THE ORIGIN OF EXOGAMY.¹

IN the following paper I propose to consider a theory which attempts to account for all those varied forms of exogamy that are found to exist, in some form or other, in nearly all races both civilised and uncivilised. And by exogamy I intend to include all those forms of sexual avoidance which result in clan exogamy, local exogamy, and the avoidance of relatives. I have been led to consider this question by the combined influence of a six-years residence among the savages of New Guinea, who are not a generation removed from the Stone Age, and by the perusal of Dr. J. G. Frazer's monumental work *Totemism and Exogamy*.

Before beginning my thesis I may say that I consider that the essential aim of all speculations as to the origin and evolution of the social conditions of primitive man should be to show how man became man by the operation of those same factors which have evolved all forms of life. And these factors I believe to be, mainly if not entirely, the natural selection and inheritance of those characters which are of advantage to the possessor of them or to his children—either directly of advantage or indirectly of advantage because they are of benefit to the family, clan, or tribe of which he is a member. I am quite aware that we cannot express mind and intelligence in terms of matter and energy; still I would contend that we can hope to explain the diverse manifestations of mind by the fact that such have been of advantage to man during the long struggle for existence which took place while man was becoming man.

It is possible that primal man may have lived in a state of promiscuity. But I think this can only have been at a time anterior to the knowledge of the manufacture of warlike weapons. In the light of my knowledge of the savages of New Guinea I can

1. Dr. C. G. Seligmann, through whom this paper has been submitted to the *Sociological Review*, writes that he has been struck by the similarity of Dr. Strong's arguments to those embodied in the late J. J. Atkinson's *Primal Law*. Dr. Seligmann adds:—"That two observers, living in different parts of Melanesia, should independently come to the same conclusion as to the origin of so important a custom as avoidance cannot but strengthen the position assumed by both, even when the arguments they advance in favour of their views show certain differences. It will perhaps not be amiss to state definitely that at the time of writing his paper Dr. Strong had not seen *Primal Law*, for when I sent him a copy of this work he wrote in reply: 'Parts of it . . . I can hardly believe I did not write.'"

hardly believe that man really lived promiscuously in settled communities. Quarrels about women would before very long cause the disruption of the community. Some few years ago I investigated the history of many of the Mekeo and Roro clans who live in the central division of British New Guinea. The social organisation of these clans is one of clan exogamy. Each village consists usually of two or more exogamous clans. The history of all the clans is in its main features, the same. A few years ago each clan was living united with another branch of the same clan; but a dispute arose between two members of the clan as to who should marry a certain woman. The friends of the two claimants joined with them, with the result that quarrelling and hostilities took place until the weaker side had to flee and begin life over again, either by forming a new village or by uniting with another village and acquiring by so doing the status of a clan in that village. If the history of this clan is traced further back, it will not be long before we find that the unbroken clan was itself split off from a larger unit and that fission again took place owing to a quarrel about women. Generally each clan can remember two or three ruptures of this kind.

While I was in Mekeo it often occurred to me that the obstacle, above all others, to the evolution of the clans into a coherent whole is this constant quarrelling about women. In their natural condition the organisation of the clans into a powerful and united group would have been of advantage to them in their struggle for existence. It would have enabled them to seize the best of the Mekeo land and would have rendered them secure against the attacks of outside tribes. We arrive, then, at the conclusion that it was of direct advantage for the clans to unite and to remain united; but that the great obstacle to union was the constant quarrelling about women. Hence any sentiment or any institution which would tend to diminish such constant quarrels would have been of advantage to the people, making them susceptible of increase by the preservation of those clans which were composed of individuals with favourable sentiments, and of those who had acquired favourable institutions. It is along these lines that we can hope to explain the growth of those various forms of the abhorrence of endogamy. Doubtless the exact details have been very different in different places and at different times, but there must have been throughout the whole evolution of man a constant increase of the feelings which result in the lessening of quarrels due to sexual jealousy. The primitive passion had to be restrained in some way or by some means before men could acquire even a

primitive and savage organisation. I look upon all modes of exogamy as means, more or less perfect or imperfect as the case may be, for attaining this end; and I propose to consider the various means by which the end has been attained. Before doing so, however, I will consider an objection which might be raised and which, if real, would invalidate much of my subsequent argument.

The existence of sexual jealousy among savages in their most primitive condition may be doubted, since there are actual instances where it seems nearly if not quite non-existent¹; but this can hardly have been the primitive condition. On the analogy of animals, I think it may be accepted that primal man was of a jealous nature; and that absence of jealousy can hardly have been a general characteristic. I am more inclined to believe that absence of jealousy is a recently acquired characteristic which has, in a few instances, been acquired because it is one of the possible means by which tribal quarrels over women have been lessened, and as a result the people concerned have been enabled to live as a settled and united tribe. It is certainly true that some races are in a more backward social condition than others; still all races are of the same age, and it may well be that even a backward race has progressed in some special direction. Perhaps it might even be said that some races are backward in some respects simply because they have progressed in some other special direction and this progress has enabled them to exist in spite of other very primitive characters.

