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**As if Authenticity Matters:
The Fall of Contemplation and The Rise of The Social Realm**

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Education

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

As if Authenticity Matters: The Fall of Contemplation and The Rise of The Social Realm

Zachary Anton Reznicek

As a corrupted byproduct of socioeconomic politics, curriculum philosophy is unsuitable to solve its own problems or reform itself. Leaving the educational field, I consider the foundation of education through a political philosophy frame. Using Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* to differentiate between active living and merely existing, I explore the pre-Socratic definitions of authenticity, politics, freedom, plurality, public, private, labor, work and action. With this political framework, I investigate the rise of the social realm from the fall of the public and private realms in three key historic periods: Ancient Greece's 4th Century B.C.E. shift from democracy to empire; the institution of neo-Platonism as Catholicism in the 4th Century A.D. to redeem the Roman empire; and the 19th Century lapse into modern consumerism from Marx's inability to reconcile the economic alienation of the Industrial Revolution. I show that the rise of Western society has galvanized essentialism and fostered a disconnect with authenticity and our human senses. I identify the anxiety created by the conditioned feeling that one cannot trust one's own senses is the catalyst of existentialism. I run authenticity through the existential frame of plurality, ambiguity and existential self-validation. It becomes evident that contemplation is the missing element in curriculum philosophy. I review two curriculum initiatives that I believe foster contemplation in students: Transcendental Meditation in

schools and Outward Bound educational adventure trips. I make recommendations of how to combine authenticity, Transcendental Meditation, and Outward Bound into practical curriculum philosophy.

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DEDICATION

In Loving Memory

Sarafina Zanna Reznichuk (1910-2007)
You are an oasis from the world of judgment

Cyrus George Reznichuk (1904-1971)
You are a wonderful enigma and your vision touches me even now

Thomas Ringelmann (1946-2008)
Your guidance to self-guidance is like no other

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Statement of the problem

The problem is that we do not make developing an authentic way of living the priority of curriculum philosophy studies. In curriculum philosophy and in the curriculum that is actually taught, we do not properly distinguish the difference between authenticity derived from the self and authenticity derived from the auspices of external dictates. Education is entangled with morality such that authenticity, as we know it, is only a derivative of a philosophy we do 'right' or 'genuinely'¹ – but that does not mean our lives themselves are authentic nor does it guarantee that the philosophies that we subscribe to are committed to self-development. At the post-graduate level, there are discussions (yet rarely in my experience) *of* authenticity, *that which is* authentic and *how* something may or may not *be* authenticated and *why* something is authentic or inauthentic, but inquiries come too late when how we are living has already crystallized (into policy). This excessive degree of abstraction shows we do not have a grasp on the problem of authenticity. And what would be more important to education than developing an authentic life?

¹ Afterall, why do people swear on a book of ideas? 'Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?' The self is not trusted to be realized or authentic. What the self proclaims must be authenticated by an external reference.

Introduction

I have narrowed my investigation of authenticity to three philosophical concepts found within existentialism: existentialism (itself), ambiguity, and plurality. In order to clarify the complexity of these concepts, I will review the literature in the first three chapters of this thesis. In the fourth chapter, I will expand on two congruent curriculum initiatives. Throughout this document, I will refer to humans as dual-gendered (i.e. ‘he or she’ ‘his or hers’), but in the case of citations, I will leave their original forms (which are usually masculine), or adapt them with brackets (i.e. [his or hers]).

I will begin in the first chapter by outlining Hannah Arendt’s (1958) conception of the *vita activa* (v.a.) – the three basic human conditions: labor, work and action from her book *The Human condition*².

In chapter two, I will review Arendt’s discussion of the hierarchical shifts within the *vita activa* and between the v.a. and *vita contemplativa* (v.c.) that she claims brought about the modern social realm³. To describe *the social*’s formation we will review three key Western historical events: the collapse of the public realm in Ancient Greece, the collapse of the private realm by Roman Catholicism, and the perpetual consumer machine of our inauthentic modern social-economy. Through this narrative, I will review what Arendt calls the reversal of contemplation and action⁴. I will highlight how action is subverted by the devaluation of the intrinsic-self for the marketable-self galvanized by the cumbersome pretexts of morality that eclipse the possibility for authentic living.

In chapter three, I will discuss the importance of existentialism as the movement that reawakened the demand for authenticity. In reviews of Abraham Kaplan’s (1961)

² Arendt, Hannah. *The Human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.

³ Ibid., pp.35-39.

⁴ Ibid., pp.262-67.

chapter “Existentialism” in *The New world of philosophy*⁵, Walter Kaufmann’s (1956) *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*⁶, and Van Cleef Morris’ (1966) *Existentialism in education: What it means*⁷, I will analyze what is so authentic to existentialists about existence preceding essence; that freedom lies in responsible plurality; and that ambiguity distances the self from essentialism provoking empowerment, reform and existentialism.

In chapter four, I will review two educational initiatives that strive toward authentic living. In consideration of living contemplatively, I will look at The David Lynch Foundation’s Quiet Time / Transcendental Meditation Program⁸ that provides reflective time in schools. In consideration of living actively, I will review the Outward Bound Program⁹ that takes students into the natural environment where they actively learn and experience a sharp contrast between their urban social lives and living in raw nature. I will make suggestions for combining elements of the two programs to expand practically on the basics of a functioning authentic curriculum philosophy.

If I have supported my thesis well, in the hopes of stimulating new lines of discourse, I will provide three challenges to the current precepts of curriculum philosophy. First, it should be clear that morality must be demoted to a lesser resource in self-development *and* educational philosophy must be promoted to a primary resource properly conjoined with political philosophy. Meaning, the articulation of ‘freedom’ must be clarified as more than just buying time and space from the encroachment of necessities and maintenance. ‘Politics’ must be clarified as more than just a struggle for power. And

⁵ Kaplan, Abraham. *The New world of philosophy*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

⁶ Kaufmann, Walter. *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. New York: Meridian Books, 1956.

⁷ Morris, Van Cleve. *Existentialism in education: What it means*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

⁸ ®Transcendental Meditation and TM are service marks registered in the US patent and trademark office, licensed to Maharishi Vedic Development Corporation and used under sublicense.

⁹ Outward Bound was founded by Kurt Hahn and Sir Lawrence Holt in 1941.

both ‘freedom’ and ‘politics’ must be released from any morality mechanism promising salvation. Second, if public education is to be authentic, it must explicitly identify the problem of promotion and reliance on external validation as primary and provide a practical means for students to investigate self-authentication whereby the educational institute itself (its philosophy, agenda, budget, policies, interests) is the primary open-book example. Third, in order to foster authentic active political human beings, public education must deliver a practical means for students to parallel their inner struggle to develop themselves [through self-authentication (contemplation), via guidance to internalize the *vita activa* (to balance *labor*, *work* and *action*)] with the outer struggle of individuals, interest groups, governments, and private enterprises to develop political bodies and maintain the public sphere, where the self is the model and the free market is a reference, but is not the model. A clear goal in all challenges is to realize the social economy is non-political (as it is the results of political collapse) and that real politics and freedom come from the communal rejection of a subjectively willed freedom and a reformulation of “the notion of human rights by thinking a notion of power and right that is not tied to the notions of sovereignty and national citizenship.”¹⁰ Otherwise, the need to do so, as is explored in this paper, implies the absence of politics and therefore may lead to tyranny. To dispel inauthenticity, the false promise of freedom by earning moral credit through conformity in the consumer market for salvation in an ‘afterlife’ must be razed along with the façade that the modern social economy is political.

¹⁰ Peg Birmingham. *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p.54. 2006.

Chapter 1 – What is the *vita activa*?

To properly respect the foresight and precision that Hannah Arendt brings to the discourse of authenticity requires a mental gymnastics of careful unfolding and attention to the structure of her writing as though it were an origami crane that will need to be put back together again. Margaret Canovan (1998), in her introduction of the recently repackaged second edition of *The Human Condition*, credits Arendt with her own unique, uncategorizable philosophical style. “Concerned with the setting for politics rather than politics itself”¹¹ this “long, complex piece of writing that conforms to no established pattern...[with] more intertwined strands of thought than can possibly be followed at first reading, and even repeated readings are liable to bring surprises”¹² works directly on the reader. “Her political theory is not simply there to be picked... it has to be literally unearthed and sifted... and then cast into an argument about politics.”¹³ Why go through all this? I chose *The Human Condition* as my primary reference, because it is concerned with the problem of authenticity even if it challenges convention. Maurizio D’Entreves remarks, “Against tradition Arendt sets the criterion of genuineness, against the authoritative that which is forgotten, concealed, or displaced at the margins of history.”¹⁴

Among a variety of ways to approach authenticity from the standpoint of political philosophy, I have chosen¹⁵ to start by reviewing the components of what Arendt (1958)

¹¹ Margaret Canovan, Margaret. “Introduction”. In *The Human condition*, 2nd Ed., Hannah Arendt (Author), p.ix. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1998.

¹² Canovan, 1998, pp.vii-xx.

¹³ Shiraz Dossa. *The Public Realm and the public self*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, p.9. 1989.

¹⁴ D’Entreves, Maurizio. “Hannah Arendt”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2006, URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>>.

¹⁵ Although an argument for Arendt’s biases can be formulated, I was looking for someone with an objective bird’s eye view with a sober sense of laying out why people do what they do (ethics) in a narrative style. Choosing to focus on character, events, resistance and responsibility, Arendt seemed the

calls *the human condition*.¹⁶ According to Arendt, the human condition is made up of three principal components: *labor*, *work*, and *action*. Although some jumping around in the historical contextualization of *labor*, *work*, and *action* in this chapter and the next will be unavoidable, I will do my best to highlight Arendt's meticulous dissection of the forms *labor*, *work*, and *action* have taken as she peels back the layers of historical shifts of political perception, interpretation and policy. Along the way, to properly define each of the conditions within the *vita activa*, I must clarify how they fit within and cross over between the public and private realms.

LABOR AND WORK

Labor defines the activity involved in ensuring a base existence of survival and consumption ...until further need of survival and consumption. Similar to any animal species, basic human existence centers on the private *labor* of family and the home. Interaction with others is communally obligatory as a means of survival. To maintain the survival of the family, everyone dependent on the shelter, food, and safety of the private home must toil together. However, there is more to the human condition than just labor. Even animals are capable of laboring.

As humans establish order(s), form routine agendas and cultivate tools, *labor* becomes more efficient (i.e., reusable, seasonal, time reducing, etc...) and productive. Populations of humans start to distinguish themselves from the natural landscape by producing artifacts like fences, silos, workshops, and aqueducts. Arendt identifies this productive change in human active life as *work*.

best choice. As Tuija Parvikko (1999, p.130) asserts, "Arendt never wrote either a *theory* of action or a *theory* of judgment."

¹⁶ Arendt, 1958.

Self-awareness¹⁷ sets humans in a different classification from animals because an inner (phenomenological) dialogue of feelings, smells, noises, tastes and visuals takes on referential symbology¹⁸. As these symbols are manifested outwardly between human beings, language is formed to define the world through which they navigate themselves. To define him or herself, Arendt says, a human needs language¹⁹. The ‘world’ humans define through language, she asserts, distinguishes them from animals.

By making artificial shelters, storing and preserving food and making primary considerations for efficiency and production, humans go against the ‘call of the wild’, altering their conditions and existence by not going with the natural²⁰ course of migration and the seasons. Thus, Arendt proposes what she herself calls an “unusual”²¹ distinction between labor and work.

Arendt reports that although the terms have become often synonymous, there has always been a Western linguistic difference, in Greek (*ponein* and *ergazesthai*), Latin (*laborare* and *fabricari*), German (*arbeiten* and *werken*), and French (*labourer/travailler* and *ouvrer*), between *labor* and *work*²². In each case, labor is (1) done by the body, (2) associated with pain and toil, (3) incomplete and therefore itself traceless, and (4) as a noun, *in process*²³ and “never designates the finished product, the result of laboring, but

¹⁷ Self-perception in the natural environment and through a ‘drive’ to overcome various natural ‘laws’ via inner reflection of outward experience (which is not, at least, initially premeditative).

¹⁸ Symbols inwardly represent self-placement in a linear (time) and geographical (space) manner – simultaneously differentiating between past, present and future *and* accommodating the conception of *being, having been* and *going to be* in different places.

¹⁹ Arendt, 1958, p. 82.

²⁰ Although efforts are now being made to exist more consciously, ergonomically, organically, and in harmony with nature, humans do not naturally or automatically preserve or maintain eco-systems.

²¹ Arendt, p. 72.

²² Ibid., p. 72; p. 322, footnote 3.

²³ Ibid., p. 72-74; p. 322 [3].

remains a verbal noun to be classed with the gerund.”²⁴ Work (a) has an intellectual component, (b) is associated with craft, (c) creates artifice and monument and is therefore traceable, and (d) is, as a noun, complete²⁵. One never says, ‘Come and see the labor I did’; one may however say, ‘Come and see the work I did.’ Ultimately, Arendt points out that although modernity has argued the difference between productive and unproductive labor; skilled and unskilled work; and manual and intellectual labor, only the distinction between the first pair “goes to the heart of the matter, and it is no accident that... Adam Smith and Karl Marx based the whole structure of their argument upon it.”²⁶ Because survival depends on it, Arendt reasons, labor can be glorified and upset the hierarchical perception between labor and work – this was Marx “hoping all the time that only one more step was needed to eliminate labor and necessity altogether.”²⁷ This becomes especially relevant when we see that ‘necessity’ is tied to tyranny in Chapter 2.

Arendt further elaborates her definition of labor. To fend off glorified ideas of ‘labor’ in the Herculean²⁸ sense, Arendt clarifies that it is “the daily fight in which the human body is engaged to keep the world clean and prevent its decay bears little resemblance to heroic deeds; the endurance it needs to repair every day anew the waste of yesterday is repetition.”²⁹ This endurance of repetition makes us, in labor, an *animal laborans*, “which with its body and the help of tame animals nourishes life, may be the lord and master of all living creatures,”³⁰ but is still only the custodian of nature and earth. By contrast, *homo faber*, man the worker, “conducts himself as lord and master of the

²⁴ Ibid., p.72.

²⁵ Ibid., p.72-74; p.322 [3].

²⁶ Ibid., p.76.

²⁷ Ibid., p.77.

²⁸ Especially the Hercules’ task to clean out Augeas’ stables among the *Twelve Labours*.

²⁹ Arendt, 1958, p.87.

³⁰ Ibid., p.122.

whole earth,”³¹ ‘works upon’, fabricates and reifies natural materials through violence and extraction, “erecting a man-made world only after destroying part of God-created nature.”³² Labor exhausts, ‘pains’, often overwhelms and only promises more of the same. Arendt makes the case that beyond the pride of doing a job, the ‘joys of labor’ are again a misnomer because it is by the elemental experiences of human strength, courage, and danger involved in work that we receive self-assurance, satisfaction and a measure of the self versus the elements³³ – all of which can be multiplied by tools³⁴.

Arendt points out that, where the repetition of laboring to eat and eating to labor follows the cycle of biological metabolism (consumption), *work* represents *multiplication* in three ways³⁵. One, tools extract materials to be *used* not consumed – multiplying resources. Two, tools make more tools and don’t get used up in the process. Three, what is made has permanence and multiplies the sense of the world.

In *work*, the model or image of the object is there before and after the object is produced. This becomes important because a permanent idea can be a model upon which others can be inwardly built. For example, through work on the inner-self, one can strive to become a ‘model citizen’ or strive to attain and maintain idealized qualities. As certain qualities are ‘extracted’ as useful resources, they are not consumed but rather put to repeated use multiplying ideology publicly and in their next of kin. The more this ‘behaviour’ is embraced and rewarded, the more concretely and permanently these human tools build an external existence or world. There will be extended discussion on multiplying ideals in Chapter 2.

³¹ Ibid., p.122.

³² Ibid., pp.119-122

³³ Ibid., pp.87,88,123.

³⁴ Ibid., pp.122-123.

³⁵ Ibid., p.124-125.

As *animal laborans* tames and shapes nature, *homo faber* is at odds with nature, violently extracting materials for tools to make both labor and work more efficient and less dangerous. Through their character, these tools, these durable and permanent products – including language – define the world. Although labor-made products are produced, consumed and disappear, we become used to and accustomed to work-made products that “give rise to the familiarity of the world, its customs and habits of intercourse between men and things as well as between men and men.”³⁶ To *homo faber*, what is made gives a sense of accomplishment because it remains and is built and expanded upon. The *animal laborans* has no such sense of rendering vision, mounting pride, building career, or establishment of identity through property³⁷.

To the Greeks and to Arendt, the hierarchy is clear between *animal laborans* that is slave to the natural conditions of life and *homo faber* who lords over nature, the self, and her or his doings³⁸. One distinction that helps us understand the hierarchy is that unlike both the subsistent *animal laborans* and the dependent actor – *homo faber*, as agent of her or his own design and products, is free to produce and – facing alone the work of her or his own hands – is free to destroy³⁹. Not only can we classify civilizations based on the tools that survive them, a tool’s very survival of a labor process is testament to the existence of different skill sets within various social classes. The industrial revolution brings a great simplification of skill sets and the strata of workers as they get split into machinists and managers.

³⁶ Ibid., p.82.

³⁷ Property that is physically tamed or intellectually patented.

³⁸ Arendt, 1958, p.127.

³⁹ Ibid., p.126.

As we approach modernity and the advent of machines, a disconnection emerges between the tool and the user. Where a craftsperson used to be connected to the materials they worked with and the person using the end product, the industrial worker is a tool in the manufacturing chain who has to work with whatever tools and materials are provided. Where formerly a person's skill fit within a community of craftspeople and tools, humans are now machine parts that can be placed and replaced with only a regard to whether they fit the task needed, but they may not be aware of or consulted about the materials used or how the next stage of the product being built relates to their work. The factor that disturbs Arendt is that in a society that uses tools to prepare for consumption, as they lose their work-character in labor's rhythm of unifying and ordering its instrumental parts, the importance of intention and the product intended blurs⁴⁰. Arendt writes, "The very distinction between means and ends [that characterizes the activities of the craftsperson], simply does not make sense."⁴¹ Where a tradition of weaving work is handed down from master to assistant, the weaving process has built into it hours of other skills, such as, trading for materials (bobbins, dyes, threads, and loom parts); identifying types and qualities of yarns and dyes; and learning to differentiate between and form other weaves, like brocade, twill weaves and satin weaves. For thousands of years, carpets and other textiles were made by weavers sitting together shuttling the weft along the warp of a loom, all along talking about their work (perhaps even singing), enriching their craft and their customs, and passing along news and knowledge. With the Industrial Revolution's 'flying shuttle', the need for assistance declined and now with mechanical looms weaving's skill-set has been replaced with technicians' know-how and rhythmic

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.127.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.127.

traditional quality control checklists for the looms' maintenance and the products' completion. When tools are used to divide tasks into discrete laborious rudiments and divide resources into stockpiles of materials and partially constructed parts and pieces, only the rhythm of the laboring body can unify labor and work processes. In this light, the advent of machines is logical, but the problem of meaning only deepens. Although *homo faber* can justify the world for its usefulness, the instrumentality that unites human and machine holds meaning only for the products and tools created, not for the human.

