their genes) and a much larger 30% for parent-child or brother-sister matings (related by one-half). These are very large numbers. With numbers this high, inbreeding depression will be substantial in both instances, especially in the offspring related by one-half of their genes. The logical conclusion seems to be that incestuous mating is fitness reducing and has been strongly selected against in human evolutionary history.

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Westermarck began the third volume of *HHM* (1922c) with a discussion of monogamy and polygyny, although he spent most of his time on the latter. Westermarck reviewed numerous ethnographic cases of polygyny, after which he focused on its causes. He argued that an excess of women was one cause, although it was not the only cause and, in fact, only an indirect cause. He contended that the direct cause was the male desire for more than one wife. Sex with a single wife is usually restricted by such things as her menstrual period, pregnancy, and postpartum sex taboos. A polygynously married man can then have sex with another wife who is at that time not subject to these conditions. There is also the importance of female youth and beauty, highly desired by men everywhere. As a first wife ages and loses her beauty, a young and still attractive woman can be taken on as a second wife. And when she eventually loses her attractiveness, yet another wife can be added. Men also have a strong desire for sexual variety; as Westermarck noted, the “sexual instinct is dulled by long familiarity and stimulated by novelty” (p. 74). In addition, men normally desire numerous offspring and thus can produce more offspring with several wives than with one. Polygyny also increases a man’s material comfort in small-scale agricultural societies in which women do much of the cultivation and perform other economic tasks (e.g., milling, cooking, and carrying wood). Because several wives can produce more economic surplus than one, polygyny increases a man’s wealth and thereby his status. The number of polygynous societies has tended to increase with social evolution, Westermarck contended, because more advanced societies have greater inequalities of wealth, and it is the wealthy who have the means to support several wives.

Westermarck said surprisingly little about monogamy. He noted that in the most advanced civilizations it became increasingly the norm. He thought this was because in the most advanced civilizations the desire for a large family had become less intense; because women’s role as laborers declined; because women’s feelings came to be held in higher regard; and because of an increase in the importance of romantic love. Numerous contemporary theories of monogamy have been proposed, but there is no consensus (Alexander, 1987; MacDonald, 1990; Posner, 1992). Perhaps the most promising current explanation of monogamy is that proposed by Richard Posner, which is similar to that of Westermarck. Posner proposes that polygyny is incompatible with companionate marriage, a type of marriage in which husbands and wives are intimate partners and vow to remain romantically and sexually exclusive for a lifetime. Because all modern industrial societies are based on companionate marriage, they must forbid polygyny. Posner’s argument is boosted by the cases of Greece and Rome, the only ancient civilizations to (p. 69) prescribe monogamy. Women had a higher status in Rome than in virtually all other agrarian societies. When a woman took property into a marriage in the form of a dowry, her husband claimed control of it, but the wife was entitled to a considerable inheritance upon his death. For an agrarian society, Rome also gave an unusual amount of emphasis to the husband-wife unit, and in fact Rome may have had a kind of precursor of modern companionate marriage (Goody, 1990).

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Concerning polyandry, Westermarck (1922c) devoted two chapters to describing and trying to explain it. He discussed numerous ethnographic cases, most of them found in Tibet and India and most of them fraternal (a woman marries two or more brothers). Westermarck suggested that polyandry could stem from an excess of men, but he devoted much more attention to a particular explanation suggested by numerous travelers and ethnographers in the 19th century and even as far back as the early 18th century. This explanation focused on the difficulty of making a living on lands that were relatively sterile. Low productivity, combined with high population density, made family plots small. An inheritance practice that divided the land among the sons would leave none of them with the means to survive. Therefore, brothers inherited the land collectively and brought in a single wife. Westermarck quoted a certain Rockhill (*Land of the Lamas*):

If at the death of the head of the family the property was divided among the sons, there would not be enough to supply the wants of all of them if each had a wife and family. . . . [T]he only solution of the problem in this case was for the sons of a family to take one wife among them, by which means their ancestral estate remained undivided. (1922c:187)

Westermarck quoted a number of other early authorities to the same effect.

This explanation was revived by Stanford University anthropologist William Durham in 1991, who called it the “hypothesis of family property conservation.” But Durham added to this explanation in a way that Westermarck, as a Darwinian, would very likely have appreciated. Durham asked whether polyandry could actually have reproductive advantages over monogamy under the circumstances in which polyandrous societies usually live. At first glance, the answer would seem to be a clear “no” because brothers can only inseminate a single woman. But Durham carried out computer simulations in which he calculated levels of reproductive success over several generations. He found that monogamy led to greater reproductive success for one or two generations but that polyandry was superior after three generations. Moreover, monogamy generally led to reproductive disaster after several generations, with entire family lines becoming extinct.

