

LABOR, LESIURE AND FREEDOM
IN THE PHILOSOPHIES
OF
ARISTOTLE, KARL MARX AND HERBERT MARCUSE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

DOĞAN BARIŞ KILINÇ

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

SEPTEMBER 2006

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis
for the degree of Master of Arts.

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully
adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil Turan
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam (METU, PHIL) _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil Turan (METU, PHIL) _____

Dr. Adnan Akçay (METU, SOC) _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

LABOR, LESIURE AND FREEDOM IN THE PHILOSOPHIES OF ARISTOTLE, KARL MARX AND HERBERT MARCUSE

Kılınç, Doğan Barış

M.A., Department of Philosophy

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil Turan

September 2006, 106 pages

The aim of this study is to present an examination of the philosophies of Aristotle, Karl Marx and Herbert Marcuse concerning labor and leisure in the context of freedom. These philosophers have paid attention to the concepts labor and leisure; their view of freedom is dependent on the relationship they have established between labor and leisure. To this end, I firstly give a general overview of the concepts labor, leisure and freedom; afterwards, I try to show how these concepts have been considered in the history of thought. I examine the concepts labor and leisure in Aristotle's political and ethical thought. I discuss the connection between Aristotle's perfect state and his view of ethics in the context of labor and leisure, and the relation between best way of life and freedom in Aristotle is presented. Next, I analyze Karl Marx's view of human nature and his theory of estrangement.

I investigate the condition of labor and leisure in the capitalist society from Marx's point of view; and consider Marxian conceptions "the realm of freedom" and "the realm of necessity" is considered in context of labor and leisure. Lastly, I analyze Herbert Marcuse's critique of the advanced industrial society and the thoughts on "one dimensional man" it creates. I dwelled on the possibilities of technological developments, and the changes they bring about concerning labor and leisure, both as means of servitude and freedom. In the conclusion, I give a brief summary, and consider the similarities and differences among the views of Aristotle, Karl Marx and Herbert Marcuse concerning labor, leisure and freedom.

Keywords: Labor, work, leisure, free time, freedom, the realm of necessity, the realm of freedom, alienation, contemplation, capitalism, advanced industrial society, communism.

ÖZ

ARİSTOTELES, KARL MARX VE HERBERT MARCUSE’NİN FELSEFELERİNDE EMEK, BOŞ ZAMAN VE ÖZGÜRLÜK

Kılınç, Doğan Barış

Yüksek Lisans, Felsefe Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Ş. Halil Turan

Eylül 2006, 106 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Aristoteles, Karl Marx ve Herbert Marcuse’nin emek ve boş zaman hakkındaki düşüncelerinin özgürlük bağlamında bir incelemesini sunmaktır. Bu filozoflar, emek ve boş zaman kavramlarına dikkat çekmişlerdir ve özgürlük görüşleri, emek ve boş zaman arasında kurdukları ilişkiye dayalıdır. Bu amaçla, ilk olarak, emek, boş zaman ve özgürlük kavramlarına genel bir bakış sunmaktayım ve sonrasında, bu kavramların düşünce tarihinde nasıl ele alındığı göstermeye çalışıyorum. Aristoteles’in etik ve politik düşüncesinde emek ve boş zaman kavramlarının önemini inceliyorum. Aristoteles’in ideal devlet ve etik görüşü arasındaki bağlantıyı emek ve boş zaman bağlamında tartışıyorum ve Aristoteles’te en iyi yaşam biçimi ve özgürlük arasındaki ilişki sunuluyor. Bundan sonra, Karl Marx’ın insan doğası görüşünü ve yabancılaşma teorisini analiz

ediyorum. Emek ve boş zamanın kapitalist toplumdaki durumunu, Marx'ın bakış açısından araştırıyorum ve Marksçı “özgürlükler alanı” ve “zorunluluklar alanı” kavramlarını emek ve boş zaman bağlamında ele alıyorum. Son olarak, Herbert Marcuse'nin ileri sanayi toplum eleştirisini ve onun yarattığı tek boyutlu insan üzerine Marcuse'nin düşüncelerini analiz ediyorum. Teknolojik gelişmelerin olanakları ve onların yol açtığı, hem kölelik hem de özgürlük aracı olarak emek ve boş zaman ilgili değişiklikler üzerinde duruyorum. Sonuçta, kısa bir özet sunuyor ve Aristoteles, Karl Marx ve Herbert Marcuse'nin emek, boş zaman ve özgürlük hakkındaki görüşlerindeki benzerlikler ve farklılıkları ele alıyorum.

Keywords: Emek, çalışma, boş zaman, serbest zaman, özgürlük, özgürlükler alanı, zorunluluklar alanı, yabancılaşma, temaşa, kapitalizm, ileri sanayi toplumu, komünizm.

To My Mermaid, Aynur Yılmaz

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Halil Turan for his guidance and support during the preparation of my thesis. I would also like to thank all the members of my family, who did not deprive me of their care and support during my studies. I am especially grateful to Aynur Yılmaz. Without her smile I would remain dark.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The concepts labor and leisure have been considered in the history of thought by different philosophers sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly. Historically, labor or work as a means of man's maintaining his life is an age-old human activity. In order to survive and reproduce his species, man has felt the need to command nature and adapt it to himself. Production and reproduction of life continuously makes this activity vital. Thus, the activity of labor is an important theme in the history of thought.

The concept leisure is generally considered together with labor. Having begun to produce his own life, man devotes a large part of his life to labor. There is also a place for leisure in human life; it can be defined as the time which remains from the labor. Thus, leisure signifies time man saves for himself beyond the necessities of life. Therefore, human life can generally be said to be divided into two parts: labor time and free time, labor and leisure.

Leisure, which comes to be an important topic for discussion in modern society, is generally seen as time to alleviate the fatigue of labor, a time necessary for making people work again and a compensation of labor time. Therefore, leisure, at first glance, is a means, not an end. With the development of capitalism and capitalism's desire to turn everything to a commodity, leisure also becomes

an area of profit. Specifically, it is argued by many socialist thinkers that by developing a leisure industry, capitalism seeks the ways of getting back the wage paid in order to buy labor time. According to these thinkers, as distinct from modes of production, capitalism sees in everything related to man a commercial issue and what is calculated is not only production, but also how the products are to be consumed, how people are made to consume. That is why, advertisement sector, entertainment sector, brands, mass media are so important. Certainly, there is a leisure industry.

Leisure, from the beginning, is considered as a time for rest and is related to freedom: this is an area of enjoyment beyond man's producing the necessities of life. Dumazedier defines leisure as an activity. Beyond the necessity to labor and the bounds of family and society, for man leisure means rest, the improvement of skills and "the free exercise of his creative capacity."¹ In this definition leisure signifies not only non-working time but also beyond social obligations. Thus, it is conceived as individual's own world, time belonging only to him.

Leisure, by definition, means non-obligatory time and leisure activities mean non-obligatory activities.² As to freedom, it is generally considered as freedom from the necessity of being occupied.³ This definition of leisure and this consideration of freedom signify that leisure and freedom must be considered together. Therefore, philosophers who think on freedom argue that necessary

¹ Dumazedier, Joffre (1967). *Toward Society of Leisure*, trans. Steward, E. M., London: The Free Press, p. 16.

² Kenneth, Roberts (1970). *Leisure*, London: Longman Group Limited, p. 6.

³ De Grazia, S. (1962). *Of Time Work and Leisure*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund, p. 14.

elements in human life must be reduced and free time must be increased so that freedom becomes possible in human life.

According to many critical philosophers, in the capitalist mode of production, work and leisure are seen as belonging to different realms. For example, Rojek, who argues that work and leisure are polarized, considers the concepts work and leisure in such a way. According to him, work is equivalent to the realm of necessity and in this realm there is no place for actualizing man's potentialities. Work is related to the requirements of life. However, leisure is conceived as "voluntaristic activity" and it belongs to the realm of freedom.⁴

However, the relation between leisure and freedom is more complicated, for it is necessary to consider also the concept labor. Labor is not considered as related to necessity or servitude by all philosophers. For example, Hegel, Marx and Marcuse ascribe a great importance to labor whereas many philosophers and thinkers, especially Aristotle, see it as servility.

As beyond the realm of necessity leisure involves exemption from the necessity of labor but does not mark the state of inactivity. It includes activities which are freely performed and which contribute to the self-development of the individual. Whether these activities involve bodily exertion or intellectual effort, they all refer to activity. In this sense, leisure requires not passivity but activity, not resignation but activity. But if leisure is to be seen equivalent to freedom, being active or activity must have a qualitative difference because given forms of activity do not mark freedom. In Aristotle's best regime, free time of laboring

⁴ Rojek, Chris (1989). "Leisure and 'The Ruins of the Bourgeois World'", in *Leisure for Leisure: Critical Essays*, ed. C. Rojek, London: MacMillan Press Ltd., p. 104.

classes mainly consisted of relaxation and enjoyment, and leisure equivalent to freedom was peculiar to a privileged minority. Contemplation, Aristotle defines as activity of the best way of life, means purely intellectual activity. Philosopher's relation to nature is an indirect relation for Aristotle; there are mediators, i.e. slaves and laborers. Marx observed that in the early times of capitalism, laborers who constitute a very large part of society had very little free time and this free time was a compensation for their labor, as was free time of slaves in Ancient Greece. Marx argued that laborers satisfied only their physical needs in leisure; they were not occupied with actualizing their potentialities. Bourgeois class was exempt from the necessity of labor but its leisure was not composed of philosophical activity. It was rather related to enjoyment and luxury. Later, working class had more free time; working hours were reduced in a certain degree. However, as Marcuse argues, this expanding free time served servitude rather than freedom. According to him, individuals are led to satisfy repressive and false needs, which the capitalist system created in order to continue its domination and increase people's dependence on itself. In other words, leisure under the capitalist mode of production does not mark freedom, even increases servitude. The individual has an illusion about freedom because he possesses more leisure.

Free time or leisure is seen as a power which makes men unfree in the general Marxist analysis of capitalism, although at the same time they mark the realm of freedom in human life. Working conditions determine non-working time, and this non-working or, free time, is considered as the compensation of fatigue of the worker. Thus, labor and leisure appear opposed; they constitute two

different realms. However, Adorno argues that labor and free time are not opposed to each other, but free time is “a shadowy continuation of labour”⁵. He says that in the given conditions it is absurd to expect men to be productive in their free time. Men feel that they are free in their free time but this idea about themselves prevent them from understanding how much they are slaves. They are actually chained where they feel themselves most free.

Furthermore, although labor and leisure have become so important with the emergence and development of capitalism, the importance of labor and leisure can be seen with man’s entering to the scene of history. In fact, the traces of labor and leisure can be followed in the myth of creation. In the Old Testament, God creates the world in six days, and in seventh day he rests in order to alleviate the fatigue of six days he worked. In terms of this religious point of view, leisure is a present God gave to men. Similarly, labor is necessity for man because even God worked. However, this point of view underlines that what is essential is labor, and leisure is a compensation for labor. While labor is seen as an end, leisure is seen only as a means.

Thorstein Veblen analyzes “the leisure class” in the history of man, by investigating distinctions among classes in the society. Veblen argues that in the history of humanity the emergence of a leisure class has a great importance. Its emergence is possible with a strict division among classes and coincides with the emergence of private property.

⁵ Adorno, Theodor (1992). “Free Time”, in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, London: Routledge, p. 168.

Veblen thinks that in barbarian society there were no enmity, private property and thus a leisure class. There was a simple division of labor between men and women. What is useful was considered as noble and accomplishment of one member of the society belonged to all society. A leisure class found opportunity to emerge only in the predatory society. Veblen says the following:

The institution of a leisure class is the outgrowth of an early discrimination between employments, according to which some employments are worthy and others unworthy. Under this ancient distinction the worth employments are those which may be classed as exploit; unworthy are those necessary everyday employments into which no appreciable element of exploit enters.⁶

After ownership begins to be considered as noble and the society reaches a certain level of production, “the characteristic feature of leisure-class life is a conspicuous exemption from all useful employment.”⁷ According to Veblen, the leisure class gains its symbolic meaning with transition from barbarian society to predatory, from the peaceable society to the warlike, and from the consideration of what is useful as noble to the consideration of the exemption from labor as noble. In the end of this process, “labor acquires a character of irksomeness by virtue of the indignity imputed to it.”⁸

According to Veblen, leisure and abstention from labor have continuously become an aspiration of man. He puts this as follows:

From the days of the Greek philosophers to the present, a degree of leisure and of exemption from contact with ... industrial processes as serve the immediate everyday purposes of human life has ever been recognized by thoughtful men as a prerequisite

⁶ Veblen, Thorstein (1957). *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*, New York: New American Library, p. 25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

to a worthy or beautiful, or even a blameless, human life. In itself and in its consequences the life of leisure is beautiful and ennobling in all civilized men's eyes.⁹

In the history of thought, as Veblen indicates, the concepts of labor and leisure have become an important topic for discussion and they are related to freedom. There are different points of view both on these concepts and their relation to each other. From Ancient Greeks to Middle Age, from the wild capitalism to the consumption society the concepts of labor and leisure have become subject to different discussions and their relations with freedom have been established in different contexts.

Technology and technological developments have an important place in context of labor, leisure and freedom. Philosophers and thinkers, such as Lafargue, Marx, Marcuse and Russell, give technology a central place because it brings about the possibility of a different form of labor and of reduction of working hours. In Antiquity, when there were no great technological developments, Aristotle envisaged a condition where machinery takes part in the process of labor and labor is replaced by machinery. He argued that in such conditions there would be no need for both labor and slaves. Since he believed that this was impossible, in his best regime labor and leisure appear opposed to each other, and society was conceived in accordance with the necessity of labor.

Aristotle puts this as follows:

For if every instrument could accomplish its own work, obeying or anticipating the will of others, like the statues of Daedalus, or the tripods of Hephaestus, which, says the poet, of their own accord entered the assembly of the Gods; if, in like manner, the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre without a

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

hand to guide them, chief workmen would not want servants, nor masters slaves.¹⁰

In this study, I will concentrate only on the views of Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse on the topic of labor, leisure and freedom in detail. I will emphasize the importance of the concepts of labor and leisure in the philosophies of these philosophers and try to show how a relation they establish between these concepts and the concept of freedom.

There are many reasons why I only consider Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse. In Aristotle's most well-known works on ethics and politics, namely in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*, Aristotle's view of ethics is closely related to his view of politics. According to him, virtuous life can be established in a political structure, which serves the citizens' happiness and virtue. According to Aristotle's views on politics and ethics, leisure provides the basis of a good state. Aristotle considers happiness as the aim of all action. Happiness has nothing to do with labor and it requires leisure. He argues that happiness depends on leisure. Furthermore, in his conception of best regime, Aristotle argues that the criterion for citizenship is leisure. Labor too has an important place in Aristotle's political philosophy; it has a negative meaning but it is the prerequisite of a virtuous and happy life. For becoming a citizen it is necessary to have leisure, and this is possible only with labor. For Aristotle philosophy or contemplation as a highest activity of man is closely related to leisure. Only those whose life is entirely composed of leisure can contemplate and become true philosophers. Philosopher

¹⁰ Aristotle (1985). *Politics*, trans. B. Jowett, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1253b.

is free in so far as he has leisure. In Aristotle's thought, there is an important relation among leisure, freedom and contemplation.

As thinkers and philosophers like Lafargue, Russell and Marx think on labor, leisure and freedom they often refer to ancient Greeks. This is because the structure of the ancient Greek society clearly shows the relation between labor and leisure. In this sense, ancient Greece provides a model in which the relation between labor and leisure can be clearly seen. Aristotle dwelled on these concepts with a special interest.

