THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP IN SOCIAL REALITY: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL THOUGHT OF KARL MARX AND HANNAH ARENDT

by

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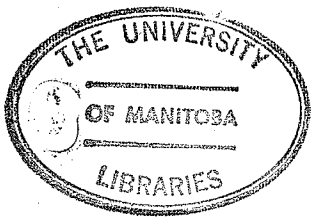

ABSTRACT

It is becoming increasingly apparent today that many individuals within society are experiencing anxiety and frustrations in their relation with nature, with others in the community, and with the world they have created. This critical situation has been diagnosed as the artificial bifurcation of man into man qua l'homme and man qua le citoyen. In response to this dilemma, Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt proposed that man's ultimate aim--a meaningful life--could only be achieved through the reconciliation of man with nature, with others and with his self-created world. To this end they reasoned that freedom and meaning--two complementary notions--were only realizable within the group.

The purpose of the study is to examine critically the conception of the individual and the group in the thought of Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt, and to evaluate their contribution to a more adequate understanding of human nature, political order, and political meaning for the individual. The thesis focuses on the relations and tensions which exist between the individual and the group within the respective theorist's model.

The conclusions are that while neither Arendt's nor Marx's definition of man's condition is viable within existent reality, their repeated emphasis on the importance of com-

munity (Gemeinwessen) for the preservation of humanity overshadows their romantic conception of man.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I of course accept full responsibility for any omissions or shortcomings.

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INTRODUCTION

The modern dilemma of alienation and meaninglessness has fractured the community of men. Extreme individualism, on the one hand, has isolated men within the community from each other; mass collectivism, on the other hand, has destroyed the unique and distinctive characters of men. In either case, the result has been the same: loss of self-identity or selfhood. However, it is not only the individual who suffers; the community suffers as well. In different ways both experience loss of meaning and purpose.

The community may experience loss of purpose in situations where extreme individualism is encouraged, since it provides no rationale as to why unique men and not man inhabit the earth. Within the same context men may be deprived of the comfort and warmth which only a concerned community may be able to offer.

Similarly, within mass society the community may undergo loss of meaning because individual distinction is scorned, sameness is stressed, and its ontological genesis is denied: community is the coming together of individuals. The individual also experiences loss of meaning within such a society since it denies him his natality. There is no room for distinction within mass society.

It was to this dilemma that Marx and Arendt directed their attention. They recognized that man in his singularity is always conscious of himself as being "alone". Because of this awareness, man's actions are motivated by self-interest. Their judgment on contemporary society was that it falsely associated the notion of "self" with extreme individualism. But this implies that Man rather than men inhabit the earth. Since, however, this is not the case, man may feel isolated and consider life as futile or meaningless. Marx and Arendt, responding to the problem of alienation in modern society, proposed that man's ultimate aim--meaning--can only be achieved through his willingness to commit himself to the group.

The general purpose of this study is to provide the reader with an analysis of the conception of the individual and the group (community), in the thought of Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt. Specifically, it is the intent of this thesis to achieve this objective by an examination of their thought in terms of the following categories.

The first chapter will examine the relation of man to nature ("the realm of necessity"). Having established that man is a natural being for both philosophers, the study will point out that though the "realm of necessity" remains a conditioning factor on man, Arendt envisages no freedom within that realm whatever man's lot might be; Marx believes that the drudgery associated with that realm could be ameliorated in a communistic society.

The second chapter will consider the modern conception of property, as understood by Marx and Arendt, and

its attendant consequences for the enrichment of the individual and the stability of the community. They discerned a number of injurious consequences which the derailed conception of property had inflicted upon the individual and the community of which he was a member.

The third chapter will explicate the relation of the individual to the group within the thought of Marx and Arendt. It will be demonstrated that within their writings a common theme persists: the individual needs the group since it constitutes the social forum in which individuating action can occur.

The fourth chapter will discuss the alternative political models which Arendt and Marx proposed. These models, in their respective opinions, provided the political form which reconciled the freedom of the individual with the plurality of man.

The fifth and last chapter will discuss the concept of political meaning within the writings of Marx and Arendt. Again it will be discovered that, for either thinker, individual meaning can only be realized within the group.

It will have become evident by now that the methodology of the paper is holistic. To put it in the form of an analogy: the subsequent study is not a series of pictures, one after another. What may appear as unnecessary or redundant categories are, rather, pictures of the whole, taken from different vantage points.

While such a study does not claim to be definitive

in its analysis, it may provide new ways of thinking about a problem which exists in contemporary society. To this end it may provoke new assessments of old ideas and practices.

CHAPTER ONE

MAN IN NATURE - "THE REALM OF NECESSITY"

In this chapter man and his relationship to the "realm of necessity" will be discussed. The objectives are: to elucidate the thought of Marx and Arendt on the concept of man as a natural being; to establish that, for each thinker, man cannot escape the realm of necessity; to explicate the differences between Arendt and Marx on the theme of labour; and lastly to give their respective judgments on the extension of this realm. The conclusions of this analysis will serve as necessary preconditions for understanding the subsequent study of property in chapter two.

One's sense of the importance or unimportance of human life and the roles which it appears reasonable or unreasonable for man to adopt, are influenced by one's conception of the ways in which man is related to the rest of the natural world. It is often through the analysis of man's interaction with nature, that salient assumptions behind his social actions are revealed. That is to say, man's appreciation and/or depreciation of his fellows is frequently conditioned by his attitude toward nature. Therefore, man as a natural being, a being dependent upon nature, must first reconcile himself to his natural condition before he can come to terms with his social condition.

Man as a natural being was an important concept in the writings of Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt. In their critique of existing social practices and political institutions, Marx and Arendt examined the underlying attitudes which girded their respective societies, and discovered a dichotomy between man's essence and his existence, that is, between his Being and his appearance. Society, in their estimation, suffered from a reversal of values. Certain values, such as universal respect for human freedom within community, equality of condition, the encouragement of the "free development of the individual", etc., which are commensurate with man's being, had been superseded or exchanged for baser values, such as the importance of wealth and security, the relative unimportance of individual worth, and the ascendency of economic and political expediency over moral restraints, etc. These latter values were fracturing the human community and alienating human individuals. Arendt and Marx, attributed this societal derailment, in part, to a distorted presupposition which formed the basis of man's interaction with nature, both at the individual and community level.

This inadequate presupposition conceptualized nature as the source of man-needed commodities, which could be accumulated and exchanged without consideration of their source. Nature, within this limited view, was perceived only as a <u>means to an end</u>: the means whereby men <u>qua l'homme revolté</u> could gain their rightful individual powers. The right to pursue individual happiness except where it conflicted

with someone else's right, the right to acquire and hoard property and wealth while others suffered poverty, the right and obligation to transform much of nature into a man-made "world", in brief, the primacy of egoistical rights were extolled as the sine qua non of human existence. Driven by an errant compulsion to recreate "given" nature into a "world" fashioned by the hands of men, husbandmen and technocrats ravished nature in the process of satisfying their immediate individual needs and thereby sacrificed their long term individual and social requirements. This affected adversely the delicate balance which had always existed between man and nature. As a result, the distinction between man's natural needs (water, food, clothing, and shelter) and his social or human needs, was crystalized, and a bifurcation of man qua man into l'homme and le citoyen took place. Therefore man as le citoyen sought to emancipate himself from a position of dependency upon nature, in effect denying his natural condition which he associated with animal-like behaviour, by regarding everything natural as primitive and in need of change. The mind set of egoistical man was that everything which was given was raw, clay-like, waiting for man, the creator. Little, if any, attention was given to the inherent symmetry and beauty within nature.

This antagonistic and philistine attitude by men toward nature incurred the anger of both Marx and Arendt, who advanced the postulate that man must acknowledge his dependence upon nature and utilize her resources for the lasting benefit of both the individual and the community.

In their opinion, man should regard himself, as custodian of nature and future mankind, as the actual owner. Nature needed to be regarded as much more than merely a "means"; she was the foundation of man's human existence[1], the "very quintessence of the human condition."[2] Not only should earthly nature be used to satisfy man's needs; she needed also to be preserved in order that man qua man might be and remain truly human. Whereas not all of man's time would be spent within the "realm of necessity", there being also a "realm of freedom"; mastery or rulership over the former was the precondition for inclusion in the latter.

Arendt and Marx juxtaposed these two antithetical attitudes, the first the derailed model, and the second, the more harmonious posture in order to highlight the limitations of their respective societies' presupposition and in order to present their alternative suggestions. Their fundamental differences notwithstanding, both writers developed their critique of man and nature around a common postulate: man is a natural being. Neither Marx nor Arendt deplored this

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[1]Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967),p. 97. Hereafter cited as EPM. Herein the Aristotelian influence on Marx can be discerned. Man and his relations were developmental and therefore this notion of nature being the foundation of human existence, while not realizable under the conditions of capitalism, would certainly be a reality within the communist society.

[2]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 2. Whereas Marx, in footnote one, was referring to the true and future relationship between man and nature, Arendt's statement revealed the actual biological condition of man.

primordial condition of man, instead their writings abound with references to the necessity of man remaining earth-bound in order to remain human. This emphasis seems to suggest an apparent contradiction within their writings. On the one hand, they posited, man can only experience true human fulfillment in the "realm of freedom", and on the other, they insisted that nature is the "foundation"or "quintessence" of human existence. Apparently man is a creature of freedom as well as a creature of bondage and may, at times, be in both areas at once. Wherein did Marx and Arendt coincide and differ in their reconciliation of this perceived conflict?

Arendt's reference to earth or nature as being the "quintessence" of the human condition is the key to understanding her concept of man as a natural being, or more specifically, an earthly creature. What did she have in mind? First of all, the earth is the only known habitat in which man can "move and breathe without effort and without artiface."[3] Thus, the earth is a habitat which is commensurate with his biological and physiological structure. Consequently man can exist functionally and move about without artifical life and transportation supports on earth because the earth was designed to accomodate him. That is, he is a child of earthly nature; he is at home on earth. Other worlds on other planets may be awaiting man's arrival; however, at the very minimum, artifical transportation would be re-

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[3] Ibid., p. 2.

quired in order for man to get there. Therefore, man would be leaving his natural home. In that new world man would be a stranger, having nothing natural in common with the inhabitants of that particular world. More emphatically, man would be unique or queer in that world. Conversely, on earth man is related to and shares life with all the other living organisms. Like other earthly creatures, he must satisfy diurnal bodily needs in order to remain alive, and go through a similar experience of biological birth and death.

Secondly, man's sensory capabilities are uniquely suited to his activities on earth. Man as a natural being has the same senses as other living creatures, and like them, relies upon his senses to provide and assure him of an objective reality outside of himself. These physical senses endow him with a geocentric view of the world, that is, he sees or hears the world of nature within the limitations of his senses. For example, common-sense language refers to the "sun as rising in the east and setting in the west." This is how man sees the movement of the sun, even though he knows that this is not scientifically correct. With the Archimedean point on earth, the sun, not the earth, is in daily motion. A second example, the force of gravity gives credence to this geocentric view because it relates all motion, within the gravitational pull of the earth, to the earth itself. Hence it is clear that it is the senses which give man his orientation in the world. Without his senses, man would be lost in the world of nature, ie., he would not be able to differentiate between himself as a subject

and the objective world surrounding him.

Conversely, it is the nature of things and beings in this world to appear as both object and subject. Arendt wrote in her last work, The Life of the Mind:

> The world men are born into contains many things, natural and artificial, living and dead, transient and empiternal, all of which have in common that they appear and hence are meant to be seen, heard, touched, tasted, and smelled, to be perceived by sentient creatures endowed with the appropriate sense organs.[4]

Arendt's emphasis on man's sensuous nature becomes readily apparent in the following statement:

> The categories and ideas of human reason have their ultimate source in human sense experience, and all terms describing our mental abilities as well as a good deal of our conceptual language derive from the world of the senses and are used metaphorically. Moreover, the human brain which supposedly does our thinking is as terrestrial, earthbound, as any other part of the human body.[5]

Thus for Arendt, the earthbound nature of the human brain, combined with its dependency upon the five senses for the ascertainment of reality and conceptualization of ideas, was visible proof of the earthliness of man. If man's cognitive processes are limited and conditioned by his earthly body, how much more so is nature, the object of his senses, a limitation and a conditioner upon him. Hence, man cannot transcend his terrestrial condition without

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[4]Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), Vol. I, p. 19.

[5]Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 271.

losing a necessary part of himself, his natural sensuous being.

For this reason Arendt deplored and questioned the aims and goals of modern science. The aim of science--the liberation of man from a dependency upon nature, that is, the artifical creation of life, the suspension of death, the transference of the Archimedean point from the earth into man himself--was depicted by Arendt as a continuous "rebellion against human existence as it has been given..."[6] It is an attempt to escape "imprisonment to the earth", a disposition to sever all links with the children of nature. In other words, science wishes for man to escape his human condition. Being cognizant of man's scientific endeavours, Arendt viewed man's increasing reliance upon advanced technology as possibly leading, in the future, to the condition wherein man might be deprived of the ability to communicate naturally, ie., be unable to rely upon his senses to provide the ideas for the conceptualization of the scientific truths he had discovered. The consequences for man would be degrading. She wrote:

> ...it could be that we, who are earth-bound creatures and have begun to act as though we were dwellers of the universe, will forever be unable to understand, that is, to think and speak about the things which nevertheless we are able to do.[7]

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[6]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 2 and 3. Arendt was not alone in her condemnation of scientific abstraction. See also Floyd W. Matson, The Broken Image: Man, Science and Society, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1964). Matson's argument is directed against the absorption of political investigation by science.

[7]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 3.

This could result in man freeing himself from his natural condition only to find himself in bondage to his own technology. Then science would no longer serve the needs of man, rather, man would serve science. The horrific demands science could make on man were already adumbrated during the Second World War. It was during this period that the ultimate degradation of the human condition occurred in the concentration camps of the totalitarian states, practicing under the guise of furthering science's knowledge of man. In the camps, the human body and the psyche were tested, using every imaginable technique possible, for resilience and mutability. These camps became laboratories for research into the ultimate plasticity of man. However, these experiments did not succeed in changing the nature of man, "but only in destroying him, by creating a society in which the nihilistic banality of homo homini lupus is consistently realized..."[8] Only in coming to terms with and accepting himself as a natural being, could man conceivably avoid this fate.

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[8]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 459. This capacity for cruelty and murder, on a scale peculiar to the human species, frightened Arendt. This unprecedented evil, accomplished by ordinary functionaries, like Eichmann (See Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem,(New York: The Viking Press, 1964), p. 47-49, caused her much anxiety about man's future potential for evil. She wrote, in The Origins of Totalitarianism: "The danger of the corpse factories and holes of oblivion, is that today, with populations and homelessness everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continuously rendered superfluous if we continue to think of our world in utilitarian terms." p. 459.

To summarize briefly: two complementary facets of her discussion on man are salient in Arendt's concept of man as a natural being. The earth is a natural and hospitable habitat for man, it is his home, and secondly, man, by virtue of being born on earth is a sensuous creature and is therefore conscious of the world through his senses.

Man's earthly condition was of equal importance to Marx. Marx's reference to nature, as being the foundation of man's existence, buttressed his argument that man was a natural as well as a social being. Although man is by nature "an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society", historically speaking, man first becomes conscious of his social character in his metabolism with nature.[9] Through his intercourse with nature, man objectifies nature, that is, he associates specific objects or products of nature with certain needs which he has. In doing this, man is expressing a need for an object whose nature is outside of himself. Echoing Arendt's declaration that man is a natural being because he is both subject and object, that is, even as he regards other things as objects, so he also is in turn an object of others, Marx wrote:

> To be objective, natural and sensuous, and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or oneself to be object, nature and sense for a third party, is one and the same thing. Hunger is a natural need; it therefore needs a nature out-

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[9]Marx, Grundrisse, tr. with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus, (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973), p. 84.

> side itself, an object outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled. Hunger is an acknowledged need of my body for an object existing outside it, indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential being...A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a natural being, and plays no part in the system of nature. A being which is not itself an object for some third being has no being for its object; ie., it is not objectively related.[10]

The point which Marx wished to make clear was that man was a natural being because part of his nature, ie., an object which he needs to satisfy his natural condition, was outside of himself. Thus man becomes conscious that he is not independent but that he needs other things and people.

As man's consciousness develops, he no longer relates to nature as an animal.[11] Rather, nature becomes the expression of his life, the exhibition of his social and creative essence. In working upon nature, man "duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he contemplates himself in a world that he has created."[12] Man's self created world becomes the mirror of his creative powers. Hence this world is the expression of his human development.

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[10]Marx, EPM, p. 145.

[11]K. Marx, The German Ideology, in Robert Tucker, (ed.), The Marx-Engels Reader, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1972), p. 122. For both Marx and Arendt the distinction between man and the rest of the animal world was an important theme, especially since they also highlighted the biological similarities between man and animal.

[12]Marx, EPM, p. 72.

Secondly, social man becomes aware of nature as the foundation or precondition necessary for men to act so as to generate bonds between themselves. As each individual works with nature and fashions a product which expresses himself, each sees the other's product as desirable and necessary for the confirmation of his own being. If individual A had the same needs as individual B, and each produced according to his need, no relationship would be possible between them. In that case they would not be <u>different</u> individuals and would have no need to exchange products. However, it is specifically the difference between their needs and between their production which gives rise to the exchange market and makes possible their social equality in this exchange. Marx expressed the relationship of nature as a bond between men in this manner:

> The fact that his need on the part of one can be satisfied by the production of the other, and vice versa, and that the one is capable of producing the object of the need of the other, and that each confronts the other as owner of the object of the other's need, this proves that each of them reaches beyond his own particular need etc., as a <u>human being</u>, and that they relate to one another as human beings; that their common species-being is acknowledged by all. It does not happen elsewhere--that elephants produce for tigers, or animals for other animals.[13]

Thus nature is the medium through which men realize their social need for each other. Marx labeled this harmony between man and nature as communistic society. It was "the

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[13]Marx, <u>Grundrisse</u>, p. 243.

consummated oneness in substance of man and nature--the true resurrection of nature--the naturalism of man and the humanism of nature both brought to fulfillment."[14] For Marx this meant that a reciprocal relationship existed between man and nature; they each conditioned the other. Through his interaction with nature, man humanized it, ie., he changed it from its "given" or natural state into a humanized nature. Simultaneously, man was naturalized, in that his sensuous social nature was realized through his conscious objectification of reality. Man first realized his need for others through his need for nature. Thus Rousseau's separation of man into l'homme and le citoyen was an unnatural dichotomy for Marx. Only as "socialized man" could man authentically regard nature as his foundation, ie., as an essential object, necessary for the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers.[15] In addition to this notion is the corollary that man as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being is therefore also " a suffering, conditioned and limited creature; like animals and plants."[16]

The problem of capitalist society, as Marx understood it, was its emphasis on the individual to the exclusion of the group. This resulted in the estrangement of man from nature, from himself and from others. An elaboration of

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[14] Marx, EPM, p. 97.

[15] Ibid., p. 145.

[16] Ibid., p. 144. Note the similarity between Marx and Arendt on this theme.

this three-fold concept of alienation is not necessary;* it is sufficient to note that through alienation, a product, which formerly was produced freely and was an authentic self-expression of man's labours, now appears after production as an alien hostile entity, owned by someone else, a diminution of the labourer's essential being. Marx concluded:

> In tearing away from man the object of his production, therefore, estranged labour tears from him his species life, his real species objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.[17]

The obvious result was that man could regard himself free and human only in his animal functions, such as eating, drinking, and procreating, whereas in his human functions he no longer feels himself to be anything but "an...animal."[18] This picture of alienated man revolted Marx. In contrast, Marx's model of man was that of a conscious, freely-producing being who is developing rather than regressing.

In summary, Marx emphasized two ideas in his concept of man as a natural being. Of primary importance was the fact that man is dependent on nature in that part of his nature, that is, an object which he needs to satisfy an

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*Cf. Bertell Ollman's study, Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), especially Part III.

[17] Ibid., p. 72. See also K. Marx, Capital, ed. by Frederick Engels, (New York: International Publishers, 1967), Vol. I, p. 179-180.

[18] Marx, EPM, p. 69.

objective need--hunger--is outside of himself, and needs to be incorporated into his body. Secondly, nature becomes a part of man through his production of an object which is an expression of himself. Nature, as humanized labour, as the product which is freely exchanged for a different product, is the symbol of mans' interdependence. Hence, nature acts as the bond between men.

Having delineated the concept of 'earthly man' in the writings of Marx and Arendt, the inclusion of man as a natural being within the "realm of necessity" merits further discussion. Neither Marx nor Arendt envisaged man as ever entirely escaping from this private realm. This realm is private because it constitutes that part of life which men devote to life-supporting labour.* In contrast to the "public realm" or "realm of freedom" (in which individuals and groups appear publicly to engage in distinctly human-enriching experiences through speech and action),[19] within the "realm of necessity" men privately wrestle with nature in order to satisfy biological needs.[20] The "realm of necessity" exists because of biological needs, such as a sufficiency of food and water, and the need for shelter persist, regardless of the society one finds himself in. Marx wrote:

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*This realm is often "objectively" social insofar as men co-operate to produce food, clothing, etc.

[19]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 49. The activities which would characterize this realm would strengthen the bonds between men and would therefore always involve more than one person.

[20]Marx, Capital, Vol. III, p. 820.

> With his (man's) development this realm of physical necessity expands as a result of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which satisfy these wants also increase. Freedom in this field can only consist in socialized man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity.[21]

Clearly, man can only ameliorate, not transcend, his condition of being within the "realm of necessity". No matter how refined these needs become or how little time man devotes to their attention, the "realm of necessity" must daily be mastered before man can move into the "public" or "realm of freedom". Moreover, freedom within this realm must not be equated with freedom in the "public realm". Neither can it be said that freedom in the "realm of necessity" automatically means freedom in the "public realm". Rather, freedom within the "realm of necessity" denotes man's mastery over nature. In contradistinction from "freedom" in the "public realm", which is "freedom to "distinguish one's self, "freedom" within the "realm of necessity" can be expressed as "freedom from" necessity. No longer is nature a "completely alien, all-powerful and unassailable force, with which men's relations are purely animal and by which they are overawed like beasts...,"[22] instead "man

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[21] Ibid., p. 820.

[22] Marx, The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 122.

of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature."[23]

Although Arendt was in basic agreement with Marx with respect to man's inability to escape the "realm of necessity", only allowing man mastery over it, she could not associate mastery with any form of freedom, since the word "freedom" had purely political connotations for her, ie., she had borrowed it from the Greek political experience in the polis. Arendt wrote:

> The polis was distinguished from the house-hold in that it knew only "equals", whereas the household was the center of the strictest inequality. To be free meant both not to be subject to the necessity of life or to the command of another and not to be in command oneself. It meant neither to rule nor to be ruled. Thus within the realm of the household, freedom did not exist, for the household head, its ruler, was considered to be free only in so far as he had the power to leave the household and enter the political realm where all were equals.[24]

For the Greeks, anyone who whether by choice or by force, remained within the "realm of necessity", was a slave to the forces of necessity. To be master over this realm meant to the Greeks, no more than for a man to be in control of the natural drives and passions which are a part of his nature or condition. This was accomplished by the use of slaves. By virtue of not having to devote all his time to satisfying material needs, the citizen was able to leave

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[23]Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 177.

[24]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 32.

the household and enter the political realm.*

In contrast to Marx, who highlighted man's dominance over nature within the "realm of necessity" in more advanced societies, Arendt pointed to the eternal presence of nature and its constant threat to his man-made world through its process of decay. For her, this process of growth and decay, part of the natural cycle, is the sine qua non of the "realm of necessity". Arendt wrote thus of man's affinity to this eternal process:

> The common characteristic of both, the biological process in man and the process of growth and decay in the world, is that they are part of the cyclical movement of nature and therefore endlessly repetitive; all human activities which arise out of the necessity to cope with them are bound to the recurring cycles of nature and have in themselves no beginning and no end...[25]

Therefore, the entire range of economic activities, including earning a living, are subject to necessity or bound to the necessities of life and are part of the cyclical movement of nature.[26]

In addition to Arendt's somber warning of nature's

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*See Hannah Arendt, On Violence, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1970), p. 40. Arendt wrote that the express purpose of slavery "...was to liberate citizens from the burden of household affairs and to permit them to enter the public life of the community, where all were equals; if it were true that nothing is sweeter than to give commands and to rule others, the master would never have left his household."

[25] Ibid., p. 98.

[26] Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 502.

threat to envelop man and his world, she was critical of man's inclination to degrade the elemental happiness which can be associated with labouring within the "realm of necessity". In her treatise, The Human Condition, Arendt wrote:

> The blessing of life as a whole, inherent in labor, can never be found in work and should not be mistaken for the inevitable brief spell of relief and joy which follows accomplishment and attends achievement...There is no lasting happiness outside the prescribed cycle of painful exhaustion and pleasurable regeneration, and whatever throws this cycle out of balance--poverty and misery where exhaustion is followed by wretchedness instead of regeneration, or great riches and an entirely effortless life where boredom takes the place of exhaustion and where the mills of necessity, of consumption and digestion, grind an impotent human body mercilessly and barrenly to death--ruins the elemental happiness that comes from being alive.[27]

Neither of the two extremes of existence within this realm, the wretchedness associated with poverty nor the boredom associated with wealth, were indicative of what the "realm of necessity" could provide for man within Marx's model. As will be shown later, part of Arendt's misunderstanding of Marx can be attributed to her conviction that Marx sought to take mankind out of the state of poverty into the "kingdom" of wealth and leisure.[28] Conversely, for Arendt, life within the "realm of necessity" was a balance

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[27]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 108.

[28]Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 56-58. Her argument, briefly, was that Marx had idolized the life of leisure and contemplation which the Greek philosophers believed was the most glorious since through contemplation, man almost approximated the status of the gods.

of "painful exhaustion and pleasurable regeneration."

Notwithstanding Marx's lucid exposition of the separation and maintenance of the "realm of necessity" and the "realm of freedom", Arendt unjustly ascribed to Marx the intention of abolishing the "realm of necessity". Arendt wrote in The Human Condition:

> While it was an "eternal necessity imposed by nature" and the most human and productive of man's activities, the revolution, according to Marx, has not the task of emancipating the laboring classes but of emancipating man from labor; only when labor is abolished can the "realm of freedom" supplant the "realm of necessity."[29]

Elsewhere, in On Revolution, Arendt repeated this interpretation of Marx.

> The role of revolution was no longer to liberate men from the oppression of their fellow men, let alone to found freedom, but to liberate the life process of society from the fetters of scarcity so that it could swell into a stream of abundance. Not freedom but abundance became now the aim of the revolution.[30]

Arendt claimed that this hope of Marx, constituted an erroneous equation of poverty with political exploitation. Instead of allowing that property relations existed between men out of necessity, as Arendt was wont to do, Marx had reduced property relations to a relationship of violence between men. Arendt wrote:

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[29]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 104.

[30]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 58.

> If Marx helped in liberating the poor, then it was not by telling them that they were the living embodiments of some historical or other necessity, but by persuading them that poverty itself is a political, not a natural phenomenon, the result of violence and violation rather than of scarcity.[31]

Therefore, in Arendt's understanding of Marx, Marx sought to solve the social question of poverty with a political act of rebellion, as had Robespierre before him. As soon as a new political order was realized, poverty and the necessity to labour would be abolished. In Between Past and Future Arendt gave her understanding of Marx's rationale.

> The combination of a stateless (apolitical) and almost laborless society loomed so large in Marx's imagination as the very expression of an ideal humanity because of the traditional connotation of leisure as...a life devoted to aims higher than work or politics.[32]

However, Marx did not seek to emancipate men from the"realm of necessity". Rather, he only accounted for its natural expansion as new needs were developed in man. Since for Marx, man's nature was not static, but developmental[33] man's basic needs would increase and thus necessitate the enlarging of the "realm of necessity". At the same time, the productive forces would also increase, thereby

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[31] Ibid., p. 57.

[32] Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 20.

[33] Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 177 and Capital, Vol. III, p. 820.

placing no extra burden on man's shoulders. In fact the technological advances would decrease man's labour time.

