

CHAPTER VII

The Sexes

(ii) Marriage and the Family

THE NATURE of the relationship established in courtship changes fundamentally with marriage. Here ends the free, personal, purely emotional bond. Marriage is part of the overt structure of the community. Ties are created not only between the *novios* but between persons who were previously linked by no more than common membership of the pueblo, if by that. Other ties are weakened by the formation of these new ones. A new pattern of social relations emerges. The system of naming serves well as an introduction to the structure of the family.

The young woman adds her husband's patronym to her own names. Let us say that he is: Manuel Castro Barea, and she: Ana Ruiz Menacho. Then she becomes: Señora de Castro, or (her official form of address) Señora Doña Ana Ruiz Menacho de Castro. The pueblo will continue to call her Ana Ruiz without her husband's patronym.

The dual surnames are composed of the patronym of the paternal and maternal grandfathers. In the same way, the children of this marriage will bear the surnames Castro Ruiz.

Within the pueblo, but not among the families of the *señoritos*, the children will be given Christian names in accordance with those of the grandparents; so that if Manuel Castro Barea is the son of Andrés Castro and Maria Barea, then the first child of each sex will be named (after the paternal grandparents) Andrés and Maria. The second child of each sex will be named after its mother's parents. The grandchildren are regarded as the descendants of one pair of grandparents as much as of the other, and this accords logically with the fact that they will have an equal claim upon the inheritance of both.

The law regards the family formed by this marriage as a single unit with, in many aspects, a single legal personality.¹ The wife becomes subject to her husband's tutelage, for in the eyes of the law he is the representative of this single personality. The wife, if she is over twenty-one years of age, will have become *vecina* (neighbour) of the pueblo. On her marriage she ceases to be so but becomes instead *casada*, the wife of a *vecino*. She also loses the right to control her worldly property, though she can prevent her husband, who administers it as he wishes, from disposing of it. Yet she cannot buy or sell property without his consent. The property of both is regarded as a single unit which the husband controls.

Neither are likely to have any property from the parents while the latter are still active, though the new couple may be given charge of a farm or mill belonging to one of the parents. If any dowry is given, which is rare, it represents either an advance of the share of inheritance of the girl's parents, or a free gift on their part. To make such a gift to one's child is called *mejorarle* (to improve him). As a general rule property does not pass until death.

The people of Alcalá feel very strongly that every family should possess its own house, and to marry without setting up a separate home is regarded as a make-shift arrangement. The poorer people are the more insistent upon this need for independence, and the economic advantages which might accrue from forming a larger family unit are offset by the desire to be free of the tensions which make family life impossible where there is more than one family in a house. "Cada uno en su casa" ("Each one in his own house") that is the only way to live peacefully. "Casada casa quiere" ("housewife wants house"), the saying rubs in the point. For while a joint family might collaborate in spending money, they cannot collaborate in making it, where each man's income derives from a daily wage. The husband must rent a house for his bride, and with the housing situation as at present it is not an impossibility even for the landless day-labourer. On the farms of the valley where family relationships are made clearer by geographical distance and

¹ Viz. Civil Code, Title IV, Chapters I and II.

conservative tendencies, it can be seen that the marriage of a child of either sex involves, or should involve, his withdrawal from the family unit. The modern custom, followed only by some is for parents to pay the sons who work upon their farm a daily wage once they are fully grown up, in order that they may start to prepare to found a family. But on some of the farms they keep the family finances integrated until a son marries, when he must have his daily wage to keep his wife. He may keep her in the pueblo in a house of his own (rarely in the parents' house even though they seldom go there) while he goes down to the valley every day to work. He may set up house in the valley or even build a house there, or he may also bring her to live with his parents or, more frequently, go himself to live with and work for hers. He may work for her parents and keep her in a house in the pueblo.

