

The Dualities of Work: Self-Consumption and Self-Creation

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For it is still probable that the enormous changes of the industrial revolution behind us and the even greater changes of the atomic revolution before us will remain changes of the world, and not changes in the basic condition of human life on earth.

– Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition²

I.

Work is not a topic about which philosophers have traditionally had very much to say. Moreover, it often seems to be the case that when philosophers do address the topic it is a somewhat idealized or one-sided view of work that preoccupies them – the idea of work as self-creative activity. Perhaps one reason for this is that the experience of philosophical and academic work itself is likely to consist much more in an experience of work as a form of creative activity than simple labour – for the academic, ‘work’ is often not so much that by which one must support oneself and one’s family (though it is that also), as a body of writing or research, a form of self-expression, a part of oneself. Yet, of course, for a great many, perhaps the majority of people, work is experienced much more as labor than as involving any form of creativity. For instance, in his Introduction to his book Working – a collection of interviews with Americans about their experience of work – Studs Terkel writes:

This book, being about work is, by its very nature, about violence – to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers as well as accidents, about shouting matches as well as fistfights, about nervous breakdowns as well as kicking the dog around. It is, above all (or beneath all), about daily humiliations. To survive the day is triumph enough for the working wounded among the great many of us...It is about a search, too, for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for daily recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than topor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying. Perhaps immortality, too, is part of the quest. To be remembered was the wish, spoken and unspoken, of the heroes and heroines of this book.³

Here work seems to present itself as having a truly dual face: it is experienced as something to be avoided, as a burden we would rather not bear, as oppressive and sometimes exploitative, as a cause of illness, stress and even despair; it is also something that many of us find to be an absolutely essential part of our lives – and not merely for financial reasons, but rather something that is a source of self-definition and self-fulfillment, that dignifies and empowers.

This "duality" seems well-expressed in terms of the way in which work encompasses both labour and self-creativity. The former is work understood as an activity that enables what is necessary for the sustaining of one's life; the latter is work understood as it contributes to self-creation and articulation, as well as to one's sense of self-worth and self-esteem. While work is what enables us to "hold body and soul together", as the saying has it, we seek more from work than just the means for physical subsistence. Work is also that by means of which we establish a world, and a place for ourselves within that world – it is that by means of which we gain a sense of who and what we are.⁴ The duality of work consists in the fact that all work is, to some extent, a matter of labour, as well as being a means of creation and self-creation. Work as labour involves, one might say, a "using

up", a consuming, of self – indeed, to a certain extent, the more demanding and dangerous the work in question, the more one might say one is "consumed" by it – while work as creative activity involves a form of self-creation or self-formation. All work might be said to have some element of both consumption and creation, although, in very many cases (certainly in the cases to which Terkel draws our attention and in those that will be of most interest here), it is the character of work as labour that dominates – so much so that the possibility for such work to provide a means of creation or self-creation is minimal or almost non-existent. For the academic, perhaps, it is the character of work as self-creative that seems much more prominent.

In some respects, the duality of work seems to be more strongly felt as part of the experience of modernity – the shift to industrial and technological modes of work seem to have brought with them certain changes in the experience and nature of work, just as they have also brought new economic and commercial structures within which work is embedded, that give priority to work as labour.⁵ The division of labour, for instance, together with certain shifts in the way work itself is understood, has led to a common experience of work as stultifying and deadening.⁶ The experience of work as a burden, is thus intensified, while the expectation of work as a source of self-creativity remains.

There are, indeed, a number of important questions to be explored concerning the shifts in the nature of work that are tied to the increasingly technological character of work – shifts that give a particular character to the dual faces of work – and some of these questions will be discussed here (including the shifts in the conception and nature of work that are tied to the new managerial and economic practices of the 1980's and 1990's). But the duality of work, as a general phenomenon, is not tied only to the modern and the technological, but is part of a set of attitudes and experiences that extend across history and culture. It is a duality that is itself reflected in, or is, perhaps, a reflection of, a set of broader dualisms: between the necessary and the free, the constrained and the creative, the private and the public, the animal and the human, the instinctual and the rational. The aim of this paper will be to explore some of these dualisms and to explore, also, the possibility that the modern experience of work does indeed involve a transformation of work into primarily labour, and the consequences of that transformation.