I am also aware that other races appear to have passed through a stage of group-marriage, in which sexual jealousy seems to have been absent or of small influence with respect to tribal brothers.² But this I take to be a recently acquired character, because it is again one of the possible ways by which tribal, or rather clan, quarrels about women have been lessened and, as a result, settled and united clan life has been rendered possible. I can hardly think that either this condition or the condition in which the wife is looked upon as property and may be sold for a time by her husband or exchanged for another woman can really be primitive. But the latter conditions imply a certain degree of social organisation and the recognition of the sanctity of a bargain; and this can hardly have been the social condition of man when he was just emerging from the state of an animal. It may be that primal man was more or less promiscuous; but I think this must have been before the

1. *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. ii, p. 216, and vol. iv, p. 88 *et seq.*

2. *Op. cit.* i, 304.

time when he had invented the art of killing his fellows. In the earliest stage to which I propose to carry my speculations, I rather suspect that each male adult wandered about with one or more females—as many, in fact, as he could get. Then every man's hand was against every other man's hand and every female was at the mercy of any male who could capture her. At this primitive stage we may suppose that man had acquired the art of using sticks and stones for killing and disabling his fellows; but had hardly reached the stage of having settled houses and gardens, and was perhaps only just beginning to talk. All those social sentiments which distinguish man from the rest of the animal world would not, thus early, have been formed. In this primitive state man would be accompanied, not only by his women, but also by children born of the women his wives. For a time all might be well; but difficulties would arise as the children grew up and reached maturity. In the earliest stages the grown-up females would simply be taken possession of by the male of the group. The grown-up male children, however, would be in a very different position. It would be no longer safe to trust them in the family group. Before long they would give occasion for jealousy on the part of the leader of the group, and would have to seek safety in flight or overcome the older male. At times, doubtless, they would persuade one of the females of the group to leave with them. The expelled youth, if he had been unsuccessful in persuading a female of the group to run away with him, would have no other course open to him but to seize a female of his own or some other group and carry her off by force. At this early stage the female would doubtless be easily reconciled to the new arrangement. In fact I have known actual instances in New Guinea at the present day when a woman has been easily reconciled to quite similar arrangements. It will be noticed that even at the early time we are considering the rudiments of a definite marriage are already in existence. The elder male of the group may be said to have married all the adult females of his group, although there has been no marriage ceremony, beyond, possibly, that of capture, and although each female of the group is always liable to be captured by another male. Still the primitive fundamental idea of marriage is present, *i.e.* the exclusive ownership, for a time at least, of a woman by an individual man.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that the first stage in social evolution was due to the non-expulsion of grown-up male children. It is quite possible to see the way in which this might be brought about. As a youth reached maturity he would understand that the

women of his group were taboo to him, under pain of incurring the hostility of the older male of the group. He would perhaps have learnt that there were other groups and other females and it would not be long before the idea of capturing one of these other females would occur to him. Having done so, nothing would be more natural than for him to return to his former life in the original group with her. Perhaps the elder male of the group, whom we may call the youth's group-father, would welcome and assist him. The elder male would by so doing tend to secure some additional protection for his own wives, the youth's group-mothers, and still retain the youth, his group-child, as before, for perhaps much of the harder part of the work of procuring food for the group and as a help in defending the entire group from various dangers. Doubtless such a group would not at first be very stable, for disruption would be liable to occur owing to jealousy and quarrels between the group-father and group-son, yet they would, in a measure and for a time, secure a certain amount of unity and enable the group with its two adult males to hold its own, and seize rather more than its own, when it might happen to come into conflict with other groups containing only one adult male.

It will be observed that this primitive society contains the germs of two moral restraints, and that for a certain degree of stability it requires only the growth of these two moral restraints; and that the two moral restraints are the two which are perhaps the most constant and powerful in the history of man. The first moral restraint is that the group-child must not marry, *i.e.* have intercourse with, his group-mothers; and the second is that the group-father must not marry or have intercourse with the wife of his group-son. It may be noted that incidentally the idea of marriage also advances a stage. Although living in common, the group-son recognises that certain women are married to or reserved for his group-father, and the group-father recognises that certain women are married to or reserved for his group-son.

It will be noticed that I have always prefixed the word "group" to the above relationships. I do this because relationship among primitive races is based on status within the group¹ and on marriage² rather than on consanguinity, and with a view to making it quite clear that relationship, as is usually understood, is not meant.³ The real father of the youth may very well not be his

1. *Op. cit.* i, 307, quoting Dr. Rivers.

2. J. G. Frazer, quoting J. F. McLennan.

3. The influence of words on thoughts is often so strong and so elusive that I propose always to prefix the word "group" to all primitive relationships based on the classificatory systems of relationships.

group-father. The youth may have been captured with his mother when quite young. Some of the group-mothers of the youth may be his sisters, half-sisters, or perhaps no relation at all.