One of the ways in which Westermarck disagreed with Darwin was with respect to his concept of sexual selection. Natural selection is selection for the ability to survive and prosper, whereas sexual selection is selection for the ability to find mates. Darwin indicated two forms of sexual selection, male combat and female choice. Under the former, males fight for access to females. Here we see such traits as the antlers of moose and elk (p. 70) and the tusks and extremely large body size, relative to females, of sea lions and walruses. Dominant male sea lions and walruses are able to defeat their competitors, usually injuring and often killing them, and as a result they are able to monopolize the vast majority of the females. Female choice involves choosing males that have, for example, the brightest colors or the most rhythmical and harmonious sounds. The classic example of female choice is the large and beautiful tails of peacocks. During the mating season, peacocks parade in front of observing peahens, which choose the

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peacocks with the most impressive tails. (For details and citations, see Sanderson, 2014: 115–119.)

Westermarck's objection to Darwin's concept of sexual selection was based largely on his observation that such a form of selection often works against natural selection.

Westermarck stated that "far from cooperating with each other, these two kinds of selection seem even to work in opposite directions. Sexual selection, as described by Darwin, produces effects disadvantageous to the species" (1922a:478). He added that

if we accept Darwin's theory of sexual selection, we are compelled to suppose that that inexplicable aesthetic sense of the females has been developed in the way most dangerous to the species. Conspicuous colours are admired by the females of those animals which, by means of such colours, are most easily discovered by their enemies, and sounds and odours are appreciated exactly in those species to which they are most perilous. (1922a:486)

It is indeed true that sexual selection can work against natural selection. A male bird with a brilliant hue is made more visible to predators. Because the hue is dangerous, Westermarck argued that natural selection has had to see to it that brilliant colors (or a euphonious song) would have a specific function, and this function Westermarck thought was to make it easier for the sexes to find each other during the mating season. He noted that "the sexual colours, scents, and sounds in the animal kingdom are complementary to each other *in the way that is best suited to make the animals easily discoverable*" (1922a: 486, emphasis in original). He pointed out that bright colors are found almost entirely in species that are diurnal, which means that the colors will be easily visible. Nocturnal animals seldom have such colors because they would be difficult to detect at night.

Unfortunately, Westermarck makes several errors here. Although natural and sexual selection can work against each other, it is now recognized that evolution has worked out a compromise so that one does not swamp the other. Both can exist together as long as the reproductive benefits of one are at least equal to the reproductive benefits of the other. For example, peacocks' elaborate tails do indeed make them vulnerable to predators, but if they mate with enough peahens—peafowl are unusual among birds in being polygynous—their reproductive success can counterbalance the reproductive loss of their elimination through predation. Moreover, we now know that the peahens' choice is not arbitrary, as Sir Ronald Fisher thought many years ago. The most impressive peacocks are in fact fitter than their less impressive conspecifics—that is, they have better genes because it takes good genes and good health to grow an elaborate tail. In choosing (p. 71) these peacocks, peahens are in fact getting fitter offspring. (For details, see Sanderson 2014:115–119.)

In addition, Westermarck does not seem to realize that his own explanation is in fact one based on sexual rather than natural selection. It is just a different kind of sexual selection theory from that of Darwin. If sexual colors, scents, and sounds function to make it easier for the sexes to find each other, then this is sexual selection *tout court*. (And an incorrect theory, it must be added.) Moreover, the concept of sexual selection is now widely

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accepted by evolutionary biologists and plays a critical role in contemporary sociobiology and evolutionary psychology. (See Sanderson, 2014, Chap. 5.) Rejecting it was one of Westermarck's blunders.

Finally, Westermarck repeatedly invokes, both here and throughout his work, a trait's usefulness to the *species*. Certainly many traits are useful to the species. The sharp teeth and great speed of cheetahs are useful to all of them in chasing down and devouring gazelles. But there is, as Darwin stressed, always individual variation. Not all cheetahs are created equal. Those that are faster will feed more often than those that are slower. Nor are all peacocks created equal. Peacocks are competing with each other for mates, and those with the most impressive tails will acquire more mates and thus leave more offspring compared to those whose tails are less impressive. Having the most impressive tail benefits the peacock that has it, not the species as a whole. Indeed, it works to the disadvantage of those peacocks with poor tails because they mate less frequently or not at all.¹

Most of the scholars who have followed up on Westermarck's work or have continued the overall evolutionary approach he used have been anthropologists. Few sociologists have appreciated Westermarck, but there are some. The first was perhaps Pierre van den Berghe. Van den Berghe wrote an entire book, *Human Family Systems: An Evolutionary View* (1979), in which he examined many aspects of family and marriage using evolutionary theory. He accepts Westermarck's theory of incest avoidance, but unlike Westermarck, who thought that it was the basis for exogamous marriage prescriptions, van den Berghe relies on Lévi-Strauss' (1969) famous alliance theory to explain exogamy. Incest avoidance is about sex, he contends, whereas exogamy is about marriage. He also discusses, inter alia, pair bonding; kin selection and inclusive fitness; male and female reproductive strategies; parental investment; cross-cultural models of marital residence and descent; and monogamy, polygyny, and polyandry.