II.

Work originates, first and foremost, in the human need to provide for the necessities of life. The duality of work arises out of the need for more than simple maintenance of life. Since work is a necessary part of any human life, so no human life can be said to have any sense or unity to it if it does not integrate work into the structure of that life. Indeed, since so much of life is given over to the need to work, so work is all the more important a focus for the formation of a sense of the unity and identity of a life and a sense of self. In working, then, we not only make our lives possible through enabling the prerequisites of life, but we also form the nature of that life. The experience of work as both a matter of necessary labor and as creative or self-creative activity is exemplified in various ways throughout the history of work. Indeed, the Hebrew and Christian stories of the expulsion from paradise presents the burdensome character of work as the curse that followed from the breaking of God's command to abstain from eating of the tree of knowledge. Of course, the starkness of the duality that seems to be part of the modern experience of work – as reported, for instance, by Terkel, does seem to be much more of a recent phenomenon and it undoubtedly reflects a number of changes – not merely changes in the technology of labour, but also in such things as the sharp separation of work from leisure and in the secularization of human activities.

In The Human Condition Hannah Arendt introduces a distinction that appears to be very close to the duality that I have suggested can be found in the experience of work itself. Arendt distinguishes "work" (associated with the human being understood as homo faber) from "labor" (associated with the animal laborans):⁷ while "work", in this sense, is directed toward the production of some particular durable object that can then be taken up for further use, that is, towards the production of the material things that constitute the human world,⁸ labour is the necessary activity directed towards the production of things for immediate consumption; whereas "work" finds its completion in the durable objects that it produces, labor is endless and repetitive, part of the endless cycle of production and consumption ("It is, indeed, the mark of all laboring that it leaves nothing behind, that the result of its effort is almost as quickly consumed as the effort is spent"⁹). Both of these, however, are understood by Arendt as associated with forms of material production and physical engagement in the world, and are contrasted with action, speech and thought which "do not 'produce', bring forth anything."¹⁰ The focus of Arendt's attention is not the possible relation between labour and creative activity as they might both figure as elements in the human experience of working, but in the distinction between two different aspects of human life in general: the "driving necessity of biological life" and the "utilitarian instrumentalism of fabrication and usage."¹¹

Yet although Arendt's distinction focuses on a slightly different contrast to that which concerns me here, her conception of labour as tied to consumption, and the associated idea of the products of labour as continually "used up" in a continuous and repetitive cycle of production and consumption, in contrast with the more enduring products of what Arendt calls "work", are certainly relevant to understanding the nature of work as labour, and so to understanding the dualism that obtains in the character of work itself, as comprising both labour and creative activity. Labour, according to Arendt, arises out of the basic demands of human life. It is cyclical, as are the natural cycles of birth and decay. The need for humans to labour in order to live is a reflection of the way in which human beings are fundamentally constrained by their nature as animals and by their character as embodied creatures. So long as human beings are to live, they must labour to provide the essential means to life. Since the means to life need to be continually replenished, as they are continually consumed, so labour is unending and repetitive. Arendt argues that in the ancient world slavery was the only means by which some individuals were able to partially escape from the need to labour – the subordination of the life of the slave to labour on behalf of the household to which she or he belonged was precisely what enabled the freedom of the free citizen. Such freedom was essentially a matter of being able to engage in a public, political life outside of the private realm of the household.¹² In the ancient world, the labour of the slave enabled the creative activity of the free citizen.

One can look to find elements of labor and of creativity in almost all forms of work. The work of the slave, however, is a perfect example of a form of work that is almost entirely given over to labour, rather than to any form of creative activity as such. For slaves, there is almost no possibility of finding any place for creativity or self-formation in the labour that is their work. This does not mean that it is impossible for the slave to view the labour that goes with slavery as having some creative character, but it does mean that there will be very severe limits on any such view. Similarly, the forms of work that emerged with the industrial revolution, according to which workers had to adapt to the demands of mechanized and (with the division of labour) de-skilled modes of production, also led to the increasing reduction of work to mere labour, even though (as Terkel's work suggest, the idea of work as creative and a focus for self-articulation does not entirely disappear). Thus Arendt writes that "The industrial revolution has replaced all workmanship with labor",¹³ but she also notes

a further result of this transformation. Labour is tied to consumption and the transformation of all work into labour brings with it a transformation of the products of works into objects for consumption, into mere commodities: "the things of the modern world have become labor products whose natural fate is to be consumed, instead of work products which are there to be used."¹⁴