An old tradition of the farmers, followed by few nowadays, ordains that the elderly parents keep the daughter or daughter-in-law to live with them for the first year of her marriage. In one family where this is followed, the son works elsewhere and visits his parents' farm on Sundays to see his wife. At the same time the farm is worked by a son-in-law, the husband of an elder daughter who has a large family and lives in the pueblo. Hence the elderly parents live on the farm with one son-in-law and one daughter-in-law while their seven children all live elsewhere. Living with the old people there is also one grandson, the son of the son-in-law, and a boy-employee of fourteen years. The object of keeping the daughter or daughter-in-law with the parents is to assist the newly married couple to set up a home, for in this way all the husband's pay can be saved. The wife lives for nothing with the old people and in return she does the housework and looks after them. This arrangement is clearly only possible while she has no children of her own, and this may explain why it is an arrangement for the first year of marriage only.

In general, sons-in-law get on well with their wife's parents, and there are several farms where they live and are employed in preference to a son. The virtual avoidance between father- and son-in-law while the girl is courted ends with marriage, and gives way to an easier relationship than that of the father with his own sons, who must preserve

a stricter respect for him than must his sons-in-law. The daughter-in-law, on the other hand, very seldom gets on well with her husband's parents once she has a family of her own; and even before that her relationship is always formal and sometimes strained. She is a virtual stranger to his parents when the son marries her, for she has remained with her parents while her *novio* came to court her at their house. Little by little, he has adapted himself to the ways of her parents' house. He has made friends with her brothers.¹ After the demand for her hand the avoidance of the father has lapsed and he has been invited into her house. She has had no such opportunity to become acquainted with his parents, and when she comes to them it is not to ask a favour, but as the established wife. Parental love is warm, and it is through her that the parental tie is loosened. In such a situation, rivalry between a man's wife and his mother for his chief regard seldom fails to produce sparks. Living in the same house they must collaborate more closely than the men-folk in the fields, and for this reason a mother always prefers to have her own daughter to work for her who is used to her authority and the ways of her house.

An Andalusian saying points out the tendency to matri-locality.

"Tu hijo se casa
Y pierdes a tu hijo
Tu hija se casa
Y ganas otro."

"Your son gets married
And you lose your son
Your daughter marries
And you get another one."

In the determination of locality, the moral and legal equality of children regardless of their sex, combined with the unity of the married couple, create a situation where the emotional tensions inherent in family life assert themselves, and the identification of the woman with the home overrides the principle of patriliney.²

¹ Not straight away. The father formally ignores him, and for some time he is regarded with suspicion by the brothers. The family requires to know whether his intentions are serious or not. Antonio, son of Andrés el Baño said of the boy who had already courted his sister faithfully for four years: "Hasta ahora se ha portado bien con nosotros" ("So far he has behaved well towards us"). But in time this suspicion gives way to friendship.

² The participation of the maternal grandparents through surname, Christian names and property, in the lives of their daughter's children must not

This pattern of relations is also illustrated in a subsequent stage of the evolution of the family. Elderly parents, no longer able to work and look after themselves, are dependent upon their children to keep them. But it is noticeable that the children with whom the parents choose to stay are, in a slight majority, daughters rather than sons. It is only surprising that the disproportion is not greater, for elderly widowed mothers are seldom happy in their daughter-in-law's house. This sacred duty which requires poor people who work hard to devote part of their income and much of their time to the care of aged parents is generally respected, though it is said that before the initiation of the old-age pensions scheme old people were more often abandoned than today. Dutiful children are the insurance against a wretched old age or one spent in an institution in another pueblo. Parents who do not give their children proper moral "education" will be faced in old age with shameless children who neglect them. Respect for parents is not based upon authoritarian rule. Children are punished very little and are never expected to emulate their elders prematurely. They learn through imitation and are encouraged much with kisses and applause, for the love of children is great here. It is enormously sentimental and demonstrative in comparison with that of Northern Europeans, and neither mother nor father, brother nor sister is ever either stiff or emotionally restrained towards them. At the same time, the identity of the child with its parents is continually stressed in its relations with other youngsters in the pueblo, so that the child's social personality is defined in relation to its parents. Children are always known as the children of so-and-so. In the advance of age the material tie between children and parents grows weaker, but