Secondly, and of greater salience, Marx, when referring to the activity which characterized the "realm of necessity", did not intend the abolition of labour per se. Rather, it was labour as an activity of bondage—estranged labour--which he sought to abolish. Edward Andrew correctly interpreted Marx's considerations on labour. Andrew wrote: "Work is seen by Marx as an interchange between man and nature, which may be either an activity of freedom or of bondage..."[34] Whereas Marx saw the need to abolish "estranged labour" as it existed under capitalism,[35] elsewhere, in a communist society, labour would be a "positive, creative activity."[36] It would take the form of "associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart."*

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[34]Edward Andrew, "Work and Freedom in Marcuse and Marx", in Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 3, No. 2, June 1970, p. 242. "Freedom"must be interpreted here in the sense discussed earlier. It refers to man's mastery over nature as opposed to his being overcome by it.

[35]Marx, EPM, p. 72ff.

[36]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 614. See also The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 156.

*Karl Marx, "Documents of the First International: The Inaugurel Address of the International Working Men's Association", in The First International and After, Political Writings, Vol. III, Ed. and introduced by David Fernbach, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 80.

The quality of labour must, however, not be confused with the labour process itself. Marx stated in Capital I:

> The labour-process...is human action with a view to the production of use-values, appropriation of natural substances to human requirements; it is the necessary condition for effecting exchange of matter between man and Nature; it is the everlasting Nature-imposed condition of human existence, and therefore is independent of every social phase of that existence, or rather, is common to every such phase.[37]

Thus, labour, as an activity, was, for Marx, a part of man's earthly condition; he had no choice as to whether he would labour or not. This was the case since man was defined and distinguished from other animals by his labour: it was through labour that man expressed his human personality. Labour was an expressly human activity since man produced not only in order to satisfy a physical need, but also produced "when he was free from physical need and only truly (produced) in freedom therefrom."[38] In criticism of Adam Smith who accepted labour as a payment for sin, Marx wrote:

> And this is labour for Smith, a curse. 'Tranquility' appears as the adequate state, as identical with 'freedom' and 'happiness'. It seems quite far from Smith's mind that the individual, 'in his normal state of health, strength, activity, skill, facility', also needs a normal portion of work, and of the suspension of tranquillity. Certainly, labour obtains its measure from the outside, through the aim to be attained and the obstacles to be overcome in attaining it. But Smith has no inkling whatever

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[37] Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 183-184.

[38] Marx, EPM, p. 72. When not constrained to produce, man is able to produce according to design, ie., to concretize his ideas.

> that this overcoming of obstacles is in itself a liberating activity--and that, further, the external aims become stripped of the semblance of merely external natural urgencies, and become posited as aims which the individual himself posits--hence as self-realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom, whose action is precisely, labour.[39]

It is clear from the above, that "labour", done in the proper social conditions, can be free and self-expressive. It is through the process of labour itself--the "overcoming of obstacles"--that "external aims" are transformed into "aims which the individual himself posits." Thus labour or work has the capacity for being free, even within the "realm of necessity."

Therefore Arendt was wrong when she wrote: "The fact remains that in all stages of his work he (Marx) defines man as an animal laboran and then leads him into a society in which this greatest and most human power is no longer necessary."[40] She misinterpreted his concept of "production" and equated it with her concept of "labour". Arendt's error can, in part, be attributed to her holistic concept of labour. Whereas Marx interchanged the terms "labour" and "work" without thereby signifying a qualitative change; Arendt meticulously differentiated between man as animal laborans and man as homo faber. Man as homo faber works upon nature, that is, he takes nature and makes something which stands

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[39]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 611.

[40]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 105.

independent of himself and nature. On the other hand, man as *animal laborans* mixes his labour with nature doing "actively what the body does even more intimately when it consumes its nourishment".[41] In other words, labour is, in Arendtian terms, a natural consuming process which continues until the organism dies. In this sense, labour belongs strictly to the "realm of necessity" and work, by contrast, to the "public realm". Thus, Marx's goal to abolish *alienated labour or work* was misinterpreted by Arendt as a plan to abolish labour itself.

In the instance, which Arendt cited to show that Marx planned to abolish labour, namely, in *The German Ideology*, Arendt misrepresented Marx's viewpoint.[42] Within the context of his argument it is clear what Marx meant. Marx wrote:

> In all revolutions up till now the mode of activity always remained unscathed and it was only a question of a different distribution of this activity, a new distribution of labour to other persons, whilst the communist revolution is directed against the preceding *mode* of activity, does away with *labour*, and abolishes the rule of classes with the classes themselves...[43]

For the purposes of clarification, it is significant that Marx prefixed the abolition of labour with mention as to the *mode* of labour to be done away with. It is the labour

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[41] *Ibid.*, p. 100.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[43] Marx, *The German Ideology*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 157.

of preceding generations. Earlier in The German Ideology Marx linked the labour of preceding generations with the limiting of man to one exclusive "sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape."[44] The wide development of man's capacities would be stifled under such a form of labour. Therefore, "the transformation of labour into self-activity corresponds to the transformation of the earlier limited intercourse into the intercourse of individuals."[45] There can remain no doubt as to whether Marx expected labour to be present in the communist society. Of course he did, albeit in a new form.

In contrast, Arendt could not entertain the thought that freedom of any sort might exist in the "realm of necessity". As mentioned above (pages 20 & 21) freedom for her had strictly political connotations. This, however, did not preclude Arendt from allowing man some form of happiness within this realm (see discussion on page 22). But the enjoyment of accomplishment, etc., should never overshadow the basic functions of the "realm of necessity". Not only is man bound to this realm, his very life depends upon it remaining in existence. For Arendt, "necessity and life are so intimately related and connected that life itself is threatened where necessity is altogether eliminated."[46] She

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[44] Ibid., p. 124.

[45] Ibid., p. 156.

[46] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 71.

saw the elimination of necessity as being dangerous for man in two ways.

First of all, in attempting to eliminate necessity, man blurs the distinction between freedom and necessity. Clearly, as discussed above, man cannot transcend his natural or biological needs and still remain man. By abolishing the "realm of necessity", man merely labours in the public realm. Labour, which belongs in the private realm, the "realm of necessity", because it involves the use of violence,[47] would then be actively pursued in the public realm, a realm in which violence is dysfunctional.* Arendt's criticism of contemporary society was--in part--that men had replaced an order of being which clearly divided man's activities into two realms, each complementary to the other, with an order of existence which combined the two realms. This aberration she labeled the "social realm".[48] Arendt wrote:

> Society is the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities connected with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public.[49]

A second reason why life itself is threatened where

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[47] Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 117 and 118.

* see H. Arendt, On Violence, p. 47-56.

[48] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 38ff.

[49] Ibid., p. 46.

necessity is eliminated is that man needs a private retreat where he can be master. Psychologically, man is not capable of withstanding the pressure of the public world continually; he needs a "reliable hiding place from the common public world, not only from everything that goes on in it but also from its very publicity, from being seen and being heard."[50] The vulnerability of individual man in the public world needed to be counterbalanced by the stability of the private household in which a man could be master.

In positing that man could be master within the "realm of necessity", Arendt referred to the Greek practice of slavery within the household. The Greeks reasoned that slaves were necessary because of the slavish nature of the occupations which satisfied the needs of life maintenance.* Freedom from the "realm of necessity" was gained by dominating "those whom they subjected to necessity by force."[51] Arendt never elaborated on how man in contemporary times might be master over necessity, remaining content to warn men of the danger to which abolishing the "realm of necessity" would lead whereas Marx saw the positive effects which modern technology could have on labour.

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[50] Ibid., p. 71.

*Arendt's interpretation is supported by C. E. Robinson, Hellas: A Short History of Ancient Greece, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), p. 125-128. He writes that the slaves were regarded "as human instruments; and indeed they performed in antiquity very much the same function as is performed by the modern machine.", p. 127.

[51] Ibid., p. 84.

For Marx, the automation of machinery could release man's labour from the drudgery earlier associated with it. No longer would labour be only "a modified natural thing" functioning as a link between "the object and himself", rather it would appear in an advisory capacity, overseeing an industrial process.

> Labour no longer appears so much to be included within the production process; rather, the human being comes to relate more as watchman and regulator to the production process itself. (What holds for machinery holds likewise for the combination of human activities and the development of human intercourse). No longer does the worker insert a modified natural thing (Naturgegenstand) as middle link between the object and himself; rather, he inserts the process of nature, transformed into an industrial process, as a means between himself and inorganic nature, mastering it. He steps to the side of the production process instead of being its chief actor. In this transformation, it is neither the direct human labour he himself performs, nor the time during which he works but rather the appropriation of his own general productive power, his understanding of nature and his mastery over it by virtue of his presence as a social body--it is, in a word, the development of the social individual which appears as the great foundation-stone of production and of wealth.[52]

The development of the production process could give the activity within the "realm of necessity", a new dignity, a freedom never before attained, and shorten the time one would need to spend in it. The transformation of labour from a status of self-depreciation into a creative self-activity would occur in "a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the

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[52]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 705.

division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want..."[53] In Marx's new society, man's mastery over the forces of nature would receive proper recognition since it is through man's interaction with nature that he regards himself as a universal and therefore a free being.[54*]

Already, the universality of man is evident in man's interaction with nature because, in contrast to animals which are limited in their appropriation of inorganic nature, man makes "all nature his inorganic body--both inasmuch as nature is (1) his direct means of life, and (2) the material, the object, and the instrument of his life-activity."[55] By inorganic nature, Marx was referring to that nature which is not the human body. It is the fruits of nature which man eats in order to maintain his life. The second aspect of nature, ie., its instrumentality, proves man's universality

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[53] K. Marx, Critique of the Gotha Program, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 388. Edward Andrew, op. cit., was wrong when citing the above quotation for support, he made the claim that complete automation would have been contrary to Marx's "condition of human freedom". Andrew wrote: Automation, rather than freeing men, would oppress men if, as Marx thought, 'labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want' in communist society." p. 247. Andrew deleted the first part of the sentence, thereby misconstruing its meaning.

[54] Marx, EPM, p. 70.

*Cf. chapter three.

[55] Ibid., p. 70.

in that man unlike animals only begins to produce in a human manner when he is free from physical need. Moreover, man is not limited in his production; "man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object."[56]

Another distinctive trait of man, which shows his capacity for universality, is his ability to conceptualize his product in imagination prior to making it, thereby following a prescribed pattern of work. Marx wrote:

> But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will.[57]

Therefore, in mastering nature through the use of advanced technology, in transforming his conditions of labour into a universal expression of his distinctiveness and self-creativity, man would bestow on the "realm of necessity" a freedom heretofore unrealized. While the full potential of man's powers could not be realized within this realm, it would provide a basis for all his social relations. The potentiality of man as he might be in the "realm of freedom" is partially revealed to man in the "realm of necessity",

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[56] Ibid., p. 72.

[57] Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 178.

in that man's self-defining activity--labour--was already transformed. For Marx, a truly human community--a communist society--could only be realized when the productive forces would be developed to the degree where man's labour would no longer be only a link between the object and himself.[58]

Arendt did not accept this developmental model of man's relationship to nature within the "realm of necessity". Whereas Marx had welcomed the development of new needs within this realm as well as the new productive means to satisfy them, Arendt viewed the search for new needs and their fulfillment as processes of necessity spilling over into the "public realm" which subsequently would degenerate into a phenomenon called "mass society". This type of society exemplified the same characteristics as were common within the "realm of necessity" and would therefore destroy the strict demarcation which needed to exist between private necessity and public activity.

Natural cyclical processes which are common to both the "realm of necessity" and "mass society", would turn the whole world into a gigantic "realm of necessity", a realm governed by natural laws, rather than by man. This new "realm of necessity" would regard objects of worth as if they were life supporting processes. Within the true "realm of necessity", tangible objects are used to sustain the life-process. They come into being for the sole purpose of dis-

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[58]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 705 and The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, pp. 114, 120 and 128.

appearing back into the natural process. Permanence has no role within this realm. Arendt wrote:

> Life is a process that everywhere uses up durability, wears it down, makes it disappear, until eventually dead matter, the result of small, single, cyclical, life-processes, returns into the over-all gigantic circle of nature herself, where no beginning and no end exist and where all natural things swing in changeless, deathless repetition.[59]

Arendt saw this same fate awaiting the social commodities in "mass society". Mass society, basically a consuming society, consumes its artifacts in a manner similar to the natural process which occurs in the "realm of necessity". Even as within the former, there are no tangible objects which might testify to man's mastery over the processes of nature, the new, enlarged "realm of necessity" ie., mass society, does not want objects, it desires entertainment, a process.

> The commodities the entertainment industry offers are not "things", cultural objects, whose excellence is measured by their ability to withstand the life process and become permanent appurtenances of the world, and they should not be judged according to these standards; nor are they values which exist to be used and exchanged; they are consumer goods, destined to be used up, just like any other consumer goods.[60]

Again:

> Entertainment, like labor and sleep, is irrevocably part of the biological life process. And biological life is always, whether laboring or at rest, whether engaged in consumption or in the passive reception of amusement, a metabolism feeding on things by

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[59]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 96.

[60]Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 205 and 206.

devouring them.[61]

Therefore Arendt could only regard with regret the energies man was spending on consumer technology during her lifetime. For her, mans' obsession with entertainment and other mass-produced commodities was a denial of that with which man ought to be concerned. Instead of man attempting to escape the "realm of necessity", he was turning all of life into the labouring process. Indistinguishable labour was replacing individual craftsmanship and expertise, and of course political action. Thus, the purpose of the "realm of necessity" was being thwarted; it was no longer considered as a retreat from public life, or as the foundation for moving into the political realm. Rather it was becoming the sine qua non of human existence. Arendt wrote:

> Now, where life is at stake all action is by definition under the sway of necessity, and the proper realm to take care of life's necessities is the gigantic and still increasing sphere of social and economic life whose administration has overshadowed the political realm ever since the beginning of the modern age.[62]

Bitterly, and erroneously, Arendt denounced this present state of man as the utopia Marx had envisaged.[63]

In summary, the preceding discussion has shown that, whereas both Marx and Arendt emphasized man as a

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[61] Ibid., p. 205.

[62] Ibid., p. 155.

[63] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 116ff.

natural being; whereas both were in agreement that the "realm of necessity" was part of man's earthly condition; a fundamental difference existed between them with regard to its purpose and condition of freedom. Arendt viewed the "realm of necessity" as a "haven of rest and physical restoration" for man. It sheltered him from the public eye and provided him with an environment in which violence and dominance had a functional role. Such happiness as was experienced, was elemental, and associated with the overcoming of necessity, temporary though it might be. But this was not freedom. For it was action, not labour, which created the conditions in which freedom could occur. And it was for freedom that man lived together in political association. Whereas labour was an animal-like activity, action was specifically human.

Marx, on the other hand, saw the "realm of necessity" as being the foundation of man's social relations. It was through the objectification of nature that men realized their need of each other and their distinctiveness from animals. Therefore, the "realm of necessity" provided the context in which man could express his universality. Moreover, the transformation of labour into a free self-activity (a state realized in the communism) released man from bondage to labour, and allowed him to express his personality through his creations. Herein Marx made no distinction between the various activities of man. Man was a productive being and was what and how he produced. "Labour", "work", "action"

were therefore different expressions of a common being. The only distinction he wished to make was the difference between "alienated labour" and "free labour". It was in this fundamental sense, that within communistic society the "realm of necessity" would be liberated. No longer would the "realm of necessity" constitute only the satisfaction of man's animal needs, it would steadily be enlarged to encompass those needs which might develop in the future.* Therefore, while it could not become the "realm of freedom" it could rid itself of the shackles which the division of labour into physical and mental activities had heretofore created.

Having considered man in his elemental state of being and his exposure therein to the forces of alienation, the study now turns to analyzing man and his relation to the institution of property. The next chapter will present the insights into the modern institution of property which Arendt and Marx elaborated within their respective writings.

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*Because Marx regarded man as a developmental being, he refused to betray this presupposition by outlining what man's future needs within the "realm of necessity" might be. Thus its growth continued.

Hereafter references to "the realm of necessity" will not be accented but its special meaning will be retained.

CHAPTER TWO

MAN AND THE INSTITUTION OF PROPERTY

The argument which Arendt and Marx advance within this chapter should be considered on its own merit. That is to say, their interpretation of property within modern society was intended to be holistic and their purpose was explanatory. Ideas which might be considered as exaggeration or, to a certain degree, misrepresentation of reality, were used in order to emphasize the theme that the modern derailed conception of property had a number of deleterious consequences for the individual and the group. An understanding of property and how it affects relations between individuals will therefore anticipate the conclusions in chapter three.

The institution of property has interested social philosophers in part, at least, because it raises issues of justice. Like government, it is practically universal but varies enough in its particular arrangements to suggest the question: What criteria are relevant in assessing the relative merits of various arrangements? Again, because it discriminates between rights and fortune, the institution of property invites moral criticism and the demand for justification. Moreover, since private property engenders relations of power between individuals per se, and between

individuals and the community of which they are a part, social philosophers have in the past, and continue today to examine the systemic controls on this power.

For these reasons, the concept of property had deep significance for Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt. Their writings abound with penetrating discussions on this concept and in particular on its relation to the individual and the community.[1] Their ubiquitous question was: What kind of property arrangements are most conducive to the formation of public spirited citizens or which kinds of property forms most facilitate the development of a concern for the common good or public interest on the part of the residents of a state? The ancillary question was, therefore, what is the significance of the modern predilection toward wealth accumulation? If popular opinion had its way, this is where the similarity of their thought would end. However, notwithstanding their differences, the common concerns and insights on the institution of property which Marx and Arendt shared, outweigh and overshadow these differences.

Despite their differing Weltanschauungen,[2] both Marx

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[1] Whereas both Arendt and Marx discuss the concept of property with reference to its historical basis in society at a much greater depth than would be expedient here, this chapter will confine itself to an interpretation of their thought on property as it relates to the experience of the individual and the community.

[2] Any discussion of their differences must acknowledge that Arendt saw herself as a critic of the society Marx had predicted. Moreover, Marx was a visionary during the great period of capitalist empire building in the nineteenth century, whereas Arendt was an intellectual child of two world wars and their effect on both political boundaries and human values.

and Arendt identified the modern transformation in the conception of property as bearing responsibility for the alienation of man in the world. Instead of being an expression of the harmony and interrelatedness of individuals within the Gemeinwessen (community),[3] the modern conception of property as private wealth[4] demonstrated the isolated self-interestedness--the egoism--of individuals within the society and the resulting conflict with this political entity.

The conceptual change to which Marx and Arendt referred was the transformation of 'personal property', which had been sacrosanct to the individual, to 'personal wealth', a general monetary value given by society and therefore universal in application. It was a change from property as a personal, private and pre-political identification of the individual's membership in the body politic, (ie. property as the 'inorganic body' of the individual and his family) into property, conceived of as a 'property-producing device' (in Arendtian language), for the continuous accumulation of

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[3]The term Gemeinwessen, also carries the nuances: 'common essence', 'common system', and 'common being'.

[4]In order to avoid etymological confusion between Arendt's definition of private property and Marx's definition of private property, the term 'private wealth' will be used whenever Arendt and Marx are referring to a possession which is of general commercial value and thus is vendible. Conversely, 'personal property' will denote that which is personal and peculiar tothe individual, ie., that which is not vendible since it is a part of the individual.

wealth expressed in monetary terms. In modern society, money had been substituted for landed property as its sacred foundation.

The modern predilection to equate property with wealth and propertylessness with poverty was rooted, in the judgment of Marx and Arendt, in the blurring of the distinction between property as a 'personal attribute' and property as 'a possession'. In other words, it was the loss of the age-old distinction between that which was private, that which had value only for the individual, and that which was public or common to all, that which had a market value. Arendt expressed this loss as the blurring of the line between the realm of the private and that of the public. By this Arendt meant that whereas property and wealth should be regarded as private, ie., as belonging to the realm of necessity, because of their non-political nature, their purposes differed sharply. Property, on the other hand, had a personal-use value insofar as it gave the possessor a location within the common political body. As such, it was permanent; it was a fungible. Wealth,on the other hand, was different from property in that it was gained through trade and commerce in the market place. As such, it was subject to the fluctuations of the market. Its purpose was to be utilized by its possessor in order for him to transcend the realm of necessity. It was a consumptible. This major distinction between the purposes of landed property and of wealth had been lost in modern society, which attached a monetary value

to everything private and public.

The tendency for man to attach a monetary value to everything external to him was, according to Arendt and Marx, destroying the intimate, and highly significant relations of man to nature, man with himself, man to other men and man to the community. Marx wrote, regarding money:

> The exchangeability of all products, activities and relations with a third, objective entity which can be re-exchanged for everything without distinction ...is identical with universal venality, corruption.[5]

The evil of money as the common exchange value was that l'argent n'a pas de maître, (Money knows no master). The mania for money possessed the possessor to the degree where all other needs were sacrificed,"in order to satisfy the need of greed for money as such."[6]

Marx and Arendt discerned a number of deleterious consequences which the above derailed conception of property had inflicted upon the individual and the community. The practical application of this new conception of property deprived man of his humanity, reducing him to the level of animals; it deprived property of its worldly character, which was the basis of man's worldliness; it set man against man in that each individual saw the other as the limitation of his own fulfillment; it brought to a climax the gradual dissolution of communal existence; and lastly, it alienated

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[5]Karl Marx, Grundrisse tr. with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus, (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973), p. 163.

[6]Ibid., p. 222.

man qua man from nature, in that nature provided the means of life.

These effects were the result of three complementary components of the new conception of property. The first was that the sacrosanctity of landed property as the personal identity of the individual and his family within society had been discarded for the sacrosanctity of private wealth in general. The second component was that this private wealth confronted its possessor as a 'sensuous, external object' and thus its relation to the individual appeared as purely accidental. The third aspect of property was that money, the general expression of private wealth, gave its possessor power over society and over the whole world of gratifications, labours, etc., despite the fact that money stood in no particular relation to the individual.

(These three components must be regarded as analytical abstractions of a holistic and interrelated phenomenon, merely a part of a larger criticism of modern political economy, and therefore, what may appear as unnecessary or redundant categories are, rather, pictures of the whole, taken from different vantage points. They isolate the salient contradictions which were inherent in the derailed conception of property and, in addition, raise trenchant questions about the stability of the modern order of society. In outlining the consequences which faced their respective societies, Marx and Arendt were not only critics, but were, more importantly, contributors to a fuller understanding of the in-

dividual and the community, because of their insights into the concept of property as an institution. Therefore, this study of property will concern itself with the implications of the observations stated above.)

A. Landed property reduced to private wealth.

The most obvious effect of the dissolution of the private and public realms into the social realm was that private wealth now became sacrosanct, displacing personal landed property as the corner-stone of civilization.[7] Thereafter, the ordering of society was regulated according to a new index--money. Private wealth, a consumptible by nature had entirely different origins than its counterpart, personal landed property, which acquired its private-use value through its location in the world of men. In contrast, the former had an exclusively social value, despite its private nature, which was determined "through its ever-changeability whose fluctuation could itself be fixed only temporarily by relating it to the common denominator of money."[8] What implications did this transformation adumbrate for the continued development of the individual? Furthermore, was the very structure of the community threatened by this erosion of traditional values? The answers Marx and Arendt gave to these questions were multi-faceted.

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[7]This notion will be discussed later.

[8]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 69.

First of all, they noticed that the humanity of man was threatened. Since man qua man was a conditioned being, a product of his society,[9] any fundamental recasting of traditional values within that entity would necessarily affect the human condition. An intellectual change of this magnitude had in fact occurred in the modern age without the members of society being cognizant of its import. What initially began with the expropriation of the poor (who were generally considered to be the authors of their own fate) showed its true character when the essentiality of all personal landed property was questioned.* What the expropriation of the poor started was the eventual dislocation of man from the world of men. For it had been personal landed property, commonly regarded as inviolable, which had provided a twofold protection for the individual and the family; it had guaranteed them a permanent place within the public order and it had served as a private refuge wherein the necessities of life were satisfied.

However, this protection was lost when landed property no longer was regarded as sacred, as 'untouchable'. The

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[9]For a more complete discussion on the dialectics of society, see Peter L. Berger, The Sacred Canopy, Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), pp. 3-28, and K. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967), p. 98. Hereafter cited as EPM.

*See J. F. Bergier, "The Industrial Bourgeoise and the Rise of the Working Class, 1700-1914", The Fontana Economic History of Europe, ed. by Carlo M. Cipolla, (London: Collins/Fontana Books, 1973), Vol. 3, for a detailed discussion on the conditions of the working-class poor.

identity of the family with its property was exchanged for identification with the organic unity of the nation-state. In actuality, one's membership in a social class became the substitute for the family unit and "just as the family unit had (formerly) been identified with a privately owned piece of the world, its property, society (now) was identified with a tangible albeit collectively owned, piece of property, the territory of the nation-state..."[10] However, membership within a faceless mass group, unified by common origin and nationality, that is, by a sort of tribalistic sentiment, could never be a full substitute for the more personal family ties to a particular piece of privately owned land previously experienced by citizens.

The inescapable result of the conceptual revolution and its practical application within society was that world alienation became a real possibility for man. The likelihood of world alienation was enhanced by the universality of private wealth. Its designation as a sacred entity, as the corner-stone of the body politic, meant that one's citizenship need no longer be confined to a particular state but could become universal. Being a citizen of the world, however, intensified the anonymity which the individual had already experienced as a member of social class or nationality. "For", as Arendt wrote in The Human Condition, "men cannot become citizens of the world as they are citizens of their

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[10] Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 256. Moreover, Arendt correctly pointed out that collective ownership was a contradiction in terms. (Chicago Press: The University of Chicago Press, 1958.)

countries, and social men cannot own collectively as family and household men own their private property."[11] Their worldliness was threatened in a world-encompassing society having private wealth, as its basis which, strictly speaking, was a contradiction in terms, since wealth, which was private in nature, (ie., was only of benefit to the individual), was also a universal phenomenon. In contrast, personal private property had given men a specific location within the common world; it had been "the privately owned share of a common world and therefore (was) the most elementary political condition for man's worldliness."[12] Arendt meant by this that the most basic political act which an individual had to accomplish was to procure within the body politic a privately owned share of its common territory so as to have a location from which he could observe and make judgments on the common world which he shared with other men.

In denying man the sacrosanctity of his personal landed property, society placed in doubt the worldliness of man which, for Arendt, was one of the three fundamental conditions under which life on earth had been given to men,

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[11] Ibid., p. 257.

[12] Ibid., p. 253.

the other two being life itself and the condtion of plurality.[13]

The humanity of man was further threatened when word and deed, the two activities which satisfied man's condition of plurality, were no longer regarded by society as the most political of all activities. The stress on the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the individual, for which speech and action were ideally suited, was replaced by a new doctrine of man which emphasized "that men are equal by nature and different only by history and circumstances, so that they can be equalized not by rights, but by circumstances and education."[14] It was the stress on the 'sameness' of men which eliminated the need for speech and action, since they would not be necessary if men were merely 'reproducible repetitions of the same model', as Arendt and Marx feared they would become in the society of their respective ages.[15]

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[13]The "world was the human artifice, an objective material creation which housed the sum total of man's artifacts. It was an artificial home for men during their life on earth; a place created for the purpose of action and speech. The Human Condition, p. 173. Thus, for Arendt, the worldliness of man consisted in his having a unique location within this artificial home, his place being different from other mens' locations in order that he could contribute his unique opinion on that which was common to all: the world and its inhabitants.

[14]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 234.

[15]Arendt, The Human Condtion, p. 176. See also Hannah Arendt, Men in Dark Times, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p. vii-x. Marx witnessed the absolute sameness of man in the propertyless and poverty-stricken working-class.

Instead of providing a public realm wherein individuals could interact with their peers, and thereby display their individuality, modern society in Arendt's opinion, turned its attention to the social problem, that is to say, modern man became preoccupied with the elimination of necessity and poverty from the human condition; in fact this preoccupation became the sole motivation for political action.[16] This meant that there was no longer any space or time provided for man to engage in the most distinctively human of all his activities, ie., to engage in political association with his peers.* Instead man busied himself with combating necessity and poverty, in effect reducing himself to the level of animals.[17]

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[16]Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 53-56. Arendt based her opinion on her interpretation of the proceedings of the French Revolution during the ascendancy of Robespierre. She wrote: "When Robespierre declared that "everything which is necessary to maintain life must be common good and only the surplus can be recognized as private property", he was not only reversing premodern political theory, which held that it was precisely the citizens' surplus in time and goods that must be given and shared in common; he was again in his own words, finally subjecting revolutionary government to "the most sacred of all laws, the welfare of the people, the most irrefragable of all titles, necessity." p. 54. See also George Lefebvre, The French Revoltion:From 1793-1799, (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1964), vol. II., p. 110-116.