Karl Marx can be considered as a philosopher of labor. The concept labor maintains its place in his works throughout Marx's life and it constitutes a central place in his analysis of capitalism, his theory of human nature and his ideal of classless society. According to Marx, labor, as a distinctive feature of man, appears alienated in the capitalist society. Marx is interested in the problem of transition to the classless society which requires the emancipation of labor. This transition finds its meaning in the relationship between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. Leisure is also important theme in Marx's thought: it emerges as the prerequisite of freedom. Marx envisages technological developments through which the quantity of labor is reduced and a transformation in the quality of labor corresponding to this reduction in quantity. Marx says that classless society as the realm of freedom depends on the concepts labor and leisure. Thus, it can be clearly seen that the concepts labor, leisure and freedom have a central place in Marx's philosophy.

Herbert Marcuse, who sets off from the Marx's ideal, is one of the most efficient thinkers of Frankfurt School. He offers a critique of the advanced

industrial society and argues that the advanced industrial society organizes the lives of individuals as a whole, that even the ways of escape from this society are directed into this society and that it creates a one-dimensional man. Furthermore, Marcuse takes Marx's conception of the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity as a starting point for his theory, and dwells on a possibility of a new society and a new civilization by means of technological developments. Marcuse examines these topics in his two major books, *One Dimensional Man* and *Eros and Civilization*, and in his numerous articles, in terms of the concepts labor and leisure. He talks about the emergence of leisure industry in the advanced industrial society and argues that leisure activities make individuals integrated to the system. According to Marcuse, both labor and leisure gain different meanings in different contexts. In the established society, they appear as means for servitude; but for a non-repressive civilization or a free society, they constitute the prerequisite of freedom. He argues that technological developments open a free time dimension. In Marcuse's works, labor and leisure constitute the basis of his conception of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom.

In this study, I will try to show that labor, leisure and freedom are fundamental concepts in the political philosophies of Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse. These philosophers are interested in the political structure, and they envisage a better society from different points of view. Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse are interested in how a life man should live and what activity or activities are best suitable to man. They consider labor, leisure and freedom in this context. Especially Marx's and Marcuse's views are still very important for our time.

I will not make a distinction between labor and work because neither Aristotle, nor Marx, nor Marcuse makes such a distinction. As to leisure and free time, I do not make a distinction between them in general. But in some places, I use the term leisure referring to the time man develops his abilities and free time referring to non-working time. For Marcuse free time has a positive meaning, whereas leisure is the time dominated by mass media and false needs. I will use the term leisure in order to show similarities between Marcuse's thought with Aristotle and Marx.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF LABOR, LEISURE AND FREEDOM IN THE HISTORY OF THOUGHT

The consideration of leisure as a means for continuation of the activity of labor or the relationship between leisure and freedom has been subject to different discussions throughout the history of thought. There are different points of view, different theories completing and improving one another, although these may be entirely opposed. In the context of freedom, the main question concerning labor and leisure concerns which of the two is the end, and which is the means. Philosophers and thinkers wanted to find an answer to this question. Sometimes labor was sublimated and considered in relation to freedom, sometimes leisure is considered in the same manner. Aristotle saw labor as the end for the laboring classes and slaves: their free time was a means to work again. However, he thought that leisure was an end for those who were exempt from the necessity of labor, such as philosophers and politicians. Labor of others was a means for the leisure of these privileged people.

In the Old Testament it is told that God created the world in six days and “on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.”¹¹ Here, it is clear that the

¹¹ The Old Testament, Genesis 2:2 (<http://scriptures.lds.org/en/gen/2>) (July 25, 2006).

basic activity of life is labor and what is considered to be substitute for labor is leisure. Such an understanding does not see any improving or productive quality in leisure; it makes leisure equal with relaxation. This is very far from the idea that after satisfying the necessities of life man can improve his personal capabilities in the resting time. This point of view considers labor as a means for satisfying the necessities of life and in this sense there is a clear distinction between labor and leisure. Human life is divided into two parts which must not be confused. Furthermore, that labor invades the sphere of leisure is immanent to this idea although such a strict distinction is at issue. Labor is also the main concept in determining the leisure time. Leisure, by definition, signifies the non-working time, namely its own definition is derived from the definition of labor.

The understanding of the concepts of labor and leisure in this way is entirely opposed to the understanding of these concepts in ancient Greece and Rome. Despite the fact that labor means the non-working time in the Old Testament, leisure has no negative meaning in the Greek language. In Greek the central concept seems to be leisure and it is not emerged from the negation of another concept. Work (*ascholia*) signifies non-leisure and it is emerged from the negation of leisure (*schole*).¹² This distinction, which reflects the spirit of Greek thought, is reflected both in their political organizations and philosophies. By the influence of the structure of slavery, society is divided into two parts between those who are obliged to work and those who are exempt from the necessity of labor: slaves and masters who possess slaves. In the ideal state of both Plato and Aristotle, there are, on the one hand, laboring classes which men who have to

¹² *Of Time, Work and Leisure*, p. 14.

provide the requirements of life, and an aristocratic class which is exempt from the necessity of labor. Aristotle says that whole life is divided into business and leisure, the former aims at necessary and useful, while the latter is required for honorable actions.¹³ Here, leisure signifies the realm of freedom whereas labor signifies the realm of necessity.

Ancient Rome has similarities with ancient Greece. The concept of labor is derived from the negation of the concept of leisure. In Latin *negotium*, which means work, is negative of *otium*, which means leisure.¹⁴ Latin language, like Greek, sublimates leisure. Such an understanding concerning labor and leisure results from the Roman way of life. They lived in a society in which slavery prevailed.

In early Christianity leisure is considered superior to labor. Leisure is considered to be necessary, because man needs leisure for realizing the service of God. Man who gives all of his time to work could be separated from God and lose his faith. However, man who has leisure is in the condition where he could live in accordance with the calling of God. De Grazia argues that “work and wealth ... can be bad because their doing and getting fill the mind with cares and leave no time or strength for the service of God.”¹⁵

While this view of early Christianity focuses on the importance of leisure for the service of God, The Florentines such as Marsilio Ficino, Alberti, Cellini, Leonardo and Giordano Bruno gave labor great importance. They saw

¹³ *Politics*, 1333a.

¹⁴ *Of Time, Work and Leisure*, p. 21.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

transformation of world as a divine activity. Contrary to Aristotle's view and the view of early Christianity, they viewed labor as the distinguishing feature of man, and thanks to labor, they thought that "man leaves behind the animal realm".¹⁶

This view of labor is continued by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In his thought, work is related both to leisure and freedom. In the adventure of self-consciousness, the relationship between lord and bondsman is drawn by means of the concept of work. The bondsman becomes aware of himself and thus can alter and transform nature through work. Thanks to work, he attains the consciousness of freedom.

Hegel says that "self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged."¹⁷ This "process of recognition" requires two self-consciousnesses and recognition must be mutual. Between two individuals confronting each other, "a life and death struggle" starts. However, because death precludes mutual recognition, provided that one individual risks his life while the other gives up the struggle because of the fear of death, recognition takes place. Thus,

[T]hey exist as two opposed shapes of consciousness; one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman.¹⁸

However, the lord is recognized by a bondsman who has not an independent consciousness. Recognition is one-sided and the relation of dependency starts going

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁷ Hegel, G. W. F. (1979). *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 111.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

wrong. While the bondsman was dependent on the lord in order to survive because of his fear of death, the lord becomes dependent on the bondsman for recognition.

The bondsman works because of his fear of death; through his work he discovers his superiority over nature. The lord satisfies his desires by the work of the bondsman. The lord is dependent on his desires because he consumes the objects the bondsman produces. While the lord gets enjoyment, the bondsman works on nature not for himself but for the lord and “through his service he rids himself of his attachment to natural existence in every single detail.”¹⁹ The fear of death teaches him “the absolute Lord” and “through work, the bondsman becomes conscious of what he truly is.”²⁰

It is work that brings man to self-consciousness and freedom. Hegel explains the importance of work for man. By deferring pleasure man does not annihilate the object immediately. Therefore, man’s relation to nature becomes an indirect relation.²¹

For Hegel while leisure of the master, his not working, makes him dependent on his desires, the slave attains the consciousness of freedom, by working. He becomes aware of his superiority to the nature. Thus, Hegel conceives labor as related to freedom; in his thought leisure has nothing to do with freedom.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²¹ Sayers, Sean. “Freedom and the ‘Realm of Necessity’”, (www.kent.ac.uk/secl/philosophy/ss/506sayers.rtf) (February 20, 2006).

In the early times of capitalism, laborer classes lived under the deplorable conditions. The working hours were very long. For example, working hours of atelier workers were sixteen hours a day. Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, criticized these conditions and defended the reduction of working hours.²²

Freedom is regarded as related to labor and leisure in Lafargue's thought. Contrary to Hegel, Lafargue considers labor as an activity from which we need to save ourselves. According to Lafargue, the more we have leisure, the more we have freedom.

Lafargue, in his very provocative book *The Right to be Lazy*, sublimates laziness against work and suggests "the right to be lazy" in place of "the right to work". According to him, "in capitalist society work is the cause of all intellectual degeneracy, of all organic deformity."²³ Lafargue argues that "it must accustom itself to working but three hours a day, reserving the rest of the day and night for leisure and feasting" and praises the Greeks:

The Greeks in their era of greatness had only contempt for work: their slaves alone were permitted to labor: the free man knew only exercises for the body and mind.²⁴

In the labor-leisure relation Lafargue argues that only leisure has an emancipating potential. What renders both leisure and freedom possible is machine. It is "the savior of humanity" and "the god who shall give him leisure and liberty."²⁵

²² Lafargue, Paul. *The Right to be Lazy* (<http://www.marx.org/archive/lafargue/1883/lazy/index.htm>) (July 25, 2006).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Bertrand Russell also dwells on the problem of labor and leisure in his essay *In Praise of Idleness*. He shares similar view with Lafargue. Russell relates these concepts in the context of happiness rather than that of freedom, but what he means with happiness is closely related to freedom. Like Lafargue, Russell thinks that labor creates has a negative meaning. Men do not want to be occupied with necessary tasks and they do not feel themselves happy while working. Labor is considered as the necessary condition for subsistence. Non-working time, or their free time, is best preferable to them.

Russell makes a distinction between idleness and labor. Idleness requires leisure. He considers society as divided into those who work and those who do not work, i.e. idles; some is obliged to work and some has the right to be idle in society. Russell argues that civilization depends on idleness; thanks to leisure, the idle class creates all civilization. In this point of view labor is also important, but its value is comes from not itself but from leisure. Leisure of idles is only possible with labor of others. Russell says the following:

Leisure is essential to civilization, and in former times leisure for the few was only rendered possible by the labours of the many. But their labours were valuable, not because work is good, but because leisure is good. And with modern technique it would be possible to distribute leisure justly without injury to civilization.²⁶

According to Russell modern technology could emancipate men from the necessity of labor. Thus, idleness could become possible for every person in the society, and not only for the privileged class.

Russell thinks differently from Hegel because Hegel saw labor of the slave as liberating. Russell is much nearer to the idea of Lafargue, for he demands that

²⁶ Russell, Bertrand (2004). *In Praise of Idleness: and Other Essays*, New York: Routledge, p. 5.

idleness be distributed to all society equally. As Lafargue defends the right to be lazy opposed to the right of work, Russell also defends the right to be idle.

Theodor Adorno, who is one of the most renowned thinkers of the Frankfurt School, is also interested in the discussion concerning labor and leisure. By the reduction in the working hours, man's aspiration for leisure and liberation from the necessity of labor seem to be a positive development in capitalism. Despite to these developments, Adorno argues that men are determined in their free time as well as in their labor time.²⁷ Their leisure activities are in the service of social conditions and are not the means for actualizing their potentialities.

Adorno observes that there is a sharp distinction between labor and free time; human life is divided into two parts. He rejects this idea and argues that philosophical or sociological studies at the university cannot be seen as opposed to free time.²⁸ Thus, Adorno envisages a resolution of the distinction between labor time and free time, labor and leisure.

As I noted, labor is considered to be related to man's animal side, on the other hand, it is seen as a distinctive human activity. As views on leisure vary, freedom gains different meanings according to different considerations of labor and leisure. It must also be noted that Adorno's view on this topic is very important because he envisages a condition in which a resolution of the contradiction between labor and leisure takes place.

²⁷ "Free Time", p. 162.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

CHAPTER III

LABOR, LEISURE AND FREEDOM IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF ARISTOTLE

3.1 Introduction

Aristotle lived in a society in which slavery was a reality. In this society, slavery was considered to be right and just; some men were naturally superior over others. That slaves were occupied with satisfying both their own and free men's physical needs brought about the consideration that some activities are inferior to other activities. These inferior activities were not seen unimportant, but because they were related to body, they were thought to be inferior. Because everything which was necessary and useful was related to body rather than mind or soul, activities of free men were considered neither useful nor necessary. Thus, Aristotle formed both his political and ethical views on the basis of such an understanding.

Aristotle begins the *Metaphysics* by saying that “all men by nature desire to know.”²⁹ Desire to know is natural and necessary for man. Man with his desire to know creates sciences. According to Aristotle, there are two kinds of sciences in

²⁹ Aristotle (1985). *Metaphysics*, trans. W. David Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 980a.

general: one aims at pleasure and satisfaction of physical needs; the other aims at neither pleasure nor satisfaction of physical needs, but is loved for itself. Aristotle says the following:

At first he who invented any art whatever that went beyond the common perceptions of man was naturally admired by men, not only because there was something useful in the inventions, but because he was thought wise and superior to the rest. But as more arts were invented, and some were directed to the necessities of life, others to recreation, the inventors of the latter were naturally always regarded as wiser than the inventors of the former, because their branches of knowledge did not aim at utility. Hence when all such inventions were already established, the sciences which do not aim at giving pleasure or at the necessities of life were discovered, and first in the places where men first began to have leisure. This is why the mathematical arts were founded in Egypt; for there the priestly caste was allowed to be at leisure.³⁰

As Aristotle indicates, sciences which are neither necessary nor useful are superior to the others. The condition for their coming into being is leisure; leisure has an important place in calling man's attention to knowledge for itself.

In addition to *Metaphysics*, labor and leisure are also at the core of Aristotle's thinking, especially in his main works on politics and ethics. These two disciplines of philosophy are related to each other and they cannot be separated, as Sir David Ross puts it, "Aristotle's ethics ... are social, and his politics are ethical."³¹ Aristotle's main ethical concepts, happiness and virtue, take part in his political thinking because becoming happy and virtuous is possible in a political system. Aristotle envisages a perfect state where all people perform their own functions in accordance with their nature. Making men good is the aim of politics and politics tries to make men to perform good acts. Virtue and happiness

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 981b.

³¹ Ross, Sir David (1995). *Aristotle*, London: Routledge, p. 195.

are possible only with leisure. Men should be free from the necessities of life in order to become good. “If a man is at leisure only when he is free, the good state must exist to give him leisure.”³² Consequently, from Aristotle’s point of view, leisure, or freedom from the necessity of labor, is necessary for virtue and for the performance of political duties.

Consequently, in Aristotle’s thought it is clear that there is a hierarchy. What is necessary and useful is inferior to what is beautiful because according to him the philosopher or the scientist seeks the truth for the sake of itself, “he is a spectator of the truth.”³³ Similarly, leisure is more valuable than labor for Aristotle, because labor constitutes the prerequisite of leisure, which is necessary for virtuous life and citizenship. Thus, the concepts labor and leisure play an important role in Aristotle’s general thought.

3.2 Human Nature

Aristotle has a view of human nature, even if he did not develop his ideas on this topic in detail. In the *Metaphysics*, the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he derives conclusions from a certain assumptions concerning human nature. As we have already noted, Aristotle says in the *Metaphysics* that man desires to know by nature. This is the mark of being human; the desire to know is peculiar only to human beings.

³² *Of Time Work and Leisure*, p. 21.

³³ Aristotle (1985), *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. David Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1098a.