be confused with matriliney. It is the mother's patronym which she gives to her children, not her matronym. In so far as this society is lineal at all it is patrilineal. The lineal principle, however, is incompatible with the social structure of the pueblo and has little importance there. In the tradition of the aristocracy, patrilineal descent was, of course, important, and was found together with a whole number of structural elements which contrasted with those of the pueblo; a monocratic relationship to community through the *senorio* (lordship) and a system of inheritance through the *mayorazgo* (entailment), which maintained the unity of property preferentially in the male line. It is noteworthy, however, that the majority of Spanish titles pass through the female line in default of a male line in the same degree of kinship.

the moral tie remains full of vigour. Within a community which knows no other principle of grouping, and where other relationships tend to be unstable and kinship ties are weak, the strength of the family stands out in solitary relief.

The statement that kinship ties are weak requires to be justified. Where kinship is associated with political structure, locality or economic production, one is accustomed to find that the extensions of the elementary family are endowed with structural importance. Enough has already been said to make it clear that this is not the case in Alcalá. People are seldom able to give a comprehensive account of their families further than their first cousins. Property alone provides an incentive to strengthen the ties with persons outside the elementary family.

The law of inheritance greatly influences the structure of the family, and the diversity of the traditional laws of inheritance of the different regions of Spain points to an equal diversity in their family structure. There is no regional tradition in Andalusia in the matter of inheritance. Its law is the law of Castile. When the property-owner dies his property is divided in half. One half is subdivided equally among all his children, the other goes to his widow for the duration of her life after which it also is divided among the children. During the widow's lifetime the division does not often take place, but when neither of the parents remain and the grandchildren are already fully grown it becomes necessary, in the interests of family independence, to make the partition. In fact, the way in which the property will be split up is usually foreshadowed in the arrangements which are made for its exploitation when the owner becomes too old to control it himself. Where the property is composed of several distinct holdings they are divided amongst the children, possibly with certain monetary adjustments, or with adjustments to the extent of the properties. In other instances, however, either it is impractical to divide the property or the heirs are unable to reach an agreement upon its division. The property then remains intact. If the joint owners fail to agree regarding its exploitation it is very often sold, so that the price may be divided among them. However, where they agree well enough,

it is often regarded as preferable to retain the property intact in joint ownership and hope that time provides a solution. This, it frequently does. The property is run by one or more brothers and brothers-in-law on behalf of all. Little by little the other participants are bought out and the property remains in a single pair of hands, to face the same problem once more in the next generation. Where, for example, a brother is tenant in another farm or follows a different occupation such as artisan, he is well content to allow this to happen: but rivalry is common between brothers and sisters for ultimate possession of the inheritance. The joint ownership works well enough on occasions, though quarrels regarding its administration and profits tend to arise. In the third generation, that is to say when members of the second generation start to die, the difficulties become too great if they all leave children. Before anything can be done, it is necessary to reach agreement in a varied group of uncles and cousins and this is neither easy nor is it efficient. At this point people are glad to sell their interest and put their money into something else. Finally, a solution to the problem of inheritance is provided by the marriage of first cousins. Where families are not too large, the property is sometimes held together, or rather reunited by a marriage in the third generation. There is, however, nothing resembling a customary obligation to do so, and Andrés el Baño, for example, considers that such marriages ought not to be allowed. It is rather an arrangement which ambitious parents make in order to avoid having to split an inheritance. The number of descendants and the nature of the property determine the advantages of such a marriage, and where the farm is small and there are many grandchildren the advantages of cousin marriage are not great.