Just as we look to work as a source, not only of the means to live, but also as a means to self-formation and self-definition, so we also look to the results of work with a similarly dual vision. We value the results of our work, even though those results are always eventually eroded in the same way that all our works are eroded – as Shelley's "Ozymandius" famously reminds us. But the more work is given over to mere labour, the more transitory are the results of work, and so the more it becomes an activity of ceaseless repetition in which the fruits of our exertions are continually lost – the more work is given over to labour the more it becomes like the task of Sisyphus and the less it seems to be a possible source of meaning or of self-definition. The comments from Terkel that I quoted above accurately reflect just this tension or duality work as creative – as a source of meaning and value – at the same time as it is destructive – as it represents the destruction of meaning and value. The duality within work is thus also present in the things produced by means of such work. Moreover, this duality, of consumption or destruction, along with a certain possibility for creation, is also to be found in the character of work as both a "using up", or consuming, of the very individual who works, as well as being the means by which the individual establishes her or himself in the world – as the means to a certain form of "self-creation".

It is important to realize that the transformation of work that increasingly subordinates work as creative activity to work as labour, is entirely compatible with the transformation in work that leads to the reduction in its difficulty, in its physical harshness and danger, in the toll it takes on the body of the worker. Labour need not always be hard labour. When Arendt claims the industrial revolution has replaced workmanship with labour, she seems primarily to have in mind the changes in work practices that came with the division of labour and so the shift towards forms of production in which the labour process is broken down into its elements and each worker assigned to a particular such element. Such division of labour does not always makes the labour process easier or safer, although it does allow for a reduction in the skill levels of the labour force required. With increasing automation, however, not only have workforces been de-skilled (though the process of de-skilling is often concealed by a variety of additional factors¹⁵), but the work process has itself been made less demanding, less harsh and less strenuous. Richard Sennett's descriptions of the changes in working conditions in a Chicago bakery provide a good example of what is a much more wide-spread (though certainly not universal) phenomenon:

The bakery no longer smells of sweat and is startlingly cool, whereas workers used frequently to throw up from the heat. Under the soothing fluorescent lights, all is now strangely quiet....Now the bakers make no physical contact with the materials or the loaves of bread, monitoring the entire process via on-screen icons which depict, for instance images of bread color derived from data about the temperature and baking time of the ovens; few bakers actually see the loaves of bread they make. As a result of working in this way, the bakers now no longer actually know how to bake bread...Program-dependent laborers, they can have no hands-on knowledge. Their work is no longer legible to them, in the sense of understanding what they are doing.¹⁶

But this making light of labour does not change the character of the labour as such – labour remains labour just inasmuch as it remains a mode of production that is geared towards consumption. Work as labour produces

commodities to be consumed, but it also consumes the labourer who is the ostensible agent of production. For the labourer whose work is made effortless, what is used up is not strength, health, or energy, however, but rather time – which is to say, just the "life-time" of the labourer. Thus the modern labourer does not find herself confronted with a workplace that threatens to deprive her of life or limb, or that leaves her physically exhausted at the end of each working day, but it nevertheless consumes the labourer in another, even if more abstract, sense. Moreover this abstract "using up" of the labourer, does not result in any production of the sort that comes from the physical exertion of the body, but in a form of production that is itself abstracted or removed from what is produced – a form of "production" that consists in little more than the monitoring of systems geared to the routine manufacture of commodities for immediate consumption.

The idea of contemporary labour as a using up of time, rather than physical energy or strength, is reflected in the way in which the contemporary organization of labour itself involves a re-organization, or perhaps a disorganization, of time. This is something that Richard Sennett notes in the development of more "flexible" work practices, in the idea of a business as geared to a process of continual "re-engineering" and the rise of "risk-taking" as a valued mode of behaviour.¹⁷ Rather than time as spanning a past and future as well as a present, as tied to narratives encompassing significant portions of a life – whether the life of an individual or a business – time is something continually appearing anew, continually reformed to fit new schedules, new configurations in the market, new trends. As Sennett writes of the changes in the temporality associated with contemporary modes of work: "Time's arrow is broken; it has no trajectory in a continually reengineered, routine-hating, short-term political economy".¹⁸ Indeed, the labourer herself must become something continually ready to be reformed and made available to fit a new role in the ongoing and ever-changing cycle of production and consumption.