This criticism also has relevance to twentieth century governments in so far as much of their program is concerned about the social welfare of their respective peoples.

*"Political activity" must not be confused with the administrative chores with which modern governments occupy their time. This theme will receive more treatment in chapters three and four.

[17]Marx, EPM, p. 108-110.

In his description of the plight of the 19th century-worker, whose activity was so regimented that his life-activity could be compared to machine-like labour, Marx saw only indescribable misery and deprivation of all that was human. He wrote: "man (the worker) no longer feels himself to be freely active in any but his animal functions--eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in his dwelling and in dressing-up, etc..."[18] In other words, the condition of man was debased to the extent that only those activities which are usually considered to be the most unfree of all activities gave the worker a feeling of humanness. Only when separated from other men, effecting those activities which could be accomplished in isolation from other men, did man qua worker, labourer, etc., experience a sense of freedom.

This inhuman situation prevailed because the capitalist system was concerned, not with the development of the socio-political aspect of man's nature, but rather, with profit and efficiency. Marx saw that:

> Within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers; they mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour-process in the same proportion as science is incor-

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[18] Ibid., p. 69.

> porated in it as an independent power; they distort the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour-process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform his life-time into working-time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the juggernaut of capital.[19]

Because the dehumanization process as described above, affected the majority of the population and threatened to engulf all of society, Marx realized that the bourgeois basis of the capitalist system--the modern institution of private property (within this paper referred to as private wealth) and its material manifestation, alienated labour*--needed to be overthrown. For, he wrote:

> private property is only the sensuous expression of the fact that man becomes objective for himself and at the same time becomes to himself a strange and inhuman object; just as it expresses the fact that the assertion of his life is the alienation of his life, that his realization is his loss of reality, is an alien reality...[20]

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[19]Karl Marx, Capital, ed. by Frederick Engels, (New York: International Publishers, 1964), Vol. I. p. 645. In support of Marx, J. F. Bergier, op. cit., p. 430 writes: "The working and living conditions of the early factory workers were generally deplorable...The work itself was essentially monotonous, for the product was created by the machine, not by the workers who ran it. In addition, the men's work was generally laborious, for the lighter tasks were kept for the women and children. Hence the workers were tied down to a form of work and existence for which they were unprepared biologically, morally, or socially, and which turn them into brutes."

*Marx held that private property was both the product of alienated labour and the means by which labour alienates itself. EPM p. 76.

[20]Marx, EPM, p. 98.

What did Marx mean? As we observed earlier, Marx saw that the humanity of man was disclosed when he individuated himself amongst others. That is to say, man externalized his individuality, thereby objectifying himself. This process of objectification was, however in his opinion, debased within the capitalist system, because the development of modern private property or private wealth had, as we shall see later, culminated in the separation of society into two classes: the property-owning, wealthy capitalists, and the poverty-stricken, propertyless workers whose only asset was their labour power. Within this system, the unfreely created product of the worker's labour appeared as something which was not his own, but belonged to someone else and therefore could not be expressive of the worker's creativity. Thus it appeared to him as an alien reality. Marx wrote:

> The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power of its own confronting him; it means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien.[21]

However the workers' already bad lot was worsened by the contradictions within the capitalist system. On the one hand, society demanded of those for whom the object of exchange (eg. the value of one's labour, one's wage) was their subsistence (ie., their means for the preservation of life, and the satisfaction of needs in general), that they should deny

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[21] Ibid., p. 67.

themselves in order to save, so that in times of crisis they would not be a burden on the poorhouses, on the state, etc.[22] On the other hand, capitalists reduced wages as soon as the workers began saving "for general savings would show the capitalist that their wages are in general too high, that they receive more than its equivalent for their commodity."[23] The contradiction was most obvious in the position taken by each individual capitalist. Marx wrote: "each capitalist does demand that his workers should save, but only his own, because they stand towards him as workers; but by no means the remaining world of workers, for these stand towards him as consumers."[24] This contradiction was not only characteristic of the employer's advice to his workers; he also deprived himself of all human enriching experiences.[25]

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[22]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 284 and 285.

[23]Ibid., p. 286. This perennial dispute between workers and employers was, during the industrialization of Europe, clearly in favour of the employers. Adam Smith, From the Wealth of Nations, in Man and the State: The Political Philosophers, ed. by Saxe Commins and Robert N. Linscath, (New York: Random House, 1947), p. 377, wrote with regards to the relative strength of the workers and employers: "The masters being fewer in number, can combine much more easily; and the law, besides, authorizes, or at least does not prohibit their combinations, while it prohibits those of the workmen. We have no acts of parliament against combining to lower the price of work; but many against combining to raise it."

[24]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 287.

[25]Marx, EPM, p. 110.

In contrast to the propertyless worker, whose poverty was artifically induced, the capitalist purposely denied himself amenities in order that private wealth as capital could be increased.

It might be argued that this deprivation was characteristic of an early capitalist society, such as Marx described, whereas within an affluent society where necessity no longer ruled man, the full realization of all of man's needs would be achieved. However, as the example of the capitalist employer adumbrated, a modern affluent society might strangle itself, for other reasons. Arendt felt modern affluent society was actually a mass consumers' society which, due to its inability to distinguish between consumer goods and objects of permanence, (ie., objects within the human artifice which attested to the immortality of the human species), eventually would prove fatal to the world of men because it would consume everything it touched. The very existence of the world was threatened when cultural objects--the artistic expression of homo faber and the stories, ie., the books, etc., recalling the deeds of men--were denied their durability and judged by the standard of a consumers society--functionality.[26]

Regardless of its applicability to items destined to be consumed, the standard of functionality was an inappropiate measure for cultural artifacts since works of

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[26]Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 207 and 208. See also, The Human Condition, p. 134 and 135.

art have no utility, are unique in origin, and are therefore not exchangeable. Moreover, they "defy equalization through a common denominator such as money; if they enter the exchange market, they can only be arbitrarily priced."[27] Their purpose was special; they were not to be "used", on the contrary, they were to be removed from the context of ordinary use-objects; their purpose was to attain permanence and thereby stabilize a constantly changing world. In other words, the purpose of culture was to immortalize the world, something individuals could never do for themselves.

However, the indiscriminate consumption of the human artifice and its objects threatened this objective of culture. The point which Arendt sought to make was that individuals within a consumers society did not spend their leisure time developing their potential as individuals, as Marx had expected they would within the communist society, but rather devoted this time to more consumption and more mass entertainment, which although non-political in nature, took place in the public realm. Again, what was basically a non-social activity, an activity which could be accomplished by one's self, had, within the consumers society, become a public activity in which isolated individuals participated.

Certain similarities are evident in comparing Marx's society with the society which Arendt criticized. In both societies, the loss of personal landed property as an in-

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[27] Ibid., p. 167.

violable aspect of the individual's identity, had resulted in the ascendency of private wealth per se. However, no amount of private wealth could compensate for the loss of one's identity as a relational being, that is, a being who was in need of others. The early capitalist society had fragmented man by making him an appendage to a machine and affluent society had made man subservient to his appetite for consumption. In both societies a "one-dimensional man" was the product of processes which neglected the human aspect of man. Everything within these societies was subjected to a test, to determine its use-value. It was in this sense that Marx and Arendt saw the humanity of man being threatened by the new concept of property as private wealth.

A second consequence of personal landed property being reduced to the all-inclusive category of private wealth, was that property lost its worldly character. Prior to this occurrence, the term property had signified a private household, that is, the home within the world in which the individual lived. Although private in terms of its usage, the concrete location of the owner was also the individual's share of the common world--in ancient days known as the Greek polis, now, the state. The original meaning of property must be understood within this context. Individual property was always related to the larger whole--the community in which one lived. It could be said that property was communal in that, while a person might retain private rights to it as long as he was a member of that society, loss of citizenship

or membership also meant loss of his property, ie., loss of his location in the community.[28] As long as the activities of the owner were directed toward "the communal interests (imaginary and real)...(toward) the upholding of the association inwardly and outwardly...", the owner retained the full protection of the community and enjoyed its privileges. For, as Marx stated: "Property is quiritorium, of the Roman variety; the private proprietor of land is such only as a Roman, but as a Roman he is a private proprietor of land."[29] In other words, only citizens could own their private homes, but as citizens, all could own their location within the community. (It must be understood that for modern man the notion of communal sovereignty of property is foreign since he generally confuses the individual right to property with the larger issue of who is ultimately sovereign over the disposal of one's property. Modern man's conception of property includes the assumption that the owner has the indisputed right to do with his property as he wishes: the right to alienate it, to exchange it and even the right to destroy it at one's own discretion.) Therefore, the communal proprietory contract guaranteed the owner that no matter how poor he might be, his location in the world would be respected by others as long as he remained a citizen. In this sense, property, although

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[28] Ibid., p. 62. See also Marx, Grundrisse, p. 484ff.

[29] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 476. Arendt's conception of private landed property as only having significance for the individual proprietor within the broader context of the community or state is more similar to Marx's conception of personal property than is commonly supposed. See The Human Condition, p. 62.

restricted for personal use, was worldly in character.

Wealth, on the other hand, had traditionally been strictly private. It had never been regarded as a part of the common world, as eg. government had been. Wealth per se had no permanence, it was meant to be used up. Therefore, prior to the modern age, this form of property had never been regarded as sacred, for sacredness was a symbol of an entity's permanence.[30] On the contrary, wealth's sole purpose was achieved when it was used up by its owner so that he could enter the world all men had in common--the public realm.

However, when the distinction between that which fungible and that which was consumptible was lost, and all forms of property became consumptibles, a new purpose was found for private wealth. It then became the basis for more accumulation of private wealth. Personal landed property was then, mistakenly, understood as privately owned wealth and hence, according to Arendt, the modern false equation of property and wealth was made.[31]

This change in the conception of property was aided, in no small way, by the revolutionary proposition which stated that the source of property was located in man's own body.[32]

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[30]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 66.

[31]Ibid., p. 61 and 69.

[32]John Locke, The Second Treatise of Government, ed. with an introduction by Thomas P. Peardon, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1952), p. 17. C. B. Macpherson recently has argued in support of this contention that "...the concept of property which now prevails in Western societies is largely an invention of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries..." See his article "A Political Theory of Property", in Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval, (Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 120 ff.

The corollary to the assertion that man was the owner of his own labour, was that whatever external object his labour touched became man's property since his labour was annexed to it. However, this implied that the individual labourer within capitalist society was the real owner of the product of his labour and not his employer. Whether there was any truth to this proposition does not matter. It is only important that because of its general acceptance, advocates of early capitalism heeded Locke's recommendation that since land was no longer res nulles, workers were only entitled to their wages. Moreover, Locke countered his own restriction on how much property could be accumulated by adding that in order to avoid spoilage, property should be exchanged for money. "Having accounted, then, for the existence of property, and for existing titles, with a theory of natural right, Locke overlaid the theory with a conventionalist theory which neutralized the limitations on appropriations that the original theory prescribed."[33] Thus Locke indirectly provided the philosophical basis for the right to accumulate private wealth ad infinitum.[34]

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[33]The paper here follows the interpretation of Stanley I. Benn, "Property" in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. by Paul Edwards, (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1967), Vol. 6, p. 492.

[34]J. P. Day clearly points out in "Locke on Property", in Life, Liberty, and Property, ed. by Gordon L. Schochet, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1971), p. 122 &123, that Locke's theory of property has been used to support both capital accumulation and social distribution of property. The former emphasizes the ascendancy of 'the turf my servant has cut' argument whereas the latter rejects this argument and stands on the original proposition which "condemned as unjustified any property which a man possessed beyond what he had either produced himself or acquired in exchange therefore."

The general import of Locke's theory was accepted by the economists of modern society and used to protect those who had vested interests in the continuation of the status quo--namely the bourgeois class. Their fundamental attitude toward the personal root of property was expressed by M. Destutt de Tracy. He wrote: "nature had endowed man with an inevitable and inalienable property, property in the form of his own individuality."[35] Thus, as Marx admitted, it was quite natural for the bourgeois as property owners to protest to the communists that by abolishing their existence as property owners, they (the communists) would be destroying their existence as individuals. This was, however, in Marx's opinion, a false understanding of private property. What the bourgeois actually wanted to keep was the power over others which property in the form of rent of land, profit, etc., gave them. Marx wrote of this: "it is a feature the extent and even the existence of which depends on social relations which are created and destroyed without the assistance of individual landed proprietors. It is the same with machines."[36] For this reason, money, the most general form of property, had little to do with personal peculiarity. That which the bourgeois property-owners were attempting to posit as one and the same thing, private property and individuality, proved to be quite different upon close inspection. The

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[35]M. Destutt de Tracy, Traités de la volonté, (Paris, 1826), cited in Karl Marx, The German Ideology, ed. by C. J. Arthur, (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 100.

[36]Marx, The German Ideology, p. 102.

bourgeois had fallen into a etymological trap; as far as Marx was concerned they had confused that which was vendible (Man's Eigentum) with that which was peculiar to the individual (his Eigenheit).[37] This confusion persisted because the property-owners were unwilling to admit that the property they owned could no longer be associated with their individuality since they were not responsible for its present commercial value.[38] Private property had, in every sense, become private wealth, thus losing its worldly character.

Arendt and Marx reacted in seemingly opposite ways to this new phenomenon. Marx saw in this transformation, the confirmation that the dialectic of history was introducing a new age. Since private property no longer fulfilled its original role--that role had been to give its owner a location in the state--but, on the contrary, was

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[37] Ibid., p. 101 and 102.

[38] Conversely, private property in its original sense, had meant nothing more than for its owner to have a private location in the community or state of which he was a member; it signified his personal sanctuary from which he could emerge into the public realm and to which he could retreat for rest and physical rejuvenation. These two dimensions which private property provided- a private realm wherein the household owner could, in privacy, have mastery over the necessities of life and a sanctuary"...a hiding place from the common world, not only from everything that goes on in it, but also from its very publicity, from being seen and being heard..." (see Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 71) which were necessary for maintaining the psychological stability of the individual--were lost when the sacredness of property was lost. For Marx's discussion on land as the "personal property of man", the reader is referred to EPM, p. 61 and Grundrisse, p. 476.

acting as an alien power over man, it needed to be exposed and understood in its present derailed form before it could be abolished. Marx wrote:

> It is necessary that this appearance (as the inorganic body of its owner) be abolished--that landed property, the root of private property, be dragged completely into the movement of private property and that it become a commodity; that the rule of the proprietor appear as the undisguised rule of private property, of capital, freed from all political tincture;...that all personal relationship between the proprietor and his property cease, property becoming merely objective material wealth;...and that land should likewise sink to the status of a commercial value, like man.[39]

The point which Marx wished to make was that the hypocrisy of the landed proprietors should cease. Their desire was 'to have their cake and eat it at the same time.' They wanted everyone else to regard landed property as something special while they themselves used it for what it really was: capital. For this reason, Marx saw the necessity for exposing the institution of property and reducing it to a commercial value, even as it, in its most general form as money, had reduced man to a commercial value. Moreover, at that particular juncture in time, property was serving only the interests of the capitalist owners. Whereas the capitalist class owned, first of all the means of production--the land, the factories, etc.--they also owned the property of the worker--the product of his labour. Conversely, the worker was propertyless in two senses: he not only did not own the means of his livelihood; he also did not own the product

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[39]Marx, EPM, p. 60.

of his labour. Therefore the worker experienced poverty in two senses as well. First of all, he was forced to sell his labour at what ever price he could get, thereby alienating his labour from himself, and secondly, he was confronted by his own product, standing as something hostile and alien (because it belonged to another) to him, instead of being an expression of his own distinctive capabilities.

The only advantage Marx saw in this total degradation of the worker, was that it intensified the conflict between the class of property owners and the propertyless workers. It also heralded the inevitable confrontation which would be won by the propertyless workers who, knowing what it meant to experience total poverty, would utilize the advanced means of production for the benefit of the whole community. The transcendence of private property would be:

> the sensuous appropriation for and by man of the human essence and of human life, of objective man, of human achievements. Man appropriates his total essence in a total manner, that is to say, as a whole man. Each of his human relations to the world--seeing, hearing, smelling...in short, all the organs of his individual being, like those organs which are directly social in their form, are in their objective orientation or in their orientation to the subject, the appropriation of that object, the appropriation of the human world;...it is an enjoyment of self in man... The transcendence of private property is therefore the complete emancipation of all human senses and attributes...[40]

The transcendence of private property was, for Marx, more than merely the substitution of a different form of private

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[40] Ibid., p. 98 and 99.

property; it was the formation of an entirely different form of political and social economy. It was in many respects a combination of the Greek and Roman concept of communal property (which both Marx and Arendt admired), with the wealth-producing capacity of the capitalist system.[41]

Since Arendt did not share Marx's conviction in a progressive dialectic which was operative in the history of man, her prognosis for the long-term effects of property's loss of its worldly character was somewhat more pessimistic. Her criticism was therefore directed to stopping the continuation of the current process and reappropriating the old standard of property. For her, the propensity of modern society to accumulate private wealth, which is what personal landed property had become, placed in jeopardy the protection of personal landed property from those who saw it as an impediment to their accumulation of wealth. She wrote:

> For the enormous and still proceeding accumulation of wealth, in modern society, which was started by expropriation--the expropriation of the peasant

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[41] That a new and better form of property relations would be introduced in a communist revolution was never doubted by Marx because, he posited, the universal poverty to which the proletarian class had been reduced had caused them to realize that the greatest need of man was others. Therefore, within a communist society, personal property would be the basis, not the goal, for the full and free development of the individual within society. Egoism would no longer restrict the fulfillment of the individual since his interests could best be realized when the good of the community was the priority. See Marx, Grundrisse, p. 488 and 489 and S. I. Benn, op. cit.

> classes which in turn was the almost accidental consequence of the expropriation of church and monastic property after the Reformation--has never shown much consideration for private property but has sacrificed it whenever it came into conflict with the accumulation of wealth.[42]

Elsewhere, in the Origins of Totalitarianism, Arendt explained, in greater depth, why personal landed property was in danger.

> Property (in its modern conception) by itself...is subject to use and consumption and therefore diminishes constantly. The most radical and the only secure form of possession is destruction, for only what we have destroyed is safely and forever ours. Property owners who do not consume but strive to enlarge their holdings continually find one very inconvenient limitation, the unfortunate fact that men must die. Death is the real reason why property and acquisition can never become a true political principle. A social system based essentially on property cannot possibly proceed toward anything but the final destruction of all property. The finiteness of personal life is as serious a challenge to property as the foundation of society, as the limits of the globe are a challenge to expansion as the foundation of the body politic. By transcending the limits of human life in planning for an automatic continuous growth of wealth beyond all personal needs and possibilities of consumption, individual property is made a public affair and taken out of the sphere of mere private life. Private interests which by their very nature are temporary, limited by man's natural span of life, can now escape into the sphere of public affairs and borrow from them that infinite length of time which is needed for continuous accumulation.[43]

Arendt identified here the threat which private wealth posed to all forms of property. Whereas property had formerly been identified with an individual, private wealth had, in its

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[42]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 67. It was only with respect to the expropriation of property that Arendt could support Proudhon's dictim: "Property is theft!"

[43]Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 145.

new conception, freed itself from the individual; it now transcended lives and space. Its dominant position was guaranteed since its accumulation was now a public interest, unrestricted by the lives of particular men.

Furthermore, the encroachment of private interests, that is the continual accumulation of wealth, into the public realm, as was discussed earlier, posed a perennial threat to man's worldliness in that it threatened all forms of property. The possibility that the derailed conception of property, if applied to modern societies, would indeed destroy property-one of the stabilizing features of the human artifice--was, in the judgment of Arendt, a strong likelihood unless men were made aware of their erroneous conception of property and reappropriated the original concept of property in its Greek and Roman sense.

Thus, it can be observed, Marx and Arendt, despite their differences, were not polarized in their discussion on the modern phenomenon of <u>private wealth</u>. Their common respect for property as giving man a location within his community--as elaborated by the Greeks and Romans--led them to condemn the modern transformation of personal landed property into <u>private wealth</u>. This transformation was injurious to both the individual and the community.

B. <u>Private wealth</u> as the 'sensuous external object'.

The second consequence of modern property which Marx and Arendt discerned in their respective societies, was that

private wealth, as a general form of property, confronted its possessor as an independent, 'sensuous, external object', as money. Private wealth gained its independent status when wealth lost its private consumptive role and became universal "capital, whose chief function was to generate more capital..."[44] This transformation was for Marx the culmination of the history of landed property.[45] When landed property lost its original 'private use value', ie., its sacrosanctity, and through gradual transformation turned the feudal-lord into a capitalist and the resident serfs into agricultural day-labourers, landed property, as was shown earlier, no longer could be regarded as anything but capital. As capital, landed property, together with the other forms of wealth, acquired a status independent of its possession and thus its relation to the individual appeared as purely accidental.[46] Again, as earlier, the question was raised: What effect did the appearance of wealth as an independent external object--money--have on the development of the individual and upon the stability of the community?

It was noticed immediately by Marx and Arendt that the new conception of property was inconsistent with its

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[44]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 68 and The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 145. In the latter Arendt argued that the bourgeois conception of wealth considered "...money as something sacrosanct which under no circumstances should be a mere commodity for consumption."

[45]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 252. Marx wrote: "It is therefore, precisely in the development of landed property that the gradual victory and formation of capital can be studied..."

[46]Ibid., p. 224. See also the earlier discussion on the alienation of the product from the worker.

fundamental premise which held that the source of property was located in man himself. The modern conception of property denied the full implementation of this proposition in society. As early as Locke, who was one of the first to argue that the labour of one's body should be considered that particular individual's property, the full realization of this idea of property was pre-empted by attaching the counterpoint of convention to the new conception of property. In effect what this addition did was vindicate the gradual formation of two quite unequal classes in society: the wealthy capitalists and the propertyless poor.[47]

The result of this polarization, in Marx's judgment, was that the propertyless workers created or produced alien artifacts (these products stood in opposition to the producer) with labour which was no longer their own (they had sold their birth right for 'a pot of porridge'), whereas the employer was the owner of labour outside of himself and therefore owner of the product, alienated labour.[48] On the one hand, this possible estrangement of man from his own labour and from the product of his labour was a fundamental premise

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[47]The discussion is following the interpretation of C. B. Macpherson, op. cit., p. 120 and Bertell Ollman, Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 159 ff. Adam Smith, op. cit. also acknowledges the creation of two unequal classes in 17th and 18th century England.

[48]Marx, EPM, p. 64-67. See also Grundrisse, p. 458.

of the capitalist system and yet, on the other hand, this premise was a direct contradiction of the other earlier proposition, namely, that each individual owned his labour since it was a part of his person. This resulted in a confrontation between what man believed about the inviolability of his own person and what happened in reality. What in actual practice the capitalist economy was demanding of the worker was that he sell "himself and his human identity."[49] Marx described the contradiction inherent in the capitalist economy in this manner:

> Whilst according to the political economists it is solely through labour that man enhances the value of the products of nature, whilst labour is man's active property, according to this same political economy the landowner and the capitalist, who qua landowner and capitalist are merely privileged and idle gods, are everywhere superior to the worker and lay down the law to him.[50]

In this non sequitur Marx saw only misery and injustice for the workers, who in fact comprised the majority of the population. Their own interests and development were being curtailed and retarded by the capitalist mania to accumulate capital, ad infinitum. Marx wrote:

> The accumulation of capital increases the division of labour, and the division of labour increases the number of the workers... Within this division of labour on the one hand and the accumulation of capital on the other, the worker becomes ever more exclusively dependent on labour and on a particular

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[49] Marx, EPM, p. 29.

[50] Ibid., p. 29.

> very one-sided, machine-like labour. Just as he is thus depressed spiritually and physically to the condition of a machine and from being a man becomes an abstract activity and a stomach so he also becomes ever more dependent on every fluctuation in market-price, on the application of capitals, and on the mood of the rich.[51]

Rather than being an activity which showed the creativeness and the full development of the individual, and of the community, labour had become so dependent upon, so subservient to the demands of capital, that it depressed 'spiritually and physically' the condition of man. Even within a society of capitalism most favourable to the worker, Marx saw that the

> inevitable result for the worker is over-work and premature death, decline to a mere machine, a bond servant of capital, which piles up dangerously over against him, more competition, and for a section of the workers starvation or beggary.[52]

Thus no longer was private wealth in the form of capital, serving the needs of man but man was serving the needs of capital.

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[51] Ibid., p. 26 and 27. See also J. F. Bergier op. cit., p. 428-431 for a description of the working class.

[52] Marx, EPM, p. 27. See also his analysis of an automated system under capitalism in Grundrisse, p. 692-695. After describing the dehumanizing quality of machine-like labour, Marx wrote: "Labour appears...merely as a conscious organ, scattered among the individual living workers at numerous points of the mechanical system; subsumed under the total process of the machinery itself, as itself only a link of the system, whose unity exists not in the living workers, but rather in the living (active) machinery, which confronts his individual, insignificant doings as a mighty organism."

This subservient relation to money, capital or private wealth, also held for the capitalist. He, too, became the pawn of capital. Rather than his wealth being "the development of a particular essential aspect of his individuality...", wealth appeared as accidental to the individual.[53] In fact it assumed a preeminent position. For, in Marx's interpretation: "money must be the direct object, aim and product of general labour, the labour of all individuals."[54]

It was, therefore, the domination of money over man, money as lord, which threatened both the development of the individual and the stability of the community. The mania for private wealth isolated individuals from each other and each seemed a threat to the other's lust for wealth. Hence, within modern society, property, in its generalized form as private wealth, was characteristic of private interests and opposed to the higher or more general interests of the

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[53] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 222.

[54] Ibid., p. 224. (emphasis is mine). In declaring that the mania for money is corrosive of the social nature of man, Marx wrote in EPM: "...the big capitalists ruin the small, and a section of the erstwhile capitalists sinks into the working class, which as a result of this supply again suffers to some extent a depression of wages and passes into a still greater dependence on the few big capitalists. The number of capitalists having been diminished, their competition with respect to workers scarcely exists any longer; and the number of workers having been augmented, their competition among themselves has become all the more intense, unnatural and violent". p. 27. See also Adam Smith, op. cit., for a more cheerful description of the same phenomena.

community.[55] As a private individual, man treated other men as means for his own purposes--that of accumulating wealth, reducing himself to a similar posture for others, and became the plaything of alien powers--money or private wealth.[56] Rather than the good of the community being the focus of all activity, the interests and rights of individuals took precedence over those of the community. Marx wrote:

> The right of property is thus the right to enjoy and dispose of one's possessions as one wills, without regard for other men and independent of society. It is the right of self-interest. This individual freedom and its application as well constitutes the basis of civil society. It lets every man find in other men not the realization but rather the limitation of his own freedom.[57]

In other words a Hobbesian bellum omnium contra omnes existed in society. Instead of individuals realizing their own individuality through political and social interaction with others (as Arendt and Marx advocated), ie., through commitment to a community in a life lived in relationship and responsibility to others, man qua worker or capitalist sought the betterment of his private condition through private wealth.

Because every individual centered his attention on money, money became their unifying force. Money itself

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[55]Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State (1843), in, Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (ed. & tr.), Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), p. 188.

[56]Marx, On the Jewish Question, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 225.

[57]Ibid., p. 236.

became the Gemeinwessen[58] in that it became: "the general substance of survival for all, and at the same time the social product of all."[59] Thus when private wealth, as the general form of property, became a 'sensuous external object' it, in the opinion of Marx and Arendt, destroyed the communal nature of man qua worker, capitalist, etc.; it set them in opposition to each other as groups and as individuals; it clarified the basic contradiction within society--that one's labour could produce alien objects, hostile to the producer; and, in destroying the basis of positive Gemeinwessen, set itself up as the new basis of community--as the object of everybody's activity. For when life is lived in total independence, man becomes irresponsible. When decisions are made outside the context of community, the perspective of man is distorted and he is propelled in self-destructive directions by a perverse ideal of self-fulfillment.