Jonathan Turner and Alexandra Maryanski (2005) have written the most comprehensive book on incest avoidance and the incest taboo by sociologists. They make the very important point that despite avoidance and the taboo, some incest occurs in every society, but its extent varies by family dyad. Father-daughter incest is the most common, mother-son incest the least common (actually quite rare), and brother-sister incest somewhere in between. They accept Westermarck's explanation for brother-sister avoidance, but they argue that father-daughter and mother-son incest have to be explained in terms of traditional sociological theories. There is no hardwired aversion between fathers and daughters or between mothers and sons, and therefore societies have had to impose a cultural taboo in order to maintain family solidarity and avoid the (p. 72) costs of inbreeding depression. Their explanation is ultimately co-evolutionary: Incest avoidance and the incest taboo resulted from the coevolution of both biological and cultural forces. (For an assessment of the authors' overall argument, see Sanderson, 2005.)

The Evolution of the Moral Sense

Westermarck was also keenly interested in the source of moral concepts and judgments, and their evolution, which was the subject of his *ODMI*. Again we find Darwinian natural selectionist reasoning at work. Westermarck was a staunch critic of approaches to morality and moral philosophy that relied on intellect and reason, especially those of Hegel, Kant, and their followers. Early in his student days, Westermarck read Hegel, whose ideas he found distasteful (Pipping, 1984). As for Kant, Westermarck strongly objected to his famous categorical imperative to treat persons only as ends, never as means. According to Ihanus (1999:271-272), “Westermarck wrote that as a student he had become exhausted with Kant’s style and his almost empty moral law. Westermarck’s comments on Kant were usually polemically critical or ironic.”

It was Westermarck’s view that morality and ethics are not products of moral reasoning but, rather, products of moral *emotions*. Moral concepts are generalizations or objectifications of moral emotions involving either indignation or approval, and the moral emotions are actually part of a larger class of emotions that Westermarck called *retributive emotions*. Moral disapproval is a type of resentment closely related to anger and the desire for revenge, whereas moral approval is a type of kindly emotion very similar to gratitude. The retributive emotions themselves

have been acquired by means of natural selection in the struggle for existence; both resentment and retributive kindly emotion are states of mind which have a tendency to promote the interests of the individuals who feel them. This explanation also applies to the moral emotions in so far as they are retributive: It accounts for the hostile attitude of moral disapproval towards the cause of pain, and for the friendly attitude of moral approval towards the cause of pleasure. Our retributive emotions are always reactions against pain or pleasure felt by ourselves; this holds true of the moral emotions as well as of revenge and gratitude. (1908:739, emphasis added)

Westermarck went on to analyze the nature of the principal moral concepts in these terms, holding that the concepts of vice, wrong, ought and duty, right and rights, and justice and injustice are rooted in moral disapproval, whereas the concepts of good, virtue, and merit are rooted in moral approval. It is easy to understand why good, virtue, and merit are grounded in moral approval, and vice and wrong in moral disapproval, but it is somewhat more difficult to understand how ought and duty, right and rights, and justice and injustice are grounded in moral disapproval. The basic idea is that the fulfillment of these prescriptions is no cause for any particular moral approval. One is (p. 73) expected to live up to these things without expecting moral praise for doing so. It is the *failure* to live up to them that generates moral disapproval. Concerning ought and duty, Westermarck states that the

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ideas of “ought” and “duty” thus spring from the same source as the ideas of “right” and “wrong.” To say that a man ought to do a thing is, so far as the morality of his action is concerned, the very same thing as to say that it is bad, or wrong, of him not to do it—in other words, that the not-doing of it has a tendency to call forth moral disapproval. (1906:137)

With regard to right (as an adjective), the implication is that doing the opposite is wrong and thus calls forth moral disapproval. A right (as a noun) means that it should not be hindered, such hindrance being disapproved. And because justice is a type of rightness, injustice is a type of wrongness.

For Westermarck, the critical distinction between moral emotions and those that are nonmoral is that the former have the quality of *disinterestedness*. They extend beyond any individual to an entire community and thus are public in nature. Thus, individuals feel indignation when a neighbor is hurt by the culpable action of another, and they morally condemn the action. Likewise, they feel pleasure and moral approval when an individual receives a benefit from another member of the community. Westermarck states,

The first moral judgments expressed not the private emotions of isolated individuals but emotions which were felt by the community at large. Public indignation is the prototype of moral disapproval and public approval the prototype of moral approbation. And these public emotions are characterized by generality, individual disinterestedness, and apparent impartiality. (1908:740)

Westermarck noted that there are both universal and variable moral judgments. The universal features of morality spring from a “general uniformity of human nature,” whereas moral variations are due to “different external conditions.” In terms of the former, both primitive and modern societies, for example, regard charity as a duty and generosity as a virtue. As examples of the latter, Westermarck states that economic hardship may lead to infanticide or the abandoning of the old and that “necessity and the force of habit may deprive these actions of the stigma which would otherwise be attached to them” (1908:742). Similarly, economic conditions have had an impact on moral ideas concerning such things as slavery. For Westermarck, there is no such thing as general moral truths or an absolute morality. This is because moral judgments, being dependent on emotions, are inherently subjective rather than objective and also because the concept of truth is a scientific rather than a moral one. Westermarck was a kind of ethical relativist; indeed, he wrote an entire book outlining his relativist perspective (Westermarck, 1932).