So far, the case of a group-father who admits one group-son into a share in the group life has been considered; but the next step is likely to be the admission of other group-sons into full membership of the group as they successively reach maturity and acquire wives by capture from other groups. But a further moral law has to be observed before a group consisting now of group-father, group-children, group-mothers, and wives of group-sons can be stable. Each group-son has to recognise that not only is his group-mother forbidden, but so also are the wives of his group-brothers. The only other alternative is for the group-brothers to hold their wives in common and for jealousy, as between group-brothers, to be lost or nearly so. This does really appear to have taken place¹ and may have done so in many instances in varying degrees. But the most stable arrangement is likely to be that in which the group-sister-in-law is taboo, except perhaps with the sanction of her husband on special occasions when wives are exchanged by agreement, or where there is a general exchange of wives between group-brothers on special and well-recognised occasions, and where each husband is satisfied to surrender his own wife for a time knowing that he will receive compensation in the shape of a group-sister-in-law. Perhaps also the origin of that group promiscuity which takes place on the marriage of a group-brother (*i.e.* in the earliest stage, when a wife is captured) can be seen. A girl is likely to be easiest captured when all the men of the group unite for the purpose. If so they may well claim a preliminary reward before their recently admitted and youngest group-brother is allowed to take the captive as his own. And it is immediately after having received such reward that they are most likely to be in a frame of mind formally to renounce all future claim to the captive by admitting her as a group-sister-in-law.² Assuming that man remains a jealous animal, the feeling that group-sisters-in-law are taboo must arise and grow into an imperative law before any stable organisation of the group can arise.

So far it has been assumed that there is only one group-father;

1. *Op. cit.* ii, 256 and 348.

2. Perhaps also group marriage in general may be nothing more than a relic of the time when the group as a whole captured women and held them for a time in common, or assigned them to one member of the group subject to a return to the condition of common property on stated occasions.

but in the next and subsequent generations each group-son will become a group-father, and there will be a multitude of group-fathers. Let us now consider the state of affairs which a youth belonging to a group in about this stage finds on reaching maturity. The group consists of group-elders with their wives; these wives are taboo to him by the original purely jealous edict of the group-father or fathers, but this edict has been now crystallised into a law. For the same reason the group-sisters are also taboo to him. In origin this taboo likewise depended on the jealousy of the group-fathers, although, as will be shown later, the group-fathers may be beginning to look on their group-children rather as property to be sold than as future wives. These women, his group relations, are from the beginning and must ever be taboo to him; but outside of his own groups are other groups with women, whom in the earliest stage he may hope to capture with the full approval of his group or in later stages, as will be subsequently shown, he may hope to purchase or have purchased for him. He finds women, in fact, divided into two classes—Class A, the taboo, and Class B, the not taboo. He sees also that his group male relations also possess this in common with himself, viz. that the same group of women is taboo to them all with the exception of the wife or wives of each of them. He is compelled by the facts to recognise that each man owns his wife or wives, and in addition that one group is taboo to him and all his relatives while another is not. The next stage may perhaps seem simpler and more obvious than it really is. Having reached the conception of two classes, A and B, nothing can be more natural than for these two classes to receive names.

Coincidentally, however, with this evolution of the group other changes will have taken place, and these have only been left out of account because of the impossibility of clearly describing more than one series of changes at one time. It will be noticed that the group as described above is defective in one important particular, viz. that no provision is made for the marriage of group-daughters as they grow up. In the most primitive state these group-daughters would be simply married, *i.e.* taken possession of by their group-father or else seized by the males of another group. But it will be seen later that one condition for the lasting stability of the primitive group is that group-daughter shall be taboo to group-father. Subsequently to the taboo on a group-sister and coincidentally with the growth of the taboo on a group-daughter, the original method of capturing a wife has probably been giving way to wife purchase. It is not difficult to see how this will have occurred. As general progress takes place the secret ravishing of a bride (in

the earliest stage already regarded as possessed by or married to her group-father) would become more and more difficult, and the chance of avoiding pursuit and a possible assassination or fight to the death would be more and more difficult.¹ But as property became more and more recognised and valuable a very ready means of appeasing the enraged group-father, who in the earliest stage is also the husband, would be to compromise the matter by a gift. In some cases this would hardly be so difficult as might at first appear. In the most primitive state, the father is likely to be the owner of more than one wife and may also have passed the age when the passions are strongest. Perhaps he is in his declining years and fears an encounter. In later times there is no longer one group-father but a number of group-fathers, who perhaps realise that by losing a group-daughter they are losing a possible cause of strife among themselves. The companions of the ravisher may also at times intervene and make up the payment or even offer one of their group-daughters in exchange. When once the idea of marriage by purchase or by exchange has been fully grasped it could hardly fail to make headway. Everyone gains by it. The group-fathers of the girl gain the payment—and this can be divided among them all—the ravisher gains the woman and his group gains another worker, and both sides avoid a doubtful fight. Also, as will be shown later, the evolution of a stable group requires that the feeling that a group-daughter is taboo to her group-father must gradually arise and later become imperative. As this feeling gradually grows, the group-fathers will lose nothing by the sale and will gradually come to look upon the group-daughters as little else than their property.