While only fabrication with its instrumentality is capable of building a world, this same world becomes as worthless as the employed material, a mere means for further ends, if the standards which governed its coming into being are permitted to rule it after its establishment.⁴²

This helps us see the difference between tools and machines and the disconnect and deskilling modernity has shuttled across the weave of time.

While a tool is in the hands of a craftsman controlling its range of work and quality of output, a machine, in contrast, only requires an attendant to control quantity, to monitor its fixed output and to feed it more materials. A machine attendant is attuned to a rhythm of the machine's needs, while tools and materials are attuned to the needs of a craftsman. In the larger picture, a machine sits at the center of a consumption chain needing to be fed materials at a high rate, in a specific proportion and in a shape that requires the material supplier to also be highly efficient and repetitive. It is easy to argue that if the product manufactured is too durable and sustainable, the machine's lifetime would be short, therefore machines are now designed not to make long-lasting goods. To validate the machine's existence, the distribution side of the product needs an expanding market of regularly open outlets with regular customers who expect the product's

⁴² Ibid., p.137.

eventual obsolescence. The impact on humanity of this development has been felt across every industry. Even art's 'boundary pushing' crafts that celebrate individual action and reflection through personalized expression have fallen into cross-promoting industries of consumer aesthetic fulfillment and marketing. Although I touch on authenticity paradoxes of the 'art' industries at the end of Chapter 2, it is relevant to say here that the machine may have added a number of new art formats, but, more overwhelmingly, it has flooded the market with so many duplications of 'art' that art appreciation for its original novelty, quality, and texture pales in comparison to the collecting and consumption of cheap reproductions such as key chains, snow-globes, refrigerator magnets, computer desktops images, posters, and coffee table books. At least pre-industrial-revolution art reproductions carried with them the skills of the craft and the connection between reproducer and client! In modernity, 'art' and décor are manufactured by people without the skills to understand or appreciate the expression therein. Further, like most factory-made products, there is no connection between those who make and those who purchase the reproduction.

We have now seen how Arendt thinks labor and work have blended together in an unpleasant complex. For now, let us turn from modernity's labor and work overlap in the public (which is called the *social* and reviewed in Chapter 2) to return to ancient Greece where the clarity of separation of labor and work in the private realm allowed for the possibility of what Arendt calls "action". Action is Arendt's third component of the *vita activa*.

ACTION

By *action*, Arendt means the expressing of original words and the doing of original deeds within a communal framework not bound to or related to the necessities of labor or the market of work. This allows for the existence of a public space separate from an individual's private life, which Arendt calls *freedom*⁴³, and the struggle *within* the public space to exercise freedom is called *politics*. Freedom, for Arendt, is not needing to attend to the necessities of life, nor the need to control resources or keep the market place in order, nor the need to vie for power, as all these detract from freedom to act. With all of these taken care of in one's own private realm, 'politics' is the engagement of action between equals in such a founded freedom where inner self-reflection (contemplation) and *distinction* drives action. Arendt puts politics in the Ancient Greek perspective:

To belong to the few "equals" (*homoioi*) meant to be permitted to live among one's peers; but the public realm itself, the *polis*, was permeated by a fiercely agonal spirit, where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievements that he was the best of all (*aien aristeuein*). The public realm, in other words, was reserved for individuality; it was the only place where men could show who they really and inexchangeably were.⁴⁴

Setting her political narrative in the public realm, the principle motives of Arendt's *actors* are plurality and natality. By plurality, Arendt means to imply something rather different than our conventional sense of the term – she means to highlight the importance of human beings creating difference. Speech and action are needed to formulate distinction from equals. Past, present, and future have no meaning except between beings who can distinguish themselves (their uniqueness) from one another. Arendt writes, "In man, otherness, which he shares with everything that is, and

⁴³ When considering the lexicon of freedom, 'need' is a synonym of 'poverty'.

⁴⁴ Arendt, 1958, p.38.

distinctness, which he shares with everything alive, become uniqueness, and human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings.”⁴⁵

By *natality*⁴⁶ Arendt uses the root *natal* or ‘birth’ to invoke the quality action has to suddenly bring something new and fresh to life. Arendt declares that although inserting ourselves into the world by word or deed

may be stimulated by the presence of others whose company we may wish to join... it is never conditioned by them; its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative. To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin (as the Greek word *archein*, ‘to begin,’ ‘to lead,’ and eventually ‘to rule,’ indicates), to set something into motion (which is the original meaning of the Latin *agere*).⁴⁷

Natality is critical to action for a number of reasons. One, with “*new* beings constantly born... new birth promises new beginnings.”⁴⁸ Two, to see that new action can arrive unanticipated is to get a sense of unbridled freedom. As Maurizio D’Entrèves (1994) points out, “to be free means to engage in action, while through action our capacity for freedom is actualized.”⁴⁹ Three, new actions prevent stagnation and corruption in human affairs.

Speech, for Arendt, is a critical aspect of action. However, it is also paradoxical because it can, in its distinct way, distinguish humans in the most revelatory or shocking manner invoking realization and motivation, and yet also obscure humans in the most mechanical manner of automatic associations. Speech, Arendt says, “corresponds to the

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.156.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.158.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.157.

⁴⁸ Dossa, 1989, p.74.

⁴⁹ D’Entrèves, Maurizio. *The Political philosophy of Hannah Arendt*. New York: Routledge, p.67. 1994.

fact of distinctness and is the actualization of the human condition of plurality.”⁵⁰ Without speech, action has no character or subject. In fact, Arendt concludes that action is only relevant through spoken word where a human identifies the self as actor, announcing what one does, has done and will do⁵¹. Otherwise, action without disclosure of an agent is only the ‘means to an end’ and “it is obvious that the same end could be much more easily attained in mute violence.”⁵² Silence and passivity’s ability to hide the ‘who’ someone is, can be a desired anonymity or a terrifying tyranny. And yet, even though the voice is so critical to represent the self and its actions, when one tries to express ‘who’ someone is, Arendt says we cannot help but describe ‘what’⁵³ a person is instead. “Our very vocabulary leads us astray...[getting] entangled in a description of qualities” we associate and identify in one another resulting in the loss of precise human uniqueness⁵⁴. When a student says, “I am too shy to participate” he or she is using the verb *to be*, but there is no clear sense of who he or she *is*. Rather, there is only a common disconnected quality of shyness that makes up what the student is. Conversely, to say, “I do not participate because if I make a mistake others will see that I am not as strong as I act and I am putting up a facade,” tells us more about who the person *is*.

To labor is to survive; paired with consumption, it is to subsist. When work is done, the world is made and maintained. However, action and speech are in some sense more powerful because they form a basis for human individuality, for authenticity. Action

⁵⁰ Arendt, 1958, p.158.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.158-159.

⁵² Ibid., p.159.

⁵³ Ibid., p.161. We will see this also echoed by Jaspers, in Kaplan, 1961, p.111, at the end of *Existence preceding essence* (Ch. 3).

⁵⁴ Arendt, 1958, p.161.

and speech form a narrative, resulting in a story, establishing a history of events in the world⁵⁵. Arendt offers strong arguments that the Pre-Socratics understood this action/work/labor hierarchy and through it conceived of and clarified freedom as residing in the public, political realm. She further clarifies that the basic action of each citizen for freedom was a renouncement of individual and or group sovereignty, because sovereignty's "ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership, is contradictory to plurality."⁵⁶ To make the publicly political possible, distinction and natality were always at the fore. This meant that, for Arendt and the Greeks, new things must be tried, new difficulties endeavoured, and that ease is no measure of success or livelihood.

Pain and effort bound together with necessity is Arendt's definition of what it feels like to be alive. She comments on the Greek view: "For mortals, the 'easy life of the gods' would be a lifeless life."⁵⁷ It does, however, by a 'repugnance to futility' clarify that freedom is won by being aware of overcoming necessity, because work and its results build a sense of liberation⁵⁸. Contrary to the natural survival mode of the household, the *polis*

was the sphere of freedom, and if there was a relationship between these two spheres, it was a matter of course that the mastering of the necessities of life in the household was the condition for the freedom of the *polis*. Under no circumstances could politics be only a means to protect society... it is freedom of society which requires and justifies the restraint of political authority. Freedom is located in the realm of the social, and force or violence becomes the monopoly of the government.⁵⁹

What is important to realize presently is how delicate the *polis* is and how 'freedom' is something shared and maintained through efforts of not selflessness, but

⁵⁵ Ibid., p.85.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.210.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.104.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.105.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.29.

‘self-full-ness’. Freedom is not simply the chance to be released from the labor and work required to maintain one’s household. Further, freedom is not earned by being the master of necessities. The freedom we are talking about here is not merely having rights; it must be disambiguated from capricious rights and sovereign claim. In Chapter 2, it will be even more relevant how aware the Greeks (and Arendt) are of action on freedom’s context and paradox.

A critical aspect of action is the degree of uncertainty involved. No one can be completely sure what will actually happen next, and no one can change what has happened. History shows that the claim of success or failure of any particular deed or action is tentative; what may be a short-term success may prove to be a long-term blunder, or what seems a short-term disaster may be a long-term saving grace. And while the multiplication of output of work and labor are limited by physical materials, the consequences of action can multiply into results unbridled, a seemingly endless fractal of spin-offs known and unknown. The fact that a human can put in process “a single deed [that] can quite literally endure throughout time until mankind itself has come to an end... could be a matter of pride if men were able to bear its burden, the burden of irreversibility and unpredictability, from which the action process draws its very strength.”⁶⁰ Action is thus a tremulous road of experimentation and flying by the seat of one’s pants, with much less predictable results than labor or work.

The sheer fact that only a historian can put together what happened in hindsight, is reason enough to turn away with despair from the realm of human affairs and to hold contempt the human capacity for freedom, which by producing the web of human relationships, seems to entangle its producer to such an extent that he appears much more

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.209.

the victim and the sufferer than the author and doer of what he has done. Nowhere, in other words, neither in labor, subject to the necessity of life, nor in fabrication, dependent on given material, does man appear to be less free than in those capacities whose very essence is freedom and in that realm which owes its existence to nobody and nothing but man.⁶¹

The “radical novelty of [Arendt’s] view” according to Dossa, is that “the ability to exercise sovereignty does not mean the absence of freedom. On the contrary: ‘if men wish to be free, it is precisely sovereignty they must renounce.’”⁶² Therefore, the tyranny that results from sovereignty in the public realm, not only defines its costs as human plurality, freedom, action and politics⁶³, it clarifies the fragility of authenticity.

As we have seen the *vita activa* is made of three distinct human conditions: labor, work, and action. Labor is what we do to survive, how we maintain feeding and cleaning up after ourselves. Work is what we do to make survival easier and more efficient. It is how we have made the world, through tools and organizing (by splitting up tasks). Action is the freedom to express the distinct self through deed or speech with no necessity to the maintenance of labor nor obligation to the marketplace of work nor need to control or seek power.

Arendt’s hypothesis is that the Pre-Socratics had recognized that to balance the *vita activa* with regular periods of reflection – a co-existing way to live called the *vita contemplativa* – was a project towards living authentically that kept labor and work in the private realm and action in the public realm. In their private households Greek citizens

⁶¹ Ibid., p.210.

⁶² Dossa, 1989, p.85. With a quote from Arendt’s *On Revolution*, 1965, p.152.

⁶³ Ibid., p.85.

may have had slaves, but that is not at issue and further they would not have denied that slaves in the private realm gave them the opportunity to develop this public political realm where action took shape and grew. Although it is quite dubious Arendt would claim it was perfectly authentic, this period before the Greco-Roman empires, showed that these great new (natal) strivings for public distinction without vying for power (sovereignty) displayed an intention for the authentic by making a demarcation of what was inauthentic⁶⁴.

By the clear separation of the private and public realms, and the power of reflection intertwined with labor, work and action, Arendt identifies a project worth reviewing that leaves no doubt that contemplation is obligatory to recover from modernity and consumer society. Chapter two will outline how set back we are from this reform due to the multi-layered collapse of the public realm, the devaluation of action that has brought about the stampeding evolution of society (the social realm) bound by devout superstitious morality policies imbedded in our political and curriculum philosophies.

The next chapter explores the challenges faced by the delicate relationship between authenticity and the human condition. As work and labor migrate from the private to the public, the resulting social realm redefines action and freedom; glorifies labor; multiplies conformity; and juxtaposes the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*. No small threat to authenticity and action, the complexity of these circumstances unfold, migrate and reinforce themselves for 2400 years.

⁶⁴ Although there were various orators and military commanders who tried to take control of Athens or Greece from the 7th to 5th Centuries B.C.E., it became clear that in the project of the Greek Republic this was not acceptable.

CHAPTER 2 – HIERARCHICAL SHIFTS IN THE HUMAN CONDITION AND THE FORMATION OF THE SOCIAL REALM

The emergence of society – the rise of housekeeping, its activities, problems and organizational devices – from the shadowy interior of the household into the light of the public sphere, has not only blurred the old border line between private and political, it has also changed almost beyond recognition the meaning of the two terms and their significance for the life of the individual and the citizen.⁶⁵

This chapter describes the rise and reinforcement of the conformist, coercive aspects of society – what Arendt calls *the social*⁶⁶ – through three historical periods: the fall of the Greek Republic, the establishment of the Roman Catholic Empire, and the lapse into consumer capitalism: modernity's failed attempt to produce an industrial utopia. The common denominator of these three periods is the steady rise of the *the social, a realm* where, as Arendt points out, action has not been placed below labor and work as much as labor and work have been raised above action. This is the sociopolitical economy we identify as our society today.

To introduce the longer narrative of this chapter, I will briefly outline the story of the rise of the social that I intend to explore at greater length. According to Arendt, *the social* originally emerged by the fall of the Ancient Greek public realm and subsequent collapse of the private realms in the Greek and Roman Empires. Ancient historian anthropologist Thucydides⁶⁷ (411 B.C.E., 1993) helps to contextualize the fracture between Greek Republic and the Greek Empire. Through Plato's (360 B.C.E.) "allegory

⁶⁵ Arendt, 1958, p.35.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.35-65. We could parallel *the social* to Nietzsche's *herd*, those assimilated in Western Judeo-Christian morality, and Heidegger's *the they* who he uses to distinguish between the dominant way of thinking: "the They-self" and the "authentic-self, the self which has explicitly grasped itself". Heidegger, Martin. *Being & Time* (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, p.121, 1962.

⁶⁷ Thucydides. *On Justice, power and human nature: Selections from The History of the Peloponnesian War*, P. Woodruff (Ed. & Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 411 B.C.E., 1993.

of the cave” in his dialogue *The Republic*⁶⁸, we get a quite shocking blueprint of the Platonic plan for future “founders of the state” that reserved the *vita contemplativa* solely for philosophers. Thus was initiated the suppression of action and plurality by a morality scheme that would replace ‘fear of the Gods’ with the more rewarding ‘doing good’.

By the 4th Century A.D., to relieve itself of the cumbersome influx of craftspeople and laborers into a swelling social-economy *and* to reconcile the open opposition of Christian martyrdom plaguing its leadership, the Roman Empire adapted Christianity to govern the social. Since then, generations have compromised the most important aspects of living by converting their active and contemplative lives into merely useful existences. Firstly, they traded civic space, that any tax payer would have full access to, for limited access to private ‘holy’ space at a cost of faith, donation and charity. They also traded the direct experience of ‘the eternal’⁶⁹ through individual and communal philosophical explorations of public distinction and excellence for the promise of salvation in an unknown ‘afterlife’ whose entrance was externally regulated by edicts demanding humility and no questions asked.

Where the Greeks believed in no afterlife, Christians were led to believe there were a number of them⁷⁰, the most worrisome of which are ‘heaven’ and ‘hell’. As we will see, through manipulation of shame and ‘doing good’, philosophers (a miniscule fraction of the population) promised heaven to the mass majority in exchange for a life-long labor and work-intensive servitude to humbly build the ‘eternity of mankind’. There is, perhaps, no finer example of the demand on humanity for compromise and humility

⁶⁸ Plato, *The Republic*, (Benjamin Jowett, Trans.), taken from:
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.8.vii.html>, book VII, 360 B.C.E..

⁶⁹ ‘The eternal’ is the Pre-Socratic concept Arendt uses to indicate universal connection, spirituality or ascension of the soul.

⁷⁰ This thesis assumes that with no proof of an afterlife there therefore is not one.

made by philosophers than *Ecclesiastes 3*, which I have included in its entirety in two versions as *Appendix Ia* (New International Bible) and *Ib* (King James) at the end of this document. Here, below is the core of Ecclesiastes 3:9-13:

⁹ What does the worker gain from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on men. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. ¹³ That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God.⁷¹

Trading their capacity for philosophy, action, and freedom in this life, for the promise of paradise in the next life ('heaven'), humans – whose forefathers and mothers worked to free themselves from necessity to participate in a public political realm – now settled for the crumbs, called 'grace', that fell from the exalted philosophers' table merely "being happy" and "doing good while they live," which meant following the prescribed rules of the church. Regular citizens were reminded by the priests – the only ones allowed to practice philosophy – that if faith in their wrathful 'God' faltered, so too would 'His' clemency and they would burn in that other afterlife: 'hell'.

In the 19th Century, Marx's attempt to redeem the debased worker and shift power away from the philosopher, Arendt argues, was well intentioned, but resulted in a glorification of work and labor at the renunciation of action. Arendt shows that with Christian morality so entrenched in Western existence and action completely compromised in the social, instead of the new opportunities for contemplation promised by surplus, only mass-consumerism has ensued.

In the following three sections, I will outline the fall of action in three historical contexts starting in Ancient Greece, continuing in the Roman Empire's formation of the

⁷¹ New International Bible, Ecclesiastes 3:9-12.

Christian institution, and, finally, modern humanity's disconnect in pre-totalitarian consumerism.

THE ORIGINAL ANCIENT ATHENIAN PUBLIC REALM AND THE CORRUPTION OF ACTION

To the Greeks, the need for elite citizens to wield power in the private realm to maintain their estates was not freedom. Paradoxical to our modern way of thinking, Greek freedom only existed in the public realm where power was relinquished. The need to create order, to clarify caste or class by wealth, power, or bureaucracy, and to manage private issues was not welcome. Conversely, in modernity, these issues are the political focus of modern central government. To the Greeks, politics meant something else entirely.