Westermarck was much concerned with the evolution of morality in overall societal evolution. He noted that in the course of moral evolution, there has been a strong (p. 74) tendency to condemn direct retaliation for wrongs and emphasize forgiveness as a moral duty. This shift was particularly apparent in the development of the major world religions, and it was part of an even more encompassing shift in the direction of greater altruism and sympathy toward a wider range of persons. Westermarck regarded this as a process of “moral enlightenment,” and he noted that at its higher stages, morality was based

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more on reason and reflection than on emotion. Enlightened minds see that retaliation as a result of resentment is not impartial—that is, springs from entirely personal motives—and that such retaliation may often be directed against not only wrongdoers but also other innocent parties associated with them, such as lineage or clan mates. This heightened moral consciousness “condemns any retributive infliction of pain which it regards as undeserved; and it seems to be in the first place with a view to preventing such injustice that teachers of morality have enjoined upon men to love their enemies” (Westermarck, 1906:78-79).

At the same time, Westermarck noted that the aggressive nature of moral disapproval does not disappear in moral evolution. Instead, it becomes more disguised and expresses itself in new and different ways. Because the desire for retribution is so deeply imbedded in human nature, it cannot be abolished but merely transformed and redirected:

Resentment is directed against the cause of the offence. . . . Deliberate and discriminating resentment is therefore apt to turn against the will rather than against the willer; as we have seen, it is desirous to inflict pain on the offender chiefly as a means of removing the cause of pain suffered, i.e., the existence of the bad will. (1906:91)

However, Westermarck noted that this conceptual distinction between will and willer, or between sin and sinner, is extremely difficult for humans to maintain in actual practice because “it may be fairly doubted whether [maintaining this distinction] is within the capacity of ordinary human nature” (1906:92).²

Just as Westermarck was ahead of his time with respect to a Darwinian understanding of marriage and family life, he was ahead of his time in terms of a Darwinian understanding of human morality. A number of modern scholars have begun to examine morality in a Darwinian light (Alexander, 1987; de Waal, 1996, 2006; Arnhart, 1998, 2005; Krebs, 2005). The evolutionary biologist Richard Alexander (1987) starts from the basic principle that each individual has been designed by natural selection to maximize the survival of his or her genes through reproduction and nepotism. This leads him to the nature of exchanges between individuals—“giving” and “taking.” He proposes five basic strategies concerned with giving:

- 1.** Give when the benefit goes to a genetic relative and its return to the giver via the improved reproduction of the relative is likely to be greater than the expense of the act multiplied by the fractional relationship of the recipient to the giver. Giving of this type is investment in direct or indirect nepotism.
- 2.** Give when the recipient is likely to give back more than he or she receives. This is investment in direct reciprocity.
- (p. 75) 3.** Give when not doing so is likely to cause others to impose costs on the giver greater than the expense of the giver’s beneficence.
- 4.** Give when giving is likely to cause a sufficient number of appropriate people to regard the act of giving as an indication of a significant probability that the giver will

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give back more than is received in future interactions. This shows that the giver is a reliable person in whom others can invest, and it is investment in indirect reciprocity.

5. In all other situations, be a taker rather than a giver.

These strategies come to be codified as rules and thus establish a moral system. The strategies are in a sense rudimentary, but they are nonetheless fundamental. Alexander summarizes his position thus:

My view of moral systems in the real world . . . is that they are systems in which costs and benefits of specific actions are manipulated so as to produce reasonably harmonious associations in which everyone nevertheless pursues his own (in evolutionary terms) self-interest. (1987:191)

Because Alexander views morality as rooted in self-interest, he is skeptical that true altruistic behavior can apply to more than a tiny handful of people. True altruism in an evolutionary sense involves genetic self-sacrifice and is, Alexander claims, an “evolutionary mistake”; it is exceedingly unlikely, therefore, that any society could be built on true altruism.³

Larry Arnhart, a political philosopher, uses a Darwinian theory of morality to formulate a political and moral philosophy (Arnhart, 1998, 2005). He calls his formulation “Darwinian natural right,” basing his terminology on Aristotle (minus the “Darwinian”). Darwinian natural right’s most fundamental principle is “the good is the desirable.” This means that a morally proper society is one that allows humans the freedom to satisfy the basic desires that make up their nature. Arnhart lists 20 such desires:

1. *A complete life*: Humans generally desire life, and a complete or long life, and can only be fully happy if they live out their full lifespan.

2. *Parental care*: Humans generally desire to care for their children, and children desire the care of adults. Despite the burdens of child care, parents are normally highly motivated to provide it.

3. *Sexual identity*: Sex is the most important dimension of personal identity, and humans strongly desire to categorize themselves as male or female. Women tend to be more nurturant than men, and men are more inclined than women to attain dominance and seek high-status positions.