The impossibility of tracing out more than one line of evolution at a time has prevented me from explaining the growth of the feeling that group-daughters are taboo to their fathers coincidentally with the above. It will be remembered that a stage where the group consists of group-brothers, their wives and children, has been reached; male children of the group have to get their wives from outside the group, but in the earliest stage group-daughters become the wives of the group-fathers. The weakness of such a social organisation is very apparent. Peace is not likely to be long kept in the group when the daughters grow up, for the question has to be settled as to which of the group-fathers is to

1. In accordance with this view, wife purchase is more likely to arise in open country, where pursuit is easier, rather than in dense bush where the search for the abducted daughter would be more difficult.

possess them. Apart from the possibility of group marriage with less of the feeling of jealousy as regards members of the group, there is hardly more than one way of rendering the group stable; and that is by the growth of a feeling that group-fathers had better leave the group-children alone for fear of endangering the peace of the group. This feeling would increase *pari passu* with the growth of the custom of buying wives, for now the group-daughters can be sold and all the group-parents can share in the price. Moreover, such a custom would be of great advantage to the group which adopted it, for there is now no possible chance of quarrelling about the women of the group; every woman in the group is taboo to every man with the exception of her husband, and every male as he reaches maturity would have to get a wife from outside the group. The group or groups which adopted this organisation would be sure to succeed in the struggle for existence as compared with other groups which were liable at any time to a fratricidal quarrel about a group-woman, with the consequent disruption of the group and perhaps a fratricidal fight. It is along these lines that, I contend, the growth of the feeling that group-daughters are taboo first arose, gathered strength, and finally became an imperative moral law.

Consideration will show that a group organised on the above lines consists of group-fathers and their wives of the first generation, group-fathers and their wives of the second generation, group-children of the third generation, possibly also with their wives, and perhaps group-children of the fourth generation. But for practical marriage purposes it is not likely that there will be more than two, or at the very most three, generations to consider. It will also be noticed that every male knows that every female of the group is definitely taboo to him with the exception of his own wife or wives, and every young male knows that every girl in the group is definitely taboo to him, so there can be no cause of quarrel as regards women. And in the still very primitive condition of social organisation I am considering there can be little else to quarrel about. It is less trouble to make a fishing-net or a hunting-spear than to risk a quarrel by stealing one, and theft within the group can hardly be concealed. Primitive savages are for the most part equal, and there is little social precedence to quarrel about; nor has religion or magic reached a stage where there can be quarrels on this account, and moreover hunting and fishing operations may require the friendly co-operation of all the members of the group, quite apart from those more serious times when the group is bound to unite for self

defence and for the protection of the women. It is at this stage, I consider, that we can really say man has become man by evolving the first primitive and yet stable social organisation.

When a tribe is divided up into exogamous classes, it will usually be found (in Australia at least) that there are either two, four, or eight of these exogamous classes, and that every member of one class can only intermarry with members of one other special class, and that there is an apparent difficulty in explaining why the binary arrangement so often occurs and not other numbers such as three, five, or seven. This difficulty appears to have influenced Dr. Frazer in coming to the conclusion that such divisions have been deliberately devised with a view to satisfy some previously felt repugnance to the marriage of certain relatives.¹ I am aware that there are certain authorities who are well acquainted with the modes of thought of a group of primitive tribes and who appear to concur.² Nevertheless, I can hardly conceive of even the relatively advanced Papuan, as I know him, sitting down and deliberately instituting new laws which he has thought out for himself. I can, however, well imagine him discussing the advantage and disadvantages of adopting some new law for his community if it is known to be the law of neighbouring communities. Still less can I imagine that such a new law, even if backed up by arguments which the propounder of the law would hardly be capable of adducing, would be accepted by general tribal or clan consent. I rather suspect that the apparent difficulty of explaining the binary system of unconscious growth, and perhaps some failure to distinguish between the adoption from another community of a law and the thinking out of a new law, has given rise to an opinion that the Australian native is capable of deliberately instituting a new marriage law almost on rationalistic lines.

The fact that tribes appear to be for the most part divided into two, four, or eight exogamous marriage classes is apparently difficult to explain by unconscious growth, but I do not think that it is an insuperable difficulty and hope to describe the possible and, as I believe, the actual causes which have given rise to this binary division of the tribes.

It is not very difficult to see that a dual grouping of the clans is likely to arise first and to be the most stable at this time. It will be remembered that a stage has been reached where group exogamy is in full force with marriage by external purchase. Primitive man

1. *Op. cit.* i, 273, etc.

2. *Op. cit.* i, 280.

has not much to buy his wives with. Cattle have not been tamed, ornaments hardly yet made, and land hardly yet subjected to ownership. Primitive man may very likely be reduced to purchasing a wife, or have one purchased for him, by giving a sister in exchange. At times he may not have a sister ready and nothing is more natural than for him to promise one. Perhaps one or more maidens of one group have been captured and peace has only been kept by promising an equal number of girls in exchange. It is not difficult to see that a species of profit-and-loss account might easily be instituted, and if this were done a very important result would follow. When such a system was instituted the creditors would have a direct interest in protecting the debtors; for if these were destroyed by their enemies, and their women ravished, the debt would never be paid. Quite apart from this, maternal and paternal affection would induce each group to help the other, if difficulties arose, for the sake of their married children; and such mutual help would be of greater advantage to the two groups in competition with other groups not so united. A triple division is not likely to be so stable. There is a probable cause of jealousy, for it would hardly be long before group B and group C would both want a given woman of group A; and a dispute of this kind would very readily give rise to inter-group quarrelling. The weaker side would doubtless have to give way, and perhaps as a result of the ill-feeling produced be driven out of the confederation or have to leave it for fear of revenge if the quarrelling should have gone so far as actual fighting. As a result there would now be only two groups left in the confederation.