The relationship of first cousin is an equivocal one. Cousins are conscious of belonging to the same family for they have common grandparents whose inheritance they share, and yet at the same time they are not in any way interdependent. There is no specific code of behaviour for them. If they are brought up in close contact with one another, then their family association provides the basis for firm friendship. But cousinship in itself does not involve any

rights or obligations. Nevertheless, upon this uncertain ground, relations of genuine affection spring up, not only between cousins of the same sex but often, stressing membership of a common family, between *primo* and *prima*. This relationship is what might be called fraternal, but at the same time there is no absolute prohibition upon sexual relations between persons so related. Such a relationship is not incestuous, though marriage between persons so related requires a special dispensation. When José-María Perez took his cousin la Castaña to Jacinas on the back of his mule he claimed to be acting in a spirit of fraternal co-operation, but that did not prevent the evil tongues of the valley from attributing quite another motive for their journey. The label of cousinship is used sometimes to conceal the true nature of a relationship. Thus in the parish register a number of entries of *primo* or *pariente* (kinsman) denote a relationship which is nothing of the kind.

The ambiguity relating to the word *primo* explains its curious slang use. "Foolish or incautious", says the dictionary. The sense might best be rendered by the colloquialism "mug". The cousin is the prototype of the mug, for he puts faith in the strength of kinship ties and is soon deceived. "We are all brothers", quipped a witty fellow to his drinking-companions, "but not *primos*."

We can now see cousin-marriage in its true light. It is a way to reinforce the disintegrating family unit, and where property is involved there is a strong motive to do this. But it can also be explained in terms of sentimental affinity. The country families are considered slightly odd and unsociable by the pueblo—a fact which is seen in the exaggerated accounts of their lack of education and uncouthness. This reason is frequently given as an explanation of cousin-marriage. Shy children raised on the farms frequently form attachments to their cousins in a way that those raised in the hurly-burly of the pueblo do not. Cousin-marriage, though not specifically a characteristic of the tenant and owner farmers of the valley, is more frequent among them than in the pueblo.

A second type of marriage which possess a certain similarity with cousin-marriage is marriage between pairs of brothers

and sisters—similarity, that is, in the circumstances which favour it. For this type of marriage should be regarded as marriage between affines, and just as cousin-marriage can be viewed as the desire to strengthen the link between blood-kin, so this appears as the desire to strengthen affinal ties. Two families united hitherto by a single marriage are thenceforth united by two. There are three instances of this in the valley and but one in the pueblo itself.

In summing up, we can see that the lack of mutual rights and obligations outside the elementary family, the lack even of occasions on which the unity of the extended family is expressed, for cousins are not bound to be asked and are not always asked to weddings, makes of kinship a facultative rather than a firm bond. It is an excellent basis for friendship, but it is not in itself an important element in the structure of this society. Among the country-dwellers, marriages are favoured which reinforce this basis, for they need to cooperate on a more permanent footing than those of the pueblo. One might say that the nature of the exploitation of the land in small-holdings produces a tendency to extend family ties. Yet in the absence of the institutions and values which might support such an extension, ties between kin cannot be regarded as important.

Two relationships remain to be discussed. First of all affinal ties. The identity of the matrimonial couple and the husband's responsibilities in formal matters bring him into very close contact with his brothers-in-law, and one very often finds strong friendship between men so related. This is not the case with their parents though these are united in a relationship which bears a special name, *consuegros* (co-parents-in-law). Parents have, in fact, little influence over their children's choice of a spouse. (One might well marry to please one's parents, but one could hardly pursue a courtship such as I have described in order to please them.) United by the institutions of marriage and baptism, and by their common relationship to their grandchildren, *consuegros* are equally divided by jealousies in relation to the latter. They tend to be formal and mutually critical rather than warm with one another.