4. *Sexual mating*: Humans strongly desire sexual coupling, and every society displays intense interest in sexuality. Men generally prefer to mate with young, attractive women, whereas women seek to mate with men who have high status and economic resources.

(p. 76) 5. *Familial bonding*: Humans generally desire to live within families, the core of which is a mother with her children. All societies provide some arrangement for marriage, and kin relations are among the most important relations in every society, if not the most important.

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- 6. *Friendship*:** Humans generally seek social relationships based on mutual affection and shared interests, and humans can have enduring friendships with only a few people.
- 7. *Social ranking*:** Humans generally seek social recognition through ranking in comparison with others, and they attain status by way of gaining prestige, honor, and fame.
- 8. *Justice as reciprocity*:** Humans have a natural sense that justice requires returning benefit for benefit and injury for injury. Humans are inclined to feel the emotions of gratitude, love, and benevolence in response to the benefits conferred on them by others.
- 9. *Political rule*:** Humans are political animals by nature; they have a natural tendency to struggle for power and control.
- 10. *War*:** Humans generally desire to engage in war when such a course of action will advance their interests.
- 11. *Health*:** Humans generally desire to live lives that provide adequately for their bodily needs. Much of social life is devoted to satisfying the desires that are fundamental to a healthy life.
- 12. *Beauty*:** Humans generally desire beauty in the human body, and they esteem the bodily signs of health and vigor. They adorn their bodies for pleasing display, and men generally prefer women whose bodies show signs of youth and nubility.
- 13. *Wealth*:** Humans generally desire the economic goods necessary for a healthy and flourishing life.
- 14. *Speech*:** Humans generally desire to communicate about themselves and their world, and children are naturally adapted to learn the language of their group or society.
- 15. *Practical habituation*:** Humans are creatures of habit, and it is through this that they seek to manage their appetites and passions.
- 16. *Practical reasoning*:** Humans seek to deliberate in a rational manner about what a good life is and to organize their actions to conform to their notion of a good life.
- 17. *Practical arts*:** Humans generally desire craftsmanship.
- 18. *Aesthetic pleasure*:** Humans desire and receive pleasure from their own artistic creations and the natural environments in which they live. Humans take pleasure in such activities as singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, painting, and decorating objects. They also take pleasure in the natural landscapes that resemble the environments in which they first evolved.
- 19. *Religious understanding*:** Humans generally desire to understand the world by means of postulating the actions of supernatural powers.
- 20. *Intellectual understanding*:** Humans generally desire to understand the world through the use of the intellect in ways quite apart from religious understanding.

(p. 77) Arnhart claims that these 20 categories of desire

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are universally found in all human societies, that they have evolved by natural selection over four million years of human evolutionary history to become components of the species-specific nature of human beings, that they are based in the physiological mechanisms of the brain, and that they direct and limit the social variability of human beings as adapted to diverse ecological circumstances. (1998:36)

Arnhart's work is both empirical and normative. Darwinian natural right for him translates into a conservative political philosophy that he calls *Darwinian conservatism*. Arnhart gives special attention to liberty, which for conservatives arises from spontaneous order, or order based on the mutual adjustment of people to each other rather than from centralized authority. He puts forth five principles of liberty that he believes flow from a Darwinian view of humans. Arnhart (2005) contends that Darwinism supports the following:

1. The conservative view of ordered liberty as rooted in natural desires, customary traditions, and prudential judgments
2. The conservative view of the moral sense as fundamental for the moral order of liberty
3. The conservative view of sexual differences, family life, and parental care as fundamental for the social order of liberty
4. The conservative view of property as fundamental for the economic order of liberty
5. The conservative view of limited government as fundamental for the political order of liberty

Arnhart even cites Westermarck twice, once with respect to family life and another time with regard to property rights. Concerning the former, he states,

Westermarck employed Darwinian reasoning applied to the anthropological evidence to conclude that marriage and the family were universal throughout history because they were rooted in some biological instincts of human nature. He argued that because human offspring cannot survive and flourish without intensive and prolonged parental care, natural selection would favor an instinct for parental care, particularly in mothers. (2005:49)

Regarding property rights, he states,

The universal condemnation of theft shows that some notion of the right of property arises in all human societies. . . . This arises from a natural human desire—shared with some nonhuman animals—to keep whatever one has appropriated. By sympathy with the feelings of others, Westermarck reasoned, human beings recognize this natural propensity to appropriate and feel resentment towards those who violate (p. 78) someone's claim to property. This moral sentiment is

then generalized into a social rule of respecting property rights and punishing theft. (2005:62)

Arnhart's grand conclusion is that Darwinian theory confirms scientifically what is already known to conservatives through common sense: Even though our moral judgments vary according to different circumstances, basic standards of right and wrong are rooted in human nature.⁴

Westermarck and Durkheim

Like all great thinkers, Westermarck had his rivals, and these rivals were themselves great thinkers of enormous influence. His main rival was the early sociologist Emile Durkheim, and although he outlived Durkheim by more than 20 years, they were born only 4 years apart and thus were contemporaries. In 1895, when *HHM* appeared in a French translation, Durkheim was quick to read and respond to it. He published a lengthy critique in *Revue philosophique*, "Origine du mariage dans l'espèce humaine d'après Westermarck" ["Origin of marriage in the human species according to Westermarck"]. Durkheim was highly critical of Westermarck for his reliance on Darwinism, which to Durkheim meant that explanations of social facts would then rest on a simple unproven and even untested hypothesis: "Faire réposer la sociologie sur le Darwinisme, c'est asseoir sur une hypothèse, ce qui est au contraire à toute bonne méthode" ["To rest sociology on Darwinism is to situate it on a mere hypothesis, which is contrary to all good method"].