The foundations for a theory of this kind are not altogether imaginary. The Mekeo clans are organised much on the lines I have postulated. Clan exogamy is rigid, with descent in the paternal line. But in addition to this each clan has one, or it may be more than one clan, termed its *ufuapia*, into which it is proper for it to marry by purchase. Pigs and ornaments are usually paid for the girl, and I well remember having before me a case in which the girl had been married but not fully paid for. The girl's clan claimed that a particular ornament should be given to complete the payment. The matter was referred to me as Resident Magistrate and I advised that the payment of the ornament was due. Both sides accepted this decision; but the husband's clan at once said that they were about to let the other clan have one of their girls and applied for an order from me that the particular ornament should be given back again when this girl was handed over. Natives remember these debts for long periods. It is not

long since the Beri¹ people lost one of their girls through abduction by the Dugare tribe. I happened to come on the scene while the Beri people were proceeding under the leadership of their village constable to try to get the girl back. The village constable, a clan-father of the girl, almost tearfully explained that this was the fifth girl the Dugare had got without paying, in addition to two others which the Beri people had been given in payment for two of the Dugare whom they had killed some time back. The Beri people demanded a woman in payment; the Dugare admitted the claim as just but said that they had no woman available. Finally the two sides agreed to settle the matter by a payment.

Let us now consider the conditions under which a youth grows up when he lives in a group with a social organisation like that outlined on p. 315 *et seq.* As he grows up he will notice and be told that women are divided into two groups, viz. those women whom he and his immediate male relatives may marry, and those who can never be married by either himself or his male relatives. In fact he finds that women are divided into the tabooed and the non-tabooed. As generation succeeds generation this feeling that women are divided into the two classes, the tabooed and non-tabooed, will grow in strength, and I can well imagine the final result to be a feeling that women are, from the nature of things, divided into the two classes. In like manner a girl as she grows up finds that men are divided into these two classes. To a girl the distinction will be all the clearer since there will be no need to consider whether the man is already married or not. When the existence of the two classes has once been clearly perceived, it can hardly be long before they will be named. It will further be noticed that there is no conclusive reason why the male and female classes should always receive the same names; but perhaps the close association of brothers and sisters from birth will cause them to be identified and for their classes to receive the same class name.

It will further be noticed that a group, constituted as I have supposed, will inherit the classes through the males. Group exogamy gives rise to the exogamous classes and the group of a child is determined by that of the group or class fathers. This is, I believe, the more common primitive system, and the inheritance is not one of inheritance *via* the actual father, but is rather a species of inheritance *via* the males of the clan as a whole. But there are some exogamous clans that count descent in the female line. It

1. In the North-Eastern Division, British New Guinea (Papua), on the upper Musa River.

may be that after the class system has fully developed, the fact that the child is obviously and physically of the mother has caused even the unthinking savage to hold that it is of the same class as the mother; but I rather think that maternal inheritance is due to a later and a different mode of marriage which has given rise to descent of the class in the maternal line. In the Mekeo tribes the usual mode of marriage is for the husband (or his relatives) to buy the woman and for the husband to take her into his clan. There is, however, another and much rarer mode recognised, and more especially, I believe, when the husband belongs to another tribe altogether, or at least not to the proper intermarrying clan. In these cases the husband simply comes and lives with his wife's clan in his wife's village. The wife's clan seem to be satisfied with this arrangement and rather to regard it with favour, for not only do they keep the girl but they also acquire an extra member of the clan by her husband's joining it. It is not difficult to see how the system could give rise to descent *via* the mother. This mode of marriage would also tend to arise and become more common whenever an astute leader of a powerful group, or the astute group-fathers of a powerful group, saw that they could not only retain their group-daughters and their value as manual workers; but also acquire additional members of the group to aid in its defence, or in its aggressive designs, or even in the ordinary pursuit of hunting and fishing, by declining to let their group-daughters be married and taken away by their husbands; but by allowing the prospective husband to come and live with his desired wife in the group of her fathers. At first, too, this might be only a temporary arrangement, but as time went on the husband might prefer to remain in his newly adopted group or perhaps be unable to pay the father-in-law the price he requires for permission to take the girl away. Something of this kind may have arisen, even before the evolution of the exogamous classes, provided means of communication were easy, for it would then be inadvisable to seize the woman by force owing to the risk of a successful pursuit. At other times the custom may have arisen if the articles for purchase of the woman became scarce or difficult to procure.

It is needless to trace the evolution of such a tribe in detail, for it would go on *pari passu* with that of a tribe which buys its women, with the exception that male would be substituted for female and female for male. The first constitution of such a group would be group-father, group-daughters, and group-sons-in-law. Harmony in the group and its consequent stability would only be obtained if the group-father respected a taboo on his married daughters, and

if the group-son-in-law respected a taboo on his group-mothers-in-law. Later, when more than one son-in-law was admitted into the group, the taboo on a sister-in-law would have to be respected as well as a taboo on group-mothers and group-sisters. Furthermore, when such a system became fixed, a youth would find that the women who were and always had been taboo to him would not now be the sisters of his group-fathers, but his real mother and his group-mothers; and not the children of his group-fathers, but the children of his group-mothers. In short, group exogamy would exist, but the group would be founded on maternal inheritance and not on paternal. A youth while growing up would now find that women were divided into two classes, class A of his own group, and class B not of his own group. The former would be taboo to him and not the latter, and it would now be maternal inheritance which would decide the taboo. In the earliest stages it would be not so much direct inheritance of the class from the mother as it would be inheritance of the class from the group as a whole.