Terry Leahy argues that Aristotle divides human nature into two parts: drives and capacities.³⁴ This suggests that man has some common features with animals, and also some peculiar features. Those which belong to the former come from man's physical structure. The latter are related to the potentialities of man, which belong only to man; and these potentialities are related to the fact that man has reason. Man is not only driven by physical necessities, but also he can act in accordance to reason and virtue. In order to show this twofold side of man, Aristotle says the following:

For man, when perfected, is the best of animals, but, when separated from law and justice, he is the worst of all; since armed injustice is the more dangerous, and he is equipped at birth with arms, meant to be used by intelligence and virtue, which he may use for the worst ends. Wherefore, if he have not virtue, he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals, and the most full of lust and gluttony.³⁵

Aristotle begins his account of human nature by asking what the characteristics of man are, "what it is that *only* man can do."³⁶ He makes this by forming contrasts between man and other livings. Life alone cannot be the distinguishing feature of man, since it is common even with plants. Nutrition, growth are such common features. Sensation? Aristotle does not give a positive answer to the question, for it is also common with animals. Aristotle says that having reason is specific to man. It cannot be found in any other living being. Hence, reason is the distinctive feature of man.³⁷

³⁴ Leahy, T. (2000), "Marx and Aristotle on Human Nature, Ethics and the State" (<http://www.octapod.org:8000/gifteconomy//content/marxaristotle.html>) (July 26, 2006).

³⁵ *Politics*, 1253a.

³⁶ *Aristotle*, p. 199.

³⁷ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1098a.

This discovery does not show only the characteristic feature of man but also man's common features with animals. The concept of human nature is scrutinized by Aristotle in the *Politics* and in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and he composes his ideas, not disregarding these features of man. What is superior is the reason, for it is the distinguishing feature of man; but, Aristotle argues that man's physical needs must necessarily be satisfied because acting in accordance with reason is only possible for those who are free from all needs and those who have satisfied these needs.

There is also another dimension of human nature. As a result of the idea that "man is sociable by nature"³⁸ Aristotle argues in the *Politics* that man is by nature a political animal.³⁹ According to Aristotle, state exists by nature. For man has some common features with animals, he depends on physical needs as animals do. These physical necessities prevent man living alone. Because he is not self-sufficient by himself, man has to live together with other men. In order to fulfill physical necessities, the relationships between male and female and between master and slave are necessary. Family comes into being as a result of satisfying the needs of daily life. When several families gather villages are formed, and then several villages make up the city. The city comes into being as a natural result of men's coming together. "If the earlier forms of society are natural, so is the state, for it is the end of them, and the nature of a thing is its end."⁴⁰ The individual

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1097b.

³⁹ *Politics*, 1253a.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1252b.

living alone in nature is not self-sufficient. Consequently, man is the political animal by nature.

3.3 Division of Labor

The political thoughts of Aristotle are founded on his view of human nature, and he envisages a perfect state by regarding the features of man. According to Aristotle, the state is not merely a convention; it is rooted in human nature.⁴¹

Being social and political is necessary for man because he is not self-sufficient being. According to Aristotle, man is only self-sufficient with a city because it is impossible to satisfy all his needs by himself. Therefore, the city is necessary and natural. Aristotle discusses what the perfect state is. For Aristotle everything has an aim. The question is what the function of the city is. Aristotle's answer to the question is that the function of city is to provide citizen's living well.

In the beginning, men come together only in order to survive, but once the city comes into being the aim becomes living well. It firstly originates for survival but with the city man creates the conditions for living well. In the first place, there are two reasons which bring men together: "the reproductive instinct" and "the instinct of self-preservation".⁴² Aristotle says the following:

When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the

⁴¹ Aristotle, p. 247.

⁴² *Ibid.*

state comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life.⁴³

In Aristotle's perfect state, division of labor is inevitable and it is also necessary. Happiness, living in accordance with virtue, and the best way of human life, namely philosophical life, are dependent on the division of labor. These are possible only with the organization of city according to the function of each man. Aristotle thinks that all men are different; they have different dispositions. Each man is different from others, and the organization of city is necessary in order to make living well possible for all. In addition to the organization of the society, division of labor also implies an order where while some people have to work because of physical necessities, some are free from the necessity of labor. This is an important distinction because virtue and happiness are realized thanks to this distinction.

The division of labor in Aristotle's thought results from his methodology. Aristotle likes to employ contrasts. These contrasts are found between soul and body, between man and the animals, between master and slave etc. in his thought, and between these contrasts what is superior should rule what is inferior.⁴⁴

There is a strict division of labor in Aristotle's perfect state. Everyone has a function as everything has a purpose. Aristotle argues that everyone should perform his own task in accordance with his nature. The division of labor constitutes the foundation of the city where "living well" could be possible.

⁴³ *Politics*, 1252b.

⁴⁴ *Aristotle*, p. 251.

The distinction between the master and the slave is a result of the division of labor. According to Aristotle, this distinction is a natural one. A slave is by nature a slave. In Aristotle's time slavery was a reality and his thoughts were influenced by it. Slavery is necessary and useful both for the master and the slave and master rules slave as soul rules body. Slaves are not animals but they have common with animals in general. They have reason, but they are deprived of the ability to use it. "For that which can foresee by the exercise of mind is by nature intended to be lord and master and that which can with its body give affect to such foresight is a subject and by nature a slave: hence master and slave have same interest."⁴⁵ The aim is common security.

Slave's function is to satisfy physical human needs. His labor would provide leisure for master's living in accordance with virtue. "Some men are by nature free, and others slaves, and that for these latter slavery is both expedient and right."⁴⁶

Aristotle enumerates the functions of a city in his perfect state: food, arts, army, wealth, worship, and a power of deciding what is right and unrighteous. There are also classes corresponding to these functions of the city. Aristotle says the following:

There must be farmers to procure food, and artisans, and a warlike and a wealthy class, and priests, and judges to decide what is necessary and expedient.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *Politics*, 1252a.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1254b.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1328b.

Since the state consists of citizens and citizenship has a distinct place in Aristotle's political philosophy, we must first understand what Aristotle means by "citizen", and according to him how one is a citizen. Slaves are, from the beginning, eliminated because of their nature. They are inferior to free men and they are deprived of the use of reason. In addition, because their function is to be ruled by their master and to work, they have no right to become citizens according to Aristotle. They have no leisure and thus virtue to be cultivated. For Aristotle, justice means equality among equals, and inequality among unequals. Therefore, because the state exists among equals, slaves, who are by nature inferior to free men, cannot become citizens.

Because the citizen needs to have leisure in order to fulfill virtue and his capabilities, and in order to perform his political duties, he can neither be artisan nor laborer nor farmer. Although they are free men and superior to slaves, in Aristotle's perfect state, working people are not citizens. These people have to work for survival and, the cultivation of virtuous life is for those who are free from the necessity of labor. Thus, Aristotle excludes artisans, farmers and laborers from citizenship. He puts this as follows:

The citizens must not lead the life of mechanics or tradesman, for such a life is ignoble and inimical to the virtue. Neither must they be husbandmen, since leisure is necessary both for the development of virtue and the performance of political duty.⁴⁸

Aristotle clearly says that leisure is the principal element for virtue and citizenship. This results from his conception that the soul is superior to the body. He argues that "the rule of the soul over the body, and of the mind and the rational

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1328b.

element over the passionate, is natural and expedient.”⁴⁹ Labor, being performed by means of body, is considered to be inferior. For Aristotle labor is neither a human nor liberating activity. It belongs to the realm of necessity. Consequently, leisure is superior to labor. What is noble is neither useful nor necessary but something which is an end in itself. However, labor exists to serve human needs; its aim is to provide leisure for citizens so that they perform their political duties and possess a virtuous life.

3.4 Labor and Leisure

For Aristotle, leisure has a distinctive place because he envisages a perfect state, in which virtuous life is possible, with the division of labor, which makes leisure possible. He notes the importance of leisure by contrasting leisure and labor. He sees leisure as superior to labor and puts this as follows:

[T]he first principle of action is leisure. Both are required, but leisure is better than occupation and is its end.⁵⁰

Thus, it is clear that while leisure is considered as an end, labor is a means for it. In order to understand Aristotle’s thought on labor and leisure, we must examine his ethical and political views in detail.

Aristotle, firstly, looks for what is chosen for itself in our actions. He says the following:

If ... there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (everything else being desired for the sake of this), and if we do not choose everything for the sake of something

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1254b.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1337b.

else (for at that rate the process would go on to infinity, so that our desire would be empty and vain), clearly this must be the good and the chief good.⁵¹

Aristotle says that this chief good is happiness for it is not chosen for the sake of something else but chosen for itself. It is the end of action.

As all things have a function, man also has a function. The function of man, according to Aristotle, is “an activity of soul in accordance with, or not without, rational principle.”⁵² And Aristotle concludes from this that human good is the activity of soul in accordance with virtue.⁵³

Aristotle connects happiness with virtue; happiness is defined as the virtuous activity of soul. Activities in accordance with virtue bring about happiness, but vicious activities constitute opposite of happiness. To call someone happy certain conditions are required. Aristotle says the following:

[H]e is happy who is active in conformity complete excellence and is sufficiently equipped with external goods.⁵⁴

For Aristotle, happiness and virtue are related to the soul, but some external goods are necessary for them. For human nature has features distinct from animal and common with them, man has to satisfy his physical needs. In Aristotle’s view of ethics, happiness and virtue are related to labor and leisure. While labor is related to man’s animal nature, leisure is related to man’s ethical life, i.e. man’s potentialities. Furthermore, Aristotle envisages a perfect state in the *Politics*, in

⁵¹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094a.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1098a.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1098a.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1001a.

which human nature is the central point. According to Aristotle, what is ethical is indistinguishable from what is political.

The whole of life is further divided into two parts, business and leisure, war and peace, and of actions some aim at what is necessary and useful, and some at what is honourable. And the preference given to one or the other class of actions must necessarily be like the preference given to one or other part of the soul and its actions over the other; there must be war for the sake of peace, business for the sake of leisure, things useful and necessary for the sake of things honorable.⁵⁵

Activities related to satisfying physical necessities should be for the sake of things honorable. There is labor for the sake of leisure; there are slaves for the sake of masters. Bodily needs are necessary only in so far as man becomes virtuous.

In Aristotle's point of view, living in accordance with virtue is only possible for master, not for slave. The function of slave signifies physical necessities which are common with animals, whereas master has sufficient leisure for activity in accordance with virtue. Leisure provides the ground for happiness and virtuous actions. Aristotle says that "happiness is thought to depend on leisure; for we are busy that we may have leisure."⁵⁶ The result is that leisure is necessary and a means for noble activities. Once a man uses his body in order to survive, his attention shifts from soul to body. For those who are occupied with necessary tasks becoming virtuous is impossible, they can only serve the other's being virtuous by providing leisure for them.

There is a strict division of city in Aristotle's thought. Self-sufficiency is necessary for becoming a virtuous citizen and noble activities; but self-sufficiency

⁵⁵ *Politics*, 1333a.

⁵⁶ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b.

depends on slaves, farmers, artisans, laborers. They serve citizen's living well; but in doing so they cannot be counted citizen. Charles Sylvester derives the following from Aristotle's thinking: 'Even in the design of the city, Aristotle argues that separate space be set aside in the agora for the working class and the leisure class... There should be two agoras, then, a lower one where business and trade are conducted and an upper one devoted to the life of leisure.'⁵⁷ Thus, labor and leisure are so contrasted to each other that they constitute two different realms.

In Aristotle's thought, leisure requires noble and virtuous activities; it is not related to passivity. "Activity in leisure is distinguished by its aim at the higher virtues, the pursuit of excellence for its own sake."⁵⁸ Those who are free from the necessity of labor has some activities to be performed, such as political and philosophical activity, but these activities does not threaten virtue and happiness, even supports them.

Those who are obliged to work also have free time but it is very different from the leisure of free men. Free time is seen compensation for work. Those who work have free time but not leisure from this point of view. Activities performed in free time consist of relaxation and amusement; they are for the sake of work: the end is work. However, activities in leisure are different from those of free time because leisure is the end and labor is the means for leisure. Activities in leisure should not be relaxation or amusement but nobler activities like politics and

⁵⁷ Sylvester, C. (1999) "The Classical Idea of Leisure: Cultural Ideal or Class Prejudice?" *Leisure Sciences*, 21, 3-16, p. 9.

⁵⁸ Hemingway, J.L. (1988). "Leisure and Civility: Reflections on a Greek Ideal", *Leisure Sciences*, 10, 179-191, p. 188.

philosophy. However, as we will see, Aristotle considers philosophy superior over politics. While philosophical or contemplative activity is an end in itself the political activity is not an end in itself, and aims something beyond itself.

3.5 The Best Way of Life

Aristotle discusses the best way of life in the X.th Book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This book is also important for it is the last book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and it can be seen as an introduction to the *Politics*. In this book, Aristotle argues that the highest activity of man is contemplation. Aristotle puts this as follows:

If happiness is activity in accordance with excellence, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest excellence; and this will be that of the best thing in us. Whether it be intellect or something else that is this element which is thought to be our natural ruler and guide and to take thought of things noble and divine, whether it be itself also divine or only the most divine element in us, the activity of this in accordance with its proper excellence will be complete happiness. That this activity is contemplative we have already said.⁵⁹

Although there are the conditions for becoming citizen, the most important of them is to have leisure; not all citizens pursue the best way of life in Aristotle's thought. There are distinctions among citizens. This discussion has an important place in Aristotle's philosophy because it shows how an activity like philosophy is possible and the importance of leisure.

Aristotle says that there are three main ways of life: the life of pleasure, the life of politics and the life of *theoria*. The first one is eliminated from the

⁵⁹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177a.

beginning as worthless because such a life is ignoble. Those who seek pleasure are ruled by their bodies, not souls. It has nothing to do neither with reason nor virtue. These people are not happy, for happiness is possible only with activity in accordance with virtue.

Aristotle looks for an activity which is fitted to the best way of life. This activity is related to man's higher side, for only this aspect of man can make man virtuous. Aristotle defines it as the activity of *theoria*, that is, contemplation. Contemplation is the activity for the happiest life as the activity of the highest virtue. In Aristotle, contemplation is superior to all actions. It is a privilege only for certain citizens. This theoretical activity requires freedom from the necessity of labor as much as possible. As the presence of slave and labor is the preconditions of citizenship, it is also the precondition of contemplation.

The best way of life, according to Aristotle, is the life of *theoria* because this life is self-sufficient. The person who leads such a life can perform the activity of *theoria* even if he is alone. According to Ross "It is least dependent on other men, while moral virtue requires others as the objects of its activity."⁶⁰ For performing the activity of *theoria*, one does not need anyone. In addition to self-sufficiency, this activity is also most continuous.

Furthermore, *theoria* is not a means for something external to it. Other activities, such as policy and military, have aims distinct from themselves. *Theoria* is preferred only for itself. It is leisurely for happiness depends on leisure. Aristotle puts this as follows:

⁶⁰ Aristotle, p. 238.

So if among excellent actions political and military actions are distinguished by nobility and greatness, and these are unpleasurable and aim at an end and are not desirable for their own sake, but the activity of intellect, which is contemplative, seems both to be superior in worth and to aim at no end beyond itself, and to have its pleasure proper to itself (and this augments the activity), and the self-sufficiency, leisureliness, unweariedness (so far as this is possible for man), and all the other attributes ascribed to the blessed man are evidently those connected with this activity, it follows that this will be the complete happiness of man, if it be allowed a complete term of life (for none of the attributes of happiness is incomplete).⁶¹

Consequently, the life of *theoria* is the complete happiness of man; it is the highest virtue. This activity is divine, Aristotle argues, because in the life of man the only thing relating to god is reason, and the activity of *theoria* completely consists of reason. Aristotle accepts that such a life may not be realized for man, but it is a task for man to get himself nearer to God. In terms of the potentialities of man, his distinctive side, that is his rational being, is open to development; virtue and happiness belong to the highest part of the soul. The more man devotes his life to the life of reason the more his life becomes virtuous and happy.