C. Private wealth gave the individual power over society.

The third observation which Marx and Arendt made, with regard to the new conception of property, was that money, as the general expression of private wealth gave its possessor power over society. It has already been shown how in their judgment, mutatis mutandis, the elevation of private

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[58] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 223.

[59] Ibid., p. 225 and 226.

interests forced individuals to see in others the limitation rather than the realization of their interests. The spirit of society was reflected in the combined egoism of its inhabitants. No longer was the societal aspect of man emphasized, but rather, each individual sought to gain advantage over others through his material wealth. Thus avarice, and artifically induced poverty existed side by side in society.[60]

Even as ruthless competition continued to exist between individuals, certain conventions were established by those who had private wealth which enabled them to gain positions of power in society. This in turn meant that to a large degree they controlled the intellectual climate as well. Marx commented extensively upon the injustice which existed where a minority of wealthy individuals gained power over the majority of labourers:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, ie., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance.[61]

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[60]This interpretation of modernizing society is supported by Christopher Hill, Change and Continuity in 17th Century England, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975), at least for English society during the 17th century. See p. 233 ff. For a more general discussion see J. F. Bergier, op. cit.

[61]Marx, The German Ideology, p. 64.

In other words, because the owners of the means of production had time to examine their own economical principles, they themselves, or through others in their employment, developed sophisticated arguments which supported their interests, and these arguments, laid out in logical format, were then taught to all their employers. (This approach is otherwise known as the process of socialization). Thus the workers, not having the wherewithall to develop an equally convincing counter-argument, absorbed the ideas of the ruling class.

Arendt advanced an argument quite similar to that of Marx. She wrote, with regard to the bourgeois mania for money and the power it gave them over others:

> The bourgeoisie's empty desire to have money beget money as men beget men had remained an ugly dream so long as money had to go the long way of investment in production; not money had begotten money, but men had made things and money. The secret of the new happy fulfillment was precisely that economic laws no longer stood in the way of the greed of the owning classes. Money could finally beget money because power, with complete disregard for all laws--economic as well as ethical--could appropriate wealth, only when exported money succeeded in stimulating the export of power could it accomplish its owners' designs. Only the unlimited accumulation of power could bring about the unlimited accumulation of capital.[62]

Thus when the accumulation of power became the raison d'être of the economic and socially dominant classes, power simultaneously became the essence of political action. What in effect happened was that the private interests of the bourgeois class became public. Arendt wrote:

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[62]Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 137.

> When, in the era of imperialism, businessmen became politicians and were acclaimed as statesmen, while statesmen were taken seriously only if they talked the language of successful businessmen and "thought in continents", these private practices and devices (such as "nothing succeeds like success", "might is right", "right is expedience", etc.) were gradually transformed into rules and principles for the conduct of public affairs.[63]

However, the modern acceptance, without restraint of principles which were necessary in the private realm, for public purposes would be disasterous for the community. Arendt wrote: "The nations concerned were hardly aware that the recklessness that had prevailed in private life, and against which the public body always had to defend itself and its individual citizens, was about to be elevated to the one publicly honored political principle."[64] This principle of the indiscriminate use of power destroyed any community based on the delegation of rights, which all modern states claimed to represent. There was no longer a question of right or wrong but only absolute obedience to the law of those who controlled this power--the state.

> Deprived of political rights, the individual, to whom the public and official life manifests itself in the guise of necessity, acquires a new and increased interest in his private life and his personal fate... Once public affairs are regulated by the state under the guise of necessity, the social or public careers of the competitors comes under the sway of chance. In a society of individuals, all equiped by nature with equal capacity for power and equally protected from one another by the state, chance can decide

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[63] Ibid., p. 138.

[64] Ibid., p. 139.

who will succeed.[65]

The complete preoccupation of the individual with his private fortunes prevented all consideration for social development. Within this type of society, the function of the state was to provide equal opportunity for all men to seek their individual fortunes. The public arena was no longer a space within which men experienced their individuality through speech and action, but was rather a forum wherein individuals gathered to gain their own private riches by exciting in others needs which they had never known. Marx wrote:

> ...every person speculates on creating a new need in another, so as to drive him to a fresh sacrifice, to place him in a new dependence and to seduce him into a new mode of gratification and therefore economic ruin. Each tries to establish over the other an alien power, so as thereby to find satisfaction of his own selfish need. The increase in the quantity of objects is accompanied by an extension of the realm of alien powers to which man is subjected, and every new product represents a new potency of mutual swindling and mutual plundering. Man becomes ever poorer as man; his need for money becomes ever greater if he wants to overpower hostile being; and the power of his money declines exactly in inverse proportion to the increase in the volume of production: that is, his neediness grows as the power of money increases.[66]

Therefore although private wealth gave its possessor power over society, it destroyed his relational character and set him at odds with everybody in the community. Each individual saw in his neighbour the limitation of his own happiness and

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[65] Ibid., p. 141.

[66] Ibid., p. 141.

therefore sought to create in him a new dependency on a particular object for which that person would give money. Marx explained it well: "He puts himself at the service of the other's most depraved fancies, plays the pimp between him and his need, excites in him morbid appetites, lies in wait for each of his weaknessess--all so that he can then demand the cash for this service of love."[67] Thus although individuals exercised power over others, the ultimate power, as we have seen elsewhere, was money. In its service men subordinated every other need.

In their analysis of the institution of property, as it existed in modern society, Marx and Arendt exposed its contradictions and accounted for its influence on the individual and the community. They discerned a number of pernicious consequences which the derailed conception of property had inflicted upon the individual and the community of which he was a member. The practical application of the new conception of property as private wealth, as money, deprived man of his humanity by questioning man's worldliness--his property, and by eliminating his need for social interaction--for the pursuit of private wealth could be accomplished best when the needs and interests of others were disregarded. Secondly, private wealth had replaced landed property as a sacred entity, without itself becoming identified with a specific individual or location in the community. Thirdly, it set man against man in that each individual saw the other

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[67] Ibid., p. 108.

as the limitation of his own fulfillment and therefore sought to have power over him. Lastly, the combination of all of the above caused the fragmentation of men within society and money became the unifying force within the community.

Therefore, although differences existed in the analyses of Marx and Arendt, their insights into the modern phenomenon of property are valuable in their own right, and when combined, as was the case in this chapter, they give twentieth-century man a better understanding of the power and the potential for injustice which the institution of property has. Having established the break-down of relations between men the study will now examine Arendt's and Marx's conception of the individual's relation to the group.

CHAPTER THREE

SELF-REALIZATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL THROUGH THE COMMUNITY

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and compare "the individual" and "the group" as portrayed in Marx's writings, with "the individual" and "the group" as presented in Arendt's writings. However, both of these terms, "the individual" as well as "the group" are analytical abstractions, since neither Marx nor Arendt conceived of man as being human unless he is actively engaged with other human beings nor could they imagine a group without individuals. The individuality of a person is a product of society, and conversely, the group is the crucible in which this individuality is fostered and protected. Via his social relations, the individuality of a person is disclosed both to himself and to others. Therefore, the collective effort of the group is required, historically, as well as in each epoch, in order for the potential of man <u>qua</u> man to be realized. Furthermore, it is the group which contains the resources necessary for the individual's development. Sartre portrayed the relationship between the individual and the group in the following perceptive manner:

> Each act can be said to be a free individual development, yet it is such only through the group. The group alone makes the act efficient and is

> instrumental in its success. Although it can be said in all truth that the individual joins the group, it is no less certain if he wants to survive, he must join, for salvation lies where the group is.[1]

This comment is equally valid for the thought of Marx and Arendt. Marx clearly stated in the Grundrisse that: "The human being is in its most literal sense a (political animal), not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society."[2] Any man outside the sphere of human community could hardly be considered fully human. In fact, the possibility of man individuating himself outside of society was as absurd as the likelihood of language developing in a situation where individuals neither lived together nor talked to each other.

Arendt likewise was firmly committed to the idea of man as a social being. She wrote:"Men in the plural, that is, men insofar as they live and move in this world, can experience meaningfulness only because they can talk and make sense to each other and to themselves."[3]

The conscious coming together of individuals in order to display their virtuosity in word and deed was so essential for the expression of one's humanness that Arendt declared that man's condition of plurality (the fact that

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[1]Jean-Paul Sartre, in Wilfred Desan, The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965), p. 135.

[2]Karl Marx, Grundrisse, tr. with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus, (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973), p. 84.

[3]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 4.

men, not Man, live on the earth _together_ and inhabit a world of their own making) is specifically "...the condition--not only the _conditio sine qua non_, but the _conditio per quam_--of all political life."[4]

Man was, however, a biological creature as well as a political one.* In order for men to develop their individuality within the realm of freedom, they needed to first free themselves from the necessity of spending all their time satisfying natural biological needs. For, as Marx wrote: "the realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases..."[5] Arendt shared this two-stage depiction of man's diurnal activity. As a student of early Greek political activity, she imbued her political philosophy with their ideal. For them, and for Arendt "the mastering of the necessities of life in the household was the condition for freedom of the _polis_."[6] Thus, both Marx and Arendt accounted for the activity of man both at the private and at the public level.

Whereas both agreed on the duality of man's nature, they were in disagreement as to where true community or freedom could begin. Marx, as was argued in chapter one, viewed the difference between the realm of necessity and

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[4]_Ibid._, p. 7.

[5]Karl Marx, _Capital_, in Robert Tucker, (ed.) _The Marx-Engels Reader_, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972), p. 320.

[6]Arendt, _The Human Condition_, p. 30 and 31.

*This was discussed at greater length in chapter one but merits brief mention here as well.

and the realm of freedom more in terms of their qualitative difference rather than their material distinction. For him, the realm of necessity would continue to expand as man developed. While he never stated it, it might be argued that the realm of freedom would also expand, and functions which formerly were considered to be controlled by necessity would then become free activities. Whereas the two realms would never become the same in absolute terms, their relative differences could be minimized.

Therefore, the abstract distinction between civil and political society, between man as l'homme and man as le citoyen needed to be superseded. In Marx's critique of Hegel's solution to this dilemma, he showed that man could only assume his universal nature, ie., know himself as a conscious species-being, when these two artificially created abstractions of society would be transcended through universal suffrage.[7] He wrote: "the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."[8] The achievement of this goal could already be visualized, for Marx, because, due to the nature of the capitalist system, the size of working class was increasing to the point where it comprised an overwhelming part of the pop-

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[7]Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State (1843), in Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, (ed. and tr.), Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1964), p. 202. See also Shlomo Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 202 ff.

[8]Marx, The Communist Manifesto, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 352.

ulation. A united vote by it would be a vote in self-interest, or, put another way, in the best interests of society. Therefore, within the progressive march of history, on the date universal suffrage would be practiced, the last act of the political state would have been committed, and it would disappear along with its counterpart, civil society.[9] This would be the case since the artificial bifurcation of society into two man-created abstractions would be transcended. Marx wrote: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonism, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."[10] At this juncture in time, the prehistory of man would cease and the real history of man would begin. Alienation would no longer exist; man would be reconciled to himself and to others.

On the other hand, Arendt insisted that within true community, a sharp separation existed between the

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[9]Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of State (1843), in Writing of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 202. Marx qualified this theoretical postulate by admitting that whereas in some countries such as America and England, "...workers may attain their goal by peaceful means..., in most continental countries the lever of the revolution will have to be force..." Karl Marx, "Speech on the Hague Congress (1872)", in The First International and After, Political Writings, Vol. III, ed. and introduced by Political Thought of Karl Marx, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 202 ff.

[10]Marx, The Communist Manifesto, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 353.

private and public lives of the individuals. Again, she referred to the early Greek experience:

> What all Greek philosophers, no matter how opposed to polis life, took for granted is that freedom is exclusively located in the political realm, that necessity is primarily a prepolitical phenomenon, characteristic of the private household organization, and that force and violence are justified in this sphere because they are the only means to master necessity--for instance, by ruling over slaves--and to become free.[11]

For Arendt, the polis life consisted of peers gathering in "a sphere where neither rule nor being ruled existed."[12] She would never have admitted that true politics was merely the appendage of society, in contradistinction to Marx, to whom Arendt attributed the assumption: "That politics is nothing but a function of society, that action, speech, and thought are primarily superstructures upon social interest ..."[13] This, in Arendt's opinion, was an accurate depiction of how modern society regarded politics, but in no way characterized a truly public life as it ought to be lived. True political action had quite another meaning for Arendt in that for her, the notion of political action was rooted in ancient Greek practice.

In Greek and Roman times, men had realized the per-

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[11]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 31.

[12]Ibid., p. 33.

[13]Ibid., p. 33. Marx held that the ideas of society were always reflective of the interests of the ruling class in society. See The German Ideology in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 138.

manence of both the realm of necessity and the public realm, and that in each realm certain needs of man were met. In addition, they had also recognized the primacy of the public realm and had sought, therefore, to escape the private realm in order to reveal their individuality in the public realm through action. In modern society the opposite had occurred. Therefore, Arendt castigated modern society for having blurred the distinction between the two realms by expanding the private realm into the public realm, thereby creating a new social realm in which all private concerns were made public. Referring to Jefferson's insight into the danger posed by the contents of the American Constitution, she wrote:

> What he perceived to be the mortal danger to the republic was that the Constitution had given all power to the citizens, without giving them the opportunity of being republicans and of acting as citizens. In other words, the danger was that all power had been given to the people in their private capacity, and that there was no space established for them in their capacity of being citizens.[14]

The worst fears of Jefferson had been, according to Arendt, realized in the formation of contemporary society. She described society as: "the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public."[15] Al-

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[14] H. Arendt, On Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 256.

[15] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 46.

though Marx did not share Arendt's high opinion of the Greek polis, believing it to be only 'the historic childhood of humanity', he certainly would have concurred with her opinion that true individuality could not express itself in the contemporary society which she was describing.

Having delineated one important distinction between Marx and Arendt upon which their discussion of "the individual" and "the group" rests, the chapter will now commence with that discussion. Consideration will first be given to Marx.

In considering Marx, a few preliminary statements are in order. First of all, Marx had a teleological concept of history. In contrast to the premodern cyclical concept of history which viewed nations and empires as caught in the vicious circles of rising and then falling, Marx held that the history of man was developmental. Herein Marx was heavily indebted to Hegel. Adopting the Hegelian dialectic of history, Marx inverted it and discovered the material laws which govern the process of history. Marx found this discovery to be the Archimedean point, a vantage point outside the prejudices found in any society. Therefore he firmly believed that:

> No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the

> task itself arises only when the material condition for its solution already exist or at least are in the process of formation.[16]

Impervious to the influences of human history, Marx, via his methodology, saw the developing character of history. Of course, this view of history was not unique to Marx alone. The political economists of Marx's day and before him as well, had based their vindication of capitalism on this premise as well. However, they seemed unable to criticize the faults of their own era, and he claimed, with some justification:

> The so-called historical presentation of development is founded, as a rule, on the fact that the latest form regards the previous ones as steps leading up to itself, and, since it is only rarely and only under quite specific conditions able to criticize itself--leaving aside, of course, the historical periods which appear to themselves as times of decadence--it always conceives them one-sidedly.[17]

In contrast to this limited one-sided vision of society, Marx saw that 'the material conditions for its solution' already existed in his day or were at least in the process of formation. Furthermore, he wrote: "If we did not find concealed in society as it is the material conditions of production and the corresponding relations of exchange prerequisites for a classless society, then

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[16]Marx, Marx on the History of his Opinions, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 5.

[17]Marx, Grundrisse, p. 106.

all attempts to explode it would be quixotic."[18]

The second important idea to keep in mind is that in Marx's conception of history, man makes his own history in the world of nature, through his productive labour.

> Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting up on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway.[19]

Therefore, for Marx, the evolution of man's prehistory was the development of man from a clans-being to man on the verge of becoming the "rich individual" within society. This development of man might also be viewed as being co-temporal with the development of production. Marx wrote:

> The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to produce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are therefore, coincides

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[18] Ibid., p. 159. It is important to be cognizant of the fact that Marx's critique of existing society and his cautious approach to change rested upon this assumption.

[19] Marx, Capital, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 232.

> with their production, both with what they produce and how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.[20]

Thus, the whole history of man's development could be described as the satisfying of current needs, first of all the physical needs and then of new human needs. "All history is the preparation for 'man'," in Marx's theory, "to become the object of sensuous consciousness, and for the needs of 'man as man' to become natural, sensuous needs."[21]

Having given consideration to these two salient assumptions of Marx, the complexity of the analysis becomes evident. In discussing the developmental nature of man (ie., if one can talk about human nature as something which "is-becoming" rather than "what is"), Marx clarified his presentation by talking about man in three ways: a) man as a historical being, b) man as a species-being, and c) man as a productive social being. It is immediately apparent that these three ways of discussing man are necessarily interwoven and complementary. Moreover, it is impossible to discuss man as a historical being without mentioning his relations with others, or how and what he produces. At the same time, each aspect of man viewed separately brings with it a fuller comprehension of what Marx visualized

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[20]Marx, The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 114.

[21]Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967), p. 103. Hereafter cited as EPM.

the "rich, fully-developed individual", to be like.

As was mentioned above, man as a historical being is, a developing being. In his own estimation, Marx did not begin from a metaphysical framework in analyzing man as had Hegel. Marx wrote: "We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process."[22] Thus, in starting his study of the history of man in this fashion, Marx was in effect refuting Hegel's idealistic conception of history.[23] History was the story, not of an Idea, but rather the story of man satisfying his human needs, ie., the story of man's becoming.

In contradistinction to animals, whose needs remain constant and are determined by their species, man's needs are social and change through his conscious interaction with nature. Marx explicitly denied "that each generation's consciousness of its own needs is a mechanistic, automatic response of the human consciousness to merely material stimuli."[24]

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[22]Marx, The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 118.

[23]Ibid., p. 119. Elsewhere, in his Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, Marx wrote: "Family and civil society themselves comprise the state...They are its dynamism. According to Hegel, on the other hand, they are produced by the actual Idea. It is not their own life that binds them into the state, rather it is the life of the Idea that has discerned them from itself; and thus they are the finitude of the Idea; they owe their particular existence to a spirit different from their own; they are determinations made by a third party, not self-determinations; consequently they are thus determined as finitude, 'as the very finitude of the 'actual Idea.'" p. 156. Marx's goal was to despiritualize this fundamentally sound conception of history and stand it on its feet.

[24]Here I am following the interpretation of S. Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, p. 79.

Rather, man's awareness of his needs is a product of his historical development. As the means of production develop, new and more advanced commodities can be made which in turn creates new needs in man. This is the case because man is always experimenting to find new ways of expressing himself. These needs are social in origin because man was responsible for their creation. Marx gave an example of this phenomenon in Wage Labour and Capital (1849). A small house seems to satisfy its owner's needs as long as all the other houses surrounding it are comparable. However, as soon as a palace is erected alongside, the small house "shrinks from a little house to a hut..." Marx explained this change thus: "Our desires and pleasures spring from society; we measure them, therefore, by society and not by the objects which serve for their satisfaction. Because they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature."[25]

It is the historical development of man, in Marx's view, which increased his wants and, therefore, these need to be measured against the modes of production which produced them. It is for this reason that capitalist society, more than any previous society, refused the labourer the satisfaction of his needs. Whereas the modes of production had developed to previously unattainable heights, the worker was being denied his own humanity; the satisfaction of new, socially created needs. The plight of the proletarian steadily worsened. Not only were his needs not being ful-

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[25]Marx, Wage Labour and Capital (1849), in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 180.

filled but his own alienated labour was increasing the disparity between the capitalist and himself.

> Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labour by not considering the direct relationship between the worker (labour) and production. It is true that labour produces for the rich wonderful things--but for the worker it produces privation. It produces palaces--but for the worker hovels. It produces beauty--but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labour by machines--but some of the workers it throws back to a barbarous type of labour, and the other workers it turns into machines. It produces intelligence--but for the worker idiocy, cretinism...[26]

In effect, what capitalist society was doing was reducing the majority of the population to an animal-like existence. Marx saw no hope for better conditions for the worker in capitalist society. This society, at its best, promised only lengthened work-hours and premature death, more competition and "for a section of the workers starvation or beggary."[27]

Even the capitalists were not experiencing a fulfilling life. The accumulation of capital had gained mastery over them in a different way. Their frugality was depicted by Marx in the following words:

> The less you eat, drink and read books; the less you go to the theatre, the dance-hall, the public-house; the less you think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc.; the more you save--the greater becomes your treasure, which neither moths nor dust will devour--your capital. The less you are, the more you have; the less you express your own life, the greater is your alienated life--the greater is the store of your estranged being.[28]

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[26]Marx, EPM, p. 68.

[27]Ibid., p. 27.

[28]Ibid., p. 110.

How could a society which fostered this sort of individual, represent a necessary stage in the development of man? Since neither the worker, nor the capitalist was experiencing himself as a true human being, where did Marx obtain his vision of the "rich individual"?

In scrutinizing the class structure of his day, Marx became convinced that the proletariat was more class-conscious than were the capitalists. The capitalist was driven by an insatiable quest for capital which set him in opposition, not only to the workers, but also to his fellow capitalists against whom he was competing. He wrote: "The separate individuals form a class only insofar as they have to carry on a common battle against another class; otherwise they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors."[29] Greed for more capital prevented the capitalist from feeling unfulfilled in his self-induced state of alienation. The self-centeredness of the capitalist isolated him from the needs of others and therefore weakened his class-consciousness.

The worker, on the other hand, thrust together with other workers in factories, mines, etc. could develop this necessary awareness of others. It was through being estranged from himself, from the product of his labour and from others that the proletarian could realize his greatest need--others. Marx wrote:

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[29] Marx, "The German Ideology", in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 143.

> Because the abstraction of all humanity and even the semblance of humanity is practically complete in the fully developed proletariat, because the conditions of life of the proletariat bring all the conditions of present society into a most inhuman focus, because man is lost in the proletariat but at the same time has won a theoretical awareness of that loss and is driven to revolt against this humanity by urgent, patent, and compelling need (the practical expression of necessity)--therefore the proletariat can and must emanciapate itself. But it cannot emancipate itself without transcending the conditions of its own life. It cannot transcend the conditions of its own life without transcending all the inhuman conditions of present society which are summed up in its own situation. It does not go through the hard but hardening school of labor in vain. It is not a question of what this or that proletarian or even the whole proletariat momentarily imagines to be the aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is and what it consequently is historically compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is prescribed, irrevocably and obviously, in its own situation in life as well as in the entire organization of contemporary civil society.[30]

The reason why the proletariat class would be the universal class was because due to its poverty, it had no class interests, private property or wealth to protect. Through poverty the workers discovered their inner wealth: each other and the worth of each person's unique needs. "Company, association, and conservatism, which again has society as its end, are enough for them; the brotherhood of man is no mere phase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies."[31] Through association with each other "they acquire a new

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[30]K. Marx, Holy Family in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 368.

[31]Marx, EPM, p. 115.

need--the need for society and what appears as a means becomes an end."[32]

However, the full development of man could only become possible with the commensurate development of production. For this reason Marx looked back at the Greek era and regarded it as "the historic childhood of humanity...", for although the Greek world had seemed quite developed, it had catered only to the privileged few.[33] Most of the people had remained subject to necessity. On the other hand, in bourgeois society, production had conquered nature to the degree that labour could be emancipated to "the full development of activity itself, in which natural necessity in its direct form has disappeared, because a historically created need has taken the place of the natural one."[34]

The history of man is therefore, the history of the emergence and development of new social needs in each individual man as well as in man generally. Marx wrote: "The course of human life consists of passing through different ages. But at the same time all ages exist side by side, distributed among different individuals."[35] Again:

> And as everything natural has to have its beginning, man too has his act of coming-to-be--history--which however, is for him a known history, and hence as an act of coming-to-be it is a conscious self-transcending act of coming-to-be. History is the true natural

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[32] Ibid., p. 115.

[33] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 111.

[34] Ibid., p. 325.

[35] Ibid., p. 639.

history of man...[36]

As was mentioned above, the history of man can also be understood as the development of man from a primitive species-being or herd-animal into man as an individualized social being. Marx wrote:

> Exchange itself is a chief means of this individuation. It makes the herd-like existence superfluous and dissolves it. Soon the matter has turned in such a way that as an individual he relates himself only to himself, while the means with which he posits himself as individual have become the making of his generality.[37]

What did Marx mean? He meant that it was necessary for man to relinquish his early herd-like relationship with others in order that the full potential of the human race could be realized in the individual development of all its members. The accumulated greatness of all the members would reveal the potential of man as a species-being.

This two-stage development meant, however, that for a period of time man would be alienated from his species-being. During this time of estrangement man would suffer depersonalization, because the centralization of the instruments of production would bring together masses of people in factories. The factory system would at first deprive the workers of their individuality and peculiarity normally ex-

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[36]Marx, EPM, p. 146.

[37]Marx, The Grundrisse, p. 496.

pressed through their private labour.[38] For, in positive labour "all the natural, spiritual and social variety of individual activity is manifested...and rewarded."[39] The condition of social anonymity would, however, be transcended because the forced togetherness, created by the economic system, would reawaken within the workers species-identity, albeit at a higher level.

What characterized this new species-identity? What relation was there between man's individual and his species life? This is how Marx described it: "Men's individual and species life are not different, howevermuch--and this is inevitable--the mode of existence of the individual is a more particular, or more general mode of the life of the species, or the life of the species is a more particular or general individual life."[40] This meant that the individual and the society are one in essence and being, though distinct from each other in terms of mode. It is with this in mind that Joseph O'Malley wrote:

> The being of society is not to be distinguished from the being of its members; nor is the essence of man in its actuality to be distinguished from the ensemble of social relationships of which he is the focus and subject, and which, taken as a

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[38] Ibid., p. 157.

[39] Marx, EPM, p. 25.

[40] Ibid., p. 98.

whole, constitutes the matrix of his life as an individual.[41]

Furthermore the character of man's species nature is free activity.[42] In contrast to animals which are identical with their life-activity, man is conscious of his life-activity. That is to say, man makes his "life activity itself the object of his will" and of his consciousness. Therefore in removing the means to his physical survival, his life-activity, the distinction between man and animal would be lost. Marx wrote: "In tearing away from man the object of his production..., estranged labour tears from him his species life, his real species objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him."[43] That is to say, in losing his species-objectivity, man loses the capacity to comprehend the essence, the being, the species-character, of all the objects in the universe, including himself. He no longer can think abstractly.

This state of species-alienation coincides with the state of poverty that was discussed earlier in relation to

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[41] Joseph O'Malley in the introduction to Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, (Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. xliv. See also Bhikhu Parekh, "Marx's Theory of Man", The Concept of Socialism, ed. by Bhikhu Parekh, (London: Croom Helm, 1975).

[42] Marx, EPM, p. 71.

[43] Ibid., p. 72.

man as a historical being. In order to transcend this estrangement from his species, man would need to become conscious again of his greatest need--others. In all pre-communist societies man had remained and would continue to remain, an egoistic, selfish, individualistic atom unable to realize his social humanity, his species-life. Only when he has regained his species-consciousness would man be able to bring out of himself his latent powers. Marx wrote:

> The real active orientation of man to himself as a species-being, or his manifestation as a real species-being (ie., as a human being), is only possible by his really bringing out of himself all the powers that are his as the species man--something which in turn is only possible through the totality of man's actions, as the result of history--is only possible by man's treating these generic powers as objects: and this, to begin with, is again only possible in the form of estrangement.[44]

It is only through the development of history that man actualizes his potential. Therefore, although it can be said in one respect that man's nature develops, it is crucial to note that this development occurs within the "given" of his species-nature. Man does not transcend his nature; but, rather, he comes-to-be what his species-nature entitled him to become. In order to arrive at this pinnacle, man needed to first become conscious of himself and his species as objects; this occurred during the eras when man was alienated. (See Chapter One). Having become species-conscious man was then able to humanize this awareness and transcend the era of alienation.

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[44] Ibid., p. 140.

In looking at the development of individual man through his species-life, "death seems to be the harsh victory of the species over the definite individual and to contradict their unity. But the determinate individual is only a determinate species being, and as such is mortal."[45] Seen in historical terms, however, each man and generation is a link in the chain of human history. Each prior stage or link is necessary for the realization of man's potential.

The essence of man could be realized only when the historical unfolding of man as a species-being, a natural being had become universal. Translating this theoretical development of man into practical terms, Marx believed the proletarian class would inaugurate the new era because they had become the universal class which, although estranged from its species-character, was becoming conscious of its greatest need--others.