In its heyday of the Seventh to Fifth Century B.C.E.⁷², the Athenian public realm was like a localized community “lake” formed by the streams of deeds poured into it, and, by definition, unrelated to work and labor that formed the contours of the adjoining yet separate private realm. If, for each public citizen, there was a private mountain estate and a river valley carved by the private work and labor of each estate, in the basin far below was the lake: a collection of all the in-running streams from each citizen's river valley, the pure pool of the public realm composed solely of speeches and actions. These were not speeches of necessity about how to fend off attackers, how to make harvests more efficient, how to keep slaves from escaping, or how to establish better trade logistics. These were speeches and inquiries, referred to as *dialectics*, about philosophical ideas. These philosophers asked question like “What is being?”, “What is real and what seems to be real?” “What is the world and all things in it made of?” “Why are we here?” “What

⁷² This era, called Presocratic by Catherine Osborne in *Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004, is at least what we have in written form or evidence of by written references by others later through Sixth Century A.D.

is truth?” “What is observable and what is not?” “Is speech more or less powerful than the written word?” or “What is the soul and how is it formed?” Made publicly in the *polis*, these political dialogues were expanded upon, debated and made rich by the various interpretations and efforts to bring forth something new (what Arendt calls the *natal*) that was yet unspoken or unconsidered (contemplation) that would bring inspiration. This inspiration felt individually was akin to immortality or a momentary elation that left mortality behind. This spirit, felt as a community, brought the momentary sense of freedom, which they in turn tried to nurture. In no way automatic, the authentic sensation of freedom required new and plural exploration and inspiration, and therefore could not be attained mechanically.

In this flourishing Greek ‘republic’, virtually every citizen was a philosopher. We know the most popular ones because their words – their excellence and distinction – were spoken repeatedly and then written down. The pre-Socratic philosophers demanded nobility through striving for individual immortality as a means of ‘making society better’. The greater the public action or deed, the higher the bar was raised among those who strived for freedom keeping work and labor of the private separated from the public. Embracing this way of life was to set up the connection between the *vita contemplativa* and the three different conditions of the *vita activa*. Having an open reflection of life’s conditions was to put in front of one’s self the reality of public and private life and the conflict between having to maintain control, order and power in the private and having to let go of sovereignty in the public. In contrast to one’s active life’s conditioning, contemplation as a constant and refreshing resource, we can argue, is the heart of the authenticating the self.

This attempt at authentic living did not promise ease, but rather challenged the individual to emphasize his or her noble and communal self at the expense of the power the individual could amass by manipulating others or the system for personal gain. The resulting honor was felt and expressed as the peak of the human soul. In a profound exchange about the difference between speech as action versus the written word as a diluted expression and lesser craft, Socrates explains to a young Phaedrus that

no body which is moved from outside itself has a soul, while everybody which is moved from within itself, from its own resources, has a soul, since this is what it is to be soul.⁷³

Establishing a universal striving to perfect the soul became a personal and communal endeavor known as *distinction*⁷⁴. Most importantly, however, regardless of any postulation of recurring or multiple lives⁷⁵, the soul could be developed in the current life, and sensation of the eternal could be attained in this life and *individually* for deeds done and honorable words spoken.

To belong to the few “equals” (*homoioi*) meant to be permitted to live among one’s peers; but the public realm itself, the *polis*, was permeated by a fiercely agonal spirit, where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievements that he was the best of all (*aien aristeuein*). The public realm, in other words, was reserved for individuality.⁷⁶

This was a rich and open period of innovation where many traditional and conservative ideas were challenged, especially in satirical plays. The Sophists were traveling teachers who spread *The New Learning*⁷⁷, an intellectual and artistic revolution

⁷³ Plato. *Phaedrus*. (R. Waterfield, Trans.). Toronto: Oxford University Press, circa 360 B.C.E., 2002, 245e.

⁷⁴ Arendt, 1958, p.19.

⁷⁵ See Plato’s *Phaedrus*.

⁷⁶ Arendt, 1958, p.38. We can still see traces of this concept in the Olympics.

⁷⁷ Woodruff, 1993, p.xv; Paul Woodruff. “Plato’s Shorter Ethical Works”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, URL = < <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics-shorter/>>, section 11, 2005.

embraced by Pericles (the then “most effective leader of the [Athenian] democracy”⁷⁸) that shocked conservatives (including Plato) and most Greeks living outside of Athens. In fact, Sophists were prohibited in Lacedaemonia⁷⁹ (where Sparta is the capital), because it was so blasphemous to their tradition of Gods and morality and it brought unwanted inquiries into superstition and traditions.

By the 5th Century B.C.E, as illustrated in great detail by Thucydides⁸⁰, as the Peloponnesian War with Sparta became highly charged, a new set of necessities for the ruling (citizen) class encroached on Athens. Although Athenians formed the Delian League in 477, a fund for *future* combat with the Persians, by 454, Pericles had removed the Delian League Treasury and put it in Athens. This action, according to Horst Hutter (2008), “was a-formation of the [Greek] empire as the fund was used to pay the stipends of the Athenian assemblymen – who of course voted for Pericles.”⁸¹ The concept of freedom and plurality began to slide from the public sphere when the need to exert control or determine a hierarchy among equals re-emerged. In the setting that had previously been nurturing the polis and the freedom to speak one’s mind through dialectic, *rhetoric* was now being employed to sway the assembly, and through it, “some men rose to power without winning elected office.”⁸²

As the Peloponnesian crisis started escalating (about 22 years after the republic had become an empire – according to Hutter) due to broken treaties of Greek states, trade embargos and border skirmishes, Corinth invited Sparta to a debate in 432 in which they

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.xv.

⁷⁹ Plato. *Hippias Major*, 283-284; in Thucydides, 1993, p.28 [footnote 78 by Woodruff].

⁸⁰ Thucydides. *On Justice, power and human nature: Selections from The History of the Peloponnesian War*, P. Woodruff (Ed. & Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993.

⁸¹ Horst Hutter. *Lecture series: A Survey of the major Greek thinkers that have shaped the political conceptions of our culture* from POLI206: Introduction to Western Political Theory. Recorded at Concordia University, Montreal, February 14, 2008.

⁸² Woodruff, 1993, p.xiii.

hoped to convince Sparta to join them in war against Athens. In the opening of the debate, the Corinthians described the differences between Sparta and Athens and railed at Sparta in an effort to provoke them. What is important to this thesis is that the excerpts below explicitly show action has been corrupted in Athens by rhetoric where the *vita contemplativa* (rest and leisure as designated time for reflection) is no longer practiced to balance the *vita activa*:

“...we think you [Sparta] are blind. We don’t think you have thought through what sort of people these Athenians are: your struggle will be with people totally different from yourselves. They love innovation, and are quick to invent a plan and then to carry it out in action, while you are good only for keeping things as they are, and you never invent anything or even go as far as necessary in action. ...Above all, they never hesitate; you are always delaying; they are never at home, and you are the worst homebodies, because they count on getting something by going abroad, while you fear you will lose what you have if you go out. ...You see, they alone get what they hope for as soon as they think of it, through the speed with which they execute their plans. At this they toil, filling all the days of their lives with hard work and danger. What they have, they have no leisure to enjoy, because they are continually getting more. They do not consider any day a holiday unless they have done something that needed to be done; and they think that an idle rest is as much trouble as hard work. So that, in a word, it is true to say that they are born never to allow themselves or anyone else a rest. That is the character of their city.”⁸³

Of course, the Spartans eventually win the war, and one factor could be this corrupted overreaching *vita activa* and lack of reflection (*vita contemplativa*) the Corinthian describes.

As we approach the Romans and Christianity, I would like to introduce the concept of *common*. It is that which, tightly knit, made Sparta strong; and which, open to interpretation and change, made Athens weak; and 600 years later – I will argue – that which, masterfully deployed, unified the Roman Empire under Christianity. As Hutter (2005) defines it, “the common is a community of persons that are united by common

⁸³ Thucydides, 1993, pp.19-20 [70-71], my underline.

consent to laws and sharing of sacred things.”⁸⁴ But these laws were not written in Greek times; they were unwritten rules and norms from a traditional education and training system. Hutter says that the mechanism that guides a common set of rules is justice⁸⁵ moderated by internalized piety shaped by a common fear of an external threat.

Confronting fear of an external threat as a community is a transformative experience. Forming tradition around this experience makes it sacred and binding. Inclusion into the community therefore requires adherence to, and common maintenance of, the tradition. The justification of the community’s rules defines a way of living; it outlines a philosophy. The choice of whether one accepts this traditional way of living will depend on the dynamic of the tradition’s philosophy and its mode of fulfilling justice. Sparta and Athens had different dynamics, but they both employed fear of an external threat to guide justice within their common.

Although all Greeks used the common enemy of Persia as a way to justify its fulfillment of justice and security maintenance, the Spartans, in addition, used the suppression of their slaves (the helots) to hone their vigilance. Going to war means exposing one’s self to pain, to suffering and potentially to death. By requiring their population to be courageous and to overcome their cowardice⁸⁶, the Spartans established and maintained a strong and common identity. But to ultimately bind Spartans together – to make them convinced beyond any doubt that what they did domestically and at large

⁸⁴ Hutter, 2005, Feb 3rd lecture.

⁸⁵ In his Feb 3rd 2005 lecture Hutter summarizes the rules of justice as presented by Thucydides: In a conflict you must not go to a violent solution, you must seek a peaceful compromise. If you make a contract with someone you must obey the contract. If there is punishment, it must meet the crime and only against the guilty. You must always seek compromise, rather than violence. Tyranny must be avoided.

⁸⁶ Ibid., Feb 3rd lecture.

was justified – it took not just rules, but shared superstition. Of the Spartans, Hutter called this a “divine sanction attached to the rules.”⁸⁷

Through constant warfare, civilizations establish strong commons, and “those who do not reach a common defense are swept under.”⁸⁸ While general security is sustained in the common by making a common defense against an outside enemy or threat, what if the threat is less imminent and there are no slaves to keep you on edge? We can argue that this was the case of the Ancient Athenian Republic that gave it the opportunity to develop the polis and relinquish external fears, of which the New Learning was arguably the result. Of course, it did not last, because external forces reappeared and action was corrupted, but we do have this historical problem of the social that Arendt beseeches we investigate. With inauthenticity under investigation, I believe there is insight in considering what brought down mighty Athens. We have argued it was in part their own tyrannical arrogance, but what caused Sparta to win? Athens was Godless. Sparta believed in Gods and were (w)holy superstitious. There is only one thing more powerful than allowing superstition to reign in the self or in the community: superstitious tradition.

Superstitious tradition helps galvanize a common through another level of fear. Rules not being enough, the Spartans traditionally, and the Athenians in their own new way of wielding persuasion and rhetoric⁸⁹, used shame to manage fear and temper civilians. Hutter asserts that even shame alone does not work if there is nothing sacred attached to it; thus, *aidos*, the fear of the opinion of the Gods, is used to keep people in common order. Although I may make an argument against expressing my passion through

⁸⁷ Ibid., Feb 3rd lecture.

⁸⁸ Ibid., Feb 3rd lecture.

⁸⁹ Among other ancient *and* modern civilizations.

violence to avoid shame via *aischune*, the fear of opinion of others, “even if my neighbor is not present, the Gods will observe me.”⁹⁰ This is the key, because *common* order requires that everyone believes in the Gods. With the same common for more than 400 years, “shaped from a similar *habitus* of the mind and *habitus* of the soul,”⁹¹ the Spartans’ success continuously reinforced their belief in the Gods. They thought that the Gods were on their side and through their superstition they kept order amongst themselves and justified their actions.

This helps to make a stark contrast to the Athenian common that had abandoned Gods.

The Athenian public realm was expanding with a surge of new citizens from the private realm. Athens was changing and the dynamic of satires, free speech and pushing for distinction allowed for and even caused society to form. The people who occupied public space were not just subjects to it, they were a part of it. The New Learning had had its effect and citizenship had opened now to any man who claimed Athenian descent. On the inside, Athens saw great change, growth and a new sense of common, where “day-laborers, with no landed estates at all, could pass judgment on the richest men of the city.”⁹² But externally the other Greek states were reticent to embrace this innovation. Empowering as it may have been for Athens, with neighboring hostility flaring externally and dialectic shifting to rhetoric and persuasion internally, new arguments began circulating in Athens about future “Founders of the State.”⁹³

⁹⁰ Hutter, 2005, Feb 3rd lecture.

⁹¹ Ibid., Feb 3rd lecture.

⁹² Woodruff, 1993, p.xiv.

⁹³ Plato, 360 B.C.E., book VII.

With freedom compromised by the need to form order, action degenerated to governance and power issues and an oligarchic power struggle replaced public politics. Here is where the hole left from abandoning ‘fear of Gods’ began to be filled by the necessity of ‘doing good’, and where the *vita contemplativa* was removed from the public sphere and taken over by the philosophers. As was mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the practical concrete doctrine that sets philosophers up as the elite is *Ecclesiastes* – a book of the original Hebrew Bible (that is now part of the Old Testament portion of the Christian Bible), roughly translated as ‘gathering’ or more modernly ‘church’, that dates back to approximately 180 B.C.E. This forlorn document admonishes humans to accept their lives as futile and thus be satisfied with their lot in life as laborers. But this attitude and how it was to be achieved was set up by Athenian predecessors.

It is most famously exemplified in Plato’s allegory of the cave⁹⁴ from the *Republic*⁹⁵, which I will lay out here, as it is key to understanding Arendt’s observations in the section “The Traditional substitution of making for acting,”⁹⁶ in *The Human Condition*’s chapter on Action. Plato (through Socrates) describes a cave beneath the surface of the earth where people are chained together and their heads are fixed to face the back wall where shadows are cast from the fire behind and above them. Between the chained and the fire is a low wall upon which objects can be set and manipulated to

⁹⁴ Plato (through Socrates and Glaucon) lays out this allegory in book VII (514a-520a) which is part of section 2 (books VI-VII) of *The Republic* where he characterizes the philosopher.

⁹⁵ The Pre-Socratic Greek Republic, during which many tyrants took or tried to take power, characterized by the mid Archaic Period (7th Century B.C.E.) to just prior to the absorption of the Delian League Treasury into Athens (454 B.C.E.), should not be confused with the republic described in Plato’s *The Republic*. Plato’s is the blue print for many concepts established within succeeding Western republics, but Arendt asks us to look again at the original historical Greek Republic for more profound inspiration and evidence of a project approaching freedom, contemplation and action.

⁹⁶ Arendt, 1958, (section 31) pp.197-206.

intentionally cast shadows. Reality, as far as the chained are concerned, is the shadows and echoes off the back wall.

When one of the chained is freed, Socrates and Glaucon agree that when shown the shadow producing objects and mechanism of illusion, the prisoner would be perplexed finding “the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him.”⁹⁷ Not until he is brought up into the light of the sun, moon and stars, and sees his own reflection in the water, would the prisoner actually see himself as he actually is in his own proper place and not in another (the manipulated prison). Only then will he “contemplate himself as he is” and achieve the knowledge of the philosopher⁹⁸. Meanwhile, those in the cave will have their own conception of justice, wealth and power, but in virtue of the fact that they are shadow followers, they will be ignorant, poor in wisdom and virtue, and hungry for private advantage.

With the oligarchy that proceeded the Athenian Republic, this philosophy devised by Plato (and subsequently reinforced by Aristotle) substantiated abstract ‘form’, lifting objective ‘ideas’ above what senses perceive. Arendt comments:

This transformation was necessary to apply the doctrine of ideas to politics, and it is essentially for a political purpose, the purpose of eliminating the character of frailty from human affairs, that Plato found it necessary to declare the good, and not the beautiful, to be the highest idea. But this idea of the good is not the highest idea of the philosopher⁹⁹.

What is ‘beautiful’ guides the philosopher who has left the cave to gaze in wonder at the stars. When rules for civil order are needed – then it is the ‘good’ which guides the philosopher-king. Yet what ultimately transformed fear of the Gods into a common framework of morality, or “doing good,” is the striving of the philosopher, now

⁹⁷ Plato, 360 B.C.E., *The Republic*, book VII.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Arendt, 1958, p.202.

philosopher-king, to enforce “his” interpretation of what is good on others. As we will see in his conception of “Founders of the state,” the philosopher king comes from a class of legislators who are given partial access to contemplation – enough to “pity”¹⁰⁰ those still prisoners in the cave – but are then thrust back into the prison to maintain order and build the world. What is so shocking, as we will see in the next section, is that this compromise – made ecclesiastic – is exactly what the original revolution of Jesus Christ sought to overthrow¹⁰¹.

Although the educational plan in Plato’s “*Republic*”¹⁰² offers every Greek an education, it does so ‘essentially’ based on capacities and competencies that define who one is separating people into a pyramid of laborers, guardians, crafts people, philosophers, legislators with the best among them as a philosopher-king at the top. Plato writes that the philosophers should hold “citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making them benefactors of the State, and therefore benefactors of one another; to this end he [the legislator] created them, not to please themselves, but to be his instruments in binding up the State.”¹⁰³

The judgment of others therefore causes one to act in a very specified way, which is really not genuinely acting at all – it is, rather, maintaining and upholding the world, which is by its very essence not action, but rather a form of labor or work. That makes doing good (or, in other words, following prescribed morality), immediately problematic for authentic living and personal growth which is not devoid of pangs, disruption, imbalance and pain, but requires contemplation, self-actualization through plurality and

¹⁰⁰ Plato, 360 B.C.E., *The Republic*, book VII.

¹⁰¹ For more insight (or blasphemy), please see *Appendix III: My Theory on the life of Jesus*.

¹⁰² Socrates and Glaucon refer to themselves, and others like themselves, to be the “founders of the State” in Plato, 360 B.C.E., *The Republic*, book VII.

¹⁰³ Plato, 360 B.C.E., *The Republic*, book VII.

nality. Outside the cave prison, the philosopher gets to contemplate, but the legislator, guardian, craftsperson and laborer living out their lives programmed to the reality of shadows and echoes do not. They get to maintain and administer 'goodness' for the State, which now represents a status quo situation where the polis of individual freedom, philosophy, distinction, and excellence are compromised. Let us go now to see what philosophers did after hijacking the *vita contemplativa*.

CHRISTIANITY! THE FURTHER DECLINE OF ACTION AND REINFORCEMENT OF THE SOCIAL

With the expansion of the Roman Empire and the private realm emptying into the public realm came the legacy of Western consciousness; new and developing technologies; and a robust public infrastructure . Rome was an enormous empire split into East and West governed by hereditary senatorial and equestrian aristocrats. Their highly organized system of public office called *cursus honorum* (Latin for "course of honours") fulfilled a centralized need to control and tax labor and work and to limit individual power, speech and action. Rank elections were so fierce that legislators had to constantly maintain their perfect records of service to the imperium or risk shame and removal from the status ladder. Furthermore, they were so occupied with maintaining order and everyone doing what Roman law required that there was no place for dissension. Tolerated by the Romans as long as they supported Rome, the philosophers were now either hermits, tutors, advisors, or students in remote schools.