Westermarck replied to this critique in his article "Méthode de la recherche des institutions préhistoriques à propos d'un ouvrage du professeur Kohler" ["Method of researching prehistoric institutions with regard to a work of professor Kohler"], published in the *Revue internationale de sociologie* in 1897. He states the following (Westermarck, 1897:452; as quoted in Ihanus, 1999:141):

M. Durkheim s'oppose à l'importance que j'ai attachée à l'ethnographie et à la psychologie comme sources d'information concernant les institutions sociales. . . . M. Durkheim me réproche aussi d'avoir basé mes recherches sur une hypothèse non prouvée. . . . Cette objection doit résonner étrangement aux oreilles de quiconque est un peu au courant des immenses progrès que la biologie a faits sur la base du darwinisme. Et je dois avouer qu'il m'est difficile d'entrer en controverse avec un auteur qui considère comme "contraire à toute bonne méthode" l'hypothèse qui fait descendre l'homme d'une espèce animale inférieure.

[Mr. Durkheim is opposed to the importance that I have attached to ethnography and to psychology as sources of information concerning social institutions. . . . Mr. Durkheim criticizes me as well for having based my research on an unproved hypothesis. . . . This objection must sound strange to the ears of anyone who is

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even slightly (p. 79) aware of the immense progress that biology has made on the basis of Darwinism. And I must declare that it is difficult for me to engage in debate with an author who considers as “contrary to all good method” the hypothesis which regards man as having descended from a lower animal species.]

Durkheim also criticized Westermarck’s conceptualization of the family, especially his view that it was a natural phenomenon that had links to similar phenomena in nonhuman primates and other mammals. Durkheim insisted that the family was a human invention that appeared only after humans had invented *rules* and *sanctions*. For Durkheim, marriage was a social institution and could not rest simply on human emotional inclinations, as Westermarck seemed to be indicating. Durkheim went so far as to say, “Des amants qui restent unis toute leur vie ne sont pas pour cela des époux” [“Lovers who remain together their entire life are not by that simple fact spouses”]. Another major point insisted upon by Durkheim was that the family, because it was a rule-based institution, varied far more widely than Westermarck acknowledged. Because the family took such diverse forms, a theory such as Westermarck’s could never hope to succeed. Diverse family forms had to be explained by diverse social facts (Roos, 2008).

Just as he rejected Westermarck’s theories of marriage and the family, so Durkheim rejected Westermarck’s theory of incest avoidance, and for essentially the same kinds of reasons. Durkheim proposed his own theory, one that linked it to totemism. In the fifth edition of *HHM*, Westermarck summarized it thus:

Professor Durkheim derives exogamy from a religious sentiment which is due to certain magical virtues attributed to blood, especially the menstrual blood of women, and the religious awe for blood is traced by him to totemism. Nay, totemism is the ultimate source not only of clan exogamy but of all other prohibitions against incest as well; the rule of clan exogamy, he maintains, has been extended to near relatives belonging to different clans because they are in no less intimate contact with each other than are the members of the same clan. And when totemism and at the same time clan relationships disappeared, the rule of clan exogamy was entirely transformed into a prohibition of marriage between near relatives, which in the course of evolution narrowed down to a prohibition of marriage between ascendants and descendants and between brothers and sisters only. (1922b:183)

Westermarck was highly critical of this theory, pointing out that Durkheim was trying to explain a universal phenomenon by means of a phenomenon that has appeared only among some societies. Exogamous clans, he pointed out, are not universal, and even where such clans are found, they are not always based on totems. But even if we could assume, for argument’s sake, that totemic clan organization was in fact universal, Durkheim does not really explain the mechanism by which it leads to exogamy. Westermarck then referred to supporters of Durkheim’s theory and to other somewhat

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similar theories and heaped scorn upon them all. It is at this point that Westermarck went on to present his own now famous theory.

(p. 80) The same year that Westermarck published the first volume of *ODMI*, Durkheim read it and reviewed it quite critically in *l'Année sociologique* (Durkheim, 1907). Unsurprisingly, the main argument of the review was that Westermarck failed to understand that moral ideas are essentially social. He contended that Westermarck illegitimately derived collective moral emotions from individual ones and that his effort to try to find the origins of morality was doomed to failure because such origins could never be found. And just as he did in his critique of *HHM*, Durkheim chastised Westermarck for failing to take rules and sanctions into account. However, Westermarck did not ignore rules and sanctions but actually considered them to be of fundamental importance. Where he differed from Durkheim was in refusing to make them the sine qua non of moral ideas and moral behavior (as well as marital and family behavior).