If, in the contemporary workplace, all work becomes mere labor a lone, still labor itself becomes easy – nothing more than the sheer consumption of time and of a time understood as empty of content without past or future, without unity of narrative, time as nothing more than the simple temporal extendedness measured by the steady ticking-by of seconds, minutes, hours. Yet the transformation of work into labor in contemporary work practices does completely not do away with the duality that continues to attach to the idea of work. Sennett reports on how even the workers within the safe, undemanding workplace of the automated bakery "felt personally demeaned by the way they work. In this bakers' paradise, that reaction to their work is something they do not themselves understand. Operationally, everything is so clear; emotionally, so illegible".¹⁹ Just as the workers interviewed by Terkel, in spite of the physical "violence" associated with their working lives, still looked to work in order to find some sense of self-respect, of dignity and self-conception (and were often successful in retaining some such sense of self²⁰), so the worker whose work has been transformed into little more than an abstracted form of labor, still seems to look to that work as a basis for self-creation rather than merely self-consumption. In the face of such an abstracted, empty mode of work, the response is bewilderment and confusion.

Arendt, as we saw above, ties the modern transformation of workmanship into labour to a corresponding transformation of those things that are the products of workmanship into commodities to be consumed. In Arendt's analysis this involves a shift from work, as the production of enduring things for further use, to labour, as the production of things for immediate consumption and so destruction. "[L]abor and consumption", says Arendt, "are but two stages of the same process, imposed upon man by the necessity of life"²¹ and so, to say that modern society is a society geared to labor is to say that it is also geared to

consumption...and vice versa.²² All activities of work, all activities of production, are thus understood solely in terms of the manufacture of commodities for consumption and as even the individual worker is taken up into this cycle of production and consumption, so even the worker is assimilated to something to be consumed, to be "used up", something that is to be flexible and adjustable to meet the demands of business and "the market". But if the worker is transformed into something consumable, so does the consumer take on the character of producer. Within a society geared to labor and to consumption, the act of consumption, and the promotion of consumption – namely advertising – itself takes on the character of a form of productive labor. Thus Borgmann points out that one of the effects of technology as it is effective in everyday life is not only a transformation of things into commodities, but a conceptualization of human life itself around notions of desire and the satisfaction of desire through consumption. But this means that anything that might fall outside of the range of production for consumption or of consumption itself can find no place within such a framework. Arendt is thus led to conclude that "[a]s a result, all serious activities, irrespective of their fruits, are called labor, and every activity which is not necessary either for the life of the individual or for the life process of society is subsumed under playfulness".²³ As mere play, such activities lack the seriousness of "productive" labor.

Arendt takes art to be perhaps the only example of a form of activity in modern society that is not assimilated to the cycle of production and consumption (thus she suggests that the artist is perhaps "the only 'worker' left in a laboring society"²⁴). In fact, it seems that Arendt may have underestimated the extent to which even art may be taken up as something to be produced simply for consumption (perhaps, then, even art must struggle against its reduction to a form of labor). In this respect, the phenomenon to which Arendt directs attention when she writes that in the grip of labor "Whatever we do, we are supposed to do for the sake of 'making a living'"²⁵ can be seen as a quite ubiquitous feature of laboring societies and, indeed, of our own –the valuation of all activities in commercial terms can be seen to reflect just the predominance of work as labor and of production as given over to consumption. As Arendt points out, such a reduction of all activities to a single end is in sharp contrast to the idea, present in ancient writers, that each activity has a distinctive end that is proper to it.²⁶