For contemplation, or philosophy, society needs to be organized so that this activity may become possible and some men attain the highest virtue. From the beginning, labor has nothing to do with theoretical activity. However, the philosopher too needs requirements of life because his nature leaves him dependent on bodily needs in a certain degree. That is why it is necessary to organize a society in which a small minority could contemplate thanks to the labor of the vast majority of men.

To conclude, Aristotle thinks that leisure, which is possible only with the existence of labor of slaves and of working classes, is preferred as the only thing

⁶¹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b.

relating to god in the life of man. Philosophers are free from necessity of labor, and their life completely consists of leisure.

3.5 Freedom

“The agora of labor”, corresponds to the necessity of labor while “the agora of leisure”⁶² corresponds to the freedom from necessity. Labor is a completely necessary activity in order to provide self-sufficiency and leisure, and thanks to labor, it is a realm for free citizens to perform political duties and virtuous actions. Therefore, labor signifies necessity while leisure is related to human potentialities and freedom.

Aristotle’s view of freedom is related to his view of human nature. Man’s features common with animal belong to the realm of necessity, while man’s distinctive features imply the realm of freedom. Aristotle tries to find a solution to the problem of freedom by focusing on the concepts labor and leisure. In the city, labor and leisure are shared by different men. The city needs labor in order to achieve self-sufficiency. Without labor the city cannot be self-sufficient, hence there have to be laboring classes. Aristotle argues that labor is incompatible with virtue and that using body for satisfying physical needs is not preferable for the citizen, and that the citizen needs to have leisure. Consequently, labor and leisure are shared by different men; “the agora of labor” and “the agora of leisure” appear to belong to different realms. Those who have to work belong to the realm of necessity, while those who are free from the necessity to the realm of freedom.

⁶² “The Classical Idea of Leisure: Cultural Ideal or Class Prejudice?”, p. 9.

Aristotle seems to make a distinction between the concepts of free time and leisure. Free time is a means to work. It consists of activities such as relaxation, amusement. According to the different kind of activities performed in leisure different ways of life come to being. Aristotle looks for an answer to the question “what ought to be done at leisure” and says the following:

Clearly we ought not to be playing ourselves, for then play would be the end of life. But if this is inconceivable, and play is needed more amid serious occupations than at other times (for he who is hard at work has need of relaxation, and play gives relaxation, whereas occupation is always accompanied with exertion and effort), we should introduce amusements only at suitable times, and they should be our medicines, for the emotion which they create in the soul is a relaxation, and from pleasure we obtain rest. But leisure of itself gives pleasure and happiness and enjoyment of life, which are experienced, not by the busy man, but by those who have leisure.⁶³

In the political philosophy of Aristotle the concepts city and the citizenship play important roles. The city, as noted above, comes to being because man is not self-sufficient. The city exists not for merely man’s living, but for supplying a foundation on which man’s living well is possible. However, living well is not available for all parts which form the city.

The citizen is expected to cultivate his mind and body. Man who belongs to the realm of necessity cannot be virtuous and therefore he cannot be counted citizen. He is a part of the city; nevertheless he is not free and does not have leisure because he belongs to the necessity of labor. Consequently, politics is an act of freedom, not of necessity.⁶⁴

⁶³ *Politics*, 1337b.

⁶⁴ Rosenberg, G. (1996). “The Limits of Necessity”, (<http://www.rosenberg.se/Freedomnecessity.htm>) (March 17, 2006).

The realm of necessity continues to exist along with the realm of freedom in Aristotle's perfect state. Aristotle tries to reconcile these contrasted areas, but does not resolve the distinction between them. These two opposed realms coexist, but men who belong to them are different. According to him, the realm of necessity is related to human nature, and it is not expected to be abolished. Rosenberg puts this as follows:

Freedom did not come about through the elimination of necessity (slaves were very much the prerequisite of freedom), but through the ability to draw a line between the realms of necessity and freedom.⁶⁵

The realm of freedom begins beyond to the necessity of labor. This means that man should have leisure to become free. In fact, leisure, as De Grazia puts it, is a state of being rather than something to be possessed: exemption from necessity of labor. 'Leisure is a state of being in which activity is performed for its own sake or as its own end.'⁶⁶

Aristotle himself does not use the terms "the realm of necessity" and "the realm of freedom", but these concepts are implicit in his thought. As I tried to show, labor and leisure are related to these realms. Human body is seen as belonging to nature, to the realm of necessity and the activity related to body, labor, is activity in the realm of necessity because it is directed to satisfying the physical needs of man. However, the soul has potentialities. Human virtue is possible with the soul, i.e. with the rational side of man; it signifies the realm of freedom. All necessities are excluded from this realm, especially the necessity of

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Of Time, Work and Leisure*, p. 15.

labor. Leisure constitutes the foundation of the realm of freedom. Political and military activities are possible only with leisure, and especially philosophical activity is seen as the proper activity of those who are free. For it is its end; it is for the sake of itself. Leisure is at the core of philosophical activity.

Later, Karl Marx used the terms the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom and made a distinction between them. His thought has similarities with Aristotle's thought. The activity of labor directed to satisfying physical needs is activity in the realm of necessity. And Marx, like Aristotle, considers artistic and scientific activities as belonging to the realm of freedom. According to Marx, as distinct from animals, "man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom".⁶⁷ Therefore, it is clear that the activities in the realm of freedom have nothing to do with satisfying physical necessities in Marx's thought.

However, as we will see later, there are some differences between Aristotle's and Marx's thought. Marx, unlike Aristotle, does not see an incompatibility between necessity and freedom; in fact he argues that in communism this distinction will be resolved.⁶⁸ According to Marx, although the activity of labor is directed to satisfying physical needs in the realm of necessity, it can have a free character.

⁶⁷ Marx, Karl (1997). *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *The Marx Reader*, ed. Christopher Pierson, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 66.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 73-74.

CHAPTER IV

LABOR, LEISURE AND FREEDOM IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARL MARX

4.1 Introduction

Labor constitutes one of the most distinctive concepts in Marx's works; it is the central concept in his thought showing the historical development of societies, in his analysis of the mode of capitalist production and of the condition of man in the capitalist society. His vision for the communist society of the future explicitly refers to the concept labor.

In the works of Karl Marx there is no explicit discussion on leisure. In some places we confront the term but he does not analyze it in detail. In general works on Marx's philosophy, the problem of leisure generally is not a different chapter, and is not investigated in detail. What Marx specifically dwells on are concepts such as labor, labor process, and labor time. However, in the entirety of Marx's philosophy a discussion for leisure seems to be necessary. Let us add that "time" always has an important place in Marx's thought. For Marx, both the way the society is organized and the realm of freedom for which leisure is essential is

related to time. William James Booth says that “no modern political philosopher has been as concerned with the question of time and freedom as was Marx”⁶⁹.

In this chapter, I will try to show that the problem of leisure is also immanent to Marx’s thought as well as labor, and that the concepts labor and leisure form the basis of Marx’s discussion concerning the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom.

In order to discuss the concepts labor and leisure in Marx’s thought in relationship with freedom, we need to consider his theory in general. This will provide a foundation to show the context these concepts are considered.

Karl Marx tried to combine three great areas of study in his theory: British political economy, French socialism and German philosophy.⁷⁰ Marx as a political philosopher investigated what constitutes the foundation of society and where the signs of a new society could be seen. He devoted almost his all life to the *Capital*, a masterpiece of political economy, but his aim, first of all, was not only to depict the society but to learn how it would be possible to change it.⁷¹ For him, first of all, it was necessary to notice what was wanted to be changed.

Marx started from real men who were active in a certain relations of production. They were born in social relations not dependent on their will and lived in these social relations.

According to Marx, capitalist society was composed of two great classes,

⁶⁹ Booth, W.J. (1991). “Economies of Time: On the Idea of Time in Marx’s Political Economy”, in *Political Theory*, 19(1), 7-27, p. 8.

⁷⁰ Lenin, V.I. “Three Sources and Three Components Parts of Marxism”, (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1913/mar/x01.htm>) (March 25, 2006).

⁷¹ Marx, Karl and Engels, Friederick (1968) *Theses on Feuerbach*, in *Selected Works*, New York: International Publishers, p. 30.

and idleness of one was based on the other's obligation to work. This was the result of the division of labor. The division of labor brought about work and enjoyment, labor time and free time devolved on different individuals.⁷² Marx thought that in such a society, the relationship between man and labor was inverted; labor which was the characteristic of man became an alienated labor; the activity of man was coercion; the working man was not free to realize his potentialities, he worked for mere survival.

Karl Marx lived in a time in which wild capitalism prevailed and witnessed the misery of the working class. Working class devoted all its life to work in order to survive. Its existence seems only a means not an end. In his time workers labored minimum twelve hours a day and their labor was alienated and their leisure was a means for workers' relaxation to labor again. The worker had no right over the product he created; the product of his labor was an alien object to him. His labor was objectified not as belonging to him but as beyond and over him. Marx was interested in these social and economic conditions and he wanted to find a solution to these miserable conditions.

Marx argued that the liberation of the worker means that of man, for this liberation entails the universal liberation of man. Slavery of man was involved in man's relation to production. The project of freedom of Marx departed from the reality of society and he always understood man as man in certain relations of production. That is why as an architect of freedom he departs not from abstract individual but from a certain class which bears all the burden of society over itself.

⁷² Marx, Karl and Engels, Friederick (1968). *The German Ideology*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, p. 45.

There is also an important distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity in Marx's political philosophy. He investigates these two realms and the possibility of transition from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom. This transition is from the prehistory to history of man.⁷³

I assume that there is continuity between Marx's early and later writings and I will not make a distinction between the concepts labor and work in Marx's works because it does not seem that Marx himself does this. As to leisure and free time, he also employs "disposable time" as well as these concepts. In this study free time is used to indicate non-working time and leisure is used to indicate an area in which man freely develops his abilities.

However, before discussing this topic, we have to understand what labor means for Marx. We find his view of labor is rooted in his view of human nature and theory of estrangement. Therefore, we must, first, examine his concept of human nature and his theory of estrangement.

4.2 Human Nature

Marx examines human nature especially in his early and later writings. His concept of human nature constitutes the foundation of his theory of estrangement. In the history of philosophy, many different conceptions of human nature have been proposed, but Marx analyses the problem of human nature differently. He poses the

⁷³ Marx, Karl (1976). *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S.W. Ryazanskaya, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, p. 6.

distinction between man and animal as a process through which man distinguishes himself from animal. This process is the process of humanization of man.

It is argued that Marx rejects idea that man has a nature intrinsic to him. On the other hand, it is also held that Marx personally suggests such a view.⁷⁴ Our aim is not to discuss whether Marx has a view of human nature or not, but to explain how crucial labor and leisure in his thought on freedom are. Here, I will refer to two commentators of Marx, Norman Geras and Isidor Wallimann.

Geras argues that it is evident that Marx has a view of human nature by considering writings of Marx logically. He draws a distinction in Marx's theory of human nature, between "human nature" and "the nature of man". Human nature implies the characteristic features of man and it is something unchanging, while the nature of man means features which man gains in a given society and it is open to change.⁷⁵

A similar distinction about Marx's understanding of human nature is drawn by Wallimann. He argues that Marx "defines human nature using a biological model, and then a historical model."⁷⁶ According to Wallimann, a biological point of view, one aspect of the human nature in Marx's thought, explains how man distinguishes himself from animal. The historical model shows the features man possesses in a certain social relations and these features imply mutability. Wallimann rejects the idea that Marx changed his theory of human nature

⁷⁴ For a comprehensive discussion for Marx's view of human nature see Geras, Norman (1983). *Marx and Human Nature*, London: Verso Books.

⁷⁵ *Marx and Human Nature*, p. 24.

⁷⁶ Wallimann, Isidor (1981). *Estrangement: Marx's Conception of Human Nature and the Division of Labor*, London: Greenwood Press, p. 11.

throughout his life and he argues that in Marx's writings, there is a certain view of human nature.

Let us now refer to Marx's early and later writings. He speaks of man's distinctive feature that distinguishes him from animal and the features man obtains through society as follows:

Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life.⁷⁷

Marx, here, talks about the starting point for man's distinguishing himself from animal. The process of man's distinguishing himself from animal is possible with man's practical activity. What renders this activity necessary is man's physical organization. We read the following in *the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* and in *the Capital*:

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is *its life activity*. Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity. It is just because of this that he is a species-being. Or it is only because he is a species-being that he is a conscious being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *The German Ideology*, p. 32.

⁷⁸ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 66.

Man's life activity has different features from the animal, according to Marx because he acts freely and consciously. His activity as an object for him is a "conscious, purposive"⁷⁹ activity.

Admittedly animals also produce. They build themselves nests and dwelling, like the bees, beaver, ant, etc. But an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally. It produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need, whilst man produces even when he is free from physical need and truly produces only in freedom therefrom. An animal produces only itself, whilst man reproduces the whole of nature. An animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body, whilst man freely confronts his product. An animal forms objects only in accordance with the standard and the need of the species to which belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms objects in accordance with the laws of beauty.⁸⁰

Man's activity is a conscious and a free activity; man also produces even if there is no physical need.

We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement.⁸¹

The frequently quoted passages above show the originality of human's activity. Man's relation to his activity is not immediate and his activity is an object for him because it is a free and a conscious activity. "Man produces even

⁷⁹ Ollmann, B.(1976). *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 98.

⁸⁰ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 66.

⁸¹ Marx, Karl (1909) ed. Engels, Frederick. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company. Vol.I p. 198.

when he is free from physical need and truly produces only in freedom from such need.”⁸² And finally, this activity is called ‘labor’.

Another aspect of human nature in Marx’s thought is what Isidor Wallimann calls “the historical model” or what Norman Geras calls “the nature of man”. It is found in Marx’s *Theses on Feuerbach*:

Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations.⁸³

In the definite social relations, man gains different features. Marx says that man is the real man in definite social relations. For these features are gained timely they have no right to be ascribed to human nature, which is unchanging and distinguishing man from the animal. Geras counts the worship to power, egoism, social and sexual inequality, nationalism, etc. among these features. These are acquired in time and by means of definite social relations.

The importance of labor, being intrinsic only to humans, is clearly seen in Marx’s conception of human nature. The relation between labor, leisure, and freedom is also seen in his statement that “man produces even when he is free from physical need and truly produces only in freedom from such need.”⁸⁴ If it were not any necessity for man to labor for his physical need, his conscious and free activity would take place in leisure, and according to Marx man “truly produces only” here.

⁸² *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 66.

⁸³ *Theses on Feuerbach*, p. 28.

⁸⁴ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 66.

Consequently, labor as man's distinguishing activity himself from animals is the activity which makes man human. Man comes to humanize himself with labor; as long as the relationship between nature and him is indirect he exists as a subject because his life activity is an object for him. This activity is free, conscious and purposive.

Man, thanks to his labor, distinguishes himself from nature and creates a new world for himself. This forms the potentiality of transition from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom. However, Marx argues that in spite of this potentiality capitalist relations of production prevent man from attaining to the realm of freedom. To understand why labor is not sufficient to pass from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom, we must look at Marx's theory of estrangement. Estrangement implies that man's relation to his life activity, distinguishing himself from animal, is an alien relation.

4.3 Alienated Labor

Marx's theory of estrangement is based on his concept of human nature.⁸⁵ For Marx, "the devastating effect of capitalist production on human beings"⁸⁶ is crucial for the understanding of estrangement. According to Marx, there are four aspects of estrangement in capitalist society: i) man's estrangement from the

⁸⁵ *Estrangement: Marx's Conception of Human Nature and the Division of Labor*, p. 5.

⁸⁶ *Alienation*, p. 131.

product of his labor, ii) man's estrangement from his life activity, iii) man's estrangement from his species-being, iv) man's estrangement from man.⁸⁷

In the context of labor, leisure and freedom, man's estrangement from his life activity has an important place; therefore we must dwell on this aspect of estrangement in detail.