Man's need for others is most manifest in the production process. For Marx, the production process in its most developed stages--in a communist society, presupposes the abolition of private property and the institution of reciprocal exchanges, which, because they are voluntary, fulfill their respective agents in a positive manner. New, socially-created needs, replace the basic needs as the distinguishing essence of man. Man, as a producer, is man striving to create himself through his interaction with and appropriation of nature.

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[45] Ibid., p. 98.

Man always seeks first of all to satisfy his physical needs. Early in the history of man, the division of labour was seen as the best way for a growing population to satisfy these needs. Different people had various talents which could be put to use most efficiently by having people specialize. The various stages of development in the division of labour coincided with the various forms of ownership.[46]

Claims to ownership were at first general in nature, the emphasis being on the right to immediate use rather than long-term use which excluded others' rights. The development of private property, which originated in the family, began the history of alienation. In primitive family life, the fruit of one's labours remained his own possession. The quest to satisfy necessity demanded all of one's resources. It is obvious that as long as each person used his product for his own sustenence, no alienation took place. With the subsequent growth of society, social relations became more complex. Alienation of one's labour arose when the product of one's labour became the property of someone else ipso facto, instead of by exchange. In becoming a wage labourer, the worker himself became a commodity which had a monetary value.[47]

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[46]Marx, The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 115.

[47]See Christopher Hill, Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1945), for a good treatment of the early attitude of the English toward wage labour, p. 219 ff. Full time wage-earners were considered to be paupers and therefore not part of society.

Marx wrote:

> On the basis of political economy itself,... the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes the most wretched of commodities; that the wretchedness of the worker is in inverse proportions to the power and magnitude of his production; that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; that finally the distinction between capitalist and land-rentier, like that between the tiller of the soil and the factory worker, disappears and that the whole of society must fall apart into two classes--the property-owners and the propertyless workers.[48]

The relationship that exists between the property-owners and the propertyless workers is a negation of the true nature of man as a socially productive being. Although workers labour together, they do so on an involuntary basis.

> In the production process of capital...labour is a totality--a combination of labours--whose individual component parts are alien to one another, so that the overall process as a totality is not the work of the individual worker, and is furthermore the work of the different workers together only to the extent that they are (forcibly) combined, and do not (voluntarily) enter into combination with each other.[49]

The result of this is that men work together as isolated individuals always in competition with each other. The more products they produce, the poorer the workers become in comparison with the owner of the product.

As mentioned above, private property (elsewhere

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[48] Marx, EPM, p. 64.

[49] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 324.

Marx equates private property with the division of labour) initiated the state of alienation (which became most evident in capitalist society) through the creation of the two classes: property-owners and the propertyless proletariat. Capitalist society was based on the accumulation of wealth, meaning that everything that existed received an exchange value. Money became that exchange value. "Money serves him", Marx wrote of the individual, "only as the 'dead pledge of society', but it serves as such only because of its social (symbolic) property; and it can have a social property only because individuals have alienated their own social relationship from themselves so that it takes the form of a thing."[50] Thus, the creation of money revealed the lack of faith and trust that individuals have for each other. In other words, tangible wealth had been given greater significance than the possible aesthetic riches which might have been gained through the development of trust and friendship between individuals. Thus within bourgeois society alienation pervaded all of society and provoked conflict between the classes.[51] The proletarian, representing one side of the conflict, suffered from an induced poverty. His labour was not his own and therefore he needed to sell it at whatever price he could get.

On the other hand, a few capitalists controlled most

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[50] Ibid., p. 160.

[51] K. Marx, Holy Family, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 367.

of the wealth, which was created not by themselves but by the proletariat. They had no respect for the products per se, but were interested solely in their exchange value on the market. The worker, alienated from his own property--the product of his labour--saw it as an alien entity, confronting him as a hostile enemy. Because it existed, he was poor.

For this reason, Marx saw a conflict developing between the proletariat and private property. Being the antitheses of each other, the question arises as to their position relative to each other. Marx's analysis is worth quoting in full.

> Private property as private property, as wealth, is compelled to maintain its own existence and at the same time that of its antithesis, the proletariat. It is the positive side of the contradiction--private property is sufficient in itself.
>
> The proletariat as proletariat, on the other hand is compelled to abolish itself and at the same time its conditional antithesis, private property, which makes it the proletariat. It is the negative side of the contradiction, its internal restlessness--private property dissolved and dissolving.
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> The propertied class and the class of the proletariat represent the same human self-alienation. But the former feels comfortable and confirmed in this self-alienation, knowing that this alienation is its own power and possessing in it the semblance of a human existence. The latter feels itself ruined in this alienation and sees in it its impotence and the actuality of an inhuman existence. The proletariat, to use Hegel's words, is abused and indignant at its abasement--a feeling to which it is necessarily driven by the contradiction between its human nature and its situation in life, a situation that is openly, decisively, and comprehensively the negation of that nature.
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> Within this antithesis the property owner is therefore the conservative party, and the proletarian is the destructive party. From the former arises action to maintain the antithesis, from the latter, arises action to destroy it...The proletariat executes the sentence that private property inflicts on itself

> by creating the proletariat just as it carried out the verdict that wage-labour pronounces on itself by creating wealth for others and misery for itself. When the proletariat triumphs, it does not thereby become the absolute side of society because it triumphs only by transcending itself and its opposite. Then the proletariat and its determining antithesis, private property, disappear.[52]

This struggle could only reach its climax when the production process would contain within itself the full material condition for the total, universal development of the productive forces of the individual. This stage of development would be characterized by the existance of surplus labour, due partially to automation and advanced technology, and partially to the over-supply of labourers in a growing proletariat.

During this stage, the contradictory character of capital would come into sharp relief. Wherever capital seeks to perpetuate and increase itself, it works against itself by developing means of production over succeeding generations needing less labour time for the accumulation and preservation of wealth, so that labour no longer is needed to do that which a "thing" could do.[53] Thus, a producer in the communist society would be freed to produce products which would satisfy his human needs, since technology would have reduced man's involvement in the realm of necessity. (See Chapter One).

The history of man as a productive being is there-

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[52] Ibid., p. 367 and 368.

[53] Marx, Grundrisse, p. 324.

fore the story of his struggle against nature and his eventual mastery of it. Only when the relations of production have reached their highest degree of development could freedom and equality of condition come into existence.[54]

In the new society, the satisfaction of the "real" human needs would be the impetus for production rather than the satisfaction of artificially created needs. This, however, did not imply that one could do whatever he desired in the communist society. Marx wrote: "Economy of time, along with the planned distribution of labour time among the various branches of production, remains the first economic law on the basis of communal production".[55] Regulation of time would be salient because the less time needed to produce for the satisfaction of necessity, the more time could be spent in other production, material or mental.

At this juncture in time, man as a historical being, man as a species-being, and man as a productive social being, would find their potential realized. Man would no longer be alienated from himself, from his product or from others. Whereas man in capitalist society was an isolated individual, man in communist society would be an individual among men.

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[54] Ibid., p. 243. Although Marx stated that private property would no longer exist (in its alienated form) in future communist society as it had in bourgeois society, the anticipation of freedom and equality within this society presupposed some form of ownership or trusteeship (see Chapter two for a fuller discussion).

[55] Ibid., p. 173.

However, it was only through total poverty (isolation from others) that the proletariat, the arche type could recognize his greatest human need--other human beings. Therefore, even as the sheer togetherness of the proletariat class raised their class or commonness consciousness, so too, under any conceivable economic system, the group would be instrumental in man's individual development. The achievement of this goal would demand the effort of all individuals within the community. The community would act as the resource base. Sartre explained this reciprocal relation between the individual and the group in the following manner:

> ...the group is a tool, and it stands between me, the individual member--sovereign and the purpose to be achieved, as a tool stands between the individual and his work. One can even say that the structure of the group is not unlike that of the workshop; just as tools are disposed in a variety of ways, each with a different usefulness, so also the inner structure of the group, with its hierarchy, presumes the existence of various functions with a variety of purpose.[56]

Having delineated Marx's concept of the individual and the group, we will now consider Arendt's views. In order to better understand Arendt, the paper will focus on two areas of concern. These can be stated in the form of questions--questions, which although can never be fully answered, deserve sustained effort, because Arendt wrote to individuals who are unique human beings, capable of distinguishing their peculiarity through action in a group. The first question

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[56] Jean-Paul Sartre, The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre, p. 160.

that will be discussed is: How does the group originate in society? Secondly: why is the group necessary for the individual?

As a preface to a discussion of the questions raised, it should be kept in mind that Arendt was an existentialist theorist. As an existentialist she did not admit that there was a static human nature, but argued instead that man was a "conditioned being". The world of man and the natural earth are preconditions and conditioning factors for man, without which he could hardly be termed human.

To understand Arendt as an existentialist is to become aware of the central problem facing her. Arendt's writings advance the proposition that man can only know the "who" and not the "what" about himself and yet her theoretical book, The Human Condition, evaluated man in terms of three defining characteristics: Man as a labourer; Man as a fabricator; and Man as an actor. Elsewhere she also referred to "man's nature" for lack of a better all encompassing term. Her aim was to have her concept of man as a political being understood by her readers, and her dilemma was how to convey her new insight in terminology which, while being understandable, was not overloaded with unwanted connotations. Primarily, her concern was to show the growing plight of the individual in modern mass society. Her writings are, therefore, an attempt to warn contemporary man of problems which had their origin during the birth and development of the nation-state, problems which gave rise to concepts and ideologies

based on racism, pan-movements, and totalitarianism.

Karl Jaspers gave voice to the same concern in his book, Man in the Modern Age (1930). William Barrett wrote of Jaspers concern:

> Jaspers sees the historical meaning of existential philosophy as a struggle to awaken in the individual the possibilities of an authentic and genuine life, in the face of the great modern drift towards a standardized mass society.[57]

Arendt, following in her teacher's footsteps, was concerned for the individual's well-being in a society which advocates sameness in behavior and production as process. As mentioned above, she was particularly concerned with the blurring of the rift between the private realm and the public realm. The rise of the social world presented severe problems for both the private and the public aspects of society. The individual became an atomized member of the collectivity instead of being distinguished and subsequently glorified. The mass society was characteristic of the former collectivity, while the political group or polis was characteristic of the latter.

How does the group come into being? What is its purpose? What are its distinguishing features? For Arendt, the ontology of the group has its permanence in the mutual promises or contracts that citizens make with each other.*

*The spontaneous and unpredictable ontology of the group in Arendt's conception must be understood in different terms from Marx's historical conception of the group. In his analysis, its appearance was inevitable.

[57]William Barrett, Irrational Man, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1958), p. 32.

She quoted Locke in this regard: "That which begins and actually constitutes any political society is nothing but the consent of any number of freemen capable of majority, to unite and incorporate into such society..."[58] This mutual consent which binds freemen together "is based on reciprocity and presupposes equality; its actual content is a promise and its result is indeed a 'society' or 'cosociation' in the Roman sense of societas which means alliance."[59] Likewise, the Greek word polis described the Greek public realm in which freemen gathered as peers. "To be political, to live in a polis, meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence."[60] These latter two types of action were relegated to the private realm where force and violence were necessary to liberate men from necessity.

Because decisions were based on words and persuasion which resulted in mutual pledges, a force called "power" characterized the group and gave it stability.[61] The phenomenon of power arises out of these mutual promises and comes into existence "only where people act together, but not where people grow stronger as individuals."[62] Only as citizens

[58]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 168.

[59]Ibid., p. 169.

[60]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 26.

[61]Ibid., p. 200.

[62]Hannah Arendt, Men in Dark Times, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p. 23.

continued to be committed to each other, and to a common goal--the disclosure of themselves through speech and action--would power, as a potential, remain with them. While power needs no justification, it does need legitimacy which it derives from the initial getting together rather than from any action which may follow.[63]

An important distinguishing feature of the group is that its formation presupposes that men living outside of the public realm are in natural life unequal. The human togetherness of the public realm, to cite an Aristotelian example, "consisted not of an association (koinonia) between two physicians, but between a physician and a farmer, 'and in general between people who are different and unequal'. The equality attending the public realm is necessarily an equality of unequals who stand in need of being 'equalized' in certain respects and for specific purposes."[64] The togetherness which resulted from this equality was of a formal nature and existed where "people are with others and neither for nor against them..."[65] This neutrality was of paramount importance because it freed the individuals to portray who they were.

One of the most salient features of the group is that

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[63]Hannah Arendt, Violence, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1970), p. 6.

[64]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 214 & 215. See also On Revolution, p. 23.

[65]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 180.

it presupposes diversity of opinion, rather than adherence to absolute truth. For this type of relationship to flourish within a group, people need to be able to accept each other as unique individuals and to accept the fact that each and every individual has a different location in the world and therefore sees a common object from a different perspective. Arendt wrote:

> For though the common world is the common meeting ground of all, those who are present have different locations in it, and the location of one can no more coincide with the location of another than the location of two objects. Being seen and being heard by others derive their significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different position...Only where things can be seen by many in a variety of aspects without changing their identity, so that those who are gathered around them know they see sameness in utter diversity, can worldly reality truly and reliably appear.
>
> Under the conditions of a common world, reality is not guaranteed primarily by the 'common nature' of all men who constitute it, but rather by the fact that, differences of position and the resulting variety of perspectives not withstanding, everybody is always concerned with the same object.[66]

The Greeks experienced this exchange of opinions in their _polis_ life. Through getting together, speaking to and acting with each other they discovered:

> that the world we have in common is usually regarded from an infinite number of different standpoints, to which corresponds the most diverse points of view. In a sheer inexhaustible flow of arguments, as the Sophists presented them to the citizenry of Athens, the Greek learned to exchange his own view point, his own 'opinion'--

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[66] _Ibid._, p. 57 and 58.

> the way the world appeared and opened up to him--with those of his fellow citizens. Greeks learned to understand--not understand one another as individual persons, but to look upon the same world from one another's standpoint, to see the same in very different and frequently opposing aspects.

Toleration of one another's opinion was of prime importance. To be willing to accept the fact that one could never fully understand the other person as an individual, but at the same time to attempt to place one's self in the other's position and to be able to accept it as being every bit as right as one's own position, demanded that members of a group be able to accept each other as peers.

If, on the other hand, equality becomes equality of condition, rather than an artifically created equality (agreed upon in order to transcend natural inequalities) the more likely it is that differences between individuals and groups will not be accepted and the more unequal individuals and groups will become. Arendt wrote:

> Whenever equality becomes a mundane fact itself, without any gauge by which it may be measured or

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[67]Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 51 and 52. Whereas truth separates differing men from one another, opinion can be the very foundation for friendship. Arendt wrote that "for the Greeks the essence of friendship consisted in discourse. They held that only the constant interchange of talk united citizens in a polis. In discourse the political importance of friendship, and the humanness peculiar to it, were made manifest. For the world is not human just because it is made by humans, and it does not become human just because the human voice sounds in it, but only when it has become the object of discourse." See Men in Dark Times, p. 24.

> explained, that there is one chance in a hundred that it will be recognized simply as a working principle of a political organization in which otherwise unequal people have equal rights; there are ninety-nine chances that it will be mistaken for an innate quality of every individual, who is 'normal' if he is like everybody else and 'abnormal' if he happens to be different.[68]

To avoid this reduction and eventual abolition of equality, equality must never be regarded as something inalienable from man himself, as the Declaration of the Rights of Man set forth. Equality in the public realm is always created for the specific purpose of allowing opinion rather than truth to characterize the speech and action between citizens.

Speech between citizens takes into account both the objective world, the world of man-made or natural objects about which people talk and to which they refer, as well as the subjective, intangible world, the world which has no end products, since the process of speech and action does not operate on a means-end-basis. Arendt called this in-between interest, the "web of human relationships", since it is primarily concerned with disclosing the speaking and acting agent. She described the "web of human relationships" in this manner:

> The realm of human affairs, strictly speaking, consists of the web of human relationships which exist wherever men live together. The disclosure of the 'who' through speech, and the setting of a new beginning through action, always falls into an already existing web where their immediate consequences can be felt. Together they start a new process which eventually emerges as the unique life story of the new comer, affecting uniquely the life stories of all those with whom he comes into contact. It is because of

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[68]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 55.

> this already existing web of human relationships, with its inumerable, conflicting wills and intentions, that action almost never achieves its purpose; but it is also because of this medium, in which action alone is real, that it 'produces' stories with or without intention as naturally as fabrication produces tangible things.[69]

The reason why action and speech need to take place in the group is twofold: firstly, plurality is the only condition under which they can occur, and secondly, in virtue of their having appeared in the public realm or space of appearance they are exposed to the public which testifies to their authenticity and judges their worthiness.[70]

Having discussed some of the distinguishing features of the political group, we can now turn to the second question: Why is the group important for the individual? Arendt's answer to this question was a) individual excellence is only recognized as such when it occurs in the presence of others; b) the story of individual action could only be created in a group; c) the potentially tragic consequences of an individual action needed the forgivenessof the group. Arendt's basis for her analysis rested on two assumptions. The first assumption was that, contrary to present day social science theories, which advance the hypothesis that "deeds and events are rare occurances in everyday life and in history..., the meaningfulness of everyday relationships is disclosed not in everyday life but in rare deeds, just as the signif-

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[69]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 183 and 184. See also Between Past and Future, p. 84.

[70]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 98.

icance of a historical period showed itself only in the few events that illumine it."[71] For her, social science, relying upon large numbers and repeatable events in order to test its hypotheses and predict future happenings, is not capable of judging the significance of rare deeds with its statistical methods. Therefore, Arendt's assumption of what constitutes important history stresses the role of the unique individual in society.

The second assumption which pervades her writings, arises out of her discussion of the quest for immortality which the Greeks portrayed. Confronted with immortal gods and an immortal nature, the Greeks sought to distinguish themselves to the extent that they too would become immortal.

> By their capacity for the immortal deed, by their ability to leave nonperishable traces behind, men their individual mortality not withstanding, attain an immortality of their own and prove themselves to be of a 'divine' nature. The distinction between man and animal runs right through the human species itself: only the best, who constantly prove themselves to be the best...and who prefer 'immortal fame to mortal things', are really human; the others, content with whatever pleasures nature will yield them, live and die like animals.[72]

Arendt's writings are permeated with the idea that, in contrast to the individualism which is prevalent in the modern age--each man for himself--, "the salvation of one's soul is a concern common to all. It is the publicity of the

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[71] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 42.

[72] Ibid., p. 10. See also Between Past and Future, p. 19.

public realm which can absorb and make shine through the centuries whatever man may want to save from the natural ruin of time."[73] This quest for immortality is, however, conditional on and meaningful only if there is no certainty of life after death.[74] Conversely, if there is life after death, then the eternity of one's soul is a certainty and men are by design superior to nature, and would not need to distinguish themselves among others. However, since the belief in the latter is based on "faith", politically speaking, man needed to act as if life after death were not the case. These two assumptions girded her rationale for the importance of the group for the individual. First of all, because immortality is the objective of all action, a virtuosic performance is of primary importance. To be a "doer of rare deeds" is the objective of all actors, because they realize that only the extra-ordinary act will be remembered by others. Herein the arts are analogous to action and speech. Arendt wrote:

> Performing artists--dancers, play-actors, musicians, and the like--need an audience to show their virtuosity, just as acting men need the presence of others before whom they can appear; both need a publicly organized space for their 'work' and both depend upon others for the performance itself. Such a space of appearance is not to be taken for granted wherever men live together in a community. The Greek polis, once was precisely that 'form of government' which provided men with a space of appearances where they could act, with a kind of theater where freedom could appear... If, then, we

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[73]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 57 and 58.

[74]Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 74.

> understand the political in the sense of the polis, its end or raison d'être would be to establish and keep in existence a space where freedom as virtuosity can appear. This is the realm where freedom is a worldly reality, tangible in words which can be heard, in deeds which can be seen and events which are talked about, remembered, and turned into stories before they are finally incorporated into the great storybook of human history.[75]

Freedom to be one's self and not to be ashamed of it is only possible in a group which encourages disclosure of the 'who'. Although the idea for action may originate in isolation (due to certain motives by different individuals), action needs to be accomplished through joint effort in order that the individual motives no longer shape its culmination. The men planning the American Revolution realized the danger involved in allowing individual motives to surface.

> American faith was not based on a semi-religious trust in human nature as was to occur in the French Revolution, but on the contrary, on the possibility of checking human nature in its singularity by virtue of common bonds and mutual promises. The hope for man in his singularity lay in the fact that not man but men inhabit the earth and form a world between them. It is human worldliness that will save men from the pitfalls of human nature.[76]

Thus, although virtuosity was lauded, it was given boundaries within which to display itself, in order that the motives might remain checked.[77]

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[75] Ibid., p. 154 and 155.

[76] Arendt, On Revolution, p. 174.

[77] See chapter four, footnote 21 on the possible limitations of this opinion.

Plurality of human actors checked human motives because, as mentioned earlier, action occurring in groups seldom realizes its aims because of the diversity or conflict of opinions which shape the action. For this reason, although one person may begin an action, the action is conditioned by the presence of others, and although he may remain the subject of his own story, he can never be called its author or producer.[78]

Secondly, it is because of the frailty of human action and speech that collective remembrance is necessary. Arendt ascribed the failure of the American Revolution to affect world politics, to the citizens' failure to remember the importance that political thought and theory had had to the founding fathers of the republic. Because they failed to remember, they forgot to act in the same tradtion. In order for action and speech to outlast their momentary effect, the people of the group must remember and talk about it.[79]

> For if it is true that all thought begins with remembrance, it is also true that no remembrance remains secure unless it is condensed and distilled into a framework of conceptual notions within which it can further exercise itself. Experiences and even the stories which grow out of what men do and endure, of happenings and events, sink back into the futility inherent in the living world and the living deed unless they are talked about over and over again. What saves the affairs of mortal men from their inherent futility is nothing but this incessant talk about them, which in its turn remains futile unless certain con-

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[78] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 184 ff.

[79] Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 44.

> cepts, certain guideposts for future remembrance, and even for sheer reference, arise out of it.[80]

The role of the storyteller or historian is to preserve the meaning of the events. While motives, preconceived goals, and guiding principles might arise during the process of the action, the meaning can only be ascertained after the action is finished. Arendt wrote: "The task of the poet and historiographer consists in making something lasting out of remembrance. They do this by translating action and speech, into that kind of fabrication which eventually becomes the written word."[81] Hence, it is the obligation of the historian to tell "what is". While it is true that the public realm can only function if opinion rather than truth reigns, the political role of the historian is "to teach acceptance of things as they are."[82] The present often seems haphazard to the actors involved and therefore "acting reveals itself fully only to the story-teller, that is to the backward glance of the historian, who indeed always knows better what it was all about than the participants."[83] It is the historian who shapes the singular and seemingly conflicting deeds and events which men have done into a "story that can be rendered through intelligible narrative the moment the

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[80] Arendt, On Revolution, p. 222.

[81] Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 45.

[82] Ibid., p. 262.

[83] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 192.

events are removed into the past."[84]

Lastly because action is irreversible, unpredictable and never fully understood by the beginner of the process, a tremendous burden falls upon the individual actor. Arendt stated:

> ...he who acts never quite knows what he is doing...; he always becomes 'guilty' of consequences he never intended or even foresaw...;no matter how disastrous and unexpected the consequences of his deed he can never undo it...;the process he started is never consummated unequivocally in one single deed or event, and...its very meaning never discloses itself to the actor but only to the backward glance of the historian who himself does not act.[85]

Such a burden would most certainly be too much to bear if the human web of relationships did not include "forgiveness". Because the actor can never stop what he has started, he suffers the consequences unless he is forgiven by others. "Without being forgiven, released from the consequences of what we have done, our capacity to act would, as it were, be confined to one single deed from which we could never recover..."[86] Vengance, by way of contrast, is only a re-action which continues ad infinitum the chain reactions inherent in every action. Forgiveness, on the other hand, is the only reaction which sets a person free to begin a new act. It is "the only act which does not merely re-act but acts anew and unexpectedly, unconditioned by the act

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[84]Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 85.

[85]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 233.

[86]Ibid., p. 237.

which provoked it and therefore freeing from its consequences both the one who forgives and the one who is forgiven.[87]

Even as action and forgiveness can start and end an individual deed, and release both actors to begin anew, so birth and death begin and end a story which is unique to that particular individual. Without the group in which these could take place, the individual would become nothing but one of many indistinguishable members of the human species. Arendt wrote:

> Without action to bring into the play of the world the new beginning of which each man is capable by virtue of being born, 'there is no new thing under the sun', without speech to materialize and memorialize, however tentatively, the 'new things' that appear and shine forth, 'there is no remembrance'; without the enduring permanence of a human artifact, there cannot 'be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.' And without power, the space of appearance brought forth through action and speech in public will fade away as rapidly as the living deed and the living word.[88]

The preceding discussion has focused on the thought of Arendt and Marx with regards to their conception of the reciprocal relations which exist between the individual and the group (community). The theme which pervaded their writings was: the individual needs the group since it constitutes the social forum in which individuating action can occur. It was the embryo within which the condition of man could be disclosed. Any man, whether by choice or

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[87] Ibid., p. 241.

[88] Ibid., p. 204.

otherwise, who remained outside the group and its sustenance for an extended period of time would become animal-like in his behaviour. Both Arendt and Marx would have agreed that activity outside the group was characterized by sameness and mundaneness(except in the case of man as homo faber). Moreover, outside the group, bondage to necessity and inequality between men prevailed.

On the other hand, activity within the group was individuating and purposeful. Freedom and equality were the rule rather than the exception. For Marx, this meant that the group was responsible for the reappropriation of man's species identity, ie., the realization of what he could be; within the group the free expression of labour could be realized; and conversely, within the group social anonymity could not exist because man produced for the other inasmuch as he produced for himself.

For Arendt, the group was necessary for the individual in that it was the forum in which his quest for immortality could commence; it was a space wherein excellence could be sought by individuals amongst others who could appreciate the endeavour; moreover, it was a space wherein remembrance of such action could occur; and lastly it was the space wherein forgiveness could take place.

The importance of these features will become apparent in the next chapter since it deals with the political form in which free activity and political action could excell.

CHAPTER FOUR

A NEW ORDER OF SOCIETY: FREEDOM AND PLURALITY

> For freedom, which is only seldom--in times of crisis or revolution--the direct aim of political action, is actually the reason why men live together in political organization at all; without it, political life as such would be meaningless."[1]

> Only in community do the means exist for every individual to cultivate his talents in all directions. Only in the community is personal freedom possible."[2]

Neither Marx or Arendt founded <u>new orders</u> of society. Unlike the revolutionary pragmatists, such as Jefferson, Robespierre, Lenin, etc., who acted in a preemptive manner when a potentially revolutionary situation began to develop, Arendt and Marx remained socio-political luminaries, who, (in the course of their criticism of existing social practices and political institutions) conceptualized <u>alternative orders of being</u> which, in their judgment, befit the stature of man. Hence, their contribution to civilized mankind lies primarily in the 'revolutionary' mode in which they thought, spoke

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[1]Hannah Arendt, "Freedom and Politics: A Lecture", <u>Chicago Review</u>, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring, 1960, p. 28.

[2]Karl Marx, "<u>The German Ideology</u>, L. D. Easton and K. H. Guddat, ed. & Tr.), <u>Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society</u>, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), p. 457.

and wrote about the condition and problems of man in modern society.

In analyzing the modern conditioners of man and in proposing alternative orders of political organization, be it the 'communist society' for Marx or the 'revolutionary councils' for Arendt, both thinkers were following in the noble tradition of previous philosophical giants, such as Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, to mention only a few, whose common concern had been the actual and proper organization of men into political collectivities.[3] Their chief question, as political philosophers, was and continues to be, what form of political organization is most conducive to the formation of public spirited citizens? Again, what variety of political organization could reconcile the freedom of man with the plurality of man?*

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[3]Both Arendt and Marx were deeply influenced by the early Greek philosophers, particularily by Aristotle, whose definition of man as a 'political animal' furnished with the faculty of language and speech, formed the basis of their 'model' societies. See Karl Marx, Grundrisse, (Middlesex England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973), p. 84, and Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 175-176. Compare these selections with Ernest Barker, (ed. and tr.), The Politics of Aristotle, (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 1-8, in particular.