Contrasting with the wary and distant relations of the co-

parents-in-law is the relationship between *compadres* (co-parents literally, meaning co-godparents). Godparents are chosen friends of the parents who enter into a formalised friendship with them through their marriage or the baptism of their children. On the occasion of a marriage, a pair of godparents are chosen (*padrinos de boda*), usually a married couple from the close kin of the groom. A married elder brother and his wife is the conventional choice. These, according to one tradition, are also the godparents of the first child (*padrinos de bautizo*). Those of the second child will be chosen from among the relatives of the wife. There are many divergent ideas on the choice of *padrinos*, which need not here concern us. The relationship of godparent is a kind of spurious kinship involving obligations towards the child or in the marriage festivities. The *padrinos* are responsible for the costs. Far more important however, is the relationship which it creates between the parents and the godparents. This is called the *compadrazgo*. In order to become *compadres*, either the would-be *compadre* offers himself or the father invites him to be a godparent to his child. It is a bond of formal friendship more sacred than any personal tie outside the immediate family. Its seriousness is stressed by the fact that, in the popular conception though no longer in the Canon Law, it creates an incest taboo—you cannot marry your *compadre*¹—and also by the mode of speech which *compadres* are obliged to adopt in talking to one another. Save when they belong to the same elementary family they must use the third person, even though they have spoken to one another in the second person all their lives. The explanation given for this is that "*compadres* respect one another". This respect does not involve a stiff or formal attitude; on the contrary, they speak to each other with great ease, but each is under the obligation to do for the other whatever he asks of him.² The *compadre* is an honorary mem-

¹ There are also frivolous derived forms of *compadrazgo* such as the *compadres de carnaval*, *madrina de guerra*, between whom marriage is permissible and frequent. For a more detailed study of this institution, see my paper "Ritual Kinship in Spain," *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Series II, Vol. xx, No. 5 (1958).

² Technically, co-parents-in-law (*consuegros*) are also *compadres* and address each other in the third person, but their relationship is usually very different in feeling. People do not refer to their *consuegro* as my *compadre* unless the latter relationship exists in its own right.

ber of the elementary family, but he is at the same time free of the trammels which bring dissension among kin. In the changing kaleidoscope of friendship the *compadrazgo* is an irrevocable tie of mutual trust, stronger than that of kinship because it owes its existence to the free consent of both parties. A young *señorito*, explaining his quarrel with his married sister, said: "It is ridiculous that a man should be bound to people through kinship. To your mother and father, yes, you have obligations, for they have brought you into the world, but what is a brother, sister or cousin? I recognise ties with no one save the friends of my choice."

The *compadres* may or may not be relatives. It is usual for the first few children to be "baptised" by members of the family. Very frequently the parents of both husband and wife wish to "baptise" one of their grandchildren, and in this way the relationship of father-in-law to son-in-law is overlaid by that of the *compadrazgo*. In the same way it serves to reinforce ties with members of the family. However, it is also entered into with persons who are not relatives. These may be neighbours or they may equally be friends who live in another pueblo. There are certain advantages in having a *compadre* in another pueblo, though the danger of losing touch with him if one ceases to be able to go there is also to be considered. Finally, there is the powerful *señorito* who is *padrino* to the child of a poor family. In this case, the relationship of *compadre* is not stressed so much as that of the munificent *padrino*. "Don Fulano is *padrino* to that family for he has baptised one of their children." This establishes him formally as their protector, but, without any such ritual tie, the word is also used to mean any powerful person who is prepared to patronise (*empadrinar*) a poor man or to use his power to protect him. "El que no tiene padrino no sirve pa' na'" ("He who has no *padrino* is no use for anything"), said a dejected poor man, whose application for a plot of ground in a new colonisation scheme had failed. A popular saying expresses the same idea: "El que tiene padrinos se bautiza" ("He who has *padrinos* gets baptised"). There are also *padrinos* who offer themselves at the suggestion of the religious associations in order to encourage poor people to celebrate their relationship with the rites of the Church. Certain of them cannot

afford to get married though they live together as man and wife. The *padrino* pays for the religious ceremony and gives them a present as well.

The significance of this institution will only be seen clearly in conjunction with the institution of friendship which is discussed in Chapter IX and from which it differs in that it is a permanent relationship which cannot be renounced.

A certain diversion from the theme of this chapter has been necessary in order to treat of kinship coherently, and to show the limits of its influence as a principle of grouping and how it creates ties between the sexes. It is not intended to convey that where there are ties of kinship or affinity people do not give weight to the difference of sex. Marriage, the nodal point of the system, is founded precisely on this difference. A man reaches his full manliness in fatherhood; a woman in motherhood attains her full social standing. The change which marriage brings in the relationship of *novios* is reflected by changed attitudes. Marriage marks the end of romantic love, the beginning of the preparation for parenthood. This transition is reflected in the nostalgia of married people for the days when they were *novios*. "That is when everyone is happiest."