In the capitalist mode of production, everything is bought and sold. Bourgeoisie sees everywhere a commercial value. It distinguishes itself from all class societies. Marx puts this distinctive feature of capitalism in the following manner:

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors", and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked selfinterest, than callous "cash payment". It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom — Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.⁸⁸

Labor is also a commodity in the capitalist mode of production. Worker, for sustaining his life, has to sell his labor power because he does not have any means of production. His labor belongs not to himself, but to the other, to the capitalist. It is under the capitalist's command; it is not his free activity. Labor, which is nothing other than the characteristic feature of the human nature, is a means for the subsistence of the worker.

⁸⁷ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, 66-67.

⁸⁸ Marx, Karl and Engels, Friederick (1970). *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, trans. Samuel Moore and Frederick Engels. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, p. 33-34.

In the capitalist society, the individual character of labor vanishes by the division of labor and the usage of machinery. As a result, the worker becomes a part of the machinery. In capitalism, labor is considered as a measure and source of wealth, but it becomes a part of the means of production and therefore loses its individual and concrete character. This is different from the understanding of labor in pre-capitalist societies. It has been “robbed of all real-life content” and is performed by “abstract individuals”.⁸⁹

The appearance of labor under capitalism has an alienated character, and labor becomes alienated labor. As mentioned above, for Marx, labor as a free and conscious activity is the characteristic of human nature; however, under the capitalist mode of production it becomes alienated because the worker is forced to sell his labor power to the capitalist and this labor is no longer a free and a conscious activity. Labor is under the command of those who possess the means of production, and as a result of losing its individual and concrete character, it becomes simply a part of means of production.

Labor is not related to the essence of the worker; it is something external to him. “He, therefore, does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind.”⁹⁰ Labor is under not the command of worker himself, the product of his labor does not belong to him. This process of

⁸⁹ Cohen, G. A. (1988). *History, Labour, and Freedom: Themes From Marx*, Oxford: Clarendon Press p. 196.

⁹⁰ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 64.

labor seems not fulfilling or liberating the worker but makes him a slave. As a result of man's estrangement from his true life activity,

[T]he worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working and when he is working he does not feel at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced, it is *forced labour*... Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague.⁹¹

Since the labor and its product do not belong to the worker he is not free for actualizing his potentialities while working. Labor is not an activity which is performed freely in capitalism, on the contrary, it is an activity from which the worker wants to escape when there is no vital need for it.

As a result, therefore, man (the worker) only feels himself freely active in his animal functions - eating, drinking, and procreating, or at most in his dwelling and in dressing-up, etc.; and in his human functions, he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal. What is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal.⁹²

Because his life activity is not a free and a conscious activity, the worker feels himself an animal while working; he sees working process as a process from which he needs to escape immediately. However, free time is desirable for the worker, a time in which animal and man are alike. The worker sees these animal functions as ultimate ends. Since the working process is a nightmare for the worker, the free time he has is not a time in which he can act for realizing himself. Because the process of work is not preferable for the worker, his leisure is not for creative activities. As Joffre Dumazedier puts it, "[d]ull work is most often

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

accompanied by dull leisure.”⁹³ The laborer’s free time is not leisure but only empty time.

4.4 Labor and Leisure

Marx argues that in capitalism the measure and source of value is socially necessary labor time. In capitalism, commodity has two values: use and exchange; and the value of commodity comes from the fact that it possesses exchange value. In contrast to the ancient modes of production, in capitalism labor time is for constituting exchange value, not only creating use value.⁹⁴ According to Marx, what gives value to commodity is labor time. This labor time is indistinguishable because labor of different individuals is homogenized. The only distinguishing feature of labor in capitalism is time.

William James Booth argues that all economic formations can be grasped as ways in which persons produce and distribute free time and that the distinctions between these formations can be expressed as differences in the use and distribution of time.⁹⁵ In the class society, there is strict division between labor time and free time. For Aristotle, free time was precondition of citizenship; laboring people, who create free time for citizens, were not counted citizens. Labor time is specific to non-citizens, while free time to citizens. Marx says the

⁹³ *Toward Society of Leisure*, p. 73.

⁹⁴ “Economies of Time: On the Idea of Time in Marx’s Political Economy”, p. 10.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

following: “They [the ancients] perhaps excused the slavery of one on the ground that it was a means to *the* full development of another.”⁹⁶

There are similarities between the capitalist society and the ancient society: those who possess the means of production have pure free time because they are exempt from the necessity of labor; whereas the working men have labor time because they do not have the means of production, they only have their labor power. The working class, to be sure, has a certain free time, as Marx says in *Alienated Labor*, but its free time is only a means to work; free time is devoted to relaxation or to “animal needs”; it is only a compensation for work. Labor of the working people does not provide time for actualizing their potentialities because their free time provides only their ability to work again; consequently, their labor is for the sake of leisure of the bourgeoisie.

Marx argues that division of labor lies at the foundation of differences between classes. The division of labor means the division of free time and labor time, idleness and necessity of labor, productive class and consumer class. Marx puts this as follows:

The division of labour implies the possibility, nay the fact that intellectual and material activity - enjoyment and labour, production and consumption - devolve on different individuals, and that the only possibility of their not coming into contradiction lies in the negation in its turn of the division of labour.⁹⁷

This contradiction needs to be solved according to Marx. The involuntary division of labor is undesirable for it brings about two opposed classes: Proletariat and Bourgeoisie. While the proletarian has to work since he has nothing to sell

⁹⁶ *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 446.

⁹⁷ *The German Ideology*, p. 45.

other than his labor, the bourgeois does not need to work since he has the means of production. Furthermore, there is also a “social division of time”.⁹⁸ Bourgeoisie has maximum, whereas proletariat has the minimum leisure. Leisure of the former depends on the necessity of labor of the latter.

For Marx the abolition of the division of labor is necessary to emancipate the working class from estrangement and the abolition of the division of labor means the abolition of capitalism.

In Marx’s political philosophy, the importance of labor is evident. It constitutes, on the one hand, the distinctive feature of man, and on the other, it is at the foundation of society- this society is organized according to a certain mode of production. Marx, first of all, sees labor as the process of humanization, secondly shows how labor is estranged, and finally envisages a society in which estrangement of labor is abolished. This process ends with the abolition of division between manual labor and intellectual labor.

Marxist theory is generally seen as aiming the abolition of conflicts. Here are some of them: the division between manual and intellectual labor, between labor and leisure, between freedom and necessity. According to Marx behind all these conflicts there is the division of labor. For this reason, it is essential to abolish the division of labor. The passage above, extracted from *German Ideology*, shows that the division of labor brings about the society to be divided into two big classes. They appear as if their existences belong to different realms.

⁹⁸ Postone, Moishe (1993). *Time, Labour, and Social Domination*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 373.

Leisure also has an important place in Marx's political philosophy. The capitalist society leaves no time to the worker for his self-development. What is expected from the worker is only work; the realization of his potentialities is not a significant issue.

Especially in Marx's vision of a new society, in contrast to capitalism, leisure plays an important role. In Marx's communist society, expansion of the realm of freedom depends on the expansion of the time, which the individual must have for his freely and consciously chosen activities.

Having shown how important labor and leisure in Marx's political philosophy, we must now consider his conceptions "the realm of necessity" and "the realm of freedom", which have important place in his ideal society and lie at the foundation of his view of the new society.

4.5 Freedom

Karl Marx's view of freedom can be defined generally as the liberation of the alienated man in the capitalist society. This liberation also includes liberation from the division of labor and from class society. In the communist society, which Marx conceives as the society of the future, man, with his liberation from class society, would succeed in creating the conditions in which he could freely develop his abilities. In this society, necessity would not dominate the life of man and the contradiction between necessity and freedom would be resolved. What is necessary would be performed freely, and what is free would be a necessity. Freedom in Marx can be considered in this context.

Then, in Marx' view of freedom is not considered as opposed to necessity. Marx's collaborator, Friedrich Engels, dwells on freedom in detail. Departing from Hegel, he defines freedom as consciousness of necessity, and thus freedom does not mean the denial of necessity but control over it. Engels says the following:

Hegel was the first state the relation between freedom and necessity correctly. To him, freedom is the recognition of necessity. "Necessity is *blind only in so far as it is not understood* ." Freedom does not consist in an imaginary independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws and in the possibility which is thus given of systematically making them work towards definite ends...Freedom therefore consists in command over ourselves and over external nature, a command founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development.⁹⁹

Marx argues that the capitalist society depends on exploitation and alienation, that production is realized not for the sake of satisfying human necessities in the capitalist mode of production, but only for profit. For Marx, the capitalist mode of production is historical like every economic system before itself and it inevitably approaches to its own end. Marx envisages that the capitalist society will be replaced by the communist society. According to him, the proletariat, the grave-digger of the capitalist society,¹⁰⁰ is the historical revolutionary, the only class capable to abolish this mode of production. Proletariat will put an end to the capitalist society by a revolution. This revolution not only puts an end to capitalism, but to the complete history of class society. In the communist society, which is to be established after the abolition of capitalism,

⁹⁹ Engels, Frederick (1976). *Anti-Dühring*, trans. Emile Burns. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, p. 145.

¹⁰⁰ *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 47.

every member of society will possess the means of production in equal degree. And, Marx argues that in the communist society the opposition, the contradiction between necessity and freedom will be resolved. He puts this as follows:

Communism as the positive transcendence of private property as human self-estrangement, and therefore as the real appropriation of the human essence by and for man; communism therefore as the complete return of man to himself as a social (i.e., human) being – a return accomplished consciously and embracing the entire wealth of previous development. This communism, as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man – the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution.¹⁰¹

Marx, here, argues that there will be no contradiction between necessity and freedom in the communist society. That there is such a contradiction between necessity and freedom is the consequence of the structure of class society. Likewise, the contradiction between man and nature, between man and man is related to the structure of class society. Therefore, according to Marx, the communist society as a classless society would bring these all contradictions to an end. Consequently, Marx does not see freedom as a negation of necessity; freedom does not signify a condition where necessity ceases to be.

Similarly, Marx does not describe communism as a society dominated by freedom. In this society necessity continues to exist; what is important is the abolition of the contradiction between necessity and freedom.

4.5.1 The Realm of Freedom and the Realm of Necessity

¹⁰¹ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 73-74.

Marx, in order to explain his view on freedom and to show the difference between the capitalist society and the communist society, uses the conception of the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity and makes a distinction between the two.

Labor which is alienated, forced and involuntary is considered to belong to the realm of necessity in the capitalist society, whereas leisure, non-working time is considered to belong to the realm of freedom. According to Marx, since labor is not self-confirmation of man and since it is merely a means to continue man's physical existence, it is right to say that labor is a necessary activity under the capitalist mode of production. "As soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague."¹⁰²

Man's labor under the capitalist conditions is not a means to actualize his potentialities, nor depend does it on one's own wishes. Labor is not an activity for freedom but servitude. Similarly, leisure in the capitalist society also has nothing to do with the realm of freedom. Leisure, in the end of the long working hours, is relaxation time, or a time for satisfying animal needs. According to Marx, "what is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal."¹⁰³ Sean Sayers argues that labor time and free time are opposed to each other in the capitalist society, and to be free is seen as not to be working. According to him, "alienated

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

and oppressive work has existed alongside an alienated and disconnected sort of freedom.”¹⁰⁴

As a result of the structure of class society and the division of labor, there is a contradiction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity, between labor and leisure in the capitalist society. However, in the communist society Marx envisages, the contradiction ceases to exist. In Marx’s thought, although the distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity continues to exist, there will be no contradiction between them in the future communist society. Hence, in the communist society, neither labor will correspond to the realm of necessity, nor leisure to the realm of freedom. For Marx, both labor and leisure appear as ends; in the communist society both will be required for man’s freedom.

4.5.2 Leisure as An End

In Marx’s view of freedom, leisure has a central place because according to him, the reduction in necessary labor time and increase in the time for “the development of the individuals”¹⁰⁵ will constitute the foundation of the realm of freedom in the communist society. He puts this as follows:

The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases;

¹⁰⁴ “Freedom and The ‘Realm of Necessity’”, (www.kent.ac.uk/secl/philosophy/ss/506sayers.rtf) (March 20, 2006).

¹⁰⁵ Marx, Karl (1973). *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus. New York: Vintage Books, p. 706.

thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production. Just as the savage must wrestle with Nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life, so must civilised man, and he must do so in all social formations and under all possible modes of production. With his development this realm of physical necessity expands as a result of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which satisfy these wants also increase. Freedom in this field can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working-day is its basic prerequisite.¹⁰⁶

Here, Marx sees the concepts labor and leisure in the foundation of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. The realm of necessity indicates man's physical necessities and the activity which is performed to satisfy these physical necessities. Man's physical necessities belong to the realm of necessity. Since man is a part of nature, in all modes of society he is confronted with the necessity to satisfy his physical necessities; therefore, the realm of necessity continues to exist also in the communist society. The realm of freedom begins beyond the realm of necessity. Free time for man's own development corresponds to the realm of freedom. The famous passage, quoted from the *Capital* above, clearly shows the importance Marx attached to the reduction of working hours for freedom: "the shortening of the work day is its basic prerequisite." The point is evident: leisure is the basis of the realm of freedom.

¹⁰⁶ Marx, Karl (1909) ed. Engels, Frederick. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ernest Unterman. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company. Vol. III, p. 954.

Marx argues that the realm of freedom is possible only for the civilized man and after the capitalist mode of the production; for this brings a definite collectivization of labor and an increased production. With the machinery's taking place of human labor, the reduction of working-day becomes possible. That the realm of freedom is possible beyond the sphere of actual material production shows that freedom appears only with leisure. And leisure is an ultimate end for full human development.¹⁰⁷

At first glance, in Marx, the distinction between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity appear to correspond to the distinction between labor and leisure because the first sentence of the passage says that ceasing of labor is required and the last sentence says that the reduction on working hours is essential for the realm of freedom. However, Marx does not mean that what is required is not ceasing of labor, but that of labor "which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations." As Glen Eker puts it, "Marx's distinction between the realm of necessity and realm of freedom is not a distinction between labour and something else such as leisure and amusement, but is a distinction between labour directed to the satisfaction of physical needs and labour which is itself the first need of life."¹⁰⁸

In the quoted passage, Marx talks about labor in a certain sense: labor which aims to satisfy man's physical needs and material production. Because this human activity belongs to the realm of necessity, it is preferable that there be as little

¹⁰⁷ Harrell, B. "Marx and Critical Theory", (people.sunysit.edu/~harrell/billyjack/marx crt_theory01.htm) (March 20, 2006).

¹⁰⁸ Eker, Glen (1991). *Leisure and Lifestyle in Selected Writings of Karl Marx: A Social and Theoretical History*, San Francisco: The Edwin Mellen Press, p. 106.

energy and time as possible. As Sayers puts it, by regulating man's relation to nature and bringing it under his control man can have a free and conscious activity even though this activity belongs to the realm of necessity.¹⁰⁹ Free activity is possible within the realm of necessity. In conclusion, freedom can exist within the realm of necessity. Such a view of freedom is immanent to Marx's theory of estrangement.

In *Grundrisse*, Marx sees leisure as the basis of freedom. With the reduction in necessary labor time, all members of society would have time for self-development in arts and sciences. He puts this as follows:

The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them.¹¹⁰

This requires a different society and a different mode of production, for in the capitalist society the source and the measure of value is labor time. Production is not for the sake of free satisfaction of needs of the society, but for the sake of the capitalist's profit. Marx envisages a society in which the measure of value is not labor time but free time. In this communist society the worker is the master of his own labor, and his necessary labor is for the satisfaction of necessary needs of all society. Marx says the following:

On one side, necessary labour time will be measured by the needs of the social individual, and, on the other, the development of the power of social production will grow so rapidly that, even though production is now calculated for the wealth of all, *disposable time* will grow for all. For real wealth is the

¹⁰⁹ "Freedom and The 'Realm of Necessity'".