The picture of a society in which all work is reduced to work as labor and all production has been geared to consumption that is presented by Arendt, and that seems to be exemplified in our contemporary world, is very close to the picture presented by Heidegger's account of a world given over to technology.²⁷ As Heidegger presents matters, the technological world, in which everything is understood as mere resource, to be constantly "used up", is essentially a world given over to labor and to consumption.²⁸ The transformation of work into labour, and the associated change of all forms of production into production for consumption, can thus be viewed as part of the human impact of the dominance of a technological mode of ordering of the world. The connection between consumption, labor and technology is also to be found in Borgmann's analysis and is perhaps implicit in Sennett's. The technological transformation of work can thus be viewed as a central element in undermining work as creative activity and the rise of work as simple labor alone. Moreover, the transformation of time that goes with the shift to labor and to consumption, is also a feature of the technological. The technological "levels out" time replacing the full time of human creative activity, the time of a human life, with the measured-out, "inhuman" time of automated production. As Sennett suggests, the technological, in the form of contemporary modes of work and business organization, also "levels out" place and space. All that is left is the calculative, mathematical frame of labor, consumption and usable resource.

III.

Richard Sennett's account of the state of contemporary work-practices seems to reflect both the duality of work that was evident in Terkel's account of American's experience of work and the increasing dominance within modern society of what I have treated as that form of work that seems to correspond to Arendt's notion of labor and that is tied to the cycle of consumption and production. Our experience of work retains its dual character, even though it is a character increasingly evident in terms of our bewilderment and dissatisfaction with work rather than being a real possibility present in contemporary work as such. The very fact of such bewilderment and confusion should itself be a source of concern. In Sennett's discussion the contemporary shifts in the character of work do not give rise merely to emotional uncertainty, however, but to what Sennett calls the "corrosion of character" – to the loss of a proper sense of human communality and mutual dependence; to the degradation of trust and the devaluing of human life. In Arendt's account the dominance of work as labor leads to a loss of a proper sense of the nature of human necessity and freedom:

...in distinction from slave society, where the "curse" of necessity remained a vivid reality because the life of a slave testified daily to the fact that "life is slavery", this condition is no longer fully manifest and its lack of appearance has made it more difficult to notice and remember. The danger here is obvious. Man cannot be free if he does not know that he is subject to necessity, because his freedom is always won in his never wholly successful attempts to liberate himself from necessity. And while it may be true that his strongest impulse towards this liberation comes from his "repugnance to futility", it is also likely that the impulse may grow weaker as this "futility" appears easier, as it requires less effort... Tools and instruments ease pain and effort and thereby change the modes in which the urgent necessity inherent in labor once was manifest to all. They do not change the necessity itself; they only hide it from our senses... The easier that life has become in a consumers' or laborers' society, the more difficult it will be to remain aware of the urges of necessity by which it is driven, even when pain and effort, the outward manifestations of necessity, are hardly noticeable at all. The danger is that such a society, dazzled by the abundance of its growing fertility and caught in the smooth functioning of a never-ending process, would no longer be able to recognize its own futility – the futility of a life which "does not fix or realize itself in any permanent subject which endures after [its] labor is past".²⁹

What I have called the "duality" of work, or what Arendt brings to our attention through the notion of labour as both necessary, and also as essentially tied to consumption, is a reflection of both human belonging to the natural world, that is, human animality, and human transcendence of that world – what might be understood in terms of human freedom or rationality. Sennett's analysis of the "corrosion" of character that is brought about with the shift to new modes of work provides an illustration of the very phenomenon to which Arendt directs our attention in the above passage. Contemporary work practices transform work in a way that makes it no longer destructive of the body, no longer arduous and difficult – work is transformed so that, one might say, it is no longer simple labour; yet it also transforms it in a way such that it is no longer a form of creative activity either. Indeed, the transformation of work destroys our own sense of the necessity of existence, of the fragility of existence, of the character of existence as itself something won. This is not to say that we should look for a return of forms of work that are harsh, painful and difficult. But it is to suggest that we cannot and should not accept the easing of the burden of labour as a simple and unmitigated blessing. Indeed, the easing of the burden of labour presents us with a new problem: how to retain a sense of both ourselves as both free and as bound by necessity; of ourselves as both creative and yet also finite and mortal; how to retain a sense of ourselves as properly human. The crucial point here is that the improvement in human life that may seem to be the result of

modern forms of work organization is not in fact an improvement in human life at all, but rather an improvement in a certain form of animal existence – it involves an easing in the life of what Arendt calls the animal laborans, but the cost is the near-obliteration of the human mode of life that encompasses both labour and creativity. This has perhaps been characteristic of many “modernist advances”. But human life, so long as it remains human, must be a life given over to both labour and creativity, to transcendence and to finitude.