Durkheim was also critical of Westermarck on methodological grounds, stating, “Il est préoccupé avant tout d’accumuler les faits, non les choisir solides et démonstratifs” [“he is concerned above all with accumulating facts rather than choosing trustworthy and representative ones”] (Roos, 2008). Durkheim extended this methodological criticism more generally. He was highly critical of Westermarck for his use of the comparative method. He thought that this method ripped social traits out of their total social context and thus destroyed our ability to see societies as single functioning wholes. However, Westermarck was well aware of the limitations of the comparative method and said so directly, but he thought it was superior to Durkheim’s own method. For example, in his *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Durkheim (1912/2008) relied on a single society, the Arunta of Australia, as a basis for generalizing to all religions in all societies. Moreover, Durkheim never set foot in Australia, instead relying on the ethnography produced by Sir Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen (1899). Such a method would appear to have much more severe limitations than the comparative method of which Durkheim was so critical.

Decline into Invisibility

As a major sociologist in the first third of the 20th century, Westermarck was even better known and more widely read than Durkheim (Roos, 2008). Indeed, Timothy Stroup states,

When he was active as a writer (during the five decades from 1889 to 1939), Westermarck was almost universally respected, even by his occasional opponents, as a researcher of massive erudition who expounded important and innovative doctrines which demanded serious attention. (1984:575)

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In addition, Morris Ginsberg, a student of Westermarck's close colleague at the London School of Economics, L. T. Hobhouse, states that Westermarck's work on morality was "carried out with an erudition, lucidity, and balance still unsurpassed" (1982:17). Ginsberg goes on to say of *HHM*, "When it first appeared it was hailed everywhere as a scientific work of the highest importance" (1982:17). Ginsberg then notes that the (p. 81) leading specialist on human sexuality of the day, Havelock Ellis, called it a monumental achievement unrivaled in the magnitude of its importance.

I have found in Westermarck's works a display of erudition and a mastery of detail rivaled only by the encyclopedic knowledge of Max Weber, and his ethnographic knowledge is vastly superior not only to that of Weber but also to that of every sociologist who has ever lived. And his ideas turn out to be astonishingly prescient and modern, and yet "he is scarcely even accorded his rightful place in the histories of philosophy and the social sciences, and the actual substance of his writings is little known or appreciated" (Stroup, 1984:575). He has subsided into an ignominious insignificance. His name does not even appear in the indexes of textbooks on the history of sociological theory. As Ronald Fletcher (1982:195) notes, "Most nineteenth-century sociologists are much talked about and little read. Westermarck is not even talked about." Only 9 years after his death, C. Wright Mills (1948) wrote a caustic appraisal of Westermarck, characterizing him as little more than some sort of "sociological stamp collector" who was not guided by any overall theory. (Of course, this is not even remotely accurate; indeed, the very opposite is true, as this chapter has amply demonstrated.) Stroup states, "When he is remembered at all, it is usually for his alleged errors of method: He is variously viewed as a simplistic analyzer of moral language, an inconsistent relativist, an armchair comparativist, a naive evolutionist, and a biological reductionist" (1984:575).

Why did his influence subside and his reputation collapse? It was, of course, because he was a Darwinian evolutionist confronted with the rising tide of social environmentalism that began to sweep through the social sciences in the 1930s. Under the circumstances, poor Westermarck did not have a chance. Westermarck's academic and intellectual struggle with Durkheim was won by Durkheim hands down. Durkheim was reportedly a master academic politician who could be quite ruthless. As Roos notes, Durkheim "was an empire builder who gathered followers, fought for academic power, tried to annihilate his enemies and competitors, whereas Westermarck lived many years in isolation in Morocco and shared his time between England, Finland, and Morocco" (2008:135). And Durkheim's ideas, of course, resonated much more with environmentalism and social determinism. As Durkheim's star rose, Westermarck's sank, and it sank virtually out of sight. Durkheim's basic sociological approach—explain social facts only in terms of other social facts—has continued to guide most sociological thinking, in very general terms at least, to the present day.

There are a few sociologists who are aware of Westermarck and regard him as an important early sociologist. But even then they are usually tepid. In Turner and Maryanski's (2005) book on the incest taboo discussed previously, for example, although they view Westermarck's theory favorably, they deny that it can apply to family dyads

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other than the brother–sister dyad. In personal conversation with the author, Maryanski has gone so far as to claim that even though the Westermarck effect is real, it is a “weak force,” when in fact the evidence strongly suggests otherwise. Also, Turner and Maryanski show no interest in any other aspect of his work, either on the family and marriage or on the moral emotions (and despite the fact that Turner is a specialist in the subfield of sociology known as the sociology of emotions). In American social science (p. 82) today, Westermarck is best known to evolutionary anthropologists and psychologists, but they are mostly interested in his theory of incest avoidance.