Arendt writes, "With the disappearance of the ancient city-state, the term *vita activa* lost its specifically political meaning and denoted all kinds of active engagement

in the things of this world.”¹⁰⁴ It is not that labor and work were lifted up to be the equals of action, but rather the reduction of action to “among the necessities of earthly life, so that contemplation (the *bios theoretikos*, translated into the *vita contemplativa*) was left as the only truly free way of life.”¹⁰⁵ Yet as contemplation disappeared with the old public realm, the new social realm became a co-mingled labor and market society ruled by an empire. Based on Aristotle’s conception of the *bios politikos*, the necessity to rule over subjects implied an inability to be free, an inability to be political, and a certain level of commitment to the ‘despot’s way of life’¹⁰⁶. Thus, only the philosopher was free and, as a non-legislator, he did not even have to fulfill the necessity of maintaining control of others.

The transitional period from 400 B.C.E. to 300 A.D. is of course a volatile period in religious history. It is important to outline some basic historical events, within which I will sketch a few key figures and instances important to the historical narrative¹⁰⁷ in *Appendix II: Historical Timeline 509 B.C.E. to 325 A.D.*

There is a close connection between ancient philosophers and the conventional morality that was later promulgated by Christian philosophers. According to Pierre Hadot (1995), in *Seelenführung. Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike*, Paul Rabbow (1954) outlines how “the methods of meditation set forth and practiced in Ignatius of Loyola’s *Exercitia spiritualia* were deeply rooted in the spiritual exercises of ancient philosophy.”

¹⁰⁴ Arendt, 1958, p.15.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p.15.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp.14-15.

¹⁰⁷ The events and persons in Christian history are of course up for interpretation. What is important to me is that we have a realistic narrative – one that has observed some contemplation on our parts – not just simply a biblical read, or worse a verbal transmission from an assimilated, blindly faithful Christian.

¹⁰⁸ The spiritual exercises that passed through Christian tradition (to Ignatius of Loyola in 1522) were very nearly the same as those “‘inward orientations’ (*Innenwendung*)” developed by the Stoics and Epicurean schools of the third century B.C.E.¹⁰⁹ the phenomenon of which Hadot confirms we can also detect in “Socratic/Platonic dialogues, and it continues right up until the end of antiquity. The reason for this is that it is linked to the very essence of ancient philosophy. It is *philosophy itself* that the ancients thought of as a spiritual exercise.”¹¹⁰ And Hadot insists that this is no mere speculation; he says that Rabbow links it directly to philosophers ancient “predominance to ethical questions in their instruction”¹¹¹! The following is critical evidence of the direct intention to compromise the *vita contemplativa*:

In fact, Rabbow goes as far as to define spiritual exercises as moral exercises:
[Hadot now citing Rabbow:]

“By ‘moral exercises,’ we mean a procedure or determinate act, intended to influence oneself, carried out with the express goal of achieving a determinate moral effect. It always looks beyond itself, in as much as it repeats itself, or at least is linked together with other acts to form a methodical ensemble.”¹¹²

With the advent of Christianity, Rabbow continues, these moral exercises were transformed into spiritual exercises:

“Spiritual exercises, then which resemble moral exercises like a twin, both in essence and structure, were raised to their classical rigor and perfection in the *Exercitia Spiritulia* of Ignatius of Loyola. Spiritual exercises thus belong properly to the religious sphere, since their goal is to fortify, maintain, and renew life ‘in the Spirit,’ the *vita spiritualis*.”¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Pierre, Hadot. *Philosophy as a way of life* (M. Chase, Trans.). Cornwall, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 1995. Paul Rabbow *Seelenführung. Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike*. Munich, 1954. Ignatius of Loyola is referenced by Hadot (as if he had read the original) but M. Chase provides his own explanation (which is worth copying here verbatim), in Hadot, p.109, #4: “[Ignatius of Loyola (ca. 1491-1556), founder of the Jesuit Order, wrote his handbook entitled *Spiritual Exercises* beginning in 1522. The goal of the work was to purify the reader from sin and lead him to God, via a four-stage meditation: beginning with meditation on sin, the reader progresses to considering the kingdom of Christ, the passion, and finally the risen and glorified Lord. – Trans.]”

¹⁰⁹ Rabbow, 1954, p.17, in Hadot, 1995, p.126.

¹¹⁰ Hadot, 1995, p.126.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp.126-127.

¹¹² Rabbow, 1954, p.18, in Hadot, 1995, p.127.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Thus, these exercises are not simply significant just because they have a new Christian character, “they have as their goal the transformation of our vision of the world, and the metamorphosis of our being. ...not merely a moral, but also an existential value... not just... a code of good moral conduct, but a *way of being*, in the strongest sense of the term.”¹¹⁴ But while this may seem exciting to Christians and other ‘spiritually traditional’ folk, we should reflect carefully on what this is saying. Recall that there was already a transformation intended by philosophers, or as Plato called them, the “Founders of the future.” Where for the Ancient Greeks taking action with no intention for power resulted in a kind of excellent and distinct ‘noble altruism’ on the outside and a satisfying connection with the eternal on the inside, for the Roman Catholics excellence and distinction and eternity took on new meanings. The only eternity humankind could celebrate was in Jesus Christ and only by debasing itself, by satisfying itself with toil and by abandoning a search for meaning in life:

⁹ What does the worker gain from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on men. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. ¹³ That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.¹¹⁵

As for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. ¹⁹ Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless. ²⁰ All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. ²¹ Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Hadot, 1995, p.127.

¹¹⁵ New International Bible, Ecclesiastes 3:9-14.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., Ecclesiastes 3:18-21.

Reduced to the bleakness of animal laborans and homo faber (at best), excellence was only rewarded for recognition of doing good through labor and work. Think of the disgrace this suggests: what was previously private (laboring to survive, eat and clean) is now all that is left of the former glorious public realm of action—the public is now about judging and organizing labor.

Considering the formation of children in such a philosophy: one grows up to do good and be on best behaviour, to ‘walk in the light’ – a space (exterior to the self) where one curries favor for appearing good. Is this not a way to construct one’s self that prequalifies the values of one’s deeds by a learned disregard for the self? Does one not become a ‘citizen’ among the followers multiplying the righteousness of higher contemplation managed by an external order of philosophers/bishops? Meanwhile potential personal and communal plurality and natality is snuffed out for generations upon generations. A child learns to subjugate inner validation and the self to external validation and praise (this is referred to as the divided self or *dividualism*¹¹⁷ by Nietzsche and Hutter). Further, one could entirely give over one’s self to be embraced by a life of contemplation whose sole purpose is to be the interface between flawed humanity and the eternal order. I can only conclude that those who were particularly talented or dedicated to subjugating the whole of their selves were ordained as ministers of behaviour control and propagation.

Once Christianity took hold, it was not just a devotional tradition; it began to alter the ‘political’ realm as a guiding force in the ‘public’ (social) realm, because it stood for ‘freedom’ from tainted mankind (‘original sin’). The Romans adapted and sponsored the

¹¹⁷ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Human, All too Human: A Book for free spirits* (2nd Ed.) (R.J. Hollingdale, Trans). Cambridge University Press, 1996, I.57. Also see Hutter, Horst. *Shaping the future: Nietzsche’s new regime of the soul and its ascetic practices*. Toronto: Lexington Books, 2006, p.22-23.

Christian doctrine to cleanse themselves of a terribly messy history (presently recovering from the *Crisis of the Third Century*), get a fresh start, and combine the fulfillment of the Empire's necessities, the need to maintain order, and the need to gain the loyalty of an enormous population. Roman Catholicism's shift from patron deities to patron saints, creation of a Christian calendar, and recognition of a New Testament Bible as public code began a revolution of human behavior in the West. Constantine charged Platonic Christian philosophers (Council of Nicaea 325AD) to organize and lead the Roman public. To send a clear signal that its jurisdiction was behavioral, Roman Catholicism immediately launched the first inter-Christian persecutions of the Arians and Donatists. Why was this mandate important?

If an 'order' of humans is charged with the necessity to centralize and claim *speech* and *action* for themselves and hedge *labor* and *work* into the same goal, the promotion of a one-and-only merciful God who 'created man in *his* image', is a chauvinistic, yet brilliant, doctrine. Not only would such a doctrine promote (if not ensure) male dominance, but if representatives of such an order promised to oversee the task of guiding the population to conduct themselves in God's image, they could endow themselves with rights of interpretation and judgment of character by declaring their faith in such a God. In so doing, the Roman Catholic clergy claimed their own benevolence as a reflection of God's and their own sacrifice as a reflection of Jesus'. The more theatrically they conduct their traditions of guarding knowledge – driving the *vita contemplativa* into esotericism – the more ignorant the population became and the more superstition aided the clergy in seeding fear, forming the new *common*, and thus fabricating a mechanism to maintain justice based on a branded Roman Catholic morality.

When it suited this tyranny, calling the results of negativity, tragedy and hardship ‘God’s wrath’ was a return to classic manipulation of shaping the future.

Without a clear pattern of behaviour and policy for its subjects to follow, such an order would not have thrived. Where the laborer and craftsman were originally under the private charge of the house master, with the dawn of such an external public ‘order’, even a lord would be prudent to take the council of a clergy member. Through superstition or the superstitious public, one could be made to think twice¹¹⁸ about his or her life of action. One could be made to relinquish actions and speeches that one’s ancestors had cultivated as inwardly motivated and self-authenticated. Here, reverting to the guidance of the pious, one’s distinction and honor, in the ancient Greek Republic sense, is sacrificed for security and enticed with honor of possible entrance into a next world paradise (a future ‘freedom’ on credit). A manipulation was needed to keep people ‘active’ but not contemplative. The clergy needed to figure out how to multiply their ideals and credit ‘good’ conforming behavior. The Ecumenical Council used Platonic Philosophy to do just that.

The opportunity for pious recognition through charity in the ‘public’ (social) realm comes in the form of volunteer labor hours building shelters, clothing the poor and feeding the hungry. Yet, the tools in this process are used not to make new tools, but to prepare for consumption on a cyclical metabolic basis, and are thus labor rather than craftsmanship. And because recognition for charitable deeds comes by the actual hours spent volunteering, labor is glorified. If everyone knew how to take care of her or himself,

¹¹⁸ Even if a ‘lord’ knew that there was a ‘higher’ manipulation or conspiracy to control the working and laboring class, he or she would be hard pressed to mount a political offensive against an order of philosopher lords that were wielding the supernatural and the promise of paradise in the ‘afterlife’.

there would be no opportunity for charity¹¹⁹, but knowing how to care for yourself is being part of the world. Arendt says that charity works perfectly outside the world in “the structure of communal life modeled on the relationships between the members of a family because these were known to be non-political and even anti-political.”¹²⁰ And with a book a Revelations heralding an end to mankind, Arendt points out,

The bond of charity between people, while it is incapable of founding a public realm on its own, is quite adequate to the main Christian principle of worldlessness and is admirably fit to carry a group of essentially worldless people through the world, a group of saints or a group of criminals, provided only it is understood that the world itself is doomed and that every activity in it is undertaken with the proviso *quamdiu mundus durat* (“as long as the world lasts”).¹²¹

Glorifying the labor process due to our status as sojourners in the “vale of tears” means stunting the work and action processes of the general public. The implications are broad and far reaching if we consider the near two thousand years of Western civilization’s Christian morality conversion process. Programmed to spread ‘the word of the Lord,’ devout and righteous missionaries have ensured themselves entry to the heavens by bringing about the decline of action and reinforcing the social.

Arendt writes, “The modern age was as intent on excluding political man, that is, man who acts and speaks”¹²² as were the Greco-Roman Empires. Beyond law enforcement, she says, there was to be no other role of or discourse for action in modern government. Although *agora* originally denoted the Greek place of public assembly, with the transition of the public to the social realm, it became the name for public market place. No longer a meeting place for citizens (political *actors*) but a space for craftspeople to

¹¹⁹ This assumes not to include the physically challenged or terminally ill – who themselves are not such a large population that care for them would not need to be a manifesto of a religion.

¹²⁰ Arendt, 1958, p.49.

¹²¹ Ibid., p.49.

¹²² Ibid., p.140.

exchange products, “it was the ever-frustrating ambition of all tyrants to discourage the citizens from worrying about public affairs, from idling their time away in unproductive *agoreuein* and *politeuesthai*.”¹²³ Certainly, Roman Catholicism ‘fixed’ that problem for quite a long time.

THE FALLOUT OF SOCIETY AND MARX’S FLAWED VISION TO RECONCILE MODERNITY

What we have reviewed so far are the first two stages in the formation of the social. First, from the height of a flourishing Greek public sphere that realized action could also be nonviolent deed and speech, came the downfall. With action corrupted by rhetoric and impending empires succeeding, Plato (and a legacy of others including Aristotle) worked to preserve the *vita contemplativa* esoterically within a class of philosophers, meanwhile leaving the rest of humanity to slavery. Secondly, Jesus’ rebellion was to take back the *vita contemplativa* nonviolently, but his work was co-opted and twisted to fit the needs of the Roman Catholic Empire. His message to shake the Romans, Jews and anyone who would listen, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,”¹²⁴ was rewritten to be a heavenly covenant with him as the son (and equivalent) of ‘God’. Making the *vita contemplativa* into ‘the holy spirit’¹²⁵ the Ecumenical Council corrupted Jesus’ message, calling it the good news! No one had to worry anymore about public chaos, because this God-man Jesus had brought a new world order: Universal Christianity (Catholicism). All everyone had to do, if they did not want to be put to the sword, was adhere to a new rigid metaphysical and superstitious

¹²³ Ibid., p.140.

¹²⁴ New International Bible, Romans 12:2.

¹²⁵ This is my own concept, which I am exploring in another publication, but is worth mentioning here. There is a bit more expansion on this in *Appendix III*.

rewording of Jesus' message in order to be accepted on Earth and in heaven. And with the Romans recovering from disaster, on the surface, everything looked 'better than ever', everyone was now "emboldened" to do good and conform to conventional morality; resources and trade were thriving; civic infrastructure was becoming more permanent and unified under one God. This increasing power of the social eventually led to the third stage of *the social's* crystallization: consumer materialism in Marxist modernity.

Living together in communities, yet cut off from each other's true selves by externally imposed moral standards for centuries, Arendt believes that without a proper public space and opportunity to distinguish one's self, people developed deep seated loneliness, superstition and gullibility - the "almost infallible signs of alienation from the world."¹²⁶ By the 19th Century, the social realm held little to no 'warmth' of what the modern term 'social' implies.

The best way to evaluate Arendt's criticism of modernity is through her analysis of Marx, which is both respectful and critical. She respects him for the consistency of his vision to empower the economically alienated victims of society by giving them a new vested interest in community and property. She writes,

He was right in concluding that the "socialization of man" would produce automatically a harmony of all interests, and was only more courageous than his liberal teachers when he proposed to establish in reality the "communistic fiction" underlying all economic theories.¹²⁷

The establishment of the social realm through Christianity implies a communal order which all follow. Interests have been harmonized in this sense, but, as we have seen, this community is problematic because people have been disenfranchised both politically and economically through superstitious tradition that reinforces *the common* through shared

¹²⁶ Arendt, 1958, pp.187-188.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.40.

fear of divine justice. Although his earlier work looked critically at the alienation involved in both religion and politics, Marx eventually chose to focus on the economic aspect of the disenfranchisement.

Arendt considered Marx's view that political alienation was secondary to economic alienation myopic. Although she agreed that the disconnect between man and material had brought about a state and government of "pure administration,"¹²⁸ she believed that he was over-idealizing that a communist revolution reconnecting man and material through labor would bring about a shift in consciousness. Of Marx, she concludes, "he was wrong in assuming that only a revolution could bring it about, and even more wrong when he believed that this complete victory of society would mean the eventual emergence of the 'realm of freedom.'"¹²⁹ I will now inspect more carefully Marx's views on alienation and private property, and, using Arendt's analysis, explain how those views contributed to forging the social into the rampant consumer society that we experience today.

Although clearly Marx succeeded in inspiring the communist movement on a near global scale, Arendt is highly critical of Marx for two main reasons. First, Marx's vision was so centered on reconnecting humans to their own labor power (which had been expropriated by capitalism) that it was doomed to ignore the need for humans to be individually political:

To gauge the extent of society's victory in the modern age, its early substitution of behavior for action and its eventual substitution of bureaucracy, the rule of nobody for personal rulership, ... was finally followed by the all-comprehensive pretension of the social sciences which, as "behavior sciences," aim to reduce

¹²⁸ Ibid., p.41.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p.43.

man as a whole, in all his activities, to the level of a conditioned and behaving animal.¹³⁰

Second, when Marx sought to offset the conversion of money to capital, he envisioned private property merging into community identity and ownership. What was supposed to be empowering was that the 'what's mine is yours and what's yours is mine' would become an extension of the sense of personal security of the self into the physical world. But what actually happened was that the public actually extended deeper into personal space, so that the body and finally, more modernly, sensation inside the body became the last private space for the self. Arendt cannot forgive this establishment of encroachment on the self; the retracted private space for self-actualization in labor and work; and the ruination of public space by opening it to private issues of labor and work, when it should be a space of action, speech and cultivating freedom.

Marx's works are vast, but to review Arendt's criticisms, I have chosen to lay out below in Marx's (1857) own words, from *Pre-capitalist economic formations*¹³¹, the four different relationships that are dissolved by turning labor into capital; and the effects of transforming money into capital. Marx concludes that it is through the active process of working with community land that a sense of property is realized¹³². A community farm, for example, where we would all work together, would give us a sense of identity and ownership come harvest. But in order to make a system of capital *and* a system of money, the laborer's relation to property is actually dissolved. Marx explains how this occurs:

The relationship of labor to capital or to the objective conditions of labor as capital, presupposes a historic process which dissolves the different forms, in which the laborer is an owner and the owner labors...

¹³⁰ Ibid., p.41.

¹³¹ Karl Marx. *Pre-Capitalist economic formations* (Trans. Jack Cohen; Ed. E. Hobsbawm). New York: International Publishers, 1857, 1965.

¹³² Marx, 1857, 1965, p.92.

(1) A *dissolution* of the relationship to the earth – to land or soil – as a natural condition of production which man treats as his own inorganic being, the laboratory of his forces and the domain of his will. All forms in which this property is found, assume a *communal entity* whose members, whatever the formal distinctions between them, are *proprietors* by virtue of being its members. Hence the original form of this property is *direct communal property* [as defined above].¹³³

(2) *Dissolution of the relations* in which man appears as the *proprietor of the instrument*. As the above form of landed property assumes a *real community*, so this ownership of the tool by the laborer assumes... *handicraft labor*. ...Here labor itself is still half the expression of artistic creation, half its own reward. The institution of the “master craftsman”. ...