*Currently there is an ongoing controversy as to whether political philosophy should be prescriptive as well as descriptive, in the tradition of Plato and Aristotle, or whether it should limit itself to descriptive accounts of existing political institutions and activities in the manner of analytic philosophy, such as B. M. Barry's Political Argument. For a brief introduction to the major arguments of both schools of thought, see Political Philosophy, Anthony Quinton, (ed.), (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

These and other related questions figure prominently within the writings of Marx and Arendt since they were interested in and concerned with the condition of modern man and his relation to the larger collectivities of which he was a member. Their goal was to disclose new orders of political organization, which were distinct from modern party-led governments, relying instead on the voluntary association of politically-minded individuals.

These new orders, the elements of which had already been observed during revolutionary moments in history (elements such as freedom of thought, speech and action, freedom of association, delegate responsibility, the universal right to become involved in the political life of the government, etc.), were to provide the political forum in which the heretofore fragmented condition of modern man would be mended, ie., the artificially imposed division of man into man qua l'homme and le citoyen would be superseded. For, in their judgment, the major problem of modern man was that he lived in a state of 'alienation'.

Modern man was, to paraphrase Marx and Arendt, an isolated and estranged individual, living in the midst of a mechanized society which had the most highly developed social relations in the history of man. That is to say, man in modern society no longer experienced himself as a social or political being (in the Greek sense of the word 'political') in his relations with others; other human beings were either regarded as impediments to one's own ambitions,

or conversely, as means to one's egoistical interests. Rather than being an 'integrated' man and a member of a cohesive social group, modern man discovered himself to be 'alone', freed from both the obligations and the security which the group or community demanded of and offered to its members. In finding himself 'alone', isolated from meaningful relations with others, man qua individualist, l'homme revolté realized his greatest need--others. Relations with other human beings were mandatory for the disclosure of that which was unique to the individual: his 'identity', his 'selfhood', his 'who' for Arendt, his peculiarity or 'individuality' for Marx.[4]

Neither Marx nor Arendt after him were the only philosophers to perceive the dilemma of modern man and attempt a restoration of his being. Already one hundred years prior to Marx, Jean Jacques Rousseau observed that the

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[4]Modern social psychologists, such as Charles H. Cooly and George E. Mead, support the contention of Marx and Arendt that the uniqueness of the individual is acquired and revealed through communicating with others, especially through language. "Cooley called this a process of acquiring a 'looking-glass self' and Mead termed it 'taking the role of the other'". Cited in, Eric and Mary Josephson (eds.), Man Alone: Alienation in Modern Society, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962), p. 15. Marx put it thus: "When communist workmen associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc, is their first end...company, association and conversation...are enough for them." Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers,1967), p. 115. Hereafter cited as EPM. And Arendt wrote: "In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world..." The Human Condition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 179.

nature of man had been corrupted by society. Characterizing the problem of modern man, he stated it thus: "Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains. One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they."[5] The salience of Rousseau's observation was not in its novelty, for the perceived dichotomy between man's essence and his existence, between philosophy and praxis, etc., has troubled metaphysicians since the advent of religion and philosophy.[6] Rather, the primacy of these remarks in The Social Contract was that they cogently expressed the 'ancient' idea of man's individual freedom within the context of an industrializing society, in which the traditional ethical norms and medieval familial and community bonds were giving way to unrestrained individualism--individual egoism.[7] Therefore the primary purpose of his writings was to show how

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[5]Jean Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract and Discourses, tr. with introduction by G. D. H. Cole, (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1913), p. 3.

[6]For a full discussion on the order of man, society and history, see Eric Voegelin's phenomenological interpretation of history: Order and History, Vol. 1-4, (Louisiana State University Press: 1956).

[7]Ramon Lemos, in his interpretation of Rousseau's philosophy, writes: "In all his political writing (Rousseau's) fundamental position is that the claims of morality are superior to the claims of culture or civilization, so that if the satisfaction of the claims of morality is incompatible with the existence of culture or civilization, it is the latter that must be sacrificed for the sake of the former, not the reverse." Rousseau's Political Philosophy, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1977), p. 3.

"man can be rescued from his corruption in society and establishing a just society."[8] Within that just society, the life and freedom of the individual and his community would coincide, and the individual and the general will would be identical.

Rousseau's conceptualization of modern man's corruptable nature and his reinterpretation of the Enlightenment view of freedom, as independence from outside control, into freedom as consisting of 'authentic self-expression', had a dramatic effect upon the philosophy of Hegel.[9] In a grandiose attempt to account for and transcend the contradictions which had beset man during his development, Hegel posited a speculative philosophy which embraced the whole history of man and confirmed the tentative and unpolished ideas of Rousseau. It was, in brief, the spectacular history of the dialectial

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[8] Ibid., p. 6. Frederick Copleston, in A History of Philosophy, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1960), writes in support of Lemos: "Rousseau assumes that the general will is directed towards the common good or interest, that 'the most general will is always the most just also, and that the voice of the people is in fact the voice of God'." Vol. 6, Part 1, p. 88.

[9] I am here following the interpretation of Charles Taylor in his study of Hegel, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 15-25. Taylor attributes to Rousseau the modern reinterpretation of the traditional opposition of virtue and vice "...into the modern opposition of self-versus other-dependence." p. 15. This was an important step towards Hegel's expressive theory of man. See Taylor, p. 13-15.

progression of 'individual self-making'.[10] Like so many of his contemporaries, Herder, Schiller, etc., and like Marx and Arendt after him, Hegel contrasted the unity of man as it had been in an earlier age--principally that of ancient Greece--with the diremption of modern man from his true nature. Recognizing that the full realization of freedom for the individual had necessitated the "...breaking up of expressive unity, of the original undivided wholeness within man and communion with other men and nature...",[11] Hegel regarded the chief task of philosophy that of over-coming the oppositions which had arisen from the breaking up of the original expressive unity.

However, philosophy was not to simply reinstate the primitive consciousness which had existed amongst the Greeks and other aboriginal communities. On the contrary, the objective was to retain the fruits of separation and free rational

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[10] This comprehensive term is used by Emil L. Fackenheim, in The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967). It denotes the process of the individual emancipating himself from nature as a whole, that is achieving self-consciousness. Fackenheim writes, with regards to the larger import of Hegel's philosophy: "The Hegelian philosophy...seeks to grasp a Reality which lives in the particulars, by means of a thought which passes through and encompasses them. Moreover, it is not a theory beside practical life but rather an activity which moves through both theory and practice, being in a sense neither and in a sense both.", p. 16.

[11] Taylor, op. cit., p. 76. For a contrasting and critical discussion of Hegel and the raison d'être of his philosophy of history, the reader is referred to Eric Voegelin, "On Hegel--A Study in Sorcery", in The Study of Time, Vol. 1, ed. by J. T. Fraser, et. al., (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1972). Voegelin depicts Hegel as a philosopher with Messianic ambitions.

consciousness, while "reconciling this with unity, that is, with nature, society, God and fate."[12]

Hegel's metaphysical solution to the modern bifurcation of man was unacceptable to Marx and Arendt. It was their express purpose, particularly in the case of Marx, to reveal the dearth of Hegel's speculative philosophy, proposing in its place alternative orders of being, which in their respective minds, reconciled the freedom of individual consciousness with the plurality of man in a more comprehensive manner. Unlike Hegel, whose absolute philosophy was a self-enclosed system of thought and action,[13] and in contrast to the Platonic tradition of static systems,[14] Marx's and Arendt's model societies were open-ended, that is, they allowed for the continuous development of man and for his ability to adapt himself to new situations. Although Marx was adamant that the inexorable progression of human history would lead to a just and moral society, a communist society, Marx was reticent about the precise mode of transformation for each country and about the specific composition of the communist

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[12] Taylor, op. cit., p. 79.

[13] Fackenheim, op. cit., p. 17 writes: "Hegel's system is by its own admission and insistence a closed circle, but it is also totally open, by virtue of a claim to comprehensiveness which makes it the radical foe of every form of one-sidedness."

[14] This is the interpretation of Shlomo Avineri in The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 237.

order for epistemological reasons.[15] Rather he restricted his remarks about the future society to general statement on the rudiments of the future classless society which were already visible in the present capitalist order of society.[16] For"the longer that governments allow thinking humanity time to recollect itself and suffering humanity time to assemble itself the more perfect will be the birth of the product

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[15]Avineri interprets Marx's reluctance to depict in any detail the communist society as being based on Marx's aversion to merely philosophizing about the future. Avineri writes: "Since the future is not as yet an existing reality, any discussions of it reverts to philosophical idealism in discussing objects which exist only in the consciousness of the thinking subject. Marx's discussions of future society are therefore most austere and restricted. He never tried to rival those socialists whom he called utopian by construing detailed blue-prints for a communist society, since for him communist society will be determined by the specific conditions under which it is established, and those conditions cannot be predicted in advance." Ibid., p. 221.

[16]Current family relations in capitalist industry afforded Marx an example of those particulars in the present which adumbrated future positive productive relations. He wrote: "However terrible and disgusting the dissolution, under the capitalist system, of the old family ties may appear, nevertheless, modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes...Moreover, it is obvious that the fact of the collective working group being composed of individuals of both sexes and all ages, must necessarily under suitable conditions, become a source of humane development..." Capital, ed. by Frederick Engels, Vol. 1, (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 489-90.

that the present carries in its womb."[17]

Similarly, Arendt described her model society with reference to certain isolated political events in past as well as in contemporary societies. Again, she was hesitant to delineate in any detail the composition of that community for epistemological premises of another kind.[18] For Arendt was quite aware of the reciprocal conditioning forces which the reality of the world and human existence exerted on each other. In fact it was the unpredictable outcome of this interplay between the various conditioners of human existence--life itself, natality and mortality, worldiness, plurality, and the earth--which attested to the possibility of unequal

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[17]Marx, in "A Correspondence of 1843", in David McLellan, (ed.), Karl Marx: Early Texts, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), p. 79. Elsewhere, in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, in Robert C. Tucker, (ed.), The Marx-Engels Reader, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972), p. 437, Marx wrote: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past."
The patient waiting of Marx for the proper revolutionary moment is in complete contrast to later Marxists who prematurely tried to overthrow existing political orders, with the result that cruelty and injustice became identified with the new order, eg., the Soviet Revolution of 1843.

[18]Arendt wrote: "It would be tempting to spin out further the potentialities of the councils, but it certainly is wiser to say with Jefferson, "Begin them only for a single purpose; they will soon show for what others they are the best instruments"--the best instruments, for example, for breaking up the modern mass society, with its dangerous tendency toward the formation of pseudo-political mass movements, or rather, the best, the most natural way for interspersing it at the grass roots with an 'elite' that is chosen by no one but constitutes itself." On Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 283.

men coming together and contracting through mutual promises for specific political purposes.[19] Therefore, a lucid description of that model society would be tantamount to assuming that the unpredictability of these conditioners could be overcome and that the model society could be forecasted by use of statistical laws.

For these reasons, the societies which Arendt and Marx envisaged were generally described as being both expressive of the individuals within them and simultaneously acting as 'crucibles' wherein the relational development of the individuals could be heightened. The generality of their terminology could, however, not lessen the saliency of their argument which held that the potential of the 'rich individuality' of man could only be realized in a political organization which understood man's individual freedom in terms of his plurality. Arendt put it thus: "The hope for man in his

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[19]The reader is referred to the section "Unpredictability and the Power of Promises" in Arendt, The Human Condition, pp. 243-46 for her discussion on the importance of the conditioning factors for the development of the individual and the group. Furthermore, the necessity of compacting together for specific political purposes is one of the salient themes in On Revolution.

As its counterpart, the totalitarian rule of mass conformism eliminates all forms of creativity. Arendt cited examples of this under both Nazis and Bolshevik rule. The reader is referred to the third part of The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York: World Publishing, 1958), where Arendt wrote: "Total domination does not allow for free initiative in any field of life, for any activity that is not entirely predictable. Totalitarianism in power invariably replaces all first-rate talents, regardless of their sympathies, with those crackpots and fools whose lack of intelligence and creativity is still the best guarantee of their loyalty." p. 339.

singularity lay in the fact that not man but men inhabit the earth and form a world between them. It is human worldliness that will save men from the pitfalls of human nature."[20] Put differently, it is men's proclivity to gather together in political organization and to speak to each other about the objective 'world' and nature which lies between and separates them from each other, which will ameliorate the

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[20]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 174. George E. Gordon Catlin, in "The Meaning of Community", Community, ed. by Carl J. Friedrich, (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1959), writes with regard to the perennial debate over the conflict between the rights of man qua individualist, l'homme revoté and the community, the homonoia: "On the one hand, then, we have the claims of the individual to reach personal virtue and have the spiritual solitariness or the (moral) responsibility of the individual admitted. On the other hand, we have the claims of the particular community so far at least as these are confirmed by the grand tradition of civility of human civilized society, the republica humana. And against the democratic thesis, we cannot admit the personal right of each to shape his conduct eccentrically as he pleases--according to his own opinion, which he holds to be as good as any other, according to a conscience (if he goes so far) which he makes no attempt to examine or instruct. That is 'bourgeois decandence' and usually ends in a self-indulgent hedonism...(In contrast) community life, indeed, in a world where man's primary obsession is the fear of being lonely and 'on the edge of the abyss of nonentity,' provides the sense of security..." which all men crave., p. 131.

natural condition of man in his singularity.[21] It is through active productive relations and through communication with others that individual egoism is stripped of its debilitating features. To this end, Marx and Arendt proposed new orders of political organization which would compensate for men's individual corruptible natures.

Having briefly discussed some of the relevant reasons why Marx and Arendt chose not to give blue-prints of their model societies as well as their rationale for community, it is now time to elucidate some of the rudiments of their model societies, which they drew from their study of history. Whereas both philosophers agreed that the political realm or realm of freedom could only exist in conjunction with a realm of necessity, (which was discussed in an earlier

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[21]For Arendt, the plurality of man provides his hope because each individual act and word is "...surrounded by and in constant contact with the web of the acts and words of other men." The Human Condition, p. 188. Thus action almost never achieves its goal or purpose but falls rather into the web of human relations.

It is a curious element in Arendt's thought which admits the defective nature of man but sees its salvation in political activity wherein each individual acts neither for nor against others, but are with others. She deplored the manifestation of love or compsssion within the political realm because, in her opinion, they were anti-political. Yet she argued for the necessary inclusion of forgiveness which, she claimed, frees actors from the results of their actions and allows them to begin anew. However, she does not make clear why respect (which, she argued, is love's counterpart in the public realm) will induce men to forgive each other. The Human Condition, p. 236-243. George Kateb, "Freedom and Worldliness in the Thought of Hannah Arendt", Political Theory, Vol. 5, No. 2, May, 1977, supports this contention. He argues effectively that only the one who is wronged is entitled to forgive the doer, (p. 170) a point she does not speak to at all.

chapter, and the mechanics of which are not pertinent to the concerns of the thesis) the ensuing discussion will be restricted to the political form of their model societies.[22] This does not mean, however, that the demarcation between the two realms would have remained constant for Marx and Arendt. In recognition of the fact that both theorists presupposed that man had a conditioned nature rather than a "given" nature, it must be allowed that their definition of necessity might change as man's nature changed.

As was mentioned above, Marx and Arendt discerned certain characteristics within their contemporary societies and their antecedents which they judged were exemplary of the political forms which they advocated in their writings. Mutatis mutandis, both philosophers were unqualified in their admiration of the political freedom which the citizens of

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[22]It is sufficient to mention that both Arendt and Marx were convinced that this realm of material production, the realm of necessity would need to be regulated by qualified administrators. See Arendt, On Revolution, p. 277-70 and The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 498; and Marx, The Communist Manifesto, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 352. This should however, not be construed as implying that a communistic bureaucratic elite would replace the old state's functionaries and that a demarcation between political and economic would continue in a communist society. Rather, the relationship between political activity and economic activity should be understood as a relationship between policy formulation and policy implementation. As well, this should not be regarded as the separation of theory and praxis. A better understanding would consist of realizing that policy formulation would occur with the council or commune and then would be implemented by the members themselves. To the objection: What about those who are not a part of the decision making process?, it should be added that for both Marx and Arendt, the councils were open to all who chose to become political. See Arendt, On Revolution, p. 284 and K. Marx. The Civil War in France: The Paris Commune, (New York: International Publishers, 1968), p. 65.

the Greek polis had evinced in ancient times.[23] However, Marx's admiration of the Greek experience in political freedom was qualified in that freedom there had been limited both in scope and degree. Not all Greeks had political freedom. Only the master of the household was freed from necessity and this was only possible because others (the majority of the people) were slaves. As a result of this inequality, freedom was possible only in the political sense; within the other spheres of human activity, inequality separated men from each other. The transcendence of all inequality would surpass and enrich the Greek concept of political freedom. Thus the spontaneous appearance of a similar expression of political freedom, however briefly, in the Paris Commune of 1871 was seen by Marx as material evidence that his philosophical reasonings about the necessary conditions (in which complete

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[23] In a letter to Ruge, (1843) Marx wrote: "Freedom, the feeling of man's dignity, will have to be awakened again ...Only this feeling, which disappeared from the world with the Greeks...can again transform society into a community of men to achieve their highest purposes..." in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 206. It was his intention to establish this form of freedom on a universal scale in modern society.

Arendt's understanding of freedom always remained tied to her understanding of Greek political life. She maintained that one needed to go back to antiquity in order to understand this political phenomenon because "...freedom experienced in the process of acting and nothing else... has never again been articulated with the same classical clarity." "What is Freedom?" in Between Past and Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 165.

freedom could be realized) were being concretized, albeit in a limited sense. For him the Commune represented "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour".[24] Whereas the previous Great Revolution (1789) had only accomplished the 'political emancipation' of man (in that it had destroyed the feudal system of privileges),[25] the Commune of 1871 was the antithesis of former centralized state power, thereby serving as the model for the "reabsorption of the state power

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[24] Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 60. The emancipation of labour meant, for Marx, the abolition of the division of labour, and therewith also the abolition of the "antithesis between mental and physical labour" (see The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 161; and Critique of the Gotha Program, in same, p. 388), in order that each individual could, if he wished, do "one thing today and another tomorrow". (The German Ideology, p. 124). In the fact that the Commune was composed of working class men, the division of labour had been transcended.

[25] Marx, On the Jewish Question, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 239. The chief failure of all previous revolutions had been their inability to free men into proper relations with each other. Instead of viewing man as a species-being, and then tearing down barriers between people, the "...political liberators reduce citizenship, the political community, to a mere means for preserving these so-called rights of man and that the citizen thus is proclaimed to be the servent of the egoistic man, the sphere in which man acts as a member of the community is degraded below that in which he acts as a fractional being, and finally man as bourgeois rather than man as citizen is considered to be the proper and authentic man." Ibid., p. 237.

by society..."[26] For Marx it was the "resumption by the people for the people of its own social life."[27] Moreover, the political form of the Commune was not an end in itself, rather it was the "organized means of action" in which the class struggle could "run through its different phases in the most rational and humane way."[28] Through this medium, a complete human emancipation would be achieved[29] surpassing by far the political freedom which the Greeks had enjoyed.[30]

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[26] Marx, "The First Draft of the Civil War in France", in The First International and After, Vol. 3, ed. by David Fernbach, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 260. The State was always considered by Marx to be independent of society and therefore not representative of their interests. This prejudice can, in part, be explained by fact that the representatives of the people, who were elected to the State, were only elected by a limited number of citizens. Universal suffrage was as yet only a dream, not a reality. This also explains Marx's repeated call for a true democracy, a state elected by the whole people. See The Communist Manifesto in The Marx-Engels Reader.

[27] Ibid., p. 249.

[28] Ibid., p. 253.

[29] Marx wrote: "Only when the actual, individual man has taken back into himself the abstract citizen and in his everyday life, his individual work, and his individual relationships has become a species-being, only when he has recognized and organized his own powers as social powers so that social force is no longer separated from him as political power, only then is human emancipation complete." On the Jewish Question, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 241.

[30] In Marx's opinion, the suitability of the Greek model of 'political freedom' was of limited value to modern society because of its one-sidedness. The res publica had only been the "actual private life and the actual content of the citizens", (who were only a small percentage of the whole population) whereas "the private man was a slave." (Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State (1843), in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 177). In this sense it was the objective of the communist revolution to overcome this artificial division of man into bourgeois and citizen and complete the emancipation of man.

Although Arendt shared neither Marx's teleological conception of the Commune, nor his opinion that its potential surpassed that of the Greeks*, highlighting rather the spontaneous and unpredictable appearance of the Commune, she did regard it, in its universality, (ie., wherein its political form was similar to other revolutionary councils) as the alternative political form which could supercede the party-led governments of modern states and re-introduce political life again into the public realm.[31] For her, the reappearance of the Commune of 1871 was another example (the others being Jefferson's ward system, the Paris commune of 1789-93, the councils in Russia in 1905 and in 1917, the Räte in Germany after 1918, the worker's councils in the Hungarian Revolution

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* The reader is referred to footnote 23 of this chapter.

[31]Arendt wrote: "The councils, obviously, were spaces of freedom. As such, they invariably refused to regard themselves as temporary organs of revolution and, on the contrary, made all attempts at establishing themselves as permanent organs of government. Far from wishing to make the revolution permanent, their explicitly expressed goal was 'to lay the foundations of a republic acclaimed in all its consequences, the only government which will close forever the era of invasions and civil wars'..." On Revolution, p. 268. In""Thoughts on Politics and Revolution", in Crises of the Republic, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), Arendt added that the most salient feature of the councils is that "...they never came into being as a result of a conscious revolutionary tradition or theory, but entirely spontaneously, each time as though there had never been anything of the sort before. Hence, (she concluded) the council system seems to correspond to and to spring from the very experience of political action." p. 231 & 232. (emphasis is mine).

in 1956, and to a lesser degree, the student protest groups which were formed during the U. S. involvement in the Vietnam War) of 'political activity' exercised in a manner reminiscent of the Greeks in antiquity.[32]

What similarities can be distinguished in the new order or political form which Marx and Arendt saw in the Paris Commune? Among the many outstanding features of the Paris Commune (either theoretical or practical), there are three features which merit special attention.* They are: (a) the formation of political communes (or revolutionary councils) in even the smallest country hamlet; (b) the encouragement of universal participation in these political councils, and (c) the revolutionary practice of sharing power within thse egalitarian councils horizontally rather than distributing it vertically, as is the case in political parties.

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[32]The reader is referred to On Revolution, pp. 266-267. Here Arendt enumerates the councils outstanding common characteristics: they were spontaneous in their coming into being; they were organs of order as much as organs of action and they were non-party organs, ie., party membership played no role whatsoever. The similarity of these councils to the Greek polis was that within these councils, the merit of the individual was judged by his powers of persuasion, eg., speech, and not by the individual's party loyalties. See also, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 498-99.

*Some other accomplishments of the Commune which were important were a) the separation of the Church and Government financially, and with regards to education; b) the cessation of a standing army, which was replaced by a National Guard; and c) the reduction of crime in the city of Paris. See "The Commune At Work", in Frank Jellinek, The Paris Commune of 1871, (New York: Grossett & Dunlap, 1965).

What political form of government did the Communards of 1871 advocate which could, on the one hand, fulfill some of the conditions which Marx believed would typify a classless society, and which, on the other hand, incorporate the main tenets of Arendt's theory of revolutionary councils? In their official manifesto, a document which reflected the widely disparate philosophies present within the commune, the Communards rejected the centralization of state power, instituting rather a federal Republic. The document read in part:

> What is wanted? 1) Acceptance and consolidation of the Republic, the only political form compatible with the rights of the people and with the normal and free development of society. 2) The absolute autonomy of the Commune extended to every locality in France, guaranteeing each (locality) the entirety of its rights and each Frenchman full exercise of his faculties and aptitudes, as man, citizen, and worker. 3) The autonomy of the Commune shall have as its limits only the equal right of autonomy of every other commune adhering to the contract, and the association of said communes will guarantee French unity... Unity, such as it has been imposed upon us up to this time by empire, monarchy and parliamentarianism, is only despotic, unintelligent, arbitrary, or onerous centralization. Political unity, as Paris wishes it to be, is voluntary association at local initiative, free and spontaneous conjuncture of all individual energies toward a common goal, the well-being, freedom, and security of all. The communal Revolution, begun by popular initiative on March 18, inaugurates a new era of experimental, positive, scientific politics. It means the end of the old clerical and governmental world, of militarism, of bureaucracy, of exploitation, of speculation in stocks, of monopolies, of privilege, to which the proletariat owes its bondage and the fatherland its misfortunes and disasters.[33]

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[33]Taken from Roger L. Williams, The French Revolution of 1870-1871, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 139-140.

It is interesting to note that the generality of the above excerpt lent support to both Marx's contention that the Commune was "not an attempt to break up into a federation of small states, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins ..."[34] and to Arendt's contention that the political form of the commune facilitated the political involvement of the people at the local level. What prompted the contemporary, Marx, to address the incident as the restoration "to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon, and clogging the free movement of, society...?"[35] On the other hand, why did Arendt emphasize the autonomy of the councils? The answer lies within the social and political problems each saw in his/her society.

As mentioned earlier, Marx realized the problem of man was alienation. Contrary to their nature men were estranged one from the other. The political freedoms which man had obtained in earlier revolutions had been gained at the expense of increasing the distance between men socially. All the individual freedoms such as freedom to property, freedom to trade, freedom to religion, etc., were all gained at the expense of the community. Politically this had led to the formation of a state outside of society, to which representatives were elected by a minority of the people or appointed by the existing state power. These government

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[34] Marx, Civil War in France, p. 59.

[35] Ibid., p. 59.

appointed functionaries were the 'parasites' to which Marx was referring. In his judgment, these petty bureaucrats, far from representing the universal class as Hegel had envisaged, epitomized the interests of an autonomous state power. The centralization of power had raped the people of their political and social rights.

For this reason the power of the state had to be returned to the social body from which it had been taken. This is where the Commune had been a progressive step forward. It had abolished the state bureaucracy replacing state appointed functionaries such as judges, mayors, etc., with elected representatives of the people and reduced all salaries to a common level.[36] Moreover, these representatives were held responsible to their electorate at all times. Herein Marx addressed himself to the political problem of representative government. In opposition to Burke, who had argued that a representative owes the electorate "not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving (the public) if he sacrifices it to (its) opinion",[37] Marx argued that the delegate should "be at any time revocable and bound by the (formal instructions) of his constituents."[38] In this manner the central functions of the government would

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[36]Herein Marx's objective assesment of the Communal procedings was accurate. Both Frank Jellinek, op. cit., p. 387-409 and Roger L. Williams, op. cit., p. 113-152 support Marx's objective analysis. Their difference lies rather in their translation of the facts into theoretical constructs.

[37]Edmund Burke, A Speech to the Voters of Bristol in 1774.

[38]Marx, Civil War in France, p. 58.

never become independent of society as had been the case in previous regimes and all governmental action would truly represent 'government by the people for the people.'

What Marx was in effect saying was that within the communist society, decisions would be made within a group who would then elect a representative to voice their decision on their behalf. If at any time, this delegate chose not to give their group decision, he would be subject to his constituents' discipline, be it dismissal or reprimand. In order to illustrate this form of delegate responsibility Marx referred to the relationship which prevailed between an employer and his workmen. He wrote: "It is well known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business generally know how to put the right man in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly."[39] For, within the business world there was no such thing as hiring a manager for a set period of time without the option of dismissing him if he did not manage to do a good job. The same rule should apply for those seeking to represent the interests of the local commune. They were to be trustees of the interests of their constituents.

However, Marx was not an advocate of a loose federal system, and here he again disagreed with the theoretical idea that good government existed where centralization of power was checked by local concentrations of power. Whereas local

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[39] Ibid., p. 59.

autonomy or municipal liberty was certainly a concomitant of the Communal structure, it was not to be regarded as a check upon state power.[40] What did Marx have in mind? While he never expanded upon this element of the new political form, certain ideas which he had developed earlier can be of some assistance.

What Marx opposed was the breakup of the nation-state into small autonomous units. In early 1850, in an address to the communist league, Marx expressed his fear of what might happen in Germany if there was no centralization of authority.