It will be observed that the husband has entered the group of the father-in-law and has not bought his wife. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to suppose that the father-in-law will be regarded as retaining the ownership of his daughter and of her children; and that on the death or incapacity of the father-in-law, ownership of the grandchildren will pass to the father-in-law's son, *i.e.* to the maternal uncle of the grandchild. This readily accounts for the intimate relationship which is so often considered to exist between a child and his maternal uncle.¹

It has been already shown that the two-class system with paternal descent is likely to prevail in cases where the husband buys or seizes his wife; and for just the same reason the two-class system with maternal descent will prevail when the husband is admitted into the group of his wife. If a three-class system ever arose it would be unstable. Class B and class C are likely to quarrel before very long about a woman of class A and the confederacy to be broken up in consequence. Any other arrangement of more than three groups is equally unstable if one group can marry indifferently into either group.

So far I have tacitly assumed that the group or class is an actual whole and lives as a whole, so it follows that group exogamy necessitates local exogamy. If the two groups should increase in number, it is not unlikely that they will split up into two or more villages, and more especially so if their mode of living necessitates

1. *Op. cit.* ii, 66, 75, 123, 194, 409; iv, 289; ii, 239, 245, 379, 443, 513, 525; iii, 575; iv, 316; iii, 562.

that only a small number of them can find food in any one given place. In that case, all the advantages of group exogamy will be retained if local exogamy is substituted for it. But a further evolution of the group system may occur. I have assumed that once a woman marries she leaves her group for all time, and that her parents hold little intercourse either with her or her husband. In the earliest stage this was doubtless the case, but as social organisation progresses it will hardly be in conformity with the persistence of natural parental feeling. So, too, it will be an advantage if the husband and wife can rely on the help of both their group-parents in times of difficulty and danger. It is a very reasonable supposition that the group-parents of the girl, of class B, and more particularly perhaps her real mother and her real mother's husband and their real brothers, remain on terms of social intercourse with the newly-married husband and his class A. But this introducing of group-fathers-in-law into the husband's clan requires an additional safeguard if quarrels are to be avoided. The group-sisters of the husband will be reaching maturity, and we may suppose that their owners, *i.e.* the clan-fathers of class A are willing to marry them to the clan-fathers-in-law of class B. We then at once get the clan-fathers-in-law possible rivals for the same girl or we may say probable rivals, for not many girls will be reaching maturity at the same time. It will also be a direct loss to the dual group if the young and vigorous females become taken possession of or married to the older males of the other group; and on the death of the older males another possible cause of quarrel will arise in the deciding of who is to possess the widows still of a marriageable age. The evil effects can, however, be prevented if it once becomes recognised that while the generation level with a man and of the opposite group is eligible to him, yet the next younger generation is not; and a stable clan group which permits intercourse between the father-in-law, or clan fathers-in-law and the husband's clan can only arise if it is agreed that a man must keep to his own generation as regards marriage. The consequence is that a man's choice of wives is restricted to a half; but when he does marry, free intercourse can be permitted and free help rendered and accepted from the group-parents-in-law of the girl without the risk of complications arising. This is only another way of saying that each class has been subdivided into two halves, so that we get a clan group with two classes and four sub-classes. Descent is reckoned in the male line as regards the class; but the son takes a different sub-class from his father and the same as his grandfather. *Pari passu* with this evolution of a

four sub-class group with male descent will be the evolution of a four sub-class group with female descent of the classes. The only difference will be that the male will marry into the group of the wife and live in her village, and that the children will be brought up there and be of her class. By this time, too, it may be that the original organisation of two groups living in different places is being more broken up and that the groups are becoming more and more scattered and perhaps intermingled. The social organisation which has been reached up to this point is that of a two-class group with each class named and each class divided into two, as yet unnamed, sub-classes. As soon, however, as the division into sub-classes is distinctly felt and the requisite taboos observed, it will not be long before the two sub-classes receive names. Each sub-class now having received a name, the class names are no longer of any practical use and the very practical-minded savage is likely to discard and forget them; and, as a result, the group will appear to consist of four sub-classes or of four classes, whichever we like to call them, and with inheritance of the sub-class in the alternate generation.