(3) ...the fact that man possesses means of consumption prior to production, necessary in order to enable him to keep alive as a producer – i.e. in the course of production, *before* its completion. ...

(4) ...*dissolution* both of the relations under which the *laborers themselves*, the *living units of labor power* are still a *direct part of the objective conditions of production* and are appropriated as such – and are therefore slaves or serfs. For capital the worker does not constitute a condition of production, but only labor. If this can be performed by machinery, or even by water or air, so much the better. And what capital appropriates is not the laborer, but his labor – and not directly, but by means of exchange.¹³⁴

One of the key causes for Arendt's writing *The Human Condition*, in my view, is to expose the insidious progressive devaluation of private property caused by the social. This destruction ranges from the tribal sense of community private property through to the Ancient Greeks' sense of ownership of private physical property to the dissolution of the connection to the land, resources, and tools that Marx describes. Finally, it extends to the last bastion of private property in modernity: intimate sensation. But if Marx and Arendt agree about the progressive encroachment of the social, where do they split up?

¹³³ Ibid., p.97.

¹³⁴ Ibid., pp.97-99.

In Marx's utopian vision of 'socialized mankind' there is no distinction between labor and work. Arendt concludes that this levels everything down to labor: "all work would have become labor because all things would be understood, not in their worldly, objective quality, but as results of living labor power and functions of the life process."¹³⁵ The reduction and division of work into labor and the making of its products into consumer goods has destroyed work's benefit of a sustainable and durable craftsmanship. Mass production requires labor, not work. Thus, Arendt admonishes that to say we live in a consumer society is to say we live in a society of laborers¹³⁶.

Arendt illuminates another contradiction of Marx's when he

insists that the labor 'process comes to its end in the product'¹³⁷: he forgets his own definition of this process as the 'metabolism between man and nature' into which the product is immediately 'incorporated,' consumed, and annihilated by the body's life process.¹³⁸

Everything is reduced to this metabolic process of labor. With the 'release from the pain of labor being the only happiness one can achieve isolated from the world, a human's sense of existence is so compromised that there remains "only an irresistible distrust in the capacity of human senses for an adequate experience of the world – and this distrust is the origin of all specifically modern philosophy."¹³⁹ I believe the anxiety created by the conditioned feeling that one cannot trust one's own senses is the catalyst of existentialism.

Work and labor are at odds in the modern scheme: *homo faber*, the craftsman, coming into the public realm with products made in the private threatens a society based on glorified labor, because the individualized and non-standardized craft products change

¹³⁵ Arendt, 1958, p.78.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.110.

¹³⁷ Marx, Karl. "Des Prozess erlischt im Produkt" (Das Kapital, Vol.1, Part3, ch.5) in Arendt, 1958, p.89.

¹³⁸ Arendt, 1958, p.89,

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.98.

the value scheme in an otherwise consumables market. On the other hand, once *homo faber's* innovations are replicable, teamwork threatens a society of craftspeople by breaking up work into discrete jobs with a metabolic rhythm that begins with the extraction of natural resources and ranges to the distribution of consumer products. The preservation of novelty through trademark, copyright, and license is arguably the hallmark of post-modern society. Yet, as we experience on a daily basis, the products that most of us come in contact with are not made with quality or novelty in mind. Whether it is food, cleaning, hygiene, transport, energy, education or pornography, mass production at cheap cost and distribution makes industries' ongoing metabolic consumption pattern the priority.

What worries Arendt about Marx's vision is not human equality in the public realm, but rather that the laboring class' occupation of the public realm is homogenizing "all human activities to the common denominator of securing the necessities of life and providing abundance."¹⁴⁰ Resulting in a 'verdict of society,' all things must be done in the name of 'making a living' – otherwise any activity unrelated to labor is a hobby¹⁴¹. Not only are professions that might challenge this verdict in rapid decline¹⁴², the *work* of the exception, the artist, "who, strictly speaking, is the only 'worker' left in a laboring society,"¹⁴³ is patronizingly regarded as '*play*'¹⁴⁴.

The fallacy of Marx's idealism, says Arendt, lies in the idea that with labor emancipated, every man and woman "will automatically nourish other, 'higher,'

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.110.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.111.

¹⁴² Said Arendt a half century ago! Arendt, 1958, p.111.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

activities.”¹⁴⁵ 100 years on from Marx, Arendt rings the alarm on this point. First, she notes,

the spare time of the *animal laborans* is never spent in anything but consumption, and the more time left to him, the greedier and more craving his appetites. That these appetites become more sophisticated, so that consumption is no longer restricted to the necessities but, on the contrary, mainly concentrates on the superfluities of life, does not change the character of this society, but harbors the grave danger that eventually no object of the world will be safe from consumption and annihilation through consumption.¹⁴⁶

Secondly, with laborers occupying the public realm, “there can be no true public realm, but only private activities displayed in the open. The outcome is what is euphemistically called mass culture.”¹⁴⁷ The third is the worrisome consequence – in the form of a two-sided coin of happiness and unhappiness that laborers demand stand on end – “where life’s processes of exhaustion and regeneration, of pain and release of pain, strike perfect balance.”¹⁴⁸ Arendt comments:

The universal demand for happiness and the widespread unhappiness in our society are among the most persuasive signs that we have begun to live in a labor society which lacks enough laboring to keep it contented. For only the *animal laborans*, and neither the craftsman nor the man of action, has ever demanded to be ‘happy’ or thought that mortal men could be happy.¹⁴⁹

Satisfaction and freedom to the actor or craftsperson comes from doing something distinct or making something intended. Happiness, in contrast, is a manufactured fallacy whose reference point is a nonexistent paradise that only has traction for those caught in a conformist loop of endless repetitive labor and consumerism. This contradiction is maintained and refreshed constantly through the ‘boundary pushing’ fashion and ‘cutting edge’ technology industries, where humans are enticed by ‘customizable’ products that

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

promise happiness in the idealized world – the consumers are assured through marketing and branding in the social public sphere that *they* are the priority.

Things that have the appearance of authenticity, but which really serve to threaten any real novelty, are endless, and when successful are celebrated as 'franchises'. While the 'film industry' and 'television industry' produce new twists to old narratives, the 'music industry' pumps pre-determined 'top 40' pop 'hits' to commercial satellite radio franchises. The 'design industry' has become the go-to service industry of clever "happiness in slavery"¹⁵⁰ quips for disheartening conditions (who hasn't empathized since the 1960's with the 'Hang on baby!' poster of the kitten struggling to hold on to the branch). And the 'fashion industry' makes humans into walking billboards. Although some of the expressions out of these industries may have (originally had) social commentary punch, they are over laden with product placement, cross-promotion, sponsorship, 'cradle-to-grave' branding. The enormous red, white and blue Tommy Hilfiger logo clothing lines are no modest undertaking. Humans have come to associate their own existences so closely to the products of these industries that they will sacrifice their own money and homegrown values and ideas for the status-associated value of mass-produced trademarked products – whose actual raw manufactured costs have no clear connection to their retail prices. These branded products' value is based capitalistically on 'target market' analysis. In other words, industry 'heads' will calculate what they think they can get for products based on the 'style' they fabricate for a given season, the product-release-'window', and any association with previous franchising. These industries have even further estranged the concept of authenticity, by identifying their brands as 'the real thing' and the 'important thing to have'. Of course, one's

¹⁵⁰ Trent Reznor, "The Downward Spiral", Long-playing music recording. Nothing Records, 1993.

consumption of these 'authentic' products puts one in the associative camp of copy-cats that conform to behavioral dictates reinforced and confirmed by market predictions. Punk and anarchy movements stick out as an antithesis to the shadow following mentality only long enough until they (images, shapes, sounds) are co-opted to become the revitalizing objects behind new shadow maker campaigns, like Che Guevara T-shirts.

The story of the rise of the social is a pathetic and tragic story; our possibilities for authentic action have been eclipsed and the public realm has become a place to conform to norms of good behavior and exhibit new corporate-endorsed trends. Depending on whether you believe Jesus died for the *vita contemplativa*¹⁵¹ or for 'original sin', this document could be considered a critical review or a blasphemy respectively. Regardless, hopefully this has stimulated some reflection of how much we have lost since Ancient Greece.

CONCLUSION CHAPTER 2

Arendt believes that human existence should be characterized by active and contemplative living. This style of life was exemplified by the ancient Greek citizens who combined contemplation (practicing philosophy) with the *vita activa's* hierarchy of action, work, and labor. The collapse of Ancient Greece's republic brought the inundation of laborers and craftsmen into the public realm and, with them, necessity: the antithesis of the political. As the boundaries blurred between the public realm and the private realm, the *social realm* was born and the path toward authenticity became obscured.

¹⁵¹ Because before I started writing this paper, I never thought I would have found respect for this Jesus of Nazareth, let alone developed a theory for his rebellion to reinstate the *vita contemplativa* (see Chapter 5).

Compounded by Christianity's embrace of Plato's 'eternal good' that made contemplation the exclusive domain of the pious, left the struggle to overcome life's necessities (housekeeping) as a publicly social task referred to as 'politics'. By obligating the population to fulfill the will¹⁵² of the eternal (e.g.: the need to do 'good' to fulfill God's commands) before its duty to the private – the social economy became a political structure and therefore the foundation of active living. Consumed by their tradition and the divine sanction of the eternal trinity that holds their *common* together forming the morality bond that guides the world they make (through the faithful: laborers and workers) and justice they proclaim, the pious then are those transfixed in the light of salvation, giving over their active and contemplative selves and pledging their beings to reinforce the eternal trinity through labor and faith.

More concretely for our purposes, likening it to “when housekeeping emerges into the light of the public sphere, ...[Arendt] maintains that as Roman and then medieval Christian civilization developed, there was a change in the way in which the necessities of life were handled.”¹⁵³ This means that through centuries of calcifying authority, the public realm subverted any possibility of the polis or freedom reforming, because all that existed was the necessity to survive, maintain order, and thus vie for power.

This chapter explored the challenges faced by the delicate relationship between authenticity and the human condition. As work and labor migrate from the private to the public, the resulting social realm redefines action and freedom; glorifies labor; multiplies conformity; and undermines both the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*. No small threat to authenticity and action, the complexity of these circumstances unfold and

¹⁵² 'The will of the eternal' to Arendt is where “the *vita activa* and the *bios politikos* [became] the handmaidens of contemplation”. Arendt, 1958, p.21.

¹⁵³ Patricia Johnson. *On Arendt*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, Inc., p.33, 2001.

reinforce themselves for 2400 years. To call it a conspiracy would be ignorant of where historical forces have pushed us. What we have seen is that the development of Western humanity has lacked personally authentic philosophy. Instead it has been on a Platonic autopilot where the ingrained legacy to 'do good' by following conventional morality and promote metabolic repetition through labor supersedes any consideration of the self's distinction and authenticity. And while the esoterically devoted few practice one of hundreds of branches of Platonic 'philosophy' twisted by years of re-interpretation, the bulk of humanity follow the 'philosophy's' precepts through a conformist interface and simply exist according to the necessities and demands of labor and work.

Doing what needs getting done, philosophy for most humans is an unchecked, God-fearing, traditional faith-based regime¹⁵⁴ (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, consumer capitalism) that keeps everyone in basic order. Slotted firmly into marginal categories of academia, poetry and entertainment, the original Ancient Greek public realm's conceptions of philosophy, freedom and action expressed through oration, writing, and art are therefore cultivated only by personal anxiety, public cultural funding (a la 1% for culture) and through high-interest loans and great personal risk.

When the obsession with following conventional/conformist morality suppresses the potential in humans to be craftsmen or women, artisans, and political beings, a serious reconsideration must be made about adopting the precepts of such an ethic. In a public sphere where private matters are laundered, *homo faber* continues to compromise his or her work to fit more within a labor scheme. In addition, in such a 'public' (social) sphere,

¹⁵⁴ Although there is a focus on Christianity in this thesis, both Islam's and Judaism's foundations are no less unchecked as their obedience ethics also require the suspension of faith to appease the wrath of God.

chaperoned by morality screamers, no one who just wants to raise their family in relative peace wishes to be confronted for pushing behavioral boundaries.

Perhaps only wealthy eccentrics, who have tasted distinction and excellence, who have the time to contemplate, and who can exist in their own private sphere or protect their liberties with an entourage of attorneys, may resist conversion to such exaltation of labor and consumption. Even Ralph Nader has been condemned in his film autobiography *An Unreasonable Man*¹⁵⁵ for pushing for clearer individual rights (in labor, work, speech and action), advocacy programs, and a multiparty American government in the 'public' (social) sphere. Another class of resister is youth and students: those who have some latitude and few responsibilities save to themselves. What is so alarming, is how difficult it is to identify an organization whose work and progress is not encapsulated in a doctrine that exalts labor excessively. What organization is not churning out tools – either inanimate or human – that just continue a rhythmic metabolic process of labor and consumption? Marx may have brought a great deal of the world out of economic alienation, but I conclude that to do it, he had to abandon his position on the problem of religious alienation and political alienation. As we have reviewed: in the society envisioned by Marx, plurality is sacrificed for unity.

It feels important to end this chapter with a concluding note on the possibilities of undermining *the social* and some inspiring words of hope that are not so obvious within the density of Arendt's writing. Humans, despite how they may be led to behave, are not interested in becoming generic. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt provides us with a narrative of the *vita activa* (*labor*, *work* and *action*) for the past two and half millennia

¹⁵⁵ Ralph Nader (biography). *An Unreasonable Man* [motion picture], H. Mantel & S. Skrovan (writ., prod., direct.). USA: Submarine Entertainment, 2006.

leading up into “what we are doing”¹⁵⁶ in modernity. Arendt argues that the redefinition of ‘freedom’ is a condition for subjective freedom through the experience of overcoming oppression¹⁵⁷. She asks us to abstain from compromising our selves and our lexicon. She is resolute that we attend to pre-Socratic philosophy that had put the world (through active engagement with the *vita contemplativa*) before the necessities of life, which we have exchanged for Platonic (and subsequent corrupted Christian) morality that puts life before the world. Here is Arendt’s final concluding criticism (the underlining is mine) in *The Rise of The Social*¹⁵⁸, in which she so poignantly articulates the hope embedded within our humanity to evolve from the social:

Not even the social realm – though it made excellence anonymous, emphasized the progress of mankind rather than the achievements of men, and changed the content of the public realm beyond recognition – has been able to altogether annihilate the connection between public performance and excellence. While we have become excellent in the labouring we perform in public, our capacity for action and speech has lost much of its former quality since the rise of the social realm banished these into the sphere of the intimate and the private. This curious discrepancy has not escaped public notice, where it is usually blamed upon an assumed time lag between our technical capacities and our general humanistic development or between physical sciences, which change and control nature, and the social sciences, which do not yet know how to change and control society. Quite apart from other fallacies of the argument which have been pointed out so frequently that we need not repeat them, this criticism concerns only a possible change in the psychology of human beings – their so-called behavior patterns – not a change of the world they move in. And this psychological interpretation, for which the absence or presence of a public realm is as irrelevant as any tangible, worldly reality, seems rather doubtful in view of the fact that no activity can become excellent if the world does not provide a proper space for its exercise. Neither education nor ingenuity nor talent can replace the constituent elements of the public realm, which make it the proper place for human excellence.¹⁵⁹

In the mid 19th Century this problem began to touch something deep enough in a few individuals to enable them to begin developing existentialist ideas. This movement was

¹⁵⁶ Arendt, 1958, p. 6.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p.147-149.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp.35-45.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pp.44-45.

ready to face the discomfort of not knowing the future rather than to continuing to conform to conventional morality schemes. It was a movement that was ready to admit it could not fulfill the conduct religion required, yet was sure there was some way to find freedom without it being at the cost of responsibility. It was a movement that felt more free in ambiguity than in the absolute.

Chapter 3 – By definition, existentialism rejects inauthenticity.

In this chapter, I will explore different interpretations of existentialism and clarify how the search for authenticity is at its root. To review existentialism I have chosen the works of renowned Nietzsche scholar and translator Walter Kaufmann, UCLA philosophy professor and Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (in 1960) Abraham Kaplan, and curriculum philosopher Van Cleve Morris to provide perspectives from three disciplines. As I review existentialism from Kaufmann, Kaplan, and Morris' perspectives, three main concepts will emerge: existence precedes essence; freedom lies in a responsible plurality; choice is paradoxically dreadful and thus only authentic decisions and actions are satisfactory. Kaufmann (1956) introduces existentialism (to Anglophones) in a compilation of translated pieces working to recontextualize political philosophy as an inward effort towards will and freedom rather than the traditional science of political control. Calling all others existentialists or philosophical analysts, Kaufmann reserves philosopher status solely for Friedrich Nietzsche¹⁶⁰ giving an enormous boost to existentialism's relevance and visibility. Kaplan (1961) reviews existentialism – giving it full philosophy status – in a lecture series of world philosophies and religions. Morris (1966) reviews existentialism's theoretical and practical relevance to education while calling for a foundational review of curriculum tenets that maintain the learner as object rather than subject.

¹⁶⁰ Kaufmann, 1956, p.50-51. Although Nietzsche's initial and false association with Nazi fascism may have been a problem for existentialism at the time, he is now academically exonerated of the association. [The rest of this footnote is a bit garbled.] and for the continued reverence his attacks on Christianity's 'corruption of reason' receive, Nietzsche's political philosophy status puts him on par (according to Kaufmann, Lampert, Hutter) with Socrates, continues to heighten existentialism's status and revitalize the movement.

Defining existentialism is not impossible, but it requires (i) certain paradoxical latitude to leave questions and interpretations open without the need to forcibly reconcile them (especially via run-of-the-mill edicts, models and philosophical infrastructure) and (ii) some elbow room because existentialism is working to dissociate itself from systems, tenets, and definitions. These ‘open’ allowances do not make existentialism obscure or obtuse, however. As we will see, existentialism clearly stems from dissatisfaction with the way life is going.