Knut Pipping (1984), Timothy Stroup (1984), and Juhani Ihanus (1999) are aware of the full range and scope of Westermarck’s work, and they have tried to resuscitate his reputation as a great thinker. But Ihanus is a Finn whose book on Westermarck was originally published in Finnish, and Westermarck is a legend in Finland. He is a national intellectual hero, just as Weber is in Germany and Durkheim and Bourdieu are in France. Pipping is also a Finn and, in fact, one of Westermarck’s grandnephews. J. P. Roos and Anna Rotkirch are two other Finnish sociologists who have great admiration for Westermarck and indeed are part of a group of Finnish Westermarck scholars at the University of Helsinki. Stroup, although an American, is a moral philosopher rather than a sociologist and interested primarily in that aspect of Westermarck’s work.

Conclusion

Pipping (1984) concludes that *HMM* and *ODMI* are today primarily of historical interest and that his ethnographies of Morocco and, perhaps, his work on ethical relativity represent his enduring contributions. I would reverse this conclusion. *HMM* and *ODMI* are masterpieces, both theoretically and empirically, and have never been surpassed in their brilliance even by that most erudite member of sociology's holy trinity, Max Weber. We have seen that his theories of incest avoidance and the moral emotions continue to be relevant and built on today. And there is much in these works that can still be mined. One is hard-pressed today, for example, to find research on tattooing, scarification, and body piercing, but Westermarck was already conducting research on these matters a century ago, with both ethnographic cases and a theoretical explanation.

It is said that history is written by the victors, and that is no less true of the history of academic disciplines than of history more generally. It is certainly true in sociology. Sociologists decided by the early 1970s that there were three great classical theorists—Marx, Durkheim, and Weber—who were worth most of our attention. Then there were some other more minor classical figures, such as Sumner, Simmel, Park, Cooley, Mead, Pareto, Thomas and Znaniecki, Mannheim, and of course Comte and Spencer (who on earth would study Comte today for reasons other than historical curiosity?). But in most textbooks on classical sociological theory or the history of sociology, Westermarck is conspicuously absent, and he has been absent for many decades (come to think of it, was he ever actually *in* a textbook on the history of sociological theory?). Students being introduced to classical theory through these textbooks come away from their courses not even knowing there was a man named Westermarck. It is time for this to change and for this prodigious scholar of great brilliance and erudition to be restored to his rightful place as one of the great masters. Will it happen? Certainly not soon, given the continuing hostility to biological explanations of human social life by most sociologists. Someday perhaps. Hope springs eternal.

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Notes:

(1.) By the time the three volumes of the fifth edition appeared, *HHM* totaled a massive 1,753 pages. It is impossible to discuss in the space allotted here all of the topics Westermarck took up. In addition to the ones discussed previously, these include the following: Volume I: the frequency of marriage and the marriage age, celibacy, sexual modesty, courtship, female coyness, and primitive means of attraction; Volume II: endogamy, marriage by capture, consent as a condition of marriage, bride price and dowry, and marriage rites; and Volume III: group marriage and the duration of marriage and the right to dissolve it.

(2.) *ODMI* is a huge work of 1,568 pages, and the ideas discussed here take up little more than the first 200. However, they are the theoretical foundation on which the whole work rests. The remainder is mostly application to a wide range of moral issues and subjects, and the majority of Westermarck's discussion is descriptive. There is no space to discuss any of these issues; it may suffice to list them. Volume I: customs and laws as expressions of moral ideas; the general nature of the subjects of enlightened moral judgments; moral agents under intellectual disability; motives; forbearances and carelessness; conduct and character; homicide; the killing of parents, sick persons, and children; the killing of women and slaves; human sacrifice; blood revenge and compensation; dueling; bodily injuries; charity and generosity; hospitality; the subjection of children; the subjection of wives; slavery. Volume II: the right of property; the regard for truth and good faith; the respect for other men's honor and pride; regard for other persons' happiness; altruism; suicide; self-regarding duties and virtues; dietary prohibitions; cleanliness and uncleanness; marriage; celibacy; free love; homosexual love; regard for the lower animals; regard for the dead; cannibalism; the belief in supernatural beings; duties to gods; gods as guardians of morality.

(3.) To be fair, it should be noted that a number of Darwinians, David Sloan Wilson most prominent among them, contend that altruism can evolve by group selection. For example, a group composed of 20% altruists could, because of its enhanced cooperation and thus superior organizational advantage, defeat a group with only 5% altruists. This may well be true, but Wilson and others do not explain how any group could consist of 20% altruists in the first place. See Sober and Wilson (1998).

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(4.) I do not intend to be presenting Arnhart's conservative political philosophy, as represented in the previously presented five principles, as "correct." I simply offer it as a leading example of an attempt to ground a moral philosophy in Darwinian theoretical principles. As one might imagine, nearly all those on the political Left are anti-Darwinian with respect to moral and political philosophy. There is the occasional exception, however (e.g., Peter Singer's book *A Darwinian Left* [1999]). Westermarck himself was a liberal.

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