¹¹⁰ *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 706.

developed productive power of all individuals. The measure of wealth is then not any longer, in any way, labour time, but rather disposable time.¹¹¹

The indication of the measure of wealth in the communist society would be leisure. The communist society will be qualitatively different from the capitalist society; the end is leisure and self-development of all members of society.

4.5.3 Labor as An End

It is clear that Marx sees leisure as the basis of the realm of freedom. However, Marx's conception of the realm of freedom does not exclude labor. Labor, like leisure, also continues to be necessary for the realm of freedom. Marx's theory of estrangement involves the liberation of labor from estrangement and labor's becoming a free activity. Labor, in the alienated form, is a means for servitude under the capitalist mode of production. According to Marx, labor is the characteristic of human nature. Thus, the abolition of alienation does not mean the abolition of labor, but the liberation of it. Marx talks about emancipated, non-alienated labor in the communist society as follows:

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly -- only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!¹¹²

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 708.

¹¹² Marx, Karl and Engels, Friederick (1970). *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in *Selected Works*, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, Vol. II, p. 25.

Marx argues that in the communist society labor would be not only a means to satisfy man's physical needs, but life's prime want. Labor would gain a different dimension. Because human nature is characterized by free and conscious life activity of man, labor would cease to be a means and become the end of life in the communist society. Marx also defines labor in *Grundrisse* "as self-realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom."¹¹³ According to Bill Harrell work is "the ultimate end", "it has no utilitarian purpose but is an end in itself" and work is "the activity of freedom" in Marx's thought.¹¹⁴

In the capitalist mode of production, the worker is forced to sell his labor power for his survival because he has no means of production. For this reason, the works he is obliged to perform are not in accordance with his abilities and wishes. Each individual is confined to only one sphere of the process of production and labor in this sphere is not a free and conscious, but an alienated one. Marx argues that in the communist society the activities of man would be liberated and man could be engaged in a large variety of activities in accordance with his potentialities and his wishes. Marx puts this as follows:

For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear

¹¹³ *Grundrisse*, 611.

¹¹⁴ "Marx and Critical Theory".

cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic.¹¹⁵

In this famous passage, Marx depicts an ideal way of life. In the communist society, the individual will have the opportunity to perform in accordance with his wishes. Leisure does not mean relaxation or it is not for the sake of work as is it in the capitalist society. Here, labor and leisure intersect.

These two realms in Marx's writings are discussed by commentators from different points of view. According to Gerald Allan Cohen, Marx takes the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity as opposed to each other. The realm of necessity is a realm in which economic aims prevails and labor as an activity which has an economic end is not related to freedom; it completely belongs to the realm of necessity. Labor means inescapably non-freedom and freedom appears only possible beyond sphere of labor. Marx wants communist society to try to limit and minimize working hours in *the Capital*, and thus, he seems to have given up his ideas in *Critique of the Gotha Programme* about labor as "not only a means of life but life's prime want". Cohen concludes that for Marx "[Labor] being a means of life ... cannot be wanted, and will be replaced by the desired activity as the working day contracts"¹¹⁶. This comment draws a hard line between necessity and freedom in Marx's thought.

Edward Andrew, departing from the critique of Herbert Marcuse, argues that in Marx's thought work is the characteristic of human personality and "an interchange between man and nature ... may be either an activity of freedom or of

¹¹⁵ *The German Ideology*, p. 46.

¹¹⁶ *History, Labour and Freedom*, p. 207.

bondage”¹¹⁷. And, he says that Marx’s claim that the shortening of the working day is the basic prerequisite for the realm of freedom does not contradict this understanding of work. Both work and leisure constitute the foundation of the realm of freedom. “Leisure and education are essential for the extension of the human personality through work.”¹¹⁸ Andrew argues that according to Marx labor is the characteristic of human nature and that he envisages a society in which estrangement of labor would be abolished and labor emancipated. Labor could be a free activity even in the realm of necessity.

Sean Sayers’ comment seems more detailed on this topic. According to him, for Marx labor is the creative and free activity of man. He argues that Marx is under the influence of Hegel in the context of labor. Furthermore, Marx criticizes the opposition between necessity and freedom. In the communist society Marx envisages that necessity and freedom would coexist. Marx says that the aim of labor, in the economical sense, is to satisfy man’s physical needs and thus it belongs to the realm of necessity. According to Sayers, this does not mean that labor cannot be free. Even if the aim of economical labor is to satisfy man’s needs and in this way it belongs to the realm of necessity, with the abolition of estrangement of labor and with the abolition of division of labor, there would be no coercion on labor, and therefore labor can be free.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Andrew, E. (1970) “Work and Freedom in Marcuse and Marx” *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 3, No:2, 241-256, p. 242.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹¹⁹ Sayers, Sean (2003). “Creative Activity and Alienation in Hegel and Marx”, *Historical Materialism*, 11, No:1, 107-128.

Marx says that the realm of necessity exists in all possible modes of production, because man belongs to nature and he is a part of it. However, in the communist society, the realm of freedom will expand and the realm of necessity will be limited. The realm of freedom would expand with the reduction of labor time in the economical sense, with becoming of labor voluntary, not forced, in short, with the abolition of estrangement and with man's possessing leisure in which man acts in accordance with his capacities and his wishes. In this context, Marx does not depict a communist society in which the realm of necessity ceases to be and the realm of freedom becomes the only realm, but projects a society in which the contradiction between necessity and freedom is resolved. The activity in the realm of necessity could be free with the rational control over production and consumption.

According to Sayers, Marx's thought aims at a reconciliation of the concepts necessity and freedom. It is evident that Marx does not consider labor as inescapably alienating and unfree. Labor, in the capitalist society, appears alienated, but the liberation from this estrangement is possible. Marx argues that labor is "life's prime want" in the communist society. When man acts in accordance with his nature as a free being, labor would be an indication of man's freedom, not his servitude. Sayers argues that Marx envisages a communist society in which science, art, philosophy would be man's main activities. They would not be occupations of a minority but open to anyone. These activities would not be a luxury but a necessity. Marx's thought, from the beginning, seems to be directed to abolish this opposition. While economic labor would be a free

activity in the communist society, creative and artistic activities would be necessary.

Marxian conception shows that labor and leisure can intersect; labor can be an activity performed in leisure. Marx explicitly expresses this view especially in *The German Ideology*: if there were no coercion on labor, if society regulated the general production, every individual would be free for engaging in a variety of activities according to his wishes and abilities.¹²⁰

In addition, Marx insistently dwells on the idea that freedom and leisure should be everyone's right, and not specific to a minority, as was it in Aristotle. For Marx, labor is not an inhuman activity but the characteristic feature of human nature and true freedom, whereas Aristotle sees labor as servile, and life of laborers as "inimical to virtue."¹²¹

Herbert Marcuse discusses the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity in the light of technological developments.¹²² He accepts the general Marxist distinction between these two realms. However, Marcuse argues that in the Marxist conception, the realm of necessity continues to be a realm of alienation, and that there can be no freedom in the realm of necessity. But Marcuse argues that labor can be a free activity even if it is in the realm of necessity. He envisages the transformation of labor to a play thanks to technological developments. According to him, technological developments render complete automation possible, and this means maximum leisure for every member of the society.

¹²⁰ *The German Ideology*, p. 46.

¹²¹ *Politics*, 1328b.

¹²² Marcuse, Herbert (1969). "The Realm of Freedom and the Realm of Necessity: A Reconsideration", *Praxis: A Philosophical Journal*, 5, 20-25.

Therefore, man determining his own needs would be a free being because he would have leisure for freely chosen activities.

CHAPTER V

LABOR, LEISURE AND FREEDOM IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF HERBERT MARCUSE

5.1 Introduction

Herbert Marcuse tries to show the vital importance of labor on man's life and the dimensions opened by it. He traces this theme in the history of civilization and establishes its relation to leisure in the advanced industrial society. Marcuse's works dwell on the idea that the concept of labor generally is a means of domination over man. Marcuse considers the concept labor as constituting the large part of human life, and draws a relation between labor and leisure. Man's physical necessities can be satisfied by less labor thanks to technological developments in the advanced industrial society.

Leisure has become a reality for man since he began to maintain his life with labor. However, when the advanced industrial society comes to render the elimination of labor from the process of production possible, only then the fact that man acquires ability to continue his life without labor. This fact distinguishes the advanced industrial society from all societies. Marcuse says that in such a society there is an extreme domination because, he thinks that uncontrolled man in all areas of his life bears a potential to break down the dynamics of system.

The advanced industrial society, by entertainment industry, extends its domination over man in leisure. For Marcuse, this means extended control and increasing unfreedom. The rising standard of life in the advanced industrial society confronts man with a world he cannot himself control. Marcuse departs from Marx's thoughts in his critique; he accepts alienation in the capitalist society and individual's impotency against the product he produces. Regarding the developments in the industrial society, which Marx could not experience, Marcuse offers a critique of the advanced industrial society. He tries to show that leisure is efficiently translated into a means of control and that the ways of liberation is closed and absorbed by the capitalist progress. Marcuse says that "from the working day, alienation and regimentation spread into the free time."¹²³ This means that alienation is fully extended over the society.

To be sure, Marx also says that leisure is a realm of alienation in the sense that leisure renders the continuation of labor possible again, and that the worker satisfies the needs common with animals in leisure. Marx argues that what is human becomes animal and what is animal becomes human¹²⁴, that in the capitalist society labor the characteristic of human nature is of the nature of animals, and leisure in which the needs common with animal are satisfied is human. However, the establishment of leisure industry as a sector is a feature of the advanced industrial society and in such a society life is surrounded more organizationally. The control of capitalism over man increases. The reduction of

¹²³ Marcuse, Herbert (1962). *Eros and Civilization: Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, Boston: Beacon Press, p. 43.

¹²⁴ *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, p. 64.

the working hours in a certain degree and the rise in the standard of life are specific to this society. What renders Marcuse hopeless about a new civilization and what allows him to see the opportunities of a new civilization are these conditions. In the new society, man would determine his own needs and cultivate his abilities freely.

For Marcuse, the analysis of labor and leisure is possible with a discussion concerning the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity. Marcuse's discussion of the reality of automation in the advanced industrial society is crucial. Automation as the process of mechanization and rationalization in the industry bears the potentiality to save man from toil, i.e. from alienated labor. But, in spite of achievements technology arrived at, labor continues to be in the process of production; non-working time is also added to the control mechanism. Man himself cannot determine his true needs and aspirations, and he gets ever more dependent on capitalism.

Whereas Aristotle says that freedom is possible only with a privileged minority because technology did not have an important place in social life in antiquity, Marcuse argues that technological developments in the advanced industrial society render freedom possible for all members of the society. For Aristotle, man's physical necessities bring about the necessity of labor, and free class is completely free from the necessity of labor. Therefore, while some people belong to the realm of necessity, some people belong to the realm of freedom. According to Marcuse, if technological developments could abolish the necessity of labor, or reduce to the working hours to a minimum, then there would be maximum leisure for everyone. This would mean freedom for all.

5.2 Reality and Opportunity

In terms of showing the importance of the concepts labor and leisure in Marcuse's thought, it is useful to discuss what kind of a society the advanced industrial society is and with what kind of contradictions it maintains its existence. Two great books of Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* and *One Dimensional Man*, dwell perpetually on the advanced industrial society in which two opposed tendencies have emerged: the rising control mechanism in this society exists alongside the rising possibility of liberation. As the possibility of liberation increases, the society becomes fully controlled.

There are great technological developments in the advanced industrial society. The development of technology is a factor which increases the productivity of labor. This brings about the possibility of a better society for man. However, Marcuse argues that the neutrality of technology cannot be maintained because technology cannot be considered apart from how it is put to use.¹²⁵ In the advanced industrial society technology as a means in the hands of rulers, helps rulers' domination to continue more efficiently rather than liberating the life of men. Thus, Marcuse argues that technology has no aim to liberate men, that it even serves the opposite. But at the same time, it constitutes the foundation of a new civilization. Marcuse puts it as follows:

For freedom indeed depends largely on technological progress, on the advancement of science. But this fact easily obscures the

¹²⁵ Marcuse, Herbert (1964). *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, Boston: Beacon Press p. xvi.

essential precondition: in order to become vehicles of freedom, science and technology would have to change their present direction and goals; they would have to be reconstructed in accord with a new sensibility -- the demands of life instincts.¹²⁶

In the advanced industrial society rationality and irrationality coexist simultaneously because on the one hand technology, which produces the greatest wealth in history, depends on rationality, on the other hand, poverty continues. The control over nature is extended to man, and this society comes to determine the needs and aspirations of man.

The most advanced areas of industrial society exhibit throughout these two features: a trend toward consummation of technological rationality, and intensive efforts to contain this trend within established institutions. Here is the internal contradiction of this civilization: the irrational element in its rationality. It is the token of its achievements. The industrial society which makes technology and science its own is organized for the ever-more-effective domination of man and nature, for the ever-more-effective utilization of its resources. It becomes irrational when the success of these efforts opens new dimensions of human realization... Life as an end is qualitatively different from life as a means.¹²⁷

Despite the possibilities of technological development, the advanced industrial society tends to be totalitarian because all life of the individual comes to be controlled. In the early times of capitalism, the control over labor time was already at issue and this labor time constituted the foundation of alienation for man. However, with the technological developments, the control mechanism, by surrounding non-working time, free time of man, extends its domination to the whole life of the individual. What is surrounded is no longer only labor time, but also leisure. Consequently, technological development is used to serve not satisfy individual's vital needs and render them autonomous beings but serve the interest

¹²⁶ Marcuse, Herbert. *An Essay on Liberation*, Boston: Beacon Press p. 19.

¹²⁷ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 17.

of a continued domination. Individual is under continual repression - a repression which restricts the individual in satisfying his needs freely. Marcuse says the following:

[T]he apparatus imposes its economic and political requirements of defense and expansion on labor time and free time, on the material and intellectual culture. By virtue of the way it has organized its technological base, contemporary industrial society tends to be totalitarian.¹²⁸

Contemporary industrial society, though it could have created conditions which could eliminate necessity of labor from production and offer new possibilities to individuals for gaining their self-determination, “exact(s) the overwhelming need for the production and consumption of waste; the need for stupefying work where it is no longer a real necessity; the needs for relaxation which soothe and prolong this stupefication; the need for maintaining such deceptive liberties as free competition, at administered prices, a free press which censors itself, free choice between brands and gadgets.”¹²⁹

Another dimension which technological rationality opens, contrary to the established society, renders the “production toward the satisfaction of freely developing individual needs”¹³⁰ possible. The advanced industrial society, although it has increased its domination over individuals, creates the forces which destroy the foundations of this system by automation. Automation is a result of the need for increasing productivity, and it leaves capitalism with a fundamental problem. Marcuse says the following:

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Automation threatens to render possible the reversal of the relation between free time and working time on which the established civilization rests: the possibility of working time becoming marginal, and free time becoming full time.¹³¹

Marcuse concentrates on the conditions where labor is no longer a real necessity, and full free time could be possible with the developments in technology. As a natural result of technological developments, automation offers man such an opportunity. But, Marcuse does not say that this possibility would inescapably take place. For reducing labor time to a minimum and expanding free time to full time is not a quantitative but a qualitative change. This change is a change in the basic structure of society and a sign of a new civilization.

This transformation in labor time and free time implies the transition from “the realm of necessity” to “the realm of freedom”. The realm of labor can lead to the about the realm of freedom inasmuch as it is automated completely. In Marcuse’s words, “complete automation in the realm of necessity would open the dimension of free time as the one in which man’s private and societal existence would constitute itself. This would be the historical transcendence toward a new civilization.”¹³²

The advanced industrial society, on the one hand, has a tendency toward automation which Marcuse sees as the aim of technological developments, thus toward the realm of freedom, on the other hand, it tries to limit this tendency. Automation is at issue in the advanced industrial society, but in a certain degree. The capitalist system avoids its full realization. The established system insists on

¹³¹ *Eros and Civilization: Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, p. iv.