Over the last 150 years a resonant despair has defined the impact of existential writing as it has penetrated the surface of our modern context and the bleak destiny of the proletariat [common citizen]. Existentialism was not founded in an academic context, although some existentialists are scholars. Rather, it all started with individuals rendering their overload of intensely personal anxiety: a communal or even global crushing anguish internalized and explored through writing. The rejection of essentialism and predestination appears as the common result of confronting this anxiety and wondering what life would be like if existence preceded essence: If what one did defined one's essence. Being literate and having a burning need to reconsider existence was not exclusive to a single background as we review some of the key Western existentialists: Pascal (Catholic); Kierkegaard (Protestant); Dostoevsky (Greek-Orthodox); Nietzsche (anti-Christian); Sartre, Jaspers, Heidegger (atheists); Arendt (Jewish); Rilke (Christian – but portrayed Jesus born to Mary Magdalene); Kafka (Jewish); Camus (absurdist?); Merleau-Ponty (phenomenologist). And their ‘spiritual’ positions are at once beds of paradoxes and yet quintessential for existential reflection, struggle and reform. Kaufmann calls “the heart of existentialism”

the refusal to belong to any school of thought, the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and especially of systems, and a marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic, and remote from life.¹⁶¹

And with the rejection of the 'existential' label by some of them, if there is "one essential feature shared by all [of them, it] is their fervid individualism."¹⁶²

I will show how existentialism is the vanguard for a global assault on the inauthentic. Existentialists' writings are assaulting because they are renderings of internal strife and the reconciliation to go public about it. What they propose is unsettling in the least, but to most it delivers a swift punch of sublime introspection to the gut. In this chapter, drawing upon the works of Kaufmann, Kaplan and Morris, I will outline three key characteristics of existentialism that I believe provide a battery to test authenticity. These three characteristics are: 1. Essence preceding existence is fundamentally problematic. 2. Ambiguity is an approach to the anguish one struggles against to reconcile responsible freedom (as opposed to capricious freedom). 3. A conduct ethic compromises character and individuality – privately, publicly and socially.

EXISTENCE PRECEDING ESSENCE

Essence can be understood as an object's and a concept's defining feature. The smell of jasmine, the taste of pomegranate, the predatory instinct of a wolf, the efficiency of a computer, the rejuvenation of a bed, the pull of gravity, the trust of friendship, the unknown of fear, the pain of shame, the rhythm of a drum, the tone of a cello. For any of these things listed above to exist, the essence is needed first to define it. Essence is connected to purpose. Why a table? Because one wants something off the ground. Its

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.12.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.11.

purpose predates its need. Pain predates shame as trust predates friendship. The cello, sitar, or voice are needed to guide the intended tone into melody, harmony and music. Basic essentialism is gender determinate, i.e. *what* a woman *is* or what *makes* a man a *man*. But it also extends to conditions humans are born into like denomination, nationality, astrological sign, and other categorization, like being or not being 'a math person'. Existentialists do not believe that a human's essence is a predetermined feature, and they feel that what it means *to be human* is sanguine. So taking it to task they strip away all the essential ideology to bare basics.

By essence, existentialists mean one's defining quality or character – and embedded therein, whether one knows it or not, is one's conception of freedom. To conceive of anything does not make it exist, but it does define it, it attempts to portray it – it gives it its essence. Existentialists argue this is true of everything except humans.

Abraham Kaplan (1961) offers:

As Sartre formulates it, “man is nothing else but what he makes of himself.”...Only man is not subject to the law of identity. Man is the one existent of which we cannot say he is only this and nothing more. In the very act of becoming aware of the particular ‘this’ that he is – whatever it may be – the human being has already transcended it. Man is the being whose existence consists in continuously transcending itself. Man's existence is constituted by this fact: that he is continuously becoming what he was not.¹⁶³

Thus, Kaplan reckons, “Because man's existence precedes his essence, no definition of man is possible.”¹⁶⁴ Yet, whether it is friendly advice, a spiritual sermon, a website banner, a TV commercial, or educational guidance, we live in a world full of definitions about what a man is and what a woman is based on how he or she behaves. Sometimes these definitions come with the best of intentions but other times these definitions can range

¹⁶³ Kaplan, 1961, p.104; Sartre quote not cited by Kaplan.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

from trying to sell a product or service to outright indoctrination. Regardless, they come from outside the self and seek to determine behaviour. Definitions are part of language, which is part of *work*, which is what makes up *the world*. We are asked to take many of these definitions at face value or taught that by integrating them into our selves the world will be an easier place to navigate, because by being or 'acting' a certain way will affect our class, our standing, our prestige, our status and our chances. Our own definition of human being is caught up in the rest of the world's interpretations of human being, better human being, worse human being, and models of best and worst. The existentialists believe we are controlled by these definitions and a long standing and unconscious collusion with essentialism. Dostoevsky points out that most of these people think they *are* active as they are under "direct" influence of these external definitions and models.

I repeat, I repeat with emphasis: all "direct" persons and men of action are active just because they are stupid and limited. How explain that? [sic] I will tell you: in consequence of their limitation they take immediate and secondary causes for primary ones, and in that way persuade themselves more quickly and easily than other people do that they have found an infallible foundation for their activity and their minds are at ease and you know that is the chief thing. To begin to act, you know, you must first have your mind completely at ease and no trace of doubt left in it.¹⁶⁵

What happens when I wake up to a world that has promoted and taught me self-deception? What happens when I realize that education has defined the shape of my own humanity (for me) and I now have doubts? If essence precedes my existence and is therefore defining who I am, what is it to wake up to this? As Morris asks, "What comfort is it to be told that one belongs in the world merely to round out the system?"¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, *Notes from the Underground* (C. Garnett, Trans.). In *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, W. Kaufmann (Ed.). New York: Meridian Books, 1956, p.64-65.

¹⁶⁶ Morris, 1966, p.34.

Kaplan identifies that existentialism's attack on existing philosophy is not just critical of "shortcomings of other philosophies, but to failures in politics, economics, and social organization in general."¹⁶⁷ He notes, "In one direction, man has been pushed aside on behalf of a depersonalized Nature; in another, on behalf of a transcendent Deity; and in a third, on behalf of a State both depersonalized and transcendent."¹⁶⁸ Faced with an alienating pre-made modern world for rent, "indifferent – if not downright hostile – to human aspiration, ...existentialism seems to speak to a man in such a situation so as to allow him to come to terms with a life of almost unbearable anxiety and despair."¹⁶⁹

To Kaplan, what makes existentialism continuously relevant, fresh *and* classically philosophical, is that it endeavors to not only describe and evaluate "what it calls 'the human condition'"¹⁷⁰ but it also insists that "philosophy is not a body of propositions but a way of life."¹⁷¹ Although it brings up difficult issues, making raw what others have been smoothing over, existentialism seeks to find a way through the negative by focusing on shaping one's own future. This means that by engaging in existentialism one has taken a step to confront one's own interpretations *and* where these interpretations come from. No one would take such a difficult step away from convention if they did not believe that by doing so they would find at least more freedom than what they already consider themselves to have. Even if it was a religious person who converted to a new religion that was even stricter than their current religion, they would be ready to endure stricter dogma conceiving a value that would free them from difficult choices or would have them

¹⁶⁷ Kaplan, 1961, p.98.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p.99.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p.98.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p.99. ...although he claims it as existential, Kaplan does not actually cite the term 'the human condition'.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

working toward a future freedom in life or 'the afterlife'. This brings us to existentialists' conception of choice, values, and freedom.

INVENTING FREEDOM WITH RESPONSIBLE CHOICES

According to Kaplan, it does not make sense to think of choice as a virtue. Deciding to do something because it is virtuous puts essence before existence and is inauthentic. What is important is that the decision made is genuine to the individual; otherwise, a real bid towards freedom is not made. "The meaning of life lies in the values which we can find in it, and values are the product of choice. ...a human being must... decide for himself what his life is to be."¹⁷² As Sartre says, "You are free, therefore choose – that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed in this world."¹⁷³

But what if we said that 'humans create values'? There is a difficulty here. The problem with saying that humans *create* values is if they have set out premeditatively to do so. By the common way of looking at 'creating' we might adopt the essence of a preexisting value or make things or fabricate situations that "exhibit pre-existent essence."¹⁷⁴ However, genuine creation or invention is possible. Invention, here, follows the line of Sartre's conception of artistic freedom¹⁷⁵, a creativity that is unhindered by rules. Setting critique and rules aside, the artist invents something, brings something into existence. This is only a metaphor as art parallels existentialism's invention of value, but the point is not to argue here whether the existence of pieces of art precede their values

¹⁷² Ibid., p.105; no citation by Kaplan of Sartre.

¹⁷³ Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is a humanism". (P. Mairet, Trans), In *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, W. Kaufmann (Ed.). New York: Meridian Books, 1956, p.297-298.

¹⁷⁴ Kaplan, 1961, p.105-106.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p.107; Sartre not cited.

and essences. To stay on the point, just as choices make one human, one's choices are also part of what makes up humanity. Therefore, under the existentialist framework, our choices collectively define the essence of a living and growing humanity, one that "is continuously becoming what [it] was not,"¹⁷⁶ one we can argue here aims to be free.

But not every choice is equally valid. Although most existentialists reject a behavioral ethic, it does not mean they seek to be unethical or ethical to one's self alone. Kaplan makes a distinction between an existentialism of responsible freedom and beat poet existentialism that believes in freedom to choose whatever desire befits the moment or "to conclude that being authentically an individual requires that you be like no one else on earth, that you choose what no one else would conceivably choose."¹⁷⁷ Kaplan links existential freedom contingently to inner values and choosing for one's self with a responsibility to the community of others who make responsible choices. The realization that a lie perpetrates a perpetual negative effect and consequence on humanity and that the truth (or closest thing to it, as we will not assume that truth can be known absolutely) is a pledge towards freedom and trust, is to make good on the Kantian realization that "truth can do without falsehood, but the lie cannot live without truth. If I choose to lie I bear the responsibility of making all men dumb. In every choice I am responsible for the fate of all mankind."¹⁷⁸ This clarifies the feeling of anguish in existentialism: it is the weight of duty to humanity felt by those who recognize what moves humans towards freedom versus what moves humans towards useless necessity. Kaplan comments:

It is the realization that in making a choice for himself he is thereby choosing the course to be pursued by mankind. This is why Kierkegaard says we choose only "in fear and trembling," why he speaks of the "dizziness of freedom," why Sartre

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 108.

says that man is “condemned” to be free. ...And so, Sartre says, there are (besides existentialists) only two kinds of people in the world: those who try to escape from freedom and those who try to deny responsibility – cowards and stinkers.¹⁷⁹

To escape this responsibility, one pretends freedom is impossible; affecting no control over what happens, as ‘victims of fate,’ one even calls for pity when the necessity to make choices catches up with him or her. To deny responsibility is to acknowledge freedom while telling others not depend on you: “The bell does not toll for me, and you need not weep at my funeral. ...you are your own keeper, not I.”¹⁸⁰ This leaves then only a romantic few whose “‘individuality,’” according to Dostoevsky, “‘is really revolting.’”¹⁸¹

Kaplan therefore concludes that self-deception – in polar opposition to existentialists’ ‘virtue’ of integrity – is humankind’s greatest vice¹⁸².

Life, Jaspers says, is a drive towards honesty, toward really being what we are. Mere things, as you recall, are wholly subject to the law of identity; for man, identity is something to be achieved. A man who is identical with himself – with his human self, the self which he has made by his free and responsible choices – such a man existentialism calls “authentic.” Existence, in the special sense which the existentialist gives to this term, is, as Jaspers puts it, the will to be authentic. Only the authentic man really is what he is, because only of him is it true that *who* he is has made him *what* he is rather than the other way around.¹⁸³

As Arendt pointed out¹⁸⁴, when we represent ourselves, our lexicon without intention (or ‘will’ as Jasper puts it) has us describing the ‘what’ as merely a series of qualities. Thus, if I were to describe myself self-deceptively, I might say, “I am a fine upstanding world citizen with a golden heart, who recycles, has an obsessive eye for detail and a sweet tooth”. If I described myself authentically – more who I am – I might say, “I am an

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 108-109.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁸¹ According to Dostoevsky (uncited), in Kaplan, 1961, p.110.

¹⁸² Kaplan, 1961, p.100-111.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p.111.

¹⁸⁴ Arendt, 1958, p.169.

underachieving white protestant male, so lost in his entitlement that it took half my life to realize that my Judeo-Christian sense of doing good and forgiveness has me playing a guilt/rewards game resulting in self-sabotage in a continuous string of squandered opportunities most minorities would give a limb for.” Thus, the *intention-to-be-authentic* can be identified as an action: a very personal, subjective, paradoxical and anxiety provoking action, because when I describe my inauthenticity – *who* I am – in one action, I lose the support system of my identity and free myself from self-deception.

For Morris (1966), before we realize that we are talking about existentialism, we acknowledge a philosophical mood that comes through the raising of certain questions from authentic doubt “as to whether any particular faith – in a metaphysic, in a logic, in whatever – can be fully certified [by “empirical philosophies”].”¹⁸⁵ Morris comments on the consequences of this mood:

[We] begin to see that some of our understandings about men and the world do not come to us from metaphysics or logic; they come to us from ourselves. They are known somehow internally without the assistance of any intellectual formulas or prepositional grammars. It is these understandings with which Existentialism starts. Three of them--Human subjectivity, Paradox, [and] Anxiety generate all Existential thinking and therefore require special attention.¹⁸⁶

According to Morris, in *human subjectivity* we put the general Existential hypothesis ‘existence precedes essence’ which has already been discussed above. Unlike the everyday items we produce and consume that require design before product and therefore are in essence before existence, Morris argues that we are in existence developing our essences:

One cannot ask the question: What did God have in mind when he created man? without realizing that any answer must issue from man’s own lips. Man is therefore in the odd position of being his own designer or essence-giver. And, we

¹⁸⁵ Morris, 1966, p.11.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

may ask, what is the essence of a being who creates his own essence? The answer must be that this is always an open question, to be answered by every individual in the process of living his life and thereby giving meaning and essence to his existence.¹⁸⁷

Once again, this brings us back to the importance of choice – which is subjective. Instead of trying to force existence and essence to be empirically tangible, Morris concludes that “if ‘being’ is undefinable [sic], let it remain.”¹⁸⁸ He is not saying that ‘nothingness’ or ‘being’ should be denied altogether, rather he opts that we relieve ourselves from “concocting some odd logic by which nothingness is made into something.”¹⁸⁹ Let ‘being’, ‘non-being’ or ‘nothingness’, all understood by human subjectivity – like ‘time’ – not be diminished just because their essences are undefinable.

Practically speaking, a social system or educational curriculum that asks its citizens and students to assume functions of character that will predefine their existences with a disregard to making essence development a priority, not only fosters deceptive inauthentic collusion, it trains them to forfeit their (existential) selves. For example, requiring students to bury gripes and forcing them to ‘see’ the benefits of grueling repetitive drills asks them to assume a false objectivism while denying any qualities derived from their subjective experience. Kaplan agrees: “The man who lacks authenticity is indeed playing a role: his existence has yielded to an essence which defines what he is. In a sense, self-deception is impossible: he who lives in deception no longer has a self to deceive.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 13-14

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁹⁰ Kaplan, 1961, p. 111.

AMBIGUITY: THE RECIPROCAL FEEDING OF PARADOX AND ANXIETY

Opening to subjectivity allows the import of paradox and anxiety to surface in existential discourse. By *paradox*, Morris reminds us that we can think at once that, ‘the universe would not be the same without me,’ and yet ‘I would be delusional to think that I had any significance whatsoever’. “This, then, is the paradox, and every man must live with it. It is to know two things about oneself: (1) that one is of absolute value in the world, and (2) that one is of absolutely no value whatsoever.”¹⁹¹ To live with this paradox, to return to it when the tendency is to reconcile it *and* to return to it when asking, ‘who am I?’ and ‘why am I here?’, is the heart of ambiguity in existentialism.

For Morris, existentialism comes from internal understandings – beyond metaphysics and logic. It comes from embracing the anxiety of life’s pressures! It is the expression of the genuine discomfort that comes from the inability to escape the human condition. If we were to focus on or become conscious of our possible annihilation, our sudden lack of existence, our nothingness, we could identify with the symptoms that “can easily set off deep tremors in [our] spirit. Kierkegaard spoke of it as ‘fear and trembling’; Heidegger, as Dread; Sartre, as Nausea.”¹⁹² These are all deep seated expressions of anxiety. Morris cautions that we could “very easily misunderstand Existentialism right at this point.”¹⁹³ He asserts that in the face of metaphoric anxiety we must not “lapse into a state of metaphysical blues. Rather, as a philosophy, it summons us onward, beyond these initial psychic states, to a new level of awareness: of self, of freedom, of choice, of

¹⁹¹ Morris, 1966, p.17.

¹⁹² Ibid., p.32.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

responsibility, of authenticity.”¹⁹⁴ Thus, the question of values and freedom is raised again through this paradox.

Morris postulates that because values are based on choices justified by merely other choices previously made, there is no ultimate foundation for my choices. He comments, “...since I can turn to no certifying agency to finally justify me in my choices, I discover that my choices are without base. They cannot be justified. I am a baseless base of values.”¹⁹⁵ How can this existential ‘ground zero’ not be frightening when the last thing in our social economy that anyone wants to be is insecure or to appear incompetent and even abject? *Can* this starting point be converted from ominous to reassuring? At first blush, existentialism seems to be presenting a foundation of vulnerability – it seems to be condoning a rejection of values. Values that most have come to revere and depend on to make choices. Seemingly, to make public or admit that one does not know how to make a decision, invites intense judgment and condemnation from the rest of the world (especially to Sartre's stinkers and cowards). To them, having a baseless base of values with no certifying agency is a nightmare that goes against all convention of security. How can this ambiguity be made into a practical and empowering existential space to return to and not one to fear?

To have nothing, to claim no foundation, is existential, but giving into passivity or ambivalence is not. To question or reject external certifying agents, if sincere, is a strong independent action. The very deed will shift one's existence into a learning process of discovery. To be unsure about external influences and to probe into their agendas is a shift in the self. It could be argued here that one can find a taste of existential freedom

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p.40.

where he or she recognizes external certifying agencies... where one realizes that a collusion has been taking place – where a part of the self (knowingly or unknowingly) has been given over to necessity to fulfill the agenda of the external certifying agent. We perpetuate the essential world without any regard for developing our own essences. Starting an agonistic discourse of why and how external influences dominate one's life is only the beginning.

The characters, narratives, and essences that we have taken to be our own have seemed so clearly defined, but only as stark silhouettes in the light of the external agent. To turn off this light is to be existential. To remove this light is to stop a 'follow the leader' dance of shadows. Where existentialism seemed vague and ambiguous next to the sharp contrast of essentialism, the shadows cast are only sharp in their two-dimensional forms. In the world of shadow making and following, mirroring others is vital to survival and upward mobility of status. One's shadow puppet skills are critical to forming imitations. To move up society's ladder we need to be clever at copying the classic (essential) forms *or* if we really want to appear original we recontextualize a few classic shapes into a 'new' unified icon. Big slaps on the back await! But we are not two dimensional cardboard cut outs! Where do we go from here? As in making animal shapes in front of a white projector screen, the only way to augment one's form then is to make it bigger and sharper by going closer to the light. Common literary themes and psychological problems revolve around this idea of people losing themselves – consumed by the light, if you will – as they try to fit themselves into the flat cookie-cutter molds of modern icons. People kill themselves (inwardly, and even outwardly) as they make pretzels of themselves trying to match the forms of the magazine body, of model

happiness, of haughty nobility, of Wall Street power, of sacred piety, of the helpless victim, etcetera. In the end, these essential contortionists are at best flat imitations of a moment, an apex, a legend, a postcard.