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- Richard Sennett, The Corrosion of Character (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998).
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Notes:

- ¹ This paper was completed during a period as a Humboldt Research Fellow at the University of Heidelberg and I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.
- ² The Human Condition (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1958), p.121
- ³ Studs Terkel, Working (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p.xi).
- ⁴ Hence the Marxist emphasis on work as the primary mode of human interaction with the world.
- ⁵ Indeed, Arendt points out that one feature of the modern era, certainly since the industrial revolution, is an enormous extension in the amount of a person's life given over to work. See The Human Condition, pp.132-3n.
- ⁶ Indeed, the changes in work that were brought about with the industrial revolution have led to the duality that can be seen to obtain within work itself being transposed onto the dichotomy between work and leisure.
- ⁷ See Arendt, The Human Condition, pp.79ff.
- ⁸ Arendt emphasises the role of work (in the contrastive sense in which she employs the notion) as geared towards the production of things for further use, that is, towards the production of a framework of instrumentality – in this there are clear echoes of the Heideggerian account of the equipmental or instrumental character of being-in-the-world as set out in Being and Time.
- ⁹ Arendt, The Human Condition, p.87.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p.95.
- ¹¹ Ibid., p.174.
- ¹² See Arendt, ibid., pp.84-5.

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- ¹³ Arendt, ibid., p.124. Albert Borgmann also writes that: "the reduction of work in technology to a mere means has resulted in the degradation of most work to what I usually will call labor" (Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984], p.114 – Borgmann, notes, however, that not intend his use of the contrast between labour and work, in this passage, to be understood in the same sense as Arendt's.
- ¹⁴ Arendt, The Human Condition, p.124. Borgmann views consumerism as closely tied to the technological paradigm and so to the degradation of work into labor that comes with it. See Borgmann, Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life.
- ¹⁵ See Borgmann, Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life, pp.116-19. The de-skilling that goes with improvements in the technology of production and with increasing automation is also a phenomenon noted by Richard Sennett in The Corrosion of Character (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), pp.64-75. The ideology of contemporary business practice tends, however, to ignore the de-skilling of the workforce, instead emphasizing increasing levels of educational qualification irrespective either of its real quality or its relevance to the actual work performed. As Borgmann writes "we ignore the irony of technology and fail to distinguish genuine liberation from disengagement" (Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life, pp.118-19).
- ¹⁶ Richard Sennett, The Corrosion of Character, pp.67-8.
- ¹⁷ See Sennett, ibid., especially pp.57-63, 76-99.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., p.98.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p.68.
- ²⁰ See also Sennett's account of the contrast between the experiences in relation to work of Enrico and his son, Rico, as set out in chapter one of The Corrosion of Character, pp.15-31.
- ²¹ Arendt, The Human Condition, p.126.
- ²² See Arendt, ibid., p.126-7.
- ²³ Ibid., p.126-7.
- ²⁴ Ibid., p.127.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Ibid., p.128-9.
- ²⁷ See, for instance, Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology', in The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), pp.3-35.
- ²⁸ Of course, the Heideggerian concept of the technological should not be viewed as a concept that maps directly onto the notion of labor, as deployed in Arendt's work, in direct opposition to Arendt's concept of work. The Arendtian concept of work is closely associated with the Heideggerian notion of the world as an equipmental ordering of things. The technological is akin to such an ordering inasmuch as it is an ordering that is tied to a certain form of instrumentality, but unlike the ordering of the equipmental world, it is an ordering that encompasses everything, or at least, it purports to do so, and the instrumental ordering is simply one in which everything is ordered within a framework of pure transformation and consumption. In this respect the technological order lacks the regionality of the equipmental which is ordered around the workshop, the project, the activity. In this respect, the technological is, in a certain sense, in tension with the equipmental ordering of the world – it actually changes that ordering from equipmental to productive-consumptive. In

human terms, the experience of the technological in relation to work is of a transformation of work to labor and the near-obliteration of its creative (and hence dual) character.

²⁹ Arendt, The Human Condition, pp.121, 125 & 135 (the embedded quotation is from Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations [Everyman's edn.], I, p.295.