¹³² *One Dimensional Man*, p. 37.

the necessity of labor. This depends on the structure of this society - the society which is organized in accordance with private property of the production means. The highest degree of automation has the power to reduce necessary labor time to a minimum and since capitalism depends on the exploitation of human power, "it would mean, plainly, the final catastrophe of the capitalist system."¹³³

Marcuse argues, two main classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie, maintain their existence in the affluent society. Hence, the advanced industrial society continues its being an apparatus of domination. Although it could expand free time, satisfy vital needs, and render the individual realize the possibilities of self-determination, the affluent society eliminates these possibilities. On the contrary it even increases its efficiency on individuals, surrounding their life as a whole. In addition to labor, which continues to be the main element of production, leisure is seen as a source of profit in this society.

Marcuse says that the advanced industrial society is to face "the conflict between the progressive "abolition of labor" and the need for preserving labor as the source of profit."¹³⁴

These two trends, which operate opposed to each other, find their expression in the relationship between labor and leisure. In the place where the abolition of labor is possible, the continuation of labor; in the place where leisure, in which man can cultivate his abilities, is possible, the rise of dependency on the advanced industrial society by creating instinct for consumption with imposed false needs.

¹³³ Mattick, P. *Critique of Marcuse: One Dimensional Man in Class Society*, (www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/2379/marcuse.htm) (April 15, 2006).

¹³⁴ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 53.

According to Marcuse, if labor were not necessary, if man were exempt from the necessity to use his body and mind as a means for labor in order to survive,

[T]he technological processes of mechanization and standardization might release individual energy into a yet uncharted realm of freedom beyond necessity. The very structure of human existence would be altered; the individual would be liberated from the work world's imposing upon him alien needs and alien possibilities. The individual would be free to exert autonomy over a life that would be his own. If the productive apparatus could be organized and directed toward the satisfaction of the vital needs, its control might well be centralized; such control would not prevent individual autonomy, but render it possible.¹³⁵

Thus, for Marcuse, two opposed trends in the advanced industrial society are related to the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity. Technological developments are directed toward the realm of freedom, in which the individual is the master of his life, the capitalist system, however, extends its control mechanism in order to hold the individual in the realm of necessity.

5.3 Alienation

Marcuse observes that alienation is spread over all society. He accepts Marx's view of alienation, and he describes new forms of alienation in the advanced industrial society. Marcuse also sees alienation in the process of consumption, which Marx observes generally in the process of production.

Marcuse describes the condition of the individual in the affluent society. This society has the ability to repress over the individual. It uses technology to sustain its existence and man's dependency on itself. With the technological

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

development, increasing productivity of labor renders a certain level of affluence possible, Marcuse argues, which makes the members of the society come to have a higher standard of living. This allows increasing consumption, even renders necessary. The advanced industrial society creates, for men, “the increasing necessity to produce and consume the non-necessary.”¹³⁶

Affluent society, which is capable of offering a higher standard of life to men, creates new needs in accordance with its own needs. Individual is rendered dependent on system in new areas of satisfaction and in the ways these needs are satisfied. Thus, Marcuse considers alienation both in labor and leisure.

The affluent society or the welfare state has achieved a high standard of living. That welfare state creates higher standards of living opens new dimensions in individual’s life, which Marcuse sees as a negative development. The individual attains opportunities which make his life easier and richer. He has the opportunity to consume beyond merely vital needs. However, Marcuse argues that this society, despite the opportunities of technological development, tends to be totalitarian. This leads to alienation in the whole life of the worker.

Firstly, the individual lives in conditions where alienation reigns because social controls dominate his whole life: labor time and free time. Labor time constitutes the foundation for alienated existence; the individual lives with the consciousness of necessity in his labor time: labor is necessary. Therefore, in the capitalist system labor as a human activity does not depend on man’s own capabilities and wishes, but it continues to exist as a precondition of man’s survival.

¹³⁶ *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 50.

Work has now become *general*, and so have the restrictions placed upon the libido: labor time, which is the largest part of the individual's life time, is painful time, for alienated labor is absence of gratification, negation of the pleasure principle. Libido is diverted for socially useful performances in which the individual works for himself only in so far as he works for the apparatus, engaged in activities that mostly do not coincide with his own faculties and desires.¹³⁷

Leisure is also subject to the control in the capitalist system: alienation spreads from man's process of labor to his leisure. Because alienated labor is equal to toil,¹³⁸ leisure means longest possible relaxation and gaining strength for working again.

The view that leisure is an area of alienation is also present in Marx's thought. However, Marcuse says that the advanced industrial society has new powers to establish a more efficient control over leisure. This society is capable of creating new needs for man and these needs result from the necessities of the capitalist system. These are not real needs. The creation of false needs have an important place in the capitalist system, for the capitalist system, by means of these false needs, increases its control over men.

The apparatus makes difficult individual's satisfying vital needs on the one hand; it creates false needs the other. Marcuse makes a distinction between true and false needs. False needs produce toil and aggressiveness.

Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and hate, belong to this category of false needs.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ *Eros and Civilization*, p. 41.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹³⁹ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 5.

These false needs are not determined by the individual, but the external powers over which he has no control. The affluent society creates these false needs and surrounds the individual's life completely. The individual feels himself that he needs to satisfy these needs because media and advertisements perpetually direct him. Media and advertisements offer him a variety of alternatives. Leisure industry controls individual's leisure through directing him to the satisfaction of false needs. With the high standard of living, he has opportunity to consume more but there is another point which media and advertisement do not mention: the individual has to work in order to consume. Freedom of consumption exists alongside with the necessity of labor. Marcuse claims that the only needs which have to be satisfied are vital ones such as housing, nourishment, clothing, etc.¹⁴⁰ If the basic needs could be satisfied without labor then this would mean more freedom, even if individuals do not have a high standard of living to consume.

The individual submerges into the world of commodities. He lives with the dream of purchasing new commodities and what he possesses. Marcuse argues that the relationship between the individual and the society has changed and social control has become possible with new false needs: "The people recognize themselves in their commodity; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment."¹⁴¹ However, these products are not repressive in themselves. Marcuse says the following:

Not the automobile is repressive, not the television set is repressive, not the household gadgets are repressive, but the automobile, the television, the gadgets which, produced in

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

accordance with the requirements of profitable exchange, have become part and parcel of the people's own existence, own "actualization". Thus they have to buy part and parcel of their own existence on the market; this existence is the realization of capital.¹⁴²

Moreover, distinctions of the classes are less severe in the welfare state. Although there are still two basic classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie, in the advanced capitalist society, they seem equal to each other in certain respects. Their leisure activities make them equal. The worker and his boss enjoy the same television program and visit the same resort places, read same newspaper.¹⁴³ However, these needs and their satisfaction serve sustaining the system of domination. Thus, distinctions between the classes become hidden.

Finally, the individual has an illusion concerning freedom and happiness. He thinks that he is free because he has a wide variety of goods and services. This means that he can make his own choice. The availability of false needs leads to "euphoria in unhappiness".¹⁴⁴ However, Marcuse rejects the idea that the individual is really free and happy, and argues that he is in fact surrounded with false needs, and media and advertisements manipulate him. With consumption the advanced industrial society determines the individual's behavior both in his free time and labor time, and also determines his consciousness.¹⁴⁵ Marcuse says the following:

Under the rule of a repressive whole, liberty can be made into a powerful instrument of domination. The range of choice open to

¹⁴² *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 12.

¹⁴³ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁵ Marcuse, Herbert (1972). *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, Boston: Beacon Press, p. 14.

the individual is no decisive factor in determining the degree of human freedom, but what can be chosen and what is chosen by the individual. ... Free election of masters does not abolish the masters or the slaves. Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear-that is, if they sustain alienation.¹⁴⁶

As a result, alienation spreads everywhere; the individual's existence is completely alienated. "There is only one dimension, and it is everywhere and in all forms."¹⁴⁷

5.4 Labor and Leisure

Marcuse in his famous book, *Eros and Civilization*, investigates the origin of the established repressive civilization and the possibility of a non-repressive civilization, by setting off from the ideas of Sigmund Freud. He argues that a sociological content is immanent to Freud's thought. He refers to many Freudian concepts in his examination, such as pleasure and reality principle, life and death instincts, etc. Marcuse adds to the Freudian analysis his own concepts: surplus repression and performance principle. Surplus repression means restrictions by social domination, it is not basic repression; performance principle is the appearance of reality principle in history.¹⁴⁸

Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* can be read as an analysis on the importance of the concept of labor in human life. This work, in which labor and

¹⁴⁶ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 7-8.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁸ *Eros and Civilization*, p. 32.

toil are seen as identical, poses the possibility of a new, non-repressive civilization, on the basis of leisure.

Freud argues that civilization is based on “renunciation and delay in satisfaction”.¹⁴⁹ Civilization begins when total satisfaction of human necessities is abandoned. This process includes the transformation from pleasure to restriction of pleasure, from joyfulness to toil and it means the transformation of pleasure rather than the negation of pleasure. This is related to necessity of labor. Man has to work and establish domination over nature because the sources of nature are not sufficient to satisfy his needs. Thus, man’s domination over nature is dependent on delay in his satisfaction. “Scarcity (*Lebensnot*, *Ananke*) teaches men that they cannot freely gratify their instinctual impulses, that they cannot live under the pleasure principle.”¹⁵⁰

It seems that primitive men were happy because they were satisfying their needs freely. But for the transition to civilization man had to delay satisfying his needs. This historical transition means transition from pleasure principle (play) to reality principle (work). Scarcity renders this transition necessary. “Behind reality principle lies the fundamental fact of *Ananke* or scarcity,”¹⁵¹ because the sources of nature are limited. Man has to work; and work is not something chosen but imposed. From the beginning, work indicates necessity. It has been considered as

¹⁴⁹ Freud, Sigmund (1949). *Civilization and Its Discontents*, London; Hogarth Press, quoted by Marcuse in *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

belonging to the realm of necessity; it is the price paid for the satisfaction of needs.

Scarcity as a justification of necessity to labor is not organized in accordance with satisfaction of individual needs, but it is not a matter of life and death for all individuals. According to Marcuse,

[T]he *distribution* of scarcity as well as the effort of overcoming it, the mode of work, have been imposed upon individuals—first by mere violence, subsequently by a more rational utilization of power... Domination is exercised by a particular group or individual in order to sustain and enhance itself in a privileged position.¹⁵²

According to Marcuse, labor does not have libidinal quality in civilization. He calls work which starts civilization labor. This labor is alienated and painful, because restrictions on pleasure are the result of social division of labor. For the individual this alienated labor is toil; the burden of civilization. With civilization, namely with renunciation on satisfaction, labor takes its vital place in human life. Labor becomes a means for organizing and controlling society; the mode of life is formed by labor.

For the vast majority of population, the scope and mode of satisfaction are determined by their own labor; but their labor is work for an apparatus which they do not control, which operates as an independent power to which individuals must submit if they want to live. And it becomes the more alien the more specialized the division of labor becomes. Men do not live their own lives but perform pre-established functions. While they work, they do not fulfill their own needs and faculties but work in *alienation*.¹⁵³

The individual has began to work so that he could satisfy his needs because of the problem of scarcity. However, the individual's labor is for the sake of the

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

organization of society over which he has no control. Labor he engages in does not intersect with his potentialities and desires: his labor is alienated labor. Thus,

labor time, which is the largest part of the individual's life time, is painful time, for alienated labor is absence of gratification, negation of pleasure principle.¹⁵⁴

According to Marcuse, with the necessity of labor, the individual's body and mind have become instruments of alienated labor. Their existence is mere means, not of pleasure but means of labor.

It is clear that the place of labor in human life, although it is the precondition of civilization, signifies a realm of necessity according to Marcuse. Labor is seen opposed to pleasure, it means restriction and negation of pleasure. Marcuse, for this reason, counts labor identical with toil. But what Marcuse means with labor is actually alienated labor. Labor is not opposed to pleasure and freedom in itself. What opposed to pleasure and freedom is labor which bounds individuals to social control and supports domination over them, i.e. alienated labor. In this way, Marcuse says the following:

To be sure, every form of society, every civilization has to exact labor time for the procurement of the necessities and luxuries of life. but not every kind and mode of labor is essentially irreconcilable with the pleasure principle. ... The irreconcilable conflict is not between work (Reality Principle) and Eros (Pleasure Principle), but between *alienated* labor (performance principle) and Eros.¹⁵⁵

Alienated labor also determines the individual's non-working time. There is a distribution of time. The individual, during labor time, works as an instrument of the alienated labor; in his free time, he does not have to work, but under the

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

performance principle, alienation spreads into free time. Marcuse puts this as follows:

The basic control of leisure is achieved by the length of working day itself, by the tiresome and mechanical routine of alienated labor; these require that leisure be passive relaxation and a re-creation of energy for work.¹⁵⁶

Marcuse adds that the advanced industrial society uses media and advertisements to control leisure through creating false needs. The individual is offered a variety of goods and services to purchase; however these alternatives are not for satisfying the individual's needs but determining what he needs. He is occupied in unlimited choices and forgets that who determines his needs is not himself but external powers. Thus, individual sells not only his labor time but also his free time.¹⁵⁷

Marcuse argues that although the individual is completely determined, he has the false impression that he is free, he is even happy with his life. His feeling happiness and freedom serves the continuity of domination. Marcuse says the following:

This happiness, which takes place part-time during the few hour of leisure between working days or working nights, but sometimes also during work, enables him to continue his performance, which in turn perpetuates his labor and that of others.¹⁵⁸

It must be added that Marcuse makes a distinction between free time and leisure.¹⁵⁹ For him, free time has a positive aspect; it constitutes a potential

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁵⁹ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 49.

foundation for the realm of freedom. However, leisure is surrounded by mass media and false needs, by business and politics; this is a feature of the advanced industrial society. Leisure is a means for controlling the individual in his non-working time.

5.5 Freedom

Marcuse thinks that liberation from repressive needs of the advanced industrial society is possible with the creation of a new type of man and a change in the biological dimension. That he places leisure in the foundation of the problem of freedom is not arbitrary, because Marcuse argues that free time increases in the advanced industrial society but this rise in free time or the reduction of working hours renders the individual ever more dependent on the control mechanism, rather than leading directly to freedom. In addition, he claims that freedom is not only related to leisure but at the same time to labor. Labor must have a place in human life in non-alienated form. Marcuse considers the relation of the concepts labor, leisure and freedom in context of the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity, just as Marx did.

That Marcuse concentrates mainly on a new type of man and a biological dimension is related to his idea that the realm of freedom requires not a quantitative distinction from the established societies, but a qualitative one. That is why Marcuse suggests not a restoration of capitalism, but its abolition, thus a revolution.

Socialism has an important place in Marcuse because it, first of all, means a new form of human existence. He points out a new definition for socialism because, for him, there have been important changes in the foundation of society. The affluent society is very far from the society in which Marx lived. In order to discover “the possibilities of constructing the socialist society” it is necessary to redefine socialism, regarding technological and cultural development. According to him, “a new vision of socialism is best characterized by a new relationship between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity.”¹⁶⁰

In his article “The Realm of Freedom and the Realm of Necessity” he rejects a separation between labor and leisure, between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. Marcuse, in this article, departs from the need for the redefinition of socialism because new technological and cultural developments render it necessary. This redefinition of socialism is possible only with the re-examination of the relationship between the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity. According to Marcuse there is a twofold development in the capitalist society. On the one hand, with false needs and “leisure commodities and services” man’s dependence on the established order increases; the realm of necessity extends to the realm of freedom. On the other hand, with the growing productivity of labor man’s position in work process changes: “The work process itself, the socially necessary work, becomes, in its rationality, subject to the free play of the mind, of imagination, the free play with the pleasurable possibilities of things and

¹⁶⁰ “The Realm of Freedom and The Realm of Necessity: A Reconsideration”, p. 22.

nature.”¹⁶¹ Thus, the possibility of the extension of the realm of freedom to the realm of necessity emerges.