When the four-class system prevails, parents may freely communicate with either their clan-children, with the husbands and wives of their clan-children, and with the brothers and sisters of the latter. Jealousy cannot arise, for they are all taboo to the clan-parents of either the husband or the wife by reason of being of the opposite sub-class. But, on the other hand, the clan-parents Aa of the husband cannot be allowed free communication with the clan-parents of the wife, for these are of sub-class Ba and as such are eligible. In other words, the clan-parents of both the husband and wife cannot all help the husband and wife *at the same time* without danger of jealousy, quarrels, and constant rupture of the group. For the same reason the family of a clan-brother and sister cannot unite without risk of jealousy if their children are grown up, for these latter may marry in the case of the four-class system. Now such unions, and more especially perhaps the union of husband and wife with their real parents, real uncles, and real aunts, may be of importance to the safety and welfare of the married couple. In the earliest times the clan-mothers are likely to be all married and as such tabooed by their possession by their husbands; but as generation succeeds generation, some of these clan-mothers will be unmarried girls and as such available to cause jealousy among the clan-fathers of the other one of the recently married couple. We may suppose that only the old prohibitions remain in force at first, and that the clan-parents Aa and Ba intermarry and that the

children of a brother and sister do likewise. But arguing along the same lines as before, this will sooner or later give rise to jealousy, quarrels, fights, and the subsequent rupture of the group. As a result the feeling will gradually arise that it is inopportune for the clan-parents Aa and Ba and for the children Ab and Bb to intermarry. If this feeling grows, as it is likely to do, there is finally produced a group with eight sub-classes, as will be more fully explained later.

In the two-class system, there are only classes A and B; and any male A may marry any female B. In the four-class system, there are males and females of the first generation, Aa and Bb; but each group has to keep to its own generation. The eight-class system is more complicated and difficult to understand; but a reference to the adjoining table will help to render the matter clearer.

TABLE I.

	HUSBAND.		WIFE.		CHILDREN.
CLASS A	Aa _α	.....	Ba _α	.....	Ab _β
	Aa _β	.....	Ba _β	.....	Ab _α
	Ab _α	.....	Bb _α	.....	Aa _β
	Ab _β	.....	Bb _β	.....	Aa _α
CLASS B	Ba _α	.....	Aa _α	.....	Bb _α
	Ba _β	.....	Aa _β	.....	Bb _β
	Bb _α	.....	Ab _α	.....	Ba _α
	Bb _β	.....	Ab _β	.....	Ba _β

This table shows the arrangement of the exogamous classes and sub-classes of the southern Arunta tribes of Australia and is taken from Frazer, substituting Aa for Panunga, Ab for Bulthara, Ba for Purala, Bb for Kumara, α for a, and β for b. The first column gives the class and sub-class of the husband, the second column the class and sub-class of the woman he must marry, and the third column the class and sub-class of their children. Table II gives much the same information expressed in the form of a genealogical table. It has been worked out by starting with a male Ab_β and inserting the classes of his wife, of his descendants, of the parents of both husband and wife, and of the descendants of these latter.

It is to be observed that in the case of the two-class system every individual of class A or class B may intermarry with any other individual of the opposite class; and that the permissibility or otherwise of a marriage can be found by neglecting the letters a , b , α and β in Tables I and II. On the four-class system Aa may intermarry with any Ba and Ab with any Bb; and the permissibility or otherwise of a marriage can be found by neglecting the letters α and β . But on the eight-class system all the letters have to be taken into account. It will be further seen that on the two-class system (with paternal descent) a man may not marry his clan-daughter or clan-sister; and that on the four-class system, in addition to the above, he may not marry a clan-mother, a clan-niece, or clan-aunt; and that on the eight-class system he is in addition forbidden a clan-parent of the partner of any of his children, and clan-children of a clan-mother's brother or clan-father's sister. If these prohibitions are interpreted into our ordinary relationships, it will be found that the two-class system forbids children, sisters, fraternal nieces and some cousins; that the four-class system in addition forbids mother, maternal aunts, and nieces the children of a sister; that the eight-class system still further forbids a man to marry the sisters of the parents of his son or daughter-in-law, and also his remaining first cousins. In addition numerous other individuals will be excluded who on the European method of reckoning relationships are regarded as being unrelated, or at least very distantly related.

The southern Arunta work their system without names for the eight classes. "The two separate sub-classes (α and β) thus comprised under each of the four nominal sub-classes Panunga (Aa), Bulthara (Ab), Purula (Ba), and Kumara (Bb), have no native names. . . .¹ This system is in practice identical with the avoidance of clan-parents of the partner of a clan-child and of all clan first cousins, and in fact the formation of the sub-classes α and β is only a convenient way of expressing the facts. Now let us consider the conditions under which a youth Aa in this eight-class system finds as he grows up. He is taught that of four classes Aa, Ab, and Bb are tabooed, while of the remaining class Ba, half is tabooed and half is not. In other words, he finds that the classes each consist of two parts—one marriageable and one not marriageable. It is not then unlikely that the two halves will before very long receive separate names as is the case with the northern Arunta. The final result is, therefore, that there are eight named classes or sub-classes, whichever we prefer to call them.

In some instances the names of the two original classes may

1. *Op. cit.* i, 261.

TABLE II.

In Table II the male is always placed on the left and the female on the right with an 'm' inserted between. The letters indicate the class and sub-class of all the relatives of a man *Ab* and his wife *Bb*, who are placed in the middle of the table.

be kept, when there will be an appearance of two classes, each divided into four sub-classes; in other instances the names of the two original classes will be forgotten and there will be an appearance of four classes, each divided into two sub-classes: in other instances the names of the two-class divisions as well as the four-class divisions may be forgotten, and there will be the appearance of a tribe divided into eight classes with the curious mode of descent of the classes which is found in the case of the Arunta and other tribes.