The change of attitude is not always complete. Few are the men who do not retain something of the boy, and there are opportunities for many members of the pueblo for justifying their manliness while away from home. But the fleeting infidelity need not detain us. We are concerned with pre-marital and extra-marital relations within the community.

It is generally conceded that girls' morals are not what they used to be. Babies are not infrequently born to the unmarried *novia*. Provided that her *novio* will marry her there is no harm done and no great shame attaches to her plight, at any rate among the people with no "social pretensions". The sanctions of public opinion are strongly exerted to force the boy to honour his obligation to marry her. Salvador was father to his *novia's* child while he was still writing to another *novia* whom, he maintained, he preferred but who lived elsewhere (he had met her in Jerez during his military service). His widowed mother, a very forceful character, went to the family of the girl and demanded that the baby

should be named after her, as was her right if the marriage were to take place. As both grandmothers were called Maria a happy ambiguity prevailed, but soon afterwards the mother made a demand for the girl's hand on her son's behalf and paid some money for the setting up of the house. When the child was nearly eighteen months old they were finally married. The delay was partly due to the fact that his elder brother had to get married first. In most cases the parents of children born prematurely marry. However, in another case the *novio* rebelled, said the father of the child was not he but his uncle, and there was a very ugly row which would have ended in the courts had not the papers been mysteriously mislaid in the Town Hall. The child had no father, took the same surnames as its mother, and its uncle was *padrino*.

In neither of these instances was the courtship really well established. In other cases, as we have seen, poor couples set up house together without the formality of a marriage ceremony and raise a family. During the years before the Civil War many families abandoned the rites of the Church, but in the eyes of the pueblo this is not important. If they live together faithfully and raise a family then they are married. "I don't know whether they are married by the Church, but they are a married couple", is how the matter is explained. Today many pressures are brought to bear in order to get them married. Both the Church societies and also the Town Hall use their influence. In certain cases, the need to register the child in order to get it a ration-card at the time of weaning is seen to be the conclusive moment. It is then said that: "Les echan las bendiciones" ("The marriage is sanctified").

No doubt on account of a pregnancy, there are a number of couples who marry very young, some even before the boy has done his military service. While, in addition to these cases, it sometimes happens that young *novios* wish to force the issue and run away together, establishing themselves in a house in the pueblo—very often in a house belonging to parents who are farmers in the valley. Sometimes the parents react by recovering their daughter and, if she is still under their tutelage, bringing the forces of Justice into action against the young man; but in other instances they accept the *fait*

accompli and attempt to enable the young couple to set up a home and get married.

In short, the situation presents no grave problem as long as the parties are unmarried. If, on the other hand, they are either of them married and are not content to observe discretion but set up house together, then the pueblo finds itself threatened in one of its vital structural principles. Its reaction will be described in a later chapter.

The lack of recognised obligations between kin within the pueblo can be contrasted with those which exist between fellow-townsmen, whether they be kin or not, outside the pueblo. The term *naturaleza*, meaning literally birthplace, but hence the pueblo to which a person belongs by origin, expresses this in formal contexts, and the significance of this has already been mentioned. A person who goes away requires an acquaintance in the place to which he goes who will accept responsibility for him, and a close relative is obviously the ideal host in this situation—brothers, brothers-in-law, uncles, *primos*; but failing a relative then a fellow-townsmen is the person who assumes this responsibility. When women go abroad they usually put up at the house of an Alcalareña even though they may not claim friendship with her previously. The lack of structural obligations within the pueblo can be related to its completeness as a community, in the sense that the relationship of fellow-townsmen to fellow-townsmen requires no amplification and admits no exclusion in the context of daily life. Away from the pueblo, in another place, this same sense of community between fellow-townsmen is what the obligation rests on.