Sadly, modernity's iconography is so injected with 'hipness' or 'coolness' that social-acceptance is more about maintaining a façade than being your self. As no one would want to be called a 'FAKE!', they will, in order to not lose face, maintain their pose of inauthenticity to the grave. In contrast, instead of being drawn to the flame like moths, where essential shadows only become larger and sharper and potential existential tools wilt and curl, the existentialist moves farther from the 'public' lights where their shadows become more ambiguous – where there is paradoxically more clarity and less anxiety. Here there is new latitude in the paradox of losing security of singular or dual identity and yet finding freedom in formlessness – the opening to the multidimensional self or plurality.

CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER THREE

Where inquiry into and rejection of external certifying agencies do not linger in the necessities of the social economy, but instead focus on communal responsibility to the self and the other, politics and freedom become approachable in the ancient Greek 'fashion'. When we move on from certifying agents, and gauge our own sense of labor (survival) and work (the world), we gain a clearer idea of acting without the necessity to behave while surviving in the world. We get a clearer picture of the self's context and where the self fits in the communal narrative and discourse. As modes of sincere discussion, inquiry and rejection form an existence from which proceeds self-certification,

and a new (ethic of) character and narrative define one's essence, like the artist rejecting rules and critique, any man or woman can step boldly forth to define themselves; they can decide to be responsible for themselves and humanity's freedom. Sure, due to deeply ingrained morality and societal programming, they will lapse back into reliance on essences, but something substantial *has* been experienced. The taste of self is felt, and not as an insecure reject, but rather as a rejector who defines. Thus, the paradox of the return to baselessness is then felt to be less daunting. Eventually, once understood as 'self invention', an action of reversing the essence-precedes-existence model, this return is only empowering. A development of self can proceed where the individual derives strength from not being judged, relinquishing the need to maintain façade and self-judgment via ambiguity, and by identifying those who share responsibility in the search for freedom. Authenticity is thus to be aware of one's freedom. Morris remarks:

Unless an individual is aware of his act of choosing, he is not a free individual. ...awareness, choosing, and freedom are interlocking notions. ...they must be present in the same degree. And they finally come together in *the awareness of one's own freedom* in the act of choosing.¹⁹⁶

Therefore, paradox cannot be understood without its effect on character and the plurality of choice among a community of individuals who work within the same ethic of building character through plurality. The paradox that they are consumed by anxiety by their groundless freedom to choose from a plurality of choices ends up bringing definition, essence, and character to their existences as their actions define them. In *Existentialism is a humanism*, Sartre rebukes some of the critics of existentialism who allege that this philosophy is passive:

You have seen that it cannot be regarded as a philosophy of quietism since it defines man by his action; nor as a pessimistic description of man, for no doctrine

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p.47.

is more optimistic, the destiny of man is placed within himself. Nor is it an attempt to discourage man from action since it tells him that there is no hope except in his action, and that the one thing which permits him to have life is the deed. Upon this level therefore, what we are considering is an ethic of action and self-commitment.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Sartre (b), 1956, p.302.

Chapter 4: Congruent curriculum initiatives toward authentic living

If education is to be truly human, it must somehow awaken awareness in the learner – existential awareness of himself as a single subjectivity present in the world. In practical terms, it refers to his awareness of his own precarious role as a baseless chooser who cannot escape choosing, and therefore creating, his own personal answer to all normative and moral questions that come up in his classroom or in his experience outside of school.¹⁹⁸

This chapter will briefly review two educational initiatives that strive toward authenticity by creating time, space, and opportunity for self-realization, reference and authentication. In particular I will look at The David Lynch Educational Foundation's Transcendental Meditation Program¹⁹⁹ and Outward Bound²⁰⁰ a nature, adventure, retreat program. After reviewing each program's historical milestones and research findings, I will focus on how Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a return respectively to the *vita contemplativa* and Outward Bound (OB) is a return to the *vita activa*. Each program also reciprocally promotes the other way of life, meaning it would be hard to separate one *vita* from the other, at least as far as education goals are concerned. If I have done justice to the previous chapters' discourse, the implications of future combined programs that reciprocally feed off each other will be clear.

SELF-AUTHENTICATION AND CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING THROUGH TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

The David Lynch Educational Foundation's Transcendental Meditation Program promotes quiet periods twice per day in schools to reduce stress and improve academic

¹⁹⁸ Morris, 1966, p.110-111.

¹⁹⁹ : ®Transcendental Meditation and TM are service marks registered in the US patent and trademark office, licensed to Maharishi Vedic Development Corporation and used under sublicense.

²⁰⁰ Outward Bound was founded by Kurt Hahn and Sir Lawrence Holt in 1941.

success. Brought to the West by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, it is more than just “the smart person's bubble bath”²⁰¹; the research connected directly to TM now impacts many mental, emotional and physical fronts throughout medical, sociological, and educational disciplines. Despite the time that needs to be set aside to do it, the simple, natural, non-religious technique of TM “allows the mind to experience finer levels of the thinking process until the mind transcends and experiences the source of thought, the simplest form of human awareness,”²⁰² described as the Unified Field of Natural Law.²⁰³ Travis, Arenander, & DuBois (2004) showed that “increased orderliness of the functioning of the brain and the experience of a profound state of ‘restful alertness’”²⁰⁴ during the practice of TM is significant and measurable. According to the David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness-based Education and World Peace website, over 20 million dollars has been granted by the US National Institutes of Health for Transcendental Meditation prevention-oriented health research.²⁰⁵ Data from hundreds of scientific studies at over 200 independent universities and research institutions show a wide range of educational benefits from TM including increased attendance, intelligence, creativity, efficiency of information transfer in the brain, calmness, and self-development; improved memory,

²⁰¹ Steiner, Joel. “Just Say Om”, from Time Magazine, August 4, 2004. Taken 3/4/2010 from “Just Say Om” webpage: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1005349-1,00.html>

²⁰² Nidich, 2009. Comes from a press document sent to me by Dr. Sanford Nidich representing (The David Lynch Foundation) Transcendental Meditation/Quiet Time Program at the Maharishi University of Management, Fairfield, Iowa.

²⁰³ Roth, *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation*, online book, Ch. 2, 1987.

²⁰⁴ Travis, F., Arenander, A., & DuBois, D. “Psychological and physiological characteristics of a proposed object-referral/self-referral continuum of self-awareness”. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 13, 401-420, 2004.

²⁰⁵ David Lynch Foundation. Taken 2/25/2010 from “Scientific evidence that Transcendental Meditation works” webpage: <http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/research/scientific-evidence-that-the-program-works.html>

mind-body coordination and academic performance; and decreased behavioural issues, anxiety, substance abuse, and depression²⁰⁶.

Particularly relevant to this thesis is the program's research on *Increased integration of personality*²⁰⁷ including increased self-confidence, self-actualization, efficiency of perception and memory; improved problem solving ability, left (verbal and analytic thinking) and right (synthetic and holistic thinking) hemisphere functioning; and increased field independence – increased resistance to distraction and social pressure²⁰⁸. Most of these are self-explanatory and very positive for self-development, but 'increased field independence' is of particular interest. Distraction and social pressure are wide ranging, but if TM builds resistance overall to these features, then, in combination with the other benefits provided by TM, the self has a real fighting chance! As meditation promotes existence first, developing essence is a biproduct. So, instead of essence coming *first* and deriving "existing, nothing but existing"²⁰⁹ – which was why Jimi Hendrix concluded that "I Don't Live Today" – meditation's existence *first* derives essence and therefore leads to living.

In my view, the 20 minute pauses taken in school (currently 50,000 strong in public and private schools²¹⁰) are a direct (re)connection to the *vita contemplativa*. Its affect on students' active life and studies, I identify as a spring board to self-

²⁰⁶ David Lynch Foundation: For consciousness-based education and world peace (2009). Taken 3/4/2009 from "Scientific evidence that Transcendental Meditation works" webpage: <http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/research/scientific-evidence-that-the-program-works.html>, 2009, pp.1-10.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p.6-7.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Hendrix, Jimi. "I Don't Live Today" from *Are You Experienced?* A long-playing music recording. MCA Records, 1967.

²¹⁰ David Lynch Foundation: For consciousness-based education and world peace (2009). Taken 3/4/2009 from "Home" webpage: <http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/home.html>, 2009, p.1.

authentication. But what happens exactly during TM? How does 20 minutes of silent sitting, a seemingly inactive waste of time, result in empowerment and self-authentication?

With hundreds of celebrated independent investigations, a review of TM research milestones will help contextualize its recent adoption into education.

'For 30 years, meditation research has told us that it works beautifully as an antidote to stress,' says Daniel Goleman, author of *Destructive Emotions*, a conversation among the Dalai Lama and a group of neuroscientists.' But what's exciting about the new research is how meditation can train the mind and reshape the brain.' Tests using the most sophisticated imaging techniques suggest that it can actually reset the brain, changing the point at which a traffic jam, for instance, sets the blood boiling.²¹¹

Attention deficit disorder (ADD) is all the rage... now for decades. But instead of looking at policies that would minimize external distraction and keep violence, reality television and in-your-face media advertising at a more digestible pace, children are drugged or put in special classrooms that minimize distraction. While this might be good for pharmaceutical companies and insurance agencies, public education programs are generally under-funded and under-staffed and these young children are caught in a struggle between discovering their inner selves (whose natural chemistry is interrupted by foreign substances) and navigating through the outer world (which is full of artificiality). In a special report issue of alternative ADD therapies in *Additude Magazine*, Maggie Jackson (2008) relays that the core of executive attention is developed in the brain between the ages of four and seven²¹². Meditation is now recognized as a non-intrusive affordable way to develop executive attention. Although, in my view, it is important to differentiate between meditation in schools as self authenticating practice of the *vita contemplativa* and meditation in schools to counter ADD or boost memory, learning

²¹¹ Goleman, Daniel, 2003, in Steiner, 2003, webpage 2.

²¹² Jackson, Maggie. "Brain training" *Additude: Life with ADHD made easier Magazine*. Winter, 2008. pp.39-40.

meditation at a young age may be useful. Lidia Zylowska co-founder of UCLA psychiatry's Mindful Awareness Research Center, is very optimistic about meditation in schools:

Attention is such a basic skill that children need, and to be able to impact that skill, to teach them how to redirect their attention and how to become more aware of themselves, their bodies, emotions and thoughts – it's an exciting thing. It's also critical.²¹³

Public education policy makers need to be at the forefront of understanding and reviewing 'attention' as a skill and it needs to be understood as an integral part of self-authentication as a discipline.

If we put self-authentication as a priority in education, we will need to reconsider how we structure curriculum. Although a complete overhaul that weaves the usual science, math, language, art, physical education and humanities into a curriculum infused with self-authentication, I do not fear a little-by-little approach like we see with the TM programs of 20 minutes twice a day where students dip into the *vita contemplativa*.

Sociologist Georges Friedmann (1970) has this to say of sitting quietly:

To take flight every day! At least for a moment, which may be brief, as long as it is intense. A "spiritual exercise" every day – either alone, or in the company of someone who also wishes to better himself. Spiritual exercises. Step out of duration...try to get rid of your own passions, vanities, and the itch for talk about your own name, which sometimes burns you like a chronic disease. Avoid back biting. Get rid of pity and hatred. Love all free human beings. Become eternal by transcending yourself.

This work on yourself is necessary; this ambition justified. Lots of people let themselves be wholly absorbed by militant politics and preparation for social revolution. Rare, much more rare, are they who, in order to prepare for the revolution, are willing to make themselves worthy of it.²¹⁴

²¹³ Zylowska, 2008, in Jackson, Maggie. "Brain training" *Additude: Life with ADHD made easier Magazine*. Winter, 2008. p.40.

²¹⁴ Georges Friedmann, 1970, in Hadot, 1995, p.81.

Let us be realistic in assessing Friedmann's plea: it is not about children. But its implicit content is what makes it even more important as an advisory notice. He, in no uncertain terms, implies that by the time we are adults, many very disturbing, intolerant, automatic, false and negative forces have crystallized in us. In my opinion, meditation is a strong springboard into self-authenticating, but it is not enough.

With their *vita contemplativas* invoked by meditation, students must engage in their community -- they must also develop their *vita activas*! Although this can and will be done in the usual context of school and community, it is my belief that the deepest realizations will come when students are removed from their usual worldly (artificial) context and placed in a natural space where they must engage in much more raw and simple survival conditions. In the urban environment, a great deal of a student's full-time life is spent simplifying and managing internally and individually the complexities of the outside world. In the natural environment, the context is reversed: the outer world is simplified and survival is paramount. With only a few key goals like navigating terrain, finding shelter, keeping clean and nourishing the body, the complexity falls away, bringing the inner self into the shared communal space. Where the weakest person in a surviving group represents the overall strength of the chain, one's active and contemplative lives are thrust into challenge. For those reading this who have had the opportunity to travel, we can see how this parallels the old edict that 'you haven't *really* gotten to know someone until you've traveled with them'. Where films have popularized this 'coming to terms with the self while learning to deal with others' process through the road-movie, it is generally an adult context. But what about the idea of educational nature trips where the guides are trained to provide students with the opportunity to engage in

the vita activa and where the process of self-motivation goes hand-in-hand with strengthening the community? Welcome to Outward Bound!

ACTIVE LIVING AND REFLECTION THROUGH OUTWARD BOUND

Leading outdoor education expeditions for over 60 years, Outward Bound (OB) now hosts over 70,000 people (predominately students) annually²¹⁵. Although experience and value-centered educational principles have been at the heart of the Outward Bound program from its inception, there have been a number of efforts to explain and expand upon the Outward Bound philosophy in pedagogical terms, including Walsh and Golins' (1976) OB Educational Process Model²¹⁶ and Sakofs and Armstrong's (1996) Active Learning Cycle²¹⁷ based on Kolb's learning cycle²¹⁸ (1984). In the current 'holistic' model, the *values, design principles and outcomes* of the "Outward Bound Educational Framework"²¹⁹ (see *Appendix IV: Outward Bound Educational Framework*) are derived from modernization of the program with an anchor in founder Kurt Hahn's personal legacy and philosophy.

Hahn oversaw the development and expansion of Outward Bound from 1920 until his death in 1974. During this time Hahn had set himself an educational mission to provide youth with an opportunity to develop authentic skills of respect, leadership, and healthy living that could translate across to any field the student decided to pursue.

²¹⁵ Outward Bound. Taken 2/7/2009 from "About Outward Bound" webpage: <http://www.outwardbound.org/index.cfm/do/ind.about>, 2009.

²¹⁶ Walsh, V., & Golins, G. *The exploration of the Outward Bound process*. Denver: Colorado Outward Bound School, 1976.

²¹⁷ Sakofs, M., & Armstrong, G.P. *Into the classroom: The Outward Bound approach to teaching and learning*. Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1996.

²¹⁸ Kolb, D.A. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984.

²¹⁹ Outward Bound. Taken 3/4/2009 from "Philosophy: The Outward Bound Mission and educational framework" webpage: http://www.outwardbound.org/index.cfm/do/ind.about_philosophy, 2009, pp.1-2.

Originally full-time boarding schools, over the years Outward Bound has taken many forms including day campuses, and as I experienced it in California in the 1980's the guides would show up to our school and take us in vans into different wilderness areas and wildlife refuges. Strategically placed inside or along natural parks or wilderness areas, the practical side of each campuses' community commitment is as a rescue service. To Hahn, learning to survive in nature is to understand the self and discover respect for nature and others. By sending students out on guided day trips and extended backpacking trips, Hahn developed an organic curriculum that uses the challenges of the natural environment to provoke communication, collaboration, problem solving and conflict resolution. Plurality, ambiguity and distinction are easily identifiable by the intention former OB director John Mitchell relates to keep the OB experience from becoming teacher-centered (or guide-centered): "We don't appoint or elect formal leaders but expect individuals with particular skills to take on this role for the duration of the situation that requires solving. Leadership is thus changed as the group moves from problem to problem."²²⁰

By the late 1960's Outward Bound growing legacy brought a new wave of careers for nature enthusiasts becoming the pet project of various educators, psychologists and sociologists. Critical to the OB program was the equivalent emphasis given to active and reflective time. As sports psychology Professor L.M. Lefebvre points out of the Belgium school he started in 1977,

The approach is a scientific one, using carefully supervised and measured methods of Action and Reflection, with much verbal and nonverbal communication between the participants and instructors. Everyone is encouraged

²²⁰ John Mitchel in Wilson, 1981, p.46.

to reflect upon their experience and use the conclusions constructively.²²¹

By the late 1970's, alternative outdoor education had really caught on and a number of academic researchers and enthusiasts canonized Outward Bound. Giving it his stamp of approval, Haverford Professor of Psychology Douglas Heath (1981) hailed *Outward Bound U.S.A.* "a case study of hope!"²²² Heath recognizes that without the proper self-authenticating foundation, students and educators both suffer in the usual curriculum: "...too exclusive an emphasis on only reading, writing and arithmetic that ignores a youth's sense of self, values, and interpersonal skills too often distorts healthy growth and ultimately blocks mastering even the three "r's" themselves."²²³ He also recognizes that the natural environment provides an opportunity to open up *to* the self and to others in a way that urban conditions shutdown and-divide. In his own words: "...today's youth grow up isolated not just from nature – its unpredictability, its wilderness, its solitude, but also from others."²²⁴ A worldwide phenomenon, Outward Bound now "offers a whole-school reform model to more than 150 elementary and secondary schools throughout the [USA]."²²⁵

While a straightforward interpretation of the modern framework's design principles to "incorporate reflection and transference [and learn] from success as well as failure"²²⁶ and the *outcome* of "character development's increased self-confidence and self-actualization" and "living a healthy and balanced life"²²⁷ have obvious implications

²²¹ L.M. Lefebvre in Wilson, 1981, p.56.

²²² Heath, Douglas. "Introduction." In *Outward Bound U.S.A.* (J. Miner & J. Boldt, Authors) New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., p.11, 1981.

²²³ Ibid., p.9.

²²⁴ Ibid., p.10.

²²⁵ Outward Bound. Taken 2/7/2009 from "About Outward Bound" webpage: <http://www.outwardbound.org/index.cfm/do/ind.about>, 2009.

²²⁶ Ibid., p.1.

²²⁷ All listed items, Ibid. p.1-2.

for the self, it is critical to this thesis to think past the first degree of the framework when considering other parts we typically interpret as related to outward or external group dynamics. In other words, the principles helping to reconcile outward dynamics, such as compassion; inclusion and diversity; goal setting, guiding and achieving; collaborating, communicating, solving problems and resolving conflicts effectively; social and environmental responsibility²²⁸ must also be considered in terms of reconciling inner plurality of the self.