The eight-class system has also the further advantage that the group is still stable even if the male joins the father-in-law's clan in some instances while yet his own sons bring their wives into their fathers' village and clan. This is a by no means unlikely event if an individual of unusual ability arises. His own sons are likely to remain with him; while his sons-in-law will only be too willing to share the advantages of his superior powers, and it may be that others quite outside the group will be willing to join it and to be adopted into the group with a view to gaining its protection; and the astute leader, if he is ambitious, will quite well see the advantage of attracting others to his group.

It will be noticed that the formation of an eight-class system is the first system which really admits of what may be described as family ties in distinction from clan ties. Until this system is founded the married daughter has simply been sold to or captured by her husband, or else the husband has deserted his clan for the woman. With the eight classes, however, the husband's and wife's relations can unite; there is an opportunity for the growth of a feeling of union and mutual affection between them all, and friendly co-operation is possible both before and after marriage. So also something like betrothal can arise, and in fact is likely to arise. The brothers and sisters of the husband are inter-marriageable with the brothers and sisters of the wife and are likely to cause trouble if means are not found to prevent it. One means of preventing it is for the appropriate couples to be betrothed at an early age and taught that they are bound to accept this arrangement. Another safeguard is for the youths or maidens to be isolated as puberty advances and to be taught the proper way to behave by the older members of the tribe. These means are hardly possible or necessary in the earlier stages, when the families of the husband and wife have little in common and do not live in common. At the same time, when I was living at Mekeo in the Central Division of British New Guinea, I was much surprised to see how completely the woman was renounced by her clan and how very

hostile in feeling the intermarrying clans sometimes were in spite of the persistence of the intermarrying relation.

I have so far considered exogamy as something quite apart in origin from totemism in spite of their frequent interdependence at the present time among primitive races. This I have done because I think the two are in origin quite distinct, and that it is only after the full significance of the sexual act as regards procreation has been grasped that they have been grafted on one another. Some of the most primitive races are ignorant of the relation between procreation and its necessary antecedent.¹ It is not until this discovery has been made that a family, as is usually understood in European countries, can be founded. Even after savages have risen to this knowledge, family feeling in the European sense of the word is hardly understood. Natives of New Guinea seem generally to recognise the necessary antecedent to procreation, although in some cases at least they believe that repeated acts are necessary; yet they appear to regard adopted children, including captives, much in the same light as their own children. But when the human race once grasped the fact that its children are its own in a more intimate sense than that of mere possession of property, one of the foundations for family feeling was established. Other factors doubtless entered into the evolution of the family, but perhaps the most important is the separation of single pairs in search of food; or, when the pastoral stage has been reached, in search of food for flocks. At first, doubtless, the old class exogamy laws would hold good, as they appear to do in New Guinea; but when family life becomes fully established, clan exogamy could hardly but be replaced by family exogamy.

In this connection it is interesting to notice an apparent echo of the time when family life does not appear to have existed among the primitive Aryans. The words for father, mother, sister, daughter, brother all contain the suffix *-tar*, and appear to have been first formed after the primitive Aryans began to keep flocks. Professor Sayce, in his *Introduction to the Science of Language*, says that the new words then coined took the place of the old words. Is it not more likely that it was only at this time that relationship as we understand it first arose, and that then for the first time epithets were given to the relationships as we understand them: whereas the old clan or classificatory relationships were afterwards lost as clan life became gradually replaced by family life? But when the primitive Aryan began to live as a united family, family exogamy would follow sooner or later as a consequence. The old

1. *Op. cit.* i, 93.

clan exogamy would be useless; but for peace and union to reign in the family, family exogamy must prevail. The present marriage laws of Europe may be taken to indicate that from the time of the primitive Aryans, grandparents, parents, sons, daughters, aunts, and uncles have been accustomed to live together as a united family; while the custom for cousins and relations-in-law has not been so constant.

SUMMARY.

The theory I have propounded can be stated shortly in the following form. It has been of advantage for man in the struggle for existence to unite with his immediate relatives for defence and other purposes. The great obstacle to such unions has been jealousy and the quarrels which arise about women. Exogamy in its varied forms is nothing more than a means of avoiding these quarrels and of enabling groups to live united without quarrelling. It has, moreover, been produced by gradual growth as man gradually progressed from the condition of an unsocial animal towards that of a true man with social institutions. As soon as any form of social progress began, primitive man had to respect the marriage tie or, in other words, to recognise the fact that certain women were owned by certain men and therefore forbidden to all others. As soon as males began to permit grown-up sons to remain in the primitive group, a taboo on all the unmarried females of the group had to be respected. As man became less brutal, the original wife capture was replaced by the interchange of women between two groups, giving rise to the two class-system of exogamy. As soon as the group-parents of the wife began to have free communication with the husband and his actual or group-brothers and sisters, the same had to be forbidden to each other; and as a consequence the four-class system of exogamy virtually constituted. As soon as the immediate relatives of both husband and wife began to have free communication with each other and as soon as the families of brothers and sisters began to live in common, the group-parents of a husband had to be forbidden to the group-parents of a wife as well as all first cousins; and as a consequence the eight-class, or sub-class, system of exogamy was virtually constituted. As soon as family life was substituted for clan life, family exogamy had to be substituted for clan exogamy. Had the above not taken place, the group would, sooner or later, have been dissolved in the midst of jealousy and hostilities.

W. M. STRONG.