> In a country like Germany where there are still so many relics of the Middle Ages to be abolished, where there is so much local and provincial obstinacy to be broken, it must under no circumstances be permitted that every village, every town and every province should put a new obstacle in the path of revolutionary activity, which can proceed with full force only from the centre. It is not to be tolerated that the present state of affairs should be renewed, that Germans must fight separately in every town and in every province for one and the same advance.[41]

The result of isolated and uncordinated action could only be defeat, as was to be the case in the Paris Commune twenty years later.[42] As long as a hostile environment prevailed, some central authority was needed in order to link and co-

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[40] Ibid., p. 60.

[41] Marx, "Address of the Central Committee League" in, The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 371.

[42] In a letter to Dr. Kugelmann on the Paris Commune, April 12, 1871, Marx wrote: "The Central Committee surrendered its power too soon, to make way for the Commune". Cited from Civil War in France, p. 86.

ordinate the activities of the local units.[43] This formation of a central authority was not, however, the rejection of local councils. The hierarchy was not to be self-imposed, rather it would consist of delegates chosen from the ever-broadening councils below it. This had been the intent of the Commune Constitution of 1871. In the wake of the Paris Commune, Marx called this "the political union of French society itself..."[44]

It is within the context of a Germany split into various states that Marx criticized any attempt to mislead the workers with ideas of community autonomy.[45] Herein Arendt was wrong when she declared that Marx, while initially excited about the communal structure of the Paris Commune, had like Lenin after him, regarded the council as "only temporary organs of the revolution."[46]

Certainly, as was shown earlier Marx did not envisage as much freedom for the political communes as Arendt did

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[43]Marx, "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League" in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 370.

[44]Marx, "The First Draft of the Civil War in France", in The First International and After, Vol. 3, p. 267.

[45]Marx wrote: "They (the workers) must not allow themselves to be misguided by the democratic talk of freedom for the communities, of self-government, etc." Marx, "Address of the Central Committee...", in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 371.

[46]Arendt's error was two-fold. First of all, she, quoting the statement cited in footnote 44, attributed the date of this address to 1873, some two years after the Paris Commune. See On Revolution, p. 324, note #64. This was wrong. Marx wrote this address in 1850, after the revolutionary upheavals in continental Europe had subsided. Secondly, this statement of Marx's was written with respect to conditions peculiar to an already decentralized state, not with regards to a unified state such as France was in 1871.

because he was concerned about the economical aspect of his future society. This was the case for two reasons. First of all, his interpretation of autonomy was conditioned by his prejudice against individual egoism. Secondly, within the context of a modernizing society, Marx attributed the economical and social backwardness of countries like Germany to the excessive tariffs and other economical restrictions which the provinces imposed on trade between each other. The states were "just egoistic man writ large". While admitting that the great nations had been united by political force, he also saw the advantage which centralization of material production could introduce into a country.[47] Whereas under the existing capitalist economy the potential wealth was destined for only a few, the social emancipation of the labourer, (which would, in part, be effected when he was able to participate in the election of his delegates, as happened in the Paris Commune) would be completed when co-operative business ventures would entitle the worker to his share of its produce.[48] In this way the government of the communist society would be a "self-government of producers."[49]

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[47] See Marx, Grundrisse, p. 705 for a fuller description of the freedom which 'the entire body of society' would get when production was regulated.

[48] Marx, The Civil War in France, p. 61 and "Critique of the Gotha Program", in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 388.

[49] Two ideas can be grasped from this phrase 'self-government of producers'. First, the statement expressed the equal relationship of all the people within the communist society. With the division of labour gone, all members of the society would be producers. Secondly, it expressed the reality of universal suffrage, ie., the universal participation of everyone who was interested, in the government of society.

Whereas Marx had written within the context of an industrializing world, Arendt was a critic of a society of consumers, a society which had, by and large, achieved a satisfactory level of material well-being. Man still suffered from alienation even as Marx had suggested. However the social emancipation of society which Marx had anticipated, had become derailed, in her opinion, because, (in sharing Marx's predominant interest in the economical aspect of society) modern governments had excluded all avenues for the political expression of the people.* Thus modern society lacked political organs through which the people could express thier opinions.

The political organs best suited for this individual expression of opinions were, in Arendt's mind, the councils. Their spontaneous coming into being meant that they were formed with regards to local interests. Arendt wrote:

> Since the revolutions of the eighteenth century, every large upheaval has actually developed the rudiments of an entirely new form of government, which emerged independent of all preceeding revolutionary theories, directly out of the course of the revolution itself, that is, out of the experiences of action and out of the resulting will of the actors to participate in the further development of public affairs.[50]

In other words, their formation came as a result of the common need for a forum in which freedom of speech could be practiced. Arendt cited the example of Hungary:

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*refer back to footnote 22.

[50]Arendt, "Thoughts on Politics and Revolution," in Crises of the Republic, p. 231.

> In Hungary, we have seen the simultaneous setting-up of all kinds of councils, each of them corresponding to a previously existing group in which people habitually lived together or met regularly and knew each other. Thus neighborhood councils emerged from sheer living together and grew into county and other territorial councils; revolutionary councils grew out of fighting together; councils of writers and artists, one is tempted to think, were born in the cafes, students' and youths' councils at the university, military councils in the army, councils of civil servants in the ministries, workers' councils in the factories and so on. The formation of a council in each disparate group turned a merely haphazard togetherness into a political institution.[51]

This phenomenon of councils could only take place because the groups were small enough for people to know each other and trust each other.

It was for this reason that Arendt emphasized the decentralization of power. It was this form of local involvement in the political affairs of the country begun among people with whom one could feel comfortable, which Arendt understood Jefferson to have had in mind when he talked about the "ward system". Belatedly, she argued, he had realized the American Constitution had failed to incorporate into the American system of government, a permanent space "for the exercise of precisely those qualities which had been instrumental..." in establishing the republic.[52] This desire to be instrumental in shaping the political nature of the country could not be assuaged through periodical casting of ballots. Arendt identified the councils' response to the

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[51]Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 500.

[52]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 234.

government as being:

> We want to participate, we want to debate, we want to make our voices heard in public, and we want to have a possibility to determine the political course of our country. Since the country is too big for all of us to come together and determine our fate, we need a number of public spaces within it. The booth in which we deposit our ballots is unquestionably too small, for this booth has room for only one. The parties are completely unsuitable; there we are, most of us, nothing but the manipulated electorate. But if only ten of us are sitting around a table each expressing his opinion, each hearing the opinion of others, then a rational formation of opinion can take place through the exchange of opinions. There, too, it will become clear which one of us is best suited to present our view before the next higher council, where in turn our view will be clarified through the influence of other views, revised, or proven wrong.[53]

Two things are important to note about the councils' self-image. First of all the members believed political action could only take place within a group. Because the ballot was an individualized act, theoretically reflecting one's personal preference, it could hardly be identified as a political action since action by definition could only take place within a group of peers.[54] It was through 'sheer togetherness' that the 'who' of the members was revealed.

Secondly, it would be revealed through discussion which person could best represent the group. Arendt wrote:

> Thus, the men elected for the councils are chosen at the bottom, and not selected by the party machinery and proposed to the electorate either as individuals with alternate choices or as a slate of candidates. The choice, moreover, of the voter is

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[53]Arendt, "Thoughts on politics and Revolution", Crises of the Republic, p. 232 & 233.

[54]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 176ff.

> not prompted by a program or a platform or an ideology, but exclusively by his estimation of a man, in whose personal integrity, courage and judgment he is supposed to have enough confidence to entrust him with his representation. The elected, therefore, is not bound by anything except trust in his personal qualities, and his pride is to have been elected by the workers, and not by the government or a party, that is, by his peers and from neither above nor below.[55]

While a quick reading of this quotation might lend the reader to interpret Arendt's idea of worker representation and accountability as reflecting more the Burkean dictim than Marx's notion of a delegate acting as the mouthpiece of his constituents, this would be a hasty judgement. It is only in conjunction with the earlier self-admission of the council members that the intent of her argument becomes clear. Arendt is clearly making the point that only if the representative is judged by his personal excellence alone, could he be capable of representing the new opinion agreed upon by his delegates for it would be up to him to argue the case in the higher council.

At this higher council, he would again be among peers who would each voice his representative opinion, and the final outcome would differ from any of the original opinions.[56] This process of policy formulation would continue through the various levels of council and would culminate in final policy. This approach to decision making can be witnessed to some degree in the "neighbourhood" concept of city planning. Certainly Marx and Arendt would have

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[55]Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, p. 499.

welcomed the conscious solicitation of the public's opinion by the government. Both, however, would have argued that the proper beginning of this effort was at the grass-roots level, rather than from the top.

Through their development of alternative political forms, Marx and Arendt sought to expose the political disabilities of the nation state. For both of them, the chief defect of existing political orders was that political freedom was either absent or restricted. In either case they were not suitable for a complete expression of man.

Their next objective then became to posit an order of being which could reconcile the freedom of man with his plurality. In embarking on this project both looked to historical instances which held in embryonic form the potential political form in which individuals could experience freedom without jeopardizing the stability of the community. Thus Marx and Arendt saw within the Paris Commune of 1871, the elements, albeit in a limited form, which they respectively identified with "a communist society" and a "revolutionary council". These elementary features were: (a) the spontaneous formation of political communes or councils at local levels in order that opinions might be shared, (b) the active involvement of any politically-minded person within these councils and (c) the revolutionary practice of sharing power horizontally among equals rather than distributing it vertically.

These conditions they believed would give meaning to the political actors. In the next chapter that concept of meaning will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAN AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

Since men and not Man inhabit the earth, "meaning" must be found within the context of the social environment. That this discovery is no modern achievement is a certainty. The early Greeks, confronted by immortal nature on the one hand and the immortality of the gods on the other, realized what the mortality of man means; it is "to move along a rectilinear line in a universe where everything, if it moves at all, moves in a cyclical order."[1] Their concern with immortality sprang from their desire to make sense out of human mortality. The consubstantiality of being not withstanding, the experience of separateness and differentiation between God, the world, society, animals and man has prompted man to search for the meaning of his existence.

The Greeks were among the first to be aware of the uniqueness of man within the order of being in that while man was subject to necessity as were animals, not every moment of man's life needed to be spent in satisfying biological needs. Rather he could seek his own salvation through imm-

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[1]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 19.

mortality. Arendt wrote:

> The task and potential greatness of mortals lie in their ability to produce things--works and deeds and words--which would deserve to be and, at least to a degree, are at home in everlastingness, so that through them mortals could find their place in a cosmos where everything is immortal except themselves.[2]

This ability to produce lasting things not meant to be consumed resulted in man creating a world--the space of appearance--which could incorporate into itself unique works, deeds and words becoming a testimony to the immortality of man's capabilities.

The quest for meaning through immortality was challenged by the Judaic-Christian concept of an eternal nature of man. The social and political context--the Greek polis and later the Roman Empire--within which the quest for meaning had previously taken place was negated and all importance was placed on man's relationship to his Creator and God. Whereas previously, action and speech had been the avenues best suited for exposing the "who", (ie., the uniqueness and greatness of one's being, to one's peers, who would then remember and tell stories of the event in the future), now the belief in a personal God meant that contemplation and meditation--thinking--were the highest activities man could engage in. The solitude necessary for this activity predisposed men to shun the society in which they lived, abstain from political and social

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[2] Ibid., p. 19.

involvement, and dwell as much as possible in the world of the eternal. The Socratic dictim, "Be as you wish to appear", was given theological status and adhered to as much as possible. Meaning was found by establishing and maintaining a right and proper relationship to God. To do the will of God--to praise and glorify God in everything one did--was to experience meaning and meaningfulness within God's creation.

The emphasis on "saving one's soul" resulted in an artificial bifurcation of the world: the realm of the spiritual and eternal on the one hand, and the realm of the material and temporal on the other hand. The eternal was the essence of God and was therefore good and should be sought after, whereas the temporal was subject to decay and was therefore bad. It should be rejected as much as possible. Similarly, one's soul was eternal, whereas the body was material and subject to decay. The development of the "community of Christian believers" in opposition to the secular world of men around it led to a polarization of the two realms. The tension between those two realms is articulated best in St. Augustine's philosophical and theological treatise, The City of God. Augustine wrote:

> We put on the image of the earthly man, by the propagation of sin and corruption, adherent unto our first birth: but we put on that of the Heavenly Man by grace, pardon, and promise of life eternal...[3]

This tension found momentary relief when the Roman Empire fell and the Roman Catholic Church succeeded it. The Romans had

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[3]Saint Augustine, The City of God, (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1945), p. 21. However, it must be understood that Augustine was not against government on earth; rather he saw the role of government as a necessity because of the sinful nature of man.

found meaning in founding, maintaining, and extending the empire over all the earth. Virgil's poem, The Fourth Ecologue, expressed the Roman understanding of meaning. For them the salvation of the world was possible because the human species regenerates itself constantly and forever. Children were educated in "the glories of heroes and the father's deeds", in order that when they grew up they would do what all Romans were supposed to do, "rule the world that the ancestors' virtues had set at peace."[4] The Romans' concern with the durability and lastingness of the empire kept in abeyance the fear of mortality, since as long as the empire endured, Romans would be remembered. In contrast to the early Christian idea of meaning having significance only in terms of God and His plan for man in the singular and the plural, the Romans understood meaning in terms of the foundation of the empire.

The Church accepted the Roman legacy of foundation,[5] transferred this concept to the spiritual realm, made the foundation of the Church co-temporal with the birth of Jesus Christ, and marked off subsequent time from that date. The

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[4]Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), p. 212.

[5]George Sabine, in A History of Political Theory, rev. by Thomas Landon Thorson, 4rth ed., (Illinois: Dryden Press, 1973), p. 159, writes that "Christianity itself and its ultimate establishment as the legal religion of the empire were the consummation of social and intellectual changes that had long been at work and which affected almost equally thinkers who never embraced the new faith."

Church also accepted the universal mission of the Roman empire and identified it with its own mission to save the souls of mankind. In this way, as the Church slowly consolidated its spiritual as well as temporal power, the Church sought to restore the unity of the world, the division between being and existence. The reasoning of the Church was: if all men could be persuaded to become Christians, the artificial bifurcation of the world would be bridged and men could again experience meaning on earth. However, until all men were saved, the conflict between the "things of this world" and the "eternal values of the next world" were mitigated by the continual subordination of the temporal world to the spiritual world.

This Christian philosophy of the individual and history received its first blow with the dawn of the Renaissance and the rediscovery of the classical age. The renewed interest in the humanities and physical sciences heralded ill tidings for a dogmatic and sterile Church philosophy which had preached ascetisim and long-suffering, and had promised eternal bliss as a reward for temporal suffering, poverty, and devotion to its doctrines. The attack on the Church intensified and culminated in Voltaire's rejection of the Church's concept of history. His interpretation of world history was devoid of spiritual meaning, substituting in its stead an anthropological meaning. A contemporary scholar, Eric Voegelin, attests to the emergence of this Weltanschauung and lists its constituent factors.

He writes:

> ...We do not find before 1700 a comprehensive interpretation of man in society and history that would take into account the constituent factors of the new situation, that is: the breakdown of the Church as the universal institution of Christian mankind, the plurality of sovereign states as ultimate political units, the discovery of the New World and the more intimate acquaintance with Asiatic civilization, the idea of a non-Christian nature of man as the foundation for speculation on law and ethics, the demonism of the parochial, national communities and the idea of the passions as motivating forces of man.[6]

The rejection of a Christian history of mankind and the subsequent plethora of profane histories of mankind which were written is only one aspect of the polarization that again occurred between the temporal and the spiritual worlds of man. Once again the concept of meaning was fragmented. The earlier loss of understanding the world as immortal, and then the loss of the Christian or eternal nature of man meant that new meaning had to be found within the context of man's history. Spiritual meaning became entirely superfluous to the organization of society, and was relegated to the private world of man. Men could experience meaning in both worlds but they were entirely independent of each other. Profane history, in its search for meaning, immanentized the eschatological hope of the Christian community and, in Hegel, the last philosopher of idealism, the meaning of the individual

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[6] Eric Voegelin, "The Emergence of Secularized History: Bossuet and Voltaire", From Enlightenment to Revolution, ed. by John H. Hallowell, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1975), p. 5.

and world history culminated in the self-realization of the World Spirit--Freedom. This attempt to transform and supersede (aufheben) the artificial separation of being and existence by use of the dialectical method ended in failure. Hegel's speculative philosophy realized itself only insofar as it vindicated an existing authoritarian monarchy in Germany. After Hegel, man in the modern age has struggled with the doctrine of nihilism and has accepted the belief in the meaninglessness of existence. This has happened because modern man inhabits a world, which (because he did not create it) he does not understand; he therefore drives himself to create a world, (the processes of which he may know but cannot understand) which is at least man made. Where knowledge and understanding are separated, meaning is illusionary and evasive.[7]

Both Marx and Arendt directed their attention to this problem. Neither theorist desired to recapture the Christian

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[7]Arendt wrote: "Understanding precedes and succeeds knowledge. Preliminary understanding, which is at the basis of all knowledge, and true understanding, which understands it, have this in common: they make knowledge meaningful." Quoted in Hannah Arendt, "Understanding and Politics", Partisan Review, No. 4, July - August, 1953, p. 380.

vision of meaning[8] with its attendant paraphernalia and sought rather to find the solution to the dichotomy between being and existence or appearance with the context of human history.[9]

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[8]Marx categorically rejected any religious meaning. In keeping with Feuerbach's criticism of Hegel's idealism, Marx identified religion as the alienation of man from himself. He wrote: "The basis of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man. And indeed religion is the self-consciousness and self-regard of man who has either not yet found or has already lost himself." Quoted in, Marx, Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction, in Loyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, (ed. and tr.), Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), p. 250. It is clear that the bifurcation of the world had been resolved in part for Marx insofar as the religious dimension had been resolved, ie., eliminated and only the solving of man's social and political problems remained. To the resolution of this remaining problem all his exhaustive research was directed.

Arendt rejected a spiritual concept of meaning because she was concerned that the manifestation of Christian virtues was endangering the public realm. Selflessness, compassion and love for the fellow man, the very attributes which St. Augustine identified as comprising the core of the Christian communities' activities, were worldless by nature. "To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every inbetween relates and separates men at the same time." (The Human Condition, p. 52) "Because compassion (and love) abolish the distance, the worldy space between men where political matters, the whole realm of human affairs, are located, (they) remain, politically speaking, irrelevant and without consequence." (On Revolution, p. 81) In fact within the public realm these virtues can only become perverted. Thus, for Arendt these virtues must necessarily be kept in the private realm. "Because of its inherent worldlessness, love can only become false and perverted when it is used for political purposes such as the change or salvation of the world." (The Human Condition p. 52, see also p. 242). This was Arendt's reply to the perversion of Christian meaning in the hands of the early Roman Catholic Church which identified its rule on earth as the fulfillment of God's plan.

[9]Marx considered the concept of meaning in regard to man realizing his true potential as a species-being, as a historical being and as a productive being. In each case the development of man culminated in freedom and equality. However for Arendt, the idea of "immortality" was of Key importance. To a world which had lost both the immortality of the world and the spiritual eternity offered by Christianity, she offered "immortality" of human deeds once again.

Both Marx and Arendt were theorists of activity.[10] They believed that in order for man to realize himself, he had to engage in praxis or action. Although their definitions of man differed,[11] Marx and Arendt were agreed upon the fact

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[10]In the case of Marx this obsession with activity is revealed most emphatically in his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it." (In the Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 402.) Arendt's emphasis on action is best exemplified in the negative. "A life without speech and without action, ...--and this is the only way of life that in earnest has renounced all appearance and all vanity in the biblical sense of the world--is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men." The Human Condition, p. 176.

[11]Marx defined man's activities in terms of "labour" whereas Arendt defined man with regards to "action" and "speech". This contrast can in part be accounted for in terms of the status each gave to the concept of labour. For Marx, man was a productive being. "As individuals express their life, so they are." (The German Ideology in The Marx Engels Reader, p. 114). Later in the same work Marx explains that in contrast to "German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven", ie., consciousness is determined by life. Marx identified various forms of labour; natural labour, ie. labour through which man humanizes nature and social labour: ie., "labour which posits exchange value: (Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), p. 36.) It is only the latter form of alienated labour which disappears after the revolution. The former type of labour, natural labour, will remain because it is indispensible to the survival of man in the realm of necessity. (Marx, Capital, Vol. III, tr. by Samual Moore and Edward Aveling, ed. by Frederick Engels, (New York: International Publishers, 1964), p. 820.

Since for Arendt, man was a political being, labour, the activity characteristic of the realm of necessity, could never be a distinguishing feature of man. Her criticism of Marx in regards to labour was discussed in Chapter One.

that a realm of freedom was necessary in order for man to achieve his purpose--self-fulfilment. It was through the establishment of the realm of freedom that man would find meaning. Marx, in words that are reminiscent of Arendt wrote: "Beyond it (the realm of necessity) begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis."[12] Arendt was equally adamant that individual fulfillment was possible only after the necessities of life had been taken care of. "The mastering of the necessities of life in the household was the condition of the freedom of the polis."[13] This freedom was, however, conditional: "Man cannot be free if he does not know that he is subject to necessity, because his freedom is always won in his never wholly successful attempts to liberate himself from necessity."[14] Life could be meaningful only if one constantly acknowledged his mortal existence in the realm of necessity and then moved into the public realm, the realm of freedom, where immortality could be won through deed and speech.

As noted above in Chapter three, the realization of this realm of freedom differed in the thought of Marx and Arendt at one fundamental point. Marx saw the arrival of

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[12] Marx, Capital, Vol. III, p. 820.

[13] Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 30 and 31.

[14] Ibid., p. 121.

this stage of history as inevitable, determined by the laws of history. "As everything natural has to have its beginning, man too has his act of coming-to-be--history--which, however, is for him a known history, and hence as an act of coming-to-be it is a conscious self-transcending act of coming-to-be."[15] A revolutionary transformation of society and its productive relations would precipitate the establishment of the realm of freedom. The elimination of classes and the capitalist mode or production would free man from serving the product of his labour and allow him to re-establish a proper relationship with nature, his product and society--namely to experience meaning as a "total or universal species-being." Marx wrote:

> Only when the actual, individual man has taken back into himself the abstract citizen and in his everyday life, his individual work, and his individual relationships has become a species-being, only when he has recognized and organized his own powers as social power so that social force is no longer separated from him as political power, only then is human emancipation complete.[16]

Human emancipation could only become a fact when the relationships that man is involved in serve the needs of man rather than vice versa.

Arendt's view of meaning precluded any such teleological interpretation of the realm of freedom. Indeed, Arendt's criticism of Marx is precisely that he transformed meaning and meaningfulness into ends. She wrote: "Marx

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[15]Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967), p. 146. Hereafter cited as EPM.

[16]Marx, On the Jewish Question, in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, p. 241.

took the Hegelian meaning of all history--the progressive unfolding and actualization of the idea of Freedom--to be an end of human action, and...viewed this ultimate 'end' as the end product of a manufacturing process."[17] For Arendt, the modern identification of meaning with "end" has led to a growing meaninglessness.

> Meaning, which can never be the aim of action and yet, inevitably, will rise out of human deeds after the action itself has come to an end, was now pursued with the same machinery of intentions and of organized means as were the particular direct aims of concrete action--with the result that it was as though meaning itself had departed from the world of men and men were left with nothing but an unending chain of purposes in whose progress the meaningfulness of all past achievements was constantly cancelled out by future goals and intentions.[18]

When the distinction between meaning and "end", (ie., the distinction between "for the sake of..." and "in order to") was forgotten, "ends" no longer remain safe and finally all "ends" turn and are degraded into means.

The creation of the realm of freedom in Arendtian terms demanded a miracle. Far from being the end of history, it is possible at any given time, yet no more probable that the original creation of the world ex nihilo. Still the miracle of beginning in the form of natality occurs regularly.

> The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, 'natural' ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted. It is, ...the

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[17]Hannah Arendt, "The Concept of History", Between Past and Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1968), p. 48.

[18]Ibid., p. 78.

> birth of new men and the new beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born.[19]

Thought, speech, action, etc., those very activities and capabilities which constitute the human condtion are political by nature and therefore faith in and hope for the world are possible as long as new men are born into the world. As long as there is a propensity among men to experience freedom, freedom is always possible. Arendt gave four examples of the creation of this realm of freedom in the modern age: the Mayflower Compact, the American Revolution, the Hungarian revolt, and the anti-war demonstrations in the U. S. in the early seventies. In each case, regardless of age or occupation, a mutually binding compact made by those concerned through promise resulted in the creation of power which became and always is the lifeblood of the public realm.[20]

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[19]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 247. See also p. 207 in On Revolution, for Arendt's recognition of the arbitrariness of beginning. "What saves the act of beginning from its own arbitrariness is that it carries its own principle within itself, or, to be more precise, that beginning and principles...are coeval. The absolute from which the beginning is to derive its own validity and which must save it, as it were, from its inherent arbitrariness is the principle which, together with it, makes its appearance in the world. The way the beginner starts whatever he intends to do lays down the law of action for those who have joined him in order to partake in the enterprise and to bring about its accomplishment. As such, the principle inspires the deeds that are to follow and remains apparent as long as the action lasts." On Revolution, p. 214.

[20]Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 200. Arendt wrote: "Power is what keeps the public realm, the potential space of appearance between acting and speaking men, in existence." Again: "Only where men live so close together that the potentialities of action are always present can power remain with them..."

These spontaneous groups sprang up because men were willing to begin anew, to start a chain of action and reaction, the end of which they could never predict or stop. The founding of political realms is ever possible where action-motivated men are gathered.

Political meaning, ie., meaning associated with the public realm, necessitates the presence of others. It is by no means certain that in searching for meaning, in performing virtuosic acts which would distinguish the performer from others in revealing the "who" to the spectator, that one's actions would achieve the purpose intended. The web of human relations into which each man is born contains innumerable conflicting wills and intentions and these act one upon one another. The person who begins the process seldom if ever completes it. It is within this medium that stories are produced "with or without intention, as naturally as fabrication produces tangible things."[21] The doer or actor cannot know the meaning of his actions since, although he may have started the process, he never finishes it. In fact the revelation of meaning only occurs after the deed is done. Arendt stated it in this manner:

> The meaning of what actually happens and appears while it is happening is revealed when it has disappeared; remembrance, by which you make present to your mind what is actually absent and past, reveals the meaning in the form of a story. The man who does the revealing is not involved in the appearances; he is blind,

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[21] Ibid., p. 184.

> shielded against the visible, in order to be able to "see" the invisible. And what he sees with blind eyes and puts into words is the story --not the deed itself and not the doer, although the doer's fame will reach the high heavens.[22]

The significant aspect of Arendt's thought on meaning is that while action must, by definition, take place within the public realm (this is not to ignore modern man's ability to act into nature), thought, which begins with remembrance, takes place in solitude.[23] To engage in thinking demands that one withdraw from the world. Whereas the production of the story takes place in solitude, the reenactment of the deed must take place in the world, among others. Thinking, a type of action, needs to be articulated in order to fulfill its purpose. It is no substitute for action among men. To reenter the world and to tell one's understanding of the past event is to give the meaning,[24] ie., the "for the sake of" which the act was performed.

To give the meaning of an event serves a twofold purpose in Arendt's understanding. First, to tell the story contributes to the acceptance of the storyteller into the world. The storyteller as a person needs to feel accepted into the world and needs to be reassured that he sees, touches, hears, and smells the same world as others around him.

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[22]Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind., Vol. I, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 133.

[23]Ibid., p. 47.

[24]Arendt, "Understanding and Politics", Partisan Review, p. 378.

> ...The need of reason is to give account...of whatever may be or may have occurred. This is prompted not by the thirst for knowledge--the need may arise in connection with well-known and entirely familiar phenomena--but by the quest for meaning. The sheer naming of things, the creation of words, is the human way of appropriating and, as it were, disalienating the world into which, after all, each of us is born a newcomer and a stranger.[25]

For although men dwell in a common world, they have each their own location within it. "Being seen and being heard by others derive their significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from different positions."[26] Meaning in this sense is personal and is derived from being accepted for what and who one is: a unique human being. To be accepted as an integral part of the whole and to be consciously aware of that acceptance is of vital importance to each individual.

The second reason why thinking must be put into a story which will then be told to others is due to the frailty of remembrance.