I believe Outward Bound works to bring students in and out of ambiguity – to understand themselves as both minute and irrelevant *and* grand and quintessential. This process helps strengthen active living, the identity within plurality of the individual, and confidence in a group. When taken out of an urban environment and placed in the wild, students are put in more direct contact with ambiguity. Through isolation and a simultaneous focus on basic survival, they realize their irrelevance in the cosmic scheme and yet utter relevance in relationship to group survival. Removed from their usual urban social circumstances and conditions, a new set of reflections and impressions from the *vita contemplativa* arrive where the *v.a.* is forced to make its way in a new environment. Although the juxtaposition between different living conditions is valuable, it is even more nutritious if students have already been thinking beforehand, in their curriculum, about the *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*, perhaps through meditation!

Consider the contrast between a program like Outward Bound and standard education. Although there are sure to be a number of variations, the modern face-front, parallel wall, teacher centered (at the front of the room) classroom is common if not

²²⁸ Ibid., p.1-2.

prevalent. In *A Portal to media literacy*²²⁹, Michael Wesch (2008) presents the results of a student based evaluation (he carried out with his cultural anthropology students at Kansas University) of the classroom environment and values surrounding the modern learning experience. Referring to their multimedia, internet-connected amphitheatre classroom, that could be the envy of all modern schools, as a “room designed for an information dump, not for discussion,”²³⁰ Wesch reports that ‘if the walls could talk’ in the modern classroom environment, they would say:

- ☐ To learn is to acquire information
- ☐ Information is scarce and hard to find
- ☐ Trust authority for good information
- ☐ Authorized information is beyond discussion
- ☐ Obey the authority
- ☐ Follow along²³¹

Even worse, Wesch reports that when students get to the smaller more intimate classrooms they bring the expectations they developed in the larger rooms. He says we can understand the reason for students’ expectations by paying close attention to the kinds of questions students ask.

- ☐ How many points is this worth?
- ☐ How long does this paper need to be?
- ☐ What do we need to know for this test?²³²

These questions relay that students have not only adapted a limited set of non-discussion type questions--the questions outline the narrow path of learning they need to navigate to survive their environment. Most interesting for the purposes of this thesis is that all the expectations and questions all relate to or seek external validation. And his students are

²²⁹ Wesch, Michael. *A Portal to media literacy*. A presentation made at University of Manitoba. Taken 4/20/2009 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4yApagnr0s&feature=channel>, 2008.

²³⁰ Ibid., minute 6:00.

²³¹ Ibid., minute 6:30.

²³² Ibid., minute 7:36.

college students. That means they have been hammered with this behavior ethic for at least a decade and have successfully adapted to it!

If combined with a self-certifying vita-contemplative-building Transcendental Meditation program, Outward Bound would not only be receiving students more prepared to benefit from guided outdoor adventure education, it would be able to expand on the values, design principles, and outcomes of its philosophy (revisit *Appendix IV*). Although I respect the Outward Bound philosophy, like anyone who thinks they need a religion to know what to do, but it suffers from a pre-made external framework. In order to show how the program could be beneficially revised to reflect the principles explored in this thesis, I have revised the current Outward Bound guiding principles. A new Outward Bound Educational Framework that might look something like the following.

Revised Outward Bound Educational Framework 2010, by Z.A.Reznichek

VALUES

~~*We teach to and work by these values:*~~

We guide and work by these values:

Compassion Freedom

~~—Demonstrating concern and acting with a spirit of respect and generosity in service to others~~

—Striving for survival, distinction, and freedom with a recognition that it will grow strong in the self only as it is nurtured by and with others who share in the experience.

Integrity Distinction

~~—Acting with honesty, being accountable for your decisions and actions~~

—Expressing sincerity, becoming aware of the influences that corrupt my decisions and actions.

Excellence

~~—Being your best self, pursuing craftsmanship in your actions, and living a healthy and balanced life~~

—Finding your distinct voice, committing to sincerity with it and demanding sincerity from your fellows no matter how agonistic.

Inclusion and Diversity Balance and Natural Diversity

- ~~—Valuing and working to create communities representative of our society that support and respect differences~~
- Valuing and working inwardly and together on self-certification to create balanced, healthy communities that we can export to the larger society.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

We use these principles to design and deliver programs:

Learning through Experience

- Facilitating engaging, relevant, sequential experiences that promote skill mastery and incorporate reflection and transference
- Learning from success as well as failure

Challenge and Adventure

- Using unfamiliar settings to impel students into mentally, emotionally and physically demanding experiences
- Utilizing and managing appropriate risk

Supportive Environment

- Designing an experience that supports physical and emotional safety
- Developing a caring and positive group culture

OUTCOMES

These are the outcomes common to all of our programs and what we measure:

Character Development

- ~~—Demonstrating increased self-confidence and self-actualization~~
- ~~—Demonstrating increased self-validation, self-confidence, and self-actualization~~
- ~~—Demonstrating compassion toward others and living a healthy and balanced life~~
- ~~—Demonstrating self-certification and agonistic friendships.~~

Leadership Self-authentication

- ~~—Demonstrating the ability to set goals, and inspire and guide others to achieve them~~
- Demonstrating the ability to set goals, but being patient and ready to adapt to the realtime narrative, and seeing that guidance comes from self-authentication and forgiveness toward the self and the group.
- ~~—Demonstrating the ability to collaborate, communicate, solve problems and resolve conflicts effectively~~
- Demonstrating the alchemization of negative emotions through sincerity into motivational energy that inspires the self and others to collaborate, communicate, create solutions and resolve conflicts effectively.

Service Self-actualization

- ~~Demonstrating social and environmental responsibility~~
- Assuming communal responsibility.

- ~~Actively engaging in service to others~~
- Actively engaging in the *vita contemplativa*.

When we considered (in chapter 2) that philosophy was originally (in pre-Socratic Greece) practiced by everyone and was in part the *vita contemplativa*, it was prior to the moral infusion of neo-Platonic need to do good and untainted by God-fearing tradition and lexicon. By Hadot's *Philosophy as a way of life* can we reconsider philosophy for everyone, by removing words like "sin", "God" and "Lord"? Because we might be able to glean the original practical advice of Dorotheus of Gaza before the *vita contemplativa* and philosophy of the individual was high-jacked by 'future founding' philosophers:

We ought not only to examine ourselves every day but also every season, every month, and every week, and ask ourselves: "What stage am I at now with regards to the passion by which I was overcome last week?" Similarly every year: "Last year I was overcome by such and such a passion; how about now?" The Fathers have told us how useful it is for each of us to purify himself in turn, by examining, every evening, how we have spent the day, and every morning, how we have spent the night.²³³

From my experience with 15 years of daily meditation, I find this examination process to be naturally occurring. I conclude as well that this parallels Transcendental Meditation's finer thinking that "transcends and experiences *the source* of thought, the simplest form of human awareness"²³⁴ (the Unified Field of Natural Law²³⁵).

²³³ Dorotheus of Gaza, circa 540 A.D., in Hadot, 1995, p.134-135.

²³⁴ Nidich, 2009. Comes from a press document sent to me by Dr. Sanford Nidich representing (The David Lynch Foundation) Transcendental Meditation/Quiet Time Program at the Maharishi University of Management, Fairfield, Iowa.

²³⁵ Roth, *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation*, online book, Ch. 2, 1987.

Although I am critical of the Outward Bound philosophy and find it too Christian and Platonic, the value of students immersed in another context is, on the whole, a progressive and holistic alternative experience. Renate Wilson reports that OB staff are not all satisfied with the results of the program. "Purists among them feel that Outward Bound needs a moral shakeup"²³⁶, but the double standard she goes on to describe of OB leaders living different lifestyles than students, points to why the Platonic/Christian value system will always be limited and constrained. With a deep investigation into the side-effects of our bloated social realm, and with a strong commitment to sincerity, authenticity and contemplation will hopefully become pillars of future curriculum philosophies. In the meantime, Outward Bound and Transcendental Meditation may not be a total-solution to the problem of authentic education, but they are steps in the right direction.

²³⁶ Renate Wilson. *Inside Outward Bound*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, p.165, 1981.

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*Appendix Ia: Ecclesiastes 3: A Time for Everything*²³⁷

¹ There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

² a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

³ a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,

⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,

⁶ a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,

⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,

⁸ a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

⁹ What does the worker gain from his toil? ¹⁰ I have seen the burden God has laid on men.
¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. ¹³ That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.

¹⁵ Whatever is has already been,
and what will be has been before;
and God will call the past to account.

¹⁶ And I saw something else under the sun:
In the place of judgment—wickedness was there,
in the place of justice—wickedness was there.

¹⁷ I thought in my heart,
"God will bring to judgment

²³⁷ New International Bible, Ecclesiastes 3.

both the righteous and the wicked,
for there will be a time for every activity,
a time for every deed."

¹⁸ I also thought, "As for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. ¹⁹ Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless. ²⁰ All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. ²¹ Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?"

²² So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot. For who can bring him to see what will happen after him?

*Appendix Ib: Ecclesiastes 3 [No subtitle]*²³⁸

¹To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

²A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

³A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

⁷A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

⁹What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

¹⁰I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

¹¹He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

¹²I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

²³⁸ King James Bible, Ecclesiastes 3.

¹³And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

¹⁴I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

¹⁵That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

¹⁶And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

¹⁷I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

¹⁸I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

¹⁹For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

²⁰All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

²¹Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

²²Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

Appendix II: Historical Timeline 509 B.C.E. to 529 A.D.

509 B.C.E.	The Roman Republic underway, lasting about 500 years
508 B.C.E.	Democratic institutions arise in Athens
477 B.C.E.	Delian League Treasury founded
454 B.C.E.	Delian League Treasury moved to Athens; Greek Empire formed
431-421 B.C.E.	Peloponnesian War, first phase
414-404 B.C.E.	Peloponnesian War, second phase
411 B.C.E.	End of Thucydides account of the Peloponnesian War
404 B.C.E.	Athens surrenders to Spartans
399 B.C.E.	The death of Socrates; Plato became a critic of Athenian Democracy calling instead for a Republic ruled by philosopher kings
324 B.C.E.	The Greek Empire began to break down upon the return of Alexander the Great to Babylon
280 B.C.E.	The Roman Republic begin warring with Greece
146 B.C.E.	The Roman conquest of Greece
83 B.C.E.	Platonic Academy closed after death of Philo of Larissa
27 B.C.E.	The Roman Empire took hold
0-20 A.D.	A Jewish man grows up along a trade route in Nazareth hearing news of the world and gleaning a Hebrew education
20 A.D.	Something does not sit well for this Jewish man, referred to historically as Jesus. He and followers begin to challenge Roman and Jewish compromise of the <i>vita contemplativa</i> . Most common word he is quoted as saying, "Awaken!" ²³⁹
36 A.D.	After open rebellion in defiance of both Roman civic rule and Jewish religious tradition, Jesus is crucified without resisting. A clearly public and distinct action; biblically the accounts resound that this action was also made after great contemplation
36 A.D. +	Followers of Jesus, known as apostles travel in different directions to related through parables – the least persecutable – the sacrifice of Jesus for the renunciation of a society that has reserved the <i>vita contemplativa</i> solely for philosophers.
64 A.D.	Apostle Peter (Simon) carried word of Jesus Christ to Rome where he was persecuted, thrown into slavery and crucified upside-down. As a martyr, Peter was recognized as the first Pope and eventually the gatekeeper of heaven (depicted with keys in Christian artwork)
33-65 A.D.	'Paul the Apostle', a fanatic so worried that Jesus had died in vain developed and spread the first major corruption of Jesus' teaching/rebellion called 'original sin' where suddenly everyone had

²³⁹ As we will see in Chapter 5, what makes this man's actions, according to the scriptures, so unrealistic is that the Roman Catholic Empire made Jesus the poster boy of 'original sin'. What I argue to be an entirely more realistic and fathomable reason to die nobly and distinctly without resistance is that his message - which has survived in tireless accounts - to "Awaken!" was not just to wake up to be programmed and behave as a labor tool, but to contemplate for one's self and fulfill one's active life as a free political plural human! Yet, he apparently died as a sacrifice for Adam and Eve's 'original sin'? For not doing what 'God' told them and trying to understand (contemplate) how the world works?

	something inherently wrong with them and needed to be resolved through a communion with Jesus Christ (the Logos of one God)
185-250 A.D.	NeoPlatonists <i>Clement of Alexandria</i> and <i>Origen</i> fused Platonic philosophy with Christian doctrine to create <i>Christian Universalism</i>
235 A.D.	Dawn of <i>Crisis of the Third Century</i> saw the Roman Empire in decline, unrest and debauchery turning over emperors sometimes in only months. Meanwhile, Christian missionaries and martyrs (and Jews) continued to persist and be persecuted
302 A.D.	The “Great Persecution” by <i>Emperor Diocletian</i> saw scriptures burned, treasures and property seized, officials demoted and priests imprisoned
311 A.D.	Persecution by Romans ended for Christians. Christianity takes hold in Roman Royalty, most critically <i>Helen Augusta</i> (later Saint Helen) mother of <i>Constantine I</i>
313 A.D.	Roman Catholicism is formed as Constantine returned all ‘church’ property via the <i>Edict of Milan</i> and over the top of Byzantium he built Constantinople the new Roman Catholic capital of the Eastern Roman Empire as the ‘center of learning, prosperity and cultural preservation’ where his mother would collect Christian relics sparing no expense. One such preservation was to build the new Church of the Holy Apostles over the site of a temple to Aphrodite.
325 A.D.	Council of Nicea establishes Jesus Christ as equivalent of God, a direct consensus of 300 bishops that reject <i>Arius of Alexandria</i> ’s opposition of there being a human equivalent of ‘God’. Jesus’ sacrifice of self to Roman crucifixion is co-opted and a rewrite of his story begins where ‘original sin’ is central to his deification and logos
410-529 A.D.	Revived Neo-Platonic Academy

Appendix III: My Theory on the life of Jesus

I never, ever, ever thought it would *ever* come to this, but through the contemplative process of this thesis and all the research that went into it, I would like to offer a new theory on the life of Jesus. Even as a child, before I could start piecing things together, I felt Christianity was corrupt and that Jesus, if he existed, was simply a wise man whose teachings were distorted and exaggerated over 2000 years. But now I come to see something else when I consider the narrative of the New Testament's creation/edition and the agenda of those who formed the Roman Catholic Church. If you are conditioned to accept the story and the metaphysics (superstition) that surround it, then critical consideration of the narrative has little opportunity to develop (and is of course sacrilegious).

Why would it not be possible that a man living under Roman occupation recognized that the *vita contemplativa* had been high jacked and was being abused by the power structure? That is not totally out of this world, what so ever. Nor that he demanded that it be returned, meanwhile telling everyone he saw and met that they needed to “awaken” and that they were in an actual and metaphysical prison of work and labor. Regardless of how we look at the New Testament Bible, this man was a shit-disturber and full of revelations – not the moon turning to blood kind, but the kind that comes from contemplation: going into the desert, into the mountains, sitting quietly. It was a quiet and simple revolution that was changing everybody who got in touch with it.

Is it coincidence that this man was crucified at what seems to be within ten years of the formation of the Roman Empire (under Julius Cesar) in 44 A.D.? Empires do not form because the government and people are rejoicing together. Romans had just been in

a period of Republic, therefore it had been in a more free-thinking tolerable time. But they had just about enough of anyone trying to bring back any kind of action in the public realm. The only ones allowed to have any form of ‘distinction’ were the legislators and the emperor – molded as we have said by the philosophers.

And if platonic philosophers got hold of the writings of Jesus’ disciples, why would they have done anything but rewrite it as it would serve them best – in the name of the Roman Empire? So what then? The Romans *reformed*? How ridiculous is that? Think about it: Roman Catholicism? The way the crucifixion is written in the Bible, the Romans are just carrying out the will of the people, even laying it on the Jews. The new form of ‘politics’, as we know it, made its first real coup d’etat by rewriting itself out of the oppressor role and spreading the incredible story of a man who could do all sorts of supernatural things. And all the things that he did, he did as a sacrifice for original sin – contemplation.

The Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., which was one of the first councils to meet after the Romans adapted ‘Christianity’ was no small affair at over 300 bishops. By the review of a priest named Arius (c. 250-336) – who asserted “the primacy of the Father over the son and thus rejected the doctrine of the trinity”²⁴⁰ – they chose to glorify the life of Jesus ‘Christ’ and made him, if we follow my line of thinking, the poster-child of Roman Catholicism by establishing the trinity that consummated the role of humans in eternity and would condemn any ney sayer such as an Arian (one who agreed with Arius) as a heretic. Thus began the wars of Roman Catholics and The Goths (those who agreed with Arius) that shaped Europe.

²⁴⁰ William Uzgalis. “John Locke”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2007, URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/>

William Uzgalis (2007) points out that John Locke and Isaac Newton noted that from this historical point Church and State were merged and that in Locke's *Letter on Toleration* one main theme was that “there should be a separation between Church and State.”²⁴¹ My point is that there are academics who see either in part or whole what I am proposing, but I am more concerned with the idea that Jesus had almost wrestled back the *vita contemplativa*, he even made himself a martyr, which was obviously an enormously powerful act of distinction and excellence in the public realm. But the twist is that the philosophers manipulated his story into cavaliering their own. And that is what most people think to this day.

²⁴¹ Uzgalis, 2007.

Appendix IV: Outward Bound Educational Framework

VALUES

We teach to and work by these values:

Compassion

—Demonstrating concern and acting with a spirit of respect and generosity in service to others

Integrity

—Acting with honesty, being accountable for your decisions and actions

Excellence

—Being your best self, pursuing craftsmanship in your actions, and living a healthy and balanced life

Inclusion and Diversity

—Valuing and working to create communities representative of our society that support and respect differences

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

We use these principles to design and deliver programs:

Learning through Experience

—Facilitating engaging, relevant, sequential experiences that promote skill mastery and incorporate reflection and transference

—Learning from success as well as failure

Challenge and Adventure

—Using unfamiliar settings to impel students into mentally, emotionally and physically demanding experiences

—Utilizing and managing appropriate risk

Supportive Environment

—Designing an experience that supports physical and emotional safety

—Developing a caring and positive group culture

OUTCOMES

These are the outcomes common to all of our programs and what we measure:

Character Development

—Demonstrating increased self-confidence and self-actualization

—Demonstrating compassion toward others and living a healthy and balanced life

Leadership

—Demonstrating the ability to set goals, and inspire and guide others to achieve them

—Demonstrating the ability to collaborate, communicate, solve problems and resolve conflicts effectively

Service

—Demonstrating social and environmental responsibility

—Actively engaging in service to others