Marcuse, here, defends the realm of freedom “within” the realm of necessity, as opposed to “beyond” the realm of necessity. He envisages that with man determining his own needs, the realm of necessity will be transformed. Thus, Marcuse claims that “not only reduction of the working day, but transformation of work itself”¹⁶² is necessary for freedom.

Marcuse’s view of freedom is based on the Marxist distinction between “the realm of necessity” and “the realm of freedom”. Marcuse sees three different interpretations of this conception by Marx in the *German Ideology*, *Grundrisse* and the *Capital*.

Firstly, in the *German Ideology*, along with the abolition of private property, Marx envisages “an all-round development of individual.”¹⁶³ The individual is free to engage in the most varying activities”¹⁶⁴ such as fishing, criticizing, hunting in the communist society. According to Marcuse, this conception is not compatible with the level technology has achieved because “this vision has become obsolete and pertains to a stage of the development of the productive forces which has been surpassed.”¹⁶⁵ Marcuse does not give comprehensive explanations in this topic; he justifies his argument only by saying that there

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁶³ *The German Ideology*, p. 46.

¹⁶⁴ *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

would be many people who would want to do the same thing at the same time. Therefore, for Marcuse, this conception concerning the realm of freedom is impossible to be realized.

Secondly, another conception concerning the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity is found in the *Capital*. Marx, in this book, sees the reduction of working hours as the prerequisite for the realm of freedom. Expanding leisure in the production process would open a free world for man, because according to Marcuse, Marx sees labor belonging to the realm of necessity. In this conception, leisure is seen identical with the realm of freedom and labor has nothing to do with it. Marcuse puts this as follows:

The later Marxian concept implies the continued separation between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, between leisure and labor- not only in time, but also in such a manner that the same subject lives a different life in the two realms. According to this Marxian conception, the realm of necessity would continue under socialism to such an extent that real human freedom would prevail only outside the entire sphere of socially necessary labor. Marx rejects the idea that work can ever become play. Alienation would be reduced with the progressive reduction of the working day, but the latter would remain a day of unfreedom, rational but not free.¹⁶⁶

Marcuse argues that Marx, in the *Capital*, held that the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity are opposed to each other. The realm of freedom is possible only beyond the realm of necessity. Marx, here, poses “the shortening of the working day” as an indication of the realm of freedom. In Marx, there seems to be a strict division between socially necessary labor and creative human activity. Marcuse says that, here, the realm of necessity means the realm of alienation and of unfreedom. He says the following:

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

According to this classical Marxian concept, the realm of necessity would remain a realm of alienation, no matter how much the working day is being reduced. Moreover this conception seems to imply that free human activity is essentially different, and must remain essentially different from socially necessary work.¹⁶⁷

This conception, according to Marcuse, is not sufficient for founding a qualitatively different society. He argues that Marx sees human life in such a way that realms are differentiated from each other strictly and in this conception it is not seen the sign of a free society. Marcuse defies this conception in the following way:

Now this conception epitomizes the division of human existence into labor time and free time, the division between reason, rationality on the one hand, and pleasure, joy, fulfillment on the other hand, the division between alienated and non-alienated labor.¹⁶⁸

Finally, in *Grundrisse*, Marx has a different conception concerning the realm of freedom and the realm of necessity, according to Marcuse. This conception is related to full automation, which saves laborer from material production and lets him to be a free individual. This conception, which Marx abandons in the *Capital*, according to Marcuse, renders possible a process of production where “[the worker] can play with, experiment with the technical material, with the possibilities of machine and of the things produced and transformed by the machines.”¹⁶⁹

He thinks that the conception of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom in the *Capital* is not satisfactory for automation has opened new

¹⁶⁷ “The Realm of Freedom and The Realm of Necessity: A Reconsideration”, p. 22.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

dimensions. In this explanation, according to Marcuse, the separation between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom corresponds to the separation between labor and leisure and it must be re-examined because he argues that “according to this Marxian conception, the realm of necessity would continue under socialism to such an extent that real human freedom would prevail only outside the entire sphere of socially necessary labor.”¹⁷⁰

Marcuse claims that technological rationalization and mechanization opens a dimension toward a new civilization. The technological development has the capability to save the individual from the necessity of labor, i.e. toil and misery. Thanks to these developments, the individual’s mind and body would not have to be the instruments of alienated labor. The increasing mastery over nature renders possible reducing labor time to a minimum, and thus fulfilling human needs with minimum toil. According to Marcuse “the technical and material resources for the realization of freedom are available.”¹⁷¹ However, although control and mastery over nature and the possibilities of fulfilling human needs have increased, poverty of man and repression continue. This situation, according to Marcuse, results not from the lack of natural resources, but from the manner the resources are distributed and utilized.¹⁷²

Marcuse takes Marx’s theory of alienation as his starting point. Man, in the capitalist society, has to sell his labor power, and his life has become an

¹⁷⁰ *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 20-21.

¹⁷¹ Marcuse, Herbert. “Liberation from the Affluent Society”, (<http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/60spubs/67dialecticlib/67LibFromAfflSociety.htm>) (April 15, 2006).

¹⁷² *Eros and Civilization*, p. 84.

instrument of labor. He has no control over his labor and its products. From this, Marcuse arrives at the following conclusion:

[T]he liberation from this state seems to require, not the arrest of alienation, but its consummation, not the reactivation of the repressed and productive personality but its abolition. The elimination of human potentialities from the world of (alienated) labor creates the preconditions for the elimination of labor from the world of human potentialities.¹⁷³

“The realm of freedom” indicates the reduction of necessary labor to minimum as much as possible in order to open place for leisure and labor in a different character. Marcuse thinks that only a world in which free time prevails and the abolition of alienated labor takes place is a free world. He says this is possible with the complete automation which is a result of the need for increasing productivity. Complete automation would be realized through the complete substitution of human labor by machines.

Complete automation in the realm of necessity would open the dimension of free time as the one in which man's private and societal existence would constitute itself. This would be the historical transcendence toward a new civilization.¹⁷⁴

At this point, Marcuse argues that individual's possessing more leisure in the advanced industrial society is not related to the realm of freedom. It remains still belonging to the realm of necessity. No matter how much leisure the individual has, if he has to work leisure will take place in the realm of labor. In this area, leisure means either passive relaxation as compensation of work or a time in which the individual imagines of satisfying “false needs”. What would emancipate the individual is not the expanding of leisure in the work world, but

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 95.

¹⁷⁴ *One Dimensional Man*, p. 37.

the abolition of labor completely. Abolition of labor implies, according to Marcuse, consummation of the alienation of labor: the condition on which there would be no need for labor.

Under the “ideal” conditions of mature industrial civilization, alienation would be completed by general automatization of labor, reduction of labor time to a minimum.¹⁷⁵

Marcuse envisages that the reduction of labor time would bring about a regression in the standard of living in the advanced industrial society, but the standard of living itself is in the limit of performance principle because it causes continually repression. The individual sacrifice his autonomy over his life in order to attain a higher standard of living. However, in the realm of freedom abundance is necessary; it is one of the prerequisites of freedom. The individual, in order to realize his potentialities, must have satisfaction of all vital needs. Civilization provides the opportunity for reducing alienated labor expended in production with technological rationalization and mechanization. Even if the necessity of labor is a result of the lack of sufficient means to satisfy everyone’s needs, the realm of freedom cannot be reached by “the existence of abundance for all”. There is also a need to abolish the control over human instincts.¹⁷⁶ “Possession and procurement of the necessities of life are the prerequisite, rather than the content, of a free society.”¹⁷⁷

Marcuse argues that in a new civilization the main emancipative activity would be “play”, instead of alienated labor. For alienated labor is essentially

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁷⁶ *Eros and Civilization*, p. 122.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

inhuman. According to Marcuse, with the transformation of labor and free time's becoming full time the contradiction between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom would be resolved. In a qualitatively different society even though labor is directed toward satisfying physical necessities, it can become a free activity, a play. Therefore, within the realm of necessity there can be a place for freedom. Marcuse puts this as follows:

I believe that one of the possibilities, which gives an indication of the qualitative difference between the free and unfree society, is that of letting the realm of freedom appear within the realm of necessity – in labor and not only beyond labor.¹⁷⁸

“Play” signifies the transformation of labor. Marcuse argues that in the realm of freedom the main activity of freedom is “the free play of human faculties and desires.” He says the following:

Play is *unproductive* and *useless* precisely because it cancels the repressive and exploitative traits of labor and leisure; it “just plays” with the reality.¹⁷⁹

This definition of play as unproductive and useless has similarities with Aristotle's conception of the highest activity of man as *theoria*. Aristotle considers *theoria* as neither necessary nor useful; it is its own end. For Marcuse, like Aristotle, leisure has a distinctive place because it means freedom from the necessity of labor. However, Marcuse's ideal, like that of Marx, is freedom for all the members of society, whereas Aristotle sees freedom as suitable for a privileged minority. According to Marcuse, thanks to technological developments, leisure may be possible for the whole society.

¹⁷⁸ Marcuse, Herbert (1967). “The End of Utopia”, in *Five Lectures*, Boston: Beacon Press, p. 64.

¹⁷⁹ *Eros and Civilization*, p. 178.

Marcuse's critique of Marx's conception of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom seems to be unjust, because if Marx's thought is considered as a whole it is clear that labor can be a free activity in the realm of necessity. From the beginning, Marx's thought is directed to resolve the contradiction between necessity and freedom. Emancipation from estrangement of labor is very important for Marx for he sees labor as a characteristic feature of human nature. Therefore, according to Marx, labor aiming at satisfaction of physical needs belongs to the realm of necessity. But in the communist society, this labor would not be forced labor. Labor in the realm of necessity would assume a free character.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I compared Aristotle's, Karl Marx's, and Herbert Marcuse's views on labor, leisure and freedom. Firstly, I have tried to give a brief account of the concepts labor, leisure and freedom in the history of thought because these concepts have been considered from different points of view. Veblen's thoughts on the emergence of the leisure class and on the assignment of certain works to certain men in this process helped drawing the framework for the contrast between the concepts labor and leisure. From the myth of creation to the ancient Greece and Rome, and from the wild capitalism to the advanced industrial society there have been many considerations on labor and leisure, and different relationships of these concepts have been proposed by many philosophers and thinkers. In these considerations, sometimes labor, and sometimes leisure is related to freedom. Generally, labor and leisure have been seen as opposed to each other, and one has been taken as superior to the other.

After having briefly dwelled on different points of view on labor, leisure and freedom in the history of thought, I focused on Aristotle's thought on labor and leisure in some detail. Especially leisure has an important place in Aristotle's views of politics and ethics. In Aristotle's perfect state, there is a strict division of labor in accordance with his view of human nature. Slaves and laboring classes

exist for satisfying the physical necessities of the whole society; their labor is for the sake of leisure of the citizens. Because slaves and laboring classes are occupied with bodily activities they lack of leisure, and they cannot be citizens. One part of the society lives in the realm of necessity while the other part lives in the realm of freedom. The precondition of citizenship is leisure according to Aristotle. Labor is inferior to leisure. Leisure is necessary for performing political duties and cultivating virtue. According to Aristotle, happiness depends on leisure, and being virtuous needs leisure and staying far away from labor. The best way of life is philosophical life because the philosopher must be completely free from the necessity of labor, and the aim of his activity is its own end. Consequently, the philosopher must have a perfect life of leisure. I think Aristotle's thought offers a comprehensive view of human nature, and his thought on politics and ethics is consistent with this view. However, his thought is under the influence of the slavery society in which he lived. Aristotle sees freedom as specific to a privileged minority. From our perspective, he seems to be unjust in thinking that laboring classes are means to philosophical activity.

I have tried to show the importance of relations among labor, leisure and freedom in the philosophy of Karl Marx. Marx considers the division of labor, which Aristotle sees as the foundation of his perfect state, as a cause of alienation. According to Marx, it is necessary to abolish the division of labor in order to put an end to the servitude of man. In his vision for communism, the whole society must have both labor and leisure; every member of society must be responsible for satisfying physical necessities. And, everyone must have maximum leisure for self-development. Marx argues that the measure of wealth in the communist

society will be leisure, because the wealth of society will be measured by its members' actualizing their potentialities, not by surplus value. While Aristotle projects a perfect state by employing contrasts, such as labor and leisure, necessity and freedom because according to him these contrasts were natural, Marx envisages the resolution of these contrasts because according to him these contrasts are contradictions. Marx argues that in the communist society the contradictions between labor and leisure, between intellectual labor and bodily labor, between necessity and freedom will be abolished. Although the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom will continue to exist in all possible modes of productions, labor in the realm of necessity can be free because it will be a free and conscious activity in the communist society.

Herbert Marcuse's views on labor, leisure and freedom are much nearer to those of Karl Marx. Marcuse as a Marxist philosopher departs from Marx's thought, accepts his theory of estrangement and employs his conception of the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. Marcuse investigates the advanced industrial society and the possibility of a non-repressive society. He observes that the life of the individual is controlled in the advanced society. Marcuse considers alienated labor as equal to toil. Labor time of the individual is not for the sake of satisfying his needs, but for the requirements of the capitalist system. Domination over leisure is added to domination over labor; domination over the realm of production spreads to that of consumption. New control mechanisms, media and false needs make the individual dependent on the capitalist system. The advanced industrial society, by offering a wide variety of goods and services, increases its control over the individuals. They feel themselves free and happy because they

are capable of satisfying these false needs. The advanced industrial society surrounds labor time and leisure of the individual. Therefore, labor and leisure are means of servitude in the advanced industrial society. However, according to Marcuse technological developments also bring about the foundations in which a non-repressive civilization could emerge: automation in the process of production could abolish the necessity of labor. With complete automation, leisure could provide an area in which the individual freely actualizes his potentialities. Therefore, in Marcuse's thought leisure is the precondition of the realm of freedom. However, Marcuse says that the transformation of labor as well as leisure is necessary for the realm of freedom. According to him, "play" is the activity of the realm of freedom. Free play of human faculties coincides with leisure, and play, is performed in leisure. Consequently, labor and leisure are also seen as means of freedom in Marcuse's thought.

Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse have similar ideas on the distinction between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. The realm of necessity signifies physical necessities of man; these are man's common needs with animals, whereas the realm of freedom signifies potentialities of man, the realm belonging only to him. The activity of the realm of necessity is related to economical labor by these three philosophers. According to Aristotle the activities of the realm of freedom are military, political and philosophical activities. Philosophical activity is superior to the others because the philosopher is completely free. For Marx, scientific and artistic activities are the activities of the realm of freedom. As for Marcuse, play is the activity of the realm of freedom. However, Aristotle, Marx and Marcuse have common ideas on the feature of the activity of the realm of

freedom. This activity must be neither useful nor necessary. Aristotle says that the noblest activity is neither useful nor necessary; it is its own end. Similarly, Marx argues that man truly produces only in freedom from physical needs. And, Marcuse says that play is unproductive and useless, but true human activity.

In Aristotle's thought freedom is possible for only a privileged minority, exempt from the necessity of labor. Majority, i.e. laborers and slaves, cannot become even citizens. However, Marx and Marcuse envisage that freedom is possible for all members of society, and they argue that technological developments can provide the conditions freedom can be realized for everyone.

In my opinion, the opposition between labor and leisure can be resolved, and labor could be an activity performed in leisure. Karl Marx and Herbert Marcuse seem to mark such a possibility. In a society, where labor is not seen as drudgery or toil, man could have a full enjoyment of his life and time as belonging completely to himself for actualizing his potentialities. As a natural being, man could be a free subject in his relation to nature, including the freedom and the means for satisfying his physical necessities. In Marx's utopia in *German Ideology*, man's activities directing to maintaining his physical existence are not seen as drudgery or toil, but as a sign of his freedom and his nature. This utopia still remains unrealized, but it expresses a great human aspiration throughout the history of humankind.

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