> For if it is true that all thought begins with remembrance, it is also true that no remembrance remains secure unless it is condensed and distilled into a framework of conceptual notions within which it can further exercise itself. Experience and even the stories which grow out of what men do and endure, of happenings and events, sink back into the futility inherent in the living word and

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[25]Arendt, The Life of the Mind, Vo. I, p. 100.

[26]Arendt, The Human Condtion, p. 57. The agreement that all are seeing, hearing, and talking about the same object supports the notion of the intersubjective nature of the human condition.

> the living deed unless they are talked about over and over again. What saves the affairs of mortal men from the inherent futility is nothing but this incessant talk about them, which in turn remains futile unless certain concepts, certain guideposts for future remembrance, and even for sheer reference, arise out of it.[27]

The lack of remembrance and the lack of incessant talk about the principles and deeds which guided the American Revolution and were instrumental in founding the state were, in Arendt's opinion, some of the reasons why public life for all Americans disappeared so quickly after the revolution. The lack of provision within the constitution for a medium through which citizens could continue to give their opinion about events meant that only those who were elected as representatives could experience "public happiness". By not participating in the public realm and by not experiencing what those who had founded the republic had experienced, people forgot what the public realm had been created for. In losing or forgetting the meaning of past experiences, the frailty of present action was accentuated in that, in addition to not having guideposts to shape and restrain it, there was also no certainty that current action would be remembered and talked about in the future.

The frailty of human remembrance is further intensified in that "the quest for meaning, which relentlessly dissolves and examines anew all accepted doctrines and rules, can at every moment turn against itself, as it were, produce a

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[27]Arendt, On Revolution, p. 222.

reversal of old values and declare these as new values."[28] Ideas to which one adhered to all his life are suddenly questioned, found wanting, and rejected, substituting previous unorthodox ideas in their place.

For this reason the search for meaning should never be confused with the search for truth. Meaning is not an object that can be found and kept; it is a process which goes on as long as man has breath. Bergson accurately grasped the character of meaning.

> Compared to an object of contemplation, meaning, which can be uttered and spoken about, is slippery; if the philosopher wants to <u>see</u> and <u>grasp</u> it, it "slips away."[29]

Whereas the quest for knowledge is the search for truth, which by its nature is unsuited for the public realm because it accepts no opposition, the search for meaning is the quest for understanding, and must therefore express one individual's point of view among others.[30] The meaning of an event is an opinion which needs to be informed by others. Arendt wrote:

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[28]Hannah Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture." <u>Social Research</u>, Vol. 38, No. 3, Autumn, 1971, p. 435.

[29]Henri Bergson as quoted in Arendt, <u>The Life of the Mind</u>, Vol. I, p. 122.

[30]Arendt wrote: "The trouble is that factual truth, like all other truth, peremptorily claims to be acknowledged and precludes debate, and debate constitutes the very essence of politica life." ("Truth and Politics", <u>Between Past and Future</u>, p. 241).

> The more people's standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my conclusion, my opinion.[31]

That opinion rather than truth reveals the meaning of an event is qualified to the extent that facts are necessary in order that an opinion can be voiced.[32]

> Who says what is...always tells a story, and in this story the particular facts lose their contingency and acquire some humanly comprehensible meaning. Reality is different from, and more than, the totality of facts and events, which anyhow, is unascertainable.[33]

The aggregation of data will never result in the knowledge of what reality is, since man interprets the world he seeks to apprehend with a language which is grounded in a world he already knows.

It is only in understanding Arendt's distinction between reality and the totality of facts, that her thesis, that being and appearing coincide, makes sense. Rather than trying to resolve the problem of being and appearing in terms of causal determination--ie., every event has a prior cause, ad infinitum until the First Cause is acknowledged, Arendt argued that the two-world theory was a fallacy. Arendt

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[31]Arendt, Between Past and Future, p. 241.

[32]Ibid., p. 238.

[33]Ibid., p. 261 and 262.

wrote:

> In this world which we enter by appearing from a nowhere, and from which we disappear into a nowhere, Being and Appearing coincide. Nothing and nobody exists on this planet whose very being does not presuppose a spectator. In other words, nothing that is, insofar as it appears, exists in the singular; everything that is is meant to be perceived by somebody. Not Man but men inhabit the earth, Plurality is the law of the earth.[34]

Again:

> The worldliness of living things means that there is no subject that is not also an object and appears as such to somebody else, who guarantees its 'objective' reality...Sentient beings, men and animals are not just in the world, they <u>are of the world</u>, and this precisely because they are subjects and objects--perceiving and being perceived--at the same time.[35]

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[34] Arendt, <u>The Life of the Mind</u>, Vol. I, p. 19.

[35] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 80. The all-important statement that men are not only in the world but <u>of the world</u> stands in contradiction to the calling of Jesus Christ who, again and again reminded his followers that while it was true that they were in the world, they were not of the same essence as the world. Whereas the world was concerned with the temporal, their lives were to be concerned with spiritual things. The Christian's being was eternal,ie., in accepting his own depravity and acknowledging that God was his Creator, the Christian became a son of God whose eternal essence could never coincide with temporal appearance.

Concerned only with men as they exist in public life, (not to say that she rejected the spiritual aspect of man), Arendt accepted Augustine's account of how secular man viewed his independence from God. "In der auf Adam gegrundet societas hat der Mensch sich unabhangig gemacht von seiner Creator. Er ist auf andere Menschen angewiesen, nicht auf Gott. Das genus humanum hat seinen Ursprung in Adam und nicht im Creator...In der von der creatura konstituierten Menschenwelt steht der Einzelne nicht mehr im isolierten Bezug zu seinem eigensten Von-wo-aus, sondern er lebt in dem mit den anderen gemeinsam konstituiert mundas. Was er ist, erfahrt er nicht mehr durch die conscientia ex Deo, sondern die aliena lingua, er hat sich selbst zu einem Bewohner dieser Welt gemacht und damit zugleich sich selbst zu einem gemacht, der nicht mehr nur ex Deo ist, sondern, das, was er ist, dieser von ihm mitkonstituierten Welt verdankt." Hannah Arendt, <u>Der Liebesbegriff Bei Augustin: Versuch einer Philosphischen Interpretation</u>, (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1929), pp. 81 and 60).

Reality, which is the world men agree upon by use of the common senses is not the same as the totality of facts. The concept "the totality of facts", is a euphemism which accounts for a state of knowledge which can never occur as long as men are human. Man by nature is a questioning being. It is therefore, necessary, in her view, to maintain strictly the separation of those activities which are a proper concern of the private realm, such as individual spiritual welfare and the quest for knowledge, from the public realm because in the public realm, men rather than man live and therefore opinion rather than truth must prevail. The fact that all worldly things are subject and object at the same time presupposes plurality.

Politically speaking then, meaning, which arises from understanding and accepting the world as it is, is caught up in the story which is told and retold through the generations. The realization that one's life is composed of actions which condition the world and those in it, is to have found meaning. The immortality of one's deeds and words is possible only within a public realm which exists for that purpose, because action needs others to continue the process. Action has a beginning but has no recognizable end.

It is within the public realm that Arendt solved the problem of being and appearing and discovered political meaning in the quest for immortality. Her discussion of Adolf Portmann's theory of organs and their functions in, The Life of the Mind, concluded with the statement:

> If follows from Portmann's findings that our habitual standards of judgment, so firmly rooted in metaphysical assumptions and prejudices--according to which the essential lies beneath the surface, and the surface is "superficial"--are wrong, that our common conviction that what is inside us, our "inner life", is more relevant to what we "are" than what appears on the outside is an illusion.[36]

Therefore, man's being coincides with his appearance. Man is what he is. Even when man thinks about himself, the language of the world imposes itself upon his thinking. "Our mental apparatus, though it can withdraw from present appearances,remains geared to Appearance."[37] Arendt summed it up most succintly in her posthumous work, The Life of the Mind:

> Language, by lending itself to metaphorical use, enables us to think--that is to have traffic with non-sensory matters--because it permits a carrying over,...of our sense experiences. There are not two worlds, because metaphor unites them.[38]

As mentioned earlier, Marx rejected a bifurcation of the world into the religious or spiritual realm and the temporal realm. The dilemma that presented itself to Marx was the unnatural dichotomy of social man and political man. Rousseau first raised the problem of modern political society. Rousseau pointed to the existence of a duality in modern society, and thus in the life of its members. He asked how

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[36]Arendt, The Life of the Mind, Vol. I., p. 30.

[37]Ibid., p. 24.

[38]Ibid., p. 110.

modern man could be restored to a unified condition, how the dualism of private and public or civil and political could be overcome. This problem was crucial for Marx since his view of human society and its relationship to the individual man presupposed that the individual and society are one in essence and not antagonists. Whereas Arendt's solution to the problem lay in the strict separation of the private realm, from the public realm, because the activities such as love, compassion, and search for truth, (which are proper within the private realm) are anti-political and dangerous to the maintainance of the public realm, Marx saw no conflict between the two realms. Either one was an expression of the other.

> The individual is the social being...Man's individual and species life are not different...Man, much as he may therefore be a particular individual and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual, and a real individual social being, is just as much the totality--the ideal totality--the subjective existence of thought and experienced society present for itself; just as he exists also in the real world as the awareness and the real enjoyment of social existence, and as a totality of human life-activity.39

If society and the individual are one in essence and being, no conflict of interests should exist. Man is essentially a social creature and society is necessary in order for the actualization of his social nature. Therefore the interests of the individual should not in any fundamental way be opposed

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39 Marx, EPM, p. 98.

to the interests of society. Man as an individual embodies society. Marx wrote in criticism of Feuerbach who had only dealt with the metaphysical part of the problem. "Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the human essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations."[40] Rather, for Marx, the essence of man is found in the expression of the complete potential of the human community. However, this ideal state of man and society did not exist in Marx's world. The dilemma of man in existent society is best expressed by Joseph O'Malley:

> If actual human, that is, political, society shows the existence of opposed spheres of interest--individual and particular on one hand, general and universal on the other--then this existence of opposed spheres constitutes an aberration as measured against the social nature of man. It means that the lives of the individual men who constitute society are aberrant versions of what man's social life ought to be. Men's lives will be either contradictory or one-sided; contradictory if they manage somehow to live and act simultaneously or by turns in the opposed spheres, one-sided if they live wholly within the sphere of private interests and pursuits. In neither case can there be a fulfillment of man's social species-being. In neither case is man in social existence a unified whole.[41]

This was the philosophical problem to which Hegel had addressed himself. Hegel began with the Idea and showed its development in history. Through the dialectical process of history,

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[40]Marx, "Thesis VI on Feuerbach," The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 109.

[41]Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right', ed. with an introduction and notes by Joseph O'Malley, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. xliv and xlv.

the conflicting material manifestations of the Idea resolved their antagonisms and culminated at the end of history in the actualization of the Idea.

Marx turned Hegel's dialectic method upside down, Marx wrote in the Afterword to the second edition of Capital, Vol. I:

> My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but it is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, ie., the process of thinking, which, under the name of "the Idea", he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of "the Idea." With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.[42]

Marx set out his method in scientific form: "We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process...Life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness by life."[43] Whereas Hegel saw the goal of philosophy as comprehending the actual and the present world in an Idea, Marx took it one step further: the goal of philosophy was to change the world, to realize the ideal world, the world as it really was meant to be, on earth. All history was a coming-to-be of man. Identifying classical antiquity as the early child-

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[42]Marx, Capital, Vol. I, p. 19.

[43]Marx, German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 118 and 119.

hood of mankind,[44] Marx sought to realize the adult stage of man. Meaning for Marx lay in man's realization of his potential.

However, Man could only realize his potential if he emptied himself (to use a religious term) and experienced "total alienation" in all his relations. Whereas man had experienced some aspects of alienation in previous stages of history, the capitalist stage of society marked the high point of alienation. The capitalist mode of production had achieved a life of its own. It was no longer serving the needs of man but man was serving it. However, capitalism was fraught with internal contradictions which spelled doom for the capitalist mode of production. Marx explains the contradictions in the following way:

> The real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself. It is that capital and its self-expansion appear as the starting and the closing point, the motive and the purpose of production; that production is only production for capital and not vice versa, the means of production are not merely means for a constant expansion of the living process of the society of producers. The limits within which the preservation and self-expansion of the value of capital resting on the expropriation and pauperisation of the great mass of producers can alone move--these limits come continually into conflict with the methods of production employed by capital for its purposes, which drive towards unlimited extension of production, towards production as an end in itself, towards unconditional development of the productivity of labour. The means--unconditional development of the productive forces of society--comes continually into conflict with the limited purpose, the self-expansion of the existing capital. The capitalist mode of production is, for this reason, a historical means of developing the mutual forces production and creating an appropriate

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[44] Marx, Grundrisse, tr. with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus, (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1943), p. 111.

> world-market and is, at the same time, a continual conflict between its historical task and its own corresponding relations of social production.[45]

As the extended quote shows quite clearly, the task of capitalism was to develop the means of production to the point where man would no longer have to be active in exploiting nature. Machinery would take the place of man and free him to the satisfying of his "human needs". However, the capitalists, caught up in a trap of their own making, sought to perpetuate the accumulation of capital at the expense of the vast majority of the people. While the capitalist class became smaller and richer, the vast majority of the people were separated from their means of production and became proletarians.

The class struggle, therefore, becomes a struggle between property-owners and the propertyless proletariat. At the same time, the struggle becomes universal in character because the proletariat is fighting not only for itself but for all mankind. In being deprived of his means of production, property, the proletarian became aware of his greatest need--others. The isolation foisted upon individual labourers was an aberration from what man was meant to be. Meaning could be found only within the group. Only when society and the individual were once again one in essence and being, could the real history of mankind begin. This new society would be communism. Since, as was noted above, the capitalist

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[45]Marx, Capital, Vol. III, p. 250.

class would never agree to this transformation, a revolution was necessary.

The new society would experience the unity of the interests of the individual with the interests of the community, because, having an advanced mode of production which would free most of man's time, the social and political aspects of man would coincide. In capitalist society, most of man's time had been spent in social relations which had been alienated forms of relations. There had been no time or opportunity for the masses to engage in political activity. In the new society, all social activities would be at the same time political activities. Political power would once again reside in the community. The realization that each individual was a part in the process of man coming-to-be would provide meaning for the individual.

The preceding presentation of the concept of political meaning in the writings of Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt has shown, mutatis mutandis, that meaning resides within the group. Their concern with the growing meaninglessness of man's activity within their respective individualistic societies caused them, separately, to reappropriate the old notions of community (Gemeinwessen) as the ontological basis of meaning. This was the case for Arendt since in her understanding of the Vita Activa, man's most human activity was action, not labour (an animal-like activity of satisfying the needs of necessity) nor work (an activity which could be pursued in isolation). Meaning, or the "for the sake of

which" "an action was performed, could only be accomplished within the public realm because it needed an audience which acted as both an "interpreter" of the deed and a "conditioner" of the deed. Thus the meaning of the situation was, for Arendt, never clear to the actor since he began a process which was reacted and reacted upon until the intention or purpose which had initiated it was altered, perhaps beyond recognition. Because the original motive was modified, the meaning of the situation would be forgotten unless someone, an historian, retold the story with its new situational meaning. It was through remembering, the act of recalling what is actually absent and past, that the true meaning of the deed would be ascertained. Within the group the dichotomy between essence and appearance was bridged because the story of the deed would unite the Act and its meaning and make it one.

For Marx, on the other hand, meaning was found within the group since the essence of man and the group were the same; they were both the particularity and the generality of man as a species-being. That is to say, man in his singularity experienced meaning inasmuch as he portrayed within his individual species existence, the history of man coming-to-be. Similarly, the historical group, ie., man as a historical being, enacted in general form the singular development of man: phylogenesis mirrored ontogenesis. For this reason, the dichotomy between essence and appearance, as experienced in alienated society, exacerbated and destroyed the coming-to-be of man in his singularity but could not halt the development of man as a historical group being. The dichotomy between

essence and singular appearance would be transcended at that juncture in time when man as a historical being would be realized. At that point, meaning would once again reside in the individual *per se* as well as in the group.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to present Karl Marx's and Hannah Arendt's conception of the individual and the group within society and to evaluate their contribution to a more adequate understanding of the human condition, property, individual/group relations, political organization, and political meaning. Both Marx and Arendt were concerned with the full development of the individual within society; the realization of man's humanity was the focal point of their writings. To this end they criticized existing socio-economic and political conventions and institutions and advanced alternate theories and/or models of political organization, which in their minds, were commensurate with the human condition.

Within this study, certain similarities and differences were noted in Marx and Arendt which alternately transcended and put into sharp relief the historical gap between their respective ages. Sometimes their interpretation appeared remarkably similar, despite their differing world conceptions, eg., the amazing degree of similarity in their critique of modern property, concepts and arrangements. Other times though the ontological genesis of their thought was similar because they were writing about the same problem: the bi-furcation of man into l'homme and le citoyen, their exegesis

differed because of their differing Weltanschauungen, eg., the discussion on the likelihood of their political models being actualized. In this case, they shared a similar premise, namely, that the existing political state denied its citizens the right to express themselves politically and socially within one being. Rather than reflecting and incorporating the diverse interests of its citizenry, modern government superimposed its rule on society, isolating itself from the interests of man qua citizen or man qua l'homme. For this reason, both Marx and Arendt saw the need for its demise.

Hereafter their thought diverged (though, as was pointed out in chapter 4, their alternative political models shared some similar elements). Marx's conception of the new order was based on the attendant assumption that the history of man was determined. That is to say, history was developmental culminating in that which it was destined to become, eg., the idea of an acorn presupposes its development into an oak tree.

Arendt, on the other hand, allowed for the unpredictability inherent in the condition of man. What Marx had described in the Paris Commune of 1871 as convulsions heralding the approach of communism, Arendt saw as spontaneous eruptions of revolutionary fervor. Simply because councils had emerged in that situation and in other revolutionary situations did not mean, for her, that they would inevitably replace existing political forms. What these occurrences did signify, however, was the possibility that they might emerge again during the next revolution.

The reasonableness of either interpretation must, necessarily, be judged by at least two criteria: their internal consistency and their agreement with reality.

First of all, in subjecting their respective theories to the test of internal consistency, it is desireable to note their assumption of the nature of man which conditioned their discussion on the likelihood of their political models being actualized. In this regard Marx will be discussed first. His understanding of political development rested on the assumption that the nature of man was both developmental and expressive. In the first sense, because man was by design something that he was not in birth, history was the womb in which man realized and appropriated his species-being. This process involved, among other things, man becoming conscious of himself as a social being and realizing his need for others.

Secondly, in presenting man as also an expression being, Marx referred to labour as that activity which distinguished man from animals. It was through labour that man expressed what he was.[1] Therefore, the nature of man was dependent upon the material conditions which determined his activity. At any given moment man was both <u>what</u> he produced and <u>how</u> he produced. This was in complete contrast to animals who were immediately identical with their life-activity and species-being. This meant that man was conscious

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[1]Karl Marx, <u>German Ideology</u>, in Robert C. Tucker, (ed.), <u>The Marx-Engels Reader</u>, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972), p. 114.

of his life activity, ie., he could look at himself as an object.[2]

It was upon this assumption that man was by nature both developmental and expressive that Marx could argue the inevitability of a communist society. However, was that assumption internally consistent? No, it was not. It can be argued that the relationship between the developmental and the expressive aspect of man's nature is ambiguous in Marx's writings. In positing man as a developmental being, Marx imbued the history of man with a type of "Reason" or "Hegalian" Geist. Whereas the reasonableness of this assumption can be challenged, its plausibility cannot be denied. However with regard to labour being the expression of what man is, the challenge is on firmer ground. It can be granted that man is what he produces and how he produces. But this notion is consistent with the earlier one only if the conditions of production continue to develop. But this itself would constitute the assumption that technology would continue to progress. Conversely, if technological progress would either be terminated (because of economic scarcity, because of a hypothetical limit to development, etc.) or be reversed, according to the assumption that man is what he produces, his nature would either become constant or regress. But this would then place the notion that man is both developmental and expressive in opposition to each other. Therefore

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[2]Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967), p. 71. Hereafter cited as EPM.

it can be argued that Marx's assumption that man is both a developmental being and an expressive being does not pass the test of internal consistency.

Would this assumption be viable in reality? It is immediately apparent from the preceding discussion that it would not be operable because the argument used to prove its internal inconsistency was derived from a hypothetical possibility in reality. Even if the assumption was internally consistent, it would not be operable in reality. The idealism inherent in this assumption simply does not fit the facts of reality. Perhaps insofar as the automation and computerization of many facets of contemporary society have eased man's burden it can be argued that man has developed. However, there is little evidence to support the contention that man has developed socially as well. What has he produced as a socially expressive being? He has, to cite one example, produced concentration camps which by design destroyed the commonness of man and turned some people into "scientists" and others into "experimental objects". Other examples could be cited as well which would attest to the banality of evil within the realm of social relations. Thus it becomes clear that even if Marx's assumption about man's nature had been internally consistent, a qualitative "leap" would have been required before the new order--communism--could have been realized.* But this would cast in doubt the determinism

*It is interesting to note that in fact Marx does at one point recognize the necessity of the "alteration of men on a mass scale" for the success of the cause. Quoted from, Karl Marx, German Ideology in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 157.

within his model of history.

An alternative criticism has been directed against Marx's understanding of man's nature in terms of labour. R. N. Berki in "On the Nature and Origin of Marx's Concept of Labour", argues that three variants of labour can be discerned in the writings of Marx.[3] Professor Berki presents these as labour qua creation, labour qua production and labour qua gratification. Berki's thesis, in brief, is that "Marx's concept of labor...is highly complex and heterogeneous, leading to unresolved tensions and ambiguities in the subsequently evolved mature Marxism doctrine."[4] In saying this, Berki is again raising the issue of whether there are two Marxisms or one. Whereas the argument which Berki tenders is sound in terms of the material covered, the ommission of the Grundrisse within the analysis places in doubt the overall strength of the argument, for it is the Grundrisse which is generally acknowledged as being the treatise which binds the "young" and the "old" Marx together.[5] In this work Marx exposes some of the deficiencies of his earlier economic writings and reveals also the fragmentary nature of Capital.

The test of internal consistency will now be applied to Arendt's assumption about the nature of man. First of all, Arendt preferred to talk about the condition of man rather

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[3]R. N. Berki, "On the Nature and Origin of Marx's Concept of Labour", Political Theory, Vol. 1, February, 1979, pp. 51-54.

[4]Ibid., p. 35.

[5]Martin Nicolaus, "The Unknown Marx", New Left Review, March-April, 1968, p. 60.

than the nature of man because the latter implied the ability to talk about the "who" as though it were a "what", something which only a god could do.[6] Conversely, for her, the character of man was indeterminate because he was conditioned by everything he came into contact with. While remaining indeterminate, the character of man's condition was revealed by his activity. For Arendt there were three possible ways of spending one's life; they were in labour, in work or in action. Labour was at the one extreme and because it was concerned with necessity she considered it barely human. She described the life of the labourer as meaningless and animal-like. Because the task of labouring was never done, it never produced anything, and so there was no opportunity for experiencing freedom which was the raison d'être of life. Thus for her, labour always should be left in the private realm.

Conversely, action, which was at the other extreme was the most human activity in which one could engage. Because it occurred in the public realm, a realm for which she had the highest regard, adjectives like "glorious", "virtuous", "excellence", etc. accompanied it in all her writings. Accompanying her use of action as a political concept was her use of it in a metaphysical sense as well. Action, within her thought played a role which traditionally had been assigned to God which was "the function of giving

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[6]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 10.

ultimate significance to life."[7] Without action the world of man would have neither meaning nor value. Being pessimistic about the meaninglessness prevalent in the contemporary world, she saw action as the only recourse for man to derive meaning in a world characterized by process. Through action man could achieve immortality, that is, lasting remembrance.

Having said this, it would be expected that, for Arendt, action would bring about the new order of councils. While she would never have admitted otherwise, it is interesting to note from where these actors were to come. In the revolutionary period between 1848 and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the revolutionary councils she acclaimed, all sprang up in the working class. In fact she referred to them as "worker's councils."[8] Having previously referred to the mass workers society as a society of labourers, it is difficult to comprehend why suddenly this class would become the catalyst in bringing about revolutionary change. It does perhaps suggest that her use of terms, coined within the framework of a slave society such as Greece had been, were too narrow and rigid when applied to a modern society in which labour and action were not as far apart as she might have supposed.

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[7]N. K. Sullivan, "Politics, Totalitarianism and Freedom: The Political Thought of Hannah Arendt", Political Studies, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1973, p. 184.

[8]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 498.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty with respect to Arendt's understanding of man's condition is whether the human being she had in mind could actually exist in reality. The political actor she had in mind was so individualistic that it is difficult to comprehend how a society of such actors would survive. Having stripped them of all virtues except "trust in the reasonableness of others "and the ability "to forgive", she claimed that when peers came together they came neither to help nor to hinder each other; they came for the sake of sheer togetherness. Because each individual sought excellence for himself, what was to hinder his use of immoral action to achieve that essence? Moreover the very structure of the group was such as to precipitate differences of opinion. What would keep the level of conflict to mere sharing of opinions? It becomes obvious that the realization of her political society would require a utopian world in which the aims and intentions of its members would be harmonized and nothing more than "respect for the next one's opinion" would be demanded. Therefore a substantial revision of her concept of political action would need to occur before it could become more than a "worker's utopia."[9]

Having cast doubt upon their assumptions of man and the actualization of their model communities, what is there in the thought of Karl Marx and Hannah Arendt which

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[9] Cf. George Kateb, "Freedom and Worldliness in the Thought of Hannah Arendt," Political Theory, Vol. 5, No. 2, May, 1977, pp. 173 ff., for a possible revision of Arendt's conception of action.

contributes to a more complete understanding of the human condition, property, individual/group relations, political organization, and political meaning? It is this. Marx and Arendt recognized that the individual could not be an individual without being embodied in a group. The group serves two purposes in this regard. Firstly, the group is the crucible in which distinction can be gained and secondly, it is the body or the coming-together in a harmonious relationship of what would be unique but useless members when viewed separately. A useful analogy is the human body. It incorporates a large number of distinct units which only become significant within the context of the larger whole: the body. In a similar fashion individual human beings are only individuals, rather than an agglomeration of interesting sentient beings, when their uniqueness is viewed within the corporate structure of the body.

Within their writings, Arendt and Marx developed this theme in alternate ways. Two examples, one negative and the other positive will illustrate the point.

Their negative response to the modern conception of property sheds light on an institution which, taken for granted by many, is a power which has the potential for much injustice. Their depiction of property as <u>private wealth</u> exposed four deleterious consequences for the individual and the community of which he was a member. First of all, in its practical application the new conception of property as <u>private wealth</u>, as money, deprived man of his humanity

by questioning his worldliness. Secondly, private wealth had replaced landed property as a sacred entity, without itself becoming identified with a specific individual or location in the community. Thirdly, it set man against man in that each individual saw the other as the limitation of his own fulfillment and therefore sought to have power over him. Lastly, the combination of all of the above caused the fragmentation of men within society and money became the unifying force within the community. These are timely admonitions to a world which affords primary importance to the accumulation of wealth.

On the positive side, the importance which they attached to the group has value for a society which has lost sight of the commonness of man. In contrast to the modern world, which stresses the sameness of man, Arendt and Marx stressed the "familiarity" of the council and the "brotherhood of man." In suggesting that the role of conversation and political action was instrumental in creating groups within which people could get to know each other, they were proclaiming the forgotten notion that men are distinct from each other. They are unique individuals who can only be conscious of their distinctiveness when they are among others. In part, the realization of freedom and meaning for the individual only becomes possible when man in the singular chooses to join the group and live within it. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote this about the relationship between the freedom of the individual and committment to the group:

> The nuance between freedom and compulsion at this point is a subtle one; I join that is, I give myself in freedom, but there is immediately a self-imposed limitation upon my freedom. My choice is actually a dependence here within the group rather than death elsewhere in complete independence. Facing the alternative of all or nothing, the group is born, and it is only on the basis of an impossibility of living any longer as a human being that one unites. If the individual loses himself in the group, it is nevertheless only in order to find himself.[10]

As Marx and Arendt pointed out so often, the concept of plurality entails commitment to the group. To a world suffering from anonymity and to individuals estranged from one another, the group may offer the individual freedom and meaning.

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[10]Jean-Paul Sartre as quoted in, Wilfred Desan, The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965),p. 136.

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